



BLOOMFIELD TOWNSHIP NEWSLETTER

Friendship Club offers activities to improve lives

The prospect of a loved one – or yourself – living with Alzheimer's disease or another form of dementia most likely brings about images of depression and hopelessness. Although that is too often the case, the members of the Senior Center's Friendship Club participate in activities that lift their spirits and challenge their mental abilities every day they attend. Art, music and pet therapies are especially effective in creating positive changes in moods as well as keeping memory as sharp as possible.



"The days of believing that persons with Alzheimer's disease are not capable of living better – of learning, growing, engaging in creativity and fun – need to be challenged," said Kevin Kirkland, PhD, MTA, FAMI, an accredited music therapist and instructor of music therapy in a recent article printed in *Aging Well*.

The Friendship Club employees take that challenge to heart. They incorporate music, in one form or another, as a daily activity. Singing, dancing, song writing and listening to live performances are all offered throughout the month. Art activities may include creating collages, sculp-

tures, weaving or painting. One Township resident, a volunteer at the Friendship Club, was especially impressed with how effective art therapy was with



club members. Now he and his family provide funding for monthly Art Therapy programs at the Friendship Club in collaboration with the Birmingham Bloomfield Art Center.

Studies have shown that participation in art and music therapy provides stimulation which, in turn, promotes people's interest in the world around them. It also boosts memory recall, encourages playfulness and a sense of humor, helps manage pain and discomfort, and reduces boredom. Art and music can reduce the depression and anxiety that people with Alzheimer's often experience.



"Music relaxes me and helps me forget about my problems," said one club member. "It is my favorite part of Friendship Club."

An extra bonus for Friendship Club members is the monthly visit from two certified therapy dogs, Holly and Scarlet. Their owners, both Township residents, bring them in for regular visits so club members can throw balls to them, watch them do their tricks, or just pet them (and receive loving dog kisses in return!)

If you are caring for a person with Alzheimer's disease, you may be able to include some of these activities at home. If you would like to find out more about the Friendship Club, please call 248.723.3500.

Tax assistance offered to Township seniors

Tax assistance for low to middle income residents will be available at the Bloomfield Township Senior Center on the following dates: February 13, 14, 27 and 28; March 12 and 13; and April 9 and 10. AARP trained volunteers will be available from 9:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m. to provide free tax counseling and help in preparing and filing federal, state and local tax returns.

Those taking advantage of this service must bring W-2 forms, copies of last year's tax returns, and pension, interest, dividend and Social Security statements.

Appointments are required. Please call 248-723-3500 to register.



BLOOMFIELD TOWNSHIP BOARD & 2012

ELECTED OFFICIALS

ADMINISTRATION

Leo Savoie, Supervisor
Janet Roncelli, Clerk
Dan Devine, Treasurer

TRUSTEES

David Buckley
Neal J. Barnett
Brian Kepes
Corinne Khederian

APPOINTED POSITIONS

PLANNING COMMISSION

Scot Goldberg, Chairman
Jeff Salz, Vice Chairman
Neal Barnett
Richard Mintz
Thomas Petinga
William Stark
Lisa Seneker

BOARD OF APPEALS

Robert E. Taylor, Jr., Chairman
James Aldrich, Vice Chairman
Brian Henry
David Buckley
Lisa Seneker
Carol Rosati
Tracy Leone
Justin Winkelman
Pam Williams

Save the date...

Spring will be here before we know it. Mark your calendars for the upcoming special events:

March 15

Yard Waste Pick-up Resumes

April 21

Electronics Recycling, Medication Disposal & Paper Shredding

May 5

Household Hazardous Waste Drop-Off Day

Watch for details in the Spring Newsletter.



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

You're invited...

to a free Property Assessment Seminar. Property values and the housing market have been on everyone's mind. Get the latest information and answers to your questions. The Bloomfield Township Assessing Department will hold a Property Assessment Seminar at the Bloomfield Township Library on Thursday, January 19, 2012 from 7 to 9 p.m. The Department will present general information including a review of Proposal A, sales study numbers, market analysis and data on foreclosures. The focus of the seminar is on understanding your assessment change notice and the procedure to appeal your assessment, including how to prepare for the March Board of Review.



Call 248.433.7710 or 248.433.7793 to reserve your place or for more information.

STRATEGIC PLAN from page 3

employees have been on pay freezes for the last two years. All employees are making a greater contribution to their health care plan. Changes in the health care program alone saved the township approximately \$1,500,000 in premiums last year.

We are keeping assets longer. It was not too long ago that cars were replaced when they reached 50,000 miles. Our normal replacement today is at 100,000 miles. Anything over that substantially reduces the resale value of vehicles and more importantly, the repair costs tend to increase exponentially.

