



NEWSLETTER

JULY 2013

12050 Old Belding Road Belding, MI 48809 616-691-8450
Hours: Monday-Thursday 9:00a.m.—4:00p.m.

TOWNSHIP BOARD

Supervisor:	Frank Force
Clerk:	Kessie Brummel
Treasurer:	Sabrina Freeman
Trustee:	Dennis Heffron
Trustee:	Paul Knoerl

From the Supervisor..... Everyone is aware that the township has been saving money since the Capital Investment Fee of \$25 was added to your sewer bill.

Half of this money is being used for upgrades in the collection system and the other half has been saved for removal of sludge that has accumulated in our lagoons since 1978. The recent monsoons in April have taught us that we need all the storage room in our ponds that we can possibly provide.

An inch of water in our largest lagoons is equal to about one million gallons of water. During the heavy rains this spring our ponds rose by about 14 inches from rainwater alone. This demonstrates the importance of removing approximately 24 inches of sludge from both of our #1 ponds which in turn will provide room for about another 24 million gallons of water.

A company has been hired and the initial phase of the process has already started with samples of sludge taken from each treatment site to be evaluated for content and toxicity. This is the first important step of the process of sludge removal.

The actual removal process is scheduled for some time in mid-October when the wheat crops have been harvested. During the interim permits must be procured, MDEQ approval and notification conducted, farm fields selected for disposal and many other pre-removal processes required prior to the actual removal.

During the application period the sludge is knifed into the ground with little or no residue on the surface. Careful attention is paid to land contours and elevations to assure the applicators that no wastewater will enter bodies of water or wetlands in case of heavy rain events. This process is carefully monitored by Synagro and MDEQ officials.

Farmers welcome this sludge for its fertilizer value at no cost to them.

Frank Force, Supervisor

From the Clerk's Office.....

INTRODUCING... Amy Brown is our new part-time Administrative Assistant here at Grattan Township. Amy is a resident of Grattan Township and was selected from

several candidates to join our office. She began training in February and now works two days a week at the front desk. She is already such an asset to all of us and is the perfect fit for our Township.

Grattan Clean Up Day Successful! We were early this year for clean-up day, but had plenty of residents take advantage and filled 8 dumpsters! Plummers Disposal Service did a tremendous job. **We have already reserved May 17, 2014 for next year!** So mark it on your calendars now.

SENIORS!! It's back! They will be playing **BINGO** at the Township Hall every 2nd Wednesday of the month at 12:30p.m. There will be prizes to win, new friends to meet and you can even get your blood pressure taken! Come to the Township Hall early (noon) and enjoy **lunch** for the low cost of 2.50!

Who Knew?!

Have you ever wondered exactly what a Township Clerk does? I thought I would give a list of some of the statutory duties. Now keep in mind these aren't the only things Monica Burt, our Deputy Clerk and I do. It is unbelievable how many different situations come up on a daily basis. This job keeps me on my toes!

Township Clerk's Statutory Duties

Maintains custody of all Township Records

Maintains General Ledger

Prepares warrants for Township checks

Records and Maintains Township Meeting Minutes (Thank you ..Diane Timmons for recording the meeting minutes!)

Maintains/updates Township Ordinance Books (Thank you Mary Kay Groening)

Prepares Financial Statements

Delivers Tax Certificates to the Supervisor and County Clerk by September

I have learned a great deal in the past few months about the many aspects of what it takes to maintain the Clerk's Office of the Township. There is still much more to learn. I am thankful to be working with the Grattan Township employees as they are supportive, knowledgeable and a fun group to work with.

Kessie Brummel, Clerk

From the Planning Commission.... The township has had lake residents concerned about the large amounts of sand being placed on the shore lines around their lake.

Currently the DEQ does allow a "reasonable" amount of sand on a lake front area upland from the lake without a permit. However, if any of that sand is allowed or placed in the water, a \$50 permit is necessary. Information on this can be found at michigan.gov, Resources and Environment, DEQ, Permits for Inland Lakes and Streams #301.

As inquiries come into the township about sand on beaches, the township will check to see if a permit has been issued. If not, the zoning enforcement officer will be visiting those properties to check to see if any of the sand is being placed or washing into the water. He will have a copy of the rules and explain that if a permit is not obtained, the DEQ will be notified and the resident can resolve the issue with the DEQ.

The other issue currently is the ordinance requiring ANY structure, with some exceptions such as a small pump house, must be at least 30 feet from the high water mark of the lake and 10' from all side yards. The purpose of this is to keep our shore lines uncluttered and free of obstructions. This ordinance has been in place since 2001 after a public hearing with residents reviewing and approving it.

The newest issue is the gazebo type enclosures, metal framed structures with fabric top and/or sides, which are being erected within thirty feet of the shore lines and many on raised platforms. Not only are either of these not permitted within that area, they need a Zoning Permit if under 200 square feet and a Building Permit if larger, from the township to be erected anywhere.

There is also only one "accessory structure" allowed in a front yard, the water side. If you currently have a storage shed in that area, you would not be permitted to have a second structure.

Again, these ordinances are in place to keep our lakes a great place to live and play and not have shore lines looking cluttered and "junkie". It is hoped we can count on our residents to observe the ordinances.

Alan Rumbaugh, PC Chairman

Dock and Boat Ordinance: A reminder to new lake residents that Grattan Township does have a dock and boat ordinance that provides reasonable regulations for watercraft, dock and raft usage. If you are unfamiliar with the ordinance, installing a new dock, or are new to the area, we would suggest you visit the Grattan Township website and review the ordinance. There are restrictions to the number of boats you can have on a given parcel and restrictions relative to the length and configuration of docks you can have on a given lakefront parcel. If residents have any questions relative to the ordinance it is suggested you contact the Township office for clarification.

