



Homer Township

newsletter

October 2011

Supervisor

Chad Moody

supervisor@homertownship.org

With summer now winding down, it is time to start thinking about fall clean up and snow removal. You can burn your fall leaves, but first, please check any restrictions on the DNR website at <http://www.dnr.state.mi.us/BurnPermits/Search.aspx?Midland> . If it says "Yes", then you can burn, if it says "No" then you cannot. When snow starts to fall, please remember to keep areas clear for the garbage removal and the mail/newspaper people.

We had a Tire drive in our township recently and it was very successful. Hopefully this can become an annual event. The tire drive was coordinated through Midland Mosquito Control. The tires will be shredded and recycled by a Midland County company.

By now you have received your new recycling bins. With these came a very detailed information note of what can be put in the bins. It also came with a calendar and the RED AND BLACK DATES WERE REVERSED. We apologize for any inconvenience this may have caused. It appears Republic Waste comes very early in the morning to pick these up, so be sure to get your bins out early or do it the night before. This recycling program will save the township money in the long run on our waste fees. We are one of the first townships in the area to have this program. Please review the items that are not allowed to prevent problems for Republic Waste. Recycling

website: www.homertownship.org

does take a little effort, but this little effort will help the greater good.

We will talk about our next round of road improvements in January. If you have any suggestions or areas we may have overlooked, please contact me. The projects that were done this year were ---- rebuilding of Five Mile Road, ditch digging of Westlawn, and we chip and sealed some other roads.

The Celebration Committee had their first meeting and are busy planning a 150 Year Celebration of Homer Township next year. Please watch for things to come, a request for historical information and volunteers. I ask residents to support this exciting time for Homer Township.

If you wish to have a friendly conversation regarding anything in the township, please do not hesitate to give me a call. I am in the office most evenings and try my best to return calls in the same evening I receive them.

Clerk

Todd Lee

clerk@homertownship.org

Hope everyone had an outstanding summer. As I mentioned before, the school elections are changing. I was told we were going to start the changes this fall, but that is not the case. Starting

next year you will vote for a school election at the same place you vote for a general election. New voter cards will be coming to you some time next year.

Also, by now everyone should have received their new recycle bin. If you haven't, please call me. Republic Waste asked that if you would like a smaller bin, please wait until January to request one. They would like everyone to try the originals first for a while to make sure you like them or not.

I try to be in the office every morning between 8 a.m. and 9 a.m. I am also there at least one night a week. Please call or email me if you have any concerns or questions.

Treasurer Sandra Turk
treasurer@homertownship.org

Summer tax season has ended and we are soon moving into our winter tax season. Many of you noticed that a Homer Township Contact Card was not included with your summer bill. The township, like many of us, continually looks at our budget and tries to make changes to conserve money. You will now see a contact card only in your winter tax bills. It is always a good idea that when you receive your winter bills you should review the tax bill to make sure the listed principal residence exemption is correct. As for office hours for the winter tax season, I will have 9-5 p.m. office hours on December 29th and 30th for those who want to get their taxes paid before the end of the year. I will also be in the office 9-5 p.m. on February 28th and 29th. At other times, I am generally in the office 2-3 nights per week. Please call the township treasurer's phone (989-631-4399) and leave your name and phone number for me to return

your call to make an appointment for a night convenient for you. February 29th is the last day that taxes can be paid at the township. Please note that postmarks are not accepted. I will look forward to meeting and chatting with you.

Planning Commission

Our focus is on reviewing and updating all materials that have not been reviewed in the last 5 or more years. Thus far we have reviewed and updated the planning commission by-laws from 1985, and just completed the review and update of the township zoning ordinance last done in 1996. It is being reviewed by the county planning commission and hopefully can be adopted by the township board in October. Our next project is to update the township zoning map to reflect changes approved since its last update in 2002. We are now addressing all current ordinances, many of which were adopted between 1950 and 1980 and are in need of updating. At the same time we are developing some new ordinances and addressing current township issues as they arise. Examples of our focus on keeping current are the inclusion of regulations on solar and wind power developments in the township as well as strengthening regulations on abandoned buildings and motor vehicles. Our next major project will be a review of the township master plan adopted in 1998 to determine if it is still appropriate or needs updating. To keep abreast of the topics we discuss, please visit the township website to review our meeting minutes.

