

# Cascade Connections



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A Newsletter from Cascade Charter Township

## CASCADE COMMUNITY FOUNDATION

On behalf of Cascade's Residents, we would like to publicly thank the following citizens for their financial donations to the Cascade Community Foundation.

Mr. Robert Arbetman	Mr. & Mrs. Douglas Evans	Mr. & Mrs. Richard Kohn	Mr. Thomas Rooks
Mr. & Mrs. Paul Bajema	Mr. & Mrs. John Ficeli	Ms. & Mrs. Tad Lane	Ms. Lois Ross
Mr. Robert Beahan	Mr. & Mrs. Ron Goodyke	Ms. Mary Leverich	Mr. & Mrs. Steven Schoenfeldt
Ms. Kristine Bishop	Mr. & Mrs. William Green	Mr. & Mrs. Jack Lewis	Mr. & Mrs. Lee Schomberg
Mr. & Mrs. Terrence Blake	Ryan Marketing Group	Mr. B.F. Link	Mr. Jeffrey Schreur
Mr. & Mrs. Peter Bylsma	Mr. Charles Harrison	Mr. & Mrs. Thomas McDonald	Mr. Gary Skinner
Mr. & Mrs. Gregory Cammell	Mr. & Mrs. James Haveman Jr.	Mr. & Mrs. Thomas McElwee	Ms. Lisa Ann Smith
Mr. & Mrs. Ken Carpenter	Mr. & Mrs. Gary Hensch	Mr. & Mrs. Dale McNinch	Mr. Leslie E. Tassell
Mr. & Mrs. Tom Carpenter	Mr. & Mrs. James Higgins	Mr. & Mrs. Robert Nault	Mr. Robert Timmons
Mr. & Mrs. Stephen Channer	Mr. Martin Hillard	Mr. & Mrs. Eric Neitzel	Ms. Mary Beth Tupper
Mr. & Mrs. Giles Courtney	Mr. Richard Horvitz	Dr. & Mrs. James Norman	Mr. & Mrs. Ken VanHaaften
Mr. & Mrs. Randy Curtis	Mr. & Mrs. Richard Ilka	Mr. & Mrs. Brian O'Donnell	Mr. & Mrs. Duane VanderBrug
Mr. & Mrs. Paul D'Amato	Mr. Carl Jasperse	Mr. & Mrs. Ken Parrish	Mrs. Pat Vredevoogd
Ms. Carol Danhof	Mr. & Mrs. Michael Jekel	Mr. Stephen Peterson	Mrs. Dorothy Wilson
Mr. & Mrs. Howard DeHaan	Mr. Richard Jones	Mr. & Mrs. Eric Richards	Mr. & Mrs. Thomas Wisner
Ms. Judith DeLapa	Mr. & Mrs. Michael Julien	Mr. & Mrs. Claude Robinson	Mr. & Mrs. David Young
Mr. & Mrs. Charles Dewey Jr.	Mr. & Mrs. Haig Kassouni	Mr. & Mrs. Ronald Roden	
Mr. Max Doering	Mr. & Mrs. Ken Kleinheksel	Mrs. Susan Roeder	
Mr. Brockton Ellwood	Mr. & Mrs. Donald Klopcic	Mr. & Mrs. Brian Roelof	

*Everyone will soon be receiving an opportunity to invest in the future of our community.*

## Cascade Charter Township

2865 Thornhills Ave SE  
Grand Rapids MI 49546  
phone: 616.949.1500  
fax: 616.949.3918  
[www.cascadetwp.com](http://www.cascadetwp.com)

PRST STD  
U.S. POSTAGE  
PAID  
PERMIT No. 653  
GRAND RAPIDS MI

DECEMBER 2003

### OFFICE HOURS

#### MONDAY

#### THROUGH FRIDAY

8:00 A.M. TO 5:00 P.M.

### HOLIDAY CLOSINGS

The Cascade Township Office  
will be closed December 24th,  
25th, and January 1st.

#### Department phone numbers:

Manager .....949-1500  
Clerk .....949-1508  
Treasurer .....949-6944  
Assessing .....949-6176  
Planning .....949-0224  
Building / Inspections .....949-3765  
Fire .....949-1320  
Sheriff .....336-3113



## TOYS FOR TOTS

Cascade Township  
Fire Station at  
2865 Thornhills  
is a drop-off site  
for new, unwrapped  
toys for

**TOYS FOR TOTS.**

*Happy Holidays  
From Your  
Township  
Board,  
Commissions,  
and  
Office Staff*

## 2003 WINTER TAX BILLS

Winter tax bills were mailed to all property owners during the first week of December. This tax bill is due without penalty by 5:00 p.m. Tuesday, February 17, 2004.

