

2nd Annual Community Tree Lighting Event - Tuesday, December 6th at 6:30 PM

The evening will start at 6:30 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 & Mrs. Claus.

DEDICATION

Back by popular demand, we will honor our Veterans. For all the men and women past and present and their families, who have made the sacrifices in service to our country, we will re-dedicate the Community Tree to them. 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, however you may bring your own ribbons decorated anyway you would like. We would consider it a privilege to honor your loved ones during this very special occasion.



Don't miss a Visit from Santa & Mrs. Claus



Home Safety Tips for a Safe and Healthy Winter. In the winter, more home fires are started by heating equipment and Christmas decorations than any other cause. Space heaters are the most dangerous. It is possible to be warm and safe this winter by following these tips. Heaters need to have plenty of space around them. Place heaters at least three feet away from anything that can burn. There should always be an adult in the room when a space heater is on. Turn off space heaters before leaving a room or going to sleep. Burn only seasoned hardwood like oak, ash or maple. Do not burn trash, cardboard boxes or Christmas trees because these items burn unevenly and may contain poisons. Have a professional chimney sweep inspect chimneys every year. They will fix any cracks, blockages and leaks and clean out any build-up that could start a fire. Install at least one smoke alarm on every level of your home and inside sleeping areas. When buying a live tree, look at the needles. If they are brown or break easily, choose another tree. Test for freshness by bending a few needles in half. If the needles snap in two, the tree is dry - look for a tree with needles that spring back to their original shape. Before you put the lights on the tree, look at every bulb. If the string of lights does not look perfect, throw the lights away and get new ones. When decorating indoors, use only those lights listed for indoor use. Unplug all lights, inside and out, before going to bed or leaving home. HAVE A SAFE AND HAPPY HOLIDAY!

Whitewater Emergency Services Auxiliary

- ◆ A huge thank you to everyone who participated in our first (annual) Spaghetti Dinner. It was a great community event and we were able to raise \$800 for the Emergency Services.
- ◆ The 36th Annual Halloween Party at the fire station was a spook-tacular event enjoyed by nearly 400!
- ◆ We are very thankful to the local businesses and volunteers that contribute to help make these events possible and so successful!
- ◆ Are you looking for a gift that truly says "I care"? How about one of our blue reflective address signs?
- ◆ If you would like to help, have any ideas for future events, have questions or would like to place your sign order contact Pat Miller: 313-0020 or Lois MacLean: 735-3987.



Provide us with your email address and receive Township Updates through the E-Letter monthly.



Whitewater Township News

WINTER 2011

This Newsletter can be found on the Township Web-site: whitwatertownship.org

Whitewater Township Directory

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Phone 231-267-5141
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www.whitwatertownship.org

SUPERVISOR

Larry Lake ext. 23
Supervisor@whitwatertownship.org

CLERK

Carol Hockin ext. 24
Clerk@whitwatertownship.org

TREASURER

Ardella Benak ext. 22
P.O. Box 100
Treasurer@whitwatertownship.org

TRUSTEE

Arnell Boyd - Message 231-267-5141

TRUSTEE

Paul Hubbell - Message 231-267-5141

PLANNING & ZONING ADMINISTRATOR

Leslie Meyers ext. 21
Monday through Wednesday
Zoning@whitwatertownship.org

ASSESSOR

Dawn Plude - 231-409-1827
Hours: 1st & 3rd Tuesdays
9-Noon
assessordawn@gmail.com

FIRE & AMBULANCE

Fire Hall 231-267-5969
Non-Emergency

PARKS & RECREATION

Township Park - 231-267-5091

PLANNING COMMISSION

Steve Zakrajsek, Chair
231-267-9386

HISTORICAL SOCIETY

Luann Snider, Chair
231-883-3193

Township News Updates: by Larry Lake, Supervisor

I would like to start by thanking all the citizens who have volunteered to help with all Township causes. Those efforts have helped make this a great place to live and enjoy life. Let me update you on some things that have taken place since our last newsletter.