We joined the Southeastern Oakland County Water Authority (SOCWA). This allows Bloomfield Township to purchase water for approximately 20% less than what it was costing us through the City of Detroit. While water and sewer bills have increased, the increase would have been much higher had we not joined.

We seek ways to restore

revenue without increasing taxes. We now receive payments, typically from insurance companies, for EMS hospital transport service. Using our fire department to provide this service rather than a private ambulance company generates approximately \$900,000 per year of additional revenue with very minimal additional costs to the Township and with no additional costs to the residents. (See article on page 5.)

Consolidation or sharing services with other communities also can add revenue and/or reduce costs. For a contractual fee we handle planning, building inspections, and assessing for Sylvan Lake. We have done this without adding any additional personnel. Our own personnel had the capacity to do more work but we could not let a person go in those departments without adversely affecting services to our own residents.

These steps and others follow the goals identified in the Strategic Plan. Department heads review the Plan, now almost three years old, every month. It reminds everyone of the work we need to accom-

Keep home values high

Please do your part this winter to keep your neighborhood looking the best it can. Comply with the Township's Open Storage Ordinance by placing recreational devices, seasonal sports equipment, maintenance equipment, etc. out of public view. Property maintenance is key to sustaining the value of your home and neighborhood. Contact the Ordinance Division at 248-594-2845 with any property maintenance questions.

plish to get us through these difficult times.

This "change in government" has occurred because everyone has worked together. We, as residents, approved the additional millage that provided the resources to continue to make our community one of the most desirable places to live in Michigan. The employees have contributed with pay freezes, higher contributions to their health care costs and doing more work with fewer people. I can tell you wholeheartedly every employee is committed to resident satisfaction. We continue to search for additional ways to reduce costs and insure that dollars spent are spent in the most prudent, fiscally responsible manner.

Remember, if you have a problem or question, make me your first call, not your last. Local government is the only place you can see your tax dollars working directly for you. I believe government should be efficient and I will make sure we operate as an example to every other community.



A NOTE FROM

Leo Savoie, Bloomfield Township Supervisor

Strategic Plan keeps Township on target

Early in 2008 Bloomfield Township embarked on a plan to weather the economic turmoil that was in its early stages. Although property values had not yet started to tumble, it was apparent a significant drop was coming. The decline in property values would eventually lead to a decline in revenues. That would have to be countered with a reduction of personnel, ultimately resulting in cuts to services. The Board and administration developed a Strategic Plan to use as a guide to insure Bloomfield Township could balance its budget but still maintain the services and quality of life we expect as residents.

As background, in 2008/2009 Bloomfield Township had a tax base of \$3,948,259,831 and total revenues of \$41,162,848. In 2011/2012, the tax base is \$3,155,385,640 and total revenues \$34,326,689, excluding 1.3 new millage and new EMS fees. See the chart.

As you can see, without the millage and the EMS fees, Bloomfield Township's total operating revenue would have fallen 16.6% over these four fiscal years, the result of the 20% reduction to the tax base over that period of time. Fortunately, because voters

Year	Tax Base	Total Revenues
2008/2009	\$3,948,259,831	\$41,162,848
2009/2010	\$3,878,712,490	\$38,214,251
2010/2011	\$3,404,549,680	\$35,022,104*
2011/2012	\$3,155,385,640	\$34,326,689*

*excluding 1.3 new millage approved by voters in 2010 and new EMS fees.

approved the 2010 millage and the Board decided to provide EMS transport services, (see *article on page 5*), revenues to the major operating funds ended up being \$40,386,017 for 2010/2011 and in 2011/2012 are projected to be \$38,428,689. This resulted in a 6.6% revenue decline over the four-year period instead of the anticipated 16.6% drop.

These revenues are used to maintain and operate our police department, fire depart-

ment, road department and the general operations of the Township.

The Strategic Plan identified four categories to focus on from 2009 through 2014. They are Residents' Expectations, Financial Considerations, Infrastructure and Personnel.

These categories are intertwined and must be considered as a group because a change in one will impact the others.

First and foremost are the Residents' Expectations. We have all gone through tumultuous times. Some of us, through no fault of our own, have faced job loss and foreclosures. Impacted by short sales in our neighborhoods and the resulting decline in property values, we have been

forced to "tighten our belts" and adjust our budgets.

On the other hand, residents in our community tend to be highly educated and have above average incomes. We all value living in a safe and attractive community. We expect quick responses for the services we need from our local government.

How do we continue to meet the expectations of residents when revenues are declining? As indicated above, revenue temporarily rose from the 2009/2010 to the 2010/2011 budget year. The 1.3 millage increase accounted for approximately \$4,400,000 of the increase and the new EMS fees accounted for approximately \$938,000 of it. This temporary increase was critical. It allowed us to set some money aside in anticipation of future revenue declines.

