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The Michigan Municipal League is the one clear voice for Michigan communities. Our goals are to aid them in creating desirable and unique places through legislative and judicial advocacy; to provide educational opportunities for elected and appointed officials; and to assist municipal leaders in administering community services. Our mission is that of a non-profit, but we act with the fervor of entrepreneurs to passionately push change for better communities and a better Michigan.

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Last year the League held a series of public policy forums, that led to the identification of the eight core assets of 21st century communities (story on page six). The Ann Arbor location was an abandoned warehouse showcasing art from local artists. Our cover features artist Marcia Polenberg's "Hera," a multi-fired, glazed terracotta sculpture. Photo by David Lewinski.





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By Daniel P. Gilmartin

People Want Arts and Culture

At our Capital Conference in March, we posed a provocative question to our members, "What kind of Michigan do we want?" The response was an agenda that dares us to dream—the League's Prosperity Agenda. Through the Prosperity Agenda, the Michigan Municipal League is intent on creating a better future, a Michigan that prospers once again. We have called on the Legislature and governor to support laws that promote additional cultural economic development. Cultural economic development is how communities grow jobs, tourism, and tax revenues through museums, art galleries, libraries, cultural heritage, live music halls, and theaters. Educated, talented, and creative people—young and old—flock to places that offer these types of attractions.

Celebrating Art

Michigan has a cornucopia of arts and cultural offerings. In this issue of *The Review*, we put the city of Jackson in the spotlight. Jackson won the League's Community Excellence Award in 2008 for its Armory Arts Village project—redeveloping part of their old prison into a teeming artists' village. Also shining as the 'Art Coast' of Michigan, are the cities of Saugatuck and Douglas. Together they won a distinguished award from the Historic Preservation Trust as one of ten 'Distinctive Destinations' in the U.S. Read on and discover the funky spirit of Ferndale and the romping celebration of red flannel underwear in Cedar Springs.

Cultural Economic Development

Increasingly, arts and culture are being recognized as essential to a healthy and vibrant economy. The Michigan Department of History, Arts and Libraries (HAL) developed the Great Lakes Arts, Culture, and Heritage Participation Survey, which, according to former HAL Director Dr. William M. Anderson, "offers scientific data that support investment in cultural economic development." Key findings include:

 60 percent of Michigan respondents participated in some type of visual, performing, or literary arts or crafts lessons, or classes as children, and spent an average of \$462 annually for arts education of their children.

- Nearly 15 percent of Michigan respondents made financial donations to arts, heritage or cultural organizations, and 30 percent of those who volunteered provided one to five hours of volunteer service during the previous 12 months.
- Artists are entrepreneurial and want to grow their businesses. Seventy-five percent of self-identified Michigan professional artists want to support themselves with their arts-related income, but face major barriers such as financing, marketing, credentials, and location.
- 36 percent of Michigan respondents attended theatrical performances over the last year, spending an average of \$38, and as much as \$250, for a ticket.
- 64 percent of Michigan respondents took an average of four pleasure trips to destinations more than 50 miles from home during the last 12 months; 52 percent of them visited some type of historical attraction or site during at least one of their pleasure trips, followed by 40 percent who visited a museum, and 40 percent who visited a festival; and 18 percent indicated that cultural tourism was the only purpose for their trip.
- Cultural attractions and programs assigned the greatest average importance by all respondents were: gardens, zoos, aquariums, historical attractions, museums, cultural fairs/festivals, customs, and ways of living.

To see the full survey and the state's cultural economic development strategy, visit www.michigan.gov/ced.

Filmmaking in Michigan

The excitement of the new filmmaking phenomenon in Michigan is certainly enhancing the arts and culture scene. With the film production incentives offered by the state, more and more film productions are coming here. Many cities have now hosted film crews—see Frankfort in our Field Report and Holland in our interview with a film producer and location scout. Also, we are pleased to include an article on Allen Park's groundbreaking new film complex and tips from the city of Novi on being a movie-friendly city. There are many more fantastic success stories in Michigan, and we hope you enjoy reading them all.

Daniel P. Gilmartin is executive director and CEO of the League. You may contact him at 734-669-6302 or dpg@mml.org.





By Colleen Layton



The Center for 21st Century Communities

Investing in communities is an important element of any long-term economic development strategy. Research continues to show that "place" matters more than ever. The League hosted a public policy series to inform and inspire a different way of thinking as we provide a blueprint for moving our communities forward in a new and creative direction. Through these forums, research, and education, we identified eight essential assets necessary for communities to be vibrant places for the next 50 years. These eight assets will serve as the focus for the Center.

Eight Core Assets

Physical Design & Walkability

• Whether your community is big or small, it is important to create a physical fabric that promotes social connections where people can live, work, shop and play.

Green Initiatives

Thinking green" is a critical asset of any viable community. It impacts natural resources, quality of life, and the financial bottom line.

Cultural Economic Development

Arts and culture should be a part of any long-term economic development strategy for sustainability. CED plays a big role in developing and preserving a community's identity and uniqueness.

Entrepreneurship

In the new economy, we need to focus on growing jobs in our communities by ones and twos for long-term sustainability.

Diversity/Multiculturalism

 Our global economy is fueled by the talent and ingenuity of people from around the world. Welcoming those from different backgrounds and disciplines can result in a whole new level of innovation.

Messaging & Technology

6. Technology allows people to connect and collaborate like never before. Communities have a powerful opportunity to connect and engage with their citizenry and beyond.

• People are choosing where they want to live, play and work in communities that embrace all modes of transportation—walking, biking and public transit.

Education (K-16)

Our educational institutions are key to growing a knowledge-based state. Leveraging these institutional resources is critical.

If someone told you that for every \$1.00 invested in your community you could get a return of \$8.00, would you want to know where to sign up? If you were asked to name some of the top economic engines that will propel your community in the next 50 years, would arts and culture be one of your choices? It should be.

Make no mistake. One of the primary ways that we are going to create 21st century vibrant places where people want to live, work and play is through arts and culture. Capitalizing on a community's heritage and cultural distinctiveness creates unique places where people want

Local officials play a primary role in setting policies that can help to achieve community sustainability and improve quality of life as it relates to creating attractive places. The League established the Center for 21st Century Communities (21c3) to assist local officials in identifying, developing, and implementing programs and strategies that will enhance the state's communities as vibrant places for the 21st century. Through the Center, the League will provide a wide range of services, including technical services, educational programming, a resource clearinghouse, a speaker and expert bureau, and other related special projects (see text box).





Identified as one of the key critical assets of 21c3, arts and culture can provide the economic boost that turns your community into a sustainable, dynamic community. Big or small, it doesn't matter, every community and region has something to highlight. If you're scratching your head, read about Cedar Springs who became the Red Flannel capital of the world (pg. 22)!

Think about it. If you were describing to someone why you like where you live, what would be some of the first things that come to your mind? Ann Arbor has been my home for a lot of years now, long enough to reminisce about lost favorite restaurants, vanished retail stores on Main Street and small specialty stores that have come and gone. Although it is a city with a world-class university with all the unique opportunities that a higher educational institution can bring, it often has the look and feel of a small town. But, when I tell people about the place I call home, the first thing that comes to my mind is the quality of life. It offers numerous beautiful parks and has a great walkable downtown, but more importantly, it has year round cultural events that give Ann Arbor a distinctive reputation. Most notably, the Summer Festival and the summer Art Fairs have made this city a destination for years, and the multitude of smaller art and musical events and street fairs and festivals add to the local flavor.

Cultural Economic Development

Cultural Economic Development (CED), as defined by the state department of History, Arts and Libraries, means leveraging our creative talent and cultural assets to spur economic growth and community prosperity. Cultural planning should be a part of any long-term economic development planning and regional collaboration and partnerships should be a part of any strategy. Grassroots connections should be used that include a broad range of business partners including Convention & Visitor Bureaus, Chambers of Commerce, business associations, banks, service clubs, local businesses, community foundations and other communities. Although the economy is suffering, this is not the time to pull back. This is the time to think more creatively, to come up with ideas you never would have dreamed of years ago. Encourage and support your local artists who provide an entrepreneurial spirit that can result in sustainable businesses. Arts and culture, like any solid economic development tool, is for the long-term benefits.

Measuring Success

These economic benefits can be easily measured through event admissions, sales of items associated with program activities and increases in retail of local products and services as well. Arts and cultural events produce direct economic benefits—jobs, a stronger tax base, downtown and neighborhood revitalization, and tourism. Its emphasis on creativity, knowledge and innovation are essential elements in attracting and retaining people and businesses vital to Michigan's re-emergence in a 21st century knowledge-based economy.

Michigan has a rich cultural history and the possibilities to leverage what is unique to our state are endless. No community or region is without a story to tell, so make sure you tell yours.

For more information on the Center for 21st Century Communities (21c3) and cultural economic development in particular, please visit our website at www.mml.org.

Colleen Layton is director of Information and Policy Research for the League. You may reach her at 734-669-6320 or clayton@mml.org.



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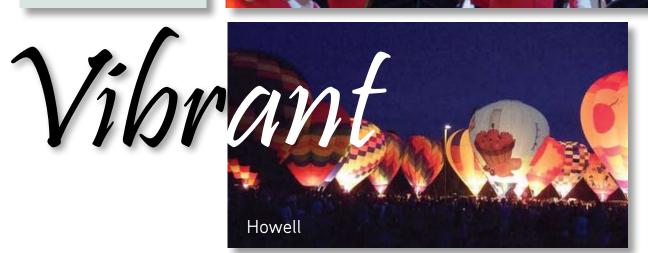
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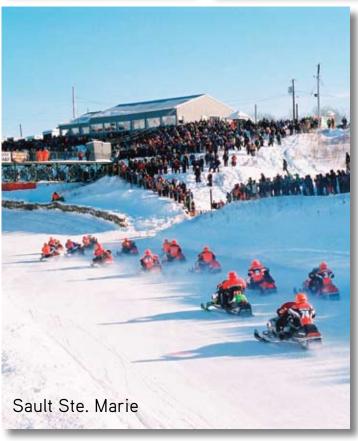












21st Century Communities





In 2004, Governor Jennifer Granholm announced the Cool Cities Initiative, intended to highlight urban redevelopment in Michigan's Core Communities. The city of Jackson was one of 16 original "Cool Cities" designated throughout the state by the governor, for its Armory Arts project. While it took six years for phase one of the project to become a reality, city and community leaders are beginning to see the benefits of arts and cultural economic development....

In the early days of Michigan's statehood, many communities were vying to be the state capital, and Jackson was among them. Though unsuccessful in becoming home to the state's governmental offices, Jackson was awarded the state penitentiary. The community has had to deal with the stigma of this for a long time, even though the jobs provided, mainly corrections officers, are good-paying state jobs with good benefits. Really, the state penitentiary was the origin of our manufacturing and transportation history, as prison labor was first used for building wagon wheels and later on for the locomotive industry, and then, of course, the automotive industry. It is a rich heritage.

