

Naturally Connected

Spring/Summer 2025 Issue 3

Charter Township of Highland, Michigan

Your Guide to life in Highland

*Crowd enjoying a Sounds Like
Summer Concert at Veteran's Park*

Photo by: Cassie Blascyk





Useful Numbers

EMERGENCIES
911

NON EMERGENCY
OAKLAND COUNTY SHERIFF
248-858-4950

NON EMERGENCY
FIRE DEPARTMENT
248-887-8688

HIGHLAND TOWNSHIP
248-887-3791

HIGHLAND TOWNSHIP
ACTIVITY CENTER
248-887-1707

HIGHLAND TOWNSHIP
PUBLIC LIBRARY
248-887-2218

HIGHLAND DDA
248-887-7200

WESTERN OAKLAND
TRANSPORTATION AUTHORITY
248-887-4979

HIGHLAND TOWNSHIP
POST OFFICE
248-887-4722

The snow is melting, the birds are singing, and vibrant colors are beginning to bloom—Spring has officially arrived! It's time to embrace the sunshine, explore the trails, and enjoy the sounds of nature as we shake off the winter chill.



After months of cozying up indoors, I invite you to get out and enjoy all that Highland Township has to offer. Whether it's walking or biking on our scenic trails, participating in the Founders Day Parade & Festival, or joining a class at the Library, there's something for everyone this season.

I look forward to seeing you around town and celebrating this wonderful time of year together.

Rick Hamill

Highland Township Supervisor



Naturally Connected

Naturally Connected is a bi-annual magazine produced for the residents and businesses of Highland Township, Michigan by the Charter Township of Highland.

EDITORIAL BOARD

- Rick Hamill, Highland Township Supervisor**
- Cassie Blascyk, Assistant to the Supervisor**
- Tina Lloyd, Communications Specialist**
- Elaine Krimmel, Assistant to the Supervisor**

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What's Inside

A word from Rick Hamill.....	3
Highland Township Offices.....	4-11
InnerViews.....with Gary Welbaum....	12-13
Treasurer's Department.....	14
Clerk's Department.....	15
Oakland County Sheriff's Dept.....	16
Highland Fire Department.....	17
Activity Center.....	18
Highland Township Library.....	19
Downtown Development Authority....	20-21
Historical Society.....	22-23
Garden Club.....	24
Community Spotlight.....	25
Huron Valley Council for the Arts.....	26
Highland White Lake Business Assoc.	27
WOTA.....	28-29
Huron Valley Chamber of Commerce..	30

Time to set out your yard waste

Pickup begins the first week of April

Yard waste may be placed at the curb on collection day. You may use brown bags, or cans clearly labeled “yard waste” or “compost”. Compost stickers are available at the Township Offices. Weight restriction is 50 pounds per container. Priority Waste will not accept the plastic biodegradable bags.

There is no limit to how much yard waste can be set out each week.

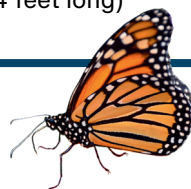
Priority Waste is the Trash, Recycling & Compost service provider for Highland Township. If you have been missed for service, please contact 586-228-1200

Yard waste includes the following items:

- Lawn Debris
- Grass Clippings
- Weeds
- Leaves
- Small Twigs
- Prunings
- Shrub Clippings (tied and bundled)
- Tree Branches and Logs (less than 3 inches in diameter and less than 4 feet long)

Monarch City USA

The buzz on pollinators:



The M-59 median in Highland is being utilized to cultivate milkweed for Monarch butterflies. The Milkweed Mile Project was initiated in 2018 following a presentation by Maecy Zarate, an eight-year-old with a deep passion for the local monarch butterfly population.

The project evolved into a petition, which was presented to the Board and subsequently approved for implementation. This approval made Highland the first city in Michigan to become a registered member of Monarch City USA, a non-profit organization dedicated to supporting Monarch butterfly populations by planting new milkweed and nectar plants within communities.

Before this initiative, the median harbored milkweed that attracted local pollinators, but it was consistently mowed down each season as it regrew, severely impacting not just the Monarch butterflies but also other butterflies and bees.

The Township collects seeds to add to the median every fall. To learn more on how to contribute to this initiative please contact the Supervisors Office at 248-887-3791 x 6.



Highland Township launches it's **TEXT ALERT** program

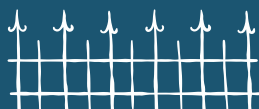
In late 2024, Highland Township launched SMS/Text message alerts for residents to receive crucial emergency updates and notifications from the Township and Fire Department.

Registration for alerts and the E-Newsletter is available at highlandtwp.net or via the QR code. For questions, contact the Township Offices at 248-887-3791 x 6.

Scan me!



Cemetery News



Highland Township has two municipal cemeteries: Highland Cemetery, north of M-59 on Milford Road, and West Highland Cemetery, south of M-59 on Hickory Ridge Road. Grave sites in either cemetery are available for \$500. To purchase, contact cemetery sexton Mike Willenberg at 248-887-6700, who also manages burials and grave marker sales.



