



CHARTER TOWNSHIP OF MERIDIAN  
PARK COMMISSION  
TUESDAY APRIL 8, 2014  
TOWN HALL ROOM



**WORK SESSION 6PM**

(salmon)

1. **Call Meeting to Order**
2. **Roll Call**
3. **Approval of Agenda**
4. **Friend of the Park Volunteer Recognition Ceremony**
5. **2014 Park Millage Ballot Proposal Update**
6. **Other**
7. **Public Comment**
8. **Adjournment**

**REGULAR MEETING – 7 PM**

1. **Call Meeting to Order**
2. **Roll Call**
3. **Approval of Agenda**
4. **Public Comment**
5. **Commissioner Reports and Comments**
6. **Approval of Minutes** (blue)
  - a. March 11, 2014 Work Session Meeting Minutes
  - b. March 11, 2014 Regular Meeting Minutes
7. **Communications** (tan)
8. **Director's Report** (yellow)
9. **Unfinished Business** (cherry)  
PUBLIC COMMENT

*Individuals with disabilities requiring auxiliary aids or services should contact the Meridian Township Park Commission by writing or calling the following: Township Manager Frank Walsh, 5151 Marsh Road, Okemos, MI 48864-1198 (517-853-4250) - Ten days notice required.*

10. **New Business** (pink)  
PUBLIC COMMENT
  - a. Natural Buffer Project – Historical Village Pond
  - b. Park Clean-up Day – April 19, 2014 9-noon
  
11. **Other Business** (green)  
PUBLIC COMMENT
  
12. **Discussion Items** (lilac)  
PUBLIC COMMENT
  - a. Park Millage Ballot Proposal Update
  
13. **Final Comments**
  
14. **Announcements**
  - a. Next Regular Meeting Date: Tuesday, May 13, 2014 Town Hall
  - b. Farmers' Market – J C Penney Corridor of Meridian Mall, Saturday, April 19 and opening day outside May 3 8am-2 pm
  - c. Van Atta Road Closed from Grand River south to bridge; access to Harris Nature Center from Jolly Road
  - d. Park Clean-up – April 19, 2014 9-noon
  - e. Friends of the Parks Volunteer Recognition Ceremony – Monday, May 12, 2014 at Central Park.
  
15. **Public Remarks**
  
16. **Adjournment**

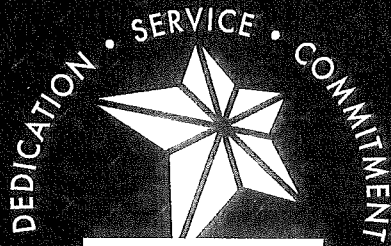
# Park Commission Meeting

April 8, 2014

## 7. COMMUNICATIONS

- A. Items to/from the Public
  - 1. To: Michigan Recreation and Park Association, RE: Community Service Awards Ceremony booklet - Kelly Colflesh to receive MRPA Community Service Award at ceremony on March 19
- B. Commission Information
  - 1. April Calendar of Events for Parks & Recreation
  - 2. Towne Courier: **March 16:** Native garden program at HNC; Campfire program to be held at HNC; Native plants pre-orders taken; Discover Walking at HNC; HNC offers Scouts badge programs; Qigong class to be held Saturdays; Okemos Boy Scout headed trail project; earns Eagle; **March 23:** Okemos snowman wins township contest; **March 30:** Meridian Twp to host community clean-up; Harris Nature Center offers native plants; Meridian Twp plan to conduct controlled burns in natural areas
  - 3. Okemos Life Magazine: March issue
  - 4. Okemos Life Magazine: April issue
- C. Staff Inquiries/Response

**WELCOME TO THE**



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**COMMUNITY SERVICE AWARDS**

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Presented by the Michigan Recreation & Park Association

**MARCH 19, 2014**

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**Welcome and Introductions**

Derek Smith, MRPA President

Wendy Wilmers Longpre, MRPA Awards Committee Chair

**Presentation of Youth Sports Awards**

Derek Smith, MRPA President

**Presentation of Margaret Whitehead Senior Awards**

Derek Smith, MRPA President

**Presentation of MRPA Community Service Awards**

MRPA Awards Committee Members

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# COMMUNITY SERVICE AWARDS

DEDICATION • SERVICE • COMMITMENT

THIS YEAR'S COMMUNITY GIVEN TO THE FOLLOWING AND INDIVIDUALS FOR TIRELESS COMMITMENT TO PROGRAMS AND SERVICES

SERVICE AWARDS ARE GROUPS, ORGANIZATIONS THEIR ONGOING AND PARKS AND RECREATION IN THEIR COMMUNITIES.

## **OUTSTANDING YOUTH SPORTS COACH**

Prentice Gardner, Oak Park

## **OUTSTANDING YOUTH SPORTS COACH**

Tracy Ostrander, Lansing

## **OUTSTANDING YOUTH SPORTS COACH**

Anthony Simmons, Oak Park

## **MARGARET WHITEHEAD SENIOR OF THE YEAR FOR LEADERSHIP**

Linda Mahaney, Dearborn Heights

## **MARGARET WHITEHEAD SENIOR OF THE YEAR FOR SERVICE**

Ella Glassmeyer, Berkley

## **COMMUNITY SERVICE AWARDS**

### **Friends of the Cadillac Pathway**

Michigan DNR

### **City of Midland Beautification Advisory Committee**

Midland Parks and Recreation

### **Friends of the Mason Tract Pathway**

Michigan DNR

### **Glen Ruczynski -**

### **Northern Michigan Mountain Bike Association**

Michigan DNR

### **Friends of Negwegon State Park**

Michigan DNR

### **Clinton Valley Lions Club**

Clinton Township Parks and Recreation

### **Neighborhood Club Board of Trustees**

Grosse Pointe Neighborhood Club

### **Boy Scout Troop 1085 - Berkley, MI**

Berkley Parks and Recreation

### **Barb Jensen**

Huron Clinton Metroparks

### **Owain Kert**

Huron Clinton Metroparks

### **St. John Providence Health Systems**

Macomb Township Parks and Recreation

### **Grand Ledge Lions Club**

Eaton County Parks and Recreation

"WE MAKE A LIVING BY WHAT WE GET,  
BUT WE MAKE A LIFE BY WHAT WE GIVE."  
-WINSTON CHURCHILL

**MRPA**  
Michigan Recreation  
and Park Association



**Fenner Conservancy Board**  
Lansing Parks and Recreation

**Old Oakland Neighborhood Association -  
Joe Duris, President**  
Lansing Parks and Recreation

**Kelly Colflesh**  
Meridian Township Parks and Recreation

**John Hesse - Mid-Michigan Steelheaders Club**  
Ingham County Parks

**Matt Rinker**  
Ingham County Parks

**Brandon Scott**  
East Lansing Parks, Recreation & Arts

**Oakland County Health Division**  
Oakland County Parks and Recreation

**Clinton River Area Mountain Bike Association**  
Oakland County Parks and Recreation

**Nick Mansour**  
City of Pontiac

**Al Iocobelli, Chrysler**  
City of Pontiac

**Flint River Valley Steelheaders**  
Genesee County Parks and Recreation

**Michael Murphy & Sedgewick & Ferweda  
Architects**  
Grand Blanc Parks and Recreation

**Crane Park Volunteers**  
Kalamazoo Parks and Recreation

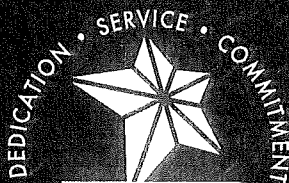
**Manchester Wellness Coalition**  
City of Chelsea

**Huron River Watershed Council**  
Riverside Kayak Connection/Community Outreach

**Bruce Whitfield**  
Saline Parks and Recreation



**COMMUNITY SERVICE AWARDS**



## COMMUNITY SERVICE AWARDS

### MRPA AWARD COMMITTEE

**Wendy Wilmers-Longpre -  
Awards Committee Chair**  
City of East Lansing Parks, Recreation & Arts

**Sal DiCaro, CPRP**  
Macomb Township Parks and Recreation

**Darrin Duistermars**  
Holland Township Parks and Recreation

**Kae Eidson, CPRP**  
Grand Blanc Parks and Recreation

**Terry Fields**  
Oakland County Parks and Recreation

**Portia Fields-Anderson, CPRP, CTRS**  
City of Pontiac

**Brett Kaschinske, CPRP**  
Lansing Parks and Recreation

**Kyle Langlois, CPRP**  
Sterling Heights Parks and Recreation

**Carla Scruggs**  
Saline Parks and Recreation

**Linda Walter, CPRP**  
Clinton Township Parks and Recreation

A special thank you to the entire staff at the Hannah Community Center  
for hosting the Community Service Awards!



[www.mrpaonline.org](http://www.mrpaonline.org)

PROVING PARKS AND RECREATION  
M A T T E R

Photos courtesy of Huron-Clinton Metroparks, Lansing Parks and Recreation and Oakland County Parks.

# Meridian Township Parks & Recreation

## April Calendar of Events

- April 3 – Preschool Science Exploration: All about Plants
- April 4 – Junior and Adult Golf Clinics at Hawk Hollow registration deadline
- April 4 – Weekday Science Programs: Fiddleheads and Ferns
- April 5 – First Class Dog Training Basic Obedience Class
- April 5 – Qigong for Health
- April 5 – Discover Bird Watching
- April 6 – Spring Discovery Walk
- April 7 – First Class Dog Training Basic Obedience Class
- April 8 – Stories in the Garden
- April 11 – Adult Spring/Summer Softball Leagues registration deadline
- April 11 – Howl at the Moon
- April 12 – 3<sup>rd</sup> – 4<sup>th</sup> Grade Baseball Pitching Clinic registration deadline



- April 12 – HNC Stewardship Mornings
- April 12 – Junior Girl Scout Animal Habitats Badge Workshop
- April 14 – My Cub and I: Nature for Toddlers
- April 14 – Timber Tots
- April 15 – My Cub and I: Nature for Toddlers
- April 15 – Playmakers Kids' Running Club
- April 16 – Move Better with Parkinson's
- April 16 – Photography Class with Ron St. Germain
- April 17 – Flashlight Easter Egg Hunt registration deadline

- April 17 – Chipmunk Story Time: The Tree Bear Climbed
- April 19 – 3 - 4<sup>th</sup> Grade Boys and Girls Lacrosse Clinic registration deadline
- April 22 – Stories in the Garden
- April 22 – Weekday Wildflower Walks
- April 22 – MELT Hand and Foot Treatment Intro Class
- April 24 – Spin-Fly Fishing at Lake Lansing Park
- April 24 – FHM Lecture Series
- April 26 – Webelos Cub Scout Forester Badge Workshop
- April 26 – Trees for Terrific Campfire
- April 26 – Meridian Recycles Electronics, Books, Large Metals, Bicycles and MORE
- April 27 – Bird Watching in our Parks: Ted Black Woods
- April 27 – Sunday Wildflower Walks
- April 29 – Weekday Wildflower Walks



Questions, call Meridian Township  
Parks & Recreation  
at (517) 853-4600



Sunday, March 16, 2014

## Native plants pre-orders taken

The pre-order forms for the Harris Nature Center's Annual Native Plants Sale are available now through April 21. Pre-ordered plants can be picked up on May 3 at the Harris Nature Center, 3998 Van Atta Road, in Meridian Township. For more information, a pre-order form and plant list, contact (517) 349-3866 or [hnc@meridian.mi.us](mailto:hnc@meridian.mi.us).

## Discover Nordic Walking at HNC

Nordic Walking is a new outdoor exercise which provides a fun, total-body, low-impact

work-out. A Nordic Walking class will be held on Saturday, March 22 at 9:30-11:30 a.m. at the Harris Nature Center, 3998 Van Atta Road in Okemos. The fee is \$15/person if you bring your own equipment and \$20/person if you borrow equipment. Space is limited, so contact (517) 349-3866 or [hnc@meridian.mi.us](mailto:hnc@meridian.mi.us) to have a registration form sent to you.

Sunday, March 16, 2014

## HNC offers Scouts badge programs

The Harris Nature Center, 3998 Van Atta Road in Meridian Township, has badge programs for Junior Girl Scouts and Webelos Cub Scouts this fall. Scouts may enroll as individuals or as a troop or den. The fee is \$4.50 per scout.

Junior Girl Scouts can earn their Animal Habitats badge on April 12 and Webelos Cub Scouts can earn their Forester pin on April 26. Both badge workshops are on these Saturdays at 10 a.m. and last two hours.

Groups of scouts on all age levels can arrange a separate date for any of the outdoor badges, by contacting the Harris

Nature Center office at (517) 349-3866 or [hnc@meridian.mi.us](mailto:hnc@meridian.mi.us).

## Qigong class to be held Saturdays

Qigong (chi gung) is an ancient Chinese exercise practice that conditions the body while quieting the mind. A Qigong class will be held on Saturdays, April 5-May 3 from 9-10 a.m. at the Harris Nature Center,

3998 Van Atta Road in Okemos. The fee is \$40/person for the five-week class or \$10/person/week for drop-ins. Contact (517) 349-3866 or [hnc@meridian.mi.us](mailto:hnc@meridian.mi.us) to have a registration form sent to you.

Sunday, March 16, 2014

## Native garden program at HNC

Learn how to design and maintain a native garden at the Harris Nature Center, 3998 Van Atta Road in Meridian Township, on Tuesday, March 18 at 7 p.m.

