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Hometown Holiday Kicked off December 2nd in Chelsea



Story and more photos on page 3. Photos by: Aimee Bingham Osinski.

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THE RUMPU ROOM

Christmas at The Mansion Delights



Story and more photos on page 8. Photos by: Aimee Bingham Osinski.

Two Chelsea Residents Sue the City of Chelsea for Withholding Citizen Complaints and Police Disciplinary Records

M MICHIGAN LAW
CIVIL RIGHTS LITIGATION INITIATIVE
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Two advocates for racial justice have sued the City of Chelsea for denying their Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) request for com-

plaints and disciplinary records associated with five officers who ticketed Black Lives Matter protesters during the summer of 2020.

The advocates, Theresa and Kerry Plank, are among the 29 Chelsea residents that the Chelsea Police Department (CPD) charged

with "impeding traffic" during the demonstrations. A judge later dismissed the charges on the ground that the police officers violated the First Amendment rights of the protesters. The Civil Rights Liti-

gation Initiative at the University of Michigan Law School is representing the Planks in their suit.

"In order to restore public trust between the police and the Chelsea community, it is critical

that the Chelsea Police Department be transparent about its officers' misconduct," said Kerry Plank. "We hope this case will result in improved public safety in our community as we **continued on page 2**

HOMETOWN HOLIDAY
CHELSEA, MICHIGAN

CHECK OUT PAGE 4 FOR ALL THE HOLIDAY EVENTS

Two Chelsea Residents Sue the City of Chelsea for Withholding Citizen Complaints and Police Disciplinary Records

► continued from page 1
move forward together.”

After police officers killed George Floyd and other Black Americans during the summer of 2020, a group called Anti-Racist Chelsea Youth organized several peaceful marches in support of the Black Lives Matter movement in Chelsea. Chelsea police ticketed 29 protestors, including the Planks, for “impeding traffic” while participating in these protests. Although Chelsea City Council voted unanimously to recommend that CPD dismiss the tickets, former Chelsea Police Chief Edward Toth refused to do so. Ultimately, 14A District Court Judge Anna M. Frushour dismissed the civil infractions on First Amendment grounds.

The City of Chelsea hired two firms to conduct independent investigations into CPD’s response to the protests. The first firm concluded the Department’s response had led to “escalating cycles of recip-

rocal mistrust” between CPD and the Chelsea community. Similarly, the second investigation found “a measure of distrust and dissatisfaction regarding transparency and engagement of the agency,” as well as “a lack of empathy and compassion on the part of CPD.” It concluded that “[t]ransparency about police conduct is critical to building and maintaining trust between officers and residents.”

In May, the Planks submitted a FOIA request with the City of Chelsea asking for citizen complaints and records of disciplinary action against five CPD police officers and former Police Chief Edward Toth. They believed the requested documents would shed light on the Department’s procedures with respect to citizen complaints and officer discipline.

The City denied the request for records about the officers, citing a FOIA provision

that allows the police to keep such records secret “unless the public interest in disclosure outweighs the public interest in nondisclosure in the particular instance.”

On November 8, the Planks filed a FOIA lawsuit in Washtenaw County Circuit Court for the documents. According to the complaint, the FOIA exemption cited by the City does not apply because of the strong public interest in improving police transparency and accountability in Chelsea.

“The goal of the lawsuit is to increase police accountability and promote transparency when it comes to police misconduct,” said Rachel Moore, a student attorney with the Civil Rights Litigation Initiative. “Given the community’s demands for safe and transparent policing, the public interest in disclosure clearly outweighs the department’s interest in keeping disciplinary records secret.”



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Hometown Holiday Kicked off December 2nd in Chelsea



continued from page 1
By Aimee Bingham Osinski
anbingham@gmail.com



Chelsea's Hometown Holiday kicked into full gear on Friday, December 2. Pierce Park featured Chelsea 6th, 7th, and 8th-grade choirs serenading residents with Christmas carols. Jets Pizza provided free pizza, Light-house Bakery provided hot chocolate and Culvers was handing out scoops of frozen custard. Excited children played freeze tag on the playground equipment while waiting for Santa. Just after the choirs finished their songs, Santa pulled up on a firetruck lit up with Christmas Lights. The excitement in the air was palpable. Santa pulled the candy cane striped lever to light the Christmas tree! Even a scrooge like me could not help but be swept up by the Christmas spirit. My