Highland Kindness

Highland Kindness recently honored 19 young photographers at a photo exhibit showcasing their interpretations of kindness. The event took place at the Huron Valley Council For The Arts, where attendees celebrated the students' creative work. Due to positive feedback, a similar program is planned for this spring. Special thanks were given to professional photographer Collin Bouchard, sponsors, and HVCA volunteers for their support.

Random acts of kindness take place in Highland every day and we want to hear those stories! Share your stories today by using hashtag [#HighlandKindness](https://twitter.com/HighlandKindness) on social media or emailing your stories to Lloydtdt@highlandtwp.org.

Highland is a great place to live, let's keep spreading KINDNESS!



Join Us

*Invasive Plant
Park Cleanup Day!*

Saturday

April 26th 2025

Hickory Ridge Pines Park

10am-1pm

Bring gloves & loppers



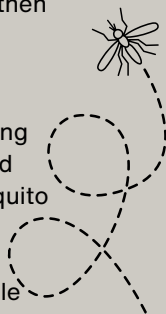
Volunteers from the 2024 Fall cleanup at Hickory Ridge Pines Park. Thank you for your dedication to this community!

Prevent West Nile Virus Infection

West Nile virus spreads to people through infected mosquito bites. Mosquitoes become infected by feeding on infected birds and then transmit the virus to humans and animals.

To prevent infection, avoid mosquito bites by using repellent, wearing long sleeves and pants, treating clothing, and controlling mosquitoes indoors and outdoors. Reducing standing water and using larvicides in ponds and basins can also help control mosquito populations.

Highland Township participates in the Oakland County West Nile Virus Prevention Program, which offers free larvicides and repellent to residents. Stop in and pick up spray and dunks at the Township Offices while supplies last.



Assessing Department

For our Veterans who claim the Disabled Veteran's Exemption: Remember to turn in your application for 2025 and a copy of your VA letter to the Township Offices for processing.

WCA Assessing will once again have workers "out in the field" in Highland this spring and summer conducting property reviews.

A few things that prompt a property review are additions/losses to a home or structure, sales, and to verify or update records.

Workers will always have a photo ID visible. You may call the Township if you have any questions or concerns.

New
Homeowners
**Welcome
to
Highland!**



**Have you recently purchased a home in Highland?
A warm welcome to you!**

Reminder, don't forget to drop off necessary forms to the Township Offices. These include Property Transfer Affidavits and Principal Residence Exemption (Homestead) forms.

Many residents forget to file necessary paperwork with the Township and are unaware that if their home is their primary residence, they qualify for the Principal Residence Exemption, which gives them a school operating tax break on their summer tax bill. (You may only claim one home).

Property Transfer Affidavits should also be filed at the Township if there are any changes in ownership, i.e., putting the property into (or out of) a Trust, or adding /removing someone from the Deed.

**Please call the Assessing Department with any questions you may have.
248-887-3791 x3**



Planning & Zoning Master Plan Adopted

A Master Plan is a community's statement of its goals and vision regarding future development. This document advises decision makers and developers on policy, ordinances and regulations to bring that vision to life. Highland Township's first Master Plan was adopted in 1982-83 and established the framework that has favored natural features and historic preservation, retained rural character and provided for a thoughtful blend of residential options and homegrown businesses. Adherence to the Master Plan has led to the unique appeal of Highland Township today.

The Master Plan is a living document which sets its sights on a 20 year horizon. The Master Plan was rewritten in 2000 and in 2025, each time preserving tried and true land use principles, but recalibrating for current demographic and economic trends. There have been many sub-area plans over the years as well, based on a limited area, or discussing policy and location regarding emerging land use trends, like senior housing.

The Planning Commission began the work of refining past plans. Releasing surveys and hosting an in person visioning session, they found the information was consistent with past surveys and data. Participants expressed interest in preserving Highland's rural character, resisting suburban growth, and focusing on strategic business development along transportation corridors. They wanted to see investment in infrastructure, such as non-motorized pathways. High-speed internet emerged as a pressing concern, but the desirability of a sanitary sewer service is still widely debated.



The new plan was adopted at a joint board meeting held on February 6, 2025. In reviewing the plan, property owners and residents will find a familiar looking map (albeit with some minor adjustments) and clearly stated policies and goals in areas like rural and historic preservation, housing options, local business development and others. We invite you to review the Master Plan at www.highlandtwp.net.

If you see pollution, report it!

An illicit discharge is any release of polluting material, such as sediment, nutrients, oil, and bacteria. These discharges can drain to lakes and streams via storm drains. Highland Township, cooperates with other state and county agencies in working to prevent illicit discharges from entering storm water to support water quality and your quality of life. You can do your part by notifying the appropriate agency when you spot a potential illicit discharge.

WHAT SHOULD YOU REPORT?

