



TODAY

Volume 14 Number 4

October 2009

Thomas Township Board of Trustees

Bob Weise
Supervisor

Vern Weber
Treasurer

Edward Brosofski
Clerk

Tom Radewahn
Trustee

Mike Thayer
Trustee

Ellen Ryder-Petre
Trustee

Chris Thompson
Trustee

Russell Taylor
Manager

Municipal Office Building
249 North Miller Road
781-0150

Police Office
8215 Shields Drive
781-1300

Fire Office
8215 Shields Drive
781-4141

Library
8207 Shields Drive
781-3770

Website
www.thomastwp.org

NEW TRUSTEE APPOINTED



Tom and his wife Lynell live and work in Thomas Township. Tom has been an Insurance Consultant since 1984, and operates Mid-Valley Insurance and Radewahn Real Estate, Tom is proud to have two sons working side by side with him, making them the 4th generation to operate this business.

Thomas Township is pleased to announce the appointment of Thomas Radewahn to the vacant Trustee position on the Thomas Township Board of Trustees.

Tom is not new to Township Government, as he was elected to the Township Board in 1988 and served until his term expired in 1992.

Tom also has been active in the creation of the Thomas Township Downtown Development Authority, and currently serves as its' Chairman.

In their spare time, Tom and Lynell enjoy biking, dog sledding and hunting.

ROAD WORK WINDING UP IN THOMAS TOWNSHIP

The orange road closed and detour signs have been a common sight for drivers around Thomas Township this year. While it is great to see so many of our local roads being improved, we realize that it also means more inconvenience for drivers. The good news is that most of these projects will be winding down as the end of Fall approaches.

Winchester Park subdivision had their roads completely reconstructed through the special assessment process. Each homeowner has taken on a \$3,000 special assessment to pay for the improvements. Meanwhile, the Township contributed \$1,000 per lot to the project through the Subdivision Road Improvement Program. This program is available to other local subdivision roads. Basically, the homeowners pay for 2/3 of the project, and the Township contributes 1/3 or \$1,000/lot, whichever is less. This is in fact the third project that has been completed under this program.

Geddes Road is presently being completed. By November, all of the work should be done resulting in a new driving surface from Graham Road to Miller Road.

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Holiday Schedule

Thomas Township will be closed on November 26th, 27th, 2009. as well as December 24th, 25th, 31st, 2009 and January 1, 2010.

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Winter Tax Bills to Arrive by December 1, 2009

Property tax statements are scheduled to be mailed to you on or around December 1st. If a property tax statement has not been received by December 5th, please contact the Deputy Treasurer, Korina Tucker at (989) 781-0150 to request a copy.

All payments should be made by check or money order. Many banks and credit unions will issue a check for a withdrawal at no charge or for a small fee.

For the convenience of our residents, a drop box is available at the porch of the Township office building for making payments after hours. The drop box is checked each morning that the Township holds business hours and all payments are considered received on that day. All payments must be received or postmarked no later than December 31, 2009, to be con-

sidered paid in 2009

If your property taxes are paid by an escrow account, you will receive confirmation of payment in the form of a paid property tax receipt. If you do not receive a paid tax receipt, you may want to contact your bank and make arrangements for payment.

*****REMINDER*****

Put those paid tax receipts in a safe place, so you know where they are for income tax purposes!

DOG LICENSES FOR SALE

Dog licenses are available at the Township Office from December 1, 2009 through March 1, 2010.

P.A. 195 of 1969, Sec. 6 requires the owner to show proof of valid rabies vaccination including the expiration date to obtain a dog license. Dog licensees will not be issued without the required rabies vaccination information.

