

the Cannon Communicator

Published by the Cannon Township Board, Kent County, Michigan

Winter 2010

From the Desk of the Supervisor

As I convey my final message to the Cannon Township citizens, for this is my last article as your Township Supervisor, I want to write about three significant issues; the State of the Township, our Township's quality of life, and the succession of the Township Board.

Currently, Cannon Township is fiscally sound, and our Board understands that the worst has yet to come. State revenue sharing continues to shrink and the Lansing gimmicks have all been exploited and exhausted. The main focus of the Township Board over the past few years has been balancing the budget and striving to maintain critical services to our residents. The Township has implemented a

"balanced" budget for its general governmental fund for the current budget year of 2010-2011. This was done by adopting the "zero-based" budgeting process, (i.e. "Value for Money" budgeting), and putting the Township citizens' priorities first.

The Township plans to use current revenues to provide essential services in fiscal year 2011 in order to maintain current fund balances, and not tap into our reserves. It is the goal of the Township Board to provide funding for critical Township services, such as law enforcement, fire

protection, and road maintenance, while maintaining a balanced budget. Each service provided by the Township has been prioritized by the Board, and funding is determined by this method. The Board continues to review and monitor all budget line items for opportunities to reduce expenditures and make any necessary amendments.

The Township Board anticipates the completion of two significant capital projects this winter. The first project is the apparatus expansion of the Cannon Fire Station #2. Our Fire Department was bursting at the seams



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Cannon Township

The Cannon Communicator, Winter 2010

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and there was no room for the newer style vehicles, which are built much taller and longer than our current fire barn could house. Due to the Township Fire Millage, plus the monetary responsibility of our Fire Department, (saving revenue dollars over the last 14 years); our Township is able to pay cash for this project.

In addition to the fire barn expansion, the Recreation Millage and a grant from the Department of Energy, along with our Metro Act Funds, financed an addition to our award winning Cannon Trail System. There's a new extension of an eight-foot wide trail from the Town Square development going north to Cannon Farms Drive and west to Bella Vista Drive. Again, no bonding or debt has been incurred for either of these capital projects.

Providing Cannon residents with a high quality of life without raising taxes has not been easy to achieve. This has been accomplished by high quality personnel, both staff and elected officials. The current Township Board is one of the most professional groups of people I have ever worked with in my career. Every Cannon elected official views the tax revenue as if it was his/her own money and has never taken his/her statutory responsibility lightly. By keeping an open mind, and applying common sense business lessons, your elected officials have assembled an efficiently run Township without petty squabbles or selfish conflicts. At times we may disagree, but like true professionals, we always strive for the betterment of the Township and its citizens. I have all the confidence that this Township Board will continue to be committed and dedicated to fiscal responsibility and professionalism. Whoever is chosen to take over as supervisor, I know that the Board will make the transition seamless.

Cannon Township continues to weather Michigan's economic storm, finding common-sense solutions that have allowed the residents to enjoy a high quality of life, all while maintaining a budget surplus. My involvement at Cannon started as a planning commissioner in 1998, then elected as a Trustee, and for the last 6-years, your Township Supervisor. I have learned many things with these positions; and the best part is that it has made me a better listener and leader.

I want to thank all the citizens for this awesome responsibility you bestowed on me as the Township Supervisor. It has been a true honor guiding this magnificent Township. I officially tendered my resignation from the position of Supervisor, effective December 31, and will be accepting my new position as the State Representative, for the 73rd District, as of January 1. I look forward to continually working with Cannon Township, but just in a little different capacity. I will take the lessons learned as your Supervisor to Lansing and implement the needed reforms this state desperately needs.

Best regards,

Peter MacGregor,
Cannon Township Supervisor

Post This

The 2011 Assessment Notices will be mailed in early February. There will be an Assessor's Review February 21, 22 and 23. This is a time to meet with the Assessing Department. The Assessing Department will respond to the appeals prior to the March Board of Review.

The Board of Review will meet March 14th 2pm to 5pm and 6pm to 9pm, and March 17th 9am to 12pm and 1pm to 4pm. Protest at the Board of Review is necessary to protect your right to further appeals to the Michigan Tax Tribunal for valuation and exemption appeals, and to the State Tax Commission for classification appeals. Properties classified as Commercial Real or Industrial Real may be appealed to the regular March Board of Review or the Michigan Tax Tribunal prior to May 31. Commercial Personal, Industrial Personal, or Utility Personal Property may be appealed to the March Board of Review or to the Michigan Tax Tribunal prior to May 31.

After receiving your assessment notice, please call 616-874-6966 if you wish to make an appointment for the Assessor's Review or the Board of Review.

From the Zoning Administrator

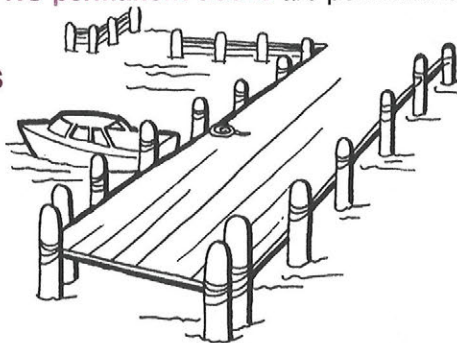
REMINDER – All docks shall be removed from Lake Bella Vista, Bostwick Lake, Silver Lake, and Ratigan Lake by December 15, 2010. **NO permanent docks** are permitted on these lakes.

