



**THOMPSON'S
GARAGE**
Finding a new
meaning in
customer service



ESKER SQUARE
Development
forges ahead



HOLT FEST
New and improved
Holt Fest receives largest
attendance ever

OURTOWN AT A GLANCE >>



Esker Landing Park opens to the public

Local families can now enjoy lakeshore views, canoeing, kayaking, and fishing — all without leaving Delhi Township.

The Delhi Township Parks and Recreation Department officially opened Esker Landing Park to the public in late August. The new park, nestled on the northern end of Cedar Lake, features a canoe and kayak launch, spots for fishing, and benches for visitors looking for a quiet escape into nature.

“We think it’s going to be a really good addition to the Delhi Township Parks and Recreation park system,” said Mark Jenks, Director of the Delhi Township Parks and Recreation department.

The park currently stands on the site of a former steel mill. The Delhi Downtown Development Authority (DDA) purchased the property, but knew that there would be limited opportunities for redevelopment. In conjunction with the Parks & Recreation department, they decided it would be a great addition to the Delhi Trails system.

“Esker Park will feature a trailhead for the existing trail and serve as the starting point for the long-discussed trail system connecting Holt and Mason,” said Howard Haas, executive director of the Delhi DDA.

The park is located on the east side of the Cedar Street and Holbrook Drive roundabout and features a parking lot and restroom facilities.

Esker Landing Park is located at 1694 Cedar Street in Holt.



DEDICATED TO HELPING OUR COMMUNITY & ITS BUSINESSES GROW

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Thompson's Garage

Finding new meaning in customer service



Thompson's Garage can handle anything that it takes to keep your car up and running: engine trouble, oil changes, clutch work, tire sales, more. But take one look at the shop's 1957 Chevy pickup out front, the eclectic vintage decor and the four small kiddos running around, and you can see that this is no ordinary car mechanic.

For couple Eric and Lacey Thompson, owning this mechanic shop together is a dream come true. Eric had worked as a mechanic for more than 25 years and always knew he wanted to open his own business. When a building came up for sale on Cedar Street in Delhi Township, the two decided to take the plunge.

"We loved the thought of being our own bosses," Lacey Thompson said.

But shortly after closing on the property, life threw them a few curve balls. The couple welcomed their fourth child into the world and Eric was diagnosed with stage IV cancer.

"When you go through something like that it changes your life," she said. "We had to hold off on our goals because our number one goal was his health."

After a year of treatment, Eric felt well enough to start building up the business again. A year after that in April 2018, the couple officially opened their doors. Today, Eric is cancer free, but the experience of the last few years has made a permanent impact on the way the couple conducts their business.

"Our outlook on life has made us appreciate everyone," she said. "You don't really know what people are going through. So many people came to us in our time of need and helped us and so a new goal in my husband's life is to continue to help others, especially in their time of need."

Thompson's Garage is at 1375 North Cedar Street in Mason, 517.676.2277, thompsonsgaragellc.com



Construction on Esker Square development forges ahead



For the past two years, the Esker Square team has been hard at work making sure all of the details are just right for the new development on Cedar Street. The Gillespie Company is hoping to restart construction this fall.

“What I wish the residents of Delhi Township knew is how hard we’ve been working to try to get this off the ground,” said Scott Gillespie, president and owner of the Gillespie Company. “We are still extremely excited and very proud of the efforts thus far and look forward to building something that all of the residents can be proud of.”

Esker Square is a \$12 million mixed-use development that will house apartments, retail, and office space on Cedar Street in downtown Holt. The project is the first private development to come to Holt as a result of the Realize Cedar initiative and will pave the way for a more livable, walkable community for residents and businesses.

The Gillespie Company worked alongside the Delhi Township Downtown Development Authority (DDA) and the Department of Environmental Quality, now the Department of Environment, Great Lakes & Energy (EGLE), to devise a plan to mitigate the environmental damage on the property, making it safe for public use.

Though the company cannot yet announce all the new business tenants who will fill the commercial space, the Gillespie Company team has been carefully cultivating relationships with businesses that will benefit the community.

“We have been working very hard to find the right businesses and the right tenants that would be a good fit for Delhi Township, who can be successful and provide a service that people want,” Gillespie said.

Tracey Hernly, of Howard Hanna Real Estate Executives, was one of the first business tenants to sign on board to Esker Square’s future commercial space.