daughter, who happens to be an expert on the subject of Santa, informed me that the Chelsea Santa is the real Santa, unlike that fraud at the mall. She knows based on the cheerful elves that sing Christmas songs with him. Santa informed us that we were all on the nice list, which is always a relief because we had a few slip-ups this year. The next morning we headed to Chelsea for one of our favorite holiday traditions; the material girl Children's Christmas Bazaar. Each year, children are able to sign up for time slots and young adults in the commu-

nity help the children select presents for family members. This year, all proceeds were donated to Faith in Action. The kids enjoy being able to select gifts for family members and when the money goes to a good cause, everyone wins. After selecting presents the kids had the opportunity to create some crafts with the assistance of kind volunteers. It appeared that everyone was having a wonderful time and once again, the Holiday Bazaar was a great success. Saturday was filled with a host of events but I was unable to attend them all. I was



fortunate to attend the light parade. The cold weather moved in with a vengeance as if to announce that the Christmas season is here and so too is the winter weather. We found a spot on a corner toward the end of the route and marveled at the lights, the band, the trucks and tractors, and of course, Santa as he made his way down Main Street. With numb hands and feet, I was smiling from the cheerful mood of the crowd and made my way to an after-hours parade event. Main Street opened its door to frozen parade goers and provided hot chocolate, cookies, music, and smores by fire pits. It was a nice way to chat with friends while warming up after the parade. All in all, the start of the Hometown Holiday was wonderful, reaffirming what a wonderful community Chelsea is and bringing more excitement and joy into the Christmas season for everyone in attendance.

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Chelsea Antiques • Country Cabin
Culture Creations • The Cottage Rabbit
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Dining:
Chelsea Alehouse Brewery
Chelsea Big Boy • China Garden
Cleary's Pub • Common Grill
Cottage Inn • Jet's Pizza
Los Tres Amigos • Mike's Deli
Seitz's Tavern • Smokehouse 52
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Chelsea State Bank Donates \$1,350 to Ele's Place Ann Arbor

Chelsea State Bank donates \$1,350 to Ele's Place Ann Arbor as a show of their continued support of healing grieving children and teens.

Over 10 years ago, Chelsea State Bank employees kicked off their Blue Jeans for Charity fund to raise money for local charities. Employees donate \$3 per person each week, which allows them to wear jeans to work on Fridays. Chelsea State Bank then matched the employee donations for the selected non-profit donation. Chelsea State Bank Customers also contributed dollars through a donation drive that took place in each

of the branches and drive-thru locations. Ele's Place Ann Arbor was selected as the local charity for 2022.

"As the community bank in Chelsea and surrounding area, we want to do all we can to help safeguard the children in our communities," said Chelsea State Bank President and CEO Joanne Rau. "Families are at the heart of our communities. I am always amazed at the generosity of our customers. Our employees continue to help those in need, both emotionally and physically, year after year. I am so proud of our employees, and the efforts they make to help others. They

are true community bankers."

"We are so grateful to Chelsea State Bank, its employees and its customers for the generous donations they give from the heart year after year. These gifts help ensure that our peer grief support programs for children, teens and their families throughout Washtenaw County, and the surrounding southeast Michigan area, remain free of charge for as long as a family needs," said Ele's Place Ann Arbor Branch Director Bree Arvai. "Since Ele's Place Ann Arbor opened its door in 2007, Chelsea State Bank has been a dedicated and committed

community partner. Their employees and customers stand with us, their leaders serve on our community board, they sponsor and attend our fundraising events, and they made a generous pledge to our capital campaign. There

are so many amazing reasons we appreciate our partnership with Chelsea State Bank, and why we honored them as our 'Company of the Year' in 2017."

About Ele's Place Ann Arbor

Ele's Place Ann Arbor is a non-prof-

it, community-based organization dedicated to creating awareness of and support for grieving children, teens and their families. For more information visit <https://www.elesplace.org/branch-locations/ann-arbor/about>.



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HOMETOWN HOLIDAY

CHELSEA, MICHIGAN

MAJOR EVENTS

- 12/01 | Special Needs Christmas Bazaar
- 12/1, 3 & 6 | Curiouser Clay Ornament Workshop
- 12/02 | Tree Lighting Ceremony
- 12/2-4 | Enchanted Alley Events
- 12/03 | Children's Christmas Bazaar
- 12/03 | All the Trimmings Holiday Show
- 12/03 | Light Parade
- 12/03 | Lights Out After the Parade Party
- 12/03 | CDL Tween & Teen Gifts for the Holidays
- 12/3-4 | Christmas on the Farm
- 12/04 | Public Christmas Shopping Bazaar
- 12/04 | Hometown Holiday Concert
- 12/09 | Three Men and a Tenor Holiday Concert
- 12/09-11 | Chelsea Robotics Wrap-A-Palooza
- 12/10 | Donuts & Selfies with Santa
- 12/10 | Fishville Farms Christmas Vendor Show & Food Drive
- 12/10 | Santa's visit to the Distillery
- 12/12 | CDL makerChelsea: Holiday Centerpieces
- 12/16 | Curling Fest
- 12/17 | Gingerbread Cookie Kit Distribution
- 12/21 | Longest Night Candlelit Vigil
- 12/24 | Virtual Storytime with Santa
- 12/28-31 | Jeff Daniels Onstage & Unplugged

