



Cascade Connections

Spring 2010

A Newsletter from Cascade Charter Township

OFFICE HOURS

Monday through Friday

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

Department Phone Numbers:

Manager:

Bill Cousins 949-1500
bcousins@cascadetwp.com

Assessing:

Roger McCarty 949-6176
rmccarty@cascadetwp.com

Building / Grounds:

Amy Waugh 682-4836
awaugh@cascadetwp.com

Building Inspections:

Butch Visser 949-3765
bvisser@cascadetwp.com

Clerk:

Ron Goodyke 949-1508
rgoodyke@cascadetwp.com

Fire:

John Sigg 949-1320
jsigg@cascadetwp.com

Planning:

Steve Peterson 949-0224
speterson@cascadetwp.com

Treasurer:

Ken Peirce 949-6944
kpeirce@cascadetwp.com

Sheriff / Non-Emergency:

632-6100

East Precinct Office:

632-6394

YARD WASTE PICK UP PROGRAM

SPRING 2010

Purchase Yard Waste Tags at the reception desk of the Township Offices from 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m., Monday through Friday.

Tags are \$1.00 each

Pick up will be every Monday

From April 5th through May 3rd

- Please have your yard waste near the curb by 6:00 a.m. to assure pick up.
- Place a tag on each bag of leaves or bundle of branches. (No grass clippings, dirt, sod, cement, sand or rocks please).
- Please use 30 gal. plastic bags or paper yard waste bags.
- Sticks should be no longer than 4 feet in length and branches, logs and stumps are not to exceed 1 inch in diameter.

Residents 62 years of age and older and residents with disabilities will receive 20 tags FREE per calendar year!

This service is only available in the restricted burn area.

The yard waste dumpsters will be available behind the Thornhills Fire Station April 22nd, 23rd, 24th & 25th.

For more information, please call 949-1500.

Note: If you have tags left over from last spring or fall and you intend to use them, please contact the Township Office so your address can be added to the pickup list.

MEMORIAL DAY PROGRAM

THE VETERAN'S OF CASCADE TOWNSHIP ARE PLANNING A MEMORIAL DAY PROGRAM ON MONDAY, MAY 31st AT THE CASCADE LIBRARY, 2870 JACKSMITH DRIVE. JOIN THEM AT 10:00 A.M. TO HONOR VETERANS OF ALL WARS AND CONFLICTS.

SPRING CLEAN UP DAY

Cascade Township is offering a spring clean up day this year in conjunction with Ada Township. The spring clean up day will be held on Saturday, May 8th from 8:00 a.m. to 2:30 p.m. at the Kent County Road Commission building at the end of Fase Street in Ada Township.

Any resident of Cascade Township (you must show your driver's license) is welcome to bring trash, household items or yard waste. Appliances are welcome, however, the Freon must be removed prior to dropping the appliance off or you may be charged. No household hazard waste products will be accepted. For household hazardous waste disposal, please contact the Kent County Department of Public Works at 336-2570.

In The Image will have a truck available at Leonard Field for the collection of household goods and Shred Docs will have a truck available for document shredding.

If you have any questions regarding spring clean up, feel free to contact Sandra Otey at 949-1500 or by email at sotey@cascadetwp.com.

Help Us Shred Cancer!



**Saturday, May 1st
8:00 - 11:00am**

Cascade's Family Fare Plaza

Bring your papers to be shredded on site!
\$5.00 per box donation recommended.
All donations benefit The American Cancer Society

Event Sponsored by:



PRINCIPAL RESIDENCE REMINDER

The deadline for qualifying for the Principal Residence Exemption is coming up. If you own and occupy a residential property as your primary residence, it qualifies for the Principal Residence Exemption (PRE).

Cascade residents who have moved in the past year should update their Principal Residence Exemption status. When you occupy a new home that is your primary residence, you should file a **HOMEOWNER'S PRINCIPAL RESIDENCE EXEMPTION AFFIDAVIT** form to obtain the exemption for the property. May 1st is the deadline to own and occupy the home to be eligible to claim the exemption for the current year. Property owners who move in after May 1st will have their exemption request activated in their name the following year. If the property already has an exemption, the prior owners exemption will stay active for the rest of the year. You do not need to reapply each year. Once you have a PRE, it continues until there is a change in ownership or the status of the property.

When a property is no longer your principal residence, you must file a **REQUEST TO RESCIND HOMEOWNER'S PRINCIPAL RESIDENCE EXEMPTION** form with the City or Township you had the exemption in. The exemption will be rescinded for the year following the change. For example, if a property stopped being your principal residence in 2009, the exemption will be removed for 2010.

