



# Communicator

Published by the Cannon Township Board, Kent County, Michigan

Spring 2010

## From the Desk of the Supervisor

It's all about the "Basics"

**B**y the time you read this article the Township Board will have completed the Budget for 2010-2011. Like many other governmental bodies, Cannon Township strives to provide for the needs of our community with fewer financial resources. In anticipation of

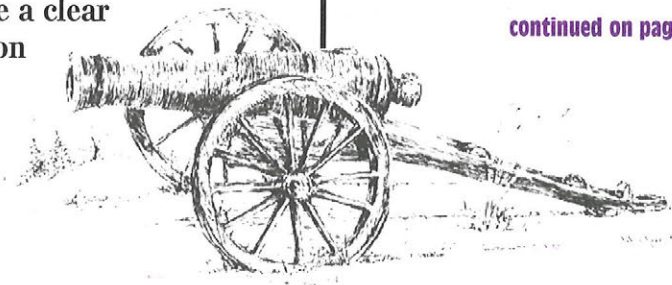
decreasing statutory revenues coming from Lansing, our Board met late last year to review and confirm the most important services (i.e. "Critical Services") our Township must provide for our citizens.

**T**he Township Board wanted to make sure that if programs, services or projects must be cut back or cut out of the budget, then we had to have a clear vision

of the critical services vs. secondary services. Our goal was to have full Board agreement on the position of each service provided to our community. It boiled down to the basics: Safety, Health and Welfare.

**T**he current Township Board has a tremendous amount of practical "real world" experience and is on its second year of

*continued on page 2*



# Cannon Township

The Cannon Communicator, Spring 2010

continued from page 1

Cannon Township

preparing our budget via the zero-based budget methodology. The zero-based budget process we just completed focused on the basics, which included Law Enforcement, Fire Department and Roads. These are the "Critical Services" that our Board agreed upon that cannot be weakened in the preparation of the new budget. These critical services are the basis or foundation of Cannon Township's high quality of life.

Our Board understands that there are many other important services we provide to our community, like planning, recreation, watershed education and many others, and though we have categorized these as secondary services, we do not discount their importance to our citizens.

Please don't misinterpret our process. We still believe these secondary services are important and add to our Township's "quality of life", but without a strong foundation during these portentous times, our Township will end up in a massive hole much like many other governmental bodies we read and hear about daily.

I am optimistic that our wonderful Township will remain strong with positive reserve revenues, continue to set the bar high for our officials, and provide great service to our citizens. The Township Board understands that it's not about control, but that it's all about "Service". Cannon Township will continue to be an example to other governmental entities on how to respond to these life altering times.

As always, please feel free to comment on this or any topic within the Township. If you have any questions or concerns please feel free to contact me or any other Township Board members at 874-6966.

**Best regards,**

**Peter MacGregor,**  
Cannon Township Supervisor

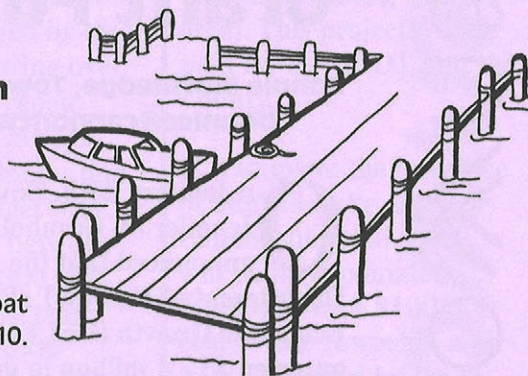




## Permanent Docks

- **Permanent docks are prohibited on all lakes in Cannon Township (with the exception of Sunfish Lake.)**
- **All docks, shore stations, boat cradles and rafts shall be removed from the lakes between December 15 and March 15 of the next year.**
- **Certain lakes also have association restrictions regarding the length and construction of a dock. Please contact your association for these restrictions and regulations**

Cannon Township general ordinance, boat launching and docking, section 4.10.



## From the Historical Society

**B**eginning in May, the Historical Museum is open every Sunday from 2PM to 4PM. However, due to the anticipated road work on Cannonsburg Road, the museum may not be able to open on the Sundays in May. Check the Cannon Township website for more information or contact Margaret Janose at 874-6865.

Don't forget that there will be a baked goods sale at the Bear Creek Waterfest at Townsend Park on April 24th from 8 am until everything is sold. Get there early because these goodies sell fast!



