



# THE CITY OF YPSILANTI NEWSLETTER

OCTOBER ISSUE 2020

## MESSAGE FROM CITY MANAGER, FRANCES MCMULLAN

Hello Everyone,

Fall is here and everyone's thoughts are turned towards the upcoming November election, the new virtual and/or hybrid learning environment recently thrust upon us, and the continued effects of COVID-19. It's easy to become stressed in these times, however I encourage everyone to exercise these nine simple effective stress management techniques: 1. Stay social as much as possible (virtually or via phone calls) 2. Get enough sleep 3. Eat well 4. Get organized 5. Manage your time 6. Get help when needed 7. Take breaks 8. Exercise and 9. Do mental and physical check-ins with yourself.



I remain concerned about the effects COVID-19 has had on residents and the nation at large. September was National Suicide Awareness Month and I presented a proclamation to remind us that suicidal thoughts can affect anyone regardless of age, gender, race, orientation, income level, religion, or background. According to the CDC, each year more than 41,000 people die by suicide. The City of Ypsilanti is no different than any other community in the country. City Council publicly placed our full support behind local educators, mental health professionals, athletic coaches, pack leaders, police officers, and parents as partners in supporting our community in simply being available to one another. Organizations like the National Alliance on Mental Illness (NAMI) are on the front lines of a battle that many still refuse to discuss in public, as suicide and mental illness remain too taboo a topic to speak on. Every member of our community should understand that throughout life's struggles we all need the occasional reminders that we are all silently fighting our own battles. All residents are encouraged to take the time to inquire as to the wellbeing of their family, friends, and neighbors and to genuinely convey your appreciation for their existence by any gesture you deem appropriate.

Back in late March at the peak of the pandemic, the City of Ypsilanti partnered with Barrier Busters, which is administered by Washtenaw County Office of Community Development, to aid the support and coordination of resources to provide financial assistance to Ypsilanti residents. To date well over \$200,000 in direct assistance has been provided to over 346 households to help them stay housed, cover utilities and medical bills and for other urgent needs.

While the racial climate in the nation has heightened, it is the goal of the City of Ypsilanti to establish and maintain a culture of diversity, inclusion and racial sensitivity. I, City Council and the entire staff is committed to pursuing unity in our community through continued learning and intentional application of skills to help us better understand each other. The city is currently engaged in training regarding Racism, Unconscious Bias, and Micro-aggressions. We are committed to eliminating racism, promoting cultural competence by having a diverse and inclusive workforce and strategically recruiting and employing personnel that reflect cultural characteristics of our city.

October is Domestic Violence Awareness Month. The National Center for Injury Prevention and Control, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention reports that one in four women and one in nine men experience physical violence which leave lasting impacts of fearfulness and posttraumatic stress disorder. I support holding domestic violence perpetrators accountable, employing interventions in order to reduce the risk and harm to all victims as well as providing victims the resources and support they



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deserve to enhance their safety and well-being. By proclamation, I am asking the City of Ypsilanti to proclaim the entire month of October as Domestic Violence Awareness and Prevention month in the City of Ypsilanti.

We have a new Councilmember. City Council selected Brian Jones-Chance to fill the Ward 1 vacancy. Please welcome him if you happen to see him around town. He is co-founder of Ypsilanti Association of Businesses of Color and co-owner of 734 Brewing.

Last but certainly not least, City hall is open during normal business hours. Please note that you must wear a mask and comply with social distancing requirements. The Clerk's office is open to the public and all other departments are by appointment. Currently, I have a hybrid work schedule and continue to work remotely and in person as necessary. To contact me, please do so via email at [fmcmullan@cityofypsilanti](mailto:fmcmullan@cityofypsilanti) or by contacting the City Manager's office at (734) 483-1810 where my Executive Assistant Jackie Harris will be happy to assist you.

