



CROSSROADS CONNECTION

JANUARY 1, 2012

BLACKMAN TOWNSHIP
1990 W PARNALL RD
JACKSON, MI 49201
517-788-4345

Office Hours:
Mon. thru Thur. 8-5
Friday 8 – 4:30

BLACKMAN-LEONI
TOWNSHIP PUBLIC SAFETY
1996 W PARNALL RD
JACKSON, MI 49201
517-788-4223

UPCOMING BOARD MEETINGS

Monday, January 9, 2012

Monday, January 23, 2012

Monday, February 6, 2012

Monday, February 20, 2012

Monday, March 5, 2012

Monday, March 19, 2012

*Regular Board Meetings
begin at 6:00 p.m.*

All Meetings are open to the public.

IF WE DON'T DO IT.....WHO WILL?

From Dan Hawkins, Township Supervisor

Recently, I got a late start driving to visit my U.S. Marine daughter stationed in Virginia and stopped at a motel for the night at Strongsville, Ohio. When I asked the elderly night attendant if there was a good place nearby to jog in the morning, he turned slowly and responded, "1/2 mile down to the intersection and turn right.....they call it the Emerald Necklace". I had my doubts the next morning while carefully running alongside a busy four lane highway toward the intersection as to whether there would be a safe jogging route. However, when I reached the intersection and turned right.....there it was.....a paved scenic route with soft curves, and emerald paint marks in the center. As I enjoyed my morning jog, I was impressed with the number of individuals who parked their vehicles at parking lots adjacent to the "necklace", solely for the purpose of walking their family dog. I thought immediately of the similarities between the "Necklace" and the Falling Water Trail of Southwest Jackson County. And then I thought of the absence of a safe jogging/biking trail in Blackman Township.

In local government circles, when we discuss services that people consider very important, but yet too expensive to afford individually, such as Public Safety, or Street Lights, we group those services under the category phrase, "Non-Appropriable Services". When Non-Appropriable services are deemed necessary, the services are financed through taxes and millages collectively by citizens so that the services then are available at affordable rates.

Safe and healthful recreational opportunities are not just a luxury item for a well balanced community. If quality of life for all residents is to be positive, local governmental units must set the pace in placing positive recreational opportunities at the top of the priority list.

I am pleased to announce that the Blackman Township Recreation Committee consisting of Chuck DeBruler, Dave Sercombe and chaired by Joe Barrett have done just that. Several months ago, the Recreation Committee, in an effort to pursue the possibility of adding a jog/bike trail to Blackman Township recreational opportunities, approached Spring Arbor University Adjunct Professor Larry Brown to establish a relationship that provided a University Recreation Major student the "real world" opportunity to initiate at almost no cost to the township, the Recreation Plan that is required for application for Federal Funding that is available for construction of job/walk trails. The Recreation Committee has now received approval from the full Township Board for appropriation of the minimal funding needed for completion of the Recreation Plan through Jackson County Region 2 staff.

The commitment by the Recreation Committee to move forward to attempt to make Blackman Township a better place to live is commendable. When it comes to "Non-Appropriable Services", we must always ask ourselves the question, "If we don't do it.....who will"?

We can only hope that the efforts of the Recreation Committee for future construction of a job/walk trail will be rewarded by federal funding award entities, and that a better Blackman Township will be the result.....for all!



FROM THE TOWNSHIP CLERK

The year 2012 will be a major election year. On February 28th, Michigan will hold a presidential primary election statewide. Whether voting by absentee ballot or at the polls on Election Day, each voter will need to specify whether they wish to vote a Republican ballot or a Democrat ballot. The Republican ballot will list all of the Republican candidates running for President. The Democrat ballot will have only the name of Barack Obama because there are no other Democrats running against him in Michigan. Residents of Western School District will also have a millage question on their ballot.

In order to be eligible to vote in the February State Primary Election, Blackman voters must be registered at a Blackman Township address no later than January 30th, which can be done at either a Secretary of State office or at the Township office.

Later in the year, the national Primary Election will be on August 7th and the national General Election will be on November 6th, 2012. We will provide more information on those elections in a future newsletter.

BLACKMAN TOWNSHIP LOSES LONGTIME PUBLIC SERVANT

Bob Laskovich, who served Blackman Charter Township in many capacities, passed away at his home, on Friday January 6, 2012 after a courageous battle with cancer. Bob, due to his ailing health, recently resigned from service as a member of the Public Safety Committee, Jackson Area Comprehensive Transportation Study, Downtown Development Authority, and the Prison Community Liaison Committee. He also served previously as a Trustee with the Township Board.

Bob recently was presented resolutions from the Michigan House of Representatives and the Blackman Charter Township Board, recognizing his public service.

Bob will be missed by family, friends and his associates. He is a true Public Servant. He held Blackman Township close in his Heart.

MEDAL OF HONOR MONUMENT

On November 22, 2011 a ceremony was conducted to dedicate a monument to four Medal of Honor recipients from the Jackson area, James Bondsteel, Frederick Lyon, Edwin Savacool and William Withington. Township Supervisor, Dan Hawkins, spoke about the bravery and unselfishness of the Medal of Honor recipients and all veterans. The flag that was lowered, folded and given to the family of James Bondsteel.

WINTER TAX BILLS

The 2011 winter tax bills are due by February 14th, 2011.

Payments can be made by mail, in our office or online by visiting our website at blackmantwp.com.

