

Village of Paw Paw

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“Notes From Larry”

FROM: Larry Nielsen, Village Manager

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Much has been happening since my last “Notes” as I and many others have been very busy.

Among all those busy people have been those people helping make the community a better place. They include: The **Kids Paradise** project. The ‘build’ is happening and the area will have a wonderful adventure type playground as a result of all the hard work and funds the greater community provided the project. The Village played a key part in the project having donated \$25,000 from the general fund and another \$25,000 from the Downtown Development Authority (DDA) for the project. Many Village employees are volunteering during the build as well. Our hats are off to the core group that led this project and to all the donors and workers who made it happen.

The **Greater Paw Paw Chamber of Commerce**, which actively promotes the community and its businesses, has also been busy. The Chamber, along with the DDA, moved into their ‘new’ digs at the historic Carnegie Center. (The rehab is beautiful, by the way.) The Chamber also established a Retail Committee who is specifically promoting the downtown. The Chamber recently recognized a number of people and businesses that help make Paw Paw a great place to live, work and play. They are: Citizens of the Year - Dick and Sally Schallhorn; Business of the Year - Myer Wood Products; Most Improved Business - Paw Paw Shampoo Hut; New Business - Great Lakes Pond Scapes; and the Business of most help to the Chamber - Bloomingdale Communications with an Honorable mention to John Small and the Village public works crew.

Two new ‘Drop Boxes’ for Village utility bills have been installed. One is in the rear parking lot by the US Postal Service box. This one allows you to drive up and drop off your payments. The other is in front of Village Hall. Please use these for your convenience.

Seasonal Brush Pick-up has begun. Schedules have been published. Your help is requested to make this go smoothly and efficiently. Please remember to stack your brush in orderly piles with cut ends pointed to the road and do not mix other items in with the brush. Also, wood from trees we cut is being made available to residents for their use. An announcement has been published about this opportunity as well.

Protect Maple Lake and the Paw Paw River branches. Easy things you can do, really do make a difference by reducing pollution in our lake and river. These include: Never fertilize before it rains; Don’t spread fertilizer over your driveway; Don’t mow to the edge of the lake or river – leave a buffer strip; and Remember, only rain water belongs in a storm drain.

Electrical Power. I keep running into people that think that Paw Paw makes its own electricity. We do not. The Village purchases bulk (wholesale) electricity. What we buy comes into the Village's substation. From there, we distribute it to all of our customers. This actually saves you money (as difficult as that sounds). Our bulk price cost and our operational costs that show up on your bill are still lower than what individuals (retail customers) pay for electricity from a non-municipal electric company. I have also run into those who think the Village is responsible for every power outage or every drop or every surge in voltage they experience. Since we purchase electricity, any outage in the supply we get, as well as a drop or surge in the voltage we get, naturally goes on through to our customers. We can't do anything about these situations. We accept responsibility when we are at fault, but can't accept responsibility for what happens with our source – our purchased electricity.

Electric Bills. Gee whiz, have you seen the fluctuating 'Purchased Power Adjustment' (PPA) rate on your electric bills? This is a cost calculated by I&M/AEP and billed to the Village of Paw Paw to pass on to all electric customers. In the last few months, the Purchased Power Adjustment (PPA) rate has had some wide fluctuations. So much so, that customers who may have used less electricity in one month may have a higher electric bill than a month in which they used more electricity! Watch this on your bills. You can find the Purchased Power Adjust cost on your bill rather easily. The billed amount can be determined by looking at the number below the KW Demand (in the darker green band) to see how much electricity you used. Then find the Purchased Power Adjustment per Kilo Watt Hour line in the explanation portion of the bill to see that number – a large, long decimal number). Multiply the decimal number by the KW demand number and you should get the dollar amount reported for Purchased Power Adjustment cost that is added to your bill. I have looked at bills the last few months and found the PPA jumped around quite a bit. It was not uncommon for the customer to use the same amount of electricity from month to month but have bills higher or lower from each other. By the number of calls we get I know this is really frustrating for the customer. But, it is not a number for which we are responsible.

Good News for Paw Paw. Coca Cola NA is still the largest plant they operate in North America.... Family Fare Supermarkets invested around \$3 million to remodel their store and will hire up to 30 full and part time people.... Walgreen's and Chicken Coop have broken ground on their new developments... Tapper Automotive is getting ready to open their new place of business.... and Bronson Hospital's commitment to invest several million in the community in the next few years is also good news for Paw Paw. All in all, Paw Paw remains attractive to new or growing businesses as many look closely at Paw Paw for their locations.

Until next time, I'm Larry Nielsen, Village Manager.