The price of the class is \$15/person. For more information and a registration form, contact (517) 349-3866 or [hnc@meridian.mi.us](mailto:hnc@meridian.mi.us).

## Campfire program to be held at HNC

Families will be connecting with nature, enjoying a campfire with a program about maple sugaring on Saturday, March 22 at 7 p.m. at the Harris Nature Center, 3998 Van Atta Road in Okemos.

There is a \$3/person or \$7/family fee due at the time of the program.

For more information, contact [hnc@meridian.mi.us](mailto:hnc@meridian.mi.us) or (517) 349-3866.

## QUICK HITS

### MERIDIAN TWP. TO HOST COMMUNITY CLEAN-UP

As we welcome spring and celebrate Earth Week, the Meridian Township Parks and Recreation Department is organizing a community-wide clean-up event to encourage residents to help clean up local parks on Saturday, April 19 from 9 a.m.-noon.

Volunteers are needed to pick-up litter and stack branches in lawn areas or remove litter and branches obstructing trails in Central Park, Nancy L. Moore Park, Wonch Park and Ferguson Park.

Those interested in volunteering can contact Jane Greenway at (517) 853-4610 to be assigned a park. Pizza will be provided to all volunteers after the event.

# Okemos Boy Scout headed trail project; earns Eagle

**OKEMOS** — Jack Itsell has attained a goal he dreamed about since he was 11 years old.

He will receive the Eagle Scout award, scouting's highest achievement, from the Boy Scouts of American Sunday, March 16.

A Court of Honor will be held by Troop 109 of the Water and Woods Council at 1:30 p.m. at Okemos Community Church, 4734 Okemos Road.

He is the son of Michael Itsell and Melissa Evans Itsell. He is a second-generation Eagle Scout, following in the footsteps of his father.

To achieve the Eagle rank, a scout must demonstrate leadership and citizenship while earning 21 merit badges before reaching the age of 18 years. The scout must also complete a service



Jack Itsell

project that benefits the community.

For his service project, Jack devel-

oped and supervised the construction of a 845-foot walking trail in Hartrick Park, a Meridian Township Park.

The project required 135 hours of planning, organizing and labor by 20 volunteers.

More than \$3,700 was raised to complete the project, including the cost of 85 tons of crushed concrete road material provided by Schelgel Sand and Gravel along with equipment and manpower provided by Michigan Demolition.

Itsell is a senior at Okemos High School where he is an active

member of the band. He served as drum major for the marching band and plays trombone in the Symphonic Wind Ensemble and jazz band.

He was been in scouting for more than 12 years.

He began as a Cub Scout with Pack 164 at Hiawatha Elementary School where he earned his Arrow of Light.

He has served in several leadership positions, including scribe, assistant patrol leader, patrol leader, senior patrol leader and is a member of the Order of the Arrow Brotherhood, scouting's honor society.

He is also the youngest member of a local high adventure contingent that trekked for two weeks in the mountains at Philmont Scout Ranch in New Mexico.

— From the Itsells

## NEWS BRIEFS

### Harris Nature Center offers native plants

The pre-order forms for the Harris Nature Center's Annual Native Plants Sale are available now through April 21.

Pre-ordered plants can be picked up on May 3 at the Harris Nature Center, 3998 Van Atta Road, in Meridian Town-

ship. For more information, a pre-order form and plant list, contact (517) 349-3866 or [hnc@meridian.mi.us](mailto:hnc@meridian.mi.us).

## Okemos snowman wins township contest



The Lock family of Okemos recently won "Most Meridian Spirit" in a snowman contest sponsored by Meridian Township Parks and Recreation. The Michigan State University-themed snowman is watched over by Thomas (front) and Jack Lock. COURTESY PHOTO



# Meridian Twp. plan to conduct controlled burns in natural areas

**MERIDIAN TOWNSHIP** — Controlled burns are being planned on township-owned property for 20 acres in the Davis-Foster Land Preserve, 5120 Van Atta Road, and 30 acres at Ingham County's Lake Lansing Park North.

The burns will occur in the next several weeks depending on the weather, and usually take place between noon and 7 p.m. "Burn breaks" will be created to help control the fire. The burn is done in a slow and deliberate manner with safety equip-

ment on hand to monitor and control the spread of fire. Smoke levels will be minimized and will be directed away from residential property. Residents will be notified by mail of the date and time of the burns.

Prairies, dry oak woodlands and certain wetlands are adapted to fire and actually require it to stay healthy. Fire stimulates native plants to grow by darkening the soil and increasing its temperature, releasing nutrients,

keeping woodlands and prairie more open and sunny and discouraging plants that are not adapted to fire, such as non-native invasive species.

"These areas are definitely in need of a prescribed burn. Our hope is that the fire will stimulate the beautiful wildflowers that once grew in these natural areas and that it will also help control the invasive species," said Jane Greenway, Meridian Township's parks and land management coordinator.

Contractors David Borneman LLC and PlantWise LLC will conduct the burns, which involves the cooperation and approval of the Meridian Township Fire Inspector, Tavis Millerov and the Fire Chief, Fred Cowper. For more information, visit [www.meridian.mi.us](http://www.meridian.mi.us).

—From Meridian Township



A PlantWise employee controls a burn Lake Lansing Park North, in 2012. 'Prescribed burns' are controlled fires common in Midwestern prairies, wetlands, and woodlands. They help revive essential ecosystem processes, by clearing the way for native plants, and helping to control invasive plant species. The fires enrich the soil during the process. MATTHEW DAE SMITH | FILE PHOTO

# Okemos Life

The key to your community



Home Show  
**IMPROVEMENT TRENDS**  
Winter Sports Weekend  
**SNAPSHOTS**  
Making the Grade  
**TUTORING TIPS**



March 2014

## Building Hope

Okemos Resident Is Making Life Better in Uganda



# Okemos Life

the key to your community

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People, places, problems, good causes and occasions.

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Your guide to music, theater, kid stuff and lots more.

**An Good-bye to a Good Thing ...**  
A fond farewell from this month's issue of the magazine.

## On the Cover

Okemos resident — and Uganda native — Jackson Kaguri is working to improve the lives of the people there by building schools and other infrastructure. See the story on page 18. Photo courtesy of Jackson Kaguri



### You could be a community contributor too!

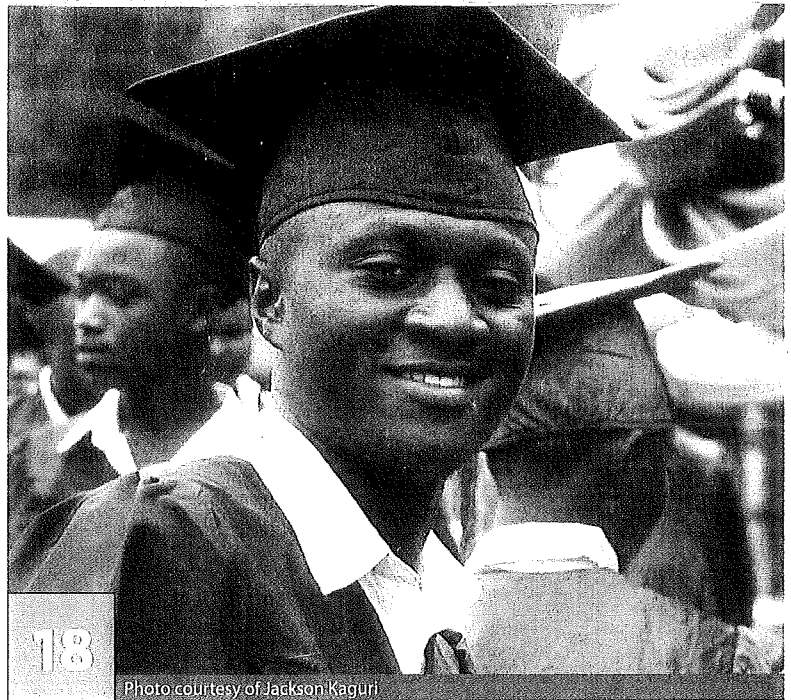
Tony Snyder is a member of the Okemos BNI group. He shares his advice on estate planning in this issue. See his column on page 20. It's easy to join the conversation too; email articles and photos to the email address below.

Get involved! Send your photos, stories or events to:

**Okemos@hibu.com**

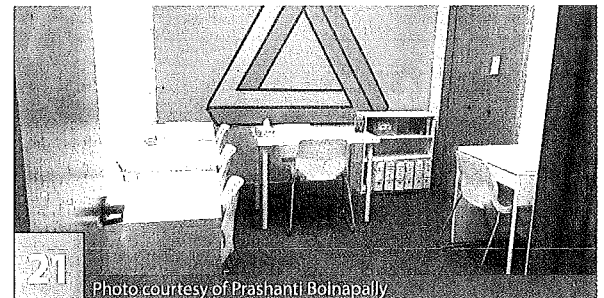
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18

Photo courtesy of Jackson Kaguri



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Photo courtesy of Prashanti Boinapally



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Photo by Jennifer Linn Hartley



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Photo by Jennifer Linn Hartley



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## Winter Market

*Meridian Townships winter farmers' market wraps season.*

by Jennifer Linn-Hartley  
Editor

Eating fresh year round has never been easier — thanks to the Meridian Township Winter Market.

Nearly 30 vendors line the JC Penney corridor at Meridian Mall with their meats, cheeses, produce, plants and other fresh products the first and third Saturday each month during the winter.

In the warmer months Meridian Township's outdoor farmers' market allows area farmers to sell produce and with the newer winter markets, vendors are now extending their growing seasons.

Green houses help vendors grow produce year round, other items sold at the indoor market are season plant arrangements, honey, syrup, baked goods, sweets, gluten-free products, eggs and more.

In addition to providing shoppers with fresher, healthier food, markets serve an educational role too, allowing customers to about different growing seasons.



Find fresh produce year-round at the Meridian Township Winter Farmers' Market.

Photo by Jennifer Linn-Hartley

### Market dates

The remaining Winter Farmers' Market dates are March 1 and 15 and April 5 and 19. Market hours are 10 a.m. to 2 p.m.

The Meridian Winter Farmers' Market is in its fourth year and has grown both in vendor numbers and the number of market dates over the years.

In its first year around 20 to 25 vendors participated in the once-a-month market. Since then, the number of vendors has grown steadily.

By having the indoor market at a shopping mall, it increases exposure to people who may not have normally

visited farmers' markets.

The Meridian Winter Farmers' Market is held from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. the first and third Saturdays of the month December through April.

The market is located in the JC Penney corridor of Meridian Mall, 1982 W. Grand River Ave., Okemos. The remaining winter dates are March 1 and 15 and April 5 and 19.

Michigan Bridge Cards are accepted, see the information table near the center court to get tokens to spend at the market. Many vendors also accept credit cards.

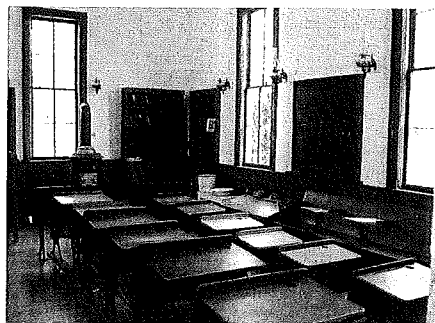
For questions or to get a vendor application call market manager Christine Miller at (517) 712-2395 or visit Meridian Township's website at meridian.mi.us.

## 19th Century

Schools in the 19th century were considerably different than today.

The township was divided into eight districts, each with a one-room school for grades one through eight. One person taught all the subjects to all grade levels.

This system continued in Meridian Township until 1923, when the eight



Meridian Historic Village's schoolhouse.

Photo by Jennifer Linn-Hartley

districts were consolidated into one.

A two-story brick school was constructed at the intersection of Okemos and Mount Hope roads and was appropriately named Central School. The building remains in use today at 4406 Okemos Road and serves as the Okemos Public Montessori School.

—Jane Rose, executive director at Meridian Historical Village

Feb. 22 - 23



Photo by Jennifer Linn-Hartley

## Greater Lansing Orchid Show

The Greater Lansing Orchid Society's 31st annual orchid show and sale is set for Saturday and Sunday, Feb. 22 - 23. The show will be held at Michigan State University's Plant and Soil Science Conservatory located at the corner of Bogue and Wilson - 1066 Bogue Street, in East Lansing.

Hundreds of orchids will be for sale by commercial regional orchid growers.

Come see exhibits of orchids in bloom offered by a variety of regional orchid societies - including the Greater Lansing Orchid Society - and other vendors, floral arrangements, orchid photography and art on display and free educational talks, workshops and advice on caring for orchids.

**For more information visit [greaterlansingorchidsociety.com](http://greaterlansingorchidsociety.com). Hours are noon to 5 p.m. on Saturday and 11 a.m. to 4 p.m. on Sunday, with a photographer session from 9 to 11 a.m. Admission is free but donations are welcome.**

March 1 and 15



Photo by Jennifer Linn-Hartley

## Meridian Township Winter Farmers' Market

Support local farmers and vendors and eat healthier by purchasing your produce from the Meridian Township Winter Farmers' Market. Approximately 25-30 vendors participate each market day, providing a variety of home grown and homemade goods. Find us in the JC Penny corridor at Meridian Mall, 1982 W. Grand River Ave., Okemos on the first and third Saturdays from December to April.

