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# Communicator

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Published by the Cannon Township Board, Kent County, MI

Fall 1995

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## A Special Tribute to Gerald Kitson

In order to honor a great man and leader of our community, this issue of "The Communicator" is dedicated to the memory of Gerald Kitson. Mr. Kitson served our community well as Township Supervisor and leader of the Historical Society. He left a history of service that those who follow will find difficult to duplicate. In his honor the Township Board adopted the following tribute:

**WHEREAS**, Gerald Kitson was a life long resident and leader of our community, and

**WHEREAS**, he served with dignity, honor and integrity as an active resident, leader of our Historical Society, and Township Supervisor, and

**WHEREAS**, he devoted his life to his family, his church, and his community, and

**WHEREAS**, even after leaving public office and until his death, he continued to serve as a role model, mentor, and community leader.

**NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED**, that in tribute to this very special citizen, the Cannon Township Board declares the week of October 9, 1995 to be Gerald Kitson Week in Cannon Township in honor of this great citizen.

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED**, that the flag at the Township Center be flown at half mast for one week in his honor and his memory.

**BE IT FINALLY RESOLVED**, that the Cannon Township Fire Department be authorized to participate in his funeral service by representing our entire community in honoring Gerald Kitson for the contributions he has made to our Township.

## Wanted - A Few Good People

Beginning January 1, 1996 we will have 3 openings on our Planning Commission due to two term expirations and one resignation. As you may know, the job of planning commissioner is one of the most important jobs we have here in the Township. These members make recommendations to the Township Board on all proposed development within the township based on the criteria present in the zoning ordinances. They are also responsible for site plan review of commercial construction and changes within the historical district among other responsibilities.

The Zoning Board of Appeals will also have one vacancy due to term expiration beginning in January.

If you share a real concern for your community and wish to contribute your time and knowledge, please fill out an application by the deadline, December 1, 1995. Application forms are available at the township office.





## CORNER

CLERK'S

Much of what we do at the local government level is dictated to us from the state or federal levels. For instance, last year the state passed a law prohibiting burning of leaves and grass clippings. The townships were allowed to pass an ordinance allowing this under limited conditions. Thus, our new burning ordinance came into effect allowing the burning of leaves only on Thursdays, Fridays, and Saturdays from October 18 through November 14 with a permit.

Now we are faced with another edict from the state government concerning precinct boundaries. According to P.A. 401 of 1994, precinct boundaries must have clearly defined and clearly observable boundaries. These include roads, streams, permanent physical features, or lines of demarcation recognized by the U.S. Bureau of the Census.

Unfortunately, one of the precinct boundaries in Cannon Township which lies in section 20, is not clearly defined by definition. This affects the people living along the north side of Cannonsburg Road between Pettis and Egypt Valley and those on the west side of Egypt Valley between Cannonsburg and approximately Robin Hill. These people (and this includes my family!) who have been in Precinct 1 for years will soon be receiving a new voter ID card telling them that they are now part of Precinct 4.

The negative side of this change is that Precinct 1 voters usually have the shortest line on election day. There is also a change of polling place involved. Precinct 1 votes at the Township Center while Precinct 4 votes at Bella Vista Church. Believe me when I say I wouldn't change this if I didn't have to, but I don't want to be in violation of a state law. We need to make this change before January 9, 1996, so watch for those cards in the mail if you live in the affected area.

*Bonnie Shupe, Township Clerk*

## Opportunity to meet your Patrol Officer



Have you ever had a question you wanted to ask a police officer but were afraid to ask? Or maybe you have a concern about your neighborhood or community but didn't want to bother the Sheriff's Department by calling and having a deputy come to your house?

On November 13, 1995, from 11:30 a.m. until 1:30 p.m. in coordination with the Kent County Sheriff Department's Community Policing Program, I would like to invite you to stop by the Township Hall to meet with me, Deputy Brian Robinson. In a joint effort we are setting aside these "office hours" for you to get to know me better as your Township Patrol Officer, and for me to become more aware of the issues you feel are important to your community.

As stated in the Kent County Sheriff's Department Community Policing Mission Statement, "We are devoted to serving the public promoting trust and respect while enforcing the law through community involved policing."

Please stop and see me on November 13, 1995 from 11:30 a.m. until 1:30 p.m.

*Deputy Brian Robinson*

## SOIL BIOENGINEERING WORKSHOP

*Discover the use of live plant materials to protect and stabilize our valuable streambanks*

Thursday, November 9, 1995  
Alpine Township Hall  
841 Alpine Church Street  
Comstock Park, MI 49321



**Co-Sponsored by the Water Resources Institute and the Timberland R C & D Area Council, Inc.**

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|--------------------|---|
| <b>1st Session</b> | 9:00 - 10:00 What is bioengineering?<br>10:00- 12:00 Stream dynamics/erosion control<br>12:00- 1:00 Break |
| <b>2nd Session</b> | 1:00 - 3:00 Site selection, permitting, preparation, and installation                                     |

**Please R.S.V.P. by November 2 • No Registration Fee**  
Call Ed Frye (616) 895-3722 or Phil Dakin (616) 887-5760

*This event is a service of the York Creek and Bear Creek Watershed Projects.*



## ROAD COMMITTEE UPDATE



### 5 Mile Road

Next time you're out on the south side of our township, take a drive down 5 Mile road east of Egypt Valley. Kent County Road Commission has just about completed the finishing touches of this major township road construction project for 1995. Thanks KCRC for a beautiful job!