### Procedure For Mailing Tax Payments

1. Mail Early.

Please use the return envelope provided with your tax statement. Payments are receipted on the business day they are physically received in the Treasurer's office. We recommend that you allow seven (7) days for mail handling. The Treasurer's Department is NOT responsible for delays in the postal system.



2. Return Receipt. If you would like a paid receipt returned to you, please mail in your entire bill. We will stamp the top portion of the statement "paid" and return it to you. Please include a self-addressed stamped envelope with your payment.

3. Make checks payable to:

Mary J. Carpenter, CMFA  
Cascade Charter Township

*Late payments which do not include penalty and interest will be applied as a partial payment.*

## WINTER STORAGE OF RECREATIONAL VEHICLES

Cascade Township Ordinance #1 of 1989 regulates the placement of recreational vehicles in residential areas. After November 30, all recreational vehicles stored on residential lots must be located within an enclosed building or behind the front "face" of the house, and at least five feet from any side or rear property lines. On corner lots, vehicles can be stored in the side yard as long as they are located behind the required front yard setback (35 feet in most cases). Vehicles must be stored on property which contains an occupied dwelling and the vehicle must be owned by the occupant of the dwelling.

## CHRISTMAS TREE RECYCLING

Bring your used Christmas tree to the parking lot above the tennis courts at the Cascade Township Park from December 26th to January 11th for recycling. Please remember...trees can be dropped off only during park hours.



Publication Notes.....  
2865 Thornhills Ave SE  
Grand Rapids, MI 49546  
(616) 949-1500  
www.cascadetwp.com

### 2003 Township Board

Michael Julien, Supervisor  
Mickie Kleinheksel, Clerk  
Mary Carpenter, Treasurer  
Robert Timmons, Trustee  
Sandra Frost Parrish, Trustee  
Richard Jones, Trustee  
Ronald Goodyke, Trustee

### Zoning Board of Appeals

Claude Robinson  
Jack Lewis  
Rob Beahan  
Barbara Wilson  
Robert Timmons  
Mel Casey  
Christopher Estes

### Planning Commission

Eric Richards  
John Nuereberg  
Tom McDonald  
Lorissa MacAllister  
Jim Koessel  
Jack Lewis  
Fred Goldberg  
Melissa Erickson  
Richard Jones

### Community Foundation

Mary Carpenter  
Michael Julien  
Jack Lewis  
Sandra Frost Parrish  
Claude Robinson  
Susan Roeder  
Pat Vredevoogd

### Board of Review

Bruce Poppen  
Barb Manus-Averill

Editor: Jeanie Neve  
Deputy Clerk

## CASCADE COMMUNITY FOUNDATION ANNOUNCES NEW MEMBERS

The Cascade Community Foundation is pleased to welcome five new members to its board. Rob Beahan, Carl Kerekes, Bill Green, Michelle Bottrall, and Wendell Christoff will join the original seven members in directing and planning future events for the Community Foundation.

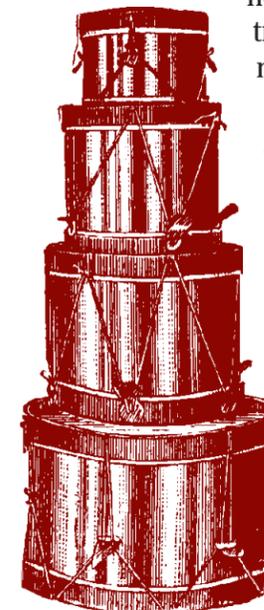


## EAST PRECINCT NEWS

On Saturday, November 9, 2003, at 6:00 p.m., East Precinct officers responded to the Cascade D&W regarding a purse snatching complaint. According to the victim, after leaving Starbucks in the D&W store she was approached by a young white male. Feeling a tug on her purse, she turned and faced the subject as he forcibly yanked her purse from her. The suspect was described as a white male with curly blonde hair wearing a black fleece or sweatshirt. The suspect was last seen running north behind the D&W. Officers, with the help of a tracking dog, recovered the victim's purse on Santiago near Magellan (minus the money).

Anyone having information on this complaint is asked to please contact the Kent County Sheriff's Department at 632-6353, or Lt. Bill Weston at 632-6188.

Always remember.....Purse snatching is a crime of opportunity. When exiting a building be alert and aware of your surroundings. Eye contact is an important deterrent in a crime such as this, as the suspect's worst fear is to be identified. If this should happen to you, be a good witness and leave the apprehension of the subject up to the police.



