

Communicator

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Spring 2005

From the Supervisor's Desk...

The last few articles I wrote in "The Communicator" have dealt with the Board's process of deciding what will be the best long term resolution for the sewer customers of the North Kent Sewer Authority (NKSA) and its five member communities (Townships of Cannon, Courtland, Plainfield and Alpine and the City of Rockford).

Should NKSA sign the new sewer contract with the City of Grand Rapids or should NKSA move forward and build our own clean water plant? Seems like it should be an easy question to answer - right? After you flush, what is the most effective way to pay for sewage treatment? Not so simple to answer. The City of Grand Rapids has presented NKSA with a very complicated contract which penalizes our Township for what we are – low density development with beautiful open landscapes. It is my opinion that Grand Rapids would like to see Cannon Township more densely developed in order to curb what is their definition of urban sprawl. Are the townships the cause of urban sprawl? We don't think so.

After investigating many viewpoints and all of the data and evaluating the studies, the majority of the Cannon Township Board have decided that building a clean water plant is the best direction to proceed for our rate paying sewer users. There will be a short period during which NKSA will have to pay for both the new construction bond and the old Grand Rapids contract while building the plant, but it is the Board's opinion that in the long run, both monetarily and environmentally, Cannon will be much more self-sufficient with our clean water plant being locally controlled by the NKSA, instead of the City of Grand Rapids.

If we are to take the route of the Grand Rapids contract, the rates will automatically increase by at least \$15 more per quarter per billing unit to Cannon Township sewer users. This is using the figures given to us by Grand Rapids, which only show improvements for 10 years (on a 30-year contract with many unknown costs thereafter. If we go the way of a new plant, the rates will increase approximately \$20 per quarter and NKSA will have full control of its sewage and future sewage.

I do not want to imply that \$20 more per quarter (approximately \$80 more per year) is not a considerable jump in rates, but at least Cannon will have control of its clean water system and more importantly, accountability to its citizens. Township citizens will have a tough time holding Grand Rapids officials accountable for its older system and leaky infrastructure.

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What makes the North Kent Sewer Board's decision even more difficult, besides the complicated contract Grand Rapids has offered, is that the contract affects each of the five communities differently. It penalizes Cannon, Courtland and Plainfield Townships more due to the 20% land based area calculations that take into consideration the land area of the sewer district even if the actual flow is less. Alpine and the City of Rockford get a better deal because their sewer areas are concentrated in areas of higher density.

I strongly believe signing the new contract with Grand Rapids is a bad idea for Cannon Township simply because it is a bad contract. The existing contract which expires in 2008 is based on flow (usage) and not on complicated formulas like land area which has nothing to do with flow. There is no doubt in my mind that signing the Grand Rapids contract would be the easiest decision to make in the short run, but in the long run Cannon Township, along with the other North Kent communities, must strive for self sufficiency. Building a new clean water plant will be intense, difficult, complicated and expensive, but I know it will be the best solution for our Township and the sewer customers. I am hopeful that Cannon Township can demonstrate to the rest of the NKSA board members and communities that the NKSA should go forward with the construction of a new clean water plant.

Pete MacGregor, Township Supervisor

Buy A Brick

The Rockford Area Community Foundation is emerging from dormancy. The City of Rockford and the Townships of Algoma, Cannon, Courtland and Plainfield are supporting the revitalization of the Rockford Area Community Foundation. It is the intention of the Foundation to provide funding opportunities for the betterment of the community.

The first undertaking of the revitalized Foundation is the building of a Recognition Plaza. The Recognition Plaza will honor those Rockford Area individuals and organizations that have achieved significant accomplishments in their lifetime through career, community or personal success. Those honored will be selected through a formal nomination process.

Help build the Plaza and grow the endowment by BUYING A BRICK. Details and a display can be found in our Township Office.

*Dick Davies, Trustee
(Cannon Township's Representative to the Foundation)*

Transportation Update from The Rapid – The County Connection, a new bus service that covers Kent County will be available in the near future. A press release will be issued soon. For more information, please call 774-1167 or 1-800-849-1191.

Major Road Construction In and Around Cannon Township

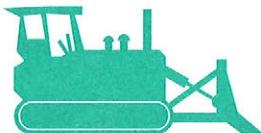
The following list of roadway construction may help your commute around northern Kent County:

Cannonsburg Road & Intersection of Northland Drive (M-44)

- This project will relocate Cannonsburg Road east of the intersection with M-44. The majority of this construction will happen north of the existing roadway. There will also be a relocation of Brewer Ave., as it will intersect the relocated Cannonsburg Road slightly east of the existing intersection. The northeast corner of this intersection has already witnessed a major change. Exact dates have not been published. Closures are expected to be kept to a minimum.

