

# BASHERT'S BI-WEEKLY MAYORAL BULLETIN



## POLICE VIOLENCE TARGETING BLACK PEOPLE

This week, there was a shocking incident in which a local Sheriff's deputy repeatedly struck a Black woman in the head -- the video went viral. While this did not occur in our city limits, it impacts everyone in our community. It is appalling to have an incident like this occur in our wider Ypsi area.

On behalf of the City of Ypsilanti, I want to express sorrow and concern about this terrible incident. It is vital to the health and safety of our community that our public safety officers be trustworthy and use the least amount of force necessary in every case. This reinforcement of real and perceived violence against African American people in our local community is destabilizing and unacceptable. The woman and her family, the Black community, and the wider Ypsi community were all harmed directly and indirectly by this incident.

As Mayor, it is important that I reinforce the values of our city at times like this. Our values DO NOT include use of unnecessary force by our first responders. Our values DO NOT include use of violence against members of the Black community by our first responders. Our values DO include creating a safe city to live and work in, for all members of our community: White, Black, Indigenous, and all people of color.

Our values DO include valuing the lives of Black people everywhere and especially in our local community. Our values DO include coming together during times of hardship to make change and really live those values. As a reminder, our city core values are Pride, Diversity, Heritage. Everything we do should be in line with those values.

I support any and all actions that help our Black residents recover and feel safe following this incident of violence. I encourage the Sheriff and County to step up and take whatever steps are necessary to create a safe and welcoming community, beginning with an independent investigation.

Let's be clear. Police must use force only when necessary. Using the least amount of force necessary to subdue a resistant person is a best practice. Using force should never be done in anger, or to punish, to cause pain, or to assert authority. I question the use of force against Sha'Teina Grady El; striking her on the head multiple times seems to be at the least unnecessary use of force to subdue her.

I hope that our community can come together to work towards a peaceful resolution of this incident and to prevent further such instances.

[Here is Sheriff Claytons' interview discussing this incident.](#)





Resolution No. 2020-113  
May 19, 2020  
As amended

RESOLVED BY THE COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF YPSILANTI:

WHEREAS, President Bill Clinton declared June “Gay and Lesbian Pride Month” in June of 2000 to commemorate the June 1969 Stonewall riots in Lower Manhattan; and

WHEREAS, President Barack Obama expanded the commemoration further by declaring June Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, and Transgender Pride Month; and

WHEREAS, Pride Month is not only a time of celebration, it is also an opportunity to peacefully protest and raise political awareness of current issues facing the LGBTQ+ community, and

WHEREAS, much ground has been gained since the 1969 Stonewall Riots, however, injustice and negative attitudes remain that threaten the LGBTQ+ community; and

WHEREAS, The City of Ypsilanti has a proud place in the history of LGBTQ+ equality in the successful passing of our Inclusive Non-Discrimination Ordinance in 1998, a historic victory that received national attention and acclaim; and

WHEREAS, while the City of Ypsilanti has a long and proud tradition of being an inclusive community, it recognizes as long as injustice exists it threatens all that has been accomplished.

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED THAT the Ypsilanti City Council of the City of Ypsilanti declare June 2020 as “Pride Month” and direct staff to fly the Pride Flag through the duration of the month.

OFFERED BY: Council Member Somerville

SUPPORTED BY: Council Member Wilcoxen

YES: 5                      NO: 2 (Richardson, Morgan) ABSENT: 0                      VOTE: CARRIED

## MEALS ON WHEELS INCREASES OUTREACH

Exciting news! And not new, but so good that I had to share it again. Our beloved Meals On Wheels has received a grant and a minivan to help increase their outreach. More seniors than ever before will now be part of the broad range of services this great organization offers.

[Here is more about that.](#)



Photo by Jacob Hamilton/MLive

## FUN IN THE TIME OF QUARANTINE

Looking for something safe and fun to do? Check it out!

Tuesdays at 7 pm  
Pub Trivia over Zoom

Pub Trivia, via zoom videoconference! This trivia event will be conducted like in pubs, but with each team having its own video breakout room (instead of its own table) and turning in their answers by Zoom Chat to the DJ. After ten questions, the team or person with the most correct answers wins. If you have your own team, fine! Otherwise we will assign you to a team of other nice people who are looking for something fun to do here in quarantine. You do not have to be good at trivia. Free. Hosted by Tom Gottsman. To get a zoom link to join in, please send an email to thomasjg46@hotmail.com.

## OPENING IN THE TIME OF COVID

Questions, Questions, Questions: How will businesses open back up?

If there is one thing we know, it's that we don't know a lot. We don't know what it will look like when our restaurants open up, what our business districts will look like, how we will eat out, how we will buy things... The list goes on and on.

Thursday, June 4, at 7 PM there will be (yes) a Zoom conversation to answer these very questions. Brian Jones-Chance from 734 Brewery, Shawn Cool from Red Rock, and Chris Jacobs our DDA Director will talk about these and other questions. Please join us!

