

Howl-oween Pawty: Oct. 16!

By Emma Heemskerck, ECA Executive Director

The ECA made the difficult decision in August to cancel the 48th Annual Eastown Streetfair (originally scheduled for September 11, 2021) due to the rising COVID-19 cases in Kent County, a more transmissible Delta variant, and the recent increase to a Substantial level of transmission in Kent County. We are happy to be able to say that we are working on an alternative format for Streetfair this year so stay tuned for more details soon!

We are also excited to be able to announce a free, smaller, family-friendly event that we are confident we can host safely, outdoors, in a socially distant manner. The Eastown Howl-oween Pawty will take place on Saturday, October 16th, 2021 from 12-5pm in Wilcox Park and will feature pet costume contests, kids activities, vendors, a pet photo booth, a craft beer tent, and the chance to win costume prizes. We look forward to celebrating our favorite furry neighbors, their

owners, and their dog-loving friends! This event will be following and implementing CDC recommended protocols to maintain the health and safety of our neighbors, friends, and vendors. Guests will be asked to wear masks and maintain social distancing while attending this outdoor event. A big thank you to Aquinas College, Brewery Vivant, Cheryl Grant Real Estate, Harmony Brewing Co., Rebel, and Uptown GR, Inc. for their support of this event! ♦



Community

BizBaz
Page 5

Environment

Green Cities
Page 4

Business

Best of the West
Page 3



Fostering a safe, diverse, and walkable Eastown neighborhood by creating opportunities for neighbors and friends to engage and connect.

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The Eastown Community Association board of directors meets on the second Monday of every month at 6p.m. Eastown residents and business owners are encouraged to attend. For more information visit our website at eastown.org

Facebook: eastowngr
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FROM THE DIRECTOR

Autumn in Eastown

By Emma Heemsker, ECA Executive Director

The Fall is upon us and here at the ECA we are starting to look towards the holidays and year-end. We were fortunate to have warm summer weather to get out and visit with friends at events like the Eastown Bizarre Bazaar, hosted by the ECA on July 24th. It was so good to see so many of you (despite the humidity)! We would like to thank all the amazing volunteers, sponsors, performers, artists, vendors, and Eastown-ers who showed up and helped make the event a huge hit (see Pg. 5)!

While we were happy to be able to host BizBaz in a smaller footprint this year, we soon found ourselves in the difficult position of having to make a decision about the safety and feasibility of hosting a much larger event, the 48th Annual Eastown Streetfair, in September.

Ultimately, with the rising Covid cases in Kent County, a more transmissible Delta variant circulating, and the increase to a Substantial level of Covid transmission in Kent County in August, the ECA Board made the difficult decision to cancel the 2021 Streetfair (originally scheduled for September 11, 2021) in the interest of community and public health. Thank you to everyone for their support and patience as we continue to navigate the logistics of the pandemic and adapt as best we can.

We are currently in the process of planning an alternative Streetfair in a different format and we can't wait to share details with all of you as they become available. So stay tuned to our Facebook page (@eastowngr) and website (www.eastown.org) for more information! Many thanks to Triumph Music Academy for their event production help with this event!

The other good news is that our Howl-oween Pet Pawty is on for October 16, 2021 in Wilcox Park (see cover). This fun family-friendly event features pet costume contests, a pet photo booth, and various activities for little ones, as well as a craft beer tent for the adults! Attendees should plan to wear masks and adhere to CDC guidelines for a fun and safe event for all!

A big thank you to Eastown Supporting Partners Cheryl Grant Real Estate, Harmony Brewing Co., Rebel, and Uptown GR, Inc, for their support of all ECA events throughout the year!

Cheers!

EASTOWN ACCESS

As the newsletter of the Eastown Community Association, the *Access* is published six times a year.

Cover images, from left to right: Samantha Ruth Photography, Abbie Robinson (Facebook), Samantha Ruth Photography

The views and opinions expressed in Access are not necessarily those of the ECA Board.

The Access reserves the right to accept, reject or edit any material submitted for publication.

Supported by CDBG funds via the City of Grand Rapids.

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The *Eastown Access* is delivered to over 2,200 households and 100 businesses six times a year. Place your ad today!

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4" Column	\$75	\$350

Access is also available online at eastown.org. Send all inquiries & advertising files to: info@eastown.org.

EBA NOTES

Best of the West

Dana Kroll, Uptown Grand Rapids, Inc.

You have once again outdone yourselves, Uptown friends! As has been the case in most if not all of this contest's years past, you've represented Uptown beautifully in the much celebrated annual *Revue West Michigan* 'Best of the West' Voting Competition.

We're excited to announce that Uptown snagged an impressive 46 coveted spots in the competition's Finalists list including 6 in Eastown. This includes grabbing two of the three finalist positions for 'Best Shopping District,' with wins for both Eastown and Wealthy Street.

