

WINTER 2024



Bridgman

COMMUNITY BUZZ



PHOTO COURTESY OF: SAMANTHA TRUESDELL

One community working together to serve you better.

In a joint effort with the City of Bridgman, Lake Township, Bridgman Public Library, and Bridgman Public Schools, we present this community newsletter.

We hope you find it informative and useful.



BRIDGMAN PUBLIC SCHOOLS



Superintendent News from Superintendent Shane Peters

Dear Bridgman Families and Residents,

Warm greetings as we close out the calendar year! I hope you all have a holiday season that is joyful, relaxing and safe. As we reach the midpoint of another school year, I'm thrilled to share with you the remarkable achievements and dedication of our students, staff, and community that continue to make Bridgman Public Schools a model of excellence.

Celebrating Our Academic Rankings & Achievements

Bridgman Public Schools continues to shine with outstanding academic accomplishments. In the Spring 2024 assessments, our students in grades 3-7 ranked among the top two in Berrien County for both English Language Arts (ELA) and Math. Their performance in ELA surpassed both the Berrien County and State of Michigan averages by 25%, while in Math, they outperformed the county average by 23% and the state average by 24%. On the Spring 2024 PSAT8, our 8th grade students placed among the top three in Berrien County, with scores 18% higher than the county average and 19% above the state average. Bridgman High School also led the way with the highest SAT proficiency in Berrien County for Spring 2024, exceeding the county average by 42% and the state average by 37%. These remarkable results directly reflect the dedication and hard work of our students, teachers, and staff, supported by our engaged community.

Financial Stability & Clean Audit Results

Our recent annual audit by Kruggel and Lawton provided a clean opinion on the District's finances for the fiscal year ending June 30, 2024. The District added \$316,734 to its General Fund balance, resulting in a healthy balance of \$5,204,624 - an impressive 32.17% of annual expenditures. This financial strength allows us to continue investing in quality education, facilities, and resources.

Tax Settlement Update

To stay updated on the latest regarding the Tax Settlement Agreement and its effects on Bridgman Public Schools, please visit our website at BridgmanSchools.com. I'm providing monthly updates for staff and community members; you can find all the information there.

School Board Recognition Month

January is School Board Recognition Month, and we honor the invaluable contributions of our school board members: Eric Ramso, Wayne Hall, Tishia Roberts, Brad Owen, JoAnn DeMeulenaere, Nancy Hawley, and Tommy LaVanway. These public servants devote countless hours to ensure that the needs of our community are met and that local governance of our schools remains strong. Their foresight and commitment prepare today's students to become tomorrow's leaders. Thank you, Bridgman School Board, for your dedication!

Weather-Related Updates

We may need to implement 2-hour delays or school closures due to severe weather. During a delay, buses run two hours later, adjusting start times to 9:45 am for



Central Administration Office
9964 Gast Road
Bridgman, MI 49106
Ph: 269-465-5432
Fax: 269-466-0221

Bridgman Elementary, 9:55 am for Bridgman High School, and 10:00 am for F.C. Reed Middle School. Breakfast and lunch will still be provided, and dismissal times remain the same. In case of closures, updates will be shared through local media and automated calls, so please ensure your contact information is up to date with the school office.

Staying Informed & Job Opportunities

The second half of the school year brings many exciting events and activities. Stay connected by visiting our updated website at BridgmanSchools.com for the latest news. Additionally, if you're interested in joining our team, explore employment opportunities under the Human Resources tab on our website.

As always, don't hesitate to reach out if you have questions or need additional information about Bridgman Public Schools.

Go Bees!

Shane M. Peters, Superintendent

BRIDGMAN BOARD OF EDUCATION

President

Eric Ramso

Vice President

Wayne Hall

Secretary

Tishia Roberts

Treasurer

Brad Owen

Trustee

JoAnn DeMeulenaere

Trustee

Nancy Hawley

Trustee

Tom LaVanway

BRIDGMAN ATHLETICS

Cash, Card & Mobile Payments are now available for all High School and Middle School athletic events!

2024-2025 TICKET PRICES

- High School events
Adult/Student Tickets \$6.00
- Middle School events
Adult/Student Tickets \$4.00
- Senior Citizens (65 years +) Free
- Current Bridgman High School Students
Free admission for all home district athletic events
- Current Bridgman Middle & Elementary School Students
Free admission for all home district athletic events **IF** accompanied by a parent/guardian.
- Family Passes are available for \$40.



FOR TICKETS GO TO
gofan.co/app/school/MI4085



BridgmanAthletics.com
for up to date schedules!



BRIDGMAN PUBLIC SCHOOLS



Bridgman High School News from Principal Gerald Heath

As we close in on the holiday season, we are approaching the end of an excellent first semester for the 2024-2025 school year. Below are some events and highlights that happened around the building this fall.

AP Honor Roll

Due to the achievements in the Advanced Placement (AP) courses at Bridgman High School, we have earned a place on the AP School Honor Roll for the 2023-24 school year!

Bridgman Marching Band

The “Spirit of Bridgman” marching band had a successful season overall. At the marching band festival, they received a Division 1 rating and all A’s from each judge in every category!

College Campus Visit & Career Exploration

Our seniors did a great job filling out their college applications and/or planning their future opportunities with the military or apprenticeship programs. Some of the teachers decorated their doors to highlight opportunities. Staff and students were encouraged to wear a college t-shirt or sweatshirt to further remind students about potential college destinations or career opportunities.

On October 25, interested 11th & 12th graders visited Lake Michigan College, and on October 31, they visited Southwestern Michigan College. Students were able to get a glimpse of what life would look like on a local college campus.

On October 18, the ninth graders took a trip to the Mendel Center for Career Pathway Day. While there, students learned about career opportunities across Michigan’s 6 Career Pathways and visited with local employers in each of the represented fields.

National Honor Society (NHS)

The National Honor Society produced a video to honor local veterans. This video was shared with all students on November 11 (Veterans Day). NHS hosted a Compassion Campaign, collecting food, toiletries, and clothes for Bridgman Cares. NHS will host a fundraiser dinner during the basketball game on Friday, February 14.

SADD

The SADD Club had a successful Red Ribbon Week (October 28 - November 1). This year’s national theme was “Life is a Movie. Film Drug Free”. Many students participated in the dress days and activities throughout the week.



Bridgman High School
9964 Gast Road
Bridgman, MI 49106
Ph: 269-465-6848
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Interact Club

The Interact Club had guest speaker Bill Scaletta, President of the Rotary Club Youth Services, come and discuss the opportunities for students in the club. Members have started volunteering at the Stevensville United Methodist Church to package and distribute food to those in the community.

Key Club

Key Club is collecting donations for the feminine products cart in the commons' bathroom. "The Cart" provides free tampons, pads, and liners, so students facing shortages of these items are not prevented from attending school. If you'd like to donate, items can be dropped off at the BHS office. Cash donations are accepted as well. Contact Key Club advisor sconklin@bridgmanschools.com if you have any questions.

Mental Health Awareness Week in October was an opportunity to spread awareness about the stigma surrounding mental illness and encourage students to support those who struggle with their mental health. Donuts and cider were sold as a fundraiser for the Kaleidoscope Playground at Kiwanis Park in St. Joe. Key Club donated \$128 for the all-abilities playground.

DECA

Mrs. Douglass and the Bridgman DECA are off to another great start! The organization prepares emerging leaders

and entrepreneurs in marketing, finance, hospitality and management. Students have been practicing role plays and professional selling events in preparation for the district competition, which will be held on January 17, 2025. Students in written events such as business plans, integrated marketing campaigns, project management and business operations research projects have been doing research and have begun writing their papers. They also just completed their first big fundraiser - selling spirit wear and will be hosting a fundraiser dinner during the basketball game on Friday, January 31.

It has been a busy first semester at Bridgman High School. We look forward to the second part of the school year.

Please feel free to reach out to me at any time by emailing me at gheath@bridgmanschools.com or calling 269-465-6848.

Gerald Heath, High School Principal



BRIDGMAN PUBLIC SCHOOLS



F.C. Reed Middle School News from Principal John Truesdell

Dear Community Members,

'Tis the season for gratitude! While expressing thanks to family and friends is a

holiday tradition, research from UCLA shows that practicing gratitude also lessens anxiety, relieves stress, improves sleep, and can improve overall health. Luckily, as I reflect on our first semester, there is so much to be thankful for at F.C. Reed Middle School.