Ordinance for Brine Discharging from Water Softeners: The Michigan DEQ has expressed concerns for a number of years over some of the sodium levels found at our sewer system irrigation fields. Although debate continues over all of the potential causes of these sodium levels/concentrations, it is evident that some of the sodium is introduced into the waste water systems via brine water from residential water softeners.

Most sewer customers may not think about where the brine water goes when your water softener is recharging/recycling. This brine solution eventually makes its way through our sewer systems' piping, pump stations, collection lagoons and then is sprayed onto the irrigation fields. Sodium/salt is not kind to pump station components and eventually collects or concentrates in areas of the irrigation fields.

The DEQ has requested a work plan from the Township to address these sodium levels in the irrigation fields.

Other Townships in the state have addressed brine discharge from water softeners via an ordinance to regulate the installation of water softeners in new home construction where sewer systems are utilized. As part of our work plan with the DEQ Grattan Township approved a similar ordinance at its January 2012 meeting.

Basically, on a new home construction in the sewer district it will be prohibited to install a water softener that introduces "backwash" into the Grattan Township Sewer systems. The water softener discharge must be discharged into a separate below ground infiltra-

tion basin (drywell). The plumbing permit and consequent final inspection of the home will involve approval of the water softener and installation.

The Township would encourage any residents on the sewer system currently to install a "drywell" for your water softener when, and if, if you will be replacing it or are making plumbing modifications in your residential water system.

The Township also strongly urges all sewer system users to utilize potassium pellets in their water softeners versus sodium. Although more costly than sodium, if the majority of sewer customers (750) used potassium versus sodium for their water softeners, this would be very beneficial for the sewer systems and reduce the long terms costs for operation of it.

A reminder to all sewer customers that everything that exits your household into the Grattan Township sewer systems eventually makes it way through a number of pump stations, into a number of settling lagoons and eventually is used as irrigation water on a number of agricultural fields in the Township. We continue to experience emergency call outs for inoperable pump stations due to shop rags, diapers and other foreign material that have clogged, damaged or jammed pumps and floats. Grease is also a problem over time as this builds up in the pump station wells and has to eventually be removed mechanically.

From the Fire Chief..... Summer is just around the corner with lots of fun for everyone, just a reminder to stay safe! The Grattan Fire Department wants to thank everyone for their support of our Memorial Day Pancake Breakfast. We had a great turn out and it was great to see everyone again.

We are pleased to welcome 4 new personnel members who finished the Fire Academy on June 13th. Don Waite, Mike Conley, Justin Obrien, and Brandon Bakhuyzen are our newest team members. We also have two new additions to our extended family, BABY GIRLS for Mike & Heather Conley AND Xavier & Tanya Szucs.

CONGRATULATIONS TO ALL!!

If you need fire alarms or CO detectors please call the township office. We should have a new supply in soon. The Fire Department also encourages for everyone to acquire **Emergency Address Signs**. Our team depends on the aid of these reflective address signs to find you when responding to an emergency situation. Applications for the Address Signs are available at the Township Office or on the website at www.grattantownship.org The cost is \$15.00.

Lou Kirkbride, Fire Chief

Family Friends & Neighbors....thanks everyone for another successful Memorial Day! Many people visited the Museum, which is now opened on Sundays from 2:00 to 4:00pm. Please stop by for a visit.

Grattan Township Historical Society operates and maintains the Roadside Park on M-44 between Wabasis & Nugent Ave. Mark your calendars to join us at the Park on Tuesday, August 20th from 6 to 8pm for our annual Ice Cream Social. Come and enjoy Ice Cream & homemade goodies for a suggested donation of \$1.50. Thank you for your support!

Veterans Flag Holder Project: This project is to make sure that every Veteran buried in one of the 4 Grattan Cemeteries has a military flag marker. These aluminum markers cost approximately \$25.00. **Donation forms:** available at the Township Hall or on www.grattantownship.org under the Family, Friends & Neighbors link.

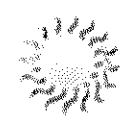
For information on any of the Family, Friends & Neighbor programs please visit www.grattantownship.org and click on the Family, Friends & Neighbors link or contact Dianna at 616-826-1872 or email force.cricket@gmail.com.

**GRATTAN TWILIGHT CANCER WALK
THURSDAY, AUGUST 1, 2013
GRATTAN RACEWAY PARK
7201 LESSITER, GRATTAN TWP**

Registration at 5:30pm /Walk at 7:00pm

A donation of \$ 10.00 includes the walk and a t-shirt. Please visit our website at www.GrattanTWCWalk.com for more information or registration forms.

Grattan Township Meeting Schedules	
Location: Township Hall Time: 7:00pm	
Township Board	2nd Mon. each month And 4th Mon. as needed
Planning Comm.	1st Wed. monthly as needed
ZBA	3rd Wed. monthly as needed
Safety Board	4th Thur. monthly as needed
FASC	4th Wed. monthly as needed
Sewer Advisory	3rd Tue. monthly as needed
website www.grattantownship.org & TV Cable Channel 25	



**SUMMER TAXES
DUE
SEPTEMBER 14, 2013**

CLIP & SAVE

**SEWER EMERGENCY
GRATTAN TOWNSHIP
EMERGENCY SERVICE
PHONE: (616) 776-9656**