PROHIBITED SIGNS

– The following types of signs are not permitted in the Township:

✓banners of any type unless they are of a **NONCOMMERCIAL** nature,

✓blinking/flashing lights, off site for sale signs, balloons and balloon signs, strings of pennants or streamers, and off site business signs.



Applications for Zoning & Building permits may be found at the Township website: www.cannontwp.org. Departments, Planning & Zoning, forms and applications or related documents.

The 2009 Zoning Ordinance and the General Ordinance (as of 9-13-10) may also be found on the website.

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The Cannon Township Clerk's Office is now on facebook. find us and "like" us to get up-to-date information.

facebook

This could very well be the last newsletter that you receive through the mail. If you would like to continue to receive these newsletters, please read the following article.

Due to the Cannon Township Board's attempt to maintain a balanced budget, some services have to be eliminated or reduced. One of those considered is our quarterly newsletter. Mailing costs for The Communicator have risen to approximately \$1300 an issue. This equates to \$5200 a year.

For a 16 page newsletter, the cost to produce and mail to everyone who lives or owns land in the Township is \$3440 an issue. To produce and make available on our website and print 1,000 hard copies for distribution at various locations costs \$990 an issue. Considering there are four issues a year, we're talking a savings of \$9800 a year by not mailing the newsletter.

What does this mean to you? If you enjoy reading this newsletter, there are two possibilities. One way is that you can subscribe to receive The Communicator electronically. To do this, go to our website: www.cannontwp.org.

On the home page, left side, is a button for you to sign

up for email alerts. You will be given an option to sign up for the newsletter (as well as other documents such as minutes and agendas). When the newsletter is uploaded to the website, you will receive an email with a link to it.

If you do not have access to the Internet, or you simply prefer a hard copy, you may pick one up at the following locations along Belding Road: Cannon Township Center lobby, Ric's Market, Choice One Bank, Huntington Bank, Pizzeria Grande, or Bostwick Bakery.

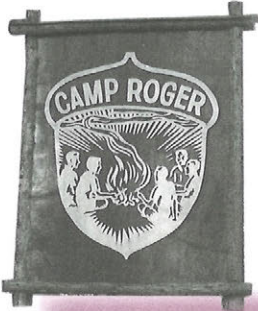
Newsletters are also available in Cannonsburg at the Gristmill or Honey Creek Inn. (If other businesses in the Township would like a supply, please ask.)

Newsletters are usually ready the third or fourth weeks of March, June, September, and December. Please remember to subscribe on the website or pick one up at one of the above locations.



“It must be slow at Camp Roger once the summer is over.

What do you do there all year?” This is a question we as staff members at Camp Roger hear frequently. Even though Camp Roger has been a part of this Township since 1913 when the camp began on 63 acres of land surrounding Little Bostwick Lake that was donated to St. Mark’s Episcopal Church in Grand Rapids, we seem to be a well-kept secret. For many years Camp Roger has served western Michigan as a Christian



residential summer camp. This tradition has continued in a strong way even though other organizations have experienced economic hard times. This summer we were busier than ever, hosting over 1500 campers for stays of various lengths (we have three-day, five-day, and eight-day sessions). When children come to camp, they stay in a cabin and stay busy during the day with

various activities (archery, riflery, snorkeling, canoeing, rock climbing, etc.) while supervised by a well-trained staff of young adults.

But these days when September comes, Camp Roger does not close. We have grown over the years and now own 190 acres. We have updated our cabins and buildings and can now host 200 people for weekend retreats in the winter. Ten years ago we began our year-round programs and now stay busy with school groups, church groups, scout groups, and other various events. Camp Roger’s outdoor educational programs now host more than 10,000 school children annually

through our Discovery Nature Center (the science-based outdoor educational component of our programming) and our Adventure Course (the high ropes course, complete with a climbing tower, a zip line, and a vertical playpen). Local schools such as Lakes Elementary, Cannonsburg Elementary, and East Rockford Middle School send various groups each year

to camp. But we also have groups from as far away as Cadillac, Remus, Chicago, and South Bend that use Camp Roger each year.

If you are at all interested in learning more about your neighbor, please take a look at www.camproger.org. We are proud to be a part of the Cannonsburg community and look forward to hosting more guests as we approach our 100th birthday. No, life does not slow down just because summer is over. And we don’t wish to be a well-kept secret anymore.

Phil Warners, Camp Roger Outdoor Education Director

Jim LaPeer, Treasurer, Cannon Township Treasurer. jlappeer@cannontwp.org

Cannon Township maintains a very complete and robust internet web site, providing easy on-line access to almost all township information pertaining to Tax Bills, Sewer Bills, and Assessing Records. Additionally if desired, payments can also be made at the same time while on-line, provided that Credit Card or Electronic Check Information is available. Forms & instruction for ACH (Automatic Clearing House) bank withdrawal setups are also available.