### 7 Mile Road

The major road project for 1996, the reconstruction and paving of 7 Mile Road east of Blakely, was presented and approved at the Board Meeting on October 9, 1995. The total amount is estimated at \$300,800, with the township's portion being 55%. We also had approximately \$15,000 in "Build Michigan" credits which lowers our portion to \$150,816. Tree removal could possibly begin this winter.

### "The Pines"

A request for engineering studies for construction and paving of the "Pines" area on the south side of Belding Road across from Bostwick Lake will be presented to the Kent County Road Commission in October. This project could become the next major road project following construction of 7 mile.

## Future Construction

The Board has been working with the engineering firm of Prein & Newhof to develop a heliport



and access road from Myers Lake Avenue onto the township property. The request has come from our fire department to facilitate the evacuation of critically injured persons. The project is targeted for completion this fall.

*George Scott*



## BURNING DATES FOR 1995

The following dates are the days you are allowed to burn leaves and grass clippings with a permit from the Fire Department:

October 19, 20, 21, 26, 27, 28

November 2, 3, 4, 9, 10, 11

Remember to call 874-6056 for a permit. Also, fires must be supervised by someone 18 years of age or older, and between the hours of 9:00 am. and 6:00 pm.

## Parks and Recreation



The Parks and Recreation Committee is working on the development of two ice skating rinks to be available this winter. One rink would be for hockey, the other for

family skating. The proposed size of both rinks would be 100' x 200'. Both would be lighted with overhead lighting. Port-a-jons are planned for the site as well as a shelter for changing skates.

In order to make this a reality, volunteers are needed for supervision of the rinks. If you are interested, please contact the township office at 874-6966.



## SUPERVISOR'S COMMENTS

Over a year ago, Cannon Township began a program in cooperation with Ada Township and Kent County to provide increased patrols by the Kent County Sheriff's Department in our Township. This program is financed through our General Fund at a cost of approximately \$80,000 per year. Since we began this new service, the response from our citizens has been overwhelmingly supportive.

As part of the increased patrols, I have requested that the Sheriff's Department set up selective enforcement programs to try to control speed on certain heavily travelled streets, and to attempt to solve a series of burglaries that hit many of our area businesses and theft that was occurring at our construction sites. Each of these efforts has been successful.

We have had special speed enforcement on Cannonsburg Drive, the Rockford Village Area, in the Lake Bella Vista development and on 9 Mile. As an example, in Lake Bella Vista, only 10% of the vehicles monitored were travelling at or below the 25 m.p.h. speed limit, over 85% were in the 27-36 m.p.h. and the balance exceeded 36 miles per hour. On Cannonsburg road, while the majority of those monitored were between 53-60 m.p.h. two vehicles were clocked at over 70 m.p.h. Speeds in Rockford Village were similar to Lake Bella Vista with one car going over 60 miles per hour.

In checking the license and registrations of those violating our speed limits it was not surprising that the majority were residents of the areas in which they were monitored. If we want to control the speeds in our neighborhoods, we have to control our own speeds. I hope you will join me in making our community a safer place by paying extra attention to the traffic and pedestrians around us and slowing down our own speed. In the future, you will see increased patrols and selective enforcement as Cannon Township works with out Sheriff's Patrol Program to increase vehicle and neighborhood safety in our community.

Also in the area of public safety, I want to congratulate the men and women of the Cannon Township Fire Department for their dedication and service to our community. As our community grows, the number and severity of our fire and emergency calls has increased dramatically. It is through their dedication and commitment that each of us can rest assured that we have the highest trained and hardest working fire department possible. I also want to congratulate them for two recent emergency calls where they were directly responsible for saving the lives of heart attack victims. If you see one of our volunteer firefighters please join me in expressing your appreciation for their hard work.

Like always, if you have any questions or concerns about Cannon Township, do not hesitate to contact me.

John W. Weiss, Supervisor

## EAGLE SCOUTS ACTIVE IN THE AREA

Currently we have three area scouts who are attempting to earn their Eagle Badges by performing service in our community. They are Steve McNay, Joe Mancewicz, and Alex Kallio.

Steve is working at the Cannonsburg Cemetery. With help from other scouts and their family members, Steve is cataloguing the grave sites in the old section of the cemetery to compare it with the township's records. He also supervised a clean-up of the area which involved spreading about 30 yards of topsoil, reseeding, and pruning.

Joe is building benches from recycled plastic lumber (donated by Kent County) which will be used at the Fred Meijer Preserve at Pickerel Lake. These will be strategically placed on the walking trails.

