

FALL 2026



# Bridgman

## COMMUNITY BUZZ



PHOTO COURTESY OF: KERI HASKINS

### **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 Thomas Reed

Dear Bridgman Community,

I've been honored to serve as Superintendent over the past few months and have appreciated the opportunity to learn more about the district and community. It has become obvious very quickly that Bridgman Public Schools and the community that surrounds our schools are a special place.

It is hard to believe that we are several weeks into the 2026-2027 school year! I've been able to spend time in all three buildings and I've seen students settling into routines, teachers building relationships, and learning taking place immediately. We're also well into our fall athletic seasons, with football, volleyball, cross-country, soccer, and swimming all having seen success this year. Beyond the classroom and field, our students continue to have opportunities to participate in music, the arts, clubs, and other activities that make the school experience about much more than academics alone.

Our top priority remains student learning. As our building principals have highlighted in their articles, Bridgman students continue to perform at some of the highest levels in Berrien County and across the state. That success is a testament to the work of our students, teachers, staff, and families, as well as the support of the greater Bridgman community.

**One of my goals coming into Bridgman has been to meet individually with employees to learn what they value about Bridgman, what challenges they see, and what they hope never changes.** These conversations have been one of the most valuable parts of my first few months. I've found that Bridgman is a district with high expectations, strong relationships, and a community deeply invested in its students and schools.

I've spent a lot of time meeting with our staff, and I'd like to extend that same invitation to our community. If you'd like to sit down, introduce yourself, share your perspective on our schools, or simply talk about Bridgman, please reach me at [treed@bridgmanschools.com](mailto:treed@bridgmanschools.com) or by calling 269-466-4220. I'd be happy to find a time to meet.

Our job now, as a school and community, is to build on our strong foundation while planning for what Bridgman Public Schools will look like in a changing future. That means protecting the things that make Bridgman special while continuing to look for ways to improve the opportunities we provide our students.

I'm excited and honored to be a part of that process with each of you.

***Go Bees!***

***Thomas Reed, Superintendent***



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

# THE AQUATIC CENTER



## IS NOW OPEN!

*The pool is ready, programs are getting started, and we can't wait to see you! Visit [BridgmanPool.com](http://BridgmanPool.com) for details on swim lessons, aqua fit, and the Sea Bees Swim Club!*

After months of construction, planning, and anticipation, the Bridgman Aquatic Center is ready to welcome you back! Construction projects always seem to take longer than expected, and this one was no exception. But as the saying goes, good things come to those who wait—and in this case, the wait was absolutely worth it!

Our facility has been receiving the care and improvements needed to make it a wonderful place for families, swimmers, and community members. We are excited to see the pool filled with activity again and to offer opportunities for people of all ages to enjoy the water, learn new skills, and stay active.

### BRIDGMAN BOARD OF EDUCATION

#### **President**

Eric Ramso

#### **Vice President**

Wayne Hall

#### **Secretary**

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#### **Treasurer**

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# BRIDGMAN PUBLIC SCHOOLS



## Elementary School News

by Lori Graves, Elementary School Principal

As we begin the 2026–27 school year, we are focused on strengthening our school through deep connection, reliable partnerships and high expectations. Guided by a dedicated staff, we are ready to deliver engaging, tailored instruction that sharpens critical thinking and supports every student's academic and social growth.

**This year, our efforts are intentionally built around two foundational principles:**

- **Belonging:** Ensuring every student, parent and staff member steps onto campus knowing they are seen, valued and essential to our school family.
- **Hope:** Inspiring students to embrace challenges, learn from setbacks and aim high as they build confidence for a bright future.

Our entire team—teachers, support staff, custodians, bus drivers and kitchen staff—is prepared to keep your children safe and foster a lifelong enthusiasm for learning.

Education is a shared journey, and your voice is vital. We invite you to join us at upcoming school events, conferences and volunteer opportunities. Working together, we will ensure this year is filled with incredible progress, shared achievements and lasting growth. Thank you for partnering with us to make BES an extraordinary place to learn!

## Welcome New Staff Members

**Caitlynn Jean** is excited for the opportunity to serve as our new **School Social Worker**. A fourth-generation Bridgman graduate, she earned her Bachelor's degree in Clinical Social Work from Western Michigan University and her Master's degree in Clinical Social Work from Spring Arbor University. Although this is her first year in the Bridgman school district, this will be her fourth year working in a school setting. Once again, the Bridgman spirit proves, "Once a Bee, always a Bee."

**Kimberly Godush** joins us as a **Special Education Teacher**. She began her education career after serving at a local juvenile justice center. Kimberly is inspired by her grandmother, a former elementary teacher. After working across Berrien and Kalamazoo counties, she is thrilled to teach in Bridgman—the school district her husband, Brett, attended as a child.



Bridgman Elementary  
3891 Lake Street  
Bridgman, MI 49106  
Ph: 269-466-0241  
Fax: 269-466-0248

Kimberly and Brett have three children: Arien, Sophia, and Audrey. Having spent over 20 years visiting local family and enjoying Lake Michigan, working in Bridgman feels like coming home.

*Lori Graves, Elementary School Principal*

# IMPORTANT DATES

**October 16 HALF DAY**  
**November 2-5 BOOK FAIR**

**November 4 & 5, 4:00-7:00 PM**  
**PARENT/TEACHER CONFERENCES**

**November 5 HALF DAY**  
**November 6 HALF DAY**  
**November 25-27 NO SCHOOL**  
**December 21 – January 1 NO SCHOOL**



# FUN RUN

# FUNDRAISER

## October 23

This exciting event promotes fitness and school spirit and raises money to support our students in meaningful ways.

Every dollar raised this year will go directly toward new recess toys, field trips, special activities and classroom requests that enhance learning and make school an even more joyful place.

Thank you for supporting our kids and making these opportunities possible!



# BRIDGMAN PUBLIC SCHOOLS



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

Dear Community Members,

Welcome to the 2026–2027 school year at F.C. Reed Middle School! Our hallways and classrooms are once again buzzing with learning, laughter, and connection. Our mission remains simple: Prepare students socially, emotionally, and academically for Bridgman High School and beyond.

### New Staff Members

We are excited to welcome several new members to the middle school team this year:

- Serenity Livengood, Administrative Assistant
- Sarah Altieri, School Counselor
- David Sokolowski, Grade 5 Special Education Teacher
- John Nicka, Grade 8 Social Studies and Grade 7/8 Exploratory Teacher
- Rose Ruschak-Kapica, Grade 7 Special Education Teacher
- Rebeccah Wedde, Science and Physical Education Long-Term Substitute

Each new faculty member brings unique experiences, talents, and perspectives and we are thrilled to have them join our school community.

### Spring State Assessments

Final results from our Spring 2026 state assessments are also arriving. I'm proud to report there is a lot for our students, staff, families, and community to celebrate! **Across the M-STEP and PSAT 8/9 assessments administered in Grades 5–8, Bridgman students consistently outperformed Berrien County and state averages while also demonstrating strong academic growth.**

Our 2025-2026 Grade 8 results were particularly encouraging as we look at how well we are preparing students for the transition to Bridgman High School. **Eighty-two percent of our students demonstrated proficiency in Social Studies, the highest reported result among Berrien County districts and more than 30 percentage points above the county average.**

On the PSAT 8/9, 85.2% met the Reading and Writing benchmark, compared with 67.2% countywide, while 67.2% met the Math benchmark, compared with 36.1% across the county. Our overall Grade 8 PSAT 8/9 score averaged 938, just two points shy of the highest average in RMS history.

Across the middle school, Bridgman students also exceeded county averages for meeting M-STEP growth targets in both English Language Arts and Math.



