



May 3, 2018

Meetings

This Just In...

Events / Things to Do

Business

Around Town

At Home

Meetings

Beautification Commission - Monday, May 7, 8:30 a.m. - Council Chambers - City Hall

City Council - Monday, May 7, 7 p.m. - Council Chambers - City Hall

Youth Assistance - Tuesday, May 8, 8 a.m. - Community Center

Arts Commission - Wednesday, May 9, 7 p.m. - Art House

Housing Commission - Wednesday, May 9, 6 p.m. - Allen Terrace

[Agendas and minutes are available by clicking here](#)

This Just In...

Teacher turned entrepreneur to help her son learn to live with autism



Photos by Liz Cezat

Rachelle Vartanian is thrilled to be in a historic home in Mill Race Village - now the new Living and Learning Center.

Rachelle Vartanian had a compelling purpose to open a business in Northville in 2014 in the former Stamp Peddler retail location at 150 Mary Alexander Court. She was racing against the clock to get help for her autistic son, who had been diagnosed with [Asperger's syndrome](#).

Not finding the resources her then 14-year-old son needed at schools or counseling centers to interact confidently with peers, teachers and others, Vartanian realized that she had to create it.

That place is the Living and Learning Center, which offers music therapy, art therapy, a range of programs, and a popular drop-in center on Friday and Saturday nights where autistic teens and young adults practice their social skills. They are joined by neurotypical (normal) people - in this case, high schools and college kids who serve as mentors to elevate the social skills of their autistic peers.

It's a bit like group dating, friend-making and confidence-building all rolled into an energetic evening, explained Vartanian. "Last week, we had 30 clients and 12 mentors." (Clients are people with autism and related challenges who use the services at the center.) Sometimes even the mentors make a new friend there.

She opened the center as a business but turned it into a nonprofit in late 2017 to draw financial support from individuals, philanthropists and businesses, and through

grants. Her biggest need today is getting more funding. It's expensive to offer a spectrum of services with the help of 15 staff members while keeping fees affordable.



Pam Travis, assistant director, shows the iPad base in the reception area where clients sign in.

"I have a passion for working with kids with behavioral issues," she said, and that was true even before her son's diagnosis.

Before starting the center, Vartanian had worked for 20 years as a special education teacher. Despite her experience as a teacher, she was never formally trained to handle the needs or understand the dynamics of an individual with autism. To succeed as her son's advocate, she earned a master's degree in autism.

What she lacks in business skills, she makes up for in determination and community engagement. She convinced a friend who knows business principles to serve as her mentor as she creates a sustainable model to change people's lives for the better - not only individuals with autism, but also their parents, who no longer have to worry about them, and the community, which interacts with them. Their corporate sponsor is Planet Fitness, which even contributed elbow grease by painting rooms.

The center relocated to a historic house at 315 Griswold in Mill Race Village. She's excited about the new space because they now have a yard for gardening and outdoor games. Since moving in April, she found, "Things are magically happening."

Her optimism for the success of clients is reflected back at her with a view of the

apartments across the street from the center. The goal is to help clients achieve independent living -whether that means getting married and having a family or holding down a job and living in their own apartment or house. Yet, she laments that too many recent graduates with autism do nothing after high school and many are still living with their parents.

Vartanian has reached out to local retailers and restaurants in Northville, including Red Dot Coffee Shop, Rebecca's, Salon 170, and nearby communities, including Fresh Thyme and Nest to Nest, to secure work experience and training for clients.

Vartanian and her team of therapists help clients learn positive behavioral traits to use on the job - for example, greeting a customer at the store and thanking them for their purchase. Many of the clients are highly intelligent but need cues and tips for how to speak in a normal tone, use eye contact without staring, and listen as the person they are talking to responds to them. If clients do well, they are closer to being hired.

Another strategy is to capitalize on an individual's talents while addressing limitations through behavioral techniques demonstrated at the center. Clients receive individualized plans to address their unique needs.

One of the most effective programs show short videos of an appropriate social interaction to a group that is similar in age, gender and ability. The clients then practice the skill with one other and are evaluated by them as well. They not only get feedback but they also observe how others in the group perform the new behavior. Then, they go out into the community - to a grocery store, coffee shop, or local park - to practice the technique with whoever happens to be there. Vartanian's son has adjusted well to the social support he's receiving. The video model is one of his favorite learning formats.