Getting started is very simple:

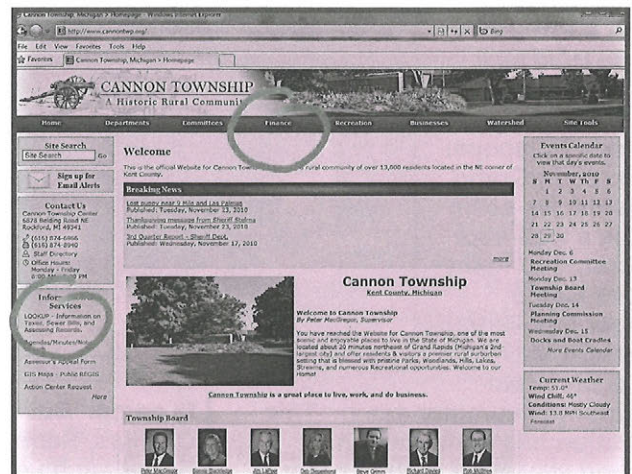
- ✓Locate a computer with Internet access.
- ✓Start up the Internet browser of your choice, then navigate to our Homepage at www.cannontwp.org. On our Homepage, find either of the two **'buttons'** as shown below circled in Red (**'Finance'**, or **'LOOKUP'**) and click on either one. Simply follow the page-by-page instructions from there.

Cannon Home page

After clicking on **'Finance'** or **'LOOKUP'**, the very next page shown will provide a list of options for viewing desired information, and/or making payment on currently due bills for Tax or Sewer. Most options that can be selected have built-in 'help' information added to them, to assist in guiding the process. Some features & functions available are:

- ☐ View **in detail** all current Tax, Sewer Bill, and Assessing information.
- ☐ Pay any such Bill where a balance is due, with a Credit Card or an Electronic Check (Routing & Account information required).
- ☐ Download & print PDF Forms for ACH setup requests.
- ☐ View payment history going as far back as we have electronically recorded.
- ☐ Review Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ's).

Need help? No problem... just give us a call, or email, and we will be glad to assist. And feel free to let us know on how we can improve this process to serve you better - your feedback on how we're doing is always appreciated.



December 2010

- Dec 1 2011 Dog Licenses available at Township Office
Dec 24 CHRISTMAS HOLIDAY – OFFICE CLOSED
Dec 27 CHRISTMAS HOLIDAY – OFFICE CLOSED
Dec 30 Quarterly Sewer Bills Mailed
Dec 31 NEW YEAR'S EVE HOLIDAY – OFFICE CLOSING AT NOON
Drop Box available for tax payments (after hours)

January 2011

- Jan 3 NEW YEAR'S DAY HOLIDAY – OFFICE CLOSED
Jan 8 Christmas Tree Recycling 9:00 am – 3:00 pm
(Township Hall Parking Lot)
Jan 10 Township Board Meeting – 7:00 pm
Jan 11 Planning Commission Meeting – 6:00 pm
Jan 13 Bear Creek Watershed Council Meeting - 6:00 pm
Jan 17 Recreation Committee Meeting 4:00 pm–5:30 pm
Jan 18 Zoning Board of Appeals Meeting – 6:00 pm
Jan 24 Township Board Meeting – 7:00 pm
Jan 31 Quarterly Sewer Bills Due

February 2011

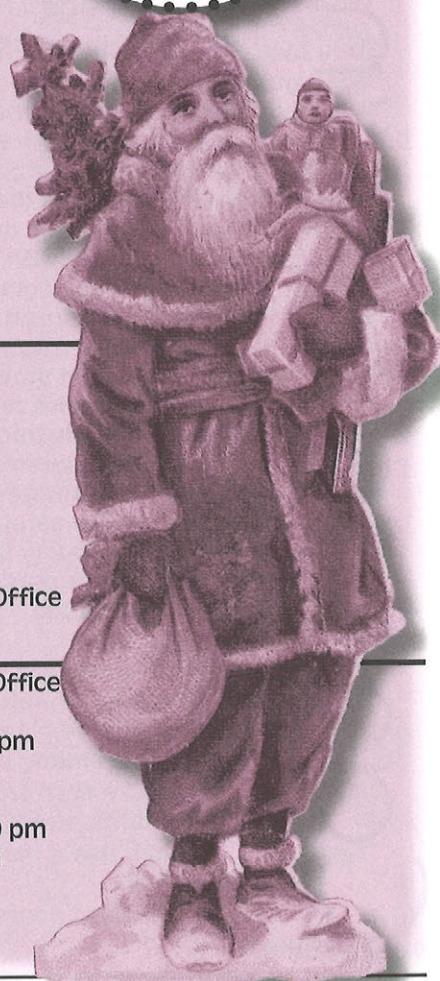
- Feb 8 Planning Commission Meeting – 6:00 pm
Feb 14 Township Board Meeting – 7:00 pm
Feb 14 2010 TAXES DUE – Penalty begins Feb 15, 2011
Feb 21 Assessor's Review 1:00 pm–4:00 pm
Feb 22 Assessor's Review 9:00 am–12:00 pm
Feb 23 Assessor's Review 9:00 am–12:00 pm
Feb 15 Zoning Board of Appeals Meeting – 6:00 pm
Feb 28 Township Board Meeting – 7:00 pm
Feb 28 Deadline for Collection of 2010 Taxes at Township Office

March 2011

- March 1 Last Day to obtain 2011 Dog Licenses at Township Office
March 8 Planning Commission Meeting – 6:00 pm
March 14 Board of Review 2:00 pm–5:00 pm, 6:00 pm–9:00 pm
March 14 Township Board Meeting – 7:00 pm
March 15 Zoning Board of Appeals Meeting – 6:00 pm
March 17 Board of Review 9:00 am–12:00 pm, 1:00 pm–4:00 pm
March 21 Recreation Committee Meeting 4:00 pm–5:30 pm
March 28 Township Board Meeting – 7:00 pm

**Remember
to check for any
cancellations or
changes
on the Township
web site.**

(www.cannontwp.org)



Congratulations!

