

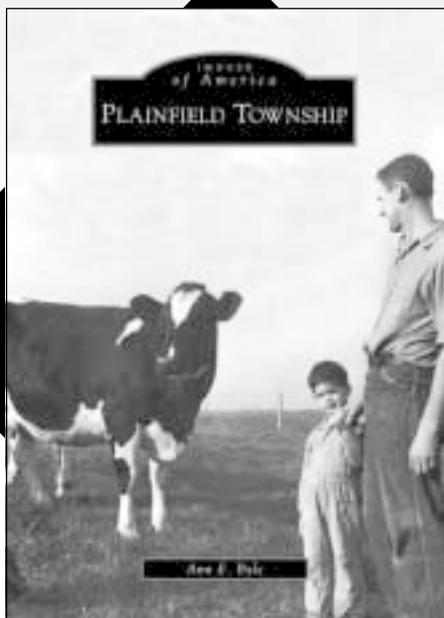
The Profile

VOLUME XXXIII NUMBER 3

JULY 2008

“Plainfield Township,” a new book by former township resident Ann Byle, is out in stores now. The book is published by Arcadia Publishing, which celebrates the history of townships, neighborhoods and cities across the country using archival photographs. “Plainfield Township” features about 170 photographs of early settlers, businesses, schools, homes, people, and places throughout the township. The book costs \$19.99 and is available at The Reading Tree, 5300 Northland Dr., Schuler Books & Music, Barnes & Noble Booksellers, Amazon.com, and wherever books are sold.

“Plainfield Township” Celebrates Our History



Ann Byle will meet readers and sign copies of “Plainfield Township” at the following events:

Date: **Tuesday, June 24**
 Time: 7 p.m.
 Place: Schuler Books & Music
 3165 Alpine Ave. NW

Date: **Tuesday, July 22**
 Time: 7 p.m.
 Place: GRPL Ryerson Library
 111 Library St. NE

Date: **Thursday, August 7**
 Time: 3-7 p.m.
 Place: Plainfield Township Farmers Market
 6156 Belmont Ave. NE



PARCC Side Clean Water Plant – Opening Soon! A “Plus” for the Environment

With their quarterly water and sewer bills, Plainfield Township’s public sewer customers have been receiving a one-page explanation of the recently approved 10% increase in sewer use charges. This increase and the 20% increases in 2006 and 2007 are necessary to pay for the construction of the new PARCC (Plainfield, Alpine, Rockford, Cannon, and Courtland) Side facility. As those who have passed by the construction site this year have noticed, this is not your typical sewage treatment plant. It doesn’t look like one; it will not smell like one (at least not in the neighborhood); and it does not produce a final product whose quality is anything like our sewage that has been treated by Grand Rapids over the past 38 years. PARCC Side (located be“side” Lamoreaux Park off Coit Avenue) is “something else.”

I invite those PROFILE readers who are not familiar with the long and difficult journey toward the building of this wonderful public facility to read past articles on this subject written in the PROFILE since 2000. Check them out on our website, www.plainfieldchartertp.org. Although not quite the stuff of a novel or a feature-length motion picture, the story behind the

PARCC Side Clean Water Plant (CWP) is quite interesting. Although students in our school systems probably will not study it, it is one of the more significant efforts in the history of local government – here in Plainfield Township and the four other North Kent communities that comprise the North Kent Sewer Authority (NKSA).

How does PARCC Side compare to other wastewater treatment plants in this area? Designed by Prein and Newhof Engineering under lead designer Mark Prein, this clean water plant will really produce “clean water.” Not just cleaner-than-sewage and being able to meet the minimum pollution standards allowed by the Michigan Department of Environmental Quality and the U.S. EPA, the effluent will be as clean or cleaner than the waters of the Grand River to which it will be discharged, and it will probably be clean enough for someone to drink as a demonstration. Think about that for a moment ... We all know what goes down the sewer – wastewater from sinks, toilets, showers, car washes, and industrial processes – just to name a few. We will continue to marvel at the impressive technology and equipment that will produce effluent that is *really clean!*

A tremendous amount of money, material, and effort has already gone into this community effort. Also, an impressive degree of political determination and intergovernmental cooperation has made this possible. Larry Campbell, former Director of Public Utilities for the City of Cadillac, has recently been hired to manage PARCC Side, and he will oversee the solicitation and hiring of qualified operators to ensure its reliable operation. Construction progress continues on a very demanding schedule, and we fully expect Triangle Associates to turn over this top notch facility to the NKSA by November 1 target date. Michael Young, Chair of the NKSA Board of Directors and City Manager of Rockford, has done admirable work in overseeing the successful implementation of this project for the NKSA. The NKSA Board and its constituent member communities have been steadily supportive throughout the construction process. I am grateful and gratified to have been part of the team that steered us through this endeavor.

