

BASHERT'S BI-WEEKLY MAYORAL BULLETIN



I am respectfully offering this article as an answer to the social media “noise” and postings that have been heavily aired in the last couple of weeks. I hope you find this response helpful and informative.

For many many years, the Heritage Festival was a highpoint of our city’s summer. A strong committee consisting of many local residents, community organizations, and local businesses participated in the planning and execution of the event. There was a parade to kick it off, the Historic Home Tour was linked to the Festival -- the entire city was involved in it.

That committee was strong and organized the events for a long time; essentially 20 years. Nothing lasts forever and, when they stepped down, they retired en masse. This left the Heritage Festival with a leadership vacuum. That group of organizers did a huge task for 20 years, something to be proud of. Attendance was impressive, 100K people at times, during their years of service.

When the original group stepped down, a committee stepped up to keep the Festival going. Their vision was different from the original. They held what was essentially a musical event, showcasing local and regional bands. Their vision was not very successful and after 3 years, they stepped down. When this second group left, there was a debt and a lowered opinion of the Festival. Attendance had fallen and it no longer was a high point of the summer for the city. My apologies to the music scene fans in the area who might disagree with this description of this period of the Festival.

This takes us to the group that has been organizing the Festival for the last 3 years. They made clear statements about their goals: to return the Heritage Festival to its original roots, to pay off the debt, to increase participation, and to make it an inclusive event for the whole city.

To some extent, the new organizers have been successful. Attendance has increased at YpsiFest (as it is now known), much of the debt has been paid off, and it is now a solvent event. It is a more balanced festival with a variety of activities, including, but not limited to music.

To some extent, they have not been successful. Minors are not allowed to attend without an attending adult. The events and vendors are pretty fun but not closely related to the heritage of Ypsilanti. Sword fighting (which I love) is a good example -- is not a part of our local history. Local organizations and city businesses do not have any key role, beyond outreach tables. Attendance is up to about 20-40K over the 3 days, but not like it was back in the heyday.

This year, there were some struggles at YpsiFest: 1) over vehicles parking on park property; 2) over confederate flags being sold at the Festival, and 3) over City Council removing the Heritage Festival ordinance that mandated closing Cross Street in Depot Town and gave the Festival power to control vendors in Depot Town. (There is a separate Festival Ordinance that controls the other successful festivals in the city, FYI)

MORE ON NEXT PAGE

CONT. PG. 1

Are any of these problems, either singly or together, difficult to resolve? The YpsiFest organizers are publicly discussing moving the festival to another location in the future. That will be a loss to the city. This nuclear response to problems that could be easily managed by them is not something the city can fix. A "my-way-or-the-highway" stance by a festival organizer does not work for small or large events.

I wish them the best of luck for future festivals. I hope they choose to stay in the city. That said, whatever they decide, no hard feelings on Ypsilanti's part.

QUICK UPDATES

TRAIN PLATFORM/STATION

Good news! The CRISI grant did open up, our grant is being prepared for submission by the end of October. Also, the city was able to get all the appropriate registrations and codes in place. We ready to submit our strong application and look forward to positive results.

RECREATIONAL MARIJUANA

This will come before Council for a vote on Tuesday, Sept. 24.

PARKING STRATEGY EXECUTION

The next hearing of the parking ordinance will be in October. There was some helpful feedback at council staff is busily incorporating into the first phase.

CITY NON-MOTORIZED ADVISORY FALL NEWSLETTER

With its smaller-in-size area, Ypsilanti is a great place to walk and bicycle. And while yes, there are a number of things that need to be improved, for most able-bodied residents, restaurants, a library, the Post Office, parks, performance venues, and various merchants are just a short walk or bike ride away.

Getting back to that "need to be improved" statement, our City has an active Non-Motorized Advisory Committee that is working to focus on the problems pedestrians, bicyclists, and especially the disabled encounter, with the goal of taking steps to correct and improve troubling situations. Education and outreach are also very important to the Non-Motorized Advisory Committee and to this end, the Committee has started publishing a quarterly newsletter with the Fall 2019 edition [HERE](#)

The Non-Motorized Advisory Committee invites the public to attend its monthly meetings (on the 1st Thursday of most months at the Ypsilanti District Library, 229 W. Michigan Avenue, 7pm). [Access the next meeting details](#) on the City website.

