

MACOMB COUNTY

1 SOUTH MAIN, MOUNT CLEMENS, MI, 48043 (/locations/)

Mark's Message

Employee Focus

HR helps out military squadron

For Your Benefit

Click for a pdf version of *Macomb Matters*.

Mark's Message (Mark)

On Wednesday, Dec. 7, we held our sixth annual State of the County Address. I truly enjoy this event as it is a great opportunity to talk about our most recent successes in Macomb County. If you attended, thank you for doing so. Your support means a lot. For those of you who missed it, you can still watch it on our county website by clicking here. (<http://executive.macombgov.org/Executive-SOTC-2016>) To view photos of the event, click here [↗ \(https://www.facebook.com/pg/MarkAHackel/photos/?tab=album&album_id=10153956189706651\)](https://www.facebook.com/pg/MarkAHackel/photos/?tab=album&album_id=10153956189706651).

A brief recap:

- More than 1.6 million people have explored Macomb County through Make Macomb Your Home's digital content.
- Macomb County is home to 180 parks, 155 miles of trails, 32 miles of coastline and 41 miles of the Clinton River.
- There are more than 17,000 acres of parks in the county. We have provided more outreach and support this year to develop these vibrant community assets.
- Green Macomb has been awarded an additional \$340K grant from the U.S. Forest Service to plant trees across Macomb County.
- Macomb County, through Macomb Community Action, opened our first Family Resource Center in Warren, serving 12,000 in the first year. The center provides health care for children, educational programs, financial and homeownership counseling, fitness nutrition and more.
- The Area Agency on Aging 1-B was awarded a Blue Ribbon for our senior services programs improving the quality of life for older adults.
- Macomb County's OneMacomb was invited to the White House and given national recognition for cultural vitality.
- There have been seven consecutive years of job growth in Macomb County. We have the most employed in 15 years and are nearing historic highs.
- Advanced manufacturing in Macomb County is a network of more than 1,200 companies and 40,000 highly-skilled employees.
- Since 2010, advanced manufacturing companies have invested more than \$6 billion in Macomb County.

- This year Chrysler Fiat committed \$1.4 billion at the Sterling Heights Assembly Plant.
- Our military installations and 600-plus prime defense contractors continue to push the limits of innovation.
- TARDEC teamed up with General Motors to develop the hydrogen-powered Chevy Colorado Z-H-2.
- Selfridge Air National Guard Base turns 100 years old in 2017!
- The world's largest aerospace companies are now doing business in Macomb County: Boeing, Lockheed Martin, Bell Helicopter and NASA.
- The first year at Jimmy John's Field in Utica was a tremendous success! There were 3,100 fans per game, and eight players were picked up by Major League Baseball clubs.

As you can tell from this list of what was highlighted in the speech, we have a lot to be proud of here in Macomb County. I can't wait to see what 2017 has in store for us. Have a great holiday season everyone! See you in 2017!

Employee Focus (Focus)

Facilities and Operations – Decorating crew

By Sarah Cormier, Macomb County Executive Office



It's easy to walk by the cheerful holiday decorations now adorning various locations throughout our Macomb County government buildings and simply enjoy their beauty without giving much thought into how they got there.

The fact is though that the holiday decorations take time, energy and, most of all, creativity on the part of many staffers in Macomb County's Facilities and Operations (F&O) Department.

According to Estella Shelton, who has been a maintenance supervisor for F&O for 21 years, said her crew is responsible for setting up the decorations in the Macomb County Circuit Court, Macomb County Jail, Clemens Center and the Talmer, Administration and Verkuilen buildings. She added that the holiday decorating commences the week employees come back from the Thanksgiving break. Approximately eight to 10 trees are fluffed out and ornamented and other wall decorations are hung.

“They just go and work together and have fun putting it up,” said Shelton of her staff’s efforts. “The custodians, they do a great job on them.”

To help the crew get into the holiday decorating spirit this year, Shelton held a contest to see who could wrap the prettiest gift. Those presents were then placed under the trees throughout each building.

“We wrap gifts under the tree, have a contest,” explained Shelton. “They wrap their own box up and whomever does the pretties one, they get a prize.”



Lynn Arnott-Bryks, director of the county’s Facilities and Operations Department, said the decorations add something special to the county buildings.

“All this decorating could not be possible without the dedication of our workers who take time out of their busy schedule to bring joy to the season by creating a welcoming atmosphere for the employees and the public,” said Arnott-Bryks. “These individuals do not often receive our thanks and gratitude for a job well done. Thank you for all you do not only during this season but throughout the year.”

Shelton said putting up the decorations is a labor of love for her crew.

“When people come in and it’s so beautiful and it makes some people happy ... it just gives you something to smile about,” she said.

HRLR helps out military squadron (Charity)

By Sarah Cormier, Macomb County Executive Office



Every year at Christmastime, the county’s Human Resources and Labor Relations Department (HRLR) happily donates to a charity. Typically, the charity chosen is the Department of Human Services where the funds can go to either local foster children or underprivileged adults and seniors.