During the first semester the middle school was fortunate to expand our special education staff and welcomed **Charisse Hoffman** as a new paraprofessional. Mrs. Hoffman is a graduate of Eastern Michigan University and previously supported public school students in multiple capacities at Grosse Ile Schools on the east side of the state. Starting mid-year, Mrs. Hoffman has quickly become a valuable addition to our faculty and campus. We are grateful for her efforts to support our teachers and ensure ALL students have the opportunity for an inclusive and meaningful educational experience.

I also appreciate that RMS faculty members continue to be lead learners. Last spring the Board of Education adopted new Math and Social Emotional Learning curriculums. Our staff immediately leapt at the challenge of learning how to teach these new programs. Investing countless hours researching content, studying

resources, and designing lessons, I am happy to report both programs are successfully up and running. This dedication has ensured that our learners continue to have access to top tier learning resources that are engaging, relevant, and rigorous. THANK YOU to the teachers, paraprofessionals, social workers, and counselors who have gone above and beyond this semester to implement these new programs for our children.

Finally, F.C. Reed Middle School continues to be indebted to our numerous community stakeholders. These partnerships and collaborations ensure that our students have access to big city opportunities in a small town setting. This includes: The Bridgman For Educational Excellence (STEM Lab Resources & Book Vending Machine Grant Project), MEMSPA (Book Vending Machine Grant), City of Bridgman Police Department (School Resource Officer Program & Downtown Banner Contest), The Bridgman Public Library (Pop-Up Library Program), The Children's Advocacy Center (Preventative Safety Education Experiences), RMS Student Council (Community Service & Middle School Dance Projects), Bridgman VPA Department (Middle School Band/Choir Concerts), Corewell Lakeland Health (Lory's Place), and The Lion's Club (Vision Screening).

As the educational leader of F.C. Reed Middle School, I feel fortunate to live and work in an area that supports



F.C. Reed Middle School
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Bridgman, MI 49106
Ph: 269-465-5410
Fax: 269-466-0393

our Bridgman Bees. If you'd like to take a second this holiday season and thank a member of our staff, please scan the QR Barcode and fill out an online note. The RMS office will print and deliver your words of kindness to our faculty throughout the winter season.

Happy Holidays!

Your partner in education,

John Truesdell, Middle School Principal





BRIDGMAN PUBLIC SCHOOLS



Elementary School News

by Lori Graves, Elementary School Principal

The mission of the Bridgman Elementary Parent Teacher Organization (PTO) is to strive to develop a closer connection between school and home by encouraging parent involvement, enhancing the educational experience by supporting academic and enrichment activities and improving the environment of our school by providing volunteer and financial support.

True to their mission, the PTO has accomplished many projects that have enriched Bridgman Elementary. Amanda Stevens, current PTO President, shared, “There are so many over the years which could not have been done without the passion and work of our previous and current board members.” Some of these include the new playground, updating the courtyard with landscaping, benches and picnic tables; hosting events such as book bingo, playground meet up, movie night, a carnival and supporting the elementary school staff and students with fun surprises throughout the year. New this year, the PTO is hosting a family game night and a sock hop.

PTO’s goal this year is to build upon the school-wide carnival they have done the last two years. The carnival is held during the day so all students can participate with their teachers. It is one of the favorite days of the

year with games, prizes, face painting and shaved ice. Outside organizations such as the Bridgman Public Library, magician John Dudley and the Boys and Girls Clubs of Southwest Michigan set up tables of information and provide games for the students. The local fire and police departments also come to do demonstrations and allow students to see the firetruck and police car.



Looking ahead, the long-term goal of the PTO is to ensure that it has passionate board members and volunteers for years to come. Amanda shares, “The PTO is making a difference for the most important people in our lives, our kids. The Bridgman school district and the BES staff are phenomenal, and we



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wouldn't want our kids to be anywhere else. Everything we are involved in is quite fun and spreads joy for our students and staff". One of their challenges is getting enough volunteers to help with everything they would like to offer and for it to succeed. There are many opportunities to be involved in that do not require attending the monthly meeting. These include helping with events in person, prepping at home, or sending in requested items.

The PTO would love to have you involved in the many fun happenings. Make sure you have filled out the volunteer application on the BridgmanSchools.com website and look for updates from them via email or follow on Facebook. Former PTO President Brittani Withers shared, "Be a part of what the PTO does. Your kids will enjoy seeing you at the school, and it's a great way to support staff and students!".

Lori Graves, Elementary School Principal —————

BRIDGMAN *Cares*



Bridgman Cares is a group of parents, grandparents, staff and community members who help address the needs of **Bridgman students**.

We award scholarships, sponsor winter clothing drives, collect food, holiday meals and gifts, donate gym shoes, and much more! All this assistance is through the generosity of our community. If you would like to support our students in need, **please consider donating!** Check our Facebook page for a list of suggested items for our school pantries as well as our activity through the year. Monetary donations and gift cards are also appreciated. For more information, email, Molly Owen at mowen1@bridgmanschools.com.

facebook.com/BridgmanCares



BRIDGMAN PUBLIC SCHOOLS



Bridgman Foundation for Educational Excellence from the Chairman, George Lepeniotis

You often hear Bridgman and Lake Township residents say, with pride, “We have great schools.” I couldn’t agree more! Bridgman Public Schools have long been recognized as some of the highest-ranked and most award-winning schools in Michigan! Recently, U.S. News and World Report ranked Bridgman Public Schools as the best in the area and amongst the best in Michigan! Of course, our schools are more than just awards and rankings. They are safe havens that provide an exceptional foundation for graduates like myself and thousands of other alums who have passed through their halls. As Bridgman Bees, we are responsible for keeping that spirit alive - supporting the needs of Bridgman Public Schools’ students and staff. The Bridgman Foundation for Educational Excellence takes this charge seriously and works daily to make the most significant impact possible. As the newly elected Chairman of the Foundation Board of Directors, my goal is to continue the Foundation’s good work and promote Bridgman Public Schools.

Since 2008, the Bridgman Foundation has provided enrichment opportunities to the students and staff of Bridgman Public Schools. Most of these opportunities

were presented as grants that helped fund numerous programs, curricular materials, professional learning activities and educational experiences. Given the recent Lake Township Tax Tribunal settlement’s negative effect on the district’s funding, the Board has decided that instead of providing multiple mini-grant opportunities throughout the school year, the Foundation will focus on major district financial needs and requirements. This change does not diminish or undervalue the innovative ideas the Bridgman Public Schools’ staff developed through the grant process. Instead, by shifting the Foundation’s approach to project investment, we hope to help offset some of the budgetary shortfalls the district may experience. That said, the Foundation anticipates receiving a prioritized list of needs from district administrators once budget adjustment plans have been finalized. The Foundation will then identify its objectives and share them with you. Needless to say, your continued support of the district through the Foundation is needed now more than ever!

George Lepeniotis, Foundation Chairman —



Save the date!

LINKS *for* EDUCATION

ANNUAL PREMIERE GOLF EXPERIENCE



The Foundation's 2025 Annual Golf Outing will again be held at Lost Dunes Golf Club. One of the top 5 golf courses in the state, according to Golf Digest, the outing offers players a chance to enjoy a prestigious course while supporting Bridgman Public Schools. Spots are limited and offered to our sponsors and donors first, so keep an eye out for how you can join the fun and support our schools!

May 5, 2025



Watch for details about sponsorship & registration on our website:
BridgmanFoundation.org



BRIDGMAN
AQUATIC CENTER

Your Community Pool!

Proudly offering a wide variety of water-based classes and lap swim for nearly 50 years! If you are a senior (62 years or older) and reside in Lake Township or the City of Bridgman, ALL of our classes are FREE. You can find detailed information on all of our classes, schedules, rentals, swim teams, lap swim and more at BridgmanPool.com.

KIDS SWIM LESSONS

January 6 – February 19
Mondays & Wednesdays
for 6 weeks

Registration opens January 6 at
BridgmanPool.com.

FREE for Bridgman & Lake Township residents! Non-residents: \$48 per swimmer.

Save the date! February 19

We always end our swim sessions with a big Family Swim Night, so the kids can show their parents what they have learned!

