

THE PROFILE

*PLAINFIELD CHARTER TOWNSHIP NEWSLETTER

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APRIL 2003

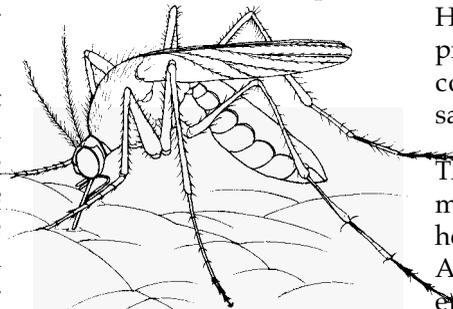
The Kent County Health Department entered the summer of 2002 aware that West Nile Virus might show up in Kent County; however it was not known how widespread or devastating the disease would become.

With citizens still somewhat aware of the link between dead birds, especially crows and blue jays, and West Nile Virus, the first report of a dead crow came into the Health Department on May 30. This and several subsequent bird specimens were found not to be infected with West Nile Virus. On July 31 a bird submitted to the Michigan Department of Community Health from Kent County was found to be infected with WNV (the bird had been submitted July 16).

Following the identification of a positive WNV bird, the Health Department immediately notified the local news media. The press release issued stated that the Health Department would be conducting enhanced surveillance activities on dead birds and that all dead birds should be reported to the Health Department. A computer database was developed and calls were logged. REGIS was used to map the reported locations of dead birds.

The Kent County Health Department had be-

gun piloting mosquito surveillance—trapping and testing mosquitoes for WNV in mid-July with traps at various locations in Kent County. Mosquitoes were analyzed by the Kent County Health Department lab, and the presence of West Nile Virus was confirmed in the mosquito samples tested.



Responding to West Nile Virus

The Health Department's Communicable Disease Unit issued health advisories (the first on August 7) to local hospital emergency departments and med centers alerting them that human WNV infection was anticipated, and to rule out WNV in anyone presenting with symptoms of meningitis or encephalitis. The Department's Environmental Health Division kept in close contact with officials at the John Ball Zoo to monitor deaths and illness among the Zoo's bird specimens. An additional health advisory was faxed to local veterinarians suggesting ways that animals' especially horses

—exposure to mosquitoes could be reduced.

The Health Department continued to monitor dead birds, mosquitoes, and human cases through October, when the last human case in Kent County was reported and mosquito populations were thinning due to cold weather.

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What's Happening with the North Kent Sewer System?

Chapter 8

This is the eighth in a series of informational pieces on the subject of the sanitary sewer system that serves Plainfield Township. In Chapter 7, I closed with the following,

"The actual decision to proceed with construction of an NKSA plant would not be made until a design engineer is selected, plans are prepared, permits are obtained, and bids are received. The boards of the five NKSA communities have NOT decided to pull the trigger on this, but they cannot decide "yes" or "no" until Plainfield Township gets beyond the present uncertain circumstances. If the Plainfield Township Board sends this question to the November ballot, I strongly encourage every Plainfield Township voter to grant the Board the authority to proceed as they, the elected representatives of the Plainfield Township community, decide what is in the community's best interests. I have every confidence that your elected Township officials will decide in the best interest of the community if the voters allow them to do so."

The voters voted to give their elected Township officials the authority to decide, with the officials of our partner communities, whether to go forward with a North Kent Sewer Authority (NKSA) plant. With that critical vote, most appreciated by the members of the Plainfield Township Board, our representatives came to the negotiating table with representatives of Grand Rapids, armed with the essential support of the community. After seven intense negotiating sessions, Grand Rapids made

a firm and final offer to the NKSA communities. On February 12, the five communities met in joint session to consider the offer. The decision of some 25 elected representatives was nearly unanimous to proceed to apply for and obtain the necessary permits to build the plant. In doing so, we have crossed the bridge, intending to proceed with the permitting process. If successful, the design, financing, and construction would likely follow.

These decisions are being made after years of study and information gathering, months of intense negotiations, and many hours of discussion, debate, and deliberation. Information and communications with the public has been and will continue to be provided as we continue to move forward in this process.

Your elected officials and the North Kent Sewer Authority Board are committed to protecting the interests of the thousands of citizens affected by these decisions, and they are particularly committed to protecting the owners of property in the vicinity of the proposed treatment plant through appropriate design, construction, and operation of a wastewater treatment plant. These officials continue to exercise their authority and responsibilities to all of the people they serve in a most serious and deliberate fashion. Representatives of neighboring property owners will be consulted on the design to ensure an appropriate image and physical appearance of the facility. Other issues impacting neighboring property owners will be addressed so that the potential negative effects that worry those property owners will be minimized or eliminated. Stay tuned.

Robert C. Homan, Township Manager

Answers to Building-Related Questions

With spring approaching, here is some information on a few issues that involve problems that arise from time to time.

