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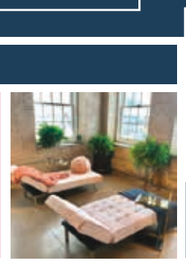


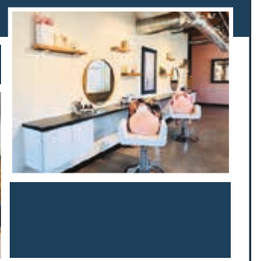
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The residents of East Grand Rapids

We are always looking for residents to follow up on leads, find great stories, and send us ideas. Let's celebrate the exciting things happening in our community! No contribution is too small. Please email edward.volovlek@n2pub.com with your pictures, suggestions, or requests.





note from our INTERN

By **Cassidy Keenan**

When I left for spring break this past semester, I was only thinking of enjoying my week off. I said no goodbyes, made no arrangements, left my apartment a total mess. I assumed I would be back in no time to clean it up. Little did I know that in a few days' time, I would receive a devastating email along with the rest of my fellow students requiring us to stay home. The rest of the semester was completed online.

Thus began one of the most confusing and challenging summers of my life. And I am not alone. Hundreds of millions of students suddenly found themselves adrift, robbed of structure, crucial life milestones, and presence with their friends.

However, it has also been a summer of remarkable creativity and perspective. I have found unexpected beauty as I take long walks with my family members, attend teary live-streamed weddings, have virtual dance parties with my friends over Zoom, and return to the practice of hand-written letters. There have been challenges and blessings, like every season of life. And as we approach this new season, when I am tentatively scheduled to return to school for my senior year, there are several things I am trying to keep in mind.

The first is that grief and mourning are essential. They are part of the process. No matter what this next year looks like, it will not be what we have planned and imagined for the last three years. Significant loss has taken place in every single person's life, to varying degrees. We can't celebrate what may come next until we allow ourselves to grieve what would have been.

The second is that this grief must be followed with an attitude of gratitude. If this pandemic has taught me anything, it is to respect and appreciate the smallest blessings: physical presence, contact and connection, the simple privilege of being alive. These are things to be celebrated and never taken for granted again as we move forward.

The third is that flexibility is key. The uncomfortable reality is that we have no idea what the future holds. We may remain on campus this semester, or we may all be sent home again. The priority must always be to keep each other healthy and safe. All we can do is take things one day at a time, and hold things loosely, with open hands.

The final thing I am trying to remember is that hope is essential. Hope is not a fleeting emotion or childish daydream; it is a tool, it is a weapon, it is healing and unifying. Come up with creative solutions to the new problems we are facing. Find things that are possible now in ways that they weren't before. There is always a silver lining. This is the way that we build a better future together.

I am grateful to be entering my senior year. I am grateful for the chance to be present among my peers one more time. I am grateful to be educating myself, in this time when knowledge is more essential than ever. There is heartbreak, but there is also joy, and ferocity, and beauty in everything.

Miracles do happen. I never thought I would be so excited to write papers again.



