



**Dancing into Sunset – Fruitport 2024**  
**Season 8 Kicks Off**  
**Thursday June 6th at 7:00 p.m. to 9:30 p.m.**  
**Pomona Park at the Bandshell**  
**93 S. Third Ave Fruitport, MI 49415**  
**With the ever so popular**  
**The Silverado Band**  
**Playing your country favorites**  
**to open the 8th Season**

Dancing into Sunset Fruitport brings Family Friendly music and dancing back for an 8th season! Can you believe it? In a world of social online media, let's keep socializing the old fashion 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. Very, very happy to have Kate back with us this season for many reasons. Our dear Kate went through a tough sickness. But with a lot of prayer chains, she made it through. So blessed to have her in our lives.

Please plan on joining Dancing into Sunset Fruitport for our 8th season! Dances are held every Thursday night, weather permitting, outdoors during the Spring and Summer. Please take note, we have once again secured indoors (due to weather conditions) at the new Fruitport High School Cafeteria, 357 N. Sixth Fruitport, MI 49415 just down the street from Pomona Park. For those that joined us last August, we can fondly recall when the weather was soooo, soooo humid we had to move indoors. Then the unexpected storm, which delayed the Fruitport High School football game, brought together a magical moment of "the senior class" being taught a line dance by the "seniors in the room."

Dancing into Sunset Fruitport would not be possible without our 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 directly on THE 4th OF JULY 2024. If you don't want to fight the big crowds, this will be the perfect place to be. As we have done in the past, we will salute and recognize all our Military men and women during the Military tribute around 8:00 p.m., with use of Military Flags lent to us by the Fruitport Lions Club. More and more veterans and military personnel are joining Local Scout Troop 4023 on stage to stand behind the flag of the Military branch they served. Ah! then they are all up front and center, receiving delicious cupcakes and/or cookies and flowers donated by Orchard Market Fruitport as a thank you for their service to our county. Please take a moment to say a prayer for one of the member families of the Blue Star Moms, whom we have collected nonperishable items for the troops in the past. Jan, who would join us with her fellow Blue Star Moms on accepting items to send to the troops, we lost her to the heavens above after a brave fight with cancer. Rest in peace Jan. Plus, mark down as very important to bring your letters or cards, addressed, so your words will make our soldiers' day. Let's remember to bring your favorite photos to hang on the wall of fame, showing off your military loved one. We're also working on a special addition to Military Night. See updates and follow the season on our Facebook Page.

We're happy to welcome back Community Foundation for Muskegon County, Hazekamp Meats/Premier Food, The Village of Fruitport, Wesco in Fruitport, and 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.

Parkside Pizza and Subs, our favorite local



eatery, is happy to join us down by the dance area again. They are a great hit with the crowd! You can grab your food by either ordering from their tent on site or calling in to Parkside in advance. They will have your order delivered to the tent by the dance area and will always have pizza hot and ready to purchase on the spot. Our good friends from Carlson's Hot Almonds will also be returning. For the close of the season, please make note that once again we will hold our final dance on TUESDAY, August 27th, 2024. We have brought in an additional vendor for the night to be announced on our Facebook page as August arrives. State Farm Insurance Doug Heins Spring Lake office has had SUCH A GREAT TIME passing out free ice cream they are returning once again as a sponsor and will have a table set up opening night of June 6th, 2024. There will be chances to sign up for giveaways as well. Not one but two State Farm Insurance agents will be supporting Dancing into Sunset this year. We also welcome back Michael Heck, Grand Haven State Farm Insurance agent. Way Point Dock and Spirits and Bella the famous greeting dog are happy to support Dancing into Sunset again for the 2024 season as well. Way Point also rents pontoon boats.

Another sponsor, A-Team Construction Co., specializes in fire, storm, and 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 also thank Dietz House Moving Engineers, Inc. and Source One Digital (printer of our banners), CSP Inc. (printer of our schedules), and Excel Propane. Dancing into Sunset is happy to welcome back Sethco Lumber and Schap Specialty Machine, Inc. Prestige Storage will be with us again and have a table of information and goodies set up on June 13th. We're also glad to have back Melching Demolition - Doug Melching.

We welcome Sandi Gentry Remax to Dancing into Sunset this season. We thank all of you for being a part of what is looking like another successful free community event. More sponsors will hopefully be on the way, but may not be in time for this article. So be sure to catch our announcements at the beginning of each dance.

And special thanks to Paula, Cathy, Kate, and Caleb, along with all our other helpers and volunteers! It is so wonderful to see the community coming together around Dancing Into Sunset like this!

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

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

Pomona Park sat vacant (except with the old burned-out hotel 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 our Memory Journal which gets 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, being unheated with open areas. It would later become a year-round draw for people to

dance and simply party into 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 is 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 are addictive, enlightening, and entertaining. (Search Brian Zwart Fruitport history to view the entire video). Make sure to view the poster of photos of the good old days of these great dancing times, which we'll have down by the dance area. 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 songwriter 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 memory journal that gets passed around every week.

This year we are asking for pre-written stories, memories, etc, that anyone may 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. Do make sure and read some of the pages in the journal. There are some amazing memories written.

Before we get to the schedule, we 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. We just found out they are going to do the same route again for 2024 for a small fee. For those that are not familiar with the Trolley route, they leave Grand Haven at noon each day, making a few stops before they reach Pomona Park about 15 to 20 minutes after the hour. It takes about one hour to circle around the lake and then come back again. You can even be dropped off and picked up at the Spring Lake Beach. You may also transfer at the Spring Lake Holiday Inn and pick up the Blue Trolley to go into Grand Haven and be dropped off along that route if you want to enjoy the waters of Lake Michigan or downtown Grand Haven. One goal in 2023 was to have the Trolley run till 10:00 p.m. so those that attend Dancing into Sunset not only can be dropped off to enjoy the evening but can now be bought back to where you picked up the Trolley close to their homes, so they don't have to worry about parking. Yes! Our goal was reached .....Thank you Scot and all the drivers and the Village of Fruitport who were willing to work at making this a reality last year and continuing into 2024. It bought back transportation just like when The Interurban rail service as mentioned doing the same back in the day. Hope we can obtain extra sponsors to help pay for our very own Trolley for the last night again, when The Scottville Clown Band plays for the thousand plus people who come out to listen or join in with "clowning around." Okay, sorry! Had to throw that in...But the Trolley really made the parking so much easier, with parking at the Fruitport High School and taking the Trolley back and forth. I rode the Trolley with many of you to get your opinion and received all thumbs up. We're working on an additional sponsor to hopefully be able to have the Trolley back again. If any business is interested, please contact me.

Ok here we go! All the fun starts Thursday, June 6th, 2024, at 7:00 p.m. till 9:30 p.m. (sunset) with live music.