- Spills and contamination to lakes, rivers and streams
- Suspicious dumping to catch basins or waterways
- Unusual discharges from pipes
- Sewage on the ground or draining to surface water
- Large number of dead fish in waterways
- Failing or leaky septic systems
- Polluted runoff from storage piles or dumpsters to catch basins or waterways
- Sewage, detergent, chemical, petroleum or rotten egg odors
- Soil erosion from construction sites

Photo by:
Christina Watts

Call the 24-Hour Pollution Hotline at 248-858-0931 to report any suspicious discharges or illegal dumping of pollution into storm drains, lakes, creeks or streams.

For additional information visit semcog.org/mionewater.

Building Department

Make sure you know if your project requires a permit.

Here are several projects that many residents may not be aware require a permit.

- Swimming Pools -above and underground
- Decks -even if you're just replacing an old one and it is the same size.
- Greenhouse -remember you still need a permit, and you will need to meet your setbacks.
- Fence -they make great neighbors, but you still need to make sure you have the correct size allowed for your zoning.
- Patio -check to see if your patio will need a permit. While it may not be required, you still must adhere to the necessary setbacks.

You can always call the Building Department at 248-887-3791 x 8 and ask if one is required.... We are the friendly department!

*Don't get caught with
your hand in the cookie jar...*





Let's explore

Duck Lake Pines Park

1241 N. Duck Lake Road



Highland has so much to offer from lakes to trails to parks and more. Hiking Highland is a favorite spring & summer activity for both locals and visitors.



Duck Lake Pines Park is the home of the Huron Valley Youth Baseball and Softball League, our local softball association. The park also provides a number of other recreational activities, including basketball, pickleball, a children's play structure, and walking trails.

The park is equipped with picnic tables, a pavilion, modern bathroom facilities and a concession stand, which is operated by HVBYSL during regular season play and tournaments. To reserve a specific area in one of the parks for picnics or special occasions, please fill out and return the park use application form found on our website. The Parks and Recreation Ordinance spells out the rules for the use of the parks.





Did you know that the pavilions at Duck Lake Pines and Hickory Ridge Pines parks are available to rent? You can rent the pavilions at Duck Lake Pines Park or Hickory Ridge Pines Park, for a \$50 fee. This fee includes the keys to the restrooms. There is a \$100 deposit required, which will be refunded after an inspection of the site is completed. If you plan on serving alcohol at your event there is an additional form to complete along with an insurance requirement. Please call the Treasurer's Office to make a reservation or with any questions you may have at 248-887-3791 ext. 4.

*Pavilion
Rentals
Available!*



Inner VIEWS

Interview with Gary Welbaum

Huron Valley Youth Baseball & Softball League - President



Can you tell us a little about the HVYBSL and its mission?

The Huron Valley Youth Baseball and Softball League (HVYBSL) is a non-profit, all-volunteer organization dedicated to providing recreational baseball and softball opportunities to young athletes in our community. Our mission is to foster the development of character, sportsmanship, and teamwork through a fun and inclusive environment. We are committed to promoting a love for the game, encouraging youth participation, and creating lasting memories, all while ensuring that the league remains accessible to all families, regardless of their background or experience level.

As a recreational league, our focus is on building fundamental skills and providing a positive, supportive atmosphere for players to grow both on and off the field. Every coach, umpire, and volunteer is dedicated to creating a safe space where children can learn valuable life skills, including respect, responsibility, and collaboration. HVYBSL is proud to serve as a pillar in our community, creating opportunities for children to engage in healthy, active play while also cultivating friendships that can last a lifetime. We welcome everyone to be a part of our league and share in our mission to make youth sports a rewarding experience for all!

How did you first become involved with the HVYBSL?

I first became involved with the HVYBSL as a kid. I played in this very league all the way through 12u, where back-to-back doubleheaders were a regular part of the experience. It was a great time, and those memories have stayed with me throughout my life.

Fast forward to when my son decided he wanted to get involved in sports. We were invited to play in the HVYBSL league, and both he and I were excited about the opportunity. I made the decision to volunteer as a coach, and it was no small feat. But being part of the growth and development of our youth was incredibly rewarding. What I learned in return from those kids was far more than I could ever teach them. It was truly a blessing and an amazing experience.



Continued

Towards the end of the 2023 spring season, I joined the Board and became the president of HVYBSL in 2024. This role allowed me to introduce new members and strengthen the league's foundation. I'm proud of our efforts to ignite passion for youth sports and look forward to supporting future leadership in continuing this work.

What special events or initiatives does the HVYBSL have planned for 2025?

In the 2024 season, we improved our fields and created a professional environment for kids, thanks to Highland Township, Iverson's Lumber, Abney Inc., and local volunteers who helped build strong dugout roofs. We also enhanced the game experience by offering high-quality food on major game days, making concessions a family highlight. Looking forward to 2025, we are excited about our plans to strengthen the league and inspire future baseball enthusiasts in the community.

How many volunteers are currently involved with the HVYBSL?

Currently, HVYBSL is supported by a dedicated team of 10 board members, along with a full roster of volunteers who help make the league thrive. This includes coaches, team moms, and many others who generously give their time to ensure that everything runs smoothly. Our volunteers play a vital role in creating a positive and enriching experience for all of our players and families. Without them, the league wouldn't be what it is today.

