

Good NEIGHBORS

A Publication of the East Troy Area Chamber of Commerce

EASTTROY.ORG

MARCH 2024

VOLUME 35, EDITION 1



What's next?

2024 Scavenger Games announces 3 East Troy dates

This summer, teams will compete head to head in the ultimate citywide scavenger hunt for a \$1,000 prize. This technology driven, citywide adventure blends modern electronic elements like movie-esque Laser Mazes and Hypercube Pop-up Art Installations with engaging physical and logical challenges.

The 2024 Scavenger Games: The Ultimate Citywide Adventure will occur on three dates:

- June 15, 2024
- Aug. 17, 2024
- Oct. 19, 2024

Each hunt will feature East Troy's must-sees and hidden treasures across our downtown, highlighting historical sites, landmarks, attractions and food, drink and dining experiences.

Face off against hundreds of other players in a game of wits, strategy, diplomacy, physical feats, and cleverness for the ultimate prize of \$1,000.

Teams consist of up to six people, but you'll need at least three to accomplish certain tasks.

Choose your team wisely. Every member will matter. From puzzle solving, to data gathering, to physical abilities, you'll want a little of everything as you face off in the ultimate scavenger hunt.

Tickets will go on sale May 1 at thescavengergames.com.

To get involved with the event as a sponsor or volunteer, email vanessa@easttroy.org.

East Troy Lights nominated for state tourism award

East Troy Lights is being honored on a state level for pushing the boundaries of innovation in the tourism industry.

The immersive and interactive holiday light experience has been nominated for the Wisconsin's Governor's Tourism Award in the "Innovation" category.

The award recognizes a business or community that has implemented a new strategy that has positively impacted their organization and/or destination through an innovative approach in technology, sustainability, adaptivity and/or the implementation of best practices.

"It's been a dream come true to bring East Troy Lights to life and we are thrilled to be in the running to win a state tourism award" said Vanessa Lenz, East Troy Area Chamber of Commerce Executive Director.

Utilizing cutting edge IoT technology and the latest in LLMs and diffusion models, this winter East Troy's downtown transformed into a holiday wonderland with East Troy Lights.

The one-of-a-kind interactive holiday experience transported visitors to a dazzling display of lights utilizing the backdrop of the

• CONTINUED ON PAGE 2

Is East Troy's Most Wonderful Time of Year Just the Start?

Interactive light show continues to keep magic alive

This winter, downtown East Troy once again transformed into a holiday wonderland and delivered big results with the much-anticipated return of East Troy Lights.

The interactive and imaginative light display experience transported visitors to a dazzling display of lights utilizing the backdrop of the historic East Troy Village Square.

For the entire month of December, people flocked to the square to walk through the lights and create their own holiday magic with the Candy Cane Adventure and addition of East Troy Lights Live!

Several area businesses and organizations, along with volunteers and donors, are working together to continue this unique event to draw visitors to the area, including presenting partners Sauced Pizzeria, Allan Integrated Control Systems, East Troy Brewery, Dither Studio and East Troy Community School District.

Vanessa Lenz, East Troy Area Chamber of Commerce Executive Director (which presents East Troy Lights) and Jamie Rohrer, East Troy Lights Show Creator, give us an inside look at East Troy Lights 2024 and why

• CONTINUED ON PAGE 4



Q&A: From Curd to Community

Hill Valley Dairy expands to Milwaukee market

Hill Valley Dairy is one of those businesses that you can't help but fall in love with.

Owners Ron and Josie Henningfeld have created a booming business centered on family, community and an entrepreneurial spirit. At the heart of it all lies their love for cheese – Wisconsin's beloved culinary treasure.

The Henningfelds, who started their

business making and selling their cheese to local markets in East Troy and Burlington back in 2016, have come a long way, creating a hub for cheese enthusiasts from all walks of life.

Due to increasing popularity and demand for their products, the Henningfelds opened a retail store and

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East Troy in 2024: All Your Questions Answered

Our fourth annual Q&A issue combines two vital things: the real-life concerns of our readers and the knowledge and expertise of our community members.

We asked for all your burning questions about East Troy ... What new businesses are in East Troy? Is Alpine Valley Music Theatre coming back with a full line up? What is the status on Highway 20 construction?

We did our best to get to the bottom of it for you.

Q: What artists are scheduled to grace the stage of Alpine Valley Music Theatre this summer?

After hosting just two concerts in 2023, Alpine Valley Music Theatre is set to have a busier summer this year.

Boasting one of the largest outdoor amphitheatres in the country, Alpine has already announced several shows for summer of 2024.

After headlining Summerfest in 2023, Dave Matthews Band is heading back to Alpine Valley Music Theatre with a pair

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GOOD NEIGHBORS

MARCH 2024

East Troy

WISCONSIN 2024

EAST TROY FIRST FRIDAYS

5 - 8 p.m. every first Friday May - September
(May 3, June 7, July 5, Aug. 2 and Sept. 6)

MEMORIAL DAY WEEKEND

Memorial Day Corn & Brat Roast: May 24-27
Community-wide Rummage Sale: May 24-26
East Troy Brewfest: May 26
Memorial Day Observance: May 27

FOURTH OF JULY CELEBRATION

East Troy Music Festival Presented By East Troy Lions June 28, 29 and 30

SCAVENGER GAMES

June 15, Aug. 17 and Oct. 19

EAST TROY'S AUTUMNAL SOIREE

Oct. 12

EAST TROY'S PUMPKIN POP UP

Oct. 25-31

EAST TROY LIGHTS

Santa on the Square & Santa Parade Train: Dec. 7
East Troy Winter Wine Walk: Dec. 13
East Troy Lights Live!: Dec. 13-14, 20-21, 27-28
The Candy Cane Adventure: Dec. 8-31
East Troy Community Night & Santa Tours: Dec. 21
East Troy NYE Ball Drop, presented by Allan ICS: Dec. 31