A number of things might have gone wrong during the journey from final approval by all of the NKSA communities for borrowing \$48 million to build PARCC Side until now, but nothing serious has gone wrong. Teamwork, professionalism, and the commitment by all parties involved have made this possible. Plainfield Township and its North Kent partners have every reason to be pleased and proud of this accomplishment.

The alternative would have been unpleasant and, likely, more expensive. Based on a current customer base of 15,000 single-family residential equivalent units, the \$48 million investment equates to about \$3,200 per unit. Amortized over a 30-year life, that's about \$100 per year per unit.

We are borrowing that over 25 years at 4.25% interest. Projections (made in 2005) of the cost of buying, operating, and maintaining this clean water plant over the next 20 years compared to the cost of staying with Grand Rapids under the City's "new terms" showed the cost of the NKSA CWP option being less expensive about 10-12 years out. To date, we have already beaten these 3-year old, conservative projections in favor of the CWP option *before the facility becomes operational!* The costs of improvements to the Grand Rapids sewer system and the user fees charged to GR's customers have turned out to be greater than those used in the projection and comparison. By diverting our 4.5 million gallons of wastewater each day from the Grand Rapids system, we have provided the City with additional capacity and removed that much sewage from an old sewer system that has been prone to overflows into the Grand River every time it rains a lot. I hope our citizens join me in looking forward to the day when the valves are turned and the clean water flows into our Grand River.

Robert C. Homan, Township Manager



Taxes, taxes and higher taxes...

Many taxpayers have raised the question at my counter, "How can my taxes keep going up with the decline in housing values?" I will give you the Treasurer's version as best I can. Your taxes are based on millage and the Taxable Value of your property. Since 1994, state law has dictated that the Taxable Value is adjusted by the Consumer Price Index (CPI) and the CPI has been between 2%-3% over this period. Therefore your taxes will go up. Additionally, your home is assessed by the Assessor to keep the home value current with the True Cash Value. The State Equalized Value is 50% of the assessed value. This is required by law. The Taxable Value and State Equalized Value are printed on your tax bill.

This year, there are homes where the State Equalized Value decreased from 2007 due to the housing market. The law requires the Taxable Value never to be greater than the State Equalized Value. Those properties that have changed ownership in recent years may experience this and their taxes will be lowered if the millage doesn't increase. The Assessor has reported in the PROFILE the details of how these values are established and if you have any questions related to the values, Assessing would be the department to call.

County tax shift...

The last shift of the Kent County operating tax happened in 2007. Starting with 2008 there will not be any increase in your tax bill due to the shift of the County operating tax. There is some legislation in the works that will shift the jail and senior taxes from the winter to the summer bill.

Recap of 2007 collections...

The Township collected over 96.5% of taxes prior to March 1st. Thank you for remitting payments in a timely fashion. The Treasurer's of-

fice processed over 25,000 tax bills between the summer and winter cycles and collected approximately \$39 million dollars, of which the majority went to schools. Personal Property Tax (a business-type tax and personal property at mobile home pads) had a delinquency rate of 4%. If you experienced any problems during the tax year, please contact me.

2007 tax bill...

The 2008 summer tax bill should be in the mail near the end of June with the due date of September 16th. None of the local schools had a millage increase; Kent Intermediate School District, Grand Rapids Community College and the County Operating are reported to be about the same.

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 Pam at 726-8891 for further information. You will be able pay your taxes automatically from your financial institution to the Township. No stamps! No late penalty fees! No lost mail!

Summer tax deferments...

If your household income for 2007 was less than \$40,000.00, you may be able to defer payment of your summer taxes until February 17, 2009 without any penalties being charged if you meet either of the following conditions: over 61 years of age, paraplegic, quadriplegic, eligible serviceman, blind or a disabled person.

Visit us on the Township website, www.plainfieldchartertp.org, email me at stoverj@plainfieldchartertp.org or call at 726-8892. Have a great summer!

