



BLOOMFIELD TOWNSHIP NEWSLETTER

BTSS provides outstanding services

Covid-19 has brought dramatic changes to everyday life since it arrived and Senior Services is no exception. The Senior Center closed physically in mid-March, and it's still uncertain when they may re-open to the public. Suddenly senior residents were left without the activities they were accustomed to, including day trips, lectures, classes, social groups and especially the very popular fitness programs. The Adult Day Service could no longer provide respite care for those with memory loss. All this has been a big loss to the community.

As big as these changes have been, Senior Services is no stranger to change, and has always prided itself on changing and adapting to the needs of the community. As Director Christine Tvaroha pointed out, "Our evolution has been constant and our success is based on the philosophy of 'how do we make it work?'"

What is now Bloomfield Township Senior Services began in 1970 as Mature Minglers, under the direction of the Bloomfield Hills School District. Mature Minglers operated out of the former Booth Elementary School on Wing Lake Road. Activities offered were card clubs, lapidary, art classes, four exercise classes a week, and discussion groups. Computers were added in the

late 1990s and exercise equipment in 2000. Some of the services provided to seniors were day trips, shopping trips, Meals on Wheels, and telephone reassurance.

Director Christine Tvaroha took over Mature Minglers in 1995. She was dedicated to offering the very best services



BTSS Director Christine Tvaroha is especially proud of the Center's warm-water pool.

to older adults that her budget and the limitations of the facility would allow. It became clear that the older population of the community was growing, and outgrowing the ability of Mature Minglers to offer superior services that this group needed and demanded. In 2002-2003 Tvaroha wrote a grant to get the funding to create a strategic plan, drawing together an advisory council comprising

older adults and community leaders. The advisory council concluded that a stable funding source, a space appropriate for older adults, and a name change were needed. In 2004 a millage proposal was placed on the ballot and passed with 80 percent approval, opening the door for the Bloomfield Township Senior Services that exists today.

The Township's state-of-the-art Senior Center opened its doors to the community in 2009 with enhanced services for adults age 50 and over. Fitness classes are especially popular, in the studio and the warm-water pool. A great variety of day trips, unique lectures, classes, and social groups are offered. Essential supportive services include Meals on Wheels, Minor Home Repair, Medicare counseling, medical loan closet, health screenings, transportation and more. Friendship Club Adult Day Service is a specialized service for those with memory disorders. The evolution of Senior Services in recent years includes innovations such as virtual fitness classes and increased presence on social media.

Before the building was closed by Covid-19, the numbers proved just how popular Senior Services is. Total user profiles created reached almost

Please see Senior Services on page 5



**BLOOMFIELD
TOWNSHIP
BOARDS
2020**

ELECTED OFFICIALS

ADMINISTRATION

Leo Savoie, Supervisor
Janet Roncelli, Clerk
Brian Kepes, Treasurer

TRUSTEES

David Buckley
Neal J. Barnett
Michael Schostak
Dani Walsh

APPOINTED POSITIONS

PLANNING COMMISSION

Thomas Petinga, Chairman
Jeff Salz, Vice Chairman
Neal Barnett
Richard Atto
Bruce Selik
Andrea B. O'Donnell

BOARD OF APPEALS

Carol Rosati, Chairman
Brian Henry, Vice Chairman
Robert Taylor, Jr.
Claudine Bacher,
Dani Walsh
Jocelyn Giangrande
Andrea O'Donnell
Jeffrey Drake, Alternate
Glenda Meads, Alternate

Save the Date...

October 3

Household Hazardous Waste Drop-Off Day

November 3

General Election

December 18

Last day for yard waste pickup



Board of Trustees

TIME: 7:00 P.M.
DATE: 2nd and 4th Monday
LOCATION: Township Auditorium

Planning Commission

TIME: 7:00 P.M.
DATE: 1st and 3rd Monday
LOCATION: Township Auditorium

Zoning Board of Appeals

TIME: 7:00 P.M.
DATE: 2nd Tuesday
LOCATION: Township Auditorium

NOTE: The Charter Township of Bloomfield will provide necessary reasonable auxiliary aids and services at all meetings to individuals with disabilities. All such requests must be made at least five days prior to said meeting. Please contact the Bloomfield Township Clerk's Office, 4200 Telegraph Road P.O. Box 489 Bloomfield Hills MI 48303--0489 248-433-7702 Fax: 248-433-7714

Township voters look forward to November election

Bloomfield Township residents eagerly await the opportunity to vote in the November 3, 2020 General Election. This epic event will shape the future governance of our country, state, county and municipality. If you are not a registered voter in Bloomfield Township, please take time to register online or make an appointment in the Clerk's Office. Voter registration continues up to and on Election Day. Don't wait until the last minute. We can assist you.