Northland Drive (M-44) over the Grand River

- Bridge deck deep overlay
- June 2005 through July 2006
- Off peak hours lane closures



Belding Road (M-44)

- Ramsdell Road east to Kent/Montcalm County line
- Asphalt overlay
- June 2005 through July 2005
- Will maintain one (1) lane traffic with flag control during off-peak hours

US 131

- Southbound lanes from North Park St. to Ann St.
- Northbound and southbound lanes from North Park St. to West River Drive
- Add weave and merge lanes; concrete reconstruction
- April 2005 through November 2005
- Will maintain two (2) lanes at all times

B.J. Street and Giles Ave.

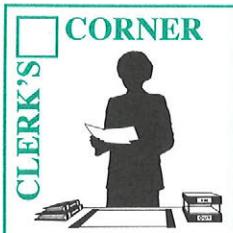
- Crush and reshape

Dick Davies, Trustee and Bob Swenson, GVMC Technical Committee

Christmas Tree Recycling Success

Thanks again to the wonderful members of Rockford High School's National Honor Society who helped with the Christmas tree recycling this year. They made over \$380 in donations from the people who dropped off their trees.

If your name is Scott or Lisa and you were married in 1998, we have an ornament here that might be yours. It's gold with two doves. Give us a call if you think it might be yours.



Major Changes Coming in May

There are three important changes coming to Cannon Township this spring that will affect voting procedures for the foreseeable future. The precinct boundaries were adjusted, new voting equipment has been ordered, and the Township will now administer all elections, including the “school” election on May 3.

Precinct Boundaries

State law requires precincts to be composed of less than 2,999 voters. In Cannon’s former four precincts, the numbers were rapidly approaching that threshold. If you voted in person last November, you were aware of the crowded parking lots and long lines at the polling places. After November, I was convinced that it was time to add additional precincts.

At the same time, school precincts changed due to changes in election law, so new voter identification cards have to be printed to designate the new precinct numbers. I decided to combine the Township precinct changes with the school precinct changes in order to save money as the cost of producing cards and postage is quite high. This way cards will have to be sent only once to the 9,400 voters in Cannon Township.

On February 28, the Cannon Township Election Commission approved expanding from four precincts to six. Lines were radically changed in order to comply with state rules on precinct boundaries and in order to achieve a balance of voters per precinct. The map I used is hand-drawn, but when an electronic version is made it will be posted on our web site. The polling places are as follows:

- Precinct 1 – West Cannon Baptist Church
- Precinct 2 and 3 – Bella Vista Church
- Precinct 4 – Cannon Township Center
- Precinct 5 – Bostwick Lake Congregational Church
- Precinct 6 – Crossroads Wesleyan Church

Many of the precinct numbers have changed, so it is very likely that you will have a different number than you did in the past. You may also be going to a different polling place than you did before. Some of you may feel inconvenienced because you may live near one polling place, but you have to go to a different one to vote. This often happened because the State forces us to divide precincts down the center of the street. For example, people living on the north side of Cannonsburg, right across the street from West Cannon Baptist Church, will have to drive over to Bella Vista Church to vote. Because of the way the streets are laid out in our Township, I had very little control over where to draw many of these boundary lines.

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Churches were chosen because of easy access, large parking lots, and the fact that they are generally unoccupied on the days we hold elections. I found all the church administrators to be very welcoming and excited to share their facilities with the community.

Watch for your voter identification cards in the mail. Since almost every clerk in the State has to send out new cards, there is quite a backlog, and you may not receive your card until just shortly before the May 3rd election. Watch local papers and our web site for the posting of maps and other pertinent information.

New Voting Equipment

Due to the federal Help America Vote Act (HAVA) legislation, every clerk in Kent County will receive new voting equipment this spring. By the time you read this newsletter, Cannon Township should have already received our new machines. This equipment is very similar to what we have used in the past with a couple of changes.

Instead of marking the ballot by connecting an arrow, you will be blackening in an oval next to the candidate of your choice. Rather than using a pencil or an “optech” pen, you will be able to mark your ballot with a regular black ballpoint pen.

When you bring your ballot to the tabulator, you will feed it in yourself as before. But if you have an error on the ballot – over voting, cross voting, etc. – the machine will print out a message on a screen that you, the voter, will read. Then you will push a button depending on your answer to this question, basically whether you want the ballot returned to you or if you want the machine to accept it as is.