In what ways can the community better support the HVYBSL?

First and foremost, we always welcome volunteers. Coaches are in high demand, and kids thrive when they have positive role models to guide them. Whether you're an experienced coach or just passionate about helping, your involvement makes a huge difference.

Donations are also incredibly valuable to help fund improvements and ensure the league can continue to provide a top-notch experience for all participants. Every contribution, big or small, helps us maintain and enhance our programs. Finally, if you have a child, get them involved! You never know — they might just discover a love for the game that lasts a lifetime. The more kids we can introduce to the sport, the stronger our community and league will become.



Treasurer's Department

Call 248-887-3791 x 4
treasurer@HighlandTwp.org

"On March 17, 1835, the Michigan Territorial legislature passed an act providing that "All that part of the county of Oakland comprised in surveyed township 3 north, range 7 east, [be known] by the name of Highland; and the first township meeting be held at the school-house on the farm of Jesse Tenny." Pursuant to this act, Highland's early settlers gathered at the Tenny farm on April 6, 1835, where Rufus Tenny was chosen Moderator and Noah P. Morse Clerk. This historic site, located on Lone Tree Road west of Hickory Ridge Road, was thus the birthplace of civil government in Highland. It also served as the township's first church where services and school were held."



-Highland Township Historical Society

In honor of Highland's 190th Anniversary, we wanted to share interesting tax facts about the Township. Did you know that when Highland was founded in 1835, it was still part of the Michigan Territory, two years before Michigan became a state? As the Township developed, so did its systems of governance and taxation. Initially, property taxes were the primary source of revenue, introduced in 1893 as a means to support the growing community's needs. Over time, additional forms of taxation were established, including the Michigan sales tax in 1933, which provided funding for public services during the challenging years of the Great Depression. The state income tax followed in 1967, further diversifying the revenue streams that have helped sustain and improve the quality of life in Highland.

These milestones not only reflect the Township's adaptability and growth over the years but also highlight the community's commitment to evolving with the times while maintaining its rich historical roots. As we celebrate this remarkable anniversary, we honor the legacy of those early settlers who laid the foundations for the vibrant, naturally connected community we cherish today.

Celebrating
Highland's History

- Highland was founded in 1835
- Michigan became a state in 1837
- Property taxes started in 1893
- Michigan sales tax started in 1933
- Income tax started in 1967



Clerk's Department

In 2024, elections kept the Clerk's office very busy, but in 2025 we will be focusing more on our other duties. Much of our time is spent on things that the public isn't directly involved in – accounting, audit preparation, board agenda packets, board meeting minutes, record retention, and continued training for election certification, to name a few.

Some of our services that the residents may not know about are:

- Notary services are provided free of charge
- Solicitor permits are processed, which includes background checks for individuals who plan to do door to door marketing
- Freedom of Information requests for Township records
- Cemetery records are maintained by our office
- Chloride reimbursement for private roads
- Auditorium scheduling is done through the Clerk's office for HOA's and Lake Boards
- Voter registration and updating registration addresses throughout the year.

Details about services provided by the Clerk's office can be found on the Clerk's page of the Township website (this QR code links to that page). Or contact us via one of the options below.



We're grateful for the patience and understanding of the residents through the challenge of managing elections in 2024. And we're looking forward to a wonderful 2025 with the community!



Call 248-887-3791 x 5
Email: Clerk@HighlandTwp.org
Visit: 205 N. John Street
Click: HighlandTwp.net

Oakland County Sheriff's Office Highland Township Substation

"Dedicated to the safety and protection of our Community"



I would like to introduce Deputy Matt Brothers to our community here in Highland. The Oakland County Sheriff's Office hired Deputy Brothers in 2023. Deputy Brothers became part of our team in September 2024. Deputy Brothers came to us with previous experience as a Plymouth Township Police Officer. Even with prior experience he is still required to go through a three- and half-month training program with our agency.

Since coming to Highland Township, Deputy Brothers is making your community safer by working the midnight shift. One example is he has made five arrests for OWI's (Operating While Intoxicated) from September 2024 through December 2024. Already in 2025, he has made two more arrests for OWI's. We are very proud to have him on our team and I hope you will be too!

-Highland Substation Commander
Lieutenant Matt Snyder



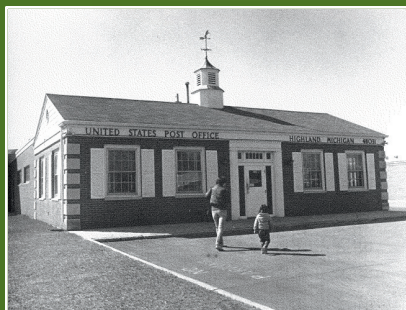
Deputy
Matt Brothers

Highland's History: *Adaptive Reuse of Buildings*

Adaptive reuse is the practice of repurposing an existing building for a new use. It's an architecture technique that can help reduce urban sprawl and preserve historic structures.