easttroy.org

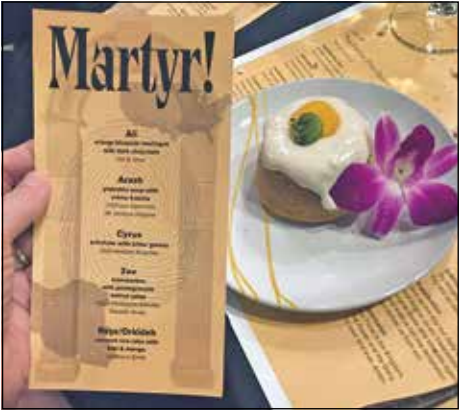
YOUR HAPPY PLACE



EAST TROY LIGHTS • CONTINUED FROM FRONT PAGE

historic East Troy Village Square, Dec. 2-31.
“Grab a comic, grab a wand,” became the tagline for people who flocked to downtown East Troy to walk through the lights and create their own holiday magic with the popular Candy Cane Adventure – a technology-led explorative adventure allowing users to interact with and control the lights.
“By utilizing technology in new ways, East Troy Lights has been successful in putting East Troy front and center, including (among numerous other positive earned media) a story in Midwest Living (which has a 3.2 million cross platform audience)!” Lenz said..
“Getting to see East Troy alongside million-

dollar light show installations in major cities due to its unique use of holiday lights and adventure validates the value of innovation and its implementation in tourism.
“We couldn’t have achieved this without the support of our incredible team and the amazing community around us. Thank you for all who believed in our vision and joined us on this journey, including our presenting sponsors: East Troy Community School District, Allan ICS, Sauced Pizzeria, East Troy Brewery and Dither Studio.”
The winner will be announced at the Governor’s Dinner and Awards Celebration in Lake Geneva on March 12. More information can be found at easttroylights.com.



Read & Feed

Kaveh Akbar spent an evening in East Troy during InkLink Books & 2894 on Main’s latest Read & Feed book dinner inspired by his first fiction novel “Martyr!” The book was at the top of TIME Magazine’s list of the 25 most anticipated books of 2024. After hitting shelves in January, the author’s work has received unending praise from literary critics at The New York Times, PBS, Oprah Daily, NPR, and many others. For details on upcoming events visit InkLink Books, 2890 Main St. on the East Troy Village Square.

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COMMUNITY SCHOOL DISTRICT



SC43 is an independent, not-for-profit soccer club on a mission to help kids fall in love with the game of soccer.

Anna Janusz, President of the SC43 Board of Directors, talks about what the club has planned for 2024 and all things soccer in East Troy.

Q: What sets SC43 apart from other soccer clubs?

A: SC43 exists to make soccer approachable and affordable for all kids.

We don't exist to make money or advance anyone's career – we have incredible coaches who are passionate about soccer and work diligently with our volunteers to keep costs as low as we can.

We encourage our players to participate in as many sports and other activities as they want to, and we are flexible with our scheduling to really help facilitate that for kids.

Q: Can you discuss how SC43 actively engages with the local community/other soccer programs. Why is this important?

A: Each year we send players to serve as ball runners for East Troy's high school soccer team and we invite the high school players to practice with our middle school-aged kids.

Last year East Troy beat Mukwonago in

the first-ever Homecoming soccer game and SC43 brought soccer excitement with our float in the homecoming parade.

This July will be our second time bringing coaches from Spain to work with our players in the La Liga Camp, which brings great excitement as we prepare for the fall season.

Many SC43 players look forward to their high school soccer career and take advantage of a winter camp hosted by high school Coach Judd and Coach Blandin.

Every spring SC43 awards college scholarships to two high school seniors who were involved in SC43 as a player or referee.

Q: How does SC43 prioritize the development of players at different age levels?

A: Our youngest players (3-6 years old) have practices on Mondays and scrimmage on Friday nights. Coaches teach foot skills, teamwork and also play lots of games to keep it fun.

When players turn 7, they play on one of our recreation teams. Practices continue to focus on foot skills and proper technique, and also start to work on tactical approach and how to work with your teammates to score lots of goals!

As players get older, we offer Select teams for players who want to take soccer a bit more seriously. When some clubs start prioritizing players for Academy teams,



SC43 recognized three of its community members – David Janusz (Coach of the Year), Mason Beaver (Youth Ref of the Year) and Vanessa Lenz (Volunteer of the Year) at the 2024 Stateline Soccer Awards Banquet at 841 Brewhouse in Whitewater. Pictured are (from left): Erin Halkin, David Janusz (SC43 Director of Coaching), Anna Janusz (SC43 Board President), Beaver, Lenz, Amy Beaver and Jayme and Jerry Mane.

PHOTO SUBMITTED *Good Neighbors*

SC43 treats all players as the most important, spending three hours in practice each week and leaving lots of time for other sports and activities.

Q: Looking ahead, what do you have planned for 2024?

A: In 2024, SC43 will roll out a new offering with our tournament teams.

Previously tournaments were only offered to our Select players and we're reimagining how we can bring more kids into the fun of weekend tournaments!

Back this summer will be our Booth Lake Beach Party for everyone on the club and in July we will host our Spanish friends for La Liga Camp. Watch our website (www.sc43soccer.com) for information about all of these things!

QUESTIONS ANSWERED • CONTINUED FROM FRONT PAGE

of shows June 21 and 22.

Singer-songwriter Noah Kahan is coming to the 37,000-person-capacity venue on Saturday, July 13. The show is one of 32 shows on his newly announced "We'll All Be Here Forever Tour."

Alpine Valley Music Theatre is one of the stops on Phish's 2024 tour, with Trey Anastasio and company playing the East Troy amphitheater July 26 to 28.

Hootie & the Blowfish, a pop-rock band, will perform at the East Troy amphitheater on

Saturday, Aug. 10.

Jason Aldean's "Highway Desperado Tour" includes a stop at Alpine Valley Music Theatre on Saturday, Aug. 17.

The Avett Brothers will bring their summer tour to Alpine Valley on Sunday, Aug. 18 with special guest Trampled By Turtles.

Tickets for Alpine shows can be purchased at livenation.com.

Q: When is East Troy's Fourth of July Festival?

A: The East Troy Lions Club will hold its annual Fourth of July Celebration Friday, June 28 through Sunday, June 30 at Rossmiller Sports Complex and Skate Park (fka Amusement Park), 3090 Graydon Ave., East Troy.

The East Troy Music Festival features the famous East Troy Beer Tent (ETBT), carnival rides, games, fair food and live entertainment.

The parade, with the theme "Music of the Ages," will start at noon on Sunday, June 30. Fireworks are scheduled for June 30 at dark. For more information, visit easttroylions.org.

Q. What is the status on the new Culver's in East Troy?

A: Culver's is set to open in East Troy mid-to late-July.