Jim Stover Treasurer, CPFA

Message from the Supervisor: It's Up to You

It is 2008 and one-half of the year has lapsed!

The year 2008 brings opportunities of one nature or another to all of us. I believe two of the most important opportunities during this year are the elections of individuals to various offices that directly



or indirectly affect each and every one of us, and the support, or non-support, of proposals, issues, millages, and concerns affecting our everyday lives. Too often, the voters are making these very important decisions without

really knowing and/or understanding the candidates or the impact of certain issues upon our lives. People have a tendency to believe *everything* they read in the newspapers, magazine articles, promotional flyers, websites and what they hear from coffee-shop politicians as the factual, bottom-line truth. Let me tell you, there are a great deal of untruths and misinformation generated through the various forms of media.

Responsible people should want to base their decisions upon the true facts, and therefore, it is up to each one of us, individually, to ascertain the correct data before marking our ballots. Anyone who is running for an office should be eager to share their experience, or lack of, with you as well as those people representing the proposals. The key is to talk with the people on a one-to-one basis and let them know up front that you want to make correct and informed decisions when you vote, and you want them to be very open about where they stand, if they want your vote.

Don't be fooled by the candidates who say that if they are elected, they will change the direction of the municipality single-handed, and everyone will be better off and live happily ever after. In most cases, the candidate, if elected, becomes one of a five or seven member board or commission and a majority vote rules, not a single vote.

Remember, August 5, 2008, and November 4, 2008 are both very important dates, not only for Plainfield Charter Township, but also for the State of Michigan and the United States of America. Leaders will be elected, proposals will be decided, and some political directions will change.

BE INFORMED and VOTE because ... IT'S UP TO YOU!

5

George K. Meek, Supervisor

Upcoming Election Dates

August 05, 2008 - Primary Election Day
November 04, 2008 - General Election Day



For the past two months, I have personally experienced the bumps, the delays, and the detours that always come with construction along public roads in Plainfield Township. With all of the disruption and dust along West River Drive and no end in sight, one might think my neighbors and I would be more than a little peeved. Speaking only for myself, but probably some of 300-400 residents having to egress from or onto West River between Samrick and Jupiter, I'm actually pleased. Something is happening now that we have been waiting years to see: We are getting a center turn lane! Over the past several years, this center turn lane has gradually come to be built from "downtown" Comstock Park to Jupiter. The businesses, as well as the residents, have waited for this safety feature on this busy road. Soon, my neighbors and I will come to experience the joy and peace of mind that comes with the relative safety of a center turn lane when we turn into our side streets and driveways. The same is true getting onto West River every morning. This is indeed "progress!"

To dovetail other needed improvements along this stretch of West River, Plainfield Township extended a 12" diameter parallel water main on the south side of the road. This will provide more reliable fire protection for the properties along West River and greater convenience and

safety because fire hoses will not have to be dragged across this busy traffic artery during emergencies. The additional "throughput" of water to the Comstock Park and Alpine Avenue (north of 4 Mile) area will help our water system to serve these areas better.

Detours and Orange and White Barrels Signal Progress!



Also, when the Kent County Road Commission scheduled this project (two years from the last one on this street), they also included the upsizing of an important storm drainage culvert from 36" to 54." Unfortunately, a high-pressure natural gas main was located just underneath the 36" culvert that was removed, and it needed to be relocated to accommodate the larger culvert. That has caused some delay and disruption to the project. **However...** we are looking for the entire West

River Drive widening and reconstruction project to be completed by August 1! Please be patient, and please be cautious in this work zone with a speed limit of 25 MPH – which is being enforced.

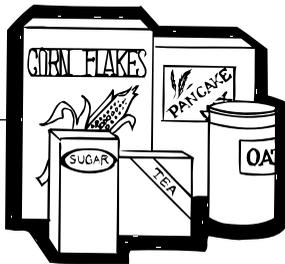
OTHER UPCOMING PROJECTS:

- 1. **Water and Sewer System Extensions continue along Coit Avenue** starting later this summer between Hunsberger and the new PARCC Side Clean Water Plant.
- 2. **Samrick Avenue Reconstruction.** This joint project of Plainfield Township and the Kent County Road Commission will include nearly one mile of new sewer that was timed to be coordinated with the road pavement removal and replacement. Work is not scheduled to begin until after West River Drive reopens to normal traffic.
- 3. **Kroes Road** will have major sections removed and replaced by the Road Commission from Brewer to Wolverine Boulevard/ Northland Drive.