family spotlight

By **Teri Tesseris**

Meet the ZERFAS FAMILY









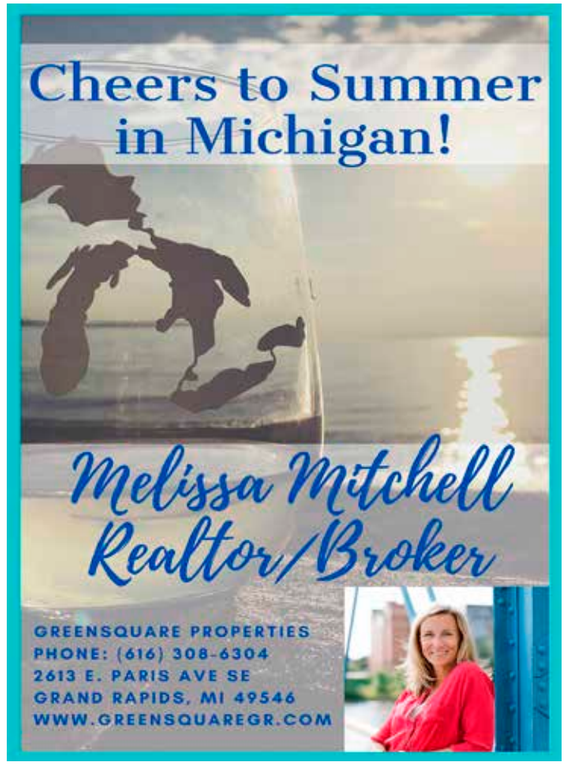


The Zerfas boys share their parents' enthusiasm for sports. "Owen loves playing lacrosse, soccer, flag and tackle football, and basketball. Owen also has been involved in Cub Scouts and a few school plays. Oliver is our soccer star and plays football too. Finn is just getting started on his 'sports career' but dominates in soccer and loves football and baseball. He may be our triple threat!" jokes Meg.

When the Zerfases are not on the sidelines cheering or coaching, Ben works as a Senior Quality Engineer in Aerospace and Meg works as a local real estate agent with her partner Sommer Dockery. They are both part of an amazing brokerage, Novosad Realty Partners. Meg also helps her clients make their new house feel like home with her 15-plus years' experience as an interior designer.

Looking towards the future, travel is in their crystal ball. "We love to travel. Some of our favorites include the beaches of Florida, specifically Siesta Key—the sand there is like no other beach! We have enjoyed taking trips with other families to Destin, Florida too. Even the 'simple' trips up north have been amazing as each time brings new experiences. On our dream travel list we have penned in Hawaii, Italy, Spain, France and a few more places in the Caribbean," Meg explains.

Everything that the Zerfas family touches, they put their entire focus, joyfulness and perseverance to see whatever task it is through to a successful end. It is families like the Zerfas family that make East what it is.



There are many wonderful things about East, that as residents, we all enjoy. Whether it's the walkability or the strong sense of community, East beckons people from all over the country to live here. But the strongest pull of them all is our phenomenal public school system.

"We have learned so much about the schools as our three boys, Owen, Oliver and Finn, go through elementary school at Breton Downs. It has been so interesting to understand how much goes into educating our children. My husband Ben and I have so much respect for our children's educators and all the work it takes. We are so very grateful for them," explains Meg.

As a former Wealthy Wizard herself, and Ben a former Breton Bulldog, their ties to East run deep and true. "We moved back to East after living in Detroit and Denver for several years because there is nothing quite like our hometown. We love going to football games in the fall, the yacht club in the summer, Jersey Junction for ice cream, all the great restaurants, lighting of the holiday lights after Thanksgiving and the musical bands at John Collins Park," shares Meg.

With all the Americana experiences and school system excellence, Ben and Meg strive to keep their hometown humming by being involved in their community. "I volunteer and serve on the East Grand Rapids School Foundation Board. I also help out at Breton wherever there is a need I can fill, whether that is helping with school play brochures, classroom prep, or being an advocate for fundraisers. I also continue to volunteer with the Junior League of Grand Rapids.

Ben has coached several sports teams each season, soccer to baseball and everything in between. He truly loves to coach and teach our boys and other kids the sports he loved to play. Along with coaching, Ben has volunteered at Breton for several events, being a reader, helping with 5th-grade camp, as well as being a Den Leader for the local Cub Scouts."





school news By Jay Forstner

One East

Bringing Our Community Together to Support Our Schools







Because of Covid-19, our schools are facing an extraordinary budget crisis. More than 60 percent of school funding comes from state sales and income taxes, not our local property taxes. Projections show reduced state revenue because of Covid-19 may create a deficit of $2.85 million for East Grand Rapids Public Schools, far greater than deficits during the Great Recession.

An unprecedented challenge demands an unprecedented response. The East Grand Rapids Schools Foundation will contribute more than $330,000 to our schools this year—including a one-time 20 percent increase in the maximum amount that can be drawn from the Foundation's endowment—but that won't be enough.

