

2010 State of the City Address

Members of City Council, City staff and citizens of Oakwood:

In 2009, the City of Oakwood marked its 101st anniversary. Oakwood continues to be “The Premier Residential Community in the Dayton and Miami Valley Region.” Our new website, welcome2oakwood.com, represents an effort to market our city to prospective people moving to the area. We are grateful for the efforts of Oakwood residents Perry Martin and Ted O’Conner, and for Joanne McPortland, all of whom assisted in this endeavor.

Why is Oakwood the region’s premier residential community? It is simple. It is our neighborhoods, our schools and library, city services, public safety, recreation and leisure; but most of all it is our citizens.

Neighborhoods

Whether it is an American Foursquare on Patterson Road, a Sears’s kit home in southeast Oakwood, a Georgian Revival mansion on Oakwood Avenue, a classic Cape Cod on Oak Knoll Drive or a stately Tudor in the Schantz

historic district, we have outstanding diversity in housing choices.

Two homes bear special mention this year. In April the Talbott-Greene estate on Runnymede was chosen the 2009 Designer's Show House by the Dayton Philharmonic Volunteer Association.

Hawthorne Hill was approved for addition to the National Park Service list of important national sites and is one of six sites in the Dayton Aviation Heritage National Historical Park. Hawthorn Hill continues to be owned by the Wright Family Foundation and operated by Dayton History. The National Park Service will add expertise in restoration and preservation of this great landmark.

Schools/Library

Everyone knows Oakwood has great schools, but did you know this about Oakwood schools?

- Oakwood schools have received the top rating of “Excellent with Distinction” from the State of Ohio since the inception of the rating system.
- Oakwood High School ranked in the top 3% nationally in College Readiness.

- Oakwood High School earned the State Superintendent's Schools of Distinction Award based on the achievement of our students with disabilities.
- \$8 million in scholarships/grants were awarded to the class of 2009.

Wright Memorial Public Library celebrated their 70th anniversary in its historic building in 2009. They also received a 3 star rating as one of "America's Star Libraries. The award was based on circulation, number of visitors, program attendance and internet usage.

The state of Ohio reduced its library funding in 2009. In turn, our citizens supported this great community asset by passing with an overwhelming margin a property tax levy to replace the lost revenue.

City Services

The city services offered to Oakwood residents are unsurpassed. We continue to provide weekly backyard trash collection, year-around curb collection of yard waste, fall leaf collection and spring mulch delivery and sidewalk snow removal. In addition, our water rates are the 5th lowest of the 67 Miami Valley jurisdictions. We were honored as a Tree City USA for the 27th consecutive year. Our Johnny Appleseed program has planted over

2,500 trees in Oakwood since the inception of this program.

Public Safety

Our public safety department is unique because all our officers are cross-trained and state-certified in law enforcement, fire fighting and emergency medical services. In 2009, we upgraded our state-of-the-art communications center to further enable our personnel to respond quickly to any emergency. Our police response time is 2.3 minutes. Our fire response time is 4.3 minutes; the national standard is 6 minutes. Our medic response time is 3.7 minutes; the national standard is 13 minutes.

Recreation/Leisure

Where else will you find in a community of 2.2 square miles the parks and green space offered in Oakwood? We offer three neighborhood parks, Shafor Park, Orchardly Park and Fairridge Park. Smith Gardens celebrated its 35th anniversary in August with a memorable blanket concert.

Our natural areas include Loy Gardens, Elizabeth Gardens, Houk Stream and Centennial Park. In 2009, Francine's Garden was completed in Centennial Park. Under the leadership of Irv Bieser and Cindy Garner and

with special advice and financial support from Dr. Ludolph van der Hoeven a beautiful addition to our green space was created for the benefit of all citizens.

Our recreation facilities include the Oakwood Community Center and Gardner pool, Creager field, Irving field, Old River fields and Mack Hummon Stadium.

In June, Oakwood City Council established a 25 member Athletic/Recreation Master Plan Committee. The committee's purpose is to assist City Council, staff and our outside consultants in preparing a guide for operations, maintenance and capital improvements of Oakwood's athletic and recreation facilities for the next 5 to 10 years.

We will conduct numerous face to face and telephone interviews with citizens, community meetings and surveys to receive advice and feedback and expect to approve a final plan in 2010.

People

Oakwood's strength is its people. Just consider some of the events in which our citizens participated in 2009.

- In January, several hundred people attended the 6th annual Kettering-Oakwood Martin Luther King, Jr. Breakfast.
- In May, over 700 walkers participated in the 8th Annual Breast Cancer 5K CARE Walk. The event raised over \$17,000 to support a cure for breast cancer.
- That Day in May, sponsored by the City and the Oakwood Rotary Club continued the tradition of the pancake breakfast, 5K and 10K runs, community parade, games, rides, refreshments and displays.
- In July, hundreds of people participated in the Oakwood Relay for Life. The event raised over \$60,000 for cancer research.

In November, our City Manager summarized why Oakwood is a great place to live, play and raise a family. He opined:

- We have a city where people truly care about one another.
- We have a community that truly values important things like education and taking care of property.
- We have citizens who are willing to pay the extra costs to have this special Oakwood community. As

former city manager J. David Foell once said, “It’s not a question of how much you pay in taxes; the question is whether you receive good value for each dollar spent”

- We have citizens who get involved in what we do and in how we do it.
- We are a community that is very generous when it comes to supporting regional efforts.

Oakwood has always been blessed with leaders who believe in community service. We acknowledge two such leaders tonight. Carlo McGinnis served our City and our region for 24 years. Judy Cook served our City and our region for 20 years. Their service and commitment to the City of Oakwood will be sorely missed. We are pleased that Rob Stephens and Anne Hilton have joined Oakwood City Council. Rob and Anne are lifelong residents of Oakwood, graduates of Oakwood City Schools, and believe our city is the premier residential community in Dayton and the Miami Valley region.

We are also pleased to have Vice Mayor Steve Byington and Member of Council Stanley Castleman representing our City and our region. In February, Mr. Byington was appointed to the First Tier Suburbs Council of the

National League of Cities. He represents our City on the First Suburbs Consortium and the Miami Valley Regional Planning Commission. Mr. Castleman represents our City on the Miami Valley Communications Council.

Our nation and our state face serious fiscal problems. There is a nationwide debate about the size and role of government in our country. Regardless of the outcome of this debate, Oakwood City Council represents you and will provide the services you believe are necessary. We will manage the resources given to us prudently. We will also ensure our city staff continues to provide our citizens the high quality and personal services they have come to know and expect.

With the help of City Council, city staff and the citizens of Oakwood, we will continue to be well governed, well managed and financially strong. Thank you for the opportunity to serve you.