



**LEIGHTONIX  
MOVES TO STATE-  
OF-THE-ART  
FACILITY**



**BETWEEN THE  
BUNS & MORE**

The taste of  
Michigan!



**A2i WHEEL  
& TIRE**

Finding the  
hard-to-find

OURTOWN AT A GLANCE >>

# Holt Community Connect



## Working together for our community

It's a positive cycle: A community that's a good place to live attracts business, and a strong business community makes better things possible for those who live and work there.

For more than 25 years, the Delhi Downtown Development Authority (DDA) has worked to attract and grow business in our community, and, in the process, improve the quality of life in this place we call home. By design, however, all DDAs eventually phase out – and, as the Delhi DDA begins “sundowning” over the next several years, local leaders want to ensure that the progress we’ve enjoyed continues.

Enter Holt Community Connect.

HCC is a nonprofit organization established to connect, cross-promote and support Delhi organizations, business and events. It is working in concert with the Delhi DDA now and will continue after the DDA is gone.

HCC’s affiliate members are the Holt Farmers Market, Friends of Delhi Trails, the Holt-Delhi Historical Society and the Holt Hometown Festival, said HCC Executive Director Marcy Bishop Kates. The group’s Facebook page features regular community calendar updates, follows other Holt businesses, and shares items of local interest. Marcy encourages any Delhi Township business or group with an event coming up to submit information for the community calendar (contact information below).

If you’d like to become involved with Holt Community Connect, Marcy said one great way is to become part of its volunteer bureau. “There are plenty of volunteer opportunities for introverts and extroverts alike,” she said, and she works hard to connect volunteers with things they feel comfortable doing. Marcy also encourages those in need of volunteer help to reach out to the volunteer bureau.

*Email Holt Community Connect at [involved@holtcommunityconnect.org](mailto:involved@holtcommunityconnect.org). Visit HCC’s Facebook page at [www.facebook.com/HoltCommunityConnect](http://www.facebook.com/HoltCommunityConnect).*



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## Growing forward: A look at the accomplishments that have helped shape our community for the future



Mark Jenks, director, Delhi Township Parks & Recreation

## The Sam Corey Senior Center

In January 2008, the Delhi DDA board approved funds for construction of a new facility to house the Sam Corey Senior Center. In early summer 2009, the beautiful new 7,700-square-foot center opened. The entire project, including furniture, appliances, sound system, computers and multimedia capability, was funded by the Delhi DDA.

"This is something our township should be really proud of," said Delhi Parks and Recreation Director Mark Jenks, who oversees center operations and is deeply committed to its success. "It's a very special resource for our seniors."

Since the new facility opened, membership in the Sam Corey Senior Center Club has tripled to more than 300 active members. "They're passionate about it," said Mark.

That passion makes possible the center's unique way of operating. Although the center is under the direction of Parks and Recreation, the building and programs are entirely managed and staffed by member volunteers.

"I feel privileged to be part of such a great group," said volunteer Addie Mutch. "We are all good at different things, and we all have our niches." She added, "I feel that the Sam Corey Senior Center is a great asset to

our seniors. It's a site away from home where people can meet new friends and have lots of things to enjoy."

Joyce Dunn, another longtime member and volunteer, feels the same way. "We're a lucky bunch of seniors to have such a beautiful place to go to," she said. "I feel really fortunate. It's a good place to go and there are lots of nice people."

The center's weekly Wednesday lunches now attract as many as 120 people, and the monthly calendar is packed with such diverse options as Wii bowling, yoga, movies, cards, and exercise programs. In fact, Mark said, the exercise classes are so well attended, "We took down a wall to expand the exercise room!"

*The Sam Corey Senior Center is at 2108 Cedar Street. For more information, please contact Delhi Parks and Recreation, 694.1549, [www.delhitownship.com/parks-parkinfor.htm](http://www.delhitownship.com/parks-parkinfor.htm).*



**View a video about the Sam Corey Senior Center here!**

# A2i Wheel & Tire: Finding the hard-to-find

When a small business starts up in a struggling economy and manages not only to survive but grow, it's obviously doing something right. When you talk to A2i owner Adam Stevens, you pretty quickly get a sense of what that something might be.