ONGOING EVENTS

- 2022 Official Chelsea Keepsake Ornament
- Business Spotlight Series | Holiday Edition
- Culver's Coloring Contest
- Gingerbread House Display
- Helping Hands: Teen Supply Drive @ CDL
- Main St Light Poles - Contest & Display
- Santa Mail
- Santa Paws Photo Booth @ Lane Animal Hospital
- Sweet \$aver Saturdays
- Toys for Tots & Teens @ Palmer Auto Service

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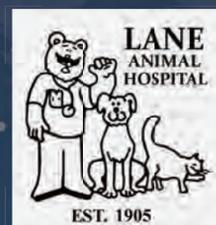
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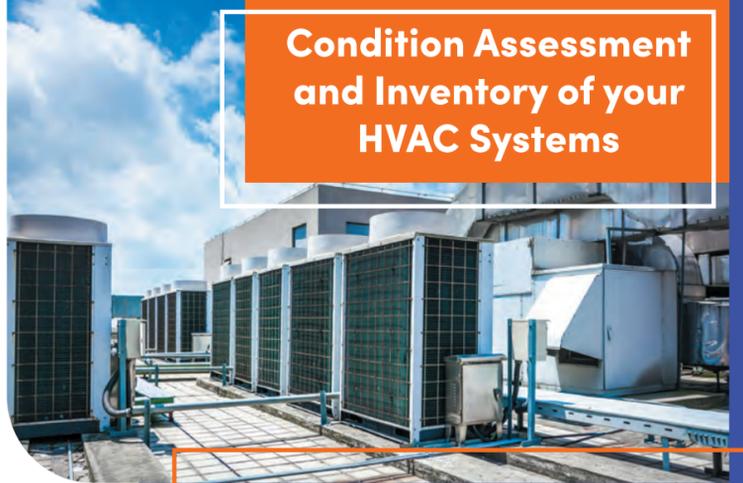
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DECEMBER EVENTS



Faith In Action Pajama Drive* (CHE/DEX) November 28–December 14
 Help Faith In Action by donating children's pajamas (sizes 5T-16). Drop off your unwrapped donations in the lobby!

Deck the Halls (CHE/DEX/STK) December 5–January 1
 Workout during the busy holiday season and you could win a prize! Earn a drawing entry every day you workout at your home center for a minimum of one hour. Your entries will be entered into a gift basket drawing each week.

Give the Gift of Health Gift Card Special* (CHE/DEX) November 28–December 24
 Purchase a gift card and give your loved one or friend the freedom to enjoy membership or other services at the Chelsea or Dexter Wellness Centers.

Relax and Roll Workshop* (DEX) December 21 • 4:30pm–6:30pm • \$10
 Stephanie Oldre, Pilates Trainer, MOVE/Personal Trainer, NETA
 In this 2-hour workshop we will release stress and tension from your hands to your feet and everywhere in between. We'll use simple self-massage techniques targeting trigger points and high-tension areas to help reduce aches and pains and improve mobility. Must be able to get on the floor. Call 734-580-2500 to register.

108 Sun Salutations for the Winter Solstice* (DEX) December 21 • 5:00pm–6:30pm FREE • Dexter Wellness Center Gym
 Dianna Kause and Megan Fink
 Celebrate the Winter Solstice, known as the day the sun stands still, by flowing through the 108 Sun Salutations with Dianna and Megan. We encourage you to pre-register for this class. Call 734-580-2500 to register.

*Community welcome!

UPCOMING JANUARY EVENTS

Fundamentals of TRX (DEX)
 January 6-27 • \$50

QPR - Question, Persuade, Refer - Suicide Prevention Training*
CHE January 5 • FREE
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Gratitude Yoga* (CHE)
 January 8 and January 11
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Christmas at The Mansion Delights



► continued from page 1

Most of my writing has been focused on Chelsea lately. But this past Saturday I had the opportunity to attend an event near and dear to my heart, Christmas at the Mansion, at Gordon Hall.

