



Dear Onekama Friends:

Welcome to our northern Michigan winter, a time to reflect & review, and explore our seasonal indoor and outdoor activities. I'm looking forward to an emphasis on reading, cooking and home projects.

PLA's Annual Report is included and provides an overview of 2024 projects, activities and finances. Usually a quiet time for the PLA board, we begin the year with a strategic planning initiative to gain a clear idea of Portage Lake Association's mission, vision and priorities.

We concluded 2024 with PLA's Christmas in Onekama activities: the Celebration of Lights and the Artisan Market. Our chairpersons have fresh ideas for next year's versions.

As I write this, I am wrapping up my term as PLA Board President and owe gratitude to those I've worked with. My special thanks to Al Taylor, Jean Capper, Evie McNeil and Mary Jo McElroy, plus the rest of the board and our excellent chair people, for your support and good spirits.

Welcome to our new PLA President Cyndy Wangbichler. She brings great work and volunteer experience to us, new ideas and perspectives. She'll have the pleasure of composing the next President's Letter!

Thank you again PLA board for a great year; thank you to the chair people and volunteers who got the work done so elegantly; our sponsors and donors who provide the funds needed to produce our events and projects; and the area residents and visitors who attended and participated in PLA.

Stay well and warm,

Rosalind Jaffe
President, Portage Lake Association

**Have any great ideas or articles for the Newsletter? Suggestions or comments?
Ideas for a Person we should know?**

Contact the editor, Jean Capper via email at jmcmom@aol.com

GUIDELINES FOR SUBMISSION OF ARTICLES TO THE PLA NEWSLETTER:

Articles must be in Microsoft Word format. Name the file something that is readily understandable e.g., petunias 0320. Photos must be jpg format. Name them the same as the file they are associated with (petunias 0320_1.jpg, petunias 0320_2.jpg. Action photos, close ups are preferable to still photos of groups.

The next newsletter deadline will be March 10, 2025 for the April 2025 issue.

Portage Lake Garden Club

2024 Harvest Garden Award

Onekama resident Fred Pries received the 2024 Harvest Garden Award from the Portage Lake Garden Club. The award recognizes individuals with outstanding floral and/or food gardens. Fred was pleased to receive the award and surprised to be nominated considering his garden is far behind his home and out of sight. Fred and his wife Sherry moved to Onekama forty-six years ago.

The three things that Fred values about his garden are food independence, freshness and the taste of the food. Fred states "I can grow for taste rather than for shipping ability. What I grow is healthier as I don't use many chemicals." One aspect of the garden that has always made Fred happy is the "miracle of watching things grow and being able to share my harvest with others."



Photo: Fred Pries receives the 2024 Harvest Garden Award from the Portage Lake Garden Club. Left to Right - Margaret Panches, Fred Pries, LaVonne Beebe

2025 Garden Club Awards

Each year, the Portage Lake Garden Club gives two awards recognizing community beautification and gardening efforts. The Civic Beautification Award recognizes a local business and the Harvest Garden Award recognizes a personal floral or vegetable garden. If you know of a business or individual who should be considered in 2025, please send an email to info@portagelakegardenclub.org. It's perfectly fine to nominate yourself!



Christmas Tree

The Portage Lake Garden Club decorates a tree in the library. The theme is the environment with a tag line of "Peace on earth, in the air, in the water for all." The colors are teal, blues, aqua, and green ornaments and ribbons. The tree topper is a globe. Next year we want to add some ornaments with beach glass, so if you have some to share, hold onto it. Pictured in first photo are Pat Pomaranski, Martha Capper, Pam Tompke, Shirley Brooks, Susan Halloran, Vickee Sawhill, and Mary Jo McElroy.

Flower Show in September 2025

Plan to attend an extraordinary Flower Show in September 2025. The Portage Lake Garden Club (Onekama), the Spirit of the Woods Garden Club (Manistee) and the Periwinkle Garden Club (Frankfort) are co-hosting a flower show that will have entries from 24 clubs representing more than 1,000 members in Northern Michigan. More details to come!



Onekama Days Car Show

For many years there has been a very successful car show during Onekama Days. If we want this tradition to continue, we need a new Chair. If you step up, you will be getting an incredibly organized packet that will guide you through the process. Contact Mary Jo at 614 325-1717 for more information.



Yellow Dog Café News

Happy New Year Everyone!

I am retiring this year and am so grateful to have had your support both personally and professionally.

Thank you to my cafe family, the people who have worked with me to grow the cafe into what it has become. Your hard work and dedication has been astounding. I am so grateful to have gotten to know such wonderful humans as my friends.

