



MIDLAND, MICHIGAN
TWP. EST. 1862

Homer Township

FALL 2014 NEWSLETTER

website: www.homertownship.org

SUPERVISOR, Russ Varner
supervisor@homertownship.org
989-631-4399, ext. 3

To the Residents of Homer Township, I hope everyone had an enjoyable summer. We've been very busy in Homer Township!

The Planning Commission, after a lot of time and hard work, presented the newly updated Master Plan to the Board for approval. They will soon begin reviewing the Township Zoning Ordinances. Look for updates on the website.

We are also putting together a Recreation Plan for the Township Park across from the fire barn and this fall we hope to have a new sidewalk at the entrance at the Township Hall.

We are still **looking for people to serve on several committees for the Township**. If you have some extra time and would like to help out, please contact me at 631-4399, ext. 3, or let any of the Board members know you are interested.

One last reminder, don't forget to use our website for information on what is happening in the Township. If you haven't already signed up to receive updates, I urge you to do so. Just go to www.homertownship.org and enter your information. Thank you,



CLERK, Todd Lee
clerk@homertownship.org
989-631-4399, ext. 2

I hope everyone had a great summer. As fall approaches I want to remind everyone that Homer Township does not have leaf or refuge pickup. If you have refuge that needs to be taken care of, you will have to bring it to the landfill or dispose of it on your own. Homer residents are allowed one pickup load of waste to the landfill per month for free.

Absentee ballots for the November 4, 2014 election will be available around the first of October. If you would like to vote absentee please contact me and I will send out an application. This needs to be filled out first before I can send a ballot. For any questions or concerns, please contact me by phone or e-mail.

ASSESSOR, Dawn Gentz
nmassessing@gmail.com 989-389-0832

If you own and occupy your home as a primary residence prior to November 1, 2014, 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no longer own and occupy the property as your primary residence and are currently receiving the exemption, it should be rescinded.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 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, contact me and it can be corrected at the December Board of Review and a new tax bill can be issued.

**Homer Township Hall and
the Township offices are
located at the corner of
E. Olson Road and
N. Homer Road**

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

The Township Hall is available to all Homer Township residents -- there is a \$20 deposit when you reserve the day for your event and an additional \$40 due when you pick up the key. The deposit will be mailed back if everything is OK with the hall.

We've had a busy year with many parties, showers and family events – the hall works great for up to 70 people.

It is important that you call me to make reservations for use of the hall and for the pavilions in order to prevent any conflict on days of use. There is no rental fee for the use of either pavilion but you still need to check on the availability.

NOTE

The hall is already totally reserved for the month of December.

**Wishing you happy
and safe holidays**

TREASURER, Sandra Turk
treasurer@homertownship.org
989-631-4399, ext. 1

The seasons seem to come and go faster each year. We have just completed the summer tax season. **Your winter tax bills will be sent to you by December 1st. Even if you are not paying your bill right away, you should open your bill quickly and check everything including your PRE (Principal Residence Exemption) status.** If you are living at your home and using it as your principal residence, most likely, you will see 100%. The correct PRE ensures that you are paying the least amount possible on your taxes. If you have questions on your PRE, you may call me or the assessor.

This winter's tax bill will be due on March 2nd since the end of February falls on a weekend. Please remember that Postmarks are **not** accepted and that you need to allow up to 5 days for mail delivery. I will be in my office on Dec. 30th and Dec. 31st from 9-6pm. I will also be in my office on Feb. 27th and March 2nd from 9-6pm. Payments made on March 3rd or after will need to be made at the Midland County treasurer's office.

If you are interested in finding out the balance on your water assessment or if are interested in paying it off, I have that information. Please feel free to contact me at any time with questions. I am pleased to let you know that in Water District # 1 we only have three winter installments left.

I have been delighted that a few of our residents have taken advantage of our free notary service. If you would like to use this service, please call me to make an appointment.