Campbell Construction broke ground Jan. 4 on an around 4,000-square-foot drive-thru Culver's on Highway 20.

Brianna Campbell, a 2018 East Troy High



Culver's is officially coming to East Troy. Campbell Construction broke ground Jan. 4 on the around 4,000-square-foot drive-thru Culver's on Highway 20, which is set to open mid- to late-July. Brianna Campbell, a 2018 East Troy High School graduate (third from left), will be the General Manager at this location.

VANESSA LENZ *Good Neighbors*

School graduate, will be the General Manager at the 2557 North St. location.

Jay Campbell, president and founder of Campbell Construction, said the location is

expected to employ a total of 60 people. Fred Kohls and Scott Mallon will also be part

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Q&A: Honey Creek Collective

Campus creates wellness community

Honey Creek Collective, an East Troy based community of like-minded organizations, businesses, entrepreneurs, wellness practitioners, community leaders and all around awesome people, has been working for the last two years to make sure its historic property on the banks of Honey Creek is alive with energy and positivity.

The former Michael Fields site (which is now a tenant in the building) hosts office and event space, plus various food, health and wellness businesses.

Owners Jason and Jodi Neu talk about being active in the community since purchasing the property, hosting the East Troy Farmers Market as well as other partnerships.

Q: Can you tell us more about the origins of Honey Creek Collective and how it came to be?

A: Honey Creek Collective was really just a fortuitous accident.

We were looking for a building to purchase that was close to home that we could use as our office and build into an investment but, in the end, we got so much more.

Our background is not in the health and wellness space but, after we put the offer in on the building, we were approached by a few wellness practitioners.

Getting to know a few people in the area really opened our eyes to what people seemed to be looking for in East Troy.

From there, we defined our purpose and mission for the campus, and had quite a few practitioners reach out about rental space. We found that East Troy has a robust community of health and wellness professionals and a passion to grow and share those skills to benefit others.

Q: Who is part of the Collective and what do they offer to the community?

A: We have practitioners that specialize in Acupuncture, massage, Reiki, Pilates, physical therapy, Sound Therapy, Infrared Sauna, Yoga, Tai Chi, and much more.

Most of our practitioners offer multiple modalities of healing and wellness.

Our website, honeycreekcollective.com, has links to all of the Collective partners.

Q: How does



above: Honey Creek Collective is an East Troy based community of like-minded organizations, businesses, entrepreneurs, wellness practitioners and community leaders. Located on the banks of Honey Creek, this historic property is alive with energy and positivity. **right:** Dr. Molly Platt, owner of Pure Physical Therapy, gives a sneak peak of hers and the other beautiful suite spaces where healing happens at Honey Creek Collective. Pure Physical Therapy is a direct access physical therapy clinic specializing in women's pelvic floor therapy and orthopedic pain.

PHOTO SUBMITTED Good Neighbors



being part of Honey Creek Collective contribute to the sense of community and collaboration among its members?

A: That's our favorite part of how Honey Creek Collective functions.

At their core, all of our partners are small businesses, often just one person. It is nice to be surrounded by other small businesses that have the same challenges and growing pains as you have.

In addition, our partners

share the same basic mission and principles, to help people be well. The fact that there are so many ways to help people feel their best on one campus is really incredible.

Q: We loved seeing the Honey Creek Collective take the reins of the East Troy Farmers Market. What's next for the market?

A: We were so unsure if we were ready to take on the East Troy Farmers Market.

We had no idea what we were doing, but, just like the wellness part of the Collective, it was the people that we got involved with that really made it happen.

The market has grown and the East Troy community has been so supportive. The importance of small, local food businesses cannot be understated.

It has turned into a really fun Friday afternoon hangout.

LIGHT SHOW

• CONTINUED FROM FRONT PAGE

they keep coming back for more.

Q: Congrats, you made it to Year 4! What is your favorite East Troy Lights moment to date?

Vanessa: I'm honestly so humbled and overwhelmed by the turnout for the debut of East Troy Lights with Santa on the Square each year.

This year's turnout, made me cry happy tears. I've never seen so many people on the square at one time.

We added the East Troy High School Band Drumline to the parade lineup and I got chills when I heard the students turn the corner of Division and Main to help Santa light the Bob Barutha Memorial Christmas Tree and kick off our first show. What a wonderful community we live in!

Jamie: So, at least for this year, my favorite moment was the launch night of "East Troy Lights Live!"

The launch was incredibly stressful because we hadn't had a chance to run through a complete show with all the parts at the same time (actors/lights/music/etc).

The first full show was that night, with the real audience!

I didn't even completely know what to expect. But it was honestly, really neat. I was actually pleasantly surprised at how well all the parts fit together!

Q. How do you continue to make East Troy Lights a unique experience year after year?

Jamie: The better question is, how can't we make it a unique experience? If we kept East Troy Lights the same every year, the show would be tedious and boring to work on.

We have to change/add new things!

By pushing the boundaries of what the show can be and what we are capable of doing, we not only make the show more interesting and exciting for participants, but also for ourselves! Yay!

Vanessa: We can't compete with the resources of larger light shows so we have to work hard and be creative.

Luckily we have Jamie's brainpower fueling the project, as well as our wonderful partners like Allan ICS and the East Troy Community School District to help take things to the next level.

This year, bearers of the magic Candy Cane Adventure wands traveled around the square on an epic story-driven adventure, which featured an accompanying East Troy Lights Comic Book (created in part with AI!) to enhance the experience. It's pretty amazing to be able to offer an experience like this in East Troy.

Q: What inspired the addition of East Troy Lights Live! and how did it further engage attendees?

Jamie: Every year, we've gotten more

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cheese and wine bar in Lake Geneva, located at 510 Broad St., in fall of 2022.

Last year, Hill Valley Dairy took over cheese production in the former Walker’s Point space of Clock Shadow Creamery, 138 W. Bruce St. In 2024, they will re-open the front end with space for cheese retail and cheese experiences.

Ron and Josie, both East Troy High School graduates, have strong East Troy ties.

Ron grew up on the same family dairy farm his family still operates in East Troy, Romari Farms, and uses its milk to make his cheeses.

Ron and Josie talk about Hill Valley Dairy’s origins, famous cheese flavors and what to expect in 2024.

Q: What inspired you to become a cheesemaker?

Ron:

Cheese! Cheese itself was my first inspiration.

Years back I just wanted to make some cheese at home, in a kettle, on my mom’s stove top. That got me hooked on cheesemaking.