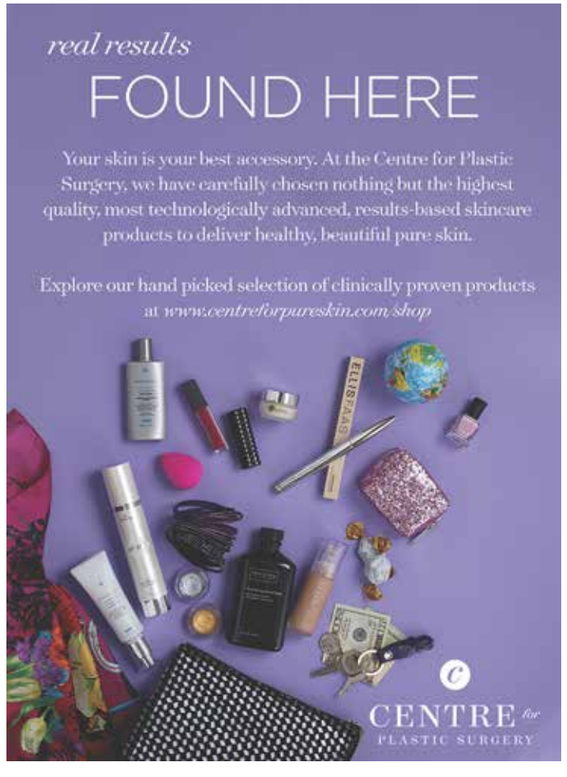
The Foundation is organizing One East, a community-wide, coordinated fundraising effort so every dollar raised by school entities this summer supports programs in our district that are in danger of being cut. One East is bringing together organizations, students and families at all our schools to protect the East Grand Rapids Public Schools' Tradition of Excellence.

To donate to One East right now, visit the Foundation's website at egrsf.org.

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pet tips
With **Dr. Laurie Brush**

DEHYDRATION in the DOG DAYS OF SUMMER

Good hydration is key during the "dog days of summer." Dogs can become seriously ill – or even die – from losing as little as 10-15% of their body's water. Dogs need at least an ounce of water per pound of weight daily – more if active. Hot weather makes dogs pant more and sweat through their paws.

"Dehydration can promote urinary tract issues, the formation of kidney stones, and organ failure. It can be a veterinary emergency," said Dr. Laurie Brush, founder of Heaven at Home Pet Hospice. "Senior dogs are at a higher risk."

Symptoms may include lethargy, weakness, labored breathing, an elevated heart rate, and dry, sticky-feeling gums or sunken eyes.

How Can I Tell If My Dog Is Dehydrated?

Your pet's mucous membranes should be moist. The easiest way to evaluate this is to check their gums. If they are sticky or dry when you run your finger over their gums, your pet may be mildly dehydrated.

If your pet is ill or has other symptoms, you can check further for dehydration by lifting a pinch of skin at the back of your pet's neck/shoulder area and letting go. The skin should snap quickly back into place. If your pet is **severely** dehydrated, the skin may stick together, and form a "tent." In this case, call your veterinarian immediately.

Improving Hydration

You might think drinking enough water is a simple biological function but in truth, there are a number of things that put dogs off their water:

- Lack of water freshness/dust and debris
- Water bowl is in a high-traffic area
- Water bowl is at an uncomfortable height
- Dog is distracted by play activity and lacks access
- Dog feels unwell or nauseous or is in too much discomfort to seek water

During hot weather, keep a water bottle nearby and take frequent H20 breaks during play, but note that deep-chested, large-breed dogs should not consume large volumes of water while highly active to avoid bloat, which can be fatal. Use dog fountains to keep water fresh via circulation. Place raised water bowls in multiple convenient locations. For pets with mild dehydration, encourage drinking by mixing in low-salt, low-fat chicken or beef broth, or a small amount of plain Pedialyte. But if your dog is clearly dehydrated, talk to your vet **immediately.** Hydration is your dog's best friend in the dog days of summer!



Dr. Laurie Brush of Heaven at Home Pet Hospice and her rescue dogs, Beezus and Henry. Heaven at Home Pet Hospice can work with you and your routine care veterinarian to help you give your fur-baby the highest quality of life possible in his or her final chapter. Visit www.PetHospiceVet.com to learn more.



