
City Activities Newsletter

By Matt Schooley

November 22, 2017



VIDEOTAPING OF COMMISSION MEETINGS

The City has made the decision to no longer participate as a member of the Cable Consortium at the start of the new year. This means that we will no longer be able to use MAC TV's equipment to record our commission meetings. It is important that the public still has access to these meetings and there have been questions as to their availability. We have started the process of replacing the MAC TV equipment with our own. We also have started communications with our website host AccuNet to ensure the meetings can be uploaded to our site. A You Tube Channel for the City also is a possibility with linked access on our web site. This process will be finalized prior to the first meeting of 2018.

TECHNOLOGY

Keeping up with changes in technology and technology security is a constant issue for most government agencies of our size. With some of the recent changes in our personnel structure we have decided it is time to look at what IT solutions are available to us. We have a working relationship with IT Right, an IT consultant out of Bath, as they have assisted the police department for many years. We have met with IT Right representatives to get an idea of what type of services are available and to get an estimate on the cost of contracts. I believe this is a key issue for the city to explore. The importance of a proven IT Solutions provider cannot be understated. The technology management and security options for governments today are impossible for someone to manage on a part time basis. It is time to fully explore this option, in some form, for the city.

Currently the city has numerous software systems responsible for various functions such as accounts payable, municipal billing, assessing, budgeting, etc.. These systems are not integrated. It appears that it may be beneficial to explore the possibility of consolidating the systems. I have contacted BS&A Software to come and assess our current designs to give us an idea of what may be available for consolidation. Efficiency and cost need to be explored to make some informed decisions.

We are in the process of creating a policy for our document records and storage management. We have been working with DocuWare for a couple years now. In looking at our processes for storage it is apparent that we need to solidify some policies and procedures so that the entire organization understands what needs to be scanned, where it needs to be stored, and how it can be accessed.

EMPLOYEE DEVELOPMENT TEAM

On November 20th, the initial meeting of the Employee Development Team took place here at City Hall. The team consists of 13 employees representing most of the departments in the organization. We laid some groundwork for the future by expanding on the idea of cultural change that was presented in the employee meeting in October. I was very encouraged after the meeting— I had to remind everyone that we're not running a sprint, change takes time. Hopefully this won't be a marathon, maybe a half marathon. It was encouraging to see that the members believe they can make a difference in where this organization is heading in the future.

A few items that stood out to me after the initial meeting:

- Cultural change is a difficult process. The first stage of this process is to understand what the culture is today. We had quite a bit of discussion about this. It appears to me that as an organization we are kind of all over the

place. Some departments have expectations and communicate well. Others do not have any idea of expectations or communicate at all - let alone with each other.

- Accepting that all departments have specific tasks they need to accomplish, our expectations and standards need to be established for the entire organization. We ALL need to work towards some common goals. This will be an area of focus for the team. We will work to establish an employee assessment tool that each department can use that will eventually match our organizational goals. Working to eliminate negativity was also a major goal.

These are the 3 Steps to Organizational Change We Identified:

1. Before an organization can change its culture, it must first understand the current culture or the way things in the organization are now. We will not just skim over this part of the process. The Employee Survey, interviews and assessments have mostly been completed. Discussion from the team for clarification is an early goal. Remember - Those who do not know their past are doomed to repeat it.
2. Once we better understand the current culture (what is bad and **good**), we will make decisions about where we want the organization to go. We will then start to define our strategies and direction. What SHOULD the organization look like when successful. What is our vision, mission, and goals? How do we accomplish this change?
3. Finally, and this may be the most difficult stage – The Team will work to model and encourage individuals in the organization to buy into the proposed changes. The Team will create the expectations of the desired culture for the City of Alma, and then

At our next meeting on December 4th – we are going to start to define the most important values for the organization. This will begin to generate some of the discussion we need to have going forward.

"Maybe you can't change people. But if you can change the environment people are in, they are more likely to change"

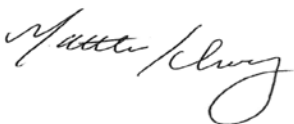
COME HOME TO ALMA FOR THE HOLIDAYS

The Alma Action Association is proud to present the [17th Annual Come Home to Alma for the Holidays](#) on Friday December 8th starting at 5:30 pm in downtown Alma. Come Home to Alma is a free, family oriented event in downtown Alma that start off with a Christmas Parade down Superior Street. The event gives our community the opportunity to get out and experience the joy of the season with fire pits on the streets, pony rides, a Christmas Tree contest, live entertainment, and visits with Santa and Mrs. Clause. The night ends with a Christmas Tree lighting next to the chamber office. Don't forget the Christmas Cash Program. Participating Alma Chamber members will distribute an entry ticket for every \$10 purchased at their business from November 6th until December 8th. The cash drawing takes place right after the Christmas Tree Lighting at approximately 8pm in front of the chamber. You must be present to win one of the cash prizes: 1 - \$500, 1 - \$250, 2 - \$100, and 1 -\$50.