**YPSILANTI RECEIVES OUTSTANDING AWARD**

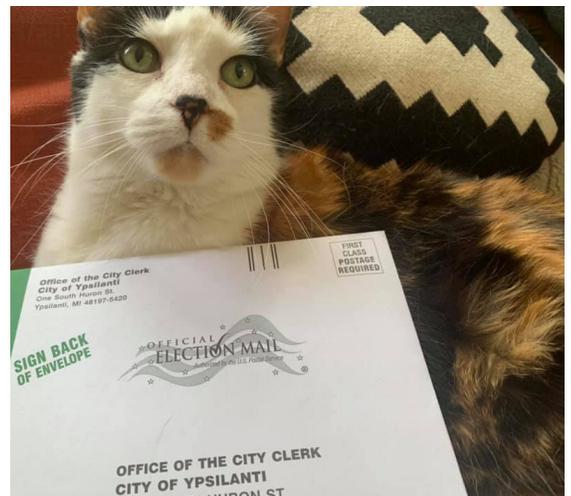
The City of Ypsilanti has received the Certificate of Achievement for Excellence in Financial Reporting for its comprehensive annual financial report (CAFR). This certificate is awarded by the Government Finance Officers Association of the United States and Canada (GFOA).

In a press release from the GFOA, it is noted that this award is the highest form of recognition in governmental accounting and finance reporting as the city has met the "high standards of the program" and have shown a "constructive 'spirit of full disclosure' to clearly communicate its financial story."

**ELECTIONS**

The Office of the City Clerk has received more than 4,000 requests for Absentee Ballots. Ballots will be mailed and available to request in person on September 24th. If you plan on returning your ballot by mail, please complete and return it as soon as you receive your ballot. Return postage for returning your ballot has already been attached to the green return envelope.

Also, you can register to vote, fill out an absentee application, and cast your absentee ballot in one trip at the clerk's office. You can register to vote until 8pm on Election Day, but if you want to use the mail in ballot, you have to register by 4pm.



Now that Cali has your attention, she wants to make sure that you get out and vote!

## DDA- YPSI SHOPS INCENTIVE PROGRAM

The Ypsi Shops Incentive Program is back, and re-imagined!

Scan unique QR Codes at participating DDA locations for a chance to win gift cards to your favorite Ypsilanti businesses! Five winners will be announced each month. Winners can choose a \$50 gift card to their favorite DDA business.

Each scan is one submission.

One submission per location per month. For more chances to win, scan at unique locations every month. Drawings will be held on the first Monday of every month!

QR Codes are currently located at-

- 734 Brewing Co.
- A2Vintage
- Aubrees
- Back Office Studio
- Bobcat Bonnies
- Brick and Mortar Modern General Store
- Eagles Market
- Heikk's Decorated Apparel
- Maiz Mexican Cantina
- Materials Unlimited
- Nelson Amos Studio
- Original Moxie
- Puffer Reds
- Sweetwaters of Ypsilanti
- Unicorn Feed and Supply
- The Rocket Gifts & Candy
- The Thrift Shop of Ypsilanti
- Ypsilanti Food Co/op
- Ypsilanti Running Co.



You will be able to find more QR codes beyond this list, when businesses sign up!

Thanks for supporting Ypsi businesses!

-Ypsilanti DDA

## YPSI GLOW 2020- REIMAGINED!

WonderFool Productions invites all of Ypsilanti to reimagine the fifth annual ypsiGLOW, a community-built celebration coming together on Friday, October 23, 2020 with “on-the-ground”, at home, and virtual creative experiences. This year’s theme – We GLOW Brightest Together – affirms the power of building community through the inclusive, illuminating, and transforming power of creativity. Plans are designed with social distancing in mind, and GLOWing masks will be required to help keep everyone safe!