**F.C. Reed Middle School**  
10254 California Road  
Bridgman, MI 49106  
Ph: 269-465-5410  
Fax: 269-466-0393

We are incredibly pleased with these results, but I am even more proud of the work behind them. Strong outcomes like these do not happen because of one program, one test, or one year. They are built through great teaching, high expectations, targeted student support, strong family partnerships, and a willingness to continually adjust when students need something different.

They are also built through relationships.

That is why connectedness has been such an important focus as we begin 2026–2027. During these first weeks of school, our teachers have intentionally created opportunities for students to get to know one another, build classroom communities, establish routines, and develop relationships with the adults who will support and challenge them throughout the year.

**At F.C. Reed Middle School, we believe belonging is the foundation that makes everything else possible.** When students know they belong, they are more willing to ask for help, take academic risks, work through challenges, and push themselves beyond what they thought they could do. I often say, **“Relationships before rigor—but never without it.”** Our spring assessment results provide another reminder that we do not have to choose between the two. When students feel connected and supported, we can hold them to rigorous expectations and help them achieve at high levels.

As we look ahead to the fall, our middle school community gives me a tremendous amount of hope for this school year. Hope is not simply believing that everything will work out. It is believing that what we do today can influence what happens tomorrow. Our students can grow. Our staff can learn and adapt. Our school can continue getting better. And when our families, school, and community work together around our kids, we can accomplish some pretty incredible things.

We are proud of where F.C. Reed Middle School is today, but we are even more excited about where we can go next.

F.C. Reed Middle School is *YOUR* community middle school, and our doors are always open to opportunities to strengthen that connection. If you have questions, would like to visit and tour our school, or have an idea for a community collaboration or partnership, please reach out. I am always happy to talk about our school, show you what our students are doing, and explore new ways we can work together.

Your partner in education,

***John Truesdell, Middle School Principal*** 

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# BRIDGMAN PUBLIC SCHOOLS



## Bridgman High School News from Principal Gerald Heath

### Welcome Back!

The beginning of a new school year is always an exciting time. Students are settling

into their classes, building relationships with their teachers, reconnecting with friends, and getting involved in the many opportunities available at Bridgman High School.

Our staff has been working hard to create a positive start to the year, and I have been impressed by the energy throughout the building. We are committed to making sure our students feel connected, supported, and challenged as they work toward their goals.

### Welcome New Staff

We are excited to welcome several new staff members to Bridgman High School this year. Each brings unique experiences, talents, and enthusiasm that will benefit our students and school community.

- **Mrs. Alee Lamica** joins our English Department as a **9th Grade English Teacher**. She previously taught 8th- and 9th-grade English in Dallas, Texas, and holds degrees from Arizona State University and Johns Hopkins University.
- **Ms. Olivia Schroeder** joins us as our new **Spanish Teacher**. She recently graduated from the University of Michigan with a degree in Spanish Language and English Language Development.

- **Mr. Preston Nichols** joins the Math Department and will teach **Algebra I and Advanced Geometry**. He recently graduated from Grand Valley State University with a degree in Mathematics Education.
- **Mrs. Rose Kapica** joins Bridgman Public Schools as a **Special Education Teacher**, serving both the middle and high school. She brings more than 16 years of special education experience and most recently taught with the South LaPorte County Special Education Cooperative.
- **Mr. Dan Buckenmeyer** joins us as our new **Business Teacher**. Dan earned his bachelor's degree from DePaul University and his MBA from the University of Chicago. He has experience teaching at the college level, where he taught an Introduction to Entrepreneurship course at Notre Dame University for two years.

Please join me in giving Alee, Olivia, Preston, Rose, and Dan a warm Bridgman welcome!



Bridgman High School  
 9964 Gast Road  
 Bridgman, MI 49106  
 Ph: 269-465-6848  
 Fax: 269-466-0355



## Building a Culture of Reading

Our English Department recently partnered with the Bridgman Public Library to kick off our independent reading initiative.

Students visited tables of books organized by genre and spent the hour “book tasting,” exploring different titles and creating their own to-read lists. Our students begin each day in English class by reading books they have selected themselves. Our goal is to help students develop not only stronger reading skills, but also a lifelong habit and love of reading.

## Homecoming Week

One of the biggest highlights of the fall is right around the corner! **Homecoming Week will take place October 5–10**, and we are looking forward to seeing our students and the community show their Bridgman pride. (See the schedule of events on the right.) I hope to see you at the football game and parade!

# IMPORTANT DATES



## Oct 9 – Homecoming Parade

5:00 pm

Scan for Parade Route!

## Oct 9 – Homecoming Football Game

7:00 pm vs. Muskegon Heights Academy

## Oct 10 – Homecoming Dance 8:00 pm

## Oct 14 – PSAT Test (Grades 9-11) 1/2 Day Grades 9-12

## Oct 16 – Career Pathway Day (Grade 9)

## Oct 16 – 1/2 Day Grades All Students End of 1st Marking Period

## Oct 20 – Parent/Teacher Conferences

4:00 - 7:00 pm Bridgman High School

Drop-in; first come, first served

## Nov 5 & 6 – 1/2 Day All Students

## Nov 25-27 – Thanksgiving Break

## Dec 15 – End of 2nd Marking Period

## Dec 16 & 17 – Exams & 1/2 Day

## Dec 21-Jan 1 – Winter Break

## Jan 18 – No School

## Feb 12 – 1/2 Day All Students

## Feb 15 – No School

*continued on page 10*



# BRIDGMAN PUBLIC SCHOOLS

## Career Pathway Day

On Friday, October 16, Berrien RESA will host a Career Pathway Day for our freshmen. This event provides students with an opportunity to explore different careers, learn more about educational and training opportunities, and connect their interests and skills to potential careers. Experiences like this are an important part of helping our students think about life after high school and begin planning for their future.

## Celebrating Academic Excellence

We are proud to share that **Bridgman High School has been ranked #20 in the state of Michigan and #1 in Berrien County by U.S. News & World Report!** This recognition reflects the hard work and dedication of our students and staff, as well as the tremendous support our families and community provide to our schools.

We are also extremely proud of our students performance on last year's Advanced Placement (AP) exams. They took **86 AP exams, and an impressive 92% earned a passing score.** A passing score on an AP exam can allow students to earn credit at many colleges and universities.

This outstanding performance demonstrates the commitment our students have to challenging themselves academically and the dedication of our teachers who help prepare them for success at the next level. We are incredibly proud of their accomplishments and look forward to continuing to provide students with opportunities to take rigorous courses and earn college credit while still in high school.

Congratulations to our students and staff for these outstanding achievements!

## A Season of Opportunity

There is a lot happening at Bridgman High School this fall. From Homecoming and athletics to academics, career exploration, clubs, and activities, **our students have countless opportunities to get involved** and make the most of their high school experience.

I encourage students to take advantage of these opportunities and try something new. Some of the most meaningful high school experiences happen outside of the traditional classroom.

I am grateful for our dedicated staff, supportive families, excellent community, and most importantly, our students who make Bridgman High School such a special place. Thank you for helping us make Bridgman a great place to learn and grow.

**For up-to-date information,** please visit our website at [BridgmanSchools.com](https://BridgmanSchools.com) and click on the "High School" link. The BHS page includes daily announcements, the school and athletic calendar, student information, and links to our social media.

As always, feel free to reach out to me at any time by emailing me at [gheath@bridgmanschools.com](mailto:gheath@bridgmanschools.com) or calling 269-465-6848.