BOYS CO-OP HIGH SCHOOL SWIM & DIVE TEAM SCHEDULE

The Co-Op includes students from Berrien Springs, Bridgman, Buchanan, Lakeshore, New Buffalo, Niles and Our Lady of the Lake. **Come cheer on the team!**

All meets begin at 6 pm unless noted.

Thur, Dec 12 – vs Kalamazoo Central

Sat, Jan 11 – Bridgman Invitational

Diving Events start at 9 am; Swimming at 12 pm

Thur, Jan 16 – vs Battle Creek Central

Thur, Feb 6 – vs Mattawan

Thur, Feb 13 – vs Portage Central (SENIOR NIGHT)

Every home swim meet can be watched live at: LiveBarn.com. Search for "Bridgman" and use code "Brid-gman" for a 20% discount when you sign-up.

YOUR Community Pool is open six days a week! Come in for a refreshing swim in our warm, clean water, enjoy a long dry sauna on a snowy day, shoot some baskets with your child, jump off the diving board or cheer on the swim and dive team to victory! The Bridgman Aquatic Center has something for everyone.

AQUA FIT CLASSES

Deep Water Aqua Fit	M-W-F	7:30-8:30 am	with Emily
GlideFit	T-TH	7:30-8:30 am	with Emily
Shallow Water Aqua Fit	M-W-F	8:30-9:30 am	with Deb
	T-TH	8:30-9:30 am	with Betsy
Bend & Flex	M-W-F	9:30-10:30 am	with Deb
Aqua Yoga	T-TH	9:30-10:30 am	with Nadine

Check BridgmanPool.com for class descriptions!

Visit **Silver Beach Pizza** on Tuesday, **January 14** and present this coupon to have 20% of your check donated to the **Bridgman Sea Bees!**

Come for some awesome pizza and the young swimmers of your community will get some much needed financial support!

The Sea Bees were started in 1977 shortly after the Aquatic Center was built by some thoughtful parents and has been our swim team – teaching both swimming skills and life lessons – for nearly 50 years!

With each flyer presented
on 1/14/2025,
SBP will donate 20% of your check to:
The Sea Bees Swim Club
That's some serious dough!

The flyer is required to be shown (either paper or phone) with each check to be given credit for the sale. Offer only valid on date listed above. Tax, gratuity, + gift card sales not included. Dine in or carry-out sales are included. Flyers cannot be handed out or the event promoted within the building or parking lot of Silver Beach Pizza before or during the event.



IS PROUD TO SUPPORT

SEA BEES SWIM CLUB



CITY OF BRIDGMAN



City of Bridgman News from the City Manager, Juan Ganum

The November 5, general election marked a significant turnout as Bridgman residents voted for various key offices. The

City had 1,928 registered voters on Election Day (out of an estimated population of 2,096 residents). A total of 1,370 individuals voted, representing 71% of Bridgman's electorate. Of the total number of votes, 701 were cast on Election Day at City Hall, while 570 were cast by absentee ballot. The balance of 99 ballots were cast through early in-person voting at the Berrien County South County Building in Niles.

At the local level, the election resulted in a change to the composition of the Bridgman City Council, which bid farewell to Councilmembers Vince Rose and Georgia Gipson, who each served the City for eight years. The City Council welcomes two newly elected members, Toni D'Agostino and Jacquie Blackwell, along with the return of incumbent John Bonkoske. Together with William Boyd Sr., Pam Hahaj, Sam Stine and Jan Trapani, the election winners will serve as Bridgman's seven-member City Council over the next four years.

Toni D'Agostino

Toni's family has a long history in Bridgman, having owned and operated D'Agostino's Navajo Bar and Grille for over 60 years. Toni graduated from Bridgman High School in 2004 and from Calvin University in

Grand Rapids in 2008. After earning her degree, she returned to Bridgman and resumed working in the family business. In 2010, Toni purchased her home near the Bridgman Elementary School.



Toni believes that growing up in a small town often inspires a desire to move to a larger city. However, over time, she feels that people are often drawn back to smaller towns for their strong sense of community and close-knit connections.

While serving on the City Council, Toni's goal is to preserve Bridgman's small-town charm and feel while balancing growth and stability. She also believes in the importance of working collaboratively with Lake Charter Township.



Jacquie Blackwell

Jacquie is an active leader in both local government and community organizations. She is a former Bridgman City Planning Commission member, chairs various committees and projects with Rotary – including chairing

District 6360 Mental Health Committee and volunteers with St. Joe Kickers Sport Club.





Professionally, Jacquie is a mental health practitioner. She earned her master’s degree from the Chicago School of Professional Psychology in 2010 and opened her practice in 2021.

Jacquie comes from a family line of local farmers and public servants. She has a broad employment background in government and public relations, having lived and worked in Lansing, Detroit, and England. In 2005, she returned to Bridgman with her husband, Simon, and their twin children, who both graduated from Bridgman High School.

Jacquie is active with Weko Beach Aerobics, enjoys playing and refereeing soccer, biking, kayaking and traveling.

John Bonkoske

John has spent over 35 years in business, specifically as a senior executive in Healthcare IT and cost management, growing, solidifying, and expanding enterprise footprints. He has an extensive background in business development and growth and is known for building relationships and consensus and leading successful teams where all participants work toward common goals and objectives that are collaborative and sustainable. His professional life has always centered around one word: Impact. He was educated in Salzburg, Austria, and graduated from Illinois State University.

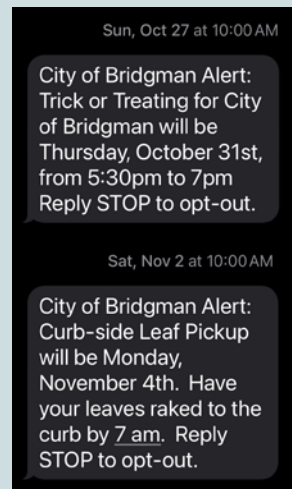


John is the president of Berrien Connection, a Benton Harbor non-profit, and the Board President of the Harbor Country Chamber of Commerce. He also writes an opinion column for the Herald Palladium on topics relevant to our region and is a member of Berrien County’s Strategic Leadership Council, Best Practices Committee. He lives in Bridgman with his husband, John Royse. They have four grown children. .

Juan Ganum, City Manager

TextMyGov

Voluntarily opt in to receive important notifications and reminders and updates about meetings, leaf collection, community events, beach conditions and more.



Simply text **BRIDGMAN** to **91896** to begin receiving notifications. Opt out anytime.



CITY OF BRIDGMAN

Assessing Department News from the City Assessor, John Baumann

Personal Property

Personal property statements, including the Small Business Taxpayer Exemption, will be mailed out to all businesses in the city by January 10 and are due to the Assessor's office by February 20. Many small businesses were eligible for an exemption of personal property taxes for 2024 but did not file the Small Business Taxpayer Exemption paperwork. In 2023, the Michigan legislature increased the exemption to \$180,000 in true cash value, so most businesses in Bridgman will qualify for the exemption IF they file the appropriate paperwork on time. Business owners who qualified for and filed the Small Business Taxpayer Exemption in 2019 or after do NOT need to file the form again in 2025. It is essential that those business owners who did NOT file the small business taxpayer exemption in 2019 or after and whose businesses qualify for the exemption, file it for 2025 to be exempted from 2025 personal property taxes.

Tax Day

December 31 is designated as Tax Day in Michigan. Your property's assessment is based on how it stands on that day. For example, your 2025 assessment and tax bills were calculated based on how your property appeared on December 31, 2024. Currently, we are working on the 2025 assessments and will base those assessments on the condition of your property as of December 31, 2024.



2025 Assessment Notices

Property Tax Assessment Notices are mailed out to taxpayers each year by the end of February. These notices show the change in assessed and taxable values for your property from 2024 to 2025. The notice also shows your homestead percentage and if there was a transfer of ownership, which results in an uncapping of your taxable value. It is very important to review this notice when you receive it to verify that all the information is correct.

If you find any errors or have any questions on the assessed or taxable value change, please contact the assessing office at 269-465-5144 x104 or email jbaumann@bridgman.org.

The Assessing Department has property record cards on file for every parcel in the city. You are always welcome and encouraged to come in and review your property record card(s). Assessing information is also online via the City of Bridgman website.