We would like to extend congratulations to one of our firefighters, Matthew Alles, on passing the Emergency Medical Technician National Registry exam. Great job!



Fireplace and Home Fire Safety fact sheet from FEMA

(Federal Emergency Management Administration) More than one-third of Americans use fireplaces, wood stoves and other fuel-fired appliances as primary heat sources in their homes. Unfortunately, many people are unaware of the fire risks when heating with wood and solid fuels. Heating fires account for 36% of residential home fires in rural areas every year. Often these fires are due to creosote buildup in chimneys and stovepipes. All home heating systems require regular maintenance to function safely and efficiently. The United States Fire Administration (USFA) encourages you to practice the following fire safety steps to keep those home fires safely burning. Remember, fire safety is your personal responsibility... Fire Stops With You!

Keep fireplaces & wood stoves clean:

- ✓ Have your chimney or wood stove inspected and cleaned annually by a certified chimney specialist.
- ✓ Clear the area around the hearth of debris, decorations and flammable materials.
- ✓ Always use a metal mesh screen with fireplaces.
- ✓ Leave glass doors open while burning a fire.

- ✓ Install stovepipe thermometers to help monitor flue temperatures.
 - ✓ Keep air inlets on wood stoves open, and never restrict air supply to fireplaces, otherwise you may cause creosote buildup that could lead to a chimney fire.
 - ✓ Use fire-resistant materials on walls around wood stoves.
- Protect the outside of your home:**
- ✓ Stack firewood outdoors at least 30 feet away from your home.
 - ✓ Keep the roof clear of leaves, pine needles and other debris.
 - ✓ Cover the chimney with a mesh screen spark arrester.
 - ✓ Remove branches hanging above the chimney, flues or vents.

Protect the inside of your home:

- ✓ Install smoke alarms on every level of your home. Test them monthly and change the batteries at least once a year. Consider installing the new long life smoke alarms.
- ✓ Provide proper venting systems for all heating equipment.
- ✓ Extend all vent pipes at least three feet above the roof.

For More Information visit the USFA website:

www.usfa.fema.gov

Safety Basics for Winter time:

- ✓ Blinding wind-driven snow, extreme cold, icy roads, and downed trees and power lines

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can all accompany winter storms. Communication lines can be cut off, and access to emergency and medical services may be severely limited once extreme weather hits a region. It's important to know what to do before, during, and after a winter storm:

- ✓ Prepare a family emergency supplies kit that contain such items as flashlights, a battery operated radio, candles, etc. Families with children should have each child create their own personal pack that might contain a favorite security item (blanket, stuffed animal, etc.) or activities to keep busy and anything that is age appropriate to help keep the child warm and secure.
- ✓ Establish an out-of-area contact (such as a relative or family friend) who can coordinate family members' locations and information should you become separated. Make sure children learn the phone numbers and addresses, and know the emergency plans.
- ✓ Learn how to disconnect gas, water, and electric power in case you must evacuate your home.
- ✓ A winter storm watch means conditions are right for a severe storm to develop within 36 to 48 hours. Avoid going outside or traveling -- the safest place to be during a

winter storm is indoors.

During a winter storm watch:

- ✓ Listen to the radio or TV for the latest weather information.
- ✓ Review your family's disaster plan. Watch for changing weather conditions.
- ✓ Move any pets or other animals to a sheltered area (make sure they have water).
- ✓ A winter storm warning means a life-threatening severe winter storm has begun or will begin within 24 hours. A blizzard warning is issued when conditions are likely to produce deep drifts, life-threatening wind chills, and blinding snowfall.

During a winter storm or blizzard warning:

- ✓ Listen for news and weather updates.
- ✓ Implement your emergency plan regarding food, water and supplies if you are unable to go out for a prolonged period.
- ✓ To conserve fuel, lower the thermostat to 65° F during the day and 55° F at night.
- ✓ If power goes out, you may be forced to find other means of keeping warm during the storm.

Use only safe emergency heat sources, such as a fireplace with a sturdy metal screen and a supply of wood; a well-vented wood, coal, or camp stove; a portable space heater. Read NFPA's heating fact sheet for more information on safe home heating.

- ✓ Dress warmly in many layers, and always wear a hat. Protect your lungs by covering your mouth. Stretch before shoveling heavy snow and remember to take breaks to avoid overexertion.
- ✓ Continue to listen to the news and weather updates.

Ice Safety

Winter has arrived in West Michigan, and with it, falling temperatures, snow and ice. Here are some safety tips offered by the Department of Natural Resources:

- ✓ Before venturing out on a frozen lake or pond keep in mind, there is no such thing as 100 percent safe ice!

