



#### WILLOUGHBY ESTATES

Everything you'd expect in a class A complex



#### HAFKE LEGAL SERVICES

Business law with old-fashioned customer service



#### PERSONNEL WORLD

A world of staffing solutions

OURTOWN AT A GLANCE >>



## SGA Production Services Setting the stage for world-class events

For most of us, attending a major spectator event means showing up and plopping down in our seats – blissfully unaware of everything that goes into preparing the venue.

Handling “everything that goes into it” is exactly what SGA Production Services does. SGA plans, designs and provides temporary stages, platforms, risers and seating for high-end events.

That includes such projects as providing risers for a Formula One race; stadium seating for a basketball game played on the deck of an aircraft carrier; custom scenic work for theme park exhibits; and, of course, a Super Bowl here or there. Even the Olympics and the Invictus Games are among the many credits on SGA’s resumé.

It’s not just about hauling in some bleachers. Successfully seating, showcasing and presenting to an audience is a science at SGA. Everything is meticulously planned and designed to ensure effective sight lines and create that high-end visual appeal.

“It’s show business,” says Tom Hilton, SGA president. “When the curtain goes up, we have to be there.”

SGA has offices in Orlando, Las Vegas, Dallas and Atlanta – but its corporate headquarters is right here in Delhi Township. Founded in Lansing 35 years ago as Sounds Good Audio, SGA began as a full-service production studio that worked primarily with the automotive industry on major events. And Tom, president for the past 10 years, has been there from the beginning, when he was a designer and “IT guy.”

“I’m the longest employee,” he says, adding quickly, “but it’s so not about me.”

SGA now has 150 employees nationwide. And, after many years of creating successful high-profile events, SGA enjoys a great reputation in its field.

“In the end, it’s word of mouth among people who know,” Tom says.

***SGA Production Services is at 3120 Spanish Oak Drive, Lansing, 323.0000, [sga.net](http://sga.net).***



DEDICATED TO HELPING OUR COMMUNITY & ITS BUSINESSES GROW

A publication of the Delhi Charter Township Downtown Development Authority • [www.DelhiDDA.com](http://www.DelhiDDA.com)

# Willoughby Estates



*“Everything you’d expect in a class A complex – and more.”*

By about this time next year, a former industrial site will have been transformed into Willoughby Estates, an upscale lease community.

“It will have everything you’d expect in a class A complex, and more,” said Scott Wieland, co-owner of Lansing-based construction company Wieland, which is building Willoughby Estates. For this project, Wieland has partnered with Maple Grove Property Management of East Lansing, which will manage the complex.

Although Wieland is well-known in mid-Michigan for commercial construction, it does a substantial amount of multi-family work in Florida and North Carolina, and wanted to put that expertise to use here. The Willoughby Estates property, former site of Cheney Concrete and Décor Products, has undergone a \$3.2 million environmental cleanup to prepare for construction.

Geared toward young professionals and empty nesters, the \$38 million, 269-unit gated complex will feature four different residence styles for lease: standard apartments; “flats” with garages below; two-story townhouses, and single-family homes known as “cottages.” The site also boasts its own pond and lake.

Additional amenities will include a clubhouse/meeting center, a playground, an onsite bus stop, a dog park with separate areas for large and small dogs, a dog wash and grooming area, and gated mini-storage parking area for boats, jet skis, etc. Scott is pleased to bring a lease community of this caliber to Delhi Township and is grateful to the DDA and township officials for helping make it a reality.

“We want to convey a sense that they’ve arrived at home,” Scott said.

The first phase of occupancy, 150 units, will be ready a year from now, with the entire community expected to be complete by year-end 2017.

***Willoughby Estates will be on the 4100 block of Willoughby Road, [wielandbuilds.com/project/Willoughby-estates/](http://wielandbuilds.com/project/Willoughby-estates/).***







# Delhi DDA: Improving our quality of life

**W**hat is the Delhi Downtown Development Authority, and what does it do for our township? Let's start with the DDA's stated mission:

- Halt property value deterioration
- Increase property tax valuation
- Eliminate causes of deterioration
- Promote economic growth
- Provide for cleanup of environmentally impacted properties, thus making them available for redevelopment
- Placemaking

A daunting list—yet, since its inception in 1989, the Delhi DDA has made major impacts in each of these areas. And all of them work together to improve our quality of life.