Three years ago, after losing my brother, and grandmother, and having a stroke in the two months prior to Christmas, I wasn't feeling much Christmas spirit. My editor assigned me to Gordon Hall for Christmas at the Mansion. My Mother had to drive me as I had not yet passed my after-stroke driver's test. We did not know what to expect. I'd never been to Gordon Hall and certainly not Christmas at the Mansion. My Mom and I climbed to the second floor and our eyes twinkled with joy as we both saw for the first time, the Christmas village collection. My mom looked down, said, "oh," and looked up at me, unable to contain the smile the collection brought to her face, the first I'd seen since my brother died. I could not help but smile. The collection is absolutely magical. To find something that brought our smiles back that year was nothing short of miraculous and from now on, the collection will always hold a spe-

cial place in my heart. It helped me remember how to smile.

I was greeted upon entering by the sound of angelic voices singing Christmas Carols and I caught a glimpse of Santa! Caryl Burke of the Dexter Historical Society provided a great rundown of Christmas at the Mansion. She was so kind and friendly, I immediately missed covering Dexter's stories. The Historical Society is raising funds to restore Gordon Hall. The Historical Society is trying to raise 3.5 million by 2024. If you would like to help, volunteer, donate, or become a member, please visit remembering the magic of childhood after their visit to Gordon Hall. If you were unable to attend there are a few more opportunities to view the Department 56 house collection

this year. December 10 from 6-8 pm people can tour the Mansion for a \$5 suggested donation and December 17th from 6-8 pm for a \$5 suggested donation. Do not miss the chance to put yourself in the Christmas spirit and find a little magic again.

<http://www.dexter-history.org/> for details.

The Christmas decor at Gordon Hall was beautiful. Kids were taking turns visiting Santa while I was there and upstairs gingerbread houses were being created in the room next to the magical Christmas village collection. I saw adults asking if they were allowed to join in the gingerbread fun as well, and they were! Everyone was smiling and in good spirits. Do yourself a favor and stop by the Mansion and get in the Christmas spirit and enjoy the magic.



Chelsea Police Department Weekly Summary

Incident #: 22-3995

Date: November 28, 2022

Location: 900 block of Moore Dr.

Time: 10:24 am

INFORMATION: While at the station the officer was assigned a walk-in fraud complaint. The complainant stated that they had received a notification from their bank stating that there had been some "suspicious activity" on their account. Upon closer inspection

the complainant stated that they had in fact located two separate transactions that had taken place and were not authorized. The complainant stated that they had made contact with the bank and reported both of the transactions. The bank suggested that the

complainant report the incident to their local police and after further investigation it was suspected that this issue was an internal issue within the bank. The case was closed pending any further leads on a potential suspect.

Incident #: 22-4002

Date: November 28, 2022

Location: 100 block of Madison St.

Time: 5:15 pm

INFORMATION: While on routine patrol an officer was dispatched to the area of the 100 block of Madison St. for the report of a larceny. The complainant stated that they had a flower urn permanently affixed to

a grave marker and an unknown suspect(s) had broken it off and stolen it. The complainant stated that they last knew the urn to be at the site on October 28th and when they returned to the site on November 28th

the flower urn was no longer there. At the time of the report there was no information available on a potential suspect(s) and the complainant could not think of anyone who may have done this.

Incident #: 22-4035

Date: December 2, 2022

Location: 1200 block of S. Main Street

Time: 11:16 am

INFORMATION: While on routine patrol an officer was dispatched to the 1200 block of S. Main Street for the report of an embezzlement complaint. Upon arrival the officer met with the complainant who

stated that it had recently been discovered that an employee had been found to be taking items without paying and altering reimbursement receipts and getting paid out for them. The suspect, a 36-year-old Chelsea woman was

later interviewed at the scene and released. The case is open pending further investigation and potential review by the Washtenaw County Prosecutor's Office for possible criminal charges.

Free Christmas Meal

Members of our community who are alone on Christmas or unable to afford a Christmas meal are invited for a free meal. We are pleased to once again offer this meal in person in the Chelsea Hospital dining room. Due to continued COVID-19 safety precautions, capacity is limited and fewer individuals will be seated at each table. Masks are required inside the hospital when individuals are not eating. Should COVID-19 cases increase dramatically on the day of the meal, the meal may shift to a pick-up only option. In that instance, registrants will be notified and the meal will be provided for easy at-home heating.

Sunday, December 25
11:30 a.m. to 1:30 p.m.
Chelsea Hospital Dining Room

Registration is required. Please call the Chelsea Senior Center at 734-475-9242 to register by December 16.

Interested in volunteering to help at this event? Let us know!

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