United States Post Office-
Circa 1980's

Oakland County Sheriff
Highland Substation 2024





Address Marker Program

Visible address signs make it easier for crews to locate you. These address markers ensure that:

- The sign surface is reflective with contrasting color
- The address marker is located on the same side of the road as the house.
- Numerals are at least 3 inches tall and visible from both directions

We urge residents to visit the Fire Station and invest in a \$15 highly reflective mailbox address sign. Proceeds go to the Highland Township Goodfellows. 1600 Highland Rd, Highland Mi (248) 887-8688



A word from Fire Marshal-Shawn Bell

Has your rental home been inspected?

The Township Fire Marshal does rental home inspections every three years. If you own a rental home or reside in a rental home within the Township, please contact Fire Marshal: Shawn Bell at 248-887-3791 x 143 to ensure you are on our rental inspection list.

The purpose of this is to protect the public health, safety and welfare in buildings intended for human habitation and their accessory structures. The property or unit will be checked for health, safety and items in violation of the Property Maintenance Codes. These include, but not limited to, sanitation, weeds, rodent harborage, foundations, electrical system hazards, emergency escape, smoke alarms, etc.

Please contact

Ordinance@twp.highland.mi.us
for more information



The Activity Center offers companionship, classes, exercise, movies, lunch, and more for individuals aged 40 and older, including those with special needs. It caters to a diverse population and welcomes people from outside the Highland area, creating a family-like atmosphere.

Monthly Newsletter

Come in or check out our newsletter for upcoming events, trips and activities. Our monthly newsletter can be picked up at the Activity Center as well as the Highland Township Offices and in it contains a monthly calendar of events.

***Enjoy lunch Monday - Friday
between 10am and 12pm for a small fee.***

Wi-Fi is available



Events

The Activity Center offers a range of events every month that have been wildly popular with the community. Activities like bingo, euchre, chair massage, trivia, hooping, exercise classes and the annual community health fair are among the favorites, just to name a few.

We strive to provide engaging activities to a diverse group of individuals who visit the center. Please visit us soon!

Hours: Monday-Friday, 9 am to 3 pm.

Location: 209 N. John Street, Highland, MI

Phone: 248-887-1707

Follow us on Facebook for daily updates!





Highland Township Library

Highland Township Public Library connects you with people, resources, and knowledge to enrich, inspire, and empower your life's journey. There are so many wonderful activities taking place and now is the time to take part!

Essential Skills for Learning and Life:

A class dedicated to parents and teachers on teaching children to be resilient and how to curb challenging behavior. *Tuesday, April 16th at 6:15pm*
Look for more programs in our Parent-Teacher Enrichment series in May.

Fiero Coding Club:

Teens can help unlock their potential through hands-on coding sessions that blend creativity with technology. Suitable for ages 8 to 18, the club welcomes beginners and experienced coders alike, offering a fun and collaborative environment. Laptops are available, however participants can also bring their own. Teens can learn together or access coding software on the website for independent study. *April 21st*

Summer reading program Color Our World:

"Color Our World" is the theme for this year's summer reading program. We have already begun planning a colorful, fun-filled summer for patrons of all ages. As summer approaches, you can check our website for more details. **highlandlibrary.info**
This program starts June 1st.



World Book Dramatic Learning:

This online resource is available for families and friends to read and perform popular stories offering a vast number of scripts to enhance learning through theater. Visit www.worldbookonline.com/dramaticlearning/home



SCAN
FOR MORE INFO
highlanddda.com

We're looking for passionate volunteers to help with events like Founders' Day and assist in maintaining our beautiful gardens. Your time and effort will make a huge difference in our community. Learn more and sign up online!

The Highland Downtown Development Authority (HDDA) is dedicated to fostering economic growth, preserving downtown Highland's history, and enhancing the quality of life in the community. By supporting local businesses, organizing community events, and driving redevelopment projects, we strive to make Highland a vibrant and thriving place for everyone.

What does the DDA do for Downtown?

This is just a sampling of the many great things the DDA brings to the community.

Events

Founders' Day - Parade & Festival
Highland Farmers' Market
Red, White & Blues - Fireworks Festival
Sounds Like Summer-Concert Series
Tree Lighting and Kris Kringle Market

Design/Infrastructure

Milford/Livingston Road Gardens
Fall Decor
Holiday Lights
Murals and Public Art
Facade and Signage Grants
Sidewalks/Streetlamps/Banners
Highland Station Boardwalk

Economic Development

Business Training/Classes
Rental Subsidy Grants
Business Stabilization

Promotions

Ladies Day Out
Sidewalk Sales
Ladies Night Out
Downtown Days-Food Fest
Haunted Highland
Shop Small
Holiday Photo Spots
Festival of Trees
Live Highland/Shop Highland



25 STREET EVENTS

APRIL
26

Ladies Day Out

10am-5pm, Historic Downtown Highland

Grab your girlfriends and join us for food, drinks and shopping.

MAY
17

Founders' Day Parade/Festival

9am-3pm, Veteran's Park

Join us for Community Parade and Festival.