To the "regulars" (you know who you are), thank you for using the cafe as your gathering place. Thank you for coming for lunch every day, repairing my chairs, telling me your stories and even bringing your own chairs. All of it has helped the cafe prosper and become part of the community. I am proud to call you my friends.

To the community, thank you for welcoming me. I started the cafe with the intention of creating a gathering place to bring community together and I believe we have started that journey.

I am happy to announce that the journey will continue. The cafe will open under new ownership as Lake & Latte. Please support Ashley Bradford and her family on their new adventure!

I will see you at the farmers markets!

Bonnie



Open this Spring!
Follow us on Facebook

PORTAGE LAKE ASSOCIATION ANNUAL REPORT - 2024

MONDAY NIGHT CONCERTS IN THE PARK

Eight Monday night concerts brought music, record crowds and donations which covered expenses and provided \$810 profit. Committee Chair Brian Deviling organized a musical celebration on June 23rd to inaugurate the new Onekama Park event stage, a great asset for our concert series.

ONEKAMA DAYS

Saturday Night Fireworks cost \$8200; donations covered entire cost. (Special Thanks to Blarney Castle, Jeff Reau, Little Eden Bible Camp, Townline Bargain Barn, Portage Wire Systems, The Glenwood, Speckled Goat & Full Pull Adventures).

Pig Out Pig Roast for Onekama School quickly sold out 300 meals & raised \$950 for school projects. Kudos to the new glasses at the Craft Beer Tasting, The Car Show featured 80 vehicles and donated \$1500 for an automotive scholarship in the name of Frank English to an Onekama student attending West Shore Community College. We are looking for chair people for the 2025 Car Show.

PETUNIA PARADE

Petunias flourished after issues with dry weather, watering truck, and watering staff. Our community donated generously (\$6800) which covered all expenses with some extra for next year. Chairperson Mary Jo McElroy will keep you informed about changes to the 2025 Petunia program needed due to repaving of M-22.

DONATIONS

Onekama School received \$3675 for outfitting new Student Lounge, buying supplies for May 10th "One Day" of Service, and senior class trip expenses.

Onekama Village received \$2000 in support of new Village Park pavilion to be installed 2025.

NEAR & FARR FRIENDS

Provided full slate of programs in winter and fall with focus on "Aging in Place" information for area seniors and their families.

FALL FESTIVAL

Summer-like weather brought huge crowds. Cost \$1541 with thanks to sponsors West Shore Bank & Five Star Realty.

CHRISTMAS IN ONEKAMA (Artisan Market & Celebration of Lights)

Strong fundraising year between public donations and 42 vendors at the market. Worked with great partners including Onekama School, local clubs & organizations and churches.

OTHER 2024 EVENTS & PROJECTS

Hello Summer Cocktail Party on June 14th raised \$3000 from auction items.

Welcome Committee under Diane Wemlinger did strong outreach.

Membership Dues brought in \$8930

Held a new Easter Egg Hunt

Onekama Area Promotion: Thanks Jean Capper, Al Taylor, Mark Miller, Nikki Schneider & others for newsletters, website updates, Facebook & Instagram posts, arranging for ads, press releases & flyers, etc.

PLA 2025 Board Members

Cyndy Wangbichler, President

Evie McNeil, Treasurer

Mary Jo McElroy, Secretary

Al Taylor, Past President

Jean Capper

Mark Miller

Susan Halloran

Carey Stark

Kathy Loynes

Joe Suchocki

Roz Jaffe

Diane Wemlinger

Many thanks to Roz Jaffe, outgoing President and outgoing board member Dave Maylen for your years of service.

The Portage Lake Association is a group of volunteers who are dedicated to making the Portage Lake area a great place in which to live, play and stay.

To learn more about Onekama and the Portage Lake Association, visit our website www.onekama.info or our Facebook pages 1,-Onekama,Michigan and Onekama Community Connection. Email us at information@onekama.info.