I hope everyone has a wonderful fall season. **Go Bees!**

**Gerald Heath, High School Principal**





## Get Michigan School Meals today

Michigan School Meals include one **free breakfast** and one **free lunch** per day for students at participating schools.

Eating Michigan School Meals not only saves you time and money, it also:

- Enables schools to purchase local foods
- Provides students with a healthy, balanced meal
- Allows opportunities for children to try new foods
- Supports students' learning and ability to focus throughout the school day



Visit [bit.ly/EatMISchoolMeals](https://bit.ly/EatMISchoolMeals) or scan the QR code to learn more.



# BRIDGMAN PUBLIC SCHOOLS



## Building Successful Student Athletes, Stronger Schools and Connected Communities

from Athletic Director & Student Services Erik Haskins

At Bridgman Public Schools, we know that a student's education extends far beyond the classroom. Athletics provide an important opportunity for students to grow as learners, teammates, leaders and members of the community. The lessons learned through participation in school sports can have a positive impact on classroom success, social engagement, school spirit and community involvement.

Participation in athletics helps students develop habits that support academic achievement. Student-athletes learn the importance of preparation, time management, goal setting, perseverance and accountability. They experience firsthand that improvement often comes through consistent effort and a willingness to learn from mistakes. These same skills can transfer directly to the classroom, helping students approach academic challenges with confidence and determination.

Sports also create meaningful opportunities for students to build relationships. Being part of a team teaches students how to communicate, cooperate, encourage others and work toward a shared goal. For many students, athletics provide a sense of belonging and a chance to connect with peers who share common interests. These relationships strengthen students' social networks and contribute to a more positive school experience.

When students compete for Bridgman, they represent more than themselves. They become part of something larger—the Bridgman Public Schools community. Athletic events bring students, families, staff, alumni and community members together to celebrate student achievement. The excitement and pride surrounding our teams can strengthen school spirit and create connections across grade levels and throughout the school community.

School athletics also provide a bridge between our schools and the greater Bridgman community. Games and activities give families and community members opportunities to come together, support students and celebrate the values we share. Student-athletes have opportunities to demonstrate leadership and service, showing that being part of a team also means being part of a community.

Ultimately, athletics are about much more than winning and losing. They are an extension of the educational experience at Bridgman Public Schools. Through athletics, students develop character, relationships, confidence and a sense of responsibility that can serve them well throughout their lives.

When our students succeed—in the classroom, on the playing field, in their relationships and in their communities—we all succeed.





## Bridgman live streams select athletic events through Hudl!

Simply go to <https://fan.hudl.com/bridgmanbees> to watch.

## BridgmanAthletics.com for schedules, rosters & updates!

Pay online or at the gate via cash, card or mobile payments for all High School & Middle School **HOME** athletic events!

### 2026–2027 TICKET PRICES

- High School events \$6.00
- Middle School events \$4.00
- Senior Citizens (65 years +) Free
- **Current Bridgman High School Students**  
Free admission for all home district athletic events
- **Current Bridgman Middle & Elementary Students**  
Free admission for all home district athletic events  
**ONLY IF** accompanied by a parent/guardian.  
Otherwise, the full ticket price.
- **Family Bargain Card:** 20 tickets for \$44.  
(Previously issued paper cards are still valid.)

# GO FAN<sup>®</sup>

**FOR TICKETS GO TO**  
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App Store

GET IT ON  
Google Play



# BRIDGMAN PUBLIC SCHOOLS



## Bridgman Education Foundation

from the Chairman, George Lepeniotis

Welcome to fall in Bridgman! Cooler nights, changing leaves and of course, back to school! While summer will be missed, we're excited to start the new school year.

### Election Results

On behalf of the Bridgman Education Foundation Board, thank you for your overwhelming support of our schools during the May 5th election. **Both proposals supporting Bridgman Public Schools passed by more than 80%, an incredible reflection of how strongly our community values its schools.**

We're proud to be a part of this Hive! Your support will help Bridgman Schools maintain excellent facilities for our students for years to come.

### Bridgman McDonald's Giveback Night

**We also want to thank Bridgman McDonald's and the Awad family for hosting our first Giveback Night.** Despite the rainy weather, our community showed up in a big way. In addition to a portion of the evening's sales being donated to the Foundation, many of you made additional contributions of your own. We are incredibly grateful for your generosity and for the continued support of our students and schools. We love partnering with local businesses and community members who share that commitment.

### Outgoing & Incoming Board Members

This fall also brings a few changes to our Board. We say a heartfelt thank you to **Joy Langfeldt** and **Karen Heath** as they complete their terms. We're grateful for the time, energy and support they have given the Foundation. At the same time, we're excited to welcome **Lisa Hansen**, Manager of United Federal Credit Union in Bridgman, and **James Salliotte**, Director of Planning, Scheduling and Outage at Cook Nuclear Plant. Our trustees generously give their time, talent and resources to help make the Foundation a strong resource for Bridgman students.

### Continuing Our Support for Bridgman Elementary

The goal of the Foundation is to help financially support Bridgman when an important educational need arises. Last year, the Foundation approved funding for a school counselor at Bridgman Elementary. As the district continues navigating budget changes following the tax tribunal, our Board unanimously voted to continue that support for the 2026-27 school year.

We believe strongly in providing resources for students and families at the very beginning of their educational journey. We are grateful for the work Mrs.



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

Graves and the entire Bridgman Elementary School team do every day and are honored to partner with them in meeting this crucial need.

Of course, none of this can happen without your support. To learn more about the Bridgman Education Foundation or how you can get involved, visit

[BridgmanFoundation.org](http://BridgmanFoundation.org) or reach out to us anytime. Thank you for continuing to support our students, our schools and our Hive!

Let's keep Bridgman moving forward, together!

***George Lepeniotis, Foundation Chairman***





# CITY OF BRIDGMAN



## City of Bridgman News

from the City Manager, Debbie Lambrix

Fall has arrived, and while the pace around town may feel a little different after another busy summer, things certainly haven't slowed down at City Hall.

Over the past year, we've completed projects, invested in our infrastructure and continued moving larger projects toward construction. Much like maintaining a home, maintaining a city means there's always another project waiting its turn.

Much of the work happens behind the scenes. Before a project reaches construction, there may be months of grant applications, engineering, permits, budgeting, legal review and coordination with other agencies. There are also everyday issues that may never become a "project" but still require staff time and attention.

One of the less visible projects completed this year was the **cleaning and recoating of the interior of the City's water tower**. This work protects the tank, extends its useful life and helps avoid much larger and more expensive problems down the road.

After approximately 15 months of work, the **City's Master Plan update** is also nearing completion. I want to thank the Planning Commission, Building Official Brad Mattner and Williams & Works for the many hours devoted to the process. The finished plan will help guide Bridgman's decisions for years to come.

Looking ahead, one of our largest upcoming investments is the nearly \$1.5 million **Willard Avenue and Mathieu Street reconstruction project**, with construction anticipated in 2027. Significant grant funding is helping make the project possible while reducing the amount that must be funded locally. Watch for a more details about this project in the winter edition of the Buzz.

There have been changes *inside* City Hall this year as well. We've welcomed new employees, watched others move on to their next chapters, and continued providing the day-to-day services our residents depend on. Our staff has done a great job keeping things moving through a year of change.

October also marks one year since I stepped into the City Manager position. It's certainly been a busy first year, and while municipal government is familiar territory for me, the City Manager's chair brings a different view. In a small city, no two days are quite the same, and I'm proud of what our staff has accomplished!

Following the November election, we will say goodbye to **Mayor Jan Trapani, Mayor Pro-Tem Sam Stine** and **Council Member Bill Boyd** as they conclude their service on the City Council. I want to thank each of them for the time, commitment, and perspective they have brought to the Council and our community. I sincerely appreciate their service and dedication to Bridgman.