- A building permit is required for **all new construction, remodeling, decks, swimming pools and re-siding buildings**. In addition to building permits, some projects may also require electrical, mechanical or plumbing permits.
- A building permit is *not* required for **re-roofing**; however, the Building Code allows a maximum of two layers of shingles on any roof. If you already have two layers, you must remove existing shingles before applying new. Any more than *two* layers may cause structural failure.
- A building permit is not required for **replacing windows and doors** so long as the sizes of the openings are not changed.
- “Outdoor Storage” — Plainfield Charter Township’s *Zoning Ordinance* requires that the **outdoor storage of any recreational vehicle**, such as: airplane, boat, float, camping or travel trailer, detachable travel equipment of the type adaptable to light duty

trucks, snowmobile, and other equipment or vehicles of a similar nature, shall be prohibited for a period greater than seventy-two hours in any thirty day period in all residential districts except where otherwise permitted by this ordinance, unless the following minimum conditions are met:

- A. All such vehicles and equipment shall be placed within a completely enclosed building or located behind the front face of the main building, but no closer than five feet to any side or rear lot line. No such storage of such vehicle shall be permitted on a corner lot in the required yards (setbacks) adjacent to the streets. In a typical residential neighborhood, the required setback is the front of the principle building; side yard is five feet from the property line; rear yard is five feet from the property line; and corner lot is twenty-five feet from the road right-of-way.
- B. Storage or parking shall be limited to a parcel of land upon which is located an inhabited dwelling unit, and the vehicle or equipment so stored or parked is owned by the occupant.



Commodity Distribution Dates

Commodities will be distributed to qualified low-income persons on these dates:

JUNE 5, 2003 • SEPTEMBER 4, 2003 • DECEMBER 4, 2003

All families living between 10 Mile Road and 4 Mile Road are eligible. Distribution is at 6156 Belmont Avenue. Hours are from 9 AM to 1 PM. New families wishing to qualify should call Jim or Peg Granzotto at 784-5249 or come to our distribution site on the above dates.

myPAL Enhances Access to Property Information

In 2003, the Consumer Price Index or C.P.I. was 1.5%. This means your *taxable* value can only increase by 1.5%, unless there were additions of new construction or amenities. Some appeals at this year's Board of Review were informational only. The property owners weren't appealing their assessment; they wanted to know how it was calculated. Although sales seem to be holding steady, we have seen a slight decrease in some neighborhoods, specifically those with higher priced homes. Since we are following the market by two years in our studies, it may take a year for the trends to show up in our assessed values.

In order to better serve our taxpayers and the general public, the Township has purchased a service to enhance your access to property in-

formation by telephone and over the Internet. The service will provide valuable building, tax, assessment, and ownership information. The general public can access the "user friendly" myPAL Service, by phone or Internet, 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. Automated information can be read over the phone or sent by fax.

CALL: 1-800-U-GOT-PAL (800-846-8725)
LOG ON TO: WWW.UGOTPAL.COM

This information will be updated daily for tax information and weekly for assessment/building information. Since the new service started, we have received very positive responses, and we appreciate any feedback you would like to provide us on this service.

Hyser Museum News

The Historical Preservation Committee is planning new and exciting activities for 2003. There is a showcase in the Township Office lobby on Belmont Avenue which features artifacts from the Hyser Museum. Items in the showcase will be changed every six months. Anyone willing to loan antiques and items pertaining to Plainfield Township history should contact the Committee.



who contributed to the construction of the quilt.

The Community Quilt is on permanent display at the Township office. At the main entrance to the building, the quilt hangs over the staircase to the basement. Thank you again to all

The Museum "wish list" this year includes the following: 1860's style clock, small 1920-30's kitchen table and chairs, dolls, and medical supplies. Any other donations of items pre-1930 are welcome. The Committee would appreciate anything that is Township related such as pictures and maps.

There have been many inquiries about Museum hours and programs. Beginning this year, the Hyser House will be open on the first Sunday of the month, January through December, from 2:00 p.m. – 4:30 p.m. Special group tours are available.

New officers for 2003 are:

President – Judy McNally	784-1217
Past President/Treasurer – Sharon Wells	784-7062
Secretary – Jan Johnson	784-6783

If you have any questions, would like to make a donation, or schedule a group tour, please call one of the officers listed above.



WHITE PINE TRAIL UPDATE SPRING 2003

*By Dick Granse,
Friends of the White Pine Trail*

This year promises to be the busiest and most fun yet on The White Pine Trail. The exciting news is featured below:

- **Paved trail** extends 14 miles — all the way from Russell Road to North Park Street, where it connects to the Riverside Park Trail in Grand Rapids.
- **Help maintain and improve the trail** – A work session on the trail will be held on the first Saturday of the month, starting April 5th at 9 a.m.; next date May 3rd. Meet and help the Friends of The White Pine Trail at the Farmers Market parking area in Rockford (behind the Towers). Wear work clothes and gloves.
- **Bike ride to the Ball Game with Friends of White Pine on Thursday May 22.** Meet at 9:30 a.m. at the trail parking area in Belmont – in the Rogue River County Park just north of the Post Office. You will need a bike lock and cash for a Whitecaps ticket. The group will ride back to the parking area after the game.
- **Special event on the new trail on Saturday, June 7, at the Fifth Third Park.** This event will include an afternoon ribbon cutting, bike ride or walk, and an evening ball game. Those attending trail events will have free parking at the ballpark. Block tickets have been reserved with the Whitecaps and

will be available through the Friends, in advance, for the regular price. More details will be available by April. Please watch the local media or call the Friends information line (616) 866-8464.

