



The Profile

JULY 2014



From the Supervisor

Greetings Plainfield Township Residents. I hope that you are having opportunities to enjoy the summer. After this winter, I have been trying to enjoy as much time outside as possible.

Plainfield Township's Board of Trustees has been extremely busy working for its residents, businesses and visitors. Some of the actions YOUR Board has approved:

- Ratified the duties and salary of our Elected Officials
- Hired a new Township Superintendent/Manager
- Selected a Township Clerk to replace one who resigned
- Started a Township Strategic Plan
- Established a Capital Improvement Fund
- Approved a key change in sewer connection fees for the North Kent Sewer Authority
- Adopted the name of *Plainfield Township Premier Park* for our long-planned 10 Mile Park
- Supported the removal of concrete debris from the Childsdale Dam on the Rogue River
- Assisted in coordinating the rebuilding of Fifth Third Ballpark
- Made improvements to roads, water and sewer infrastructure

In the future the Board will be working on these topics:

- Approving the 2015 budget
- Delivery of our police, fire and emergency medical services
- Both the Township and Park and Recreation Five Year Master Plans
- Capital improvements to our parks

You can keep updated on what is happening in the Township, by looking at the board packets and minutes that are listed on the Township's website. I also would be happy to discuss any issues or questions you might have. Feel free to contact me at (616) 951-1818, or jay@PlainfieldSpencer.com. Enjoy the rest of the summer.

Jay Spencer, Supervisor

Primary Election – August 5, 2014

This is a busy year in the Clerk's office. We successfully completed the Northview, Rockford, and Comstock Park Public Schools Special Elections on May 6 and we have two more elections to administer in 2014 – the August 5 Primary Election and the November 4 General Election. I encourage you to vote and to become educated on the various millage requests and ballot issues you will have a voice in deciding.



The State of Michigan Voter Information Center at www.michigan.gov/vote is a wonderful source of helpful information where you can view a sample ballot, find your polling location, check to see if you are a registered voter, register to vote, contact your local election official, learn how to use your voting equipment, and find answers to frequently asked questions.

Absentee Voting

Absent Voter applications are available at the Plainfield Township Clerk's office located at the 6161 Belmont Avenue, Belmont, MI. You may also contact Stephanie at 726-8884 or mcmillens@plainfieldchartertp.org and the application can be mailed to you.

- Electors who wish to apply for an absent voter ballot **by mail** must apply no later than Saturday August 2, 2014 at 2:00 P.M. The Township Clerk's office will be open on that Saturday from 9:00 A.M. until 2:00 P.M. to issue absentee ballots. ***No other departments will be open.***
- Those still wishing to receive an Absent Voter ballot after August 2nd can do so by voting **in person** at the Township Clerk's office on Monday, August 4th until 4:00 P.M.

Voter identification requirements are in effect – Michigan election law requires that each registered voter present a photo I.D. at the precinct in order to be issued a ballot.

Electronic Poll Books

Plainfield Township has implemented the Electronic Poll Book (E-Poll Book). The E-Poll Book allows precinct officials to check voters in with a scan of their **driver's license** or **ID card**. The Electronic Poll Book is NOT connected to the internet and is strictly a voter registration database / election software program. The scanning of your driver's license or ID card does not, in any way, access your private, personal, or financial information or put your identity at risk of theft. Going from paper-based to an electronic system speeds up voter check-in, improves accuracy, and helps expedite election night returns.

Michigan Voter Information Center - www.michigan.gov/vote

- Check to see if you are a registered voter
- Find your polling location
- View a sample ballot
- Register to vote
- Absentee voting
- Contact your local election official
- Learn to use your voting equipment
- Find answers to frequently asked question

It is a great privilege to be an American and it is my great privilege to be your Clerk. I hope to meet many of you in the weeks and months ahead.

Ruth Ann Karnes, Clerk (616) 726-8883 karnesr@plainfieldchartertp.org

Questions for the Assessing Department?

What is my property worth? What is its taxable value? Am I receiving the Principle Residence Exemption? Why doesn't the purchase price of the property I just acquired automatically become its true cash value? Assessing staff will be happy to answer these or any other questions you may have by just stopping in or calling our office at (616) 726-8880. Most of this information is also provided for you on our website free of charge, www.plainfieldchartertp.org.

Veterans, are you aware that the rules have changed to qualify for the Veterans Exemption? To be eligible for the exemption, the disabled veteran must have been honorably discharged from the armed forces of the United States, be a Michigan resident, and meet one of three requirements that you can view on our website or by calling our office for more information.

November 1, 2014 is the next deadline to file for the Principle Residence Exemption Affidavit (form 2368). This will apply to the winter tax levy and subsequent levies so long as it remains the owners' principal residence. The form can be obtained on Plainfield Charter Township's website, www.plainfieldchartertp.org.

