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MARCH 2020

VOLUME 31, EDITION 1



These are the movers and shakers of 2020, the Faces of East Troy: (clockwise from top left) Jamie Rohrer, East Troy Lights; Ryan Hammerel, head brewer at East Troy Brewery & Tim Guild, head brewer & owner at The Hive Taproom; East Troy High School NASA Hunch Club (from top left) Tara Johnson, Carly Goetsch, Abigail Manthey, Caitlin Hunter, Maddy Otto & Christina Nolting; Dan O'Leary of Honey Valley Beekeeping; Greg Jennings, President and CEO of Wisconsin Oven Corporation; Mary Nicoson, Vice President of First Citizens State Bank- East Troy Office & Joe Klarkowski, Town of East Troy Chairman, both of Tri-Troy Alliance & East Troy Community Foundation Electric Trail Project; Ryan Jonas, East Troy Electric Railroad President; Carissa Chanos, owner/ artistic director at Infinity Dance; Dan Moody of Home on the Square and Eileen Suhm, Village of East Troy Administrator.

Faces of East Troy

A community in motion

By Vanessa Lenz
EAST TROY CHAMBER EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

When we came up with the concept of “Faces of East Troy,” we set out to put together a piece reflecting the unique voices and experiences of our town.

The final result not only focuses on the individuals and groups whose experience and knowledge makes them leaders in our community and beyond, but also provides some unexpected (and warmly-welcomed) perspective.

Getting a chance to know the people behind some of our local organizations, biggest businesses, beloved shops and attractions, was also a chance to bring new energy as a new decade begins with lots of talk that

See **FACES**, Page 2

Things to do this Spring

MARCH

1 - Art Show & Band-O-Rama

East Troy Schools 5-12th grade music concert, 2 to 4 p.m., Sunday, March 1, East Troy High School, 3128 Graydon Ave., (262) 642-6760.

7 - Seed Swap

9 a.m. to noon, Saturday, March 7; Michael Fields Agricultural Institute, N8030 Townline Road, (262) 642-3303, ext. 107

7, 8, 13, 14, & 15 - ‘The Gin Game’

Off the Square Players performance 7:30 p.m. Saturday, March 7, Friday, March 13 and Saturday, March 14 and 2 p.m. Sunday, March 8 and 15, Ivan’s Backstage, 2093 Division St. \$15, East Troy House & brownpapertickets.com, (262) 642-7100.

13-15 - National PI Day

March 13-15, Elegant Farmer, 1545 Main St., 5-inch Apple Pie Baked in a Paper Bag for just \$3.14 (reg. \$6.99), elegantfarmer.com.

15-BeginnersBeekeepingWorkshop

9 a.m.- noon, Saturday, March 15 at Michael Fields Agricultural Institute, W2493 County Road ES featuring instructor Dan O’Leary, \$40 (advance), \$50 (day of), michaelfields.org.

15 - Cookie Decorating

Edible watercolors cookie decorating class from 2 to 3:30 p.m., Saturday, March 15, Hive Taproom, W2463 County Road ES, thehivetaproom.com.

20 - Parents Night Out

Friday, March 20, East Troy Area Community Center, 2040 Beulah Ave., featuring activities for kids, ages 4-12, \$15, (262) 642-2266

21- Kiwanis Club Family Breakfast

Kiwanis Club of Greater East Troy family breakfast, 8-11 a.m., Saturday, March 21, East Troy High School, 3128 Graydon Ave., \$5 (12 and older), \$3 (ages 5-11) & free (under 4).

Q&A: Ready to revitalize

EILEEN SUHM

East Troy Village Administrator

Eileen Suhm, Administrator and Executive Director of the Community Development Authority, has been at the helm of the Village of East Troy for five years.

She began as the Deputy Clerk-Treasurer and has held various positions with the Village, including involvement with zoning, development and Plan Commission.

She has been hard at work on many of the village's priorities while enjoying her role as part of the East Troy community.

Q. What are your top goals for East Troy in 2020?

A. • Facilitate a financial management planning update with the Board and our financial consultants. This is important because it assists with prioritizing goals and establishes how the Village will fund the projects associated with those goals.

• To assist the Community Development Authority, which was formed in January 2019, with carrying out their top priorities in my role as the Executive Director. Their top priorities include establishing a façade grant program, revolving loan fund program, and working on Main Street revitalization.

• Continue work to secure additional development in Tax Incremental District 4, the land south of Honey Creek Road and our existing business park.

• Work with staff to determine how we will upgrade the Village website so this can be incorporated into a future budget. We would like the site to be easier to navigate and a more effective communication tool.

Q. The Village of East Troy has been increasingly embracing the power of business partnerships. How has the village worked to improve collaboration?

