



How much wood could a woodchuck chuck if a woodchuck could chuck wood?

I have no idea if anyone has even tried to answer this one. Many of us know, though, that woodchucks — also called groundhogs — can chuck a lot of dirt, in gardens and under decks in particular. They are excellent diggers, horizontal and vertical, and have chewed or dug their way through gardens, taken up residence or claimed visiting rights under decks, and

even dug down beneath foundations and into crawl spaces.

Wildlife is all around us in the Village and, for the most part, we enjoy it. Woodchucks, though, like skunks, possums, and raccoons, are best enjoyed when they stay away from our homes. They are often destructive, smelly, make carry diseases, and pose threats to pets and people. How to keep them at a distance?

Kendra Zurich, our community manager, contacted several Michigan wildlife organizations to get some tips on critter control. It's not surprising that the short answer is: don't make them comfortable! Close off access to the space under the deck; clean up yard waste; eliminate nesting spots, like piles of 'stuff' on or around the deck. And for heavens sake, do NOT throw bread, pizza crusts, cheese, or leftover veggies off the porch or deck onto the lawn, 'for the birds'.

You can report the presence of woodchucks (and other cute but not-so-desirable critters) to the Village office. We'll call in critter control to attempt capture and relocation, but it's not always successful. Relocation options are pretty limited; there are rules (oh yes...) about how far away animal control workers can relocate them; it's often not beyond their usual habitat.

⊗ Groundhog/Woodchuck

Groundhogs, also known as woodchucks, are large squirrels that are strict herbivores. They eat grasses, plants, fruits, vegetables, seeds, and other plant matter. Groundhogs hibernate in their dens during the winter months.

Groundhogs dig large holes and long underground tunnels that can cause structural damage, crop/ garden damage, or damage to farm equipment or livestock.

Prevention and control tips:

- Place fencing around gardens to keep groundhogs out. Fencing should be at least 3 feet tall and made of thick wire. Bury the fencing under the ground about 12 inches deep as well, to keep groundhogs from digging under the fence.
- Groundhogs can climb nursery, orchard, or ornamental trees to access fruits. Place metal flashing or tree guards around the trees, at least 3 feet high.
- Place fencing under decks and porches to keep woodchucks from tunneling underneath.
- If a woodchuck den exists on property, place an ammonia-soaked towel in its den. Used cat litter may also be effective as it smells strongly of ammonia. Moth balls cannot be placed in the den, as they are considered an insecticide.

Rules...Again?? Really???

Yes, really! All condo communities have rules for residents, just like towns, schools, workplaces. Remember drivers' ed...and the Rules of the Road? Rules allows to live, work, play, and drive in harmony (most of the time).

We've been pretty lax in the Village over the years in enforcing our rules, and that approach has led to more than a few issues. The Board recognizes this and wants to change our approach to move in the direction of better compliance, for the benefit of all.

RULES

To that end, the first step was the review and revision of the rules fromway back, and make them easily accessible. We did that last year. The next step is to foster awareness. This month, we're doing that with a quiz. Remember those pop quizzes in elementary and middle school? The ones that made your heart skip a beat because you really hadn't done any homework for the past 3 days? Not to worry! This one isn't hard. It's open book and you don't even have to turn in your answers.

So...here we go:

1. How many bird feeders can I have? Anything special I should know about putting it up?
2. How many decorative items can I put on the outside of my home? Can I attach them to the building?
3. Name one plant that's OK to have in my garden. Then, name one plant that I should NOT have in my garden.
4. How many signs can I put up in front of my home? Where can I put them?
5. Name five things our fees pay for. Did you get to 5 really fast? Go for 10!!
6. I have a gas grill; where do I put it when I want to use it? What about my fire pit?
7. Where can I set off firecrackers in the Village?
8. How many cats/dogs can I have?
9. My deck really needs repair; is the Village going to do that?
10. I can't stand the paint colors on my building. How can I get different colors?

Jot down your responses and hold onto them. We'll circle back next month with answers and comments and explanations. Between now and then, if any of the above questions make you think of other questions you need answers to, send them to the Village office and we'll answer those too.

Board of Directors

IN THE GARDEN

September 2022

By: Kristan LaFleur

Warning to all!



It was brought to my attention that we are having an issue with two extremely challenging species of plants on the grounds. One, Velvetleaf (shown here), is extremely invasive due to its ability for reproduction. This plant generates around 700—4,400 seeds, which can remain active for 50-60 years. In addition, velvetleaf is highly competitive as it can secrete chemical substances that inhibit the germination and growth of other plants, killing off your expensive wanted plant beds. These plants must be removed before flowering, otherwise controlling them will be extremely difficult and may result in chemical intervention.



Our other concern for everyone's welfare is shown in pictures here: **Poison Ivy**. This plant has been popping up everywhere and causes not only damage or death to your plants but harm to your body as well.

Poison Ivy contains urushiol, a compound that causes allergic reactions in many people, and is found in every part of the plant.

This plant is commonly eaten by animals while the seeds are a favorite to birds, which helps its ability to spread in your garden. Poison Ivy also spreads through its vines and root system which will literally choke-out your trees and other plants.



Planning for the fall

This is the perfect time of year to extend the season by rejuvenating containers and the landscape with late blooming perennials. A few you might want to try are Black Eyed Susan (Rudbeckia), Asters, Helen's Flower (Helenium), mums (Dendranthema), Sweet Autumn Clematis, and ornamental grasses. For fall foliage color, try October Daphne (Sedum *sieboldii*), Willow Blue Star (Amsonia), Mukdenia, or Blue Spruce Stonecrop (Sedum).

