



The Profile

VOLUME XXX NUMBER 3

AUGUST 2005

For the past five years, Plainfield, Alpine, Cannon, and Courtland Townships and the City of Rockford, the communities that make up the North Kent Sewer Authority (NKSA), have been engaged in complex deliberations about building a new Clean Water Plant (CWP) to serve some 24,000 sewer customers in a fifty square mile service area. I have explained the evolution of this issue in previous PRO-FILE articles over the past few years. Readers are welcome to call my office if you wish to receive copies of those articles. We have educated ourselves on the treatment technology and financing. We have carefully examined this once-in-a-lifetime opportunity to provide quality wastewater treatment for our citizens. Months and years of preliminary design and interaction with the permitting agencies have been invested. We are now very near a “go/no go” point. The contract for wastewater treatment with the City of Grand Rapids expires in 2008. If we are to build the facilities, the work must begin soon.

This Clean Water Plant would be a state-of-the-art facility that receives sewage and processes it into clean water. The Michigan Department of Environmental Quality has already determined that it would approve such a facility. Traverse City, using the same technology, has already constructed similar facilities and boasts the highest quality of treatment in the State of Michigan.

Why?

Estimates of \$50 – \$60 million would make anyone swallow hard. What is wrong with what we have? Isn't Grand Rapids already treating our wastewater adequately? In 1999, Grand Rapids presented its customer communities a new contract. Using a seriously flawed new formula that heavily favors Grand Rapids at the expense of all of its customer communities, we now know that we would have already paid nearly

Time for The North Kent Sewer Authority to Act!

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Time to Act

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\$7,000,000 more than we have been paying under the current agreement. We attempted to get Grand Rapids to change its proposal enough to make it acceptable, but we were not successful.

We have a choice

We know that we will be paying a great deal more for our wastewater treatment – regardless of where our sewage is treated. We have no choice about that, but we do have a choice: We can either accept Grand Rapids’ bad deal or build a Clean Water Plant, which we would own and manage.

Recently, the NKSA commissioned an independent financial analysis to compare the costs of the G.R. Contract with building the CWP. The report shows that, over a 33-year span, the costs for both options were very close, but the Grand

Rapids Contract option appears to have much greater uncertainty and unknowns. Our financial model shows the ratepayers paying \$11,000,000 million less for the CWP because we will generate additional money by charging new customers the same level of new fees that the Grand Rapids Contract would charge them. However, the NKSA would keep the money instead of turning most of it over to the Grand Rapids system, and use it to help pay for the CWP.

Compared to the treatment of our wastewater by the Grand Rapids system, the proposed Clean Water Plant wins hands down. If we build the CWP, we can have confidence that our wastewater will be treated to a much higher level, and sewage will not end up in the Grand River every time it rains a lot. We have a choice about how well we treat our wastewater, and we should choose to do a much better job of it than is being done now.

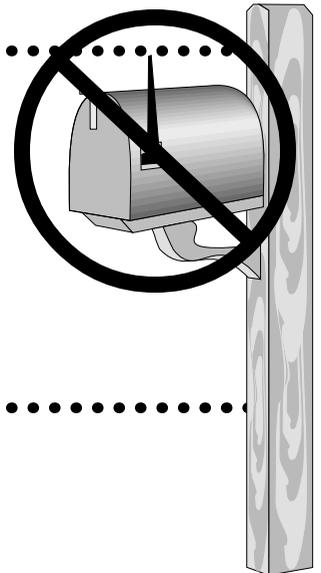
The NKSA communities have been working on an agreement and final approval by all five NKSA communities. We have labored long and hard to develop a cost sharing formula where we pay to build and operate the new system. I believe we are very close to reaching agreement on going forward with the Clean Water Plant.

Robert C. Homan, Township Manager

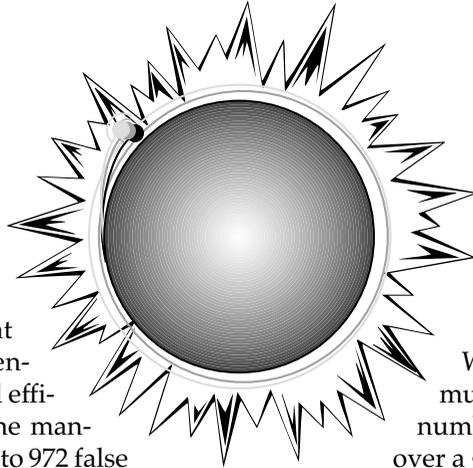
Please Note!

The mailing address for Plainfield Charter Township is changing. From now on, the mailing address will be the street address, NOT the P.O. Box number.

In the future, use **6161 Belmont Avenue, NE, Belmont, MI 49306.**



Discouraging False Alarms



In cooperation with the Kent County Sheriff's Department, Plainfield Township is working on a false alarm ordinance that will help to improve law enforcement, public safety, and efficiency. Can you imagine the man-hours wasted in responding to 972 false alarms in Plainfield Township last year? During the first month of 2005, there were 83 false alarms. These are not fire alarms; they are more or less "burglar alarms." At least two police units are dispatched to the scene when an automatic intrusion or "hold-up" alarm is activated. This ties up police officers who are becoming more thinly spread as a result of budget cuts and leaving vacancies unfilled to manage those cuts. While these police units are wasting their time, attention to serious public safety threats is being put on hold.

Typically, false alarms happen due to carelessness. Sometimes they happen due to faulty equipment. The vast majority of these can be prevented, but there is no real incentive for the people who are responsible to do so. While it would be nice if people could read this or some slick public service announcement and then change their behavior, that probably isn't going to happen.

Some municipalities, like Grand Rapids and Wyoming, have established [anti-] false alarm

ordinances to successfully address this problem. Unfortunately this involves negative reinforcement through fines and penalties.