**WEBSITE NEWS, Sandra Simmons,
Website Coordinator homertownship.org**

We utilize the website to post a range of information and topics that residents should know and to seek input from residents. Frequent messages were posted on the website throughout the revision of the Master Plan seeking input and ideas as well as announcing public meeting for review/comment.

Standing topic areas on the website include: current news, township items for sale, meeting minutes from the board and planning commission, general township ordinances, zoning ordinances, permit applications and fees, hall rental, an extensive links section for quick access to area organizations and legislators and much more.

The revised Master Plan will be available by the end of this year. All residents are urged to check the website frequently for updates and to sign up for the ALERT notifications when time sensitive action is requested. Please let me know how we can make the website more useful to you.

ALERT!

**BUILDING INSPECTOR, Kevin P. Varner
homertownship.org 989-839-9181**

We hope you are properly planning your next building project or new home. If you need a worksheet, checklist and permit application to guide you through this simple process, please contact me so you can avoid untimely delays. The forms are also available online at homertownship.org, click on *Fees and Applications*, print off both the *Requirements and the Application*, fill them out and then contact me by phone, fax or e-mail. \

If your project is a deck or utility barn under 200 sq ft., you will not need a building permit - but be sure to check on zoning setbacks. ***Anything and everything else*** needs a Building Permit including demolition of any structure. Please contact me or your design professional for updates regarding dwellings and additions.

For electrical, plumbing or heating questions, call the appropriate inspector to clarify your specific issues. A call is cheap compared to the double fee and a citation charge of construction fraud filed against you for proceeding without a permit. Thank you, we are looking forward to assisting you.

Things to do in and around Homer Township:

- ***Check out some of the local parks and trails!***
- ***Take a drive to see the fall colors.***
- ***When the snow starts to fall, there are many good places to try out snowshoeing and cross-country skiing.***
- ***Share your skills & talents - volunteer***
- ***When the weather permits the skating rink will be open again***



If you have questions about Homer Township's recycling program or requests for an added or replacement bin, please check the Township website or call the Township Clerk.

FIRE CHIEF, John Hanson
989-832-8034

New Fire Engine

On June 24th the new fire truck was officially put into service and has been used several times, meeting all the firefighter’s needs. The department wants to thank the residents and the Township Board for supporting this project - you should be very proud of this accomplishment.

Burn permits

Reminder, once the snow starts flying you do not need to call to find out if open burning is being allowed in Midland County. **As long as the ground is snow covered you can burn brush, sticks, leaves and stumps, you cannot burn household waste or any type of building materials. The contact number is 1-866-922-2876.**

Smoke and Carbon Monoxide detectors

Please check these devices often during the upcoming heating season. These detectors can and will save your life if they are working properly. Check them monthly, and change the batteries when we change the clocks, once in the fall and once in the spring. The cost of replacing batteries does not compare to cost of a life. If these devices activate, call 911 and have the fire department come and check your house.

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

PLANNING COMMISSION,
Sandra Simmons, Chairperson
homertownship.org

Since the last newsletter, every Planning Commission meeting has focused on the revision/updating of the Township Master Plan. The master plan spells out the future/projected land use designations for the coming 10-20 years and is to be reviewed/ updated every 5 years, more often as needed. This task, which must adhere to state requirements as well as reflect township needs and desires, is now completed.

The revised document will be on the township website by the end of this year for your reference. Beginning in October the Planning Commission will begin the process of revising the township zoning ordinance to reflect the updates/changes in land use in the Master Plan. This also is a slow and demanding process and will include opportunities for community input and review. We welcome your input as it was very helpful in guiding us in our Master Plan revision. Input/questions may be directed to any Planning Commission member or dropped off at the township hall

Planning Commission meeting dates for the year are posted at the township hall and on the website and are open to the public.