*Deidre Frollo
Director of Fiscal Services*

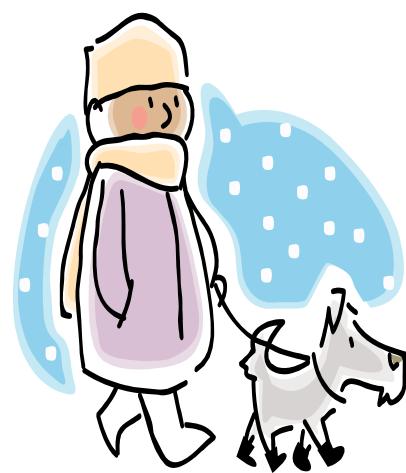


Winter Sidewalk Safety

As another summer fades into fall, we all know that snow and ice are soon to follow. This would be a good time to talk about sidewalk safety. Thomas Township has a great number of walkers that use the sidewalks on a daily basis throughout the entire year. The numbers may appear to diminish as the temperatures fall, but not as much as you think. On most days you can find citizens getting in a mile or two in the dead of winter. Before and after school you will see kids using them for walking to and from the bus stop. Keeping that in mind, every winter as the first snow falls please remember to keep your sidewalks cleared for everyone's safety and enjoyment.

After a snowfall, all residents and businesses alike must see that the sidewalk is cleared within 24 hours of the storm. Because Michigan weather is so unpredictable and sometimes it snows for days at a time, it is important to clean your sidewalk as soon as possible so it does not get packed down from an accumulation of several snow falls or from the walkers that use them.

More and more residents young and old are using sidewalks to get around and for exercise. Did you know that Thomas Township has over 10 miles of sidewalks connecting subdivisions, businesses, parks, libraries and schools?



If you use the sidewalks make sure the next time you see someone shoveling them that you tell them you appreciate what they are doing. Their efforts are a benefit to the entire community. If you have a question about the snow removal ordinance or you would like to see

sidewalks installed in your area, call the Community Development Department at 989-781-0150.

Recreation Programs

PARKS AND RECREATION OFFICE HOURS

The Thomas Township Parks and Recreation office is open from 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. Monday through Friday. Occasionally, the park office will be closed when the park staff has to leave the office. In those cases, the main office staff will assist you with questions and registrations.

SWINGIN' SENIORS

The Swingin' Seniors meet the first Wednesday of the month for a pot luck luncheon and bingo. Join in the fun. Meetings are at Noon at the Thomas Township Public Safety Building.

HAUNTED TRAIN RIDE

The Haunted Train Ride is scheduled for October 16-17 and 23-24 at Roethke Park. The Parks and Recreation Department is looking for volunteers to help man skits for this fund raiser that benefits the parks in Thomas Township. To volunteer call John



(drawing by Jay Fosgitt)

at 781-0150. To catch a ride, mark your calendars for these dates. Rides are just \$5 per person. The train runs from 7:00 p.m. to 11:00 p.m.

BOYS' BASKETBALL

Boys basketball leagues are forming for 2nd – 3rd and 4th - 5th grades. Sign up continues until November 20th. Draft Date is December 12th at Swan Valley High School. Weekly practices begin in December with Saturday games starting in January. Games are held at Swan Valley High School. Players fees are \$35 for Thomas Township residents and \$42 for non-residents. New participants must purchase a sports shirt for \$18. Volunteer coaches are needed for this program.

GIRLS' BASKETBALL

A girl's basketball league is also offered for grades 3rd-4th and 5th-6th. Registration for this league ends on February 12th. The games begin in March. Fees, practices and games are the same as the boys' program. Volunteer coaches are also needed for this league.

BASKETBALL CLINIC FOR BOYS AND GIRLS

One of our most popular programs is back----the six week basketball clinic for boys and girls ages 4-5 and 6-8. This Saturday program is held at Swan Valley High School. This is an educational program where participants work in small groups with high school athletes learning the skills of basketball. The cost is \$35 for Thomas Township residents and \$42 for non-residents.

KNIGHTS OF COLUMBUS FREE THROW

The Knights of Columbus Free Throw Contest will be held on Saturday, January 9th at 1:00 p.m. at Swan Valley High School. This is a free competition for boys and girls ages 9 to 14. Registration begins on site at Noon the day of the event.