When a business owner accumulates more than an acceptable number of false alarm responses over a given time period, he receives

a citation and will be required to pay a penalty, which increases if the problem continues. This creates a great incentive to fix problems and procedures, and property owners, managers, and employees begin to care MORE, rather than less. It works. Can these communities use the fine money? I'm sure they can. But they would rather forego the money and have no false alarms.

This would be the objective of Plainfield Township and our policing agency, the Kent County Sheriff's Department. This is a sensitive topic, so we will carefully craft a proposed ordinance, explain it to the community, encourage cooperation, and put it into operation once the Township Board approves it. If you have suggestions on how we might deal with this effectively and gain the degree of cooperation needed, please e-mail them to falsealarms@plainfieldchartertp.org. You may write in your ideas to "False Alarms, c/o Plainfield Township, 6161 Belmont NE, Belmont, MI 49306. We will report on this further in the next PROFILE later this year.



WHITE PINE TRAIL UPDATE SUMMER 2005

By Dick Granse, Friends of the White Pine Trail

An even more exciting future is in store for the White Pine Trail. As well as their role in trail maintenance and improvement, the Friends of the White Pine Trail continue to work towards funding the remaining paving of the trail from Russell Road to Cadillac. There will be more news to report on that in the next Profile.

Two exciting improvements are taking place this summer. The pavement repair from Belmont to Rockford was completed early in the season and results in a smoother, ride, skate or walk for everyone. The historic trestle the trail crosses near Summit Road is getting a face-lift and this project should be done in the next few weeks.

Safety continues to be a major concern as trail use continually increases. Two major issues I have seen are the need for the faster road bikers to slow down when the trail is busy. Only yelling, "on your left" and startling people while maintaining full speed is dangerous particularly when the other users are children or the elderly. The only safe answer is to slow down! On the other hand, slower trail users must be watchful and stay to the right. Also, the trail is not as wide as it may appear. Bikers, runners, etc. must be prepared to ride single file when any traffic is coming the other way. It is not fair to force oncoming trail users to "take to the edge" while continuing to ride or run double or triple file. A little courtesy will help protect all trail users.

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The Friends of the White Pine Trail welcome new members and community involvement.

Meeting Schedule: *All meetings 7 p.m.*

August 10 th	Pierson Township Hall, 131 at Pierson exit
Sept 14 th	Plainfield Township Hall, 6161 Belmont Avenue
Oct 12 th	Algoma Township Hall, 10531 Algoma Avenue
Nov 9 th	Nelson Township Hall, Downtown Sand Lake - <i>tentative</i>

Friends of the White Pine Trail Information line for trail updates and membership Info: (616) 866-8464 or P.O. Box 159, Belmont, MI 49306; website: www.whitepinetrail.com

Medicare Prescription Drug Program and the Extra Help Available for the Program

A representative from the Social Security Administration will be present at the Plainfield Township Office, 6161 Belmont Ave., Belmont, MI 49306 on August 31, 2005 and September 14, 2005 from 9:00 A.M. – 12:00 P.M. to explain the new Medicare prescription drug program (PDP) and take applications for the extra help that is available for the new PDP that begins January 1, 2006.

Anyone entitled to Medicare Part A (HI – Hospital Insurance) or enrolled in Part B (SMI – Supplemental Medical Insurance) is eligible to join the new Medicare prescription drug program. To join, current Medicare beneficiaries will have to select an approved prescription drug plan (PDP) from one of the many sponsors and enroll in that plan for the year. Enrollment for the prescription drug program is entirely voluntary.

Unlike Medicare Part B, where the beneficiary is automatically enrolled in Medicare at age 65, the new drug benefit has an “opt-in” rule that requires an affirmative statement to enroll.



There is extra help available to beneficiaries who need assistance with the Medicare prescription drug costs. This help could assist with deductibles, co-payments and premiums. Beneficiaries can file for the extra help much sooner than they can file for the Medicare PDP. By filing for the extra help before filing for the PDP, beneficiaries will

know the amount of assistance for which they qualify.

For more information about the PDP, extra help or information about the event, please visit, www.cms.hhs.gov, www.socialsecurity.gov or plainfieldchartertpw.org.

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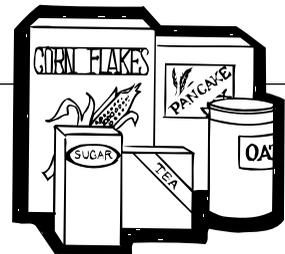
Commodity Distribution

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

SEPTEMBER 1, 2005 • DECEMBER 1, 2005

To qualify you must reside between 4 Mile Road and 10 Mile Road. Distribution is at 6156 Belmont Avenue, directly across from the Township Offices. Hours are 9 AM to 1 PM

New families wishing to qualify, call Jim or Peg Granzotto at 784-5249. Or come to the distribution site on the above dates. Bring the last 4 numbers of your Social Security card for each member of your family and income statements.



KDL Kent District Library NEWS

The Plainfield Branch has recently seen a number of technological improvements, which will help maintain our high level of service. New computers have been installed, allowing customers to use USB pen drives of 2.0 and above for various applications. CD/DVD viewing and listening capability is also now available in a read-only mode, and headphones are available.

Radio Frequency Identification technology, commonly referred to as RFID, is also coming to the Plainfield Branch, and will eventually be installed throughout the KDL system. This technological enhancement will streamline checkin and checkout procedures and will allow for the self-checkout of materials and the avoidance of long lines at the circulation desk.

KDL is also proud to announce that the Science Resource Center has been added to its already outstanding online database collection. The Science Resource Center may be accessed through the KDL website at www.kdl.org and provides a gateway to 200 full text science magazines as well as links to 520 websites, biographies, science experiments, and more.

Watch for these upcoming special programs, and please join us! Stop in or call the library for specific times, or check the events calendar on the KDL Home page (www.kdl.org).

For Young Children and Families

(to register please call your KDL branch at the telephone number listed above).