# Cannon Township Awarded Grant Funds

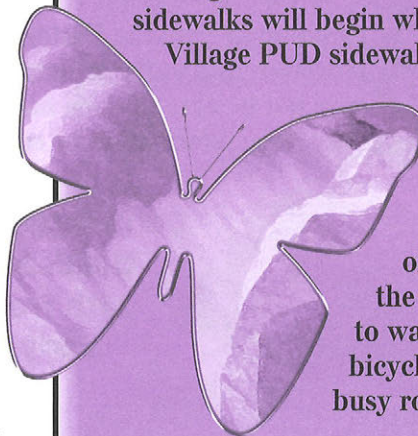
**Bonnie Blackledge, Township Clerk**  
**[bonnies@cannontwp.org](mailto:bonnies@cannontwp.org)**

**O**n January 25th, Governor Jennifer M. Granholm announced that the Michigan Department of Energy, Labor, and Economic Growth (DELEG) had awarded \$17.4 million in grants to 125 cities, villages, townships, and counties throughout Michigan to support local energy efficiency projects. The state Energy Efficiency and Conservation Block Grants (EECBG) are funded through the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009 (Recovery Act).

**D**ELEG's Bureau of Energy Systems (BES) awarded the EECBG grants to projects that will create and retain jobs, save energy, and reduce greenhouse gas emissions. Cannon Township is pleased to say that it was awarded a grant of \$74,464 to help pay for a sidewalk project in our Village Planned

Unit Development (PUD) area. The total cost of the project is estimated at \$223,072. A small portion of this amount will be "in kind" contribution (\$1,072 -mostly my time doing the project coordination and the grant administration) and the remainder will come from the Recreation Fund (\$76,244) and Metro Act dollars (\$71,292).

**C**annon Township's project qualifies for an energy grant because the construction of these sidewalk extensions should aid in making that area more "walkable" and thus reduce the number of vehicle trips from the neighboring homes to the businesses along Belding Road and to the Cannon Township non-motorized Trail and thereby conserving on fossil fuels. The sidewalks will begin where the Village PUD sidewalks end.



Instead of forcing the public to walk or bicycle in the busy roadways



continued from page 4

or to walk along rough terrain, there will be an eight-foot wide concrete pathway that will connect to Bella Vista Drive to the west and Cannon Farms Drive to the north.

**W**e are aware that many of the business owners are excited about the additional foot or bicycle traffic this could bring. The public is also excited about the ability to easily ride bicycles or walk to the corner of Myers Lake Avenue where crosswalks were recently installed. From there they can access the Township Center trailhead of our 4-mile trail that connects to several developments (Summerset Meadows and Dix Farms) and ends in Townsend Park. Funds from the EECBG grant will allow us to complete this project in one year, rather than having to divide it into two separate projects over a longer stretch of time. It should allow the Bella Vista, Cannon Place, and Cannon Farms residential communities safe and easy access to many local businesses as well as recreational opportunities.

## Road Repairs

**A**s Spring begins it is time to review the repair program of our Township roads that were damaged by the freezing and thawing over the winter. (The repair of our roads has always been one of the larger line items in our budget with annual amounts between \$250,000 and \$300,000 per year.) Because our revenue will be lower in the next budget year because of lower State Shared Revenue and less property tax our budget will be submitted at approximately \$208,000.

***Following is a list of projects that are being reviewed during the preliminary budget discussions.***

**1.** Crush and shape Cannonsburg Rd. from Myers Lake Ave. East to 5 Mile Rd.

During construction (which we hope will start in May) both lanes will be closed to thru traffic but residents who live in the section will be able to get to and from their homes. (Only one lane will be closed at a time at the Cannonsburg Village area). This project will be paid for by MDOT and the County.

**2.** Complete the resurface of Sunfish Lake Ave to Cannonsburg Rd. Cost will be approximately \$200,000 with \$100,000 cost to our Township and \$100,000 paid by the County.

**3.** Resurface Weller and Farrell Dr. Estimated costs will be \$115,000 with \$57,000 paid by our Township.

**4.** Other annual items are resurfacing of some residential streets and additional limestone coverage over gravel roads.