A. The Board, as well as staff, have approached opportunities to work with businesses as a collaborative partnership.

Listening, identifying common goals, and determining how we can work together to reach those common goals is a priority. In addition to this approach, the Village Board authorized forming the CDA. This is a group that dedicates their time to focusing on development, redevelopment, and aiding business growth.

There have been efforts to retain more resources for new business, as well as growing businesses. Through the Village's Connect Communities membership with Wisconsin Economic Development Corporation, Walworth County Economic Development Alliance membership, and formation of Tax Incremental Financing Districts we have more resources available for businesses.

Q. What are some of the most fulfilling projects you have worked on during your time as Village Administrator?

A. The projects that are always most fulfilling are those where I have an opportunity to help somebody. In a business sense it is exciting to help business owners realize their dreams.

More recent examples include being involved in the Community Development Investment Grant process with the East Troy Brewery and seeing them be awarded a grant of \$250,000 through WEDC, assisting LD's BBQ through the approval processes and seeing Leon's new restaurant open, and working with Knoll Precision to build their new location for their expanding operations in the business park. This does not diminish experiences or the value of other businesses or developments I have seen come to fruition, these are simply recent examples.

On a citizen level, the most fulfilling projects include educating the public about local government and how they can get involved.

This can be as simple as answering a resident's questions to working on the Youth in Government Program or with the St. Peter's Brickbusters FIRST Lego League.

Q. What do you see as the most significant opportunities in East Troy as we look to the future?

A. Location, Location, Location! We have close access to many natural features and beauty including state forests, recreational trails, and lakes. In addition, we have unique amenities such as the East Troy Railroad and Alpine Valley is close by. This is all accompanied by easy access to more urban areas such as Milwaukee.

Another significant facet that East Troy can continue to capitalize on is our founders' and subsequent Village planning, which has resulted in something that is an opportunity today.

The historic area of the Square will be preserved while Highway 20 serves as a bypass for this area. The newer industrial development is occurring south of the interstate, which is segregated from this historic area and most of our residential developments. We also have two freeway access points within the Village, which will continue to assist with smooth traffic flow as we see more development.

Another opportunity we have is people. We have business owners, community members, numerous civic groups, and a Chamber of Commerce with many of creative ideas who have been dedicated to making the community what it is and continually improving it. This makes East Troy an easy community to love and more desirable to future residents and businesses. In addition, we have a Board that is looking at the big picture and planning for the future.

Q. What makes East Troy great?

A. It is home. Not in the sense that it is a place where I own a house, in the sense that it is a community where my family feels welcome and where we prefer to send our children to school.

A lot of the things I mentioned about significant opportunities make East Troy great, but most importantly it is the people that make East Troy great!



PHOTO SUBMITTED Good Neighbors

Dan O'Leary embraces an organic and natural approach to beekeeping, harvesting around 2,500 pounds of honey each year.

Q&A: Bee-ing a Beekeeper

DAN O'LEARY

Honey Valley Beekeeping

Dan O'Leary has been a beekeeper for Honey Valley Beekeeping for over 20 years.

He took on the hobby full-time after retiring from his plumbing and heating business O'Leary Heating & Plumbing.

In recent years, O'Leary has become well known for connecting and equipping beekeepers with the concepts, knowledge and best management practices needed for sustainable beekeeping – work with a critical benefit as one-third of the food we eat relies on honeybees for pollination.

Q. How did you get into beekeeping?

A. I come from a long line of beekeepers. My grandfather, father, sister and son were all beekeepers in the community in the past. I wanted to be able to carry on the tradition and offer a high-quality, natural honey for myself and others.

Q. How has beekeeping changed since you started?

A. There is more focus on the bee health due to increased overall loss of bee population. Winter loss averaged less than 10 percent when I started vs. today beekeepers are experiencing up to 50 percent average loss. So, this has increased my attention and many

others to natural, sustainable practices of keeping healthy bees all year long.

Q. Why was it important for you to share your love of bees and educate your community on the art of beekeeping?

A. I feel that the bees are a unique, social unit that teach us so much about nature. I want to inspire others, especially the youth, to enjoy and respect this interaction with nature and give them an opportunity to understand the best things about becoming a future beekeeper.

Q. Is there anything East Troy residents can do to help the bees?

A. They can support bees and all pollinators by planting flowers, trees, etc. that can create a diverse source of pollen and nectar. Also, they can become aware of the dangers of using pesticides, herbicides, fungicides and GMO seeds that create a toxic environment for the bee.

Q. What's your favorite way to eat honey?

A. Right out of the hive! Second best is a nice big chunk of natural comb honey along with a slice of artisan bread. Pure, raw honey is great on anything.

•Faces (Continued from front page)

East Troy is hitting a prime time.

The individuals featured in the "Faces of East Troy" are finding a way to work together and the crop of leaders is full of fresh ideas to push East Troy forward.