Babytime is here—a special one-on-one program for parents and their babies aged birth-18 months. Did you know children learn reading skills starting right from infancy? This program uses songs, bounces, rhymes, baby signs and playtime as building blocks for later reading and writing. Begins the week of Sept. 12.

- Plainfield Branch – Mondays at 10:30 a.m.
- Comstock Park Branch – Thursdays at 1:00 p.m.

Spring Laptime and Storytime programs also begin the week of Sept. 12.

Laptime – Stories, music and thymes for babies, toddlers and their parents.

- Plainfield Branch – Thursdays at 9:45 a.m. and 10:45 a.m.
- Comstock Park Branch – Mondays at 10:30 a.m.

Storytime – Stories and crafts for ages 3-6 years.

- Plainfield Branch – Thursdays at 9:45 a.m. and 10:45 a.m.
- Comstock Park Branch – Mondays at 10:30 a.m.

Other programs for children include “Make and Take”

Our early literacy specialists will use everyday materials in simple craft activities that help create building blocks for your child to become a life long learner. There will be six stations to interact with your child, each based on a pre-reading skill.

- Plainfield Branch – Sunday, Nov.13 at 2 p.m.
- Comstock Park Branch – Monday, Nov. 14 at 10:30 a.m.

PLAINFIELD BRANCH HOURS

2650 5-Mile Road NE • Phone: 647-3930

Mon. through Thurs. 9:30 a.m. to 8:00 p.m.
Friday, Saturday 9:30 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.
Sunday 1:00 p.m. to 5:00 p.m.
(during the school year only)

COMSTOCK PARK BRANCH HOURS

3943 West River Drive • Phone: 647-3860

Monday 9:30 a.m. to 8:00 p.m.
Wednesday 9:30 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.
Tuesday, Thursday 12:00 p.m. to 8:00 p.m.
Friday, Saturday 1:00 p.m. to 5:00 p.m.

“Blustery Day in the 100-Acre Woods”

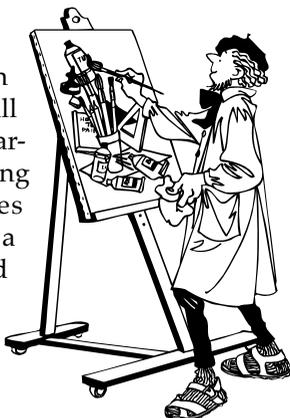
Three cheers for our favorite bear! Come in out of the autumn chill and let us entertain you with Pooh-related stories, crafts, and games. For ages six and under.

- Plainfield Branch – Tuesday, Nov. 15 at 10:30 a.m.
- Comstock Park Branch - Monday, Nov. 7 at 10:30 a.m.

“The Toybox” presented by Pippin Puppets
A hilarious show featuring bright, colorful puppets, music and surprises.

- Plainfield Branch only – Thanksgiving weekend, Saturday Nov. 26 at 10:30am.

Hey kids—explore your artistic genius! Do you have a favorite book that has inspired the creation of a piece of artwork? Here is your chance to make your own special entry in KDL'S “Art Attack” show of fantastic literary creations. Your creation can be in the form of a sculpture or painting and will be displayed at the library for all to see. Stop into the library and pick up an entry form that tells all you need to know to participate in this exciting program. All entries must be based a children’s book, and are due by Nov. 1. Space is limited and registration required. Ages 6 and up.



Especially For Adults

Both library branches warmly welcome you to join our monthly “no-pressure” Thursday book discussion groups, where you can relax and talk about books with other avid readers. The Plainfield Branch also offers basic computer and Internet classes. Call your branch for more information.

Other upcoming adult programs include:
Only at the Plainfield Branch

- “Introduction to Baby Signs with Deaf Expressions” – Sunday, Oct. 2 at 2:00 p.m.
- “Ghost Towns with Diana Stampfler” on Thursday, Oct. 27 at 6:30 p.m.
- “Stamping and Embossing Holidays Cards and Tags with Liz Langenberg” on Saturday, Nov. 12 at 10:00 a.m.

At both Branches

- “Fall Floral Designs with Liz Langenberg”
- Plainfield Branch – Sunday, Sept. 18 at 2:00 p.m.
- Comstock Park Branch – Tuesday Sept. 6 at 6:30 p.m.
- “Navigate your Way on eBay with Patrick Prominski”
- Plainfield Branch – Saturday, Oct. 15 at 10:00 a.m.
- Comstock Park Branch – Tuesday, Nov. 8 at 6:30 p.m.
- “How to Attract Birds to Your Backyard”
- Plainfield Branch – Tuesday, Nov. 1 at 6:30 p.m.
- Comstock Park Branch – Tuesday, Oct. 4 at 6:30 p.m.

Friends of the Plainfield Library

We are a 501 C 3 tax exempt, non-profit organization that “loves” its library. We raise money for the library for furnishings, programs, and other incidentals that are not in the everyday operating budget. We welcome new members any time of the year, and we also appreciate the continuing support of our ongoing members. For a nominal yearly fee members receive a monthly newsletter that describes the upcoming events. Members are invited to attend monthly meetings on the second Monday of each month, but attendance is not a requirement for membership. Members can help to plan programs, vote on how monies are raised and spent, donate time to assist with fundraising events or contribute baked goods...and other perks. Call the library at 647-3930 and a staff member will put you in touch with a Friends board member.

The Friends will be sponsoring a Used Book Sale on Friday, August 19, from 12:00-4:00 and on Saturday, August 20, from 10:00-4:00. There will be a bag sale on Monday, August 22, from 12:00-7:00. Other Friends’ programs will include **Stories From the People of This Place**, presented by Master Storyteller Larry Plamondon, on Thursday, September 15, at 6:30 p.m. The Friends’ **Before the Snow Flies Annual Craft Show** will be held on Saturday, October 22, from 9:30 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. The Silent Auction items will be on display starting Saturday, October 15th and will be open for bidding to all library patrons one week before the show. The admission fee is fifty cents, and the show will include a bake sale as well as arts and crafts.