**Dick Davies,  
Trustee**





## "Where did Our 2009 Property Taxes go?"

**Jim LaPeer, Treasurer**

The Township Treasurer's Office has just completed 2009 Tax year Collections. As provided for by State law, the Township may act as the collecting & disbursing Agency for property tax millage collections that are approved by voters. The list below shows Tax Millages collected, and disbursed, by the Township Office. The Disbursement (payment) is to the respective Taxing Authority shown. Additionally, other lesser funds were collected and disbursed such as Assessments for Lakes Weed control, Lake Water Level control, Lighting Districts, etc.

| <b>Taxing Authority</b>                 | <b>Taxes Collected &amp; Disbursed</b>   |
|---|--|
| Rockford Public Schools.....            | \$1,036,356 ..... (Operating Millage)    |
| Rockford Public Schools.....            | \$5,138,224 ..... (Debt Service Millage) |
| Lowell Public Schools .....             | \$14,758 ..... (Operating Millage)       |
| Lowell Public Schools .....             | \$93,259 ..... (Debt Service Millage)    |
| Forest Hills Public Schools.....        | \$1,333..... (Operating Millage)         |
| Forest Hills Public Schools.....        | \$28,513..... (Debt Service Millage)     |
| State Education Tax .....               | \$3,380,364 ..... (State Wide Millage)   |
| Kent County Jail.....                   | \$436,797 ..... (County Millage)         |
| Kent County Seniors .....               | \$179,506 ..... (County Millage)         |
| Kent County Operating .....             | \$2,411,476 ..... (County Millage)       |
| Kent District Library .....             | \$486,996..... (County Wide Millage)     |
| Grand Rapids Community College.....     | \$1,006,479..... (County Wide Millage)   |
| Kent Intermediate School District ..... | \$2,642,469 ..... (County Wide Millage)  |
| Cannon Township.....                    | \$463,749 ..... (Operating Millage)      |
| Cannon Township.....                    | \$520,202..... (Fire Department)         |
| Cannon Township.....                    | \$208,064..... (Recreation Millage)      |



### April 2010

---

- April 1..... Quarterly Sewer Bills Mailed to Residents
- April 2..... **OFFICE CLOSED**
- April 5..... Last Day To Register – May 4, 2010 School Election
- April 8..... Bear Creek Watershed Council Meeting – 6:00 – 7:30 pm
- April 12..... Township Board Meeting – 7:00 pm
- April 13..... Planning Commission Meeting – 6:00 pm
- April 20 ..... Zoning Board of Appeals – 6:00 pm
- April 24 ..... **17th Annual Bear Creek Waterfest Townsend Park 8:00 - Noon**
- April 27 ..... Township Board Meeting – 7:00 pm
- April 28 ..... Invasive Species Seminar - 6:30 – 8:00 pm
- April 30 ..... Quarterly Sewer Bills Due

### May 2010

---

- May 1..... **Principal Residence Exemption Due**
- May 1 ..... **Office Open For Absentee Voting 8:00 Am – 2:00 pm**
- May 4..... School Election – Polls Open 7:00 Am – 8:00 pm
- May 10..... Township Board Meeting – 7:00 pm
- May 11..... Planning Commission Meeting – 6:00 pm
- May 18..... Zoning Board Of Appeals Meeting – 6:00 pm
- May 24..... Township Board Meeting – 7:00 pm
- May 31..... **Memorial Day – Office Closed**

### June 2010

---

- June 8..... Planning Commission Meeting – 6:00 pm
- June 14 ..... Township Board Meeting – 7:00 pm
- June 15 ..... Zoning Board of Appeals Meeting – 6:00 pm
- June 28 ..... Township Board Meeting – 7:00 pm

**Remember to check for any cancellations or changes  
on the Township web site. ([www.cannontwp.org](http://www.cannontwp.org))**



## News From The Fire Department...

**2**009 saw a slight decrease in the number of calls we served. By the end of last year, the Cannon Township Fire Department responded to 443 calls compared to 466 calls from 2008. Our average in-Township emergency response time increased by 8 seconds, to 5 minutes 22 seconds. These statistics include calls outside our Township as well.

### Here is a breakdown of our calls:

|  |     |
|--|-----|
| Fires .....  | 37  |
| (Grass fires, Structure fires, Chimney fires, etc.)          |     |
| Rescue & Emergency Medical Service calls .....               | 289 |
| (Accidents, Ice rescues, EMS calls, etc.)                    |     |
| Good Intent Call .....                                       | 26  |
| (Disregarded after dispatched, Authorized burning, etc.)     |     |
| Service Calls .....  | 45  |
| (Unauthorized burning, smoke investigation, lock outs, etc.) |     |
| Hazardous Conditions (no fire).....                          | 31  |
| (Carbon Monoxide calls, Gas leak, Power line down, etc.)     |     |
| False Alarm .....  | 14  |
| (Malfunctioning alarm system, CO detector, etc.)             |     |
| Special Incident Type.....                                   | 1   |
| (Citizen Complaint)  |     |

**O**ur average response time is calculated based on when Kent County dispatches the department to when the department arrives on scene. Sometimes our delayed arrival is the direct result of not being able to find a street address.