In the 1930s, a new prison was built outside the city limits and the original state prison became home to the National Guard. However, early in 2002, the city became aware that the National Guard planned to move to a new building in three to four years. So the challenge to the community became, "What do we do with the original state prison once the National Guard leaves?"

Fortunately, the city had a champion in Neeta Delaney who was the director of one of Jackson's local community-based foundations. Neeta was aware of the strength of Jackson's art community, and started researching the concept of arts and cultural economic development. She discovered Artspace, a non-profit organization out of Minnesota that had partnered with several communities across the nation with arts and cultural redevelopment projects, and saw the opportunity for Jackson. Ms. Delaney championed her idea of an arts colony in the original state prison to the city council and The Enterprise Group, our local non-profit economic development organization. Artspace was invited to tour the site and subsequently agreed to partner with Jackson for the project. Shortly thereafter, Neeta Delaney was hired by The Enterprise Group as the Armory Arts project manager.

"The Armory Arts project has established Jackson as a leader in the economic revival of Michigan and is at the forefront of the new economic reality for Michigan."

—Scott Fleming, president of The Enterprise Group

Profile: Armory Arts Village Artists



Judy Gail Krasnow left the sunshine of 26 years in Miami, Florida, when she heard on National Public Radio about the old first Michigan State Prison in Jackson being renovated into an artists' community. She visited—never having been to Michigan—and said, "YES!" The incredibly fascinating

history of the place brought her here, a definite lure for a professional storyteller for all ages, historical portrayal artist, musician, and published author with a propensity for historical tales. Judy, an Armory Arts Village resident, gives tours entitled "From Historic Prison to Artistic Vision." The tours clearly show why in 1839, during the height of the Industrial Revolution, Jackson made the wise decision to build a prison. Visitors see the old solitary cells, hear engaging stories about colorful inmates with names like Hannibal the Bear, and move into the era when the old prison became an Armory as a new house of incarceration was built on the outskirts of town. The tours then bring visitors into the present, showing how the historic site has become an artists' community. The Village aids in boosting Jackson's economy through the enticement of tourism inspired by Jackson's fascinating old prison and its present focus on the arts. The tour ends with a visit to an apartment that once housed 36 prison cells. Jacksonites, as well as tourists from surrounding communities, out of state, and other countries, come to see this goldmine of history and the arts. They all express that Jackson has a lot to be proud of—even its history as the city that housed the largest walled prison anywhere in its day!



My name is Kay Howard; I live at the Armory Arts Village. I am a biologist by training (MS, U of M), and for the last 15 years, a potter by choice. I also own a small art gallery and gift shop in Jackson's art neighborhood. I moved from Grass Lake to the Armory in order to be part of something bigger than myself—a

synergistic community of artists. Widely considered a "luxury," purchases of art are especially hard hit in the current economy. I can only stress that each white tent at an art show, each small art gallery, each artist resident at the Armory, is a small businessperson who represents a part of every town's economic base. It seems to me that supporting a strong arts community is one of today's best investments for future economic health, especially as Michigan begins to diversify.

Photo of Kay Howard by Jennifer Whaley.

Though the project went through several evolutions and things looked dead in the water when Artspace withdrew their partnership a couple of years into it the process, the city pressed on. When Governor Granholm announced the Cool Cities initiative in 2004, it was a much-needed boost to the project, which included a \$100,000 grant from the state. The \$12 million renovation of the original cell blocks and drill hall was completed in late 2007, and artists moved in early in 2008.

What a huge project this was! It has been six years in the making. There were many challenges, obstacles, and setbacks. There were environmental contamination issues, which set the project back. We had skeptics and naysayers in the community who didn't believe that it would ever work. In spite of it, Jackson has taken the 16-acre site of the original state penitentiary and is redeveloping it and re-identifying our history and heritage.

The following list of groups cooperated with the city and The Enterprise Group to make the Armory Arts Village happen: Michigan State Housing Development Authority, Department of Military and Veterans Affairs, State Historic Preservation Office, Michigan Department of Environmental Quality, our city and county Brownfield Redevelopment Authorities, all the different levels of government—federal, state and local—as well as public and private groups.

This project is a catalyst for community and economic development, downtown revitalization, and repositioning our community's identity as a center for the arts.

What is really exciting about this project, is that it is now home to artists that have moved here from all over the country. They've come from as far away as California and Florida, as well as all over Michigan, and are excited to be here.

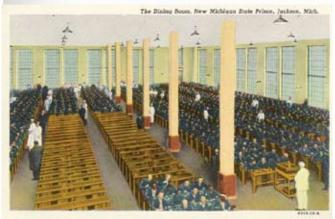
With this project, Jackson has succeeded in brownfield reuse and redevelopment, as well as creating partnerships and collaborations through other organizations all across the state. The results of taking this beautiful building and turning it into something positive for our community has been met with overwhelming support.

The first residents moved in early in 2008. By summer, there was only one out of sixty-two units left available, exceeding the expectations of all involved. Phase two of the project calls for two new buildings and is under active consideration

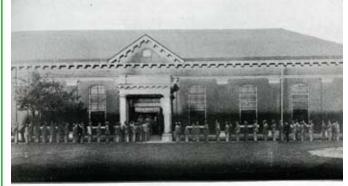
The Jackson State Prison was built in 1839. It was the origin of manufacturing, as prison labor was first used for building wagon wheels and later on for the locomotive and automotive industry. When the National Guard decided to vacate in 2002, the city had a huge challenge on their hands. There were many naysayers to turning the old prison into an artist's colony, but the city persevered. All photos courtesy of the city of Jackson.



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MARCHING TO BREAKPAST

by the planning commission and city council. Phase two is expected to begin late in 2009 with additional apartments and retail space. While in Jackson for a recent council meeting, developer Peter Jobson said "The Armory Arts project is a unique opportunity for Excel Realty to not only develop a new style of housing, but also to partner with a community that is interested in moving to a new and promising economic base."





Recognition of the uniqueness and history of this site as well as the creativity of the artists and the proximity to Jackson's gateway to downtown, Cooper Street, has led to other economic development opportunities in the immediate vicinity of the project, including approximately \$8 million in new construction. Art 634 is the reuse of a former warehouse building as studios and classrooms for artists. Besides the additional \$7 million investment planned by Excel Realty in phase two of the Armory Arts Village, there is interest in other redevelopment on surrounding property. These developments utilized either existing buildings or property that was developed as a result of the stimulus of the Armory Arts project.

"The Armory Arts project has established Jackson as a leader in the economic revival of Michigan, and is at the forefront of the new economic reality for Michigan," stated Scott Fleming, president of The Enterprise Group. Jackson City Manager William Ross agrees, "The Armory Arts project deserves credit with stimulating other community improvements and development projects such as the Grand River Arts Walk Trail, Art 634, and the renovation of Mechanic Street with a period appearance and a new focus on the arts as an economic development opportunity."



The artists hold an open house for the community on the fourth Friday of each month, from 5 pm until 9 pm. The Armory Arts Residents Association and the city of Jackson invite all members of the Michigan Municipal League to attend the open house and art sale on July 24, 2009. The artists and

the city are planning this as a special event to give League members and friends an opportunity to tour the Armory Arts project, meet the artists, see what the arts can do to stimulate a community, and purchase some of the outstanding art that is being produced every day in Jackson, Michigan!

> The city of Jackson's Armory Arts Village won the 2008 Community Excellence Award Race for the Cup at the League's Annual Convention.

Daniel Greer is a councilmember for the city of Jackson, where he has served for 12 years. You may contact him at 517-787-4607 or danielpgreer@yahoo.com. Photo of Dan by Margene Scott.



magine you are standing on the front lawn of St. Denis Church, a quaint old stone building in a resort harbor village along the Lake Huron shoreline. It is a warm September evening. From the church spills the sound of beautiful music written almost three centuries earlier. The musical notes soar across the churchyard and through the evening air, filling your heart and mind with an energizing joy and feeling of hopefulness.

What you hear is a performance from the "Bach and Friends Music Festival," an annual event held in the tiny village of Lexington, situated along the eastern shoreline of Michigan's "Thumb." The festival, now in its tenth year, celebrates the music of Johann Sebastian Bach, as well as the many musicians (including both his contemporaries and more recent composers), who have been inspired by the great composer.

The Bach and Friends Music Festival began as the Village Bach Festival in Cass City, a successful venture first organized and founded by Don Th. Jaeger. In 2000, Maestro Jaeger passed the "festival baton" to the Lexington Arts Council (LAC). With little time and few resources (but lots of energy and determination), the nonprofit group of volunteers produced the first two-concert season of the Lexington Bach Festival. Since then, with the support of many devoted LAC volunteers and organizers, the event has thrived.

Today, the Bach and Friends Music Festival consists of five full days of classical musical entertainment, as well as educational workshop performances orchestrated for students in the local schools. The event attracts audience members from across the country, and those who return year after year, are continually impressed by the quality of programming and the high level of classical music performed by world-renowned musicians.

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The high quality of music is what draws people in, and the tourism dollars are a boon for the eastern coast of Michigan, or Blue Water area.

Mr. Jaeger, who has performed around the world in such illustrious halls as the great Konzerthaus Berlin and Carnegie Hall, conducts the Lexington Bach Festival concerts in much smaller venues. Although Mr. Jaeger acknowledges the excitement and prestige connected with performing in famous places like Carnegie, he believes the concerts performed

in Lexington's St. Denis Church offer a unique facet to the performances that can't be found in the world's greatest concert halls. The small churches provide the perfect venue for enjoying the music of Bach, who composed his work to be performed and heard in such intimate spaces.

Many of the gifted and talented musicians who perform at the festival have become close friends with Mr. Jaeger over the course of his long professional career. These world-traveled musicians say they appreciate the warmth and hospitality found in the small community of Lexington, as well as the immediate contact and sense of communication that forms between performer and audience in a setting such as St. Denis Church. As one musician friend told Don Jaeger, "You know, when I come to Lexington to play, it reminds me of why I decided to pursue music as a profession in the first place."

The mission of the LAC is to improve the quality of life for residents in the Blue Water community by increasing access to arts and culture, and the Bach Festival helps achieve this goal. Besides bringing the residents of the community together and improving the learning experiences for area youth, the festival also produces a direct economic benefit to the area by attracting tourists and visitors to the area and helping retain many of the businesses that are so essential to Michigan's economic resurgence. As such, the festival has received generous donations and support from individual patrons in the community and from local businesses.



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Bach and Friends has also benefited from the support of public arts funding in the form of grants from the Michigan Council for Arts and Cultural Affairs and the National Endowment for the Arts. It is fortunate that our legislators recognize the importance of art and culture to our communities and that funding for such projects is integrated into our state's overall economic development strategy. Without such generous support, it would be difficult for the Lexington Arts Council to share Bach's music with such joyous and open celebration.

If you haven't yet attended the Bach and Friends Music Festival, give yourself a special treat and join us this September!

Kathy Stevens is a grantwriter for the Lexington Fine Arts Festival. You may reach her at kstevens@deckervillehosp.org.