Friends are in need of any old Readers Digest Condensed Books in good shape. We make these books into book lamps. We especially need the dark, maroon color. The cost for a book lamp is \$35.00; a limited number of shades are available for an additional cost. Sample lamps are on display in the library.

FROM THE WATER DEPARTMENT

Grand River Crossing

The 24” pipe for our new river crossing has been delivered. This pipe will allow us to have another crossing of the Grand River to insure our ability to provide uninterrupted service to both sides of the river. The need for a second crossing was identified in the reliability study we commissioned a few years ago. The single, large-diameter pipe across the Grand River that has served the system since 1972, is considered a potential weak point. As more people connect to the system on the north side of the river, the need for a second transmission line increases. When the new crossing is completed, we will be able to meet average daily demand everywhere in the system even if one river crossing out of service. This project is part of our continuing commitment to serve the needs of Plainfield Township residents.

Wise Water Use

We are well into the lawn-sprinkling season. It is time to check your system to make sure you aren’t wasting water. Do any of your sprinklers spray water into the street? Does your system operate when it is raining or has rained recently? Does your system operate when the wind is strong enough to blow the water away from where it is supposed to go? Lawns need about one inch of water per week. Most of that comes from rain. Does your system deliver more water than your lawn needs? If the answer is “yes” for any of these questions, you are wasting water. Wasted water costs you more in your water bills now. If we have to expand our plant capacity to provide more water, your bills will increase significantly.

Water less frequently. Your grass will develop deeper, stronger roots. Raise the cutting height of your lawn mower. Taller grass will shade the ground and reduce evaporation of soil moisture.

Save water. Save money. Check your sprinklers.
Vincent Ferrarese, Water Department Director



Hyser Rivers Museum

The Hyser Rivers Museum located at 6440 West River Drive is open the first Sunday of the month, April through December, from 2:00 p.m.-4:30 p.m., with the exception of holidays. This amazing, small Greek style house contains some of the most interesting pieces of history of Plainfield Township.

The upcoming months' calendars of events are as follows. All events are from 2:00 p.m. – 4:00 p.m. unless otherwise noted.

- August 7** Friendship Day featuring the Apple Valley Dulcimer Group. Bring a lawn chair and join in the fun and enjoy light refreshments.
- September 18** Patriot Re-enactment Day in conjunction with the Rogue River Camp Grounds.
- October 2** Family Day – Paper crafts. Pick up contest rules for the November 6 “Best Patriotic Picture Contest.” Submissions must be in by October 21 to Township Hall, 6161 Belmont Avenue. The contest is open to all age groups.
- November 6** Contest judging with prizes for the “Best Patriotic Picture.” Winning artwork will be on display at the museum.
- December 4** Annual “An Old Fashion Christmas” craft day for the entire family. Please RSVP for this event (so we have plenty of supplies) by calling 784-7062.

Contact the museum staff by calling Township Hall at 364-8466 to arrange special visits (when possible) for educators, special events, or out-of-town guests.

New Passport Initiative Announced To Better

Currently, U.S. citizens, and some citizens of other countries in the Western Hemisphere are not required to present a passport to enter or re-enter the U.S. when traveling within the Western Hemisphere. The Intelligence Reform and Terrorism Prevention Act of 2004 (also known as the 9/11 Intelligence Bill), mandated that the Secretary of Homeland Security, in consultation with the Secretary of State, develop and implement a plan to require U.S. citizens and foreign nationals to present a passport when entering the United States.



The Department of State and The Department of Homeland Security have recently announced the "Western Hemisphere Travel Initiative" to secure and expedite travel. Travelers to and from Bermuda, Canada, Caribbean, Central & South America, Mexico, and Panama will be required to have a U.S. Passport to enter or re-enter the United States by December 31, 2007. This is a change from prior travel requirements and will affect *all* United States citizens entering the United States from countries within the Western Hemisphere who do not currently possess valid passports. This new requirement will also affect certain foreign nationals who currently are not required to present a passport to travel to the United States. Most Canadian citizens, citizens of the British Overseas Territory of Bermuda, and to a lesser degree, Mexican citizens will be affected by the implementation of these new requirements.

The travel initiative requirements will be rolled out in phases, providing as much advance notice as possible to the affected public to enable them to meet the terms of the new guidelines. The proposed implementation timeline is as follows:

• **On December 31, 2005:** Requirement applied to all travel (air/sea) to or from Bermuda, the Caribbean, Central America, and South America.

• **On December 31, 2006:** Requirement applied to all air and sea travel to or from Mexico and Canada.

• **On December 31, 2007:** Requirement extended to all air, sea, and land border crossings.

For more information on the initiative and how it may affect you, please visit the State Department's consular website www.travel.state.gov or the U.S. Department of Homeland Security's website www.dhs.gov

The Plainfield Charter Township Clerk's office accepts passports between the hours of 9:00 AM and 4:00 PM, Monday through Friday. Every effort is made to keep the office open during these hours; however, there are occasions when the office must be closed. It would be wise to call 364-8466 to confirm that the Passport Agency is open on the day you wish to come.

When you apply for a passport, you **MUST** bring the following information and documents:

- **Application:** Available on line at www.travel.state.gov or at the Township Offices.
- **Proof of identity:** Driver's license, state issued ID card or US Military ID card.
- **Proof of citizenship:** Original birth certificate with raised seal or printed on government issued paper. Hospital Certificates and Birth Registrations are not acceptable as proof of citizenship. You can obtain a certi-

fied birth certificate from the state of county of your birth.

