

Naturally Connected

Your Guide to life in Highland

Fall/Winter
2025 Issue 4





Photo by: Dani Adkins
Free Folk Photography

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

Fall is in the air, and Highland is truly a beautiful place to live this time of year. As the leaves change and the air turns crisp, the charm of our community comes to life. Whether you're taking a stroll on one of our scenic trails, enjoying a cozy meal at a local restaurant, or spending a peaceful afternoon at our Highland Township Library, there's something for everyone in Highland.

I look forward to crossing paths around town and celebrating this festive season with you.

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

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Trash Talk



*Need to
get rid of
an old
couch?*

Got Big Stuff to Toss? We've Got You Covered!

Priority Waste picks up large household items right at your curb — no need to call ahead!

Limit: 2 large items per week

How: Just place them at the curb on your regular pickup day

Questions? Call Priority Waste at 586-228-1200

Accepted items include: Carpet (rolled & bundled in 4-ft lengths), Furniture, Mattresses, Refrigerators/Freezers (doors removed for safety), washers, dryers and TVs.

Time to set out your yard waste



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.

Pickup ends the first week of December

*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" in diameter
and less than 4' long

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



Stay safe, stay informed

Highland Township Alerts

In an emergency, quick access to information is crucial. Whether it concerns a road closure, a significant township alert, or a more serious issue, the Highland Fire Department and Highland Township Offices aim to communicate effectively with residents through our TEXT ALERT program.



Registration for alerts as well as the E-Newsletter can be found at highlandtwp.net or via the QR code. For questions please contact the Township Offices at 248.887.3791 ext 6



Get emergency notifications straight to your phone!



Highland Township Cemeteries

The Charter Township of Highland owns and operates two Cemeteries: Highland Cemetery is located just North of M-59 at 561 North Milford Road.

West Highland Cemetery is located South of M-59 at 977 South Hickory Ridge Road.

Mike Willenberg of Huron Valley Cemetery Maintenance is our Cemetery Sexton who is responsible for the maintenance, plot transactions and burials at our two cemetery locations. The Sexton can be reached by calling 248-887-6700. The office is located at 764 North Milford Road, Highland, MI 48357. The Clerk's Office is here to help you with cemetery deed or burial information. To contact our office please call 248-887-3791 ext. 5 or E- mail kabalkaj@highlandtwp.org



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Assessing Department



New Homeowners

Please make sure to drop off your Property Transfer Affidavit and Principal Residence Exemption forms to the Assessing Department at Highland Township Offices within 45 days of closing. These are usually found in your closing packet documents.

A few words on property taxes

If you are having your taxes paid through an escrow account, make sure your mortgage company has the CURRENT taxable value on your home to make sure there are no shortages in your account once tax bills are due.

Mortgage companies put aside money into an escrow account for property taxes based on the PRIOR owner's taxable value. This can be a significant difference in amount, especially if the prior owner had owned the home for many years. If the mortgage company is not putting enough money aside to cover the UPDATED taxable value, your monthly mortgage payment could go up hundreds of dollars the following year to make up for the shortfall.

Reach out to the Assessing Department at 248-887-3791 x148 to find out your CURRENT taxable value and inform your mortgage company before this happens.

Be proactive and be prepared!

Property Records Notification

through the Oakland County Michigan Register of Deeds

Protect your
BIGGEST
INVESTMENT



Property Records Notification allows users to subscribe to **FREE** email alerts when new documents of interest are recorded at the Register of Deeds.

Users will be notified of any activity happening on their property including alerts to potential real estate fraud.

Sign up for **FREE** at ocmideeds.com

*For more
information
please call*

**Oakland County
Register of
Deeds at**

(248)858-0561



2026
**HOUSEHOLD HAZARDOUS
WASTE COLLECTION DAY**
FREE ONE DAY DROP OFF

SATURDAY
June 13th

9am to 2pm

**Driver's license or
property tax bill showing
Highland Township
address required.**
*more details to come

Protect Our Water

Small Steps at Home Make a Big Difference

Did you know that the way we handle everyday household waste can have a big impact on Highland Township's water quality? By making a few simple changes, you can help keep our waterways clean and your septic system running smoothly.

Fats, oils, and greases (FOG): Never pour these down the drain. Instead, collect them in a covered container or can and throw them in the trash when full. Wipe pots and pans with a paper towel before washing.

Food scraps: Scrape leftovers into the garbage instead of rinsing them down the sink.