[meridian.mi.us](http://meridian.mi.us)  
(517) 853-4600

March 13



Photo courtesy of Emily Fijol

## Michigan Women's Historical Center and HOF Reception

March is Women's History Month and the Michigan Women's Historical Center and Hall of Fame is celebrating women of character, courage, and commitment. Join the community for the presentation of the 2013 Michigan Women's Hall of Fame inductee plaques and the opening of a new history exhibit on Michigan women and the Civil Rights Movement at the Michigan Women's Historical Center and Hall of Fame, 213 W. Malcolm X St. in Lansing.

March 13 - 16

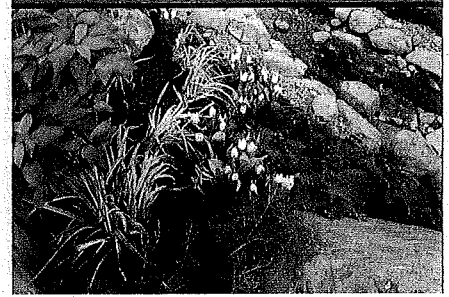


Photo courtesy of Lansing Home & Garden Show

## Lansing Home and Garden Show at MSU Pavillion

The strongest Home & Garden show in the Mid-Michigan area fills the MSU Pavilion on the campus of Michigan State University. Incredible gardens, extensive landscaping projects, a Standard Flower Show and four free seminar stages surround hundreds of exhibits featuring construction, remodeling, kitchens and baths, retail garden centers, pools and spas and home services.

[showspan.com/LHG](http://showspan.com/LHG)  
(800) 328-6550





## Winter Sports Weekend

Meridian Township hosted their annual Family Winter Sports Weekend Jan. 24-26.

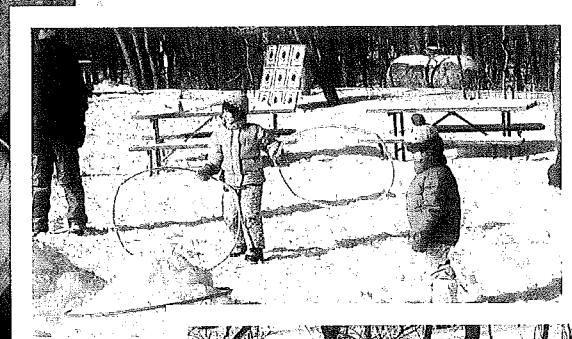
### Send us your photos

Want to see your group or event featured on these pages? Send your photos to the email address below.

[Okemos@hibu.com](mailto:Okemos@hibu.com)



Dog sled demonstrations were given at Harris Nature Center's Winter Wonderland, which was part of Winter Sports Weekend.



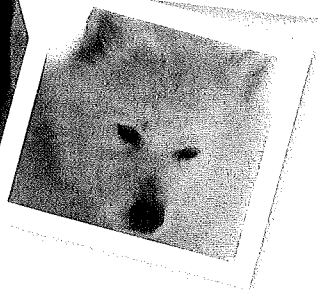
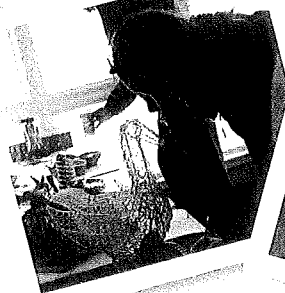
This was the 15th year Family Winter Sports Weekend was held by Meridian Township. When it first began it was a one-day event with snowshoeing, sledding and cross country skiing. Now it's grown into a two-day event and includes bowling, swimming and other events.

All photos courtesy of Harris Nature Center unless otherwise noted.

Harris Nature Center's Winter Wonderland was Saturday, Jan. 25. It included dog sledding demonstrations, snowshoe and cross country skiing and ice sculptures.



Photo courtesy of Meridian Township



This year the Michigan Athletic Club featured a family swim, the Demmer Center hosted shooting instruction and activities, bowling and the seventh annual Polar Beark 5k run/walk were part of the events during Family Winter Sports Weekend.

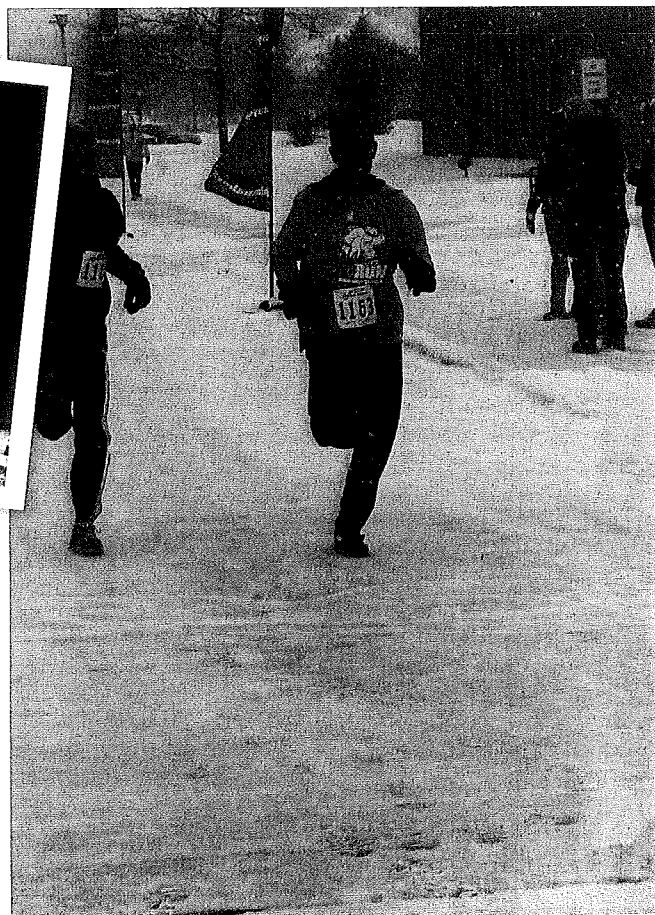


Photo courtesy of Meridian Township

# UPCOMING EVENTS

Schedules are subject to change.  
Call venues to confirm event information.

Let us know about any upcoming events.  
Email us at [Okemos@hibu.com](mailto:Okemos@hibu.com).

## SATURDAY 1 'The Bob and Tom Comedy Show'

7 p.m. and 9:30 p.m.

**WHAT:** 'The Bob and Tom Comedy Show' returns to Wharton Center for one night only. This year's show features comedians Drew Hastings, Greg Hahn, and Dave Dyer, all regulars on the syndicated Bob and Tom morning show (heard locally on Q106). Your host for the evening will be the one and only Chick McGee, who is, of course, part of the syndicated Bob and Tom Show team, and the voice of Mr. Obvious.

**WHERE:** Wharton Center for Performing Arts, 750 E. Shaw Lane, East Lansing.  
**INFO:** Recommended for those 18 years and older. Tickets are \$29. \$1 of each ticket will be donated to the American Red Cross. For more information visit [whartoncenter.com](http://whartoncenter.com) or call (517) 353-1982.

## SATURDAY 1 Winter Farmers' Market at Meridian Mall

10 a.m. - 2 p.m.

**WHAT:** Approximately 25-30 vendors participate each market day, providing a variety of home grown and homemade goods. Find us in the JC Penny corridor on the 1st and 3rd Saturdays from December to April.

**WHERE:** Meridian Mall, 1982 W. Grand River Ave., Okemos. JC Penny corridor.

**INFO:** For more information call (517) 853-4600 or visit [meridian.mi.us](http://meridian.mi.us).

## THURSDAY 6 Alzheimer's Association Caregiver Support Groups

7 - 8:30 p.m.  
**WHAT:** Professionally led groups for caregivers and others dealing with Alzheimer's disease. Support groups are facilitated by trained individuals.

**WHERE:** Ingham County Medical

Care Facility, 3960 Dobie Road, Okemos.

## FRIDAY 7 - SUNDAY 9 2014 Field & Stream Deer & Turkey Expo

**Times vary**  
**WHAT:** This hunting expo is an annual event for the entire outdoor-oriented family, especially deer hunters and turkey hunters. The expos emphasize how-to scouting/hunting information and products of all kinds, presented by recognized experts and companies. These are places to have fun and pick up tips to become a better hunter, have more satisfying and rewarding times outdoors.

**WHERE:** The Summit Sports and Ice Complex, 9410 Davis Hwy., Dimondale.

**INFO:** Friday - 2 p.m. to 9 p.m.; Saturday - 9 a.m. to 7 p.m.; Sunday - 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. For more information (800) 324-3337 or visit [deerinfo.com/Michigan](http://deerinfo.com/Michigan).

## FRIDAY 7 - SUNDAY 9 Stallion Expo

**Times vary**  
**WHAT:** The International Stallion Exhibition and Trade Show (Michigan Horse Expo) has been going strong since 1984 and this year we hope you help us celebrate our 31st year! The Michigan Horse Expo is one of the top three-day horse expos in the country.

**WHERE:** MSU Pavilion, 4301 Farm Lane, East Lansing.

**INFO:** Visit [michiganhorseexpo.org](http://michiganhorseexpo.org) or call (231) 821-2487. Admission prices vary.

## SUNDAY 9 Lansing Symphony Orchestra: String Quartets & Licorice Sticks (Chamber)

3 p.m.  
**WHAT:** Fanyue Sun, violin; Chingwen Tseng, violin; Mikhail Bugaev, viola; Daniel Tressel, cello;

Emmanuel Toledo, clarinet.

**WHERE:** Molly Grove Chapel - First Presbyterian Church, 510 W. Ottawa St., Lansing.

**INFO:** For more information visit [Lansingsyphony.org](http://Lansingsyphony.org) or call (517) 487-5001

## THURSDAY 13 Homeschool Science Day

**Times vary**  
**WHAT:** Pre-K and kindergarten: Light Exploration Grades 1 and 2: Light and Color Science Grades 3 and 4: Nanotechnology 2 Grades 5 and 6: Nuclear Science.

**WHERE:** Impression 5 Science Center, 200 Museum Dr., Lansing.

**INFO:** Times: Pre-K and kindergarten: 12:45-1:30 p.m., 1st and 2nd: 1:45-2:30 p.m., 3rd and 4th: 12:45-1:30 p.m., 5th and 6th: 1:45-2:45 p.m. Admission is \$5/child plus museum admission price. Contact: Katie at (517)485-8116 Ext.32 for reservations.


## THURSDAY 13 - SUNDAY 16 Lansing Home and Garden Show

**Times vary**  
**WHAT:** With more than 300 exhibitors, a dozen feature gardens, five seminar stages, and more, the Lansing Home and Garden Show packs the MSU Pavilion with everything attendees need to create their dream home and tackle this year's landscape projects.

**WHERE:** MSU Pavilion for Agriculture and Livestock Education, 4301 Farm Lane, East Lansing.


**INFO:** Times are: Thursday - 3 - 9 p.m.; Friday - noon - 9 p.m.; Saturday - 10 a.m. - 9 p.m.; Sunday - 10 a.m. - 5 p.m. Admission is \$9 for adults, \$4 for children ages 6 - 14 and free for children under age 5. For more information call (800) 328-6550 or visit [showspan.com/LHG/](http://showspan.com/LHG/).

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# UPCOMING EVENTS

Schedules are subject to change.  
Call venues to confirm event information.

Let us know about any upcoming events.  
Email us at [Okemos@hibu.com](mailto:Okemos@hibu.com).

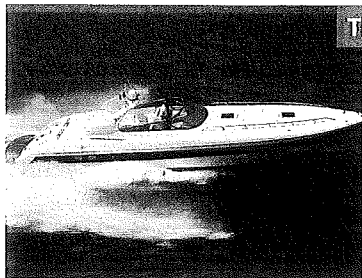


Photo courtesy of hibu

Thursday, March 27 - Saturday, March 29

## Lansing Boat Show

**WHAT:** More than 36 manufacturers will be showing off what's new for 2014.

**WHERE:** Lansing Center, 333 E. Michigan Ave., Lansing.

**INFO:** Cost is \$5 for adults, \$4 for seniors, \$3 for children over age 5, and free for those under 5.

THURSDAY 13 - SUNDAY 16

### A Shot in the Dark

**Times vary**  
**WHAT:** This "whodunit" has a wide range of audience appeal for young adults to seniors. As a murder is being investigated, beautiful Josefa is the obvious suspect but the bumbling Inspector Paul Sevigne drive all around him mad by seeing hear as plainly innocent. Produced on Broadway in 1961, the script was revamped for the 1964 film to accommodate Peter Sellers as Inspector Clouseau.

**WHERE:** Riverwalk Theatre/Community Circle Players, 228 Museum Drive, Lansing  
**INFO:** Times: Thursday - 7 p.m.; Friday/Saturday - 8 p.m.; Sunday - 2 p.m. For more information call (517) 482-5700 or visit [riverwalktheater.com](http://riverwalktheater.com).

FRIDAY 14 - SATURDAY 15

### St. Patrick's Celebration in Grand Ledge

**Times vary**  
**WHAT:** This annual celebration is set in historic downtown Grand Ledge and consists of two nights of Irish dance performances, lots of Irish music, and grand parade and more.

**WHERE:** Downtown Grand Ledge  
**INFO:** For more information call (517) 627-8360 or visit [glstpats.org](http://glstpats.org).

SATURDAY 15

**Maple Syrup Festival at Fenner Nature Center**  
**11 a.m. - 5 p.m.**  
**WHAT:** Celebrate nature's own "Liquid Gold" at Fenner Nature Center's Maple Syrup Festival! Participate in demonstrations in our Sugar Bush, try your hand at tapping a tree and treat your taste buds to savory treats like maple creme and maple cotton candy!