The Best of Both Worlds: Michigan's Art Coast

By Jennifer Eberbach Originally a 19th-century lumber community, Saugatuck-Douglas maintains its old world charm, while also encouraging growth that builds upon its strongest assets. Due largely to the passionate efforts of the local Historical he National Trust for Historic Preservation recognized Society, one still finds historic architecture and one-of-a-

The National Trust for Historic Preservation recognized Saugatuck-Douglas, Michigan as one of its "2009 Dozen Distinctive Destinations." The recognition honors the creative character and natural landscape of the area that attracts vacationers and residents alike, who seek a nice blend of natural beauty, access to recreation and attractions, lively cultural experiences, arts and entertainment, and the contemporary feel of a big city—all within the borders of these two small, adjacent western Michigan coastal communities.

Douglas maintains its old world charm, while also encouraging growth that builds upon its strongest assets. Due largely to the passionate efforts of the local Historical Society, one still finds historic architecture and one-of-a-kind attractions, including the country's only hand-cranked chain ferry still in operation. However, the area has also experienced significant development as a modern, 21st-century destination, and it houses a blend of art galleries, shops, Broadway-quality theater, fine dining establishments, bed and breakfasts, and major events like the Saugatuck Waterfront Film Festival, which has achieved international renown that rivals giants like Sundance and Cannes.

Felicia Fairchild, executive director of the Saugatuck-Douglas Visitors Bureau describes Saugatuck as "a cosmopolitan microcosm of a big city," that attracts travelers and residents from all over the world who are looking for access to a "high quality of life" coupled with a less hectic small town atmosphere. Across the Kalamazoo River, Douglas has more of an "old school, Main Street mentality," that provides "a respite from some of the bustle of Saugatuck," and is "centered around the year-round residents," says Douglas Community/Economic Development Director Ryan Kilpatrick. "The two cities have found a really great yin and yang between them, and the arts and culture are at the center of both," Kilpatrick said. Saugatuck-Douglas has long attracted travelers seeking reprieve from the chaos of urban living.

Chicago Discovers Saugatuck-Douglas

By the early part of the 20th century, the area had already become a popular destination for midwestern urbanites and visiting artists. In 1910, faculty members from the School of the Arts Institute of Chicago chose the area as the location to establish the Ox-Bow Summer School of Art. They were inspired by the natural landscape of the area, its breathtaking dunes, its magnificent beaches, and its quiet seclusion from the hustle and bustle of big city life.

Executive director of Ox-Bow Jason Kalajainen said, "I think the remarkable thing is how Ox-Bow has served as a catalyst for turning the Saugatuck-Douglas region and western Michigan into an arts hub." Although the school is

The success of Saugatuck-Douglas as a distinctive destination can be largely attributed to how it has been marketed as "Michigan's Art Coast" over the past two decades.

in many ways separated and removed from what is going on in the local community, Kalajainen explained that "often what happens is the students and the artists who come to visit develop a fondness for the area and stick around," whether they take up residence, show their work at local galleries, or establish their own galleries in town.

On the cusp of the 21st century, Saugatuck-Douglas mounted efforts to promote the area in order to attract new businesses, residents, and tourists. Its success growing as a distinctive destination can be largely attributed to how it has been marketed as "Michigan's Art Coast" over the past two decades, a title that references the area's two greatest assets—its access to Lake Michigan and the Kalamazoo River, and its history as a haven for artists seeking an environment conducive to creative inspiration.

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Art Makes Us Different

After taking the promotional helm, in 1989, the Saugatuck-Douglas Visitors Bureau organized focus group sessions in order to pose the question, "What's makes us different?" In order to better brand the area as an attractive destination for travelers, businesses, and residents, "We wanted to know, what was the one thing that distinguishes us from our competitors?" Fairchild reported, adding, "everyone else has shops, beaches, restaurants, and attractions, but we have art. The only thing that I heard coming out of focus sessions was that a distinctive difference was art."

As the area was promoted as a destination for fine arts and culture, more and more creative professionals, businesses, and artists started flocking to Saugatuck-Douglas, making it what it is today. "What you need to do is to establish your brand and then unwaveringly market it, target who you are after, and reinforce that message. As you do that, you basically build the framework of a house, and then all the people who come to town and are attracted by it become the walls, the bricks, and the stairs. They fill in this framework," Fairchild said.

"Art doesn't drive the economy.
Tourism does." Whether tourists
actually end up patronizing the area's
arts and cultural offerings, or not,
"tourists like to know it's an art town."





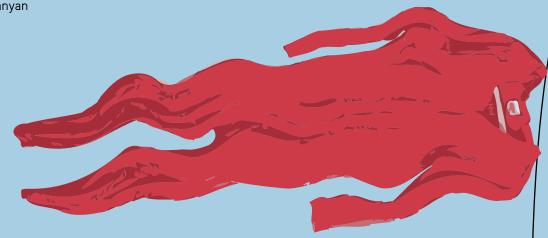
Whether people first come to Saugatuck-Douglas to hit the beaches on spring break, to study at Ox-Bow, or to explore its natural beauty and charming character, it is common that they end up developing a loyal attachment that brings them back year after year and encourages many to relocate to the area. Saugatuck City Manager Kirk Harrier related, "I've talked with people who live here year round, and many explain that there is this creative energy here." He added, "When you have a lot of creative people in one area, they can feed off each other. They are attracted to the area for many reasons. It's the water, it's the fresh air, there is a certain energy around, and it's a small town atmosphere," which he says creates "a perfect soup."

"Michigan's Art Coast" is a popular destination for many reasons, which are not limited to its vibrant arts and culture. Fairchild explained, "Art doesn't drive the economy. Tourism does." In many cases, tourists are drawn to the area for outdoor recreation, boating, fishing, and endless other offerings. However, a strong arts community has contributed to the unique character of Saugatuck-Douglas. Whether tourists actually end up patronizing the area's arts and cultural offerings, or not, Fairchild concludes, "tourists like to know it's an art town."

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A Salute to Red Flannel Underwear

By Linda Branyan



ew cities would admit their claim to fame is underwear, and they probably wouldn't hang the flashy colored garments from the city's lamp posts. But to the residents of Cedar Springs, there is only one kind of underwear and the scarlet drop seats are proudly displayed on the city's lamp posts for all the world to see.

"Red flannels are our heritage, our history. It's who we are," says Mayor Linda Hunt, who served as director of the Red Flannel Festival for many years. "People would miss the red flannels hanging from the lamp posts."

The Two Skirts

Cedar Springs' love affair with red flannels began in 1936 when Grace Hamilton and Nina Babcock came to town and purchased the local *Cedar Springs Clipper* newspaper. The two "skirts,"

as disgruntled Cedar Springs businessmen referred to the New York City women, stirred things up when they penned a response to an editorial that appeared in the New York Sun daily newspaper bemoaning the fact that "in the midst of an old-fashioned winter... there are no red flannels in the country to go with it."

Nina's response was succinct: "Who but a New Yorker would conclude that all the world doesn't because we don't? Or who but a Gothamite would expect that there are no red flannels just because Saks Fifth Avenue, Wanamakers, Lord & Taylor, and Bergdorf Goodman don't wrap 'em up for their clients? Don't write off us lumberjacks; we've got plenty of red flannels in Cedar Springs."

Within days the Associated Press had picked up the story and orders began pouring into town with

Cedar Springs merchants happily supplying the country with red flannels.

By 1938, the city's businessmen had more orders than they could fill and the Clipper Girls figuring they only had a couple of years to play out the thriving red flannel business, came up with the idea of a Red Flannel Festival. In later years, Nina reminisced that certain townsfolk thought it was "indecent to talk about underwear," and "those Clipper Girls were ruining the whole town."

But once again, the two ladies proved the naysayers wrong and today the Red Flannel Festival is still going strong. This fall the city will observe its 70th Red Flannel Day celebration. The theme for this year's festival is appropriately entitled "Soaring at 70...and beyond!"

The Beginnings

The city's favorite underwear was first manufactured by Mae Oppenneer who began sewing the garments in her home in 1949. In 1952 she sold the business to Sally Wall who ran the business for

Red Flannel Day is a "big day," for her, she explained. When she runs out of clothing, she takes orders and ships out the garments the following week. The town's legacy—the drop seat long johns—are her biggest seller.



photos courtesy of the Red Flannel Festival

20 years. The Red Flannel Factory has changed hands and locations several times since then. Today the red flannel garments are once again being manufactured in the home. Seamstress Pam Mauric took over the operation of the Red Flannel Factory in January 2007, and is the sole seamstress of red flannel apparel operating out of her Rockford, Michigan home.

Mauric spends five to eight hours a day at her sewing machine. "I sew all year long," she explained. Her goal is to finish eight to 12 garments a day. Since the Red Flannel Factory is no longer a Cedar Springs owned and operated business, Mauric offers her red flannel garments for sale locally as well as running an online business at www.redflannels.com.

When tourists come to Cedar Springs on Red Flannel Day, held each year on the first Saturday in October, Mauric is there to offer her red flannel apparel. She opens up her "store" in a booth at the annual arts and craft show. "People are so excited to see the red flannels," she said. "Lots and lots of people come to town specifically looking for red flannels."

Another business that promotes red flannel apparel is Flaunt It Sportswear. Co-owners Karen Fudhoff and Lea Dillard have supplied red flannel t-shirts for the festival for years. Red Flannel Day "brings a lot of people to town," Fudhoff said. "They are looking for anything red, as well as umbrellas if it's raining or blankets if it's cold." The company screen prints 500 t-shirts with the festival's logo for the Red Flannel Festival to sell, and then produces another 100 generic t-shirts they offer for sale in their Main Street shop on Red Flannel Day.

"Last year we were slammed," Fudhoff said. "We were hopping all day. We had to shut our door before the parade started because we had nothing else to sell."

Big Business to a Small Town

The Red Flannel Festival is big business to Cedar Springs. The influx of an estimated 35,000-40,000 people into the city to participate in Red Flannel events has a huge impact on the business community. "We've had business owners tell us if it weren't for Red Flannel Day and what they make on that day, they wouldn't be able to stay open the rest of the year," said Michele Tracy Andres, president of the Red Flannel Festival Committee.

Community Share

If the Red Flannel Festival is important to the business community, it is an even bigger boon to local non-profit organizations who volunteer hours to help make the festival a success. Last year the festival implemented a Community Share Program whereby local non-profit organizations volunteer time to certain festival-sponsored events such as the Chili Cook-Off, Queen Pageant, and others. The amount of money each group receives is based on the number of people and hours worked by the organization. Last year the festival donated over \$4,600 to local non-profit groups and expects an even bigger response to the program this year.

"It's a nice thing for us," Andres explained. "We struggle with the need for volunteers and it's a way for a small group to make some money by volunteering."

The Red Flannel Festival is put together by a seven-member festival committee. All are volunteers. "We've had 70 years of people putting this festival together with no paid staff," Andres said. "Most of us work full-time and pulling this together is a lot of hard work. You step in and do your part and carry it along to pass it off to someone who can do something else with it."



