



June 2019 | Volume 9 | Issue 6

## Local students get creative with the plow



*Students in grades 3-4 pose in front of a plow they painted at Alward Elementary School.*



Students at Alward Elementary School in Georgetown Township let their creative juices flow recently with one of the Ottawa County Road Commission's snow plows.

Students in grades 3-5 at the school recently painted one of our plows.

The plow features a colorful springtime design, one that will certainly stand out when we're using it to clear roads next winter!

Before being brought back to the Hudsonville garage for storage, the students thanked OCRC staff for letting them use the plow as a canvas, and posed for a picture in front of their finished masterpiece.

If you have a class interested in painting one of our plow blades, please contact Ottawa County Road Commission Communications Administrator Alex Doty at 616-842-5400 for more information.

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## Know your road maintenance: Chip seal



The seal coat treatment process, sometimes called a “chip seal,” is a key part of the Road Commission Preventive Maintenance Program to maximize the service life of our road network.

Today’s technically advanced seal coats

are economical surface treatments designed to protect and prolong the life of pavements for up to an additional 10 years.

In a single seal coat process, an asphalt binder is sprayed onto the pavement, then immediately covered by a single layer of uniformly sized aggregate. The new chip sealed surface is then rolled to seal the aggregate to the binder, broomed, fog sealed, striped, and ready for traffic.

Seal coats provide a quick and reliable surface treatment that will seal out the damaging effect of water, help to increase skid resistance, improve aesthetics and delineation, and provide a new wearing surface to protect the pavement for years to come.

By comparison to other road surface treatments, seal coat surfacing is one of the most economical, and long-lasting options available to the Road Commission.

This year’s seal coat program is anticipated to start in June and includes more than 48 miles of roads within Crockery, Polkton and Wright townships. More information about the seal coat surfacing program can be found within the [OCRC Strategic Improvement Plan](#), located on our website.



## Passing on the right...isn't right

Drivers on M-104 in the Spring Lake area may notice increased patrols from the Ottawa County Sheriff's Office.

During the safety campaign, deputies will be watching for speeding, seat belt use and other traffic violations. There is one violation, however, that they will keep a closer eye on: passing on the right using the shoulder.

You may not even know that moving onto the shoulder and 'passing on the right' alongside a car waiting to make a left turn is both dangerous and illegal. In Michigan, it is only legal to pass on the right if your vehicle stays on the main traveled portion of the roadway.

Shoulders, whether paved or gravel, are not the roadway. Passing on the shoulder is also dangerous. Cyclists and pedestrians use these shoulders regularly and find themselves in harm's way if drivers pass on the shoulder.

Passing on the shoulder can set up accidents as well, since the next driver in line has less time to react to the vehicle that is waiting to turn left. To remind drivers of the law, MDOT will be installing signs on M-104. Drivers cited for the infraction face a \$125 fine and three points on their record.

“In the last couple of years there seems to be an increase in traffic and speed, and a decrease in following traffic laws. I'm grateful that our local townships, Sheriff and MDOT have been willing to address M-104 traffic, and I'm encouraged by the steps that are being taken,” said Dave MacKenzie, owner of Hortech Inc., one of the businesses located along M-104.

Since May 1, the Ottawa County Sheriff's Office, with help from the Michigan State Police, has been patrolling the area more often thanks to an \$8,000 safety grant from the Michigan Department of Transportation.

This is not an effort by the Sheriff's Office to drum up more dollars for the department. In fact, the initiative was spurred by business owners and residents in the area. Concerns about the

practice of "vehicles passing on the right shoulder" came into the office, initiating a meeting between law enforcement officers, MDOT, and local community members in February.

Together, a plan was created to increase awareness and improve safety. The extra enforcement is planned to continue through the summer.



*15210 M-104 Spring Lake, Michigan. Google Street View, July 2018.*

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## OCRC welcomes new finance administrator



The OCRC is pleased to welcome Steve Sypniewski to its administrative staff.

Sypniewski has been hired as a Finance Administrator, and began working here on Monday, May 13.

A native of the northwest side of Grand Rapids, Sypniewski received his business degree from Grand Valley State University in 1997.

Professionally, he has spent much of his time in the technology sector, having worked for Verizon Wireless, and most recently Kraft Business Systems Inc., and also spent some time in the construction industry.

Sypniewski said he is eager to get acclimated to the job and to utilize his skills to work with the OCRC team.

Sypniewski lives in Coopersville and has an 8-year-old. Outside of work, Sypniewski is a self-described car fanatic, having been on the Hot Rod Power Tour.

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**Important Dates:**

**June 6, 2019 | 9AM | Board Meeting**

**June 20, 2019 | 9AM | Board Meeting**



14110 Lakeshore Drive  
Grand Haven, Michigan 49460  
616-842-5400

Office Hours: Monday-Friday; 7:30AM-4PM

The Ottawa County Road Commissioners:

Tom Bird | Tom Elhart | Betty Gajewski | Tim Grifhorst | Jim Miedema

Managing Director: Brett Laughlin