All Township precincts will be open on Election Day from 7:00 a.m. – 8:00 p.m. The insert in this newsletter contains a map and list of polling locations. Protective protection supplies are available at the precincts, including hand sanitizer, wipes, gloves, and masks. Floor mats will assure voters keep the appropriate social distancing. While Governor Whitmer's orders do not require a mask at the precinct, few voters appeared at the precinct in August 2020 without a mask. Extra masks will be available at all precincts in November.

With the Covid pandemic, voting by absentee ballot has become a popular alternative. If you have not applied for an absentee ballot, the applications are available on our website at the following link: <https://www.bloomfieldtpw.org/Resources/Forms/Clerk/Fillable-Nov-2020-AV-App.aspx>

The last day to request an absentee ballot by mail is

Friday, October 30, 2020. Over-the-counter requests continue until 4:00 p.m., Monday, November 2, 2020. Call 248-433-7702 now for an appointment. We will begin mailing absentee ballots at the end of September 2020. For the first time, *prepaid postage* will be included on the return envelope. For those of you in town, we suggest use of our drop box in the lobby. It is open 24/7, well-lit, free from inclement weather and continually monitored by our police department. Whether you return the ballot by mail or in our drop box, the ballot must be placed in the secrecy sleeve and then enclosed in the return envelope. Be sure to sign the return envelope.



Clerk Jan Roncelli suggests voters use the lobby drop box to securely return absentee ballots.

Michigan Election Law requires absent voter ballot applications and ballot return envelopes to be signed. The law also requires election

workers to verify that the signature matches the voter's signature in the Qualified Voter File; this signature is on your driver's license.

More detailed information regarding voter registration, election inspectors, polling locations, sample ballots, proposals and absentee voting can be found on our website at the following link: <https://bloomfieldtpw.org/Government/Services/Clerk/Elections.aspx>

Study your ballot carefully. There are numerous races to consider and limitations on the number of candidates you can vote for in each race. Instructions are on the absentee ballot secrecy sleeves and on the secrecy sleeves given to voters at the precinct. If you make a mistake, request another ballot. Make your vote count as you prepare to select candidates and proposals.

For your convenience, the Clerk's Office will be open by appointment Monday – Thursday, 7:00 a.m. – 5:30 p.m. and for additional service on the following dates:

Friday, October 23, 2020, 10:00 a.m. – 4:00 p.m.
Friday, October 30, 2020, 10:00 a.m. -5:00 p.m.
Saturday, October 31, 2020, from 8:00 a.m. – 4:00 p.m.

If you have any questions regarding the November 3, 2020 Election, please contact the Clerk's Office at 248-433-7702. We welcome your interest and feedback.

Check the dashboard

How does Bloomfield Township stand financially compared to other communities? You can find out at a glance by looking at the dashboard. It can be found on the home page of the Township website, www.bloomfieldtpw.org. Just look for Citizen's Guide and Dashboard under Quick Links at the right of the home page.



A NOTE FROM

Leo Savoie, Bloomfield Township Supervisor

Outgoing supervisor reflects on years of service to Township

August 1, 2011. This was the day I became Supervisor; however, my relationship with Bloomfield Township started long before then.

I became involved with Bloomfield Township in the 1990s when I moved here from Birmingham. I was on the Board of Review for tax assessment appeals for the City of Birmingham. The former supervisor Fred Korzon and the former assessor Rick Farms asked if I would be on the Board of Review here. Then, in the late 1990s, I was asked to sit on the Zoning Board of Appeals (ZBA). Both of these Boards are established to help residents if they disagree with the Township on their property tax assessments or, in the case of the ZBA, if they have unique or special circumstances that need to be addressed as part of a building project.

In 2004 I was elected to the Board of Trustees. I had begun to notice there were significant negative financial undercurrents in regards to real estate and financial institutions. This was the precursor to the "great recession." Bloomfield Township went through a significant downsizing for the next 5 years.