A longtime resident of Livonia, Vartanian sold her home to open the center. She finds Northville to be an ideal location because of its walkable streets, abundance of downtown shopping, and easy access to parks and trails. This works well for a population that typically doesn't drive cars.

People come to the center from Northville and throughout southeastern Michigan. One boy was brought over from India, traveling with his mother and staying with relatives, for a three-month experience at the center. To date, the center has worked with more than 500 families and handles 10 intakes a week. For more information, call 248-308-3592 or [visit the website](#).



One of the families of a client built this fairy garden on the property at 315 Griswold overlooking the river.

Survey results show that people like our communications but there's room for improvement

A communications survey conducted from March 7 to April 13 received 234 responses. The reason for the survey was to learn whether people are reading City News, a weekly e-newsletter; and Northville Matters, a quarterly print newsletter mailed to all city residents; and whether people are following us on Facebook and Twitter. Of each of these formats and platforms, we asked respondents what they liked about it and how we could improve.

The boil water advisory drew the most comments. While this wasn't a question on the survey, the situation occurred while the survey was underway. Due to changes in the day, time and duration of the boil water advisory, the start/finish time of the boil water advisory changed over the course of two days, which was confusing. We apologize for lapses in communicating the event.

The advisory was a fast-changing story. Here's how we communicated it:

- Sent a press release to the media, who reported it throughout the day, while it was in effect and when it was over. (This was our priority and meant that social media posts came after.)
- Put a notice on our website's home page.
- Posted to our Facebook and twitter feeds.

- Put out a special bulletin of City News and also had an update in the weekly issue.
- The DDA and Parks and Recreation put out their own bulletin to ensure we were reaching a wide audience.
- Had a recorded line at City Hall with up-to-date information about the advisory for after-hour calls.
- Had one point of contact internally, acting DPW director, who returned all calls promptly.
- DDA's Lori Ward visited several business owners to keep them up-to-date.

Onto our publications. Many did not know that City News existed. We need to do a better job of promoting that. You can sign up on the home page of our website. Here is the link: <http://tinyurl.com/gpwl5lf>.

Nearly 90 percent of respondents want to read about Northville businesses. Of city services, respondents most want to read about police dept. news, roads and sidewalks, garbage collection and election news. For feature articles, respondents ranked special event recaps as their favorites, followed by City Council recaps and environmental news.

Those who read profiles most want to read about business owners, the mayor and City Council members. Of those who read about civic organizations and places, most want to read about Northville District Library, Maybury State Park and the Chamber of Commerce.

Regarding photos, respondents want to see more photos of people at events. We will try to do this on social media and City News. Other photos that people want to see are neighbors and friends, community leaders and city leaders - in that order. Ninety percent of respondents said they read photo captions.

Northville Matters, the print quarterly newsletter mailed to residents, drew mostly positive responses. Survey-takers said they read it and like the way it's organized. Respondents most prefer reading about downtown Northville, followed by garbage and recycling, and neighborhood services. More than 60% like reading about the Historic District and the arts.

On social media, only 40 percent follow us on Facebook and most respondents don't follow us on Twitter. If you do use this platform, let us know how we can improve our posts.

Most people who do follow us on social media like to read about community events (85%), and city services (63%), followed by 50% who want to read about their neighbors and friends. Most of our followers say they learn about city services and events from our posts.

One respondent said Facebook was too restrictive. We recently changed the settings to allow tagging posts and photos. We have always allowed comments and direct messages. We invite you to engage with us by posting comments and

questions on social media.

Thank you to all who took the time to answer the survey. If you made a comment on the survey and expected a response, please note that the survey was anonymous so there was no way to directly respond to you. However, if you want to speak to us about your concerns or suggestions, please contact Liz Cezat, communications manager, at 248-305-2703 or lcezat@ci.northville.mi.us.

The Farmer's Market opens today for the season Thursdays, 8 a.m. - 3 p.m.



Photo by Liz Cezat

Shop at the [Northville Farmers' Market](#) at the corner of 7 Mile and Sheldon Road for a bounty of delicious, locally-sourced food for your table from farmers and merchants. It's a festive day with 70 stalls of Michigan-made and Michigan-grown products, along with booths of crafts, art, jewelry, furniture and more. Gardeners can shop for plants and flowers and ask questions of master gardeners. Park on site or across the street at Northville Downs. This event is sponsored by the Northville Chamber of Commerce.

