



The Village Spotlight

A Publication of the **Village of Grafton** designed to provide the community with a snap shot of village life today.



*The Pride We Foster Today will
reflect upon the Pride We Have Tomorrow.*

A Message from Mayor Dave DiVencenzo



*Village of Grafton
Mayor David DiVencenzo*

Dear Grafton Residents,

The calendar year of 2017 will go down in our community's history of as one of celebration, reflection, happiness and unity. On behalf of the entire Village of Grafton, I thank everyone involved with the Bicentennial festivities that lasted throughout the year. Beginning with a planning committee that stretched back into 2016, a devoted group of individuals invested their time, talents and treasures to ensure that everyone in the community had the chance

to participate in the 200th birthday celebration of our Village. From commemorative events, to those that revolved around our Greatest Generations and for our children, the list of events was comprehensive. Without question, the byproduct has become a feeling of pride, a permanent stir of emotion and the overall elevation of the essence of the people who live in Grafton. This yearlong celebration has made people feel strong, secure and confident in being Grafton residents. Our businesses continue to flourish and our residents swell with delight... in the sense that they can call Grafton their home. Congratulations to all involved.

Fortunately, the festivities for the year are not yet complete. The Village of Grafton community has come together to resurrect an old tradition called the Old Fashioned Christmas. As the holiday season approaches, this Old Fashioned Christmas, which will be held on

(continue on page 2)

Old-Fashioned Christmas is back!

Friday, December 1, 2017
See inside for details

- Visit with Santa
- Visit a Holiday Village
- Feed Reindeer
- Watch Ice Carving
- Enjoy Coloring
- Meet Mrs. Claus
- Wreath Contest
- And Much More...

Bring the entire family

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A Message from Mayor Dave DiVencenzo

(continued from page 1)

Friday, December 1, 2017, from 4 p.m. until 8 p.m., will harken participants back to an earlier time with activities, apparel and a mood from centuries past. As Mayor, I strongly recommend your participation in this event as we wind down the Bicentennial celebration for 2017. Thank you to those who have helped to organize this wonderful event. Be sure to see the full itinerary of events which is listed on Page 7 of this publication.

As it relates to Village business, Grafton continues to be strong. Residents will most visibly notice the major infrastructure projects that have taken place over the last several years. Our aim is to upgrade the roadways that help you to commute throughout the area. In addition, our Downtown Main Street Corridor continues to bustle with activity. Please see inside for our next "Business Spotlight" and for pictures from our most recent Greater Grafton Business meeting. Please be sure to patronize our local shopkeepers and business owners. Your support and their commerce keeps Grafton strong.

As we close 2017, I thank the residents who have made our community great. There are some very exciting things planned for 2018 as well, as our Village intends to make lasting imprints from some of the new traditions begun during the Bicentennial. The Village has several major economic development initiatives in the works, and our plan is to continue communicating along the way. As always, residents are free to contact me or any of the elected officials at any time. Thank you for your continued support of the Village of Grafton.

Mayor Dave DiVencenzo

Did You Know?

Grafton is the hometown of not one, BUT TWO major league baseball players? Ed McKean and Ryan Feierabend both played in the Major Leagues and both call Grafton their home. Ed McKean played 14 seasons for the Cleveland Spiders, 1887 – 1889... and, as many of you know, Ryan played for the Seattle Mariners from 2006- 2008 and the Texas Rangers in 2014, and is a graduate of Midview High School!

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Businesses continue to convene to discuss ways to stay proactively engaged in the Greater Grafton area.



Thanks to our friends at Village Jewelry and Repair for their sponsorship throughout the year.

Important News from the Fire Department!

Important News from the Fire Department: From Fire Chief Randy Kimbro

Welcome to the Fall season, a time for football, clam bakes, and an excellent time to think about fire safety. The second week of October was Fire Prevention Week and the focus this year is on making sure you know two ways out of every room. This is especially important in bedrooms and other sleeping areas. Even with smoke detectors, exits can sometimes be impassable. Knowing a second way out of the rooms in your house may save your life and that of your loved ones. Please visit the new fire prevention page on the Grafton Village web site for more tips.

