



# Whitewater Township Winter 2015 Newsletter

Questions, comments, or to be added to our  
E-mail letter subscription contact  
Della Benak at: [Treasurer@whitwatertownship.org](mailto:Treasurer@whitwatertownship.org)

## Township Calendar

- 12/01 Tree Lighting Ceremony
- 12/02 Planning Commission
- 12/08 Township Board
- 12/09 Historical Society
- 12/14 Park & Rec. Advisory
- 12/15 Dec. Board of Review
- 12/17 ZBA
- 12/25 Christmas

## Directory

5777 Vinton Road - P.O. Box 159  
Williamsburg, MI 49690  
Phone 231-267-5141  
Fax 231-267-9020  
[www.WhitewaterTownship.org](http://www.WhitewaterTownship.org)

### SUPERVISOR

Ron Popp ext. 23  
[Supervisor@whitwatertownship.org](mailto:Supervisor@whitwatertownship.org)

### CLERK

Cheryl Goss ext. 24  
P.O. Box 159  
Hours: M thru F 9:00 am - 5:00 pm  
[Clerk@whitwatertownship.org](mailto:Clerk@whitwatertownship.org)

### TREASURER

Ardella Benak ext. 22  
P.O. Box 100  
Hours: M-W-F 10:00 am - 5:00 pm  
[Treasurer@whitwatertownship.org](mailto:Treasurer@whitwatertownship.org)

### TRUSTEE

Lloyd Lawson - Message 231-267-5141  
[Trustee01@whitwatertownship.org](mailto:Trustee01@whitwatertownship.org)

### TRUSTEE

Paul Hubbell - Message 231-267-5141  
[Trustee02@whitwatertownship.org](mailto:Trustee02@whitwatertownship.org)

### PLANNING & ZONING

Josh Vey ext. 21  
Hours: M & W 10-2:30, F 8-11:30  
[Zoning@whitwatertownship.org](mailto:Zoning@whitwatertownship.org)

### ASSESSOR

Dawn Plude-Kuhns - 231-409-1827  
[assessordawn@gmail.com](mailto:assessordawn@gmail.com)

### FIRE & AMBULANCE

Fire Hall 231-267-5969  
Non-Emergency

### PARKS & RECREATION

Township Park - 231-267-5091

### PLANNING COMMISSION

Brad Link, Chair  
231-499-9479  
[whitwatertownshipPC@gmail.com](mailto:whitwatertownshipPC@gmail.com)

### HISTORICAL SOCIETY

Luann Snider, Chair  
231-883-3193

### GT COUNTY RD COMM

231-922-4848

## Supervisor - Ron Popp

Greetings,

The summer of 2015 was remarkable! The storm of August 2 took special interest in Whitewater Township bearing down extremely hard on the Skegemog Point Road area. Before the storm was over, the Grand Traverse Rural Fire Department, the Whitewater Township Ambulance Service, and numerous citizens were wielding chain saws, pulling fallen trees from roadways and standing guard by downed power lines keeping residents safe. When the clouds did clear, I was amazed! Not because of the damage, which was beyond description. It was the number of people offering food, water, gloves, and heavy equipment to help their neighbors. A special note of thanks to the Ashmore, Lenzi, and Dupuie families for their help to the entire Township.

In late fall, the Planning Commission presented the Township Board with a completed Draft Master Plan for review. At the October Regular Meeting, the Board approved the submittal bringing closure to a multi-year review of the 1999 Master Plan. Over the next few months, the Planning Commission will be conducting a review of the Zoning Ordinance. If you have interest in this area, please visit our website for meeting dates and times.

On October 8<sup>th</sup> I attended a road tour hosted by Grand Traverse County Road Commission. The tour is designed to educate local officials on the complexities of road repair and construction. One point of interest that gathered attention this year is the damage caused by trees in the road right of way. Highway engineer Jim Johnson and team member at Grand Traverse County Road Commission explained how the shade provided by trees prevents the road from drying out properly, causing damage during the freeze thaw cycle. Potential 2016 road construction projects were also discussed during the tour. Williamsburg and Broomhead Roads are under consideration depending on final budget numbers of the Road Commission.