Looking back, there have been so many positive things that have happened in Bloomfield Township since 2011. The rundown ruins of Bloomfield Park have now become the fully developed Village at Bloomfield. After working for years we were finally able to get Nino Salvaggio to take the closed-

down Kroger at Maple & Telegraph. We have had numerous new successful restaurants and businesses come into and thrive in Bloomfield Township. These entities are here to meet the needs of our residents in the community.

New residential developments have started in Bloomfield Township. Some have been controversial. I get that change is not always easy. What I have found is that currently over 50 percent of the purchasers in these new communities are current residents who are choosing to stay in Bloomfield Township. That has been our philosophy all along. We want our residents to remain in Bloomfield Township for as long as possible.

There are other successes that are not quite as visible. Infrastructure is not something anyone thinks about until something bad happens. Since 2011 we have replaced over \$25,000,000 of water and sewer lines. This prevents the water main breaks and destructive sinkholes that have become prevalent in other communities.

Prior to 2011 there had not been a single re-paving project of any paved residential street in Bloomfield Township. Since that time there have been approximately 20 neighborhoods that have had complete repaving projects finished. Much of that is because of the success we had in getting Lansing to change the law to allow road assessments to be assumed

by a new purchaser if someone sells their home. Over and above that we have spent millions of dollars in overlay and concrete work and have been successful in getting our major arteries and feeder streets re-built and re-paved.

Our gypsy moth program is very expensive; however, it is worth it. It has allowed us to protect the canopy growth of the trees in the area. Other communities that stopped their programs had to start aerial spraying to curb the infestation growth.

There still remain some ongoing challenges that need to be addressed. Our unfunded OPEB liabilities have fallen significantly but Bloomfield Township needs to be disciplined with the ongoing funding. Our funding for the pension plan is at the required level but it is going to take more and more resources to keep it there. The money needed for these required programs is going to take resources away from other services we deliver to the residents.

Very few people are talking about the 5G small cell towers that will be coming into our neighborhoods. I have been fighting that battle for the last three years. The communications companies want to put them anywhere they see fit and there likely will be a lot of them since every 5G cell tower must be visible to the adjoining ones in a network so they can communicate. That means putting cell towers in residential neighborhoods and many road

rights-of-way. We as a community need to have a say in where the equipment will be located, principally along main roads and entrances to neighborhoods. Currently state laws gives the communications companies sole discretion as to where they can go.

Bloomfield Township is very lucky. We have outstanding personnel that go above and beyond to deliver services to the community. I have stated since the time I became involved with Bloomfield Township the most surprising thing was the quality of the employees here and the high level of services they deliver. We would not be the type of community we are without them.

I have worked tirelessly to keep Bloomfield Township in a position for continued success. Some of my decisions weren't always popular. But I am glad to say that due to the attention and dedication by the employees and the elected officials to make those hard decisions and do the right thing, we are currently positioned to move forward and prosper as the outstanding community we have always been.

Finally, I want to say thank you to the residents. I have made many new friends and many great relationships during my time serving the community. The positives outweigh the negatives 100 to 1. I can say from the bottom of my heart I value, honor and appreciate the last nine years of being supervisor of Bloomfield Township.

Township copes with Covid-19

The world has changed a lot since early last spring when the full impact of the Covid-19 pandemic began to be felt. It was clear from the start we were in for a rough ride, and that early assessment proved to be true.

As conditions worsened and seemingly the whole world went into lockdown, Bloomfield Township was not spared. Township government was forced to make the difficult decision to close its office doors to the public.

But then what?

Operating a public body like the Township posed a challenge of huge proportions. People are accustomed to coming to Town Hall to pay their bills and conduct other business. Builders and contractors need to get permits and file documents with the Planning, Building and Ordinance Department; and how in the world are police officers and firefighter/paramedics, who often come into direct contact with the public, going to do that safely?

Those were just a few of the questions Township staff faced as they looked to the months ahead. But with guidance from the state and county and resourcefulness from within, the job was done. It wasn't easy, it certainly wasn't

perfect and challenges remain, but a process for doing business was put in place.

"We transitioned fitness class-



Treasurer Brian Kepes watched as plastic shields were installed at counters in Township Hall.

es to virtual," said Christine Tvaroha Director of Senior Services for the Township. She is in charge of the Senior Center, whose operations were hit early and hard by the Covid-19 threat. By its nature, the senior center caters to the population most vulnerable to the virus. The Senior Center closed on March 12 just as the number of cases in the United States started to rise.

