



JOHNSON CREEK
Crossroads With A Future

The Creek

News from the Crossroads

June 2020

NEW FIRE CHIEF: MIKE STRATMOEN



Stratmoen Family

Mike Stratmoen is Johnson Creek's new part-time fire chief and has served the Village for the past nine years; most recently as assistant fire chief. His schedule includes being at the fire station on Tuesdays, Thursdays, and Saturdays. Normally Stratmoen has an open door policy, but with COVID-19, the fire house is currently closed to the public.

Having grown up in a fire fighting family, Stratmoen always knew he wanted to serve. "I grew up watching my uncle and having the sense to give back. I'm in a position where I felt I was able to give to Johnson Creek."

Stratmoen and his wife, Bobbie, live in Johnson Creek to be centrally located to family in Libertyville, IL and Fond du Lac, WI. The couple has been married for nine years and their son, Gavin, is nine years-old. "My son was pretty excited when I was named chief," chuckled Stratmoen. Stratmoen also works as a project manager for a security company in Madison, and is taking EMT and officer leadership credential classes at MATC.

Stratmoen will continue the COVID-19 safety policies put in place by Interim Chief Roemer. "Short term, I want to continue working on the shared services agreement with the Lake Mills and Watertown Fire Departments. This agreement will help with staffing concerns and will allow our staff to have cross training opportunities with both departments. Long term, I plan on focusing on budget reform, employee retention, and growth of the department to meet the increasing growth of the Village," said Stratmoen.

RESIDENT SPOTLIGHT: DALE & KELLY VLASTNIK



Vlastnik Family

Pastor Dale and Kelly Vlastnik moved to Johnson Creek in 2017 when Pastor Dale took over the ministry at St. John's Evangelical Lutheran Church. "Johnson Creek is a wonderful place to live," said Pastor Dale. "There are always events and things going on and wonderful new people to meet all the time" Dale continued.

Dale grew up in Peru, Illinois where his grandfather started Vlastnik's Menswear in 1925. Dale felt the calling for ministry at an early age, but his parents wanted him to follow in the family business. So Dale and his brother, Richard, worked together at Vlastnik's for 30 years. While at Vlastnik's, Dale served 17 years on his church's council and was very active in his community as pillar merchant in downtown Peru.

Prior to working at Vlastnik's, Dale earned his organizational administration degree from the University of Illinois and later his MBA from Bradley University. He then worked at Caterpillar where he met Kelly; both of whom worked in marketing. "I took one look at Kelly at that was it," Dale smiled. The couple has been married for 34 years and have two sons, Kurtis and Alexander.

While working at the family's menswear business, Dale recalls how serving customers is similar to serving in ministry. "You would see customers at their best and worst days," Dale recounted. "There were moments of joy and sadness at life's transitions and we always strived to be there for our customers. I can recall a couple coming in for a fitting for the husband's 50th anniversary suit. The wife was sitting and started crying when she saw her husband. She shared it was 50 years ago that my grandfather helped them with his wedding suit and here I was helping 50 years later," Dale beamed.

Having those connections with customers, Dale continued to feel the call to serve. So Dale went back to school to earn his Masters of Divinity from Wartburg Seminary in Dubuque, IA. He then spent a year as a vicar in Beloit, WI before taking over at St. John's.

Kelly grew up in a small town in Ohio, York Center, which had approximately 150 people. "We lived in the suburbs because we lived on the other side of the town sign," chuckled Kelly. "Because Kelly grew up in a smaller town, she's really able to share her cultural translating with me and provide her perspective when living in a smaller town. And we love it in Johnson Creek," smiled Dale.

Kelly later earned her civil engineering degree from Ohio State University. After working at Caterpillar with Dale, Kelly worked for 33 years with the Illinois Department of Transportation as a civil engineer and retired in 2017.

She still maintains her professional engineering license and recently became certified as a substitute teacher. This past January, she began teaching math and science for the Johnson Creek Middle School and math for the High School. Kelly is also on the Johnson Creek Library & planning boards, and is on the board for Christian Education at St. John's and sings in the choir.