Following Township Board action, the Township owned and operated ambulance service was replaced November 2, 2015. Mobile Medical Response, a private company, now delivers residents Advanced Life Support ambulance service 24/7/365. The change elevates the level of service from Basic to Advanced Life Support, minimizes our liability, and reduces costs. Help us welcome MMR, stop by the fire station at 8380 Old M-72 and say hello to the staff.

Negotiations between the Grand Traverse Fire Department-Rural Division and two member townships, Green Lake and Long Lake, have failed to address issues noted earlier in the year. Barring a last minute breakthrough, both townships will leave the Rural Division at year's end taking with them more than 50% of the fire department's operational budget. The six remaining townships of Grant, Fife Lake, Paradise, Springfield (Kalkaska County), Union, and Whitewater have worked diligently through late fall restructuring the department to account for the loss.

We still need your help on several different committees and/or boards. If you have any desire to serve, please give me a call or drop me an email. As always, if you would like to receive a monthly Planning Commission packet, please send me an email or phone call and I will make sure you get the information.

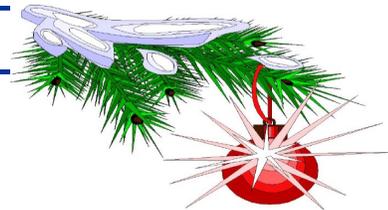
Wishing you a joyful holiday season,

*Ron Popp*  
Whitewater Township Supervisor



*Merry Christmas to ALL*

## "Details, Details" ... From The Clerk



Greetings, Residents/Taxpayers:

While 2015 was a quiet election year (with only one election in May), township voters will be asked to cast their ballot in at least three elections in 2016, the Presidential Primary on March 8, the State Primary in August, and the General Election in November.

For the March 8, 2016, Presidential Primary Election, we would like to remind everyone that if you will be out of the township over the winter/spring months, please be sure to notify us of your winter address. The Post Office is not able to forward election mail, including the Application for Absent Voter Ballot. We expect to mail the AVB applications the first week of January to those on the permanent AV list. If you are not on the permanent AV list but meet one of the six criteria to vote absentee, you can obtain an application from the Clerk's office or online. Ballots will be available by the third week of January.

In other election news, you may be interested to know that, recently, the state Senate passed legislation to eliminate straight-party voting. You can find out more about this bill at [www.legislature.mi.gov](http://www.legislature.mi.gov). Search for Senate Bill 13. The House Elections Committee could take this bill up as soon as the Legislature returns from the holiday recess on December 1, 2015. If you have an opinion about the elimination of straight-party voting, please contact your state representative (Larry Inman, 517-373-1766, [LarryInman@house.mi.gov](mailto:LarryInman@house.mi.gov)), your state senator (Wayne Schmidt, 517-373-2413, [SenWSchmidt@senate.michigan.gov](mailto:SenWSchmidt@senate.michigan.gov)), or the House Elections Committee.

The numerous and diverse duties of the Clerk's office continue to be attended to by Deputy Clerk Terese Hooper and myself, and 2015 was another busy year. We enjoy speaking to and assisting all of the residents/taxpayers who call or stop in looking for information. Once again, we thank you for the privilege to serve.

Wishing everyone a joyous holiday season!

*Cheryl Goss*



### Local Heroes Above and Beyond the Call of Duty!

**Captain Timothy Arbenowske** (Rural Fire/Station 3 in Williamsburg) was recognized and presented a plaque by Grand Traverse Rural Fire Chief Weber for his actions above and beyond the call of duty during the storm of August 2nd 2015.

Arbenowske responded along with Lesa Kreps/EMT to a call for help off Skegemog Point Road involving a tree fallen on a vehicle with a person trapped inside it. The roadway was impassable with all the fallen trees blocking the road. With equipment in hand, they continued on foot several miles to reach their patient. Once the patient was stabilized,

Captain Arbenowske commandeered a boat from a willing neighbor and crossed Elk Lake to meet up with an ambulance at the Township park to transport the patient to Munson. Captain Arbenowske's and EMT Lesa Kreps' quick thinking, dedication and valor is a credit to themselves and to Whitewater Township!

Arbenowske was quick to say that it was a team effort, that many played a hand in a safe rescue, that it was not accomplished by just him.

With that we say thank you to all who helped that day and the days after that terrible storm.