**P**lease take time to make sure that your address is clearly marked at your mailbox and/or the house numbers are visible from the street. If necessary, clear away any brush or tree limbs that may obscure your house numbers or prevent us from accessing your driveway.

**A**s a service to the public, the Cannon Township Fire Department is still offering reflective street signs for \$10.00 per sign. Call 874-9725 or stop in our fire station on Belding Rd., next to the Township Center, during normal business hours.

### Open Burning Ordinance Reminder

**T**he Cannon Township Open Burning Ordinance is the result of a collaborative effort between the Township Board, the fire department and the Township's attorney.



continued from page 8

**W**ith the upcoming months of dry, hot weather, it was necessary to find a way to ensure the safety of our residents. We on the department, feel strongly that this ordinance helps reduce the amount of nuisance calls and allows the Township to recover the expense of providing fire suppression efforts to those individuals and businesses that do not adhere to the same rules as the rest of our residents.

**S**o please take a moment to read this ordinance and remember that burning permits are free:

**B**urn Permit homepage (<http://www.cannontwp.org/departments/division.asp?fDD=6-44>) Burn Permit ordinance ([http://www.cannontwp.org/egov/docs/1236703320\\_725616.pdf](http://www.cannontwp.org/egov/docs/1236703320_725616.pdf))

**To obtain a permit,  
call 874-9725 during  
normal business  
hours.**

**Until next time, stay safe.**

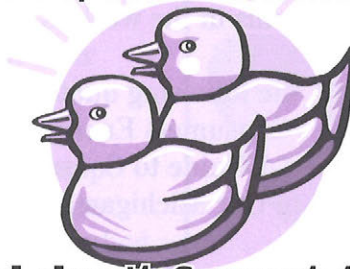
**17th Annual Bear Creek Waterfest**  
**Saturday, April 24**  
**from 8 - noon**

**Townsend Park**

Corner of Ramsdell Dr. and Cannonsburg Rd.

## Family Activities Include:

- Creeky Critters
- Make A Bird Feeder
- Container Gardening
  - Rain Sticks
- Microscope Magic
  - Bee Keeper
- Watershed Maps and much more!
- Pancake Breakfast 8—10 a.m.  
\$5 adults, \$3 kids 12 & under
- Bake Sale by Cannon Historical Society.



**And don't forget the  
Rubber Ducky Races!**

**All activities are FREE**

*The Bear Creek Waterfest is sponsored  
by Cannon Township*



## Spring Watershed News

**Kim Sapkowski,**  
Watershed Administrative Assistant

### Wetlands Should Be Left Alone-

**F**rom time to time the Township receives complaints about people operating ATVs in wetlands and/or areas that are owned by Consumers Energy. Please understand that wetlands should be left alone. Wetlands provide flood control, water filtration, ground water recharge and a habitat for wildlife. They are one of the most productive ecosystems in the world.

**T**he following quote is from a Consumers Energy brochure titled "A Guide to Consumers Energy Land to Our Michigan Neighbors".

**M**any neighbors we talk to believe that because we are a public utility, our land is public. That isn't so. Consumers Energy land is private property and not open for public use without permission. Certain activities

such as hunting, dumping, burning, operating off-road vehicles and planting trees are strictly prohibited.

**O**peration or storage of motorized equipment such as dirt bikes and off-road vehicles is also not allowed. Dirt bikes and other off-road vehicles destroy vegetation, which leads to erosion. This can expose an underground natural gas pipeline or weaken a transmission line tower. Snowmobiles are also prohibited in many areas, except where trails are clearly marked and identified.

**W**e appreciate it when the community helps keep a close watch on unusual and illegal activities such as vandalism, trespassing and theft.

**I**nformation can be given to local law enforcement agencies or by calling us (Consumers Energy) at (800) 760-3295.



continued from page 10

## Fertilizer Ordinance

**P**lease remember to follow the Township's Fertilizer Ordinance if you live in the Lakes District. This ordinance prohibits the use of phosphorus based fertilizers. If you are a commercial applicator of manufactured fertilizer, you must obtain a license with the Township in order to apply fertilizer in the Lakes Drainage District.

**P**hosphorus based fertilizers can cause algae blooms and excessive weed growth in lakes. You may obtain phosphorus-free fertilizer from most retail stores. Bostwick Lake Congregational Church has a Phosphorus Free Fertilizer sale each spring. Call 874-7045 for more information.

