



CASCADE CONNECTIONS

A NEWSLETTER FROM CASCADE CHARTER TOWNSHIP



Celebrate.

Remember.

Fight Back.

AMERICAN CANCER SOCIETY

Relay For Life

May 20 - 21, 2 p.m.-2 p.m.
Cascade Township Library Lawn
Support the Cascade Firefighters Association

TEAM HOSERS

GARAGE SALE

April 14, 15, & 16
7801 30th Street

We will pick up your donations and provide a receipt for the value items sell for!

PANCAKE BREAKFAST

Cascade Applebee's
Saturday, April 9th, 8 a.m.-10 a.m.
\$5 kids / \$8 adults

For more event information contact the Fire Department
949-1320

Team Hosers



YARD WASTE PICK UP PROGRAM SPRING 2011

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 4 through May 2

- 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 28, 29, 30 and May 1.

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 30th 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 7th 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 Korhorn at 949-1500 or by email at sandra@cascadetwp.com.



The CBA will again be hosting a document shredding event on Saturday, April 30th from 9:00 a.m.-12:00 noon at the Family Fare Plaza on the corner of 28th Street and Cascade Road. Bring your papers to be shredded on site! \$5.00 per box donation is recommended to benefit The American Cancer Society, although is not required. Shredding services provided by West Michigan Document Shredding.



To stay informed, become a fan of Cascade Business Association on Facebook!

Office Hours:

Monday through Friday
8:00 a.m. - 5:00 p.m.

Department Phone Numbers:**Manager:**

Bill Cousins; 949-1500
bcousins@cascadetwp.com

Assessing:

Roger McCarty; 949-6176
roger@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

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 2010, the exemption will be removed for 2011.

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's 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's Office.

Property owners who discover their exemption status is wrong may request the July or December Board of Review to 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.

Cascade Historical Society

The Cascade Historical Society is looking for new members. We have set a goal to complete an inventory of all our possessions, then enter that inventory in a computer system that will respond to inquiries about the history of our township. It is a noteworthy effort that will pay dividends to both the casual and serious researcher. If you enjoy history, please join us.

2011 to 2015 is the sesquicentennial of the Civil War and Cascade Historical Society, along with many other entities, are involved in activities that remember those years, particularly from the Township perspective. Our first objective is to identify veterans of the Civil War and determine where they are buried in Cascade Township. We contemplate that as the anniversary continues, we will look at other objectives. If you have information, photographs or want to be part of these efforts, please contact Rob Beahan at rbeahan@cascadetwp.com.



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 Saturday, May 14 from 10:00 a.m. - 12:00 p.m. Please meet at the 8900 Grand River Avenue entrance at Cascade Peace Park.



PULL ME

From the Supervisor...

Spring is wonderful time to shed those winter clothes (and maybe those winter pounds) and get out and enjoy the beautiful pathways and parks that connect Cascade with both Ada and Grand Rapids Townships. Our parks and pathways in Cascade add immensely to the quality of life we enjoy.

A number of people have asked how they can become more involved and contribute in some manner to enhance and maintain our parks and pathways. For the last few years Kris Taylor has been leading the efforts as a pathway coordinator to help keep the entire trail system free of trash and debris. You may want to consider joining forces with your neighbors and making an organized effort to maintain a section of pathway.

With the addition of both Burton Park and Peace Park we now have over 276 additional acres to oversee. If you are interested in getting involved this is a wonderful opportunity to be in these beautiful natural areas and give back to the community with the gift of your time and labor.

What else can you do to help out? You may want to consider volunteering for an event such as the Garlic Mustard Pull in Peace Park scheduled for Saturday, May 14th from 10 a.m. to Noon. Or you may consider helping organize a similar project in Burton Park. There are plenty of opportunities to get your hands dirty with tasks such as removal of invasive plant species, trash, and trail improvements.

Your help in developing and maintaining the parks and pathways is essential to making Cascade an enduring and viable place to live for many years to come.



Pathway News...

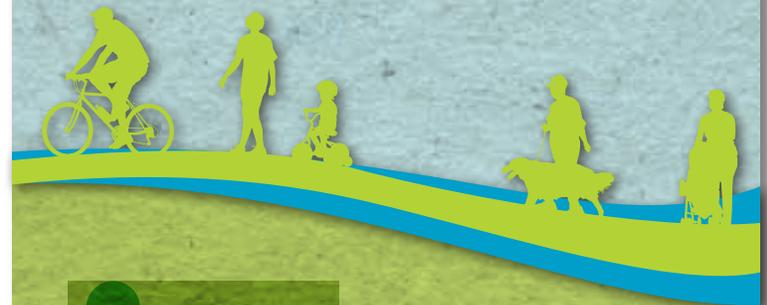
I would like to take this opportunity to express my thanks to the maintenance personnel that kept the Cascade trail system open for use in the winter. It would have been easy to ignore plowing the trails in favor of other more important maintenance tasks. Evidently that was not the mind set. The trails were not only plowed in a timely manner, but the trash cans along the trails were always picked up and easily accessible. As a person that uses the trail daily, I have come to appreciate their efforts more and more each season. If you keep it open we'll keep it clean. Remember, Keep Cascade Beautiful.