Money is getting increasingly tighter at the Road Commission. Since their funding source does not include increases proportional to gasoline prices, fewer dollars are there to do increasingly expensive work. Plainfield Township has traditionally matched Road Commission dollars for overlays and replacement of **Local** Roads. Typically, the Road Commission has paid 100% of the cost to maintain and improve **Primary** Roads. Belmont Avenue is one of those Primary Roads, and it needs improvement in the worst way — from Post to Jupiter. The cost estimate for those improvements is about \$1.2 million. Total Road Commission funding for this needed improvement does not appear likely, so Plainfield Township will probably be looking at financial support. With local government funding from the State of Michigan being steadily squeezed over the past seven years, Township participation in rebuilding Belmont will be difficult.



Robert C. Homan, Township Manager



Commodity Distribution from River Grove

Commodities will be distributed from River Grove Retirement Community, located at 5761 Jupiter Avenue, just north of West River Drive (enter from Jupiter Avenue) on Thursday, September 4, 2008, from 9:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. To qualify, you must reside between 4 Mile Road and 10 Mile Road.

New families wishing to qualify may call Jim or Peg Granzotto at 784- 5249, or come to the distribution site on the above date. Bring Social Security cards for each member of your family along with income statements.

KDL

Kent District Library NEWS

The Kent District Library introduces a new listening format—**Playaways.**

Playaways are audiobooks by popular authors like James Patterson, Jonathan Kellerman and Michael Connelly. Here's what's exciting about them: they are already loaded and ready to play on an MP3 player. Simply plug in your own headphones, pop in a AAA battery, and enjoy. Visit your library and give one a try!

Summer Reading Club Fun—Sign up for a summer full of creepy crawly fun!

This year's Summer Reading Club theme is "Catch the Reading Bug @ your Library," and runs from Monday, June 9 until Saturday, August 2. Reach your reading goal to earn rewards, and enter drawings for prizes, including a new bike and a trip to Disney World.

Bring the family to free programs all summer long!

For Young Children and Families...

Babytime – One-on-one rhymes for babies and their caregivers.

Plainfield – Tuesdays, July 1-22, 1:00 pm

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

Plainfield – Thursdays, July 3-31, 10:00 am

Comstock Park – Mondays, June 16-July 21, 10:30 am.

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

Plainfield – Thursdays, July 3-31, 10:00 am

Comstock Park – Mondays, June 16-July 21, 10:30 am

Family Storytimes – For caregivers and kids, ages 6 and under.

Plainfield – Wednesdays, July 2-30, 10:00 am

Play-Grow-Read Make & Take – Crafts that support pre-reading skills for parents and kids, ages 5 and under.

Comstock Park – Monday, July 28, 10:30 am

For Ages 6 and Up...

Ruff Readers – A unique program that pairs kids with trained therapy dogs who love to hear a good story. Call to register for a 15-minute session.

Comstock Park – Thursdays, July 17-August 7, 6:30 pm

Plainfield – Mondays, June 9-July 28, 6:30 pm

Big Kids Book Club –

Plainfield – Tuesdays, July 15, 22, 29, 10:00 am

Wildlife Safari – Exotic animals from around the world.

Plainfield – Wednesday, July 16, 6:45 pm

For All Ages...

KDL Puppetters Present: X is Missing!

Comstock Park – Tuesday, June 17, 1:00 pm

Bubbleology - Watch the amazing Geoff Akins make unbelievable bubble creations.

Comstock Park – Tuesday, June 24, 1:00 pm

PLAINFIELD BRANCH HOURS

2650 5-Mile Road NE • Phone: 647-3930

Mon. through Thurs. 9:30 am to 8:00 pm

Friday, Saturday 9:30 am to 5:00 pm

Sunday 1:00 pm to 5:00 pm

(during the school year only)

COMSTOCK PARK BRANCH HOURS

3943 West River Drive • Phone: 647-3860

Monday 9:30 am to 8:00 pm

Wednesday 9:30 am to 5:00 pm

Tuesday, Thursday 12:00 pm to 8:00 pm

Friday, Saturday 1:00 pm to 5:00 pm

Animal Crackers – Live exotic and farm animals to pet.

