

### JOHNSON CREEK AND COVID-19

By John L. Swisher



Board President,  
John L. Swisher

The Village of Johnson Creek's board and staff have been diligently working to keep residents safe with the most up-to-date information on the rapidly changing COVID-19 pandemic. With Gov. Evers' emergency order #28, extending the Safer at Home order to May 26, we continue to provide links to resources on our website ([www.johnsoncreekwi-us](http://www.johnsoncreekwi-us)) and frequent updates on the Village's Facebook page. We continue to work with state, county, and local agencies to communicate efforts to our residents on a daily, and sometimes hourly, basis.

During this time, our wonderful staff holds down the fort and continues to come to work to keep Village services going and residents safe. Here are some of the efforts of our remarkable team. Please know this newsletter is printed weeks ahead of distribution and the efforts below reflect work done through mid-April 2020.

#### POLICE CHIEF GARY BLEEKER

Chief Bleeker and his team have been doing a great job putting the safety of the Village first as they always do. Due to social distancing, and adhering to Governor Evers' Safer at Home order, the police department has limited the types of calls officers respond to in person in an attempt to limit COVID-19 exposure to officers and citizens. Officers will attempt to handle low-level complaints by phone or email and will document all complaints in a report form. Officers will continue to patrol our streets and make arrests as needed. The department building has its normal hours and is available for walk-in complaints or information with social distancing behind the glass.

#### INTERIM FIRE AND EMS CHIEF JEFF ROEMER

COVID-19 has become the primary focus within the JCFD. Chief Roemer and his team developed COVID-19 specific response guidelines, continue to work daily on personal protective equipment (PPE) supplies, and worked out arrangements for quarantine and health notifications for all staff. In an effort to keep our crew in service and available, the station has been closed to all visitors and daily disinfecting and cleaning is taking place. They receive daily correspondence and briefings from Jefferson County MABAS, Emergency Management and Health Departments, along with updates from State Emergency Management and Health Services. Duty and other officers are monitoring every call and making sure guidelines are being followed. Department training and meetings are on hold to maintain social distancing with our crews.

#### VILLAGE CLERK AND TREASURER SAM BELL

Sam and her team, Deputy Clerk/Treasurer Kelly Brinkman and Administrative Assistant Laura Canales, have been diligently keeping Village Hall running smoothly during COVID-19. While Village Hall remains closed to the public, the team works tirelessly to answer all Village business via phone and email. Regular monthly business continues operating; from payroll to board and committee meetings. Sam's team as well as the DPW staff coordinated the election on April 7 at the Community Center. Before the election, many safety concerns were addressed from absentee balloting,

securing sanitizer and disposable pens, securing more poll workers in younger demographics to help our already incredible polling team stay safe, and setting up voting with social distancing requirements. All this preparation ensured a safe election.

#### TOURISM DIRECTOR KATIE NEWCOMB

Katie has been busy reaching out to event organizers to confirm the status of events to ensure our event calendar on the tourism website, [www.visitjohnsoncreek.org](http://www.visitjohnsoncreek.org), is up-to-date. She has been rescheduling tourism marketing efforts to promote the Village as the great place it is when folks begin to travel again. Over the past year, Katie has overseen the Discover Wisconsin production which aired in late April. It is a great piece that tells the story of why Johnson Creek is a great place to not only visit, but also live and work. Katie will also continue serving as communications director for the Village during COVID-19 to keep all informed by updating both the Village and tourism websites and social media with the most current information.

#### WASTEWATER AND DPW DIRECTOR ARIC MINDEMANN

The Public Works Department takes the "business as usual" approach, continues to be fully staffed, and is going about routine work with precautionary measures. They are maintaining the social distancing guidelines, altering lunch time routines, limiting one person per vehicle, and disinfecting and sanitizing equipment after each use. Here are some notable work changes as well as public amenities that are closed during the Safer at Home order:

\*Unless it is an emergency situation, the utility department will not be doing routine meter change outs, or any other maintenance items, to eliminate direct contact with the public.

\*Village parks are open, however the jungle gyms and other play equipment have been, and will remain, closed until further notice. Also the park restrooms and pavilions will not be open.