My inspiration for taking it further was my parents. I watched them work hard and take pride in running their own business, the dairy farm, and I was always drawn to that – both the dairy and being an entrepreneur.

Q: What makes your cheese unique compared to others in the area?

Ron:

What we do has become uncommon these days. My brother, Frank Henningfeld, farms a small dairy farm and I use milk from that farm only for making our cheese.

The connection and the control we have from beginning to end makes for some really great results.

Q: What is your favorite cheese you produce, and why?

Ron:

Cajun Cheddar because it is Josie’s favorite. Shallot and Herb Alpine because it is Rayla’s favorite. Yellow Cheddar because it is Leni’s favorite. Luna because the moon is made of cheese.

Q: You opened your first retail space and cheese bar in downtown Lake Geneva. Can you talk about how your space has created a community around cheese?

Josie:

We did the farmer’s market circuit for a long time and met so many amazing small businesses with incredible products.

When we were opening a brick-and-mortar store, we wanted to showcase not just our cheeses but other cheeses and products we love, made by people we really enjoy.

We dreamed of a space that friends and families could gather and be social and have a new experience with cheese.

It was a really special project. Our friends



Hill Valley Dairy owners Ron and Josie Henningfeld aim to connect local people to local products often making it a family affair (with daughters Leni and Rayla), selling their cheese at Hill Valley Dairy Cheese Shop & Wine Bar in Lake Geneva and new Walker’s Point pop-up.

PHOTOS SUBMITTED Good Neighbors

and family helped us remodel the space, our kids were with us every step of the way, and our community really showed up to support it once the doors opened.

We host a number of classes and events each month, all of that information can be found on our Facebook and Instagram pages.

Q: We were thrilled to hear the news that Hill Valley Dairy now operates the cheese production Walker’s Point. What do you have planned for the space in 2024?

Josie:

Yes! This move feels so full circle for us, and we are really excited.

Ron was Clock Shadow’s first cheesemaker and when we first opened Hill Valley Dairy, we rented space from them to make our cheese.

This location has always been our production facility, but now that we are the sole occupants, we are able to increase our cheesemaking and expand our reach to new customers in the Milwaukee area!

It does have a front retail space that we are in the process of remodeling. The goal is to have another tasting bar and retail space opening in the summer of 2024.

Q: Why do people love Wisconsin cheeses so much?

Ron:

Cheese is a yummy manifestation of human intellectual achievement and Wisconsin is in the right place at the right time.

Our land, our water, and our weather is great for cows and producing the best quality milk that can then make the most lovable cheeses. Our dairy heritage has run for generations of dairy farmers teaching dairy farmers and cheesemakers teaching cheesemakers.

In Wisconsin we have become very good at making very good cheese.

Wisconsin cheese makes people happy!

Q. What is there to do this spring?

MARCH

22-30 EASTER GOODNESS

Hop into the Elegant Farmer, 1545 Main St., before Easter for a selection of Simply the Best Easter foods including its boneless CiderBaked Ham (\$2 off), fresh breads, Easter basket candies, jumbo iced Easter cookies, Wisconsin cheeses and more. For more information, visit elegantfarmer.com.

23 INTRODUCTION TO NEEDLE FELTING

Humble Oak Folk School will host an Introduction to Needle Felting class from 1 to 4 p.m. on Saturday, March 23 at Honey Creek Collective, N8030 Townline Road. The event will focus on embellishing flat felt surfaces via the needle-felting process and cover how to make small wet felted beads.

For more information on the Folk School, its classes, instructors, registration, sliding scale pricing visit www.humbleoak.org/folk-school

23 FAMILY RESOURCE CENTER EGG HUNT

The East Troy Family Community & Resource Center will host its 18th Annual Easter Egg Hunt on Saturday, March 23 at Little Prairie Primary School, 2109 Townline Road. Registration begins at 10 a.m. and the hunt begins at 10:15 a.m. Any children birth through fifth grade are welcome to participate.

The event, sponsored by the East Troy Lions Club, will include a bag of candy and prize per participant and photos with the Easter Bunny. RSVP with the number of children attending on the resource center’s Facebook page or by calling (262) 642-4900 or easttroyfamily@gmail.com.

In the event of inclement weather, the event will be moved indoors to the Little Prairie Primary School gym.

30 FFA CONSIGNMENT AUCTION

The East Troy FFA Alumni will host its 30th annual alumni consignment auction at 10 a.m. on Saturday, March 30 at East Troy High School, 3128 Graydon Ave. For more information, call (262) 642-7892.

30 SATURDAY NIGHT COMEDY SHOW

Attend the Caste of Killers comedy show from 5 to 9 p.m. on Saturday, March 30 at Alpine Valley Resort, W2501 County Road D. With a talented cast of Katrina Brown and Glen Gerard, attendees can expect a night filled with laughable stories, jokes, magic and surprises.

Cocktail hour is 5 to 6 p.m. Dinner is 6 to 7 p.m. with show beginning at 7 p.m. Cost is \$65 per person and \$45 per person (ages 12 and younger).

Sign up at alpinevalleyresort.com.

31 BUNNY JUMP

Celebrate with Skydive Milwaukee’s one-of-a-kind Annual Easter Bunny Jump on Sunday, March 31, from 9 a.m. to 2 p.m. at W1341 County Road L (adjacent to East Troy Airport). The event includes an Easter egg hunt complete with a separate toddler hunt, refreshments, free pictures with the Easter Bunny starting at noon

and the Easter Bunny landing at 1 p.m. (weather permitting). For more information, call (800) ET-CHUTE or visit skydivemilwaukee.com

31 EASTER BUNNY BRUNCH

Celebrate Easter at Alpine Valley Resort, W2501 County Road D, with an Easter Bunny Brunch on Sunday, March 31 from 9 a.m. to 1 p.m. Meet the Easter Bunny from 10 a.m. to noon. Brunch is \$45 per adult and \$25 for children ages 12 and younger.

The event will feature family-friendly activities, including an Easter Egg Hunt. Register at alpinevalleyresort.com.

31 BRUNCH WITH BUNNY

The Venue, 2645 Main St., East Troy, will host an Easter Bunny Brunch on Sunday, March 31 from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m.

The event will feature pictures with the Easter Bunny and an egg hunt. Brunch is \$39 per adult and \$16 for children ages 12 and younger.