PORTAGE LAKE ASSOCIATION ANNUAL REPORT

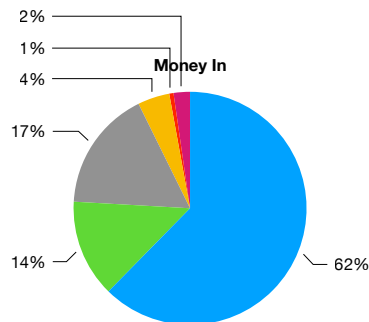
2024 Income & Expense

Money In	
Individual Contributions	\$41,660
Membership Dues	\$9,055
Business & Corporate Sponsors	\$11,225
Fundraiser	\$2,960
Other	\$394
Interest	\$1,522
Total income	\$66,816

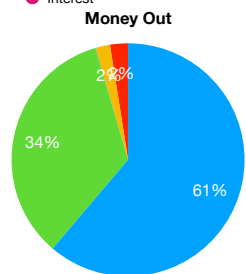
Money Out	
Outsourced services	\$37,893
Program Costs	\$21,229
Miscellaneous	-\$37
Insurance	\$1,217
Facilities	\$1,542
Total expenses	\$61,844

Income minus expenses	\$4,972
-----------------------	---------

Notes:
 Data as of October 31, 2024
 Outsourced services: 1099s for contracts, caterers, concerts, accounting, tech, etc.
 Program Costs: costs not on 1099s



- Individual Contributions
- Membership Dues
- Business & Corporate Sponsors
- Fundraiser
- Other
- Interest



- Outsourced services
- Program Costs
- Miscellaneous
- Insurance
- Facilities

Fall Festival Family Fun

The Portage Lake Association’s Onekama Fall Festival took place Saturday, October 5th from 10am to 3pm at Onekama’s Village Park. The day gave us an opportunity to come together and celebrate autumn in Northern Michigan and provided a day filled with fun activities for kids, adults, and families alike. The beautiful weather brought out a record number of participants.

Children and their families enjoyed a host of free activities, including a petting zoo, horse-drawn hayrides, mini donkeys, bouncy houses, the balloon clown, pie-eating contest, old-fashioned games, and an exciting pumpkin race with fire-hoses run by Onekama Township Fire Rescue Department. More than 90 pumpkins were decorated by children and taken home. Also featured was the popular voting display for favorite Onekama Main Street Scarecrow with proceeds benefitting the St. Joseph’s Community Food Pantry. The community donated \$493 and we thank Marilyn Ackner for creating and running the Scarecrow initiative.

Special thanks to event sponsors, Five Star Realty and West Shore Bank. Thanks to our wonderful local farms and markets for their donations of pumpkins, gourds, hay bales, cornstalks, etc including Miller’s Northwood Farms, Saddle Up Grocery, and Miller’s Produce. And our invaluable volunteers including Onekama School teams and PLA members.



We’re excited to announce the launch of our new snowshoe loaner program! When there is enough snow, snowshoes can be borrowed from the MCD office - completely free of charge.

- No deposit or fee required, we just ask that you take good care of them and return them on time so that others can also enjoy!

- Snowshoes can be loaned for up to 4 days at a time and used anywhere in Manistee County.
- A variety of sizes are available from youth to adult.

Stop by the MCD office to check out a pair, and let’s make the most of winter! More details can be found here: <https://www.manisteedc2.org/snowshoes>

This program is made possible in part by a grant from the Manistee County Community Foundation - Minger Family Endowment Fund.

Onekama Guild Thrift Shop

By Patty Suchocki

The Thrift Shop has been closed since October, but there's been exciting activity going on behind the scene.

First, we've been the fortunate recipient of \$11,500 from the wonderful organization, *100 Women Who Care of Manistee!* That brings us close to meeting our goal for the proposals to insulate and upgrade the electric in our building.

To get ready for the renovations we are preparing to embark on a huge undertaking! We must empty most of the building. You may have seen our request on FB for boxes and a cargo trailer (to temporarily store our furnishings on-site). Boxes are filtering in and we will be filling them in the coming weeks. Locating a cargo trailer was our biggest obstacle. However, we found we can rent storage pods and have them placed on-site. While overcoming this obstacle, it does increase our costs. We're hopeful that we will acquire the additional funds needed.

This past year has proved very successful as our sales more than doubled! We are proud that we were able to increase our monetary contributions to over 15 charitable organizations throughout the county. In addition, we were able to donate \$500 to the American Red Cross Hurricane Relief Fund in October.

While most of our recipients received their checks in the mail, a few of us had the pleasant opportunity to present checks in-person!



Debby Major presenting to Melanie Tomaski, Supr. of CASMAN Academy.



Myra Lautner presenting to Sue Johnson, Ofc. Mgr. at Lighthouse Pregnancy Center.



Bonnie Garbrecht presenting to Dan Mesyar, Supr. at Onekama Consolidated Schools.



Patty Suchocki presenting to Jackie Kiszelik, Dir. at Choices.