- **Donations** are needed to raise the local matching funds to pave the trail from Russell Road to Sand Lake. This paving will not occur until funds are raised. Any donations can be sent to Friends of the White Pine Trail, P.O. Box 159, Belmont, MI, 49306-0159, and will be appreciated. Donations are tax deductible.
- For **questions** about the trail or events, call The Friends of The White Pine Trail information line at (616) 866-8464. Notices of specific events will be available at the Township Building or on the trail information kiosk at Rogue River County Park staging area. Become a new member! You will be most welcome.

Meeting Schedule - Friends of the White Pine Trail – all meetings at 7 p.m.

- | | |
|---------|---|
| April 9 | Howard City Municipal Bldg.
downtown Howard City |
| May 14 | Plainfield Township Building |
| June 11 | Comstock Park Library |
| July 9 | Krause Library—Rockford |

In the December 2001 issue of *The Profile*, I introduced a brief summary of how Plainfield Township became the prosperous and developing community that it is – infrastructure-wise. I narrowed my focus to the creation of our water and sewer systems, which are basic building blocks of any modern urbanizing community. Having closed that article with the following paragraph, I will now explain and discuss “SADs.”

After the initial creation of our water and sewer systems in the 60’s and 70’s, often aided by federal and state grants, these systems were expanded by new developments and by what are called Special Assessment Districts (SADs). The SAD is a mechanism for getting public water or sewer into an area by following state law and the procedures that the law provides.

The water and sewer systems serving Plainfield Township were born more than 30 years ago, and there are still many people around who can tell the stories about that. Local leaders in those days managed to bring about a Township-owned and operated water system that tapped a huge underground water source that presently serves a population of over 40,000 people. It wasn’t easy... and it wasn’t cheap. In fact, it still isn’t easy or cheap – but it is critical to the success and futures of the Plainfield and Alpine Township communities. In 1968, the City of Rockford, Plainfield Township, and Alpine Township worked with Kent County to build the North Kent sewer system. The County borrowed the money, leveraged with state and federal grants, and the era of having a septic system in every yard was over. The final payments on those County bonds were made in 1997.

Not every neighborhood, business, or institution was initially served by the new sewer system, and many remained on private wells. Public sewers now serve all but a few streets

south of the Grand River and west of the East Beltline. In that area, only scattered homes are not served by Plainfield’s water system. New residential developments along Grand River Drive and in the Thousand Oaks area are being served with public water and sewer, with the developers paying for the extensions of the water and the sewer systems.

But what about the areas, mostly north of the Grand River, that do not have water

and/or sewer? Some of these neighborhoods have existed for decades. Their water supply may not be terrific, and their on-site septic systems are getting old. Some of those on-site systems have been repaired or replaced over the years. How would those areas be able to get public water or sewer service? The typical way to bring these public utilities to a neighborhood without them is the creation of a Special Assessment District. State of Michigan Public Act No. 188 of 1954 is a legal mechanism for property owners and municipalities like Plainfield Township to construct and pay for these public improvements. The typical procedure is as follows:

- Petition required →
- Public hearing to create district →
- Construction bids Received →
- Public hearing to assess costs

If signatures representing over 50% of a neighborhood’s land area are presented to the township board on a petition describing the improvement wanted, the board will notify all

It’s Not Easy, and It’s Not Cheap – Part Two (Updating Plainfield Township in the 21st Century)

property owners in that neighborhood that there will be a public hearing on the matter. If, following the hearing, the township board decides that the petition is valid and that the improvement is needed, the composition of the area to be served is confirmed, and the township's engineer is requested to prepare plans and estimates for construction. When the bids for constructing the improvement are received, the township board notifies the property owners that a second public hearing will be held to apportion (assign) a share of the cost to each property that will benefit from that improvement.

Costs Assessed →

Construction Contract Approved →
Improvement Built

If, after public comment, the township board decides that the improvement should be constructed and that the proposed assignment of costs to properties to be benefited is fair, reasonable, and appropriate, assessments upon the benefiting properties are approved. The assessments can be paid in one lump sum without interest before the project is built, or they can be paid over a number of years like a mortgage – except the payments are billed annually, rather than monthly. Also, like a mortgage, the assessments may be paid off at any time. If a house is sold, the financing agency usually requires the assessment to be paid off when closing the sale, but it is possible for the remaining amount on the assessment to be assumed by the new homeowner. This often happens when homes are privately financed (land contract).

In a nutshell, that is pretty much how SADs work. But... it is not easy – and, depending on your point of view, it isn't cheap. I could end this bit of public information at this point, but I would not be telling an important part of the story. As public servants and public officials, we are responsible for understanding this process, accurately informing people how it works, what their rights are, what the township's authority is, assisting and respond-

ing to the citizens involved, and managing the process.