Underwriter Laboratories is also focusing on a campaign to Close Before You Doze. Did you know that with your bedroom door closed, you may survive over 20 minutes with a fire raging right outside? Visit www.closeyourdoor.org for more details.

Since becoming Fire Chief in July, I have had the wonderful opportunity to meet many people in Grafton at our Fire Department Open House, at the Greater Grafton Business Association meeting, and at the recent opioid seminar organized by the Grafton-Midview Public Library. I look forward to meeting more residents and business owners in the coming months. Although the fire department does not have staff on-duty in the station, we are always there to serve. You can always

reach me via phone at (440) 926-2075 or via email at rakimbro@villageofgrafton.org

Reminder, Grafton Village Ordinances prohibit the burning of leaves and landscape material.



For further information, contact
Chief Randy Kimbro
(Cell 440-212-0056)
rakimbro@villageofgrafton.org

Business Feature - Studio Em, and owner, Emily Markovich

Grafton Resident Pursued Small Town Feel For Her Business!

Emily Markovich had been in the hair-styling business for a good portion of her professional life when she decided that a 'small town feel' with her own enterprise was calling her name. Enter husband, Caleb, who had a construction background and a similar "can-do" spirit and the combination of their blended efforts has become one of Grafton's newest businesses, **Studio Em**. Featuring classic haircuts, styling, manicures and pedicures, Studio Em is a boutique-style salon in a customized new location at 498 Main Street. Markovich and her team of four employees serves both women and men, and they are looking to expand into a more in-depth men's grooming service later this fall. She prides herself on quality services, affordable prices and a relaxing, un-hurried atmosphere. The environment inside of the renovated Studio Em, performed with the construction expertise of Caleb and the creative and contemporary design of Emily, is very professional but soothing as well. Even more, Emily is looking to truly understand the needs of her clients, recommending a consultation prior to service. This way, Emily and her team are able to truly get to know each person who enters her salon and achieve the best result. In this sense, Emily is looking to establish a trusting relationship over the long-term. Emily and her husband Caleb have lived in Grafton for the past three years, and after working in larger establishments, she truly sought a small town feel in the community in which she lives. Emily and her team will be participating in Grafton's Old Fashioned Christmas, where her products will be on sale for 20% and cookies, cider and hot chocolate will be provided as well. Welcome to the Village of Grafton, Studio Em, and all the best in your business endeavors!



Grafton residents Emily and Caleb Markovich have made an investment in the community in which they live, "Studio Em!"



Studio Em seeks to create a long-term relationship with clients to truly understand their style needs and desires.



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Council Commentary: Council President-John Lescher

Reporting from Village Council, I would like to take this opportunity to share an update regarding important matters that concern our residents. First and foremost, all elected officials in the Village of Grafton encourage our residents to remain educated about the bills that they pay on a regular basis. Whether they are electric bills or gas rates, residents should always take an extra moment to review the fine print of their monthly statements. Anyone who pays bills on a regular basis knows the importance of paying their amount due on time, but we also encourage you to take the extra step to learn what your rates actually are. Knowledge is power, and in some cases, knowledge can also be protection against scams and other sales-minded entities who claim they have lower rates on various utilities than what you are already paying.

Your tax bill is important to know as well. As a long-time Councilman in the Village of Grafton, I am consistently asked about where our tax dollars go. Residents should understand that by Ohio law, a percentage of earned income is the sustaining revenue source for Village operations. In other words, those people who earn income in the Village of Grafton pay a small percentage of their income towards the Village. Only a small percentage of property taxes come to Grafton as well, whereas a much greater percentage of this type of tax goes to fund our school district and other various county entities. Please take a moment to read your tax bill, know the amounts you are paying

Watch Council Meetings Online!

