

# Grass Lake



# express



SEPTEMBER 2021

## SESQUICENTENNIAL EVENTS

Mark the date, Saturday, September 11 for the Whistlestop Depot's **Heritage Day celebration** on Michigan Avenue and the **Sesquicentennial Community Fair** at the Events Pavillion—together commemorating Grass Lake's 150<sup>th</sup> birthday with prize-winner contests, demonstrations, vendor sales, a silent auction, a taste of history and family-friendly events. Contest registration is earlier but both events open at 10 am. The Beard and Mustache contests will be judged at 11. Check out the winners. Fun continues through the day with Square dancing with instruction mid-afternoon

plus music throughout the day and evening. Flyers have the details. The Downtown Development Authority (DDA) provided seed money for many of the Sesquicentennial items over this year in its ongoing efforts to promote growth in our community.

The **Let Freedom Ring Car show** sponsored by Grass Lake's VFW is scheduled for the next Saturday, September 25, on Michigan Ave, west of Lake Street.

**The Common Threads Quilt Show** will take place at the Grass Lake Federated Church on Friday and Saturday, September 17-18 (10 am - 5 pm).

Grass Lake Historical Society is holding **Coe House Fabrics Galore II** on both Saturday, the 18th and Sunday the 19th, from 11am -5 pm.



## GOVERNMENT



### Changing of the Guard:

Village Manager, David Trent officially resigned on August 11, leaving Grass Lake on September 1. The President and Village Council immediately began the process to identify the best qualified candidate to lead our Village forward. Mr. Jim Stormont, former Grass Lake Township Supervisor, has agreed to provide needed expertise during the interim; all services will run smoothly.

Check out the job posting on the Village website with this QR code.



On his last work day and at a DDA Informational meeting, Mr Trent delivered a state-required, address about its activities—those already funded or with plans to fund throughout 2021. Grass Lake wishes him success in his new position as Manager for the Village of Almont, Michigan.

### Road Construction Projects:

The repaving of S. Union Street between Michigan Avenue and the east end of the village limits near the Grass Lake Middle School is complete; the water-related road work on **Watson Street** between W. Michigan Avenue and Water Street is

near completion. Related street projects in progress include the DDA-funded sidewalk leveling Phase 2 for West of Lake Street and sidewalk repairs on Mt. Hope Road near Dollar General.

**Truck purchase:** The Grass Lake Department of Public Works awaits delivery of a new, and much needed, truck with crane. The multi-skilled expertise of our staff has held the fleet together but not without numerous delays due to time-taking repairs. Crew safety prompted Council's interest in the purchase of a newer vehicle and recently, one became avail-

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(continued from page 1)

able with desirable financing. A well running fleet is vital to DPW efforts to perform needed services to Village and Township residents and to generate revenue through the Intergovernmental contract with Grass Lake Charter Township

**LRUA:** Reports in local news sources state that one township has not agreed to the proposed SRI settlement with Jackson County. A court date could be set soon. This legal conflict impacts the Leoni Regional Utility Authority's (LRUA) efforts to improve the management and operational efficiency of its WasteWater Treatment Plant.

Based upon current evaluations, including grant funds committed to Leoni, Grass Lake sewer rates will likely increase yearly over the next five years as the plant strives to improve service and pay for needed upgrades to its system parts costing \$11 million.

The Village had explored switching its sewer contract to Jackson, which would involve grants for right of ways and digging new lines. EGLE counseled to continue use of the Leoni plant.

Local construction projects—planned or in progress—are stalled until the plant's perceived ability to handle additional hook ups, based upon existing conditions, is resolved. This is an evolving matter.

**Golf Carts:** Recently several reported incidents of poor practices involving golf cart driving came to Council's attention. All were issues not allowed per the Registration agreement owners sign. Village Clerk Jennifer Keener created a new form and ID stickers that will assist all

## COMMUNITY

**Weeds:** A Township public hearing is scheduled for September 14 at 6:30 pm at the Township Hall to discuss a special assessment district (SAD) proposal for Grass Lake shore-property owners to pay for a five-year treatment plan to combat invasive aquatic weeds that have plagued the lake. If the agreement is approved, the first assessment to those owners will be included with the next tax invoices and treatments could resume next May. For the first time, Jackson County Department of Parks will contribute funds to this water quality project.

**Farm to Table:** The Five Health Towns, annual and revolving, Farm to Table



fundraiser dinner was held under a big white tent on a sunny afternoon in Grass Lake (August 29). Sabrina Edgar, Grass Lake Farmers Market organizer, managed a successful event with bounty from all over the community and many local volunteers to prepare and serve. It was great to be there.

in better following carts that operate within the Village. While golf carts are handy and efficient transportation that is welcome in the Village, safety remains a primary concern.

**Evaluating Boat Races:** After a Council meeting discussion in February about the economic impact of hydroplane boat races in our community amid voiced concerns raised by Grass Lakers exposed to poor treatment, several residents contacted the DNR (DNR grants a special marine event permit for the race each time it comes to Grass Lake). Our Village Manager reached out to the Michigan Hydroplane Racing Association (MHRA) to encourage its support of Village businesses.

This two-pronged approach yielded positive results. DNR Officer Reynolds clarified water rights to MHRA with the result that during August 7-8 race week-

end, lake activities around races were convivial, park-goers received a friendly welcome and racers shared information— even invitations to see the "pit" area. MHRA also made a concerted effort to support Grass Lake businesses, rented The Village Events Pavilion for a gathering that was catered by a local food vendor, and in many cases left "Race Dollars" with business owners to show what they spent.

Continued local business support is the needed evidence to sustain racing in Grass Lake. MHRA will again be racing here on September 11-12.