**WHERE:** Fenner Nature Center, 2020 E. Mt. Hope Ave., Lansing.  
**INFO:** Admission varies. Call (517) 483-4224 or visit [mynaturecenter.org/maplesyrupfestival](http://mynaturecenter.org/maplesyrupfestival) for more information

SATURDAY 15

**Winter Farmers' Market at Meridian Mall**  
**10 a.m. - 2 p.m.**  
**WHAT:** Approximately 25-30 vendors participate each market day, providing a variety of home grown and homemade goods. Find us in the JC Penny corridor on the 1st and 3rd Saturdays from December to April.

**WHERE:** Meridian Mall, 1982 W. Grand River Ave., Okemos. JC Penney corridor.  
**INFO:** For more information call (517) 853-4600 or visit [meridian.mi.us](http://meridian.mi.us).

SUNDAY 16

**Tao: Phoenix Rising**  
**3 p.m.**  
**WHAT:** An athletic ensemble in dazzling costumes meets explosive Taiko drumming and innovative choreography. The performers live and train in the mountains of Japan, reaching the highest level of virtuosity after years of intense study. TAO combines the traditional are of Japanese drumming with spectacular modern effects and brings nontraditional flair to the group by drawing on members' diverse backgrounds: one as a rock musician, another a gymnast, and yet another as a composer.  
**WHERE:** Wharton Center for Performing Arts, 320 Wharton Center, East Lansing.  
**INFO:** Tickets from \$15. For more information visit [whartoncenter.com](http://whartoncenter.com) or call (517) 353-1982.

SUNDAY 16

**'The Fantasticks'**  
**2 p.m.**  
**WHAT:** 'The Fantasticks' is the world's longest-running production of any kind. 'The Fantasticks,' a timeless fable of love, is a funny and romantic musical about a boy, a girl, two fathers and a wall.  
**WHERE:** Charlotte Performing Arts Center, 378 State St., Charlotte.  
**INFO:** Admission is \$35 for adults and \$5 for students. For more information call (517) 541-

5690 or visit [cpacpresents.com/thefantasticks](http://cpacpresents.com/thefantasticks).

TUESDAY 18 - SUNDAY 23

**'The Gershwins' Porgy and Bess'**  
**Times vary**  
**WHAT:** The classic story is set in fabled Catfish Row, where beautiful Bess struggles to break free from her scandalous life, and her only rescuer is the courageous Porgy. Threatened by her past, Porgy and Bess' relationship evolves into a deep romance that triumphs as one of the theater's most exhilarating love stories.  
**WHERE:** Wharton Center for Performing Arts, 750 E. Shaw Lane, East Lansing.  
**INFO:** Tickets from \$32. For more information visit [whartoncenter.com](http://whartoncenter.com) or call (800) Wharton.



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# Okemos Life

The key to your community

Helping Tanzanian Women  
SHINING A LIGHT  
Celebration Snapshots  
CHINESE NEW YEAR  
Library Grand Opening  
RIBBON CUTTING

April 2014

## Signs of Spring

Tips for Getting Your Garden in Shape for the Season



# Okemos Life

The key to your community

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Photo courtesy of The Greater Lansing Chinese Association



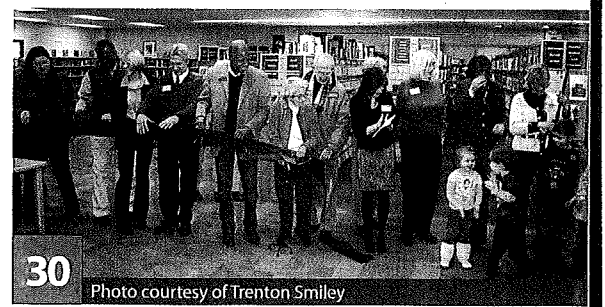
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Photo by Jennifer Linn-Hartley



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Photo courtesy of Shining a Light



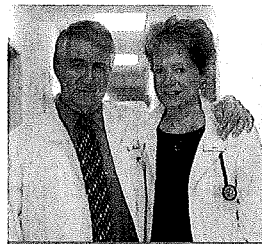
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Photo courtesy of Trenton Smiley

## On the Cover

According to the saying: April showers bring May flowers. It's time to get started working on your garden. See a story on page 12 for some gardening tips.

Photo by Jennifer Linn-Hartley



### You could be a community contributor too!

Dr. Edmund Messina and Jayne Messina, R.N., of the Michigan Headache Clinic offer advice on making sure you get the most affordable healthcare on page 10. Send your articles, photos, and ideas to the email address below.

Get involved! Send your photos, stories or events to:

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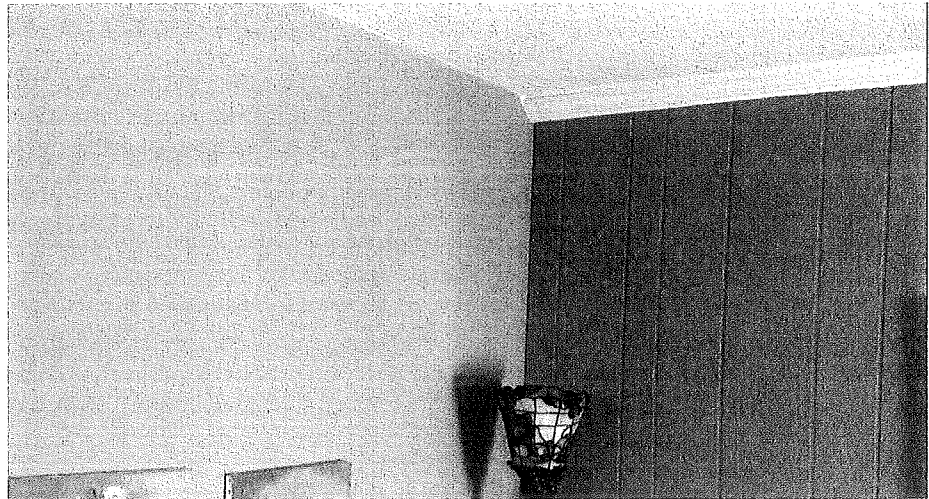
## Respect Your Ceiling

*Tips and ideas to liven up a room by changing the ceiling.*

by Tiffany Kennon  
Community contributor

Ceilings are the Rodney Dangerfield of interior spaces, they get no respect. Years ago decorating ceilings was a common practice. Then in more recent years they became forgotten. I'm not sure why this happened but it's time to start including ceilings into the room design. When making the decision on how to address your ceiling consider your room size, décor and budget. Choosing the right color, product, and texture can change the feeling in a room, enhance the proportions and discise any physical drawbacks.

The easiest and least expensive option is a coat of paint. Wrapping the wall color up onto the ceiling is safe but an accent color will really change the space and make a statement. I recently painted the ceiling in my living room. The color I chose was an accent color already in the room. Now those accents pop even more. There are some awesome paint products on the market today that take paint to the next level. Keep in mind



**Look up. Is your ceiling boring old white? What can be done to include it into the rooms design? How can you show your ceiling some respect?**

Photo courtesy of Tiffany Kennon

### Tiffany Kennon

Tiffany Kennon is an interior designer with Kennon Interiors.

She can be reached at  
[kennont@comcast.com](mailto:kennont@comcast.com)

darker colors will give a cozy feeling to the space and lighter colors will make the ceiling feel higher.

There are lots of options you can add to your ceiling based on your budget and design style. Use carpentry skills to add crown molding or faux beams to create an architectural element. This will draw the eye up and make the ceiling feel higher. Recreated tin ceiling tiles can be purchased at home improvement stores in a verity of styles and finished to suit

any décor. This is a great option for covering textured ceilings. Installing bead board panels or wainscoting is a way to cover damaged ceilings. These panels can be painted or stained.

If you are working with a smooth surface applying wallpaper or fabric can give a personalized look. Choose a pattern and color that will compliment elements already in the room. Decals are a popular design trend right now. They come in endless patters and are applied easily and removed easily. Try duplicating a pattern from a throw pillow or upholstery fabric as a stencil. Use an accent color to apply the design in small areas like around a light fixture or in the corners. A mirror might be the prefect option for a small, dark space like an entry. The mirror will reflect light and make the space feel larger.

## 19th Century

In the late 19th century, "Friendly Societies" were popular. The Independent Order of Odd Fellows established a lodge in Okemos. The I.O.O.F. provided community service for members in times of need.

Members originally held their meetings in a store at the corner of Hamilton and Marsh roads, which was eventually



**The I.O.O.F. Hall.**

Photo courtesy of Jane Rose

moved to the Meridian Historical Village. The meeting room on the second floor still has a small hole in the door so members could be identified prior to entering.

Members built a two-story lodge in 1903 at the corner of Hamilton and Ardmore. The I.O.O.F. building still stands today.

—Jane Rose, Meridian Historical Village executive director

# Community

## Nature Center Volunteers

Information provided by  
Harris Nature Center

Harris Nature Center, 3998 Van Atta Road in Okemos is looking for volunteers to help in the park on Saturday, April 12 from 9 to 11 a.m.

Volunteers will work in the flower beds, restore habitats and maintain trails.

"In order to maintain the natural beauty of our park, we have to remove invasive plants, maintain habitat areas and garden around the nature building," said Kit Rich, Harris Nature Center Coordinator.

Additional stewardship mornings are Saturdays, May 17, June 21, July 19, Aug. 16, Sept. 20, Oct. 18 and Nov. 8.



**Volunteers are needed to help maintain the park.**

Photo courtesy of Harris Nature Center

## Wildflower Walks

**Wildflowers are a sure sign of spring.**

Look for spring wildflowers with a naturalist on Tuesday, April 29 at 10:30 am at the Harris Nature Center, 3998 Van Atta Road in Meridian Township.

"Each week the spring woods look a little different as more wildflowers poke up out of the ground," said Kati Adams, Harris Nature Center park naturalist. "This is a good time to find Trillium and Jack-in-the-Pulpit, two of the favorites!" There will be a two more Tuesday morning walks on May 6 and June 3.

A Mother's Day walk is wildflower walk is set for 3 p.m. Sunday, May 11.

"This will be a peaceful walk in the woods to enjoy our native wildflowers, including everyone's favorite, the large-flowered trillium," Adams said. "I know that's how I like to spend my Mother's Day."

There is a \$3/person fee due at the time of the walk.

For more information contact Harris Nature Center at (517)349-3866 or [hnc@meridian.mi.us](mailto:hnc@meridian.mi.us). Find out more online at [meridian.mi.us](http://meridian.mi.us) and [facebook.com/HarrisNatureCenter](https://www.facebook.com/HarrisNatureCenter).

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## Safely Recycle Household Items

Meridian Township's Spring Recycling Day set for April 26.

Information provided by  
Meridian Township

Meridian Township's annual spring recycling event is set for Saturday, April 26 from 9 a.m. to 2 p.m. at Chippewa Middle School, 4000 Okemos Road in Okemos.

Area residents can safely recycle a variety of unwanted items such as home electronics, computers and computer accessories, televisions, stereos, copiers, CD/DVD players, VCR's, vacuums, and more.

Books are also being accepted, and organizers ask that you sort them into the following categories: hard cover, soft cover and children's books. Soft cover books will be on sale for 25 cents and hard cover books will be on sale for 50 cents.

The Habitat ReStore will be helping collect clean, working, unbroken furniture and building materials.

Major sponsors for the event include Friedland Industries, Inc., MSU Bikes, Habitat for Humanity ReStore, World Mission, ASAP Printing, Foods for Living, Granger, Titus Farms, Kellie's Consignments, Playmakers, Share Bike, Meridian Plumbing, Heating, Cooling Remodeling, Vintage Tech Recyclers and Meridian Mall.

If you are interested in volunteering, please contact Ellen at (517) 339-2015. For more information visit [recycle.meridian.mi.us](http://recycle.meridian.mi.us).

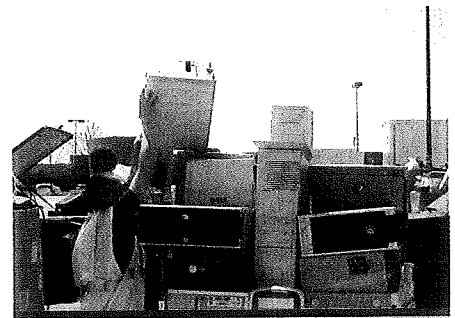


Photo by Jennifer Linn-Hartley

### Spring Cleaning

**RECYCLE HOME GOODS and electronics on Saturday, April 26** from 9 a.m. to 2 p.m. at Chippewa Middle School, 4000 Okemos Road in Okemos.

For a list of items being accepted visit [recycle.meridian.mi.us](http://recycle.meridian.mi.us)

## Van Atta Road Closure

Road closed for bridge construction.

The Van Atta Road Bridge will be closed until further notice. Neither vehicular nor pedestrian traffic will be able to cross the river until the new bridge is re-opened.

Residents will be able to access their property from only one direction; residents that live south of the bridge will have to access their property from Jolly Road and those that live north of the bridge will have to access their property from Grand River Avenue. Local traffic to and from properties within the work zone including visitors to the Harris Nature Center will be maintained to the greatest extent possible from only one direction during the detour.