The menu will feature starters, a large variety of main courses and dessert. Walk-ins welcomed.

Call for reservations at (262) 378-8888 or email thevenueeasttroy@gmail.com.

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Bunny Trains Return

The East Troy Electric Railroad will host its Bunny Trains on Friday, March 29, Saturdays, March 23 and 30 and Sunday, March 24. Departures from the East Troy Depot, 2002 Church St., are at 9 and 10:30 a.m., noon, 1:30 and 3 p.m.

The event will feature photos with the Easter Bunny at The Elegant Farmer. All child ticket holders will receive a gift.

Tickets are \$20 for adults, \$16 for children ages 3-14 and \$11 for children ages 0-2. For more information, visit easttroyrr.org.



Enjoy some family fun aboard the East Troy Electric Railroad’s Bunny Train. Get tickets at easttroyrr.org.

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technical. We’ve added more technology, more capabilities, more lights, etc. But, by adding live acting, and a comic book, we got to take a step backward towards a bygone time helping bring in a little more personality and humanness, which adds a lot more personality and depth to the technical side.

Vanessa: Building on extensive storytelling in order to create a streamlined experience, we wanted to bring the shows to

life – think dazzling interactive light tunnels, hot chocolate, live actor performances and more.

Accompanying the new additions was a shiny event schedule, including the sold-out East Troy Lights Winter Wine Walk, Santa Tours and the East Troy Lights New Year’s Eve Ball Drop (kid-friendly at 8 p.m. and midnight.)

This collaborative approach with local businesses enhanced the overall holiday

experience, attracting diverse audiences and boosting overall tourism.

Q. Can you share any behind-the-scenes insights into the planning and execution of East Troy Lights (Tell us your secrets!)?

Jamie: Planning? What’s that? Every year we start out with a huge smorgasbord of crazy ideas (most of which actually didn’t make it into this year’s show, but hopefully will next year!).

As time goes on, we whittle down the number of ideas to the ones that we’ve made the most progress on and/or ideas that will help us going forward.

For the technically inclined, last year meant we switched from Raspberry PI controllers to ESP32s resulting in tremendously faster deployment and

reliability.

Vanessa: East Troy Lights is fueled by a passion much bigger than us.

The foundation of the project is collaboration with the East Troy Community School District (from 4K to 12), our businesses, attractions and residents coming together to make it happen.

We have grown so much in the last four years (with extremely limited resources) and couldn’t have done it without our community partners and volunteers coming from all directions, working endless hours to help make the magic happen, as well as our first big boost from Travel Wisconsin’s 3-Year JEM Grant.

We’ve gotten this far by working cohesively as a community and I’m so proud to be part of it.



VANESSA LENZ *Good Neighbors*



CARLY BRAHM *Good Neighbors*

clockwise from above: Students from East Troy High School, under the direction of John Vilanj (left) and ETHS tech ed teachers (front) Mike Mass and Mike Hoff, help with lights set up and construction at East Troy Village Square Park. Pictured are: (back row from left), Vilanj, Nolan Apriesnig, Ryan Mikes, Aaron Knox, Kieran McCue, Michael Busateri, Dylan Politoski, Gabe Voss, (middle) Keegan Kreft, Trey Alvero-Gunderson, Isabel McGinley, Pandora Brown, Tessa McCue, Adalina Adsit, Hailey Steinruck, Bridget Boll, (front) Jackson Helgert, Gracie Hell, Amelia Klamm, Megan Meeks and Abby Fry. The East Troy Area Chamber of Commerce is grateful for the many, many volunteers who gave their time and talents to make the magical return of East Troy Lights happen! Jake Trippler and his daughter Saylor enjoy the magic of the popular East Troy Lights Tunnel. Riley Monahan preps a welcome wine during East Troy’s sold out Winter Wine Walk. Nola Foster gets a chance to meet Freckles the Elf following an East Troy Lights Live! Show. Harrison Lamb and Holden Baumeister navigate the Candy Cane Adventure using a wand at East Troy Village Square Park to experience a world of holiday magic during the immersive East Troy Lights event. Thanks to East Troy Brewery, Sauced Pizzeria and Home on the Square for serving as wand sites. Thanks to the East Troy Elementary PTO and East Troy Community School District for partnering with the East Troy Area Chamber of Commerce on this STEAM project, based on real life applications, in order to provide a meaningful opportunity for students to be involved in the community outside of the school campus.



CAH PRODUCTIONS *Good Neighbors*



VANESSA LENZ *Good Neighbors*



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Q: How does East Troy Lights contribute to the local economy or benefit the community as a whole?

Jamie: That's actually a lot of questions in one!

First, I believe the benefit to the community, especially in the form of local pride is hard to measure, but invaluable.

Seeing the square in a new exciting/imaginative way and then getting to see the square show up in a magazine such as Midwest Living, alongside cities like Chicago, changes how people see where they live.

It changes how they think of their homes, how they think of themselves, and how they think of their neighbors.

As far as the impact of East Troy Lights on the local economy, this is actually measurable, and is quite tremendous.

I don't have the numbers on me at the moment, but we've polled local businesses and the month of December has completely changed their income expectations.

To be honest though, for me, the goal was never to boost the local economy.

The goal was to create magic. To make people imagine something that didn't exist. To reimagine what they thought they knew. To be able to press a button and watch light swirl all around them in a place they have lived their entire lives. That's why I do most of what I do: I believe collectively we could fix a lot of real world problems by just adding a little more magic to the world around us

Show Some Love to East Troy Lights

If you like what you saw, please donate to help us continue to build East Troy Lights for next year's show –\$1, \$5, \$20, \$100 – any amount will help us continue to build East Troy Lights and make next year's show even better.

Visit EastTroyLights.com to donate or mail donations to East Troy Area Chamber of Commerce, PO Box 312, East Troy, WI 53120.

– to our everyday lives, helping us appreciate and see the world around us differently (especially adults).

Vanessa: East Troy Lights shows how a community can creatively attract new visitors during the off/winter season.

The event first launched during the pandemic in 2020 and has attracted tens of thousands to the downtown square (during a previous non-peak season), providing a massive audience to enjoy and interact with the lights while giving new life to East Troy and its businesses for the holiday season.

By utilizing technology in new ways, this event (orchestrated in a small town with a population of just over 4,000 with limited resources) has been successful in putting East Troy front and center (i.e. Midwest Living article, state tourism award nomination).