Council Meetings will be televised
Thursday's at 7:30 PM as well as Friday,
Saturday and Sunday at 11:00 AM and 7:30 PM
on Channel 12 or www.glwb.net

and recognize where your tax dollars are going. Your Village of Grafton officials would also like to remind you that EMS and fire calls are not paid by the taxpayers. When a call or run of some sort is initiated that requires fire or EMS services, the Village contacts the insurance company and they reimburse the Village for the cost of the service. Whatever amount is collected from insurance is considered paid-in-full. We do not go back to the resident for any balances. We have been able to fund Police/Fire / EMTs without additional levies.

Ultimately, knowing the specifics of your utility bill, your tax bills and where your dollars are being spent is information that will be a valuable source of power and protection for you in the future. The Village believes that a wise and informed citizenry is the backbone of any local municipality. As always, those of you who have questions can contact your Council representatives, the Mayor or anyone else at Village Hall anytime for more information. Thank you for your continued support of the Village of Grafton.

John Lescher
Council President

PUBLIC NOTICE: October 17, 2017, Village Council approved a 5% water rate increase beginning in January 2018. Seeing the water fund decline over the past three-years, council earlier this year funded a Water Rate Study. The water system had absorbed all added costs-to-operate since 2012 without any rate increase to residential and commercial customers. The Rural Lorain County Water Authority, Grafton's water supplier, has announced an added wholesale rate increase for 2018. The Rural Water wholesale rate increase could and most likely would accelerate the decline of the water fund. The 2017 water rate study recommended a 5% increase in 2018, followed by a 5% increase in both 2019 and 2020 (15% over three-years). Council unanimously decided to take a conservative approach to this concern, approving a 5% increase in 2018 with plans to monitor the fund balance through the fall of 2018 to see if an additional 5% increase in 2019 would be absolutely necessary to keep the water fund solvent.



Service Update



Village Administrator
Joe Price

Making greater Grafton even GREATER!

*The fourth of a 4-part series
highlighting Grafton's commitment to
modern infrastructure -2017*

Paving the pathway of progress...

Recently, much has been discussed throughout the national political subdivisions about addressing the needed improvements of an aging infrastructure in the United States. Here in Grafton, one doesn't need look far to see your village officials working well ahead of political rhetoric with an aggressive action and plan to

proactively address aging infrastructure.

A decade ago the reconstruction and improvements of Center Street, began a pilot process to address aging infrastructure. Shortly afterwards the recession took hold of the country, most municipalities were forced to conserve resources including

funding for infrastructure projects, and Grafton did as well. In 2011 the village proactively began planning for the SR 57 (N. Main St) reconstruction and widening. Working with engineering, funding, and partnering with ODOT, reconstruction was completed in mid-2015. Even as work was underway on N. Main, the village planned complete reconstruction of Mechanic St. Phase 1, this too was completed in 2015. The village then stepped up infrastructure improvements as it planned and completed Mechanic St. Phase 2 reconstruction in 2016.

The long-awaited Water Tower project along with the new booster pump station project and the Main St. waterline loop projects have finally received approval to proceed. All projects went out to bid in September and if all goes as planned, all three projects will be awarded by the time this publication is in your homes with construction completed in 2018.

In 2016, village streets underwent an evaluation regarding overall condition. Areas of concern were documented, and a 4-year plan is now in place to address replace streets where needed, replacing entire sections of roadway in some, repair failing sections of roadway and

(continued on page 7)

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Service Update

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resurface roads where applicable. Two of the streets rated critical in 2016 were Nantucket and Chippewa. Nantucket underwent total pavement replacement, driveway apron replacement, drainage improvements and four new storm sewer catch basins were installed. Chippewa underwent total roadway and driveway apron replacement, both projects completed this past September.

Future street improvement planning continues... The village sought funding for Oak St. reconstruction in August 2016. The village was awarded a \$265,000.00 grant towards this \$1.2 million reconstruction project. As we wait approval from CSX to bore under tracks for waterlines and sewers, we hope to see construction completed during the summer of 2018. Additionally, we recently applied for similar funding for the reconstruction of Chestnut Phase 1. If all goes as we hope, we'll seek final approval for Chestnut Phase 2, with construction to completion in 2020.