JINGLE BELL RUNS

The Holiday fun continues Saturday December 9th with the 7th Annual Come Home to Alma Jingle Bell 10K and 5K Run/Walk through the streets of Alma. Registration and sign in take place at St. Mary's School gym starting at 8:30 am. The Kids Reindeer Trot (Kids under 10) starts at 10 am followed by the 5K and 10K. Start/Finish Line is in the drive near Gratiot Integrated Health lot near Wright Park.

Sincerely,



Matthew Schooley
Interim City Manager

ALMA CHRISTMAS PARADE ENTRY FORM

FRIDAY, DECEMBER 8, 2017



- Line up for the Parade Begins at 5:00 pm in the Frontier Parking Lot
- Parade Begins at 5:45 pm
- Make Sure Everyone Can See Your Float-Add Christmas Lights!
- Entries Due by December 1st.

Name of Participant/Organization: _____

E-mail: _____

Phone: _____

Mailing Address: _____

What will you have in the Parade?: _____

Will you have amplified Music: _____yes_____no

If you are interested in participating please email your information to:

Rob DuHadway

dudance1@gmail.com

Fax your information to: 989-463-3307



**COME HOME TO ALMA
CHRISTMAS TREE DECORATING CONTEST
DECEMBER 8, 2017
ENTRY FORM**

Business/Group/Individual Name:

Name of Tree:

Contact Name and Number:

E-Mail Address:

DEADLINE FOR ENTRY IS DECEMBER 6, 2017

Send entry form to Shelly Buschle
buschlesm@alma.edu

RULES FOR TREE DECORATING CONTEST

1. Trees are supplied by you. Trees may be artificial or real. They must be in a tree stand.
2. Tree decorating starts at 12:00 pm on 12-8 and must be done by 5:00 pm that night.
3. Battery or solar lights may be used. If you have a small, quiet generator or power converter that will fit close to the tree, regular lights may be used. **No power cords are allowed to cross the sidewalk due to safety issues.**
4. Trees must be picked up by 10:00 pm on December 8.
5. All trees must have a name and a sponsor.

New this year there will be two winners!

1. **A popular winner voted on by the general public.**
2. **A winner chosen by the Come Home to Alma judges.**

Christmas Cash Drawing

Sponsored by the Alma Action Association/
Gratiot Area Chamber of Commerce

**5 Drawings (1) \$500 (1) \$250
(2) \$100 (1) \$50**

**Win your share of \$1000. One winning ticket per person.
For every \$10 purchased at a participating retailer you will
receive a ticket for the drawing.**

**Drop your tickets off at Alma True Value Hardware,
102 W Superior before 8:00pm, Friday, Dec. 8th.**

Participating Chamber Merchants

ABC Music	Carolyn's Cake & Confectionery	Mid-Michigan Awning & Upholstery
Academy of Performing Arts	Cobbler Shop Shoes & Pedorthics	Pizza 1 One
Advanced Glass	Countryside Apartments	Purple Pear Salon
Alma Barbershop & Hair Studio	DuHadway Dance Dimensions	Randall Boyer - State Farm Insurance
Alma Brewing Company	Heatwave Tanning	Redbird Pet Food
Alma College Bookstore	JC Penny of Alma	Rent Rite of Alma
Alma Sewing Center	J & J Giles Tire & Car Center	Terry's Cycle & Sports
Alma Tire Service	Katie Tobias - State Farm Insurance	Tom Billig Flowers & Gifts
Alma True Value Hardware	Ken's Culligan	Treasures
Ashlin Portraits	LaLonde Hair Studio	The Trophy Shop
Biggby Coffee of Alma	Mancino's Pizza & Grinders	Twin City Landscape 172 0
Braveheart's Pub	Michael Richard Floral Boutique	Quaker State Quick Lube
BRICKK Fitness		Unique Boutiques

**Winning tickets will be drawn immediately after the Christmas
Tree Lighting Ceremony on Friday, December 8th at 8:00 pm.**

**At the Gratiot Area Chamber office,
110 W Superior, Alma.**

MUST BE PRESENT TO WIN!!