Plainfield – Wednesday, July 2, 6:45pm

Comstock Park – Thursday, July 24, 1:00 pm

Bee Amazed – The fascinating life of the honey bee, with an observation hive.

Plainfield – Wednesday, July 9, 6:45 pm

Comstock Park – Thursday, July 10, 6:30 pm

Art Attack – Create wonderful works of art for the library and home.

Plainfield – Thursday, July 10, 1:00 pm

Kids and Teen Craft Show – Shop for crafts made by kids.

Plainfield – Thursday, July 17, 1:00 pm

PALamazoo Puppets – Sing, dance and laugh along with the puppets

Plainfield – Wednesday, July 23, 6:45 pm

And just for teens...

This year's Teen Summer Reading Club theme is "Metamorphosis @ your Library," all about transformation and excitement, with gaming, crafts and other special programs. Every branch will be raffling off awesome prizes, including an iPod and mall gift certificates. For teens entering grade 6-12.

KDL Design-a-Deck Contest – Submit the raddest skateboard design you can imagine, with a chance to win a real deck with your design on it. Applications due July 26.

Also check out these great programs:

Creative Cooking – Learn to make snacks and desserts with a local chef.

Plainfield – Tuesday, July 1, 6:45 pm

Nintendo Wii – show off your Wii skills or learn new ones.

Plainfield – Tuesday, July 8, 6:45 pm

Comstock Park – Thursday, July 31, 1:00 pm

Bead Crafts!

Comstock Park – Thursday, June 19, 1:00 pm

Plainfield – Tuesday, July 15 at 6:45pm.

Smoothie Blast – Mix up your own smoothie creations!

Comstock Park – Thursday, July 17, 1:00 pm

Cake Decorating

Plainfield – Tuesday, July 29, 6:45 pm

If you have a KDL library card and access to a computer, you can search and print from our new database, "U.S. Legal Forms," geared specifically for the state of Michigan. It's very easy to navigate for non-lawyers, providing options that bypass technical legal terminology. If you're not sure what you're looking for, there are several options, including a general category listing, a "sample searches" area and a search box as well. To access the site: go to [kdl.org/online/databases/Law/Thomson Gale Legal forms](http://kdl.org/online/databases/Law/Thomson%20Gale%20Legal%20forms). If you are accessing from home, you will need to enter your library card number.

2008 VERSLUIS PARK NEWS



The play set in the picnic area has been expanded by 40% and the playset's accessibility has been enhanced. Plainfield Township received a grant from the Michigan Recreation and Park Association Foundation and Access to Recreation Initiative to assist with the cost of replacing the wood chips with a permanent padded rubber surface.

LIFE JACKETS

Plainfield Charter Township is recommending that *all* children under the age of 8 years old use a "Coast Guard Approved" life jacket while in the water at Versluis Park. Please check the label on the inside of your life jacket to make sure it is "Coast Guard Approved." We will *not* allow life jackets or floatation devices that are not "Coast Guard Approved."

FISHING INSTRUCTION

Plainfield Township has again partnered with the Dwight Lydell Chapter of the Izaak Walton League of America for fishing instruction at Versluis Park. The instruction takes place on June 18 and 25 and July 2 and 9. Plainfield Township will provide the bait, and we have a limited supply of poles for those that do not have a fishing pole. The class will be from 6:30 – 8:00 PM. Last year the kids caught walleye, blue gill, and bass.



The mission of the Izaak Walton League of America is "to conserve, maintain, protect, and restore the soil, forest, water, and other natural resources of the United States and other lands; to promote means and opportunities for the education of the public with respect to such resources and their enjoyment and wholesome utilization." Plainfield Township is privileged to have such a highly regarded organization such as the Izaak Walton League of America to assist our youth in the understanding and experience of fishing.

SUMMER SWIMMING



Versluis Park is open daily from 11:00 a.m. – 8:00 p.m. (swimming beach ONLY). All other areas of Versluis Park are open from 11:00 a.m. – 9:00 p.m. Plainfield Township residents may purchase a Season Pass Sticker for \$15.00. A Non-Resident Season Pass Sticker is \$75.00. The entrance fee per vehicle is now \$8.00. You may purchase Season Pass Stickers at the Park.

The Plainfield Charter Township Parks & Recreation Department wishes you a wonderful and safe Summer Season!

Farewell, Jackie!