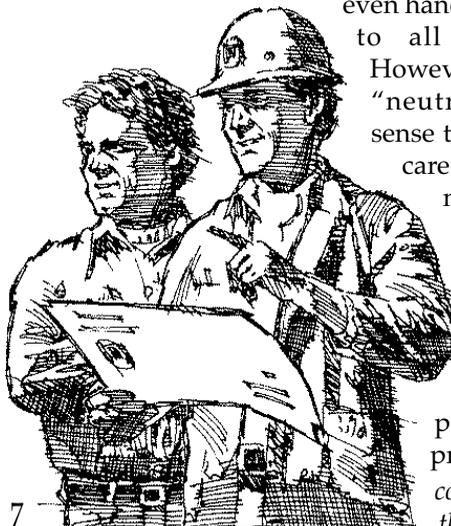
If public improvements like water and sewer were made available at no charge or at a cost that everyone thought was really inexpensive, all of this would be easy and perhaps even enjoyable. But, not everyone in a proposed SAD wants the improvement – and they certainly do not want to pay for it. The process (PA 188 of 1954) is designed to provide a means for those who do want the improvement to get it. It provides those who do not want it with the ability to comment, disagree, and protest. Therein lies the rub! The SAD process has built into it a tendency for conflict – among neighbors and between those neighbors and their local government. Those who do not want the improvement (and do not wish to pay for it), tend to resent their neighbors who are dragging them into paying for something they feel they do not want or need. They also tend to resent and become angry with their local government, which they see as masterminding and forcing this upon them.

As a local government manager (in this business for 30 years), it is not only my duty to assist those who desire a public improvement and who will be using the SAD process to make it happen, it is my sworn responsibility to be

even handed and fair to all involved.

However, I am not "neutral," in the sense that I do not care whether or

not the improvement is accomplished. I promote and encourage public improvements. I
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It's Not Easy, and It's Not Cheap

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want to see people getting the benefits of a dependable and safe public water supply. I want to see on-site septic systems eliminated wherever feasible and wherever beneficial to the community and the environment. This is the tightrope upon which I have walked dozens of times these many years.

So – this is the process; these are the problems with it. Is there a better way? Yes, I think so. While the PA 188 SAD process is workable and acceptable in many cases, it can be ugly and, in some cases, really counter-productive to the public good. There are two things that Plainfield Township should be able to accomplish that addresses the issue and the problems I have described:

- (1) Wherever possible, require new development to provide for public sewer, public water, proper storm water management, and appropriate and properly constructed roads and sidewalks. Ensuring this will avoid future problems. This, I feel, is the business of local government – good community development and planning!
- (2) Plainfield Township should consider initiating water and sewer construction in already developed areas that do not have these public services. With water, there are very, very few neighborhoods where public water runs by them and not in them. There are areas along major roads that should be served by public water and are not. Some can be served by means of developers paying to extend the water system. Some need Township assistance and initiative to make it happen. In any case, there is no “free lunch.” Properties that are served by our water system must pay for that service to be available to them. The Township can sometimes front the money to extend the system and will get the money back with new connections.

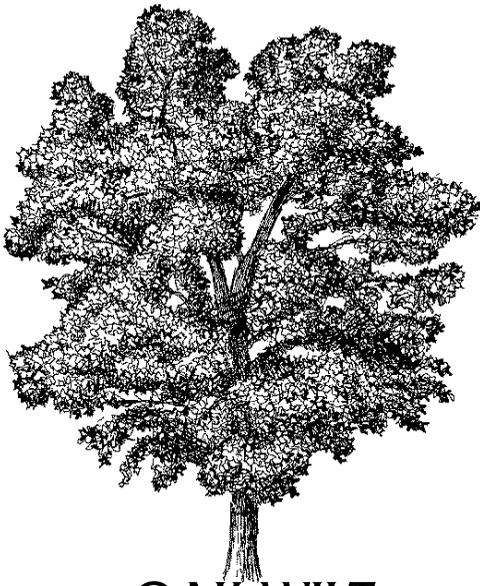
Sewer is a bit different. For one thing, it is significantly more expensive to build than water. Sewers are deeper in the ground, they are built underneath paved roads, and, because they work by gravity, they must often be buried very deep. In older neighborhoods, getting public sewer service means removing and reconstructing the road – very expensive! They get a new road in the process, but still very expensive. Then, individual homeowners will be responsible for disconnecting their septic systems and usually running a private sewer lateral from their backyard or side yard all the way out to the road – not cheap! Retrofitting an established neighborhood for public sewer is, well, very involved and complex. For all these reasons, getting a Special Assessment petition for sewer is a very tall hill to climb.

Plainfield Township should consider taking the initiative to install public sewers in older neighborhoods without an SAD. It would cost a lot of money to do that in every unsewered neighborhood – certainly not all at once. We should consider the condition of the road (old pavement needing resurfacing or reconstruction), age of the septic systems (they don't last forever), type of soils (septics do not function well in heavy clay), and impact of septic systems on groundwater.

If Plainfield Township were to take the initiative and address the areas that really need sewer and where sewer service can be provided in a reasonably cost effective manner, experience shows that many homeowners will connect right away, or within a few years. When they connect, the Township will recoup its investment, and the money will go back into the Sewer Fund to provide for other system repair or replacement needs.

Any readers that have questions about the SAD process or the issues involved are welcome to call me at 364-8466 or e-mail me at homan@plainfieldchartertp.org

Some Tax Info



OAK WILT

Homeowners should be aware that oak wilt is a serious disease that can kill large oak trees in a few years or even weeks. It is a fungal disease that is transmitted by sap beetles.