Parks and recreations improvements are currently under consideration. The old water plant in front of Willow Park will be demolished in 2018 and the land restored for park use. Other Willow Park improvements considered include possibly constructing a concert venue for future events. Council is also considering soccer field improvements. The North Park playground received attention with replacement of all platforms in 2017, and after several attempts, valve

functions of the splash pad were significantly improved.

As weather conditions allow, seasonal brush grinding and leaf pick up will end on or before November 29th. Leaf pick up is heavily dependent on dry conditions, wet leaf piles cannot be picked up. If for any reason leaf fall is later than normal, weather permitting we may continue to pick up leaves in early December. PLEASE do not allow piles of leaves to remain on your tree lawns throughout the winter as they will kill your grass.

Fuel for thought; the reconstruction of roadway projects big and small, always create a hardship during construction for local residents living in or near the work-zone, and all your village officials are conscientious of this. Although we plan and take measures to limit hardships, often unforeseen conditions and weather play a part in the time needs to complete each project. When completed, the one thing we all can appreciate is the visible enhancement to our neighborhoods, safer roadway accessibility, improved property values, and the overall renewed pride in all of our neighborhoods. We hope you'll agree, when completed your short-term hardships and sacrifice are worthwhile the long-term benefits they provide our community. On behalf of all at Village Hall... We wish everyone the Happiest of Thanksgiving!

Save the Date

Friday, December 1, 2017

4:00 - 8:00 PM

Old-Fashioned Christmas is back!

- 5:00 – 6:00 p.m. North of the Tracks: Santa in antique fire truck visiting with businesses
- 6:00 p.m. Parade begins with Santa at the end. Santa arrives at Town Hall.
- 6:05 p.m. Lighting of the tree at Town Hall
- 6:00- 8:00 p.m. DJ Playing Music in front of Ted's DT Grafton
- 6:00 – 8:00 p.m. Od School Christmas Wonderland and displays of Soldiers from History
- 6:15 – 8:00 p.m. Santa with Mrs. Claus arrives at library to meet with children
- **Reindeer and silent wreath auction
- 6:15 – 7:15 p.m. Ice sculpting in front of Village Hall
- 7:00 – 7:15 p.m. Flash Mob performance
- 7:15 – 7:45 p.m. Singing at the Gazebo, LiFE Church leading the carols
- 7:45 – 8 p.m. Wreath auction winners announced. Best decorated wreath winner announced.

Raffle winners announced with volunteers and Businesses

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Upcoming Village Events

★ ★ ★ ★ ★ DECEMBER ★ ★ ★ ★ ★

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
					1 Old Fashioned Christmas 4:00 - 8:00 p.m.	2
3	4	5 Council Meeting 7:30 PM	6	7	8	9
10	11	12	13	14	15	16
17	18	19 Council Meeting 7:30 PM	20	21	22	23
24	25 Christmas Day	26	27	28	29	30
31						

★ ★ ★ ★ ★ JANUARY ★ ★ ★ ★ ★

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
	1 New Year's Day	2 Council Meeting 7:30 PM	3	4	5	6
7	8	9	10	11	12	13
14	15	16 Council Meeting 7:30 PM	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 Council Meeting 7:30 PM	7	8	9	10
11	12	13	14 Valentine's Day	15	16	17
18	19	20 Council Meeting 7:30 PM	21	22	23	24
25	26	27	28			



Non-Emergency Contact Information

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Village Secretary laclark@villageofgraffton.org

Building (440) 926-2401 opt. 2

Utilities (440) 926-1093 opt. 1

Streets (440) 926-2260

Electric (440) 926-2912

Sewer (440) 926-2765

Fire (non emergency) (440) 926-2075

Police (non emergency) (440) 926-2261