

A LOOK AT WHAT'S HAPPENING IN **OURTOWN**

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HOLT NOW



DEDICATED TO HELPING OUR COMMUNITY & ITS BUSINESSES GROW

A publication of the Delhi Charter Township Downtown Development Authority • www.DelhiDDA.com

THE DDA – WHO WE ARE & WHAT WE DO

The Downtown Development Authority (DDA) promotes economic development through business attraction/retention programs and works to foster investment within the DDA district. It strives to increase the township's tax base and strengthen the local economy while maintaining those qualities that make Delhi Township a desirable place to live and work.

For more information, visit us at www.DelhiDDA.com.

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15 YEARS

GROWING STRONG

After 15 Years, the Market is Expanding!

The Delhi Downtown Development Authority has purchased the adjacent lot south of the Holt Farmers Market and plans to develop the property starting this spring. The new addition will nearly double the space of the market and the available parking, and there will be room for at least ten new vendors year-round.

“We’ve been wanting to expand for the last five years,” said the market’s Manager Chuck Grinnell. “An architect drew up a plan for us, but that was cost prohibitive. When the opportunity came up to buy the land next door and renovate the buildings, we took it.” The project is funded with dollars from the DDA and some leftover funds from Realize Cedar Street. The DDA hopes that construction will begin in the spring and wrap up as early as August.

The expansion is necessary because popular events on the property, like the Friday night Cruise to Holt, have run out of room.

“We’ll be doing more of the same, but we’ll add some new programs that we haven’t done before. We’ll expand the Food Frenzys and have more accessible parking. The car shows will be bigger, and we’ll get the demo kitchen up and running again,” said Grinnell.





“The DDA has funded the farmers market from day one. Fifteen years later, we’re celebrating that...”

Demonstrations from Michigan State University’s Extension programs will be focused on cooking, canning, and more.

Grinnell has been at the helm of the farmers market since its inception 15 years ago after he retired from the Fire Department. “My wife and I had just retired, and we were supposed to be moving up to the lake. A friend of mine came to me and said, ‘We think you’re our guy for the market.’ I told him that I would do it if I could have the old fire station building.” Although Chuck says that the past 15 years have included some of “the weird and the wacky,” he couldn’t be prouder of the work they’ve done and the work that is to come.

“The DDA has funded the farmers market from day one. Fifteen years later, we’re celebrating that. It’s hard to believe we’ve been going for that long and even harder to believe that I’m still here, running it. Sometimes my wife and I look at each other and say, “Did you ever think?”

The Holt Farmers Market is open year-round on Saturdays. It is located at 2150 Cedar St, Holt, MI 48842. Call (517) 268-0024 or visit holtfarmersmarket.org for more information.



Holt Food Frenzy

FOOD, FUN & MUSIC!

2024 SCHEDULE

April 24

Wednesday, 4:00 p.m. - 8:00 p.m.
To go only - no seating available

May 22

Wednesday, 4:00 p.m. - 8:00 p.m.
Limited on-site seating available.

June 12

Wednesday, 4:00 p.m. - 8:00 p.m.
Limited on-site seating available.

July 17

Wednesday, 4:00 p.m. - 8:00 p.m.
Limited on-site seating available.

August 14

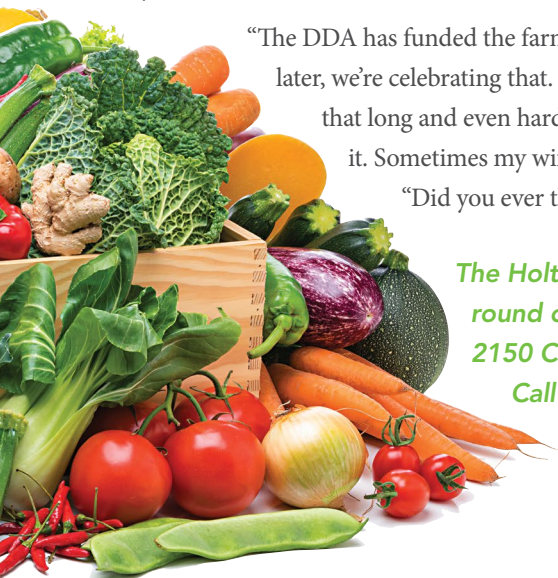
Wednesday, 4:00 p.m. - 8:00 p.m.
Limited on-site seating available.

September 11

Wednesday, 4:00 p.m. - 8:00 p.m.
Limited on-site seating available.

October 9

Wednesday, 4:00 p.m. - 8:00 p.m.
Limited on-site seating available.



FISH ENTHUSIAST DIVES INTO BUSINESS

// This was a lifelong dream," says Danny Hackett, the owner of the Cichlid Source off S. Cedar Street and E. Willoughby. "I had most of this stuff in my basement already, and there was no one there to tell me not to!" Although Hackett is still employed at his day job, his adult children have moved up from Kansas to help him with the store. His daughter Brandi Mead said she's adjusting to Michigan, despite the weather. This father-daughter duo is very knowledgeable about the specialty fish they carry in the shop. Cichlids (pronounced "Sic-lids") are "exotic, freshwater species," says Brandi, "they come from lakes in Africa and South America."