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Recommended minimum ice thickness:

- ✓ 4" of new clear ice is the minimum thickness for travel on foot 5" is minimum for snowmobiles and ATV (remember that these thicknesses are merely guidelines for new, clear, solid ice. Many factors other than thickness can cause ice to be unsafe.)
- ✓ If you plan to go ice fishing, test the thickness yourself using an ice chisel, ice auger or even a cordless 1/4 inch drill with a long bit.
- ✓ Go out with a buddy and keep a good distance apart as you walk out. If one of you goes in, the other can call for help (it's amazing how many people carry cellular phones these days). The companion can also attempt a rescue if one of you is carrying rope or other survival gear.
- ✓ Refrain from driving on ice whenever possible! Snowmobiles and ATV's need at least 5 inches.
- ✓ Don't "overdrive" your snowmobile's headlight. At even 30 miles per hour, it can take a much longer distance to stop on ice than your headlight shines. Many fatal snowmobile through-the-ice accidents occur because the machine was traveling too fast for the operator to stop when the headlamp illuminated the hole in the ice.
- ✓ Wear a life vest under your winter gear. Or wear one of the new flotation snowmobile suits. And it's a good idea to carry a pair of ice picks that may be homemade or purchased from most well stocked sporting goods stores that cater to winter anglers. It's amazing how difficult it can be to pull yourself back onto the surface of unbroken but wet and slippery ice while wearing a snowmobile suit weighted down with 60 lbs

of water. The ice picks really help pulling yourself back onto solid ice.

Ice Skating Safety:

- ✓ Wear skates that fit comfortably and provide enough ankle support to keep you on your feet.
- ✓ Have the blades professionally sharpened at the beginning of each season.
- ✓ Always check for cracks, holes and other debris. Wear warm clothing and rest when you become tired or cold.
- ✓ Never skate alone.
- ✓ Always supervise children near lakes, ponds, and creeks. Educate children of the danger of ice by taking them to sites and advising them of places they must avoid.

Family Safety:

- ✓ Remind children that under no circumstances should they go onto a frozen lake to chase a ball or save a pet.
- ✓ Always keep your pets on a leash. Many rescues are the result of dog owners trying to rescue their dog that walked out onto the ice.

What if a companion falls through thin ice?

- ✓ REACH, THROW, GO
Try to reach them with something - rope, ladder, stick, ski pole, etc.
- ✓ Throw them something

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to help they stay afloat - a cooler, plastic milk/soda bottles, spare tire, etc. Call 911. Wait for emergency responders to bring them to the exact location of the victim

✓ Try not to panic. Instead, remain calm and turn toward the direction you came from. Place your hands and arms on the unbroken surface of the ice (here's where the ice picks come in handy - screwdrivers make great ice picks). Work forward on the ice by kicking your feet. If the ice breaks, maintain your position and slide forward again. Once you are lying on the ice, don't stand. Instead, roll away from the hole. That spreads out your weight until you are on solid ice. This sounds much easier than it really is to do.

The best advice is don't put yourself into needless danger by venturing out too soon or too late in the season.

**Until next time,
stay safe!**

Check out the Cannon
Township Fire
Department's website @
<http://cannonfire.org/>

A word of Caution on Bill Payment Services

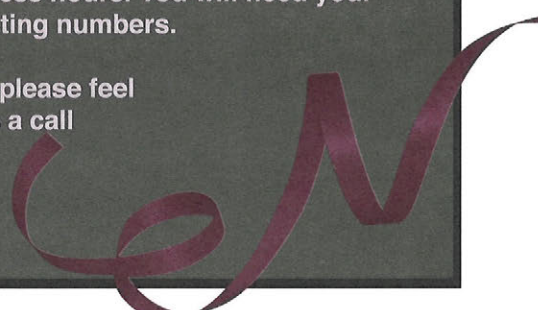
Jim LaPeer, Treasurer

Many Banking & Financial Institutions have begun to offer "On-Line Bill Payment Services" as part of their suite of home banking applications. For many of our Township residents, these are wonderful aids in managing our family budgets, and paying bills. However, there is one situation to be aware of when utilizing these services... that being, "timeliness of processing".

The procedure for bill payment that apparently many financial institutions follow is to physically print the payment check followed by manually mailing the check to its destination via the US Mail. This introduces a great deal of 'uncertainty' as to when the check may actually arrive at the intended recipients; for time-sensitive payments this may mean being late. If you are not sure how your banking institution handles this we would encourage you to discuss the subject with your banker.

If you have a need for an immediate payment on your Township Sewer or Tax bills, check out the Township Web Site at www.cannontwp.org ... review the instructions under Finance... and select Electronic Check payment. This service costs \$3.00 and is quick to within a few business hours. You will need your Bank Account & Routing numbers.

Any questions, please feel free to give us a call
@ 874-6966.



Winter Watershed News

**Kim Sapkowski,
Watershed Administrative Assistant**

Christmas Tree Recycling

Cannon Township will offer free Christmas Tree Recycling only one day this year! The event will be Saturday, January 8, 2011 from 9 a.m. – 3 p.m. in the west parking lot of Cannon Township Center. We usually offer tree recycling the first two Saturdays in January but this year, New Year's Day falls on the first Saturday. Moving the two Saturdays further out into January would mean citizens having to hang on to their trees into mid-January. So, please mark your calendars for January 8. The Rockford High School National Honor Society will be on hand to assist you with your tree. Please check your tree for stray ornaments, lights or wire before you drop it off. We cannot accept wreaths or trees with wire.