In warm months, April to October, sap beetles are attracted to oozing sap from pruning or storm injuries thus introducing the disease. Sick trees may pass it to neighboring trees through the roots. Red Oaks, identified by their pointed leaf lobes, are especially susceptible and may die in one or two months. White Oaks can last two to three years and may live with treatment injections.

Diagnosis of oak wilt is very difficult. The following are indicators of this disease:

- Rapid death in red oak,
- Slow decline in white oak,
- Evidence of pruning or storm injury,
- Proximity to other oaks which have previously died,

The main methods of prevention are:

- No pruning April-October
- Apply pruning paint to seal any wounds

More information may be obtained from the Kent-MSU Master Gardener Hotline 336-3881.

Recap of 2002 collections....

This year my office collected nearly 95% of taxes prior to March 1st. The collections were down a little from prior years, perhaps due to the economic climate. Thank you for remitting payments in a timely fashion. The Treasurer's office processed over 22,500 tax bills during the summer and winter cycles. Personal Property Tax (tax on business equipment and enhancements to mobile home pads) had a delinquency rate of less than 14%. Compared to last year, it increased approximately 3%.

Pay your taxes easier....

The use of automatic debit payment has been available for several years and is working very nicely. If you haven't used this and would be interested, please call 364-1188 ext. #114 for further information. The plan will require you to sign an approval form. You will be able pay your taxes automatically from your financial institution to the Township. No stamps! No late penalty fees! No lost mail!

If you now use automatic debit **payment**, **please** remember that, when you change your financial institution or accounts, you **MUST** let us know, so we will withdraw your payment from the proper account.

Your taxes paid from a mortgage escrow account...

For various reasons, a number of taxpayers are refinancing or restructuring their mortgages. If this event occurs after June 1 (for the summer tax bill) or after November 1 (for the winter tax bill) the tax bill may indicate the prior mortgage company. If that is the case, you must send a copy of the tax bill to the correct mortgage company, because we sent the tax bill to the mortgage company on record at the time of preparation of the tax bill.

Jim Stover, Treasurer

Veterans Memorial Park Pays Tribute

When a small tornado ripped out all the mature trees at the corner of Jupiter and Belmont in May 2001, the sight saddened many people. Not long after the tornado, when the site was being cleared, a positive side of the sad event emerged from creative minds.

Township Trustee Charles Weldon and several other long-time Plainfield Township residents began to imagine a park at this cleared location, right at the intersection of two main roads, visible as drivers approach from any direction. What a wonderful location to remind everyone of the service of the veterans from this township in the many armed conflicts involving our country's military! The Plainfield Charter Township Veterans Memorial Park idea began to take shape.

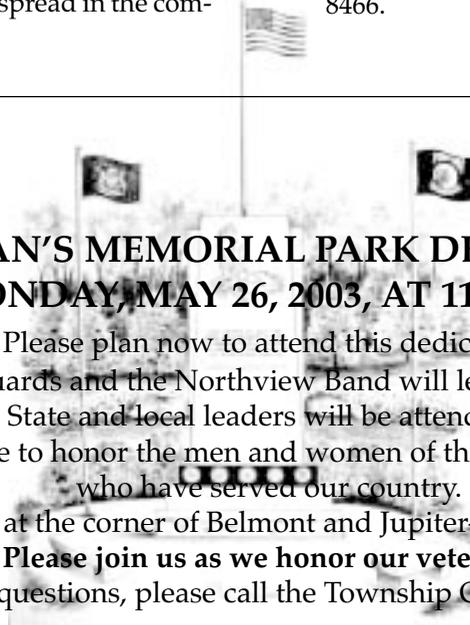
The Plainfield Charter Township Board created a committee that includes Kathy Timmerman, Carolyn Dee, Trustee Wendell Briggs, and Chairperson Charles Weldon. Plans began to take shape after a meeting with Patten Monument Company to look at possible memorial structures. Word began to spread in the com-

munity about the plans for a Veterans Park, and people wanted to help. Prein & Newhof donated their engineering services, Reyers Funeral Homes donated money for two park benches, Dykema Excavating donated the fill and the site preparation, and Pederson Funeral Home donated three flagpoles. Other donors include Chet's Nursery, Lakeland Electric Company, Couturier Iron Craft Inc., and Hydro Mulch Inc.

The ground breaking took place in September 2002.

On Monday, May 26, 2003 at 11:00 a.m., the dedication will take place. Three lighted flagpoles will flank the 13' white granite monument, on which is a large eagle with a dedication statement. Surrounding the monument and flagpoles will be benches and appropriate landscaping. Parking for five cars will be accessible from Belmont Avenue.

To make donations to defray the cost of landscaping the park, or questions regarding the Dedication Service, please contact Charles Weldon, 363-1160 or Kathy Timmerman, 364-8466.



VETERAN'S MEMORIAL PARK DEDICATION MONDAY, MAY 26, 2003, AT 11:00 AM

Please plan now to attend this dedication.

Honor Guards and the Northview Band will lead the service.

State and local leaders will be attending.

We strive to honor the men and women of this community
who have served our country.