Some arrived at just the right time to see East Troy on the rise. Some have been sharing their passion and commitment to East Troy for decades. All said they can't wait to see where the community is heading.

Join us in celebrating East Troy and this group that works hard to see their community



Vanessa Lenz

thrive during a "Faces of East Troy" release party.

Meet the featured "Faces of East Troy" and leap into the new year from 3 to 5 p.m. on Saturday, Feb. 29 at The Hive Taproom, W2463 County Road ES. Stay for a performance by Brothers Quinn from 6 to 9 p.m.

For details, visit easttroy.org or RSVP to vanessa@easttroy.org.

If you go...

'FACES OF EAST TROY' PARTY
WHEN: 3 to 5 p.m., Saturday, Feb. 29
WHERE: The Hive Taproom, W2463 County Road ES
INFO: easttroy.org

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Q&A: What's on Tap

RYAN HAMMEREL

East Troy Brewery

TIM GUILD

The Hive Taproom

East Troy is making its mark in Wisconsin's flourishing craft beverage industry thanks to the work of two brewers whose drinks have quickly gained rave reviews and become local favorites.

From clean and crisp basics like Pale Ale to a classic IPA to a stout garnished with cocoa powder and espresso ground coffee bean, Hammerel has been serving up an impressive selection of craft brews to thirsty patrons since the opening of East Troy Brewery in December of 2018.

Tim Guild and his wife Ayla opened The Hive Taproom in summer of 2018 establishing a loyal following to its taproom, one of Wisconsin's only meaderies.

As head brewer, Guild is a reformed technology junkie /engineer /consultant who has found his niche making people smile while producing small batch session meads, honey kombucha & soda elixirs. The Hive's beverages feature local everything: honey, hops, produce.

Q. What got you interested in brewing?

A. Ryan: Two things come to mind... First when I started 12 years ago, there was not a lot available in the craft beer world. There were a lot of imports, which were great, but as far as locally sourced craft beer there were limited varieties so I wanted to create something different in the sense that I could control the outcome of a product to my liking based on the ingredients I used.

Brewing beer was something that was interesting and fun in itself. As I became intrigued with the idea I bought a Mr. Beer kit for my dad for Father's Day and started a fun hobby that ended up becoming a passion.

Tim: The ability to use both my science and creative background to create something delicious that makes people happy. It's very satisfying to play such an important role in maximizing the return our patrons get back for their time and money when they're ready to relax and have a great time with like-minded people.

Q. We love that the "hot" factor of the craft drink market has hit East Troy. What makes the craft brew party so appealing?

A. Tim: I see it as an extension to my living room. There's nothing quite like sharing a connection with people, and in this case it's an experience and vibe. The craft Session Mead, and great music, definitely play an important role in our experience as well.

Ryan: I believe it's the fact that the local community and surrounding area have the ability to come in and enjoy an in-house made product with locally sourced ingredients.

Whether it's the Wisconsin sourced

ingredients to the spent product being donated to local farms as feed for their animals, we are completing a large circle of shared experience. Also the market is booming and continuing to grow. Having a quality product with a back story is huge for people that have not been able to experience less than a decade ago.

Q. With a constantly evolving brewery scene, how do you work to thrive/stay ahead?

A. Ryan: When looking at the industry today the two things that come to mind when brewing are, creativity and consistency. Whether it's creating a beer brewed with maple syrup and blueberries, to adding spices like grains of paradise, coriander or cinnamon, we as brewers have the ability to play around with ingredients to make something unique which wasn't practiced for many years.

The factor that I believe keeps East Troy Brewery thriving in such a large market is the consistency of product. We are able to have a set list of core beers we replicate so people that want to come in and enjoy our Imperial Milk Stout or Pilsner that they love so much can come in and do so year round.

Tim: By providing spaces that focus on social responsibility and community building through the creation of world-class experiences and beverages.

Q. What are your priorities as a brewmaster (i.e. looking for the next flavor, sustainability, local focus, etc.)?

A. Tim: To continue developing truly unique products that push the limits for what people expect from an alcoholic beverage.

Ryan: My top priority even before we opened has been the local focus - make what the people enjoy drinking. There were countless hours of extensive research in developing our beers prior to opening.

Between brewing multiple different styles of beer and getting the feedback, to fine tuning and replicating recipes we wanted to make sure we were providing our customers with a product they would enjoy. We keep up with the trend as far as new beers that are hot in the market are concerned but it's the consistent core base that the locals keep coming back for.

Q. Where do you get your inspiration as a brewer?

A. Tim: The great outdoors....Oh, and drinking lots of our product.

Ryan: Two people stand out to me as far as an inspiration. First is Greg Picora from a brewery in Florida. My father and I visit a friend who lives in Orlando as a tradition & during one of our visits we stopped at a brewery called Wop Hops where I met Greg. I was always interested in the idea of working at a brewery but was hesitant because of the stable career in the automotive industry which I had for years.