- **Two passport photos:** Walgreen's and Meijer are two stores within the township that take passport photos. The cost is about \$8.00 for a 2-picture set.
- **Two checks:** One for \$67.00 (adult) or \$52.00 (child) made payable to the U.S. Department of State and one for \$30.00 made payable to Plainfield Charter Township. (The township will accept cash instead of a check but the DOS will not).

All applicants must be seen in person, no matter the applicant's age, at the Township Office to complete the form and sign it in person.

FROM THE ASSESSOR'S OFFICE

Property Owners: DID YOU KNOW?

- If you have purchased a new home, NEW applications for a **Principal Residence Exemption** (formerly "Homestead Exemption") must be filed by May 1st. You do not have to file each year if you don't change your residence.
- It is your responsibility to review your assessing record card periodically to be sure you agree with all the information currently on record. You may go to the Township's website (www.plainfieldchartertwp.org) and click on property information to review your record.
- Your taxable value can never exceed your assessed value. The **Assessed Value** becomes the **Taxable Value** when a property's ownership is transferred.
- If a property's ownership changes, a **Property Transfer Affidavit** must be filed in the Assessor's Office within 45 days of that change to avoid penalties.
- Although your property's assessed value is set at one-half of its **True Cash Value**, the Assessor, by State law (Sec 27(5) of the Gen-

There are no exceptions. There are special rules for children, expedited applications, and unusual circumstances. Please call to ask your questions before coming to the office. It may take up to six (6) weeks to receive your passport; so early planning is a good idea!

The Clerk's office can make special arrangements to assist any size group (church, school, club, etc.) with the application process at your facility, during specified times. These arrangements need to be made in advance. The Clerk's office staff is happy to assist you with your application and any of your questions. Call us at 364-8466.

eral Property Tax Act), is not permitted to set the assessed value at one half of your purchase price.

- 2005 Residential Assessments (**Assessed Value**) were increased an average of 5%, and the **Taxable Value** for 2005 was increased by the CPI (Consumer Price Index) of 2.3%. This factor is set by the State in the fall of each year. Unless there were additions or losses to a property, the **Taxable Value** cannot increase by more than the CPI or 5%, whichever is less.
- Plainfield Charter Township has a total property value (**True Cash Value**) of over 2.3 billion with 12,333 parcels.

Property assessing and property taxing procedures are very complex. While we in the Assessing Department deal with this routinely, we understand that most citizens do not understand these complexities. If you have any questions, please feel free to call our office at 364-8466.

Judy LaFave, CMAE3 Assessor

It was time for a renovation!



www.plainfieldchartertp.org

In May 2005, Plainfield Charter Township unveiled a fully redesigned version of its Website, www.plainfieldchartertp.org. While the site domain name remains the same, the site itself is very different than before.

Why did Plainfield decide to renovate its site - just four years after a previous mini-overhaul? After receiving comments from citizens, organizations and local businesses, and discussing the Website with township staff, it became obvious that some of the online information, while valuable, was outdated, missing or difficult to find.

With approximately 740 visitors each week on the old site, Plainfield staff knew that its citizens and businesses were clamoring for information on township government and the services that Plainfield provides. Over the past six months, staff has been working with a new website designer, MCR Technologies. Not only has the site been totally reorganized and up-

dated, but more useful and requested information has been added, as well as pictures of our township parks, buildings, residents and activities.

Here are just a few of the things that you will be able to find:

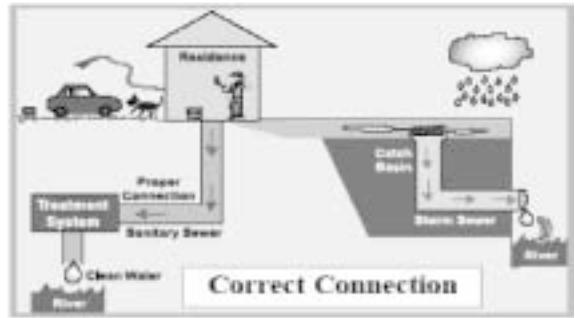
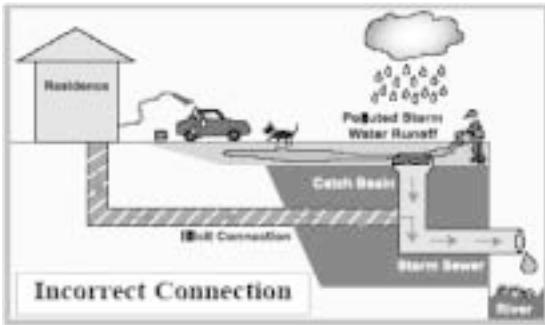
- Current millage and tax rates
- Calendar of events for township functions
- Who's on Township Boards, Committees and Commissions
- Current property information - PAL Website - assessments & taxes
- Agendas and minutes for Township Board, Planning Commission and Zoning Board of Appeals meetings
- Township Profile Newsletters (current and past editions)
- Parks & cemetery information
- Voter information and precinct map
- Township Ordinances (mid-late 2005)
- And more to come...

Since unveiling of the new website, we have already noticed an increase in visits from 917 per week in May, to 1,652 per week in June. We hope to see this number continue to increase over the coming months. Our goal is to be here for you, when you need us to be here!

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WI-FI to You In the Heart of Comstock Park

COMSTOCK PARK – The Plainfield Township Downtown Development Association, Comstock Park Business Association, and local technology consulting company, Kore / Hi Com, have partnered to provide Comstock Park's Dwight Lydell Park visitors free Wireless Internet Access. Access will be available in early September. Watch for more information in future PROFILES and at the site.



Be Stormwater Savvy

One of the most significant, yet unrecognized groups of water contaminants is *storm water pollutants*. When it rains, storm water runs over yards, streets, roads, highways, parking lots, parks, and playgrounds, carrying with it everything in its path, including debris and pollutants. Eventually, the water will travel to a stream, either over land or via a storm drain. Storm drains are frequently located alongside streets and parking lots. Unlike sanitary sewers that divert water to a treatment plant directly from your home, storm drains lead directly to surrounding lakes and rivers without any type of treatment. All the debris and pollutants that were picked up by storm water runoff, end up in your lakes and streams!