One of the DDA's functions is to purchase deteriorating or blighted properties and renovate or raze them, thereby making them available for redevelopment—raising property values and stimulating economic growth, said Delhi DDA Executive Director Howard Haas.

“New development also spurs current ownership into maintaining existing properties,” Haas explained. In fact, since the DDA's inception, state equalized value (SEV) in Delhi Township has increased 392%—“far more than most other units of government in mid-Michigan,” said Haas.

Many of the properties the DDA has purchased over the years have been environmentally impacted by gasoline and other carcinogens. Through the DDA's efforts, said Haas, “Many of these properties have been returned to the property roll as clean properties, and now house new businesses and living centers.”

Improving infrastructure is another vital function of the DDA, which has invested millions in extending public sanitary sewer and water systems and adding fiber optics and lighting in key locations throughout the township.

Although one of the DDA's primary goals is to attract new businesses to Delhi Township, Haas emphasized what the Delhi DDA does *not* do: “We have chosen to never compete with private business. Instead, through environmental cleanup and the extension of infrastructure, we enable private development and investment to take place.”

“Placemaking” is another key facet of the DDA's mission—and the results are visible throughout the township. The DDA has participated with Delhi Township in building numerous parks—including Veterans Memorial Gardens—and non-motorized trails. It also established, developed and continues to support the Holt Farmers Market, donates to numerous Holt Community Arts Council events, and sponsors a portion of the Holt Hometown Festival.

Haas emphasizes that the DDA's revenues do not constitute a tax increase for any township resident or business. Rather, DDAs are allowed by law to capture a portion of local property tax dollars that would otherwise leave the township to support other regional entities. And, said Haas, “No taxes are captured from Holt Public Schools.”

In fact, he added, “We believe the redevelopment use of the taxes we capture actually increases the revenue for all jurisdictions.”

***For more about the work of the Delhi DDA, view this video, or contact the Delhi DDA, 2045 N. Cedar Street, Holt, 517.699.3866, [delhidda.com](http://delhidda.com).***



# Halloween Safety Tips

Greetings! I would like to spend a bit of time talking about some simple safety practices for all during the upcoming Halloween season. Some of them may be familiar, but they do bear repeating.

The American Academy of Pediatrics has some great ideas for those going out on the trick-or-treat journey:

- A parent or responsible adult should always accompany young children on their neighborhood rounds.
- If your older children are going alone, plan and review the route that is acceptable to you. Agree on a specific time when they should return home.
- Only go to homes with a porch light on. Never enter a home or car for a treat.

Because pedestrian injuries are the most common injuries to children on Halloween, remind trick-or-treaters of these basic safety practices:

- Stay in a group and communicate where they will be going
- Remember reflective tape for costumes and trick-or-treat bags
- Carry a cellphone for quick communication
- Remain on well-lit streets and always use the sidewalk
- If no sidewalk is available, walk at the far edge of the roadway facing traffic.
- Never cut across yards or use alleys.

- Only cross the street as a group and in established crosswalks (as recognized by local custom). Never cross between parked cars or out of driveways.
- Don't assume the right of way. Motorists may have trouble seeing trick-or-treaters. Just because one car stops doesn't mean others will!
- Law enforcement authorities should be notified immediately of any suspicious or unlawful activity

In case the weather turns wicked, please check the local community resources for indoor options—churches and community centers offer many programs for trick-or-treat and activities.

Be careful, and have a great time with the children. As a motorist, focus on eliminating distractions and slow your vehicle speeds, particularly through the neighborhoods. It is our duty and joy to create a safe, lasting memory they will cherish always.

*Please contact the Delhi deputies if you have any questions or concerns. You can reach us at 517.694.0045. Suspicious persons or activities can be reported by dialing 911.*



# Hafke Legal Services

## Business law with old-fashioned customer service

As attorney James Hafke puts it, “People aren’t in business to spend their time dealing with legal matters.” That’s why he solves his clients’ legal needs quickly and efficiently—so they can get back to running their businesses and not be bogged down in costly and lengthy legal matters.

But “quickly and efficiently” doesn’t mean impersonally. Quite the opposite.