Alex is involved with the Bear Creek Watershed Project which is being administered by the Water Resources Institute at Grand Valley State University. He has been monitoring the temperature on a weekly basis at four different sites along Bear Creek through the Adopt-a-Stream program at WMEAC ( West Michigan Environmental Association). He will then monitor this portion of the creek for macro-invertebrates on a regular basis and provide periodic clean-up.

These scouts are all part of Troop 228 which is led by Scoutmaster James Alles, a Township Trustee.



## "Neighborhood Complaints"

Did you know that the Township has Zoning and General Ordinances that govern what you may do with your property? For instance, there are Ordinances regarding barking dogs, inoperable automobiles, lot sizes, signs, building sizes, and unwholesome substances (refuse). Most of the complaints that the Township receives are regarding inoperable/dismantled automobiles, noise, and barking dogs.

When a complaint is received, it is logged and then investigated. The resident calling is not asked for his name or address. After the investigation and if it is determined that a violation exists, the township assumes responsibility for notifying the

owner of the property by letter. Usually, we grant the property owner thirty days to take care of the problem. Sometimes it is necessary to send a second letter, and then, if there is no response or cooperation, a municipal civil infractions ticket is issued for 63rd District Court.

Incidentally, neither the Township nor Kent County have noise ordinances. We ask that you call the Kent County Sheriff's Department at 336-3113 to file a noise complaint. Car #11 is shared with Ada Township and they will respond as soon as they can.

*Chris James, Planning & Zoning Coordinator*

## Fire Station Renovation

The fire station in Cannonsburg has been in need of modernization for some time now. A committee was set up to develop a plan for remodeling/modernization of the present site. Cornerstone Architects were chosen to provide a study and plans for what could be done with the existing building and what would need to be modified for today's usage.

Numerous meetings were held with the committee, Fire Department personnel, and the architects. A proposed plan was derived from the input received and a preliminary site plan was formed. The plan calls for retaining the cement block portion of the present building and the removal and enlarging of the north portion which is presently of a "pole barn" type of construction. A pitched roof will be used for the whole new building which will provide areas for future needs (meeting rooms, etc.) as our fire department expands.

At present the remodeling is scheduled to start in the spring of 1996.

*Cannonsburg Fire Station Committee - Jim Alles, Dan Barker, and Nick VanBelkum*

## NEW ZONING ORDINANCES

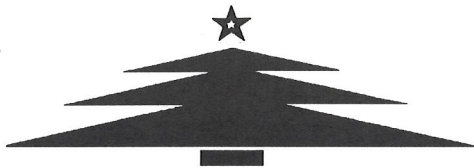
Almost two years ago a Zoning Ordinance Committee was formed to review and update our current ordinances. With our new Comprehensive (Master) Plan (adopted in December, 1993) as a guide, this committee met every three weeks beginning at 5:00 p.m. since March, 1994 to accomplish this task.

Three members of the Township Board were selected: Jim Alles (Chairperson); Dan Barker and Dick Davies along with two members of the Planning Commission, Chuck Bloom and Jim La Peer. Also assisting this committee was Jim Brown, Township Attorney; Tim Johnson, Township Planner; and Christine James, Zoning Administrator.

Under the capable leadership of Jim Alles, a preliminary draft has been completed. The public hearing was held on October 11, 1995. The Planning Commissioners will recommend that the board adopt the ordinance in December.

*Dick Davies, Trustee*

## Cannonsburg Holiday Home Tour



The second annual Holiday Home Tour will be on Saturday, December 2, 1995 from 2:00 pm. until 6:00 pm. Five area homes will be open along with the Honey Creek Inn. The homes will be decorated for Christmas by area merchants. Tickets are \$5.00 for adults, \$3.00 for students 12 and under. Babes-in-arms are free. All proceeds will go to Cannonsburg Elementary School.

For information call 874-6855.

## Cable Television

Beginning in the summer of 1995 the FTC Commission and Congress have been reviewing new legislation to remove local control by the Townships and Municipalities over the cable companies. The reason for the change is to encourage competition and to provide incentives for new cable companies such as the telephone companies to proceed with their plans.

The negative side of this plan is that the consumers could see large rate increases and that the local government units such as Cannon Township would lose control over streets, highways, franchise fees, codes for satellite dishes and telephone radio towers and the loss of control of local taxes to direct broadcast satellites.

Our townships along with many other governmental units have been writing letters to our congressmen to urge them to continue local control over this "fast changing" communication industry. As of this date Congress is still reviewing this situation.

*Dick Davies, Trustee*



**CANNON TOWNSHIP**  
6878 Belding Road, NE  
Rockford, MI 49341

### TOWNSHIP BOARD

Supervisor ..... John Weiss  
Clerk ..... Bonnie Shupe  
Treasurer ..... Dan Barker  
Trustees ..... Thom Longcore  
                                Jim Alles  
                                Dick Davies  
                                George Scott  
Township Offices ..... 874-6966  
Fax ..... 874-8940

### Township Board Meetings

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

BULK RATE  
U.S. POSTAGE  
**PAID**  
ROCKFORD, MI 49341  
PERMIT NO. 1