We were so pleased to see all the families and groups looking for festive activities be drawn to our interactive light attraction and the benefits it had on local accommodations, restaurants and other businesses.

Launching this venture has been a huge success and our dream is to share the magic with visitors for decades to come.

Q: What feedback or reactions have you received from visitors to East Troy Lights, and how has the experience evolved over time?

Jamie: Overwhelmingly positive.

I do think for the majority of the audience



Vanessa Lenz, Executive Director, East Troy Area Chamber of Commerce



Jamie Rohrer, Light Show Creator, Dither Studio

though, the show has definitely somewhat transitioned from feelings of absolute surprise/amazement into more of a sentimental, yearly, beloved tradition.

Vanessa: People love East Troy Lights and I love to see it so much.

Hearing stories from people who remember watching Santa come to town while stuffed in a snowsuit as a small child and now bring their own kids to the square, is why I do what I do. I love connecting people in that way.

Q: Can you tell us anything about plans for 2024?

Jamie: No. Just kidding. Kind of. To be honest, I'm not entirely sure what we will do yet.

We have a lot of projects started or prototyped, mostly geared towards building out the adventuring aspects of the show. Obviously more lights is always a good thing. I'd love to see another type of tunnel or similar type attraction. I guess I'll end up being just as surprised as everyone else as to what we end up having!

Vanessa: We are always looking to go bigger and better with both the light installations and the accompanying events. Do you have something you want to see or are you looking to help?

This is your opportunity to get involved. For more information visit easttroylights.com or email vanessa@easttroy.org.



VANESSA LENZ Good Neighbors



CAH PRODUCTIONS Good Neighbors



CAH PRODUCTIONS Good Neighbors

above left: The crew as Sauced Pizzeria welcome Freckles the Elf following an East Troy Lights Live Show, including (from left) Mallory Ledonne, Logan Coulman, pizzaiolo Jon Lenz, Ray Salentine and Charlotte Reitz. **at left:** Gargantua (towering at 6-feet tall) performs with the East Troy High School Choir during the debut of East Troy Lights. **above:** Santa and Mrs. Claus usher in East Troy's most wonderful time of year Dec. 2.

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THANK YOU! Light Show Locations:

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Al Smith's Saloon
James R. Taylor & Sons
East Troy Brewery
East Troy Area Historical Society
East Troy House
East Troy Lions Lodge
ECP
Edward Jones - Jim Jakscht
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Home on the Square
InkLink Books
Magic Touch
Realty Executives Integrity
Sammy's Place
Sauced Pizzeria
State Farm Insurance - Tim Werwie
Strumpet and Tart
Squareside Boutique
Urban Cloud Factory
Zinn's on the Square



East Troy Village Square Park

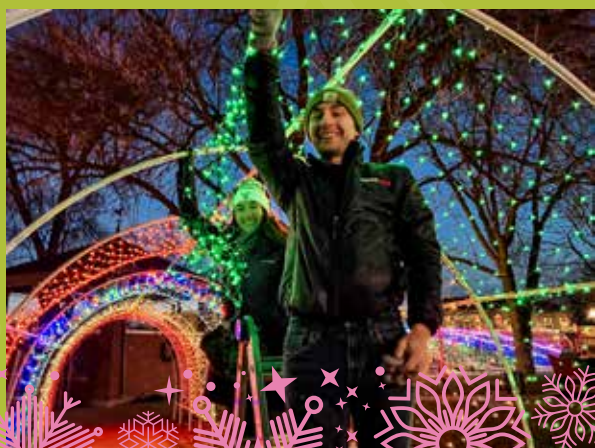
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East Troy Attractions

Alpine Valley Resort
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APRIL

2 PEANUT BUTTER & JELLY DAY DONATION
Tim Werwie Agent- State Farm Insurance, 2104 Church St., East Troy, is collecting Peanut Butter and Jelly Day Donations through the end of March. Donations will go to the East Troy Food Pantry.

6 THE PICTURE LADY
The East Troy Area Historical Society's Kubicki Museum and Heritage Center, 2106 Church St., will host its Picture Lady series, with Eileen Altenburg presenting a famous artist's work and style at 1 p.m. on the first Saturday of the month. Upcoming program dates are April 6 (Marc Chagall), May 4 (Frida Kahlo), June 1 (N.C. Wyeth) and July 6 (Ansel Adams).
The museum, located on the village square, provides a showcase of local history including changing exhibits, artifacts, books, maps, documents, photographs and other materials.
Museum hours are Saturdays from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. or by appointment. For more information, call (262) 642-2642 or visit



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This spring, sit back and enjoy live music events from a variety of talented musicians on Saturday nights from 7 to 10 p.m. at The Hive Taproom, W2463 Country Road ES.

Music Line-Up
March 23 – The Acoustix
March 30 – Wait, What?
April 6– Grey & Greyer
April 13– Spare Animals
April 20 – Paulie & The Poor Boys
April 27 – Indigo Canyon Duo
May 4 – Wheels North
May 11 – Radio Recall
May 18 – Un-Hich'd

About the Hive
With a focus on locally-sourced ingredients and starting with raw, local honey, The Hive brews their session mead with produce from across Wisconsin. A range of flavor notes greet with you with 14 taps of distinct session meads brewed with hops, Door County cherries, Valentine coffee, aged in bourbon barrels, and more.

Trivia
Test your Trivia skills every Thursday, beginning at 7 p.m. Bee there with your team (up to 6 people) for a fun night of friendly competition.
Stop in or visit the Hive's website for a calendar of weekly trivia, live music, plus other special events throughout the year.
For more information, visit thehivetaproom.com.

easttroyhistory.org.

13 MAPLE SYRUP FAMILY FUN DAY
Camp Edwards YMCA Camp and Retreat Center, N8901 Army Lake Road, will host its annual Maple Syrup Family Fun Day, featuring a pancake breakfast from 8 a.m. to noon and activities from 8 a.m. to 2 p.m., on Saturday, April 13.
The Family Fun Day is open to the community with free activities for the whole family, including maple syrup demonstrations, archery range, crafts, climbing wall, tube slides and live music.
Breakfast is \$8 for adults and \$5 for children (4-12). For more information, call (262) 642-7466 or visit www.campedwards.org.