SNOW CLEARING ASSISTANCE

Do you have a disability? Or are you a senior who needs help clearing snow off your sidewalk? The Washtenaw County Sheriff Department's Community Work Program offers snow removal for seniors & people with disabilities. Every year the WCSO Community Work Program assists in clearing snow for approximately 170 households throughout the county.

If you are interested in receiving assistance with snow removal from the Community Work Program please call 734-973-4867.

This service is VERY popular so the earlier in the autumn you call, the better.

KAREN NICKELS PASSING

It is with great sadness that I share the passing of Karen Nickels. Her husband, Bill Nickels, represented Ward 2 on our City Council for 12 years.

Can I emphasize how much being on Council (and being Mayor) impacts our spouses, as well as the office holders?

Karen was the First Lady of Ward 2 for many years and will be sorely missed.

[Obituary](#)



Photo thanks to Depot Town Chatter

SAVE THE DATE

- **Oct. 4:** First Fridays Ypsilanti
- **Oct. 5:** Holy Bones Halloween Market and Creative Bizarre
- **Oct. 17:** Walking Tours of the Historic District
- **Oct. 25:** Ypsi Glow (hold on to your hats, this will be a big one!)
- **Oct. 26:** Freighthouse Halloween Carnival
- **Nov 1:** All Hallows Illumination of Frog Island Park

More details to come for all of those exciting activities.

FIRE AT GROWING HOPE KITCHEN



Growing Hope continues their programming and fundraising events after kitchen fire: Ypsilanti nonprofit seeking community support to rebuild kitchen. After Growing Hope's first "Chefs in the Garden" fundraiser ended on Sunday night, a kitchen fire spread through the Growing Hope farmhouse on Michigan Avenue. The building was unoccupied and guests, staff, and volunteers had left the property. Ypsilanti police and firefighters arrived at the scene quickly after a security guard at Sauk Trail Pointe housing called in the fire.

Growing Hope operates youth and adult gardening and nutrition programs on their urban farm near downtown Ypsilanti. The organization also runs the Downtown and Depot Town Farmers Markets in Ypsilanti and the Growing Hope Incubator Kitchen. Their annual "Chefs in the Garden" fundraiser is a three-part series showcasing local chefs with a sit-down dinner hosted in the farm's hoop house. The first evening of this year's series featured Chef Ji Hye Kim of Miss Kim and Rachel Martindale of Milk + Honey. The five-course meal highlighted seasonal and locally-sourced ingredients. Though the fire has rendered the Growing Hope farmhouse and offices unusable, the next two Chefs in the Garden evenings are on course to take place September 29th and October 13th on the grounds of their urban farm.

A link to purchase tickets can be found on their website at www.growinghope.net/calendar

HIGHLIGHTED UPCOMING EVENTS



PRIDE

Queereoke

4th Tuesdays Sept-Oct
734 Brewery
15 E. Cross St
[Facebook Event.](#)

I am still trying to say this 'word'. Hah! This should be a whole heckuva lot of fun!
KARAOKE IS HERE AND IT'S QUEER!

Back again by popular demand is your favorite way to fundraise and support Ypsi Pride! It's Queereoke! Join us at our usual karaoke time for an extra-special show- where you can shine bright! Bring out your inner star and come play dress up while singing a tune with some of Ypsi's favorite queers and allies! Invite your friends to join in on the fun at 734 Brewery on the fourth Tuesdays! Features Mx. Madame Kiki / Mx. Venis Mound, Ani Briated, and Førcè Majeure, alongside a rotating line up of live drag vocals! (Tips are encouraged for supporting the local drag artists who come to slay and sing!)

DIVERSITY

Sarah Schulman

Sept. 24th, 25th, 26th
Ypsilanti Freighthouse
100 Marketplace Dr.
[Full Details](#)

EMU's Creative Writing Program, with support from Campus Life, is excited to host Sarah Schulman, the acclaimed novelist, playwright, journalist, screenwriter, and AIDS historian, who will be with us for 3 events on Sept. 24, 25, & 26. Prof Schulman will give a talk & reading on her new book; a fiction reading of recent works; and screen her documentary, "United in Anger: A History of Act Up." All events take place at the EMU Student Center auditorium.