Still, we needed to reduce costs. We cut our staffing by 23 people, or approximately 10% over the last several years. Non-union employees have been on pay freezes for the last three years. Union

Please see **STRATEGIC PLAN** on page 2

Red Wings GM visits Township Fire Department

Fire Chief Dave Piché recently invited Detroit Red Wings General Manager Ken Holland to visit the Bloomfield Township Fire Department and speak about the organizational success of the Red Wings. Fire Department personnel learned ways to improve team building and develop best business practices. Holland also addressed the importance of sound character and integrity in creating a successful organization, speaking about hiring and keeping good people.

Bringing in someone from outside the firefighting culture brought new perspectives to the Department. Township Supervisor Leo Savoie, Clerk Jan Roncelli, Police Chief Kirt Bowden and DPW Director Tom Trice also attended the event.

"The Red Wings are a model organization," says Chief Piché. "We can get good insights from them to build the Fire Department into the best it can be."



Red Wings General Manager Ken Holland spent time with Township firefighters



From the Police Department

Police Department offers Concealed Pistol License class

A group of Bloomfield Township women, all friends, recently took a Concealed Pistol License (CPL) class offered by the Police Department. One of the women was very comfortable with guns; she has hunted for decades. Another had never touched a weapon before and took the class only because her husband insisted. The others had experience somewhere in between. However, they all had two things in common – spouses who legally carried concealed weapons,

and the desire to know how to use those weapons if it ever became necessary.

In spite of their different levels of experience, they all passed the written exam and the firearms qualification and may now obtain a Concealed Pistol License if they wish. The one who had never handled a gun before was pleasantly surprised about the class and admitted to the instructor and her husband that it was nothing like she thought it would be.

Bloomfield Township's class



Gun safety is emphasized in CPL class

is distinguished from others around the state because it is

taught by two veteran police officers who are certified firearms trainers. The eight-hour class consists of five hours of classroom instruction and three hours of range time. Typically, a student will shoot between 50 and 100 rounds during this training. If the student does not already own a pistol, one will be provided for use in the class.

To inquire about the next class, contact Ofc. Pete Matejcik at 248.433.7724 or via email, pmatejcik@bloomfieldtwp.org.

What were the high points of 2011?

January	Bloomfield Township starts 2 nd year with new health care program that reduced health care costs by \$1.5 million in its first year.
March	Fire Department ended 2010-2011 fiscal year with higher than projected revenue – more than \$900,000 – from collection of EMS transport fees from insurance companies.
April	Standard & Poor's upgraded Township's bond rating to AAA.
June	Agreements were finalized with all employees that eliminate future legacy costs for retiree health care.
July	Township joined SOCWA, enabling us to purchase water at 80% of the cost of purchasing it from City of Detroit.
July	Leo Savoie was appointed Supervisor, filling the remaining term of retiring Supervisor Dave Payne.
July	Board of Trustees began televising its meetings.
August	Agreements signed with Sylvan Lake to provide assessing services, building inspections and plan reviews; could add up to \$54,000 in combined revenues.
August	Classic Car Show, the Township's Woodward Dream Cruise event, approached sell-out numbers and raised \$9,000 for local charities.
October	Open House included all departments and offered free activities and demonstrations to approximately 1,000 people.
November	Police Department continued Concealed Pistol License class which, with earlier Citizens' Academy, gave a chance to learn more about public and personal safety.
December	Senior Services tallied 1,000 new registrations for the year, bringing a record number of people into the new facility for activities, classes and services.

Last call! Police Academy is filling up fast

The Bloomfield Township Police Department will be hosting its 2012 Citizens' Academy on Thursday evenings this winter. Definite dates will be determined once class enrollment is complete.

The aim of the Citizens' Academy is to give Bloomfield Township residents the opportunity to learn more about their police department and how it operates. There is no cost for the course, but seating is limited to the first 30. A cursory criminal history check will be conducted on each applicant prior to acceptance to the Citizens' Academy.

There are a few spots remaining in the upcoming Academy. Call soon to reserve your space!



For more information or to apply to the Citizens' Academy, call Officer Pete Matejcik at 248-433-7724 or email pmatejcik@bloomfieldtwp.org



From the Fire Department

EMS adds medical transport, increases revenue

After completing its first two years of transporting patients to area hospitals, Bloomfield Township's EMS division has surpassed its revenue projections for the relatively new service and has enhanced emergency medical care for residents and other patients. And that's not all. Although the additional service comes at no cost to taxpayers, it enables the Fire Department to maintain its current quick response times for all types of emergencies despite steadily increasing demand.

"This is a win-win-win situation for patients, taxpayers,

and the Township," said Fire Chief Dave Piché. "When we transport patients ourselves,



EMS transport adds revenue to the Township budget

we can give them continuous care. We also recover some of

our costs, which helps sustain sufficient personnel levels to properly carry out all our crucial emergency functions."