For information on these or any of the programs offered by the Parks and Recreation Department call 781-0150 or e-mail us at parks@thomastwp.org

More from Parks and Recreation

Taste of Thomas Township

Our Annual Taste of Thomas Township was held at Roethke Park on September 21st. This yearly event was our biggest Taste of Thomas Township to date! Different from past years, we added a small wine sampling with wines from eight different countries. As in past years, we also had many, many food choices from most of our fabulous restaurants in Thomas Township.

A special thank you needs to go out to Lee's Tent who set up a 30 x 60 tent for the event, Tom and Jerry Kluck who provided us with a beautifully landscaped walkway to the tent, Swan Valley Banquet Center for skirting our tables and allowing us to use their carving station and chafing dishes and Craig Leddy who spent multiple hours making sure we had enough electricity to our tent for all the food warmers and beautiful lights in the trees. We are looking to grow this event each year and would love to hear from those who attended about any thoughts or ideas they may have to make this event extra special next year.

More special thanks to HSC, Klucks Nursery, Thomas Township Business Association, Bob Evans, Drive Thru Party Store, Eudici's Pizza, Frost Road Market, Hills Tavern, Kathleen's Restaurant, Mary's Creative Cakery, Meijer, Little Ceasars, Scott's Party Store, Seven Star Food Store, Swan Valley Banquet Center, Michigan Brand Inc., Cabot Cheese, Martin Chevrolet, Lee Tents and Tom Radewahn for all of their generosity.

The Taste of Thomas Township began twelve years ago as a Business After Hours event and has blossomed into our biggest Parks and Recreation fund-raising event of the year.

This year, nearly \$33,000 was raised for the Parks and Recreation Department. Money from this event will go toward the Roberts Park Expansion Fund, as well as park improvements throughout our park system.

Besides our food donors, we would like to also thank our monetary donors, for making this event our biggest to date:

Hemlock Semiconductor Group
 Bierlein Companies
 Ed and Nancy Brosofski
 Community State Bank
 Jim and Anne Currin
 Homer and Joanne Day
 Don and Jan Emeott
 Wayne and Carole Engel
 Grainger
 Frank and Tina Gulczinski
 Butch and Jan Heath
 Del and Jeanette Hicks
 Kluck Nursery
 Dave and Randi Kutch
 Leddy Electric
 Ron and Ellen Petre
 Jack and Connie Rehman
 Terry and Peggy Rock
 Don and Angie Sherzer
 Shields Lion's Club
 Shields Men's Club
 Spicer Group
 Standard Electric
 Mike and Lynda Thayer Family
 Thomas Township Fire Fighters
 Thomas Township Kiwanis
 Chris and Mary Thompson
 Vern and Yvonne Weber
 Bob and Mary Jo Weise
 Steve and Debbie Witt
 Pat and Alice Wurtzel
 Elizabeth Peters
 Thomas Township Business Association
 Dave Gilbert/Clark Gas Station/The Daily Scoop
 Tom and Lynell Radewahn
 Mid-Valley Insurance
 Sandra Hirschman
 Scott Branch
 Tom and Kim Pieske
 Tree Buyers:
 Jerry Kluck
 Peggy Rock
 Kay Adams

Department of Public Works

New DPW Facility to Replace Converted Township Hall

At the Township Board meeting held on May 4, 2009, a contract to build the new home of the Thomas Township Department of Public Works was approved. This contract was awarded to Wolgast Corporation of Saginaw, and was the culmination of many years of planning, budgeting, and design.

The original idea to consolidate all operations of Public Works into one centralized location began in 2004; however, multiple design requirements had to be met to meet the needs of all the different duties and storage issues with which the DPW is responsible. One thing was certain; we needed the facility to be located close to town and the main office. The decision was to locate the new facility on Miller Court, in the very heart of the community. We also wanted the facility to blend into the existing area with a campus feel. The facility would have to be value based and cost effective. Finally, the building would need to be of adequate size for the department's equipment and supplies.