Kris Taylor
Pathway Coordinator

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.**



**THANK
YOU!**



On-Line Citizen Police Reports

Please visit us at www.accesskent.com

Filing your police report on-line is convenient for you! You can do it when you want and do not have to wait for an officer to be available to come to your home. On-line filing is easy, safe and secure! It's important that all crimes are reported, even minor ones. We need to have an accurate picture of all criminal activity.

What types of incidents can I report on-line?

- Malicious destruction of property under \$1000.00
- Vandalism (no damage)
- Larceny and Larceny from an auto
- Larceny of gas
- Lost Property
- Car deer Accident
- Private Property

Security Safety—How secure is your home and property?

Burglary and theft are crimes of opportunity. A door that is easy to open, a dark house, or an open window or garage door, is seen as opportunities by criminals. By thinking safety and security first, and taking some simple steps to secure your home, you can reduce these opportunities.

Do you have tools, bikes, or other items sitting out, or in view from window? Is your garage door open? How about your windows and doors? Look at your neighbor's property, do you provide more opportunities to criminals than your neighbor. Or does it look like you take good care of your property or will the criminal think you may be an easy target.

Do you have serial numbers and property labeled to identify that it is yours. Engrave your license number and state on property to identify your property. Take photographs of property with your driver's license. Store valuables and important documents in a safety deposit box with your local banking institute.

PLANS FOR HALL ST. IMPROVEMENTS ADVANCE

Planning and design work is advancing on a proposed 2012 project to re-surface Hall St., from Cascade Rd. to the Forest Hills Central campus, add a center turn lane at Paradise Lake and add facilities for pedestrians and bicycles.

In late 2009, Ada and Cascade Townships, along with the Kent County Road Commission, held a public open house meeting to obtain feedback from residents along the street on various alternatives for improving the street, including options for location and width of pedestrian and bicycle paths along the road.

Based on input from that meeting, the concept that has been chosen for further design work leaves the width of the road largely unchanged, with the exception of a new center turn lane at Paradise lake, and adds 5-foot sidewalks on each side of the road. Alternatives that would involve installing a wider (8 to 10 feet) non-motorized trail on either the north or south side of the street have been discarded, due to the shallow front yard setbacks that exist along much of the road corridor, and resident concerns with potential impacts on trees and other vegetation along the road corridor.

The costs of sidewalk installation are proposed to be shared by Ada and Cascade Township, while the cost of resurfacing the road will be shared on a 45% County / 27.5 % Ada Township / 27.5% Cascade Township basis. Total project cost is estimated at \$581,000, with the Ada and Cascade Township share being approximately \$200,000 each. Completion of the project is scheduled for the summer of 2012. While the project is programmed in both Townships' Capital Improvement Plans, it is contingent upon approval of funding by each Township Board.

As detailed engineering is completed (expected to be Fall of 2011) for the project, another neighborhood information meeting will be held to share the construction plans with residents along the road.

Comments or questions can be submitted to Jim Ferro, Planning Director, at jferro@adatownshipmi.com, or Steve Peterson, Planning Director, at speterson@cascadetwp.com or mailed to either office.

STORM WATER / GLYCOL ENVIRONMENT

Gerald R. Ford International Airport has begun an engineering analysis to determine a long-term plan to control glycol impacted storm water runoff before it leaves airport property. The study is to be completed in September of 2011. Information on the Storm Water/Deicing Management Study is now available on the Airport's web site www.flygrandrapids.org. You can access it thru the *What's New* page or the *Airport Administration-Environmental* page, under the *About Us* tab of the home page.

RECYCLING OPPORTUNITIES IN CASCADE TOWNSHIP

Bill Cousins, Township Manager

The Township Board recently adopted a number of goals for 2011. One of the goals was to promote the current household recycling efforts available for Cascade Township residents and increase efforts to provide additional options for recycling in the Township. To start the process, a review of the opportunities that we currently have is warranted.

As you are aware, residential trash pick-up in Cascade is provided by private trash haulers. Most companies offer recycling in one form or another. One may take virtually anything that can be recycled while another may have some restrictions. One may pick up recycling weekly, another does it every other week. One company may charge for the recycling service, while another includes the cost in its basic service charge. Check around to learn which of the services best fit your needs and budget.

There are other recycling outlets in the Township:

Newspapers and cardboard may be dropped off at the Boy Scouts semi-trailer across from Cascade Christian Church on Orange Street. The trailer is open 24/7 and is frequently replaced with an empty trailer, so it is always available for your needs. There is no charge to the public for this service; the scouts use it as a fundraiser for troop activities.