As we head toward 2027, there is plenty more ahead. We'll continue looking for opportunities to improve our community, stretch our local dollars through grants and outside funding, and keep moving the projects and priorities that matter to Bridgman forward.

Thank you to our City employees, Council members, boards and commissions, volunteers, businesses and residents who each play a role in making Bridgman what it is.

There is always more to do, but we're making progress, one project, one grant and, occasionally, one very large stack of paperwork at a time.

*Debbie Lambrix, City Manager*

## Honoring Beth McNeil

The City of Bridgman is proud to recognize Beth McNeil as the recipient of the **2026 Dorothea Crocker Lifetime Volunteer Award**, honoring her 20 years of dedicated service to our community.

Beth's involvement began in 2006 with the **Economic Growth Alliance**. When the organization merged with the Chamber of Commerce in 2014 to become the **Greater Bridgman Area Chamber of Commerce and Growth Alliance**, Beth remained a key leader—and she continues as an active member today. She also serves on the **City of Bridgman Corridor Improvement Authority**, lending her time and expertise to efforts that strengthen our local economy.

Over the years, Beth has donated countless hours organizing and staffing many of the town's favorite traditions:

- **Local Festivals:** Helped organize and run the Wine Festival at Weko Beach and later the Makers Trail Festival.



- **Holiday Celebrations:** Serves as a longtime volunteer for Holiday Village, including helping manage its popular pet parade.
- **Community Events:** Actively contributes to Celebrate Bridgman and local parades.

Remarkably, Beth has accomplished all of this while operating her own local business, Paws to Wash!

Beth's love for her hometown is evident in everything she does. Her years of service represent the exact spirit the Dorothea Crocker Lifetime Volunteer Award was created to honor.

Congratulations, Beth, and thank you for everything you have given to Bridgman!



# CITY OF BRIDGMAN



## It's Election Season, Bridgman! from the City Clerk, Kaci Jones

Whether you plan to vote in person on Election Day, take advantage of early voting, or vote from home, make sure your voice is heard! Here are your options for casting your ballot:

### Vote Early (In Person)

**WHEN:** Saturday, October 24 – Sunday, November 1, 2026

**WHERE:** Lake Charter Township Hall, 3220 W. Shawnee Road, Bridgman

### Vote by Absentee Ballot

Request an absentee ballot or check your registration status by contacting Bridgman City Hall at 269-465-5144 or visiting [Bridgman.org](https://Bridgman.org).

### Vote on Election Day

**WHEN:** Tuesday, November 3, 2026

**WHERE:** Bridgman City Hall, 9765 Maple Street

However you choose to vote—early, absentee, or on Election Day—make a plan and cast your ballot!

If you have any questions or want to know more, please email me at [cityclerk@bridgman.org](mailto:cityclerk@bridgman.org) or call City Hall.

*Kaci Jones, City Clerk*



# City of Bridgman Awarded \$5,000 Grant for Rain Garden Pilot Program

from the Parks & Recreation Director, Sara Pendergast

The City of Bridgman is excited to announce a **\$5,000 grant from The Heart of Cook and the Berrien Community Foundation to launch a residential Rain Garden Pilot Program.**

Through this grant, the City will provide **50 rain garden plant kits** to local landowners interested in reducing neighborhood flooding and managing stormwater.

## What Is a Rain Garden?

A rain garden is a shallow, landscaped basin designed to collect and absorb rainwater. By soaking up runoff, rain gardens minimize standing water and create vital habitats for pollinators and local wildlife.



The City aims to partner directly with **property owners dealing with ongoing drainage issues.** Applications for the kits will be available during the meeting.

If you have experienced flooding or ongoing stormwater issues we encourage you to attend the informational session and learn how a rain garden may be able to help.

This program is a great opportunity for Bridgman residents to take a hands-on approach to stormwater management while adding attractive, environmentally friendly landscape features to their home and community.

For questions, please contact the City of Bridgman Parks & Recreation Department at 269-465-5144.

## Informational Meeting

**Date: December 12, 2026**

**Time: 10:00 am – 12:00 pm**

**Location: Weko Beach House**

Topics will include:

- How rain gardens work and their local environmental benefits
- Simple steps to prepare a shallow basin on your property
- Technical assistance and expert support available to participants
- Program timeline and how to apply



# CITY OF BRIDGMAN



## Treasurer's Update from Debbie Wishart

As we approach the fall season, I would like to remind residents of several important property tax dates and provide a few helpful tips to make sure your payments are processed correctly.

The deadline to pay 2026 summer property taxes without penalty was September 14, 2026. Past-due bills can be paid directly at City Hall through March 1, 2027.

### Address or Mortgage Changes

If your mailing address or mortgage company has recently changed, please notify City Hall as soon as possible. Keeping this information current helps ensure your tax bill is sent to the correct location.

### When Paying by Check

When mailing or delivering your property tax payment, please take a moment to carefully review your check before submitting it.

Please make sure that:

- The numerical amount is correct.
- The written amount matches the numerical amount.
- The amount reflects the payment you intend to make.
- Your parcel number is correct if included with your payment.

We frequently receive checks with transposed numbers or mismatched written and numerical amounts. These errors can require additional processing and may delay your payment.



## WINTER PROPERTY TAXES DUE

**2026 winter tax bills are due February 16, 2027 by 4 pm to avoid penalties. Be sure to leave ample time when paying by mail (postmarks are not accepted).**

You may pay at City Hall, by mail or online at **Bridgman.org** through **March 1, 2027**. After that, payments must be made at the Berrien County Treasurers Office at 701 Main St. in St. Joseph.



# Watching Our Dunes Grow

submitted by Brad Mattner, Bridgman Shoreline Committee Member



The shoreline at Weko Beach is always changing. Lake Michigan's water levels, waves, wind, storms, and vegetation all influence the shape of the beach and dunes. Through a partnership with the Michigan Coastal Management Program and Michigan State University's Coastal Processes and Geomorphology Lab, the Bridgman Shoreline Committee is helping document those changes through a community science pilot project.

The study focuses on the recovering foredunes at the south end of Weko Beach. Foredunes are the first dunes that form immediately behind the beach. During Lake Michigan's recent high-water period, waves eroded much of this dune area.

Now that lake levels have receded, the beach has widened and dune grass is beginning to recolonize the exposed sand. As wind moves sand across the beach, the grass slows it down and traps it, gradually helping new dunes form.

## How the Surveys Work

Members of the Bridgman Shoreline Committee have been trained to survey the study area using an iPad equipped with LiDAR (Light Detection and Ranging) technology. LiDAR uses light pulses to measure elevation and create a three-dimensional model of the ground.

The initial survey was conducted in October 2025 using both an iPad and a drone. The study area is surveyed approximately every two months, as weather and site conditions allow. During each survey, committee members place the ground control points, scan the area, and send the collected information to the MSU team for processing. The markers are removed after the survey is completed.

As additional surveys are completed, elevation maps will show where sand is accumulating or being lost and how the foredunes are changing. This information will help Bridgman better understand and care for one of our community's most treasured natural resources.



# CITY OF BRIDGMAN POLICE DEPARTMENT



The City of Bridgman is a special place, and the partnership between our residents and the police department plays a major role in keeping it that way. The men and women of the Bridgman Police Department are committed to serving our community with professionalism, fairness, and respect.

We encourage residents to stay engaged, communicate with us, and continue working alongside us to keep our neighborhoods safe.