Medications: Avoid flushing pills or liquid medicine. The Oakland Sheriff substation offers "Operation Medicine Cabinet (OMC)" where you can drop off unused or expired medications for safe disposal (M-F, 8 am to 4 pm).

You can also put unused drugs in a sealed bag mixed with an unpalatable substance like used coffee grounds or kitty litter and place it in your trash.

Trash in toilets: Only flush the "Three P's" — pee, poop, and toilet paper. Items like wipes (even "flushable" ones), feminine products, paper towels, and tissues should always go in the trash.

Together, these small steps help prevent clogs, protect our infrastructure, and keep Highland's water clean for everyone. Thank you for doing your part!

For more tips, visit semcog.org/mionewater

Building Department

The Role of the Building Department

The Building Department is responsible for ensuring that all construction within the Township is safe, compliant, and built to code. Our staff work closely with property owners, contractors, and builders to guide them through the permitting process and help them understand the requirements for code-compliant construction.

Building codes are in place to protect the health, safety, and welfare of the community. When properly followed, they help ensure that structures are safe from hazards such as fire, water contamination, and electrical failures. Our inspectors monitor all phases of construction to verify compliance with building, plumbing, electrical, and mechanical codes.

In addition to new construction, the department oversees the renovation and repair of existing buildings to ensure that all work meets current safety standards. This not only helps preserve property values but also contributes to the long-term safety and livability of our neighborhoods.

The Building Department also includes the Ordinance Department, which enforces the Township's general ordinances—covering issues like property maintenance, and other local regulations. Together, both departments work to support safe development and maintain a high quality of life for all residents.

The Building Codes have been established for the health, safety, and welfare of the community.

Why did the builder break up with his girlfriend?
She had too many walls up!

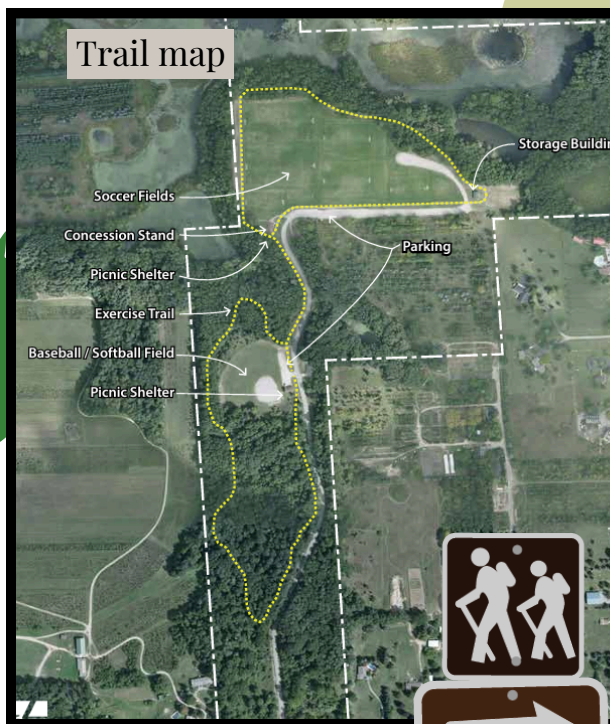
Let's explore

Hickory Ridge Pines Park

3800 N. Hickory Ridge Rd

Hickory Ridge Pines Park is situated at 4200 N Hickory Ridge Road, about 2.5 miles north of M-59. This park serves as the home field for the Huron Valley Soccer Club. In addition to soccer facilities, the park features a small baseball field, picnic areas, and walking and biking trails. Visitors also have access to modern restrooms and a concession stand, which is operated by the Huron Valley Soccer Club during the regular season and tournament events. Portable restrooms are available during the off-season.

Highland has something for everyone — from scenic lakes and winding trails to beautiful parks and more. Hickory Ridge Pines Park has seen a rise in popularity lately, and the township is showing it some extra love to keep it looking its best!





Things to do



**HIKE
BIKE
PLAY SOCCER
PLAY KICKBALL
PLAY BASEBALL
THROW A FRISBEE
PICNIC WITH FRIENDS**

Did you know that the pavilions at Duck Lake Pines and Hickory Ridge Pines parks are both 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

Meet the director of the Highland Activity Center!

Q&A

HEIDI BEY →

The Highland Activity Center provides companionship, classes, exercise, movies, and lunch. It fosters a family-like atmosphere and welcomes a diverse population, including those from outside the Highland area.