JUNE
28

Red, White and Blue Fireworks Festival/Craft Show

5-11pm, John Street Field

Enjoy live music, kid's activities, food trucks, craft show and a firework show at dusk.

JULY
18-19

Summer Sidewalk Sales

Fri 10-5pm and Sat 10-3pm, Historic Downtown Highland

Join the merchants of Downtown Highland for our annual sales event.

OCT
1-31

Haunted Highland

Historic Downtown Highland

Enjoy skeletal selfies spots at Downtown Highland businesses.

NOV
18

Ladies Night Out

4-8pm, Historic Downtown Highland

Grab your girlfriends and join us for a night of food, drinks and shopping.

NOV
29

Small Business Saturday

Historic Downtown Highland

Support local, family-owned, small businesses with specials and discounts.

DEC
1-31

Festival of Trees

Historic Downtown Highland

Enjoy festive trees decorated along Milford and Livingston Roads.

DEC
1-31

Holiday Photo Spots

Historic Downtown Highland

Enjoy holiday displays around town for pictures and selfies.

DEC
01

Kris Kringle Market & Tree Lighting

Veteran's Park Area, 5:00pm - 9:00pm

Join us for caroling and pictures with Santa, plus shop our Kris Kringle Market.

Highland Farmers'
market

JUNE OCT
14-4

Every Saturday

New Location!

205 N John Street
10:00am - 2:00pm

SOUNDS
LIKE
SUMMER
CONCERT SERIES

Every Tuesday

Veterans Park
7:00pm - 9:00pm

JULY AUG
8-19

Weekly Events | **THIS SUMMER**

Visit us online at www.highlandDDA.com

Spring/Summer 2025

Naturally Connected **21**

HIGHLAND TOWNSHIP HISTORICAL SOCIETY

Happy 190th birthday Highland!

April of 2025 marks the 190th anniversary of Highland's establishment, and with Founders Day following in May it seems fitting to present the story of how Highland Township came to be.

In the early 1830s all of northwest Oakland County was so thinly populated it was attached to and administered by Pontiac Township for township government purposes. This proved a hardship for Highland's earliest settlers who needed to travel over 20 miles each way along winding Native trails to attend town meetings, pay taxes or transact other township business. So in December, 1834, these pioneers prepared a Petition addressed to Michigan's Territorial Governor and Legislative Council. Citing "... many inconveniences from our remote location from the place of doing town business..." the signers asked the Governor and Council to "... set us off and organize us in a separate town by the name of Highland..." This Petition was presented to the Legislative Council on January 19, 1835, and on March 17, 1835, Governor Stevens T. Mason signed into law an act authorizing the township's establishment. Three weeks later, on April 6, 1835, the early settlers held their first township meeting; an event which marked Highland's official beginning.

These men may therefore be considered the "Founders" who are honored each May during Highland's Founders Day Festival. Their simple Petition not only set in motion the process by which the township was established, but also gave it its name. Many of these signers thereafter continued to serve their new community in other ways, either as elected officials or church and civic leaders, as have many of their descendants down to the present day.



*John Farmer's 1835 "Map of Michigan"
One of the earliest to identify Highland Township by name.*

1834 Petition

Listed in alphabetical order, the signers of this Petition were Stephen Armstrong, Theron L. Armstrong, Michael Beach, Joseph M. Becker, Jephtha Coburn, Daniel Dunham, Alexander Findley, Robert Findley, Mindret W. Gardner, Abner Hyde, Noah P. Morse, Duncan McColl, Peter McPherson, Jesse Tenny, and Rufus Tenny. While not a signer, pioneer Jonathan F. Stratton is also named in the Petition as the settlers' choice to be their first justice of the peace.

To the Honourable the Governor and Legislative Council of the Territory of Michigan

We the undersigned inhabitants of Township Three North of Range Seven East would respectfully represent that we are situated in the district of country now subject to the Town of Pontiac that we suffer many inconveniences from our remote situation from the place of doing Town business the Township East of us (viz T3N R8E) not having any inhabitants or Road we have little or no communication in the direction of Pontiac we would therefore petition your Honourable body to set us off and organize us in a separate Town by the name of Highland the first Town meeting to be held at the School house on the farm of Jesse Tenny and that Jonathan F. Stratton be appointed Justice of the Peace. Thus your petitioners do sincerely pray

Dated T3N R8E Decr 19th 1834

Jesse Tenny
Daniel Dunham
Rufus Tenny
Abner Hyde
Peter McPherson
Jonathan F. Stratton
Joseph M. Becker
Noah P. Morse

Michael Beach
Robert Findley
Stephen Armstrong
Jephtha Coburn
Mindret W. Gardner
Theron L. Armstrong
Jesse Tenny
Rufus Tenny

Verbatim Transcript of Petition

To the Honourable the Governor and Legislative Council of the Territory of Michigan:

We the undersigned inhabitants of Township Three North of Range Seven East would respectfully represent that we are situated in the District of country now subject to the Town of Pontiac, that we suffer many inconveniences from our remote situation from the place of doing Town business; the Township East of us (viz T3N R8E) not having any inhabitants or Road we have little or no communication in the direction of Pontiac. We would therefore petition your Honorable body [sic] to set us off and organize us in a separate Town by the name of Highland; the first Town meeting to be held at the School house on the farm of Jesse Tenny and that Jonathan F. Stratton be appointed Justice of the Peace. This your petitioners do sincerely pray.