**HOMER TOWNSHIP
BOARD MEETINGS
are held the 3rd Wednesday of
each month
at 7:00 PM**

Grace A. Dow Memorial Library

What has a new look, is easier to use and keeps you informed of all the latest news and programs at the library? Visit the Library's website at www.cityofmidlandmi.gov/library.to get acquainted with all the new features.

Story times, including Pajama Jams on selected Mondays at 7:00 pm, are held throughout the fall and winter. Call Youth Services, 837-3466, or click on the Adult, Teens, & Youth link on the website for more information.

No school? On Friday, October 10, 10 am – 7 pm, children in grades K-5 are invited to drop in for **KID VENTURES: READING ROCKS** for activities, games, crafts, and prizes..

The annual **Happy Halloween Party** is Friday, October 31, 9:30 am – 3 pm. Bring your preschooler to the popular Halloween Parade, trick or treat stations, snacks and Move & Groove.

The **Battle of the Books** for 4th and 5th graders will kick off Saturday, November 8 at 10 am and 2 pm with book signing after each program. with author Heather Vogel Frederick. The Battle books list will also be distributed. Following written battles and Oral Battle Day, the Championship Battle is Thursday, March 5.

The “**Amazing Brain**” series continues through February 2015. Programs will focus on the teen brain, mindfulness and the brain, and the aging brain. Dates and times are on the website or join us on Facebook for program announcements.

The **Friends of the Library Fall Used Book Sale** is Friday, October 17 through Sunday, October 20. Don't miss out on the great bargains on Sunday \$6 Bag Day. Next sale is in February 2015.

There's no better time than **NOW** to get a library card. Come for a library program, leave with a library card and access to all of the library's resources including eBooks.



Chippewa Nature Center

Venture Out to Chippewa Nature Center to take a hike on 15 miles of trails, enjoy the Visitor Center (free admission 7 days a week) or participate in one of CNC's programs. Visit our web site at www.chippewanaturecenter.org for a full calendar of events, 'Like' CNC on Facebook at www.facebook.com/cncmidland and sign up to receive CNC's weekly e-news to stay up-to-date with CNC programs and to hear about recent sightings! All programs listed below are free unless registration is note.

OCTOBER: 2, 4 & 16 – Story Hour; **3** – Birds & Bagels Hike; **4** – Tapas, Toasts & Tunes: Celebrating Michigan's finest in food, drink & music (ticketed fundraiser event); **5** – Cider Sunday at the Homestead; **8** – Full Moon Stroll; **10** – Wee Stroll; **11** – Birds & Bagels Hike; **15** – Wildflower Hike; **16** – Fire & Cordage Making Workshop (register by Oct. 10); **18** – Autumn at the Wigwam; **18** – Grapevine Wreath Making Workshop (register by Oct. 10); **22** – Bela Hubbard's Wild Michigan; **24 & 25** – Nature at Night

NOVEMBER: 1, 6 & 20 – Story Hour; **2** – Creating a Bird Friendly Yard; **7** – Birds & Bagels Hike; **8** – Soap Making Workshop (register by Oct. 31); **14** – Wee Stroll; **19** – In the Steps of Michigan Surveyors: 1815-1850; **22** – Jolly Hammers & Strings Dulcimers; **26-30** – Fall Exploration Days

DECEMBER: 4 & 18 – Story Hour; **6** – Birds & Bagels Hike, Full Moon Stroll & Nature Art Show & Sale; **6 & 7** – Snowshoe Lacing Workshop (register by November 10); **20** – Winter Solstice Celebration; **Dec. 20 to Jan. 4** – Winter Exploration Days

JANUARY: 10 – Exploring the Au Sable River Area in Winter (registration required; visit our w

eb site for details); **Jan.30 to Feb. 1** – Grand Traverse Winter Adventure (registration required; visit our web site for details)

FEBRUARY: 21 – Snakes Alive!

MARCH: Every Saturday and Sunday (except March 21) – Afternoons at the Sugarhouse: **21** – Maple Syrup Day!