

South Lansing Community Development Association

Community Resources

The City of Lansing is using two new resources to share and receive information about our community.



Nixle is a subscription notification service that allows government agencies to broadcast immediate, geographically relevant information to subscribers who live, work, and travel in our community. This includes emergency alerts, traffic advisories, and community information.

Through Nixle, the cities can deliver important information to citizens by e-mail or cell phone (text), allowing faster, more efficient community outreach.

Emergency alerts are sent to all subscribers. In Lansing, you can also sign up to receive a variety of information from City Departments, the Ingham County Sheriff, the Ingham County Health Department, and the State of Michigan.

Nixle is useful when . . .

. . . an adult with Alzheimer's disease walks away from home. The alert can include a picture with a map of the area where they were last seen.

. . . a public safety emergency requires people to stay inside or away from their homes. The alert can let those who live in the affected neighborhood know what's happening.

. . . a serious injury or fatal crash causes investigators to close an intersection. Subscribers in the area can be notified to select a different route.

According to Trent Atkins, Lansing's Chief of Emergency Management, the 911 center has used Nixle to send Amber Alerts, warnings about hazardous materials, and traffic advisories related to car accidents. The Fire Department sends notices about active fire events. After the last big snow, the Public Service Department used Nixle

to remind residents to move cars off the street before they did a full plow.

The city can also broadcast utility outages, sewer brakes, gas leaks, severe weather warnings, and non-emergency events like fireworks, festivals, or parades. Go to www.nixle.com and sign up today.



SeeClickFix is a public platform for citizens to report and monitor non-emergency issues online. In the words of co-founder Jeff Blasius, it's a "toolbox for social civic engagement."

SeeClickFix makes it easy for everyday people to become agents of change in their community. Did you know citizens who take the time to report even minor issues and see them fixed are likely to get more engaged in their local communities? It's called a self-reinforcing loop.

The platform also helps responsible parties (city departments, elected officials, etc.) be more efficient and effective when addressing community issues. These days, municipal employees are stretched, so it's helpful to have other eyes watching out for problem areas.

How do I report an issue?

Simply log on to SeeClickFix.com and choose "Lansing, MI" as your community. Click the tab that says "report an issue," and fill out the form. Include the location, a summary of the problem, and your email. If available, you can upload pictures of the problem. Then submit.

SeeClickFix logs the issue as "open" and marks the problem area on the local activity map. If you find your problem has already been reported, you may leave additional comments or just click "I want this fixed too!" *(cont'd on pg. 3)*

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South Lansing Community Development Association's mission is to build and sustain a strong, healthy community with the knowledge, resources, and desire to work collaboratively toward positive change.

SLCDA is generously supported by the Michigan Department of Community Health, the Ingham County Health Department and the City of Lansing.

SouthLansing.Org is published quarterly to provide South Lansing stakeholders with information about local organizations, community resources, and upcoming events. We welcome and encourage submissions from all facets of the community.

To submit ideas for publication, call Jerrell at (517) 374-5700. Send press releases, newsletters and other communications to:

Jerrell@SouthLansing.Org

or

SouthLansing.Org
 1900 Boston Blvd.
 Lansing MI 48910.

Community Resources

Tax Tips in a Poor Economy

If you've been pounded by this recession, the last thing you want to think about is your tax situation. But you'd better think about it soon, or come April, you may really get clobbered.

Have you thought about how this recession will affect your tax liability? Let's say you lost your job and received a lump-sum severance. Did you know you owe taxes on that money? What about payouts for accumulated sick leave or unused vacation time? Also taxable.

Normally unemployment benefits are also taxable, but thanks to the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act, the first \$2,400 of unemployment benefits in 2009 is exempt from federal taxation. If you are

married, the exclusion applies to each spouse, separately.

If you are unemployed, you may qualify for the Earned Income Tax Credit. This credit allows low- to moderate-income individuals and families to get money back, even if you owe no tax or the credit is more than the tax owed.

If you'd like to learn more, the Internal Revenue Service has prepared a list of questions and answers for people in financial trouble. It's called "The What Ifs of an Economic Downturn," and it's available at www.irs.gov. To find it, just type "What Ifs" in the search field).

If you or anyone you know needs assistance with tax preparation, dial 2-1-1 to schedule an appointment near you.