But this year the department wanted to change things up a bit. By nearly a unanimous vote, it was decided to instead sponsor someone from the military. According to Karen Bathanti, HRLR service director, once the recipient was decided, the department reached out to a veteran who connected the department with a local, deployed Marine, Jayson Vrable. According to Jessica Catalano, position control specialist with HRLR, Vrable had originally given “a very small, humble list.” However, after she explained this gift was coming from the entire HRLR department, he asked if he could request more for his squadron, which HRLR readily agreed to.

Gift ideas included: protein bars, tuna fish, beef jerky, peanuts, movies, bar soap, USB cables, batteries, cell phone battery packs and sour gummy worms. The department, which has 30 staffers, also bought Vrable a winter hat, gloves, socks, cell phone rechargeable battery pack and a USB cord. The items had

to be shipped by Dec. 2 at the latest so they would arrive on Dec. 25.

The department was able to raise \$500. Each item was individually wrapped and included Christmas cards from each employee who contributed. In addition to the main collection, the department held a special casual day to help with the shipping costs, which raised an additional \$32.

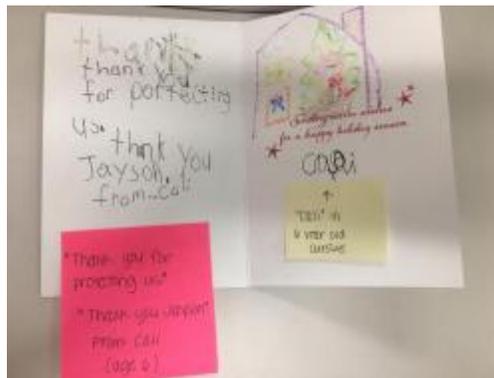
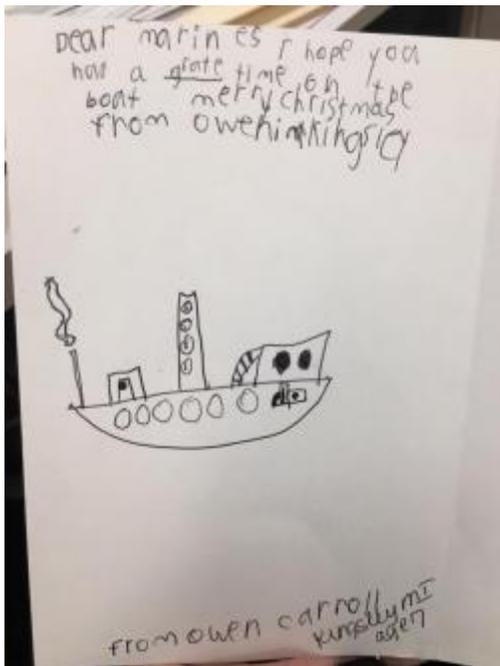
“This made the list a little more realistic and gave us something to really work with. I also thought this spoke volumes about the type of person Jayson is,” said Catalano. “He could have very easily accepted the entire gift for himself, but he was thinking of others and by us paying it forward, he turned around and paid it forward as well.”

Theresa Lemerand, another HRLR staffer, and Catalano shopped at Costco, Meijer and Walmart to gather the requested items. HRLR ended up sending one very large box, a medium box and two flat-rate boxes.

“With our stellar shopping skills, we were able to get the best deals and make the most out of our budget,” said Catalano.

In the boxes, letters of encouragement were also sent.

“We enclosed notes of thanks and appreciation for protecting us ‘back home’ and the sacrifices they are making every day, especially during the holidays while being so very far away from their families,” said Catalano. “Those of us with kids and grandkids had them fill out cards as well; we thought that would make them smile. Nothing beats getting a hand-drawn picture and card from a young child.”



Catalano and Bathanti are both proud of how HRLR came together this year to provide for Vrable and his squad.

“Our department has always been generous when donating to our Christmas program; however, this year it seemed as though our staff was even more generous – if that is even possible,” said Catalano. “I immensely enjoyed giving to those who are less fortunate and take great pride and joy in being able to

provide a little bit of Christmas cheer to those who may not be as fortunate as us. I believe it is very important to pay it forward and extend kindness and generosity in any way possible, no matter how big or small.”

For Your Benefit - Qualifying events (Benefit)

By Human Resources and Labor Relations

With open enrollment now behind us, this may be a good time to review when and why it would be permissible to make changes to benefits during the plan year. An employee may experience a qualifying event, sometimes referred to as a “qualifying life event” or a “status change,” during the plan year that would make them eligible to make certain changes to their benefit plans.

The following, while not all inclusive, are the most common qualifying events:

- marriage
- birth / adoption / guardianship
- divorce / annulment / legal separation
- death
- loss of spouse’s coverage under another employer plan
- court order

When an employee experiences a qualifying event, an employee has a 30-day eligibility period to make changes to their current health care plans. The employee must provide Human Resources with completed paperwork and the required documentation within the eligibility period to start the review process. If the employee has missed the eligibility period deadline, they must wait until annual open enrollment. The forms and a list of the documentation required for a particular status change and the affected benefits resulting from the status change can be found under the Human Resources and Labor Relations forms section on the Macomb County website.

For any benefit related questions, call (586) 469-5650.

Tags

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