We recently had the opportunity to sit down with the Director of the Highland Activity Center, Heidi Bey to learn more about her.



Q Hello Heidi! How long have you worked at the Highland Activity Center?

I started August 11, 2011, as Activity Coordinator. In May of 2013, I was promoted to Director. During that time I also worked with the Highland Downtown Development Authority, the Highland White Lake Business Association, the Highland Festival Committee, Milford Parks and Rec, HVS Farmers' Market and the DNR.

Q What do you enjoy most about your position as the Director?

Helping folks in the community. When I first started, my mom was a frequent flyer at the Center. We used to joke about the fact she ran the streets like a misbehaving stepchild, but I always knew where to find her from 8:30am-2pm. It became my mission to grow the Center to a point where the community finds the center a viable source for information, activities, trips, lunches, and an all-round fun place to hang out. We have no membership fee.

“Walk in the door, you are family”



Q

What types of classes or programs are currently offered at the Activity Center?

Currently we have Yoga (Monday 8am, Friday 6pm), exercise classes Monday, Wednesday & Friday 9:30am, Hula Hoop class for balance and range of motion.

We have an educational series during the day for; fraud awareness, banking protection, estate planning, and insurance. Most are free or require a small fee (\$5).

We have a company that will help folks plan for open enrollment and free health care packages. We also offer financial consultant and Ask a Lawyer programs, free of charge.

Dinners pop up throughout the year with educational and historical presentations and a party for almost every occasion.

Q

What is the most popular events held at the Activity Center?

Christmas is the highlight of our year! From Crafting with Greens and our festive cookie swap to joyful sing-alongs, the season is packed with holiday cheer. It all leads up to an unforgettable party, complete with over-the-top decorations. The fun doesn't stop there — every month brings something new and exciting to look forward to!

Q

What are some of your favorite ways to spend your free time outside of work?

I am a bit of a flower nut. I enjoy gardening, decorating my house, kayaking, and playing darts.

Q

What makes this career meaningful to you?

The opportunity to help others. I don't have family in the area so our staff and our patrons have become my adopted family. The Highland Activity Center staff is the best.

Q

Tell us about some of the folks you work with.

Rick Hamill, Supervisor of Highland Township, has shown a strong enthusiasm for community involvement, which has given me the opportunity to create the old Highland Community Garden, develop trip ideas, and design educational programs. The Highland Township staff and my coworkers are a fantastic group of people to work with.

Stop by and see what the Activity Center has to offer!!

Wi-Fi is available



**Monday-Friday 9 am-3 pm
209 N. John Street
Highland, MI
248-887-1707**



Treasurer's Department

Your 2025 Winter Property Tax Statement will be mailed December 1st, and they are due, without penalty, by February 14, 2026.

2026 Dog License are available starting December 1, 2025. Remember to bring proof of current rabies vaccination.

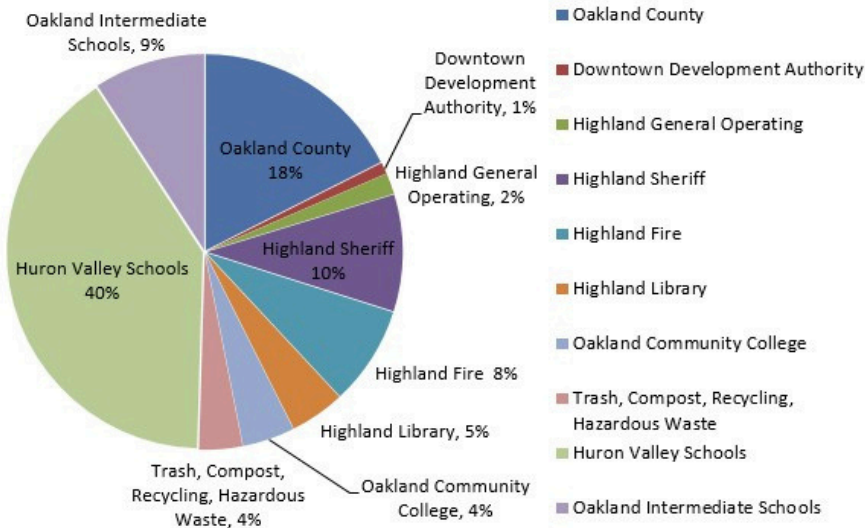
Questions? Call 248-887-3791 x 4
HTtreasurer@highlandtpw.org



Where do my tax dollars go?