#### LIBRARY DIRECTOR ABBY ARMOUR

The library is now offering curbside delivery Mon-Fri from 10-2! Call or email the library to place your order and make a pick-up appointment. Visit their website, [www.johnsoncreeklibrary.org](http://www.johnsoncreeklibrary.org) to learn more. Even though the doors are closed to the public, many library services are still available including downloading e-books and e-magazines, accessing databases, streaming audiobooks, and digital story times. Library employees are available via phone, email, website chat, or Facebook messenger to answer all questions. No library card? No problem! Sign up for a temporary library card in the Café Catalog. Be sure to follow us on Facebook to engage with your community.

#### VILLAGE BOARD

The Village Board continues to meet to take care of Village business. Each meeting has the opportunity for members to call-in rather than be physically present to adhere to the Safer at Home order. Those present for meetings are separated by 6 feet. The Board also lifted regulations on being physically present to reach a quorum so business and projects can continue without interruption. The board thanks the staff for their dedicated commitment to the Village. Please look for the thank you video to residents for their resiliency during this time on Spectrum. It is also on our Village website.

## RESIDENT SPOTLIGHT: HANNAH CONSTABLE



Hannah Constable

Hannah Constable is a familiar name to many at Johnson Creek High School. The senior track star made a name for herself as a three-time winner of the WIAA 800 meter race, as well as placing several times in the 400 meters, 4 x 4 relay team, and cross country.

"I inherited the love of running from my parents," said Hannah Constable. "Both were on track at UW-Stevens Point. My mom was an All-American and she's transformed our track team as our coach," Constable continued proudly. "I knew in middle school that I might be good at this running thing when I ran cross country at a Junior Olympics meet at Carol College against high schoolers and won. So I decided to keep going."

And this go-getter attitude isn't limited to running for Constable. She has been involved with numerous extra curricular activities. This includes her love of music, where she plays the trumpet in the school band and sings in the school choir (where she qualified as a soloist for state competitions this year). She was also scheduled to play Tonya in the cancelled spring musical, *Mama Mia*. "I love singing and have been in choir since middle school," Constable recounts.

But it doesn't stop there. Constable has also been a staff member of the Johnson Creek High School newspaper and yearbook, on student council, vice president of her class, on the basketball team, and oh yes, started both the Johnson Creek Student Council and Johnson Creek Hype Club pages on Instagram to promote civics and sports at the high school.

And while she was looking forward to defending her 800-meter title at state for the fourth time, prom, performing in the spring musical, finalizing her senior yearbook, and graduation, COVID-19 forever changed her, and all her classmates', senior year. "When things started to change and the school was closed, I didn't want to believe that it could be happening," said

Constable. "There were so many things to look forward to. I wish I would have known this could happen when I was a junior. But this moment has certainly taught me how you should live your life thinking every moment could be your last. I miss even the little things of hanging out with friends. You don't think about those things until the opportunities are gone," continued Constable.

While Constable is not alone in grieving what could have been, she isn't giving up. The University of Minnesota bound athlete continues to train with the support her family, safely, during the pandemic. "I'm lucky I had the chance for a Division I school to see my talent," said Constable. "I'm also lucky to have such a close family," Constable remarked. "My mom, brother, and sister bike with me as I run on safe trails," Constable chuckled. "We are also taking things in stride and it's fun to try new hobbies and see my dad and brother take up more art projects."



From left to right: Jeff, Jacob, Hannah, Lia, and Paula Constable

"Even though I feel as though so many things have been stripped from my senior year experience, I'm looking forward to the future. My coach at Minnesota has been able to connect the track team with one another and we are making plans to meet when this is all over," Constable remarked.

One other notable task Constable decided to take on was helping as a poll worker in Johnson Creek for the April 7th election. When approached by School Superintendent Dr. Garvey to participate, Constable didn't hesitate, "Sure. I can do that," she recalled. "My mom was worried, but the Village had great training and were going above and beyond to keep us safe with the plexiglass, gloves, and hand sanitizer. I wanted to help my community," shared Constable.

## 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.

During these times of uncertainty with the COVID-19 pandemic, 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.