Roundabouts For M-72: After several years and countless meetings, it appears that the answer for intersection controls along our M-72 corridor will be roundabouts at high-use intersections. This is the decision that has found favor with Acme Township. Consequentially, when the first roundabouts go in at the Lautner Road and M-72 intersection, along with the new Meijer store, it will set the stage for a succession of roundabouts to the east. Ultimately this would include the Elk Lake Road intersection. As a result we should learn more about driving through roundabouts. I have had experiences with roundabouts and found one thing about them special. Drivers can actually make a u-turn in a roundabout intersection legally. You can enter the roundabout and by turning left you can exit out the same way you came from.

Water Service Line: Thanks to the Grand Traverse Band of Ottawa and Chippewa Indians for providing a water service line to the Mill Creek Elementary School. Along with the service line came fire hydrants along Old M-72. The water service installation was completed in August and is functioning nicely. There have been numerous compliments about the quality of the water now at the School. A special thanks to Tribal Engineer Jon Anderson for his efforts to see this project through. For those who may not know Jon, he lives in our township and is a 1976 graduate of Elk Rapids High School.

Fire & Ambulance Station Proposal: A new fire station proposal for Whitewater Township has been suggested by the Grand Traverse Band at a recent Township Board meeting. At this time it is in the research and discussion stage. Along with Township Board members a couple of knowledgeable citizen volunteers are investigating and evaluating the options associated with the proposal. Because it is still in the early stage of developing the plan and details, I will not attempt to suggest what it will turn out like. However, I want to thank the Grand Traverse Band of Ottawa and Chippewa Indians for identifying another community need and coming forward with a solution. Working together we can solve many problems associated with our continued growth and update.

2012 Clean-up Day Date: Clean-up Day normally is the first Saturday in May. We offered two dates this past year with the second not as well attended. **What do you think about the third week of June?** If you have a thought on a clean-up day, please contact me. The Town Board will set the date in January.



ANNOUNCING NEW FIRE INSURANCE RATES

The Grand Traverse Rural Fire Department, to which Whitewater Township belongs, is proud to announce that the Township's ISO (Insurance Service Office) rating has improved! Homeowner insurance providers use an ISO rating to assist in determining how much you will be charged for your homeowners insurance. The Township was previously rated a "10." We now have a Split Rating of 7/10 and 5. 10 means that you live more than 5 miles from a recognized fire station. 7 means that you live inside that 5 mile radius. 5 means that you live within a 1000 radius of a viable water source. The viable water sources include the Turtle Creek Casino, portions of Old M-72, Williamsburg Road near Mill Brook Subdivision and the new Mabel Meadows Subdivision. Congratulations to Rural Fire and our own Battalion 3. Contact your insurance provider to make sure that your ISO rating has been updated. If you have additional questions, contact Captain Arbenowske at the fire station or the Zoning Department.

Under Consideration by The Planning Commission

The Planning Commission is currently working on Zoning Ordinance provisions that will allow for private and commercial campgrounds.



Also under consideration are Accessory Dwelling Units (ADU's). What is an ADU?

A habitable living unit added to, created within, or detached from a single family dwelling. ADU's can:

- Allow homeowners a means for providing separate living quarters for visitors.
- Add affordable housing units to the existing stock.
- Allow homeowners with a means of obtaining, through tenants rental income, security, companionship, and/or services.

For additional information contact Leslie at zoning@whitewatertownship.org or join us at their meetings the first Wednesday of each month.

Treasurer's Corner - Ardella Benak



Normal Office Hours at the Township Hall are as follows

Mondays, Wednesdays & Fridays from 12:00 pm—5:00 pm, other days by appointment.