Keystone Cops looking to "arrest" people who are not wearing red.

In 2002, the festival's operating budget was \$41,000. This year's budget is \$75,630. They have added 16 new events in the last seven years. Among them are a professional lumberjack show, a teen dance, a grand lodge, photography contest, mule pull, wine tasting, horseshoe throwing, and judgment day pullers.

Money Stays in the Community

Equally important to the festival committee is that monies stay in the community. Approximately \$27,000 is spent in Cedar Springs' businesses each year and all banking is done locally.



The Cedar Springs community has stressed the importance of education by supporting the festival's efforts to improve the Red Flannel Queen's Scholarship. Donations to the annual scholarship drive have allowed the festival committee to double the yearly scholarship dollars awarded the queen and court from \$3,000 to \$6,000. One hundred percent of the donated monies are used toward the scholarship. The money is invested annually and the committee has set a goal of awarding a four-year tuition for the queen by 2010.

The festival now has a place to call home. For all the years it has been in existence, it rented space to run its operation. In 2006, the festival committee purchased the building at 21 E. Maple St. in downtown Cedar Springs and

started a capital campaign to pay off the mortgage. It rents the front portion of the building to help offset expenses and was awarded a Downtown Development Façade Improvement Grant by the city for improvements to the building's façade. "This was a dream," Andres explained. "What does it say to the community if we are renting after 60 years? This building is a formal statement about the festival's presence in Cedar Springs."

The city of Cedar Springs fully supports the Red Flannel Festival through donations of time and labor supplied by the department of public works for setup and clean-up before and after the festival, as well as supplying police officers for crowd control. It also promotes the festival on Facebook, "We Celebrate Underwear" www.facebook.com. "It's our way of connecting to the millennial generation and keeping them informed on the happenings in Cedar Springs," said City Manager Christine Burns who started the page that now boasts over 400 members. "Any time there is something happening, I can write one email and get the word out to over 400 people. It's a great advertising tool."

Each of the past seven years Andres has placed flowers on the graves of the Clipper Girls in the weeks before the festival. "The first year, I just asked them to help me get through it," she said with a smile. "It hasn't rained or snowed in seven years. Some of the things we do with the festival we do with them in mind. Seventy years later, I like to think they would be proud of us."

For more information, please visit the Red Flannel Festival website at www.redflannelfestival.org, or through a link at the city of Cedar Springs' website at www.cityofcedarsprings.org.



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Legal Spotlight

By Sue Jeffers

Does the Free Speech Clause Apply to Monuments in a Public Park?

This column highlights a recent judicial decision or Michigan Municipal League Legal Defense Fund case that impacts municipalities. The information in this column should not be considered a legal opinion or to constitute legal advice.

Facts:

Pioneer Park is a 2.5-acre public park located in Pleasant Grove City, Utah. It contains 15 permanent displays, at least 11 of which were donated by private groups or individuals. These include an historic granary, a wishing well, the city's first fire station, a September 11 monument and a Ten Commandments monument donated by the Fraternal Order of Eagles in 1971.

Summum is a religious organization headquartered in Salt Lake City, Utah. Summum requested permission to erect a stone monument similar in size and nature to the Ten Commandments monument. The city denied the request on the basis that its practice was to limit monuments in the park to those that "either (1) directly relate to the history of the city, of (2) were donated by groups with longstanding ties to the Pleasant Grove community."

Summum sued asserting that the city had violated the Free Speech Clause of the First Amendment of the U.S. Constitution by accepting the Ten Commandments monument but rejecting the proposed Summum monument.

Question:

Does the Free Speech Clause apply to a government entity's acceptance of a privately donated, permanent monument for installation in a public park?

Answer according to the federal district court:
No.

Answer according to the Tenth Circuit Court of Appeals:

Yes. The Court of Appeals noted that it had previously found the Ten Commandments monument to be private rather than government speech. Since public parks have traditionally been regarded as public forums, the court held that the city could not reject the Summum monument unless it had a compelling justification that could not be served by more narrowly tailored means.

Answer according to the United States Supreme Court:

No. The issue of whether the Free Speech Clause applies to a government entity's acceptance of a privately donated, permanent monument for installation in a public park had never before been addressed by the United States Supreme Court. The Court held that the placement of a permanent monument in a public park was a form of government speech and was not subject to scrutiny under the Free Speech Clause. In particular, the count found that although parks are a traditional public forum for speeches and leaflets and other transitory expressive acts, the display of a permanent monument in a public park was not a form of expression to which forum analysis applied. Instead, the court found that the placement of a permanent monument in a public park is best viewed as a form of government speech and therefore not subject to scrutiny under the Free Speech Clause.

As noted by the Court: Petitioners [the city] contend that the pertinent cases are those concerning government speech. Respondent [Summum], on the other hand, agrees with the Court of Appeals panel that the applicable cases are those that analyze private speech in a public forum. The parties' fundamental disagreement thus centers on the nature of petitioners' conduct when they permitted privately donated monuments to be erected in Pioneer Park. Were petitioners engaging in their own expressive conduct? Or were they providing a forum for private speech?

The court held that the city was engaging in its own expressive conduct and, as a result, the Free Speech Clause has no application. "The Free Speech Clause restricts government regulation of private speech; it does not regulate government speech."

The court also noted, however, that even though government speech is not restricted by the Free Speech Clause, the government does not have a free hand to regulate private speech on government property.

The decision was notably fractured. In four concurring opinions, six justices set out sharply contrasting views about the scope of the decision. It should be noted that so-called Ten Commandments cases are typically litigated under the clause of the First Amendment prohibiting government establishment of religion.

Pleasant Grove City, Utah v Summun, No. 07-665 (February 26, 2009)

Sue Jeffers is associate general counsel for the League. You may contact her at 734-669-6306 or sjeffers@mml.org.



Michigan Launches Film Incentives

Compiled by Kim Cekola

Michigan legislators enacted the Michigan Film Production Credit incentive program in April 2008. The news was noted in movieland, when a statement in the *L.A. Times* read, "Not since Michael Moore's documentary "Roger and Me" has the Great Lakes state garnered so much attention from Hollywood." (Verrier, 2008).

In a 2008 radio address, Governor Granholm had this to say about our state's new film industry venture: "We are encouraging the production of movies and TV shows, the creation of film industry infrastructure, and the hiring of Michigan workers for the wide range of jobs that exist in this industry. Hollywood will know what we know—Michigan has a strong workforce, a strong work ethic, and great locations. We are investing in this new industry for several reasons."

The state established the Michigan Film Office to assist and attract incoming production companies and promote the growth of the film industry in our state. In the nine months following the enactment of the Michigan Film Production Credit incentive program, the Film Office received 221 scripts for potential consideration, leading to 136 applications and 71 approvals for the incentive program. The Film Office offers the following services to potential filmmakers:

- Location photographs—from our files or shot to order
- Help with location procurement and clearance
- Response within 48 hours in most cases
- Liaison with local/county/state government
- Contacts with business, institutions, churches, neighborhoods, farmers, and local municipalities
- Production—pre to post
- Crew, equipment, talent, unions, weather stats, studios, and lab

Ken Droz, publicist for the Film Office, told local officials at the League's Capital Conference that nothing has excited people in Michigan like the prospect of Hollywood coming here to make movies. Governor Granholm explained the economic impact like this, "Every dollar spent in film production will generate up to \$3 in economic activity

in Michigan. We also believe the film industry can give our economy an immediate shot in the arm while it takes years to reap the benefits of other economic development incentives."

Michigan Film Credit FAQs

What is the Michigan film incentive?

The incentive is a refundable, assignable tax credit of up to 42 percent of a production company's expenditures that are incurred in producing a film or other media entertainment project in Michigan.

Who qualifies?

The film production credit is available to eligible production companies—companies that bear the overall responsibility for making (or producing) a movie or other entertainment project as a whole.

What is the difference between the 40 percent credit and the 42 percent credit?

Qualifying expenditures made in a designated core community in Michigan are eligible for a 42-percent credit. Qualifying expenditures made in a "non-core" community in Michigan are eligible for a 40-percent credit.

Who qualifies for 30 percent?

Compensation payments made by a production company to below-the-line personnel (cast and crewmembers) who were not residents of Michigan for at least 60 days before approval of the agreement between the production company and the Michigan Film Office will be "qualified personnel expenditures" eligible for a 30-percent credit.

Who qualifies for 40 percent?

Above-the-line personnel (creative talent) regardless of residency, and below-the-line personnel who were residents of Michigan for 60 days or more before approval of the agreement between the production company and the Film Office, will be direct production expenditures eligible for a 40–42 percent credit.

(Information from the Michigan Film Office website, www.michigan.gov/filmoffice.)



It's Friday afternoon on a normally sleepy Bloomfield Hills cul-de-sac lined with modest ranches and tri-levels with big, sloping yards. But today, 27 cars border the road. At the bottom of the street, adjacent to the neighborhood playground, are four RVs, a catering tent, a process trailer, a generator, three box trucks, three trailers—one with gold stars on the doors—and dozens of people milling around with headsets and walkietalkies.

The entourage of people, vehicles and equipment will be here all weekend shooting scenes for an independent film, *The Job*, a dark, comedic thriller starring Patrick Flueger, Ron Perlman, Taryn Manning and Joe Pantoliano.

The film is one of the first productions to take advantage of Michigan's new film incentives package, and one of at least 22 approved by both the Michigan Film Office and the Treasury. The production spent a month filming in Detroit, but also in Bloomfield Hills, where one suburban neighborhood amiably dealt with congestion, late-night activity, and general hubbub in the name of healthy Michigan commerce.

Hollywood Apathy No More

But the skies weren't always so sunny or star-studded in the mitten state. In fact, past years have seen numerous films that were set in Metro Detroit, but actually filmed elsewhere, like the Assault on Precinct 13 remake, Birmingham native Mike Binder's The Upside Of Anger and The Crow—even Detroit Rock City, which was primarily shot in Toronto.

But today, the tides are turning as metro Detroit has a chance to become the next Toronto or Vancouver B.C., a place where producers of feature films, music videos, and television pilots flock for the cash back incentives—namely a 40 to 42 percent rebate on all Michigan expenditures.

Already productions are looking to the mitten state as the place to shoot. Aside from the incentive package (which is, of course, a mighty big hook), Michigan boasts a wide range of geographies and settings. Need coastline? We're second only to Alaska. Looking for small town Americana? The state is blessed with some of the most photogenic downtowns around. Shooting a battle in the Sahara? Sleeping Bear Dunes has more sand than

you can imagine. And though winters are long, we've got all four seasons on full display. From gritty urban mean streets to ivy-strewn college campuses, Michigan can stand-in for virtually any place a film production might require.

And Hollywood is starting to get it. Whip It, a rollerderby movie set to star Drew Barrymore and Ellen Page had already begun shooting in Austin, Texas when they caught wind of what Michigan had to offer and moved their production north.