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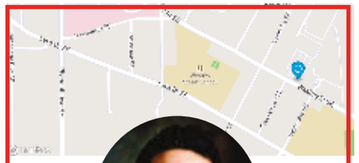
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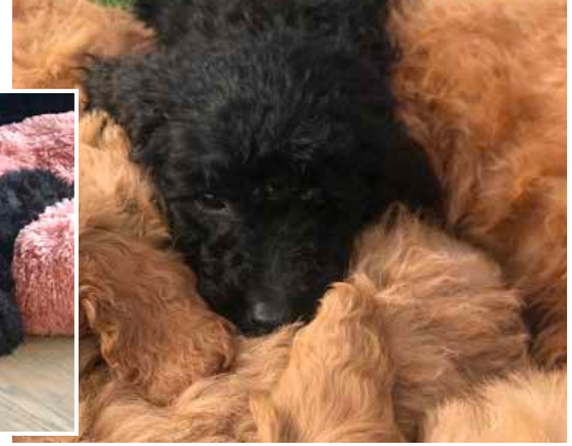
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INTRODUCING PEYTON RONA FRENG

By **Teri Tesseris**





One of the positives to come out of quarantine is the puppy palooza that has ensued. Pet adoption has never been more popular, emptying shelters and increasing wait times for purchasing. I am almost certain that many of you know of at least one family who has dove into pet ownership. The Freng family is one of them.



Looking for a companion for their son T.K., who misses his buddies, and realizing how much their daughters wanted a pet, Kevin and Mindi added Peyton Rona Freng to their already joyful household. "We call her Rona for short since she is our silver lining to the pandemic," explains Mindi.

It's been proven, many times over, that pets help their humans with stress, sadness and uncertainty. All of which we have felt in abundance during the past few months.

Rona, a Goldendoodle and just a newbie puppy, is educating the Frengs on puppy potty-training. "At least every day someone is asking, 'Did she poop in the dining room again?' which is something I never thought I would say," laughs Mindi. "We think she ate a mouse her first time outside our cottage, so the kids kept checking her 'leavings' for it all weekend. And there's the time Kevin stepped in one with bare feet. The kids thought that was absolutely hilarious!"

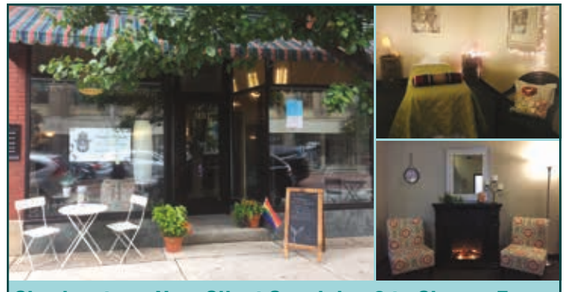
Luckily, Goldendoodles are known for their friendliness and intelligence, so those accidents should cease pretty quickly.

With Rona just getting to know her humans, she gravitates to anyone who is holding her treats. Kevin, being savvy, keeps his pockets full of them! So it will be no shock when Kevin comes out the winner of that competition!

To all you pet owners out there, old or new, keep up the playfulness! Our pets bring out the best in us.

















BAKING TO THE RESCUE!

Baked Oatmeal Bars

resident recipe
By **Ellen Cherveny**

Ingredients

3 cups oats
1/2 cup applesauce, shy a little and fill with oil
3/4 cup brown sugar (light or dark)
3 eggs
1 1/2 cups almond milk
1/2 teaspoon salt
1 tablespoon baking powder

Directions

Mix wet ingredients and add dry. Store in refrigerator overnight, or a minimum 8 hours. Heat oven to 350, butter 9x13 pan and bake for 45 minutes.