Hackett has kept an aquarium since he was sixteen years old and he has been breeding Cichlids for about three years. He started going to area 'fish swaps' to connect with other enthusiasts both in West Michigan and the Detroit area. "I was selling them faster than I could raise them," he said, which led to his inspiration to open the storefront. He also carries betta fish. "They're not actually aggressive unless you put two males together," he says. His daughter chimes in, "And a group of girls is called a 'sorority.'"

The Cichlid Source offers a membership deal: \$100/year for 25% off all year long. Hackett wants the Holt community to know that he sources fish from reputable breeders, and supports local breeders whenever he can. He's even partnered with a nearby school teacher to raise fish in a classroom. "He raises them with the kids. After a year we'll sell them, then he'll get new fish to raise." Hackett is tapped into the "small, but passionate community of Cichlid owners and breeders in this area," and he's living his dream as a small business owner in Delhi Township.



The Cichlid Source is located at 2495 Cedar St. Suite 10-B Holt, MI 48842. Call (517) 709-3475 or visit www.facebook.com/cichlidsource for more information.

New Leo's Led by Father-Son Team



The new Leo's Coney Island Diner and Drive-Through on Jolly Road opened on November 27, 2023.

"We've been busy from day one, which is good," said Ali Alsidi, the son of franchise owner Alex Alsidi. Ali is twenty years old and studying corporate law, but he helps his father out with the restaurant. The Alsidi's are from the nearby Milford area and also run restaurants in West Bloomfield, Birmingham, and Chesterfield in Macomb County. Now, the Lansing area has two Leo's Coney Island locations, but the new restaurant off Jolly has a full-service menu. "You'll get everything here. At the East Lansing location they don't have wraps, for example," said Ali.

The restaurant seats 172 people at a combination of four-top booths, freestanding tables, and intimate two-seater booths. Pendant lighting drops from high ceilings, and enormous stock art of palm trees gives this diner a relaxed

and modern feel. But the staff has classic, old school charm. I watched them kindly making conversation with patrons, and they wouldn't let me leave without taking a coney dog— on the house. The servers lined up for a few photos, and one even prepared Saganaki for a photo op. She lit up the classic pan-seared cheese appetizer while everyone shouted, "Opa!"

Ali has been helping his father with the restaurant business since he was a sophomore in high school. He said that helping him open this new location has been a great experience. "We're happy to be here in Holt, the support has been amazing and everyone has welcomed us fully." The restaurant has approximately 50 people on staff and they're still looking to hire more.

Owner Alex Alsidi says that the restaurant is especially busy on Sundays. "People like to come here after church to have lunch. The last two Sundays, we've actually had a wait."

"We're happy to be here in Holt, the support has been amazing and everyone has welcomed us fully."



Leo's Coney Island is located at 2520 E Jolly Rd, Lansing, MI 48910. Call (517) 940-9578 or visit order.leosconeyisland.com for more information.

April is Child Abuse Prevention Month

“Child abuse is a public health issue that impacts everyone,” says Alex Brace, Executive Director of Small Talk Children’s Advocacy Center in Delhi Township. “It’s our responsibility to facilitate the conversation and be proactive. Together, we can protect children who are at risk of physical and sexual abuse.”

Small Talk Children’s Advocacy Center has been working to respond to child abuse since 2011, and Director Alex Brace was one of the center’s first employees. He is a trained, trauma-focused therapist and leads the nonprofit’s daily operations. Every April, Small Talk celebrates Child Abuse Prevention Month by planting blue pinwheel gardens around town and delivering community education. “Everyone has a role to play in preventing child abuse. Although this is a difficult topic, it is important to learn the signs of child abuse so that you can act and help a child in this community.”

The prevention education offered at Small Talk is designed for adults and includes a frank discussion of child abuse including signs and symptoms, and how to respond. The information is not limited to social workers or teachers. Anyone who works with children, or has children in their life, can benefit from this training including coaches, volunteers, religious educators, and people who work in locations where children are present like restaurants and pet stores. According to Brace, many people and organizations in our community have completed this training and benefitted from the conversation.

“It’s our responsibility to bring this topic out of the darkness and into the light. The statistics are staggering, and the long-term impacts of child abuse affect every one of us. Whether you know it or not, you know someone who is a survivor of abuse.” That’s why, Brace says, prevention is key.

Community members who are interested in more information can contact Small Talk Children’s Advocacy Center at (517) 253-0728 or email info@smalltalkcac.org. The center is located at 3400 Pine Tree Road, Suite 106 Lansing, MI 48911.