June 4, 2020  
7 PM to 8:30 PM  
<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/88467556940>  
No password required

## COVID ASSISTANCE CARE PACKAGES NOW AVAILABLE TO RESIDENTS

*From the desk of City Manager McMullan*

On May 5th, City Council approved a new program aimed at providing COVID Assistance Care Packages to city residents after staff identified the City of Ypsilanti is eligible for an allocation of \$44,937 of Coronavirus Emergency Supplemental Funding administered by the Department of Justice. These care packages include 3oz bottles of hand sanitizer, 3oz bottles of cleaning disinfectant, 1 cloth reusable face mask for each member of eligible households in the City, 2 rolls of paper towel, and 2 rolls of toilet paper. Included in each care package will be detailed instructions on the items received and their proper use, including wearing and washing your cloth facemask.

Each cloth facemask was produced locally in partnership with Engage EMU. The EMU PPE Project was launched in mid-March 2020 with a request from administrators of St. Joseph Mercy Hospital in Ann Arbor/Ypsilanti for fabric masks to help protect employees working on non-COVID-19 units. That initial request led to the development of a more comprehensive PPE project which utilized the key assets of EMU (students, faculty, and equipment) in collaboration with community organizations and businesses. The material and design of the masks have been approved by St. Joe's Health System for their non-medical staff and the high quality of the quilted material is more durable than cotton and reusable. 500 out of the 2500 ordered for COVID Assistance Care Packages to city residents will be made for children.

The plan is to utilize existing distribution channels such as Ypsilanti Community Schools at Parkridge and the management staff at facilities such as Chidester Place and Town Center Place who have communicated the need for these kinds of supplies for their residents. City staff has been quickly assembling the care packages over the last couple weeks since the plan was approved and there is now an application online where residents can go to sign up and receive a COVID Assistance Care Package for contactless pickup at City Hall while supplies last. Staff will verify City resident status by address and leave the bag in the foyer with a name attached and time of pickup. Information about Washtenaw County Barrier Busters is included in every care package for residents that might need rent, utility, or mortgage assistance.



**COVID assistance care packages include:**

- 1 reusable cloth face mask for each member of the household
- 2 rolls of toilet paper and 2 rolls of paper towel
- 3 oz bottle of hand sanitizer
- 3 oz bottle of cleaning disinfectant

**Apply-** [cityofypsilanti.com/725/COVID-19](https://cityofypsilanti.com/725/COVID-19)

**Need rent, mortgage or utility relief?**  
**Apply-** [washtenaw.org/588/Barrier-Busters](https://washtenaw.org/588/Barrier-Busters)

## DOMESTIC VIOLENCE AND CHILD ABUSE DURING COVID-19

In these days of Stay Home Stay Safe, I have been asking some questions about anticipated increases in domestic violence and child abuse -- a potential and likely negative outcome due to social isolation, combined with closed businesses, many people laid off, and loss of safety nets. In doing some investigation about the data associated with this concern, I have learned a lot.

I am sharing an [opinion piece below from Barbara Niess-May](#), director of Safehouse (our local shelter for people fleeing domestic violence). She has added to my understanding of this complex issue, for which I am greatly appreciative.

Her Op-Ed helps explain some of the factors associated with domestic violence. Watch for an upcoming Zoom event where she and I will have a public discussion about domestic abuse during the pandemic.

## FOURTH OF JULY NEWS!

*From the desk of Angel Vanas, Parade Coordinator*

Even with all the changes we have been facing in this Corona paradigm we find ourselves in, we could not just cancel our long parade tradition. So we, like everything else, are evolving to survive.

We wanted to keep your Ypsi parade tradition alive and keep all of our friends and neighbors safe. Enter the UnParade! We think this concept will fulfill our goals of providing us all with the celebration that we are all so used to having and looking forward to, while keeping us safe. And we will do it with a very distinctly Ypsi flair!

The idea is to shift the festivities from one central location to many. This will allow us to all have a great time, celebrating the same thing. We will still have the community feel. But we won't all be packed together, putting each other at risk.

The way this works: each of the neighborhoods / areas of Ypsi will be assigned a Captain. That Captain will then have the autonomy to communicate with the participants in their UnParade and design an event that resonates with their stomping grounds. We at Ypsi Parade and the Legion will be available to assist the Captains with communication and questions. But how each UnParade looks and feels is completely up to each individual neighborhood! Of course, there will be guidelines to help us all create safe experiences. And we are working to come up with some examples of things our communities might like to try, but other than that, it's your show, Ypsi!

We are currently reworking our parade sign-up forms to accommodate this new dynamic. The forms will include spaces for people to apply to be participants, captains, photographers (cuz pics or it didn't happen), and tell us where they want to perform.

We are also hammering out details around the cookout at the Legion Post 282 and what that's going to look like. People interested in this should Like and Follow the Ypsilanti Fourth of July Facebook page. That is the first place we get things posted when we finish them.

Our next meeting is June 9th. That is when we will get all the details hammered out. So be on the lookout in the days following that. All the ins and outs will go live at that point.

We are all excited to see what Ypsi does with this year's Fourth of July UnParade!



## IN COMMUNITY,

Mayor Beth Bashert

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

Sheriff Clayton interview

<https://www.wemu.org/post/wash-co-sheriff-launches-immediate-investigation-video-showing-deputy-striking-subject-head>

Ypsi Meals on Wheels increases outreach

<https://www.mlive.com/news/ann-arbor/2020/05/ypsilanti-meals-on-wheels-increases-capacity-by-25-receives-assistance-from-toyota.html>

Domestic Violence opinion piece

<https://www.bridgemi.com/guest-commentary/opinion-theres-help-survivors-domestic-violence-during-stay-home-order>