Comments/ Substitutions

- If no applesauce or no oil, use full amount of either
- Any kind of milk should work okay
- Adding a packet of apple cinnamon oatmeal is a nice addition
- Substitute some sugar for honey
- Add chopped apples, nuts or dried fruits in the mix or as toppings once cooked
- For fluffier bars, mix in the baking powder while the oven heats right before baking



vintage egr: a peek at the past

RAMONA PARK on Reeds Lake, circa 1920

By **Mary T. Dersch**, curator, East Grand Rapids History Room



The Aeroplane Swings ride figures prominently in this postcard produced by the Heyboer Company of Grand Rapids. Postmarked September 23, 1923. The setting is the west shore of Reeds Lake at what is now Collins Park. Steamer Major A.B. Watson, the largest in the Poisson family fleet, which plied the lake from 1892 to 1923, is receiving passengers at the dock. Seven hundred or more folks could be on the boat, ready for their 15-minute trip around the lake with Captain Charlie Poisson (b1879–d1956). However, the price of admission, 10 cents for kids and 20 cents for adults, entitled you to ride all day! The boat's namesake, Major Amasa Brown Watson (b1826–d1888), was a Civil War Major, a prominent Grand Rapids businessman and a good friend of Poisson patriarch John Honore Poisson, who established the family business on Reeds Lake in 1883. The main campus of Ramona Park (1886–1954) was across Lakeside Drive on 21 acres; bordered by Lakeside Drive, Wealthy Street and Lovett Avenue SE. Other attractions included the Jack Rabbit Derby Racer roller coaster, merry-go-round, swings, the Caterpillar ride, the Whip, miniature railroad, shows at Ramona Theatre, games of chance, food and drink concessions, and cages with baby bears and monkeys. Parking was available at the shore through 1954 when Ramona Park closed and until 1955 when the steamboat Ramona made its last run.

The East Grand Rapids History Room, 746 Lakeside Drive SE is located on the upper level of the East Grand Rapids Library.

Please like us on Facebook. If you have photographs, artifacts or history to share please contact **egrhistoryroom@gmail.com**, **https://eastgrandrapidshistoryroom.weebly.com** or **call 616-241-2092.**



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CAMP Casey





Camp Casey, a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization that provides cost-free horseback riding programs to children with cancer and rare blood disorders, will be hitting the road this summer to deliver happiness on horseback to sick kids in the greater Grand Rapids area.

Camp Casey's unique Horsey House Call program surprises sick kids with a full-size horse on their doorstep and an afternoon of fun, camp-related activities, including horseback riding in their neighborhood.

A 16-year-old organization, Camp Casey will amend its Horsey House Call program to continue to put the health and safety of its participants at the forefront of its interactive programming amid the COVID-19 pandemic. Camp Casey promises to increase the sanitation process of its supplies, work with each family's individual needs, and keep up with the ever-changing guidelines of the state of Michigan and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

"As a mobile program that has been delivering our services to doorsteps in our community for years, we have found ourselves in a unique position: we have experience bringing joy to immunocompromised children who are confined to their homes," says Executive Director Molly Reeser. "Now, more than ever, our personalized, mobile programming is critical for the families we serve."

Camp Casey will administer a controlled and safe Horsey House Call program this summer by limiting personnel, limiting guests, requiring face masks and frequent hand-washing, eliminating the pizza portion of the visit, and continuing to increase sanitation procedures.

"Our patients in the hematology and oncology program at Helen DeVos Children's Hospital are especially grateful for the added fun this modified Camp Casey program will deliver to their homes," says Rhys VanDemark, child life specialist at Helen DeVos Children's Hospital. "It will be the highlight of my day to report to these families that Camp Casey will still be taking place this summer, just in a modified and special way that brings the horses right to their doorstep."

To be eligible for a Horsey House Call, a child must be under the age of 18 and have been diagnosed with or treated for a form of cancer, sickle cell disease, or aplastic anemia within the past two years. If you know of a child that could benefit from Camp Casey's cost-free horseback riding programs, please visit camp-casey.org/programs.

To volunteer for the Horsey House Call program, a volunteer must be sixteen years or older, have a valid driver's license, pass a required background check, and be in good physical health. To register as a volunteer with Camp Casey, please visit camp-casey.org/volunteer.

Though Camp Casey is setting out to complete its programming goals set before the COVID-19 crisis, its funds have been significantly affected by the pandemic. To make a donation to Camp Casey or contribute to its supply wish list, please visit camp-casey.org/donate.



