



News from the Administrator

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“And when it rains on your parade, look up rather than down. Without the rain, there would be no rainbow.”

~Gilbert K. Chesterton

Administrator’s Message

Greetings Everyone, and welcome to April!

I trust everyone is looking forward to the warmer weather that Spring is sure to bring—I know I am. While we did have an unusually mild winter, it’s always nice to welcome longer days, sunshine and warmth.

This month I’d like to update you on some of the things my team and I have been working on:

1. As part of my restructure plan, on March 20, we posted for several positions, two in administration and two in our corporation counsel/risk management areas. The Board of Commissioners will be posting a position very soon as well. I’m looking forward to a fully staffed, high performing team that will help all of us to get more done! Please watch eCentral for more information.
2. As a follow-up to last summer’s Town Hall series, I am working with my staff to identify several sessions in the mid to late summer. I’d like to hear your feedback about how we handled your ideas and requests last year, and then for you to tell us what else we need to do.
3. Equity! If you attended our Group of 180 meeting last month, then you were able to view the

outstanding presentation that was given by Andrea Plevak and Ellen Rabinowitz. Washtenaw County is on the leading edge of this issue, working to ensure all of our residents enjoy the best possible state of health and well-being. Stay tuned, we’re hopeful to have this important initiative implemented later this year.

4. Coming soon, a new Leadership Development program. Another presentation at the Group of 180 meeting last month was the unveiling of the foundation of a new professional development opportunity for all of our employees. I’ve made no secret about my concerns surrounding succession planning, and thanks to a team of highly motivated individuals who worked together to put this together, I was able to share my vision with the organization. I hope to have a project-based learning opportunity ready for applicants at our September Group of 180 meeting.

5. Website upgrade. Our web liaisons have been working diligently to identify the vendor who will meet the varying needs of Washtenaw County, last month, they presented their vision to the Board of Commissioners, followed by a meeting of their group where a consensus was reached, and a pro-

ject lead identified. Please stay tuned as the group begins the work necessary to rework our web presence—and remember, your opinions are important in this process.

6. Many of you have reached out to ask about the nature of our recent network issues and mandatory password changes. Please be assured, we are doing everything possible to ensure the safety of our network, including an all-staff training. As soon as I can share additional information, I will be sure to do so.

7. Over the past few years, your Wellness Committee has been doing a great job helping to keep you healthy by making better decisions. I’ve been meeting with them and I’m excited to tell you that they have some outstanding things planned this year, including the return of the very popular Health & Safety Fair — but a new and improved version that will offer participation at a new level! Check out page 3 of this newsletter for more information.

So, as you can see, we’re staying busy! How about you? Drop me a line and let me know how things are going in your department!

~Greg

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United Way Update



Reminder: Our annual food drive begins in March!

Volunteer Center goes Mobile!

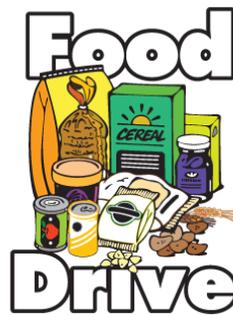


United Way of Washtenaw County's online Volunteer Center can help match your interests with local agencies in need, plus, it has just been upgraded to be mobile-friendly, check it out:
www.VolunteerWashtenaw.org



2017 UNITED WAY UPDATE

On deck for the Spring: Your committee is hard at work planning a new Grand Slam for the United Way fundraising event. They are very excited for this new opportunity and can't wait to share it with you. More details will follow as we finalize them. I hope everyone will consider participating!



We have just wrapped up our first event for the year and it was a resounding success. We had a total of 1639 lbs. of food donated which calculates to approximately \$4,786. Thank you to everyone throughout the organization who brought in supplies to help restock the shelves over at Food Gatherers. We had several bins overflowing throughout the organization! The real winners are the families in our community who will not go hungry because of all of your generous donations. Thank you again!

