



Cascade Connections

Summer 2009

A Newsletter from Cascade Charter Township

OFFICE HOURS

Monday through Friday

8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.

Department Phone Numbers:

Assessing:

949-6176

Building / Inspections:

949-3765

Clerk:

949-1508

Fire:

949-1320

Manager:

949-1500

Planning:

949-0224

Treasurer:

949-6944

Sheriff:

336-3113



CASCADE CELEBRATION!

It's time for the Annual Cascade Township July 4TH Celebration! Begin the celebration with a spectacular fireworks show on Friday, July 3RD. **Please note the fireworks location change—they will be held at 7590 E. Fulton at Ada Drive.**

Continue the festivities on Saturday, July 4TH by watching the parade with antique cars, fire trucks and floats. Following the parade you can enjoy the street fair, where there will be free rides, games and activities for kids of all ages. Come join in the fun with your community!

Please remember that if you are participating in the 4TH of July bike parade and are 14 years and under, you must wear a bike helmet, as per Cascade Township ordinance.



July 4TH Celebration: *Grand Marshal*



The 2009 Grand Marshal for the 4TH of July Celebration is **Mrs. Jane Wood**. Jane will preside over the festivities of our 4TH of July Celebration.

Jane, a resident of Cascade Township for 44 years, was born and raised in Grand Rapids. She and her first husband moved to Kilmer and owned the Standard Station that was located at the corner of Thornapple River Drive and Cascade Road.

In 1975, after the death of her first husband, Jane volunteered with the Operation Santa Claus program. Operation Santa Claus has been in existence for 51 years. Jane has served as the Director of Operation Santa Claus for 34 of those years. The program provides food, clothing and presents for families in the Forest Hills School System.

Since 1982, Jane has served as the Treasurer for ACCESS-SIX (All County Church Emergency Support Systems) and is also in charge of the Second Mile Home, which is the clothing bank for ACCESS-SIX. ACCESS-SIX provides food, clothing and emergency utility and medical bill assistance to needy people referred by a variety of local social service agencies and churches.

Jane has two children, four step children (from her second marriage), 16 grandchildren and 3 great grandchildren. Jane very humbly accepted the position of Grand Marshal. She loves what she does and feels fortunate for the opportunities that she has. She has requested that the community remember these organizations with volunteerism, donations of goods and financial support year around.

Cascade Township, Operation Santa Claus, ACCESS-SIX and the Second Mile Home are very honored to have Mrs. Wood as a resident for the past 44 years. On behalf of Cascade Township, we congratulate Jane Wood as the 2009 Grand Marshal and thank her for her contribution to Cascade Township and the Forest Hills area.

Cascade

Volunteers Needed

Cascade Township has begun planning for the annual 4TH of July parade and street fair activities. This year the event is being held on Saturday, July 4TH.

There is a lot that happens the day of the event to keep it running smoothly. We cannot do it without the help of township staff, the Kent County Sheriff Department and community volunteers.

Cascade Township would like to extend an invitation to individuals of the community, church groups and community organizations to volunteer their time that day. There are numerous areas where help is needed at various times of the day. They are as follows:

Parking Detail 7:30 a.m.-9:30 a.m.

Directs vehicles in various parking areas prior to book sale.

Parade Marshals 9:30 a.m.-12:00 p.m.

Will work along the parade route to keep parade moving and alleviate large gaps.

Parade Route Clean up . 12:00 p.m.-1:30 p.m.

Clean up trash along parade route.

Street Fair “Roamers”. . 11:30 a.m.-3:30 p.m.

Work in “zones” to keep areas clean.

Event Break Down 3:30 p.m.-5:00 p.m.

Helps to break down tables and chairs at event end.

If you are interested in volunteering your time for a few hours or even the day, please contact Stephen Korhorn at 949-1320 or via email at skorhorn@cascadetwp.com. Please indicate which area(s) you are interested in volunteering for and respond by Friday, June 19.

Thank you for your consideration and time.

Parade Float Contest



It's time for the families, neighborhoods and businesses of Cascade to get creative as we head toward another 4TH of July Parade Float Contest. Put your thinking caps on and come up with a unique and fun float to entertain our Cascade Township residents and many visitors who watch the parade.