*Chief Dan Unruh*

## OVERNIGHT PARKING

**Parking is not allowed on city streets from 2:00 - 6:00 AM from November 1 to March 31.**

This helps ensure streets remain clear for snow removal and emergency operations. Residents may request a parking pass for overnight guests—weather conditions will be considered when officers issue passes. Optionally, if you are hosting a number of overnight guests, consider having them park in the large free parking lot to the south of City Hall on Maple Street.



## HALLOWEEN SAFETY

With Halloween right around the corner, please take extra precautions during trick-or-treating hours **(5:30-7:00 PM on October 31)**. Expect heavy pedestrian traffic, excited children, and crowded neighborhood streets.

### Tips for Drivers:

- **Slow Down:** Reduce speed significantly in residential neighborhoods.
- **Stay Focused:** Put away cell phones and eliminate distractions.
- **Yield to Pedestrians:** Watch closely for children crossing unexpectedly or walking along roadways.

### Tips for Parents & Trick-or-Treaters:

- Stick to sidewalks and designated crosswalks whenever possible.
- Carry flashlights or wear reflective gear to stay visible after dusk.

Taking a few extra minutes to slow down and stay alert helps keep Bridgman's children and families safe this fall!



The Bridgman Police Department provides 24-hour coverage, along with certain services such as: **vehicle lockouts, property checks, bank escorts, background checks and unwanted/expired medication disposal.** We also have several dedicated part-time and reserve police officers available to assist us when needed.



## School Bus Safety Tips for Drivers: Stop Means Stop!

**The majority of bus-related deaths and injuries involve pedestrians - mostly children - who are struck by a bus or injured when they are exiting the bus to cross traffic.**

- Slow down and prepare to stop when a slowing bus has its overhead yellow lights flashing.
- Stop at least 20 feet away from buses when red lights are flashing, unless driving in the opposite direction on a divided highway.
- Slow down in or near school and residential areas.
- Look for clues-such as safety patrols, crossing guards, bicycles, and playgrounds-that indicate children might be in the area.
- Watch for children between parked cars and other objects.

**Drivers should slow down and prepare to stop when the yellow flashing lights are on and **MUST STOP** when flashing red lights are activated on school buses. This is mandatory on all 2-way streets and multi-lane highways.**





# CITY OF BRIDGMAN

## Remember to Rake 'em Right!

As the nights become cooler, we are reminded that leaves will be falling before we know it. The fall cleanup schedule is included on the next page, available at City Hall *and* on the city's website. The following are important reminders and requirements about the leaf collection program.

- Rake leaves curbside to the grassy area between the street and the sidewalk or to the curb. Never put leaf piles in the street. Leaves placed in the street will wash down storm drains where they can cause algae, clogging and water quality impacts. Leaves will also clog drain inlets and cause flooding.
- **Collections occur on Monday during pickup weeks between 7:00 am and 4:00 pm. Collection will start on the east side of the city and work westerly. Crews will make one pass each week through the entire city.**
- Leaf collection is weather dependent. If there is a significant snowfall, pick up will be delayed and/or suspended.
- The final brush chipping and curbside leaf bag collection will be November 23. Collection will resume in April 2027.
- Leaf piles do not kill grass, although they may cause it to temporarily discolor. To prevent grass from discoloring rake your leaves just prior to the scheduled pickup date.
- After the loose-leaf collection period ends, leaves are to be placed in biodegradable paper yard waste bags. The bags should weigh no more than 50 pounds each when filled and will be collected as part of the normal curbside-composting program in the spring. Residents may drop off leaf bags in the designated area behind the Department of Public Services Garage located at 9825 Maple Street (blue building south of city hall) any time of year.
- Residents are reminded that **leaf piles mixed with grass trimmings, branches, brush or other non-leaf content will not be collected.**





**Bagged Leaves & Brush Pick-up** are indicated in **GREEN** on the calendar. The city requires the use of biodegradable paper leaf bags. City workers will not pick up leaf bags made from any other material. Please limit to yard cleanup.

City workers will spend no more than 15 minutes at each property. If you have a large quantity of brush, arrangements can be made for you to haul the brush to the city composting site. Commercial tree removal/trimmings will not be picked up and should be disposed of by the tree service hired.

Remember the storage bins located at the DPS building are open for City residents for brush and leaf bag drop off.

**Leaf & brush burning within the city is prohibited**

**Curb-side Leaf Pickup** is indicated in **ORANGE** on the calendar. The leaf vacuum will begin on Mondays on the east side of the city and attempt to complete one pass per week through the city. Leaves must be raked to the roadside/curb. **To prevent flooding from leaves clogging the storm drains DO NOT rake leaves into roadways.**

**Christmas Tree Pick Up** – January 4th and 11th, 2027 (weather permitting)

**Large Trash Pick Up** – September 21, 2026, WEST OF RED ARROW HWY and September 23, 2026, EAST OF RED ARROW HWY. Items not accepted include large plastic drums, tires, yard waste, hazardous waste, medical waste and construction material. A complete list of accepted and not accepted items is available on the city's website and at City Hall.

Last day for the season will be November 25th. Service will resume April 2027.

Lakeshore Recycling & Disposal also will pick up your extra-large items for a fee. To schedule such a pickup, call Lakeshore Recycling & Disposal at (269) 231-5623.

## 2026 FALL CLEAN-UP SCHEDULE

**NOTE:**

**BAGGED LEAF & BRUSH WILL BE PICKED UP ON THE SAME DAY**

### SEPTEMBER

|    |    |    |    |    |    |    |
|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|
|    |    | 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

|    |    |    |    |    |    |    |
|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|
|    |    |    |    | 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

|    |    |    |    |    |    |    |
|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|
| 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 |    |    |    |    |    |

|  |                                       |
|--|---------------------------------------|
|  | <b>BAGGED LEAF &amp; BRUSH PICKUP</b> |
|  | <b>CURBSIDE LEAF PICKUP</b>           |
|  | <b>LARGE TRASH PICKUP - WEST SIDE</b> |
|  | <b>LARGE TRASH PICKUP - EAST SIDE</b> |



# CITY OF BRIDGMAN

## The Cost of Keeping Bridgman Moving Making Every Road Dollar Count

**We hear it often:** *Why is the City maintaining one street when another looks worse? Why can't we just pave them all?*

Maintaining streets is a lot like taking care of a home. You repair a few shingles before replacing the whole roof, and you paint the siding before the wood rots. Spending a small amount early prevents a much larger bill later. Our roads work the exact same way.

### The Numbers Behind Bridgman's Roads

Bridgman maintains 14.2 miles of city streets (5.76 miles of Major Streets and 8.44 miles of Local Streets).

**State Funding:** In the 2025–2026 fiscal year, the City received approximately \$367,875 in state revenue for street maintenance—about \$25,900 per mile.

**Routine Expenses:** That money doesn't go entirely to repaving. It also covers snow and ice removal, pothole patching, traffic signs, pavement markings, drainage repairs, equipment, fuel, and labor. Part of the local street fund also pays off debt from past road projects.

### Preserve Now or Rebuild Later

Roads have a limited window where low-cost preventive maintenance can add years of useful life to a structurally sound surface. That's why the City uses treatments like chip sealing and fog sealing on roads that are still in decent shape.

In 2025, the City spent approximately \$72,000 on pavement preservation work in Stelter Farms, Pearl/Papalardo, Watertower Place, and School subdivisions.

### Comparing Road Care Costs:

- **Preventive Treatments:** Tens of thousands of dollars total
- **Asphalt Overlay:** Hundreds of thousands of dollars per mile
- **Complete Reconstruction:** \$1 million or more per mile

That's why, when you see crews working on a road that looks "fine," we aren't choosing a good road over a bad one. We are stopping a good road from becoming a million-dollar problem.