Or visit us online: www.manisteeibrary.org

Manistee Main
95 Maple St
Phone: (231) 723-2519

Monday 9:30 a.m. - 7 p.m.
Tuesday 9:30 a.m. - 7 p.m.
Wednesday 9:30 a.m. - 5 p.m.
Thursday 9:30 a.m. - 5 p.m.
Friday 9:30 a.m. - 5 p.m.
Saturday 10 a.m. - 3 p.m.
Sunday CLOSED

Onekama
5283 Main St.
Phone: (231) 889-4041

Monday 10:30 a.m. - 5 p.m.
Tuesday CLOSED
Wednesday 12:30 p.m. - 7 p.m.
Thursday 10:30 a.m. - 5 p.m.
Friday 10:30 a.m. - 5 p.m.
Sat. - Sun. CLOSED

Wellston
1273 Seaman Rd.
Phone: (231) 848-4013

Monday 12:30 p.m. - 7 p.m.
Tuesday 10:30 a.m. - 5 p.m.
Wednesday 10:30 a.m. - 5 p.m.
Thursday 10:30 a.m. - 5 p.m.
Fri. - Sun. CLOSED

SELF-SERVICE CENTER
Wagoner Community Center
260 St. Mary Parkway

*This is a collaboration with the
Manistee Council on Aging.

For more details, contact:
Manistee Main at (231) 723-2519

St. Joseph Community Food Pantry

St. Joseph Parish Fellowship Hall,
(Entrance located behind Church)
8380 Fifth St, P.O. Box #150
Onekama, MI 49675

Contact: Leslie Osborn, 231.864.2509
Email: foodpantry_2014@yahoo.com

There are always people in need of food, drink, clothes and kindness. On average, we serve about 100 people every month. We spend about \$1,500 a month for food and drink. Donations from parishioners, other churches, civic organizations, individuals and others fund our ministry. Parishioners are only a portion of the 20-25 regular volunteers, many of whom have been helping for more than 10 years, and some have volunteered month after month for over 25 years. The purpose of the food pantry is to respond to families and individuals who are residents of Manistee County, are low income and in need of food assistance

The St. Joseph Community Food Pantry, Onekama, is open the 4th Friday of each month, from 10:00 - 11:15 AM, and will be open regardless of the weather conditions.

RECYCLING

Wonder if something is recyclable? Check this link for a helpful guide: [Manistee Recycling PA69](#)

Recycling Program Public Act 69 allows Michigan Counties and local units of government to enter into an agreement to fund a residential recycling program. Nine of Manistee County's communities, including Onekama Township/Village use Public Act 69 to fund their local recycling programs. The recycling sites located in six communities are paid for and are for use by residents of the PA69 Recycling Program communities only. View the PA69 Recycling Guidelines to see what is recyclable in these communities.

All Manistee County residents have access to the recycling drop-off site located at the Republic Services Manistee County Landfill at 3890 Camp Road, Manistee.

PLEASE RECYCLE responsibly! All boxes need to be broken down before going in the truck. If the truck is full or not there, please DO NOT leave boxes on the ground to blow away.

Have Questions? Call the Toll-free Recycling Hotline - 855-2Go-Zero (855-246-9376).

LARSEN'S LANDSCAPING & LAWN CARE

Main Office: (231) 757-3850 • North Office: (231) 398-9900
3091 N. US-31 Scottville, MI 49454 • 3021 Schoedel Rd, Manistee, MI 49660

Fertilization – Mowing – Seasonal Clean-up – Landscape Maintenance

Seasonal Clean-Up – Snow Removal – Installations

Celebration of Lights

The Celebration of Lights has been a holiday tradition in Onekama for approximately 30 years. The 2024 Celebration of Lights was a very festive event.

As people gathered around the Onekama holiday tree on the grounds of the Farr Center, Beth McCarthy read aloud the names of the 120 people being honored and remembered. The tree was lit to cheers and applause from those attending.

Following the tree lighting was a lovely social gathering inside the Farr Center. Joe and Patty Suchocki generously volunteered to plan the event and provide refreshments and holiday music. In all, it was a fun way to kick off the holiday season and mingle with friends, both old and new.

The Celebration of Lights is traditionally held the Sunday before Thanksgiving. In 2025 it will move to Saturday of that weekend, instead of Sunday. Looking forward to seeing you there!



The Christmas Artisan Market held at the Onekama Consolidated School on Saturday, November 23rd was a great event!

Hundreds of shoppers found beautiful creations from forty different local artisans. Jewelry, Pottery, Knitted, Felted, Sewn, Stitched, Woodwork, Glasswork, Local authors just to name a few of the talented folks we have in our community.

The School had a Merchandise table and the library held a book fair. The Cookie Bake Off along with the Grinch was a very popular event once again.