During a conversation with Greg at his



VANESSA LENZ Good Neighbors

The Hive Taproom's head brewer and owner Tim Guild (left) and East Troy Brewery's head brewer Ryan Hammerel teamed up to produce a special collab brew for the East Troy Area Chamber of Commerce's fourth annual East Troy Brewfest. The event will return May 24, 2020.

brewery he told me if he could have he would have jumped into the industry 20 years ago which kicked started me into looking for an opportunity at a brewery.

Second would be John Harrison from

Delafield Brewhaus. I got a life changing opportunity working as an assistant brewer for John. He was able to share with me 20 plus years of experience while I worked under his wing at Delafield.

• Things to do (Continued from front page)

25 – Read & Feed

InkLink Books' Read and Feed, 6 p.m. Wednesday, March 25, 2894 on Main, 2894 Main St. featuring Quan Barry, author of "We Ride Upon Sticks" & four-course, wine paired dinner. Tickets on sale at 10 a.m., March 3 at InkLink Books, 2890 Main St., (262) 642-9607.

28–MapleSyrupFamilyFunDay

Pancake breakfast from 8 a.m. to noon & activities from 8 a.m. to 2 p.m., Saturday, March 28, Camp Edwards YMCA Camp and Retreat Center, N8901 Army Lake Road, Breakfast tickets are \$6 (adults), \$4 (4-12) & free (under 3), campedwards.org.

27-29– ETHS Spring Play

"Curious Savage," 7 p.m., Friday, March 27 & Saturday, March 28 & 2 p.m., Sunday, March 29, (262) 642-6760.

APRIL

1– Wine Class at Ivan's

6 p.m. on Wednesday, April 1, Ivan's Backstage, 2093 Division St.

4– Family Resource Center Egg Hunt

9 a.m., Saturday, April 4, Little Prairie Primary School, 2109 Townline Road, featuring egg hunt, activities, photos with the Bunny. RSVP to easttroyfamily@gmail.com.

4, 5, 11 – Bunny Train

East Troy Electric Railroad Bunny Train, April 4, 5 & 11. Departures from East Troy Depot, 2002 Church St., at 9 and 10:30 a.m., noon, 1:30 and 3 p.m., featuring photos with Easter Bunny, activities & live bunny and chick displays, \$17 (adults), \$14 (ages 3-14), \$8 (0-2), easttroyrr.org.

11– FFA Consignment Auction

East Troy FFA Alumni auction, 10 a.m., Saturday, April 11, East Troy High School, 3128 Graydon Ave., (262) 642-7892.

12– Bunny Jump

Skydive Milwaukee's Easter Bunny Jump, 9 a.m.- 2 p.m., Sunday, April 12, W1341 County Road L featuring egg hunt, photos at noon, jump at 1 p.m., skydivemilwaukee.com

13,14,20–Cheep,CheepEaster Celebration

April 4, 5 & 11, Elegant Farmer, 1545 Main St., Mukwonago, featuring Easter Bunny, baby chicks & Easter specialty foods, elegantfarmer.com.

19– Cocktail Class

The Global Glass & Ivan's Backstage, 2093 Division St., East Troy, class, 6 p.m. Thursday, March 19. Tickets at The Global

Glass, 2884 Main St.

25– St. Peter's Casino Night

St. Peter's Catholic Church & School, 3001 Elm St., 6-11 pm., Saturday, April 25, (262) 642-5533.

ONGOING

Live Music at the Hive

The Hive Taproom, W2463 County Road ES, will host live music from 6 to 9 p.m. on Saturdays in March and Open Mic on Sundays this spring.

Dates include: March 7: Sneezy; March 14: 3 A.M. Saints & Ghosts in Color; March 21: Smooth Blues Band; March 28: Indigo Canyon; March 29: Open Mic; April 4: Paulie & the Poorboys; April 11: Brothers Quinn; April 18: Matt Meyer Duo; April 25: Would You Kindly? and April 26: Open Mic, thehivetaproom.com.

Picture Lady

The East Troy Area Historical Society, 2106 Church St., will host its Picture Lady series, presenting a famous artist's work from 1-3 p.m. on the first Saturday of the month, March 7 (Ansel Adams), April 4 (Norman Rockwell) and May 2 (Georgia O'Keeffe) through August, easttroyhistory.org.

Trivia Night

The Hive Taproom, W2463 County Road ES, will host Tim's Taproom Trivia from 7 to 9 p.m. on Thursdays. The Hive will also feature Team Tournament Game Night (most) Fridays from 7 to 9 p.m. and Yoga & Pour: (most) Sundays from 11 a.m. to 1 p.m., thehivetaproom.com.