COVID-19 might have spoiled plans for our fun luminary-making workshops, but people of all ages and abilities are invited to get GLOWing at home. WFP is organizing 600 GLOW Kits so kids can get busy making art for ypsiGLOW with creative activities and supplies to make masks or costumes, decorate their rooms, or neighborhoods. Kits will be distributed by community partners such as the Ypsilanti District Library (YDL), EMU Bright Futures, Ypsilanti Community Schools, Kereke Freedom School, Hope Clinic, Corner Health Center, Ozone House, and others. “Together We Can Breathe” murals designed by student artists will be painted at outdoor sessions hosted by the YDL-Downtown (October 2, 4 to 6pm) and Whittaker Road (October 3, 2 to 4pm). Creative ideas and tutorials will also be shared on our ypsiGLOW Facebook page/social media so everyone can make and share some Ypsi GLOW!

Surprising, light-filled public art will emerge in mid-October across the Downtown, Depot Town, and West Cross Street districts and shine brightest on Friday, October 23, 7:00 to 9:00 PM for this year’s community-built ypsiGLOW celebration. Local artists will bring Ypsilanti’s landmarks, public spaces, and storefront windows to life with illuminating art installations. A pop-up market and other GLOWing fun will be found on N. Washington Street and fan favorites like the YDL’s Spider, Stark Funeral hearse, and Wolfpack Cruiserz will roam the streets. There will be experiences across Ypsilanti to surprise and delight all ages, so dust off your luminaries, get your costumes and masks ready, throw your holiday lights outside, and make plans to be part of the wonder that is ypsiGLOW. Support our local businesses and make a night of it with great food and drinks, some sweet treats, a bit of shopping, and maybe some post-GLOW music!

To keep everyone safe, ypsiGLOW 2020 experiences will be socially distanced so you can mask up and do your own GLOW tour on foot, bike or by car. You can GLOW at home with our new virtual GLOW TV program featuring community-created videos, performances, music, and dancing by local artists and youth. Plans are in the works for our first ever ypsiGLOW drive-in movie night at the EMU Convocation Center featuring GLOW TV as the warm-up act. Watch for details on where and how to tune in!

The magic of ypsiGLOW is made possible by our generous sponsors including the Ann Arbor Area Community Foundation, Bank of Ann Arbor, Beal Properties, Dick Mattie, Charles Reinhart Realtors, Ypsilanti Downtown Development Authority, and the Ypsilanti Heritage Foundation. If you’d like to help ypsiGLOW brighter, please contact Jennifer Goulet at [wonderfoolproductions@gmail.com](mailto:wonderfoolproductions@gmail.com) or 734-834-4288.

For more info visit [www.wonderfoolproductions.org](http://www.wonderfoolproductions.org), follow ypsiGLOW on Facebook, or email us at [wonderfoolproductions@gmail.com](mailto:wonderfoolproductions@gmail.com). Together we can



Photo by Leisa Thompson

## YPSILANTI STRIVES FOR PEDESTRIAN SAFETY

In partnership with the Michigan Department of Transportation (MDOT), the City of Ypsilanti continues to improve navigation throughout the city for all residents by installing “gateway treatments.” The City stated in a press release that these features are being used to help prevent severe crashes and remind drivers to yield to pedestrian traffic. It was also noted that with the use of these treatments “drivers are more than 80% more likely to safely yield to a pedestrian in the crosswalk.”

The continued effort that the city is making to improve the community should encourage us all to participate as well. Please be mindful of these signs and pedestrians at all time to help keep the community safe and prospering.



## MORE PEDESTRIAN FRIENDLY IMPROVEMENTS

The City of Ypsilanti has been working hard this summer to make numerous pedestrian-friendly improvements throughout the community. In partnership with a handful of state and local entities, the City has installed many features including a new pedestrian crossing, bike lane extensions, and bicycle repair stands; all at multiple locations throughout the city. Other improvements include the reconstruction of the Border to Border Trail, as repairs to a section of sidewalk connecting to the trail have been completed and the addition of lighting in Frog Island, and additional reconstruction of the trail, are underway.

Non-motorized transportation can be essential to improving the health and mobility of a community. In a press release on these city improvements, City Manager Frances McMullan states “Bicyclist and pedestrian safety is a cornerstone of safe outdoor recreation and nonmotorized transportation, especially in this time of covid-19 and social distancing. More people have gotten outside and active this summer, and we want to encourage those healthy habits.” With Fall weather approaching and the urge to continue to enjoy the outdoors as much as possible, this is the perfect to enjoy a nice walk or bike ride around town and utilize these features.