Come Downtown and Enjoy the Festivities

Downtown Parade and Santa Arrive at 5:45pm
Starting at Gratiot Avenue - Ending at Prospect Avenue.
Christmas Caroling Sleigh Rides - Cost 25 cents
Pickup and drop off at the corner of Superior & Gratiot

Visit with Santa at the 110 W Superior 6pm - 8pm
Visit Santa's Reindeer on Superior Street
Pony Rides - Woodward Avenue
Tree Decorating Contest
Please remember to vote for your favorite tree

Christmas Tree Lighting Begins @ 8:00pm, Christmas Cash Drawing Immediately After Lighting



7th Annual Come Home to Alma for the Holidays Jingle Bell Run
10K Run 5K Run/Walk ~ Kid's Reindeer Trot ~ Saturday, December 9, 2017 ~ 10 am

LOCATION: Registration begins at 8:30 am in the St. Mary School's Gymnasium, 220 W Downie St. Start and Finish line is next to the Gratiot Community Mental Health building near Wright Avenue Park. See map on back. Parking available at Wright Park and Community Mental Health building.

TIME: Kids Reindeer Trot begins at 10:00 am sharp. The 10K Run, 5K Run and Walk will start immediately after the Kids Reindeer Trot.

REGISTRATION: Register online at RunSignUp or mail in this entry form along with payment to the address below and save the Fee Charged by the Website. Early packet pick up on Dec. 8th from 5:30 pm to 8:00 pm 102 W Superior (Alma True Value Hardware). (Make Checks Payable to Gratiot Chamber in Memo write Alma Jingle Run).

Age Divisions (5K & 10K Run): <14 15-19 20-29 30-39 40-49 >50

Reindeer Trot: <10

10 K RUN- \$30 - shirt, jingle bell & on-site swag. After Dec. 6th registration increases to \$35.00
 5K RUN/WALK - \$30 - shirt, jingle bell, & on-site swag. After Dec. 6th registration increases to \$35.00
 Kids Reindeer Trot 10 years of age or younger - \$15 - shirt, jingle bell & reindeer antlers.
Register by Dec. 4th to guarantee shirt size.
Race limit is set at 250 participates. Make sure to register early for your spot!

AWARDS: The overall male and female will receive a trophy.

Medals will be awarded to the top male and female in each age category of the 10K and 5K Races.

INFORMATION: www.ci.alma.mi.us/1/307/come_home_to_alma_for_the_holidays.asp

or call Aeric Ripley (989) 463-8336.

MAIL ENTRY FORM TO: Alma Jingle Bell Run/Walk, c/o Aeric Ripley, 525 E Superior Street, Alma, MI 48801.