2017 United Way Campaign Calendar: Overall Goal \$71,250

2017 Events:			
EVENT	DATE	GOAL	OUTCOME
Food Drive	Feb 27-March 28	\$4,000	\$4,786
Day of Action	June	20 Volunteers	
Stuff the Bus	August	\$17,500	\$
Grand Slam for UW	May	\$250	\$
Annual Campaign	September—November	\$41,000	\$
Annual Online Auction	September—November	\$4,000	\$
Washtenaw Cares	November—December	\$4,500	\$

Click [HERE](#) to Like Your United Way Committee on Facebook!



Wellness Committee Update-Save the Date!

Your Wellness Committee would like everyone to save the date for the 2017 Wellness and Safety Fair. This year's fair will take place at the Mary Lou Rec Center on Thursday, June 28th and will also include a walk/run.

Last year's fair hosted more than 20 participants and more than 250 attendees with more than 40 raffle items. Our goal (and your challenge) is to surpass those numbers this year.

Finally, thank you to all who are participating in our current Blue Cross Blue Shield Win By Losing Challenge. Currently we have 46 employees enrolled in the challenge and have lost more than 137 pounds after just 3 weeks. Great job, everyone!



Stay tuned for more Wellness Communications!

Network Safety

Tips for Interacting with Tech Support:

Here are a few tips on working with technical support, whether working with County IT or in your personal life.

We may be caught in a particularly hectic moment and let our guard down, just enough to become vulnerable. So, please keep these things in mind as it pertains to your network access here at Washtenaw County:

Never share your passwords—IT staff will *never* ask you for **ANY** password, in fact, IT doesn't even know what your passwords are. In addition, do not share your passwords with co-workers. If you have suspicion or know that someone else has your password, please change your password immediately.

Washtenaw County IT staff will occasionally call you to troubleshoot an issue that you have first submitted a ticket or emailed the help desk about. Washtenaw County IT will never call you on the telephone to ask you to assist in troubleshooting a problem that you did not initiate, or ask you to navigate to a web site to download something.

- * If it is a call on an issue that you did not initiate, be suspicious.
- * If caller ID does not match as a County phone, be suspicious.
- * If you are ever suspicious, please hang up and call the help desk at 222-3737.

If there is a major issue with a program or system, Washtenaw County IT will put an alert ("This Just In") on the home page of eCentral. eCentral is the place to go for updated information regarding any widespread issues with County systems. Once an issue has been identified, you can stay tuned to eCentral for further updates on the resolution of the problem.

Thank you for your vigilance and helping us to maintain a secure network—it is a challenge to stay one step ahead of those who want to unlawfully access our records, and together, we can safeguard the systems we all rely upon to provide services to our citizens.



Getting to Know: Faye Stoner



"I take my role of public servant seriously."

~ Faye Stoner

This month, I'm honored to introduce you to Faye Stoner from our Parks and Recreation Department. Faye is our 2016 Citizen/Customer Service Achievement honoree, and over the course of her career with Washtenaw County, has continued to prove she is deserving of that recognition. Faye is another of our unsung heroes, just quietly going about her day to day tasks, working to bring awareness to our natural resources and appreciation of the beauty that surrounds us here in Washtenaw County, she unselfishly shares her time to educate young and old, all because of a deeply rooted desire to increase understanding in our community. Please read on to learn more about Faye:

Would you mind telling us a little bit about yourself and how you got to this point in your career?

I am currently in my 19th year of working for Washtenaw County and the Parks and Recreation Commission has been my 'home' the entire time. I have worked for government entities in the past, such as Pennsylvania State Parks when I was just out of college, and some years later as well. My background is ingrained in the parks system, I started working for the Huron Clinton Metropolitan Authority, our local HCMA Metroparks, shortly after moving to Michigan in 1988. I worked in three different HCMA parks, including Hudson Mills here in Washtenaw County, during the

ten years that I worked for HCMA. I came to Washtenaw County from the Metroparks. Working in an outdoor environment is something that I have wanted to do since I was a teenager. I grew up in western Pennsylvania, learning about the wildflowers and birds as a child from family and friends. In college I studied biology with a focus on environmental biology. My first job teaching about nature was at an arboretum in Ohio and my personal and working life took me from Ohio, back to Pennsylvania, then to Michigan and eventually here to Washtenaw County Parks.