We hope to use these machines in the May election. This will be a good opportunity for you to try the new equipment. I will also try to have a machine set up at the Township office so you can familiarize yourself with it ahead of time. Just remember, this equipment is new to everyone, including my staff and me, so we will all be learning together at the same time.

Election Consolidation

Due to changes in State election law, the township and city clerks will now administer all elections. The State determined four possible election dates per year – February, May, August, and November. Schools were given a choice when to hold their elections, and all the schools in the Kent Intermediate District chose a May annual election. Chris Thomas, Director of State Elections, has told the clerks to consider this a regular election since at any time other issues could be placed on this ballot. For instance, the County or the Township could add a millage issue to the May ballot if desired.

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In Cannon Township, most voters live in the Rockford School District, so all six precincts will be polling places for Rockford Schools. Precincts 2 and 3, which use Bella Vista Church as a polling place, will be combined in order to save money. In addition, some residents in Precinct 1 are voters in Forest Hills or Lowell Schools. The tabulator will be set up to accept ballots from all three school districts. The voter will be given the proper ballot depending on which school district he resides in.

Absentee ballot applications will be sent to everyone on our permanent list for every election. We hope to get these out as soon as possible, but we have to wait until precinct changes are entered into the computer at the State level. If you are not on the regular list, and will need a ballot because you will be out of the community on May 3rd, please call our office and we will make sure you get a ballot when they are received.

Remember this is new for everyone – three big changes this year. Please be patient. If you have any questions, call the office and ask for Bonnie or Nancy. Also, check our web page often for updated information – www.cannontwp.org.

Bonnie Shupe, Township Clerk

Historical Society News

Upcoming Baked Sale and Meetings



There will be a baked goods sale on Saturday, April 30 in conjunction with the Bear Creek Waterfest at Townsend Park from 8:00 AM to 12:00 PM. Baked good donations are welcome from anyone. The proceeds from the bake sale help to cover the cost to run the Historical Society.

On Tuesday, April 19 at Noon, there will be a business meeting at the Museum to discuss the upcoming bake sale. Coffee and cookies will be served. Please come with ideas.

On Tuesday, May 17 at 6:00 PM, there will be a meeting at the Cannon Historical Museum. Special speaker for that evening will be Joan Bunn of Joan & Associates. She is willing to appraise antiques, but asks that you only bring one item or set of items due to time restraints. This item should be small enough to carry. A \$5.00 donation is asked for each appraisal. Please come and join the fun. Refreshments will be served. For more information, call Pat Herrington at 874-6975.

Museum Open Hours

The museum will be open every Sunday from 2 PM to 4 PM beginning the first week of May until October. Other visits can be arranged by appointment.



WATERSHED PAGES



How to Manage Geese in your Backyard

Last spring at this time, I wrote an article about how to keep Canadian Geese from overrunning your yard. This past spring and summer I had the opportunity to go out and see what some of the residents in the Township are doing to discourage them. Many residents have had success with tying a string or wire around stakes along their shorefront. Some have employed the method of allowing a buffer area to grow between the water and the rest of their yard.

A big thing that helps is to stop feeding the Geese. Feeding them causes them to lose their wild instincts and fear of humans. It also causes them to congregate in large groups and stay in an area longer than they would otherwise. Feeding geese can also lead to a nutritional imbalance and abnormal behavior, such as attacking or showing aggression toward people.

Scare devices, such as bird alarms, motion detectors, electronic noise systems, plastic flags or Mylar scare tape can be very effective and inexpensive. Dogs are also helpful in keeping geese away. Some dogs have been trained in a manner similar to that of sheep dogs. They are mainly used by golf courses and airports to chase the geese off property without harming them.

Another way to keep geese away is to apply grape extract to grass to repel birds. The only drawback from this method is that it must be reapplied after it rains or after mowing.

For the best possible results, you should use a combination of different methods. Also, changing what methods you use will also help to keep the geese from getting conditioned to any one method.

For more information you can visit the MDNR website at www.michigan.gov/dnr/. Click on "Wildlife Species" and then click on "Problem Wildlife." On this page you will see "Nuisance Geese," and that will take you to the page that has all of the DEQ recommended techniques. Any other questions can be directed to Ryan Teelander at the Township Office via email at rteelander@cannontwp.org or call 874-6966.



Rising Waters

With all of the “extra” rain we seem to be getting these days, one may wonder where all of this water is going. When the storms come our way, we see the rain rush quickly from our rooftops, driveways, parking lots and streets to the closest street drain. These drains are appropriately termed storm drains.