A change in the law last year allows some homeowners to have two homesteads for a period of time. If you have moved to a new residence for which you have received a PRE, you may be able to continue the principal residence exemption on the old home for up to three years while you sell it. For details, check the Michigan Department of Treasury website or stop down to the Assessor Office. We have details on eligibility requirements and the form to fill out.

The Principal Residence Exemption Program is a State program administered by the Michigan Department of Treasury. Cascade Township sends the PRE forms it receives to the Treasury Department PRE section. They update their database and monitor for duplicate exemptions. The Department of Treasury has the ultimate decision as to the validity of an exemption.

The Principal Residence Exemption reduces your taxes. It does not change your assessment or taxable value. Properties with an exemption do not pay the School Operating Millage tax. This reduces the millage rate by 9 mills on the summer and 9 mills on the winter tax bills.

There are several ways to confirm whether you have the exemption. The last tax bill will indicate the PRE percentage and show if school-operating millage is being charged. The **CHANGE OF ASSESSMENT NOTICE** you received in February listed whether you had an exemption. You may also check on our website or stop down to the Assessor Office.

Property owners who discover their exemption status is wrong may request the July or December Board of Review correct it. The Board may add or remove an exemption for the current year and three prior years. If you do not have a Principal Residence Exemption and believe you qualify, contact the Assessors Office at 949-6176.

Identity Theft Prevention

- Place the contents of your wallet on a photocopy machine. Copy both sides of each license, credit card, etc. Place the photocopy in a safe place. Now you will know what you had in your wallet and all of the account numbers and phone numbers to call and cancel in the event your wallet is lost or stolen.
- If you order checks have only your initials (instead of first name and last name) put on them. If someone takes your checkbook, they will not know if you sign your checks with just your initials or your first name, but your bank will know how you sign your checks.
- Never have your Social Security number printed on your checks.
- If you write checks to pay on your credit card accounts, DO NOT write the complete account number on the "For" line. Instead, just put the last four numbers. The credit card company knows the rest of the number, and anyone who might be handing your check as it passes through all the check processing channels won't have access to it.
- Do not sign the back of your credit cards. Instead, put "PHOTO ID REQUIRED".

In the event your wallet is lost or stolen:

- File a police report immediately in the jurisdiction where your credit cards, etc., were stolen. This is a first step toward an investigation. Have all information related to the stolen items ready for the officer, ie. card numbers, etc.
- Call the national credit reporting organizations immediately to place a fraud alert on your name and Social Security number. The fraud alert means that any company who checks your credit is advised your information was stolen, and they have to contact you by phone to authorize new credit.

The national credit reporting organizations are:

Equifax: 1-800-525-6285

Experian (formerly TRW): 1-888-397-3742

Trans Union: 1-800-680-7289

Social Security Administration (fraud line):
1-800-269-0271

Connections

Census 2010

The Census Bureau undertakes the count of every person residing in the United States, as mandated by Article 1, Section 2 of the U.S. Constitution. The stakes are high; an accurate count of the local population helps to ensure that your community receives its fair share of federal funding. This funding includes resources for services, such as health care, education and roads.

Residents must complete and mail back their census forms between March 15, 2010 and April 15, 2010. The 2010 Census questionnaire is one of the shortest in history – just 10 questions that only take about 10 minutes to complete.

For more information about Census 2010, contact Ron Goodyke, Township Clerk, at 949-1500 or go to www.michigan.gov/census2010.

Roundabout—Open House

Please note...

The Township will be holding an open house to answer questions and receive input regarding the idea of constructing a roundabout at Cascade Rd. and 28th Street. The open house will be held on Wednesday, April 21 from 5:30-7:00 p.m. at the Wisner Center.



Cascade Road at 28th Street
conceptual roundabout | perspective

progressive

Passport News

WESTERN HEMISPHERE TRAVEL INITIATIVE

This law requires a passport book, passport card or other travel documents approved by the U.S. government for land and sea ports of entry to the United States from Canada, Mexico and the Caribbean.

FEE INCREASES ARE PROPOSED

Watch the news for a proposal to increase passport fees. Fees for U.S. Passport Books, Passport Cards and Renewal of Passports will all be affected by this rule change. There will be a public notice indicating the date the new fees go into effect. If you intend to apply for a new Passport, be sure to act before the rates increase.