National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) Phase II Program

The Clean Water Act of 1972 set up the NPDES. The NPDES program required communities around the country with urbanized areas to begin tackling the issue of storm water pollution. In recent years, several communities in Kent and Ottawa counties were required to develop an illicit discharge elimination program (IDEP). The IDEP was required to include an investigation of the waters of the state to identify, and eventually eliminate, illicit discharges and connections to the storm sewer.

What is an Illicit Discharge or Connection?

An illicit discharge is any discharge to the storm sewer system that is not composed entirely of rain water or groundwater. Examples include dumping of motor vehicle fluids, household hazardous wastes, grass clippings, leaf litter, industrial waste, restaurant wastes, or any other non-storm water waste into a storm water system. An illicit connection is the discharge of pollutants or non-storm water materials into a storm sewer system via a pipe or other direct connection. Sources of illicit connections may include sanitary sewer taps, wash water for laundromats or carwashes, and other similar sources.

How Do I Spot an Illicit Discharge or Connection?

- Look for makeshift pipes or hoses that lead to a storm drain or body of water.
- Watch for stains, unusual odors, structural damage to streets or gutters, and abnormal vegetative growth in nearby lakes and streams.
- If you see an illicit discharge or connection, REPORT IT to your community. The Illicit Discharge and Connection Ordinance, adopted by your community, gives them legal authority to inspect and sample discharge, as well as enforce sanctions for violations.

Swimming Pools

It has been a hot summer, and everyone loves to get relief by swimming, sitting, or wading in swimming pools. Thankfully, due to newer technology, there are a number of private portable swimming pools that are relatively inexpensive, fairly deep, and have their own filter system, so our precious water supply doesn't have to be wasted by draining and re-filling. However, with this technology, there also comes a responsibility to ensure the safety of our children. Many children die due to accidental drowning not only in lakes and ponds, but also in private swimming pools. We must do everything that we can to prevent this from happening, and one way is to make sure that the swimming pools that we purchase and use are not accessible to little children.

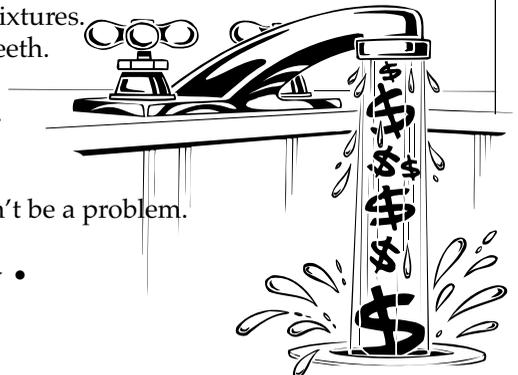
This brings us to the proper safety requirements for swimming pools, whether portable or fixed. The Michigan Residential Building Code states that a Building Permit "IS REQUIRED" for any structure intended for swimming and bathing that is capable of holding over 24 inches of water. It also requires an electrical permit if the pool has a pump and filter system. These swimming pools are required to have a 4-foot high barrier around it that is not climbable and a self closing and latching gate that swings out away from the pool. With the advent of the new large blow up pools, or portable pools, there is a definite increase in the possibility of yet another child drowning. Please do your part by abiding by, being aware of, and following the rules. Do what you should do to protect the children and avoid tragedies.

Don't Waste Water:

1. Adjust your sprinklers so they don't water driveways and streets.
2. Don't leave your sprinklers on any longer than necessary.
3. Have your system professionally checked and in good repair.
4. Install a rain sensor. Does it make sense to water in the rain?
5. Use plants that don't require much watering.
6. Fix small leaks and malfunctioning plumbing fixtures.
7. Turn the tap off while actually brushing your teeth.
8. Get a water-saver showerhead.
9. Use full loads when using your clothes washer.
10. Consider a front-loading clothes washer.

If everyone practiced these principles, there wouldn't be a problem.

**Be Smart • Be Responsible • Save Money •
Help the Environment.**





A Citizen's Guide to Boat and Vehicle Care

How we take care of our boats, personal watercrafts, mobile homes, cars, and other vehicles greatly influences the health of the Grand River and its tributaries. You can do your part to prevent pollution at the source by checking up on your marina and following

a few simple tips at home.

Car Washing and Boat Cleaning

- Look for non-toxic and phosphate-free cleansers.
- Use alternative cleaners, such as baking soda and lemon juice. Avoid those with bleach, ammonia, lye, or petroleum distillates (see chart).



Product	Better Alternative
Bleach	Borax or hydrogen peroxide
Chrome cleaner	Apple cider vinegar to clean, baby oil to polish
Drain cleaner	Boiling water and plunger or plumber's snake
Engine cleaner	Steam clean the engine in a dedicated service area
Fiberglass stain remover	Baking soda paste, scrub pad, "elbow grease"
Paint stripper	Physically remove old paint without chemical use Avoid products containing methylene chloride, trichloroethylene, benzene, trichloroethylene, xylene, or toluene
Scouring powders	Baking soda and "elbow grease"
Window cleaner	Vinegar and lemon juice mixed in lukewarm water
Wood polish	Olive oil or almond oil for interior wood; use water-based or borax-based products

References: Marine Environmental Education Foundation's National Clean Boating Campaign 2000 Action Kit and Michigan Department of Environmental Quality's "Tips to Protect the Environment"

Fuel and Oil

- When fueling, avoid topping off! Remember that fuel expands as it warms up in your tank.
- Store fuel only in approved containers.
- Routinely check for and fix oil and fuel leaks.



Engine Care

- Keep boat and car engines properly tuned for efficient fuel consumption and clean exhaust.
- Use a drip pan when doing engine maintenance. Drippings left on the cement get washed into nearby drains and end up in our streams.