These wins are extra special, because they get to be shared equally amongst the businesses located there. You may find a complete list of our finalists and top spot winners at the *Revue West Michigan* website at <https://revuewm.com/>. Eastown really does have it all. There's such a variety of things to do, places to shop, and food to eat. You can always find something unique and fun, whether it's your first time or your 100th.

Uptown Grand Rapids, Inc. brings people, partnerships, and possibilities together to sustain a strong and vibrant urban district. Uptown GR, Inc. is the lead nonprofit for the Corridor Improvement Authority and Business Improvement District representing East Fulton, East Hills, Wealthy Street, and Eastown business districts and the Fulton Heights, Midtown, East Hills, Eastown, and Baxter neighborhoods.

The Eastown Business Association (EBA) is an organization comprised of retailers, restaurant owners, business owners, landlords and others with an interest in preserving and enhancing the unique qualities of Eastown. ♦

Bringing you the Best of the West!

Enjoy our many award-winning businesses.

- Best Diner: Matchbox
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CBD Shop	Grassy Knoll
Antiques Shop	Eastown Antiques
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Thrift and Consign	Rock Paper Scissors
Gift Shop	Rebel
Yoga Studio	Funky Buddha Yoga Hothouse

URBAN PERCH

Green Cities: The Environmental Advantage of Compact Urban Neighborhoods

By Lee Hardy, Access Contributor

We often think of nature and cities in opposition to each other. Cities: paved and polluted. Nature: green and pristine. High-density urban development with its lack of green space seems like a threat to the natural environment. Maybe nature would be better off if we didn't have cities, the source of so much energy consumption and pollution. Perhaps the extension of our low-density leafy suburbs would be easier on the environment.

As it turns out, if we consider one of the chief threats to the natural environment—climate change—nothing could be further from the truth. A study based on projections by the U. S. Department of Energy's Energy Information Administration bears this point out. Using 2005

as a baseline and 2030 as the endpoint, researchers predicted that at the current rate of low-density development, vehicle miles traveled (VMT) will rise by 60 percent. Even if we increase the average gas mileage of our cars by 30 percent in the same period of time, CO2 emissions will still go up by 12 percent.

To bring that number down, we will need not only high-tech solutions for higher gas mileage, but the low-tech resolve to build more walkable neighborhoods connected by public transit—like Eastown. Low-density development means more driving. More driving means more CO2 in the atmosphere. Between 1969 and 2009, the heyday of low-density

development at the edges of our cities, the population of the United States increased by 44 percent. But the total number of vehicles went up 78 percent. During the same time period, even though the number of persons per household shrank by 21 percent, the number of vehicle miles traveled per household went up 179 percent. The percentage of households that own three or more cars went from 5 percent in 1969 to 23 percent in 2009. More cars per household; more miles per household. That's altogether bad news for nature.

Numbers like these convinced journalist David Owen that compact, walkable cities are in fact an environmental blessing. In his book

Continued on Page 11

BurrLaw

James Booth Burr, Jr.



Elder Care & Probate Law
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Real Estate Law

Jim been has a resident of Eastown for nearly 40 years and is a Member of the 6th and 7th US Courts of Appeal

Jim is also a member of the State Bar of Michigan and a member of the Unauthorized Practice of Law Committee and Real Estate and Business Law Sections

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The ECA at BizBaz!

The ECA held its annual Bizarre Bazaar, this year as a Pop Up Art Market, on July 24th:



Photos by Mary Riehl

NEIGHBOR NOTES

Having good neighbors is just one of the many perks of living in Eastown. Neighbors who have a great rapport know there are real benefits of having a friendly relationship with those on their street. But neighborly relationships aren't built overnight. It can take a lot of time and effort to form a strong relationship and healthy communication. Oftentimes, neighbor issues arise that are downright infuriating, mystifying, or just plain rude. It helps to foster open lines of communication to help resolve small issues before they start to loom really large. And as many longtime homeowners will tell you, it's no fun to have a rift with someone you have to live next to for the foreseeable future, so it's in the best interest of neighbors to be just that - neighborly. Oftentimes, that's easier in theory than it is in practice, but here are a few tips to keep in mind whether you are a renter, business/property owner, new Eastown resident, or longtime homeowner.

Be a Welcoming Neighbor

Cities are constantly changing. Eastown is no stranger to rapid growth these days. Whether it's a renter, new first-time homeowner moving in next door, or someone you've lived next to for 20 years, remember to be welcoming. Everyone deserves a place to call home and Eastown is known for being accepting, inviting, and welcoming of people of all types. That's what makes Eastown great!