Many cities in the United States used combined sewers until the mid 1940’s. These systems were designed to collect wastewater and stormwater in the same system and transport it to a treatment plant. During times of heavy rain, these systems were designed to overflow to prevent damage to the pipes. The overflow would discharge into the nearest body of water.

Since then, in a nationwide effort, wastewater pipes are being separated from stormwater drainage systems. The result of separating these sewer systems has been fewer releases of untreated wastewater to lakes and streams. However, other pollutants found in stormwater are no longer treated at the wastewater treatment plant. These pollutants accumulate between periods of rainfall, and then are washed down the storm drains during a rain event. They include substances such as motor oil from our vehicles, pet and animal wastes, fertilizers, and grass clippings from mowing our lawns. Since stormwater pipes are now directly routed to lakes and streams, these contaminants can have a significant impact on those waters.

Today’s wastewater treatment plants are working hard to make our wastewater as clean as possible before it is discharged to the Grand River. In fact, the wastewater is now often cleaner than the Grand River itself. The primary cause of pollution today in the Grand River is not from wastewater plants or industry; it comes from the many smaller sources like the pollution from our storm sewers.

The Clean Water Act of 1972 set up the National Pollution Discharge Elimination System (NPDES). The NPDES program has required some communities in Michigan to tackle the issue of stormwater pollution. A number of communities in Kent County have formed a committee that is working on cleaning up storm water pollution. This cooperative effort is actively seeking approaches to help citizens become “stormwater savvy”.

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Your Kent/Ottawa Stormwater Education Committee would like to remind you to be storm water savvy and utilize the recycling programs, practice proper solid waste disposal and utilize your free residential hazardous waste program. Never dump substances down your drain or storm drains! Instead call to dispose of hazardous waste items such as gas and paint thinner through your free County program and help prevent additional storm water pollution. Be sure to share your knowledge of these programs that are available to protect our precious resources! Please call the Kent County Resource Recovery program at (616) 336-2501 or 1-888-217-2850 for more information on programs available for County residents.



Home * A * Syst

Within the last year you may have gone to a presentation given by Katie Brandt of the Michigan Groundwater Stewardship Program (MGSP). I recently took over for Katie in this position as a Groundwater Educator, working out of the West Michigan Environmental Action Council (WMEAC) office in Grand Rapids.

At this time I wanted to pass along information on a free pollution prevention assessment that is offered through our program. Called a **Home * A * Syst**, the program looks at ways a homeowner can reduce their risk for pollution and contamination to groundwater - and, in turn, drinking water.

Drinking water, for example, can be affected by a number of household sources: poorly maintained septic systems, leaky fuel tanks, fertilizers or pesticides, and everyday household products.

Thus, a Home * A * Syst covers such topics as managing household trash and hazardous waste, yard and garden care for water quality, as well as managing well and septic systems. An individual Home * A * Syst takes between a 1/2 hour and 1 1/2 hours, and is a confidential assessment. If you would be interested in a Home * A * Syst at your residence, or have any additional questions, please feel free to contact me.

Thanks,
Tom Cogswell
 (w) 616-451-3051 ext.23
groundwater@wmeac.org
http://www.wmeac.org



12th Annual Waterfest

This is the twelfth year for the Bear Creek Waterfest. Started in 1994, Waterfest began as a celebration of water in honor of earth day. The tradition continues with many of the same events that were held at the original festival. The event is customarily held on the last Saturday in April.

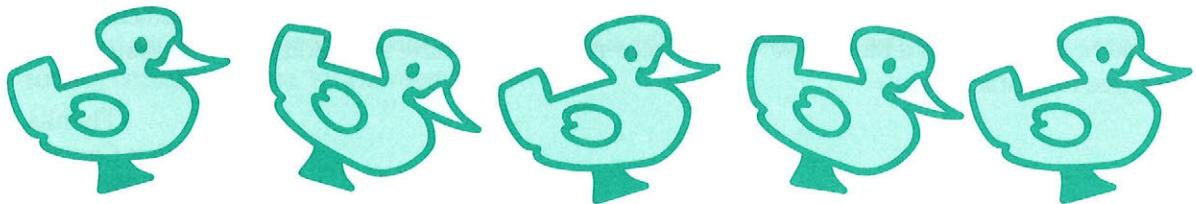
This year, on Saturday, April 30th, the Cannonsburg Christmas Lights Committee will again be dishing up their popular pancake breakfast beginning at 8 AM. After enjoying a hearty breakfast in the cozy atmosphere of the lodge, you can wander out on the porch area to visit displays set up by various community organizations. From there you can wander out on the lawn where there will be many activities to partake in, all creating awareness of water quality issues.