The location is at the corner of Belmont and Jupiter—5747 Belmont NE.

Please join us as we honor our veterans.

If you have questions, please call the Township Office at 364-8466.

Responding to West Nile Virus

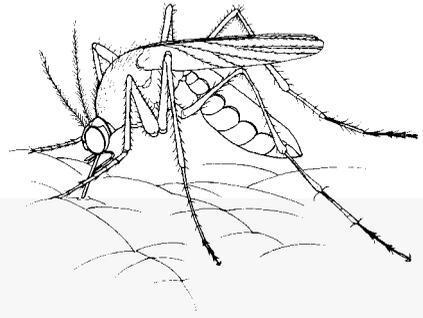
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Throughout the summer and fall, a key message of the Health Department that featured prominently in all news releases and public information efforts was the need for individuals to reduce their risk of WNV infection by using personal protection measures. Personal protection is a two-pronged responsibility that includes minimizing personal exposure to mosquitoes (by wearing protective clothing, using DEET-containing insect repellent, and staying indoors at dusk and dawn when mosquitoes are most active), and environmental measures to reduce mosquito exposure (eliminating standing water in the yard and other outdoor areas, keeping grass and weeds mowed near the house, and ensuring that screens are in good condition). Additional information on West Nile Virus and reducing personal exposure risk can be found on the web sites of both the Michigan Department of Agriculture (www.michigan.gov/mda) and the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (www.cdc.gov).

In order to prepare for the 2003 West Nile Virus season, the Kent County Health Department is currently considering the data and what is known about WNV to develop recommendations for surveillance and control measures. These recommendations will be published in the spring of 2003.

Summary Report: Epidemiological Profile of West Nile Virus in Kent County, Michigan

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The Michigan Department of Community Health suggests the following tips to reduce exposure to mosquitoes:

Mosquitoes lay their eggs in standing or slow-moving water such as streams or creeks. Weeds, tall grass and bushes provide an outdoor home for mosquitoes. They can enter homes through un-screened windows or doors, or broken screens.

- **Make sure that doors and windows have tight-fitting screens.** Repair or replace all screens that have tears or holes.
- **Drain all standing water in the yard weekly.** Empty water from mosquito breeding sites, such as flower pots, pet bowls, clogged rain gutters, swimming pool covers, discarded tires and similar sites in which mosquitoes can lay eggs.
- **Remind or help neighbors to eliminate breeding sites on their properties.**

For additional information:

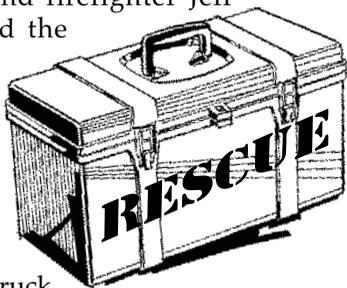
Michigan West Nile Virus Hotline
1-888-668-0869

The website for the MDCH is:
www.michigan.gov/mdch

Plainfield Department

The Plainfield Township firefighters are pretty excited right now. The department has just taken delivery of a new heavy rescue unit. A heavy rescue does not have a pump or carry water; it is more like a giant toolbox. It is a fire truck that, in addition to carrying the equipment that we use at fire scenes, carries the equipment necessary to do all of those jobs that have been added to our mission. That includes jobs like prying apart a vehicle that has been involved in an accident, or freeing some one who has been trapped underground, or helping someone who is trapped in industrial machinery. The fire department responded to alarms that included all of these instances last year. Because it is necessary to have additional equipment designed specifically to do these jobs, the rescue vehicle being replaced just could not hold all of the equipment that we need to carry. That vehicle was purchased about fifteen years ago and included a "Command Post" area, which is being used to store equipment and supplies and can't be used as it was intended.

A committee consisting of Lt. Jeff Drake, Equipment Operators Craig Brown, Rich Rottman, Rick Van Horn, and firefighter Jeff Hawkins designed the new rescue. They put in much effort, and we're proud of the job they have done. In an attempt to not repeat past mistakes, the committee specified a truck that would allow us room to grow. The new vehicle has a 22' box (that part of the truck where the equipment is stored) where the old truck had a 14' box. Additionally, the new truck's roof has four large storage compartments, as well as a 25kw hydraulic generator



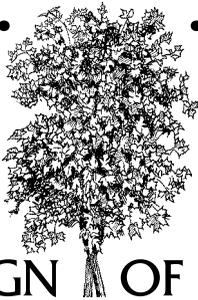
and a light tower that will allow us to provide lighting at emergency scenes. The new unit has a portable 8000 lb. winch that can be used from four different points on the vehicle. It has two pre-connected hydraulic extrication tools as well as pre-connected rams and shears to allow us to extricate a patient faster, which lessens the time to the emergency room. The new command center is 6" wider, and it combines with the cab to allow us to work easier.