Parks & Recreation Department

from the Parks & Recreation Director, Sara Ball

Bridgman Awarded \$158,000 Through Michigan Shared Streets & Spaces Grant for Downtown Enhancement

The City of Bridgman Parks & Recreation Department is excited to announce that Bridgman was one of 27 cities across Michigan that received the grant, part of a state initiative to enhance public spaces and improve mobility infrastructure.

The **Bridgman Sideyard** project, located adjacent to the hugely successful **Bridgman Courtyard**, will serve as phase 2 of the City's efforts to revitalize its downtown. The Sideyard and Courtyard are officially part of the City's parks system, and this new project will further enhance public space downtown. Early concepts for the

project include a bike repair station, bike rack, water fountain, shade structures, and areas designed for rest and relaxation. The City is committed to engaging the community over the winter to gather input and ensure the project meets the needs and desires of residents before finalizing the design.

We will host a series of public listening sessions, which will allow residents to share feedback and ideas, helping guide the project in a direction that reflects a collective vision for the Sideyard space. To stay informed and learn about upcoming meetings, please visit the City's website at Bridgman.org.

Sara Ball, Parks & Recreation Director

RENDERING CREDIT: CHANGEMAKER STUDIO





CITY OF BRIDGMAN

Winter Home Maintenance: Essential Tips to Protect Your Property

from the Building & Zoning Department, Brad Mattner

As winter sets in, preparing your home for the cold and challenging conditions can help prevent costly repairs, reduce energy bills, and keep your home comfortable and safe during the colder months.

Seal Drafts & Insulate

Drafts around windows, doors, and other openings let cold air in and warm air out, increasing heating costs.

- ✔ Check for gaps around windows and doors, and use caulk or weatherstripping to seal them. Adding insulation to attics, basements, and crawl spaces can also reduce heat loss and keep your home warmer.

Protect Pipes from Freezing

Frozen pipes are a major cause of winter water damage.

- ✔ Disconnect garden hoses, drain outdoor faucets, and turn off the water supply to exterior taps to prevent freezing. For extra protection, insulate pipes in unheated areas like basements, garages, and crawl spaces.

Check Your Heating System

Heating system maintenance is crucial for a warm, efficient home.

- ✔ Schedule a professional inspection for your furnace, replace air filters to improve air quality

and efficiency, and check the intake and discharge vents for obstructions like leaves, debris, or even snow. Keeping these vents clear helps your heating system function safely and effectively.

Inspect & Clean Your Fireplace

A cozy fire can be inviting, but a neglected fireplace is a fire hazard.

- ✔ If you have a wood-burning fireplace, get it professionally inspected and cleaned to prevent creosote buildup. Ensure the flue damper functions properly, and have working smoke and carbon monoxide detectors nearby.

Check Your Roof for Leaks & Shingle Damage

Winter storms can cause severe roof damage if there are existing weaknesses.

- ✔ Inspect your roof for missing or damaged shingles and check for signs of leaks. Repairing issues now will help prevent leaks and water damage during heavy snow and ice. If roof access is challenging, consider hiring a professional to inspect it safely.

Clean Gutters & Downspouts

Clogged gutters can lead to ice dams, which trap water and force it under your roof.





- ✓ Clear out leaves, twigs, and debris from your gutters, and ensure downspouts are angled away from your home's foundation. This will help prevent water damage and ice buildup.

Trim Overhanging Tree Branches

Snow and ice can weigh down branches, causing them to snap and potentially damage your roof or power lines.

- ✓ Trim branches near your home to reduce storm damage risk. This also minimizes debris buildup in gutters and enhances safety around your property.

By handling these essential winter maintenance tasks, you can ensure your home is well-protected, energy-efficient, and ready for the colder months. A little preparation now will make a big difference in avoiding winter troubles.



PROPERTY TAXES DUE

The 2024 winter tax bills are due February 14 by 5 pm to avoid penalties. Be sure to leave ample time if paying by mail (postmarks are not accepted).

Tax payments received after the deadline will be subject to late fees regardless of the postmark date. Taxes are collected at City Hall until February 28, 2025. Beginning March 1, 2025 delinquent taxes will only be accepted at the Berrien County Treasurer's office at 701 Main Street in St. Joseph.

Several ways to make your payment:

By mail – post marks are not accepted

Drop box – inside City Hall's vestibule or the drive-up drop box

In person – Monday-Thursday
8 am to 4 pm or Friday 8 am to 3 pm

Online – Bridgman.org

Questions: 269-465-5144 ext. 103



CITY OF BRIDGMAN POLICE DEPARTMENT



Hello Residents,

I'd like to express my gratitude for the unwavering support we receive from the residents of Bridgman. Your voice matters in this town. Your instincts matter. Don't let anyone tell you differently. We're all in this together, and your eyes on the street can make a difference. Together, we can continue to make our community a place where everyone feels safe, secure, and proud to call home.

Here are a few reminders for everyone's knowledge and safety:

OVERNIGHT PARKING

Parking is not allowed on city streets from 2 - 6 AM from November 1 to March 31. Signs are posted at each entrance to the city limits advising motorists of this ordinance. Residents can contact the police department and request a parking pass if overnight guests are expected. Weather conditions may be considered by the officers, thereby determining the issuance of parking passes.

POLICE DISPATCH

Our police department is dispatched by the Berrien County Emergency Dispatch Center. For police response to **non-emergencies, residents should call 269-983-7141** and **9-1-1 in the event of an emergency (staffed 24/7)**. Officers are normally patrolling the city and frequently check the phone messages at the police station in the event residents wish to leave non-emergency type messages or information at 269-465-3880.

ANIMALS AT WEKO BEACH

City ordinances prohibit animals on Weko Beach year round, not just during the summer months. They must remain on leashes while on the boardwalks, stairs and parking lots.

PROPERTY CHECKS

We provide property checks for residents when they are out of town or on vacation. Feel free to contact us to have our officers check your property while you're gone.





Payment Options for Your Water Bill

Did you know that you can make monthly payments towards your quarterly water bill?

Paying a quarterly water bill in full may be challenging, especially during tight financial periods. The City accepts monthly payments to accommodate residents who prefer a more structured and frequent payment schedule.

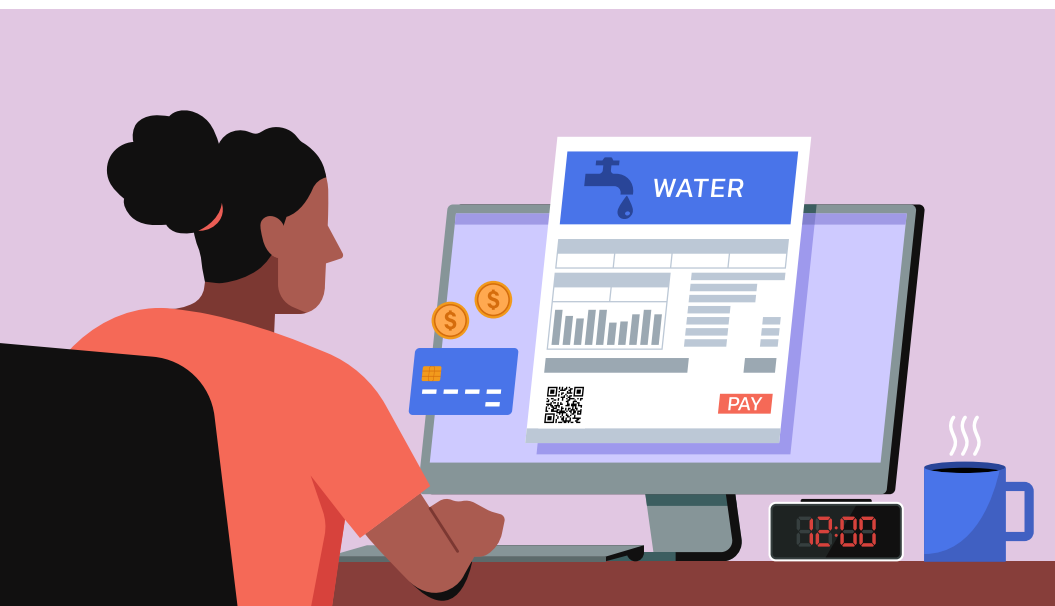
If you make a partial payment without a corresponding water bill, simply note your account number on your check so that we can apply your payment correctly. Your payment will be applied to your next quarterly bill.