As you walk closer to the creek you will find people collecting "creaky critters," the aquatic insects that live in the stream. By identifying the insects that live there, you will be able to discover the quality of the stream. Over by the bridge is the famous "Rubber Ducky Race." This is one of the most popular events for children.

The focus this year will be on the National Wildlife Federation Backyard Habitat program that Cannon Township and the Izaac Walton League have been promoting over the past year. There will be information about attracting wildlife to your backyard.

Before you leave, you should check over the table of baked goods being sold by the Historical Society. These are some of the best buys you will find, and they're guaranteed to be calorie free. In fact, they are often so popular; you might want to go there first before the best items are snatched up.

Please put the date on your calendar now. I hope to see you all there!



12th Annual Bear Creek Waterfest

* April 30, 2005 *

8:00 am till noon

Come join us on Saturday, April 30, beginning at 8 am at Townsend Park for the annual pancake breakfast sponsored by the Cannonsburg Christmas Lights Committee - until 11 am or whenever the food runs out. Prices are: \$3.95 for adults, \$2.00 for children 12 and under, and children under 3 eat for free.

Family special - \$12.00.

See displays and participate in activities by various community and environmental groups. Special focus – National Wildlife Federation Backyard Habitat Program and other ways to attract wildlife to your yard

For Children – Rubber Duck Races, Creeky Critters Aquatic Insect Identification, Nature Scavenger Hunt, Microscope Magic, and more!

Baked goods sale sponsored by the Cannon Historical Society.

Townsend Park is located on the corner of Cannonsburg Road and Ramsdell Avenue near the village of Cannonsburg.

NO COST TO PARTICIPATE!

Soil Testing Available

Often people put fertilizer on their lawns and gardens without being truly aware of what nutrient is lacking. The Kent County Michigan State University Extension Office at 775 Ball NE will test your soil for only \$10.50.

If you would like to bring in a soil sample, here are a few steps to follow to ensure that you are getting the best information possible.

- From the area where you will be planting, take approximately 20 cores (scoop soil about $\frac{1}{2}$ inch thick from areas 3 – 8 inches deep).
- Thoroughly mix the samples together in a clean pail. If the soil is wet, allow it to air dry before mixing.
- After the soil is mixed, fill a Ziploc bag with approximately 2 cups of the composite sample.
- Bring the soil sample to the Extension Office during the hours of 8 AM to 4 PM, Monday through Friday.

In addition to testing soil, the Kent MSU Extension Office has numerous handouts to help you with your gardening needs. Also, you may bring in insect-damaged or diseased specimens on Monday, Tuesday, or Wednesday for identification and/or diagnosis. For more information, please call (616) 336-3881.



Cannon Township Seniors

The Cannon Township Seniors have merged with the Bostwick Congregational Church Seniors to form the YOUNG AT HEART group. They meet once a month at Bostwick Lake Church at 12:00 PM for a potluck lunch and a program.

All Cannon Township seniors and retirees are invited to attend.

The program schedule for the next few months is as follows:

- Thursday, April 7 – Senior Safety with Deputy Scott Cook
- Wednesday, May 4 – Wild Birds
- Wednesday, June 1 – Lighthouses – Bruce and Sandy VanWingen

Come join in – bring a dish to pass and your own table service.

Mildred Plescher – 691-8249

"DATES TO REMEMBER"

April 1 Quarterly Sewer Bills Mailed to Residents
April 4 LAST DAY TO REGISTER FOR SCHOOL ELECTION
April 11 Township Board Meeting – 7:00 pm
April 12 Planning Commission Meeting – 6:00 pm
April 14 Bear Creek Watershed Committee Meeting – 4:00 pm
April 19 Zoning Board of Appeals – 7:00 pm
 Historical Society Meeting – Noon at Museum
April 23 Boater Safety Course – 9:00 am – 3:00 pm
April 25 Township Board Meeting – 7:00 pm
April 26 Planning Commission Meeting – 6:00 pm
April 30 Office Open for Absentee Voting – 8 am – 2 pm
12th ANNUAL WATERFEST-TOWNSEND PARK (8:00 am-Noon)
QUARTERLY SEWER BILLS DUE