But, said Tvaroha, "We did

adapt." In fact, we "pivoted," she said as the department focused its energies in different ways. Meals on Wheels deliveries doubled, medical transportation continued and minor home repairs increased. "People are at home more," she said. "There has been a huge influx of applications."

The Township Planning, Building and Ordinance Department also came under a new degree of pressure. "Once the governor allowed construction to commence we had to establish a protocol to receive permit applications and plans," said Patti Voelker, department director. And there was a "tsunami" of applications, she said.

"We were overwhelmed," she said. But new procedures, like on-line payments, helped ease the pressure and projects are moving forward.

The Township Clerk's Office also has come under a lot of pressure to do business efficiently in the pandemic.

"The Clerk's Office is responding to the Covid-19 pandemic carefully and efficiently, with the safety of our residents and staff foremost in our procedures," said Clerk Jan Roncelli.

"The office has been open from the beginning of the

shutdown by appointment, phone, email and fax. We handle most general calls through the automated phone system, with voicemails sent to our email box for forwarding and tracking of return calls. The drop-box in the lobby has become an accessible, secure and comfortable venue for returning absentee ballot applications, ballots, and payments. Now, with the U.S. Department of State increasing their staffing for passport issuance, we are moving toward weekly appointments for passports effective immediately," Roncelli said.

All the Township departments have had to adapt their operations to some degree. Many employees are now working from home. Those who can't, such as the road crews, police and fire, have adopted special safety procedures to protect themselves and the public.

The public still can't enter Town Hall, but more than ever business can be conducted on-line, and while personal interaction between the public and staff is limited for now, the job does get done.

And as the pandemic goes on, there has been no shortage in the resourcefulness allowing the Township staff to get the job done.

Dream Cruise on track to return next year

The Woodward Avenue Dream Cruise came and went without the usual roar of the engines that we have become accustomed to every August.

That's because this year the Cruise was officially canceled due to the Covid-19 pandemic. Still, Woodward wasn't entirely silent on the third Saturday of August as Cruisers came out on their own to show off their rides.

The Township's events – the Classic Car Show and Bill Wells Car Club Classic - were not held this year, but are expected to return as usual next year for the 26th Woodward Avenue Dream Cruise.

So keep your car in tune and get in gear for a great time next year.



Senior Services from Page 1

15,000, with an average of 48 per month in 2019. Daily attendance at the Center reached 300-400 each day, totaling 70,000 in 2019. Fitness classes have grown from four to 65 per week in 2019. The number of enrichment programs offered reached 135 per month. Supportive services, including meals delivered, dementia respite care, rides to the Center or medical appointments and more totaled 26,000 "units."

All these services to the Township community are a great bargain for taxpayers, with the Senior Service millage comprising just 3/5 of a penny of each tax dollar paid. The balance of the funds needed to provide these services comes from user fees, fundraising and grants. Staff in normal times includes eight full-time employees and 32 part-time employees. With the Center closed to the public the staff has been reduced to six full-time and one part-time staff who handle on-going services such as Meals on Wheels and Ensure, Minor Home Repair, Medical Transportation, Friendly Caller,

Information and Referrals, Medicare counseling, Caregiver Support, Medical Loan Closet and 30 virtual fitness classes weekly.

Bloomfield Township is a mature community. Half of Township residents are age 50 and over and are eligible to take advantage of the

Senior Center and the services offered. Director Christine Tvaroha and her staff are dedicated to adapting to the current situation. Fitness classes are now offered via Zoom, and this innovation will continue after the Center re-opens. Many more innovations are sure to follow as Senior Services continues its mission to serve the community with efficiency. Their success will continue to grow, with the support of Township residents.



Fitness Coordinator Maggie Barclay conducts a Zoom class.

Toolkits help businesses reopen

About 200 Covid-19 small business ReOpen Toolkits were distributed by Bloomfield Township in June.

The free kits were supplied by Oakland County and contained disinfectant, gloves, digital thermometer and information about reopening procedures. They were offered to area businesses with no more than 50 employees.

The initial distribution was so successful that additional ones were held at the Township cable TV studio.