In 2024, Highland residents paid an average of \$6,800 in property taxes. Those with homes valued above \$400,000 typically paid more and those with lower valued homes paid less. Of the total amount paid, \$1,900 or 29% went directly to Highland covering Highland General Operating, Sheriff Services, Fire Services, Public Library, and Trash Services.

MY 2024 HIGHLAND TAX DOLLARS



Clerk's Department

How to Keep Up with Decisions in Highland

Highland Township is governed by an elected board made up of seven members: the three full-time officials: Supervisor Rick Hamill, Clerk Tami Flowers and Treasurer Jennifer Frederick along with four Trustees: Grant Charlick, Brian Howe, Beth Lewis and Joe Salvia.

The Board of Trustees meetings are held in the Township auditorium, usually on the first Monday of the month at 6:30 p.m. These public meetings are an excellent way to follow what is happening in your town! Register for the Township E-Newsletter and other alerts at HighlandTwp.net. In addition to getting the newsletters each month, you will be sent the Board of Trustees meeting agenda packets several days prior to each Township Board meeting.

Can't attend a Board of Trustees meeting in person? Check it out on YouTube! There's a link to our channel on the Township website or open YouTube and search for the "Charter Township of Highland, Michigan" channel. Be sure to subscribe! The channel has our past meetings available to watch, and the future meetings will be added each month.



The Township also holds meetings to consider variance requests at the Zoning Board of Appeals (ZBA) meetings usually held on the 1st and 3rd Wednesday of each month. Planning Commission meetings are usually on the 1st and 3rd Thursday of each month to discuss zoning issues and development plans. Approved minutes of these meetings are available online.

On the main page of the Township website (HighlandTwp.net), visitors can scroll down to the "Township Board Meetings" section, click on it, then select "Agendas & Minutes" to view documents *from the Board of their choice*.

Reading the Township's publications and attending or viewing meetings is a great way to be aware of what is happening in your community. It's easy to be in the know.



Call 248-887-3791 x 5
Email: HTclerk@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"

Honoring Over 50 Years of Service: The History and Growth of the Oakland County Sheriff's Substation in Highland Township

Since 1972, Highland Township has partnered with the Oakland County Sheriff's Office (OCSO) to provide local law enforcement. What began with just two deputies has grown into a full-service substation staffed by 20 sworn personnel and one civilian office manager, offering 24/7 coverage for residents and visitors.

This dedicated team ensures around-the-clock public safety, traffic enforcement, investigative services, and community outreach throughout the township.

The current team includes:

- 14 Road Patrol Deputies
- 1 School Resource Officer
- 2 Detectives
- 1 Weighmaster
- 1 Sergeant
- 1 Lieutenant

What makes the Highland Substation and the larger Oakland County Sheriff's Office exceptional is the access to a wide range of specialized units and shared resources, allowing for efficient and effective policing. Through centralized services, Highland benefits from:

- *Dispatch, Records, and Training*
- *Crime Lab, Forensics, and SWAT*
- *Narcotics, Auto Theft, and Computer Crimes*
- *K-9, Mounted, Drone, and Aviation Units*
- *Gang, Fugitive, and Fire Investigations*
- *Marine, Reserve, and Parks Patrol Units*

With these resources, Highland Township enjoys personalized service with the strength of one of Michigan's most advanced law enforcement agencies.

As we look ahead, the Highland Substation remains dedicated to professional, community-focused policing—continuing a legacy over 50 years strong.



Highland Substation Circa 1980's



Highland Substation present day

Highland Fire Department

Township

Long Driveway Program



The Charter Township of Highland Fire Department has introduced a long driveway program. Homeowners with new or existing driveways that extend more than 900 feet from their home to the roads are requested to install approved distance markers at the 900-foot point.

This distance is measured from the structure toward the road.

All fire trucks in the Township of Highland carry 1,000 feet of supply hose, and neighboring communities that may respond through mutual aid agreements carry between 1,000 and 1,200 feet.

This program aims to ensure a timely supply of sufficient water for firefighting through relay pumping, where one engine supplies water to another.

The distance marker sign labeled DROP 1 should be installed at the 900-foot point, measured from the house toward the road. When approaching the residence from the roadway, the sign must be placed on the right side of the driveway. It should be positioned at least 4 feet away from the driveways to protect it from damage due to snow plowing or driveway maintenance, and it should be a minimum height of 4 feet above the ground.

The Fire Department will measure and stake the distance. The homeowner will be required to place the post and install the sign.