May 2 **PRINCIPAL RESIDENCE EXEMPTION DUE**
SCHOOL ELECTION – POLLS OPEN 7AM – 8 PM
May 3 Township Board Meeting – 7:00 pm
May 9 Planning Commission Meeting – 6:00 pm
May 10 Bear Creek Watershed Committee Meeting – 4:00 pm
May 12 Zoning Board of Appeals Meeting – 7:00 pm
May 17 Historical Society Potluck Supper – 6 :00 pm - Museum
May 23 Township Board Meeting – 7:00 pm
May 30 **MEMORIAL DAY – OFFICE CLOSED**

June 1 **Summer Office Hours Begin – 7:30 am to 4:30 pm**
June 9 Bear Creek Watershed Committee Meeting - 4:00 pm
June 13 Township Board Meeting – 7:00 pm
June 14 Planning Commission Meeting – 6:00 pm
June 21 Zoning Board of Appeals Meeting – 7:00 pm
June 27 Township Board Meeting – 7:00 pm

Remember to check for any cancellations or changes on the Township web site under Events. (www.cannontwp.org)

SUMMER HOURS – The Cannon Township Offices will begin summer hours on June 1st. During the summer, the office hours will be 7:30 AM to 4:30 PM. Regular hours will resume again on September 1.



Smoke Detectors

According to the National Fire Prevention Administration, 70% of the home fires reported in 2004, did not have working fire alarms or smoke detectors. Here are some additional statistics to consider:

U.S. homes without smoke detectors installed	4%
Fires in which smoke alarms had dead batteries	15%
Homes in which smoke alarms were installed but not working	20%
Home fires reported by U.S. fire departments where no smoke alarm was installed	40%
Fires in which non-working smoke alarms had disconnected or missing batteries	50%
Home fire fatalities where no working smoke alarm was present	70%

Your smoke detector is your front line defense against fires. Make sure you take time to regularly test (once per month) your smoke detectors. Also, use daylight savings time (twice a year) as a reminder to replace the batteries in your smoke detectors. Too many times we hear homeowners say that they never thought a fire would strike their home while we were putting out their fire. Spread the word to your children, your neighbors and your family to regularly test and replace the batteries in your smoke detectors. While we encourage promoting the regular maintenance and testing of your smoke detectors, we still need to realize that some members of our community have none. If you do not have a smoke detector, make time to go out and purchase one right away.

Cannon Township Fire Department 2004 Statistics

2004 was another busy year for the Cannon Township Fire Department. By the end of last year, our department had responded to 432 calls compared to 414 calls from 2003...over a 4% increase from the previous year.

Here is a breakdown of those calls:

Rescue & Emergency Medical Service calls	268	Service Calls	44
(Accidents, Ice rescues, EMS calls, etc.)		(Unauthorized burning, smoke investigation, lock outs, etc.)	
Fires	37	(Lightning strike-no fire)	
(Grass fires, Structure fires, Chimney fires, etc.)			
Good Intent Call	27	Hazardous Conditions (no fire)	28
(Disregarded after dispatched, Authorized burning, etc.)		(Carbon Monoxide calls, Gas leak, Power line down, etc.)	
		False Alarm	25
		(Malfunctioning alarm system, CO detector, etc.)	
		Severe Weather	3

Average Response Time **4 minutes 52 seconds** (a decrease of 7 seconds from the previous year responding to calls within the Township)

Our 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. 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. As 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.



course on Basic Trauma Life Support (BTLS). This course is refreshed every 3 years and includes classroom work, practical applications with volunteers from the community, and a final written and practical exam. Our thanks to those volunteers who offered their time so that we had "victims" on whom to practice our medical training and to the instructors who did a fantastic job. Check out some scenes of your department during the BTLS training.

Additionally, the Cannon Township Fire Department hosted an Ice Rescue class in February. Personnel from fire departments serving Dalton, Grattan Township, City of Grand Rapids, East Grand Rapids, Cutlerville, Kentwood, Hopkins, Solon and Port Sheldon joined our department for a tough one-day class designed to practice techniques and become volunteers so that other personnel could perform practice rescue scenarios. This included jumping into Bostwick Lake with our protective ice rescue suits, especially designed for water rescue situations, for up to 20 minutes at a time. Many thanks to all those that attended and to the instructors. See the group picture below and having fun at the lake in February.

The first two months of 2005 has kept the personnel of the Cannon Township Fire Department very busy. In January, all of the personnel who are licensed as Medical First Responders (MFR) or Emergency Medical Technicians (EMT), had an intensive two day



Until next time, Stay Safe!