After fifteen years of dedicated service to Plainfield Township, Jackie Wiltzer has decided it's time to retire. Jackie started working for the township in 1993 and for the first three years, she assisted former Township Supervisor Beverly Rekeny, followed by two years with Township Manager Robert Homan. For the last ten years she has been working in the Community Development Department. Many residents may recall Jackie assisting them with zoning and planning questions about such



items as sheds, splitting property, building permits, and many more issues. Jackie will always be remembered for her hard work ethic. She often works late and goes the extra distance to provide information for residents, builders, and developers.

Jackie will be joining her already retired husband Ronald, to spend more time with their three grandchildren and traveling. Jackie has been a valuable member of the township staff and she will be truly missed!

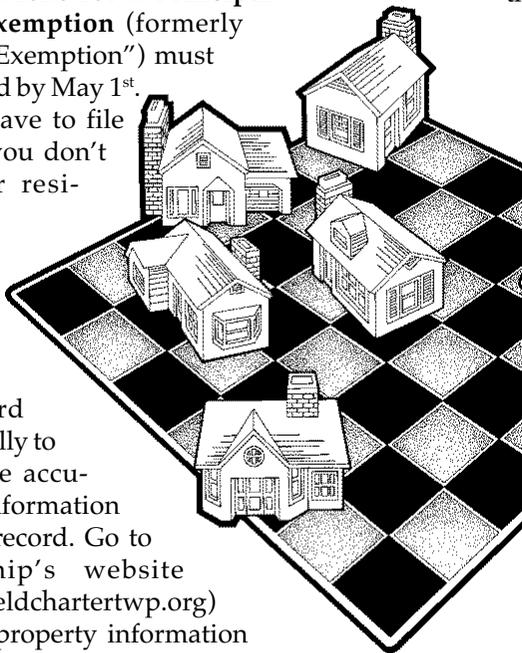
Friends of the Plainfield Library

If you are interested in donating your time or talents locally, consider the Friends of the Plainfield Library, a tax exempt, non-profit group with a membership of over one hundred individuals and families; your membership may be tax deductible. The membership helps to support the library through various community and fundraising activities such as home-based sales events and used book sales. The Plainfield Township Branch Library greatly appreciates the support of the Friends and its core group of active volunteers who work so hard to raise funds for library programs, furnishings and equipment. The library check-out desk, electrical and data cable network upgrades, and Kids Club Play Tree were paid for with funds from the Friends. This year, funds from the Friends are being used to customize the print management system furnishings and to add new furnishings in the central part of the building. Membership applications are available at the library.

Look for the Library and Friends booth at the Township's Farmer's Market on July 10th and August 21st. The next Friends' Used Book Sale is scheduled for Friday through Monday, September 5th through 8th. If you like to keep your money local, consider attending the next Home-Based Sales event sponsored by the Friends of the Plainfield Library scheduled for Saturday, September 25th: you can shop for great gift items for birthdays, anniversaries, Christmas and other celebrations. Contact the library at 647-3930 for more information.

In our ongoing effort to ensure that our property records are accurate, Plainfield Township's Assessing Department staff will be in neighborhoods throughout the summer. There will be notification by letter to the homeowners in the neighborhoods selected for review. The Assessing Department staff will be properly identified and driving a township vehicle most times. Thank you in advance for your cooperation.

- If you have purchased a new home, NEW applications for a **Principal Residence Exemption** (formerly "Homestead Exemption") must have been filed by May 1st. You do not have to file each year if you don't change your residence.
- Property owners should re-view their assessing record card periodically to determine the accuracy of the information currently on record. Go to the Township's website (www.plainfieldchartertp.org) and click on property information to review your record.
- Your Taxable Value can never exceed your Assessed Value (one-half of the True Cash 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 General Property Tax Act), is not permitted to set the Assessed Value at one half of your purchase price.
- 2008 Total Residential Assessments (**Assessed Value**) did not increase as in previous years. The **Taxable Value** for 2008 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. It is possible for your Assessed Value to decrease and your Taxable Value to increase if the two values are not equal. If the Assessed Value stays the same or decreases, the Taxable Value will continue to increase until it reaches the Assessed Value or the property has transferred ownership.

From the Assessor's Office

- Plainfield Charter Township has a total property value (**True Cash Value**) of over 2.58 billion dollars — with over 14,000 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 directly at (616) 726-8880.

Judy LaFave, CMAEIII
Assessor

It's A Passport Party....and you are invited!