Cash Rebates for Replacing Appliances

The Michigan Department of Energy, Labor, and Economic Growth is offering cash rebates to those who replace energy-guzzling appliances with more energy-efficient models.

DELEG hopes the upgrades will help consumers save energy, reduce greenhouse gas emissions, and spur economic growth (because many of the appliances included in this program are made in Michigan by Michigan companies).

Participants must be Michigan residents. Rebates are limited to one per product per household. Rebate amounts vary by appliance. See chart below for details.

Call toll-free or go online to reserve your rebate today!

For furnaces & hot water heaters:
www.michrebate.com
 1-888-642-4674

For refrigerators, dishwashers,
 & washing machines:
www.MIrebates.com
 1-866-621-8782

Products to be Rebated	Rebate Level (\$)	Quantity	Total Cost
Clothes Washer Tier 3*	\$50	30,764	1,538,200
Refrigerators ENERGY STAR	\$50	30,000	1,500,000
Refrigerators Tier 3	\$100	28,807	2,807,300
Dishwashers ENERGY STAR	\$25	10,601	265,025
Dishwashers Tier 2	\$50	10,600	530,000
Propane Furnaces AFUE 95%	\$300	4,280	1,284,000
Propane Storage Water Heaters EF>=.67	\$100	1,280	128,000
Propane Tankless Water Heaters EF>=.82	\$100	3,000	300,000
Oil Furnaces ENERGY STAR	\$300	770	231,000
Solar Water Heaters ENERGY STAR	20% (max \$1200)	200	240,000
Total Rebates		119,568	8,823,525

Schools

North School Garden

One of Ying Zheng's favorite garden memories occurred during North School's annual Watermelon Party. After devouring his watermelon, a young boy beamed at her, "This is the very best day of my whole life!"

Ying's hard work in the North School garden began in 1996. What started as a single plot has grown into an impressive operation. With help from The Garden Project, the garden now features an orchard, greenhouse, pond, compost bin, tool shed, and plots for local community gardeners.

Students can help in the garden during the after-school program, at recess, and in the Summer Garden Club. Every year, the whole school participates in a Garden Tour to see what's "growing on." Ying helps the students learn where food comes from, how to grow food organically, and ways to enjoy it.

She also stresses the importance of volunteerism. Her young gardeners give back to their community by donating produce to needy families. They "Grow a Row" for the Greater Lansing Food Bank, and they prepare Thanksgiving baskets of fresh produce for families in need.

We commend Ying, and the entire North School staff who support her, for creating an outdoor classroom that nourishes students minds and bodies.

To learn more about the North Elementary School Garden, contact Ying Zheng at 517-755-1710. To learn more about North School's community garden plots, call The Garden Project at 517-887-4660.



Faith

Free Meals for Folks in Need

The Southside Community Kitchen provides hungry people with well-balanced, nourishing, meals in a caring, dignified environment. Serving times are 11:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m., Mondays and Wednesdays at Christ United Methodist Church (517 West Jolly Road), Tuesdays and Thursdays at Galilee Baptist Church (2511 Reo Rd.) For more info, call 517-676-8144.

Giving Tree Collections

During the month of March, Tithes Missionary Baptist Church (1415 West Holmes Rd) is collecting personal care items for The Giving Tree charity. Items requested include bath soap, shampoo, deodorant, toilet paper, feminine hygiene, and laundry products. To make a donation, call 517-887-1592.

In April, The Giving Tree will be accepting household items at Mt. Hope United Methodist Church (501 E. Mt. Hope). Items requested include new or gently used pots, pans, dishes, linens, lamps, and lamp shades. To donate, call 517-882-5961.

Swiss Steak Dinner

Christ United Methodist Church (517 West Jolly Road) will host its monthly Swiss Steak Dinners on March 12th and April 9th. The menu includes Swiss Steak, gravy, mashed potatoes, green beans, coleslaw, rolls, dessert, and beverages. Tickets are \$8 for adults, \$5 for kids 5-12. For take-out, call 517-394-2727.

Breakfast & Supper

Grace United Methodist Church (1900 Boston Blvd.) is holding a Lenten Breakfast on Saturday, March 20, from 10-11 a.m. The breakfast is continental, including baked goods, bagels, juice, and coffee. There is no charge, but donations are accepted. Layspeaker Holly Dickinson will speak about Lent.