Zoning Administrator

Development slowed considerably in the Township in 2004. Three new OS-PUDs (Open Space Planned Unit Development) were approved. Hidden Canyon is located on the south side of Cannonsburg Road, east of the Village of Cannonsburg. Twenty-four housing sites have been approved. R&R Farms OS-PUD has nine building sites. The development is located on the east side of Pettis, between 4 & 5 Mile Roads. Settlers Grove, a development of 55 home sites, is located on the west side of Pettis, between 4 & 5 Mile across the street from R&R Farms.

Street maps are available at the Township Office.

The Village PUD Ordinance was adopted in December. This ordinance regulates the development of the northwest corner of Belding Road and Myers Lake Avenue. Preliminary site plans for "Cannon Crossings" are available for review at the Township. The Village will have mixed uses of commercial/retail, single family residential, townhouses, and office space.

HOUSE NUMBER ALERT!

Please identify your house with your street number. If you live in a highly populated area (such as Bella Vista) it is extremely vital to identify your house. If you live in a more rural area, make sure your driveway and mailbox are marked. If you have a shared driveway, please indicate where your home is with an arrow or directional marker. This is a matter of safety and welfare in the event of an emergency.

Permits - A reminder that zoning and building permits are required for all residential and commercial buildings and most accessory structures (Pools, detached garages, pole barns, etc). Permit application packets are available at the Township Center. We do not fax applications; we will mail them to you or you may pick them up during regular business hours. The Building Official is in our office Monday, Wednesday, and Friday between 8:00 am and 10:00 am. Building permits are written only when the Building Official is in the office.

Please remember that if your proposed construction is within 500 feet of a lake, creek, wetland, stream, or any other body of water you will need both a Storm Water Permit from Cannon Township and a Soil Erosion Permit from the Kent County Road Commission. The Storm Water Permit is \$200.00 and must be obtained before ANY building or zoning permits will be issued. A survey of the property with very specific information is required as part of the Storm Water Permit application. The Township Engineer reviews and issues all Storm Water Permits.

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Animal Control Ordinance, Section 3.04, Dogs Running At Large, reminder:

No person owning or having charge, care, custody or control of any dog shall cause, permit, or allow the same to run at large or to be upon any highway, street, lane, alley, court, or other public place, or upon any private property or premises other than those of the person owning or having charge, care, custody, or control of such dog, within the Township, unless such dog is restrained by a substantial chain or leash not exceeding six (6) feet in length and is in the charge, care, custody, or control of a person with the ability to restrain it.

The Township has been receiving calls about dogs not being confined to their property. Callers are advised to contact Animal Control – 336-3210 or the Deputy Sheriff – 336-3113.

Would a Fertilizer Ordinance Benefit Cannon Township?

Many of the lakes in Cannon Township are developed. Are the effects of this development on the water-quality of the lakes increasing as a result of the fertilizers the homeowners use? Would the effect of the nutrient runoff in the lakes be less if the surrounding homeowners used phosphorus free fertilizers?

These questions and more are being researched.

Do you have information, an opinion or articles that might be of interest to the Board? Share that information! I would love to hear from you.

(Just a note: Your soil can be tested at Michigan State University's Extension Office on Ball Ave. NE for a nominal fee. The results will let you know just what nutrients you need to add to your soil. Call 336-3265 for more information. See related article.)

Diane Jones, Trustee

ORDINANCES

Cannon Township Ordinances can now be found on the web page.

www.cannontwp.org



**ABSENTEE BALLOTS FOR THE MAY 3RD ELECTION ARE AVAILABLE AT
THE TOWNSHIP OFFICE. STOP BY OR CALL FOR A BALLOT.**

Boater Safety Course

On Saturday, April 23, 2005 Cannon Township will be hosting the Michigan Safe Boating Course offered by the Kent County Sheriff's Department at the Township Center, 6878 Belding Road from 9 AM to 3 PM. The course covers all the laws, ethics, and safety procedures needed to legally and safely operate a boat or PWC (Jet Ski/Wave Runner) in Michigan. Emphasis is also on water safety and "drown proofing."

Upon successful completion of the class, a Michigan Boating Safety Certificate will be issued. This certificate is also acceptable in most of the other states.

Who needs this class?

- anyone born after 1978 who wants to operate a personal water craft
- anyone 12 – 16 years old who wants to drive a motorboat alone
- everyone is concerned about the laws and how to operate a vessel safely on the waterways
- anyone who spends time around lakes and rivers

Requirements for this class –

- A pencil and a pen
- You must be 12 years old by August 1, 2005
- You must provide your own sack lunch

To register –

- Call Deputy Scott Cook at 632-6230. Class is limited to 50 people.