Events / Things to Do

It's time for Rouge Rescue 2018!



Spend a few hours with your friends and neighbors to improve the Rouge River and make a difference in your community.

Work days will be held across the region. Most sites will work on Sat. May 19. A few sites are working earlier and are listed below. Please [visit us online](#) or call 313-792-9621 for the most up-to-date list. Volunteers should wear sturdy, closed-toe shoes, long sleeves, and long pants. Expect to get a little dirty, have fun, and meet others who care about the river. Free t-shirt provided to all participants (limited quantity at each site).



May 10-13, 2018
Spring Carnival
Northville Downs Parking Lot

The carnival returns to Northville, rides and amusements for all ages!

Carnival hours are:

Thursday, May 10, 4-10 p.m.

Friday, May 11, 4-11 p.m.

Saturday, May 12, noon-11p.m.

Sunday, May 13, 1-9 p.m.

Located in the Northville Downs parking lot.

[Click here for more information.](#)



Northville Historical Society 2018 Lecture Series
"Early Organized Crime in Detroit"
May 15, 2018

Though detectives denied it, the Italian mafia was operating in Detroit as early as 1900, and the city was forever changed. Bootleggers controlled the Detroit River and created a national distribution network for illegal booze during Prohibition. Gangsters, cops and even celebrities fell victim to the violence. Professor James Buccellato spent years researching and writing a book discussing the rise of organized crime in Detroit. Join us to hear this expert discuss this fascinating subject.



James Buccellato is a faculty member in the Department of Criminology and Criminal Justice at Northern Arizona University. James taught in the Irvin D. Reid Honors College at Wayne State University in Detroit, MI for several years. He researches and writes about the politics of crime. His work appears in peer-reviewed journals, crime anthologies and national news websites.

His book, Early Organized Crime in Detroit: Vice, Corruption and the Rise of the Mafia, was released on The History Press in late 2015. The book explores Detroit's struggle with gang violence, public corruption and the politics of vice during the tumultuous first half of the 20th century and includes rarely published images from the era.

The lecture will be at the New School Church at Mill Race Historical Village, 215 Griswold St, Northville at 7:00pm. The lecture is free of charge although donations are accepted at the door to help defray costs.



Armed Forces Day Concert/Events
May 18

A benefit concert by the band Killer Flamingos, with all proceeds going to [Homes For Our Troops](#), is scheduled for 7 p.m. Friday, May 18, at Ford Field, Griswold and Main streets. HFOT is a privately funded 501(c)3 nonprofit organization that builds and donates specially adapted custom homes nationwide for severely injured post-9/11 veterans to enable them to rebuild their lives. All ages are welcome for this family-friendly night. Food and beverage will be available for purchase. No outside food or drinks are allowed. Northville American Legion Post 147 will be hosting a beer tent at Ford Field beginning at 5:30 p.m.

Free parking is available at city lots off Cady Street, Dunlap Street, at Northville Downs and in the downtown parking deck. Admission is free. Donations are welcome. [Click here to make a donation online.](#)

Armed Forces Day will be celebrated Saturday, May 19, and several events are planned throughout the Northville area. The celebration is largely organized by the Northville High School baseball program.



May 16-19

The Remembering Our Fallen exhibit will be displayed Wednesday through Saturday, May 16-19, at Northville High School, 45700 Six Mile Road, in its Michigan debut to remind Americans of the ultimate sacrifice made by those who died from wounds suffered in Iraq and Afghanistan while serving in the military. The memorial includes 31 Tribute Towers with military and personal photos of almost 5,000 of our nation's fallen since Sept. 11, 2001. This

memorial was unveiled nationally Sept. 7, 2017, at the steps of the Lincoln Memorial in Washington, D.C.

Organizers are still asking for help in contacting Gold Star families to include every single American who has died since 9/11 in The War on Terror. There is no fee to families; they are asked to go to www.RememberingOurFallen.org and provide basic information and two photos of their fallen loved one.

A directory of the fallen, along with the tour schedule and additional information, is available at www.RememberingOurFallen.org.



May 19

The fourth annual benefit 5K run, also with all proceeds going to HFOT, is scheduled for Saturday, May, 19. Registration is 7 - 8:15 a.m., with the run set for 8:30 a.m. in the east parking lot at Northville High School, 45700 Six Mile Road.