Cascade Township is a passport application acceptance agency. We are open daily Monday – Friday from 8:00 am to 4:00 pm (no appointment necessary) for the execution of passport applications. We have all the necessary forms to accommodate your application.

There are some important items needed:

- **Proof of citizenship**
- **Current photo I.D.**
- **2 passport photos**
- **Appropriate fees**

Please note, children under 16 must be accompanied by both parents. Fees must be paid by check (please bring 2 checks). Cash or credit cards cannot be used (the mandated fees are the same no matter where you apply for your passport). A driver's license is best for I.D. Your "official" birth certificate must be submitted with the application as proof of citizenship. It will be returned with your new passport. Expired passports must also be submitted with the application.

Feel free to call the Cascade Township Office (949-1500) if you have further questions or concerns.

Cascade

From the Supervisor...

Thanks to the vision, dedication, and hard work of numerous Cascade Township residents, staff, and volunteers, Cascade now has two new natural parks open to the public.

The first park is 78 acres located between the ends of Burton Street and Windcrest. This property was acquired as a result of the millage passed in November of 2008. For now, temporary access to the park land is available through the entrance at the end of Windcrest. Parking is also temporarily available at the end of Windcrest until dedicated parking at that location and off of Burton are constructed in the coming months. Portions of this property were previously used residentially and much of the interior fencing has already been removed allowing hiking access to all areas of the 78 acres.

The other park is Cascade Peace Park, 198 acres located at 8900 Grand River Avenue and the southeast end of Bolt.

These 198 acres of undeveloped land were identified by Cascade Township as an environmentally important area to preserve due to the numerous natural features such as wetlands, the Grand River floodplain, mature forests, open meadows, wildlife (including rare species such as Yellow-billed Cuckoo, Hooded Warbler, Kentucky Warbler, and Eastern Box Turtle), steep topography and scenic views.

Cascade Peace Park will be used as a natural park that will provide natural resource preservation, hiking, limited hunting, cross-country skiing, snowshoeing, bird watching, and similar outdoor recreation activities.

The name Peace Park was suggested by Charlie and Sara Homeyer, who were the generous lead donors in creating our Open Space Fund. Creating the Open Space Fund set the groundwork for the acquisition of land for preservation and public use. The name Peace Park is inspired by Wendell Berry's poem "The Peace of Wild Things":

*When despair for the world grows in me
And I wake in the night at every sound
In fear for what my life and children's lives may be,
I go lie down where the wood drake rests in his beauty on the water,
And the great heron feeds.
I come into the peace of wild things
Who do not task their lives with forethought of grief.
Ah, I come into the presence of still water.
And I feel above me the daybright stars waiting with their light.
For a time I rest in the midst of the world and am free.*

The acquisition of this land was a cooperative effort of the Cascade Charter Township Board, The Nature Conservancy, and the Michigan Department of Natural Resources Trust Fund.

Formal dedication of both parks will be in the coming months and announced on the Township website. Rules and regulations are also posted there. In the meantime, I urge everyone to take advantage of these two great parks and enjoy a hike in the great outdoors.

From the Manager's Desk...

The Township Manager has asked that residents please refrain from feeding the deer. Below is some information from the Michigan Department of Natural Resources article A Review of Deer Management in Michigan, September, 2009:

As deer have lost their inhibitions of humans and densely populated areas, they have taken advantage of an environment that provides sufficient cover, an abundance of food, and freedom from natural and human predators (recreational hunters). Increasing numbers of urban car-deer accidents and excessive damage to landscaping are the most common problems associated with deer in these settings. In addition, concerns of disease associated with an abundant deer population living so closely with humans (e.g. bovine tuberculosis, Lyme disease) also arise.

Many people enjoy feeding deer in urban/suburban areas to increase viewing opportunities. This may attract deer to unwanted areas, especially during winter months. Feeding deer can also lead to crowding and increased potential for disease transmission. Inappropriate feeding locations can induce deer to cross roads, increasing the potential of vehicle accidents. The feeding of deer is prohibited in Michigan's LP.

For more information from this report, please click on this link: http://www.michigan.gov/documents/dnre/WLD_Deer_Mgmt_Plan_Appendix_D-A_Review_of_Deer_Management_in_Michigan_310657_7.pdf.

Please note that the city is moving forward to propose projects for possible stimulus funding including the following projects for Cascade:

- **Thornapple River North Crossing water line,**
- **Kraft/60th water main extension,**
- **A Southeast Elevated Storage tank on Patterson Avenue**
- **A Southeast Tank Watermain**

The City will hold a public hearing April 5th and will act on the proposal shortly thereafter.