If the driveway is longer than 900 feet, a second sign may be needed, labeled DROP 2.

Cost: \$11 per sign

Available at:

Highland Township Fire Department

1600 W. Highland Road

Questions? Call the Fire Marshal's

Office at 248-887-3791 x142

Highland Activity Center

Township

The Activity Center hosts a variety of events each month that have quickly become community favorites. From bingo and euchre to chair massages, trivia, coin club, quilters, mahjon, bridge, hooping, fitness classes, and the annual Community Health Fair — there's always something fun and engaging for everyone to enjoy!



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!

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

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 at the Highland Township Offices.

Let's get festive this holiday season!

Crafting With Greens

Crafting with Greens is back — and it's a crowd favorite!

Join us for one of two sessions to get into the holiday spirit:

🎄 Monday, December 1st (6pm-9pm)

Stop by before Highland's annual Tree Lighting Ceremony at Veteran's Park and get your craft on!

🎄 Tuesday, December 2nd (11 AM – 2 PM)

Bring along a holiday cup, basket, sled, skates, or any item you'd like to adorn! We will provide some supplies, tree greens, and bows, and you are also welcome to bring your own materials. Don't miss this festive and creative kickoff to the holiday season!

**Sign up opens
November 3rd
call 248-887-1707
to reserve your spot!
\$5 per person.
Refreshments provided**





The Highland Township Library

*444 Bench Farm Circle
Highland Mi*



The Highland Township Public Library is your gateway to connection, discovery, and lifelong learning. With a wide variety of engaging programs and valuable resources, now is the perfect time to get involved and be inspired!

Events

The ABCs of Ai:

Wednesday, November 12th at 6pm

This program introduces the core concepts of artificial intelligence (Ai), along with its benefits and drawbacks at both individual and societal levels. Presented by, Dr. Hee Rin Lee, an assistant professor at Michigan State University. This program is for adults and teens.

The Pere Marquette Railway

Thursday, Oct 30th at 6:30pm

Learn about the history and legacy of the Pere Marquette Railway that passed through Highland and was a vital transportation link for our area.

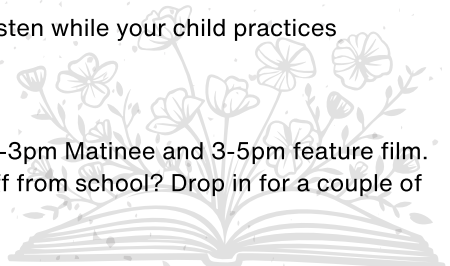
Reading with Ruby

Select Monday evenings, call or visit to make an appointment
For elementary-school readers

Ruby, a sweet Certified Therapy Dog, will listen while your child practices reading. A great way to build confidence.

Kids Movie Afternoons

Tuesdays, Oct. 7th, Nov. 4th, & Dec. 2nd, 1-3pm Matinee and 3-5pm feature film.
Looking for something to do on your day off from school? Drop in for a couple of movies and some snacks!





Highlights From Highland: What We've Been Up To In 2025

The Highland Downtown Development Authority (HDDA) is all about keeping Downtown Highland thriving—championing local businesses, preserving our one-of-a-kind historic charm, and creating a vibrant gathering place for residents and visitors. From eye-catching redevelopment projects to can't-miss community events and hands-on business support, the HDDA is driving growth while making Highland a place people love to live, work, and explore.

Downtown Highland had a big year! June kicked off with the grand opening of the scenic new boardwalk at Colasanti's/Snook's, making it easier—and prettier—than ever to explore downtown on foot. That same month, the Volunteer Awards Banquet shined a spotlight on community excellence, celebrating volunteers who are active in the community including the Lloyd & Swanson Family, Roscoe Smith, Rick Hamill, Jenny Frederick, Amy Koenig, Monolo Hair Studio, and Cassie Blascyk.



In September, the HDDA launched its first Downtown Highland Commercial Property Open House, bringing property owners and potential businesses together to spark new growth in the district.

Live Highland, Shop Highland

Mark Your Calendars for Fall & Winter Fun!



October kicks off with the return of the **Haunted Highland Skeleton Display!** If you haven't seen these spooky sights around town yet, you're definitely in for a treat (not a trick)!

Start the holiday season with an evening of shopping, prizes, and community cheer at our very own **Highland's Ladies Night Out** – Tuesday, Nov. 18

Support local merchants while checking off your holiday shopping list at Highland's **Small Business Saturday** – Nov. 29

December brings the **Festival of Trees and festive Holiday Photo Spots**, leading up to the **Tree Lighting Ceremony & Kris Kringle Market** – Monday, Dec. 1 at Veteran's Park– a magical night to welcome Santa to Downtown Highland.