July 22, 4:30-7:30 pm or August 19, 4:30 to 7:30 pm

Plainfield Charter Township Office
6161 Belmont NE, Belmont, MI

Individuals interested in applying for a U.S. Passport at Plainfield Township must appear in person. Children under age 16 need to be present with both parents. Children 16-17 need to be present with one parent. Every applicant must bring the following items:

- APPLICATION FORM which can be downloaded from the Internet at www.travel.state.gov or **completed in the Township Office.**
- EVIDENCE OF CITIZENSHIP such as certified birth certificate.
- EVIDENCE OF IDENTITY such as driver's license.
- TWO (2) identical PHOTOGRAPHS taken within the past 6 months that meet the U.S. Department of State specifications. These pictures can be taken at the township

PASSPORT BOOK FEES (A passport *book* is valid for reentry into the United States if traveling by air, sea, or land from any country.) – two checks or money orders as follows:

- Age 16 and over = \$75.00 Passport Book fee (payable to: U.S. Department of State)
\$25.00 Execution fee (payable to: Plainfield Township)
- Under Age 16 = \$60.00 Passport Book fee (payable to: U.S. Department of State)
\$25.00 Execution fee (payable to: Plainfield Township)
- Passport Pictures = \$10.00 (payable to: Plainfield Township)

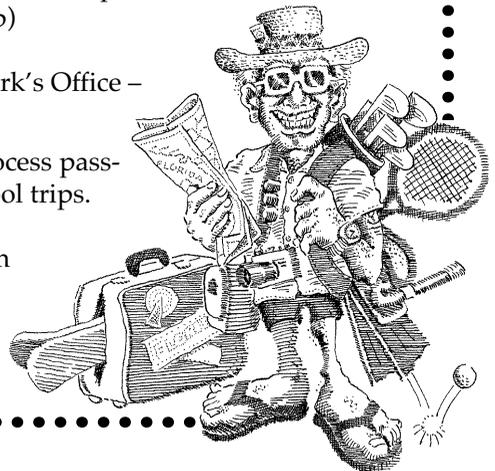
PASSPORT CARD FEES (A passport *card* is valid for reentry into the United States if traveling by land from Canada or Mexico and by air from Canada, Mexico, Caribbean, or Bermuda – two checks or money orders as follows:

- Age 16 and over = \$20.00 Passport Card fee (payable to: U.S. Department of State)
\$25.00 Execution fee (payable to: Plainfield Township)
- Under Age 16 = \$10.00 Passport Card fee (payable to: U.S. Department of State)
\$25.00 Execution fee (payable to: Plainfield Township)

QUESTIONS? Contact Plainfield Township Office Clerk's Office –
364-8466

The Clerk's office is happy to go to your location to process passport applications for groups such as missionary or school trips. We also participate in the Breton Village Travel Fair. Plainfield Township can accept passport applications from any US citizen regardless of the home address.

Susan L. Morrow, Plainfield Charter Township Clerk



PLAINFIELD FIRE DEPARTMENT

In this day and age where taxes are considered evil and the philosophy that we should “cut the fat” out of government is the rallying cry for many, the fire department is frequently the target for cuts. After all, the fire department has the largest budget in the General Fund and doesn’t collect revenue as do some of the other Township departments.

I am going to limit this review strictly to a cost versus return standpoint and not debate the value of the fire department’s response or programs. Let’s look at the statement “The fire department doesn’t pay for itself.” Ostensibly, this statement has some validity. The water department is an enterprise fund (it recovers operational cost thru fees), the clerk’s office collects fees for licenses and permits, the building and planning departments work closely with contractors and developers who purchase building and mechanical permits, and the parks department budget is partially offset by the entrance fees for one of the many parks in the Township.

What does the fire department do to raise revenue? The easy answer to the question is that we charge non-residents for services such as auto accidents and occasionally charge a resident for an illegal act. This amounts to less than 2% of our budget. The fire department’s contribution to the Township does not show up in the revenue side of the budget. The real benefit derived from having a fire department is the cost savings on homeowners and business insurance.

Many people do not understand or appreciate the savings that a well equipped, well trained, and appropriately staffed fire department creates. All fire departments are rated according to a national standard developed by the Insurance

Services Office (ISO). This agency reviews the coverage, response and capabilities of a fire department and rates them on a scale 10-1 (1 being the best rating). The Plainfield Fire Department meets the standards for the ISO rating of 5. The insurance premiums paid by each homeowner or business are directly related to the ISO rating of the department that services them.

