

City of Ypsilanti

Ward 2 Chatter Box

VOLUME 1, ISSUE 1

NOVEMBER 20, 2015

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Ypsi Toastmasters club aims to build better leaders

While most people would agree that public speaking can seem a bit like a chore, the new Toastmasters club in downtown Ypsi is leaving new and experienced public speakers of all different ages thinking otherwise with its fun and relaxed atmosphere.

Colleen Riccinto, Founder and CEO of Cyber Talent Search and a resident of Ypsi for nearly 18 years, brought a Toastmasters club to downtown Ypsi because she believed the community could greatly benefit from a place where individuals would have the opportunity to develop leadership skills and share ideas.

Riccinto said she loves the authenticity and diversity of the community, and that it has been great getting to know downtown Ypsi in a more intimate way.

Additionally, she said Toastmasters is different from all of the other places out there because there is no pressure on individuals to generate leads for their companies. Riccinto added Toastmasters is a place where you can be yourself and let loose while receiving encouragement and support from peers.

“I fell in love with the club because it was the one place where I would always leave feeling better and more energized than when I first stepped walked through the

door,” she said. “And I always walked away with a more positive outlook after every meeting.”

She said one student from Eastern Michigan University was surprised to find out that Toastmasters taught him the same skills for \$72 per year that he paid \$700 to learn in an EMU speech course.

While some people may already have a lot of public speaking experience, Riccinto said even those who are very experienced enjoy the meetings and walk away with new knowledge.

Joe Licavoli, Director of the Spark East Incubator, said a woman who has been going to Toastmasters meetings for 17 years told him that she is still learning something at every meeting.

Aside from Toastmasters being just as helpful to someone who has been going to it for 17 years as it is to someone who is completely new to it, Riccinto said the club is a great way to meet new people.

“Toastmasters is connecting people together who might not have met otherwise,” she said.

Additionally, Riccinto said Toastmasters allows people to get to know one another better through interesting table topics.

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She said the first table topic was firsts, and everyone shared stories about their first car.

Licavoli said Toastmasters is helping the local community by allowing people to share ideas in a different type of setting than their workplaces.

“At Toastmasters, people feel more comfortable sharing personal stories than what they feel comfortable sharing while at their workplaces.”

If you are looking to learn more about the Toastmasters in downtown Ypsi, you can attend a meeting at Spark East, which is located at 215 E. Michigan Ave.

The meetings take place every Tuesday from noon to 1 p.m. Additionally, you can visit the website by going to www.meetup.com/A-Toast-To-Ypsi.



WHERE LEADERS ARE MADE
www.toastmasters.org

City Capitol Projects

Ainsley Street:

A road was constructed between Ainsley Street and Louise Street. The road goes in a circle, and it was constructed in order to allow for residents to plow snow.

Candy Cane Park:

A new sidewalk was installed at Candy Cane Park because there were some missing sidewalk sections.

Adams Street:

We are working on rebuilding this street. After the street is rebuilt, it will be set in concrete.

Project Street:

The street was reconstructed and rehabilitated.

Park Ridge Senior Center:

The kitchen has been upgraded.

EMU students attend City Council meeting to stay informed

On Tuesday, October 20, Eastern Michigan University students took time away from their books to check out the Ypsilanti City Council meeting in the McKenny Ballroom.

While all of the students could have studied for exams instead, they all said they wanted to remain informed about how the Ypsilanti City Council is working to improve the City. Additionally, they all agreed that more students should attend City Council meetings because they are a great way to stay informed about what is going on in the community.

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Tanasia Morton, a junior in EMU's political science program, added that City Council meetings are also a great way for students to help shape change in the community.

"I believe students should attend City Council meetings because it gives them the opportunity to vocalize their concerns," said Morton. "This is an important way for students to be a part of their community, and help make positive changes."

Nate Reineck, a senior in EMU's earth science program, said City Council meetings are one of the best ways for students to stay informed. He added that he attended the meeting because he wanted to learn more about what is going on in the City.

"I think that City Council meetings are a great way for students to educate themselves on what is going on in their community," said Reineck. "Aside from that, students who really want to speak out about an issue should really consider attending the meetings because the meetings allow individuals to vocalize their concerns to City Council members."

Even if you are not a student, you may want to check out a City Council meeting in order to become more familiar with everything that is happening in your community and to meet the local leaders that represent your community.

Ypsilanti coffee shop owner shares his story

Before the building located at 1510 Washtenaw in Ypsilanti became the home of a vibrant coffee shop with a friendly atmosphere, it used to be just an empty building for seven years that people would drive by and not even notice.

Bill Tripp, owner of the Biggy on Washtenaw in Ypsilanti, said he looked at many different buildings before deciding on the building on Washtenaw. But there was no other place he wanted his business to be after he visited Candy Cane Park for the first time on a Tuesday night in May 2013.

"I knew I could not pass up the College Heights neighborhood because it seemed like the perfect place to start a new business," he said. "The community just seemed like it would be very welcoming and very supportive of a new business, and it reminded me of where I grew up."

Aside from the community reminding him of his childhood, he said he really enjoyed the diversity of the neighborhood.

"There is a little bit of everything in this community," Tripp said. "You have everything from young people buying their first homes to retirees."