The float contest has two categories – Family and Neighborhood floats are in one category while Churches, Businesses and other Organizations are in the other. The parade contest has inspired many new neighborhoods to join together to build a float—it has encouraged Churches to use their floats as an outreach tool, and it has inspired just plain FUN for the friends and neighbors who attend the parade.

Prizes!! You are probably wondering—what do I win if I come in first place? The winners in each category win a trophy to keep plus you get to put the “Winner” banner on your float during the parade. In addition, your winning entry photo is on a plaque in the Township offices for the year.

Once again, Pat Vredevoogd of AJS Realty is sponsoring the Float Contest. No sign ups are necessary—just show up at the parade staging area (parking lot of the Forest Hills Administration Building on the corner of Cascade Road and Burton Street) by 8:30 a.m. on the morning of July 4TH and get in line.

This is your Township—This is your parade—Let's make it great with loads of new floats!

Connections

Kent District Library

The Cascade Branch of Kent District Library is ready for another big summer of fun events! Summer Reading Club runs June 8 through August 15. Our theme this year is Be Creative @ Your Library.

- Programs for young children include story times, movies and crafts and music programs.
- School age children can participate in Ruff Readers (dogs and kids reading together), art and music programs, a summer carnival, magic show and lots of other fun events!
- Teens will have weekly opportunities to Express Yourself @ Your Library.

Details can be found at www.kdl.org/events or by calling the branch, 616-647-3850.

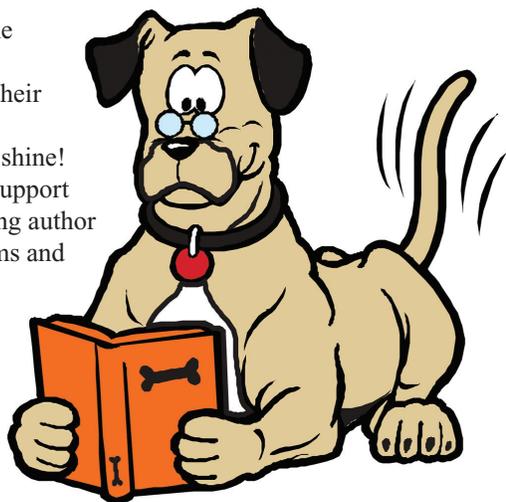
Adults have a unique opportunity for extra computer time and help with our Job Searching Open Computer Lab and Open Computer Practice Labs. Call the branch for details, 616-647-3850.

The Michigan Community Blood Center will be holding a Blood Drive on July 27.

The Michigan Education Trust will be hosting a community enrollment on August 21 to start a college savings program.

Summer activities have you running hither and yon? Ask about the library's 24/7 Pick Up Lockers for after hours pick up for library materials.

And last but not least, the Friends of the Cascade Library will be hosting their 37TH Annual Used Book Sale on July 4TH, rain or shine! Proceeds from the sale support library activities including author visits, children's programs and other great services.



Gigantic Annual Used Book Sale

Sponsored by the Friends of the Cascade Library



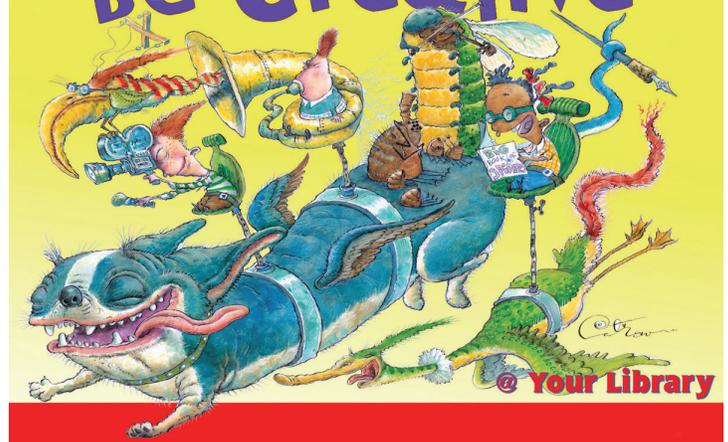
July 4

8:30 a.m.—3:30 p.m. (rain or shine)

Cascade Library

2870 Jacksmith Ave. SE

Be Creative



Cascade

From the Assessor's Office...

PRINCIPAL RESIDENCE EXEMPTION ...