"I love being a teacher," said Kelly. "I have always had an encouraging and adventurous spirit and the best part is when kids look forward to me teaching their class," Kelly continued. "Ever since Kelly started teaching, she's sort of a celebrity. When we walk our dog, Rudy, kids see her and say, 'Hi Mrs. Vlastnik! It's fantastic,'" Dale cheerfully shared.

With the pandemic, the Vlastnik's have had changes to their everyday lives like all of us. "Even though I just started in January, I miss the kids so much," said Kelly. And Dale has been an innovative leader by working with his team to continue offering Sunday services through the help of an FM broadcast and parishioners staying in their cars to hear the service. The services are also live streamed on Facebook. St. John's was one of the first in the nation to utilize technology to keep services going and was featured on both FOX and PBS. Clips of those news stories may be found on the St. John's Facebook page.



Pastor Dale Vlastnik leading worship at St. John's during COVID-19

GET TO KNOW THE PEOPLE IN YOUR NEIGHBORHOOD

Shaping the Future of
YOUR
Johnson Creek



The Village of Johnson Creek has been blessed with residents who have a love for our community and the desire to make it the wonderful place to live, work, and play that it is. It's been easy for us to know what we're most thankful for – you! Our residents' generosity and commitment to our community are what make Johnson Creek so unique. The investments of time, talent, and treasure of so many help ensure the continued success and growth of our community. We want to thank and remind such individuals of how important they are to the Village.

Mike Gosh

- Police Officer for Jefferson County and Johnson Creek for over 28 years, in which he held additional positions as a Field Training Officer, Dive Team Member & Swat Team Leader.
- Volunteered to speak to students at area schools about his work and public safety.
- Volunteered his time to provide security for prom, homecoming, car shows, and picnics in Johnson Creek.
- Coached Little League in the City of Jefferson and fast pitch softball for the Thundercats and Johnson Creek Yellowjackets.

Butch Klug

- Served on the Johnson Creek Fire Department for 20 years, and drove for the Johnson Creek EMS.
- Served on the Police & Fire Commission in Johnson Creek.
- Was active in the athletic booster club while his children were growing up, along with coaching T-ball, Little League, and Pony League teams during that time.
- Refereed at the high school and college levels for both football and basketball for 15 years.
- Coached Johnson Creek's JV basketball team for 3 years.



Village of Johnson Creek

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ADMINISTRATOR RECRUITMENT UPDATE

The Village Board has been working with Public Administration Associates LLC (PAA) to find the right person to fill our Village Administrator vacancy. On May 4th, the Village Board reviewed 23 resumes presented by PAA, and narrowed the search to seven primary candidates. The board then requested an introductory video of each of the seven candidates. On May 18th, the board again met and narrowed the field of candidates to four. In-person interviews of the four candidates will be conducted on Saturday, May 30th. The goal is to have the Village Administrator vacancy filled by July 1st. The interim administrator, Chris Swartz, will continue to hold office hours Mondays and Thursdays weekly through this process.

CURBSIDE BULK TRASH PICKUP



Badgerland Disposal will resume normal curbside bulk trash pickup on Friday, June 12.

COVID-19 LINKS

Here are some helpful Village, County, State, and Federal links to keep track of the latest COVID-19 news.

Johnson Creek: www.johnsoncreek-wi.us

Jefferson County:
<https://www.jeffersoncountywi.gov/departments/health/Coronavirus.php>

THRIVE Jefferson County:
<https://www.thriveed.org/covid-19-business-resources/>

Governor Tony Evers:
<https://evers.wi.gov/Pages/Home.aspx>

Wisconsin Department of Health Services:
<https://www.dhs.wisconsin.gov/covid-19/index.htm>

Wisconsin Economic Development Corporation: <https://wedc.org/>

Federal/White House:
<https://www.whitehouse.gov/openingamerica/>