Bob Brown a consultant to the Michigan Film Office and producer with Farmington-based Charity Island Pictures, sees nothing but upside for the state. He talks of investment returns of 25 percent and soundstages moving into long empty auto warehouses in Ypsilanti and twentysomethings finally seeing a reason to stay in Michigan with a evangelist's zeal.

"With the stroke of a pen we've created a creative economy that didn't exist here before," Brown says. "In the 60 days that we've been on the books we have had \$200 million, brand new dollars, float into the state. We're the most aggressive in the country and it's working."

At a recent meeting with leaders in western Washtenaw County Brown explained how Bear Communications and a Wixom company that builds modular offices for construction sites were already fielding requests from film productions for two-way radios and costume trailers.

"Where else are you going to get a response like that?" Brown said at the meeting. "State investment in alternative energy companies or biotech will take years to realize. With the film industry it's almost immediate. They're ready to do business here now and if we do this right they'll keep coming."

So, with what is now the best film incentive package in the United States, how can Hollywood's attention on our state translate to booming business for local communities?

Talk to Me, Baby

"The biggest thing communities and organizations can do is respond quickly and comprehensively to film industry requests," says Carolyn Artman, manager of Film Detroit, an arm of the Detroit Metro Convention & Visitors Bureau. A point person within city governments, visitor bureaus or chambers can serve as a liaison with film crews and help expedite approvals for filming while communicating with appropriate public departments, like police and fire.

"Sometimes it takes an act of city council to get a location approved," says Mark Adler, director of the nonprofit Michigan Film Alliance. "For a feature film it might be okay to drag out a week, but when commercial producers come from out of state, they don't have that kind of time."

Bob Brown points out that movies shoot all hours of the day and that communities should be savvy enough to assign a go-to guy for a visiting production company, a liaison producers can call any time of day to find what they need locally.

"The biggest learning curve for Michigan communities is responsiveness," Brown explains. "There's real world speed. There's business world speed. And then there's the entertainment industry speed, which is 'we need an answer right now.' Our sense of urgency is a thousand times greater than the real world because it costs us so much money to make a movie. 'I'll take a couple of days to get back to you' just doesn't work. You can take a couple minutes to get back to me but otherwise we're moving on."

Resources and Infrastructure

But while solid, speedy and friendly communications will help Michigan communities attract film business, our region also needs the resources, in terms of people and equipment, to meet Hollywood demands.

According to Adler, film crews look for production office space, serving as temporary headquarters, where they can easily put in phone lines and Wi-Fi. They may also need residential accommodations. Adler says that condo developments in Ferndale and Royal Oak have benefited from several film groups staying there. *Metromode* recently wrote about the impact this has had on the local apartment rental market.



Film crew on "All's Faire in Love," at the Michigan Renaissance Festival. Photo by Scott Klender.

But that means identifying property owners in your community who are flexible enough to grant three or four month leases instead of the traditional year-long commitment. Film crews may not stay long but the production company will rent large blocks of rooms and apartments for the duration of their stay.

Crews also need transportation and food. Dan Gearig of Ciao Catering in Grand Blanc is catering *The Job*, which is the sixth film his company has catered in Michigan. "It's great. It's real money that's helping people out," says Gearig. "This is real cash for chauffeurs, caterers, hotels, lots of people."

Production vehicles are yet another necessity but appear to be in short supply. The star trailer, process trailer and honeywagons for *The Job* came from Chicago.

Michigan's incentives helped to lure the production to town, but producers were dismayed by the additional cost of bringing equipment from out of town, which lessened the impact of the Michigan rebate.

And probably most importantly, an ample supply of skilled production people and of actors are also necessary. While *The Job* eventually found needed crew, it took longer than normal.

"The film package itself is great, but resources for crew were very limited. There were three or four productions

trying to hire the same crew we were," says Tuffendsam, who ended up with a crew composed of 65 percent locals. Which dovetails with the incentive packages goals. Michigan communities, with unemployment rates higher than the rest of the country, have an opportunity to turn today's crew shortages into tomorrow's job opportunities.

Even with production challenges, Tuffendsam is positive about his Michigan film experience and says that he understood the film would encounter challenges because Michigan was not used

to doing multiple feature films at the same time. "I would encourage others to come here, but also encourage those in the state to figure out a way to build the infrastructure. Films will benefit a lot more if they don't have to bring resources from out of town."

Location, Location

Michigan is clearly a good fit for almost any film with its quaint downtowns, rural countryside and big city skylines. With the incentives in place, and producers' curiosity piqued by cash incentives, a community's first and last step to luring film productions should be a proverbial polishing of the storefronts and washing of the windows. We've got the goods; let's make them sparkle.

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Melinda Clynes is a Detroit-area freelancer. Additional quotes and information provided by Jeff Meyers.



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"Oogieloves" Producer Loves Michigan

By Kim Cekola

Well-known Hollywood producer prepares to head to Michigan to film a movie, lured by the state's film tax incentives. Michigan? Detroit? He is apprehensive...maybe even dreading it. Then the unexpected happens. He is blown away. There is an unexpected beauty and diversity of the landscape. The talented, hard-working crews take him by surprise. The people are a delight. He is so impressed that he wants to make his next movie here.

The producer is Kenn Viselman, the creative marketing force behind children's shows such as the Teletubbies and Thomas the Tank Engine. His new venture, an interactive song and dance movie for pre-schoolers called "The Oogieloves in the Big Balloon Adventure," was filmed on closed sets in Farmington Hills, Utica, and Holland. Considering that Kenn Viselman is involved—a man with the reputation for taking a concept and turning it into gold—the movie industry is foaming with curiosity. *The Review* was fortunate enough to interview Mr. Viselman and hear his perspective on making a movie in Michigan.

Kim Cekola: How did you find out about Michigan's Film tax incentives?

Kenn Viselman: Unless you've crawled under a rock, you know. When I first heard about them, I was fascinated. I like to refer to them as "production" credits. Governor Granhom is very brave and smart as the driving force to make this happen. Michigan was among the lowest economically in the nation. Now it is infused with possibility and excitement. What were dormant buildings are now being snatched up for filming. This could be a real turnaround for your state.

KC: What do you think Michigan could do to make itself a destination for film companies in the future?

KV: It will happen naturally, on its own. Once Clint Eastwood decided to make a movie here, others followed.

I think it's a shame that all anyone hears about Michigan is bad news coming out of Detroit. You don't see the beauty, the texture of the state. You need to do something to show how beautiful Michigan is.

KC: Have you seen our Pure Michigan marketing campaign?

KV: No—but it should be aired in Hollywood and New York, where people who make movies live.

KC: Would you consider filming another movie here?

KV: Not only would I consider it, but I am reconfiguring my next film so it can be filmed in Michigan instead. I expected filming here would be a hassle, but it wasn't. I thought that there would be a huge learning curve—but there wasn't.

Michigan has the second most coastline in the U.S, and the diversity of locations is amazing. There are a lot of stories you could tell here.

KC: How do Michigan film crews compare to others you have worked with?

KV: They are the most hard working, jubilant people I have ever worked with. I am highly impressed. Michael Jones is the best location scout in Michigan.

The Review was also fortunate to interview Michael Jones about scouting locations and filmmaking in Michigan. As the Michigan location scout for "Oogieloves in the Big Balloon Adventure," Michael was responsible for finding locations that met the aesthetic needs of the script, then securing those locations for filming.

Kim Cekola: What does it mean to be a film location scout?

Michael Jones: Before becoming a film location scout, I was a scout for commercials and advertisements. I was a big proponent of Michigan then, and still am. When the economy hit the skids, commercial and

ad worked petered out. I would have been forced to leave Michigan, to find a job out of state. I am happy to have segued into film location scouting—moviemaking in Michigan will provide thousands of jobs for people like me who otherwise would have abandoned Michigan.

I see my job mainly as community relations. I knock on doors, I call people. If a residential home has a porch that looks like the porch in the script, I will check out the neighborhood, drive the streets during different hours of the day, then knock on the door and ask if we can film in their house. If a park has the amenities needed in the script, I find out who has jurisdiction then contact them. I am the first point of contact with municipal governments.

In Holland, filming on Windmill Island during the Tulip Festival, I talked to about 60 percent of the visitors who were turned away from seeing the windmill (Oogieloves maintained a closed set). The people were understanding, and actually happy to hear that a movie was being filmed in Holland.

KC: What do you look for first in a location?

MJ: The ultimate criterion is looks, aesthetics. The Stony Creek site (Stony Creek Metro Park in Shelby Township) satisfied five criteria of the script in the one location, which was great. The next would be whether the site is accessible for equipment. On this set, they brought in crews of 90-150 people. I think, "Can I bring 14 trailers and necessary equipment in? Is there parking? Is there water nearby?" If there is no parking or water nearby, then it is an additional cost to the production. Once I've identified a site, I go knock on doors. If I can't get a response in 24-48 hours, then I have to move on. As incredible as it sounds, the "Oogieloves" script called for a windmill and tulips. Well, Michigan had that! The city of Holland was incredible, and timing couldn't have been worse for them—during tulip time.

KC: What would you like to tell local governments who want to be film-friendly?

MJ: You need to designate one person at city hall to handle film requests. You need to have a one-stop shop. I should be able to get my requests to one person, not the police chief and the mayor and the council three weeks later when they have a meeting. If you really want to be welcoming, even inviting of film crews, you have to be able to respond in 24-48 hours with a yes or no. And having a faxable permit is golden.

KC: What do you want to say to local officials?

MJ: Please support the film industry. It could generate 2,500-3,000 jobs. These are not transplants. Early film

productions brought crews to Michigan because they didn't think we had the talent. They weren't aware that we were known for commercial work. For "Oogieloves," about 90 percent of the crew was from Michigan. In addition, the screenwriter is from St. Clair Shores and the executive producers are from Macomb Township.

Part of the beauty of filmmaking is the money the production brings to local economies. The "Oogieloves" production made business cards and each person involved in the movie was handed a huge stack. Every time they spent money, whether for a tube of toothpaste at CVS or dinner and drinks at a bar/restaurant, they left a card to show that this film was bringing money into the local economy (i.e. Farmington Hills, Utica, and Holland).

I have several tips for local governments. The first is not to make permit approval contingent on the content of the movie. Second, you should be somewhat concerned about housing in your area. To keep costs under control, we look for places that can offer housing within 30 miles of base. My third tip is a parting comment—"if communities are known to be film-friendly, then we will go back there."



Novi...The Hollywood of Michigan By Pamela Antil

Recently ranked among the top 100 places to live in the U.S. by *Money* magazine, the city of Novi is becoming one of the premier locations to film large production movies, as well as smaller television and commercial productions. Home to picturesque parks, beautiful and safe neighborhoods, first-rate retail areas and some of the nation's most cuttingedge industries and corporations, Novi provides a unique opportunity for a variety of productions within one city. Combine these amenities with recent advances to become even more "film friendly" and Novi offers it all!