Make checks payable to Gratiot Area Chamber of Commerce - Jingle Bell Run

Name: _____

Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____

Phone: _____ E-mail: _____

Age (as of 12/09/17) _____ Gender (please Circle): F M

Long Sleeve T-Shirt (adult sizes): S M L XL XXL (Youth Sizes): S M L

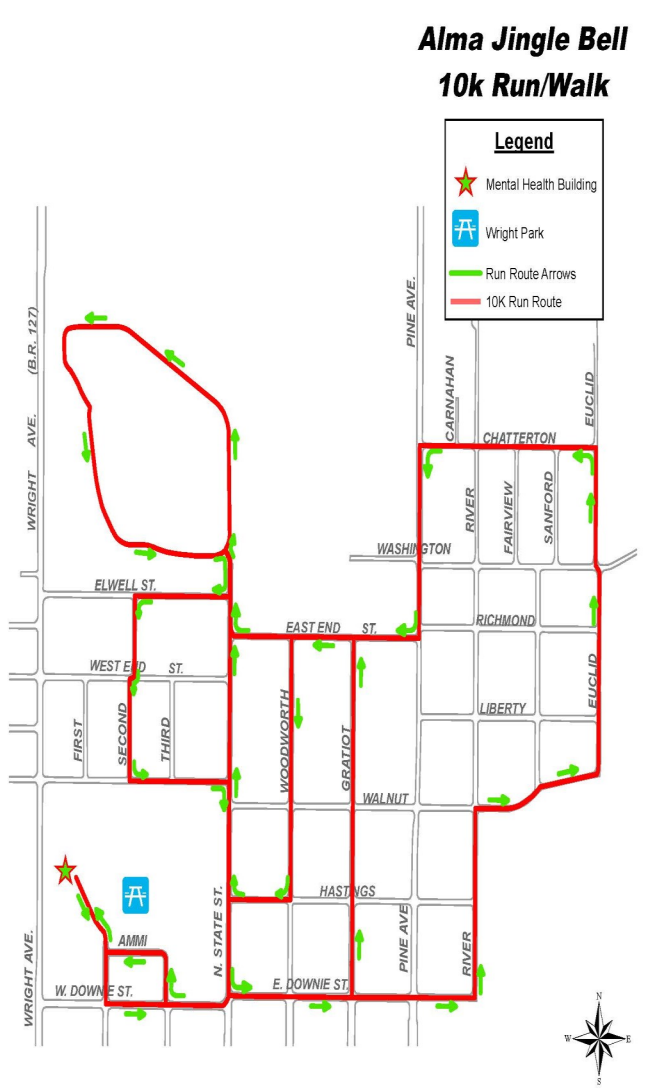
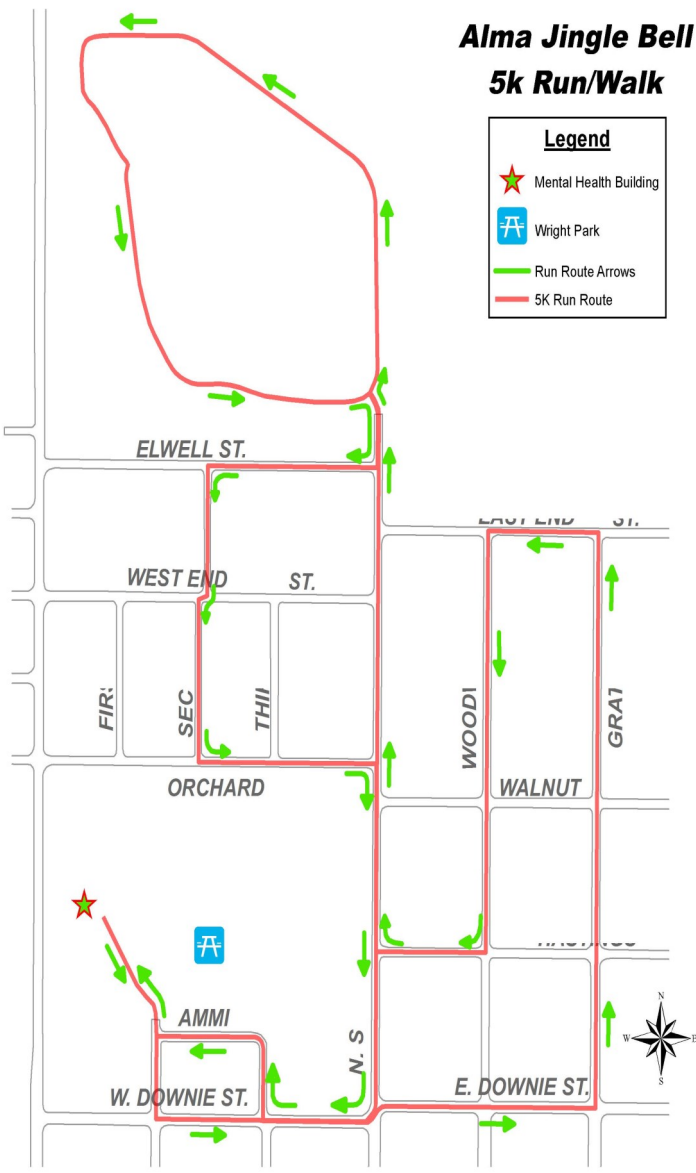
Races: 10K Run \$30 5K Run \$30 5K Walk \$30 \$15 Kids Reindeer Trot Total Enclosed: \$ _____

In consideration of accepting this entry form, I hereby intend to be legally bound for myself, my heirs, my executors and administrators, waive and release all rights and claims for damages I may accrue against Alma Action Association, Gratiot Area Chamber of Commerce, the sponsors of this event, it's agents, representatives, successors and assigns for any and all injuries suffered by me at said run, or which may arise out of traveling to participating in and returning from the event.

Signature: _____ Date: _____

Parent/Guardian signature if under 18: _____

**7th Annual Come Home to Alma
for the Holidays
Jingle Bell 10K Run 5K Run/Walk &
Kid's Reindeer Trot
2017 10K Run 5K Run/Walk Route
December 9, 2017**



All Proceeds From the event go back into the Christmas Celebration and to Fund Future Christmas Decorations. Enjoy your Run or Walk. Thank you for your support!