Kathy Dunn of Jacobsen's Flowers poses with her ReOpen Toolkit.

Home tips for the fall

Here are some things to remember as we move into fall, from the Planning, Building & Ordinance Department:

- Check the exterior caulking and paint and repair as needed.
- It's a good time to reseal your asphalt driveway.
- Soon it will be getting cooler and that's a good time to inspect your roof and shingles.
- It's always a good idea to cover your AC unit for winter storage and make sure that your humidifier has a clean filter in it.
- Have a fireplace? Now would be a good time to have your flues cleaned and your fireplace dampers inspected.
- Remember to disconnect your hoses from the hose bibs and drain the water out of the hose to prevent freeze damage.
- Don't forget to schedule to have your sprinkler system "blown-out."
- If you plan to leave for an extended time, be sure to turn your water heater down to the "vacation" setting.
- This is a good time to schedule your pool winterization.

Tune in to Township social media



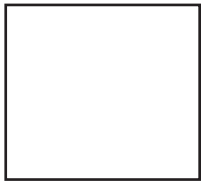
Find out what's happening in the Township by following us on social media. The Township regularly posts on Facebook, Twitter, Instagram and NextDoor. The Township's Police and Fire departments can also be found on Facebook, Twitter and Instagram. And you will continue to get updates every Thursday through the eNewsletter. The Township website, www.bloomfieltdwp.org, is updated and modified frequently.

There are road closings, traffic alerts and similar items that are posted at once. Also, we preview special events and elections. In order for you to make an informed choice when you go to the polls, you will need to know the facts about the issues. The Township strives to provide you with those facts through every means possible.

So follow us on Facebook, look for our tweets and watch for our pictures on Instagram – and tell your friends to subscribe to the eNewsletter. Information on how to do that is one the Township website.



BLOOMFIELD TOWNSHIP



4200 TELEGRAPH ROAD
PO BOX 489
BLOOMFIELD MI 48303-0489

TOWNSHIP DIRECTORY

Water/Sewer Emergency
433-7730

Administration	433-7700
Accounting	433-7712
Assessor's Office	433-7710
Building Division	433-7715
Clerk's Office	433-7702
Community Cable	433-7790
Engineering & Env.	594-2800
Fire Non-Emergency	433-7745
Ordinance Division	594-2845
Planning Division	433-7795
Police Department	
Administration	433-7750
Non-Emergency	433-7755
Animal Welfare	433-7757
Investigations	433-7760
Alarm Info	433-7775
Property	433-7777
Records	433-7776
Public Works	
Road Division	594-2800
Water & Sewer	594-2800
Senior Services	723-3500
Adult Day Service	723-3530
Treasurer's Office	433-7705

Christine Tvaroha marks 25 years with Senior Services

Director of Senior Services Christine Tvaroha has been dedicated to serving the older adults of Bloomfield Township since 1995. The beautiful Senior Center and the array of programs and services offered are a testament to her dedication and skill.

"I've always had an affinity for older people," Christine says. "I love talking with them and hearing their stories. It's almost like a glimpse into living history."

This interest led her to pursue graduate studies in the field at Michigan State University, after receiving a bachelor's degree in health science and gerontology. After internships and volun-

teer work in senior centers, her first paying job in the



field was in adult day service in Grand Rapids. Christine moved on to become the activities director at a senior living center in southeast Michigan, and then took the job as coordinator of senior programs with Bloomfield Hills Schools.

The organization known as

Mature Minglers served the senior population out of the former elementary school known as the Booth Center. Christine's energy and enthusiasm expanded the program to offer more and more services, and eventually she was instrumental in pushing for a senior services millage and the move to create Bloomfield Township Senior Services. The Senior Center opened in 2009 and in 2019 offered over 120 programs weekly, serving 300-400 people each day.

Christine Tvaroha is a leader who demonstrates warmth, concern and empathy while performing her job with imagination and efficiency. She is able to exercise

entrepreneurial skills to operate Senior Services within her budget. Her skills combined with 25 years of experience have provided the older adults of the Township with outstanding services. Typical of Christine, she gives the credit to the staff she works with. "It's my great team that makes Senior Services what it is," she stressed.

Township Clerk Jan Roncelli said, "After a quarter century, Christine has finally become a Mature Mingler! In her youth and in her mature years she has always led our Senior Services to new horizons. I am proud to have known and worked with her."