I spent my first seventeen years at Washtenaw County Parks working as a Parks Naturalist. I joined the staff while Matt Heumann, the County Parks' first naturalist, was still working. I worked with Matt for three years, before he retired and learned a great deal from him. The job of Parks Naturalist is primarily a role of educator. Using the natural resources of Washtenaw County as the curriculum and our Washtenaw County Parks and Preserves as an outdoor classroom, I have taught literally tens of thousands of people, children and adults, but more children, about birds, turtles, wildflowers, mushrooms, frogs, trees, glacial geology, land and water insects and much more.

So, it sounds like you're working in a new capacity, what does that job entail?

In February of 2016, I took on a new role with Washtenaw

County Parks, the role of Stewardship Coordinator. In this position, I work with the other staff members of our Natural Areas Preservation Program, helping to survey and assess the natural resources we have (nesting bird surveys, botanical surveys, frog and salamander surveys), helping to plan and conduct the stewardship work on the land (remove invasive species, conduct prescribed burns, care for the trails) still leading nature education walks in our natural areas.

You are highly regarded by those you work with and serve, what would you say is the secret of your success?

I think being fortunate in finding work that has been personally satisfying for me, in several ways, has helped me be successful. In all the parks jobs I have had in my career, I have taken my role of public servant seriously. I have tried to serve the needs of the people I was



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~Faye Stoner

working with to the best of my ability, and I have tried to do a good job in my role. I feel it is important for people to understand about the world around us and I have been glad for the opportunity to teach people about nature. The desire to serve, and to teach about the natural world, combined with the opportunities I have had to have a job that allows me to spend a good deal of time in the outdoors, and to share with others interesting, important and amazing things about the natural world, has provided me with much inner personal satisfaction. I feel grateful for the work opportunities I have had.

As with any job, I'm sure there are challenges and rewards, could you share a little about each with us?

The most difficult part of my job has been the challenge of considering so many different things at one time. I have often used the phrase that I "wear many hats" on my job, being an educator, a planner, a maintenance crew member, an event coordinator, and more. In addition to filling a variety of roles in my job, my work takes place in many locations, over 30 different locations if one counts all the preserves and parks that I work in. Thinking of all these different locations and what each needs, at various times of the year, sometimes feels a bit overwhelming. At the times when I feel this challenge, I am really grateful to be part of a stewardship team here at Washtenaw County Parks and Rec, where

my colleagues help with this thinking and planning and doing of the stewardship of and education about our preserves and parks.

The most satisfying part of my job has been the combination of the opportunity for me to continually learn about the natural resources of Washtenaw County, animal, plant and mineral, and for me to have the opportunity to share what I learn with other people. I have often told people that it is great to have "Mother Nature" as my work partner; the things there are to notice and learn about are truly endless!

What a great attitude, is there a particular part of your job that really motivates you?

My favorite part of my job is being able to spend time working outside, in all sorts of habitats, in all seasons of the year. Each habitat has its own type of beauty and specialness; forests, marshes, swamps, prairies, in spring, summer, fall and winter have provided me with many interesting things to see and learn about and have given me wonderful memories. Those memories include sharing the excitement of seeing a Massasauga rattlesnake while with a group of people in a Park Lyndon wetland, seeing a really cute screech owl peeking out of a hole in a tree at 11:00 in the morning at Independence Lake with one of my colleagues, and finding over one hundred white lady slipper orchids in a wetland area after we had done a prescribed burn

there some weeks back -- all these things were quite wonderful and thrilling in their own way and I experienced them while "on the job"!

If you could share just one bit of advice to help others be successful in their careers with Washtenaw County, what would that be?

In my opinion, being successful in your job, or at anything, requires some self-introspection and some self-knowing. Ask yourself what types of things bring you satisfaction, what types of things do you find fulfilling. If you can find some of these self-satisfying elements in your work that goes a long way to helping one be happy and successful in her/his work, here at Washtenaw County, and any place of work.

Wow! Aside from your co-workers at Parks and Rec, I'm not sure anyone knew what a great job you have, and then, what a great job you do, Faye! You have certainly found your calling and continue to prove your passion by sharing and teaching your knowledge with others. How fortunate for your co-workers, our citizens and all of the visitors to our county parks system. Keep up the great work!

Greg