### Scott Thomas

- Serves on Village of Johnson Creek Plan Commission, Variance Committee, and was a member of the Community Leadership Focus Group for the current Johnson Creek Comprehensive Plan
- Board member of Evergreen Cemetery Association & currently working on their headstone and plot mapping project to make future online searches possible
- Served at St. John's Lutheran Church on their church board for 7 years, was a Foundation Committee member for 12 years, and on One Call Committee

### Diana Thomas

- Served as an EMT and Crew Chief for Johnson Creek Fire/EMS Department for over half a decade
- Started 5K "Run Walk Worship" to raise funds for various charities at St. John's Lutheran Church
- Started "Run for the Fields" 5K and other fund raising efforts with One Team One Dream to raise funds for JC schools athletic fields
- Bootcamp instructor at JC High School three days per week, donating her salary to One Team One Dream
- Volunteered at St. John's Bible School, coached numerous kids' soccer, basketball, running groups, and sponsored Maasai tribesmen to speak at Johnson Creek Elementary and High School.

## NEW POSITION UPDATES WITH FIRE DEPARTMENT AND VILLAGE ADMINISTRATOR

The Johnson Creek Fire & EMS Department (JCFD), thanks Interim Fire Chief Jeff Roemer for his months of service



as the search for a new part-time fire chief and full time firefighter-medical was conducted. We are now happy to announce Michael Stratmoen is the new fire chief and will start May 1. Stratmoen was formerly JCFD's assistant chief of fire operations & prevention. And the new firefighter-medical is Courtney Salov and she will start June 1. Salov has been with JCFD as an EMS Captain and will retain that title as well.

"I am excited to continue working with the professional men and women of the Johnson Creek Fire & EMS Department in providing emergency services to the residents of the Village of Johnson Creek and the surrounding township that we serve," said Stratmoen.

"I am grateful and honored to start as a full time firefighter-medical for the Village of Johnson Creek. I have served as a volunteer

### **JOHNSON CREEK FIRE & EMS LEADERSHIP TEAM**

- Michael Stratmoen, Fire Chief
- Courtney Salov, Firefighter-Medic & EMS Captain
- Scott Wolf, Asst Chief of Training & Safety
- Paul Schoenherr, EMS Asst Chief
- Dylan Callas, Captain of Operations & Fire Prevention
- Brian Turner, EMS Captain

paramedic here for the last three and a half years and am looking forward to continuing my career in this community. I am up for new challenges and am excited to see where it takes not only me, but the entire department," said Salov.

"We are thrilled to have found two great additions to our wonderful fire and EMS department," said Village Board President John L. Swisher. "The Johnson Creek Fire Department has a stellar history of responding to emergencies with care and dedication and we see that continuing under Chief Stratmoen's leadership," Swisher continued.

The structure of JCFD is like many small towns across America where positions are part-time and on-call. Paid part-time and on-call positions are available for EMT, paramedics, and firefighters. They also offer training for interested firefighters wanting to earn their certificates, and a fully supplied ready house for EMS and firefighters to stay while on call.

Interested in joining a flexible and family-friendly team to help serve others and promote safety? Contact JCFD at (920) 699-3456.

The search for a full time village administrator is also underway. With the help of Interim Administrator Chris Swartz of Public Administration Associates, LLC, the position has been posted and the Village is currently reviewing candidates. Chris has extensive municipal administration experience and will stay on as interim administrator throughout the process. He will have limited office hours at Village Hall, but will be under the direction of Village Board President John L. Swisher.

## TOURISM UPDATE: LEARNING WHAT WE CAN DO DURING COVID19



For tourism, the goal is bringing people together for positive connections in our community where small-town charm with big ideas can be celebrated. But right now that's hard to do when many everyday things we used to do and enjoy are on hold. We've had to adjust our lives to be physically apart, but there are ways we can still be connected.

One way to be together is watching our Discover Wisconsin episode which first aired April 25 & 26th. It was a year-long project that encompassed some of the wonderful businesses, organizations, and people that make Johnson Creek the special place it is to visit, live, and work. The video is available on both the Discover Wisconsin and Johnson Creek websites. Please be sure to share it with friends on your social media.

Another way to connect is sharing the #HowWiHelp campaign from the Wisconsin Department of Tourism (WIDOT). They want to showcase feel-good stories from across the state to inspire hope and feelings of connection in our shared experiences. Please share your stories with the tag #HowWiHelp. The WIDOT is collecting all tags and creating a landing page on their website.