Connections

Garlic Mustard: A growing problem

Have you noticed the beautiful spring wildflowers like trilliums and wild geraniums are slowly disappearing from our natural areas? Replacing these native gems is a plant that is sweeping across the Midwest, destroying the natural landscape as it goes. This terrible weed is called garlic mustard. From its unexciting appearance one would not guess its insidious nature. But, for those who have battled on the front lines of this invasion, the destructive powers of this plant are irrefutable.

What is the problem?

Among the many invasive plants, garlic mustard stands out with its ability to destroy our natural lands. Its competitive nature quickly transforms a diverse Michigan forest ecosystem into a sea of garlic mustard. One of the main ways garlic mustard competes is by changing the soil in which our native plants grow. By eliminating an important fungus that lives in our Michigan soils, it creates an environment that our native plants cannot grow. Even the tall trees that tower above the garlic mustard, are affected by its invasion. Scientists have recently shown that garlic mustard invasions significantly impact the growth of a tree, thereby decreasing timber harvest.

But for most of us, it is the disappearance of the beautiful spring wildflowers that affect us the most. Within a few years a forest floor of trilliums, trout lilies and other spring wildflowers can disappear, along with the animals that use them.

What to do?

Take action! If you find a small patch of garlic mustard in your yard or favorite natural area-PULL IT! First, you should make sure you are identifying it correctly. There are a few plants that do look similar. Once you have correctly identified the plant and received permission from the land owner, remove the plant as quickly as possible and continue removing the plants in subsequent years until it is gone from that location. It only takes a few years for a small patch of garlic mustard take over an area.

If you find a small patch of plants that has never gone to seed (less than two years old), you may be able to get rid of the patch in one year by pulling the plants before any of them go to seed. If there is evidence that some of the plants produced seed the previous year, it may take five or more years of pulling at that location to eliminate the garlic mustard due to the seeds in the seed bank.

If you have a patch too large for hand pulling, herbicides might be the only answer. Since garlic mustard is often found in wet areas, make sure you are following label directions and use wetland approved herbicide if necessary.

The most important thing to remember is to remove all flowering plants every year before they go to seed. If you miss just one year or just a few plants, you will be back to square one. Garlic mustard is

a biennial. Therefore, within a few years of working on an outbreak, progress can be made. It is also critical you bag any plants that you pull because even out of the ground, the plant will continue to produce seeds. It takes at least five years of pulling and monitoring to ensure a population is actually gone.

There are a few means of disposing of garlic mustard. Recently, a state-wide organization, the Stewardship Network, received permission to have people throw bagged garlic mustard in with their normal trash as long as they explain that it is an invasive species. You can contact the Stewardship Network at www.stewardshipnetwork.org to find out more (plus find out more about the state-wide competition to eradicate garlic mustard). But do not compost the plants! Most compost piles do not reach a temperature that will kill the garlic mustard seeds.

Help keep our natural lands beautiful by stopping the spread of this destructive invasive plant.

Cascade Township will be holding a garlic mustard pull on Thursday, April 29 from 6:30 to 8:00 p.m. Please meet at the 8900 Grand River Avenue entrance at Cascade Peace Park.

From our Neighbor...

Ada Parks & Recreation Department is offering a wide range of programs this spring and summer. For details, contact the Ada Parks office by phone at 616-676-0520, email mfitzpatrick@adatownshipmi.com or their web site: www.adatownshipmi.com.



Cascade

March 19, 2010

Dear Community Member,

Each year the Cascade community hosts a variety of activities to celebrate our Nation's Independence. Attached is sponsorship information regarding this year's Independence Day Activities, which include a number of opportunities to show your support for the community.

In years past, several thousand people have participated in the festivities throughout the day. The parade through the village brings people to line the streets of this community and cheer on over 100 parade entries. After the parade, people gather at the street fair to enjoy live entertainment, food and festivities. All the day's festivities are planned by Cascade Charter Township.

This year, the event will be held on Saturday, July 3rd, 2010. With your support we can continue to provide the community with this patriotic celebration. We have enclosed detailed information regarding a variety of sponsor levels, including ways your family and friends can get involved by volunteering time throughout the day.

The print deadline for sponsorships is Friday, May 7, 2010. We will accept sponsorship money after May 7; however, your name will not be included in the newsletter or on the flyers.