This new rescue vehicle is not the only thing that we're excited about. The fire station on Plainfield Avenue at Five Mile Road is *finally* going to be replaced. I emphasize finally because, when I came here almost ten years ago, I was informed that a location was being sought for the relocation of Station #3. The existing station was in poor condition, would not adequately accommodate new apparatus, and the location made it challenging to enter Plainfield Avenue. It seemed like every time we had a potential location, something would cause us to continue the search. So, after more than ten years, and hundreds of staff and Public Safety Committee hours of searching and preparing plans, we are actually going to build a new station. The architect has completed the drawings, and the bids have been received. The new station will be located on the site of the former Wards Automotive Center. We had hoped to be able to remodel the existing building, but the architect showed us that it was actually less expensive to tear down most of the old building and build new. We will be moving to the new building by the end of the year.

Fire Safety Specialist Steve McKellar has been promoted from Captain to Assistant Chief. Steve has accepted many additional responsibilities over the past two years. This promotion recognizes his dedication and commitment to the department and its personnel. Congratulations Steve!

Ordinance Enforcement

The Township's part time ordinance enforcement officer, responsible for complaints regarding trash and junk cars, has new office hours. Office hours are Monday and Friday from 7:00 a.m. to 9:00 a.m. and 3:00 p.m. to 5:00 p.m. To report a junk car or trash and junk on someone's property, call 364-8466, extension 146. If you get a recording, please leave your name, phone number, and a brief message. You will receive a return call.



A SIGN OF SPRING — FREE BUSH PROGRAM

In an effort to encourage reforestation of the land within Plainfield Township's boundaries, 650 free bushes will be given to residents who call in to place an order.

Bushes **MUST** be pre-ordered by calling 364-8466 beginning at 9:00 AM on April 15 until all the bushes have been reserved. *This usually takes less than 2 hours!!*

No fax orders or walk-ins will be accepted

The random use of six telephone lines has been a fair way for everyone to have a chance to get bushes. Only ONE order per address will be accepted. You may not make multiple orders per phone call. Each address must place their own order! The bushes will be available for pickup on Friday, April 25th between 2:00 PM and 5:00 PM ONLY. Please do not arrive early or come late, as township employees will not be available. Bushes that are not picked up will be used in township projects.

Thank You!

The Employees of the Kent County Road Commission want to thank our Township residents for the positive support you have given us during the winter season.

As we look ahead to another busy summer maintenance and construction program, we want to remind you to drive carefully, especially within Kent County Road Commission's maintenance and construction work areas. **You can make a difference!**

So, when you see the orange signs, barrels, and cones, please slow down and drive alertly. With your help, we will have another productive and **safe** road improvement season.

Remember: Fines are doubled for violations in a construction zone!

Participants will be given two bushes, but may NOT choose a species. All bushes are "park stock" and come in one-gallon pots, 12 to 30 inches tall with 6 years of growth.

Bushes will be distributed from the Township Offices located at 6161 Belmont Avenue. Please enter the Township Office driveway and follow the directions of the people assisting with the traffic. A Township employee will place the bushes in your vehicle.

PLEASE DO NOT GET OUT OF YOUR VEHICLE!

The Officers and Trustees of the township encourage interested residents to participate in this program. This is the 14th year of the program.

*Susan L. Morrow, MMC
Plainfield Charter Township Clerk*

KENT DISTRICT LIBRARY NEWS



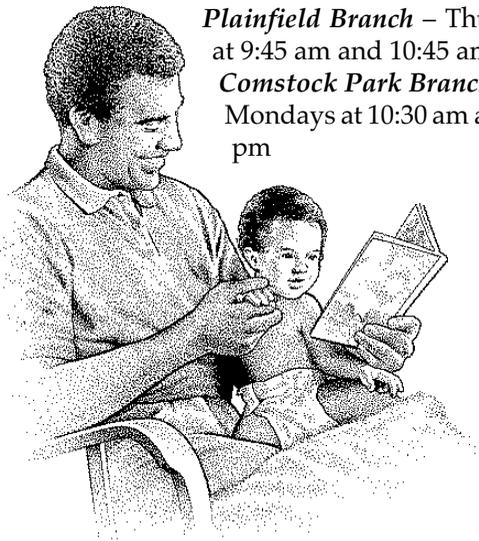
Check out Lakenet!

All public libraries in western Michigan are now using a new electronic library catalog called **Lakenet Library**. Catalog users will enjoy the ease of use, improved graphics and also the new look of the KDL website, www.kdl.org. Visitors to the library branches will notice that all computer workstations offer access to the Internet as well as Word, Excel and PowerPoint. New user time limits range from twenty minutes on designated Express workstations to ninety minutes on others. The Plainfield Library is offering one-on-one instruction sessions for using the new catalog. Please call the library at 647-3930 to set up an appointment.

Watch for these upcoming events, and please join us!

Programs for Young Children (to register please call the library)

- **Spring Laptime series** begin the week of March 31 – stories, music and rhymes for babies, toddlers and their parents
Plainfield Branch – Thursdays at 9:45 am and 10:45 am
Comstock Park Branch – Mondays at 10:30 am and 6:30 pm



- **Spring Storytime series** begin the week of March 31 – stories and crafts for ages 3-6
Plainfield Branch – Thursdays at 9:45 am and 10:45 am
Comstock Park Branch – Mondays at 10:30 am and 6:30 pm
- **Family Storytime series** begins the week of March 31 – a different theme each week
Plainfield Branch – Tuesdays at 10:00am
- **Build a Birdhouse** (bring your own hammer—adult supervision required)
Plainfield Library—Wednesday, April 9 at 2:00pm.