Santa was there surrounded by children and baked goods from the local churches and Junior Clio. The National Honor Society once again provided volunteers to help the vendors unload/load their wares. It seemed like the whole town was there. It was the perfect way to kick off the holiday season!

COMMUNITY FITNESS & WALKING TRACK

Check out the walking track and fitness center at the Onekama School. Hours are:

Monday through Friday

5 AM to 8 AM & 3 PM to 8 PM

Saturday & Sunday

5 AM to 8 PM

NOTE: Walking Track is closed during Athletic Events. Applications for keycards to the walking track and fitness center are available in the Superintendent's Office (hours are Monday–Friday 8AM to 3PM).

Onekama School

The Onekama Blood Drive held on November 26 was a great success, thanks to the generous donations from our community members! We are proud to announce that over 70 units of blood were collected, which will help save lives in our local hospitals, some donations have already been used! A huge thank you to everyone who donated, volunteered, and supported the event. Your contributions make a big difference! We look forward to hosting future blood drives and continuing to support our community's health and well-being.

Information About the Trails Project

For updates visit: <https://www.onekamatwp.org/parks-recreation-committee/pages/trails-feasibility-project>

Where did the Trails Project come from? The last two Master Plans (2010 collaborative effort between the Township and Village and the 2023 Township Plan) were developed by the Planning Commission with extensive public input, including visioning sessions and social media surveys. The Master Plan serves as a future land use guide and outlines goals, objectives and strategies for implementation for (re)development activities in both the Township and Village. Pursuant to state statute, the Master Plan is adopted after a public hearing by the Planning Commission and receives approval (though not required) from the Township Board. Among the goals identified in the Master Plan is the development of a recreational trail in the Township.

How was the Trails Project organized and what initiated the process? Within the Master Plan's action item list, the recreational trail was assigned to both the Parks & Recreation and Planning Commission, with Parks & Recreation taking the lead role. The approved Township Parks & Recreation budget included \$15,000 to hire a professional consulting firm to prepare a Trails Feasibility study. The Township Board subsequently hired Gourdie Fraser Associates (GFA) as the consultant to prepare the Feasibility study phase of the project. The Township and Village governments both signed a resolution of support in the spring 2024, giving authorization to explore the recreational trail concept.

A Trail Team (TT) was formed, consisting of four representatives from the Village and two representatives from the Township Planning Commission (1) and Parks & Recreation Committee (1). The three phases identified were Feasibility, Engineering, and Construction, with the initial consultant's contract focused solely on the Feasibility phase.

During initial meetings with GFA, the Trail Team (TT) reviewed rough timelines and costs, which made it clear that the Township and Village would not have the funding resources required for the project. As more

project details emerged, other funding sources were discussed.

Early in the consulting process, the TT became aware of a grant opportunity from The Michigan Health Endowment Fund focused on Health and Wellness projects. With the application deadline fast approaching, the TT applied for the grant. In September, the TT was informed that they had been awarded \$100,800 for the Engineering Design Phase. However, this grant has not yet been accepted and will only be finalized with Township Board approval. During the 2024 spring and summer months, members of the Trail Team (TT) held several virtual meetings with Michigan Department of Transportation (MDOT) officials who oversee design, safety, funding, and scheduling to benefit from their expertise. With this input, GFA created a Trails Project concept plan, which the TT introduced to residents for feedback using an Open House format. Between 150 and 200 Township and Village residents attended, and reactions were mixed. A major concern expressed by several of the open house attendees was the possible elimination of parking on one side of Main Street within the Village to accommodate the proposed trail.

GFA has been asked to bring forward their other alternative designs for the Trail Team (TT) and the public to consider, which will be shown during the October 23 public meeting at the Township Offices at 6:00 pm. These designs will also be shared in an online survey to gauge community preferences and feedback.

Other individuals expressed concern about the use of "taxpayer dollars" for this project. It should be emphasized that the Trail Team (TT) is relying on sources involving federal, state, county, and foundations. The Onekama community currently has a significant opportunity to secure funding from state, foundation, and other external sources to advance this project from a Master Plan goal and consultant concept stage to an engineering design stage. If the Onekama community fails to take advantage of this funding opportunity, the majority of these resources will be allocated to another community in Michigan or another state. The TT's goal is to leverage minimal taxpayer dollars, aiming to secure as much as \$5 to \$6 in outside funding for every dollar of local funding.