Thank you for your time and we look forward to hearing back from you! If you have any additional questions, feel free to check our website at www.cascadetwp.com, or you may contact me at (616) 949-1320 or via email at skorhorn@cascadetwp.com.

Sincerely,
Cascade Charter Township

Stephen W. Korhorn

Stephen W. Korhorn
4th of July Coordinator



Happy 4th of July

Connections

Independence Day Activities Sponsorship Opportunities

Saturday, July 3rd, 2010

Cascade Charter Township

\$10,000 Dynamite Sponsors:

Includes everything offered at the Rocket Sponsor Level &:

- Billing as "Cascade 4th of July presented by Company Name"
- Picnic Area
- Receive 20 meal tickets for lunch!

- Display area at Event (includes 10x10 tent, chairs and tables)

\$1,000 Fire Cracker Sponsors:

Includes everything offered at the Sparkler Sponsor Level &:

- Banner Sponsoring an Event or Attraction

\$5,000 Rocket Sponsors:

Includes everything offered at the Fire Cracker Level &:

- Logo or Name on Event T-shirts
 - Your organization will receive 20 complimentary shirts

\$300.00 Sparkler Sponsors:

- Name in Newsletter
- Name on Website
- Name on Flyer

Yes! Count on me as a Sponsor for the 2010 Independence Day Activities!

SPONSORSHIP DEADLINE: MAY 7, 2010

OFFICE USE ONLY: Date Received: _____ Processed Date: _____ By: _____ Amount: _____

Once form is received, your name will be added to all publications listed at the level of your sponsorship pending the information is received prior to the print deadlines.

**PLEASE MAIL TO: CASCADE CHARTER TOWNSHIP 4TH OF JULY, 2865 THORNHILLS AVE. SE,
GRAND RAPIDS, MI 49546**

NAME: _____ E-MAIL ADDRESS: _____

CONTACT PERSON: _____ PHONE: _____ FAX: _____

ADDRESS: _____ CITY/STATE/ZIP: _____

- Yes! I would like to be a Dynamite sponsor and make a \$10,000 donation.
- Yes! I would like to be a Rocket sponsor and make a \$5,000 donation.
- Yes! I would like to be a Firecracker sponsor and make a \$1,000 donation.
- Yes! I would like to be a Sparkler sponsor and make a \$300 donation.

- Yes! I would like to make a donation. Amount Enclosed: \$_____

- Yes! I would like to volunteer! Please call me with details.

Payment Method: Cash Check (Make payable to Cascade Township)

****Please Note: All sponsorships are tax deductible***

Cascade Charter Township

2865 Thornhills Ave SE
Grand Rapids MI 49546
phone: 616.949.1500
fax: 616.949.3918
www.cascadetwp.com

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Township Board

Supervisor Rob Beahan
rbeahan@cascadetwp.com
Clerk Ron Goodyke
rgoodyke@cascadetwp.com
Treasurer Ken Peirce
kpeirce@cascadetwp.com
Trustee Jim Koessel
jkoessel@cascadetwp.com
Trustee Cindy Fox
cfox@cascadetwp.com
Trustee Jack Lewis
jlewis@cascadetwp.com
Trustee Fred Goldberg
fgoldberg@cascadetwp.com

Pathway News...

Fellow good citizens of Cascade, spring is upon us and that mean only one thing, at least only one thing to me, time to clean up our bike and walking paths. It only takes a few moments of your time as you begin to get out and use the trail systems. If you see trash, pick it up; make a civic project out of picking up trash, whatever gets you motivated. My wife and I have picked up the trail on Cascade road several times during the winter and will be at it anew this spring. As always, I can't tell you all how much I appreciate your participation in the endeavor. See you in the spring. Remember, keep Cascade beautiful.

Kris Taylor
Pathways Coordinator

Healthy Lawns and Gardens

Healthy lawn and garden practices can save homeowners time and money and promote a beautiful landscape. You can help prevent pollution of nearby streams and lakes by following these healthy lawn and garden tips.

1. Select native plants suited for the site and climate conditions.
2. Mow your grass at a high setting and leave the grass clippings on the lawn.
3. Mix grass clippings with leaves and soil to make a backyard compost pile.
4. Use mulch (shredded leaves, grass clippings, or compost) to control weeds, retain moisture, and build fertile soils.
5. Reduce the use of insecticides, herbicides, and other chemicals on your lawn or garden.
6. Select a no-phosphorus or low-phosphorus fertilizer.



**Cascade
Connections**