

**Dancing into Sunset – Fruitport, 2023
Season 7 Kicks Off**

Thursday June 8th from 7:00 pm to 9:30 pm
Pomona Park at the Bandshell
93 S. Third Ave Fruitport, MI 49415
With
The Silverado Band
Playing Your Country Favorites

by Susie Halter



Dancing into Sunset – Fruitport's

Family Friendly music and dancing is back for its 7th season. Can you believe it? In a world of social online media, let's keep socializing the old fashioned way, by meeting friends and family in person in a fun way, outdoors in the fresh air and sunshine. I have to start off with a huge applaud for the posting on Facebook by Kate Holtrop throughout the off season to keep Dancing into Sunset – Fruitport dancing in your heads. When you see a post, it is all Kate, so during the season when you see her and her brother Caleb roaming around taking pics, please say thank you to them for all they do to help me with Dancing into Sunset – Fruitport.

Please plan on joining Dancing into Sunset – Fruitport for our 7th season of dances, held every Thursday night, weather permitting, outdoors during the Spring and Summer. **Please take note we have once again secured a location indoors, if rained upon, at the new Fruitport High School Cafeteria, 357 N. Sixth Fruitport, MI 49415** just down the street from Pomona Park.

Dancing into Sunset – Fruitport would not be possible without these fantastic sponsors:

The Storage Group is a returning sponsor. **Fruitport Orchard Market**, and **Spring Lake Floral** are returning sponsors to help celebrate Military Night which will be held this year on Thursday July 6th, 2023. We will salute and recognize all Military men and women as we have done in the past. Not only is The Silverado Band back by popular demand for Military night, as will be the singing group Voices of Freedom from Grand Rapids who will grace the shores of Spring Lake in the Village of Fruitport with all patriot songs from **6:30 pm to 7:00 pm** (so come early this night). Voices of Freedom will sing again during the Military tribute around 8:00pm. Mark your calendars as a reminder that we will once again put out a collection box at Fruitport Orchard Market to collect non-perishable items to send to our troops by way of the Blue Star Mom's. Plus, mark down as well, very important, to bring your letters or cards addresses so your words will make their day. Let's remember to bring your favorite photos to hang on the wall of fame, showing off your military loved one.

We're happy to welcome back **Community Foundation for Muskegon County**, **Hazekamp Meats/Premier Food**, **The Village of Fruitport**, **Wesco in Fruitport**, **Tractor Supply**. Shredded rubber has been donated by **Ginman Tire Co.** and put down each week with the help of volunteers to help "soften" the feet and knees while your dance partner swirls you around in the large dance area.

Doesn't the grassy hill that overlooks Spring Lake make this location one of the best in the area for an outdoor evening of dancing, music, meeting old friends and making new ones? You may just find a couple tucked away by one of the trees to listen and watch.

State Farm Insurance Doug Heins Spring Lake Office keep having SUCH A GREAT TIME passing out free ice cream they are returning once again as a sponsor and will have a table set up the night of June 22nd, 2023, to sign up for giveaways as well. Not one, but two State Farm Insurance agents are supporting Dancing into Sunset. We also welcome back **Grand Haven State Farm Insurance agent, Michael Heck**.

Way Point Dock and Spirits and Bella and the famous greeting dog are happy to support Dancing into Sunset again for the 2023 season. Waypoint also rents pontoon boats.

Another sponsor is **A-Team Construction Co.**, who specializes in fire, storm, & water damage repairs as well as remodeling. Back again are **Pincrest Bar and Lanes** and **Ashley Robbins Insurance Agent MI Insurance Services** who specializes in health insurance. We're pleased to have sponsors **Dietz House Moving Engineers, Inc.**, and **Source One Digital** who prints our banners. **CSP Inc.**, printer of the schedules, and **Excel Propane** are also sponsoring. New this season we welcome **Sethco Lumber** and **Schap Specialty Machine, Inc.** We're also pleased to welcome **Melching, Inc.** to our list of sponsors. Those that have made donations to Dancing into Sunset this season are **ServPro of Muskegon/North Ottawa** and **Brechtig Bridge & Engineering, Inc.** We thank all of you for being a part of what is looking like another successful free community event.

Happy to say we will see the return of **Parkside Pizza N Subs**. They are a great hit with the crowd. Customers can either order from Parkside's tent on site or call in to the restaurant in advance, and they will have your order delivered at the tent by the dance area. They will also always have pizza hot and ready to purchase on the spot. **Carlson's Hot Almonds** will also be returning. **Vibe Nutrition of Spring Lake** will fill in from time to time when Carlson's Hot Almonds is sharing themselves around at other events. If you're still hungry after you dance the night away, you can always walk across the street to **Ye Old Tavern** for that chili dog special and a cold one. For the close of the season on Tuesday August 29th, 2023, I have added an additional vendor for the night. We welcome **Smoke n Ash's** who offers snacks, sandwiches, and entrees.



Susie Halter hands out treats and flowers on Military Night

The history of Pomona Park is so important to our community. I always like including the following for those who are new to the area to learn about our history, or just to give a refresher for all those that grew up here.