13 CONVERSATION WITH BEEKEEPER DAN O'LEARY
Humble Oak Folk School will host a Conversation with Beekeeper Dan O'Leary from 1 to 3:30 p.m. on Saturday, April 13 at Honey Creek Collective, N8030 Townline Road.
For more information on the Folk School, its classes, instructors, registration, sliding scale pricing visit www.humbleoak.org/folk-school

20 VEGAS NIGHT
The East Troy Gridiron Club will host Vegas Night beginning at 5:30 p.m. on Saturday, April 20 at Ivan's Backstage, East Troy House, 2093 Division St.
The event will feature dinner, Vegas games, live music by Big Al Wetzel Band, raffles, live auction and 50/50 raffle. Dress to impress in Vegas attire.
Tickets are \$60 each or 4 for \$200 in advance and \$75 at the door.
Proceeds benefit East Troy youth and East Troy High School football programs.
Register at easttroygridiron.com.

28 ST. PAUL'S CELEBRATES 150
St. Paul's Lutheran Church, 2665 North St., East Troy, is celebrating its 150th Anniversary with a series of special worship services featuring its former pastors and other speakers.
The celebration will kick off at 9 a.m. on Sunday, April 28 with Pastor Baerbock.
Additional featured events include:
• Sunday, May 5 at 9 a.m. with the Lutheran Chorale
• Sunday, June 9 at 9 a.m. with the Steel Drum Band from Wisconsin Lutheran High School
• Sunday, Aug. 18 at 10:30 a.m. with Pastor Tim Kujath (followed by a church picnic)
• Sunday, Oct. 20 at 9 a.m. with President Schroeder
For more information, visit stpaulset.org.

MAY
3 EAST TROY'S FIRST FRIDAYS KICK-OFF
The East Troy Area Chamber of Commerce will kick off its First Fridays 2024 season from 5 to 8 p.m. on Friday, May 3. Mark your calendars for an assortment of special events to take place at East Troy Village Square Park on the first Friday of the month May-September.
Each First Friday will feature a showcase event at East Troy Village Square Park, 2881 Main St., with surrounding local businesses collaborating to bring an afternoon and evening of fun. For more information, visit easttroy.org.

3 SPRING FLING
The East Troy Lions Club is hosting its Spring Fling on at 6 p.m. on Friday, May 3 at the Venue, 2645 Main St., East Troy.
The event will feature a night of craft beer, seltzer and small bites with a Cinco de Mayo Fiesta infusion, as well as live music by Jackie Brown & KKLee of Driving Miss Crazy. Tickets are \$50 per person and available at easttroylions.org, The Global Glass and First Citizens State Bank.
12 LOCAL CHARM POP-UP MOTHER'S DAY BRUNCH
Local Charm Pop-Up will host a Mother's Day Brunch Buffet on Sunday, March 12 at The Social Affair, 2919 Main St., East Troy.
Local Charm makes its food from scratch featuring locally sourced products.
Tickets are \$59 per adult and \$22 per child. Purchase at localcharmpopup.com.

Q. Where can I get
Friday Fish Fry?

A: East Troy keeps one of Wisconsin's most cherished traditions alive with the best Friday Fish Fry around. Check out our favorites.

EAST TROY BREWERY
East Troy Brewery, 2905 Main St., offers Friday Fish Fry from 4 to 9 p.m. (Get your orders in early.)
The Fish Fry includes beer battered Icelandic cod, served with French fries or potato pancakes, house-tartar sauce, and homemade coleslaw.
The locally owned brewery, which opened in a remodeled historic bank building dating back to 1892, features exclusive taps, an outdoor patio, fireplace lounge, open kitchen, indoor seating and Taproom on the southwest corner of the East Troy Village Square. For more information, visit etbrew.com.

EAST TROY HOUSE
East Troy House, Wisconsin's oldest operating inn & tavern, 2093 Division St., on the East Troy Village Square, is serving its popular Fin-Tastic Friday Fish Fry, featuring beer-battered fish, tartar sauce, rye bread, coleslaw and tasty fries.
Kitchen Hours are Friday and Saturday from 11 a.m. to 9 p.m., Tuesday through Thursday from 11 a.m. to 8:30 p.m. and Sunday from 11 a.m. to 4 p.m.
To make dining reservations or order carry-out call (262) 642-7100 starting at 11 a.m. For full menu, visit easttroyhouse.com.

ALPINE VALLEY RESORT
Alpine Valley Resort, W2501 County Road D, is featuring Friday Fish Fry.
Enjoy four pieces of fish, French fries, or potato pancakes with applesauce, coleslaw, and tartar sauce. The cost is \$18.95 per person.
Situated in the scenic Kettle Moraine area, Alpine Valley Resort features 27 holes of golf, lodging, all new electric carts, dining and banquet facilities.
For up to date info on booking tee times, visit alpinevalleyresort.com.

LULABELL'S DOCKSIDE
Lulabell's Dockside, N9228 E Shore Road, is featuring its Friday Fish Fry for dine in or carryout.
Enjoy 12 oz lightly battered Icelandic Cod or baked fish, jumbo shrimp or make it a combo. All served with your choice of hand cut French fries or jumbo baked potato, homemade coleslaw, tartar sauce and rye bread. Fish Tacos are also available.
Call (262) 642-5264 to place your order or reservation today. For more information, visit lulabellsdockside.com.



East Troy Brewery Fish Fry



East Troy House Fish Fry



Alpine Valley Resort Fish Fry



Lulabell's Dockside Fish Fry

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For more information, email billing@edgebroadband.com.

HONEY CREEK • CONTINUED FROM PAGE 4

This season we will be running Fridays from 3-6 p.m., June 7-Oct. 4. We have a handful of new vendors this season, and we're always looking to add a few more.

Q: What other events or activities is the Collective exciting about hosting?

A: Honey Creek Collective is hosting an open house this spring, keep an eye on our social media channels and website for more information.

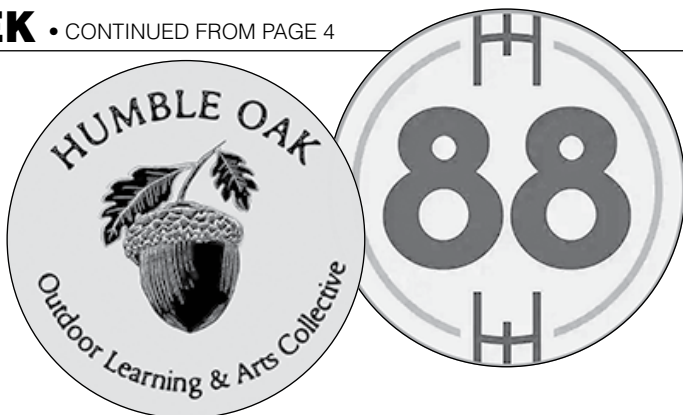
We would like to expand our offerings in the event space. We currently host yoga a few times/week, sound baths, tai chi and occasional education opportunities.