Grace UMC is also hosting its annual Pancake Supper on Friday, April 30, from 4:30-7:30 p.m. Cost is \$5 for adults, \$2.50 for children under 12, and \$13 for a family of four. Funds raised

support the church's Habitat Work Trip. For more information, call 517-482-5750.

Corned Beef Dinner

Mayflower Congressional Church (2901 W. Mt. Hope Rd) is holding its annual Corned Beef and Cabbage Dinner, March 26, from 5-6 p.m. The Gracewood Singers will perform after the meal. Tickets are \$8 and must be purchased in advance. To place your order, call 517-484-3139.

Taco Dinner

Redeemer Lutheran Church will host an all-you-can-eat Taco Dinner on Thursday, May 18, from 6-8 p.m. The meal includes tacos, rice, beans, nachos, beverages, and Melting Moments ice cream! Cost is \$7 for adults, \$3.50 for children. For info, call 517-882-8000.

Community Resources

SeeClickFix (cont'd from pg. 1)

Who will see my issue?

Anyone can create a "watch" within a chosen geographic area. So far in Lansing, watchers are primarily city departments and elected officials. In the future, we may find more residents, community leaders, and local media creating watch areas.

Watchers receive email alerts when reports are generated in their area or comments are posted on prior issues. Watchers can also limit notifications based on keywords. For example, the City of Lansing Operations & Maintenance Division only gets reports that include words like snowplow, pothole, and sidewalk.

While an issue is open (active), city employees, elected officials, and others can post status updates, e.g., "Property owner was notified to clear sidewalk" or "Debris has been cleared from road." When a watcher or other user feels the issue is resolved, they can close it, and the issue is labeled as fixed.

From now on, if you SEE a problem, get CLICKin' so the city can start FIXin'!

Parks and Greenspace

Lansing's Urban Nature

Submitted by Chip Kosloski, Fenner Nature Center

At first glance, the phrase "urban nature" seems like quite the paradox. While we do not often associate the words, keener observation of Lansing allows us to see that while we can have nature without urban, we cannot have urban without nature. Or maybe in Lansing's case, we choose not to.

The dynamic aspects of the ecosystem become apparent through close investigation of nature in Lansing. Our park system provides an abundance of preserved green space in many different shapes and sizes.



Sycamore Creek and the Red Cedar River provide excellent aquatic habitat for fish, aquatic mammals (muskrats, mink, etc.), insects and many other species. Our deer herds move back and forth across the urban-rural interface where city streets fade into wetlands, woodlots and farm fields.

There is no doubt that these natural assets provide an essential framework for our ecosystem and the life it supports. But a critical question remains: where else can the urban ecosystem be found?

We must scale down our perceptions of typical wildlife habitat to answer this question. In essence, the urban ecosystem is everywhere. Some may even argue that the city is an ecosystem itself.

Wildlife in the city must adapt to take advantage of all potential habitats, from puddles to schoolyards to power lines. Sometimes they even make their way into our homes, attics, and sheds. We will encounter urban wildlife wherever they can find the food, water, shelter, and space necessary for survival. Perhaps we can relate to them in this way.

So what makes Lansing's urban nature so special? Our connection to the ecosystem and celebration of the natural world that supports our very being. Nature is a constant. But the lens with which we view nature can change, and it is changing for the better right here in Lansing.

We are recognizing the importance of our green infrastructure to the vibrancy of our lives. This is evident through our movement to localize our food and create a network of urban gardens. Our hands are returning to the soil our ancestors once turned over. We are dedicated to trail development and providing opportunities for people to connect to the ecosystem.

Both people and wildlife can move through the hubs and corridors of Lansing's green infrastructure without one deterring the existence of the other. In fact, we are often drawn to nature in a way we cannot explain, and it is better this way. An explanation of our biophilia would certainly defeat the feeling we get when we witness fall color change or hear the steady sound of the creek.

So the next time you are driving down a city street, or sitting out on your front porch reading the newspaper, think about the ecosystem. Give yourself a minute to just wonder about it, where it is, and how you are connected to it.

Lansing's urban nature is all around us. But it takes a certain lens to see that it lies within us.

Discover the Gems of Geocaching!

Geocaching (pronounced geo-cashing) is a worldwide game of hide and seek in which "seekers" use handheld GPS (global positioning system) devices to search for hidden containers, called "geocaches," in the great outdoors.