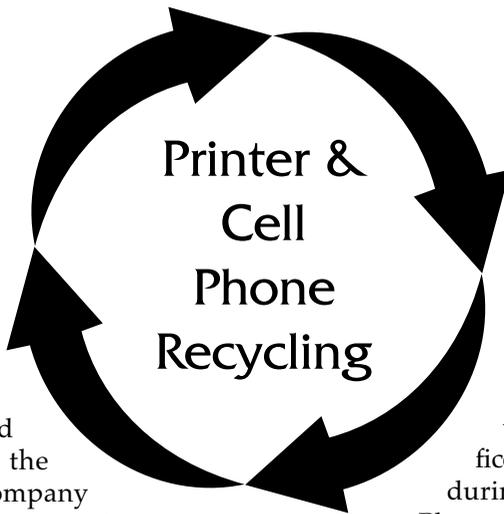
Sewage Control

- Use onshore restrooms when docked, and encourage everyone to use the facilities before casting off.
- Empty portable toilets only at pump-out stations or at home.
- Clean up after your pet to prevent pet waste from washing into storm drains.

Many marinas statewide have pump-outs and allow non-members to use them. Keep sewage out of storm drains and lakes!

Plainfield Charter Township is celebrating Earth Day, 365 days a year, by recycling empty laser and inkjet cartridges and used cell phones (no bag phones) from disposal in landfills. The cartridges and cell phones collected by the township are sent to a company where the cartridges are inspected and then sold to reputable recycling companies to be remanufactured. These cartridges are later sold to secondary markets, including retailers and office-supply stores. Cell phones that are recycled are either donated to non-profit markets such as women's shelters, sold to refurbishing companies who sell them back into the domestic market or sold to foreign markets.

Plainfield Charter Township is among more than 25,000 organizations nationwide that are helping the environment by collecting empty laser and inkjet cartridges and used cell phones from the community and sending the waste products in to be recycled. We are helping to put a dent in the more than 350 million car-



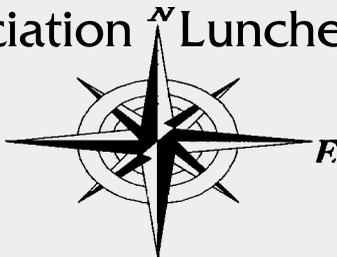
tridges and 30 million cell phones that are thrown away each year.

Please drop off your empty laser and inkjet cartridges and used cell phones (with batteries attached) at the Township Offices, 6161 Belmont Avenue NE, during normal business hours.

Please ask your employers, employees, family and friends to also participate in this project.

All proceeds received from recycling these items will assist in offsetting the cost of *Megan's HOPE* (Helping Others Play and Enjoy) Barrier-Free Playground. *Megan's HOPE* is a privately funded, barrier-free playground, for children and adults with disabilities, that is being planned for Plainfield Charter Township. All supplies, boxes and postage are provided at NO cost to the township. For more information on this project, or how to contribute additional funds to *Megan's HOPE*, please contact: Jeffrey S. Hawkins, CMC, Plainfield Charter Township Deputy Clerk / *Megan's HOPE* Project Coordinator. (616) 364-8466

North East Business Association ^NLunches



The North East Business Association would like to announce their upcoming monthly luncheons. Our luncheons take place on the third Wednesday of every month from 11:45 a.m. – 1:00 p.m. at the Boulder Creek Golf Club located at 5750 Brewer NE, Belmont. Each month we have a speaker with important issues facing all of us personally and professionally. The cost for the luncheon is \$12.00, but your first

The Rapid Launches Countywide Transportation Service

The *Rapid* has kicked-off The County Connection, a new county-wide transportation service. The County Connection service ensures that all residents of Kent County have access to public transportation. It is available twenty-four hours a day, seven days a week, with the exception of major holidays. Rides are scheduled in advance and cost \$14.00 each way; same day rides can also be scheduled on a space-available basis with a \$5.00 surcharge per person/per ride. Children under the age of 5 are free. The service area is the borders of Kent County, approximately 22 Mile Road to the north, 108th Avenue to the south, Wilson/Kenowa to the west, and Boynton/Snow to the east. You can ride from any point in the county to any other point in the county using this service.

The County Connection program is funded through a competitive federal job access and reverse commute grant matched by state money. *The Rapid* worked closely with the



Workforce Development Board and the Area Community Service for Employment and Training (ACSET) to design a program that supports work or work-related trips throughout Kent County. Priority is given to clients of ACSET and the Michigan Department of Human Services (formerly FIA), but it is available to all residents of Kent County.

County Connection has brought transportation alternatives to many areas of Kent County that previously had no access to public transportation. The service also assists those choosing to live in rural areas in finding a cost-effective, reliable way to get to work. The County Connection significantly enhances the quality of life for Kent County residents and is quickly on its way to becoming a major success story for *The Rapid*, and ultimately, the people it serves. To schedule a ride or find out more about the service, call *The Rapid* at (800) 849-1191.

visit is on us. For reservations and questions, please contact Lynette at 451-2494.

August 17 – No Speaker – Casual lunch on the deck

September 21 – Fred Brailey, Jr. and Jayne Dykema – Estate Planning

October 19 – George Meek – Plainfield Twp. Supervisor

The NEBA raises money to award scholarships annually to qualifying graduating seniors at Northview High School. So far we have given away over \$10,000.00. Our annual golf outing was held on June 2, 2005 at Boulder Creek Golf Club with the proceeds benefiting our scholarship fund.

PLAINFIELD
FD
FIRE DEPARTMENT

I don't think of myself as being lazy. I prefer to think of any procrastination on my part being due to the fact that I am "particular" as to which job I undertake. After all, a guy can only do so much, and, over the years, I have observed that for every job completed on the "honey do" list another seems to appear. I preface my article with this admission so that you will understand, especially the guys, that I realize there is the potential for dire consequences associated with this article - work. Read on, if you dare.