## Good News!

**C**annon Township has been chosen to be part of a Wetlands Local Assistance Pilot Program through the Michigan Department of

Natural Resources and Environment (MDNRE). The goal of the pilot program is to increase the efficiency of the wetland permitting process through local and state resources in order to protect the wetlands of the state.

**C**annon Township was one of only three entities chosen by the state to participate in the pilot program. The other two entities are Michigan Association of Conservation Districts on behalf of Calhoun, Delta and Muskegon County Conservation Districts and the Thumb Land Conservancy, St. Clair County.

**C**annon Township has been a state leader in watershed conservation. The pilot project will allow the Township to partner with the State of Michigan to not only streamline the wetland permitting process,

but to educate our citizens about wetlands and the importance of protecting them.

**C**annon Township's Wetlands Ordinance protects wetlands in the Township that are less than five acres in size. This is important because the MDNRE only regulates wetlands that are more than five acres in size and/or are adjacent to a body of water.

**The program will  
run until  
October 1, 2012.**



continued on page 12



continued from page 11

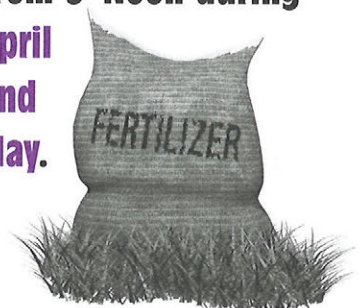
## 5 Simple Ways You Can Help Michigan Rivers and Waterways

- 1** Only rain down the drain! Do not use storm drains as trash containers. Storm drains lead directly to streams or lakes. This includes lawn clippings and leaves.
- 2** Limit your pesticide and fertilizer use. These chemicals are picked up in snow melt or rain runoff and eventually make their way into local waterways.
- 3** Check your vehicle for fuel and oil leaks. When it rains, grease and oil wash into storm drains and go directly to rivers, lakes and streams.
- 4** Wash your car on the lawn or at a car wash. If you live on street with storm drains, the dirt, oils and suds from your car will eventually end up in local waterways, harming fish and animals.
- 5** Use a pooper scooper. Bacteria, parasites and viruses from pet waste can make their way into storm drains and therefore into local streams and lakes.

## The Men's Club

at Bostwick Lake Church, across from Lakes School, will have their spring fertilizer sale again this year. All but a couple of products will be phosphate free.

They will be open on Saturday mornings from 9- Noon during April and May.





# Invasive Species Seminar

**J**oin Cannon Township and The Land Conservancy of West Michigan for an Invasive Species seminar Wednesday, April 28 at 6:30 p.m. at Cannon Township Hall. Melanie Good, Stewardship Coordinator from the Land Conservancy of West Michigan, will present information on how to identify invasive species plants and how to eradicate them. She will take participants outside to help them identify invasive species on Cannon Township property. This informative and fun seminar is free and open to the public.



**Hope to see you there!**





## Clerk's Corner...

By Bonnie Blackledge



### Changes in Elections -Again

**I**t seems that every time the election cycle comes around, something changes. This time the change proves to be very promising and should turn out to be a cost saving measure that increases efficiency as well. We have been promised by the State of Michigan that we will be given laptop computers to use as "electronic poll books." The cost for these laptops will be covered through Help America Vote Act (HAVA) funds coming from the federal government.

**D**uring the Primary and General in 2008, this program was piloted at Precinct 4. Those of you who voted at the Township Center in those elections may remember having your drivers' license scanned when you came in. This was a way to check in at the precinct and also added your name to the "poll book." It's a much more efficient way to process voters at the polls.

**I**t is my intent to train two workers per precinct on these laptop "poll books" before the August Election. These workers will have the responsibility of managing this electronic system, but other

workers will also process voters the old-fashioned way. I believe it is important to do this the first time the electronic system is used because I do remember there were a few slight mistakes made the first time we piloted the system. At that time we were required to use both systems and I was glad we did. When we used the electronic system again in November, both systems matched perfectly. If all goes well this August, we will "fly solo" in November and use only the laptops.

### Cemeteries

**S**ome of you may be aware that the Cemetery Committee made an attempt to erect fencing at the Old Bostwick Lake and New Bostwick Lake cemeteries. The result of this endeavor was that we discovered that this process was much more complicated than we anticipated, and the Board eventually decided to take the fencing down due to many complaints by neighbors and people who have relatives in these cemeteries.