Caches are usually hidden in greenspaces like parks, trails, or cemeteries. An ideal hiding space is well-concealed; a hollow log, a large knothole in a tree, under a large stone, or a crevice in a rock. South Lansing has an abundance of greenspace, so naturally, we have several dozen geocache sites.

You'll find them in places like Hawk Island Park, Scott Woods, Fenner Nature Center, and Mt. Hope Cemetery.

What exactly is a geocache? Typically, a geocache is a small air-tight container (often Tupperware) that contains a sign-in book and a small treasure. Seekers sign the log after they find the cache. The treasures are usually small toys or trinkets. The general rule of geocaching is "take an item, leave an item."

Geocaching is enjoyed by people of all ages, but it's especially fun for families. What kid wouldn't want to go on a high-tech treasure hunt? Sometimes, seekers have to decipher puzzles. One clue might lead to another clue. The most important part of the search, though, is the GPS.

GPS devices use latitudinal and longitudinal coordinates to locate hiding spots where little treasures can be found. A handheld GPS device can be purchased for under \$50. Most smart phones have GPS applications available to download for under \$10.

The next time you're looking for a little exercise and adventure, try geocaching! Why not start by checking out the caches in Mt. Hope Cemetery. Log on to geocaching.com and enter 48910. Look for postings by a user called "Catcash." Catcash worked with Parks Director Murdock Jemerson to coordinate placement of three caches in the cemetery. The caches are called End of the Line, Only one T, and Vaudeville Organist, and his clues contain little history lessons.

Happy hunting!

Information about geocaching at Mt. Hope Cemetery was reproduced with permission from the Friends of Lansing's Historic Cemeteries. Visit their website, www.folhc.com, for information on upcoming events and cemetery tours.



Health & Wellness

Portion Distortion: Size Matters!

Americans are always looking for a good deal, especially in this economy. We are enticed by phrases like Jumbo, Supersize, Combo, and All-You-Can-Eat. These words are often found on menus that offer high-fat, high-sugar, high-sodium food choices with minimal nutritional value. These low-cost, high-volume options promise great value, but the deal isn't worth it, especially when the price is your health!

What you're served



What's one serving



Americans have a very distorted view of portion size. A serving size of soda is 8 ounces, yet we drink the entire 20 ounce bottle. We gobble down a "snack size" bag of chips that actually contains 2.5 servings. Restaurants offer 1/2 pound burgers, but a proper serving of protein is only 2-3 ounces. We have to retrain ourselves to consume appropriate amounts of food.

Every gram of fat equals 9 calories. Consuming an extra 100 calories daily for a year, without using them up, can lead to a weight gain of 10 pounds. FYI—the difference between a single serving of soda and a 20 ounce bottle is more than 150 calories. The more you consume, the more you have to burn through physical activity, or those pounds are going to stay on your body.

Try these small steps to help you eat enough, but not too much:

- Eat meals at home on a smaller plate.
- Portion out snacks on a plate. Do not eat straight from the bag.
- Buy or portion out treats and snacks in small bags or packages.
- Check the nutrition label for serving sizes and servings per container.
- Choose foods with low percentages of fat, sugar and sodium.

Sources: MyPyramid.gov & Joyce McGarry, MSUE

Start a Walking Group

Walking can be a great workout for those who crave solitude, but if you'd rather look to others for inspiration, you don't have to go it alone. Start a walking group today! Here are a few tips to help you get started:

Spread the word

Talk to family members, friends, neighbors and colleagues. You might be surrounded by people who are ready to lace up their walking shoes AND hold each other accountable for regular exercise. You can also post a notice at your workplace, place an ad in a local newspaper, or post information on a community Web site.

Get organized

Once you've recruited members for your walking group, hold a kickoff meeting. Collect e-mail addresses, phone numbers, and other contact information. Then discuss:

- When, where, & how often to walk
- Whether to walk indoors/outdoors
- What to do in case of bad weather
- Walking speed and distance

If your group is large enough, consider breaking into smaller walking groups based on fitness level, fitness goals, availability or other factors.

Maintain momentum

Once your group's walking routine is established, look for ways to enhance motivation. You might choose a name for your walking group, design a group logo, enter charity walking events as a group, or set regular goals to increase walking time or intensity.