WASHINGTON, DC – More than 3,000 people die each year in fires, according to a new study released by the Federal Emergency Management Agency's U.S. Fire Administration. Michael D. Brown, Under Secretary of the U.S. Department of Homeland Security for Emergency Preparedness and Response and FEMA's Director, called the special report, *Fatal Fires*, "alarming. Residential structure fires, the very place people should feel the safest, unfortunately account for the vast majority of fatal fires," said Brown. "What's most worrisome is that in a full two-thirds of these fires, smoke alarms are missing or not working."

More than two thousand people died in 2003 in homes with non-working smoke alarms! How can that be? In 1973 *America Burning* was released; it was *The Report of the National Commission on Fire Prevention and Control*. The Report, "urged Americans to protect themselves and their families by installing... alarms in their homes." At the time of the publication of the report it was estimated that 12,000 people died

annually as a result of fire (there was no National reporting system). That number dropped to 6,200 in 1989, and to 3,300 in 2003, which is a significant decline. Would not 1000 be even better? Michigan had 112 residential fire fatalities in 2002 with 21 operational alarms, and 115 residential fire fatalities in 2003 with 20 operational alarms. These numbers equal over 80% of the homes not having working smoke alarms, numbers very much like those of 1973.

Why are thousands of people killed annually in homes without smoke detectors? I think there are several reasons:

- Antithesis of Chicken Little's complex – In other words we don't think the sky will ever fall or our house will ever burn (also sometimes referred to as the "it will never happen to me" complex).
- Higher fiscal priorities – "Gosh, if I buy a smoke detector for each floor, I won't have enough to buy ____." (fill in the blank with beer, cigarettes, go to the casino, milk, shoes, etc.) Two smoke alarms are less than twenty dollars. Isn't the life of your loved one worth twenty bucks?
- Genuine financial problems. Smoke alarm programs are available for people who are in need. If you can't afford to buy smoke detectors we can get you one for free.
- I'll do it tomorrow. These people intend to do it; they just haven't gotten around to it yet.

I must admit that I may be being somewhat pious about this. I just replaced my smoke de-

tectors recently. Replaced? Did he just say replaced? Oh, yeah, I forgot to mention that smoke detectors require maintenance. If you don't have a unit with a lithium battery, the batteries must be changed every six months. AC powered units should be replaced after ten years. Additionally, it's a good idea to vacuum your units occasionally to make sure that there

isn't an accumulation of dust or spider webs.

Please, make my job easier and purchase and maintain a smoke detector at least for every floor of your house. You see, there is a very good chance that I could be the person notifying your survivors that you were killed because you didn't have a smoke detector.

WARNING Compliance with the philosophy of this article may save your life, & create some work!



Greetings from the Supervisor

It is hard to believe, but the day I penned this article was my 8-month anniversary as the Supervisor of Plainfield Charter Township. I must admit that not only did the first

eight months fly by, but also the 8-month education program in municipal government has been fantastic.

The residents of Plainfield Township are very fortunate to live in a community such as ours and have the quality of Township employees – elected, hired, or appointed – working for you 24/7. I have been very impressed with the dedication of the municipal work force at Plainfield Township, and I know that the citizens' concerns, positive or negative, are not taken lightly by anyone.

In the future, the citizens of the Township should be seeing an improvement in the enforcement of ordinance violations. One of my strong concerns is how our township - residential and commercial – appears, not only to us, the residents, but also to the visitors who work, shop, or drive through our community. We have a lot to be thankful for, and we should maintain and preserve our natural resources to the utmost. To assist the Township in maintaining the quality of life that we want, the Township is enhancing its ordinance enforcement capability with the appointment of an experienced enforcement person and a more effective approach that will provide meaningful results quicker and in more depth.

The Township is always looking for volunteers to serve on boards, commissions, or ad hoc committees. If you are interested in becoming involved, please contact the Township Clerk's Office for more information.

Whenever you see a Township employee in the community, on-duty or off-duty, and you appreciate their work and dedication to our Township, a smile and appreciative comment would be entirely appropriate.

ALERT!

Want to save money – Or avoid spending more than you have to?

If you have a public sanitary sewer adjacent to your property and your residence or building is not yet connected to the sewer – **listen up!**

If you connect to the sewer AFTER December 1, 2005, your Connection Fee will cost you \$1,200 more than if you connect BEFORE December 1, 2005. There are many homes and businesses that have the opportunity to connect and avoid paying an extra \$1,200. This will apply only to buildings that are built or will be ready for hook-up on or **before Decem-**

ber 1, 2005. Even if you have paid some fees or are paying as part of a Special Assessment District, you will have to pay the extra \$1,200 if you don't connect *before December 1, 2005.*

To encourage you to connect and to help you to finance this cost, Plainfield Township will let you pay on an installment plan for the cost of the sewer adjacent to your property, the Connection Fee, AND the cost of constructing a lateral (tap) onto the sewer. To take advantage of this one-time opportunity to finance these costs AND to avoid a \$1,200 increase after December 1, please call the Manager's office at 364-8466 for information on how to get this done.

Plainfield Charter Township

TOWNSHIP HALL SUMMER HOURS

7:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.

Phone: 364-8466

TOWNSHIP BOARD

George Meek, Supervisor
Susan Morrow, Clerk
James Stover, Treasurer
Rebecca Borek, Trustee
Jack Hagedorn, Trustee
Robert Heindrichs, Trustee
William Parris, Trustee



MANAGER

Robert Homan

TOWNSHIP BOARD MEETINGS

7:30 p.m.

First and Third Mondays

www.plainfieldchartertwp.org

The Profile

Plainfield Charter Township
6161 Belmont NE
Belmont, MI 49306

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