Bear Creek Watershed Management Plan Update

After consulting with various experts, the Bear Creek Watershed Council has decided to not have our updated Watershed Management Plan be Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) compliant. There were many reasons for this decision. First, it is felt that because the Bear Creek Watershed is not considered an "impaired" watershed or a "priority"

watershed, going through the time and expense of creating an EPA compliant plan was not necessary. Although a watershed group must have an EPA compliant plan in order to apply for EPA grants, that compliance is not a guarantee that a group will receive the grant. Again, the fact that the Bear Creek Watershed is not an impaired watershed puts it low on the priority list of EPA grant funding, whether the plan is EPA compliant or not.

Please keep in mind that creating an EPA compliant watershed management plan is an optional activity, so there are no repercussions for choosing to not do so. Also, The Lower Grand River Organization of Watersheds (LGROW) will soon have an EPA compliant watershed management plan. Since Bear Creek Watershed is a sub-watershed of the Lower Grand Watershed (and a member of LGROW), we'll probably be able to run an EPA grant request through LGROW. The Bear Creek Watershed Council will also be able to pursue grants outside of the EPA (private foundations, for example).

The important thing is that we update the current Bear Creek Watershed Management Plan, which was created in 1993. The Township and metro area has changed significantly since then. The Bear Creek Watershed Council wishes to take a protective and pro-active

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stance in watershed health.

That is where you come in! In December or January, a survey will be posted online at the Cannon Township website that will ask your input about what should go into the new watershed management plan. It is vital that the community have input on this planning process. Please check the Cannon Township website www.cannontwp.org for more information on the survey.

Watershed Protection in Winter

Reduce the amount of salt that is used on your driveway and sidewalks. Salt eventually runs off into waterways. Try Calcium Magnesium Acetate (CMA), a deicing product. It doesn't cause corrosion and has fewer adverse environmental impacts.

Shovel snow and break up ice before putting down salt or CMA.

Cannon Trail Volunteer

It's never too early to "think spring!" If you are interested in becoming a Cannon Trail Volunteer, give Kim

Sapkowski a call at 874-6966 or email at ksapkowski@cannontwp.org The Cannon Trail Volunteer season runs April through November. Trail Volunteers keep the trail looking beautiful by picking up trash, occasionally sweeping off sand or pruning vegetation. Deadline to sign up is March 4.

Thank You Trail Volunteers!

Many thanks to the 2010 Cannon Trail Volunteers! Over 25 volunteers worked hard this past season keeping the trail clean and free of debris. We appreciate their dedication!

Bear Creek Waterfest

Looking for more volunteer opportunities? Consider helping out at the Bear Creek Waterfest April 30, 2011. This annual event at Townsend Park is full of family activities that teach us about watershed health. It's fun and you'll be sure to walk away learning something new! All volunteers are treated to a free pancake breakfast held at the festival! There are a variety of ways you can help. Call Kim Sapkowski at 874-6966 or email at ksapkowski@cannontwp.org

Thanks!



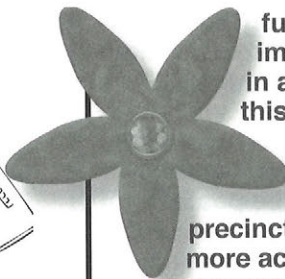
Clerk's Corner...

By Bonnie Blackledge

I always breathe a sigh of relief when the busy even-year election cycle is completed, especially when the process has gone smoothly. This year is no exception. We had two fairly busy elections – the August Primary had an overall turnout of 35.76% and the November General had a turnout of 60.32%. Results are broken down below.

The success of these elections can be attributed to well-trained, dedicated workers who did their best to follow State rules concerning election administration. I am very proud of my “team” and the professional way they manage themselves on Election Day.

Everyone seemed to like the new Electronic Poll Book. We piloted this new technology at one precinct in 2008, but thanks to HAVA (Help America Vote Act)



thanks to the funds, we were able to implement the process in all six precincts this year. This helped us save money by eliminating two workers at each precinct and it also added more accuracy to the process. I was impressed with how the workers embraced this new technology. Even my oldest workers (I believe the oldest is 87) are happy with this addition to the election process.

I look forward to the odd “off” year when the only election to run is the school election in May. It gives me a chance to catch up in the other areas of my responsibility and frees me up to spend more time on other projects.

Wishing you all the best in the New Year!

Precinct/Voter Turnout

	60.51%	58.11%	63.29%	58.39%	61.17%	61.31%	60.32%
	1	2	3	4	5	6	Total
Voters at polls	814	825	754	864	632	805	4694
Absent Voters	214	189	184	249	250	195	1281
Total Voters	1028	1014	938	1113	882	1000	5975
Total Reg. Voters	1699	1745	1482	1906	1442	1631	9905

Recreation Committee Update

There were two large projects earmarked for this fiscal year – one was the sidewalks on Myers Lake Avenue and Belding Road. The other is the public restroom that is being built as part of the Fire Station renovation.