Every participant gets a dry-fit tech T-shirt and a medal. Gift cards from Gazelle Sports will be

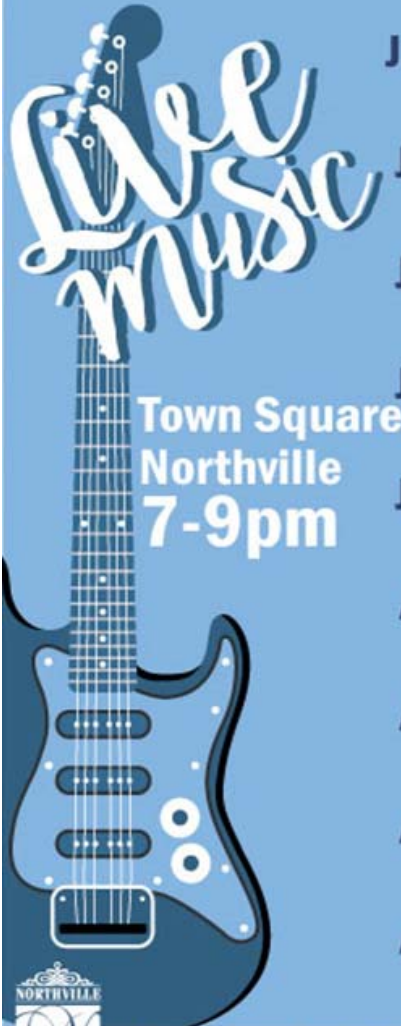
awarded for overall top male and female runners, as well as awards for top runners in every age group.

Cost is \$35 (\$20 for veterans) through May 16 at <http://www.nhsarmedforcesday.com/5k> or \$40 (\$25 for veterans) the day of the race.

Other scheduled events include a veterans vs. Northville Fire and Police softball game and a Northville High School varsity baseball doubleheader. For more information on all events, go to www.NHSArmedForcesDay.com.

NORTHVILLE FRIDAY NIGHT CONCERTS

Presenting Sponsor



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MAY 25 Northville High School Jazz Band

Sponsors: RE/MAX Dream Properties - Lisa Hall

JUNE 22 Theo Gridiron - Pure Detroit Soul

Sponsors: Tom Holzer Ford, Community Financial Credit Union

JUNE 29 Mr. Moody - Party Music

Sponsors: Tom Holzer Ford, Varsity Lincoln

JULY 06 Randy Brock - Blues

Sponsors: Tom Holzer Ford, St. Mary Mercy

JULY 13 Social Bandits - Rock/Funk/Blues

Sponsors: Tom Holzer Ford, Varsity Lincoln

JULY 20 Gia Warner - Rock Classic

Sponsors: Tom Holzer Ford, Varsity Lincoln, St. Mary Mercy

JULY 27 Groove Therapy - Classic Rock

Sponsors: Tom Holzer Ford, Community Financial Credit Union, LoveWell Home Care, Varsity Lincoln, Monroe Bank & Trust

AUG 3 Buy Michigan Now Festival

No Concert

AUG 10 Shawn Riley - Celtic /Classic Rock

Sponsors: Tom Holzer Ford, Varsity Lincoln, Monroe Bank & Trust

AUG 17 Paddle Bots - Soul/Pop

Sponsors: Tom Holzer Ford, Monroe Bank & Trust, St. Mary Mercy

AUG 24 Steve King & The Dittilies - Classic Rock

Sponsors: Tom Holzer Ford, Varsity Lincoln, Monroe Bank & Trust

Stage Sponsor:



PROVIDENCE PARK HOSPITAL



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flower SALE 2018

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WHEN
FRIDAY
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SATURDAY
MAY 26
9AM - 5PM

WHERE
DOWNTOWN
NORTHVILLE



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For more information call the Northville Chamber of Commerce
248-349-7640 or visit our website: www.northville.org



May 26
Orin Rocks 85th Anniversary Block Party
Downtown Northville
6 - 11 p.m.

Join Orin Jewelers immediately after the flower sale to celebrate 85 years in business. Main Street from Center to Hutton will be closed for live music, food and dancing in the streets. Free and open to the public.

Business

Need to pay delinquent personal property taxes?

Here's an easy way to make online payments for delinquent personal property taxes in Wayne County. [Click here](#) to get started; note that convenience fees apply.