BATHHOUSE EVENTS

Creative Writing @ EMU & Campus Life



SARAH SCHULMAN

<p>A novelist, playwright, screenwriter, journalist, and AIDS historian, Sarah Schulman's honors include a Guggenheim in Playwriting, a Fulbright in Judaic Studies, two American Library Association Awards and the Bill Whitehead Award for Lifetime Contribution to LGBT Studies.</p>	<p>TUES 9/24 7PM CONFLICT IS NOT ABUSE: OVERSTATING HARM, COMMUNITY RESPONSIBILITY AND THE DUTY OF REPAIR. Reading & discussion.</p> <p>WED 9/25 3:30PM FICTION READING. Schulman's recent novels include <i>MaggieTerry</i>, <i>The Mere Future</i>, and <i>The Cosmopolitans</i>.</p> <p>THURS 9/26 11AM UNITED IN ANGER: A HISTORY OF ACT UP. Film screening, reading, & discussion.</p>
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All Events In Student Center Auditorium 

MORE ON NEXT PAGE



HERITAGE

Fall River Day

Sunday September 22nd

Riverside Park

[Facebook Page](#)

Mark your calendars for our 2019 Fall River Day on Sunday, September 22, 2019. Come enjoy the fall colors along our Huron River! Fall River Day consists of exhibits and programs from 12pm until 3pm in Riverside Park (north end, entrance on Cross Street just east of Huron Street) along with canoe/kayak trips, programs, displays and walks, all next to the Huron River.

- Kayak Rentals - 12pm-3pm. Launching from Frog Island Park. \$10/single, \$15/double
- 1pm - Live Birds of Prey from the Leslie Science & Nature Center
- 2pm - Border to Border Trail Walk with Washtenaw County Parks & Recreation
- FREE Face Painting from 12pm-3pm
- FREE snacks and drinks
- Music
- Yard Games



The success of our City's updated Master Plan depends on widespread community input -- turn out at one of the following upcoming sessions. Information on this will be updated on the [City of Ypsilanti Website](#)-- have you been there? Lots to learn! If you can't make one of these dates, contact your City Council reps [HERE](#).

We now have live-streaming and recording of City Council and many Commission meetings. See the link below to see how it looks from our last streamed Council meeting.

Note the icons on the agenda (on the left sidebar) that look like movie cameras. Clicking those icons will take you directly to that agenda item. This feature allows you to focus on the agenda item or discussion that interests you the most.

[STREAM HERE](#)



IN COMMUNITY,

Mayor Beth Bashert

FB page: <https://www.facebook.com/bashert4ypsi/>

Email: mayor@cityofypsilanti.com

Phone: 734-368-3573

READING THIS OFFLINE? Here's a list of links I mentioned in the articles above.

Non-motorized committee quarterly newsletter:

<https://cityofypsilanti.com/DocumentCenter/View/2130/Non-Motorized-Advisory-Committee-Fall--2019-Newsletter>

Non-motorized committee meeting details:

<https://cityofypsilanti.com/296/Non-Motorized-Advisory-Committee>) and visit it's Facebook page (www.facebook.com/YpsilantiNMAC

Karen Nickels:

<https://obits.mlive.com/obituaries/annarbor/obituary.aspx?n=karen-nickels&pid=193916778>

Queeraoke:

<https://www.facebook.com/events/755668944870923/>

Fall River Day:

<https://www.facebook.com/events/2212235002424931/>

Sarah Schulman:

<https://www.emich.edu/english/news-events/bathhouse-events-sept-2019.php>

Council live stream:

<https://cityofypsilanti.civicweb.net/Portal/MeetingInformation.aspx?Org=Cal&Id=95>

Parks Plan Survey:

https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLSd8SGBzfXlyCcHo49TT8j_cggyhDYV2sbsUkiHaYlgizKrSw/viewform

City of Ypsi Website:

<https://cityofypsilanti.com/261/Current-Upcoming-Planning-Projects>

City Council Reps:

<https://cityofypsilanti.com/323/Elected-Officials>