Yoga on the Square

Connect mind, body, and spirit with certified yoga instructors Julie Scurek and Elizabeth Weinkauff at 9:30 a.m. on Sundays with 60-minute beginner's yoga classes at 2890 Main St., 2nd floor, above InkLink Books, \$12. Bring mats and water.

Bingo at East Troy House

East Troy House, 2093 Division St., will offer bingo on Thursday nights, featuring \$5 special martinis from 5-9 p.m. and Bingo from 7-9 p.m., (262) 642-7100.

SmartIPAnts Trivia

East Troy Brewery, 2905 Main St., will host SmartIPAnts Trivia Mondays at 7 p.m. Buy any app and get 2-4-1 house brews, easttroybrewery.com.

Senior Movie

The East Troy Area Community Center, 2040 Beulah Ave., will host a movie for seniors from 1 to 3 p.m. on the first and third Tuesday of the month featuring free popcorn and a movie. Enter via Division Street Parking Lot, Door 7, (262) 642-2266.



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Q&A: Six Bright Stars

EAST TROY HIGH SCHOOL NASA HUNCH CLUB

Maddy Otto, Abigail Manthey, Christina Nolting, Caitlin Hunter, Carly Goetsch & Tara Johnson

Six East Troy High School students have joined the exclusive NASA Hunch project-based learning program and will spend the rest of the school year trying to build something they are hoping will be adopted for use aboard the International Space Station.

The all-girls group is confident they can pull it off and we will all be cheering them as they set their sights on an invite to present their findings to NASA experts at Rocket Park in Houston (for the third straight year) & as they continue their studies in engineering.

Q. How did you get involved in the NASA Hunch Program?

A. Our siblings and friends had always been involved in the program and it sounded interesting. We all knew one another before doing the program so once we all learned that we would be doing together it drove us to be even more committed to it.

Q. We understand the Hunch Program tasks students with building something NASA has never successfully attempted before. What have you worked on to date & how long does it take?

A. We developed a fruit preservation chemical technology, a collapsible sleeping chamber and this year a lunar sleeping rack for the ISS. The process generally takes around six months.



PHOTO SUBMITTED Good Neighbors

East Troy High School's NASA Hunch Club members (from left) Maddy Otto, Abigail Manthey, Christina Nolting, Caitlin Hunter, Carly Goetsch and Tara Johnson are hoping to travel to NASA's Johnson Space Center in Houston to present their findings to experts for the third straight year.

Q. We love to hear that an all-girl group from East Troy High School was asked to join this exclusive program. How can we empower other girls to get involved in science, technology, engineering and mathematics?

A. Inspiring girls to explore options outside of the stereotypes & giving opportunities to girls to explore STEM programs just like HUNCH

Q. How do you blend skills you've learned through the Hunch program into your everyday life and future plans?

A. • Problem solving!!!

- Working as a team in high pressure settings
- Presentation skills
- How to deal with rejection
- Adapting ideas
- Communication with professionals
- Time management

Q. What is your group's goal for 2020?

A. Our main goal for this year to make it to the final presentation in Houston, Texas. We want to have a successful presentation and prototype. For our senior year it's really important to us to have a successful season.

Q&A: Connecting Communities

Mary Nicoson

East Troy Area Community Foundation

Joe Klarkowski

Tri-Troy Alliance

Tri-Troy Alliance members Joe Klarkowski, Town of East Troy Chairman, and Mary Nicoson, Vice President of First Citizens State Bank and East Troy Community Foundation board member, are on a mission to connect communities.

Touting the connectivity, health and economic benefits, the two have led the push to create the community's first Multi-Use Recreational Trail. Plans call for the proposed 7-mile Electric Trail to start at the Village of East Troy Mill Pond Park, go through Town Hall Park and end at Indianhead Park in the Village of Mukwonago. The majority of the trail would be built along the East Troy Electric Railroad with the remainder on Town, Village and County road right of ways.

Nicoson and Klarkowski plan to continue

their work, seeking support and partnership from stakeholders in 2020.

The trail project will require the cooperation between five government entities, including Walworth County, Waukesha County, Village of East Troy, Village of Mukwonago and Town of East Troy.

Q. Why do you want this path?

A. The construction of a Multi-Use Recreational Path is a beneficial amenity to our communities and visitors. The conceptual plan to construct the path parallel to the existing railroad tracks running from the Village of East Troy to Indianhead Park in Mukwonago is a vision of connecting communities while promoting healthy lifestyles and economic development.

Q. How will the project be funded?

A. State and Federal Grant opportunities are being applied for to accommodate the majority of costs. The project will also need a mutual

contribution from the counties of Walworth and Waukesha, as well as the Town of East Troy, Village of East Troy and Village of Mukwonago, a massive amount of fundraising activities, as well as the support pledged by the East Troy Area Community Foundation, Inc.

