Main Street closures and parking restrictions Aug. 2 and beyond

University of Michigan football season is right around the corner, which will again bring game-day Main Street closures and on-street parking restrictions in the stadium area. But before the first home football game, International Champions Cup Soccer is coming to the Big House, Saturday, Aug. 2, 2014, with a 4:06 p.m. game time, during which the Main Street closures and parking restrictions will be in effect.

Parking restrictions
Stadium-area residents are being reminded that on-street parking restrictions will be in place 8 a.m.–midnight on Aug. 2 and on all U-M home football game days, including the Oct. 18 Slippery Rock vs. Mercyhurst game. Go online for a map and details about these parking restrictions: www.a2gov.org/parking.

Street closures
Closures will begin three hours prior to each game — i.e., beginning at 1 p.m. on Aug. 2 — until the end of each game. The exception is southbound South Main Street, which will be closed one hour prior to the games (i.e., beginning at 3 p.m. Aug. 2) until the end of each game. The closures are South Main Street between Pauline and Stadium; East Keech Street between South Main and Greene streets, limiting access to parking permit holders on Greene Street from East Hoover to Keech streets; the westbound right-turn lane on East Stadium Boulevard (onto South Main Street) just south of the Michigan stadium. As with the parking restrictions, these closures will also be in place for all 2014 U-M home football games and the Oct. 18 Slippery Rock vs. Mercyhurst game.

Please also note that the Ann Arbor-Saline Road exit 175 from/to I-94 is under construction, with various lane closures. More information and a detailed map are available online: www.a2gov.org/news/pages/article.aspx?i=20.

Golf for a good cause

Two special golf events are being organized by Ann Arbor police and fire services in support of important causes. The Ann Arbor Firefighters Charities is hosting the 26th annual golf outing to support the University of Michigan Trauma Burn Center Monday, Aug. 4 at Reddeman Farms Golf Course in Chelsea. The four-person scramble includes 18 holes of golf with cart; lunch; awards banquet dinner; silent auction, games and prizes; and more. Programs that benefit from this event include trauma burn prevention, awareness programs and the children's burn camp. For more information, please contact Firefighter Chris Taylor, 734.260.6747 / pegleg186@yahoo.com.
The 23rd annual Ann Arbor Police Charity Golf Outing is Friday, Sept. 5 at Leslie Park Golf Course in Ann Arbor. The event is held in honor of two of the department’s fallen officers, Jason Zogaib and Vada Murray, raising money for The Jason Zogaib Memorial Fund and The Vada Murray Fund for Cancer Research. The four-person scramble includes 18 holes of golf with cart; a shotgun start at 9 a.m.; lunch; dinner; raffle, prizes and games; and more. For more information, please contact Officer Treca Zdybek, 734.777.0695 / TZdybek@a2gov.org, or Lt. Dreslinski, 734.260.7137 / EDreslinski@a2gov.org.

CERT program accepting applications
The Ann Arbor Office of Emergency Management in conjunction with the Washtenaw County Emergency Management Division is accepting applications for the Washtenaw County Community Emergency Response Team training program. The application deadline is Friday, Sept. 12, at 5 p.m.

Weekly training classes for those accepted into the program will be held from 6:30 to 9:30 p.m. starting Sept. 23 through Nov. 4, 2014, with final exercise and graduation on Nov. 8. CERT training is required to become a CERT member. Attendance at all classes is required for certificate completion.

During the course, participants are trained in basic disaster response skills. Classroom and hands-on training will focus on scene assessment, fire safety, emergency medical response, team organization, disaster medical operations, and light search and rescue. Additional topics include local threats, hazards, county and city emergency management initiatives and incident command and terrorism.

Using their training, CERT members can then be called upon to assist following an event when professional responders are not immediately available to help. CERT members also are encouraged to support emergency response agencies by taking a more active role in emergency preparedness projects in their community. Citizens interested in participating in the Washtenaw County CERT course can find an application on the City of Ann Arbor Police Department website, www.a2gov.org/police, or call Crime Prevention Specialist Adele El-Ayoubi, ICPS, with the Ann Arbor Police Department at 734.794.6933. A background investigation will be conducted on all applicants, who will then be notified if accepted into the program.

Outdoor smoking ordinance
A new ordinance, Chapter 64: Smoke-Free Outdoor Public Places, was approved by Ann Arbor City Council and went into effect on May 4, 2014. This ordinance prohibits smoking within 10 feet of any AAATA bus stop, or within 20 feet of an entrance, window or ventilation system of any city building or the Blake Transit Center. The ordinance also has the potential to designate non-smoking areas in some city parks. The Park Advisory Commission is currently working on specific recommendations related to parks, and will make a recommendation to Council in the coming months.