Hollywood Novi Venture Team

When the state of Michigan announced new tax incentives for film production companies doing business in Michigan, Novi Mayor David Landry and the city council saw it as a unique opportunity to add to the city's flourishing economic development program. They encouraged city administration to look at how filming could be conducted in Novi if requests were received in response to the incentive program. Using the city's 'Venture Team' concept of bringing together a diverse group of employees to quickly implement a new program or project, a team comprised of the assistant city manager, economic development manager, and fire marshal were assembled to lead the effort to draft a city film permit process. The Hollywood Novi Venture Team was launched. Other team members included representatives from the city's police, finance, assessing, community development, and parks, recreation and forestry departments, as well as the Novi public library.

The Venture Team looked at the film permit ordinances and guidelines in other cities and states, and also met with local film producers to gain an understanding of their needs. Producers overwhelmingly suggested that the city's process be easy, flexible and with a very short turnaround time, given the speed in which the film/television industry typically worked. It was also suggested that the film permit process be written to allow for administrative approval by staff rather than formal city council approval, again given the short turnaround necessary.

Ordinance Changes to Support Film-Related Activity

The team determined that the city's temporary use provisions for street fairs and other short-term community events, which are processed by staff, was the most appropriate way to do film processing. The city amended its temporary use permit ordinance to allow for a special use permit for filming that could be granted administratively by staff. This accommodated the needs of the industry and achieved the "film friendly" goals established by city administration.

It was suggested that the fees for film permits be low to attract producers to Michigan. Novi's fees for filming are \$75 for television or other commercial shoots of less than four hours and \$150 for all other motion picture and television filming in the city. Personal photography and video shoots for weddings, graduations and other non-commercial events are exempt from the ordinance and fees. Other fees and charges can apply if the production needs police or fire patrols for special shoots with large crowds, special effects or driving scenes. The city will make other resources available on a case-by-case basis, depending upon the request.

The adoption of these special ordinances and a streamlined permit process ensure all film crews' needs are met while still ensuring the public's health and safety and minimizing the impact of filming on other regular commercial and residential activities. The city has placed the film permit information and its one-page application form on its economic development website—investnovi.org/film. All of the forms are downloadable versions of the permit application, the city temporary use ordinance addressing filming in the city, and links to helpful resources, contact information, fees and guidelines. Also available on investnovi.org are links to helpful resources such as the Michigan Film Office and local production resources.

Hollywood Novi

Since adopting the ordinance in October 2008, the city has hosted several commercial and film productions. In each case, film permits were processed in less than 48 hours. As part of Novi's goal to attract the film industry, the city also created a database of citizens interested in being cast as extras in movies or commercials. It will be up to the film companies to utilize the database, but offering a database of potential actors is another aspect of becoming film friendly in Novi.

For more information about filming in Novi, permit applications and related documents and information, visit investnovi.org and connect to the Novi Film Office.

Pamela Antil is assistant city manager for the city of Novi. You may reach her at 248-347-0445 or pantil@cityofnovi.org.

\$146 Million Film, TV Production Studio Factory Chooses Allen Park and Michigan

April 14, 2009 Press Release

A veteran Hollywood film executive who is a native Detroiter will build a \$146 million, 750,000-square-foot film, TV and media production studio factory and village on 104 acres of land at Southfield Road and Enterprise Drive in Allen Park, officials announced in an April 14 press release.

Productions at Unity Studios will employ up to 3,000 skilled and non-skilled union workers. Unity will employ up to 83 management/operational positions for the studio and within the Village.

City of Allen Park residents and laid-off union workers from across the region will get first shot at the jobs, Allen Park Mayor Gary Burtka said. "Unity Studios amounts to an economic development blockbuster and the best economic news announced in Downriver and southeast Michigan in years," Burtka said. "This project represents new hope and, more importantly, job opportunities for thousands of Allen Park residents and auto workers who have lost their jobs. We have found an economic boost in the lights, cameras and action of Michigan's newest high-tech industry."

Governor Jennifer Granholm said the Unity Studios project highlights the success of the state's efforts to attract the film industry to Michigan. "We are working hard to build a diversified economy and create good-paying jobs for our talented workforce." Governor Granholm said. "As a result of our aggressive film incentives enacted just a year ago, we are not only bringing new investment to the burgeoning film production community in Michigan, we are putting in place the infrastructure for an industry that will support longterm job growth and opportunity in new, creative sectors."

Wayne County Executive Robert
Ficano said the Unity Studios project
is an important step in diversifying
the county's economy. "Our economic
development team has been working
diligently with Allen Park on this project,"
Ficano said. "We are now attempting to
put together an incentive package that
will create jobs in a new industry for
the region." The county is considering
making a Renaissance Zone designation
available for the project when all
benchmarks are met by investors, Ficano
added.

Unity Studios will be majority owned and operated by a group of investors from Los Angeles and Michigan, with Jimmy Lifton of California as the president. Lifton, originally from Southfield, Michigan, has been in the business of entertainment for 30 years. He has owned an internationally distributed record label, produced 13 feature films, and is principal of one of the largest independent post-production audio studios in Los Angeles, Oracle Post. Some of the most famous and familiar TV and film industry giants use Oracle Post including Fox, HBO, NBC, ABC, Disney, Nickelodeon, Paramount, Lionsgate, Universal, Dreamworks, Warner Brothers. VH1 and MTV.

Also unique about the project: The Lifton Institute for Media Skills will implement one of the largest retraining programs ever enacted in Michigan. Out of work skilled and unskilled labor will receive on-the-set training and production experience, giving students production credits. In addition, the project will include a village where people can live, shop and find entertainment options.

"My goal was to help bring a new industry to my home state." said Lifton. "I like to think of Unity Studios as a

factory in the tradition of Henry Ford's Rouge factory model. All aspects of production occurring in one location; workforce training, production, post-production, distribution and marketing. We will constantly be creating product on the lot, utilizing the Detroit area's best asset, the creativity of its people."

Burtka said the project represents a creative and progressive approach to community-based economic development and redevelopment: under the agreement with Lifton, the city will own equity in the studios. In addition, the studios are being developed on brownfield property currently occupied by various buildings and open fields. As a result, it does not increase sprawl nor does it require the city and its taxpayers to shoulder significant new infrastructure costs.

"This project is an economic development win-win-win for Allen Park residents," Burtka said. "We did not need to raise taxes a penny to win this project. Our residents get first shot at the jobs, and they are owners too." Allen Park officials said the project would not have been possible without significant support from the state of Michigan. "We offer our sincere appreciation and heartfelt thanks to Governor Jennifer Granholm. the Michigan Film Office, Robert Ficano, the Michigan Economic Development Growth Corporation, and to the state legislators who helped us put all the pieces together," Burtka said.

For more information on Unity Studios, visit Allen Park's website, www.cityofallenpark.org.



Make your community a brighter place at

www.mml.org

Plug Into the League!



Field Report

by Caroline Weber Kennedy

Flourishing Touches in Frankfort



photo by Eric Shepard

Youth in Revolt

Downtown Frankfort was the scene of filming for *Youth in Revolt* several days last June. Starring Justin Long, Michael Cera, Steve Buscemi, and Ray Liotta, the film is scheduled for fall release.

Frankfort Superintendent
Joshua Mills describes the
experience with enthusiasm.
He says that while the industry
can be aggressive, the key
is understanding that time is
big money in filmmaking and
their goal is to minimize time.
The industry was amenable to
paying costs incurred for police
coverage; set designers bought
construction and landscaping
materials locally; and area
residents, lured by curiosity,

were respectful visitors and increased restaurant business. The film crew, actors, security, paramedic, set crew, and carpenters rented local condo properties.

The city worked with affected businesses in the one block area of filming, ensuring alley access and adequate signs. Mills recognizes that timing was ideal, making accommodations easier than they would have been in peak tourist season, and reflects that "next time" they will likely charge for the use of parking/trailer lots.

Frankfort was chosen for site location because of one downtown block, similar to Ukiah, California—oddly not a coastal town. Frankfort's experience demonstrates that filmmakers are attracted to Michigan's film incentives. You can position your community for consideration by submitting photos to the Michigan Film Office. They are creating a database of photos showing all types of landscapes, vacant warehouses, and unique architecture from Michigan's communities. Visit www.michigan.gov/filmoffice. Happily, this is one step you can take toward economic development that doesn't require spending money to make money.

Launching the Sleeping Bear Dunes Cruise and More

New to Frankfort this June, you can catch a ride on the Sleeping Bear Dunes Boat Cruise. A daily cruise runs through October, with an additional sunset cruise in peak tourist season. This cruise is sure to attract lighthouse tourism, as it features three—Frankfort Harbor, Empire and Point Betsie. Also good, the newcomers are renting a formerly vacant building, and downtown merchants will see increased traffic with this new draw, handily located in the business district. Visit www.sleepingbeardunescruise.com.

Frankfort is poised for another big draw, but we can't elaborate just yet. In the meantime, they're working on a new municipal launch ramp—funded with Michigan Department of Natural Resources and federal Housing and Urban Development grants. Two ADA compliant slips will be added, along with a new dinghy dock and fishing pier with enhanced LED lighting and landscaping. Building amenities will be developed as funds allow.

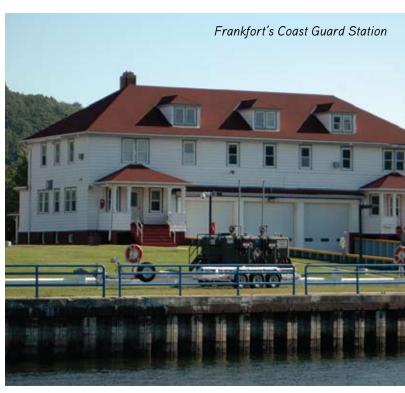


photo courtesy of the city of Frankfort



photo courtesy of the city of Frankfort

Keeping Millennials Local

With a coastal zone management grant of \$25,000, the city is redoing its master plan in a very 21st-century way, pursuing adoption of form-based codes, and creating virtual models for both existing and future land use. The virtual model will be a significant tool toward creating a harmonious design associated with updating and creating new commercial development/redevelopment, clustered residential neighborhoods, and mixed-use planned unit developments. This process attracted public participation and the city submitted a second round continuation grant. They are creating an asset-based inventory database to network for enhanced inter-business commerce-determining what types of business would flourish locally. Their primary goal is to foster and promote entrepreneurship of their own young adults—encouraging them to seek education in the areas identified for local success and to come back home and put it to use.

Changing of the Guard Focuses on Arts

Frankfort procured their local Coast Guard Station through the federal Land-to-Park Program, recently finalizing a lease agreement with the Crystal Lake Art Center. Fortunately, the center had previously begun a capital campaign and is able to bring \$2.2 million in property enhancement to the project. The project required a tenant with the ability to enhance the property; and the program supported the proposal for its adaptive reuse as an arts center. It's a harmonious change for the community, which already has a connection to local block print artist Gwen Frostick (www.gwenfrostick.com).