The camaraderie and shared fitness success you experience in a walking group can help you walk your way to better health. *(excerpt from Mayo Clinic)*

FYI: This summer, South Lansing CDA is organizing a weekly walking group in conjunction with our farmers market. If you'd like more information on this or other walking opportunities, contact Catie Parker at 517-374-5700 or catie@southlansing.org.

CELERIAC

Celeriac, also known as 'celery root,' 'turnip-rooted celery,' or 'knob celery,' has a tough, furrowed, outer surface which is usually sliced off before use. Celeriac may be used raw or cooked. It's often used as a flavoring in soups and stews, but it can also be used on its own, usually mashed, or used in casseroles, gratins and baked dishes.

* * *

Celeriac and Thyme Bisque
Serves 8

1/4 cup (1/2 stick) butter
1 cup chopped celery
1/2 cup coarsely chopped shallots (about 3 large)
2 pounds celery roots (celeriac), peeled, woody parts trimmed and discarded, cut into 1/2-inch cubes (about 5 1/2 cups)
1 10-ounce russet potato, peeled, cut into 1-inch pieces
5 cups low-salt chicken broth
1 1/2 teaspoons minced fresh thyme
1/4 cup whipping cream
Additional chopped fresh thyme

Melt butter in heavy large pot over medium heat. Add celery; cover and cook until slightly softened, about 3 minutes. Add shallots; sauté uncovered 3 minutes. Stir in celery root cubes and potato, then broth and 1 1/2 teaspoons thyme. Increase heat to high; bring to boil. Reduce heat to medium-low, cover, and simmer until vegetables are very tender, about 40 minutes. Cool slightly.

Transfer soup to blender and puree until smooth. Stir cream into soup and bring to simmer. Season to taste with salt and pepper. Ladle soup into bowls. Sprinkle with additional chopped thyme and serve.



* * *

The Benefits of Celeriac

Looks can be deceiving when it comes to celeriac, which despite its knobbed and gnarled appearance, is actually one attractive addition to your diet! Stock up on this vegetable in the spring months for its high levels of vitamin C, vitamin K, phosphorus, potassium, vitamin B6, magnesium and manganese, which are important for blood health. Celeriac is also an excellent source of dietary fiber, which is important for digestive health and can help you feel full longer.

SLCDA

Catie Takes Nutrition on the Road!

Healthy communities need healthy people. To spread the word, our Health Initiatives Coordinator, Catie Parker, is taking Nutrition on the Road.

Her first stop was South Brook Villa. You may remember this senior housing complex from an article last summer. They partnered with local boy scouts to build raised garden beds so physically limited residents could enjoy access to the garden.

During the month of January, Catie returned to South Brook Villa with CeCe Foster of MSU Extension. Together, they provided nutrition education classes and food demonstrations for residents.

The nutrition classes were a hit for the seniors who participated. The class was held weekly and covered topics on nutrition and food labels, food pyramid guidelines, food safety, and recipe enhancement. Taste tests and a free giveaway were provided each week.



South Brook seniors show off the veggie scrubbers and measuring cups they received for attending weekly nutrition classes.

In February, Catie started teaching nutrition education during the after-school program at Wexford Montessori School. The lessons are hands-on; the students play food pyramid BINGO, act out food and fitness charades, make simple recipes, and taste test a variety of fruits and vegetables.

The students planted spinach, lettuce, and basil. The plants are kept inside to observe growth. In a few weeks, they'll make a meal with the results. When the weather cooperates, the kids will get their hands dirty outside gardening in the school yard.

The goal of the program is for students to gain knowledge of fruits and vegetables and healthy eating habits that increase fruit and vegetable consumption.

In March, Catie's "Nutrition Road Show" heads to New Mt. Calvary Missionary Baptist Church, where she'll focus on health issues affecting the African American community. One topic of interest is finding healthier ways to prepare traditional soul food recipes.

If you are involved with or know of any group (senior living, church circle, girl/boy scout, etc) that may be interested in hosting nutrition education classes (could be one time or a series), please contact Catie at 517-374-5700 or catie@southlansing.org.

New Community Garden

South Lansing CDA has partnered with the Ingham County Land Bank and The Garden Project to open a new community garden at the Southwest corner of Pleasant Grove and Jolly Rd!