The policy does not restrict smoking or the use of tobacco products in public common areas, such as streets and sidewalks, as long as it is beyond 20 feet of an entrance, window or ventilation system. Signage is posted around the Municipal Center campus to indicate that smoking is prohibited. Read the full ordinance text online: http://a2gov.legistar.com/LegislationDetail.aspx?ID=1652668&GUID=CD4B38A8-5AA6-4B42-80DC-9650678F8536&Options=ID|Text&Search=smoke.

125 years of service for the Ann Arbor Fire Department
The Village of Ann Arbor was founded in 1824, and within 12 years (1836), residents started to organize and provide fire protection. Soon, many fire companies were formed and located throughout the growing village/city of Ann Arbor. In 1889, the city decided to form one organized fire department and began hiring full-time firefighters to staff a fire station at Main and Huron streets. That same year, the remaining volunteer fire companies were disbanded, and the Ann Arbor Fire Department was created.

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In 2014, the Ann Arbor Fire Department celebrates its 125-year anniversary, more than a century of providing service to residents and visitors of the City of Ann Arbor.

The city is also currently conducting a search for a new fire chief. In July, City Council approved a contract with Affion Public to assist the city in the fire chief candidate search. Former fire chief, Chuck Hubbard, retired from the city in January 2014. The Fire Department is overseen by Safety Services Administrator John Seto.

Affion Public also assisted the city during the city administrator candidate search in 2011. The city anticipates that final fire chief candidates will participate in citizen meet and greets and be part of more public engagement opportunities. Details will be shared as they become available.

Good news

- Ann Arbor has been named the best swim city in America, according to a new study commissioned by USA Swimming and Speedo. The city achieved the highest aggregate score in categories such as percentage of active swimmers and swim clubs, number of accessible pools and volume of top-level swimmers from the area. The 50 Top Swim Cities, presented by Speedo, ranked San Jose-Santa Clara, Calif., second, followed by Raleigh-Durham, N.C. (www.usaswimming.org/DesktopDefault.aspx?TabId=2629&Alias=Rainbow&Lang=en)

- Two of the City of Ann Arbor’s gems were included in examiner.com’s Top 10 Reasons to visit Ann Arbor: Argo Canoe Livery and the Ann Arbor Farmers Market. What else made the list? Read on: www.examiner.com/article/lions-and-tigers-and-lakes-oh-mi-10-reasons-to-visit-ann-arbor!

Help provide a safe passage

From the middle of August through the end of October, migrating birds will be flying over Ann Arbor on their way south from their breeding grounds north of us. On clear nights, the birds navigate using the stars. But on cloudy and foggy nights, they attempt to navigate using the lights of tall buildings, putting the birds in danger. Most often, they either crash into lit windows, or they endlessly circle the building until they drop to the ground from exhaustion, where they risk death from the fall or from becoming helpless prey. Please ask the occupants of your building on floors five and above to help prevent these needless deaths by pulling the drapes or closing the shades on windows in lit rooms between 11 p.m. and dawn August through October. Doing so joins Ann Arbor with other major cities in helping migrating birds have a safe passage.


Election Day notes

Polls will be open in Ann Arbor 7 a.m. to 8 p.m. on Tuesday, Aug. 5 for the Statewide Primary Election. For those planning to vote absentee, the Ann Arbor city clerk’s office will be open special hours on Saturday, Aug. 2, 8 a.m. to 2 p.m. for voters to pick up or turn in Statewide Primary Election absentee ballots. The city clerk’s office is located on the second floor of Larcom City Hall, 301 E. Huron St. On-street or lot parking is available off of Ann Street, east of Fifth Avenue.

For candidate and ballot information or to locate your polling place, contact the city clerk’s office at 734.794.6140 or go online: www.a2gov.org/elections. And, to learn more about the candidates for Ann Arbor mayor as well as Council member candidates in wards 1, 2 and 3, and 22nd Circuit Court and County Probate Court judicial candidates, watch the League of Women Voters candidate primary forums on Community Television Network Video on Demand (select “2014 elections” from the pull-down menu): http://a2citiv.pegcentral.com/.
New and improved a2gov.org
After eight years, the City of Ann Arbor now has an updated online presence in the form of its new website, www.a2gov.org. The streamlined and newly designed website allows the city to still provide a tremendous amount of information about multiple services, but in an easier-to-navigate format.
While the website does have a new look and feel, it also includes enhanced user features including:
- Multiple navigation entry points including “enjoy,” “business and democracy” and a “what do you Need” quick-launch menu.
- New calendar system with RSS feed.
- Social media integration.
- Report a problem via the new A2 Fix It online citizen-request app.
- Responsive design: Content conforms to the screen size of the visitor’s device, whether desktop or mobile.
- Increased accessibility to information due to ADA design and compatibility testing.
- Enhanced parks and recreation site.