“I look at being a lawyer as building a relationship with a client,” Jim says, “so I can give them honest answers.”

Building that kind of relationship starts from the very beginning with old-fashioned customer service: Jim returns phone calls the same day, gives clients regular updates on the status of their cases, and provides clear and reasonable billing statements. And, he believes, since clients are paying for his services, they should be able to speak with him personally, rather than with an associate – one of the reasons he maintains a solo practice.

Jim moved to Holt about 20 years ago when he first opened his practice in Lansing. Two years ago, he moved the practice to Holt as well. Although his specialty is business law, Jim also handles real estate law. He represents clients from multi-million dollar companies across the country to the small business owner who may be involved in a legal matter for the first time.

Passionate about both sports and our community, Jim has coached Holt youth wrestling, football and lacrosse. He is a member of many professional associations and athletic organizations. And, says his legal assistant, Harriet, “He’s the greatest guy you could ever work for!”



James Hafke

*Hafke Legal Services, PC, is at  
4170 Charlar Drive, Suite 1,  
Holt, 482.3141, jameshafke.com.*

## Welcome to HOLTNow.com!

*News about our schools, our businesses, our community & our local government*

We’re pleased to announce that the new **holtnow.com** website is live!

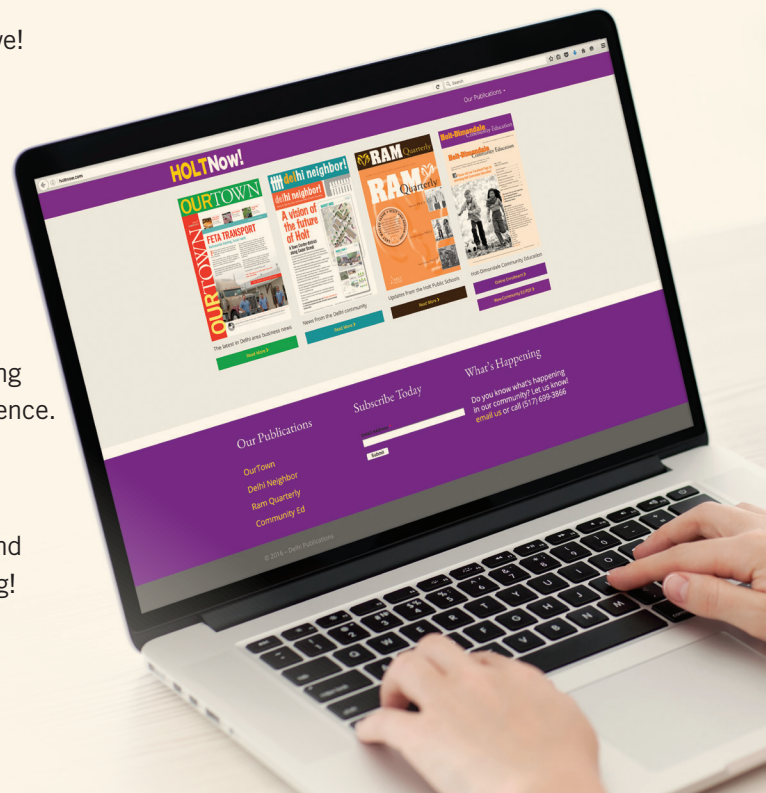
What does this mean for you? You’ll now be able to view all of our community newsletters on one convenient, mobile-friendly site!

Holtnow.com will house the Delhi DDA’s *Our Town*, Holt Public Schools’ *Ram Quarterly* and *Community Education*, and Delhi Township’s *Delhi Neighbor* newsletters.

**A little background:** *Our Town* transitioned to a digital publication a little more than a year ago as a way to reduce printing and mailing costs and make the publication more accessible for a mobile audience. Since then, the rest of the publications have followed suit.

Please check out the site. We think you’ll like it! And while you’re there, please take a moment to enter your email address. We’ll send you a link to each issue as it comes out so you don’t miss anything!

***If you have any questions, please contact the Delhi DDA at 517.699.3866, or email [lori.underhill@delhitownship.com](mailto:lori.underhill@delhitownship.com).***



# Personnel World

## A world of staffing solutions

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This past July, Lansing-based Personnel World held a ribbon cutting to celebrate the grand opening of its new office in Holt—the second location for President/CEO Kent Housler’s Lansing-based company.