**A**t this point, we have decided not to fence either cemetery with different fencing material, but instead make sure



continued from page 14

the boundaries are well marked. Perhaps this can be revisited someday. Instead we have decided to improve the area along the property lines at the Old Bostwick Lake Cemetery with the help of an Eagle Scout project being planned by Nate Finneran.

## **Facilities**

**T**his committee has been busy working on bids for insurance, office cleaning, museum repair, and more. Another project that is somewhat related to the "facility," is the possible expansion of the Township Center Fire Station. This is being handled by the Fire Committee and the Board, but there is an interest in possibly using a rain garden as a method of handling storm water from the expansion. Watershed Administrative Assistant, Kim Sapkowski, is pursuing a grant that, if received, will provide funding for that project. If no funding is received, the storm water will be handled by traditional methods.

## **Recreation**

**A**fter over a year of hard work, the Recreation Committee recently

approved the final draft of the Recreation Plan that covers 2010 to 2015. On February 22, the Board also approved the plan. At this time, minor edits are being made and the plan will be sent for approval to the State of Michigan before the end of March. This will allow the Township to apply for other grants, similar to the one received for the existing trail in hopes of expanding our trail system. Check out our web page to see a copy of the plan.

**A**lso, as part of the Fire Station expansion, a public restroom will be added on the east side of the structure for use of the people using the trail and for those who will use the Township Park property as it is developed. We are able to do this at a much lower cost by attaching it to the building rather than creating a stand-alone separate facility.

**C**heck out the article in this issue about the DELEG grant that was received to help build sidewalks along Myers Lake and Belding Road. We are so excited to have been awarded this energy grant! This project should be completed by next fall.

## **Census**

**P**lease remember to mail back your census forms after you receive them. An accurate count of the local population helps to ensure that our community receives its fair share of federal funding. This funding includes resources for services such as health care, education, and roads. There are just 10 questions to complete that should take about 10 minutes to answer. Please complete and return your forms by April 15.

**Enjoy Spring!**



## Clip and Save E-mail Addresses

Supervisor, Pete MacGregor: ..... pmacgregor@cannontwp.org  
 Clerk, Bonnie Blackledge: ..... bonnies@cannontwp.org  
 Treasurer, Jim LaPeer: ..... jlapeer@cannontwp.org  
 Trustee Deb Diepenhorst: ..... ddiepenhorst@mindspring.com  
 Trustee Dick Davies: ..... rrd8565@gmail.com  
 Trustee Steve Grimm: ..... steve@slgrimm.com  
 Trustee Rob McBrien: ..... Rj.mcbrien@helmholdt.com  
 Deputy Clerk, Nancy Popma: ..... nancyp@cannontwp.org  
 Deputy Treasurer, Milissa Soderstrom: ..... milissas@cannontwp.org  
 Zoning Administrator, Christine James: ..... christinej@cannontwp.org  
 Administrative Assistant Sue Clarin: ..... suec@cannontwp.org  
 Watershed Assistant, Kim Sapkowski: ..... ksapkowski@cannontwp.org  
 Fire Chief, Jim Morris: ..... Chief@Cannontwp.org  
 State Representative, Tom Pearce: ..... tompearce@house.mi.gov  
 Phone: 1-888-414-3684  
 State Senator, Mark Jansen: ..... senmjansen@senate.michigan.gov  
 Phone: 1-800-774-1174  
 Congressman Vern Ehlers: web site: ..... www.house.gov/ehlers  
 Phone: 202-225-3831  
 Cannon Township Web Site: ..... www.cannontwp.org  
 Kent County Web Site: ..... www.accesskent.com  
 State of Michigan Web Site: ..... www.michigan.gov



### Township Board

Supervisor ..... Pete Macgregor  
 Clerk ..... Bonnie Blackledge  
 Treasurer ..... Jim LaPeer  
 Trustees ..... Deb Diepenhorst  
                                 Dick Davies  
                                 Steve Grimm  
                                 Rob McBrien  
 Township Offices . 874-6966  
 (Hours 8:00 am – 5:00 pm, Mon – Fri)  
 Fax ..... 874-8940  
 Fire Department . 874-9725  
 Emergency ..... 911

PRSRT STD  
 U.S. POSTAGE  
**PAID**  
 ROCKFORD, MI 49341  
 PERMIT NO.1

Township Board Meetings • 2nd & 4th Monday, Monthly • 7:00 p.m., Township Hall

6878 Belding Road, NE • Rockford, MI 49341  
 The Cannon Communicator, Spring 2010