*Join us downtown to celebrate the
♥ heart and spirit of Highland!*



Visit us online at www.highlandDDA.com

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Highland Township Historical Society

Hallowed Ground: A Brief History of Highland's Cemeteries

by Eugene Beach

Highland's pioneers faced many hardships; not least of which was the interment of deceased loved-ones. During the first years of settlement it was common for burials to take place on the family farm. In April of 1834, for example, Samuel Stratton became the first death in Highland and was buried on his father's homestead. There was also a small "informal" burying ground near the west shore of Lower Pettibone Lake that was used for a time by families living in that area.



Since the majority of Highland's earliest settlers lived in the southwest part of the township, however, Highland's first "formal" cemetery was established there in 1835-36, on the east side of South Hickory Ridge Road. The original one-acre plot was on the farm of pioneer John C. Morse, who was a charter member of the (West) Highland Baptist Church, which thereafter purchased the site in 1841. In 1915, at the urging of the church's Ladies Aid Society, the West Highland Cemetery Association organized to improve the property. It added an iron fence and plantings, and in 1927 assumed ownership. By 1977, when title passed to Highland Township, what is now called West Highland Cemetery had grown to four acres in size.

In 1846 Michigan adopted a public health code which established a "Board of Health" in each township. This statute made it "... the duty of said board to purchase in each surveyed township so much land for burying grounds as shall be necessary for burying the dead of such township." As noted, Highland already had a cemetery, but it was considered private since it was then owned by the church. Thus, at its first meeting on April 10, 1849, Highland's Board of Health passed a motion to establish a township-owned cemetery by purchasing one acre off the south end of William H. Leonard's farm and an adjoining acre off the north end of Germain St. John's property for a total price of \$130.00. Situated on the west side of North Milford Road, this cemetery was initially called the "Highland Centre Burying Ground" in recognition of its central location, but is today called simply "Highland Cemetery."

The new cemetery was quickly surveyed into lots, divided into blocks by lanes or "alleys" running East-West and North-South. At a meeting held October 16, 1849, the Board of Health directed the township Clerk "... to give notice to the people to select lot(s) on the first Tuesday of Nov, next..." The names of these original purchasers and the lots they selected were thereafter recorded on a map included in the Board of Health's minutes. Over the years which followed many of the remains originally buried on farms or in "informal" burying grounds were disinterred and reburied in the new cemetery.

The Board of Health's minutes also include periodic entries for cemetery maintenance, including the repair and/or replacement of its fencing and gates. Much of this work was undertaken or overseen by board-appointed Sextons; of whom William J. "Buckey" Stiles served the longest from 1925 to 1948. With the abolition of township Boards of Health oversight of Highland's two cemeteries is now entrusted to the Township Clerk.

Many of the earliest burials in both Highland and West Highland Cemetery were likely marked with simple wooden crosses, boards or a large fieldstone since carved or engraved headstones were costly and only available from artisans in major cities. Starting in the mid-1840s, however, more formal markers of limestone, marble or other materials began to appear, both for new burials and as replacements for less permanent markers. These display a wide variety of styles, from simple upright slabs to large columns; some ornately carved with crosses, weeping willows, clasped hands, fraternal emblems, or other 19th century funerary symbols. There are likewise a handful of "one of a kind" markers such as that of Thomas and Eleanor Gonne in West Highland Cemetery, made from local cobblestones. It was erected by their son, Albert Gonne, who was well known for his cobblestone chimneys, porch columns and other architectural features found on many of Highland's historic homes, as well as the cobblestone pillars at the front of Highland Cemetery.



A view of the Gonne family marker in West Highland Cemetery.

Highland Garden Club

As the leaves begin to fall and the air grows crisp, HGC celebrates another season of all things green. The anticipation of fall colors, the gentle hum of community, it's the perfect time to dig in—whether you're a seasoned gardener or simply curious about planting and nurturing outdoor spaces. If this sounds like a hobby – or maybe even a passion, this could be your group.

Highland Garden Club partners with Highland Township, Highland DDA, Community Sharing and the Highland Library to spruce up a few projects around town as well as some seasonal special touches. 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. And the bloom on the plant, the frosting on the cake – we get together socially to share plants and ideas. Does any of this sound like fun? We'd love to get to know you – come join us - contact Judy Cooper to be added to our email list – coopjudy@hotmail.com . Dig, plant, harvest, and socialize with us, not necessarily in that order.