Just for Teens

- Learn about, watch and discuss some great **Anime films** at the Plainfield Branch on Saturday, April 12 from 1 to 4 pm.
- The **Teen Advisory Groups** of both branches will be meeting in May. Teens interested in joining these groups or volunteering for KDL this summer, can pick up an application at either branch beginning May 1.

PLAINFIELD BRANCH LIBRARY

2650 5-Mile Road NE

Phone: 647-3930

HOURS

Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday,

Thursday 9:30 a.m. to 9:00 p.m.

Friday, Saturday 9:30 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.

Sunday 1:00 p.m. to 5:00 p.m.

Especially for Adults:

- On Tuesday evening, April 22 at 6:30 pm, **local historian and longtime resident David Wier**, will present a fascinating program about the history of Comstock Park at the Comstock Park Branch.
- Friends of the Plainfield Library are offering a stroll "**Down Memory Lane**" with Ed Briggs and Johnny Phifer on Tuesday, April 29 at 12:30 p.m. Come hear Ed and Johnny tell of days gone by through stories and music. A sandwich and salad lunch will be provided for \$4.00. Registration is required.

At the Comstock Park Branch on Monday, May 12 at 6:30 you can journey back in time when educator and lecturer **Shirley Meyer impersonates former first lady Abigail Adams** through period costume and speech. For ages 12 and up.

Recycle your gently used books and current magazines by donating them to the Plainfield Library Friends for re-sale in the "Book Nook." All proceeds are used for Plainfield Library enhancement.

COMSTOCK PARK BRANCH LIBRARY

3943 West River Drive

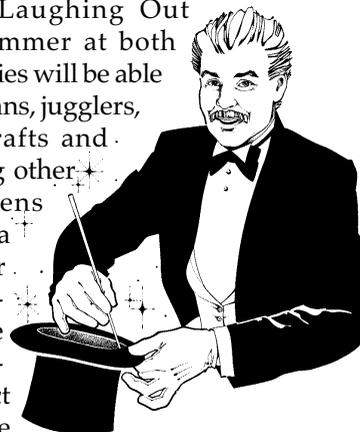
Phone: 647-3860

HOURS

Monday	9:30 a.m. to 8:00 p.m.
Tuesday, Thursday	12:00 p.m. to 8:00 p.m.
Wednesday	9:30 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.
Friday, Saturday	12:00 p.m. to 5:00 p.m.

Looking forward to the annual KDL Summer Club...

We will be "Laughing Out Loud" this summer at both branches. Families will be able to enjoy magicians, jugglers, puppeteers, crafts and Bill Vits, among other programs. Teens will put on a puppet show for younger children, make leather bracelets, deconstruct their jeans, make Manga masks and fashion decorated switch plates for their rooms.



For all upcoming events, pick up the KDL Spring Calendar at any library or check the KDL website at www.kdl.org.

"A Thoughtful Way to Remember or Honor"

A gift to the Plainfield Library Friends is a unique way to honor or remember someone special. Your gift to the Friends will bring enjoyment to the community for years to come. When making a contribution, you can also designate how you would like it spent by suggesting subjects or titles. When a memorial book is purchased, a bookplate will be placed inside the cover with the name of the person being honored or remembered and your name as a donor, if desired. The library staff will send an acknowledgement to the family of the honoree with a copy to you. Your gift to the Plainfield Library Friends, a 501.c.3 tax-exempt organization, may be tax deductible.

TOWNSHIP/ OFFICERS

TOWNSHIP HALL HOURS

8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.

Phone: 364-8466

TOWNSHIP BOARD

David Groenleer, Supervisor

Susan Morrow, Clerk

James Stover, Treasurer

Wendell Briggs, Trustee

Robert Heindrichs, Trustee

William Parris, Trustee

Charles Weldon, Trustee

MANAGER

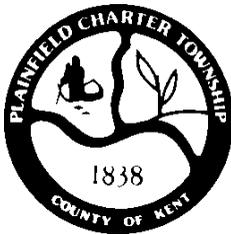
Robert Homan

TOWNSHIP BOARD MEETINGS

7:30 P.M.

First and Third Mondays

www.plainfieldchartertp.org



•• IMPORTANT ••

NEW WAY TO GET TAX and
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WE ARE HAPPY TO ANNOUNCE

EFFECTIVE IMMEDIATELY
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ASSESSING INFORMATION FOR
**The Charter Township of Plainfield/
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IS AVAILABLE 24 HOURS A DAY /
7 DAYS A WEEK

NO WAITING – NO CHARGE !!!

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WWW.UGOTPAL.COM

(No username or password required)

or

CALL 1-800-U-GOT-PAL (800-846-8725),

Gov. Unit #4110

DELINQUENT TAX INFORMATION
IS AVAILABLE FROM KENT COUNTY

@ WWW.ACCESSKENT.COM

WE WILL NO LONGER BE PROVIDING THIS
INFORMATION BY FAX.
A FAX MAY BE OBTAINED VIA THE 1-800 OPTION.

THE PROFILE

Plainfield Charter Township
6161 Belmont NE
Belmont, MI 49306

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