Online payments for utility bills and taxes

Online payments for taxes and utilities is available on the City's website offered through Point & Pay, for a convenience fee. To access this option, please [click here](#). On the left side of your screen, select either Property Tax and Assessing Lookup or Utility Bill Lookup. Search for your property and click on the "Pay Online" button. You will then be re-directed to the Point & Pay website to make a payment.

Fees: Please note there is a convenience fee paid directly to Point & Pay if you choose to utilize this option:

Credit cards: 3% Fee (minimum \$2)

E-Checks: Flat fee of \$3, up to \$10,000 or Flat fee of \$10, anything over \$10,000

Around Town

Historic Resource Council 2017 Directory is available

City Hall has a copy of the Historic Resource Council 2017 Directory, which lists architects, contractors, suppliers and others who specialize in historic preservation, rehabilitation and adaptation of historic structures and houses. This directory will interest residents of historic homes, owners of businesses in historic buildings and others who own property or are involved in the City's Historic District. The book can be viewed at City Hall and [online](#) at Michigan Historic Preservation Network's website. (see the publications page).

Streetlights

Streetlight out? Businesses and residents can [report streetlight outages online](#). This link goes directly to the DTE streetlight outage reporting tool.

Businesses and residents who have a DTE wooden power pole on or adjacent to their property are eligible to have outdoor protective lighting installed on the pole to illuminate their private property. Residents may even qualify for no up-front cost installation. Please call 866-503-0627 and leave a detailed message that includes name, address, city, zip code and phone number with area code for a DTE representative to contact you within 3 business days.

At Home

Brush collection program

For its compost program, residents can place branches at the curb without bundling or bagging them. Branches 6 feet long and up to 6 inches in diameter can be placed at the curb for removal by the City's solid waste collection contractor.

Every Tuesday, year-round, a crew will come through each neighborhood and chip any branches left at the curb.

Branches must be in the street right-of-way (between the street and the sidewalk). Simply stack the branches neatly behind the curb with the cut ends facing the street.

This program benefits residents who do a lot of tree and bush trimming, and also expedites clean-up efforts after storms.

The City's compost program does not accept roots, stump, dirt, lumber, railroad ties or any wood with metal in it. Residents can dispose of firewood pieces and stumps with their normal weekly garbage (Maximum 35 gallon cans and 60 lb. weight limit).

Collection crews will not rake up small branches after the large brush piles are removed. Residents may have to rake these areas afterwards.

Sewage backups

Homeowners may experience an overflow or backup of a sewage disposal system or storm water system. If you intend to file a claim with the City, [please check our website for details](#) or call the Department of Public Works at 248-449-9930.

When presenting a written claim, you will be required to provide the following items:

1. Copies of receipts for cleaning costs, plumbing bills or other bills.
2. List of the damaged items and receipts to prove the ages of your items.
Reimbursement for the actual cash value of damaged items is the maximum

amount payable.

3. Please make an attempt to provide pictures of anything you wish to claim that was damaged due to the sewer backup.

The filing of a claim does not guarantee reimbursement.

Most homeowner's insurance will not cover sewage backups, but insurance can often be obtained as an added item. Ask your insurance provider about this option. Also, consider having a plumber install a check valve - backflow preventer - to help minimize the risk of backups and related damage.

Northville Police Department has free gun safety locks

Don't take the risk of having an unlocked gun get into the wrong hands - especially if you have young children and teenagers. Stop in at the Northville Police Department lobby to get your free gun safety lock. There are no forms to fill out and no waiting.

Get social with City Hall online

Follow our Facebook page ([Northville City Hall, Michigan](#)) and our Twitter account [@NorthvilleCity](#).



You will be able to see stories, photos and videos of the City's people, places and events. We'll let you know about City services, such as trash pick up, payment of taxes and utility bills, and roads under construction. Plus, we want to hear from you. Share your photos and comments; ask questions. If you "like" the Northville Facebook page, you'll see our posts in your news feed.

Add your name to the City News mailing list

New subscribers to City News can sign up below (if you are viewing the e-mail version). You can also [sign up on the City of Northville website](#) (homepage, left hand column under Quick Links)

If you have comments or requests for specific news items, please e-mail Liz Cezat, Communications Manager, at lcezat@ci.northville.mi.us.

City of Northville, Michigan | 248-349-1300 | [Website](#)

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