Published on Onekama, MI (<http://www.onekamatwp.org>)

BOARD MEMBERS: Supervisor, David Meister; Clerk, Robert Blackmore; Treasurer, Edward Bradford; Trustees, Matt Kieffer and Cyndy Wangbichler

ZONING ADMINISTRATOR: Manistee County Planning Department, M-F 9:00 am - 5:00 pm

BURNING PERMITS: Burning permits issued by website: www.michigan.gov/burnpermit. Township residents: you are (Twp. 23 N. and Range 16 W) and your section number.

BURN BANS: Burn bans can be found at dnr.state.mi.us.

TOWNSHIP OFFICE HOURS: Monday, Tuesday, and Wednesday 9:00 AM – 2:00 PM. Closed on the following recognized holidays: Memorial Day, Independence Day, Labor Day, and Christmas Eve through New Year's Day.

TOWNSHIP OFFICE PHONE:
(231) 889-3308; FAX: 889-5587.

FIRE DEPARTMENT: (231) 889-7014

Township Updates

Tax bills are now due. The Township is working on a process for online payments, which should be ready for the Summer taxes.

A Michigan Health Endowment Fund Trails Team was created. It is a recommending body to the Township Board. All final decisions will be made by the Township Board. It will manage all provisions and procedures associated the Michigan Health Endowment grant agreement titled "Onekama Renewal Trail".

A process for a potential Township Clerk appointment was set, applications are being taken. See <https://www.onekamatwp.org/home/news/seeking-candidates-fill-township-clerk-position>

A permit for dredging of the boat launch was obtained. A second permit will be needed. Work should be done

in the spring.

The Recycling subcommittee will meet to discuss a proposal for a long term solution for the recycling location.

Three sections of fencing have been erected per the DeVoe compliance order. The full terms of the agreement will be enforced, if the fencing is not completed by June.

Visit <https://www.onekamatwp.org/> for more information about the Township.

Recycling Location



**Please
Don't Abuse our
Recycling Trailer!**

**If the trailer is full
or not there,
DO NOT leave your cardboard.**

Village Update

Updates from the Master Plan process:
Public Input from the Survey can be found at https://www.onekama.info/_files/ugd/111d5a_53cb77bffabf-48f78aabd7d1852162d2.pdf

A summary from the Consultant can be found at https://www.onekama.info/_files/ugd/111d5a_53cb77bffabf-48f78aabd7d1852162d2.pdf

Information on the Workforce Housing Presentation can be found at https://www.onekama.info/_files/ugd/111d5a_b0a474a5223248ea98097fcae23e1f31.pdf

There is a Porta Potty for the winter, located in the Village Park. The Village was awarded a \$100,000 grant from the Manistee Community Foundation for the replacement of the shelter.

The Township is forming a committee consisting of Village and Township officials plus public representation. The board appointed Joe Suchocki to be the public representative.



Manistee Conservation District

We recently partnered with Onekama Consolidated Schools for an environmental stewardship activity on school grounds. Mr. Lonn's high school science students planted 25 native potted trees and shrubs with guidance from our Forester, Josh, and assistance from our Environmental Educator, Kathryn. The trees were planted at the edge of the forest canopy near the parking lot and will provide decades of environmental enhancement. The project was part of a Great Lakes Restoration Initiative More Trees for School Forests grant.



Village Information

Village Council meets on the Third Wednesday of the month, 7 pm. at the Farr Center.

Village Planning Commission meets on the Second Tuesday of the month, 6 pm. at the Farr Center.

Farr Center Hall rental: please make arrangements with the clerk @ (231) 889-3171 or email: clerk@villageofonekama.org.

VILLAGE PRESIDENT

Wayne Miller

president@villageofonekama.org

CLERK

Ruth Hudson

clerk@villageofonekama.org

TREASURER

Nikki Jach

treasurer@villageofonekama.org

ZONING ADMINISTRATOR

David Jarvi

djarvi@manisteecountymi.gov

231-398-3527

Manistee County Planning Department

planning@manisteecountymi.gov

TRUSTEES

Roger Burger

Sarah Fauble

Mickey Finan

Susan Halloran

Rod Hudson

FIRE CHIEF

Rob Johnson

(231) 889-4240

ONEKAMA VILLAGE OFFICES

Farr Office

5283 Main Street • Onekama, MI 49675

Phone#: (231) 889-3171 / Fax # (231) 889-3423

Office Hours:

Monday, Tuesday & Wednesday

9am - 2pm

News from Portage Lake Watershed Forever

During the first week of September, PLWF volunteers completed our summer 2024 water quality monitoring activities as part of the Michigan Clean Water Corps (MiCorps). MiCorps is a network of volunteer water quality monitoring programs administered by MSU Extension under the direction of EGLE and in partnership with the Huron River Watershed Council and the Michigan Lakes and Streams Association.

