



# Homer Township

newsletter

October 2013

website: [www.homertownship.org](http://www.homertownship.org)

**SUPERVISOR, Russ Varner**  
[supervisor@homertownship.org](mailto:supervisor@homertownship.org)

It's hard to believe the summer is already over. It seems to go faster and busier each year. As a Board, we finished the water bond refinancing, worked with the Fire Department to order a fire truck, and are currently working with the Planning Commission to revise our township master plan.

We have three committees that are in need of members to serve on them. First, we need people to be on the Park Committee. This committee will work on a five-year plan to develop the Township Park. Second, the Water Committee needs people to come up with assessment charges for new hook-ups as the bonds are paid off. Third, the Cemetery Committee needs volunteers to work on the expansion and development of the township cemetery.

If you have some extra time and would like to help your township, please volunteer to serve on a committee! Just contact me or any Board member. Thank you.

**CLERK, Todd Lee**  
[clerk@homertownship.org](mailto:clerk@homertownship.org) 989-832-0964

I hope everyone had a great summer as fall is approaching fast. Just a note on a couple of things that are going to be happening at the cemetery. The first thing is that the chapel is going to be repainted this fall. The other is between the fall and winter we will be taking out some trees and trimming others.



Also, remember we will open the ice arena as soon as the weather permits.

If anyone has any questions or needs help, please contact me. I am in the office most mornings between 8 and 9:45 am.

**ASSESSOR, Dawn Gentz**  
[nmassessing@gmail.com](mailto:nmassessing@gmail.com) 989-389-0832

If you own and occupy your home as a primary residence prior to November 1, 2013, you may be entitled to an exempt from local school operating taxes. If you no longer own and occupy the property as your primary residence and are currently receiving the exemption, it should be rescinded. The Principal Residence Exemption appears on your Winter Tax Bill which will be in the mail by December 1<sup>st</sup>.



**HOMER  
TOWNSHIP  
BOARD  
MEETINGS**  
are held on the  
3<sup>rd</sup> Wednesday  
of every month.

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 xbe corrected at the December Board of Review and a new tax bill can be issued. Please contact me for any questions concerning assessments and principle residence eligibility requirements.

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**TREASURER, Sandra Turk**  
**[treasurer@homertownship.org](mailto:treasurer@homertownship.org) 989-631-4399**

Good things are happening in the Township!

I am pleased to announce a new service for Homer Township. We are now able to offer FREE notary service to anyone who lives in our Township. I am now a bonded notary agent and you can contact me to make an appointment. I am very excited to be able to offer this service to you!



As you know, the township was able to refinance Water Districts 1, 3, 4, 6 and 7. With the reduced interest rates, you will notice a lower payment on your winter tax bill this year. If any of you have any questions, please feel free to call me.

For your convenience when paying your winter tax bills in 2013, my office will be open December 30<sup>th</sup> and 31<sup>st</sup> from 9am to 6pm. I will also be open the last two days, Feb. 27<sup>th</sup> and 28<sup>th</sup>, 2014 from 9am to 6pm. You may call me anytime to make appointments. I am generally in the office every day a couple of hours to answer phone calls and make appointments. Enjoy the fall season!

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**BUILDING INSPECTOR, Kevin P. Varner**

Fall is here and there are still a few things to do before you can grab that gun for hunting and a map for the color tours.

We hope you are properly planning your next project or new home. If you are going to be building a new home, “Thank You” for choosing Homer Township, we warmly welcome you to our community. If you need a worksheet, checklist and permit application to guide you through this simple process, please contact me so you can proceed without getting into untimely delays. The forms are also available online at [homertownship.org](http://homertownship.org), click on *Fees and Applications*, print off both the *Requirements and the Application*, fill them out and then contact 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 or your design professional for these updates and verifications.

As I have stated before, permits are very important for your building progress in Homer Township. 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 one.

