



Encore

AN UPDATE FOR OUR OLDER ADULT RESIDENTS
2026 | VOL. 6

PLUS!

**SURVEY:
LET YOUR
VOICE BE
HEARD**

Dear Friends,

As older adults settle into retirement years, opportunities for active healthy lifestyles, more community engagement and even more educational opportunities are plentiful.

And in Oakland County, we're proud to help our older residents connect with programs and resources to achieve some of those goals.

You can learn about some of them in this edition of *Encore*, which is packed with useful information for you and your family:

- One woman's story on getting help from our *Oakland80* initiative to expand educational opportunities.
- Improvements being made at the Bloomfield Township Senior Center, including the inclusion of a soothing saltwater pool.



- How to avoid financial scams and beef up your cyber security.
- Activities aimed toward older adults at the Oakland County Parks.
- A new program that can help you make your home more energy efficient.

This newsletter is just a small part of our mission to ensure all of our residents, including the growing older adult population, know about the resources and programs that are available to you.

And, if you don't already have this number in your contacts, jot down the Oakland County Older Adult services helpline at 248-858-0593 or look up OakGov.com/OlderAdults to find out more about what we're doing for you.

With gratitude,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "David Coulter".

Oakland County Executive David Coulter

OAS Senior Expos and Outreach Opportunities

Older Adult Services (OAS) has joined in partnership with Senior Expo USA in co-sponsorship of community-based expos tailored to the needs of our older population.

There are three remaining events scheduled in Oakland County through 2026.

Come visit us:

- **Tuesday, Aug. 25** at "The J" (6600 W. Maple Road, West Bloomfield), 10 a.m.-1p.m.
- **Tuesday Sept. 1** at the Southfield Pavillon (26000 Evergreen Road, Southfield), 10 a.m.-1p.m.
- **Tuesday, Oct. 6** at the Royal Oak Farmers Market (316 E. Eleven Mile Road) in Royal Oak, 10 a.m.-1p.m.

OAS was created in January 2023 by Oakland County Executive David Coulter, with the support of the Oakland County Board of Commissioners.

Chief Jim Ellison and Communications and Marketing Assistant Danisha Weathersby lead OAS' outreach efforts and collaborate with the

Board's Senior Advisory Council and Healthy Aging Ad Hoc Committee to support older adults.

We also schedule other outreach opportunities throughout the year including *Encore Power Hour* town hall sessions, Senior Farmers Market Days, Senior Day at the Zoo, and a host of other outreach services. OAS is committed to educating residents 60+ about age-related programs offered by the county. We use several forms of communication, such as this senior newsletter, *Encore*, our Senior Resource Guide, and information from other departments and agencies in the county to keep our older adults engaged.

Oakland County OAS is available Monday-Friday, 8 a.m.-5 p.m. at OlderAdults@OakGov.com or (248) 858-0593. Visit OakGov.com/OlderAdults for resources, news and events. ■

Jim Ellison

Chief of Older Adult Services

Danisha Weathersby

Communications and Marketing Assistant

Tips for Avoiding Phone Scams (and Warning Others)

Oakland County Prosecutor Karen D. McDonald is reminding residents to protect themselves against scammers who use texts, calls, and emails to take their hard-earned money.

“The simplest thing to do is hang-up, especially when an unknown caller is asking for gift card or cryptocurrency payments,” said Prosecutor McDonald. “We all need repeated reminders and warnings because scammers are tenacious. We must remain vigilant to protect ourselves and our loved ones.”

Scammers are believed to steal billions annually from victims using technology and human emotions to impersonate businesses, government agencies, and even family. Some of the most sophisticated use AI



and other technology to imitate trusted voices and spoof recognized numbers or email addresses.

“We always want to think the best of people,” McDonald said. “Scammers will use your good will this season to separate you from your money. If a call or message feels off, ignore it. Look up the proper customer service number and contact a business or government agency yourself before making a payment or disclosing personal information.”

In an effort to protect people from scammers, the Oakland County Prosecutor’s Office is offering the following tips.

WHAT TO LOOK FOR:

- An unsolicited call about money, prizes, debts, or “problems” with your account
- You don’t know the caller, but they seem to know things about you, like your workplace
- Odd pauses, or background call center noise
- The caller uses a friendly tone that shifts to pushy when you hesitate to give them what they want
- Threats of arrest, legal action, or cutting off utilities or benefits if you don’t pay or provide information
- Requests for sensitive information (your Social Security number, date of birth, bank or card numbers, passwords, onetime codes, or PINs)
- Demands for payment via gift cards, wire transfer, cryptocurrency, apps (like Venmo, Zelle, PayPal, or Cash App), or cash via courier
- Offers for anything that seems “too good to be true”, like prizes or low interest loans

WHAT DO I DO IF I THINK I’VE BEEN SCAMMED?