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Art Heals

Photos by **Caitlin Volovlek**

One of the more profound moments in our city's history occurred at the start of summer. Following a necessary, beautiful, and peaceful march for racial justice, Grand Rapids was struck down by vandals and opportunists looking to create chaos and undermine the message of the peaceful protesters. It was emotionally overwhelming to see the level of destruction.

My wife and children biked downtown the following day to witness and partake in the clean-up effort. They were blown away by the overall orchestration and swiftness—a testament that Grand Rapids is a strong and supportive community.

Recently, art has bloomed in the windows and doorways of downtown. This is an essential time to hold meaningful discussions about Black history, anti-racism, equity, and how to lean in, listen, and learn. Check out the power of the messages and, if you're lucky, you'll stumble into our very own African American History & Archives Museum located right on Monroe.

May we continue to heal, learn, and unify!



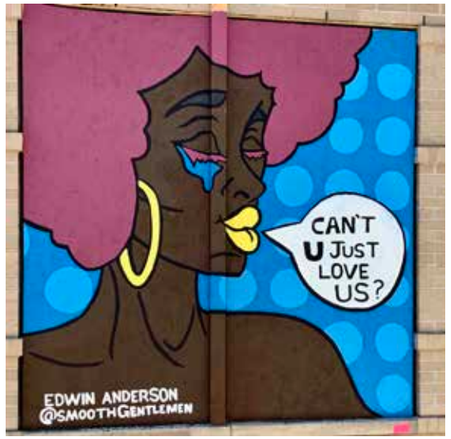








Camilla Volovlek seeing both the destruction and beauty in the aftermath of the riots in downtown GR.



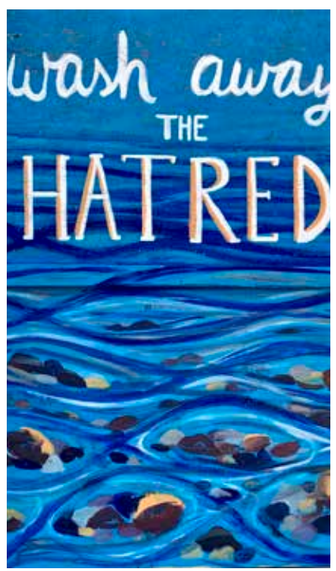




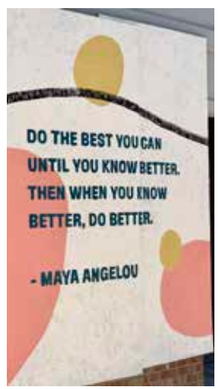












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Oh So Clean

If you've been on the hunt for a high-quality cleaning service, then you've heard the rave reviews of the Oh So Clean team. "We aim to provide individuals and families with more quality time by relieving the burden of cleaning and providing a welcoming, organized and comfortable home," says owner Erika Abbo. "Our team is dedicated to finding simple living solutions for your busy lifestyle."

Oh So Clean was founded in 2014 by East Grand Rapids native Jane Steele as a way to help families with their cleaning and organizing needs. Since taking over the company last year, Erika has been focused on continuing Oh So Clean's mission to provide a consistent, trustworthy and dependable, detail-oriented cleaning option.



"We specialize in personalized cleaning and organizing services for your home or business. We offer flexible one-time or ongoing weekly, biweekly or monthly services. For those moving in or out of a home, we can also help with cleaning, unpacking and organizing to get you set up and comfortable in your new home," says Erika.

With families spending more time at home, having a clean, comfortable and healthy home is more important than ever. Some practical steps you can take to help protect your home include:

- Limit germs coming into your home by creating a routine. Remove your shoes, wipe down keys and phones using a disinfectant wipe and keep a garbage can nearby to throw away any packaging or bags that may be exposed.
- Wash your hands with soap and water for at least 20 seconds before and after prepping food, before eating, after using the bathroom, after touching garbage and after handling pet food.
- Frequently clean and disinfect high touch surfaces including doorknobs, light switches, handles, railings and faucets using an EPA-approved disinfectant.