Q: What are the future plans

and goals for Honey Creek Collective?

A: We have a ton of gratitude for the positive energy and encouragement that has come our way. The success of Honey Creek Collective is truly a manifestation of letting good things happen.

We love being part of the East Troy community. Our plan for the future is to continue to help this community be well.



QUESTIONS ANSWERED • CONTINUED FROM PAGE 3

owners of the new Culver's.

Q: What is happening on the corner of Highway 20 and ES across from Kwik Trip?

A: A new "national coffee retail" business is set to be constructed at N8321 Coun-ty Road ES, East Troy on the northwest corner of Highway 20 and Highway ES.

Rumors started swirling that the site is expected to be a Starbucks, but there has been no official confirmation on the name of the new business.

On Dec. 18, the East Troy Village Board approved a Conditional Use permit for a restaurant on the corner property recently annexed from the Town of East Troy.

In the application, submitted by Gooden ES/20 and Anderson Commercial, the establishment is referred to as "national coffee retail."

According to the permit, the business entrance will be off County Road ES, and the proposal includes 39 parking spots. The applicant described it as a major addition to the Highway 20 exit area from Interstate 43.

Q: What is the update on the East Troy Highway 20 Project?

A: The Wisconsin Department of Transportation has announced the 2024 construction schedule for its Highway 20 (North Street) Rehabilitation project (from Sterling Circle to County Road L).

This roadway rehabilitation project (spanning 2023-25) in Walworth and Racine counties will make improvements to approximately 9.5 miles of Highway 20 from Thomas Drive in East Troy to Buena Park Road in Watford.

Stage 1 of the project was completed in 2023 (Thomas Drive to Sterling Circle).

According to the Wisconsin Department of Transportation, Stage 2 will last from early spring to late June. It involves reconstructing Highway 20 eastbound lanes from Stage 1 to County Road L and mill and

overlay pavement on Highway 83 near the intersection with Highway 20. The road will remain open during these phases.

A 21-day road closure will take place for the rebuilding of the south leg of the Highway 20/County Road ES intersection. Interstate 43 Southbound Entrance and I-43 Northbound Exit Ramps will also be closed with detours for Highway 20 access.

Stage 3 will take place from late June to late fall and includes several projects:

- Reconstruction of Highway 20 westbound lanes from County L to Stage 1 limits (road open)
- Rebuilding the north leg of Highway 20 / County ES intersection (21-day road closure)
- Reconstruction of the intersection of Highway 20 and County Road L (14-day road closure)
- Pavement milling and overlay from County L to Highway 83 (road open to local traffic only)
- Full closure near the Racine/Walworth County line for retaining wall and shoulder widening construction
- Closure of I-43 SB Exit and I-43 NB Entrance Ramps with detours
- Railroad crossing replacement near Honey Creek Road

A weekly highway construction update will be available online beginning in April. For more information, visit projects.511wi.gov/20wal/

Q: Did East Troy get a new gym?

A: Fitway Fitness, a small community gym, recently opened at 3224 Main St. East Troy, the former site of Snap Fitness.

Fitway, owned by Chaz and Megan Self of Grassway Organics, is focused on providing a community space where members can focus on their personal fitness growth.

The gym offers 24-hour access to an array of cardio and weight machines, as well as a substantial variety of free weights through an affordable membership. For details, visit eastroyfitway.com.



Fitway Fitness, 3224 Main St., is a community gym that hones in on your health and personal fitness needs in a welcoming space.

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Q & A: IGET Community Center

Your Guide to a Fun-Filled Spring

The East Troy Area Intergenerational Community Center has continued to find ways to connect with a bustling spring schedule.

The Center is located in the back half of the Leona Doubek Building, which is located at 2040 Beulah Ave. in East Troy. The entrance is Door 7, which is easily reached from the back parking lot via Division Street.

Q: When are the pickleball courts open?

A: Pickleball courts are open daily from dawn to dusk for public enjoyment.

We kindly ask players to consider donating \$2 when playing to support our facilities. Drop in the big blue pickleball donation box next to the courts. Tournament details will be shared on our Facebook page.

Q: What's happening on Saturdays at the Center?

A: Saturdays are all about family fun at the IGET Center. Join us for our Saturday Family Arcade, Activity & Movie Day from 10 a.m. to 3 p.m., starting mid-May. Admission is free.

Q: Will you bring back your Summer Concert Series?

A: Yes! From Caribbean vibes to Elvis tributes and funk performances, there's something for every music lover:

- June 12 at 6:45 p.m. – Caribbean Eclipse
- July 24 at 6:45 p.m. – Dakota Pongratz, Elvis Impersonator
- Aug. 24 at 6:30 p.m. – Montage

Q: Is there going to be a kickball tournament?

A: Absolutely! Our 3rd Annual Kickball Tournament for fifth-eighth graders is back on July 23 at Mitchell Field. It's staffed by



The East Troy Area Intergenerational Community Center will feature Saturday Family Arcade, Activity & Movie Day from 10 a.m. to 3 p.m., most Saturdays beginning mid-May. Admission is free.

PHOTO SUBMITTED Good Neighbors

local business leaders, law enforcement, and village officials. Details will be announced on Facebook.

Q: What recurring classes or activities are open to the public?

A: We offer several monthly classes and activities open to the public:

- Senior exercise classes meet from 8 to 9 a.m. on Mondays (Tai Chi) and from 8 to 9 a.m. on Wednesdays (Strengthening Seniors).
- Memory Cafe held every third Tuesday from 1:30 to 3 p.m.
- 5-Handed Sheepshead every Tuesday beginning at 2 p.m.
- Pool for the Public each Thursday, from 1 to 3 p.m. Enjoy billiards with a group of friends or meet new ones.

Q: Can I rent space at the IGET Community Center for events?

A: The IGET Community Center offers rental space for business meetings, private parties, closed Arcade Room activities, and more. For rental fees and availability, call (262) 642-2266.

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