"The customer is number one," he said without hesitation. "We take care of our customers. We find what they need."

Adam started his business as a wheel wholesaler in 2009. Unfortunately, he said, "When the economy tanked, we tanked with it." But Adam hung on, even working out of his house for a time to reduce overhead. Looking back, he said, "The tough economy made me focus on the key part of my business" – finding hard-to-find wheels, tires and related accessories for the end consumer.

A2i ("Automotive to Internet") is aptly named, with online sales – primarily on eBay – comprising about 70 percent of its business. Still, Adam is always looking for new avenues for growth. The company does online advertising and maintains an active presence on Facebook. And, of course, referrals and return business are extremely important – hence A2i's focus on customer service. "We're not satisfied with where we're at," said Adam. "We want to learn and grow."

Whether the customer is a tire store, a car dealership, a body shop or an individual consumer anywhere in the country, Adam said, "We're all about service. I want customers for life." That means working hard to find exactly what the customer is looking for, and A2i is up for the challenge. "The more oddball it is, the more we love it," he said. "We can't carry everything, but we try!"

*A2i Wheel & Tire is at 1904 North Cedar Road, Holt, 517.214.1044, [www.a2iwheelandtire.com](http://www.a2iwheelandtire.com).*



Adam Stevens

# FirstMerit Bank: "Our focus is service."

It's built on 165 years of history and is part of a leading commercial banking organization. Yet, true to its Midwestern heritage, FirstMerit Bank in Holt is focused on the financial needs of local people and on bettering the communities it serves.

"We're constantly looking to upgrade our services," said Holt branch manager Karen Oatley. And, she added, as the kind of bank that is small enough to know its customers by name when they walk in, "We see what the clients really want."

FirstMerit Bank's latest upgrade will happen in the first quarter of this year, when the Holt branch will be converting to a "smart" teller system. Karen explained that the smart system will allow customer service representatives to pull up all of a client's account information on a single screen. This will speed up transactions and allow FirstMerit to serve clients more quickly and easily – and that means happier clients.

FirstMerit Bank opened in Holt in October 2013, when Citizens Bank and FirstMerit merged. FirstMerit is a full-service bank and offers such advantages as free checking with no minimum balance. "We're one of the few local banks to still offer that option," Karen said.

It's just one more way FirstMerit puts clients first.



From left: Karen Oatley, Bobbie-Jo, Zuwenia & Ashley

*FirstMerit Bank is at 2285 Cedar Street, Holt, 694.4573, [www.firstmerit.com](http://www.firstmerit.com).*



## More tips to protect yourself from fraud

Over the past several issues, we've discussed various tricks employed by con artists to steal your personal information and valuables. In this issue and the next, we'll focus on tips for keeping your personal identifying information and valuables safe, whether online or in person. Let's break it down by category, with information provided courtesy of <http://www.fbi.gov/scams-safety/fraud>:

### **Avoiding Health Care/Health Insurance Fraud:**

- Never sign blank insurance claim forms.
- Never give blanket authorization to a medical provider to bill for services rendered.
- Ask your medical providers what they will charge and what you will be expected to pay out of pocket.
- Carefully review your insurer's explanation of benefits (EOB) statement. Call your insurer and provider if you have questions.
- Do not do business with door-to-door or telephone salespeople who tell you that services or medical equipment are free.
- Give your insurance/Medicare identification only to those who have provided you with medical services.
- Keep accurate records of all health care appointments.
- Know if your physician ordered equipment for you.

### **Tips for Avoiding Counterfeit Prescription Drugs:**

- Be mindful of appearance. Closely examine the packaging and lot numbers of prescription drugs and be alert to any changes from one prescription to the next.