Currently, the average annual insurance premium for residents with a home valued at \$100,000 in Plainfield Township is \$642 (based on information supplied by a local insurance agent, reflecting the rate of one company). Using this for comparison, premiums paid township-wide for homeowners would total \$6,095,020.

- If the department was rated at ISO 7, the premium would be \$686, totaling \$6,512,747 for the Township (a difference of \$417,727).
- If the department was rated at ISO 8, the premium would be \$724, totaling \$6,873,511 for the Township (a difference of \$778,491).
- If the department was rated at ISO 9, the premium would be \$885, totaling \$8,402,013 for the Township (a difference of \$2,307,997).
- If the department was rated at ISO 10, the premium would be \$895, totaling \$8,496,951 for the Township (a difference of \$2,401,931).

The substantial savings for homeowners would be similar for business and industry since the ISO rating affects all insurance costs. The value of business and industry property combined is \$207,300,800. The premiums for the businesses in Plainfield Township total \$1,330,871. The premiums for businesses if the fire department rating was ISO 10 would total \$1,855,342 (a difference of \$540,571). Businesses and residents of

Plainfield Township easily save over 2.9 million dollars due to the foresight of the elected officials in providing adequate support to allow the department to receive this rating. The numbers used to develop this article are based on one company's rates. The rates do vary so individual homeowners may actually be paying more or less for insurance on their property.

The fire department's current budget is 2.6 million dollars. Essentially, the cost of operating the fire department is completely offset by the savings to Township property owners through insurance premium savings. Occasionally, the obvious answer isn't always the correct answer.

David Peterson, Fire Chief

The Farmers Market is now open! Free parking is available at the township office and at Belmont Elementary School. Both are located across Belmont Avenue from the market. The entrance to the market is clearly marked by an opening in the snow fence. Please cross Belmont Avenue at the designated area. It might be handy to bring a wagon for your purchases. The Plainfield Farmers Market is a people market, so no pets are permitted.



Market Begins!

Thursdays, June 19 to October 30

3:00-7:00 pm

6156 Belmont Avenue, Belmont MI

The Plainfield Farmers Market has a variety of vendors signed up and more coming every day. Shoppers will find potted plants, cut flowers, vegetables, fruit, catnip, fudge, baked goods, granola, breads, cinnamon rolls, cabinets, laser engraving, jewelry, ceramic items, and many other items. As the growing season gets going there will be more vendors so each week should be a new experience.

The Plainfield Farmers Market is more than a market. We have classes each week. At 3:15 pm each week a class for Young Gardeners will be held. There is no specific age for the participants but the kids should be able to take the information they learn and apply it to gardening at home. Each week the kids will share their experience of what is growing in their gardens at home. At the appropriate planting time they will be given some pumpkin seeds to grow, and

grow, and grow! In the fall they will harvest the pumpkins, have a contest for the best looking pumpkin, and then sell their pumpkins at the market.

At 4:15 pm almost every week the Wolverine World Wide YMCA will conduct a variety of classes dealing with healthy living. These classes will be specified as for adults or for kids.

At 5:15 pm classes will vary. There will be a class on making butter in a blender, another on making soap, and another on growing herbs. These classes are for various ages but will usually be geared towards adults.

The Plainfield Farmers Market is more than a market. We have a "Featured Booth" almost every week. The Featured Booth is an area where non-profit groups or other special groups may display their materials. The Featured Booth will change each week. Be sure to stop by to see who is in the booth and how you might benefit from their information.

The Plainfield Farmers Market is more than a market. We have dinner ready for you! Dallas Deli will be preparing a light dinner of hotdogs, pulled pork barbeque, chips, homemade desserts and drinks. You may purchase your meal and then take a seat in the picnic area. The picnic area is clean and plenty of trash barrels are provided.

Susan L. Morrow, Township Clerk

Plainfield Charter Township

TOWNSHIP HALL HOURS

7:30 am to 4:30 pm Monday – Friday
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 pm
First and Third Mondays

www.plainfieldchartertp.org

The Profile

Plainfield Charter Township
6161 Belmont NE
Belmont, MI 49306

PRESORTED
STANDARD
US POSTAGE
PAID
GRAND RAPIDS, MI
PERMIT NO. 657