Tasked with operations and maintenance of both the water and sewer systems, the department was quickly running out of storage space for vehicles and the supplies necessary to operate the utilities. The existing storage, located at Frost Road was constructed in the early 1950s. It has undergone several conversions during its lifespan, from the original Township Hall, to a banquet room, and even a dance hall. As the Public Works Department began running out of storage space for equipment and supplies, the building was retrofitted for storage. Today, equipment is still parked on the original oak planked dance floor, and needed supplies are organized on the stage!

With the age of the structure and its poor condition, it became necessary to consider some very large and expensive repairs. The flooring was buckling underfoot and needed replacement, windows and doors needed to be replaced, severe roof and wall damage threatened the integrity of the structure itself, the plumbing was failing. And, regardless of the immediate repairs, the building would still be drastically undersized for storage purposes, and lo-

cated nearly 4 ½ miles outside our normal work area. Based upon these factors, it was determined that a new structure, located in a more strategic area of the community would prove to be more cost effective and a wise use of the funds available. It was also noted that by maintaining operations within the main service area of our community, additional cost savings in fuel, wear and tear on vehicles, and manpower hours would be quickly realized. In 2005, we started to put aside money annually to construct this facility. It was estimated at that time to cost approximately one million dollars.

By late 2008, the estimated costs to construct the facility had risen to 1.646 million dollars, much higher than what would be prudent for the DPW to expend. But in 2009, as the national and regional economy began to stall, material prices and construction costs began to plummet too, in some cases, to 10 year lows. Due to those economic issues, it was decided that this could be a prudent time to advertise for bids to construct this project and perhaps save the community a lot of money.

Great care was taken to encourage local contractors to potentially construct this project. In April, 2009, 12 bids were received. Eleven bids were submitted by local contractors within the immediate Tri-City area. The lowest bid was submitted by Wolgast Corporation, headquartered right here in Thomas Township, for a cost of \$ 994,000.00. This bid represented a significant cost savings to the community of upwards of \$652,000.00, or 40 percent of the estimated construction costs from 2008. Groundbreaking was held on May 26, 2009. The facility is due to be completed by November, 2009.

*Rick Hopper
DPW Director*



FIRE DEPARTMENT NEWS

SIX NEW MEMBERS JOIN THE FIRE DEPARTMENT

Your Fire Department has recently added six new dedicated members! These are six residents who have said they want to help their community by helping their neighbors throughout the Township when they are having a bad day. When we have a resident who is experiencing a disaster of sorts and they need to call upon the Fire Department for help, there are now thirty five people eligible to answer that call. These additional selfless people are as follows: Thomas Charlton, Jean Harken, Maynard Lockwood, Mary Miller, Yale Miller and Tom Stoddard.

As a community, we are extremely fortunate to have all of these dedicated members who give up so much of their own time to help others. These folks maintain other fulltime jobs, have hobbies, operate households, and maintain families. Somewhere in this mix, they still attend training meetings to maintain quality skills and respond to calls.

Of these new members, three of them are starting a new chapter in our department. We now have three members of our Department that are dedicated strictly as Medical Responders. These Medical Responders will respond to our numerous daily medical only calls. Upwards of 60% of our monthly calls are medical calls. They will also provide assistance during a fire call by covering secondary medical calls and also provide rehabilitation of the Fire Fighters while on the scene of a fire. This change in the Departments structure will lighten the demands of our on call Fire Fighters, alleviating the need for them to respond to the medical only calls.

As you can see, there is more to it than just saying "I'm on the fire department". We welcome these six new faces and I encourage each of you to say 'thank you' to all of the fire department members you see for the hours they invest to protect you and your family.



THANKS FOR TAKING THE CAKES!

Thanks to everyone who attended our 18th annual pancake breakfast. This annual event has grown into one of the largest projects we undertake. We typically

summon the help of all our personnel and many members also bring their family to make this a success. For the past eighteen years, many of you have supported us through this event. We thank you. We often will get the question what do you do with the money you earn? Well, we don't earn a lot, but what we do

is reinvest in our community. We use this money to fund the bi-annual "Change your Clock Change Your Battery" campaign. In this event, we rotate between our local pizza delivery shops and randomly select homes to accompany the pizza person to the door. If the resident has a working smoke detector, we buy their pizza. If they don't have a working smoke detector, we provide them with a free smoke detector. This has been one of our most rewarding programs. And we love to see our residents faces when the Fire Department shows up with their pizza.