Be a Positive Neighbor

While it's easy to often notice the things other neighbors are doing that may be a nuisance, keep in mind that we all do things that may irritate those we have to coexist near. Think about the things you may be able to do to be a better neighbor and focus on the positive. You don't have to be best friends with your neighbor, but you do need to be able to communicate on basic issues such as noise, shared driveways, and repairs if you want to live nextdoor amicably. Eastown has so much to offer including a quality-of-life that is not obtainable for many, so giving grace to neighbors (especially during Covid) and showing gratitude can go a long way towards building neighborly relationships and enjoying the benefits of your neighborhood.

Be a Responsible Neighbor

Examining how your trash, repairs, barking dog, or house party may impact your neighbors is always something to keep in mind. Remember that there are ordinances in place that prohibit excessive noise between 10pm and 7am which can result in civil infractions. Trash cans should always be stored out of sight if possible. Tidying up your yard and tiring out that barking dog by taking a brisk walk can go a long way towards building good will with your neighbor, being a responsible Eastown resident, and contributing to the improvement of your neighborhood! ♦

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COMMUNITY NOTES

Aquinas College Saints Together

The pandemic is not over, but our mission hasn't changed: to provide a valuable and transformative on-campus experience for our students in our Catholic and Dominican tradition. In order to do so, we are working hard to provide layered strategies that protect the health and safety of our campus community. We will continue to monitor and assess the situation and will adjust our campus plans in consideration of changes to public health requirements and guidance. Please keep tuning in to our communication channels for updates and alerts.

"Our Catholic and Dominican heritage calls us to care for others, particularly those most in need. We are a community of caring, so we each have individual responsibility to others on our campus. It will require the cooperation of all of us to ensure that our campus is as safe as possible." --President Kevin G. Quinn

Aquinas College Homecoming

Mark your calendars for an extended weekend of celebrations September 16-19, 2021! Come home to Aquinas for a weekend full of exciting events and programming including the Dedication and Celebration of the new Albertus Magnus Hall of Science, Welcome Home Reception & Awards Celebration, class reunions, a multicultural alumni social, athletic games and more!

AQ Grand Opening of Albertus Magnus Hall of Science

Date: Thursday, September 16. Start Time: 5 p.m.

Location: Albertus Magnus Hall of Science

Cost: Free. Registration: Not required

Join us for the grand opening and blessing of the newly renovated and expanded Albertus Magnus Hall of Science.

Coldbrook Creek

The Coldbrook pumping station sits at 1101 Monroe Ave. NW, just south of Leonard Street, near the site where Coldbrook Creek flows into the Grand River. This historic pump was active from the late 1870's until just recently. Currently, it may find new life as part of the River For All project which hopes to establish that area as a primary access site for all to enjoy the riverfront. The Coldbrook Creek Community will be hosting a tour of the facility as part of its membership meeting on Monday, September 20, from 6-7:30pm. All are welcome and encouraged to attend.

Coldbrook Creek originates in the wetlands around Reeds Lake in EGR and from there flows into the Grand River in downtown GR. The mission of the Coldbrook Creek Community is to promote education, protect the environment, and provide enjoyment of this watershed. To become involved or for more information please visit www.lgrow.org/coldbrook-creek, or search for us on Facebook.

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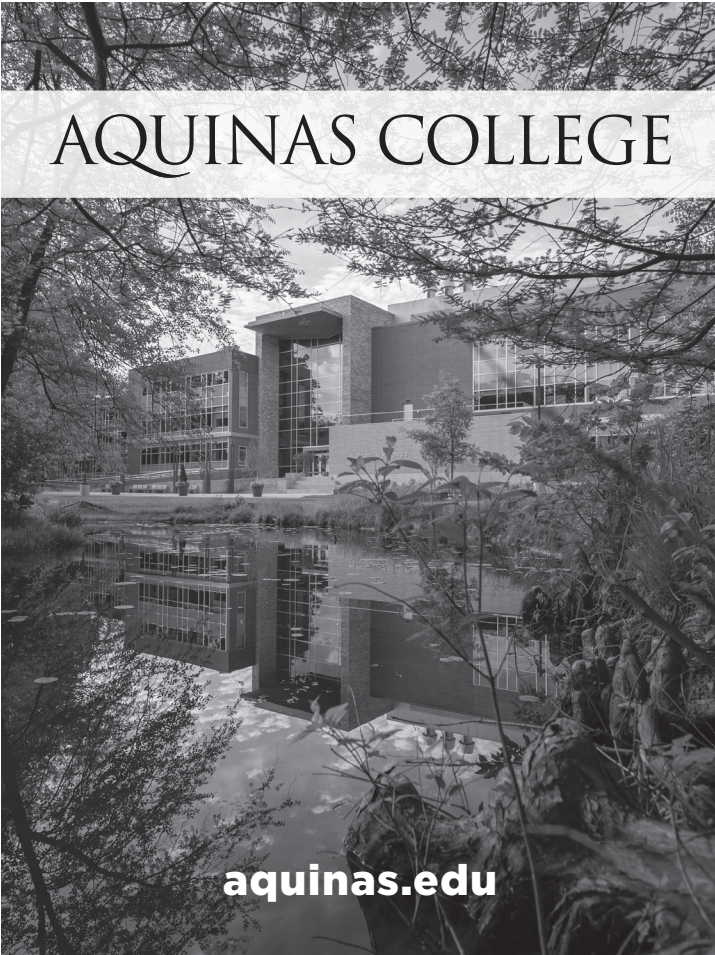
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AQUINAS COLLEGE