Major reconstruction projects, such as Willard and Mathieu street projects planned for spring 2027—require grants and significant local investment because annual state revenue simply isn't enough to pay for projects of that size.

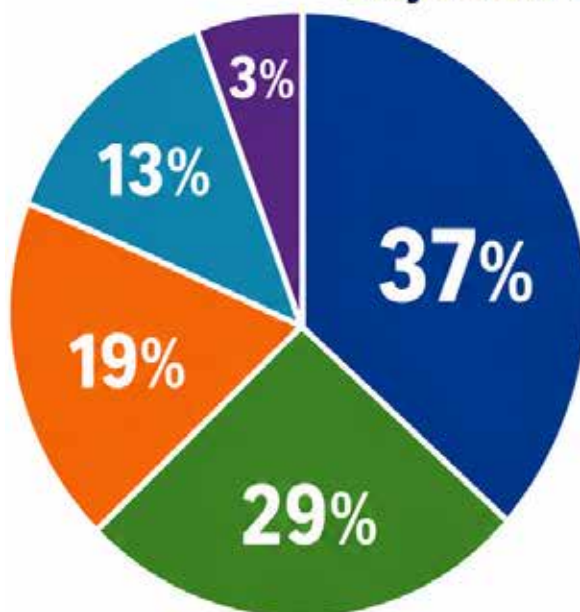
With 14.2 miles of streets to maintain, every road dollar matters. Just like your home, taking care of small issues today keeps Bridgman's infrastructure safe while protecting taxpayer dollars tomorrow.



# WHERE THE ROAD DOLLARS GO

**FY 2025-26 ACTUAL EXPENSES**

*Major & Local Street Funds*



## TOTAL OUTSIDE EXPENSES

**\$422,769**

Five expense categories shown represent 100% of outside expenses.



FY 2025-26 State Revenue Received

**\$367,875**

(About \$25,900 per mile of city streets)



**37%**

### ROUTINE MAINTENANCE

**\$157,843**

Pothole repair, patching, drainage, materials, equipment, fuel, labor, repairs, and contracted services.



**29%**

### DEBT SERVICE - PREVIOUS ROAD PROJECTS

**\$120,817**

Payment on debt issued for prior street improvement projects.



**19%**

### CAPITAL IMPROVEMENTS

**\$79,280**

Pavement preservation (chip/fog seal, sealcoating) and other street improvements.



**13%**

### WINTER SERVICES

**\$53,547**

Snow & ice removal, salt, overtime, equipment and materials.



**3%**

### TRAFFIC SERVICES

**\$11,282**

Signs, pavement markings, traffic signals, supplies, utilities and maintenance.



**14.20 MILES OF CITY STREETS**

5.76 miles Major Streets  
8.44 miles Local Streets



STATE REVENUE RECEIVED IN FY 2025-26

**\$367,875**

THAT'S ABOUT  
**\$25,900**

PER MILE  
IN STATE ROAD FUNDING

\*Excludes \$141,674 internal transfer between Major Street Fund and Local Street Fund (not an expense).



## Major Business Expansions Coming to Bridgman

Director, Nancy Kiernan

Bridgman is on the move! Thanks to key state and federal grants alongside local investment, several major development milestones are shaping the future of our community.

### City Planning & Growth Readiness

**Master Plan Update:** Funded by a grant from the Michigan Economic Development Corporation, the City is finalizing its Master Plan Amendment. This work represents a major step toward earning Redevelopment Ready Community certification, a prestigious designation that recognizes municipalities with transparent, predictable, and efficient development processes. It sends a clear signal to developers everywhere that Bridgman is ripe for investment and ready for opportunity.

**Corridor Assessment:** The Greater Bridgman Area Chamber of Commerce and Growth Alliance received a federal grant from the U.S. Economic Development Administration to assess the Red Arrow Highway and Lake Street corridors. Supported by American Electric Power, Lake Charter Township, the City, and the Corridor Improvement Authority, this effort will create an action plan to revitalize vacant parcels across town.

### Downtown & Local Business Expansions

**Transient Artisan Ales:** Construction is underway on Lake Street for an expanded footprint featuring a new outdoor beer garden and food truck court.

**Cooperative Market Study:** A feasibility study funded by the Michigan Department of Agriculture and Rural Development is nearly complete for establishing a cooperative market in the former Chase Bank building. Work will continue through the fall, so expect more updates as this project takes shape.

**Emma's Hearth & Market:** Using state agricultural grant funding, Emma's is expanding operations along Red Arrow Highway. Site plans are under review with the City, with expanded offerings anticipated for 2027.

### Industrial Growth & Jobs

**Bridgman Manufacturing Center:** Located at the former Pemco site, a tool and die cooperative made up of three businesses is investing millions of dollars to rehabilitate the facility. The Chamber established a Plant Rehabilitation District to support the project, which will bring strong, good-paying jobs to our downtown district.

These projects reflect the hard work of our local businesses, community partners, and economic development team, **all working together** to build a stronger, more vibrant future for our city. From master planning to major grants to boots-on-the-ground construction, Bridgman is proving that big things happen when community partners come together with a shared vision. We are grateful for the support of our state and federal partners, our local businesses, and everyone working to make these projects a reality.

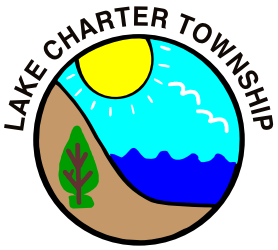
We are proud of the growth happening in our community, and we cannot wait to see it all come to life!

*Nancy Kiernan, Director*

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*Rendering of Emma's Hearth & Market expansion plans.*



# LAKE CHARTER TOWNSHIP



## Township Updates from Supervisor, Zach Carson

Dear Township Residents,

It has been a busy summer throughout the Township, with several projects completed or nearing completion. The Berrien County Road Department and contractors are putting the finishing touches on the **Red Arrow Highway reconstruction**, and repairs have also been made to portions of **Gast and Jericho** roads. The **John Gast Memorial Trail** was completed as well, and we celebrated its opening with a dedication ceremony. At the **Township Park**, crews made much-needed repairs to all of the dugouts, keeping the facilities in great shape for players and spectators alike.

As summer draws to a close and the leaves begin to turn, it's a sure sign that motorcycle season is winding down and snow will not be far behind. With this seasonal shift, our ground maintenance crews will soon begin preparing the Township for fall and winter. **Water service in the park and cemetery will be shut off by November, and the Township Park will officially close for the season on November 1.** However, the off-season parking lot will remain open, so residents can still enjoy a round of disc golf or a leisurely walk through the park throughout the colder months.

## Fire Department Updates

Throughout the summer, our firefighters have continued to invest in their training and professional development, attending the Blue Card Incident Command class and participating in multiple live burn exercises, search and rescue drills, and vehicle extrication training.

Looking ahead, the department is excited to welcome our long-awaited new fire trucks in the coming months, a significant step forward in our ongoing efforts to serve the community effectively.

As we continue to grow, we are also seeking to expand our roster of paid-on-call firefighters. If you or someone you know may be interested in joining the department, stop by the Township Hall to pick up an application.