Things to do in Early September

- It's not too late to replace those tired, worn-out annuals with perennials that will continue to beautify your garden year after year. Many garden centers are having sales this month!
- Divide and transplant overcrowded or overgrown plants early in the month and keep them watered to allow roots to become established before the first frost.
- Clean out any diseased plants or foliage from the garden and discard.
- Continue to look for slugs, snails, and plant diseases. Address those problems now before frost arrives.
- Continue to pull perennial weeds before they go to seed to avoid pulling hundreds more next spring.
- Make sure to continue watering all newly planted perennials from this year.

Things to do in Mid-September *(continues on next page)*

- Continue to water the plants in your garden even though their growth has slowed down. This is important because plants need enough moisture to get through the stress of the coming winter.

- Dig out any perennials you do not want to have in your garden next year.
- Make a note in your journal of any holes you'll need to fill next spring.
- Take pictures of your fall garden. Make a note of places that need more color or interest this time of year so you can address those issues next spring.

Stop deadheading any flowers or seed heads that you'll want to leave for winter interest. The neighborhood birds will thank you.

Things to do in late September

- Have the leaves started falling in your yard? It may be time to start raking already

POOCH PLUNGE

Sunday,
September 18

2:00 to 3:30 pm



Why alien abductions happen only at night



Paws & Tails Pet Care

Right here in Pittsfield Village!

Have peace of mind while you're away with quality care and affordable rates for your furry family member!

I provide daily dog walking for people who have long, busy, work hours, new puppies who need potty breaks and socialization, or for those that want their dog to have a fun break in their day!

I also provide house visits for dogs, cats, and small animals for those gone on vacations and business trips.

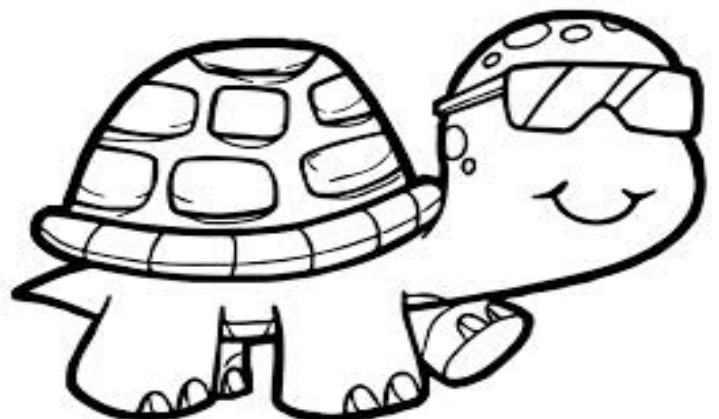
Email to book your free meet and greet with me and to receive more information.

Contact information:

Irenehayes03@yahoo.com



COLORING FOR FUN



Hidden behind some of our units at the southwest corner of Edgewood and Pittsfield is an ongoing landscape reclamation project you might have easily missed. That long stretch of bare earth is the result of our removing an invasive, non-native shrub known as Common Buckthorn (*Rhamnus cathartica*) from the property line. This invasive shrub is found throughout Pittsfield Village along fence lines and border areas. It out-competes native plants by shading them out and producing fruits the seeds of which are then spread by birds. (See [Invasive Plant of the Week: Common Buckthorn](#) for more information.)



The gray-brown bare area above is where the buckthorn once was. The yellowish-green area to the right is dead and dying grass which was shaded out by the over-arching buckthorn plants. As it grows, buckthorn can form dense thickets such as the one below.



And here it is encroaching on a much more desirable conifer:



The task of removing it was done by our landscape contractor, Superior Mow and Snow, who owns the machinery necessary for the task. We have already done another stretch south of this one along the western boundary of our property, as well as an area adjacent to Red Bud Nature area. We have several more areas targeted, especially along the northern property line between Pittsfield Village and the commercial area along Washtenaw.

But the good news here is that after removing the buckthorn, Superior transplanted several conifers from our tree nursery to the site. Here's what it looks like now with the newly planted trees:



And you, too, can help us to control buckthorn. Here's what the young buckthorn seedlings look like when growing in the lawn:



When young, they can be easily pulled out by hand especially when the soil's somewhat moist and easily worked. Doing so will help prevent future problems when removal is far more expensive. And if you know of large buckthorn plants anywhere near you, please let the office know. Your help is greatly appreciated.

Pittsfield Village Office

Monday— Friday, 8:30 am to 5:00 pm

Office: 734-971-0233 Fax: 734-971-3421

Email: office@pittsfieldvillage.com / www.pittsfieldvillage.com

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PEST CONTROL

JC Ehrlich services the community every Thursday. If you have pest control needs & would like to place a work order, contact the

Village office at **734-971-0223** or email

office@pittsfieldvillage.com.

Please call by Wednesday to be on the schedule for that week.

MEETING LINKS FOR SEPTEMBER

M & M <https://meet.goto.com/513200773>

Landscape <https://meet.goto.com/655483773>

BOD <https://meet.goto.com/471965837>

The pool will remain open, 7 days a week from 11:00am-8:00pm for the remainder of the season.

The last day of the pool season will be Sunday, September 11

September 2022

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
				1	2	3
4	5 LABOR DAY OFFICE CLOSED	6 M&M Committee Meeting 6:00pm	7	8	9	10
11 Last Day Pool is Open	12	13 Landscape Committee Meeting 6:00 pm	14	15	16	17
18 POOCH PLUNGE 2:00 -3:30pm	19	20	21 Board Meeting 6:15 Open forum; 6:30 pm Meeting	22	23	24
25	26	27	28	29	30	