“I’m very picky about my office space,” Hernly said. “I want to work at a place that I find motivating and inspiring.”

Hernly said she’s looking forward to moving her business into a thriving new downtown space.

“There’s so much that Holt has to offer,” she said. “The hype and the excitement of Holt’s new downtown and the Esker Square development will be off the charts. With two leading teams in the Greater Lansing area partnering with the nation’s largest family-owned real estate brokerage company, I think that it’s a perfect opportunity for a new real estate brand to come to town.”

The Gillespie Company is hoping to be finished with construction on Esker Square by the fall of 2021. Until then, the team is grateful for the community’s patience.

“I just want everybody to know that it’s not dead,” Gillespie said. “It’s coming and it’s going to be beautiful. I’m proud of the design. I’m proud of the team and I really look forward to it being something that everybody is proud of.”

To learn more about the Esker Square project, visit thegillespiecompany.com/properties/esker-square/.

Gravity Smokehouse

Holt's newest restaurant is open for business



Last fall, *Our Town* spoke with Bruce Kring of Gravity Smokehouse about his new restaurant location set to open on Cedar Street. At the end of August, Kring and his crew officially opened their doors and began serving their beloved BBQ classics: brisket, chicken, pork, turkey ribs and specialty mac and cheese.

Gravity Smokehouse originally started as a food truck in June 2018, traveling around central Michigan. But as their popularity and demand grew, they decided to look into buying a brick-and-mortar restaurant. They purchased the former Hot N' Now building on Cedar Street and were welcomed to the Holt community by eager diners.

"The early days have been quite intense," Kring said. "We sold out early almost every day. The first day was completely crazy with the drive-thru line out to the street and cars parking in the grass to be able to come inside."

While the new restaurant features a drive-thru, Kring wants customers to know that Gravity Smokehouse is not fast food. Their BBQ classics are still prepared in the same way they were when the shop was run as a food truck and, just like a lot of other BBQ joints, it is common for the restaurant's most popular items to run out before the day is finished.

Kring and his staff are grateful for the community support and looking forward to expanding their restaurant in the coming months.

"We are starting the design process now so that we can submit plans to the township for approval," Kring said. "If that all goes well we would like to start an expansion in the spring."

The new Gravity Smokehouse & BBQ restaurant is at 1850 Cedar Street in Holt, 517.258.4900.

Visit their website at www.gravitysmokehouse.com.

Esquire Barber stands strong after almost 100 years in business

Classic barbershops have long served the social hub of tight-knit communities. Esquire Barber in Holt is no exception.

The barbershop has been a mainstay of the community since the 1920s. Though it has changed locations and owners many times during its almost 100 years in business, it has remained a key gathering place where Delhi Township residents — ages 2 to 102 — go for high quality, no-nonsense haircuts.

Bob Beckwith, the shop's current owner, has been in the barber business since 1965. For over 15 years, he worked as a teacher at a barber college in Lansing. During the later part of his teaching days in the early 1990s, he had two students who turned out to be the sons of Dwayne Willett, then the owner of Esquire Barber. Beckwith befriended the family and came to work for Willett in 1995. In 1999, he officially purchased the shop.

Since then, Beckwith has continued to build on the legacy of this Holt-area landmark.

While he has never advertised the barbershop, he still keeps his chairs full of customers Tuesdays through Saturdays. The longevity of this decades-old shop is about a lot more than just easy walk-in appointments and clean cuts. It's also about community.

"I enjoy the customers," Beckwith said. "I've made a lot of friends here since I've been here. I've gotten to know several of them quite well."

Esquire Barber is at 1965 Cedar Street in Holt, 517.694.7528.



Calling all volunteers!

Help Delhi Township organizations serve our community by volunteering your time, talents and resources. Whether it's a one-time event or an ongoing commitment, there is an opportunity for everyone to serve the Holt community!

Check out our Holt Volunteer Bureau Facebook page or website to learn more about volunteer opportunities in our community!

facebook.com/HoltVolunteerBureau
volunteerinholt.org

Chisholm Hills offers beautiful facilities all year round

For Steve Ramey, owner of Chisholm Hills Golf and Banquet Center, there's never truly an off-season.

"There's a constant battle in maintaining the property and striving to improve," Ramey said.