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IN MEMORIAM

James Baldwin Johnson, 1945-2021

By James Booth Burr, Jr., Access Contributor



James Baldwin Johnson *Photo courtesy Julie Johnson*

We lost a denizen of Eastown. James B. Johnson, Esq., tri-athlete; musician and voice (piano, sax, guitar, lead singer); ping pong aficionado, connoisseur of Bill Lewis' tasty Yesterdogs, left us on August 3, 2021.

We should remember that Jimmy started his career as a Central High teacher and coach before receiving his law degree from the U of M. His legal practice was enabled by his office manager and confidant, Connie Lemmink. Jimmy's practice focused on young people sometimes caught in the throes of the juvenile court system.

His great love, aside from wife Julie, children John and Johanna, and grandchildren Johnny, Quinn and Winter, was Eastown. He was part of the social rebuilding of the Lake Drive-Wealthy corridor, and a fervent supporter of our many activities, pageants and goings on – especially if there was a ping pong table around.

He supported local music, and made Eastown a popular favorite. He was a proud member of the Fabulous Eastone's band, and unabashedly exhibited the Eastown "brick" in his law office. Viewing history, the old timers will remember the Eastown movie theatre, and certainly not forget Jimmy Johnson.



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John Witte	526-6548
Aquinas College, Engagement	
Katharina Hausler-Gross	632-2112
Grand Rapids Public Schools	819-2000
City of GR Code Compliance	456-3053
Kent County Animal Shelter	632-7300
Dispute Resolution Center of W. MI	774-0121
Eastown Community Association	451-3025

WEBSITES/EMAILS

The City of Grand Rapids:

www.grandrapidsmi.gov

Mayor of Grand Rapids

Rosalynn Bliss: mayor@grcity.us

Second Ward Commissioners

(North of Wealthy):

Milinda Ysasi: mysasi@grcity.us

Joseph D. Jones: jdjones@grcity.us

Third Ward Commissioners

(South of Wealthy):

Senita Lenear: slenear@grcity.us

Nathaniel Moody: nmoody@grcity.us

The Rapid Bus System:

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Green Cities, cont.

Green Metropolis, Owen directs attention to one of our densest urban centers: New York City. If we focus on energy use by land area, New York doesn't look particularly good. In fact, it looks like an ecological disaster. Lots of energy is burned up within the five boroughs. But if we consider energy use per capita, we get a very different picture. The average number of metric tons of CO2 emissions per person per year for U. S. residents is 24.5. The average number of metric tons of CO2 emissions for the residents of New York City is 7.1. That's a 71 percent reduction. Residents of Vermont, a largely rural state, burn on average 545 gallons of gas a year. Compare that to 146 gallons a year for residents of New York. Those who live in the borough of Manhattan use on average only 90 gallons a year. Although New York City contains 2.7 percent of the U. S. population, it generates only 1 percent of its greenhouse gas emissions. That, if anything, is an environmental success story. And it happened not

because New Yorkers care that much more about the environment. Or because the city is on the cutting edge of energy-saving technology. A big part of the explanation for this reduction is the fact that New Yorkers live in walkable neighborhoods served by public transportation. They drive less.

Of course, there is much that could be done to reduce stormwater run-off in cities, to increase their tree canopies, to better insulate their buildings, and to encourage more comprehensive recycling programs. But on energy efficiency, compact cities come out way ahead on the environmental scorecard just by virtue of being compact—at least until we all drive electric cars powered by wind and solar energy. Which will be a while. And nature doesn't have a while to wait. According to the 2021 report of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change, we reached the climate tipping point this year.



HOST NEIGHBOR CORNER

One of the ECA's long-standing initiatives is the Host Neighbor Program. The Host Neighbor Program is an informal network of neighbors who help to foster engagement, communication, and leadership on their block.

They do this by helping the ECA to disseminate information (i.e. flying on their block), keeping a "phone tree" of their block, and serving as a point of contact for their block to communicate issues between the ECA and residents.

The ECA relies on information shared with us to update our Host Neighbor list. If you are not sure if you are a Host Neighbor, would like to become one, would like to update your information, or receive an info packet, please contact us at info@eastown.org today! ♦

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*-Your Neighbors,
Rachael Wingo & Stacy Snider*



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