- Contact your bank or credit card provider immediately if you shared financial information, and let them know you might have been scammed.
- File a report with your local police department and report the scam to the FBI’s Internet Crime Complaint Center at ic3.gov.
- Change passwords for any accounts you mentioned on the call, starting with email and financial accounts.
- Take screenshots and document what happened, including the time of the call, the number that showed up, what the caller said, and what information you provided.

I JUST GOT AN UNEXPECTED TEXT OR CALL. WHAT SHOULD I DO?

- If you don’t recognize a number, don’t text back, and send calls to voicemail.
- Even if you think you recognize the number or the voice on the other end, be alert. Scammers can use AI and other tools to “spoof” a number you know and clone the voice of a family member. If the person says they’re in jail or in trouble and they need money urgently, that should be a red flag. Hang up and call another family member who can confirm.
- If you do pick up a call, hang up as soon as you feel pressured or confused.
- Do not give any personal or financial information.
- If the caller claims to be from your bank, a company, or government agency, hang up and call back using a number from your statement, card, or the organization’s website — not a number provided during the call.

- Consider a fraud alert or **credit freeze** with the major credit bureaus:

Equifax – equifax.com

Experian – experian.com

TransUnion – transunion.com

You can also **check your credit reports** for all three using the official centralized site:

AnnualCreditReport.com

- Tell a trusted family member or friend what happened; support helps, and others may be at risk. ■

Spotlight

Bloomfield Township Senior Center



Saltwater Pool Workouts

Helping older adults in Bloomfield Township stay engaged, socially active and healthy is the goal of the Bloomfield Township Senior Services.

“We are family. We take care of and support one another,” said Ernie Thomas, pool coordinator at the center. “That’s what really makes a family.”

Recently renovated to feature a saltwater pool, the center offers a welcoming environment, a variety of programs and activities that enhance the lives older adults who walk through its doors - more than 47,000 visits in 2025.

“Coming to this center is the best move I’ve made,” said Les Goldstein, a member since 2000. “I enjoy the programs, the people and the community. In fact, my wife and I are proud to be a part of the advisory council.”

The Bloomfield Township Senior Center, located at 4315 Andover Road, is one of 29

Oakland County facilities that benefited from \$5 million in grants from Oakland County.

Bloomfield Township used its grant to upgrade its pool to saltwater, improving both the water quality and comfort for older adults.

The center offers classes and pool workouts Monday through Friday. It also schedules a wide variety of events, ranging from piano concerts, lunch and learn educational sessions, day trips and social and support clubs.

The township also offers a Friendship Club from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. on Mondays and Thursdays. It’s an adult day service providing a safe, supportive, and engaging environment for adults experiencing dementia or memory challenges.

“This is truly a place where seniors call home,” said Christine Tvaroha, director of the center’s senior services. ■

Word Jumble

Unscramble this issue's buzzwords.

1) Y T E I V N R U S I

2) D R E S K A O T E R K P A W A R

3) M F B E O I D O L L

4) C Y C R R P R Y T O N E U C

5) L E R O I S A Z

What would you like to see more of in *Encore*?

Let us know! Scan this QR code with the camera on your phone and follow the link or go to **OakGov.info/EncoreSurvey** to answer a few brief questions and make your voice heard.



Services for Older Adults

Oakland Connects Helpline

The former Oakland County Nurse on Call hotline has expanded and been renamed the Oakland Connects Helpline. Call 800-848-5533 or email **OCHelpline@OakGov.com** for assistance with:

- Health-related resources and requests for information
- Referrals to other Oakland County programs
- Immunization waiver education appointments
- Referrals to housing resources and connection to Oakland County's Housing Resource Center
- Navigating the shelter system
- Food and transportation

Public health nurses or community health workers are available to chat Monday-Friday, from 8:30 a.m.-5 p.m.

The Oakland Connects Helpline is a part of Oakland Connects, a free program that guides residents through available services in the county. To learn more about Oakland Connects, visit **OakGov.com/OaklandConnects**. ■



Oakland County

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To learn more about the Oakland County Board of Commissioners, follow along on Facebook, Instagram, LinkedIn and YouTube, or visit OakGov.com/BOC

Pictured left-to-right, fourth row: Brendan Johnson, Charlie Cavell, Philip J. Weipert, Robert Smiley. Pictured left-to-right, third row: Penny Luebs, Kristen Nelson, Yolanda Smith Charles, Gwen Markham, Karen Joliat. Pictured left-to-right, second row: William Miller, Linnie Taylor, Ann Erickson Gault, Christine Long, Bob Hoffman. Pictured left-to-right, front row: Majority Caucus Chair Angela Powell, Board Chair David T. Woodward, Board Vice Chair Marcia Gershenson, Minority Caucus Chair Michael Spisz. (Not pictured: Michael J. Gingell)

2025–2028 Board
of Commissioners





Pictured (from L-R): Adam Phelps (Absolute Solar), Marshall Clabeaux (GLREA), Mason Christerfield (Detroit 2030 District), Commissioner Penny Luebs, and Commissioner David Woodward

Learn How Solar Energy Can Benefit Your Home

Are you looking for a way to reduce energy bills or your carbon footprint?

