



# It's a Wonderful Life

## Volunteers have made this year's "Festival of Lights" and Parade happen

A dedicated group of local volunteers gathered in late October to make certain that a Grass Lake tradition since 2007 would still take place this year. **Festival of Lights** is held on the first Saturday of December, and includes fun all day that begins with an 8 am Breakfast with Santa at the Firehouse at 12222 E Michigan Ave, includes a craft mart, the cookie tour, tree walk, and culminates with a fully-lit parade at 6:30 pm with Santa on the last float—and then he lights the Historic Whistlestop Depot's Christmas tree.

Look for the flyers and social media reports. As you enjoy the festivities, give thanks for the countless hours of work it took to put together a full day of fun for children and adults alike. With a mere 5½ weeks to prepare, this really qualifies as a miracle on Michigan Avenue. It takes all of us to ensure that our traditions remain so. Please consider adding your support to help create the next Festival of Lights in 2024. Signing up is easy—just contact the Village Clerk!

## Forward progress...

The Downtown Development Authority's role is to reduce blight and deterioration, with the end impact being economic growth and higher property values. The DDA is addressing these objectives in several ways. Its first priority is to bring new businesses downtown – ideally local entrepreneurs with a passion for community. We are very fortunate to have four "Mom & Pop" type businesses in the works. **Cattleman's Coffee and Provisions** (was Roaming Goat) is expected to open in December; **Asher Creek** (was Jams) is a proposed deli and creamery planned for 2024; **Prates Place** (was Ryan's) will be a family-oriented restaurant/bar with a focus on community (plans for breakfasts, at least on the weekends); and a Chelsea chef/baker/sommelier plans to open a yet-to-be-named **bakery/cafe** (was Muscle And Soul) to open in mid-2024. The DDA just received very positive feedback in a preliminary assessment about the viability of creating a historic district in the downtown.

If you would like to learn more about these items, or other things that the DDA is working on, please attend our DDA Informational Meeting on Wednesday, December 6th, at 6 pm at ERA Reardon Realty's office at 108 E. Michigan Ave.

## Budget Workshop Meetings Recap

The budget process is ongoing. Sections of the first draft were discussed at the November 14 Budget workshop, the first of four planned sessions for Council to have open discussion about line items – sewer, water, equipment pool, general fund, etc. The first workshop focused on Salaries and General Fund.

Nothing replaces being in the room to hear the questions and answers that explain the funds and the logic behind proposed figures. Discussions included the proposed salary increases for cost of living, and for required education. State law requires the Village to employ two certified, water quality officials. The village needs to retain its knowledgeable staff.

The General Fund balance has decreased in the last few years to a point of concern. Improved management with forecasts toward replacing assets simply means that money is being saved each year toward future planned expenditures.

The November 21 workshop focused on Major and Local Streets financing; lively discussion did not allow covering more. The next Workshop is scheduled for Dec 5, at 6 pm, before the regular Council meeting at 7 pm.

A public hearing will be held in February

2024, before the final proposed budget is voted on by Council. The new budget takes effect March 1. What the public reviews at that time is the result of several months of research and discussion to achieve the best balanced budget for the new year. Now is the time to contact the Village Manager and Council members over any personal concerns.

**December 7, 2023**

**5 pm - 7 pm**

**Holiday Mixer hosted by Grass Lake Regional Chamber of Commerce at Designs By Judy 250 Wolf Lake Rd.**

**Attend a fun, seasonal gathering, no strings attached.**

You can also attend any Chamber of Commerce Board meeting (2<sup>nd</sup> Thursday of the month, @ 8:00 am – Village Hall) to share your ideas and support for Grass Lake.

More news >

Do what you can to show you care about others, and you will make our world a better place.

— Rosalynn Carter

## Meetings Scheduled

### GOVERNMENT

December 5, 6:00 pm: Village Council Budget Workshop, Sewer and Water

December 5, 7:00 pm: Village Council Regular Meeting, Village Hall

December 6, 6:00 pm: DDA Informational Meeting, at ERA Reardon Realty's office at 108 E. Michigan Ave.

December 7, 7:15 pm: Village Planning Commission Public Hearing regarding the rezoning of Village owned properties from General Commercial (GC) to Municipal Utilities (MU-1)

December 7, 7:30 pm: Village Planning Commission Regular Meeting, Village Hall

December 11, 6:30 pm: DDA Regular Meeting, Village Hall

December 12, 6:30 pm: Grass Lake Charter Township Regular Meeting, Township Hall

December 19, 6:00 pm: Village Budget Workshop, DDA Fund, Capital Assets and Debts

December 19, 7:00 pm: Village Council Regular Meeting, Village Hall

**Please note:** Village Offices will be closed December 25 & 26.

### COMMUNITY

December 2, 8 am on: Magical Festival of Lights. See Social media for details.

December 2, 6:30 pm: Parade from Lafayette St to Lake St., followed by Tree Lighting at the Whistlestop Depot.

December 14, 8:00 am: Grass Lake Regional Chamber of Commerce, Village Offices

## Christmas Concerts

**The Middle School Choir concert:**  
Wednesday December 13<sup>th</sup> at 6:00 pm in the High School Auditorium.

**High School Choir AND Band concert:**  
Friday, December 15<sup>th</sup> at 6:00 pm

## December 1

Euchre on Friday December 1<sup>st</sup> at 7pm, \$5 to play, 25 cents a Euchre, \$1 for the Loner Pool. BYOB and bring a snack to share. Everyone is welcome to play. The last Euchre for 2023 is Friday December 15<sup>th</sup> and will resume after the holidays on Friday January 5<sup>th</sup>. Come on out and enjoy some fun at the Wolf Lake Yacht Club, 357 Highland Dr.

## Leaf Pick-up

generally ends with the first significant snowfall. Check out the Village on Facebook:

[www.facebook.com/VillageofGrassLake](http://www.facebook.com/VillageofGrassLake)

## More about Grass Lake County Park

Regrading activity at the boat ramp parking lot took place before Thanksgiving but is not completed. As of press time, we have no information to share.



## Message in a Bottle

In 2024, a new spacecraft will hurtle toward Jupiter in a bid to learn whether its moon Europa is capable of supporting life. Along with high-tech sensors, it also will carry a poem and hundreds of thousands of human names. Yours could be one of them because NASA is asking people to submit their names by the end of 2023, ahead of the mission's October 2024 launch.


**You can join** the mission and have your name engraved on NASA's Europa Clipper spacecraft as it travels 1.8 billion miles to explore Europa, an ocean world that may support life. Visit MESSAGE IN A BOTTLE. <https://europa.nasa.gov/message-in-a-bottle/sign-on/>. The Europa Clipper spacecraft should enter Jupiter's orbit in 2030.

## The Indispensable Man

Sometimes when you're feeling important. Sometimes when your ego's in bloom. Sometimes when you take it for granted you're the best qualified in the room; Sometimes when you feel like your going would leave an unfillable hole, Just follow these simple directions, and see how they humble your soul.

Take a bucket and fill it with water. Put your hand in it up to the wrist. Pull it out and the "hole" that's remaining is the measure of how you'll be missed. You can splash all you want when you enter. You may stir up the water galore. But stop, and you'll find that in no time it looks quite the same as before.

The moral in this quaint example is to do just the best that you can. Be proud of yourself, but remember: There's no indispensable man. (or woman)



*Come and Behold!*  
Third Annual Live Nativity  
SUN, DEC 17 | 6:00 PM  
@PIOUS UNION OF ST. JOSEPH  
953 E. Michigan Ave  
Grass Lake, MI 49240  
[pusj.org](http://pusj.org) | 517-522-8017