## Board of Review (BOR) DECEMBER 15, 2015 - 4:30pm



The Whitewater Township Board of Review will meet on Tuesday, December 15<sup>th</sup> at 4:30 pm for the purposes of correcting clerical errors or mutual mistake of fact. They will **not** be hearing valuation appeals at this meeting. If there is a clerical error on your tax bill, please contact Dawn Kuhns, Assessor at 231-409-1827.

- ◆ The deadline for qualifying for the Principal Residence Exemption is June 1<sup>st</sup> each year.
- ◆ Veteran exemptions are granted by the Board of Review each year for 100% totally and permanently disabled veterans or veterans who are determined unemployable by the Veterans Administration. Applications for the 2016 tax year may be turned in starting January 1, 2016.

**Please contact Township Assessor Dawn Kuhns at: 231-409-1827 with any questions.**



## 6th Annual Whitewater Township Christmas Tree Lighting Tuesday, December 1st at 6:00

The evening will start at 6:00 pm across from the Fire Station in Hi Pray Park with joyful music and light refreshments, followed by a countdown to light the tree and a visit by Santa.



### Don't miss a Visit with Santa!

Santa arrives on the fire truck with lights flashing and horns blowing to place the first ribbon on the tree for Peace.

**Everyone visiting Santa will get a small gift and an opportunity for photos.**



### HONORING OUR VETERANS

We dedicate the Community Christmas Tree to all the men and women past and present and the families who have made the sacrifices in service to our country. At the time of the lighting, we invite each family that would like to place a ribbon on the tree in honor of their Military family member to come forward. Ribbons will be available. You may bring your own ribbons decorated any way you would like.

*We consider it a privilege to honor your loved ones!*

### *3A Signed Off the air for the last time November 2nd 6 am.*



3A began its service to Whitewater Township residents with a few dedicated individuals and a used converted Suburban in 1980. Fran Olson, Jan Donkers & Joann Ayers were the first women to serve as EMT/EMS volunteers. Jan Donkers recalls "We ran most of the calls during the day because we were home raising kids, the men Fire Fighters took most of the calls at night". Most of the Fire Fighters had first responder training. Jan's family has carried on the tradition of emergency services. Her nephew, Jeremy Jennett, volunteered for both Fire and Ambulance services for Whitewater Township and happened to be the last to sign 3A out of service. It is a sad time, the ending of an era for our township. We will miss them.

Moving from an all volunteer Ambulance service to a paid on call was made necessary by the changing of the times. People no longer work and live in the same place. No one being available during the daytime hours resulted in Whitewater coming close to losing our license to run an ambulance service because of missed calls. Going to a contracted provider was made necessary due to the overwhelming cost of 24/7 staffing.



So with a heavy, but grateful heart, we want to say to all the volunteers that have given their time, heart and soul into setting the bar high on quality of care for our citizens a resounding **THANK YOU!**  
**You have done your community proud.**

### **MASTER PLAN AWARD ACCEPTED By PC Chair Brad Link at the MTA Annual Banquet**

#### **The Whitewater Township Planning Commission is in the process of reviewing and amending the entire Zoning Ordinance.**

This is an open process. Your participation is encouraged. We will be communicating to our shareholders in several ways including our website at [whitewatertownship.org](http://whitewatertownship.org), this newsletter, open houses to be scheduled and potentially a community survey.

Our regular meetings are held on the first Wednesday of each month at 7:00 pm at the Township Hall. We will be scheduling additional meetings in the coming months. If you would like to receive notices, agendas, meeting minutes via email, or have any other questions please contact us at [zoning@whitewatertownship.org](mailto:zoning@whitewatertownship.org) or (231) 267-5141 ext. 21.



### **Williamsburg Emergency Services Auxiliary (WESA) Says THANK YOU!**

WESA members want to take this opportunity to say thank you to all the **many volunteers**, local contributing businesses and the Fire Fighters and Ambulance personnel that make the Spaghetti Dinner and the Annual Community Halloween Party possible.