Lt. Bill Weston



## IMPORTANT HOMESTEAD EXEMPTION CHANGES

Last summer Governor Granholm signed Public Acts 105 and 140 of 2003. These laws make various changes to the administration of the Homestead Exemption and the Qualified Agricultural Property Exemption, both of which are exemptions from the 18 mills of local school operating tax.

The filing deadline for new Homestead Exemptions and Qualified Agricultural Property Exemptions has been changed from May 1st to December 31st. In the past, the day for determining whether a property qualified for the Homestead Exemption was May 1st of the year of the exemption. Starting in assessment year 2004, filing deadline for the Homestead Exemption is December 31st of the prior year. This means that, for 2004 assessments, you must own and occupy your home as your principal residence on or before December 31, 2003. If you own a vacant parcel of land adjacent to your principal residence, you may also claim an exemption on that property.

You will notice in 2004 that all references to the Homestead Exemption will be changed to Homeowner's Principal Residence Exemption. This was done to differentiate it from the homestead exemption available on the State Income Tax form. New forms will be provided by January 1, 2004. The forms will be used for new filings only. Those properties that already have a Homestead Exemption or Qualified Agricultural Exemption do not need to reapply.

New forms for the Homeowner's Principal Exemption and Qualified Agricultural Property Exemption will be available in the Assessor's office or on our website [www.cascadetwp.com](http://www.cascadetwp.com). (Click on "Forms".) If you are interested in reading more about the changes for 2004, a copy of the State Tax Commission's bulletin is available in our office. The assessing staff will be available to answer any questions you may have. Please call 949-6176.

## THANK YOU TO THE HALLOWEEN PARTY SPONSORS

Cascade Township Fire Department would like to send a special thank you to the following businesses and sponsors for their generous donations and contributions to the Halloween party.

Acosta	AmeriSuites	Amoco	Applebee's
Arby's	Bank One	Baseball Card City	Batson & Associates
Best Cleaners	Big Boy	Blackie's TV	Brann's Steakhouse
Carlos O'Kelly's	CarQuest	Cascade Automotive	Cascade Barber Shop
Cascade Car Wash	Cascade Engineering	Cascade Firefighters Assoc.	Chemical Bank West
Citgo	Comerica Bank	Cascade Hospital for Animals	Crowne Plaza
D&W Food Center	David & Lynne Deering	Days Inn	Elan Nutrition
Family Video	Fifth Third Bank	Gordon Food Service	Hampton Inn
Huntington Bank	Impact Collision	Independent Bank	Joe & Beverly Albright
John M Shipley	Kingsland True Value	Koens Auto Body	Libation Station
Mama's Pizza	McDonald's	Meadowbrook Mobil	Medawar Jewelers
Meijer, Inc.	Napa Auto Parts	National City Bank	Northern Jet
Noto's Italian Dining	O'Neill's Body Shop	O'Neill's Transmission	Paradise Bagel
Pepsi	Perkins Restaurant	Powell Moving	Prevo's
Red Roof Inn	Rite Aid	Sam's Club	Sentinel Pointe
Standard Federal	Tuffy Muffler	United Bank	Verburg Automotive
Walgreen's	WalMart	Wiltse & Co	Wolverine Vending

## PAYING YOUR PROPERTY TAXES BY CREDIT CARD

You may now pay your property taxes by credit card. Payments may be made by telephone or on the internet with AMERICAN EXPRESS, DISCOVER, MASTERCARD, and VISA.

To pay by credit card on the internet, simply visit [www.officialpayments.com](http://www.officialpayments.com) and go to the Payment Center link. You will be prompted to enter Jurisdiction Code 3230. You will also be notified of the convenience fee that will be charged based on the amount you are paying. The fee for a tax bill in the amount of \$1,000 would be \$30. The Township does not receive any of this fee.

To pay by credit card over the phone, call Official Payments Corporation toll-free at 1-888 272-9829 and follow the instructions. You will be prompted to enter Jurisdiction Code 3230 on the telephone keypad. When you call, you will be informed of the convenience fee charge based on the amount you are paying. You will be given a confirmation number at the end of the call, which you should keep for your records. Your payment will be effective on the day you make the charge.

Support Your Local Cascade Historical Society

# FOR SALE



## Heirloom Quality Keepsake Afghans \$75 each

Give a Piece of History to Family and Friends

Each afghan is embroidered with Cascade Township's most significant historical sites.

Afghans are 100 percent loomed cotton and machine washable.

Proceeds will help fund construction of the future History Rooms at the Cascade Library.

Five colors available while they last.

Please stop by the Township Offices at 2865 Thornhills SE to make your purchases. Thank you!