Q. Trails improve wellness opportunities & address important quality of life issues. Can you explain how a recreational path can also link regions & draw visitors?

A. The "Connect Communities" is a prevailing goal for this project as well as creating a venue of activity for the camps, parks & tourism. The three communities have a lot to offer. When completed, this trail will also have connections to the east & west and potentially to the north & south. The local and regional bicyclists will be welcome and drawn to the trail.

See **CONNECTING COMMUNITIES**, Page 6

Q&A: On the move

CARISSA CHANOS

Infinity Dance

With the goal of sharing its deep love of dance with more people, Infinity Dance expanded to East Troy at the start of 2019.

From the beginning, owner and artistic director Carissa Chanos has made it her goal for the boutique-style studio (co-owned with her mom Gina) to be a fixture within the East Troy community. With a new studio at 3278 Main St., expanded class offerings & dance performances (all in less than a year), she's well on her way.

Q. How did you make the decision to teach dance as a career?

A. Dance runs in my blood. It always has been a huge passion for my family, and I continued to fall in love with the art form the more classes I attended.

When I started as an assistant to help instruct classes, a spark had ignited for me to teach. Seeing a student accomplish a new skill leaves me with such fulfillment that continues to drive my passion to do what I love to do.

Q. How would you describe Infinity's dance aesthetic?

A. When you join our studio, you become a part of our family.

We've created an atmosphere that has a boutique look and feel, and with our intimate class sizes, it allow our instructors to have one to one touch points with our students so they feel a more personalized experience when they walk through our doors.

Q. Why did Infinity decide to make the move to East Troy?

A. When exploring the option of relocating, the authentic and encouraging culture of the East Troy community best matched our values of who we are.

Q. Why is a dance studio such an important element of East Troy?

A. Dance is a great artistry to dive into because it focuses on discipline, organization, creativity, leadership and so much more!

It is a way of moving our body as an instrument of expression and communication that challenges us to work outside our comfort zone. Our goal for our students is to gain a new found confidence that I feel is of upmost importance in childhood development.

Q. What is the best thing about East Troy?

A. The community, hands down! Since we opened in East Troy in June, everyone has been so supportive, kind and excited to have us here. The profuse amount of love we feel has our hearts overflowing with joy!

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East Troy Lights 2020, a community-oriented interactive light show, will kick off on Dec. 5 at the Santa on the Square celebration and Bob Barutha Memorial Tree Lighting and continue through the month of December. Get details at easttroylights.com.

JAMIE ROHRER *Good Neighbors*

We are beyond fortunate to have such an amazing community. I can only hope to see East Troy continue to grow and thrive: to see more people get involved and make East Troy their home. Every individual matters and can make a difference. East Troy Lights is just another step in this process.

Q. What is the timeline you are looking at for this project & how can we help?

A. Our timeline is to be done before Christmas! Just kidding...kind of. Actually we plan to show off this year's light show on Dec. 5 at the annual East Troy Christmas Tree lighting. We plan to have the light show available until Christmas with a light show playing every night. Breaking down the timeline, we are currently working with Allan Integrated Control Systems and the students at East Troy High School to have the control boxes finished by the end of summer and hope to have a simulation environment setup around this time to test out light show scripts. We are looking for people who want to help hang lights, write light show scripts, build decorations, sponsor, or donate. Basically anything involving Christmas lights.

Q&A: Let there be light(s)

JAMIE ROHRER
East Troy Lights

Jamie Rohrer is the co-founder of Dither Studio and co-owner of Corvia Technologies. He can often be found at East Troy Chamber events either in a pirate costume or stormtrooper outfit. He's an out-of-the-box envelope pusher combining his love for East Troy, background in business and technology expertise to lead East Troy's newest venture: East Troy Lights – plans for a spectacular interactive light show on the square.

Q. What is East Troy Lights & who is involved?

A. East Troy Lights is a community-oriented, interactive, Christmas light show project! In order for it to be successful, we need everyone involved – the businesses around town, volunteers to help put up lights and build control boxes, and donors to help fund the endeavor. Vanessa Lenz - director of the East Troy Chamber - dreamed of creating a light show for years. But it wasn't until 2019 that we had the chance to finally make the idea a reality. Already, multiple business on the square have gotten involved (East Troy House, Sauced - the new pizza shop on the square, & East Troy Brewery), the East Troy School district, Allan Integrated Control Systems, as well as interest and inquiries from numerous other organizations.