Please be advised that the City will work with residents who request assistance by developing a payment plan

that fits their financial situation. In addition, the City can recommend local organizations that may be able to assist with financial resources during a difficult time.

Would you like to avoid the time and hassle of making payments manually? For your convenience, the City offers an autopay option that will automatically withdraw the current amount due on the due date from your bank or credit union. The form to enroll in autopay available at <https://mi-bridgman.civicplus.com/248/Water-and-Sewer-Forms>.

By making partial payments or enrolling in autopay and staying proactive, you can avoid penalties, stay on track, and ensure uninterrupted service.



City of Bridgman Water & Sewer Bill Autopay Form





Updates from the CGA

Director, Nancy Kiernan

As we transition into a new season, I want to reflect on the remarkable evolution

of Chambers of Commerce. Historically known for facilitating mixers and marketing campaigns, today's Chambers play a pivotal role in regional development, civic engagement, and social impact. This shift reflects a broader transformation in how we approach economic vitality and community well-being.

In the past, Chambers focused primarily on organizing networking events and projects like murals and community gardens—important initiatives, but not necessarily equipped to address the complex challenges of today's world. As the needs of our communities have evolved, so too has the Chamber's role. We've embraced a more dynamic, strategic approach to economic development, with a renewed emphasis on placemaking and community-centered initiatives. The goal is to create places people want to live, work, and visit.

One example of this shift is the Bridgman CGA's support for local agri-business and the cottage food industry, demonstrated through the development of the Gast Road Market. This initiative represents a thoughtful, regional approach to economic growth while celebrating our community's unique character. Our efforts to spotlight local stories and activities in the BUZZ newsletter and our commitment to community events like the annual

Holiday Village are part of our ongoing effort to keep Bridgman's spirit alive and thriving.

We've also worked to enhance civic engagement through initiatives like our Commerce & Conversation series, featuring key economic development partners, including representatives from the Michigan Economic Development Corporation (MEDC) and the Michigan Department of Agriculture and Rural Development (MDARD). Looking ahead, community visioning and placemaking will be central to our Red Arrow Highway Corridor Plan. Additionally, our Buy Bridgman Gift Card program is evolving into a powerful tool for local economic growth and social impact, encouraging residents and visitors to shop locally while contributing directly to community initiatives with each purchase.

Our newly formed Events Committee, made up of Amanda Drew, Cheri Heward, Brett Boyd, and Shanyn Day, is already making an impact. This summer, they helped organize the Bridgman Birthday Bash and the Maker's Trail and are planning exciting events for the year ahead. We also recently hosted our Annual CGA Dinner on November 14 at the Haymarket Taproom, and the Holiday Village returns on December 14, taking place at key locations throughout downtown Bridgman.

The Membership Committee, led by Chair Beth McNeil, is actively engaging new businesses and community



organizations to join the CGA, further strengthening our collective impact. Members of the Economic Development Committee, including Vince Spina and Kathy Ramso, are driving key initiatives like the Redevelopment Ready Communities certification and working to strengthen our connections with the Rural Readiness Network.

Our work on projects like the Lake Side Fit Commercial Rehabilitation Tax Abatement is already showing results, with entrepreneurs James and Lacy Lucas renovating an existing building to create a new state-of-the-art fitness center. Through the Rural Readiness Network, we've also secured a fellow to continue developing our Commercial Property Inventory, an essential tool for business retention and attraction.

There have been several ribbon-cutting and groundbreaking events that signal our community's growth and vibrancy. Notable milestones include Surf Internet's groundbreaking for high-speed broadband service in Bridgman, renovations at the Bridgman American Legion Post 331, Hannapel's new location on Red Arrow Highway, the D'Agostino family's complete renovation of their historic Navajo Bar/Grille, and the opening of Lake Time Brewing & Spirits on Lake Street.

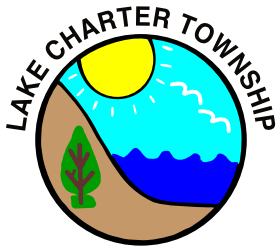
I am enrolled in the Redevelopment Ready Communities Virtual Academy through MEDC. Having passed the Best Practices exam, we've achieved an "Engaged" status, and we're nearing completion of our Community Evaluation by MEDC.

To bolster our business attraction and retention activities, we've published a Demographic Bulletin that provides valuable data on our area's population, education levels, household incomes, and age distribution. Using tools like Placer AI, we can now track visitor patterns, including frequency, duration, geographic origin, and traffic counts along local roadways.

We've also participated in several networking and educational summits to stay ahead of the curve. The Rural Readiness Network Fall Summit focused on funding and technical assistance for rural development. The Michigan Association of Chamber Professionals conference provided valuable insights from economic development experts, and the Michigan Chamber of Commerce's Chamber Day gave us an important update on legislative issues affecting chambers and business advocacy organizations.

As we look to the future, the role of Chambers of Commerce has never been more critical. We must continue to innovate, adapt, and respond to the changing needs of our communities. The challenges are great, but the opportunities are even greater. As we move forward, I'm excited about the future and the continued progress we'll make together. Thank you for your ongoing support of the Bridgman CGA. Let's keep pushing forward and building a stronger, more vibrant community for all.

Nancy Kiernan, Director



LAKE CHARTER TOWNSHIP



Township News from Supervisor, Zach Carson

Dear Township Residents,

As another busy summer season has passed, we are pleased with all of our accomplishments throughout the year so far.

One of our most significant accomplishments is that Lake Charter Township has reached a favorable settlement with American Electric Power, which operates the Donald C. Cook Nuclear Power Plant. After many months of negotiation, this settlement removes the shadow of litigation and locks in tax revenue for the next six years for all entities that rely on the Cook Nuclear Plant for operating revenue.

How did we get here? In 2022 and 2023, AEP provided property values for the Cook Nuclear Plant. It's long been our practice to allow AEP to recommend its own property value because of the facility's extraordinarily unique nature and highly sensitive and confidential security considerations. AEP historically provides a detailed report of its physical assets and costs. Our Township historically accepts the valuation report, believing it to be comprehensive, reliable, and the most accurate information that could realistically be considered in determining a market value for the facility. However, in 2023, AEP appealed the numbers it provided, asking for a 29.65% reduction for 2022 and a 33.14% reduction in 2023 without any explanation. This happened during a

time when the vast majority of property values were increasing. AEP also petitioned the Michigan Tax Tribunal to reduce its personal property value by \$20 million in taxable value, which would have resulted in hundreds of thousands of dollars in refunds.

Had the Michigan Tax Tribunal heard this case and agreed with AEP, the Township, Bridgman Public Schools, Berrien County, Berrien RESA, Lake Michigan College, and the State Education Tax would have had to refund more than \$10 million to AEP in 2022 and more than \$12 million in 2023. This would have had devastating effects for the Township and these organizations to continue providing service at levels residents have come to know and support.

With input from the county, schools and the other affected entities, Township attorneys worked hard to negotiate the best possible settlement with the interests of all parties kept top of mind. The agreement, which has been approved, covers the next six years and:

- Locks in tax revenue for that time period, which makes it easy for the Township, County, Schools, etc. to plan their budgets with certainty.
- Eliminates the demand for millions of dollars in refunds.
- Removes the potential for litigation, which always brings uncertainty with it.



- Holds the value of the Cook Nuclear Plant at 2022 rates for the first three years of the settlement.
- Approves 5% increases in taxable value for the Cook Nuclear Plant for the final three years of the settlement. This is the maximum allowed under state law.
- Agrees no taxable property at the Cook Nuclear Plant will be reclassified to industrial personal property during the settlement. This is critical as reclassification would have led to the Township, County, Schools, etc. owing AEP a sizable refund.

This is the best possible settlement achieved for a power plant appeal in the history of the state of Michigan. While no settlement is perfect, we're grateful to have reached a reasonable and fair agreement that allows the Township, County, Schools and all taxing entities to continue to provide services at the level our residents have come to expect.

To revisit another item, we are continuing to improve our sanitary sewer system and reduce our stormwater inflow. With that being said, you may see crews inspecting and doing maintenance in your area. Information mailed out when system testing is being done in a specific district. Please know that this is an ongoing project over the next two years.