How do you know if you need a permit? Contact me please, I will return your call, fax or e-mail as soon as I can. For electrical, plumbing or heating questions, call the appropriate inspector to clarify your specific issues. The call is cheap compared to the double fee and a 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. Our office is located in the Township Hall on the corner of E. Olson Road and N. Homer Road. Thank you, we are looking forward to assisting you!

**FIRE CHIEF, John Hanson**

As summer turns to fall, it is time to start thinking about the upcoming heating season. Following are some things to think about. This is not an all inclusive list:

**Home Hazards: Living Room**

- Make sure fireplace flues are clean and dampers work properly
- Keep flammable materials at least three feet from heating devices
- If you have an open faced fireplace, use a fire place screen
- Install smoke and carbon monoxide detectors on every floor and in all rooms used for sleeping
- Test smoke and carbon monoxide detectors and replace batteries every six months
- Turn off space heaters when you leave the room, space heaters are not intended for long term use
- Do not overload power strips
- Keep candles at least two feet from flammable materials, and do not leave them unattended
- Never leave a burning cigarette unattended

**Home Hazards: Bedroom**

- NEVER smoke in bed
- Don't run extension cords under rugs
- NEVER use candles in bedrooms
- Anyone dependant on a walker or wheelchair should sleep on the ground floor
- Install smoke and carbon monoxide detectors in every room used for sleeping

**Home Hazards: Kitchen**

- Keep a multiuse fire extinguisher in a place where it is easy to access
- Limit distractions such as computer, TV or phones
- Never leave anything on the stove or under the broiler unattended
- Turn the handles of pans inward so children cannot grab them

- Smother oven fires by turning off the appliance and keeping the door closed or lid on pans
- NEVER attempt to fight a fire that spreads quickly or won't go out. Close the door, leave the house and call the fire department from outside

**Home Hazards: Basement**

- Clean your dryer filter after every load and check around the drum and back for lint or lost laundry
- Have your heating system inspected and serviced once a year BEFORE cold weather begins
- Keep areas around heating sources clear of debris
- Do not store flammable fuels inside your residence
- Do not store flammable or combustible materials under stairways

**New Fire Engine**

The township board, after much work and research, approved the purchase on May 15<sup>th</sup>. The engine is being purchased from Front Line Services in Freeland at a cost \$487,405.00. Several firefighters went to the factory to finalize the specifications in May. The chassis will be completed in mid-October, and then it will be shipped to the factory for completion in late April.



Once again, THANK-YOU to the residents of Homer Township for your continued support of your fire department!

**WEBSITE NEWS, Sandra Simmons,  
Website Coordinator**

The Township Website (*homertownship.org*) is beginning to be used by more (but not enough) residents. The current news section is regularly updated, as are the Minutes of the Township Board and the Planning Commission, Open Township positions, Township items for sale, and Township bids for work are examples of other items that have been posted. The most frequently accessed pages are: Meeting Minutes, Contact List, Ordinances, Hall Rental, Cemetery, Permits, Current News, For Sale, Links, Newsletter and Fire Department.



The new “Township Alert” system has also been functioning for almost a year. While the number of those participating has slightly increased, it still represents a very small percentage of residents. This is the only way we can notify residents in a timely manner of actions or events that affect you. Those signed up for this alert receive an e-mail notice of important news and are provided a direct link to the topic. This system has been used several times and will be used more in the future to notify residents of Board/Commission actions, community events and other matters of significance to the township and residents.



**To sign up, go to the Township Website and select “Register for Township Update Service”. Please let me know how we may better serve you.**

**PLANNING COMMISSION NOTES,  
Sandra Simmons, Chairperson**

The major focus of the Planning Commission this year has been the updating of the Township Master Plan which was last done 15 years ago. The Master Plan makes projections for land use for the coming 10-20 years and is to be reviewed and updated as needed every 5 years. This Plan then serves as a base for making all future land use decisions. It identifies our plans for future land use and does not affect current zoning. This is a lengthy process spelled out by state law. We have been making every attempt possible to inform and involve the township residents in this process as it affects all of us. Notices of meetings, a resident survey and updates have been and will continue to be posted on the township website and available in print form in the township hall for review. Unfortunately, only a very small percentage of residents (.02%) have provided input thus far. The input that has been provided has been extremely helpful and insightful and is providing the direction the Township Planning Commission and Board of Trustees is following. These results are also available on the Township Website and in print form at the Township Hall. Following review and discussion of these materials, a draft of our proposed revised Master Plan will be presented at an open house for public review and input.