Sandra Simmons, Chair

Township Website

If you have not recently visited the township website, please do so. It has been completely revised and updated. The “permits and fees” section has been expanded and the “current news” section is regularly updated with the latest information relating to the township. When the new zoning ordinance is adopted by the board, it will be placed on the website as will all new/updated ordinances and the updated zoning map. The current water districts map has also been recently added. If you have suggestions as to how we can further improve the website, please submit any ideas to the webmaster address listed on the website. I welcome your input.

Sandra Simmons
Website Coordinator

Assessor

Dawn Gentz

If you own and occupy your home as a primary residence prior to May 1, 2011, you may be entitled to an exempt from local school operating taxes but if you no longer own and occupy the property as your primary residence then it should be rescinded. The Principal Residence Exemption appears on your winter tax bill which will be in the mail by December 1st. Please check your tax bill as soon as you receive it to be sure the Principal Residence Exemption is correct. If your PRE is incorrect it can be corrected at the December Board of Review and a new tax bill can be issued. The December Board of Review meets Tuesday, following the second Monday, in December. If you need the form, I can be reached at (989)389-0832 or nmassessing@gmail.com.

Homer Township Turns 150!

2012 is a big year for our township. It's the Sesquicentennial celebration. Activities are being planned for the entire year as well as an old-fashioned family weekend in the summer. This weekend will include games, food, entertainment and activities as well as a birthday party for the township, complete with cake and ice cream. Other events throughout the year will feature lectures on the history of the township, tours of the Fire Barn and an invitation to our Township's monthly Board meeting so you can watch our local government in action.

Kicking things off will be a township logo contest. The logo should represent Homer Township and its past, present and future. There are two age brackets for the contest. A junior division that is ages 14 and under and a senior division which is 15 and older. All entries should be submitted by December 31st, 2011. The winners will be announced at the Township Board Meeting on Wednesday, January 18th, 2012. The winner will receive \$75 with second place receiving \$50. The winning logos will be put on shirts and hats and sold at our weekend celebrations and through the remainder of the year. Please mail all entries to: Darcie Johnson, Homer Township Hall, 522 N. Homer Road, Midland MI 48640.

We are also looking for people to join the sesquicentennial celebration committee. This committee currently meets every other month and will be planning the celebration and working at the year-long events. To find out more information about becoming a member of this new and exciting committee,

please call Darcie at: 832-4123.

If you have any old photos, news articles or other pieces of township history, please contact committee member Rollin Yeakle, at: [\(989\) 631-0371](tel:9896310371). For continuing updates on dates and events, make sure to check the township website.

Building Inspector

Kevin Varner

Fall is rapidly approaching and there are still things to do.....As the leaves fall, the visibility of your hidden items out back will stand out. Homer Twp. does have regulations concerning revealed objects such as cars, boats and other valuable scrap. Please include the removal of these objects in your fall cleanup before I get complaints and have to contact you to remove them or issue citations to remove them.

I hope you are properly planning your next project or new home. If you need a worksheet, checklist and permit applications to guide you through this simple process, please contact me so you can proceed without getting into untimely delays. They are also available online at www.homertownship.org, click on "Documents", print off both the applications and fill it out and call me. New requirements for dwellings and additions have been installed this new code cycle (2009 edition and the latest version of the Energy Code), so please contact me for these updates and verifications. As I have stated before, permits are very important for your building progress in Homer Twp. If your project is a deck or utility barn under 200 sq. ft., you will not need a building permit -- but please be sure to check on the zoning setbacks. **Anything and everything else** needs a building

permit.....demolition of any kind to a structure, pools, ponds and lean-to's. It may fall under the NO CHARGE category, but you still need to pursue a permit. OR....how do you know if you need a permit? Call me, please, and I will return your call, fax and/or message as soon as I can. Electrical and plumbing/heating questions???? At least call the inspector to inquire. The call is cheap compared to the double fee and the citation charge of construction fraud filed against you for proceeding without a permit. Please, believe me when I say we (all the inspectors) are on your side so that the project will proceed smoothly without delays and problems. The office is still on the corner of E. Olson Rd. and N. Homer Rd. Thank you and we are looking forward to assisting you.