While there are plenty of Biggy locations out there, newcomers will quickly realize the Biggy on Washtenaw is a little bit different from other coffee shops because it offers more seating and Tripp makes an effort to converse with all of his customers because he places a lot of value on building a personal connection with everyone who enters his store.

"I wanted to have more seating than what people would usually find at a coffee shop because I wanted this to be a place where people could stay a while," he said. "It has been a lot of fun to see different groups come in on a constant basis."

He said there is a group that comes in every Monday through Friday around 8 a.m. to chat and play hangman, and there are also nursing students that spend time studying in the coffee shop before their 5 p.m. class.

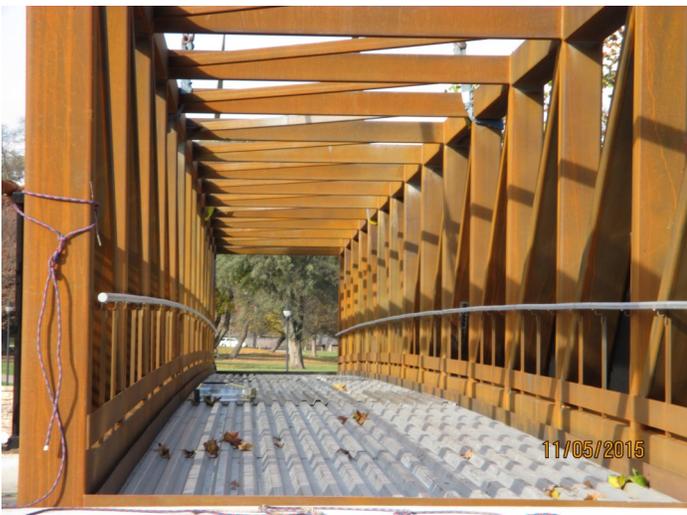
Although owning a business has been a bit scary, he said it is really rewarding and totally worth it because you get a great sense of accomplishment from knowing that you are the one driving your world.

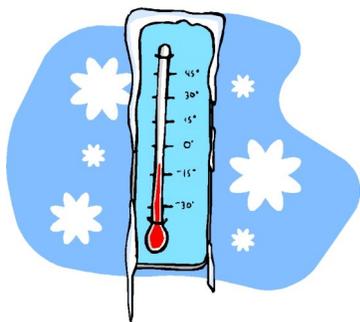
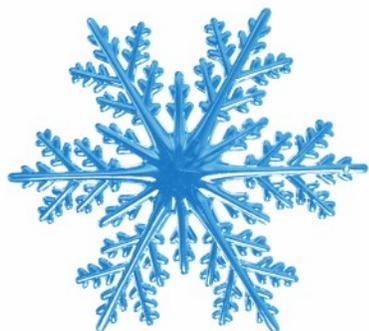
"This is what I want to do for the rest of my life," Tripp said. "If I could go back in time, I would have opened up the coffee shop 20 years ago."

Heritage Pedestrian Bridge

On Thursday, November 5, the Heritage Pedestrian Bridge was moved into place!

For additional pictures, you can visit the City of Ypsilanti's Facebook Page, which is www.facebook.com/Ypsi.Michigan.





Preparing for Winter!

Oh no! It is almost time to break out our mittens and winter coats! But before doing that, it might be helpful to consider these tips since winter can be very draining when you are not at all prepared. Besides, there is not much time to worry about winterizing your home or vehicle when you are rushing around to shop for holiday gifts or rushing to the store to pick up ingredients for holiday dishes.

Here's some tips on how you can winter-proof your home:

- Clean out gutters
- Insulate water lines that run along exterior walls
- Install storm windows or cover windows with plastic from the inside to help keep cold air out of your home

Here's some tips on how you can winter-proof your vehicle:

- Replace current tires with snow tires
- Take your vehicle to a mechanic to have all of these checked: antifreeze level, battery and ignition system, brakes, exhaust system, fuel and air filters, heater and defroster, lights and flashing hazard lights, oil and thermostat.
- Prepare a winter emergency kit in case you become stranded and place it in your vehicle. It should include heavy blankets, snacks and water, booster cables, flares, tire pump, a bag of sand or cat litter (for traction), flashlights and extra batteries, a cell phone charger and a first aid kit

Helpful Resources

Simple Recycling is a curbside recycling program for household goods.

P: (866) 835-5068

SOS Community Services is a community-based nonprofit that promotes housing stability and family self-sufficiency through collaboration, care and respect.

P: (734) 485-8730

Hope Clinic offers medical care and dental care to the uninsured, and also offers a variety of social services.

P: (734) 484-2989

Meet Council Member Anne Brown



Anne has resided in Ypsilanti for more than 35 years and is committed to improving the quality of life for all residents.

Before joining City Council, she served on the Parks and Rec Commission.

She is responsible for helping the City be more fiscally responsible, improving service delivery and increasing the communication between City Council and City residents.

Anne has a continued interest in working to improve the park system and currently serves as the District Manager for State Representative David E. Rutledge. In this role, she assists citizens with local and state concerns.

City of Ypsilanti Department Contacts



Building Department — (734) 482-1025

City Clerk — (734) 483-1100

Public Services — (734) 483-1421

Fiscal Services — (734) 483-1105

Fire Services — (734) 482-9778

Human Resources — (734) 483-1242

Police Services — (734) 483-9510