"The garden reconciles human art and wild nature, hard work and deep pleasure, spiritual practice, and the material world. It is a magical place because it is not divided." -Thomas Moore

Thursday, October 9th at 6pm – Highland Library Community Room
"Tuckered out and Tuckin' in – Putting the Garden to Bed". Bethany Try, Head Horticulturalist at Beal Botanical Garden & Arboretum at MSU.

Thursday, November 6th at 6pm - Highland Library Community Room
"Let's Grow Native - Rediscovering Native Flora in Highland". Highland's very own Jake Lloyd will speak.



Community Spotlight



In July 2023, Nancy Branstetter partnered with the Township of Highland to introduce the #HighlandKindness campaign. This initiative aims to celebrate and recognize acts of kindness throughout the community. It highlights the thoughtful gestures that residents are already making for one another while also encouraging everyone to perform a kind act for a friend, family member, neighbor, coworker, or even a stranger.

Throughout the year, community volunteers come together to brainstorm creative ways to keep kindness moving forward. Whether they're interviewing local organizations and sharing their stories of kindness or reading kindness-themed stories to schoolchildren, the Kindness Crew is always finding new ways to make a difference.



**Volunteers from
Community Sharing Outreach Center
Spreading Kindness**

In September, *Highland Kindness* partnered with the *Highland Downtown Development Authority* for a special act of generosity—surprising diners at local downtown restaurants by picking up their tabs with the Taste of Kindness program.



Nominate someone today!!

Is there someone you can think of who has been spreading kindness within the community? We would love to hear about them! Please scan the QR code below to pull up our submit your nomination today.



**Want to collaborate?
Give us a shout at
kindness@huronvalleyarts.org**

Founder, Nancy Branstetter





205 W. Livingston Rd. Highland, MI 48357
248-889-8660

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.

- Van Go Cultural Tours
- Artist-run gift gallery co-op
- Art Classes
- Concerts
- Literary Events
- Professional Gallery Space

www.huronvalleyarts.org



An Enchanted Evening Fundraiser SATURDAY, OCTOBER 11TH, 2025 FROM 7 TO 10 PM SPIRITS OF OCTOBER

JOIN HVCA FOR...

REFRESHMENTS & BITES!

• LOCAL ARTS • ENTERTAINMENT • SILENT AUCTION •

*COSTUMES ARE OPTIONAL BUT ENCOURAGED!

MEMBERS \$20
ALL OTHERS \$25



Handmade for the Holidays 2025

205 W. Livingston Rd
Highland, MI 48357
248-889-8660

NOV 29-DEC 20
Tue, Wed, Thu 10-3
Fri 10-5 Sat 10-2
Closed Sunday and Monday



Unique gifts for everyone on your list.



Art & Greens HOLIDAY MARKET

Sat, Nov 22
9:30 am-5:00 pm

Sun, Nov 23
10 am-3:30 pm

Fine Arts
Fine Crafts
Music & More

BOGIE LAKE GREENHOUSES
1525 BOGIE LAKE ROAD, WHITE LAKE MI 48383

www.HuronValleyarts.org

Highland Workshops is pleased to present

Rocco Pisto "Beyond Realism" Watercolor Painting Workshop October 28, 29 & 30, 2025

Location
Huron Valley Council for the Arts
205 W. Livingston
Highland MI 48357
Cost: \$200



To enroll Call:
Barb Weisenburg
248-757-1133
or email:
hercverspirit@yahoo.com



FRED & BARBARA
Erb Family
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NATIONAL
ENDOWMENT
for the ARTS
arts.gov





Join Today!
Email Ann at
info@hwlba.com

Get connected 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 for businesses

Variety of 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's service area covers over 500 square miles!



WESTERN
OAKLAND
TRANSPORTATION
AUTHORITY

In today's world, connection is more important than ever—connection to family, friends, work, healthcare, and community. For many in Highland, transportation is the bridge that makes these connections possible. That's where the Western Oakland Transportation Authority (WOTA) comes in.



WOTA provides safe, reliable, door-to-door transportation for adults 18 and older, ensuring that no one is left isolated due to lack of mobility. Whether it's a ride to a doctor's appointment, a visit with loved ones, a trip to the grocery store, volunteer, or attending a community event, WOTA helps riders stay engaged in the things that matter most.