In an effort to help residents who are facing rising energy costs, Oakland County launched *Solarize Oakland County*, a series of community education sessions for local residents, businesses and organizations to discuss rooftop solar options.

Solarize Oakland County is a community-based program that provides free, reliable information and gives access to a bulk-purchase discount on residential solar power solutions.

This partnership between the Oakland County Office of Sustainability and the nonprofit Great Lakes Renewable Energy Association, with support from the Oakland County Board of Commissioners, gives residents the opportunity to learn more about how solar power works, and the costs and benefits of adding rooftop solar energy to their home.

Interested residents can also request a quote from a vetted installer, which can:

- Determine the best system for each home
- Provide estimates on energy savings
- Manage installation from beginning to end
- Monitor and service solar panels after installation

Residents who move forward with a solar project within specified deadlines throughout the year can receive up to a 15% discount depending on the total number of participants. Additionally, financing options are available through Michigan Saves, a nonprofit green bank that assists borrowers seeking loans for renewable energy projects. ■



Solarize Oakland County also works with businesses, non-profits, houses of worship and local governments.

Solarize Oakland County events are planned throughout the county in the coming months, so register for updates and keep an eye on the Upcoming Events schedule to attend an event near you at:
bit.ly/OCSolarize

Explore the Outdoors Through Oakland County's Many Parks

Staying active and healthy can be fun, especially when you include Oakland County Parks (OCP) in your fitness plan. Explore the parks and try new activities through year-round wellness programming that immerses you in nature and keeps you moving toward your health and wellness goals.

WALKING

Walking is a great way to jumpstart your healthy habits. OCP has more than 100 miles of trails throughout Oakland County. From paved trails to rustic paths, there is something for everyone. Enjoy a brisk walk around Buhl Lake on the Solar System Trail, hike along Crooked Lake in Independence Oaks or take your grandchildren to stroll the Storybook Trail at Red Oaks Nature Center.

Visit OakGov.com/community/oakland-county-parks/parks-trails for more information.



WATER WALKING

The popular River Walk fitness program combines walking with the gentle motion of water, which is generally considered easier on joints. Walk with or against the flow of the 1,000-foot River Ride at Red Oaks Waterpark in Madison Heights for a unique workout. This adults-only activity is for all abilities and fitness levels. Participants must walk as no floating is allowed during this program, which will be held until Aug. 13. Different days and times are available, including a new morning option on Tuesdays and Thursdays. View program details and information on purchasing punch cards at OaklandCountyParks.com.

SWIMMING

Make sure to check out the information on the Over 50+ Swim Party, too. It won't even seem like you're exercising when you're splashing in the wave pool and sliding down waterslides at Red Oaks Waterpark on July 21 and Aug. 11.

ARCHERY

If you've never tried archery before, now is the time to give it a shot. Archery is a great way to boost hand-eye coordination, enhance upper body strength and increase confidence. There is no charge to use the

**The archery range at
Independence Oaks
North County Park
Nature Area**



facility or equipment during Open Archery Range hours at Independence Oaks County Park. Learn archery basics and perfect your shooting technique during the Adult-Only Archery Shoot on July 11 and Sept. 12. Register at OaklandCountyParks.com.

FREE ENTRY

Since park entry is free for Oakland County residents, friends can easily meet up for a game of pickleball at Lyon Oaks County Park grandparents can take the grandkids to one of our 15 playgrounds or let four-legged companions enjoy off-leash fun at Lyon Oaks, Orion Oaks and Red Oaks dog parks. Other activities include golf at one of our five golf courses, biking, kayaking and fishing.

FARMERS MARKET

Don't forget to check out the Oakland County Farmers Market for farm-fresh healthy produce and additional wellness programming, like monthly yoga lessons, tai chi sessions and Senior Market Fresh Days. Visit https://bit.ly/OC_farmersmarket for more information. ■



**Oakland County
Farmers Market**

For upcoming events and program information, email OCPrecreation@oakgov.com, call (248) 858-0916 or visit OakGov.com/parks. You can also sign up at OakGov.com/government/ subscribe to receive emails about upcoming programs and activities and follow our Facebook page at facebook.com/ocparks.

Struggling to Pay Water Bills?

APPLY TO THE HARDSHIP ASSISTANCE PROGRAM!