Dated T3N R7E Dec 19th 1834



If you love the smell of dirt in the Spring and can't wait to see ANYTHING green – this could be the group for you. Our members love nothing better than sharing ideas and talking plants.

The Highland Garden Club partners with Highland Township, Highland DDA, Community Sharing, and the Highland Library to spruce up and add seasonal touches around town.

We also sponsor speakers and the Seed Library (free seeds!) at Highland's beautiful library – all this keeps us on top of the latest trends and techniques.

Spring brings our annual plant sale full of favorites from member gardens.

Does any of this sound like fun? We'd love to get to know you – come join us at one of our events and contact Judy Cooper to be added to our email list – coopjudy@hotmail.com.

Plant, dig, and socialize with us, not necessarily in that order.

Events

Brian Roest-Peterson from Bees in the D

"World Pollinators"
including Monarch Butterflies – a topic near and dear to Highland's heart. *April 10th at 6pm at Highland Library Community Room*

Highland Community Prayer Breakfast

*May 1, 2025
8am
Church of the Holy Spirit*

Annual Plant Sale Saturday, May 17th

*9am-12pm
Veteran's Park
Highland*

Bethany Troy "Tuckered out and Tuckin' in –putting the Garden to

Bed" Thursday, October 9th at 6pm at the Highland Library Community Room

" The glory of gardening, hands in the dirt, head in the sun, heart with nature. To nurture a garden is to feed not just the body, but the soul! "

~ Alfred Austin

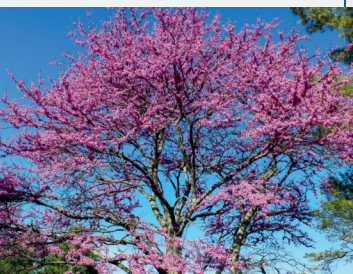
Friends of
Highland
Recreation Area

Community SPOTLIGHT



From Jay Fitzgerald, FOHRA volunteer, here is the story of the Friends of Highland Recreation Area

**Redbud
Festival
Saturday
May 10th**



The township of Highland intersects with one of Michigan's great state parks; the 5,900-acre Highland State Recreation Area. A large portion of the park was the former country estate of Edsel and Eleanor Ford and their family. Some of the historic Ford structures remain available to visitors for viewing. The park also features a large variety of great outdoor activities to enjoy along with its' amazing landscapes and history.

The Friends of Highland Recreation Area volunteer organization supports the park in their mission to enrich the Historical, Natural, and Recreational Experiences. They are very proud to show the former Ford buildings, especially the newly refurbished Haven Hill Gatehouse. This 100+ year old home is now repurposed as a welcome center/house museum, opening in 2025.

Each May, the Friends and the Michigan Department of Natural Resources host a spring/summer kick-off event aptly called "The Redbud Reveal" in celebration of the beautiful redbuds that bloom each spring throughout Michigan. The historic former Ford buildings are opened for guided public access. Informative displays, art, photography, and friendly docents will all be available during Redbud. This year's Redbud include vintage Model T and Model A Ford automobiles cruising the winding roads and on display for visitor enjoyment. If the timing is right, the beautiful pink redbud flowers will bloom throughout the day for a spectacular show!

This year's Redbud Reveal is on May 10th, from 10am to 4pm. Entry is free with a Recreation Passport. The event will take place at HSRA, 5200 Highland Road, White Lake, MI 48383. More information is available at www.fohravolunteers.org. FOHRA is a 501c3 charitable organization that depends on volunteer support.

For more information head to <https://www.fohravolunteers.org/>

WE ARE MAKING THE ARTS ACCESSIBLE TO EVERYONE, EVERYDAY

OUR REGION IS A BETTER PLACE WHEN EVERYONE HAS ACCESS TO THE ARTS. THROUGH FREE AND LOW COST PROGRAMS, OUR ARTS FOR LIFE INITIATIVE BRINGS THE ARTS, SCHOOLS, PARKS AND COMMUNITY AGENCIES TOGETHER THROUGHOUT SOUTHEAST MICHIGAN.

HVCA
HURON VALLEY COUNCIL *for the ARTS*
205 W. Livingston Rd. Highland, MI 48357
248-889-8660

- Van Go Cultural Tours
- Artist-run gift gallery co-op
- Art Classes

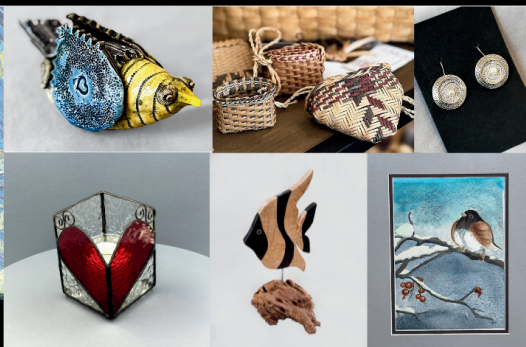
- Concerts
- Literary Events
- Professional Gallery Space



www.huronvalleyarts.org



Join us for a VanGo Tour soon. Check our website for upcoming trips.