Zach Carson, Supervisor

**LAKE
CHARTER
TOWNSHIP**

Supervisor

Zach Carson

Treasurer

Bob Clark

Clerk

Miranda
Companion

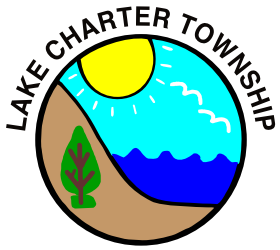
Building Admin

Rich Kubsch

**Water
Superintendent**

Jeff Burkhard

**Find helpful info
on our website
including
building forms,
permits, zoning,
tax assessments,
forms, maps,
online payments
and more!**



LAKE CHARTER TOWNSHIP



Treasurer, Park & Trail News from Jennifer Adams

I am humbled and excited to introduce myself as your newly elected Treasurer and thank each of you for the trust you've placed in me. I take on this role with enthusiasm and a deep sense of responsibility. I'm excited to continue working together to support and grow our community.

My husband, David, and I have been married for 30 years and have two sons, Hunter and Ty. Hunter graduated from Bridgman High School, and Ty is a Sophomore at Bridgman High School. We are honored to be able to call Lake Township our home for the past 25 years and have witnessed how much our community has grown and thrived. We are proud to be part of such a supportive, close-knit, vibrant place. From the outstanding school district to the beautiful beaches, well-maintained park, and many restaurants, there is no better place to call home.

I'd also like to express my heartfelt gratitude to Bob Clark. Before stepping into this role as Treasurer, I had the privilege of working alongside him for the past year as his Deputy Treasurer. I gained invaluable experience and learned so much under his leadership during that time. His expertise and dedication have laid a solid foundation for the role, and I'm committed to maintaining the high standards he has set. Bob is deeply committed to our community, and I'm grateful for his mentorship. While

I take on this new role, I'm pleased to share that Bob will continue serving our community as Deputy Treasurer, ensuring a seamless transition and guidance as we move forward together.

At this time, I want to remind you that you should have received your 2024 winter tax bills in early December. Please review your bill carefully and make arrangements for payment **on or before February 14 at 5 PM to avoid penalties**. If you haven't received your bill, please contact our office.

You may pay your Summer and Winter tax bills at the Township until February 28. After that date, you must make payment arrangements at the Berrien County Treasurer's office in St. Joseph, and additional penalties will apply. The payment must be received at our office by February 28; therefore, leave ample mailing time if paying by mail (postmarks are not accepted).

We have several options to pay online, including e-check and credit payment through our website, which includes a transaction fee. You may also obtain tax and assessment information on our website. Please visit our newly renovated website at lake-township.org for more information about these payment options and information. We also have two drop boxes for after-hour payments, one in the lot east of the hall and one near the front door. Please get in touch with our office with any questions about your bill, assessment, or other information.



Park & Trail News

The park officially closed on November 1, but you can still enjoy it using the off-season parking access. Enjoy the cross-country ski trail around the park's perimeter and some wooded areas.

We had another busy year at the park. The various recreational leagues, including soccer, baseball, softball, and disc golf, had busy and successful seasons. Some of you may have noticed that a baseball fencing project and field maintenance work are underway. These will be completed before the spring season begins.

Many residents and nonresidents enjoyed the pavilions, which are available to rent. Please contact the Township Hall if you would like to rent a pavilion for the 2025 season.

The Lake Township **John Gast Memorial Trail** is still planned for construction in early 2025.

The **Friends of Berrien County Trails** continue actively with trail construction projects. The plan is for the trail to continue north on Red Arrow to Warren Dunes State Park. Then, it would continue through the State Park to Lake Township and Bridgman. The road department plans to continue the trail north of Bridgman to the Cook nuclear plant.

I am also thrilled about the talented and dedicated team I work with daily. They are all a true blessing. I look forward to the work ahead and to continuing to contribute to our community's success and growth. Thank you again for the trust you've placed in me.

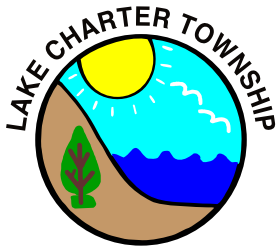
Jennifer Adams, Treasurer

WINTER TAX BILLS DUE

The 2024 winter tax bills are due February 14 by 5 PM to avoid penalties. Be sure to leave ample time if paying by mail (postmarks are not accepted).



We suggest looking your check over carefully for proper amounts and signature. Consider using our online payment system on our website at [Lake-township.org](https://lake-township.org). It is very easy to use! If you have any questions about your bill, assessment or other information please contact our office at 269-465-6601.



LAKE CHARTER TOWNSHIP

Water & Sewer System News from Jeff Burkhard

Hello, Everyone. I want to update you on continuing developments related to the water plant, distribution system, and sewer system. We are in the final engineering design phase of the water plant improvement project. This design phase will be completed by December, with construction beginning in the fall of 2025. It will consist of upgrading antiquated equipment and processes past their useful life. The project will improve the long-term future of the plant. It will not enlarge the plant's footprint, only increase existing treatment capacity with more current technology and efficiency. It will be an exciting project!

On the distribution front, in an ongoing effort to protect public health and reduce exposure to lead and copper in drinking water, the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency has established new requirements under the Lead and Copper Rule. One of the key provisions of the updated rule is the creation of a comprehensive service line inventory. This inventory is crucial for identifying and replacing lead or galvanized steel pipes that may be contributing to the contamination of drinking water.

You may have received a letter from the Lake Charter Township Water System asking you to confirm, identify, or submit a picture of where your service line enters your residence so we can determine your service line material. If you receive one of these notices, please respond to help us update our records. Due to the age of our system and the materials that were allowed, the Lake Charter Township water system contains no lead service lines or service connections.

Understanding Sewer Flows: The Important Difference Between Usage and Inflow & Infiltration

Sewer systems are critical in managing wastewater and ensuring public health and sanitation. They carry sewage from homes, businesses, and industries to treatment plants, where it can be processed and safely returned to the environment. However, not all water that enters the sewer system is wastewater; sometimes, excess water from external sources—known as Inflow and Infiltration (I&I)—can make its way into the sewer lines. These additional flows can pose significant challenges to the infrastructure and the effectiveness of treatment systems.

What Are Sewer Flows?

Sewer flow refers to the movement of wastewater through the sewer system. This flow includes water from various sources, such as household sewage (from sinks, toilets, showers, etc.) and commercial and industrial wastewater. A properly functioning sewer system can handle expected flows of wastewater, ensuring it reaches a treatment facility where it can be cleaned and processed before being released into the environment. Stormwater is another type of flow altogether. Stormwater is meant to drain to

However, in many cases, the sewer system may also experience I & I, which are both types of extraneous water that can disrupt normal sewer flow and add stress to the system.



Inflow vs. Infiltration: Key Differences

While both inflow and infiltration are unwanted water sources that end up in the sewer system, they differ in their origin and behavior:

Inflow refers to water that enters the sewer system directly through connections or openings such as roof leaders, yard drains, manhole covers, or broken sewer pipe joints. This type of water is typically associated with stormwater runoff or other direct surface connections. Inflow is usually quick to enter the system, often following a heavy rain or other weather events.

Infiltration, on the other hand, occurs when water seeps into the sewer system from the surrounding soil. This happens when groundwater enters cracks, joints, or faulty connections in the sewer pipes. Infiltration typically occurs gradually and is more persistent, often exacerbated by aging infrastructure or poor system maintenance.

Illegal Connections - Lake Charter Township has a fixed capacity we are allowed to send to the GRSD processing plant. However, we pay for every gallon we send to the processing plant. Specifically in a rain event, illegal connections to the sewer system like gutter downspouts, sump pumps, yard drains can cause us to overload the system, sewer backups into basements, lift station overload, unnecessary flow needing to be processed and most importantly increased sewer costs which are then incorporated in increased sewer rates for all.

Inflow, infiltration and illegal connections contribute to excessive volumes of water in the sewer system, but their impacts and management strategies differ slightly.

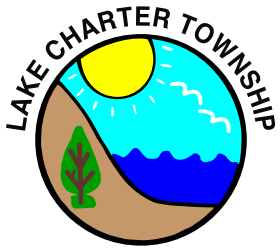
Why Is Managing Our Inflow and Infiltration Important?

System Overload and Overflows - Our sewer system is designed to handle a certain volume of wastewater. However, when excess water from I&I enters the system, it can overwhelm the capacity of pipes, pumps, and the treatment plant. In these cases, the system may not be able to treat the increased flow efficiently, leading to sewage overflows, which can contaminate local waterways, create public health risks, and result in environmental damage.