This year we collected data on 3 water quality parameters: chlorophyll-a, phosphorus, and water clarity. Over time the changes in these measurements can tell us a lot about the health of our lake. Chlorophyll-a is a measure of the amount of algae growing in a waterbody. One of the symptoms of degraded water quality is the increase of algae biomass as measured by the concentration of chlorophyll-a. Phosphorus is an important nutrient for plant growth but too much phosphorus in a lake can stimulate excess growth of algae. This can lead to low dissolved oxygen levels, harmful algal blooms and blockage of sunlight in the water column.

Measuring water clarity is important because it controls how far light penetrates into the water column. This determines where and how well aquatic plants can grow, with implications for animals that depend on those plants for oxygen – like fish.

Our volunteers report their measurements to MiCorps and the results are published in individual lake reports that are available through the micorps.net website. You can see how our lake is doing over time and how it compares to other Michigan lakes.

We could really use some more volunteers to monitor the health of our lake. Each of these activities only involves a few hours over the course the summer. In 2025 we would like to add another MiCorps monitoring activity called Score the Shore to evaluate the health of our lakeshore habitat. If you think you may be interested in helping us with MiCorps activities this coming summer, please contact us at <https://www.portagelakewatershed.com> by clicking on About Us, then How to Get Involved to let us know of your interest.

What Will The Onekama Petunia Committee Be Doing In 2025?

The “Petunia Parade” in Onekama is a long-standing tradition, initiated in 1993 by Dan and Polly Welburn. For 32 years, it consisted of volunteers planting, fertilizing, weeding, and watering almost 4,000 petunias in ground plots for about a mile along Main Street (M-22). Locals and visitors alike absolutely love how the petunias lend a quaint appearance to our Village. 2024 was no exception with a lovely array of blooms along the road.

Things will change in 2025. Michigan Department of Transportation (MDOT) plans to resurface M-22 and create ADA-compliant sidewalk corners at intersections with Main Street in Onekama. The heat and fumes from that project, along with workers trampling the area, has led the Committee to take a “gap year” from planting petunias this summer. Timing for the project is still up in the air.

However, that does not mean there is no work to be done. We need to replenish the soil (the last time that was done was 2019), fix the tires on the watering trailer, find another water source, and resolve the algae growth in the tank. The committee may even consider another way to spruce up the Village with flowers Hanging plants from shepherd’s hooks, large pots like those on the south side of M-22, or something else.

The 17 large planters will also have a new look this year, led by committee member Kris Greve. She and her team have decided to use red rubrum grasses, Begonia ‘Whopper Red’, Lantana Gem yellow topaz, garden sage, and variegated vinca green and white. Pleasanton Valley Greenhouses will again supply the plants.

If you have a great idea or want to pitch in with a solution, please let me know at maryjomcelroy@sbcglobal.net. The entire Petunia Parade Committee welcomes your input.



Near and Farr Friends

Near and Farr Friends is a program that began in January 2016 as part of the Portage Lake Association (PLA). This new program assisted the Welcome Committee of the PLA to offer newcomers a way to meet people in the community. Near & Farr Friends began with twice weekly meetings for games, puzzles, and plenty of time for conversation. Soon speakers were added with topics from the author who wrote Saving Arcadia and local hikers of the Appalachian trail, to histories of the Onekama camps, churches, families, and businesses. A variety of speakers and game days were held weekly from September to May over the next four years.

During covid Near & Farr Friends took a break until resuming in late 2021 with games (Euchre, Bridge, board games) on the 1st Thursday and speakers on the 3rd Thursday. In 2024 the fall featured speakers on issues related to aging in place. Given the cost and insufficient number of beds in elder care facilities, there are many who wish to find ways to stay in the familiar surroundings of their home.

The Advisory Committee of Near & Farr Friends met on December 13, 2024, to plan the topics for 2025 winter/spring season. Speakers on black bears, dog training, transportation options for those without a car or able to safely drive, birding in the winter,

Brown's Poplar Ridge store and creamery, computer security, and more make this a program not to miss most Fridays this winter and spring. Card and board games will be featured on the first Friday of each month and speakers are scheduled on two other Fridays each month.

The Welcome Committee encourages you to come and see for yourself what the Near & Farr Friends has to offer. If you wish to be added to the Near & Farr Friends email list notifying you of our meetings, email your name and email address to: nearandfarrfriends@gmail.com



On December 7 and 8th Patina held their 6th annual Pet Photos with Santa.