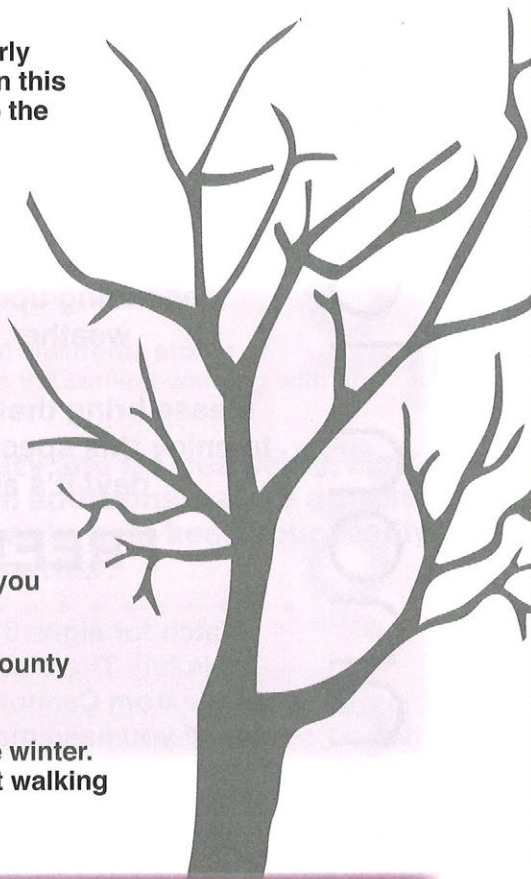
At this time, the sidewalk project is complete. People have been seen using the sidewalk and carrying grocery bags from Ric's. That was one of our hopes – that this sidewalk would lead to a safe way to walk to and from area businesses. Most of the cost of this project was paid for by Department of Energy (DELEG) funds and Metro Act revenue (received for right-of-way improvements).

The public restroom is still under construction, but nearly complete. The Committee hopes that we can soon open this up to the public and eliminate the portable toilet next to the parking lot.

Since there are now some additional segments to our trail system, the Committee thought that it would be a good time to republish some of the rules:

- No motorized vehicles or horses are allowed on any Cannon trails or sidewalks.
- Pets must be leashed and you must clean up after them.
- If you live next to the trail, please do not park your car so that it obstructs the pathway.
- If you plow snow on your driveway, please make sure you do not block the trail with your snow piles.
- Violations of these rules can be reported to the Kent County Sheriff Department.

At this time, trails are not shoveled or plowed in the winter. They are open for skiing and snowshoeing, or just walking with a good pair of boots. Enjoy!



The Cannon Historical Museum is Closed for the Winter.

The Izaak Walton

League presents their annual

Winterfest!

Saturday, January 29 10:00 - 3:00

at the Conservation Center, 5641 Myers Lake Rd.

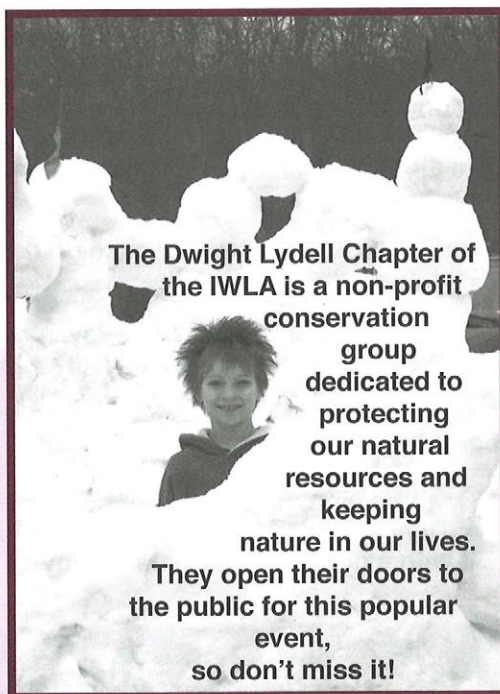
As in other years, the IWLA will be providing good old-fashioned Wintertime Fun, with ice-fishing, cross-country skiing, snow-castles and camps, archery, nature-trails, sledding, crafts, and lunch.

Activities may vary depending upon the weather.

Please bring the kids out to enjoy this special winter day! It's all

FREE!!

Watch for signs if parking lot is full. There's usually a shuttle from Cannonsburg Ski area. If you need more info, or would like to volunteer for this fun event, call Georgia Donovan at **773-2850**, or georgia.art@att.net.



The Dwight Lydell Chapter of the IWLA is a non-profit conservation group dedicated to protecting our natural resources and keeping nature in our lives.

They open their doors to the public for this popular event, so don't miss it!

By Deb Diepenhorst, Trustee

The Township Board initiated a Severe Weather Alert Committee to take a look at alternatives to help keep our community alert, safe, and protected as severe weather approaches. Sirens were the first option we investigated. To cover the 36 square miles of the Township we would need 20 sirens, costing \$20,000 each (net \$400,000), with an annual maintenance fee of \$400 per siren (\$8,000 annually).

In conducting further research we learned sirens may not be the most reliable source for severe weather notification. Therefore, with your tax dollars in mind, we took a look at other options and found several avenues that would instantly notify an individual. We are living in a technology age and there are more advanced resources available than in the past. The best way to be informed of severe storms is individually.

We strongly encourage you to sign up for one of these free notification services; you would receive text or email messages when Cannon Township is under a severe weather alert. If you click on a link below it will take you directly to the organization's sign-up page.