Q. Why is the development of the light show a priority for 2020?

A. Well, I wouldn't say it's a priority per se, but we are extremely excited about what we accomplished with the proof-of-concept light show in 2019. Although the proof-of-concept light show

was not publicly announced, hundreds of people either saw the show live, on Instagram/ Facebook, or had the chance to interact with it at www.easttroylights.com. With where the light show is at today, taking the show to the next level for 2020 is a highly logical next step. We already have the technology and we already have a fabulous community itching to make some lights blink. All we need to do is just do it!

Q. How are the defining characteristics of the East Troy Village Square factoring into your light show planning?

A. While we want the light show to eventually encompass all of East Troy (the snowflakes along Main Street, the schools, the houses, and the businesses), the square offers a number of unique advantages as an initial starting place. Firstly, we plan to launch the light show during the Dec. 5 Santa on the Square event/ tree lighting. This will allow the thousand or more people there to immediately enjoy and interact with the lights. Secondly, the principle of concentrated impact. That is to say, if we took all the lights in all of East Troy, on all the houses, on all the buildings, on all the trees, and put them in one spot, the light show would quite likely be one of the largest light shows in the state. This is the idea behind making a concentrated impact. The square is an ideal location for us to concentrate our initial efforts. Finally, and most importantly, the square has a 360 view which maximizes the lights-to-visibility ratio (okay, fine, we just made this up, but it actually makes sense!).

Q. Where do you see this community, and especially the East Troy Village Square, heading & how do you hope the light show will play a role?

A. I believe communities don't just exist, but that they take continual effort to maintain, grow, and foster. Communities require passionate kids and passionate adults to drive them forward. The idea behind East Troy lights is to offer everyone - old and young - an introductory opportunity to get involved. Whether using the buttons on the website to control the lights on the buildings, or climbing a ladder to help hang the lights, East Troy Lights reshapes how East Troy looks (if even temporarily).

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Q&A: All Aboard

RYAN JONAS
*East Troy Electric
Railroad President*

East Troy has always been synonymous with the East Troy Electric Railroad.

The famous attraction draws 30,000 visitors a year looking to get that once-in-a-lifetime vintage trolley ride aboard the 111-year-old East Troy Electric Railroad – Wisconsin’s last original electric railroad line

Current president Ryan Jonas has been ever-present and key to the railroad’s current success with a focus on working together and strengthening the railroad’s vitality for generations to come.

Q. What are some of the defining characteristics of the East Troy Electric Railroad?

A. Our museum offers a family-friendly atmosphere that fosters memories that last a lifetime. I am extremely privileged to work alongside many dedicated volunteers who work tirelessly to ensure a great guest experience. It never ceases to amaze me how diverse talents of our volunteers are.

Q. What do you have planned for 2020?

A. In addition to favorites like our Bunny and Christmas Trains, we will be expanding our dinner train offerings for 2020 with several new themed events including a “Local” Motive train highlighting some local favorites including Grassway Organics, Hometown Sausage, The Hive Taproom and of course some Elegant Farmer Apple Pie for dessert!

Q. The railroad continues to grow as a top tourist attraction, however you’ve

also made an effort to get locals to ride the rails. Can you tell us why everyone in the 53120 zip code should love the East Troy Electric Railroad?

A. The railroad itself is such an important piece of history that built East Troy.

Many people don’t realize that before the railroad came to town, East Troy didn’t have electricity. It also cut the travel time into Milwaukee from two days via horse and carriage to two hours. The railroad was also a U.S. Mail route and transported freight for many years.

Today, it brings 30,000 people into our community, stimulating our economy and exposing guests from all over the world to our community.

Q. Why is the continued development of the East Troy Electric Railroad important for East Troy?

A. As a resident of East Troy myself, I am amazed at the growth on and off the square. There is a momentum that has been built in the past several years that is both exciting and fun to be a part of.

The railroad has connected cities together for over 110 years and will continue to do so for years to come. The more we can expand operations and offerings, the more people we will bring into our thriving community.

Q. Tell us about your favorite trolley?

A. Although I like each of our cars for different reasons, I remain partial to our Milwaukee Streetcar, 846. My grandparents and great-grandparents lived in Milwaukee and utilized the streetcar system on a regular basis to get around. I like thinking of how they might have sat in those very seats years ago.



Home on the Square’s general manager Dan Moody welcomes customers to East Troy’s one-stop gift shop, located on the north side of the East Troy Village Square, adjacent to InkLink Books.

Q&A: Sometimes more, never less

DAN MOODY
Home on the Square

Home on the Square, located at 2888 Main St., is the latest new business to claim a spot on the East Troy Village Square and the first gift shop to grace downtown East Troy since recent revitalization efforts began.

The about 1,200-square foot new shop, owned by longtime East Troy business owner JoAnn McCormack and Dan Moody, who has worked in the fashion and entertainment industry for more than 15 years, features the latest garden, home and gift items sourced from a mixture of the East and West coasts and Wisconsin-based artists and companies.