Days to Help Meet Your Tax Deadlines

Friday December 30th 2011	9:00 am—5:00 pm
Tuesday February 14th 2012	9:00 am—5:00 pm
Wednesday February 29th 2012	9:00 am—5:00 pm

Deadlines to Remember

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|--|--------------------|
| ◆ Summer Tax bills were due without interest by | September 14, 2011 |
| ◆ A 1% interest fee is charged each month for delinquent Summer Taxes starting | September 15, 2011 |
| ◆ Winter Tax bills are due without penalty if paid by | February 14, 2012 |
| ◆ Summer 2011 Deferments must be paid by (interest will be applied if not paid) | February 14, 2012 |
| ◆ A 3% penalty will be assessed on delinquent property taxes starting | February 15, 2012 |
| ◆ Last day to pay your property taxes here at Whitewater Township Hall | February 29, 2012 |
| ◆ Delinquent 2011 Real Property taxes are turned over to GT County for collection on | March 1, 2012 |
| ◆ A 4% penalty plus a 1% interest fee will be assessed by GTC starting on | March 1, 2012 |
| ◆ Property taxes starting with the numbers: 28-13-900 will continue to be collected at the township Treasurer's office these are Personal Property taxes, they do not get turned over to the County. | |

Treasurer's office **accepts postmarks**. Payments mailed must be postmarked by February 14, 2012 to not incur penalty & interest fees. **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 2, 2012, please call Grand Traverse County Treasurer's office for the correct payoff amount due at 231-922-4535.

Please contact me if you should have any questions, I am always happy to help. I am hoping your Holiday season is a joyous time for you and your families and that your New Year is a happy and safe one. *Ardella M. Benak*

From Clerk Carol Hockin's Desk

ELECTIONS

There will be a **PRESIDENTIAL PRIMARY** held on February 28, 2012. The primary will be a closed primary; this means that voters must declare that they wish to receive either a Republican or Democratic ballot. If there are proposals on the ballot, a voter may declare that they wish to vote on the proposal (s) only.

In the near future election workers will be using an electronic poll book. This will make the election process much more streamlined and provide reports on a timelier basis. Voters will still be required to mark their ballot and process it through the voting tabulator.

OFFICE HOURS

The clerk office hours are posted weekly on the outside door at the township hall and also on the clerk's page on the website. I will usually be off every Wednesday. My cell phone number is listed and I will gladly make appointments at times when I am not scheduled to be in the office.



Parks and Recreation News

Whitewater Township Park

The campground at Whitewater Township Park had a very good summer, camping was above average, however boating was down. The park staff did a commendable job of keeping the grounds clean; offering assistance to campers; and most importantly kept the restrooms and showers very clean. I continue to receive compliments on the cleanliness of our restrooms and showers.

A great big THANK YOU goes out to the Fire Department personnel (Arbenowske, Emerson, Shaffer & Straughen) who burned the brush pile at the park.



Battle Creek Natural Area

Eagle Scout candidate and Township resident Jonathan Courtade will blaze a trail to Elk Lake as his eagle project. Many trees have fallen across the proposed trail, so this is a big project for him. If there are adults who can operate chainsaws safely who would like to assist him, please contact Clerk Carol Hockin.



"Hi" Pray Park

A tree was planted by the Sweetwater Garden Club in memory of Kevin Scott, a master gardener who was a member of their club. The tree is located at the Elk Lake Road entrance to the park.

The Sweetwater Garden Club maintains the garden around the cairn that commemorates early settlers in the Williamsburg area. Thank you to the club for their efforts to keep this area beautiful.



What is a Cairn?

Cairn's are man-made piles of stone. They vary in size from small stone markers to entire artificial hills. Today as in ancient times, cairns are most often used as monuments.

Northern Michigan's most famous cairn is located in Kewadin off the Cairn Hwy near the 45th Parallel. Constructed of 83 stones, one furnished by each county, it was erected in 1938 honoring Hugh Gray, "The Dean of Michigan's Tourist Activity." Hugh served as the first Director of the Michigan Tourist & Resort Association.