The project will consist of replacing the 60-foot long bridge that was constructed in 1935 with a 100-foot long bridge. The project will also feature extra deck width for future dedicated sidewalk and a canoe launch along the shore of the Harris Nature Center. The new bridge is expected to open by early June 2014. For more information, please contact the Ingham County Road Department at (517) 676-9722. —[meridian.mi.us](http://meridian.mi.us)



Photo courtesy of hibou

## What's in My Garden?

And other gardening tips.

So anxious for signs of spring, I ventured outside to cut some branches from my forsythia bush. I re-cut the ends right before placing the branches in a container of water set by a sunny widow. I added a half teaspoon of bleach to the water to help control bacteria and changed the water every couple of days. In a few short weeks my kitchen counter sported a lovely vase of bright yellow flowers.

The same technique can be used with other flowering shrubs and trees such as redbud, dogwood, honeysuckle, lilac, or spirea. If you are tired of cold weather you too can fool mother nature and bring spring indoors.

### Planting pansies

April isn't too early for some outdoor planting. Pansies actually prefer cooler temperatures to hot weather and you will find them waiting for purchase in garden stores. If you plant them in pots on your deck you may be able to enjoy them whether you are indoors or out. —Sue Wittick, Meridian Garden Club

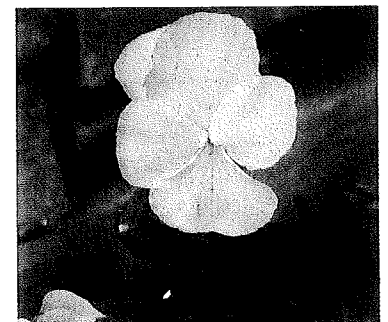
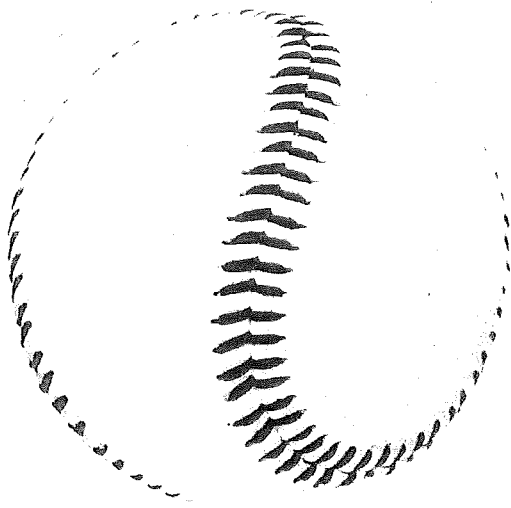


Photo courtesy of Sue Wittick



April 8

## Dollar Deals at Lugnuts Opener



The Lansing Lugnuts 2014 home opener is set for Tuesday, April 8 against the Quad Cities River Bandits.

The game starts at 7:05 p.m. at Cooley Law School Stadium, 505 E. Michigan Ave. in Lansing.

The Lansing Lugnuts, Class-A Affiliate of the Toronto Blue Jays, 'Go Nuts' as they enter their 19th season in Michigan's Capital City.

Every Tuesday is Dollar Deal Day at the stadium — which means \$1 hot dogs, fountain drinks and ice cream sandwiches on opening night.

**Lansing Lugnuts tickets are available for purchase at [lansinglugnuts.com](http://lansinglugnuts.com) and by calling (517) 485-4500. Tickets start at \$8 for lawn seats.**

Photo courtesy of hibuu

April 9

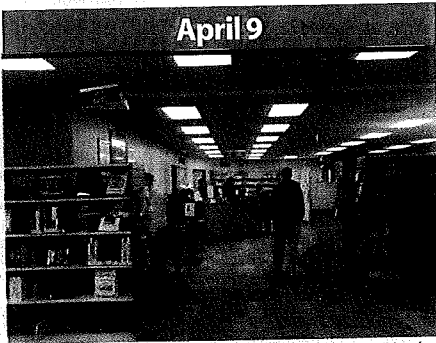


Photo by Jennifer Linn-Hartley

## Children's Book Discussion: Books Made Into Movies

Pizza & Pages (grade 3 a up) meets Wednesday, April 9 at 4:30 p.m. at the Okemos Branch of the Capital Area District Library, 4321 Okemos Road. Read any book that fits our monthly theme, then come for discussion, snacks and activities. A list of suggested titles is available at the library. This month's theme is books made into movies.

[cadl.org](http://cadl.org)  
(517) 349-0250

April 18 - 19

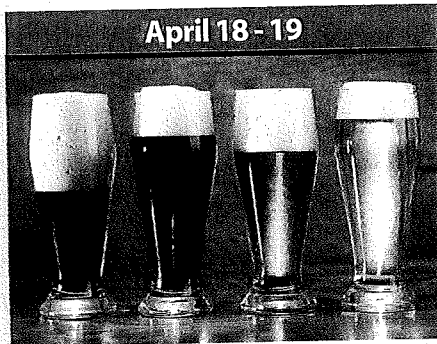


Photo courtesy of hibuu

## New Microbrew and Music Festival set for Lansing-area

The Lansing Microbrew & Music Festival will feature 50-plus carefully selected craft breweries and more than 100 musicians. Dirty Heads, a reggae and hip hop group, will headline the festival on Friday, April 18, and O.A.R. will headline on Saturday, April 19. Tickets start at \$40. The festival will be held at Adado Riverfront Park, 300 N. Grand Ave. Lansing. Must be at least 21 years of age to attend.  
[microbrewandmusic.com/lansing](http://microbrewandmusic.com/lansing)

April 29



Photo courtesy of Sue Wittick

## Enjoy Nature with Harris Nature Center Wildflower Walks

Look for spring wildflowers with a naturalist on Tuesday, April 29 at 10:30 am at the Harris Nature Center, 3998 Van Atta Road in Meridian Township. There will be two more of the monthly Tuesday morning walks — on May 6 and June 3. A Mother's Day walk is wildflower walk is set for 3 p.m. Sunday, May 11. There is a \$3/person fee due at the time of the walk.  
[meridian.mi.us](http://meridian.mi.us)  
(517) 349-3866



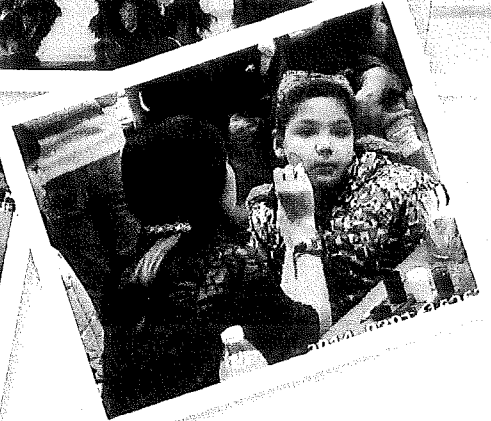
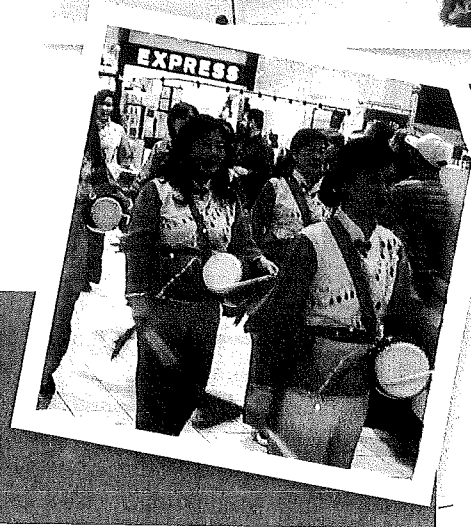
## Chinese New Year

The Greater Lansing Chinese Association held a Chinese New Year celebration Saturday, Feb. 1, at Meridian Mall.

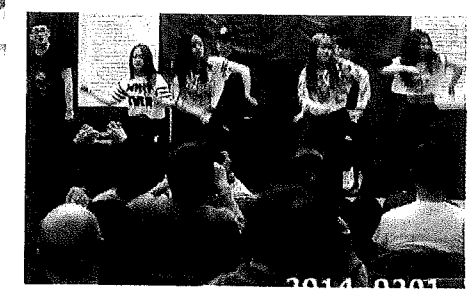
### Send us your photos

Want to see your group or event featured on these pages? Send your photos to the email address below.

[Okemos@hibu.com](mailto:Okemos@hibu.com)



The festival is an annual event and focuses on bringing the entire community together in celebration of the Chinese culture.

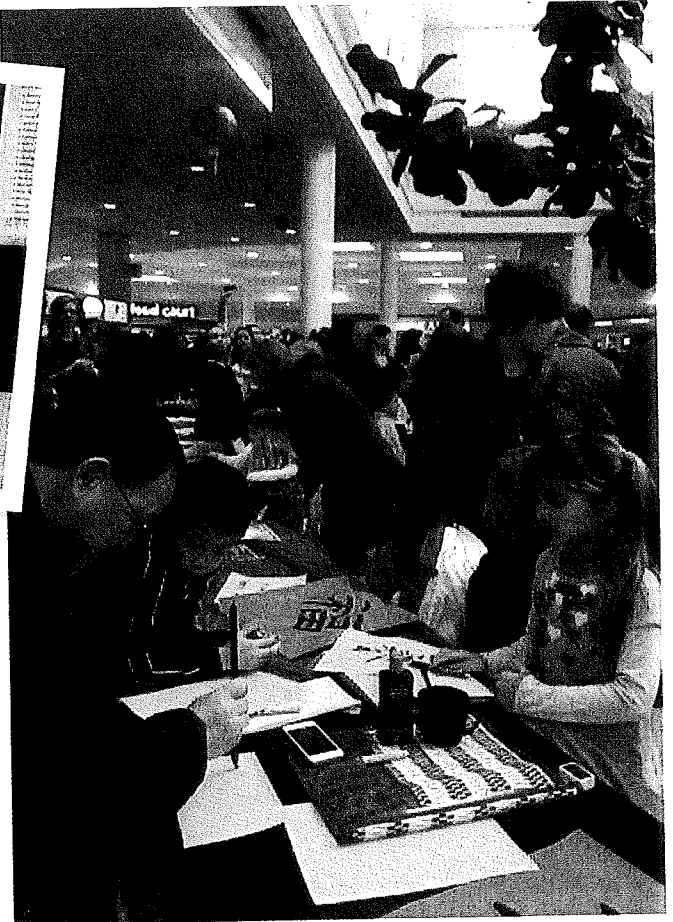
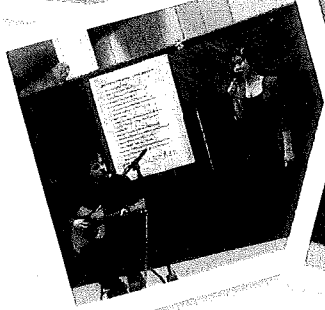
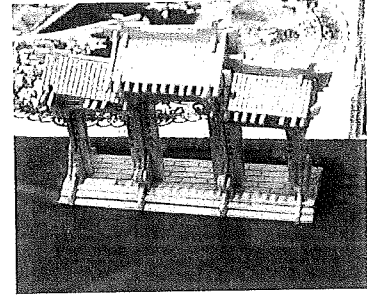
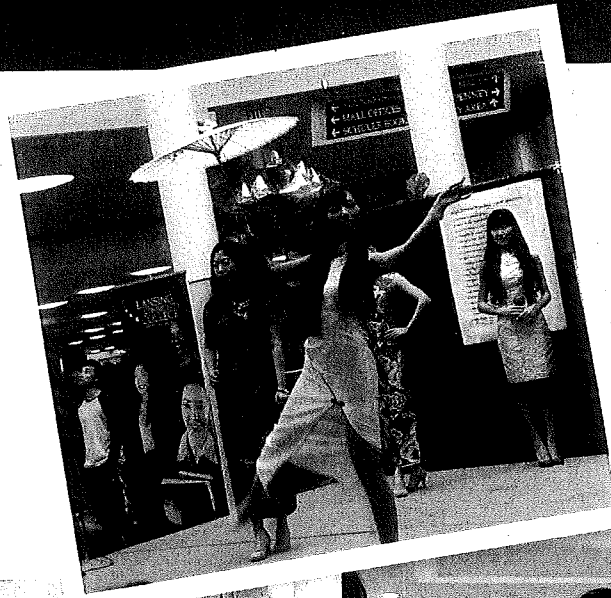


As part of the day's festivities, a parade, fashion show, music, dancing, singing, carnival games, and provided entertainment to attendees.

Photos courtesy of The Greater Lansing Chinese Association



The Greater Lansing Chinese Association and 20 other Chinese organizations and sponsors helped make the Chinese New Year Celebration possible this year.



The celebration was held in the center court area at Meridian Mall. It started with a Lion Parade at 1:30 p.m. and had live entertainment from 2 to 4 p.m. Guests could participate in games and other activities from 4 to 6 p.m.

# UPCOMING EVENTS

Schedules are subject to change.  
Call venues to confirm event information.

Let us know about any upcoming events.  
Email us at [Okemos@hibu.com](mailto:Okemos@hibu.com)

## TUESDAY 1 – SUNDAY 6 MSU Science Festival

*Times vary*

**WHAT:** The 2014 Festival will feature topics spanning the science spectrum, from astronomy to human behavior to robotics to zoology. Presentations are designed to excite the mind and inspire lifelong learning for all ages.

**WHERE:** MSU campus, East Lansing.

**INFO:** Festival events are free and open to the public. For more information visit [sciencefestival.msu.edu](http://sciencefestival.msu.edu) or call (517) 353-8977.