Q. What drew you to the East Troy Village Square?

A. The Square is having a Renaissance and the word has gotten out. People from surrounding towns are coming to see what East Troy has to offer. The Square embodies the sense of community that we are known for.

Q. How do you work to create a great in-store experience?

A. My business partner, JoAnn McCormack and I have worked very hard to create

an environment that is welcoming and unassuming.

I do my best to make a connection with everyone who walks through our doors. Also, I spent about a week on our playlist.

Q. What excites you the most about East Troy?

A. The small-business boom has brought a collection of like-minded people to the area who want to use their skill sets to progress the great community that already exists in East Troy.

Q. Where do you think downtown East Troy is heading? How does your work play a role in that future?

A. You can easily spend an entire day in downtown East Troy and we are becoming a destination for weekend getaways. I want to be able to offer people something that they can say “check this out, I got it in East Troy!”

Q. What is the nicest thing a customer has said to you?

A. My favorite compliment has always been non-verbal and it’s when a customer starts bobbing their head to the shop’s playlist.

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•Connecting Communities (Continued from page 4)

Q. This endeavor has created an immense amount of cooperation. How have you worked to increase collaboration?

A. This overnight success is almost four years in the making. The villages and towns have been very receptive to the community improvement aspects of the project. It has also led to the creation of the Tri-Troy Alliance,

which has been active in cost saving. The towns of Troy and East Troy and Village of East Troy are indeed working together.

Q. What is the next step?

A. We are rendering the results of the first of many grant applications. A memorandum of understanding has been drafted and we are waiting for a few parties to sign.



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Q&A: Taking charge

GREG JENNINGS

President and CEO Thermal Product Solutions, Wisconsin Oven

In summer of 2019, Greg Jennings was appointed to the role as President and CEO of Thermal Product Solutions, parent company of Wisconsin Oven Corporation.

He succeeded longtime CEO Dave Strand after his retirement announcement.

Jennings hit the ground running with an engaging leadership style that relies heavily on collaboration and partnership.

He brings a unique perspective with experience in both Fortune 500 and private companies. He previously held the position of Chief Financial Officer at TPS since 2013.

Q. Can you share a bit about the background you bring to your new role?

A. I have always been drawn to manufacturing. Being able to see a tangible product that is going to help the customer meet their needs is very gratifying.

My career has been within various industrial manufacturing businesses, domestic and international, with a focus on finance and business operations.

Throughout these roles, I have been very

fortunate to work with some truly incredible leaders, the most recent of which was Dave Strand. Dave provided me with a wealth of industry knowledge and a prime example on how impactful positive interaction within a company and community can be. Upon Dave's retirement, I was appointed CEO of Thermal Product Solutions and Wisconsin Oven, and am looking to continue community involvement efforts that Wisconsin Oven is known for.

Q. What are some examples of how Wisconsin Oven Corporation innovates (i.e. how Wisconsin Oven provides equipment to the aerospace industry)?

A. Wisconsin Oven is a company that has always done a tremendous job of evolving based on market needs. Recently, we have worked with industry leaders in the most demanding of industries, aerospace and privatized space travel.

To meet the requirements in this industry, Wisconsin Oven has had to develop equipment never before manufactured, including the largest composite oven in the world. Additionally, we are looking to be market leaders on IOT, providing more data and connectivity than ever before, launching in 2020.

Q. What are some things Wisconsin Oven Corporation has done to integrate into the local community?

A. In 2019, Wisconsin Oven contributed to 36 different organizations in, or around, East Troy. These organizations include police and fire departments, numerous school programs,

sports programs, Big Brothers Big Sisters, and many more.

We also partner with the United Way of Walworth County. This partnership allows our employees to contribute directly to the United Way through payroll, and ensures that these donations get disbursed within the county. And during the holiday season, we collect food for the East Troy Food Pantry and we adopt a family for Christmas.

Q. Being one of the largest employers in East Troy, how do you view your role as leaders in the community?

A. Being one of the largest employers in the community allows for a number of opportunities to make a positive impact for our employees and the community.

For our employees, Wisconsin Oven does not just provide a job, we look to provide a family style work environment, company

events, professional training, and opportunities to contribute to the community. This, in turn, can provide the community with a support both socially and economically.

We understand the importance of community interaction and will continue to look for new ways to set the stage for other employers.

Q. What is your favorite thing about East Troy?

A. East Troy has a unique mix of small town feel, industry, and entrepreneurial spirit.

This mix allows for the community members and businesses to interact and contribute in a progressive way, with everyone looking to make a positive impact.

Although, I have lived in the area for only three years, there have been several businesses established and many venues to bring business and community leaders together through the East Troy Chamber. I'm excited to see the years to come for East Troy.

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