## ALL HALLOWS ILLUMINATION OF FROG ISLAND

Please join some really amazing local Ypsi folks for the second annual All Hallows Illumination of Frog Island! Walk, red wagon, bike, or drive your aging jacks to the Frog Island amphitheater to light it & our track with our old jack o'lanterns. Costume encouraged [& masks required] of course. Nothing fancy, just us, hopefully a few performers (tips encouraged!), an illuminated Tridge, & a park of



## A WORD FROM THE MAYOR

Greetings All,

Welcome back EMU Students/Families, Faculty and Staff and YCS students and Staff,

We are in times we have never experienced before, but we will make it through this.

We are excited to see our YCS students and staff starting the new year both in person and virtual classes. We know there are difficult challenges that you are facing but we believe that as you push forth things will all come together. Be encouraged.

We are grateful to have all EMU students and staff back in Ypsilanti this term. As you know, the City of Ypsilanti is excited about your safe return. We are also looking forward to you visiting the businesses and restaurants here. When your class schedule permits please stop in for shopping or dining on Cross Street, Downtown or in Depot Town.

There are also new services that will be available to you such as the IHA Health Center, Swoops Food Pantry, and new procedures for entering buildings on the campus.

COVID -19 is still an issue that we must face and manage daily, so I'm asking you to mask up and social distance to keep yourself and others healthy.

I'm also sending this as a reminder of the election that will be held November 3, 2020. If you are not registered to vote and you will be in Ypsilanti, please contact our City Clerk, Andrew Hellenga at 734-483-1100 or stop by 1 S. Huron Street, Downtown.

As Mayor of Ypsilanti, I am available to meet as appropriate or speak with each and everyone so feel free to contact me at 734-972-3673 with any questions, concerns, or suggestions.

Council meetings are scheduled the first and third Tuesday each month starting at 7:00 pm and you are welcome.



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## CENSUS REMINDER!

There is still time to complete the 2020 census if you have not done so. The deadline is September 30, so time is short. Completing the census is so important.

Please see the listing of the things affected by the census on the next page.

Here's wishing everyone a fantastic fall season. Enjoy the weather and seasonal events remembering to follow the new rules: masks and social distancing. Oh, and don't forget to wash your hands. Be safe and stay well.

Better to best,  
Mayor Lois



**The Ypsilanti Council of Elders**  
presents

## THE 2020 CENSUS HELPS BLACK LIVES!

When you fill out the 2020 Census, you will help our communities get more money!  
Here's what it does:

- It puts money into HOUSING PROGRAMS like:
  - o SECTION 8 VOUCHERS
  - o FOOD STAMPS & SNAP
  - o UNEMPLOYMENT
  - o THE HOME INVESTMENT PARTNERSHIPS
  - o LOW INCOME HOME ENERGY ASSISTANCE (DTE)
- It puts money into HEALTH INSURANCE PROGRAMS like:
  - o MEDICAID HEALTH INSURANCE
  - o STATE CHILDREN'S HEALTH INSURANCE PROGRAMS (CHIP)
- It puts money into EDUCATIONAL PROGRAMS like:
  - o HEADSTART
  - o SCHOOL FREE LUNCH
  - o FASFA – PELL GRANTS for COLLEGE
  - o CAREER and TECHNICAL EDUCATION GRANTS (Trade Programs)

So don't let them take our help away from us!  
FILL OUT THE 2020 CENSUS!

\*\*\*Last day to fill it out is **September 30, 2020**\*\*\*

Reading this offline? Here are some links referenced above.

All Hallows Eve Event:  
<https://www.facebook.com/events/622461075110757>

Your story could be published here! Send your story to Jada Tillison-Love [jtillisonlove@cityofypsilanti.com](mailto:jtillisonlove@cityofypsilanti.com)