This meeting will occur sometime late this year or early next year. Check the website and/or sign up for the Township Alert System so you don’t miss the meeting, then please attend and provide input. In the meantime you may review the planning commission minutes/meeting dates on the Township Website.

**RESERVATIONS: TOWNSHIP HALL OR PARK PAVILION,  
Pam Varner 989-832-9618**

As we head into the busy holiday season, the Hall is in great demand. For the month of December the hall will be rented twice a day on Saturdays and Sundays. The morning session is from 9-4:30p.m. and the evening session is 5:00p.m.-9. There are only a couple of morning sessions open and a few days during the week. There is a \$20.00 deposit when you reserve a day and an additional \$40.00 upon picking up the key. The deposit will be mailed back after your event if everything is OK with the hall.

Since the sad passing of Anna Miller, I am now in charge of Pavilion Reservations. There is no rental fee for the use of either Pavilion, but you still need to call and check on the availability.

I would like to say "Thank-You" to everyone who has rented the hall in the past year. The hall was always left the way it is supposed to be. Your cooperation is appreciated! If you have any questions, please give me a call.

unavailable as work is being done. Updates will be posted on our website and Facebook page.

You can also call 837-3430 for current information.

On October 1<sup>st</sup> from 4pm until 7pm,

**Pumpkin Carver, Pat Harrison**

will be in Youth Services transforming pumpkins into works of art while you watch. At



7 pm there will be a family pumpkin story time.



The annual **Children's Halloween Party** is planned for October 31 from 9:30 am – 3:00 pm.

There will be a Halloween craft, trick or treat stations and the children's costume parades filmed by MCTV.

We'll kick-off the **Battle of the Books** for 4<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> graders on November 9 with author Sue Corbett. The Battle book lists and books will be available after the program.

**Computer classes** offered are listed in our newsletter available online through our website.



At the resume workshop on October 16, attendees will create a resume to take with them. Registration starts on October 1.

Our **October DVD event** is "Rent one-Get one" on any DVD labeled Horror or Mystery. DVDs rent for \$1.25 for 7 days.

The **Friends of the Library Used Book Sale** is Friday, October 18 (for members) through Sunday, October 20. Bargain bag day is on Sunday.

We're planning "**Cram Night**" in January. High school students are invited to study in the library on the Sunday night before finals with pizza and pop provided.

For information or news about the renovations, go to the library's website, [www.midland-mi.org/gracedowlibrary](http://www.midland-mi.org/gracedowlibrary), for the latest updates.



**Renovations will begin at the Grace A. Dow Memorial Library** this fall, thanks to a grant from The Herbert H. and Grace A. Dow Foundation. Contractors are working on updating and replacing equipment for the heating and cooling system. Interior improvements include: remodeling the restrooms in the Lounge and the Auditorium for handicap accessibility, replacing worn carpeting and furniture, and redesigning the lobby to accommodate patron self check out. Every effort will be made to keep the library open during the project but sections may be



### Fall Happenings at Chippewa Nature Center

Join Chippewa Nature Center (CNC) for **Fall Harvest Festival (FHF)**,

CNC's biggest event of the year on Saturday, October 5 from 10 am-4 pm. Visitors will enjoy demonstrations, crafts and activities that reflect 19th century life on the farm at harvest time.

Members and all children under 18 are admitted free. Non-member adults pay just \$5!