Gmoser's	Rog's Garage	Top of the Line Crane Service	Mr. C's Pub & Grill	GT Resort & Spa
Ginop Sales	Clare & Elaine Ray	Northwest Engine Repair	Ace Hardware (Acme)	Park Place Hotel
Car Connection	East Bay Pizza	Send Brothers Farm Market	American Business Solutions	AIS
Geo Camo	Mary Harshfield	Orchard View Farms	Renee's House of Quilting	United Methodist Church
The Flour Pot	Chemical Bank	The Grand Traverse Band	Grand Traverse Plastics	

## ZONING

A zoning ordinance has a lot of power. It sets the guidelines that tell you how you may, or may not, use your property. The intention is that the guidelines being set provide some protection for people to enjoy their property as they wish, without neighboring property owners being able to take away your reasonable expectations to enjoy your property. The Whitewater Township Planning Commission has identified some concerns with our zoning ordinance and are taking the necessary steps to fix it. This is your opportunity to be a part of the changes you may like to see in our township. Your presence at our meetings and your input would be greatly appreciated. You may also email your thoughts to [zoning@whitewatertownship.org](mailto:zoning@whitewatertownship.org), or send a letter to Zoning, PO Box 159, Williamsburg, MI 49690.



Wishing you Happy Holidays

*Josh Vey*



### Mobile Medical Response is proud to be Whitewater Township's emergency medical services provider.

MMR started service on November 2, 2015, after the township elected to privatize EMS services. With this move EMS has been upgraded to Advanced Life Support (ALS) and Critical Care Transportation (CCT) service available on a full time basis 24 hours a day. ALS means that our ambulance is now staffed by an Emergency Medical Technician (EMT) and a Paramedic. Paramedics provide advanced assessment skills and have more tools available to them including cardiac monitors and defibrillators, medications, Intravenous (IV) therapy and advanced airway procedures. Additionally, MMR is able to provide extra support when necessary with their ambulances stationed in Elk Rapids and Milton Townships.

Part of MMR's commitment to our community includes providing medical standby services at area events as well as community CPR/AED training. Having citizen responders trained in Hands Only CPR makes a huge difference in increasing the chances of surviving a cardiac arrest – especially in rural communities like ours.

Look for announcements on a future open house and training opportunities!

To learn more about MMR and their services visit their website at [www.mobilemedical.org](http://www.mobilemedical.org).



### A SPECIAL THANK YOU

In August, township resident Nicholas Zazula came in to the township hall to conduct some business. He noticed that there was no air conditioning in the main room. He immediately volunteered that he had a window air conditioner that he was not using and would like to donate it to the township. Sure enough, a day or two later, he showed up at the township hall with his friend Marty McCauley and the like-new air conditioner. Nick and Marty, along with some help from ZA Josh Vey, proceeded to install the AC unit and it was up and running in no time! The township extends its sincere appreciation to Nick for donating the AC unit and to Nick and Marty and Josh for installing it!

### Treasurer's Corner - Ardella Benak



I would like to wish everyone a very Merry Christmas and to invite you, on December 1st at 6:00 pm, to the Christmas in the Park Tree Lighting Event. It is a wonderful way to kick off the season's festivities with family and friends. From my family to yours, here's wishing you a joyous holiday season.



*Ardella M. Benak*

### Dates to Remember.....

Winter Tax bills due without interest by	2/16/2016
A 1% interest each month for delinquent Winter Taxes starting	2/17/2016
<b>Summer 2015 Deferment</b> must be paid by	2/16/2016
A 3% penalty will be assessed on delinquent taxes starting	2/17/2016
Last day to pay your property taxes at Whitewater Township Hall	3/01/2016
Delinquent 2015 Real Property taxes are turned over to GT County	3/02/2016
A 4% penalty plus a 1% interest fee will be assessed by GTC starting on	3/02/2016

**Personal Property Taxes** starting with the numbers: 28-13-900 will continue to be collected at the Township Treasurer's office as they do not get turned over to the County. Treasurer's office **accepts postmarks**. Payments mailed must be postmarked by February 16, 2016, to not incur penalty & interest fees from the Township.

**Partial payments** are accepted. When paying by **CASH**, please have the **exact amount** of your tax bill. I thank you for your understanding in this matter. After March 1, 2016, please call Grand Traverse County Treasurer's office for the correct payoff amount due at 231-922-4535.

**Please contact me if you have any questions, I am always happy to help.**