In closing, on behalf of our fire fighters **THANK YOU FOR YOUR CONTINUED SUPPORT!**

Please feel free to contact us if you have any questions about your Fire Department at (989) 781-4141.

Thank you,
Michael Cousins
Fire Chief



POLICE BEAT

SCHOOL IS BACK IN SESSION

Fall is upon us and school is back in session. Please remember that the safety of our children is our first and foremost priority as they commute to and from school. Soon it will be dark as they walk to their bus stops and can be very difficult to see. Please give the school buses the respect on the roadway that they deserve.



SAFE TRICK-OR-TREAT TIPS

With Halloween just around the corner lets review some Trick-or-Treat safety tips:

Go where you know, visiting only people you know;

Plan the route your children will take and have a time limit;

Use sidewalks if available or walk as close to the edge of the road as possible;

A parent or adult should accompany younger children;

Older children should go in a group and should never leave the group;

Costumes should be fitted to remove the chance of tripping;

Costumes should allow the child to hear and see without obstruction;

Costumes should if at all possible be light in color, have reflective patches or a flashlight should be carried;

Avoid dark places and hold hands when crossing the street;

Parents should inspect all treats before allowing a child to consume any;

Make this and every Halloween a safe and fun one;

2009 TICK-OR-TREAT HOURS

Trick-or-Treat hours are 5:30 to 7:30 PM this year. If you will not be home or participating in Trick-or-Treat please turn off your outside lights

SAFELY WIRE MONEY

We have had a number of scams lately where money has been sent via Western Union. With this service virtually anyone with a fake identification can pick up the money that was wired. Even if you know the person you are sending the money to, if you haven't spoken to them by phone (voice), don't assume that is the person who will be picking it up. Once the pickup has been made they are impossible to trace. Never use Western Union for Internet purchases of any kind, even if you receive an email that appears to be from the auction service.

*Steve Kocsis
Chief of Police*

OUTDOOR WATER BAN

The outdoor odd/even yearly watering ban concluded for 2009 on September 1, 2009. Thanks to all of you once again for your cooperation! Expect the outdoor odd/even watering ban to start back up in April of 2010.

RECYCLE BINS ON SALE

Anyone in need of extra recycling bins can purchase extra ones from the Township Office. The cost of each bin is \$7.00.

PASSPORT ACCEPTANCE AGENTS

Thomas Township has been a Passport Acceptance Facility since 2004. This is a one stop shopping facility with picture facilities right here on site.

POLICE BEAT

continued

POLICE DEPARTMENT COMMUNICATIONS

In an effort to keep the citizens of Thomas Township informed, we will be publishing, on our website, a listing of complaints taken by our Police Station. Starting in November, these statistics will be published for our residents, exactly as we report them on a monthly basis to the Michigan State Police. These reports are then forwarded to the F.B.I. We are also hopeful that in the future we will be able to show where these incidents occurred by mapping them. As this technology progresses we hope to be able to pass this along also.

It is our hope that by keeping you informed, you can in turn help us by becoming our eyes and ears in the community. If you as a citizen have not been the victim of a crime it is often easy to not be as attentive to things in and around your neighborhood as you could or should be.

The goal of any Law Enforcement agency is the **PREVENTION OF CRIME**, to stop it before it happens and make the risk of being caught so great, that it is not worth the attempt. This lofty goal can only be accomplished with the assistance of every resident. Our community is what we make it, together, as team.

In our first publication we will include a glossary of sorts for reporting categories that may otherwise be confusing. If anyone has other ideas as to what information would be useful to the citizens of Thomas Township, please contact us at 781-1300.



