

Dancing Into the Sunset News - 2020

by Sue Halter



Hello and *thank you* to Fruitport and the surrounding communities for coming out and enjoying and supporting the 4th season of Dancing into the Sunset Dance Party at Pomona Park overlooking beautiful Spring Lake (Dancing into the Sunset – Fruitport on Facebook). Our attendance once again was strong even as our shortened season started in July instead of June. Despite the ongoing challenges of 2020 we surpassed last season.

All who attended enjoyed themselves by dancing and listening to some of our favorite returning bands, **The Silverado Band** and **The Sea Cruisers**. I was happy to secure new bands this season by welcoming **The Adams Family Band**, **Sweet Justice** and **The Carl Webb Band**, all who were audience-suggested bands. We also welcomed **Sam’s Swing Band** with guest dance instructor **Florencia Colella** and her husband, and local favorite line dance instructor **Amy Christian**, with **Woody** from the Silverado Band lending his DJ service for the night.

So happy to introduce our beautiful Pomona Park, not only to the bands who traveled from as far away as Lansing like the The Sea Cruisers, but to many new attendees from Rockford, Greenville, Whitehall, Ludington. Many returned each Thursday night all season long, they enjoyed it so much.



We kicked off the season a bit late for obvious reasons with The Silverband Band and paying tribute to Dennis Noren, a long time Fruitport business owner and resident. He was a super dancer who attended regularly with dance partner Deb, and who helped me get Dancing into Sunset-Fruitport started. His family joined us for a nice evening celebrating Dennis’ life with photos and tribute songs. Dennis will continue to be missed each Thursday.

That same opening night it was our Military Night which we celebrate the week of 4th of July. All branches are represented, with even a visit by water from the Coast Guard. We have a wall of fame for anyone who wanted to bring a photo of a loved one who served. We collected cards, notes and non-perishable items through the week at Fruitport Orchard Market to be passed along to The Blue Star Mom’s to send off to the troops. What a wonderful



night of celebration by each branch of the military being represented by either an active military member home on leave, or a retired veteran walking across the stage with local Scout Troop Pack 4023. Many thanks to Scout leader, George Kotkowicz, for the participation of Chris Kotkowicz, Jacob Kotkowicz, Robert Vekved, Elijah Bolema, Becky



Hudson, Windi Sievers, Matthew Williams, Christy Thomas, Jon Meyer, Jacob Meyer, Andy Peck, Landen Peck and Mason Griggs, for being part of our celebration. A very proud night for all.

After a pretty successful food vendor season last year, I decided to make it even easier Thursday nights by including the new pizza and sub shop across the street from Pomona Park – **Parkside Pizza and Sub**, who not only had pizza hot in the oven on the spot but made their full menu available by either ordering from the canopy on site or calling the restaurant and having them deliver to the bandshell. By the end of the season they had many nice compliments for the owners Cathy and Troy, as well as their right-hand man, Dean. Mid-season we added **Carlson Almonds** to Dancing into Sunset-Fruitport at the top of the hill. Ah, those that sat



up there enjoyed the aroma of those hot cinnamon almonds. So delicious! We had dinner at the bottom and dessert at the top. A perfect combination for all. Both will be returning for the 2021 season.

Now, one of the most important parts of Dancing



into Sunset-Fruitport, is thanking the sponsors like I do each Thursday. There would be no Dancing into Sunset-Fruitport if they did not step up to the plate and support this wonderful local community event. Please stop by these local businesses or send messages and say “thank you” to them, and let them know how much you appreciate their participation in Dancing into Sunset-Fruitport. Many thanks to The Storage Group, Fruitport Orchard Market, Andy O’Riley and The Muskegon Channel Radio.com, Positively Muskegon, Community Foundation o f



Muskegon, Hazekamp Meats / Premier Foods, Waypoint Dock and Spirits, Leo Valdez, Sr.

Military Night photographer, State Farm Insurance Doug Heins in Spring Lake, as well as Michael Heck in Grand Haven, Serv Pro of Muskegon, Wesco, LeFleur Shoppe and a special thank you to The Village of Fruitport for such a beautiful park. Without Pomona Park and the Bandshell, there would not be Dancing into Sunset-Fruitport. As always we are interested in adding new sponsors. Please send any new sponsors my way to: Dancingintosunset@aol.com. I like to add a special thank you to my weekly helpers for set up, take down and videos from Diane Campbell and her grandkids.

So, yes, with such a successful fourth 2020 season we will be back in Pomona Park at the Bandshell in 2021. A organizer never sits still. With that said, I am already working on securing the bands for next season and planning for a June 10th start. Many favorites will be returning as well as rotating back in from



previous seasons, and perhaps a few new ones. Seems I don’t have to search out the bands anymore, they are coming to me wanting to play because they want to be part of Dancing into Sunset-Fruitport’s success.



And there you have it folks! A great fourth season in the books and a fifth season shaping up nicely, with old and new joining together for this once again FREE event. I must remind all that back in 2017 when the idea for Dancing into Sunset came about, it was a group effort that started with The Fruitport Lions Club, which I will always be grateful for, to where we are today with so many added sponsors mentioned above.

Over the years together, we all work for the better of our community to bring dance and music to all, and we will continue to do so right into 2021. Please mark

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for the community, by the community, for all of us to enjoy right here in our own backyard of Pomona Park. Remember you can come by car, walk, or bike the bike path. Boaters anchored, if no spots available at Waypoint Dock and Spirits, adjacent to the park. Additional parking always available at The Storage Group across the Street and at the Fifth



Third Bank parking lot. All approved parking during Thursday nights. Just bring a chair or blanket, or make use of the on-site picnic tables. Enjoy the holidays and see everyone in the Spring of 2021 at Dancing into Sunset-Fruitport.