"In addition to our normal, detailed cleaning processes, we are taking added measures to ensure the safety of our team and clients, including: conducting a daily health screening protocol for all team members, wearing appropriate PPE, and disinfecting all equipment after each appointment. Additionally, we clean all high touch surfaces with disinfectants effective against the coronavirus."

Erika and her husband grew up in the metro Detroit area before moving to Ada to raise their family. Their busy home includes a teenage son and daughter, Drew and Emerson, and two fur babies, Frankie and Maggie. Erika enjoys cooking, biking, concert-going and traveling with her family.

Prior to acquiring Oh So Clean, Erika enjoyed a career in corporate finance for almost 25 years, including several years at Amway. "It had long been my dream to be a business owner, and when I was introduced to Oh So Clean and its founder Jane Steele, I knew it was a perfect fit," adds Erika.



Oh So Clean is dedicated to providing the EGR community with the highest quality, friendly and professional cleaning and organizing services. They are committed to making your home clean and comfortable and giving you more time to spend with your family. They are licensed, bonded and insured, and accredited by the BBB. All of their employees undergo background checks and are thoroughly trained. If you are in need of cleaning, they'd love to help make your home Oh So Clean!

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business beat

EGR

HOME COLLECTION

When Hannah Greening was looking for a city to raise her daughter, she remembered how safe and free she felt as a child in Richland, Michigan—a quintessential small Michigan town. "After finishing my degree at the University of Illinois, I began a career in television advertising and was completely happy with where I was until I had my daughter. I realized then just how much I missed West Michigan, and how much my childhood was shaped by the amount of experiences this area has to offer families." In 2014, Hannah accepted a position with WZZM13 and moved to Grand Rapids.


Hannah Greening

Knowing that her "someday career" would be in Real Estate, Hannah decided to make the transition in _____. "As soon as I began working with clients and seeing how valuable Realtors are, and how rewarding the experience of representing my clients was, I knew immediately that I was born for this career," beams Hannah. After being named Rookie of the Year in her market center, Hannah moved to Berkshire Hathaway.

"My team and I launched East Grand Rapids Home Collection in April which has been a great fit for me. As Team Leader, I've been able to look at the major pain points that happen on both sides of the sale of a home, and I've realized that the difficulty and stress is always in the variables."

Hannah found that so many families struggle with the listing price. "It's absolutely a difficult process to have a Realtor look at comparable home sales and make their best estimate as to the most competitive listing price. On the flip side, sellers and buyers both have concerns when it's time for the appraisal process. Will the lender approve the amount requested based on their opinion of the home's value?"

What Hannah loves about being a Team Leader for EGR Home Collection is having those difficult conversations. "We provide such an immense amount of value by automatically ordering a professional appraisal upfront. We provide this on our own so that our clients feel confident in their asking price, lessening the chance of receiving low offers, and giving the buyer insight that their investment is sound."

EGR Home Collection also provides upfront inspections. "Inspection is another nail-biting point in the transaction for both seller and buyer," adds Hannah. "Inspectors can uncover things that homeowners might not have considered, or even known existed. When major repair needs are brought up, it can break a deal, leaving both sides frustrated and concerned. Along with the appraisal, we always include a complete inspection so that our clients have zero surprises down the line."

While there have been many uncertainties in the economy, Hannah feels the market in EGR and West Michigan looks healthy. "Home values are up from the same time last year, and the growth in the area still creates an immense amount of buyers. With insanely-low interest rates, buyers are ready and excited to get out of the homes they've been stuck in for the past few months, and into something better!"