- In the Visitor Center, you'll find folk music, quilting demonstrations and more. New this year, you can purchase items from Lavender Fleece Farm & Studio and Saverine Creek Heirlooms and baskets by Nancy Carlson. Also check out the Nature Center Store, Ecosystem Gallery, Nature Discovery Area and River Overlook. Before riding the hay wagon to the Homestead, visit the wigwam, where traditional skills expert Jim Miller will be working on an autumn project.

- At the Homestead, enjoy demonstrations of woodcarving, herb-craft, woodstove cooking, woodworking, cider making, beekeeping, apple butter making, spinning and weaving wool, natural dyes and traditional music. Children can make rope, stamp leather, dip candles, stencil, grind corn and more! At the garden, learn about organic heirloom vegetables grown this year at the Homestead. Food concessions will be provided by the Studley Grange.



- Near the Wagon Barn, watch teams of Belgian horses plow the field and see the antique threshing machine thresh grain grown this year at CNC.



At the sugarhouse, the Max Carey Blacksmith Guild will be at work on their latest projects. Visit the Log Schoolhouse for kids' lessons, outdoor crafts and games.



FHF is generously sponsored by Dave & Patti Kepler, The Danville Family, Margaret Klumb, Arbury Insurance Agency and Pizza Sam's.

#### Free Programs this Fall:

- ✓ Preschool Story Hour,
- ✓ Full Moon Stroll,
- ✓ Birds & Bagels Hikes,
- ✓ Wee Stroll,
- ✓ Nature for Youth,
- ✓ Fall Exploration Days and more!

Mark your calendars for *Nature at Night* on Friday & Saturday, October 25 & 26 from 6-8:30 pm – nocturnal insects and frogs, stories in the wigwam and a jack-o-lantern lit trail. Kids, dress as your favorite animal to win a prize!

For more information and a calendar of events, visit

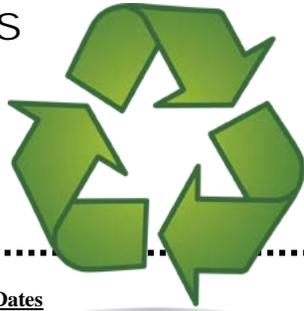
[www.chippewanaturecenter.org](http://www.chippewanaturecenter.org), and 'Like' us on Facebook at [www.facebook.com/cncmidland](http://www.facebook.com/cncmidland)



Don't forget to sign up today for the **Township Alert** which will notify you of important meetings, election issues, and if you

sign up you will be notified when the electronic newsletter is available.

RECYCLE DATES  
FOR 2013



Recycle Dates  
North of M-20

April 9 and 23	August 13 and 27
May 7 and 21	September 10 and 24
June 4 and 18	October 8 and 22
July 2, 16 and 30	November 5 and 19
	December 3, 17 and 31

Recycle Dates  
South of M-20

April 2, 16 and 30	August 6 and 20
May 14 and 28	September 3 and 17
June 11 and 25	October 1, 15 and 29
July 9 and 23	November 12 and 26
	December 10 and 24



The Homer Township Newsletter  
is published two times per year.  
Look for the next issue in  
April 2014.

**Things to do in  
Homer Township  
this winter?**

- Skating
- Sledding
- Cross Country Ski
- Visit the Chippewa Nature Center
- Bake some cookies
- Visit a friend
- Learn a new craft
- Take a computer class
- Volunteer
- Attend a Township Board Meeting

**Do you have a favorite  
place to visit in Homer  
Township? We'd like  
to hear about it!**

If you have any questions or comments regarding items being addressed by the Homer Township Board, please contact us and/or come to the next Board Meeting.





# Homer Township

website: [www.homertownship.org](http://www.homertownship.org)

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**SUPERVISOR**

**Russ Varner**  
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**

**Keith Johnson**  
832-4123

**Craig Norton**  
636-7695

**John Pruiett**  
631-2775

**John Stern**  
835-4203

**Plumbing Inspector**

**Ted Van Wert**  
631-9645

**Rentals -**

Hall and Park Shelter

**Pam Varner**  
832-9618

**Newsletter**

**Carolann Maxwell**  
631-7488

**Garlene Glanz**  
832-3145