TOWNSHIP PARKS COMMITTEE is forming

Do you know how many parks Homer Township has? Do you know where they are located? What facilities do our parks contain? What facilities are important to you to have in the parks? What activities should be available? Do you want to help decide what direction the parks will move in the future? We are forming a Parks Committee to answer some of these questions. Committee members need to be Homer Township residents. Email Chad Moody at supervisor@homertownship.org, with your request to volunteer for this committee. Or you can download the application form from the "Committees & Commissions" page at the bottom. If you have ideas, please watch future

newsletters and the Township website “Recreation” page for a survey on the parks where you can contribute your ideas. The Parks committee will gather them together to create a 5-year plan that will allow us to look for funding. Please give careful thought to helping out. You could impact future generation’s use of our parks.

John Pruiett
Trustee

What is Open Burning?

Open burning is the burning of unwanted materials such as paper, trees, brush, leaves, grass, and other debris, where smoke and other emissions are released directly into the air without passing through a chimney or stack. Open burning pollutes the air and poses a fire hazard. The air pollution created can irritate eyes and lungs, obscure visibility, soil nearby surfaces, create annoying odors, and are a threat to those with respiratory conditions. The state’s open burning rules are very restrictive. What may be burned usually depends on the type of material (such as household waste or brush) and who is doing the burning (such as a business or household).

Who Regulates Open Burning?

Burn permits are required for open burning not conducted in burn barrels when the ground is not snow-covered. Contact the DNR burn permit web site <http://www.dnr.state.mi.us/burnpermits/> or call 866-922-2876.

Remember, you are legally responsible for any fire you start!

There are two state agencies responsible for administering these open burning regulations: The Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ) and the Department of Natural Resources (DNR); however, these regulations may be enforced by local units of government.

Household Waste

Persons may burn solid waste from a one or two family dwelling in an approved container, as long as it is not prohibited by local ordinance and it does not create a smoke or odor nuisance. Solid waste includes refuse and garbage generated at a household (grass clippings, leaves, trees, and brush are regulated separately and therefore addressed elsewhere). An approved container is one constructed of metal or masonry with a metal covering device with openings no larger than $\frac{3}{4}$ inch.

Trees and Brush

The open burning of trees, logs, brush, and stumps is allowed if it meets the following criteria:

1. The burning is conducted further than 1,400 feet from the boundary of an incorporated city or village.
2. The burning does not violate any other air pollution rules (such as burning that causes a smoke or odor nuisance). A burn permit is required whenever the ground is not snow-covered. Although open burning of trees, logs, brush, and stumps is allowed, it is recommended that you consider other disposal options

such as chipping the material for landscaping or compost, or using the wood for fuel.

John Hanson
Fire Chief

Chippewa Nature Center The Flood of 1986

Twenty-five years ago, the weather traumatized Midland County. In September, 1986, clouds dumped 18 inches of rain, six times our monthly average, with 13 inches of this falling in a 32-hour period. A record-breaking flood was inevitable. Some called it a “500-year flood” which has a 0.2 percent chance of occurring in a given year. Triggered by moisture pumping into a nearly stationary storm front, this deluge spanned a 60-mile wide band across the central Lower Peninsula. Its scale was so huge that a state hydrologist estimated that if precipitation from this one incident had drained from the Saginaw River basin directly into Lake St. Clair, it would have raised it 10 feet!

On September 12 and 13, floodwaters in the Nature Center’s Pine and Chippewa Rivers crested about 16 feet above their normal levels, covering 60 percent of our land between the Chippewa River and Pine River Road. Water flowed through old channels long abandoned by the rivers. Downstream of the Visitor Center the Tittabawassee River gushed an all-time peak flow of 38,700 cubic feet of water a second, the amount carried by 32 big tank trucks ... every second!