## WEDNESDAY 2 – SUNDAY 6 Cirque Du Soleil: Varekai

*Times vary*

**WHAT:** Deep within a forest, at the summit of a volcano, exists an extraordinary world - a world where something else is possible. A world called Varekai. From the sky falls a solitary young man, and the story of Varekai begins. Parachuted into the shadows of a magical forest, a kaleidoscopic world populated by

fantastical creatures, this young man sets off on an adventure both absurd and extraordinary.

**WHERE:** Jack Breslin Student Events Center, 534 Birch Road, East Lansing.

**INFO:** Admission is \$9. Call (517) 432-1989 for more information.

## THURSDAY 3 Crosstown Showdown: Lansing Lugnuts Baseball vs. Michigan State University

*7:05 p.m.*

**WHAT:** Crosstown Showdown presented by Auto-Owners Insurance. Join us to Go Nuts downtown for a Lansing Lugnuts Baseball game! The classic American past time is alive and well in our community, so come be a part of the fun.

**WHERE:** Cooley Law School Stadium, 505 E. Michigan Ave., Lansing.

**INFO:** Admission prices vary. For

more information call (517) 485-4500 or visit [lansinglugnuts.com](http://lansinglugnuts.com).

## THURSDAY 3 Nathan Bell at Pump House Concerts

*7 p.m.*

**WHAT:** As the son of Marvin Bell, first Poet Laureate of Iowa, Nathan has language in his bloodlines.

Nathan performs literate and literary songwriting supported by a solid grounding in guitar-based American music forms (country, blues, soul, and rock)

**WHERE:** Pump House Concerts, 368 Orchard Street, East Lansing.

**INFO:** \$15 suggested donation, all money goes to the artists, kids are free. For more information contact Dudley Smith at (517) 927-2100.

## THURSDAY 3 Alzheimer's Support Group

*8:30 p.m.*

**WHERE:** Ingham County Medical Care Facility, 3960 Dobie Road.

## FRIDAY 4 – SUNDAY 13 The Hobbit

*Times vary*

**WHAT:** In this stage adaptation of J.R.R. Tolkien's classic fantasy novel, Bilbo Baggins enjoys a comfortable life until a wizard and a company of dwarves arrive to whisk him away on an adventure. This prelude to The Lord of the Rings trilogy explains how the young hobbits got their hands on the dangerous One Ring.

**WHERE:** Riverwalk Theatre/Community Circle Players, 228 Museum Dr., Lansing, MI

**INFO:** Times are Fridays - 7 p.m., Saturdays 2 p.m. and 4:30 p.m., and Sundays 2 p.m. Admission prices vary. For more information call (517) 482-5700 or visit [riverwalktheatre.com](http://riverwalktheatre.com).

## SATURDAY 5 Winter Farmers' Market

*10 a.m. – 2 p.m.*

**WHAT:** Approximately 25-30 vendors participate each market day, providing a variety of home grown and homemade goods.

**WHERE:** Meridian Mall, 1982 W. Grand River Ave., Okemos.

## SATURDAY 5 Beerfest at the Ballpark

*1 – 6 p.m.*

**WHAT:** The inaugural Beerfest at the Ballpark will feature 24 Michigan breweries with over 50+ craft beers, ciders, & meads along with live music & food while in the ballpark's unique atmosphere. Tickets are \$30 in advance and \$35 at the door and include entry, a logoed sampling glass, and 10 sampling tickets.

**WHERE:** Cooley Law School Stadium, 505 E. Michigan Ave., Lansing.

**INFO:** Admission is \$30 in advance, \$35 at the door. VIP advance purchase is \$35. For more information call (517) 485-4500 or visit [lansinglugnuts.com](http://lansinglugnuts.com).

## WEDNESDAY 9 Lansing Lugnuts vs. Quad Cities River Bandits

*7:05 p.m.*

**WHAT:** Enjoy Hump Day Happy Hour with half off drinks from 7-8PM!

**WHERE:** Cooley Law School Stadium, 505 E. Michigan Ave., Lansing.

**INFO:** Tickets start at \$8 for lawn seats. For more information call (517) 485-4500 or visit [lansinglugnuts.com](http://lansinglugnuts.com).

## WEDNESDAY 9 Pizza & Pages

*4:30 p.m.*

**WHAT:** Read any book that fits our monthly theme, then come for discussion, snacks and activities. A

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disco DJ dance tent, and local food vendors. OAR will be headlining on Saturday and Dirty Heads will be headlining Friday.

**WHERE:** Adado Riverfront Park, 300 N. Grand Ave., Lansing.

**INFO:** Tickets are prices vary. Visit [microbrewandmusic.com](http://microbrewandmusic.com) for more information. Ticket buyers must be 21 years old.

### SATURDAY 19 Winter Farmers' Market 10 a.m. – 2 p.m.

**WHAT:** Approximately 25-30 vendors participate each market day, providing a variety of home grown and homemade goods.

**WHERE:** Meridian Mall, 1982 W. Grand River Ave., Okemos.

### MONDAY 21 Lansing Lugnuts Baseball vs. Lake County Captains 7:05 p.m.

**WHERE:** Cooley Law School Stadium, 505 E. Michigan Ave., Lansing.

**INFO:** (517) 485-4500 or [lansinglugnuts.com](http://lansinglugnuts.com).

### TUESDAY 22 Lansing Lugnuts Baseball vs. Lake County Captains 7:05 p.m.

**WHERE:** Cooley Law School Stadium, 505 E. Michigan Ave., Lansing.

**INFO:** (517) 485-4500 or [lansinglugnuts.com](http://lansinglugnuts.com).

### WEDNESDAY 23 Gurf Morlix at Pump House Concerts 7 p.m.

**WHAT:** Morlix can write, sing, produce, and play nearly every instrument (mostly stringed) and has a bottomless (albeit muddy) range of American musical idioms from which to draw.

**WHERE:** Pump House Concerts, 368 Orchard Street, East Lansing.

**INFO:** \$15 suggested donation, all money goes to the artists, kids are free. For more information contact Dudley Smith at (517) 927-2100.

### WEDNESDAY 23 Building a Little Free Library in Your Neighborhood

7 p.m.

**WHAT:** Little Free Libraries are boxes placed in public areas and schools, where people can take and/or leave a book. Hear from several Okemos/East Lansing residents about their experiences establishing LFLs, plus tips on how to make your own.

**WHERE:** Capital Area District Library, Okemos Branch, 4321 Okemos Road, Okemos.

**INFO:** For adults. For more information call (517) 349-0250 or visit [caddl.org](http://caddl.org).

### WEDNESDAY 23 Lansing Lugnuts Baseball vs. Lake County Captains 7:05 p.m.

**WHERE:** Cooley Law School Stadium, 505 E. Michigan Ave., Lansing.

**INFO:** (517) 485-4500 or [lansinglugnuts.com](http://lansinglugnuts.com).

### THURSDAY 24 Cyrille Aimee 7:30 p.m.

**WHAT:** Cyrille Aimee is an unstoppable, undeniable new talent in jazz today. Internationally renowned and praised for the unparalleled abilities, Cyrille's vocal stylings are enchanting and mesmerizing.

**WHERE:** Wharton Center for Performing Arts, 320 Wharton Center, East Lansing.

**INFO:** Admission is \$32. Visit [whartoncenter.com](http://whartoncenter.com) for more information.

### THURSDAY 24 Lansing Lugnuts Baseball vs. Lake County Captains 7:05 p.m.

**WHERE:** Cooley Law School Stadium, 505 E. Michigan Ave., Lansing.

**INFO:** (517) 485-4500 or [lansinglugnuts.com](http://lansinglugnuts.com).

### FRIDAY 25 2014 Arbor Day Celebration 8 a.m. to 3 p.m.

**WHAT:** Attendees rotate amongst

hands-on natural resources activity stations and spend the day outside celebrating Arbor Day. General public and families are welcome to attend.

**WHERE:** Potter Park Zoo, 1301 S. Pennsylvania Ave., Lansing.

**INFO:** For more information visit [miarbordayalliance.com/arborday.html](http://miarbordayalliance.com/arborday.html) or call (517) 483-4205.

### FRIDAY 25 Lansing Lugnuts vs. Bowling Green Hot Rods 7:05 p.m.

**WHERE:** Cooley Law School Stadium, 505 E. Michigan Ave., Lansing.

**INFO:** (517) 485-4500 or [lansinglugnuts.com](http://lansinglugnuts.com).

### SATURDAY 26 2014 Multiple Sclerosis Society Walk 9 a.m. to 1 p.m.

**WHAT:** When you participate in Walk MS, the funds you raise give hope to the more than 19,000 people living with MS in our community.

**WHERE:** Potter Park Zoo, 1301 S. Pennsylvania Avenue, Lansing.

**INFO:** Contact [walk@mig.nmss.org](mailto:walk@mig.nmss.org) or call (800) 344-4867.

### SATURDAY 26 Lansing Lugnuts vs. Bowling Green Hot Rods 2:05 p.m.

**WHERE:** Cooley Law School Stadium, 505 E. Michigan Ave., Lansing.

**INFO:** (517) 485-4500 or [lansinglugnuts.com](http://lansinglugnuts.com).

### SUNDAY 27 2014 Susan G. Komen Race for the Cure Times vary

**WHAT:** The purpose of this event is to raise funds to help support the Susan G. Komen Foundation programs for breast cancer research, education, and support for survivors.

**WHERE:** State Capitol Building, 100 Capitol Ave., Lansing.

**INFO:** [Komenmidmichigan.org](http://Komenmidmichigan.org).

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# AND ANOTHER THING...

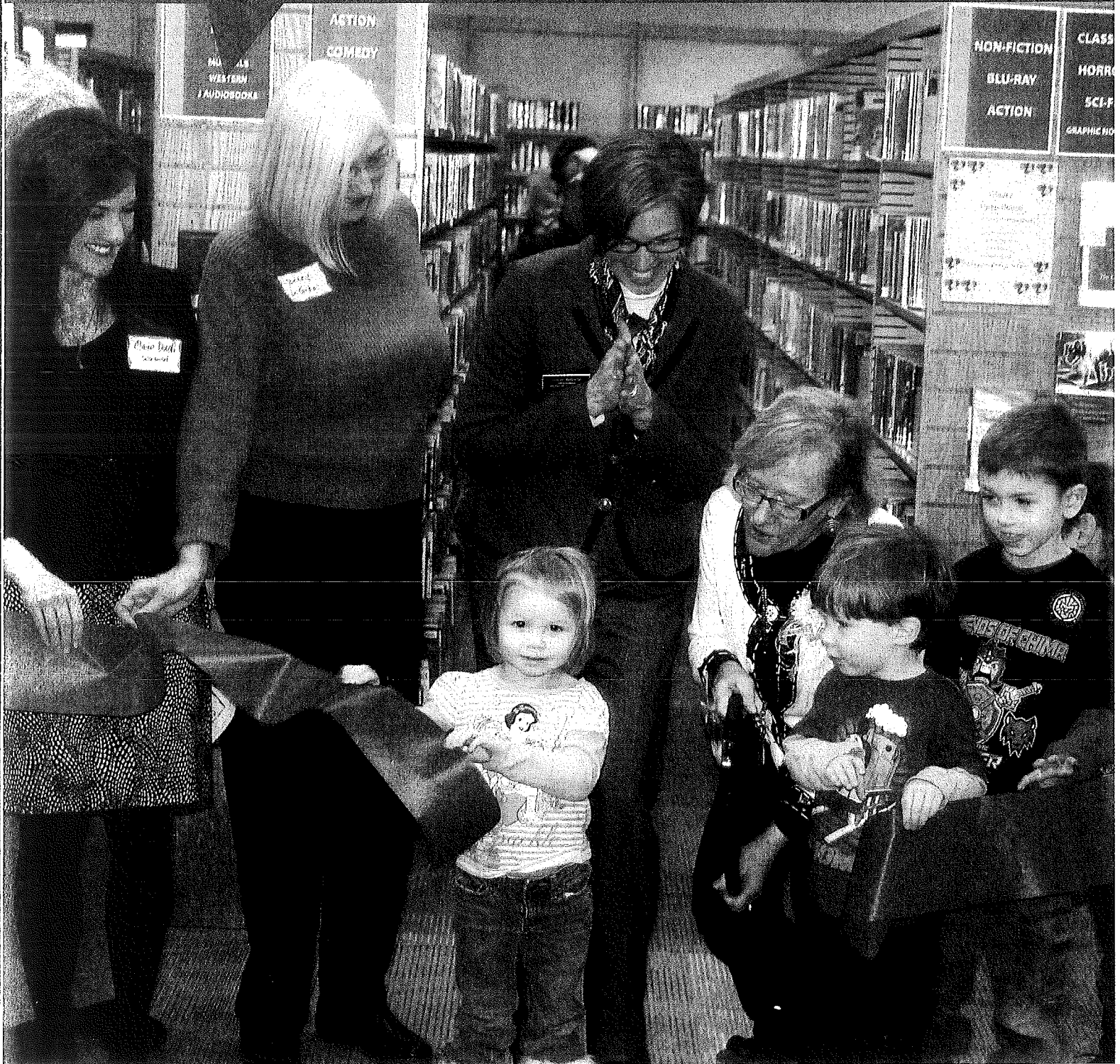


Photo courtesy of Trenton Smiley

## Okemos Library Reopens, Celebrates Renovations

After a successful fundraising campaign in 2013, which raised more than \$125,000 in public donations and a match of \$200,000 from Meridian Township, the Okemos Library went under construction in mid-September 2013 and is now open.