Teresa Zimmerman, Assessor

Do You Know Where Your Septic System Is?

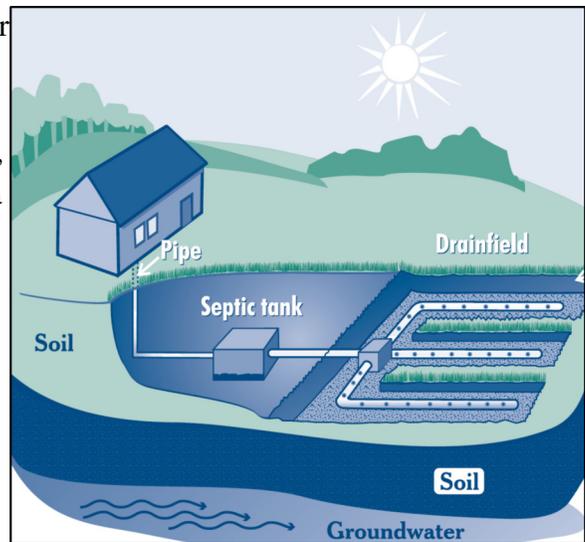
As a homeowner, you are responsible for maintaining your septic system and protecting our rivers and streams.

A **septic system** is a treatment system for your wastewater, consisting of a pipe leaving the house carrying the waste, a septic tank, a drainfield (leach field, absorption field), and suitable soil.

Regular maintenance includes pumping your septic tank regularly, usually once every 3 to 5 years to avoid a costly septic system failure.

Signs of failure include odors, plumbing or septic tank backups, gurgling sounds in the pumping system or wet, spongy ground or unusually lush plant growth in your yard. Poorly managed septic systems often allow wastes to directly enter waterways.

The **environmental consequences** are potential health hazards at local beaches for swimmers and other water users, an increase of algae and other aquatic plant growth causing fish kills, and contaminated groundwater. For more tips, go to www.lgrow.org.





Expanded Hours at the Farmers Market

The Farmers Market, located in the parking lot of Frontline Church at Plainfield and 5 Mile, is now open Tuesdays and Thursdays from noon to 6 pm. Come and enjoy local produce, flowers, crafts and much more!

Plainfield Township Takes Steps to Protect Water Supply



Plainfield Township prides itself on its water system offering excellent quality water to residents and businesses alike. This is due, in part, to controls on commercial and industrial water usage. Based on their size and type of business, commercial and industrial users can pose a larger threat to water contamination because of “cross connection.” A cross connection is an arrangement of piping that could allow undesirable water, sewage or chemical solutions to enter the township’s drinking water as a result of backflow.

Now for the first time, residents are also coming under scrutiny for cross connection contamination. One-third of the residential water system customers who have a lawn irrigation system should have received a letter and a test form this spring. According the Township’s Director of Public Services, Rick Solle P.E., “It is our responsibility as the water supplier to have a comprehensive control program for the elimination and prevention of all cross connections.”

The Plainfield water system currently provides water to more than 10,000 residential and commercial customers, many of whom have connections to lawn irrigation systems. These irrigation systems are required to have approved functioning backflow prevention devices installed on their system supply lines.



To comply with the township ordinance, residents with irrigation systems must have an inspection made by a plumber qualified to perform the testing and who completes the required test form. The resident then files the form with the township. Residential irrigation systems will need to be tested every three years.

“Yes, it’s for the good of the township,” said Solle, “but ultimately it’s for the good of the resident. If your backflow device is not working correctly, it’s the drinking water in your home that’s going to get contaminated first. And then all your neighbors’ water will get contaminated.”

Plainfield Township water customers have been divided into three areas. One area will be tested this year, another in 2015 and the final area in 2016. To see the township area map, go to Plainfield Township’s website at www.plainfieldchartertp.org. Complete instructions, a list of local plumbers and forms are also on the website.

No Wipes Down the Pipes

Wipes, cloths, and rags are being found in sanitary sewers at an ever increasing rate. Many of these products are labeled as flushable, but while they may clear the toilet, they will most likely cause problems downstream.

These products are becoming notorious for blocking private sewer laterals, public sewer mains, and binding up municipal pumps. Items that specifically list the term flushable (but should not be flushed) include diapers and diaper liners, baby wipes, pre-moistened wipes, a wide variety of bathroom cleaning wipes and brushes, feminine hygiene products, toilet seat covers, doggy doo-doo bags, and cat litter.

Other products have been found to clog pipes and pumps after being flushed include Q-tips, dental floss, paper towels, and rags. Instead, please place these items in a trash can.

Even if a product says it is “Flushable” ... Unless it is toilet paper, it should not be flushed

No Wipes Down the Pipes

Even if a product says it is “flushable” ...

Unless it is toilet paper, it should not be flushed!