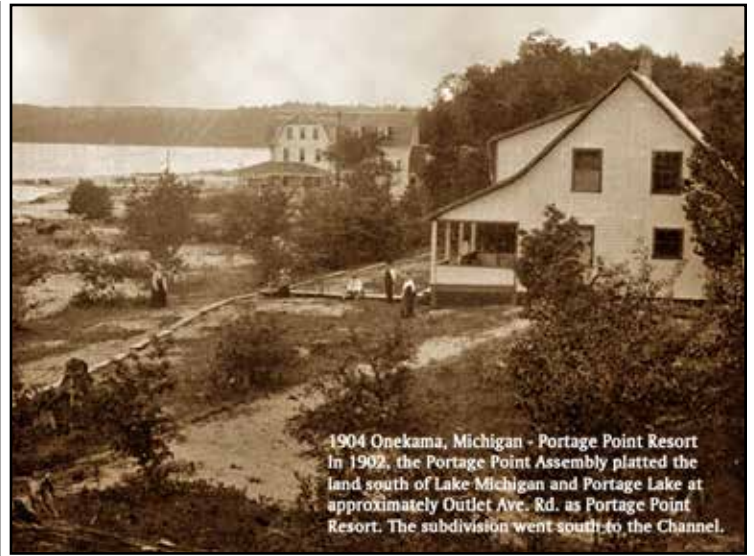
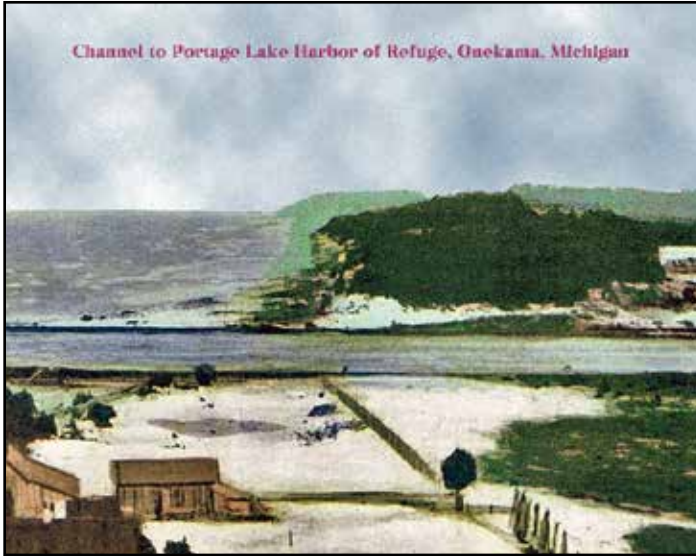
Thanks to our hard working and PATIENT crew of Lori Wilson and Austin Wilson (Lori Wilson Photography), Jean Capper (Cat Concierge), the Homeward Bound team including Vanilla and Iris, the cutest puppies ever, and the big man himself, Mark Schneider, as Santa we raised \$1500 for Homeward Bound Animal Shelter in Manistee!!

Our Gallery was filled with dogs, cats, a bunny, a ferret and even our first ever goat. Most decked out in holiday garb that did not please most of them. There were capes, hat, bows, crowns, scarves, sweaters among the animal adornment. Pet owners, the photographer and pretty much anyone in the vicinity coerced the pets into posing for the perfect photo. There was pulling, prodding, begging, wardrobe malfunctions, some peeing but thankfully no biting. But the photos were amazing and the donation jar full. Thanks to all the generous monetary donations from the pet owners. Special thanks to Maggies of Bear Lake and our very own, The Groomery, down the street, for prizes that raised extra money in the raffle.

As Patina is now closed for the season, we would like to wish everyone a Happy and Healthy New Year. See you in the spring!



1890 Onekama, Michigan
Portage Lake Channel Pier
before Lighthouse installed



MEMBERSHIP & DONATION FORM



Name _____

Address _____

Best Contact Phone _____

Email Address _____

How should we use your donation*: Check one:

- General Fund (best use / most needed project)
- Petunia Planting Concerts in the Park
- Celebration of Lights Onekama Days Fireworks

Other _____

**Excess funds roll over to best use as determined by the PLA Board.*

MEMBERSHIP

- Individual \$35
- Family \$50
- Renewing Member
- New Member
- I'm interested in Volunteering

*Make checks payable to **Portage Lake Assoc.** and send along with this form to:*
PLA, PO Box 493, Onekama, MI 49675

For More Events and information – check out www.onekama.com

Portage Lake Association
 P.O. Box 493
 Onekama, MI 49675