Esker Square Apartments to Open in April

The second 45-unit building is now pre-leasing

Construction on the second Esker Square apartment building is planned to conclude in April. The Esker Square project now totals 90 units and about 90,000 square feet of living space. As reported by Fox47 last summer, this \$20 million project has been over six years in the making. The Delhi Downtown Development Authority and the Gillespie Company used Brownfield Redevelopment Funds to help clean up contamination on the site, which formerly housed a carwash. Scott Gillespie, CEO of the Gillespie Company, stated in our interview, “Working with the township has been fantastic. They know what they want. And to be in an area where they’ve done the vision and the work, that only adds to the success of the project and the success of this area as a whole.”

Every unit at Esker Square has a balcony, and the two buildings are connected by a courtyard which will allow residents to enjoy social activities and soak up some sun. As I walked around, I saw residents relaxing on their balconies and taking in the surprise, 50 degree weather in February. The units are 1 or 2 bedrooms

and rent for between \$1,200-\$1,600 per month. One bedroom units are 770 square feet, while the 2-bedroom apartments cover 1,090 sq ft. Plans to build a small dog park for residents are underway, it will be located behind the parking lot.

Gillespie said, “I’d show you a unit in the first building, but we’re completely full. That’s a good thing.” We toured the second building as construction was still ongoing in the interiors of each unit. On a third story unit, we went out onto the balcony so I could snap a photo of Scott. On the ground floor, a member of the construction crew posed near the almost-finished entrance to the second building. Said Gillespie, “The second unit is already pre-leasing. We’ll be open in April.”

Esker Square is located at 2030 N Cedar St, Holt, MI 48842. Call (833) 619-0483 or visit liveeskersquare.com for more information.

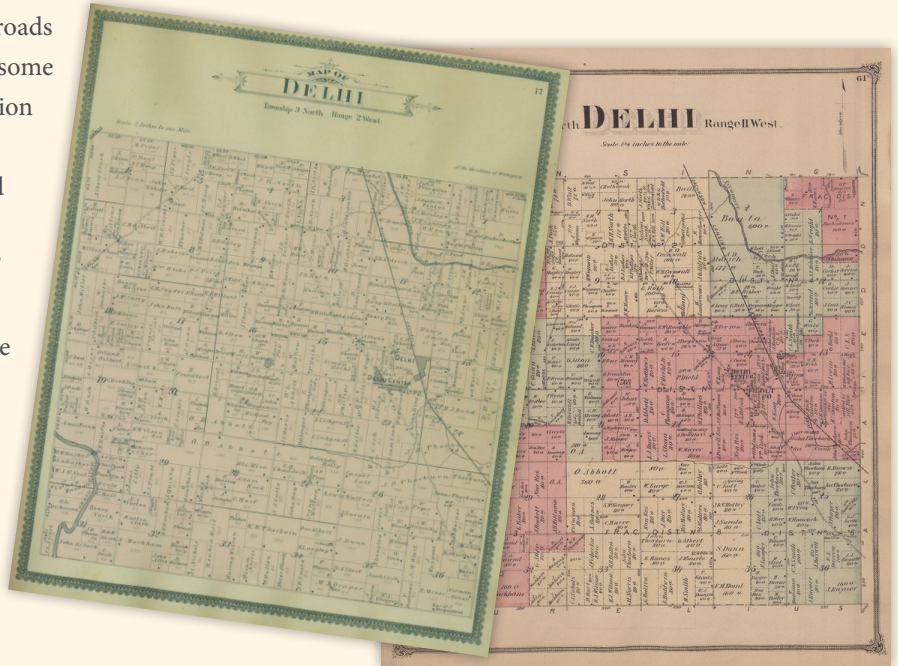


HOLT HISTORY

Holt History In Every Step

Holt's history is easily learned from the roads we all walk and drive each day. While some streets get their names from the direction they lead, like Onondaga, Aurelius, or College Rd., others are named for prominent families and individuals, like Wilcox, Eifert, and Willoughby. Many roads are named by or for their developers' families, like Dallas, Dean, and Greenwood Avenues. Though unique names abound, like Pine Tree Road (named for a single lone-standing pine tree at the corner), some are less obvious. You might think Park Lane was named for a park nearby, but it was really named for a man named Minor E. Park, who gave his garden for road access from Holt Road to the Arlington Park neighborhood behind his home.

Learn about the fascinating history right under your feet at the new holtdelhihistory.org.



HOW AND WHEN TO FERTILIZE YOUR LAWN



While fertilizer may help our lawns, excess phosphorus and nitrogen in our waterways causes algae to grow faster than aquatic ecosystems can handle. By properly applying and limiting the usage of lawn fertilizer, you can help protect our water resources from this form of pollution.

1. Get your Soil Tested: Determine if fertilizer is even necessary or if it is just a waste of your time and money!
2. Apply When Dry: Watch the weather, don't apply fertilizer right before a rainstorm.
3. Read the Label: Use phosphorus-free products on your lawn.

It's easy to do your part to protect our watershed. Learn more about the Greater Lansing Regional Committee for Stormwater Management by visiting mywatersheds.org.