- Diapers (including cloth, cotton, disposable, or plastic)
- Flushable, disposable, cleaning, or baby wipes
- Paper towels, cloth towels, or any type of rag
- Feminine hygiene products
- Facial Tissues



Place the items listed above in a trash can

**Putting these items down toilets may plug sewers and
cause raw sewage to back up into YOUR HOME**

**HYSER RIVERS MUSEUM FALL OPEN HOUSE
 & Grand Rogue Historical Encampment at the
 Grand Rogue Campground (next door)
 Saturday, September 13th, 10:00 am. – 5:00 pm.
 Sunday, September 14th
 12 noon – 4:30 pm.**



THERE IS SO MUCH I WOULD LIKE TO KNOW AND NO ONE TO ASK!

Township history is ongoing. We need to preserve “stuff”. We have become a throw-away society. When your family is grown and looks back on their youth here in Plainfield Township, what will they find that reminds them of “home”? It’s up to all of us to save pictures and memories for the future. That’s what the Plainfield Charter Township Historical Preservation Committee is all about. We need your help with the following:

TOWNSHIP SCHOOLS: Did you know that in 1933 there were 11 schools in Plainfield Township? The eleven schools were Belmont, Brownell, Colton, Comstock Park, Goff, Oakfield, Peach Grove, Plainfield District #1, Post, Sage, and Wilson. Currently Plainfield Township School Districts are: Comstock Park, Northview, Rockford and a tiny area of Kenowa Hills. We also have Christian schools and Charter schools. (We’d love pictures of buildings and students.) We can scan them for you.

ORGANIZATIONS: **Professional:** (like Kiwanis, Rotary) Fellowship **groups** (breakfast clubs, circles) **School** (parent groups, student activities) **Children’s** (Scouts & Campfire, yearbooks)

CHURCHES: There are churches on both sides of the river! (Building pictures, organization lists)

WRITE: a House History or donate a copy of your family tree. Neither of which is ever complete.

WHAT TO DO WITH YOUR OLD “STUFF”: Cleaning out that old-fashioned stuff? Before you toss those old papers and outdated items bring your items to the Hyser Rivers Museum on the 1st Sunday of every month, May – December from 2-4:30 pm. The Museum is located at 6440 West River Drive, NE. or you may call the Buildings & Grounds office at (616)363-9399 or you may attend one of our meetings.

The Historical Preservation Committee meets every **4th Tuesday of the month, 6:00 pm. at the Plainfield Branch of the Kent District Library, 2650 Five Mile Road, Grand Rapids, MI.** Your ideas and suggestions are encouraged. Meetings are open to the public.

MEETING DATES

July 29 (changed at June mtg.)
 August 26
 September 23
 October 28
 November 26
 NO DECEMBER MEETING

OPEN TOUR DATES

Sunday, August 3	2:00 pm – 4:30 pm
Sunday, September 7	2:00 pm – 4:30 pm
Saturday, September 13	10:00 am – 5:00 pm
Sunday, September 14	Noon – 4:30 pm
Sunday, October 5	2:00 pm – 4:30 pm
Sunday, November 2	2:00 pm – 4:30 pm
Sunday, December 7	2:00 pm – 4:30 pm

Happenings in the Township's Parks

The Plainfield Township Parks and Recreation Department is having an extremely busy year. Staff and the Parks and Recreation Advisory Committee with planning consultants Landscape Architects, Inc. are currently updating the Parks and Recreation 5-Year Master Plan. The Committee's meetings are listed online and at Township Hall, 6161 Belmont Avenue NE. Your participation is encouraged. A part of the 5-Year Master Plan will be a citizen survey available in the near future. Look for information online at the Township's web site, www.plainfieldchartertp.org, to find out how you can participate in the survey. It is imperative that we have a significant response to help set goals and accurately identify our citizens' priorities and desires.

Visser Brothers Construction has started the wetland expansion at the Grand Isle Park on West River Drive. After the expansion is complete and seeded, construction will begin on a disc golf course. Parks and Recreation has created a Disc Golf Club. The club will design, construct and help manage the course. Membership is open to anyone interested. Call Cathy at (616) 363-9399 for more information. The Township is also working on developing the remaining 60 acres.

Future plans may include the construction of soccer fields, ice skating, a pavilion, bathrooms, fishing piers, basketball and play areas. The soccer program will be offered through P.A.S.S. with information at www.passoccerclub.com.