### **HELPFUL RESOURCES TO BOOST SPIRITS**

[Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources links on state parks, trails, and forests policies during COVID-19](#)

[Wisconsin Department of Health Services' COVID-19: Resilient Wisconsin](#)

[American Birkebeiner Ski Foundation's list of over 350 virtual workouts, tips for social distancing with kids, and yoga classes.](#)

## APRIL ELECTION RECAP



Poll workers (L-R) Sally Albertz, Debra Brown, Ann Lees, Chelsea Hernandez, Hannah Constable, and Tom Lees stepped up and worked safely behind a custom plexiglass barrier on Election Day

Clerk/Treasurer Sam Bell also included 6-foot social distancing markers to keep voters safe at the polling place

Thank you to Clerk/Treasurer Sam Bell, and DPW Director Aric Mindemann who, with their teams, did a great job in making sure the April 7 Spring Election was safe for both poll workers and voters. The village DPW staff custom made plexiglass inserts for the Community Center kitchen that provided a safety barrier between workers and voters. Bell and Deputy Clerk/Treasurer Kelly Brinkman, with additional help from the DPW staff, set up 6-foot place markers throughout the polling place to maintain proper social distancing. Voting booths, all table surfaces, and voting equipment were also continually sanitized throughout the day.

"I'd like to congratulate trustees Joseph Yaeger IV, Rooney Freimund, and David Rousayne who were reelected. I look forward to continuing our work together to make Johnson Creek a wonderful place to live and do business," said Village President John Swisher. "We continue to have amazing residents who are willing to step up and give their all to this community," Swisher continued. "Today I thank the poll workers who did that in the face of the COVID-19 pandemic, and the trustees who have a passion to continue service to our residents on our village board."

# YOUR LIBRARY UPDATES & NEWS

Our doors may be closed...

...but the library is **ALWAYS** here for you!



Got questions?  
Email us!



Find COVID-19  
resources on our  
website



Check out our  
digital programs



Access e-books,  
e-audiobooks,  
& more!



Interact with us  
on social media



## Curbside Pick-Up

call or email to make an  
appointment



Johnson Creek  
Public Library

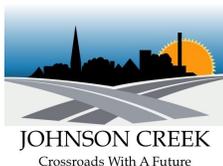
[www.johnsoncreeklibrary.org](http://www.johnsoncreeklibrary.org)

[requests@johnsoncreeklibrary.org](mailto:requests@johnsoncreeklibrary.org)

(920) 699-3741

Facebook

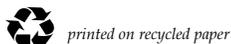
@JohnsonCreekPublicLibrary



## Village of Johnson Creek

[www.johnsoncreek-wi.us](http://www.johnsoncreek-wi.us)

PRSRT STD  
U.S. POSTAGE  
PAID  
Ft. Atkinson, WI  
Permit No. 11



printed on recycled paper

### VILLAGE HALL & LIBRARY HOURS



*"I believe our flag is more than just cloth and ink. It is a universally recognized symbol that stands for liberty, and freedom. It is the history of our nation, and it's marked by the blood of those who died defending it." - John Thune*

In observance of Memorial Day, please note the following closures:

#### Village Hall Office Hours

Closed Monday, May 25

#### Johnson Creek Public Library Services

Closed Saturday, May 23 & Monday, May 25

### BULK TRASH PICK UP FOR MAY

In maintaining utmost caution when it comes to manual, hand pickup of waste materials and in alignment with guidance from the Solid Waste Association of North America (SWANA) and OSHA, Badgerland Disposal will NOT resume curbside bulk pickup services in the month of May. That said, there are NO changes to the automated cart pickup service for trash and recycling for residents.

As an alternative, Badgerland will place a dumpster at the village compost site at 110 Aztalan St on the morning of Friday, May 8th in which residents can place their allowed single bulk item. The dumpster will remain there until Monday, May 11th, with a single dumpster switch out on Saturday. Normal compost site hours will apply.

Friday: 7:00am – 2:30pm  
Saturday: 7:00am – 7:00pm  
Sunday: 11:00am – 4:00pm



Please do not leave items next to dumpster. All items must be placed inside; handling dumped items puts staff at risk.