

## Timebank wins honors for Lathrup Village

BY PAT MURPHY • ECCENTRIC STAFF WRITER • APRIL 9, 2009

A program that enables neighbors to help neighbors has won recognition for Lathrup Village.

The city's Timebank program — enabling residents to “bank” work hours — has been named regional Community Service Award winner in Region One of the Michigan Municipal League, which includes Southfield, Sterling Heights and other Oakland communities.

The program will compete with those from communities in six other regions at the league's state conference in Kalamazoo in September.

Here's how Timebank works. Residents perform work for another person or household, thereby building up hours of service that can be redeemed from other depositors who perform similar tasks.

More than 70 Lathrup Village residents have signed up for the program under which they do chores for neighbors — collectively or individually.

On April 18, for example, Timebank has two group projects. At one home in the 28000 block of Lathrup Boulevard, residents will gather to wash windows. Another group of residents will do yard work at a home in the 27000 block of Lathrup Village, where they are also invited to bring a dish to pass.

At other times, residents have done chores to bank hours individually, with the understanding they will get services in return.

One resident, for example, agreed to do yard work for a 16-year-old, in exchange for the teen's tutoring him on the use of a computer.

“We really enjoy it,” said Kim Hodge, co-coordinator of the program. “We help our neighbors at the same time we get to know more about the community.”

So far, there have been no deadbeat depositors and no overdrawn accounts, Hodge said.

“We seem to have more givers in Lathrup Village than takers,” she said. “That says something about our community.”

The program is not costly, said Richard Reeves, the other co-coordinator. The benefits are easily understood — and redeemed — and the program can be emulated by other communities.

More information is available at the Timebank Web site — [www.lathrupvillagetimebank.org](http://www.lathrupvillagetimebank.org) — created by a 16-year-old participant.

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