Frankfort is working with the State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO) on the adaptive reuse. The exterior will look as it did in 1935, with a third-story loft available for traveling artists. The city proposes the boat room be used as gallery space; but SHPO wants the sloped floor retained, which would require that gallery space be added on. You shall have to visit in the next year to see what emerges. The center will partner with the Frankfort area schools to offer classes not traditionally available, such as dance (www.crystallakeartcenter.org).

And finally, the former Mitchell Marina area next door is approved for mixed-use development, including 24 condo units with the six units in phase one for sale at \$700,000 each.

Caroline Weber Kennedy is manager of field operations for the League. You may reach her at 906-428-0100 or ckennedy@mml.org.



owntown Ferndale has a reputation for being funky, unpretentious, and hip. Walking around town it is easy to glean a sense of the city's character from its eclectic blend of people, art spaces, restaurants and cafes, spas and salons, entertainment venues, and shops. For individuals seeking down-to-earth cultural experiences, Ferndale is the place to be. Its character is attractive to businesses looking for a place to relocate, events planners looking for an audience, and residents looking for a walkable, friendly community that gives them access to a diverse array of cultural offerings.

Unpretentious People

Talking with local business owners and residents, the most enjoyable aspect of Ferndale seems to be its people. AJ O'Neil, owner of AJ's Music Cafe, explained that you will find a diverse mixture of personalities in his establishment, which is often referred to as "Ferndale's living room," he said. "The 'vibe' of Ferndale's people is what is best. People from all walks of life—well off, poor, every color, race, gender, sexual identity—meld together; not merely tolerating differences but embracing them as well," he explained.

Ferndale is "artistic without being superficial. It's a good mixture of ethnic backgrounds and different ages, and it's unpretentious."

-Wyll Lewis, owner, American Pop!

Assemblage artist Wyll Lewis owns American Pop!, an eclectic shop packed to the rafters with vintage collectables, nostalgic memorabilia, and artwork by local artists. Lewis enjoys Ferndale because "it has a do-it-yourself atmosphere. It's funky and thinks green. People recycle. It's artistic without being superficial. It's a good mixture of ethnic backgrounds and different ages, and it's unpretentious," he said.

Alternative Art Scene

Visitors and residents alike find a variety of art galleries and alternative art spaces sprinkled throughout downtown. These range from up-scale galleries to coffee shops, restaurants, and stores that lend their wall space to local artists. Even Ferndale's Paramount Bank has devoted 1,400 square feet of gallery

quality wall space to art. Community Arts @ Paramount Gallery curator Narine Kchikian explained, "I am pleased to see local businesses like Paramount Bank recognize the many benefits of bringing art to the local community. I hope what I do will encourage other businesses to join Paramount Bank in such endeavors to make contributions locally that have a major impact on the entire Detroit Metro area community," according to its website, www.theparamountgallery.com.

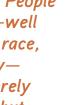
A thriving music and entertainment scene supports local performers and brings popular touring acts to town. Ferndale's blend of venues fill niches that give locals and out-oftowners plenty of choices for fun and entertainment. For example, The Magic Bag is a unique mixed-use space, which regularly screens movies and showcases bands, and it is available to rent out for parties, meetings, art exhibitions, and most every type of event under the sun. Down the road, The Ringwald Theater is a popular spot to catch a play by local resident theater troupe Who Wants Cake? Ferndale is also home to multiple citywide events, from the Motor City Pride festival,



which reflects the impact of Ferndale's Lesbian/Gay/Bisexual/Transgender (LGBT) community, to the Ferndale Blues Festival, which is supported by the city's large collection of venues. Ferndale is also the original location of the Woodward Avenue Dream Cruise. which began in 1995 as a grassroots fundraiser to raise money for a local Ferndale soccer field and has blossomed into one of metro Detroit's most popular annual events. Whether large events are homegrown or brought in from the outside, events planners find Ferndale to be a perfect location to grow successful events.

"The 'vibe' of Ferndale's people is what is best. People from all walks of life—well off, poor, every color, race, gender, sexual identity meld together; not merely tolerating differences but embracing them as well."

-AJ O'Neil, owner, AJ's Music Café



Edgy Fairs

marriage of event and location. The event is designed for that location because Ferndale is more of an energetic, younger, unusual community. Although we do have people who do things that look like every other art fair, the majority of our artists are doing things with a little bit of an edge, a little bit unusual, and they know Ferndale has an audience that is going to go with that."

Mark Loeb, founder of Integrity Shows,

plans the annual Funky Ferndale Art

Fair. He commented, "It's really a

Citywide festivals bring in an influx of visitors to the area, and many times local businesses and restaurants have their most profitable days during these events. However, events that close down streets and bring in non-local vendors are not popular with everyone. Events planners admit that it is a challenge to convince many downtown businesses to stay open during events that are not focused on them. One common complaint is that, although events draw vast numbers of people to town, they are not the people who will keep coming back to Ferndale to support local business and culture.



- Cost Allocation Plans
- User Fee Studies
- **Project Management Studies**
- **Utility Rate Studies**

Contact:

James R. Olson 2343 Delta Road Bay City, MI 48706 989.684.4111

William Maxwell MAC Building 935 N. Washington Ave. Lansing, MI 48906 517.484.4240

www.maximus.com

Do-It-Yourself Spirit

Chris Johnston, who owns several businesses in downtown Ferndale. including Woodward Avenue Brewers, saw a need for a more locally oriented fair that would reflect the do-it-yourself (DIY) spirit of the local population in Ferndale and better support downtown businesses. Last year, he organized the first annual Ferndale DIY Street Fair, held in conjunction with the Funky Ferndale Art Fair. On the DIY Fair's myspace page, Johnston is quoted claiming, "there was something missing [in Ferndale], like an event that was really about the people." Ferndale Woodward Avenue Dream Cruise Weekend planner Mark Lary recognizes the reluctance of many businesses to stay open and participate in outside events. However, he sees them as an opportunity for local businesses to market themselves and leave an impression on visitors who are likely to return to Ferndale at a later date. According to Lary, local establishments must ask themselves, "how are you going to try to reach out to them in order to bring them back some other day?" He explained, "What happens a lot of the time is that people come in to browse, but it doesn't mean that they are going to buy, but they'll remember and they'll come back later."

Natural Character? Funky

Those in charge of developing downtown Ferndale recognize how its funky character contributes to promoting the area to new businesses. Executive director of the Downtown





Development Authority Cristina Sheppard-Decius explained, "Each of the businesses that are down here make up the character of downtown Ferndale. In terms of what we are doing to drive economic development, we are looking at the natural character here and making sure that we are taking that message and communicating that message outwards to more people." Sheppard-Decius is concerned with filling Ferndale's empty commercial spaces with the types of businesses that downtown is currently lacking, including more office space and downtown residential living. "Unfortunately, we all got hit with a bad economy," she said. However, she claims that Ferndale's

character attracts a lot of interest from businesses seeking commercial space. "We are on the cusp. When the economy turns back over, we are going to ramp right back up, and we're not going to be behind on it by any means," she concluded. Ferndale struck? If so, visit these websites:

www.ajsmusiccafe.com
www.theparamountgallery.com
www.themagicbag.com
www.whowantscaketheatre.com
www.motorcitypride.com
www.ferndalebluesfestival.org
www.ferndaledreamcruise.com
http://integrityshows.com
www.michiganartshow.com/ferndale
http://diystreetfair.com

Jennifer Eberbach is a freelance journalist and professional copywriter. You may contact her at 734-929-2964 or jen@jenthewriter.info. Visit her online at www.jenthewriter.info.





From the Road

by Al McGeehan



Fremont

A Small Town Big on the Arts

When we Michiganders think of iconic cities, where emphasis on arts and culture is strong and visible, our minds focus on a Detroit, an Ann Arbor or a Grand Rapids. Municipal leaders have been reminded over and over that in today's world people first choose their community and then they search out new employment. As people prioritize what they are looking for in a new hometown, high on the list is "accessibility to both the arts and culture." Make no mistake about it, this is as true for young professionals as it is for seniors who are interested in relocation. However, "bigger isn't always better."

Welcome to Fremont, Michigan, a city of barely 4,500 residents, yet a city that has substantially invested in the arts.



Now, I fully realize that when you read the name Fremont, your mind quickly moved from the arts to an infant's face on a jar of baby food. Since 1928, Fremont has been the home of the Gerber Baby Products, a company recognized worldwide by the charcoal pencil-drawn logo of a baby girl. Did you catch that? A city called Fremont, Michigan, is known worldwide and is immediately recognized because of an

image created through the arts and chosen by early company owners through an art competition! Gerber Baby Products sold high quality product, but the successful marketing that followed was achieved and maintained through art-inspired packaging and design.

Fremont, just as any other municipality, needs to augment its native population base through the attraction and retention of a superior high quality workforce. As they compete for this talent with Chicago, Austin, San Francisco, or even a Grand Rapids, Fremont public and private sector leaders fully understand that if all they have to offer is Friday night at the local Tractor Supply, their community will lose every time.

One reason that today's Fremont, Michigan, is alive, well, and prospering is because of the significant presence of arts and cultural opportunities found there.

I recently visited Fremont to make a courtesy call on Mayor Jim Rynberg. Driving into Fremont my eye spied a banner strung across downtown Main Street announcing the annual Fine Arts Festival. As I parked the car I realized that I had parked in front of a storefront with a sign that read "Center Stage Dance." There, on the creatively painted windows, I read "Hip Hop, Lyrical, Jazz, Tap and Ballet" and "Enroll Now." A few steps further brought me to Artsplace, the home of the Newaygo County Council for the Arts. Inside I found accessibility to numerous art classes, a fantastic exhibit showcasing the works of a local artist, and the aroma of pottery being fired in the kiln.

My walk down Main Street brought me to a 60-foot long historical mural depicting the history of the telephone, which graced the front of the local AT&T building. And, on separate downtown properties stand three pieces of public art.

The ultimate testimony to the value that Fremont citizens have for the arts is found just east of downtown. Here one finds the 405 seat Dogwood Center for the Performing Arts. In 2002, after eight years of effort, "The Dogwood" opened to rave reviews, sold-out productions, and debt free! There have been new performances every week of the year.

Fremont leaders understand the community value gained by successfully advocating for the priority given to the advancement of the arts. Fremont has proven that without a doubt small towns can be big on art!



photo by Al McGeehan

Al McGeehan is the mayor of the city of Holland and the west Michigan regional coordinator for the League. You may reach him at 616-355-1314 or a.mcgeehan@cityofholland.com.

111th Michigan Municipal League Convention

September 22-25 ~ Radisson Hotel, Kalamazoo

Kalamazoo

Kalamazoo is a city dedicated to the development of its community, education of its citizens, and values to build its future. With thriving businesses in the pharmaceutical and orthopedics industry, the community sustains a diverse workforce. Join us at the Kalamazoo Radisson Plaza Hotel in the heart of downtown Kalamazoo for progressive conversation on ways to make Michigan a unique and attractive place to live.



General Sessions

Keynote Speakers

The 111th League Annual Convention is a great event for Michigan local government officials. Our keynote presenters will set the tone for a dynamic, must-attend Convention.