*Zach Carson, Supervisor*



3220 Shawnee  
P.O. Box 818  
Bridgman, MI 49106  
Ph: 269-465-6601

## LAKE CHARTER TOWNSHIP

**Supervisor**  
Zach Carson

**Treasurer**  
Jennifer Adams

**Clerk**  
Miranda  
Companion

**Building Admin**  
Rich Kubsch

**Water  
Superintendent**  
Toby Riley

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



**KNOW THE RULES BEFORE YOU BURN:**  
**BURN PERMITS REQUIRED**

**BURN PERMITS ARE MANDATORY**  
Required whenever ANY burning occurs.

**ONLY NATURAL WOOD IS ALLOWED TO BE BURNED**

Natural Wood (Untreated Logs, Branches, Brush)

**DO NOT BURN:**  
Trash, Plastic, Construction Debris, Painted/Treated Wood, Tires, etc.

**CALL THE TOWNSHIP HALL**  
to get your Burn Permit Form Before Burning.  
**269-465-6601**

Protect Our Community and Environment. Burn Responsibly.



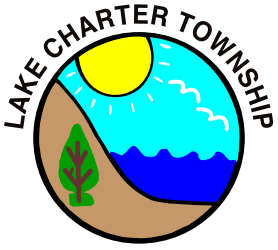
**FIREFIGHTERS WANTED!**

**Join the Lake Township Fire Department!**

**Supplement Your Income**  
**Gain Valuable Skills**  
**Serve Your Community**

**Responsible & Motivated Individuals**  
**Teamwork & Training provided**

**For more information, please email:**  
Brandon Chiarello at [firechief@lake-township.org](mailto:firechief@lake-township.org)



# LAKE CHARTER TOWNSHIP



## Clerk News

from Miranda Companion, Township Clerk

It has been a busy season at the Township! Following the August Primary Election, I want to extend a heartfelt **thank you to our incredible election workers.** Their careful attention to detail, and dedication ensured everything ran smoothly, accurately, and efficiently. **We truly couldn't do it without them!**

### Looking Ahead: November General Election

**November General Election**  
**Tuesday, November 3, 2026**

### Early Voting Schedule

Early Voting will once again be **held at Lake Charter Township Hall** for 9 consecutive days, giving residents a flexible, convenient option to vote ahead of Election Day.

**Oct. 24 – 27: 8:30 am – 4:30 pm**

**Oct. 28 (Extended Hours): 11:00 am – 7:00 pm**

**Oct. 29 – Nov. 1 8:30 am – 4:30 pm**

If you have questions about voter registration, absentee ballots, or polling locations, please contact the Clerk's Office at 269-465-6601 or email [clerk@lake-township.org](mailto:clerk@lake-township.org). Thank you for staying engaged in our community!

### A Visit from Our Future Voters!

We recently had the pleasure of welcoming Bridgman Elementary 2nd graders to Township Hall for their annual field trip. Hosting them for the second year in a row was a highlight for our staff!

During their visit, the students learned how Township Board meetings are run, how local decisions are made, and why elections are so important. It was wonderful watching them listen to one another and take their responsibility as voters seriously.

The best part was giving the students a chance to put their new knowledge to work. The class held their very own Township Board meeting and conducted a mock election to choose a new tree to plant at the park.

### What was the winning choice? The Redbud 'Flame Thrower'!

A big thank you to **Lake Street Eats** for helping make this experience even more special by generously purchasing a commemorative plaque to be placed alongside the tree. The plaque will read:

*"This tree was selected and dedicated by the Second Grade Class of 2025-2026. As this tree takes root and reaches toward the sky, may it symbolize dreams, kindness, and curiosity, and serve as a reminder that even small hands can leave a lasting mark on the world."*





This project is what community is all about—coming together and creating something meaningful for the next generation. I am so thankful to be part of a communi-

ty that continues to show up, support one another, and make a difference.

Teaching our young people about local government and the importance of civic participation is something I truly enjoy. Who knows — we may have some future Township clerks, board members, or election workers sitting in that classroom!

We can't wait to welcome them back again next year.

## Election Worker Opportunities

Our local elections simply could not happen without the dedicated community members who step up to staff the polls. We are actively **looking for dependable residents to join our election team**. Whether you have worked an election before or are looking to get involved for the first time, we would love to have you!

If you are interested in serving or learning more, please reach out to me at 269-465-6601 or [clerk@lake-township.org](mailto:clerk@lake-township.org). I am always happy to answer your questions and get you signed up.

*Miranda Companion, Clerk*



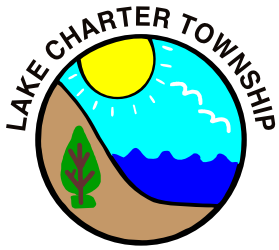
## JOIN OUR ELECTION TEAM: WE NEED YOUR HELP!

Election Inspectors—also known as poll workers—play **a vital role in keeping our elections fair and efficient**. Depending on assignment, duties can include:

- Greeting and checking in voters
- Issuing ballots and assisting with tabulation
- Helping with absentee ballot processing or operating electronic pollbooks

Election Inspectors are **paid positions** and are critical for supporting safe, secure, and well-run elections. Every inspector helps ensure voters are served respectfully and accurately.

**Call 269-465-6601 if interested.**



# LAKE CHARTER TOWNSHIP



## Treasurer, Park & Trail News from Jennifer Adams

As we move into fall, I wanted to share an update on Lake Charter Township's financial health, park improvements, and several key upcoming dates.

### Current Financial Status

Lake Charter Township remains in strong financial health, with **revenue and expenditures on track with our 2026 budget projections**. Careful planning allows us to address infrastructure needs and invest in our community while maintaining fiscal responsibility.

Beyond budget season, my role as Treasurer involves overseeing the deposit and investment of Township funds, disbursing payments, reconciling accounts, and coordinating with our auditor. I am also your primary point of contact for questions about tax bills, assessments, and payment options—it's a steady, detail-oriented job that I truly enjoy.

### Property Tax & Assessment Information

**Summer Tax Bills:** Summer taxes were due September 14, 2026. If you have not paid yet, you can still submit payment directly online at [Lake-township.org](https://lake-township.org) or at at Township Hall.

**Late Interest Charges:** A 1% interest penalty applies to payments made between September 15 and September 30, with an additional 1% added for each month the bill remains unpaid after that. **Call for an updated payoff amount before submitting a late payment.**

**Winter Tax Bills:** Winter bills will be mailed the first week of December and are due by Tuesday, February 16, 2027, at 5:00 pm.

### Park Improvements & Off-Season Hours

Lake Charter Township Park and the John Gast Memorial Trail have seen wonderful activity this year:

**Renovations:** Both baseball and softball fields were renovated, and dugouts received new roofs and fascia. Keep an eye out for a brand-new park entrance sign in the coming months!

**Trail & Recreation:** The trail continues to draw daily walkers, runners, and cyclists, connecting residents directly to soccer games and disc golf.

**Off-Season Schedule:** The park pavilions and restrooms will close for the season on November 1. The park grounds remain open year-round from dawn to dusk, with parking available via the off-season lot.



## WINTER PROPERTY TAX BILLS DUE



The 2026 winter tax bills are due **February 16, 2027 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.

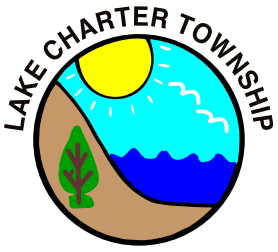
### Looking Ahead

Beginning in October, the Township Board will start working on the 2027 budget, a process that will continue over the coming months as we review revenues, anticipated expenses, and community priorities. As always, we remain committed to serving as thoughtful stewards of your taxpayer dollars while providing the high-quality services our residents rely on.

*Jennifer Adams, Treasurer*



*A little bit of magic over Lake Charter Township!  
Photo by resident, Keri Haskins*



# LAKE CHARTER TOWNSHIP

## Water & Sewer Department News

from Toby Riley

### Wrapping Up Three Years of Sewer Smoke Testing

By the time you read this, we will have completed—or be very close to completing—our township-wide sewer smoke testing project. Over the past three years, crews have tested every line section by section.