Increased Treatment Costs - Inflow and infiltration can significantly increase the volume of water that needs to be treated. This extra water may not even be wastewater (illegal connections to the sewer system, leaks, cleanouts with no caps etc.), but still requires processing at the treatment facility. As a result, our treatment costs increase, energy consumption rises, and the system is strained, all of which contribute to higher operating costs for all of our customers

Asset Damage and Maintenance Issues - Sewer pipes are built to last for decades, but when excess water constantly enters the system, it can accelerate corrosion and deterioration of the infrastructure. Infiltration, in particular, can lead to structural damage in aging or poorly maintained pipes, which can result in costly repairs and replacements. Additionally, the increased pressure on the system may require more frequent maintenance and monitoring.

cont. on the next page



LAKE CHARTER TOWNSHIP

Strategies for Reducing Inflow and Infiltration

Effective management of inflow and infiltration is critical to the long-term success and sustainability of our sewer system. We implement various strategies to reduce I&I and mitigate its negative effects:

Inspection and Assessment - Regular inspections of sewer lines, manholes, and pumping stations are essential for identifying cracks, leaks, illegal connections, or areas where inflow or infiltration may be occurring. Advanced technologies, such as closed-circuit television (CCTV) cameras and smoke testing, allow us to detect problem areas and assess the condition of the infrastructure. In September, we started smoke testing and CCTV our sanitary sewer system. The result of the test showed many problems. We will be conducting more smoke testing in the spring of 2025 and 2026.

Repair and Rehabilitation - Once source of inflow and infiltration are identified, it is essential to make necessary repairs. This may involve replacing damaged pipes, sealing cracks, disconnecting and capping roof drains/downspouts, disconnecting and capping sump pumps, and replacing defective manholes or pipe joints. Notification to property owners will be sent in late 2024/early2025 for any repairs necessary for illegal connections as a result of the smoke testing completed in September of 2024.

System Maintenance - We perform regular maintenance of sewer infrastructure, including clearing blockages and preventing root intrusion.

Inflow Control Measures - Inflow from surface water, such as rainwater entering the sewer through roof drains

or stormwater connections is not permitted in Lake Charter Township. Stormwater in any form is strictly prohibited from entering our sanitary sewer system.

What Can You Do?

Simple changes can have a big impact on our sewer system.

A small toilet leak can add up to 6,000 gallons a month. There are 5 communities that send sewage to the processing plant. Imagine if there are 100 leaky toilets in the total sewer system. That's 600,000 gallons of extra/wasted capacity that needs to be treated.

Did you know that if 100 homes have a sump pump connected to the sanitary sewer system running for 10 minutes per hour can discharge up to 1 million gallons per day. If you have a sump pump connected to the sewer system, you must disconnect it and re-plumb it so the water is discharged onto the ground.

A home's roof can collect around 1,000 gallons of water for every inch of rainfall. If your gutters are connected to the sewer system, you must sever and cap this connection. Remember, the sewer system is designed to treat wastewater, not stormwater.

A 4" cleanout that is missing its cap can collect up to 75 gallons per minute! Simply replacing a missing cap can help dramatically.

If you have any questions about either water or sewer, please contact the water department at 269-465-3850 or lakechartertownshipwater.org

Jeff Burkhard, Water System Superintendent





Clerk News

from Miranda Companion, Township Clerk

Dear Residents,

It was a busy couple of months preparing for the General Election in November. We tested all the equipment, making sure that it worked correctly, and that the ballots were being read correctly. We sent out all of the Absentee Ballots and set up the hall for election day. We had two different Challengers during the General Election, one stating “You all are doing a great job. It is very organized and well run; you all handle yourself professionally.”

I want to thank all of our fantastic election workers! They are hard-working and dedicated to ensuring that each of the elections this year ran smoothly. Between the hours of training and the long hours of the election day, I could not do this without their help! Thank you all for your guidance, knowledge and patience. Your hard work does not go unnoticed.

I would also like to thank everyone who works at Lake Township for helping set up each election, helping on election day, and then tearing it all down the next morning. Thank you for all your help; I appreciate every single one of you!

Lastly, thank you to all the Lake Charter Township residents. The lines to vote were long all day. So, on behalf of the election workers and myself, thank you for being patient, kind and understanding on one of the biggest turnouts we have had for an election.

This year, we added nine days of Early Voting. In the February and August elections, only a handful of residents voted early. During the General Election, 165 people voted early. Lake Charter Township has 2,678 registered voters. We sent out 890 absentee ballots and received back 849 ballots. On November 5, we had 1,139 people vote at the township hall. Out of 2,678 registered voters, a total of 2,153 votes were cast by Lake Township residents.

A few election workers are retiring, so we are looking for new Election Inspectors to work future elections. If you are interested in helping, please email me at clerk@lake-township.org.

I was excited to help with the Tire Recycling on Saturday, October 26. I enjoyed talking to and getting to know the residents who stopped by. It was a great turnout, with 720 tires recycled. Thank you to all who helped fill the truck up! We will do the Shredit and Electronic Recycling in 2025 and another Tire Recycle in 2026.

This year has been filled with firsts! Stepping in as Clerk during a huge election year was a whirlwind! I am happy that the elections ran smoothly and are completed. I look forward to diving into the other aspects of my job now including learning the ins and outs of the Cemeteries. I am grateful for the local clerks who have reached out to help and guide me. I cannot believe I have been in this role for a year now, but I am so excited to continue!

Miranda Companion, Clerk



BRIDGMAN PUBLIC LIBRARY



Library News from Sarah Skinner, Director

The BPL staff have been busy preparing a variety of fun and interesting programs for all ages in the coming new year. Family fun is on the calendar!

Be sure to check out all of our featured events in this edition of The Bridgman Buzz.

Does your family love a good board game? Bring the whole family and join us for Family Game Night! BPL staff will provide a host of fun family games for you to choose from. Friendly competitions are encouraged! If you find a game that you really enjoy, you can even check it out! Select games are part of our Library of Things collection and available for checkout.

Learning about animals is one of our favorite things to do here at BPL. With that in mind, we are hosting Kayla Kolberg from Zoovolution to introduce us to some fun furry critters. Interact with Kayla and her animal crew and learn something new! Since animal programs are so popular, we ask that you sign up on our website as space is limited! We look forward to seeing you this winter at BPL!

Sarah Skinner, Director

Find us on Social Media



**and be sure to check out our fun library videos!*

TECH DEMYSTIFIED For Seniors April 24, 6:00pm



**DISCOUNTS
ON FUN
ACTIVITIES**
WITH YOUR LIBRARY CARD!



**MICHIGAN
ACTIVITY PASS**
www.miactivitypass.org



MON – THUR: 10 AM TO 8 PM

FRI: 10 AM TO 5 PM

SAT: 10 AM TO 4 PM

SUN: CLOSED

BRIDGMANLIBRARY.COM

4460 Lake Street
Bridgman, MI 49106
Ph: 269-465-3663
Email: bpl@bridgmanlibrary.com

**Find a full calendar of events and additional program information on the library website at BridgmanLibrary.com.
Registration is not required unless noted.**

ADULT PROGRAMS

CRAFT CONNECTIONS

JAN 21, FEB 18, MAR 18, APR 15, 2 PM

A different make & take craft every month. Perfect for adults and homeschooled teens! Ages 13+

WAR OF THE WORLDS WITH WILLIAM HAZELGROVE

FEB 11, 6 PM

In *“Dead Air: The Night that Orson Welles Terrified America”*, Author William Hazelgrove illustrates how Welles turned six seconds of radio silence (dead air) into absolute horror that caused massive panic in the United States.

CAST IRON COOKING

MAR 11, 6 PM via Zoom

Mary Spencer, Culinary Instructor and Owner of Taste: A Cook’s Place, will be on Zoom to teach us how to cook with cast iron. Program recipes and Zoom link will be posted to the library’s website. Come along for the fun and none of the mess!

TECH DEMYSTIFIED FOR SENIORS

APR 24, 6 PM

Get answers to general tech questions! We will explain how email and the internet work and how to keep your information safe online.

If you have specific questions about your personal devices, we ask that you please schedule a one-on-one tech help appointment by calling the library.