- Consult your pharmacist or physician if your prescription drug looks suspicious.
- Alert your pharmacist and physician immediately if your medication causes adverse side effects or if your condition does not improve.
- Use caution when purchasing drugs on the Internet. Do not purchase medications from unlicensed online distributors or those who sell medications without a prescription. Reputable online pharmacies will have a seal of approval called the Verified Internet Pharmacy Practice Site (VIPPS), provided in the U.S. by the Association of Boards of Pharmacy.
- Be aware that product promotions or cost reductions and other "special deals" may be associated with counterfeit product promotion.

### **Tips for Avoiding Funeral and Cemetery Fraud:**

- Be an informed consumer. Take time to call and shop around before making a purchase. Bring a friend who may offer some perspective to help make difficult decisions. Funeral homes are required to provide detailed general price lists over the telephone or in writing.
- Educate yourself fully about caskets before you buy one, and understand that caskets are not required for direct cremations.
- Understand the difference between funeral home basic fees for professional services and any fees for additional services.
- Know that embalming rules are governed by state law and that embalming is not legally required for direct cremations.

- Carefully read all contracts and purchasing agreements before signing and make certain that all of your requirements have been put in writing.
- Make sure you understand all contract cancellation and refund terms, as well as your portability options for transferring your contract to other funeral homes.
- Before you consider prepaying, make sure you are well informed. When you do make a plan for yourself, share your specific wishes with those close to you.

As a general rule governing all of your interactions as a consumer, do not allow yourself to be pressured into making purchases, signing contracts, or committing funds. These decisions are yours and yours alone.

In the spring issue, we'll conclude our series with tips for avoiding telemarketing fraud and identity theft.

As always, if you have questions or concerns, you can reach the Delhi Officers at 517-694-0045. Suspicious persons or activities can be reported by dialing 911.

*Stay safe out there.*



Deputy Kelly Bowden

# LEIGHTRONIX moves to state-of-the-art facility



Leightronix Facility

With success comes growth – and LEIGHTRONIX has enjoyed plenty of both. After having outgrown its headquarters and additional leased space, the video communications firm at last has some elbow room.

Founded by president and CEO David Leighton in 1981, LEIGHTRONIX is a pioneer in the field of video automation control and digital media communications technology. The company is a leader in specialty video equipment design and manufacturing, including digital video solutions, television automation, live and video-on-demand streaming media and Internet Protocol television (IPTV), and serves industries including cruise lines, hospitality, military, space, corporate and retail.

When word got out that LEIGHTRONIX planned to relocate and expand, David was approached by several other municipalities – but he chose to keep the company here.

“With Delhi Township you have the advantage of a true community, one that’s been my personal home and home to LEIGHTRONIX for over 30 years,” David said. “It provides a centralized location that

supports our international and national customers with easy access to multiple airports and state highway intersections, allows us easy access to the resources of Michigan State University, and, even more importantly, it provides a safe destination to live and work for myself and my staff, with excellent school districts and other amenities.”

The new facility brings LEIGHTRONIX’s staff and capabilities under one roof with room for growth. It features advanced security and a computerized energy management system (EMS) that controls the building’s lighting, heating, cooling and energy systems. This maximizes comfort and safety while drastically reducing energy consumption.

*LEIGHTRONIX is at 1125 North Cedar Road, Mason, 694-8000, [www.leightronix.com](http://www.leightronix.com).*



# Between the Buns & More

## The taste of Michigan!



Marcy Bishop Kates

It all began with El Azteco chips, salsas and cheese dips. Now, distributor Ruben Garcia's roster of Michigan-made foods runs nearly 12 pages – and he has his own storefront.

Several years ago, Ruben founded RG Distribution to market El Azteco snacks and condiments to food retailers and farmers markets across the state. Yet the desire to open a store was always in the back of his mind.

The store became a reality in the summer of 2013, when Marcy Bishop Kates, owner of IncuBaKe, a shared-use commercial kitchen in Holt, invited Ruben to share the space. It turned out to be a win/win.