The initial planning meeting was buzzing with excitement. People shared ideas for how they'd like the garden to look and feel, including a "free eats" plot for visitors to munch on garden goodies!

If you'd like to help in any way (volunteering, planning, donating materials, having a plot), please attend the next meeting or contact Rita at 517-374-5700 or rita@southlansing.org.

Let's Garden Lansing!

Are you interested in having a garden but don't know where to start? Maybe you're an experienced gardener who'd like to learn more . . .

South Lansing CDA had partnered with several wonderful organizations to create the Greater Lansing Garden Education Collaborative. Together, we've created a calendar of garden workshops offered quarterly throughout the Lansing area. *See page 7 for a list of classes on the south side.*

Posters of the calendar are hanging all over town. They are also online at www.letsgardenlansing.org. If you know of locations to hang posters or you'd like to help us distribute posters, please contact Rita.

Youth Gardening Conference Recap

The 3rd annual Youth Gardening Conference was held on Saturday, Feb-

ruary 20, at the Southside Community Center. Nearly 100 youth and adult gardeners from around the state enjoyed workshops on Vermicomposting, Art for the Garden (taught by our own Rita O'Brien), Garden in a Box, Simple Season Extension, and Growing Your Garden.

Special thanks to all who helped organize and all who attended. Look for even more exciting workshops at next year's conference! For more info, go to www.youthgardeningcoalition.org.

South Lansing Coffee Connection

Come one, come all to South Lansing CDA's weekly coffee hour. We'll have free coffee, tea, or cocoa (thanks Paramount!), connect with neighbors, and learn about all the cool things happening at South Lansing CDA and across the south side! Join us every Tuesday, starting March 2, from 10:30-11:30 a.m. at Southside Community Center (5825 Wise Road).

***Friday Night Food Movies***

Starting in March, South Lansing CDA will be hosting a monthly series of movies pertaining to the social, economic, political, and health implications of food. Join us at the Southside Community Center for movies, snacks, and discussion. Upcoming dates include:

Friday, March 19, 7-9 p.m.
Food, Inc.

Friday, April 9, 7-9 p.m.
Fast Food Nation

Friday, May 14, 7-9 p.m.
Supersize Me

For more info, or to suggest other movies we might feature, please call Rita at 517-374-5700.

South Lansing Weekly

Stay informed between newsletters with South Lansing CDA's weekly e-mail update, featuring events and activities across the south side. To receive updates, call 517-374-5700 or e-mail Jerrell@southlansing.org.

Community Activities and Events

*Garden Classes*

The following garden classes will be offered at the Southside Community Center. Register by calling 517-374-5700 or email rita@southlansing.org.

Seed Starting

Tuesday, March 16, 6:30-8 p.m.
In this hands-on workshop, led by Linda Anderson, you will learn tips and planning involved in starting your garden from seed!

Spring Crops

Saturday, April 17, 2-3:30 p.m.
Make the most of your gardening season by learning the ins and outs of cool weather crops in this workshop led by Gabriel Biber.

Container Gardening

Saturday, May 8, 2-3:30 p.m.
You don't need a yard to garden! This workshop will provide you with tips for growing vegetables in all kinds of containers.

Gardening 101

Thursday, May 13, 6-7:30 p.m.
Learn all you need to know to start gardening this Spring. Workshop led by Gabriel Biber.

* * * *

Garden Leader Training Series

Thursdays, 6-8:30 p.m.
March 4, 11, 18, 25

Anyone starting a new community garden or planning to have a leadership role at a community garden should plan on attending all four classes in this series. To register, contact The Garden Project at (517) 887-4660 or email gardenproject@ingham.org.

NOTE: Classes for this series will be held at Gier Community Center.

*Southside Community Center:
Winter Drop-In Hours*

The Southside Community Center has a lot to offer this winter! Stop in for open and lap swimming, volleyball, basketball, ping pong, pool, air hockey and many other game room activities. If you like to walk for exercise, you can walk the halls anytime the community center is open, just bring a photo ID and sign in at the reception desk.

Drop-in programs in the game room and gym are as follows:

Monday-Thursday, 3:30-6:30 pm
Youth ages 6-17

Monday and Tuesday, 6:30-8:30 pm
Teens, ages 13-17

Monday and Tuesday, 8:30-10 pm
Open gym for adults (\$2)

Sundays 1-4 pm
Family Time (activities and rooms are available for all ages)

Open and Lap Swim is available 7 days a week at various times. Call or stop in for a schedule. For more information, call the Center at 517-483-6685 or email SSCC@lansingmi.gov.