National Weather Service: <http://www.weather.gov/emailupdates/index.php>

The Weather Channel: <https://registration.weather.com/ursa/alerts/step1>

WZZM 13: http://www.wzzm13.com/weather/resources/my_weather/default.aspx

WOOD TV 8: http://www.woodtv.com/subindex/about_us/text_alerts

Another option is a weather radio which can be found at electronic stores or on-line, starting at \$20.00. These special radios provide the earliest warning with an alarm that will alert you in case of anticipated bad weather.

Cannon Township cares about the community and its well being, and would like to equip each of our residents with additional safety options. We hope you will utilize one of these resources to help keep your family safe during inclement weather.

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The Cannon Township Board of Trustees decided that because of the departure of Supervisor Peter MacGregor to the Michigan House of Representatives, the position of Supervisor would be filled by a current and previously elected Trustee. Stephen Grimm will assume that position effective December 31 at noon. That decision creates an opening on the Board of Trustees. The Board invites any resident of Cannon Township interested in filling that opening to contact Bonnie Blackledge at (616) 874-6966 or by email to bonnies@cannontwp.org, by visiting the Township Center at 6878 Belding Road, or by visiting the Township website at www.cannontwp.org, to obtain details regarding the requirements of the position and an application.

Farmland Preservation in Cannon Township

Cannon Township became a participant in Kent County's Purchase of Development Rights (PDR) farmland preservation program in 2003. The purpose of this program is to create a long-term environment for agriculture by permanently preserving prime and unique farmland. Agriculture is important to Michigan's economy as it is our largest industry, and 1 in 4 Michigan jobs are connected to the food system. To date, 928 acres have been preserved in Kent County.

Each year, program staff sends out postcards to all farmland owners notifying them of the application cycle. From March 1 – April 30, interested landowners voluntarily apply. Applications can be found at www.accesskent.com/pdr or can be mailed upon request. Each application is scored and prioritized according to the scoring system also posted online. The township board must approve each application every year. High scoring applications are then appraised to determine a fair market value for the development rights. In 2010, development rights values ranged between \$1,000 per acre up to \$2,400 per acre.

Cannon Township has supported farmland preservation by reviewing applications and adding an area for farmland preservation on the future land use map of the master plan.

For more information on farmland preservation, please visit www.accesskent.com/pdr or contact Kendra Wills, staff person to the Kent County Agriculture Preservation Board at 616-336-2028 or willsk@anr.msu.edu

Believe in the magic of *Christmas*



*Merry Christmas
AND
Happy New Year
From The
Cannon Township
Board,
Staff, AND
Commissions!*

THE 2011 IZAAK WALTON LEAGUE ANNUAL CONSERVATION BANQUET AND SILENT AUCTION

The Dwight Lydell Chapter of the Izaak Walton League of America located at 5641 Myers Lake Avenue will have their 2011 Conservation Awards and Fund Raiser Banquet on Friday March 4 at the Centennial Country Club, 3361 Charlevoix Dr SE, Grand Rapids, MI

This is a multipurpose banquet with an appropriate speaker, and a Conservation award will be given to an area person or business that has done something outstanding regarding conservation or the environment. A few Ikes will also be recognized for their work during the past year. This is our most important fund raising event for the year, made up of a big silent auction with something for everyone. Two bucket raffles are also added to top the evening off.

Many of you are familiar with the Ikes and may have attended one of our open to the public events at our property such as the Winterfest (again this January 29), the Summerfest, or kids' fishing every Saturday morning in May. Some of you may have volunteered in our effort to spread the *Gallerucella Calmariensis* beetle from wetland to wetland to control the non-native invasive Purple Loosestrife plant which crowds out native plants

The banquet committee is excited to have the man who is considered the "Father of Great Lakes Salmon Program, Dr. Howard Tanner, to be the Banquet's featured Speaker. Dr. Tanner was chief of the Michigan DNR Fisheries Division



in 1964 and was told to do "something spectacular" to resurrect the Great Lakes from overharvest by commercial fisheries and disruption due to invasion of the sea lamprey and alewife. There is no doubt that he accomplished that with the successful introduction of Coho and Chinook salmon which fishing some many of us enjoy all summer long and in through the fall. Later Dr. Tanner served as Director of the MDNR under Governor William Milliken.

It is a banquet served buffet style of fish, beef, chicken with all of the other veggies etc. to make it a great meal. Reservations are a must with no tickets sold at the door that night. The price is \$27 per person with payment appreciated by February 25. Your reservation can be made by sending your name, address and phone number along with a check to *Fred Eyer, 2488 Rockhill Dr NE, Grand Rapids MI. 49525. If you have any questions please call Fred at 363-0253.*

Hope to see you and your friends on March 4 for a great and fun evening.
– Bob Stegmier and Maurie Houseman, Banquet Co-Chairs.

Clip and Save E-mail Addresses

Supervisor, Steve Grimm: sgrimm@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 Rob McBrien: Rj.mcmbrien@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, Pete MacGregor:..... PeterMacGregor@house.mi.gov
 Phone: 1-855-DIST073 (347-8073)
 State Senator, Mark Jansen: senmjansen@senate.michigan.gov
 Phone: 1-800-774-1174
 Cannon Township Web Site: www.cannontwp.org
 Kent County Web Site: www.accesskent.com
 State of Michigan Web Site: www.michigan.gov



Cannon Township
 A Historic Rural Community



Experience
 the
Wonder

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

Township Board

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

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

6878 Belding Road, NE • Rockford, MI 49341

The Cannon Communicator, Winter 2010