A ribbon cutting ceremony was held on Saturday, Jan. 25. The Capital Area District Libraries purchased furniture and

coordinated the internal move within the library. The building is owned and maintained by Meridian Township.

Among renovations made was a main entrance on the west side of the library, re-purposed space to better utilize and increase the patron area and upgraded wiring and technology.

—*Information from Meridian Township*

Park Commission Meeting  
April 8, 2014

6. MINUTES

- a. March 11, 2014 Work Session Minutes
- b. March 11, 2014 Regular Meeting Minutes

CHARTER TOWNSHIP OF MERIDIAN  
PARK COMMISSION WORK SESSION MINUTES  
TUESDAY, MARCH 11, 2014

PRESENT: Commissioners: Aronoff, Banas, Jaramillo, Stephens, Wilson  
Staff: Parks and Recreation Director LuAnn Maisner; Parks and  
Recreation Administrative Assistant II Robin Faust

ABSENT: None

**1. Call Meeting to Order**

Chair Wilson called the work session to order at 6:07 pm.

**2. Roll Call**

Chair Wilson called roll and the following members were present: Teri Banas, Marilyn Aronoff, Melanie Jaramillo, Mark Stephens, Todd Wilson

**3. Approval of Agenda**

Hearing no objections, Chair Wilson accepted the Work Session agenda as presented.

**4. MNRTF Grant Request Public Hearing Wonch Park Pavilion**

Director Maisner gave an overview of the grant hearing process as follows: The Chair will declare the public hearing open; Parks and Land Management Coordinator Greenway will present a project overview and then read into the record the communications received to date; public comment is then taken followed by Commissioners' comments. When everyone has commented, the Chair will declare the public hearing closed.

Director Maisner reported staff has been working with adjoining communities to create a River Trail Master Plan which when completed will earn extra points on associated grant projects. The River Trail Master Plan is mentioned several times in the application as the proposed pavilion will offer picnicking and shelter along the river trail.

During the public hearing presentation, staff was asked to address how the pavilion will be protected from the elements such as standing water, ice, etc.

**5. 2014 Park Millage Ballot Proposal Update**

Commissioner Banas shared information on the progress of the Friends of Meridian Parks Group including items related to organizing and fund raising.

- The Friends group is now legally ready to accept donations and is reaching out to community supporters to assist with the campaign.
- The workgroup is creating a website but it is not up yet; it will be [www.voteyesformeridianparks.com](http://www.voteyesformeridianparks.com)
- Commissioner Banas stated she presented the Millage information to the Haslett Kiwanis Club and were very supportive of the proposed millage; the Wonch Park grant proposal was mentioned and their concerns about addressing how well the structure will hold up when it is under water during the spring time.
- Staff will find out the number of registered voters and the average number of voters who normally turns out for an August election.
- Commissioner Stephens reported he presented the millage information to LINC at their last meeting. LINC members appeared to be very supportive as well. They asked for clarification on the two-year overlap of the millages.

Commissioners discussed:

- Need for additional clarification on printed materials about the two year overlap of millage collection
- Hold a separate work session to discuss maintenance and staff needs
- Director Maisner stated she has been asked to speak with the Indian Hills Homeowners Association and the Okemos Kiwanis and will be asking a Commissioner to attend with her to talk about the millage proposal.

## 6. Board Liaisons

Chair Wilson asked Commissioners if they had watched the January 15, 2014 Environmental Commission meeting. During their meeting, they discussed appointing a liaison to the Park Commission. Members of the EC made questionable comments directed at the Park Commission. They also talked about appointing someone to be a liaison to the Planning Commission but staff swayed them from doing that. Chair Wilson has spoken with Township Manager Walsh who was aware of these comments. After a brief discussion, it was agreed that Chair Wilson will draft a letter to the Environmental Commission and make available for Commissioner.

## 7. Other

None

## 8. Public Comment

Mike McDonald, Okemos resident, stated he attended an Ingham County Park Board meeting last week and does not believe they will be seeking a new millage. The County Board discussed how successful the Oakland and St. Clair's millage campaigns were and how each group continued to keep their residents informed after the millages were passed. The Potter Park Zoo millage

was successful and suggested the Commission might want to review how it was handled. He is interested in assisting with the millage campaign.

**9. Adjournment**

Hearing no objection, Chair Wilson adjourned the work session at 6:58 pm.

CHARTER TOWNSHIP OF MERIDIAN  
PARK COMMISSION REGULAR MEETING MINUTES  
TUESDAY, MARCH 11, 2014

PRESENT: Commissioners: Aronoff, Banas, Jaramillo, Stephens, Wilson  
Staff: Parks and Recreation Director LuAnn Maisner; Parks and  
Recreation Administrative Assistant II Robin Faust

ABSENT: None

**1. Call Meeting to Order**

Chair Wilson called the regular meeting to order at 7:09 pm.

**2. Roll Call**

Chair Wilson called roll and the following members were present: Teri Banas, Marilyn Aronoff, Melanie Jaramillo, Mark Stephens, Todd Wilson

**3. Approval of Agenda**

COMMISSIONER ARONOFF MOVED, COMMISSIONER STEPHENS  
SECONDED, TO APPROVE THE MEETING AGENDA AS PRESENTED. Voice  
vote. Motion passed.

**4. Public Comment**

Vance Kincaid voiced support for the Wonch Park pavilion project and the current pathway project that is underway. He also voiced support for a new canoe landing utilizing existing culverts and concrete in river. He has spoken in support of this project with Director Maisner on numerous occasions.

**5. Public Hearing**

**a. Michigan Natural Resource Trust Fund Grant Request for Wonch Park Pavilion**

Chair Wilson declared the public hearing open at 7:11 pm.

Parks and Land Management Coordinator Greenway offered the following presentation:

- The Commission is proposing to submit a Michigan Natural Resources Trust Fund Development Grant for Wonch Park
- The grant request includes the construction of a new pavilion to replace an existing one built in 1972, planting of four (4) shade trees, electricity, water, two universally accessible grills and three handicapped accessible picnic tables

- The estimated project cost is \$250,000 with a Michigan Natural Resources Trust Fund (MNRTF) fund request of 75% (\$187,500) and a local match from the General Fund of 25% (\$62,500)
- Plans for the pavilion are conceptual; construction drawings and details will be developed if/when the grant is awarded; necessary permits will be obtained; will address elements of nature and maintaining the current water flow rate; this improvement was requested in a recent survey; can function as an outdoor classroom for Project Fish and the Grand Learning Network groups who currently use the site; this pavilion is one of the highly rented facilities; in an effort to improve river access, staff is working with adjoining communities to develop a "Water Trail Master Plan" between Williamston and Lansing that identifies existing and proposed infrastructure and amenities to promote greater recreational use of the Red Cedar.
- The grants are submitted online and are due by April 1
- Grant results will be announced in December 2014, funds could be available for construction in 2015.

Parks and Land Management Coordinator Greenway read the following communications into the record:

- Letter of support from Willis Bennett, Director, Ingham County Parks and Recreation Department
- Letter of support from Brian G. Dale, Chairperson, Meridian Township Downtown Development Authority
- Letter of support from Marsha Madle, Chairperson, Meridian Township Economic Development Corporation
- Letter of support from Jay Hanks, President, Lansing Oar and Paddle Club
- Letter voicing concerns about land area misuse; construction in the floodplain and potential affect to water flow rate; and the possibility of attraction of large, loud groups which could affect adjacent neighbors
- Letter of support from Jeff Potter, resident and avid paddler

Public Comment:

Mike Swartz, President, Indian Hills Homeowners Association, voiced support for improvements to Wonch Park and support a new pavilion but is concerned about the potential for additional flooding with the construction of a paved pathway and new pavilion, and about the potential for loud evening programs. He has invited Director Maisner to their next meeting to talk about parks. He feels his neighbors will support the improvements.

Vance Kincaid, Okemos, voiced concern about the current loss of trees in the park. Currently when the police stop to lock the gate, their headlights shine across the parking lot into his windows. He is concerned about loud, noisy programs if allowed during the evening hours. He also suggested working with the Ingham County Drain Commissioner's Office to make sure any potential impact is addressed concerning water flow and erosion. He



suggested, as a future Eagle Scout project, to use the concrete currently in the river to construct a canoe launch. He also suggested the connection of Mt. Hope Road over to Marsh Road be explored to help alleviate traffic on Okemos Road and knows it will required federal funding.

Commissioners Comments:

Commissioner Banas asked how much parking is needed for canoe launch areas. She believes Ferguson Park canoe launch is in need of renovating and a new canoe launch is being constructed adjacent to the Harris Nature Center as part of the bridge reconstruction project. When asked about using permeable surface, Director Maisner replied the installation costs are higher because additional subsurface materials are required, the pathway will required on-going maintenance (vacuuming) and studies have shown that permeable pavement is more efficient when installed in larger areas like parking lots, but staff can research it. When asked if the asphalt loop trail or pavilion would impede water flow, Director Maisner replied it is constructed to not impede water flow as the cut and fill amounts are equal.

Commissioner Stephens suggested the use of plantings to absorb water and address any potential drainage issues. Commissioner Banas suggested planting Willow trees to help block lights and noise. She stated all Township parks are open dawn to dusk. Director Maisner stated during the Wonch Park Master Plan process, it was mentioned one of the future activities could include musicians at lunch time in the proposed plaza area.

Commissioner Aronoff reported this is one of the highest used pavilions and does not recall there being any problems with loud events at the site. She has received many requests for improvements to this park and has listened to the concerns and appreciates feedback from the residents.

Chair Wilson asked about need for electricity at the pavilion. Director Maisner stated the current pavilion does not have electricity, it is continually asked for and electricity is available at all of our other pavilions. Chair Wilson stated there is a permeable walkway at MSU and the general consensus is it is hard to maintain and was costly to install and since the area is restrictive, it may be hard to access to accomplish the installation in Wonch Park. The Township has had great success partnering with the Ingham County Drain Commission on recent projects and will continue that relationship with this project.

Chair Wilson closed the public hearing at 7:53 pm.

## **6. Commissioner Reports and Comments**

Commissioner Aronoff expressed her appreciation of the Winter Farmers Market inside the Meridian Mall and feels it is a positive for the Township,.

**7. Approval of Minutes**

- a. February 11, 2014 Work Session Meeting Minutes – no change
- b. February 11, 2014 Regular Meeting Minutes – page 6, last paragraph, replace the word “research” with “supporting documents”

COMMISSIONER STEPHENS MOVED, COMMISSIONER BANAS SECONDED, TO APPROVE THE FEBRUARY 11, 2014 WORK SESSION MINUTES AS PRESENTED AND THE FEBRUARY 11, 2014 REGULAR MEETING MINUTES AS AMENDED. Voice vote. Motion passed.

**8. Communications**

**A. Items to/from the Public**

1. To: Michigan Recreation and Park Association, RE: Kelly Colflesh to receive MRPA Community Service Award at ceremony on March 19

**B. Commission Information**

1. March Calendar of Events for Parks & Recreation
2. Parks & Recreation Department Monthly Report – February
3. Towne Courier: **Feb 9:** Meridian Ice Fishing Derby set for Feb 15; Winter Farmers Market; **Feb 16:** Vulture program at HNC March 7; \$6M park revamp plan envisioned
4. Kids' World News – February 14 issues; Meridian Township Parks & Recreation Family Winter Sports Weekend
5. Lansing State Journal: **Feb 15:** Investing in Parks; **Feb 16:** Kids get chance to try their hand at ice fishing;
6. LSJ Website: **Feb 15:** Investing in Parks; **Feb 17:** Meridian Township plans \$6M overhaul of parks; Lansing-area kids try their hand at ice fishing
7. OkemosToday.com: **Feb 28:** Park Commission pushes for new millage
8. Okemos Life Magazine: February issue

**C. Staff Inquiries/Response**

Commissioner Stephens stated Kelly Colflesh, Township resident, has received the Michigan Parks and Recreation Association Community Service Award. Kelly loves to fish and shares his passion with others by volunteering at all youth fishing events, provides stewardship to the pond in the Historical Village and maintains the storage box with fishing poles and tackle boxes for community use.

COMMISSIONER BANAS MOVED, COMMISSIONER ARONOFF SECONDED, TO ACCEPT AND PLACE THE ITEMS OF COMMUNICATION ON FILE. Voice vote. Motion passed.

**9. Director's Report**

- **Family Fun Guide:** Is set for delivery the week of March 17 that promotes activities through December 31, 2014. This will be an annual publication with announcements throughout the year through our Activenet registration program and social media and direct email. The front cover photo for this edition was provided by Jeff Potter. The guide is also available on the township website.