Check your tax bill

Summer tax bills will be mailed the first week of July. Check immediately to be sure you have received the principal residence exemption. If you have a 100% exemption, the tax amount on the "School Operating" line will be "-0-".

If you purchased a new home or one that was previously a non-homestead property, you must have owned and occupied it as your primary residence on or before **May 1, 2009** to receive the exemption on your 2009 tax bills. If you have purchased a piece of vacant land that is contiguous to your principle residence, the vacant parcel is also eligible for the principal residence exemption.

If you qualify for the exemption and it is not reflected on your summer tax bill, **call the Assessing Department at 949-6176 before July 13, 2009** so the correction can be made before the tax bill is due.



Summer 2009 Tax Information

Summer 2009 tax bills and informational notices will be mailed July 1ST. Summer taxes are due on or before September 14TH, 2009. If you do not receive a tax statement during July, please check the township's website or call the Treasurer's office at 949-6944. Please use the return envelope provided with your tax statement. Payments are receipted on the same business day they are received. We recommend that you allow 7 days to ensure timely delivery.

The Summer Tax Deferment allows qualifying taxpayers to pay summer taxes after they receive a property tax credit refund from the State of Michigan. To qualify for this deferment, your household income must not exceed \$40,000, and you must be either 62 years or older; a paraplegic, quadriplegic, totally disabled; blind; a serviceperson, veteran or widow or widower of a veteran. Deferment application forms are available in the Treasurer's Office through September 14TH. ***The deferment period covers only one year, so you must reapply each year.***

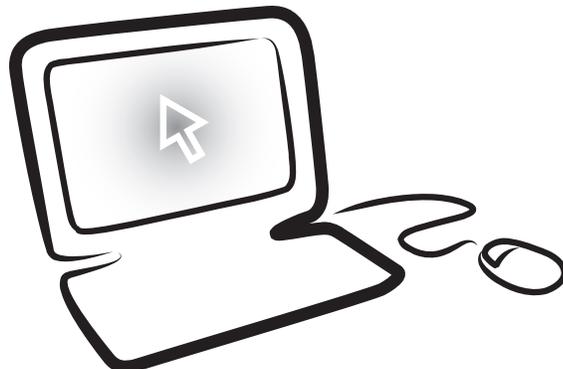
You may check property taxes 24/7 with a link from the Township's website www.cascadetwp.com.

Instructions for link on web site are:

- Departments
- Treasurer's Office
- Tax & Assessing and Building Information
- BS & A** "please click here" link
- Current Tax Search

Click in box marked Parcel Number (you may also search by name or street). Click "Search" when criteria entered for your inquiry.

Click on Parcel Number (This will give you history of the parcel. Click on (+) sign for detail of history.



Connections

ANNUAL CASCADE TOWNSHIP LUNCH FOR SENIORS

Monday, August 10, 2009

We hope you will be able to attend our annual luncheon, hosted by Cascade Township, in cooperation with Jean Kubiszewski of the Forest Hills Senior Center.

This event is intended to provide an opportunity for our senior citizens to mingle, relax and reminisce. Lunch is provided by Cascade Township at no charge, but space is limited so we need your reservations as soon as possible (we can only accept the first 100 registrations).

To register, either call 493-8950 or stop in at the Forest Hills Senior Center. Call Ron Goodyke, Cascade Township Clerk at 949-1500 if you have questions.

Here are all the details you need:

Who: Cascade Township Seniors

What: Annual luncheon (serving assorted breads, meats and cheeses, potato salad, pasta salad, baked beans, fresh fruit, coffee/punch and dessert)

When: August 10, 2009 at noon

Where: Wisner Center at the Cascade Library, located at 2870 Jacksmith just one block south off 28th Street

We look forward to a fun time with entertainment again provided by Tom and Sherry Hagen; please make your reservations soon.

Please note the day is Monday. The usual day, Tuesday, was not available at the Wisner Center. We look forward to seeing you there.