For Ruben, Between the Buns and More is another way to bring tasty Michigan-made foods to consumers. At the same time, said Marcy, "It was the best thing I've ever done for IncuBaKe," providing an avenue for its food entrepreneurs to bring their products to market. Because RG Distribution keeps Ruben on the road much of the time, Marcy often operates the store.

Between the Buns and More features lots of condiment-type items – jams, jellies, sauces, salsas and the like – all Michigan-made. Golumbki Gal golumbkis and Grampa G's salad dressings are also big draws, Marcy said. And, she added, "Because the things we carry are 'small batch,' they don't have the preservatives and additives" so prevalent in mass-produced foods.

Between the Buns and More maintains an active Facebook presence that spotlights the store's offerings. It's a great place to get inspiration for gifts for the "foodies" in your life – and to discover the delicious variety of Michigan products.



*Between the Buns and More is inside IncuBaKe at  
1967 Aurelius Road, Holt, 517.974.8944.*



## Rick Anthony's Flower Shoppe

It's been 10 years since Rick and Carole Anthony moved their Holt flower shop to the location they'd dreamed about for years – and nearly that long since Our Town published their story. So what's been happening since then?

“We're still plugging along,” laughed Carole. She and their daughter, Randi-Kay Anthony, run the Holt shop, which has been a hometown favorite for nearly 25 years. Rick is the general manager of the North Grand River location in Lansing, which has an even longer history in the community.

Carole said that today, when people have many places they can buy flowers – including the grocery store – hard work and real customer service are what help set Rick Anthony's apart.

“If someone calls at 4:00 p.m. today and needs flowers today, if there's any way to do it, we will,” she said.

Flower-giving occasions deserve expertise, too – and that's something the Anthonys have in abundance. Rick has been working in the industry since he was 16; Carole wasn't far behind, getting her start as a floral designer when the couple married.

Like most independent businesses, Rick Anthony's faced tough times during the economic downturn. But Carole noted that the local economy seems to be on the upswing in the past year – “Knock on wood!” – for which she is grateful. And Rick Anthony's Flower Shoppe is still here to add beauty and joy to life.

*Rick Anthony's Flower Shoppe in Holt is at 2111 Cedar Street, 694-7717, [www.ricksroses.com](http://www.ricksroses.com).*



# The Water Store is coming to Holt



“Basically, people are always looking for a better-tasting water,” said Roy Tong. And they find it at The Water Store.

Owned by Roy and his wife, Tina, for 25 years, The Water Store provides great-tasting bottled water to commercial and residential customers in the Jackson and greater Lansing areas from two locations in Jackson. This summer, Roy and Tina will open a store in Holt.

“I have several customers in Holt already,” Roy said, “and I wanted a new location that wasn’t too far away from Jackson.” The Holt store will sell and rent water coolers, deliver purified bottled water, and will offer a self-fill station.

Water purity is, of course, one of the main reasons people choose bottled water. The Water Store treats its water with reverse osmosis, also known as ultra-filtration. The result is clean, pure, natural-tasting water with no added flavor or chemicals.

“We take everything [potentially harmful] out of the water,” Roy said. “We don’t put anything in.”

If you’re one who mostly thinks of water as something you need to make coffee, The Water Store has you covered, too. It carries coffee makers, cappuccino makers and espresso machines — and delivers the coffee to put in them. The Water Store offers an abundance of coffee choices from the leading brands, including K-cups in more than 100 gourmet flavors, plus tea and hot chocolate.

Roy is looking forward to The Water Store’s expansion to Holt and plans to open the store this summer.

***The Water Store will open at  
2419 Cedar Street, Holt, 517.764.7210,  
[www.waterstore1.com](http://www.waterstore1.com).***



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## THE DDA – WHO WE ARE AND WHAT WE DO

The Downtown Development Authority (DDA) promotes economic development through business attraction/retention programs and works to foster investment within the DDA district. It strives to increase the township’s tax base and strengthen the local economy while maintaining those qualities that make Delhi Township a desirable place to live and work. For more information, visit us at **[www.DelhiDDA.com](http://www.DelhiDDA.com)**.

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