The 10 Mile Park is now *Plainfield Township Premier Park*. Congratulations to Katie Karnes, winner of the "Name the Park" contest. Recreation opportunities at Premier Park include:

- The Merrell Mountain Bike Course has been open for over a year now. The trail is accessed from a dirt road west of the transfer station and water tower. Information may be found at their Facebook page, <https://www.facebook.com/MerrellTrails>, or the Michigan Mountain Biking Association, www.mmba.org.
- Rock City BMX is open. This is a non-motorized family bike sport for all ages with opportunities for open biking. Rock City also has instruction and membership opportunities. The facility will host local, regional and national BMX biking events. Visit the Rock City website at www.rockcitybmx.com for scheduling programs, events and contact information.
- The Easton West Michigan Archery Center is now open. Currently only scheduled classes are available while construction is ongoing. The archery center will have an indoor and outdoor range and a 3-D outdoor range. Once complete, the programs will include open shooting, classes, competition and membership. To become a member of the facility, information on schedules, programs and events, please visit www.wmarchery.org.
- Plainfield Township Premier Park will have a sledding hill that will open this winter and two soccer fields that will open in the summer of 2015. Bathrooms, a pavilion, basketball courts and paved parking are planned for the future.
- The "Nate Hurwitz" Miracle Field on 10 Mile is already in use and the "Art Van Sports Complex" plans to be open for baseball this fall. Information and event scheduling for the

Miracle Field is available at www.wmml.org. Information and event scheduling for the Art Van Sports Complex is found at www.artvansportscomplex.com.

- Plainfield Township's Versluis Park, located on Northland Drive, is a family friendly and handicap accessible location featuring a swim beach that is supervised with lifeguards, picnic and play areas. The park has a 1000 foot boardwalk along the lake with two fishing piers, two sand volleyball courts and a beautiful walking path around the park. There is a \$10 per car admission or season passes are available for purchase by Township residents and non-residents.
- D.W. Richardson Park is west of the East Beltline on Grand River Drive. It hosts three ball diamonds, a play set, pavilion and a Community Center. The Community Center is used for senior citizen programs during week days and is available for rent evenings and weekends. The contact for the senior programs is Christine Friedt, Director, at (616) 365-6150, and their website is www.northviewseniors.org. The contact for rental information is the Parks and Recreation Office at (616) 363-9399 or the Plainfield Township website at www.plainfieldchartertp.org.

Fire Service Training



I'm sure many of you have passed one of the fire stations and seen firefighters training outdoors. Typically, the training you see in those cases is department training intended to maintain basic proficiencies. However, there is much more training required to prepare firefighters for the incidents to which they respond. The MIOSHA rule that pertains to fire department response states:

R 408.17411. Duties of employer.

Rule 7411. (1) An employer shall comply with all of the following requirements:

Provide initial and continuing training to an employee commensurate with and specific to the duties and functions that the employee is expected to perform. The training shall be provided before the employee is permitted to perform emergency operations.

Plainfield Fire Department (PFD) has always sought to comply with this rule by requiring extensive training beyond the basic course consisting of 267-plus hours. The better trained our firefighters are, the safer you and they will be.

The Michigan Firefighters Training Division offers over thirty classes of supplementary training. These courses include Pump Apparatus Operator, Cargo Tank Training, Officer Development, Building Construction, Advanced Vehicle Stabilization, Hazardous Material Safety, and more. There are courses on elevator safety, how to safely deal with gas leaks/fires, and farm equipment extrication. These courses are from six to twenty-four hours long and the instructor must be certified by the State.

Providing advanced training can be expensive for the community. PFD is committed to providing the best trained responders we can afford. One means of limiting cost is having state certified instructors on staff who can conduct fire academy classes and departmental trainings. These in-house trainings have included over thirty-five classes so far this year; including various medical, search and rescue, webinars, and topic-specific trainings.

The desire of the Michigan Association of Fire Chiefs has been to provide excellent service to the community by establishing a funding mechanism to help train firefighters. A promise by the politicians to provide a funding mechanism through a tax on fireworks caused most fire chiefs to not oppose the changes made to the laws governing the sale of fireworks in Michigan. The new law placed an additional tax on fireworks; the revenue from which would be used exclusively for firefighter training.

The law does not limit the manner in which these funds are spent, but a requirement included in this year's State budget limits the use of fireworks revenue exclusively for initial firefighter training. The result is there will be significant money unspent and a need for additional State mandated training unfulfilled. PFD was able to send several firefighters to advanced trainings with funding from last year's fireworks tax. The requirement added to this year's State budget will reduce the amount of funding available for supplementary training for PFD firefighters.

David R. Peterson, Chief

TOWNSHIP HALL HOURS

7:30 AM TO 4:30 PM Monday – Friday

Phone: 364-8466

SUPERINTENDENT

Cameron Van Wyngarden

TOWNSHIP BOARD

Jay Spencer, Supervisor

Ruth Ann Karnes, Clerk

Bill Brinkman, Treasurer

David Grant, Trustee

Vic Matthews, Trustee

Dale Pomeroy, Trustee

Jon Rathbun, Trustee

**TOWNSHIP BOARD
MEETINGS**

First and Third Mondays