Used motor oil is accepted at most of the automobile repair shops in the Township. Check with the service you typically use. I found one that will also take old car batteries.

Speaking of batteries, the Kent District Library on Jacksmith has a collection box for household batteries. The box is just outside the employee entrance (around the side of the library from the front, between the book-drop and the Wisner Center doors). This drop off is also available 24 hours each day.

Cascade Township offers two chances each year for residents to discard unwanted items. Many of the items dropped off are recycled. The Spring Clean-up day is planned this year on May 7 at the Kent County Road Commission Building at the east end of Fase Street in Ada. Computers and appliances (no Freon) are accepted at this event.

There are many additional opportunities to dispose of or recycle unwanted items in the area. Kent County provides a guide that details the times and locations for the dropping off of many household items. For example, the guide points out that Home Depot will accept your used compact fluorescent light bulbs. Copies of the guide are available at the Township Office, or you may view it online at www.recyclekent.org.

The Township hopes to offer a hazardous waste collection in the township in the near future, but for planning purposes two are offered nearby this summer: July 16th and September 10th at the Kentwood DPW from 9 a.m.-1 p.m.

SPRING HOME REPAIR CHECK LIST

The full heat of summer will be here before we know it! As soon as the snow melts, it's time to check your home for signs of wear and tear. A lot of money can be saved by spotting trouble areas early in the year and making repairs before the issue(s) create major expense. Here are ten things for you to check on at your home and make repairs if necessary before they become major repair problems:

EXTERIOR –

- Roofing, siding, chimneys and vents.
- Overhanging wires, tree limbs, etc.
- Eavestroughs, down spouts and drainage away from the house.
- Driveways and walkways.
- Foundation, stairwells and window wells.

INTERIOR –

- Attic roof boards and insulation.
- Door frames and thresholds.
- Window frames and sashes.
- Drainpipes.
- Basement walls and floors.





JOIN US AS WE ENVISION THE FUTURE!

The Cascade Community Foundation is dedicated to improving the fabric of life in our community, increasing our connection to each other and finding new ways to make Cascade the very best place to call home. We need you to tell us how we can best accomplish this over the next few years.

Please join us for an open forum and help the Cascade Community Foundation *Envision the Future!* What do you foresee for the future of Cascade? What can we do to make this an even better place to live work and play?

Tuesday, May 3; 6:30 p.m. Kent District Library, Cascade Branch - Wisner Center

Friday, May 6; 8:30 a.m. Kent District Library, Cascade Branch - Wisner Center

SAFETY TIPS FROM YOUR BUILDING INSPECTOR

Do I need a Permit for My Home Project?

Check with your local building department before beginning home improvement projects. Requirements vary, but many building departments require permits for home improvements projects, including electrical, mechanical, structural or plumbing work. As a result of getting a permit, an inspector will check the work. Inspections provide a measure of safety to protect your life and property.

Projects That Usually Require Permits:

- **Re-roofing**
- **Installing electrical outlets**
- **Windows**
- **Remodeling kitchens or bathrooms**
- **Installing a pool, spa or hot tub**
- **Building an addition, including seasonal rooms**
- **Installing appliances and replacements such as furnaces, boilers, water heaters, fireplaces and space heaters**
- **Building a tall fence—over 6 feet in height**

If you are planning to make home improvements, contact your local building department (949-3765) to find out what building code provisions apply in your area and if you need a permit.

Cascade Inspection Services





Cascade Charter Township

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

Township Board

Supervisor Rob Beahan
rbeahan@cascadetwp.com
Clerk Ron Goodyke
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Treasurer Ken Peirce
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Trustee Fred Goldberg
fgoldberg@cascadetwp.com

PRST STD
U.S. POSTAGE
PAID
GRAND RAPIDS MI
PERMIT No. 1

Report A Streetlight Problem...

Cascade Township would like to thank you for providing us with information regarding streetlight problems throughout the community. While Cascade Township does not own or maintain the lights (with the exception of the decorative lights on Cascade Rd and 28th Street), we are happy to help report any streetlight that is out or malfunctioning to Consumers Energy.

However, if the Township Offices are closed or you are unable to reach us you can report the problem directly to Consumers Energy using their website. The link is https://www.consumersenergy.com/bdisu/streetLightRepair_start.sap or you can go to our website at www.cascadetwp.com. We have a link on our homepage.

Traffic Updates

Are you interested in having local traffic updates sent directly to you? The Michigan Department of Transportation (MDOT) offers this service. Please visit the following link <http://www.michigan.gov/mdot/0,1607,7-151-9615-251246--,00.html> to subscribe or you can go to our website at www.cascadetwp.com. The link is provided on our homepage.