The rolling terrain 18-hole golf course welcomes golfers year-round. But even when frigid Michigan winters get cold enough to deter devoted golfers, the Chisholm Hills banquet hall is bustling with events and parties. Ramey has a core team of about 20 employees who work with him at Chisholm Hills and Branson Bay, Ramey's Mason-area golf course. The team is constantly searching for new ways to beautify both facilities and keep them in tip-top shape for every season of use.

Chisholm Hills was first opened by Alex Chisholm in the early 1950s. The golf course stayed in the Chisholm family until the early 1990s, when Ramey purchased it.

"I always wanted to have a business myself and I liked the nature of the golf business," Ramey said.

Since first purchasing the property, Ramey expanded the course by 60 acres and renovated the golf course's facilities to be able to handle weddings and other major events. While he saw a dip in golfers around the Great Recession of 2008, Ramey says that the golf course has seen increasing growth over the last decade.

Looking ahead, Ramey says he's looking forward to keeping his beloved facility up and running for his devoted golfers, especially during particularly wet and rainy seasons like this past spring.

"I'm just looking to keep up with the regular demands of running a business," he said. "There's always new issues and new improvements, but working with the public is a lot of fun."

Chisholm Hills Golf Club is located at 2395 Washington Road in Lansing, 517.694.0169.

www.chisholmhills.com





Feldpausch Cleaning keeps community in focus

For Mike Feldpausch, owner and president of Feldpausch Cleaning, it's all about investing in his community.

"We're a family-owned business," he said. "I don't pay franchise fees to a corporation in another state. All the money stays here. All the employees are right here, and I have a vested interest in the community."

Mike launched his company in 2007 after leaving a career in sales at another cleaning and janitorial company.

"They were starting to lose a lot of the customers I was bringing in so I thought maybe I could do this better myself,"

— Mike Feldpausch

"They were starting to lose a lot of the customers I was bringing in so I thought maybe I could do this better myself," he said. "So I went out on my own."

The company offers residential and commercial carpet cleaning, commercial janitorial services, and commercial kitchen and restaurant hood cleaning to homeowners and business owners in the Greater Lansing region. Feldpausch's staff of 10 janitorial workers, carpet cleaners and kitchen cleaners work tirelessly to keep each customer happy and stay up to date on the latest certifications and trainings in the industry. The Feldpausch Cleaning kitchen cleaning

staff has a special certification for how to safely and effectively clean a commercial kitchen vent so that it remains sanitary and working at its optimal level — which is not an accolade that everyone can claim. Feldpausch Cleaning moved to Delhi Township from Lansing last year. Mike is looking forward to growing his business in this thriving community.

Feldpausch Cleaning's excellent technical service, attention to detail and top-notch communication have earned them the top ranking for local carpet cleaners on Home Advisor and Angie's List. But what really sets Feldpausch apart from his competitors is his dedication to his community at large — especially families and agencies involved in the foster care system.

"Any carpet cleaning customer that is a foster or adoptive parent will receive a discount because I'm an adoptive parent myself," he said. Earlier this year, Feldpausch and his wife finalized the adoption of their two sons.

"There's a very large need for fostering and adopting and there aren't as many people with the resources or patience to do it as there is a demand for it," he said. "Serving this population through my business is my way of letting them know they're not alone. There's somebody in their corner that understands what they're going through."

**Feldpausch Cleaning is at 4025 Holt Road,
Suite 204 in Holt, 517.582.1083.
www.feldpauschcleaning.com**

New and improved Holt Fest receives largest ever attendance!

Approximately 5,000 people came out to downtown Holt on August 17 to enjoy Holt Fest, formerly known as the Holt Hometown Festival. Now in its 20th year, the festival kicks off with a parade and features live music, great food and plenty of family-friendly activities. This year's Holt Fest was held on Cedar Street at the Holt Farmers Market, Veterans Memorial Gardens and Senior Center to highlight the new downtown improvements as a result of the Realize Cedar project.

"Thanks to our wonderful sponsors and all those involved, the 2019 Holt Fest was a success," said Chuck Grinnell, Holt Fest coordinator. "Everything went off without a hitch. Plans for next year are already underway."

Keep an eye on plans for next year's festival online at holtfest.com.



Holt Fest

FOOD, FUN & MUSIC!



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.

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