



November 13, 2015

Mayor Donald D. Lyons
City Council Members

Dear Mayor Lyons and City Council Members:

The following report has been prepared to provide you with an update on current issues or projects in progress:

Upcoming Meetings: None

Annual Health Insurance Renewal

The final pieces of the annual health insurance renewal are being prepared by Rose Scherr. For the 2016 calendar year plan, the United Health Care rates increased by approximately 3%. As you may also recall, PA 152 sets a limit on the amount that a public employer may contribute to a medical benefit plan, with MCL 15.563 providing the maximum dollar amount annually adjusted to the medical care component of CPI. For 2016, the limit was raised by 2.5%.

Two plan changes are being implemented, the first being the elimination and replacement of a health insurance plan with no premium cost to the employee, and the second is a change to the dental plan that adds a maximum accumulation benefit which provides for a rollover to the next plan year of a portion of unused dental benefits.

Leaf/Brush Pick-Up Program

Leaf pickup will continue into November as long as weather permits. City residents who have bagged their leaves and/or yard waste can schedule a pickup by calling **782.8200** or emailing: DPS Service request@dowagiac.org. Please note that requests are subject to crew workload conditions and availability.

Residents are always welcome to bring brush or yard waste to the City compost site located at Riverside Cemetery. The compost site is open Tuesdays from 4 pm to dusk and Saturdays from 10 am to 3 pm through November 30 when the site closes for the season.

Museum Update The second floor of the Dowagiac Area History Museum is open to the public. If you were not able to attend the Grand Opening, stop by and check it out.





Don't miss the next event on December 2
Studebaker Goes to War, by Andrew Beckman, Archivist of the
Studebaker National Museum

Studebaker Goes to War examines the Studebaker Corporation's many contributions to our nation's defense. For over a century, Studebaker stood at the ready to serve in times of conflict. From its earliest days supplying horse-drawn supply wagons to building jet engines for the Air Force, Studebaker served admirably whenever called upon. The image here shows a train loaded with Studebaker-made ambulances outside the South Bend factory in 1917 (provided by Studebaker National Museum).

Beckman has been the archivist at the Studebaker National Museum since 1999 and travels across the country promoting the museum. He is the author of two books: *The Studebaker National Museum: Over a Century on Wheels*, and *Studebaker's Last Dance: The Avanti*. Mr. Beckman also serves as Vice-President of the Society of Automotive historians.

This program is free for museum members, \$5 for non-members.

East Railroad Street Construction and resurfacing of East Railroad Street is now complete.

Gorlich Building Update

You may have seen the construction fencing being set in place around the property on East Division Street. The environmental work inside the building is nearly complete, the windows have been removed and the demolition project is on schedule.

Promotional Video

The City will be working with the film company CGI on a promotional video.

In preparation for filming in the spring, producers from CGI will be here most of next week meeting with City personnel and area organizations and business owners. This film will highlight the resources, events, organizations and businesses in Dowagiac. The video will be used in multiple ways, including on the City's site.

You can a copy of the letter of invitation on the City's site www.dowagiac.org. Look for the "Coming Soon" icon at the bottom of the home page. As we progress, more information and sample footage can also be viewed on the site.

The Holiday Season Begins Today in Dowagiac

Explore and enjoy the many activates around town during the Christmas Open House Weekend.

DOWAGIAC CHRISTMAS CELEBRATION

Open House Weekend

November 13-15

Friday, November 13

9 am - 7 pm . . . Visit the Christmas Open Houses of our specialty shops & the Ladies Library Association holiday book sale, as we kick off the Yuletide Season with in-store events the entire weekend. Shopkeepers present their finest merchandise, special discounts, festive treats & weekend drawings. Open Houses continue through Sunday, 12 to 4.

Saturday, November 14

9 - 2 pm . . . Enjoy the hand-made works of Michiana artisans, showcased at the 19th annual Theta Mu Sorority Craft Show, located at Dowagiac Union High School on Prairie Ronde.

9 - 5 . . . Christmas Open Houses at our specialty stores continue, as shopkeepers attend to your every need. For those who tire easily, distinctive dining and even an old-fashioned soda fountain provide the perfect spot to rest awhile.

10 - 2 . . . A true-to-life **Old-World Santa** greets families within the elegant indoor setting of Wood Fire Italian Trattoria. Children receive a coloring book from **St. Nick** and can register for a gift basket of toys & invitation to appear with Santa in the December 4th Candle-light Parade!

10 - 2 . . . Join Mrs. Claus and Alyssa Wainwright, Miss Blossomtime Congeniality, at Who Knew? Consignment, where children can make a jingle bell bracelet.

10 - 2 . . . At Beckwith Park families can meet the **Alpacas of Chambana** and enjoy horse-drawn wagon rides.

10 - 2 . . . Warm up with hot chocolate, served by contestants of the Miss Dowagiac Scholarship Pageant and enjoy **holiday sweets** from the sidewalk booths of MKSOD and Pastry Artist Jordan Anderson, owner of The Baker's Rhapsody. **Nominal fee.**

10 - 2 . . . Shelagh Brown Duo presents your favorite **Christmas carols** at the gazebo.

11 - 2 . . . Dowagiac Area History Museum presents a **Christmas Card Design Workshop** for families. Materials supplied.

11:30 - 12:30 . . . Dance into the holidays with **Positively Dance!** Events in and around Beckwith Park continue through 2 p.m.



Sunday, November 15

Noon - 4 . . . Enjoy holiday shopping the way it used to be, as the **Christmas Open Houses** of our specialty shops continue. Register for the **Weekend Drawing** that awards \$500 in Dowagiac Universal Gift Certificates to shoppers. Register at Booth's Country Florist & Gifts, Caruso's Candy Kitchen, Beeson Street Bar & Grill, Hidden Treasures, Imperial Furniture, The Marshall Shoppe, Rosy Tomorrows, Shabby Bou-Chic, Vincent J. Jewelers & Wounded Minnow.

Borgess Tree of Love

Join Borgess-Lee Memorial Hospital on **Wednesday, Dec. 2**, at 5:30 for this very special tree-lighting event at Fair Park. Symbolic of the donations raised to provide mammography services to the uninsured, a beautiful pine will be set aglow in pink lights. Honor someone special by making a donation to the **Borgess Tree of Love Campaign**. For every \$8 donation, you can help an uninsured woman receive free services.

Candle-light Parade

Friday, December 4

6 pm . . . As you await evening festivities, savor the hot chocolate and sweet delights available from our street vendors.

6:15 - 7 . . . Gather 'round the Beckwith Park for our Tree-Lighting Ceremony, pre-parade entertainment featuring **ACTION Chorale & Positively Dance**, and community caroling led by ACTION.

7 pm . . . Listen for the tolling bell of our Town Crier and join Borgess-Lee Memorial Hospital and the Chamber as we usher in one of **Michigan's largest holiday events**. Our Candle-light Parade of 100 lighted floats, costumed characters & marching bands makes this a magical evening you'll long remember!

Our Proud Sponsors. . .

Borgess-Lee Memorial Hospital & the Chamber of Commerce, as the **Proud Hosts** of our celebration, along with these sponsors, invite you to enjoy our **Grand City** during this special season. . .

AEP / Indiana Michigan Power
Burling & Gillesby DDS
Chemical Bank

Front Street Crossing / COA
Mahar Insurance
Ylonis Contracting

Sincerely,

Kevin P. Anderson, City Manager