- **New Facebook page** – [www.facebook.com/MeridianTwpParksRec](http://www.facebook.com/MeridianTwpParksRec) - please log on and be a friend to receive up-to-date information on the events and activities happening in the Township
- **Van Atta Road Bridge Replacement:** Van Atta Road is closed through June to replace the bridge. Access the Harris Nature Center from the south via Jolly Road. A new canoe landing will be constructed by the ICRD near the existing fire pit area later this summer.
- **Legg Park:** staff is working on the driveway paving project for the site
- **Newton Road Park:** staff is working with Engineering and Planning Departments on construction of the parking lot
- **Wonch Park:** staff is working with the Engineering Department on the construction of the new paved loop trail in the Park as part of the new pedestrian bridge project on Okemos Road
- **Red Cedar River Water Trail:** staff is working with neighboring communities to establish a “water trail” along the Red Cedar River. This is a fantastic natural resource and we want to offering amenities along the route
- **Village Pond Project:** staff is working with the Meridian Garden Club to develop a monarch butterfly waystation garden on the shoreline of the pond in the Village. It will help with erosion while planting a buffer zone at water’s edge, provide a natural filtration system for water runoff, and help deter geese We are working with school groups on the planting project
- **New programs** at Harris Nature Center this month include: Introduction to Nordic Walking and Maple Moon Campfire at the Harris Nature Center on Saturday, March 22
- **Friends of Historic Meridian Lecture Series** starts Sunday, March 23 at 3 pm in the Village Chapel and this series will continue to meet in the Village Chapel due to renovations at the Service Center
- **Maps:** staff is working on Township maps depicting natural and paved trails. Eventually will be an interactive app for smart phones.
- February 15 – **Ice Fishing Derby** had 75 participants and **Family Moonlight Sledding** had 200 participants
- March 15 and April 5 & 19: **Farmers’ Market** at Meridian Mall
- February 28 was deadline for our Snowman/**Snow Sculpture Contest** and winners are:
  - Most Meridian Spirit: “**Frosty**”, builders are Jack, Thomas and Adam Lock
  - Most Original Sculpture: “**Club Penguin Igloo**”, builders are Eran, Jen, Eric and Emma Andrecheck
  - Most Original Snowman: “**Sharon’s Supersorous**” by Sharon Russell
- **Service Center Renovations:** Due to the recent closing of the Central Fire Station, the Fire Department personnel will be operating from the Service Center lunch room. Once the new fire station is built, the rooms that are being constructed now will provide additional office space for our department.
- I have recently been appointed to the MRPA Foundation Board of Directors

**10. Unfinished Business**  
PUBLIC COMMENT

None

**11. New Business**  
PUBLIC COMMENT

**a. Wonch Park MNRTF Grant Resolution**

Director Maisner stated a public hearing was held on the grant application earlier in the meeting and a resolution has been prepared for consideration.

Commissioner Banas stated we need to invest in our community and we want to get more people out into our parks. There is a need for a new pavilion for this site.

The following resolution was offered Commissioner Banas and supported by Chair Wilson.

WHEREAS, the Michigan Department of Natural Resources accepts grant requests from local units of government to assist in the development of recreation properties; and

WHEREAS, it is possible to have up to 75% of the total project cost funded through this grant program; and

WHEREAS, the Park Commission is interested in the continued improvement of Meridian Township's parks and recreation system; and

WHEREAS, Meridian Township has prepared a grant application for submission to the Michigan Department of Natural Resources for the Michigan Natural Resources Trust Fund Program for an estimated \$250,000 of improvements to Wonch Park that includes a picnic shelter and associated amenities that will provide recreation opportunities and accessibility for visitors of all abilities; and

WHEREAS, Meridian Township has been working in cooperation with adjoining communities to improve accessibility and associated features to the Red Cedar River water trail; and

WHEREAS, the grant request is outlined and justified in the 2011-2015 Parks and Recreation Master Plan adopted by the Meridian Township Board and Park Commission, and is on file with the Michigan Department of Natural Resources; and

WHEREAS, this grant request was reviewed by the Park Commission at their meetings on February 4 and February 11 and during the public hearing on March 11, 2014.

NOW, THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED BY THE PARK COMMISSION OF THE CHARTER TOWNSHIP OF MERIDIAN, INGHAM COUNTY, MICHIGAN, as follows:

To support submission of a grant application to the Michigan Natural Resources Trust Fund Program in the amount of \$250,000 for improvements to Wonch Park, including a new pavilion, water, electricity, 4 deciduous trees, 2 universally accessible grills, and 3 handicapped accessible picnic tables, and provide a local 25% match (\$62,500) funded by the Meridian Township General Fund.

ADOPTED:

YEAS: Mark Stephens, Marilyn Aronoff, Teri Banas, Todd Wilson, Melanie Jaramillo

NAYS: None

The resolution passed unanimously.

**b. Harris Nature Center Foundation Nature Exploration Area**

The Harris Nature Center Foundation is in the process of raising funds for the proposed Youth Nature Exploration Area. They are working on submitting grant applications to the Dart Foundation and Jackson National Life Foundation and have requested resolutions of support for each grant. This nature exploration area will offer unique opportunities for children to explore nature elements including a spider web to climb on, tree house, walkways, fossil dig experience, etc. The Foundation has been fundraising and is now in the position to seek grants to start with Phase I including the log climbing area, the fossil dig area and development of a gravel trail with an estimated cost of \$20,000. The Foundation is asking the Park Commission to commit up to \$8,000 of cash and/or in-kind services for the entire project. Park Millage funds for this project will be budgeted from the Harris Nature Center fund balance.

The Commissioners asked to receive reports from the HNC Foundation progress on their fund raising efforts. Staff stated that the project will go through site plan review before construction can begin.

**A. Resolution of Support of Grant Submission to Jackson National Life Foundation**

The following resolution was offered by Chair Wilson and supported by Commissioner Banas:

WHEREAS, the Harris Nature Center was founded in 1997 to provide a connection with nature for adults and children throughout the Township through programming, special events and casual visits; and



WHEREAS, the Harris Nature Center Foundation was established in 2006 to raise funds to support operations and capital improvements for the Harris Nature Center; and

WHEREAS, a plan has been developed to create an environmental exploration area for youth to play in the out-of-doors at the Harris Nature Center utilizing many natural elements from nature; and

WHEREAS, the Harris Nature Center Foundation has been fundraising to support construction of this new play area through silent auctions, annual giving programs and seeking grants from other organizations, and

WHEREAS, the Harris Nature Center Foundation has prepared a grant application for submission to the Jackson National Life Foundation for construction of phase I of the Youth Nature Exploration Area at the Harris Nature Center which will provide environmental education through play opportunities for all visitors with an estimated project cost of \$25,000; and

WHEREAS, the Harris Nature Center Foundation is requesting \$5,000 from the Jackson National Life Foundation to assist with funding; and

WHEREAS, the Youth Nature Exploration Area is outlined and justified in the 2010-2015 Parks and Recreation Master Plan adopted by the Meridian Township Board and Park Commission; and

WHEREAS, the Meridian Township Park Commission is committing up to \$8,000 of cash and/or in-kind service toward the entire project from the Park Millage Fund.

NOW, THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED BY THE PARK COMMISSION OF THE CHARTER TOWNSHIP OF MERIDIAN, INGHAM COUNTY, MICHIGAN, as follows:

Move to support submission of a grant application by the Harris Nature Center Foundation to the Jackson National Life Foundation for construction of a nature exploration area at the Harris Nature Center with an estimated project cost of \$25,000, and committing up to \$8,000 in cash and/or in-kind service from the Township's Park Millage Fund to support this project.

ADOPTED:

YEAS: Mark Stephens, Marilyn Aronoff, Teri Banas, Todd Wilson, Melanie Jaramillo

NAYS: None

The resolution passed.

## **B. Resolution of Support of Grant Submission to Dart Foundation**

The following resolution was offered by Chair Wilson and supported by Commissioner Banas:

WHEREAS, the Harris Nature Center was founded in 1997 to provide a connection with nature for adults and children throughout the Township through programming, special events and casual visits; and

WHEREAS, the Harris Nature Center Foundation was established in 2006 to raise funds to support operations and capital improvements for the Harris Nature Center; and

WHEREAS, a plan has been developed to create an environmental exploration area for youth to play in the out-of-doors at the Harris Nature Center utilizing many natural elements from nature; and

WHEREAS, the Harris Nature Center Foundation has been fundraising to support construction of this new play area through silent auctions, annual giving programs and seeking grants from other organizations, and

WHEREAS, the Harris Nature Center Foundation has prepared a grant application for submission to the Dart Foundation for construction of phase I of the Youth Nature Exploration Area at the Harris Nature Center which will provide environmental education through play opportunities for all visitors with an estimated project cost of \$25,000; and

WHEREAS, the Harris Nature Center Foundation is requesting \$5,000 from the Dart Foundation to assist with funding; and

WHEREAS, the Youth Nature Exploration Area is outlined and justified in the 2010-2015 Parks and Recreation Master Plan adopted by the Meridian Township Board and Park Commission; and

WHEREAS, the Meridian Township Park Commission is committing up to \$8,000 of cash and/or in-kind service toward the entire project from the Park Millage Fund.

**NOW, THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED BY THE PARK COMMISSION OF THE CHARTER TOWNSHIP OF MERIDIAN, INGHAM COUNTY, MICHIGAN, as follows:**

Move to support submission of a grant application by the Harris Nature Center Foundation to the Dart Foundation for construction of a nature exploration area at the Harris Nature Center with an estimated project cost of \$25,000, and committing up to \$8,000 in

cash and/or in-kind service from the Township's Park Millage Fund to support this project.

ADOPTED:

YEAS: Melanie Jaramillo, Todd Wilson, Teri Banas, Marilyn Aronoff, Mark Stephens

NAYS: None

The resolution passed.

**12. Other Business**

PUBLIC COMMENT

None

**13. Discussion Items**

PUBLIC COMMENT

**a. Park Millage Ballot Proposal**

Commissioner Banas stated in preparation for the August 5<sup>th</sup> ballot proposal, the Commission will be asking for the public to support a new park millage of 2/3s of a mill to support for parks projects and maintenance. The new millage proposal will replace the current 1/3 of a mill which expires in 2016. If the new millage proposal passes this year, the Township will collect one mill for two years and in 2016, the park millage would reduce to 2/3 of a mill and run for ten years. At this point, a millage ballot committee has been formed by Park Commissioners Banas, Aronoff and Stephens with Trustee Wilson to organize communication materials and outreach to residents, neighborhood and civic groups. Last spring, the Township Board unanimously supported the Commission's request to place the increased millage proposal on the 2014 August ballot. The committee has been officially organized and is called the "Friends of Meridian Township Parks", which is separate from the Park Commission, and it can now solicit donations to spend on the ballot initiative. The Friends of Meridian Township Parks have enlisted people to serve on the community wide support team and if anyone is interested in assisting with this initiative, please contact us, everyone is welcome. Individuals are needed to assist with outreach into the community, to help share the word. In the future, the community will see flyers and other forms of communication. We are in the process of creating a website to assist with this endeavor. Our theme is to continue the high level quality of life for Meridian Township citizens and build a better future for our children. The Commission has received many communications and survey results where the citizens have stated they would support a millage. Commissioner Banas thanked Commissioners Stephens and Aronoff and Trustee Wilson for the many hours to prepare for this millage request.

Commissioner Stephens invited the public and anyone interested in assisting with the ballot campaign to attend the next meeting this Thursday at Schuler's Café. The Friends of Meridian Township Parks now have a bank account and can accept donations to help fund this campaign initiative.

Commissioner Aronoff stated if you cannot attend this week, please contact us or attend future meeting. We would be available to attend neighborhood and civic group meetings.

Chair Wilson stated he fully supports this initiative because in order to improve what the Township and the Park System has to offer, funding is crucial to improve the general quality of life for the residents. Due to economic pressures all over the State and County, it has been challenging with the current millage to maintain our facility at a level the residents have come to expect. The Commission and staff have been very mindful of what we have and if the millage proposal passes, it will address improvement needs and allow for development and support of future projects.

Commissioner Stephens stated the Commission will continue to seek grants and other funding s to assist with project developments such as the exploration area for the Harris Nature Center. Our park acreage has tripled since the current millage was passed and funding has not increased. This new millage will allow us to enhance what we have but also allow us to do more. The Commission spends funds wisely.

When asked how many acres out of our 900 acres has been donated, Director Maisner replied she is not sure but only 200 acres of all the parkland is developed currently. For many years, the Park Commission was the only entity who could receive donated land. Chair Wilson stated that although some of the land was donated, the Commission is responsible for it and in order to improve and offer outdoor experiences, funds are necessary. Director Maisner stated currently residents are paying approximately \$33/year (from a home with a taxable value at \$100,000) and under the new proposal the millage amount would increase to approximately \$67/year. History shows the Commission has been very good stewards of parks and the current collection of millage dollars is covering operations.

Commissioner Banas stated under the current millage, the Commission has not been able to develop a major project during the last ten years. We were finally able to construct a small bathroom project with a grant. We cannot continue to operate under the current 1/3 of a mill and continue to offer the kind of services that are expected by our residents. Going from 1/3 to 2/3 of a mill, it will make a significant difference in maintenance and development of new projects.

#### **14. Final Comments**

None

**15. Announcements**

- a. Next Regular Meeting Date: Tuesday, April 8, 2014 Town Hall
- b. Farmers' Market – J C Penney Corridor of Meridian Mall, Saturday, March 15 and April 5 & 19 from 10 am-2 pm
- c. Van Atta Road Closed from Grand River south to bridge until June; access to Harris Nature Center from Jolly Road

**16. Public Remarks**

None

**17. Closed Session**

None

**18. Adjournment**

COMMISSIONER STEPHENS MOVED, COMMISSIONER ARONOFF  
SECONDED TO ADJOURN THE MEETING.

The meeting adjourned at 9:06 pm.