Oakland County Water Resources Commissioner and United Way are helping residents pay past due bills, current bills and plumbing repairs through the Hardship Assistance Program.

Eligible applicants must:

- Live in Oakland County
- Use municipal water and/or sewer services (not a private well)
- Meet the income requirements below:

Household Size	Max. Family Income
1	\$3,912.50
2	\$5,287.50
3	\$6,662.50
4	\$8,037.50
5	\$9,412.50

Unsure if you qualify? Apply anyway.

Visit <https://uwsem.smapply.org/prog/HAP/> to start the process. Application assistance is available Monday-Thursday, 9 a.m.-4 p.m. at (844) 211-4994 (press option 3). ■





Oakland80 Empowers April Dickerson to Uplift People Through Communication Degree



Second chapters are a common phenomenon for people as they encounter challenges in life and changing priorities. That's something April Dickerson knows a lot about. The 64-year-old Rochester Hills resident, who started down one educational path before encountering roadblocks that stalled her professional aspirations.

As the daughter of a woman who earned a master's in social work while working for General Motors, Dickerson learned the power of a college degree and the value of compassion.

"She's always instilled in all of her kids that education is an investment in you," Dickerson said of her mother. "Whether you do anything with that degree or not, you have that knowledge, and that knowledge is powerful."

Dickerson's first choice for a degree that could lead to a job as a court reporter was sidetracked by life's trials, ranging from motherhood to a devastating housefire and then taking on a caregiver role for her husband. By the time she got back on track, she knew that her chosen profession no longer fit her altruistic nature.

Dickerson's easy-going nature allowed her to talk with anyone, often meeting as strangers and leaving as friends. In 2018, she turned to Oakland County for help determine what a job would look like that would incorporate that main personality trait. She met with Natalie Toma, program coordinator and counselor at the Oakland County Michigan Works! Troy office. They worked together to update her resume and secure a clothing voucher for interview attire, which helped her get her first role as an event specialist at Advantage Sales & Marketing. After a few years working as a professional caregiver, Dickerson began working for her current employer, textile company CF Stinson, as an order fulfillment specialist.

“

So many places and people have helped me get here, and I'm grateful. There are so many resources out here. This works. It happened for me, and it can happen for anyone.

Through the collaboration between Oakland County Michigan Works! and Oakland80, Dickerson met Alex Chudzik, an Oakland80 navigator, in 2024. After looking at her work and education history, Chudzik saw that Dickerson was well on her way to earning a bachelor's degree in communications through her pre-existing credits from court reporter training and her career experience.

They reviewed potential colleges and discovered that Rochester Christian University in Rochester Hills accepted the majority of her past school and "life" credits. She applied and was accepted soon after, but her laptop stopped working almost immediately. She feared another postponement in her education, but with the help of Chudzik and Oakland80, she was able to get a new laptop in time to start her first semester.

"April has shown incredible determination in continuing her education," he said. "She brings thoughtfulness and commitment to every step of the process, and it's been a privilege to work alongside her to help connect her with the technology and resources needed to succeed in her program."

"So many places and people have helped me get here, and I'm grateful," Dickerson said. "There are so many resources out here. This works. It happened for me, and it can happen for anyone."



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As for post-graduation, she is staying flexible on professional titles but knows that her life's purpose is to share the message of love, togetherness and acceptance during these divisive times in the country.

"I want to use this degree to bridge the gap between people because we all have a lot more in common than differences," Dickerson said.

For more information on Oakland80 and career and education resources, visit OakGov.com/Oakland80. ■

Important NUMBERS

Oakland Connects Helpline:

(800) 848-5533

Oakland County

Older Adult Services:

(248) 858-0593

Neighborhood &

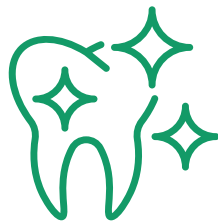
Housing Development:

(248) 858-0493

AgeWays Nonprofit

Senior Services (formerly Area
Agency on Aging 1-B):

(800) 852-7795



Did you know?

The Oakland County Health Department has a program that provides dental services for low-income county residents who have no dental insurance. Nearly half of the program participants are older adults.

For more information, email OCHD-Dental@OakGov.com or call **(248) 858-1306**.

About *ENCORE*: This newsletter magazine, proudly funded by Oakland County, is dedicated to serving and empowering the older adult community across the county. Published twice a year, it provides valuable resources, community news and health tips designed to enrich the lives of our older adult residents. Through this initiative, Oakland County is committed to fostering a strong, connected, and informed community for our older adults, ensuring they stay engaged and well-supported. *ENCORE* is distributed to households with older adult residents. If you have questions, please contact Danisha Weathersby at WeathersbyD@OakGov.com or **(248) 858-0593**.

All ways, MOVING FORWARD