Changing Township Scenes

This small building was built in the 1800's and stands at the intersection of Cascade Road and Thornapple River Drive. Through the years it has been a grocery store under the name of Yates, Watterson and Buttrick. It has also seen use as a flower shop and mower/repair center. When 3.2 beer was introduced in 1932, this building served as a tavern. In the years during which it was a grocery store, it was also the center of activity on Saturdays nights as villagers gathered around the pot bellied stove until 11 or 12 p.m. to visit and spin yarns. The first gas pump in the village was located here. Electricity for the store and the house next door was provided by the village's first power plant, which was housed in the basement. When the two roads were changed in the 1920's, the building was moved closer to the road and 50 feet nearer to the river. This building is now the corner anchor of Cascade Pointe mini mall, which houses offices and shops. This building now is home to the Gathering Place restaurant which opened in October of 1988. What a fitting name given the life and use of this old building.



East Precinct News...

Sheriff Stelma wants Kent County residents to stay safe on the water this summer by performing a vessel safety check now.

“While most people are aware that they need to keep their automobiles in good running order, it sometimes doesn't occur to them to check their boats before the season gets underway,” said Sheriff Stelma.

Sheriff Stelma recommends boat owners take the following steps for vessel safety:

- Check the condition of your life jackets. Make sure that there is one properly fitting life jacket for every person on board and that they are in good condition. Check for discoloration, dry rot, and mildew; popped seams and tears in the fabric; and that the straps, buckles, and zippers still work.
- Check your equipment to make sure it is in good working order. This includes items like your visual distress signals, sound-producing devices, navigation lights, bilge pumps, ventilation blowers, and fire extinguishers.
- Check to make sure your navigation charts are on board and updated to the most current conditions.

Sheriff Stelma encourages boat owners have the Coast Guard perform a free vessel safety check. Vessel examiners will check the boat for mechanical safety as well verifying the proper safety equipment is on board and offering recommendations on how to best outfit vessels to comply with federal and state laws and regulations.

“By taking the proper precautions now, you can prevent tragedy later,” said Sheriff Stelma. “Take personal responsibility for your safety in order to enjoy a summer on the water.”

Cascade

Septic Systems in Cascade Township

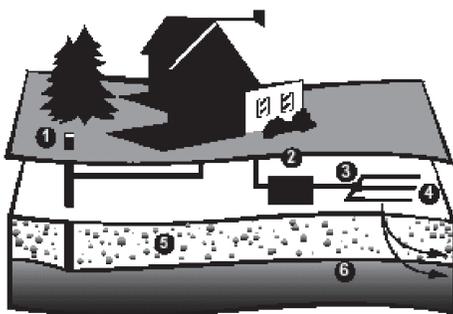
Did you know that just over 75% of the homes in Cascade Township use on-site septic systems to dispose of their wastewater? One of the main differences between a house with an on-site disposal system and a house hooked up to a public sewer system is that the homeowner is responsible to maintain the on-site septic system. That's why homeowners need to know the proper ways to use and maintain their septic systems in order for them to last. *Kent County Health Department officials have indicated that all septic systems will fail at some point in time. At the point of failure (sewage on the ground surface or backups in the house) it is often necessary to replace the absorption field. If you suspect a failure, the Kent County Health Department (632-6900) can offer assistance to determine needed repairs.*

What should not go through your septic system?

The following substances should not be put in the septic system: Cooking grease, oils, or fats; Pesticides; Paints; Solvents; Disinfectants; Septic tank additives, cleansers, or yeast. Cooking grease, oils or fats should be placed in a container and put in household garbage. Pesticides, paints, paint thinners, solvents, disinfectants and other household chemicals are toxic substances that threaten ground water quality. There is no such thing as a safe and effective septic system additive and most harm your system.

What else do I need to do to manage my septic system?

- Conserve water use to avoid overloading your septic system.
- Your septic system is not a trash can, so treat it that way. Using your garbage disposal or depositing napkins, tampons, plastics, cat litter, or other solids is detrimental to your systems operation.
- Have your septic system inspected every 1-2 years and pumped periodically (usually every 3-5 years) by a licensed inspector/contractor.
- Know where your septic system is and do not drive or park heavy vehicles or build over it. This can compact the soil and crush your system.
- Know how your septic system works and keep records of repairs, pumpings, inspections, and other maintenance activities.



- 1 drinking water well
- 2 septic tank
- 3 distribution box
- 4 absorption field
- 5 soil absorption (unsaturated zone)
- 6 groundwater (saturated zone)

Following these steps are keys to keeping your septic system a safe and economical method for treating and disposing of your wastewater onsite.