Support local artists.





Join Today!
Email Ann at
info@hwlba.com

*Get connected to Highland and join the
Highland White Lake Business Association!*

Enjoy all these great benefits!

*Access to a variety of networking events including coffees,
lunches and social events*

*Free advertising in our newsletter & reasonable rates to
advertise to our database*

Community events and fundraisers to help support local charities

*Multiple educational events with content developed
to help businesses*

Many sponsorship opportunities to help promote your business

**Did you know that the HWLBA has a reduced membership rate for non-
profits and home based businesses (1-employee)? Email Ann at
info@hwlba.com for more information and to see if you qualify!**

Save the date

Saturday November 8th - Third annual Harvest Dance

**Visit www.hwlba.com for upcoming
social and networking events!**



WOTA is proud to serve the residents of Highland and honored to participate in Oakland County's veteran initiative, "This Ride is On Us." Through this program, veterans can ride for free with WOTA or any Oakland County transit provider. This service is made possible by a grant from Oakland County Veteran's Services, helping veterans access essential locations, stay connected with their community, and reclaim their independence.

One of our riders, retired army Sergeant Frank Withers, shares his experience: "It's good to have transportation. It allows me to come, relax, and talk to my friends."

If you are a veteran or a veteran's spouse, we sincerely thank you for your service. We encourage you to take advantage of WOTA's transportation services. When scheduling your ride with Dispatch, simply let them know your veteran status—and your ride is on us!

For more information or to schedule a ride, contact WOTA today!

Register today and let your journey begin!

(248) 887-4979

RideWOTA.org



Ride WOTA



Driving Hours:

Monday-Friday: 6am-9pm

Saturdays: 8am-4pm

Sundays: 7:30am-3:30pm



WOTA's service area covers over 500 square miles so you can schedule essential and recreational trips!



Cost per stop:

\$2 for seniors, adults with disabilities, and low income individuals.

\$4 for general public (18+)



Register today online or by mail.

To schedule your ride head to **rideWOTA.org** for more information.

HV/CC HURON VALLEY CHAMBER OF COMMERCE

Building a Stronger Community, Together!

Since 1962, the Huron Valley Chamber of Commerce has been dedicated to making our community a great place to live, work, and do business. We connect businesses with customers, partners, and resources, fostering collaboration and growth. Our members enjoy exclusive benefits, networking opportunities, and community events that strengthen local ties and create goodwill. Whether you're a resident, visitor, or business owner, we're here to support you—let's grow together!



Milford Memories Summer Festival

a Huron Valley chamber signature event

Since 1992, the Milford Memories Summer Festival has stood as the hallmark event of Huron Valley, showcasing an art fair with more than 300 artists nationwide. The festival buzzes with live entertainment all weekend, complemented by delicious offerings from Village restaurants and vendors. A large beer tent in Central Park, alongside a 5K run, Kids Activity Tent and more, round out the festivities. It also offers local non-profits valuable opportunities to generate crucial funding.



DOWNTOWN HIGHLAND
**FOUNDERS'
DAY** **PARADE
& FESTIVAL**

CELEBRATING

190
years
Highland Twp.

FREE FAMILY FUN!

Parade • Veteran's Ceremony
Plant Sale • Art Market • Food Court
Car Show • HVCA Art Shop
Kids Zone! *Includes Bounce Houses, Face
Painting, Pony Rides, Train Rides & Petting Zoo*



**SCAN
ME!**

Brought to you by:



Saturday, May 17th
9 am - 3 pm • Veteran's Park



RED HIGHLAND'S
WHITE
BLUES
festival + fireworks

FREE FAMILY FUN!

Live Music • Art Market • Food Court
Kids Zone! *Includes Bounce Houses, Face Painting,
Pony Rides, Petting Zoo, Rock Climbing Wall,
& Fire Department Waterhose Spray*
Fireworks Display at Dusk!



**SCAN
ME!**

Brought to you by:



Saturday, June 28th
5 - 11 pm • John Street Field

Charter Township of Highland
205 N. John Street
Highland, MI 48357

NATURALLY CONNECTED

SPRING/SUMMER
2025
ISSUE 3

Our Bi-Annual magazine combines publications from Highland Township, The Highland Activity Center, The Highland Downtown Development Authority, The Highland Township Public Library, The Highland Township Fire Department, The Oakland County Sheriff-Highland Substation, The Highland White Lake Business Association, The Huron Valley Chamber of Commerce, The Huron Valley Council for the Arts and The Western Oakland Transportation Authority.



Photographer: Tina L...