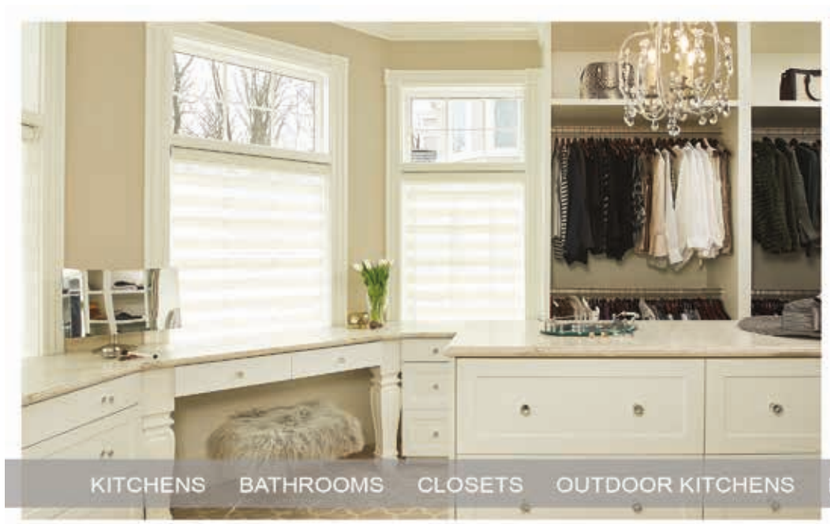






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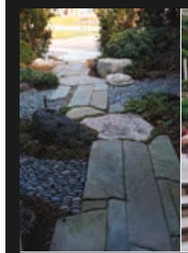
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IN THE Summertime...


Neighborhood pool party: Proux, Seyferth and Shirley families


Josie, James & Jenna Conant tubing on Gun Lake


Cruisin' around the neighborhood: Jack Jacoby


Jack Siebers fishing in Harbor Springs


Billy Mead living his best summer life


Grace Jacoby keeping up with big brother Jack


Heitmeiers' first visit to Lake Michigan this summer


Grace Foster & Paige Volkema enjoying "sister" time


Submitted by Liz Della Croce


Charlie & Natalie Chappus at GRYC sailing school


Submitted by Natalie Owen


Liam Boyle snuggling a goat at Deer Track Junction


Kaci & Kelty Wiser loving the sand and surf

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Brody and Mac Wiser boating


Quinn & Nate Kolakowski — Reeds Lake


Lena Kolekamp & Avery Hungerford first time sailing on Reeds Lakesailing on Reeds Lake


Ruby Kolakowski at Saugatuck Dunes


Submitted by Liz Della Croce


Ben & Jack Falicki with cousin Grayson Smith and new puppy Fauci


John Shirley's first fish on Reeds Lake


Delaney & Sam sailing on Reeds Lake


Burke, Mady & Avery Hungerford picking strawberries at Krupp's


Ian Kanaan: So happy baseball is back!


S'mores & Family: Kanaan and Miller families


Cormac Boyle catching a big catfish


Christian & Kelty Wiser with their homemade lemonade stand


Colton Weigel & Whitaker Norden — Parks & Rec sailing class


Slip-n-slide shenanigans: Finn, Milo and Oscar Wieringa


Ella & "Terrific Timmy" Rogalski



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2459 Beechwood	$325,000	$310,000	06/02/20	6	3	1.5	1,159	1 attached
1022 Lake Grove	$330,000	$330,000	06/12/20	1	3	1.5	1,404	2 detached
1033 San Jose	$359,900	$352,500	06/05/20	54	3	1.5	1,478	1 detached
935 Breton	$359,000	$359,900	06/15/20	3	3	1.5	1,698	2 detached
2910 Oakwood	$394,900	$385,000	06/10/20	22	3	2	1,589	2 attached
1331 Cornell	$415,000	$410,000	06/15/20	12	4	2.5	1,875	2 attached
2220 Burchard	$420,000	$417,000	06/12/20	40	4	2.5	2,187	2 attached
2847 Elmwood	$449,900	$450,000	06/23/20	1	4	2	2,074	2 detached
2961 Lake Drive	$474,000	$465,000	06/05/20	63	5	3	2,158	2 attached
1062 Plymouth	$599,900	$520,000	06/23/20	116	4	2.5	2,516	2 attached
2746 Maplewood	$554,900	$554,900	06/12/20	1	4	3.5	2,480	2 attached
225 El Centro Blvd	$735,000	$710,000	06/09/20	66	4	3.5	2,671	2 attached
946 San Jose	$1,300,000	$1,150,000	06/01/20	61	5	4.5	3,050	2 attached
2727 Darby	$6,450,000	$5,250,000	06/22/20	31	6	8	9,975	5 stalls





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