MLGMA Colloquium Presentation

Civic Engagement: Our Public as Partners Not Enemies Ed Everett

Tuesday, September 22, 4:30 pm

Learn from a very successful practitioner how civic engagement can help both staff and elected officials deal with such tough issues as budget cuts, land use, and traffic issues. Civic engagement can actually make your job easier not harder.



Places and Spaces! Fred Kent

Wednesday, September 23, 8:30 am

The importance of "place" cannot be overemphasized. It makes up the fabric of our public lives that connects us to the rest of the community. Fred Kent, founder and president of Project for Public Spaces will help us understand how well-created public spaces result in vibrant places. He will share ideas, big and small, on how you can create a vital community that will enrich people's daily lives.



Bringing the World Back to Michigan

Sam Singh

Thursday, September 24, 9:00 am

Former East Lansing Mayor Sam Singh will recount his recent 18month travels around the world and discuss what cities across the world are doing to remain vibrant in the 21st century.



State and Federal Affairs Update

Thursday, September 24, 3:00-4:15 pm

The League's state and federal affairs team will speak on several key legislative issues currently facing Michigan's communities. Audience members will have an opportunity to ask questions on the various topics following the presentation.



The Seven Rules of Admiral Rickover

Gordon Graham

Friday, September 25, 8:30 am

The "father of the nuclear navy" had some thoughts in the early '50s on how to deal with complex, high-risk operations—like building a nuclear fleet. His "seven rules" have made the nuclear navy a HRO (high reliability organization) and these principles have direct application to what you do in government operations.

Convention General Information

Parade of Flags

Wednesday, September 23, 8:30 am

Participate in this spectacular event and proudly show your colors with other officials from across the state. Carry your flag in the parade and leave it on display throughout the Convention. To participate, please check "yes" on the Convention registration form.

Fall Expo

Thursday, September 24, 7:30 am-3:00 pm

Visit the Fall Expo to meet with exhibitors offering specialized products and services to Michigan local government.

Housing

Host Hotel – Radisson Plaza Hotel 100 West Michigan Ave Kalamazoo, Michigan, 49007 Phone: 269-343-3333

www.radisson.com/kalamazoomi

Housing Reservation Process

Housing reservations will only be accepted for registered Convention attendees by faxing the housing form with a personalized registration code. After registering for Convention, a confirmation email will be sent within 48 hours. The confirmation email will contain your registration information, a link to the form, and your personalized housing registration code.

This process has been put in place to deter overbooking of rooms and allows registered attendees to take full advantage of the Convention rate and secure housing in the host hotel. This also protects the League from paying attrition fees on rooms that are reserved and cancelled after the Convention rate is closed, and allows us to keep our registration fees lower.

Housing Rates

Single or double: \$130 (plus a 5% accommodation tax)
Additional persons in the room will be at the rate of \$10 per person, per night.

Hotel Parking Rates

\$6.00/day for registered guests; \$1.15/hour for non-registered guests

New this year:

Register online at www.mml.org

With workshops on the hottest community issues plus exciting mobile workshops and outstanding speakers, the city of Kalamazoo is rolling out the red carpet for this can't-miss event!

111th League Convention Overview

Tuesday, September 22, 2009

10:00 amGovernance Committee Meeting1:00-4:00 pmPre-Convention Workshops2:00 pmBoard of Trustees Meeting

2:00-7:00 pm Registration Open

3:30-4:15 pm First-Time Attendee Orientation
4:30-5:30 pm Welcoming General Session
MLGMA Colloquium Presentation—

Ed Everett

6:00-10:00 pm Host City Reception

Wednesday, September 23, 2009

7:00 am-6:00 pm Registration Hours
7:15-8:15 am MWIMG Breakfast
7:30-8:15 am Continental Breakfast
8:30-10:45 am General Session

Parade of Flags

Community Excellence Award

Presentations

11:00 am-12:00 pm Annual Business Meeting

12:15-1:30 pm Networking Lunch

12:15-1:30 pm Michigan Black Caucus of Local Elected

Officials Meeting

1:45-3:00 pm Concurrent Sessions
3:00-3:30 pm Networking Break
3:30-4:45 pm Concurrent Sessions
5:00-6:30 pm Vendor Reception—Expo hall
8:00 pm Vendor Hospitality Suites

Thursday, September 24, 2009

7:00 am-6:30 pm Registration Hours

7:30-8:30 am Continental Breakfast in the Expo Hall

7:30 am-3:00 pm Expo Hall Open
7:30 am-3:00 pm Silent Auction Bidding

9:00-10:15 am General Session—Sam Singh

10:15-10:30 am Networking Break 10:30-11:45 am Concurrent Sessions

11:45 am-1:30 pm Affiliate Organization Lunches

1:30-2:45 pm Concurrent Sessions 2:45-3:00 pm Networking Break

3:00-4:15 pm General Session: State and Federal

Affairs Update

6:00-8:30 pm Reception and Annual Awards Banquet

9:00-11:00 pm Night in the 'Zoo

Friday, September 25, 2009

8:30-10:00 am Closing Breakfast—Gordon Graham

Community Excellence Award "Race for

the Cup" Winner Announced

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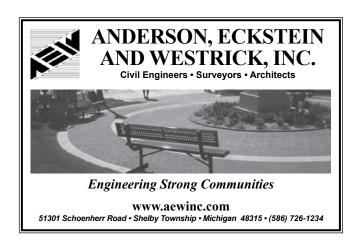


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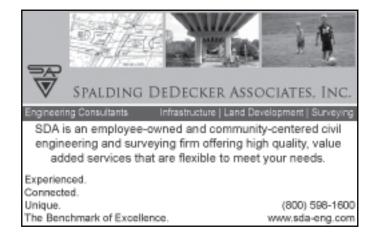




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Records Management

There have been significant changes regarding the management of local government records. The state agency responsible for writing local government records management schedules [Records Management Services in the Department of History, Arts & Libraries (HAL)] is taking a new approach—instead of updating entire schedules, they are updating them by sections.

What does this mean for your municipality? If you have adopted *Records Management Handbook: Guidelines and Approved Retention and Disposal Schedule for Cities and Villages* (Schedule #8), you now need to adopt the separate schedules that have superseded sections of this book. The Elections

schedule (schedule #23) and the Clerks schedule (schedule #24) have superseded sections of the *Records Management Handbook* published by the League.

However, not all of the new schedules promulgated by HAL supersede sections of the *Records Management Handbook*. Schedules such as the Public Libraries schedule (schedule #17) are new, and were never a part of the original general schedule. You should look over the list and adopt the schedules that are appropriate for your municipality.

Please visit www.mml.org for further information and a list of schedules.



Municipal Q&A

Coordinated by Mary Charles

Can a matter be
brought back to
council once it has
been voted on? We have been
told it can never be brought
back during the "current
session" and that a session
does not end until after the next
election.

First, any matter may be brought back to the council table during the same meeting if a councilmember who voted on the prevailing side makes a motion to "reconsider." It requires a majority vote and then the discussion begins again as if the vote had never been taken.

However, if you are asking whether or not a council can look at an issue again if the situation changes or if more information becomes available, of course they can. Depending on your local charter and council rules, it will need to be placed on the agenda for an upcoming meeting and then proceed as if it were a new matter. There is nothing in state law that defines a council "session" as more than the time from the call to order to the adjournment.

We are a home rule city and interested in changing our election from November odd year to coincide with the November even year general elections. What is the process for that?

Under the Election Consolidation Act, cities were given the opportunity to change their election date to November odd year. However, no option was offered to move city elections to

November even year. Only those cities whose elections were at the November even year date were allowed to continue with November even year elections. (MCL 168.642)

Are committees subject to the Open Meetings Act?

Yes. All public bodies are subject to the Act. A committee is included in the definition of a public body by the Open Meetings Act (MCL 15.262). A public body is defined as a legislative or governing body which exercises or performs a governmental function.

I keep hearing about the "Green Challenge" sponsored by the League and the Bureau of Energy Systems. Can our village enter or is it limited to the big cities? Where can I get more information on it?

All Michigan communities are eligible to complete the Basic Challenge, a program designed to reflect the governing body's commitment to adopt policies and programs of energy efficiency and conservation. If a community decides to accept the Basic Challenge, its governing board must pass a resolution indicating its desire to participate, and complete Steps 1–6 as outlined in the materials on the website (http://www.mml.org/resources/educenter/green_challenge.html).

Our village clerk (we are a General Law Village) is out on medical leave. We will appoint a deputy clerk to perform her duties while she is out. Can the president swear her in?

No. Only township, city or county clerks, a notary public, or a judge can administer the oath of office.

Center for 21st Century Communities (21c3) Requests

As the League activates our 21c3 initiative, we are looking for innovative ideas to share with our members. We are particularly interested in examples of:

- Green initiatives
- Programs supporting entrepreneurs
- Arts and culture programs
- Initiatives promoting diversity
- Web 2.0 and community marketing initiatives
- Cooperative efforts with local educational institutions. K-16

Please email your innovative ideas to info@ mml.org; fax to 734-663-4496 or mail to the League at 1675 Green Road, Ann Arbor, MI 48105. Thank you!

Mary Charles is a research analyst for the League. You may contact her at 734-669-6322 or mcharles@mml.org.









Get to Know the Village of Milford

A relaxing stroll through the village of Milford is testimony that small towns are often the greatest destinations in this busy world. Only 40 freeway miles north of Detroit Metropolitan Airport, the village of Milford is easy to get to from both I-96 and M-59. Established in 1869, the village's economy was based on hydro-powered mills, which Henry Ford expanded when he created one of the first manufacturing facilities based on his "Village Industries" philosophy.

The village, located in southwest Oakland County, is home to many destinations offering the best of both worlds—fabulous family-owned shops and independent restaurants, in a downtown surrounded by green spaces and flowing rivers. The must-see in Milford is truly this charismatic, traditional downtown, renovated to an 'Old World' style but established just before the turn of the century. Visit for an afternoon or a weekend, and check out any of the 250 unique specialty boutiques and restaurants located in and around Main Street, from quaint, family-friendly cafes to cutting-edge clothiers and craft stores to award-winning gourmet dining. Everything you covet or crave, from diamonds to delicacies, can be found in Milford.

The downtown area is on the National Register of Historic Places, as are most of the adjacent neighborhoods. The village is home to just 6,300 people, yet the 70,000 residents who make up the surrounding area consider Milford's Main Street their central business district.

Milford is surrounded by many natural areas and boasts six parks within its boundaries, as well as a canoe launch and trail system for excellent day hiking. Central Park, located on the banks of the Huron River, is a hit with children and teens thanks to a playscape, basketball courts, tennis court and volleyball court. For a picnic destination, Fairgrounds Park is perfect. Hubbell Pond Park is the site of a new YMCA and library. For cycling enthusiasts, there's even a winding bike path that links to other communities, including Kensington Metro Park.

For more information on the village of Milford, visit the Milford Downtown Development Authority's website at www.meetmeinmilford.com, or the village website at www.villageofmilford.org.