Adult Programs

at Bridgman Public Library

Chair Yoga	Knit n' Yarn	Roots to Remember	Alzheimer's Caregivers
Mondays 9:00am	Mondays 1:00pm & 3rd Tuesday 6:00pm	1st Tuesdays 5:00pm	Last Tuesday of the month 2:00pm
Artplay	BPL Book Group	Open Craft Time	On the go Legal Self Help
1st Wednesdays 6:00pm	2nd Wednesday of the month 5:30pm	3rd Wednesday of the month 4:00–6:00pm NEW TIME!	1st Thursdays 5:00–7:30pm

WAR OF THE WORLDS

with author: William Hazelgrove

February 11th

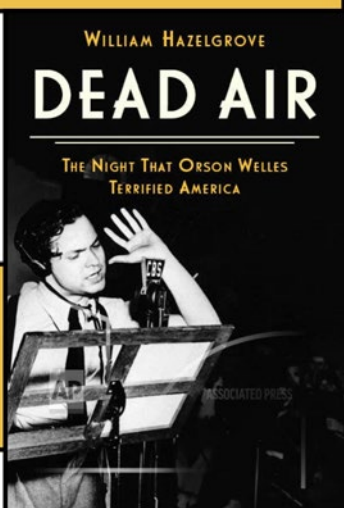
6:00pm

Welles turned six seconds of radio silence—dead air—into absolute horror, changing the way the world would view media forever, and making himself one of the most famous men in America.

WILLIAM HAZELGROVE

DEAD AIR

THE NIGHT THAT ORSON WELLES TERRIFIED AMERICA





BRIDGMAN PUBLIC LIBRARY

FAMILY PROGRAMS – ALL AGES

FAMILY BOARD GAME NIGHT

JAN 9, 6 PM

Bring the family and join us for a fun night of board games! We have a small selection of games in our Library of Things, or bring your own. All ages.

GHOST HUNT AT THE LIBRARY

JAN 25, 5:30 PM

Ever wondered what ghost hunting on TV is really like? Participants will get to use tools of the trade and see if the library is really haunted! Ages 9+

CRAFTING FOR VALENTINE'S DAY

FEB 1, 11:30 AM – 3:30 PM

Drop in for an extravaganza of make & take Valentine's Day crafts. Ages 13+

VALENTINE'S DAY CHOCOLATES

FEB 8, 1 PM

Make that special someone a hand-crafted chocolate flower for Valentine's Day. First come, first served. All ages.

MAGIC THE GATHERING NIGHT

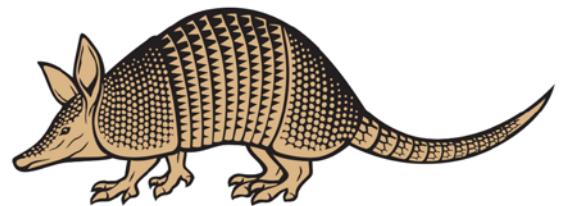
FEB 27, 4-5:30 PM

Calling all Magic players! We are hosting a Commander/EDH night. Players will be matched based on skill level. For beginners to CEDH Masters. Please bring a Commander Legal Deck. Ages 9+

Zoolution Zoo-to-You Program



March 22, 1:00pm



SPACE IS LIMITED, REGISTRATION IS REQUIRED

NERF NITE

MAR 13, 5 – 7:30 PM

Join us for a night filled with Nerf fun for kids and adults alike. Bring your blaster, we'll provide the darts. Ages 6+

ZOOVOLUTION ZOO-TO-YOU PROGRAM

MAR 22, 1 PM

Kayla Kolberg from Zoolution will bring some animal friends to this fun, educational program. Space is limited. **Registration required.** Please sign up on our program calendar on the library's website. All ages.



YOUTH PROGRAMS

HANDS-ON SCIENCE BOAT BUILDING

MAR 8, 12 PM

Hands on science is back! We will build boats out of random household materials and see which one can hold the most weight before sinking.
 Ages 5 – 12

POKÉMON DECK BUILDINGWORKSHOP

APR 12, 11 AM

A hands-on workshop about building consistent decks that play well in the Pokémon Trading Card Game. Knowledge of the game is required. Please bring your own cards. Ages 9 – 12

Early Literacy

at Bridgman Public Library

Little Explorers	Toddler n' Me	Baby & Me	Evening Storytime
2nd & 4th Mondays 11:00am	Tuesdays 9:30am & 11:30am	Wednesdays 10:30am	1st & 3rd Thursdays 6:00pm
	Storytime	Baby & Me Art	
	Tuesdays 10:30am	Last Wednesday of the month 10:30am	

Youth Programs

at Bridgman Public Library

Pawsitive Reading	Pokémon Card League	D & D
2nd Tuesdays of the month 3:30 – 4:30pm	Every Tuesday 4:00 – 5:00pm	2nd & 4th Wednesdays 4:00 – 5:00pm
sign up for a slot by phone or at the desk		

DISPLAY CASE

If you would like to showcase a hobby or collection in our display case, please call the library at 269-465-3663.

LIBRARY EMAIL NEWS

Stay in the know! Sign up to receive library emails on all of our upcoming programs and events. Register on the library website at BridgmanLibrary.com.

HOURS

Mon – Thur
 10 AM TO 8 PM

Friday
 10 AM TO 5 PM

Saturday
 10 AM TO 4 PM

Sunday
 CLOSED

LIBRARY BOARD

President
 Ed Valauskas

Vice-President
 Rick Fuller

Secretary
 Sue Collins

Treasurer
 Jim Kole

Trustee
 Sue Janoskey

Trustee
 Aaron Noll

Trustee
 John Wilk

Trustee
 Catherine Worcester

9964 GAST ROAD, BRIDGMAN, MI 49106

BridgmanSchools.com

Office: 269-465-5432

Fax: 269-466-0221

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U.S. POSTAGE
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ST. JOSEPH, MI
PERMIT #29

CITY OF BRIDGMAN 2025 TRASH & RECYCLING SCHEDULE

2025 City of Bridgman Trash & Recycling Pickup

January

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
			1	2	3	4
5	6	7	8	9	10	11
12	13	14	15	16	17	18
19	20	21	22	23	24	25
26	27	28	29	30	31	

February

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
						1
2	3	4	5	6	7	8
9	10	11	12	13	14	15
16	17	18	19	20	21	22
23	24	25	26	27	28	

March

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
						1
2	3	4	5	6	7	8
9	10	11	12	13	14	15
16	17	18	19	20	21	22
23	24	25	26	27	28	29
30	31					

April

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
		1	2	3	4	5
6	7	8	9	10	11	12
13	14	15	16	17	18	19
20	21	22	23	24	25	26
27	28	29	30			

May

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
				1	2	3
4	5	6	7	8	9	10
11	12	13	14	15	16	17
18	19	20	21	22	23	24
25	26	27	28	29	30	31

June

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
8	9	10	11	12	13	14
15	16	17	18	19	20	21
22	23	24	25	26	27	28
29	30					

July

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
		1	2	3	4	5
6	7	8	9	10	11	12
13	14	15	16	17	18	19
20	21	22	23	24	25	26
27	28	29	30	31		

August

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
					1	2
3	4	5	6	7	8	9
10	11	12	13	14	15	16
17	18	19	20	21	22	23
24	25	26	27	28	29	30
31						

September

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
	1	2	3	4	5	6
7	8	9	10	11	12	13
14	15	16	17	18	19	20
21	22	23	24	25	26	27
28	29	30				

October

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
			1	2	3	4
5	6	7	8	9	10	11
12	13	14	15	16	17	18
19	20	21	22	23	24	25
26	27	28	29	30	31	

November

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
						1
2	3	4	5	6	7	8
9	10	11	12	13	14	15
16	17	18	19	20	21	22
23	24	25	26	27	28	29
30						

December

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
	1	2	3	4	5	6
7	8	9	10	11	12	13
14	15	16	17	18	19	20
21	22	23	24	25	26	27
28	29	30	31			

- Symbol - Trash and Recycle day
- Blue is Trash pick-up day - WEST OF RED ARROW TO LAKE MICH.
- Pink is Trash pick-up day - EAST OF RED ARROW TO GAST RD

Large Trash Pick-Up will be
May 12 & 14 and September 15 & 17



For recycling information and helpful tips visit:
www.lakeshorerecycle.com/recycling-info