Many months of planning and testing went into the launch of the new site. The city worked with The Understanding Group (TUG) to assist in developing an information architecture recommendation and functional specifications for a new website navigation structure. TUG also interviewed citizens, businesses, city staff and visitors to gather requirements for the recommended functional specification. End-user tests were then conducted with these groups to ensure TUG’s recommendation addressed stakeholder needs.
While the functional specification from TUG provided the basis for the new website, the city engaged Keystone Media to apply an updated look and feel by way of new global navigation menus and templates, incorporating responsive design and improving content accessibility via ADA-compliant code.
Please note that, although a site map has been submitted to Google to optimize search engine results, it may take several weeks for Google to complete the A2gov search update. The city is closely monitoring inquiries about search engine results and is working with Google to ensure the search engine update is completed.
So, please check out the new website, www.a2gov.org! The city welcomes your feedback and wants to know what you think of the new look and feel: feedback@a2gov.org.

Buhr Park pool goes to the dogs
Celebrate the dog days of summer when Buhr Park Pool opens its gates to four-legged friends for the annual Dog Swim Wednesday, Sept. 3 and Thursday, Sept. 4 from 3 to 8 p.m. Preregistration is required, and spaces are limited, for a half-hour swim time. To register, call 734.794.6234. Buhr Park is located at 2751 Packard Road.
The cost for the first dog is $6 for residents/$7.50 for non residents, and for the second dog, $3 residents/$3.75 non residents. The rain dates are scheduled for Thursday and Friday, Sept. 5 and 6.
A raffle will occur every half hour with prizes, as well as a complimentary hot dog stand for the dogs! This popular event, sponsored by A2 Doggy Adventures, Arbor Dog Daycare, Washtenaw Veterinary Clinic, Camp Bow Wow, Green Pawz, Groom’N Go West, South Arbor Animal Hospital, SnaggleFoot, Wags to Whiskers, The Groom Room and Dog-O-Mat, occurs after Buhr Park Pool closes to the public for the season.
Tips for discarding cooking waste
Recycle Ann Arbor's Drop-Off Station (DOS), 2950 E. Ellsworth Road, now accepts plant-based cooking oil for recycling. Customers often brought cooking oil to the DOS for recycling, and then were disappointed to find that it was not accepted on site. This prompted Recycle Ann Arbor to designate a collection point in the barn. Included with the $3 entry fee, customers can bring up to 5 gallons of cooking oil to the DOS. Customers with more than 5 gallons must pay an additional $0.25 per gallon for each gallon over 5 gallons.

Types of oil accepted: Plant-based oils such as vegetable, sesame, peanut, canola, olive, etc. NO animal-based oils or fats will be accepted. Oils must NOT be mixed with water or meat fats.

Preparing the oil: Customers should take care to bring the oil to the DOS in a strong, sealed container with a tight-fitting lid. Customers are encouraged to use small containers (5 gallons or less), if possible. No barrels or drums will be accepted for collection due to space. If repurposing a juice container or detergent container, it should be thoroughly washed out before filling with the oil.

Placement/collection point: Please use the designated tray located in the barn behind the existing motor oil collection tray. All cooking oil containers should be placed inside the tray to avoid spills. Staff members will be around for assistance if unsure of collection point.

Additional details on this new recycling opportunity can be found on Recycle Ann Arbor's website: www.recycleannarbor.org.

The City of Ann Arbor kicked off the 2014 compost-collection season last April with an expanded program. Cooking waste and plate scrapings are now eligible for curbside compost collection. A common concern when it comes to composting food scraps is odor. Fear no more. Community Television Network takes a closer look at this new composting practice, offering tips to help avoid and reduce odors in compost carts and kitchen compost containers.

CTN podcast
On April 17, 2002, Community Television Network premiered a new series, Ward Talk. Now in its 12th year, Ward Talk features a different Ann Arbor City Council member each month, discussing current city issues and answering residents' questions the third Wednesday of every month on CitiTV Channel 19. The August edition of On Air, CTN’s monthly podcast, welcomes the third and newest Ward Talk host, Bonnie Gabowitz, to the airwaves. Be sure to listen in: www.ctnannarborblog.org!

Dates to remember
Among the many public meetings/events taking place in August, including some featured in articles this month, here are some of the highlights. Go online for a complete list: www.a2gov.org/calendar.

- The city clerk’s office will be open Saturday, Aug. 2, 8 a.m.–2 p.m., for voters to pick up or turn in absentee ballots for the Aug. 5 Statewide Primary Election.
- Celebrate the Ann Arbor Farmers Market’s 95th birthday Saturday, Aug. 2, with activities taking place 11 a.m.–2 p.m. Market hours are 7 a.m.–3 p.m.
- Catch the final summer 2014 Concerts in the Park performance Sunday, Aug. 3 with Kitty Donohoe.
- Tuesday, Aug. 5, polls are open 7 a.m.–8 p.m. for the Statewide Primary Election.
- The regular City Council meeting will take place Thursday, Aug. 7, due to the Statewide Primary Election.
- Testing of the outdoor warning sirens will be conducted Tuesday, Aug. 12 at 1 p.m.

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