Spring Break at Fenner

Don't let the kids tell you there's nothing to do during spring break. Check out Fenner Nature Center's Spring Break Nature Explorations, Tuesday thru Thursday, April 6- 8, 9 a.m. to 2:30 p.m. Come one day or all three!

Students from Kindergarten to 5th grade are invited to explore the park during the changing season. Whether it's snowing or balmy, children will investigate the changes occurring in plants and animals in the park. Every day is different. Be ready for hikes, fun activities, and crafts. Cost is \$15 per child, per day. For more information, call 517-483-4224.

Maple Syrup Festival

March at Fenner means Maple Syrup! Venture into the maple grove to watch this uniquely North American activity. See demonstrations of how

sap was collected and made into syrup throughout the ages. Then head to the Visitor Center to warm up with some hot chocolate, purchase some maple syrup, and browse the exhibits of locally made nature arts and crafts.

As always, admission is FREE! Festival hours are 11 a.m. to 4 p.m. Saturday-Sunday, March 20-21. For a nominal fee, Maple Syrup group tours are available during the day, Tuesday thru Thursday, from March 8 to March 19. Call 517-483-4224 for scheduling.

Physical Defense for Women

The Lansing Police Department is offering a course on R.A.D Basic Physical Defense System for Women. This is a 12-hour self-defense course divided into three days. It is free to participate with the commitment that they attend all three nights: April 20, April 27, and May 4 from 5-10 p.m.

The course is "hands on," for women ONLY. It is intended to increase safety awareness, physical defense, and confidence. Classes will be held at LPD's North Precinct (740 May St.).

To register contact Michelle Reddish at mreddish@lansingmi.gov or call 517-483-6040.

4th Annual Hawk Island Triathlon

Every year, hundreds of men, women, and children swim, bike, and run through Hawk Island Park, southeast Lansing, and the farms at MSU. The Hawk-I-Tri is designed to welcome and encourage people of all ages, shapes, sizes and abilities as they venture into the world of triathlon.

The Hawk-I-Tri has become the largest sprint triathlon in Michigan, and it's known throughout the Midwest as a popular triathlon for beginners. It's also a great warm-up race for veteran athletes gearing up for the summer triathlon season. This year's race will be held Sunday, June 6.

If you're not ready to TRI it, we can always use volunteers. Training is provided. To volunteer, call 517-374-5700 or email jerrell@southlansing.org. To register for the race, visit www.hawk-i-tri.com.

Keep up with us online at:

www.southlansing.org

[www.facebook.com/South Lansing
Community Development Association](https://www.facebook.com/SouthLansingCommunityDevelopmentAssociation)

www.twitter.com/southlansingcda

Remember When . . .

Lansing's African-American Heritage

Lansing's first recorded black resident was James Little, a freed slave from New York state who settled here in 1847. Over the next 50 years, black settlers came from Northern free states and the upper South. Some were Canadians descended from escaped slaves or transplants from freed slave communities in Cass County.

The Lansing Area African-American Genealogical Society (LAAAGS) is gathering information on early black families for a publication on how and why African-Americans first came to this region. If you can document family members who settled in the Lansing area between 1847 and the 1940s, please contact the society.

Many early families settled in cities close to Lansing and not in the

city proper. This is valuable information about the early black presence in this region. LAAAGS is particularly interested in death notices and funeral programs of early African-American residents who were here during the late 1880s through 1930. Photos are welcome, as well. Non-returnable copies of documents and photos can be mailed to LAAAGS, P.O. Box 22203, Lansing, MI 48909.



William Leabs, Jr., an African-American businessman standing in front of his store, the Marquette Shoe Shining Parlor. The business is listed in the Lansing City Directories of 1902 and 1904, and the photo presumably dates from that same time period. Photo and description from the Michigan Archives.

If you'd like to learn more information about your own family, or about genealogy as a subject area, the society encourages the public to visit. Meetings are held at 9 a.m. the second Saturday of each month at the Michigan Historical Library downtown. Upcoming dates include March 13, April 10, and May 8.

For more information, contact LAAAGS President Melvin Holley at 517-882-1293 or visit their website at www.laaags.org.