Every trip WOTA makes is more than just miles on the road—it's an opportunity for someone to remain independent, participate in community life, and maintain vital relationships. Drivers and dispatchers understand they're not just providing transportation; they're delivering peace of mind and helping build a stronger, more connected community. With WOTA, connection isn't just a destination—it's the journey we take together.



The service area includes over 500 square miles with the following boundaries:

- NORTH - Northern Border of Highland & White Lake Townships, and Clarkston.
- EAST - Pontiac, down to Orchard Lake Rd between 12 & 16 Mile and Hiller Rd to Telegraph between Pontiac Lake and Williams Lake Roads.
- WEST - US 23 (Hartland) and Kensington Rd and the west edge of Milford Township.
- SOUTH - Grand River Ave to 10 Mile & Haggerty.

Cost per stop:

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

\$4 for general public (18+)

Veterans ride for FREE!



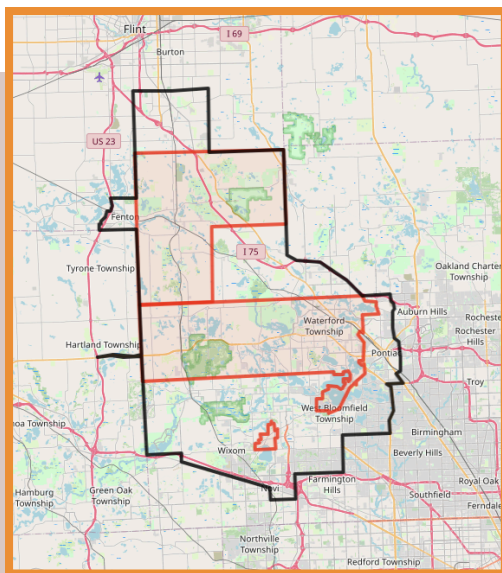
Driving Hours:

Monday-Friday: 6am-9pm

Saturdays: 8am-4pm

Sundays: 7:30am-3:30pm

***To schedule your ride,
call (248) 887-4979***



Ride WOTA

Register today and let your journey begin!

(248) 887-4979

RideWOTA.org

Milkweed Mile Project

The M-59 median in Highland is being used to grow milkweed in support of Monarch butterflies, thanks to the Milkweed Mile Project. This initiative began in 2018 after an inspiring presentation by eight-year-old Maecy Zarate, whose passion for protecting the local Monarch population sparked community action.

Maecy's presentation led to a petition that was brought before the Board and ultimately approved, paving the way for Highland to become the first city in Michigan to join Monarch City USA—a nonprofit organization dedicated to helping Monarch butterflies thrive by encouraging the planting of milkweed and nectar-rich plants in urban areas.

Prior to the project, milkweed naturally grew in the median and attracted local pollinators, but it was routinely mowed down each season, harming Monarchs as well as other butterflies and bees. The Milkweed Mile Project has since transformed the space into a vital habitat for these important species.



Milkweed Seed Collection



Did you know you can join our efforts in preserving Milkweed for Monarchs in the Township?

The Supervisors Office collects milkweed and native flower seeds in the fall to add to the Milkweed Mile. You can collect seeds at home and drop them off at the Township Offices. Follow the steps below.

1. *Dry the seeds*
2. *Place the seeds in a paper bag and label the bag with seed species*
3. *Drop off the seeds at the Highland Township Offices at 205 N John St.*

To learn more on how to contribute to this initiative please contact Cassie Blascyk in the Supervisors Office at 248-887-3791 x 6.

Explore Highland

Winter Bucket List ✓

☐ Go fat tire-biking at Hickory Ridge Pines Park!

☐ Visit the parrots at Colasanti's!

☐ Take fun photos at the Boardwalk!

☐ Shop local!

☐ Go snowshoeing at Highland Rec!

☐ Grab friends and head out to Small Business Saturday on November 29th!

☐ Submit a Kindness Nomination to Highland Kindness!

☐ Go ice skating on one of our 25+ lakes

☐ Attend the Kris Kringle Market & Tree Lighting Ceremony December 1st!

☐ Check out the Highland Activity Center and all it has to offer!

☐ Attend Highland's Ladies Night Out November 18th!

☐ Visit Art Gallery and gift shop at the HVCA/Steeple Hall

☐ Cozy up by the fireplace at the Highland Library!

☐ Go sledding!

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

NATURALLY CONNECTED

FALL/WINTER
2025
ISSUE 4

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.