TOWNSHIP BOARD MEMBERS

Dan Hawkins, Supervisor
Mike Thomas, Clerk
Sherry Brockie, Treasurer
Joe Barrett, Trustee
Paula Clingerman, Trustee
Chuck DeBrueler, Trustee
David Sercombe, Trustee

DATES OF INTEREST:

1/2/2012 Office Closed
for New Years Day

2/14/2012 Winter Taxes
Due

2/20/2012 Office Closed
For Presidents' Day

2/28/2012 Election Day

3/15/2012 Sewer Bills
Due



AMERICAN RED CROSS BLOOD DRIVE

On Friday, January 13th, 2012 the American Red Cross will be holding a blood drive at Blackman Charter Township. The blood drive will be located in the lower level from 12:00 until 5:45. More information about donating blood can be found at www.redcrossblood.org/donating-blood/why-donate-blood.

BLACKMAN TOWNSHIP
OFFERS FREE NOTARY
SERVICES!

Need to make a payment
after our office is closed?
We have a night drop on
the east side of the
building for after hour
payments.

A MINUTE WITH YOUR PUBLIC SAFETY DEPARTMENT

Winter Fire Safety Tips for the Home

The high cost of home heating fuels and utilities have caused many Americans to search for alternate sources of home heating. The use of wood burning stoves is growing and space heaters are selling rapidly, or coming out of storage. Fireplaces are burning wood. All these methods of heating may be acceptable. They are, however, a major contributing factor in residential fires. Many of these fires can be prevented. The following fire safety tips *link* from the *United States Fire Administration* can help you maintain a fire safe home this winter:

<http://www.usfa.fema.gov/downloads/pdf/publications/fa-249f.pdf>

CONSUMERS ENERGY LINE CLEARING CAMPAIGN

Line clearing is one of the most effective activities that Consumers Energy undertakes to reduce storm related outages and help maintain reliable service to their customers. Beginning in early January 2012 and perhaps extending on into February, Consumers Energy will be undertaking line clearing activity along their Parnall Road circuit. This will generally extend along M-50 from US 127 northwesterly. The general areas of this activity will include: Parnall Road, M-50 North to Standish Road, Vanhorn Road and subdivisions off of these roads.

OUT AND ABOUT.....Did you know?

Great Northern Sentry Co. purchased the former Premier Lighting building at 2901 West Michigan Ave. in Blackman Township and officially opened for business at that site on November 1, 2011. Al Cavasin who has served as President/CEO of Great Northern Sentry in Jackson County for the past twenty years shared recently that Great Northern had been looking very diligently for their own building from which to operate in Jackson County and their new location in Blackman Township was the best fit, providing a 6,000 square foot area which exceeds their previous site by 1,500 square feet. Great Northern is a private security and investigation firm that currently employees seventy staff, and according to Cavasin, is "on the grow". A contract with an Indiana firm is currently in Cavasin's sights for Great Northern Sentry, which currently contracts primarily in South Central Michigan. A big Blackman Township welcome to Al Cavasin and Great Northern Sentry Co.!

Another noteworthy item is that TAC Manufacturing is anticipating its celebration on March 1, 2012, of twenty years in Blackman Township. TAC currently employs a combined permanent/temporary work force of approximately 752 staff. Congratulations TAC!!!!

In the very near future, another new Blackman Township business, "Pet Smart", which features various basic as well as specialized services for pets, will open in the building formerly occupied by "Circuit City" on Boardman. Welcome Pet Smart!!!

And last but certainly not least, Blackman Township businessman, Phil Tripp, (Tripp's Autoshop and Collision Centers), was recognized by the Jackson County Chamber of Commerce at its 103rd Annual Meeting on January 19, 2012 as the Small Business Person of the Year.

FROM STATE REPRESENTATIVE MIKE SHIRKEY

Dear Friends,

In January of 2011 I was privileged to be part of a new incoming class of Freshmen Michigan State Legislators elected into office with a strong mandate to challenge and change the status quo in Michigan. People across our state were clearly frustrated with the lack of progress, the routine excuses, and the inability to make tough, important decisions.

For the first time in a long, long time we not only passed a balanced budget early but did so without gimmicks, borrowing from future revenue, or relying on Federal handouts. We also created a second year budget forecast which will make the 2012 budget process even more efficient. Most importantly, we began the necessary but difficult process of paying down debt and securing Michigan's balance sheet. By getting our balance sheet in order we have begun to shed the financial burden our kids and grandkids would have had to bear without such action.

In all of this, jobs remain "Job # 1". The combination of tax reforms, workers compensation reforms, unemployment insurance reforms, and a growing list of regulatory reforms and eliminations all contribute to help Michigan become a better place to provide a job. Michigan recently received recognition from Bloomberg Financial ranking our state as one of the most promising for economic recovery.

We have also afforded significant attention to education reform. Tenure reform, uncapping Charter school limitations, protecting taxpayer exposure to runaway spending for public employee benefits, and many other actions have resulted in re-establishing a foundation to build upon. I am very excited about being selected to be part of a bi-partisan, bicameral work group assigned to make recommendations on what specific quality metrics Michigan should adopt in order to insure our children have more robust opportunities to reach their potential.

Transportation and infrastructure, further regulatory reforms, continued rebuilding of our education system, and JOBS will be our main areas of focus going forward. Personally, in addition to these areas, I remain dedicated to advancing the cause for Michigan to become a Labor Freedom (aka Right to Work) state, to promoting more free market influence into our energy policies, and to doing whatever necessary to fight the damaging effects of Obamacare.

Thank you for the privilege to serve in this role. It is a high honor and a humbling experience. I will endeavor to do my best to continue to earn and deserve your support.

Serving with and for you,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Mike Shibley". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style with a prominent loop at the end of the last name.