Staffing Manager Paige Emmons says the business, which was founded in 1980, is continually growing and needed to expand to better serve its clients.

“We’re incredibly busy—and loving it,” she said. The expansion to Holt also allowed the company to widen its applicant pool, said Paige, adding, “We really enjoy Holt. It’s a great community.”

Personnel World staffs for technical, light industrial, craft/trade, legal, data processing and professional level positions as well as clerical, administrative and office positions. It can also provide temporary employees for long- or short-term projects, or “temp-to-hire,” which

allows companies to try the employee on the job before offering permanent employment. Whatever the need, Personnel World will work with employers to custom-tailor a solution.

Paige says employers appreciate that Personnel World is a locally owned, family-owned company. It also personally interviews each job candidate onsite in order to better evaluate his or her fit for the position – another layer of direct service employers appreciate.

Personnel World works with companies with as few as two or three employees to those with hundreds, and has the reach to place employees throughout mid-Michigan and even across the country.

***Personnel World is at 924 Centennial Way, Suite 400, Lansing, and 2049 Cedar St., Suite B, Holt, 323.3500, [personnelworld.com](http://personnelworld.com).***



Left to right: Courtney Sharick, Paige Emmons, and Kent Housler.





## CELEBRATES 25 YEARS

*It was pure serendipity that Our Town happened to revisit Fat Boys as it marks its 25th anniversary. To get a small business to that milestone, however, requires a bit more than serendipity.*



"I don't remember much from the time I was 26 to 32," owner Dave Dec says of Fat Boys' early years. "No games, no parties – I was always working."

And he wasn't always sure all that work was paying off. "There are times now when we are busier in an hour than we used to be in a whole day!" he says.

Even though Fat Boys is now, by any measure, a success, "There's a part of you that never gets to the point of believing you're 'there,'" says Dave.

For Dave, an important aspect of being "there" is being a part of people's memories of their hometown – just as he remembers the two local pizza places in his hometown. Not that he consciously set out to create memories; he was busy creating great pizza.

"You're just doing what you do," Dave says. "You don't know you're creating those memories while you're doing it. People tell you."

That's why, in the scheme of things, not much changes from year to year at Fat Boys.

"We strive to make it always taste like folks remember," says Dave. "It makes them feel good and smile."

But that doesn't mean there's nothing new. Fat Boys added a "legit, thick crust deep dish pizza" Dave had been "thinking about for years" – a taste memory from those pizza places he grew up with in the Connecticut/New York area.

Being the "hometown pizza place" means something to Dave. "It doesn't feel like it's been 25 years," he says. He measures the time in the loyal customers; the former employees who come back and tell him that working at Fat Boys was great training for their professional lives, or to share old stories and memories.

Quite simply, Dave says, "We love what we do here at Fat Boys Pizza."

***Fat Boys is at 2040 N. Aurelius Road in the Holt Plaza, 699.2400, [fatboysholt.com](http://fatboysholt.com).***

# Hometown Festival a success despite rain

The meteorologist must not have gotten the memo.

Despite the rain that dampened the Holt Hometown Festival in the afternoon, festival manager Chuck Grinnell reported many highlights.

"The parade was big this year; it went very well," he said. "And the rain cleared just in time for the fireworks, so that was a nice little party to end with."

In between were more good things.

"The kids' area at the junior high was packed" before the weather went

south, Chuck said. And the Makers' Expo and craft beer tasting—in its second year but its first held in conjunction with the festival—drew a good crowd, too.

As always, the end of one festival begins the planning for the next. With 2017 marking Delhi Township's 175th anniversary, the committee is looking to add more special events and entertainment and make the festival the best yet. Chuck encourages you to call him at 517.930.2655 if you have ideas, suggestions, or would like to be involved with the 2017 festival.

***You can reach Holt Hometown Festival manager Chuck Grinnell at 517.930.2655.***



## 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).

**To contact us:** Howard Haas, Executive Director  
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517.699.3866  
[Howard.Haas@delhitownship.com](mailto:Howard.Haas@delhitownship.com)

## THE DDA BOARD MEMBERS:

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