Bluebirds

Bluebirds in Your Backyard

Learn how to attract and keep beautiful Bluebirds coming to your backyard. The Izaac Walton League (IKES) and Cannon Township are co-sponsoring a presentation by Bluebird expert and lover, Lee Petersen. She will give advice on how to feed Bluebirds, what to feed them, how to provide housing and how to protect them from other birds and predators. Come and learn all about these colorful birds on Tuesday, March 29, at 7:00 PM at the Cannon Township Center, 6878 Belding Road.

Building Your Bluebird House

After you learn all about the beautiful Bluebird, come to the IKES' property, 5701 Myers Lake Ave., on Saturday, April 9 at 1:00 PM to build the safest and best house for your Bluebirds. Materials including pre-cut pieces will be provided. Bring your hammer, your children and/or grandchildren and go home with your own hand-made Bluebird house. Everyone is welcome. A nominal fee will be charged to cover the cost of materials.

Trail Update

We recently heard that we did not receive the award from MDOT for an enhancement grant for 2005. Although we did not receive funding for this year, we were encouraged to apply again for 2006.

One reason is that there is a difference of opinion between MDOT and MDEQ regarding boardwalks across wetlands. ASHTO standards that MDOT follows require a 14-foot wide boardwalk. MDEQ would like to see boardwalks no wider than 10 feet in order to minimize impacts to the wetlands. There was concern that even if we changed our design to 14-foot boardwalks, that the DEQ would not issue a permit.

Even though this source of funding did not materialize for 2005, I have been working with the Township Engineer to apply for funding from another source. If we are unable to obtain funding through grants, the Board will need to make a decision about alternate ways to fund the trail. It is my belief, however, that the trail will be constructed, hopefully no later than 2006. I know it has been a long, difficult struggle, but we are hearing from the people in this community that they want to see a trail system, and we are determined to make it happen.

Bonnie Shupe

Keep yourself “in the information loop”

Did you know that you can access agendas for meetings, minutes, and information to contact the board members at www.cannontwp.org?

You might find information regarding topics that are of interest to you and you might want to voice your thoughts to the Board. Please feel invited to every Board meeting. Meetings are the second and fourth Monday of the month at 7:00 p.m. at the Cannon Township Office. Public comments are structured toward the beginning of the meeting. Your thoughts regarding Township issues (regardless of topics on the agenda) are very valuable. I would love to hear from you!

Diane Jones, Cannon Township Trustee

WATCH THE MAIL FOR YOUR NEW VOTER ID CARD. These will be issued before the May 3rd election. Many of you will have a new precinct number and polling place.

Lost – Margie Smallfield

Margie has been doing the layout and design of the Cannon Communicator for many years. Due to her family's recent move to Arizona, we have lost her services. This issue was designed by Colleen Mandle at Dickens Printing. Although we all miss Margie, I have confidence that Dickens will do a great job.

Clip and Save E-mail Addresses

Supervisor, Pete MacGregor	pmacgregor@cannontwp.org
Clerk, Bonnie Shupe	bonnies@cannontwp.org
Treasurer, Dan Barker	dbarker@cannontwp.org
Trustee Diane Jones	dianecjones@yahoo.com
Trustee Jim LaPeer	JimLaPeer@ferris.edu
Trustee Dick Davies	rrd8565@hotmail.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, Ryan Teelander	Rteelander@cannontwp.org
Fire Chief, Harry Morris.	Chief@Cannontwp.org
State Representative, Tom Pearce	tompearce@house.mi.gov
.....	Phone: 1-888-414-3684
State Senator, Ken Sikkema	ofcKenSikkema@senate.michigan.gov
.....	Phone: 1-800-774-1174
Congressman Vern Ehlers	www.house.gov/writerep
Cannon Township Web Site	www.cannontwp.org
Kent County Web Site	www.accesskent.com
State of Michigan Web Site.	www.michigan.gov



CANNON TOWNSHIP
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Township Board

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Clerk Bonnie Shupe
Treasurer..... Dan Barker
Trustees..... Diane Jones
..... Dick Davies
..... Chuck Bloom
..... Jim Lapeer
Township Offices ... 874-6966
(Hours 8am - 5pm, Mon - Fri)
Fax..... 874-8940
Fire Department ... 874-9725
Emergency..... 911

Township Board Meetings
2nd & 4th Monday, Monthly
7:00 pm, Township Hall