Garlic Mustard Pull



The 1ST annual Garlic Mustard Pull was held at the new natural area in Cascade Township on April 30TH. Cascade Township showed great leadership in coming together to keep this beautiful property from development. The excellent turnout for the garlic mustard eradication workday (despite the rain), demonstrates your commitment to the continued protection of the natural values of the property. Great job Cascade!

Melanie Good

*Land Conservancy of West Michigan,
Stewardship Coordinator*



Connections

TOWNSHIP REVENUES CUT BY STATE

By Bill Cousins, Township Manager

The State cut revenues paid to local communities on May 5TH in an effort to balance the State budget. Three things are troubling about this action: 1) The state cuts to locals in order to balance their budget pass on the money trouble to the place where residents notice government the most—right in their hometowns; 2) The cuts break a pledge by the state to provide funding to local governments to service residents; and, 3) these cuts come ½ way through our fiscal year which creates a huge difficulty trying to revise our local spending without cutting services.

Revenue Sharing in Michigan came about as a result of the passage of Proposal A in 1994. Taxes paid to the state (mostly in the form of sales tax) are ‘shared’ with local governments to provide reasonable funding for essential services. After Prop. A, local governments were also limited in the amount of taxes able to be collected locally. The revenue sharing payments were pledged to bridge the gap for locals. This worked fairly well until the state started to have money issues. In the last seven years, local governments have seen the revenue sharing dollars reduced by over 3 billion dollars. Cascade Township has lost about 5.2 million dollars over this time.

Revenue Sharing by the State of Michigan appears to have changed from fulfilling an intergovernmental agreement to merely being another line item in the state budget. The cut this month is 4.1 million dollars without any consideration for the effect on local governments. You may have read about layoffs of police officers and fire fighters across the state. Did you know that there are 4,000 fewer of these public safety personnel on the streets of Michigan than in 2001?

Cascade Township has been fortunate—we have weathered the cuts from the state due to willingness from the residents to fund our basic public safety services through special millages. And, we in the township government have been good at finding ways to continue to provide services in time of fewer dollars of revenue. We have consolidated police services with neighboring communities. We coordinate fire training and services with surrounding townships, cities and airport. We are in the process of creating “automatic aid” (a neighboring department will respond to a fire as if it were in their community when the initial alarm is sounded) agreements to further improve our response time and level of service for our residents. This also helps to reduce our own costs for personnel and equipment.

The cities, villages and townships in Michigan are where the “essentials” of our lives are found. Whether it is a vibrant downtown and nightlife, an array of shopping opportunities on 28TH Street, a sound employment base, a quiet suburban neighborhood, or an active recreation area, it is the personality of our local communities that draws people to our state. The state cuts to our local funding not only have a negative effect on services, it also poses the problem of being able to succeed at competing globally to keep the local talent in Michigan when our streets and parks fall into disrepair, libraries close and the public’s safety is diminished.

Cascade will survive. We are doing everything we can to keep you safe and keep the community in a position to compete for jobs and talent. Please help us by reminding our state legislators that the economic resurgence of Michigan is going to happen right here in the local community—we must have the resources to be able to make this happen.



Cascade Charter Township

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Township Board

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Trustee Cindy Fox
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Trustee Jack Lewis
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Trustee Fred Goldberg
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Attention: Dog Owners

Please remember there is an ordinance regarding leashes and cleaning up after your dog. The ordinance states that all dogs on public or private property other than their own shall be controlled and on a leash not exceeding twenty (20) feet in length at all times. It goes on to state that any person shall not permit a dog to commit a nuisance within the Township by defecating upon any public or private property without the consent of the owner or person in lawful occupation of such property. Remember to clean up after your dog. These ordinance violations are a misdemeanor and could result in a fine. If you would like to read this ordinance in its entirety, feel free to visit our website at www.cascadetwp.com.

Pedestrian Pathway Etiquette

Cascade Township maintains approximately 17 miles of pedestrian pathways for Township residents to enjoy. However, for the comfort and safety of pathway users, please remember the following:

- Always clean up after your dog.
- Walk, run or cycle on the right side of the trail in the direction you are going. Pass on the left.
- If you are on a bicycle or rollerblades and are approaching a pedestrian from the rear, please use common courtesy when passing.
- Remember that cyclers 14 years and under are required to wear a helmet.



**Cascade
Connections**