Pomona Park was very popular back in the early- to mid- 1900's for dancing and music. Here is a bit of history by Fox 17 Kevin Craig's West Michigan Stories interview with Brian Zwart.

Pomona Park sat vacant (except with the old burned-out building on it) until about 1900 or so. It was the electric rail car known as the Interurban that came into existence and began to capitalize on the old boom. The Interurban rail service ran from Grand Rapids, to Coopersville, and rails veered off to Fruitport and Grand Haven. Since the Interurban company had an electric power house and stop in Fruitport, they wanted to capitalize on it and draw more people in. So, they built a huge wood pavilion over Spring Lake on the shore of Pomona Park in 1902. It was a major success!

The Interurban operated the pavilion until 1928 when it was sold to band leader Frank Lockage. He began bringing in major, nationally known talent and acts like Glenn Miller, Lawrence Welk, and Buddy Holly (see the Memory Journal passed around on Thursday Nights for a copy of the announcement of Buddy Holly's appearance just four months before he would die in a plane crash with the famous Big Bopper and Richie Valens). At first the pavilion was a seasonal thing with open areas and unheated. It would later become a year-round draw for people to dance and simply party in to the wee hours of the night.

The fun, excitement, and draw went on until January 3, 1963. In the early morning hours of January 4, the pavilion would burn to the ground. Never-before-seen home movies were taken of the fire and are part of the video in our West Michigan Story. Unfortunately, it was never rebuilt and the property sits only as a park today. That said, the original pylons that held the pavilion up over the water are still visible today. The slab of concrete that led into the pavilion still intact...even with pieces of the original floor tile still attached.

The history of Pomona Park is amazing and incredible to say the least. A special thanks to Brian Zwart of the Fruitport Historical Society.

Unlike many historical experts in the area, Brian is a much younger man who has researched Fruitport and Pomona Park extensively. His enthusiasm and insight into Fruitport's past is addictive, enlightening, and entertaining. (Search Brian Zwart Fruitport history to view entire video) Make sure to view the poster of photos down by the dance area of the good old days of these great dancing times. You might just see grandma or grandpa in the photos. Many of those photos have been donated by another local historian Roger Dykehouse, whose wife Blanch was sister of singer and song writer of the 60's Del Shannon. So c'mon everyone and let's make history of our own for our kids to talk about 50 years from now by joining Dancing into Sunset every Thursday and signing the journal that gets passed around every week.

This year I am asking for pre-written stories, memories, etc. that anyone of you may have and want to share of the original Pavilion on the water in your own handwriting to put in the journal as well, when it gets passed around each night.

Before I get to the schedule, I want to thank the Village of Fruitport for working with Scott of Harbor Transit to include Pomona Park as one of its stops around Spring Lake last spring and summer. And I just found out they are working toward doing the same route again for 2023. This would be de-ja vu, bringing back transportation just like when The Interurban rail service, as mentioned above, would do the same.

Ok here we go! All the fun starts Thursday June 8th, 2023 from 7:00 pm till 9:30ish (sunset) with live music.

(NOTE – AUGUST BAND LINE UP WILL START AT 6:30 PM AND END AT 9:00 PM TO ACCOMMODATE THE EARLIER SUNSET, FOR SAFETY OF THOSE LEAVING THE PARK)

See the full schedule to cut out and put on your refrigerator for quick reference below.

We have many returning regulars and a few newbies who have been on the list waiting to join in. Please help spread the word about Dancing into Sunset to continue to share dancing and music with the community. Let's keep the pace going.

Dancing into Sunset – Fruitport Dance Party
Season 7
2023 Schedule

When: Thursdays Starting June 8th, 2023, through Thursday August 24th, 2023, to end the regular season. Then on Tuesday August 29th, 2023 another special appearance of Scottville Clown Band. The community welcomes them back to Fruitport with open arms. So many of the band wanted to come back and play for us again for a 3rd Year.

Where: Pomona Park – Fruitport, at the Bandshell (93 S. 3rd Street)

Time: 7:00pm to Sunset of course, which will be 9:30ish

NOTE – August Bands Scheduled start playing at 6:30 pm and end at 9:00 pm.

Please take note RAIN LOCATION: The New Fruitport High School Cafeteria at 3255 Pontaluna, Fruitport, MI 49415. Watch Facebook closely if it's raining or even if rain has stopped but the ground may be too wet and slippery, since we may still may move indoors. Many thanks to Fruitport Community Schools for wanting to show off the new high school to many who have attended the school district in years past. Last season we did have to go indoors for one Thursday evening. It was a good test run to see how many had remembered we had an indoor spot to go. We had a nice turn out inside for only the second time in six years.



FULL SCHEDULE

To kick of the season -Thursday June 8th, 2023 – 7:00 pm - 9:30 pm – THE SILVERADO BAND: Woody, MacKenzie, & Tom

Thursday June 15th, 2023 – 7:00 pm - 9:30 pm – THE CARL WEBB BAND is a blend of rock,
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