THOMAS TOWNSHIP TRAFFIC VIOLATIONS

The Police Department receives more calls complaining about traffic violators than any other single type of incident. These calls range from incidents of road rage to speeding and virtually everything in between. Ironically, we find ourselves most often criticized for traffic enforcement, quite the catch-twenty-two.

Although traffic issues must take a backseat to 911 calls for service, it remains an important part of the law enforcement function. Without traffic enforcement our roadways would be chaotic. Drunk drivers, persons on drugs and anyone without any regard for anyone else's safety would pose an imminent danger every time you and your family took to the roadways.

We at the Police Department are proud that we have had a positive effect on the safety of our citizens through traffic enforcement. Over the last twenty years, as traffic counts have steadily risen we have maintained an almost level crash rate. Furthermore, the number of fatal crashes have declined from a high of 6-12 a year twenty years ago to an average of less than one a year.

Remember, driving 5,000 pounds of rubber and steel down the road is a full-time job all by itself. A simple mistake can take a life every bit as quickly as a gun. A note to parents, PLEASE talk to your teenage drivers about texting while driving. I see this dangerous habit almost daily in my travels. This could truly be an issue of life or death.



Automatic Debit Available for Water and Sewer Payments

Utility bill payments may now be made through a direct debit from a checking or savings account. Upon written authorization, residents may elect to have their utility bill payment taken out of their bank accounts automatically on the due date of the utility bill. The payment will be automatic each quarter once the proper forms are filled out.

This automatic debit process will be in effect until such time that the utility billing department has been notified. The cancellation notification must be received at least ten days prior to the utility bill due date and signed by all persons generally designated as authorized to make withdrawals from this account. It is the resident's responsibility to notify the Township of any changes to their banking information.

An account that is returned as non-sufficient funds will be considered delinquent, penalties will then be applied and a shut-off notice will be sent. If you are interested in beginning the automatic debit for your utility bill payments, please fill out the short form at the bottom of this page and return it to our office with a voided copy of a check.

*Deidre Frollo
Director of Fiscal Services*

I authorize the Township of Thomas to initiate direct debit entries equal to the amount of my water/sewer bill on the designated due date to my account at:

(Bank/Credit Union) _____ Transit/ABA# _____

Debit my: Checking Savings Account #: _____

This authority is to remain in full force until the Township of Thomas has received written cancellation notification. Such notice must be received at least ten (10) days prior to the utility bill due date and signed by any of the persons generally designated as authorized to make withdrawals from this account. Any fees incurred in the collection of funds charged to the Township of Thomas will be passed on to you, the customer.

Signed: _____ Date: _____

Address: _____ Phone# _____

Effective date of payment: _____ Employee initials: _____ Date: _____

Utility location ID/account #: _____

Continued from page 1 Busy Road Construction Year

In addition, the intersections of Orr and Geddes, and Graham and Geddes have been widened to add turn lanes in all four directions. These improvements are being made through State grant funding with matching funds provided by HSC to support their expansion.

The Gratiot and North Orr Road intersection is the last project directly related to the HSC funded work. It started in late September. The majority of the construction will be completed yet this year; however, some of it will have to be done next Spring. Finally, next Spring, the intersection of

Orr and Frost will be reconstructed with funds from a safety grant awarded through the State to remove the hill on Frost Road that has caused limited visibility at this corner for years.

The reconstruction of Miller Court that started in August will be finished by early November. The Gratiot Road bridge railing that has disrupted traffic so much is supposed to be done around mid-October. This is the one Federal stimulus project that we were awarded here. It will certainly be nice to see the new railing installed where the concrete wall had previously deteriorated.

THOMAS TOWNSHIP
249 NORTH MILLER ROAD
SAGINAW, MI 48609-4896



BRUSH SITE DATES

Brush may be taken **by the homeowner** to the Township brush drop off site located at the northwest corner of Gleaner and Frost Roads. No stumps, leaves, grass or commercial brush will be accepted. The site will be open from 8 a.m. to 12 p.m. on the following dates: October: 3, 10, 17, 24

Yard Waste pick-up will continue through November 27