## DOG LICENSES

Dog licenses will be available at the Township Offices from  
December 1, 2003  
through  
March 1, 2004.

This year you may purchase or renew a dog license on the internet at [www.kentcounty.org](http://www.kentcounty.org). After March 1st, licenses may be purchased only at the Kent County Treasurer's Office or the Animal Shelter. Bring the post card that you received in the mail from the Health Department along with the rabies certificate and proof of neutering from your veterinarian. License fees for 2004 are as follows:

**Female / Male \$20.00**  
**Unsexed \$ 9.00**

**Citizens over 62 years of age are eligible for a discount.**

## Winter Driving Safety Tips

*It's that time of year again: snow, sleet and ice. Driving in the winter months means traveling on road conditions that could lead to unforeseen dangers.*

### Preparing for winter driving:

1. Before taking any vehicle on the road in the winter, have it tuned up.
2. Test brakes, battery, check fluid levels, and add anti-freeze accordingly.
3. Have emergency equipment such as sand / kitty litter, shovel, ice scraper, jumper cables, blankets, and flashlight with working batteries.
4. Cell phone for emergencies.
5. Keep your fuel tank as full as possible. Condensation will be at a minimum and the added weight will help maximize traction and handling on slick roads.

*Any small problem you had with your car in good weather will be a bigger problem in winter.*

### Safe winter driving tips:

1. Warming up the car: Never warm up the vehicle inside of garage or other closed areas. Pull the vehicle out of the garage and shut garage door to reduce carbon monoxide build up. Have an extra set of keys and lock vehicle to reduce theft and accidents.
2. Frost: Make sure to scrape all frost from windows prior to driving.
3. Snow: Remove all snow from windows, headlights, tail lights, mirrors, and license plate area. It is important that your vehicle is free from snow and ice so you can see and be seen.
4. Dirt/road grime: Dirt and road grime will cover the lenses of your headlights and tail lights, reducing their brightness. When traveling for long periods of time, stop periodically to check these areas.
5. Reduced braking capacity: Remember that you will need to slow down and begin braking much sooner on snow or ice covered roads. Make sure to leave extra space between vehicles for stopping.
6. Watch for slippery bridge decks: Even when the rest of the pavement is in good condition, bridge decks often ice up sooner.
7. 4x4 vehicles: Do not get over confident in your 4x4 vehicle. Remember that your 4x4 vehicle may help you get going quicker but will not help stop any faster. A 4x4 vehicle can lose traction just as fast as a 2-wheel vehicle.

Respect the winter weather by knowing road conditions. Watch the local weather forecasts and listen to the radio while traveling for updated conditions. Allow extra time when traveling. A trip that may take 30 minutes in good weather may take up to an hour in the winter. You may need to cut your speed in half to drive safely when snow/ice conditions exist.

*These tips are designed to alert motorists to some of the most common safety concerns seen on the roadways during the winter.*

Deputy Todd Probst  
Kent County Sheriff's Department

## 2004 BUDGET HIGHLIGHTS

*On October 22, 2003, the Cascade Charter Township board adopted the 2004 Township Operating Budgets.*

*The 2004 budget includes the following:*

- A doubling of residential street asphalt repaving to a total of \$150,000. This is a \$75,000 increase to last year's repaving program.
- An increase of \$40,000 in contribution to the Fire Fund (for a new total of \$400,000) - to maintain 24 hour / 7 day fire protection for our community during 2004.
- The creation of two Cascade Clean-Up Days for the community in the spring and in the fall. The estimated cost is \$25,000.
- An increase in election expense of \$24,000 to hold the required elections in August and November 2004.
- The cost of the above improvements and services will be offset in part by a planned reduction in administrative cost totaling \$46,000.
- All Township employees with medical insurance will pay 10 percent of the cost - as is done by many private sector employers.
- Popular events and programs such as the Yard Waste and "Bag Tag" Program, the Fourth of July Street Fair and Parade and the Gypsy Moth Spraying Program will continue. Combined these events and programs cost \$97,800.
- The Pedestrian Pathway Fund will complete the last segment of the Thornapple River Drive Pathway. This segment goes north of Bridgewater Avenue to the Ada Township line. This project will include a pedestrian bridge across the Thornapple River that will be built in cooperation with the Kent County Road Commission.
- The East Precinct will establish offices near the intersection of Cascade Road and Forest Hill Avenue. This facility will provide a convenient location for residents of Ada Township, Cascade Township and Grand Rapids Township to seek police services during regular business hours.

*The complete 2004 Township Budgets will be available on the township website in mid-December. The website address is [www.cascadetwp.com](http://www.cascadetwp.com).*