Bullock Creek washed out both Patterson and Grey roads and covered part of Poseyville Road; Poseyville Bridge and Homer Road Bridge were

also inaccessible. So the normally 4-mile drive from my home to the Nature Center stretched into a 16-mile journey. Staff could only access our Homestead buildings by boat. Fortunately, the only public building inundated was our Nature Study Building, which water swamped about three feet deep. Receding floodwaters deposited a smelly layer of mucky silt, and revealed that the torrent had gouged several feet deep into the Homestead Road. In spite of the silty fertilizer, trees in the Arboretum appeared stressed the following year.

Of course, no one knows when a similar flood may strike, but to find out how flood prone your area may be, you can check out a GIS Interactive Map at www.midland-mi.org/government/departments/planning/Planning/map.

For more information about Chippewa Nature Center and its programs, please visit www.chippewanaturecenter.org or www.facebook.com/cncmidland

Phil Stevens
Senior Naturalist

Up and Coming at West Midland Family Center

Summer program participants have gone home temporarily which leaves WMFC scurrying to plan for fall. Our slate is filling up fast. With activities available for the entire family!

Fall programs will be kicking-off soon including: **Men’s Basketball League**--Registration accepted during the month of September! Games are played every Tuesday from 6:15-10:15 p.m. from October 18th to November 29th. Player fees: \$45.00 per player with

2011

no team fee. Drop-in basketball happens on Monday, Wednesday and Thursday-Saturday evenings, call ahead for times.

Free: Martial Arts classes are offered in a joint effort with Gateway Martial Arts. Classes meet every Tuesday night

New: High School Teen Drop-in after school-----Buy snacks, play video games, cards or pool with friends-every day, after school until 5:30 p.m. Get creative on Friday's from 5:30 p.m. to 7:00 p.m. With a new project each week, learn to make stained glass, design clothing art from recycled materials and MORE...Call to reserve materials. **OR, Dare to Challenge Yourself:** low ropes course, skateboard, climb our climbing wall, race through our inflatable obstacle course, shoot archery, play basketball, football, and MORE! Call ahead to see what's scheduled every Friday,,,,,, from 5:30 p.m. to 7:00 p.m. brings a different activity to add adventure to your life.

New: In addition to our long-standing preschool program for four year olds this year we are **now offering preschool classes for three year old children!** First Day: Monday, September 12, 2011. Days offered: Monday-Thursday 9:00 a.m.-11:30 a.m.

Child's age: Child will be 3 years old by December 1st of the enrolling school year, but not yet 4 years old by that date. For information contact Missy Finney at 832-3256.

WMFC requires **volunteers** in a variety of programs! If you are interested in spending time with children reading or tutoring, or if you could teach older folks computer skills or if you have carpentry or mechanical skills, there are people who need you and opportunities for you to share your skills. If you are interested in spending time helping others contact

Volunteer Coordinator Gail Crosby at 832-3256.

For a full menu of programs and opportunities visit our website, www.wmfc.org

Susan Love

Have you seen the new structure being built on the north side of M-20 between Homer Road and Sandow Road? It is the new Treatment Facility. Final completion is set for Spring, 2012.

**Mark your calendars:
2011 Board meetings**

October 19
November 16
December 21

Meetings are held on the 3rd Wednesday of each month.

Interested in getting your newsletter by email? If so, stop by the township office and add your name to the sign up sheet at the front desk

FOR SALE

1967 Ford pumper tanker fire truck
Call John Hanson @ 989-832-8034

~~~~~  
Homer township property  
20 acres --- \$83,990

Contact the township supervisor  
~~~~~

See the township website for more details on these two items for sale!



Homer Township

www.homertownship.org

SUPERVISOR	Chad Moody 832-7882	Fire Chief	John Hanson 832-8034
TREASURER	Sandra Turk 631-4399	Building Inspector	Kevin Varner 839-9181
CLERK	Todd Lee 832-0964	Electrical Inspector	Mike Gravis 631-3336
TRUSTEES	Charlie Glynn 835-1207 John Pruiett 631-2775 John Stern 835-4203 Russ Varner 835-6845	Plumbing Inspector	Ted Van Wert 631-9645
		Township Hall Rental	Pam Varner 832-9618
		Newsletter	Carolann Maxwell 631-7488

Homer Township Hall
522 North Homer Road
Midland, MI 48640