**How it works:** We blow a harmless, odorless smoke into sewer mains and monitor where it exits. Smoke should only escape through rooftop vent stacks. If smoke emerges from a yard clean-out, driveway, or lawn, it indicates a defect where rainwater and groundwater can seep in.

**Why it matters:** Every gallon of rainwater in our sanitary sewer system forces us to pump and treat unnecessary volume, which can overwhelm lift stations during heavy storms and cause basement backups. Most issues we found were simple fixes: cracked or missing clean-out caps, uncapped risers, or broken lateral lines near homes.

- **Property owners with identified issues will receive a letter this fall detailing what needs correction.**
- **Repairs are due within six months. Most fixes are inexpensive and simple for homeowners to complete.**
- **Questions? Call us at 269-465-3850 before starting—we are happy to walk you through the process.**



### What Happens to Grease After it Goes Down the Drain?

With the holidays around the corner, turkey drippings, bacon grease, and gravy will soon fill our kitchens. Before rinsing that roasting pan, keep this in mind:

Hot grease pours like liquid, but as soon as it hits the cooler pipes under your yard, it cools, hardens, and clings to the pipe walls. Over time, a 4-inch pipe can narrow down to 2 inches or less! When a backup occurs, it almost always happens in the private line connecting your house to the street—which is the homeowner's responsibility to repair. (A plumber and a roter truck on a holiday weekend is an expensive afternoon, and it's almost always avoidable.)

Hot water and dish soap don't dissolve grease; they just push it further down the line before it hardens.

#### The 10-Second Solution:

- Let grease cool in the pan.
- Scrape it into an empty jar or can, seal the lid, and throw it in the trash.
- Wipe greasy pans with a paper towel before washing them in the sink.



## Pre-Winter Checklist: Take 20 Minutes Before the First Freeze to Prevent Issues

Most emergency plumbing calls we receive every winter can be prevented with a bit of prep in October.

- **Irrigation Systems:** Have your system blown out before the first hard freeze. Trapped water expands, cracking pipes and destroying expensive backflow preventers.
- **Outdoor Hoses:** Disconnect all garden hoses from outside spigots. Attached hoses trap water inside the faucet, splitting pipes behind your walls.
- **Water Meters:** Insulate meters located in unheated garages, crawl spaces, or along exterior walls. A frozen meter can rupture and flood the area.
- **Locate Your Main Shutoff:** Find your main water shutoff valve now—not at 2:00 am during an emergency! Make sure everyone in your home knows where it is and how to turn it off.
- **Heading South for Winter?** Call the Water & Sewer Department at 269-465-3850 before you leave. We can advise you on the best way to safely prepare your home's water system while you are away.



## After Hours Service Fees

Nonpayment Water Shutoff  
Fee: \$60

After-Hours & Weekend  
Emergency Turn-On: \$150

Thank you for your understanding  
and cooperation.

## Contact Information

**Water Department:** 269-465-3850

**Township Hall & Water Bills:** 269-465-6601

**MISS DIG 811** (before you dig): 800-482-7171

Get service interruption alerts in your area! Sign-up at [LakeCharterTownshipWater.org](https://LakeCharterTownshipWater.org). If there's a main break or a service interruption in your area, you'll get a text or an email — whichever you prefer.

*Toby Riley, Water System Superintendent*



# BRIDGMAN PUBLIC LIBRARY



## Library News

from Director,  
Dr. Terri Hebert

Find a full calendar of events and additional programs on our website at [BridgmanLibrary.com](http://BridgmanLibrary.com).  
**Registration is not required unless noted.**

### FEATURED PROGRAMS

#### MAH JONGG FOR BEGINNERS

NOV 4, 6, 11, 13, 18, 20

DEC 2, 4, 9, 11

1:00 – 3:00 PM

Bring a friend and join us to learn this fun game!

#### WILDLIFE WONDERS!

NOV 7, 1:00 – 2:00 PM

Sarett Nature Center will bring along animal friends to teach us about the magnificent wildlife of our area.

*All ages. Registration required.*

#### COMMUNITY RESILIENCE WORKSHOP

NOV 12, 5:30 – 7:00 PM

Developed by the Trauma Resource Institute, the Community Resiliency Model (CRM) is an interactive workshop that will teach us how to stabilize the nervous system and stay grounded and resilient.

#### SOO LOCKS: BEHIND THE SCENES

NOV 16, 6:00 PM

An overview of year-round Soo Locks operations, featuring behind-the-scenes photos and stories. It covers critical missions like generating electricity and maintaining federal harbors and channels. Led by Soo Locks Chief Park Ranger, Michelle Briggs.

As we celebrate 60 years of service, we invite you to discover our diverse programs, creative workshops, and lifelong learning activities for all ages. Looking ahead, please note that the **library's millage renewal** will appear on the City of Bridgman **November 2026 ballot**. This essential funding helps sustain the collections, technology, and community spaces you rely on. To learn more about how this ballot measure supports our next chapter, please **visit the Millage FAQ page on our website**. Thank you for being a part of our story!

*Dr. Terri Hebert*



## FIND US ON SOCIAL MEDIA

**BRIDGMANLIBRARY.COM**



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

|                                                                                            |                                                                                                             |                                                                                                             |                                                                                                            |
|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <h1>LIBRARY<br/>MILLAGE<br/>RENEWAL</h1>                                                   |                                                                                                             |  <b>VOTE<br/>NOV 3</b>     |                                                                                                            |
|                                                                                            |                                                                                                             | <p><i>*City of Bridgman Residents</i></p>                                                                   |                                                                                                            |
|           |                                                                                                             | <p>For FAQ, scan<br/>the QR code</p>                                                                        |                                                                                                            |
| <br>Books | <br>Technology<br>Services | <br>Programs               | <br>Streaming<br>Services |
|                                                                                            |                                                                                                             | <br>Interlibrary<br>Loans |                                                                                                            |

## SOUND BATH & BREATHING

**NOV 30, 6:00 – 7:30 PM**

Join Elizabeth Nuti from Skybird Yoga for a free, restorative sound bath in the community room. Bring a blanket, mat, and pillow.

## SAVING THE MITCHELL'S SATYR BUTTERFLY

**DEC 16, 5:30 PM**

The Mitchell's Satyr was once common in Michigan. Now endangered due to habitat loss, its population has plummeted. Join ecologist Alice Dykstra to discover how the SW Michigan Land Conservancy and partners are driving its recovery!

**LWV** LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS®  
OF BERRIEN & CASS COUNTIES  
*at BRIDGMAN PUBLIC LIBRARY*

**October 1 | 6:00pm - 7:30pm**

Voting 101 and Ballot Proposals

**October 8 | 6:00pm - 7:30pm**

Navigating Voter Information in a Digital Age

**October 15 | 4:30pm - 5:00pm**

Ask the LWVBCC: Pop Up Office Hours of Voter Questions

**November 18 | 6:00pm - 7:30pm**

Taking a Breath After the Election with The LWVBCC: Relax, Reflect, and Re-engage



This holiday season...bring in non-perishable goods for those in need and we will waive your overdue fines.  
**November 16 - January 2**

## 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**  
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# CITY OF BRIDGMAN 2026 TRASH & RECYCLING SCHEDULE

## 2026 City of Bridgman Trash & Recycling Pickup

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

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

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



For recycling information and helpful tips visit:

[www.lakeshorerecycle.com/recycling-info](http://www.lakeshorerecycle.com/recycling-info)