Formerly, EMS gave patients who needed advanced life support (ALS) the treatment they needed at the scene but a private ambulance company was primarily responsible for transporting them to a hospital. The patients'

insurance typically paid the ambulance company. Now

EMS personnel transport them instead and the insurance company pays the Township.

Revenue from emergency transports was \$938,204 in the 2010 – 2011 budget year and is expected to be about that amount again for the 2011 – 2012 budget year.

EMS medical runs reflect the increasing demand on all Fire services. In 2004 there were 1,997 medical runs (not all of these were hospital runs). By the time the data is compiled for 2011, that number is expected to be approximately 2,500, or an increase of 20%.

Presidential primary coming in February

Bloomfield Township voters are encouraged to participate in the state's 2012 Presidential Primary on February 28, 2012. Several features of this election warrant explanation, including a closed primary, party participation formula and the citizen verification question.

A closed primary establishes

the Absent Voter Ballot Application. The applications were mailed in December.

Ballot style selection (Democrat or Republican) will be recorded in the Qualified Voter File (QVF) for 22 months and will be available to the public during that time, subject to the Freedom of Information Act (FOIA).

The party participation formula determines eligible political parties that can participate in this primary. Only the Republican and Democratic parties are eligible to participate in Michigan's 2012 Presidential Primary. A political party that received less than five percent of the total vote cast nationwide for the office of president in the last presidential election is ineligible to participate in the primary.

Along with the legislation for the closed primary, a new citizen verification question has been added to both the Application to Vote and the Absent Voter Ballot

Application forms (Are you a United States Citizen?). This question will appear on these forms permanently, starting with the Presidential Primary.

Exercise your right to vote on Tuesday, February 28, 2012. Voting is the foundation upon which our democracy was built. The polls will be open from 7:00 a.m. - 8:00 p.m. Visit our website for the final list of candidates and further details: <http://www.bloomfield-twp.org/Services/Clerk/Elections.htm>.

DPW from page 6

When asked about his own professional achievements, Trice emphasized the importance of everyone's involvement. "It takes the full support of the Board of Trustees and the whole-hearted cooperation of everyone on staff to make a department run well, as well as the acceptance of the residents in the community" he said. "If any piece is missing, the sum total doesn't add up."

Move cars during snow emergencies

Bloomfield Township's Snow Emergency Ordinance requires that cars be moved from streets within six hours



of a declared snow emergency. Residents will be notified about snow emergencies by an announcement from the Township, by way of radio and television stations, including Bloomfield Community Television. The hotline, 248-594-2848, will also inform callers when a snow emergency is in effect. Please remember that noncompliance with this ordinance may result in a fine of up to \$100 and illegally parked vehicles may be impounded.



the following procedures: There will be at least two ballot styles: Republican and Democrat (three if nonpartisan candidates or proposals are added to the election). Ballot style selection must be indicated in writing. Voters at the polls will indicate their ballot style on the Application to Vote. Absentee voters will indicate their ballot style on

Public Works employees maintain high standards to serve the public

Bloomfield Township's Director of Public Works, Tom Trice, recently fulfilled the eligibility requirements for the Donald C. Stone Level 4 Leadership Fellow program. The American Public Works Association awards this credential to professionals who commit to excellence in public works and mentor aspiring executives in that field. Tom is the only person in Michigan to have achieved this honor.

Tom, with full support from the Board, sets similarly high standards for every Department of Public Works (DPW) employee. The Department includes four divisions: Roads, Water & Sewer, Building & Grounds, and Fleet Maintenance. The employees in these divisions labor largely unseen by residents as they perform services that are vital to the community's public safety.

Every DPW employee (except for some office staff members), regardless of division, must obtain a Commercial Drivers License within a certain amount of time from his or her date of hire. This assures the employees are professional, among other things, and that there will be suffi-

cient trained staff to safely and effectively plow snow during a major snow fall.

To become certified by the state of Michigan to operate the water distribution and sewer systems, an employee must pass an extremely technical examination.



Water Division foreman Ken Brown in the Westbourne Water Pumping Station.

It is vitally important that employees understand the complex system that delivers safe drinking water to residents. They must also ensure that your home has adequate water pressure and efficient sewage disposal.

The Township owns and operates a fleet of vehicles, large road and water & sewer equipment, fire engines, ambulances, and police vehicles worth approximately \$14,000,000. Motor pool staff members must all be certified by the State of Michigan as Master Mechanics. They develop and follow a repair, maintenance and replacement schedule that keeps the fleet operating at maximum efficiency.

The Department goes well beyond federal and state requirements to make sure employees work safely. They are required to participate in monthly training sessions that reinforce the proper methods of carrying out key operations.

Looking to the future, the Board recognizes the value in preparing for tomorrow's leadership. All supervisory DPW staff members are required to attend a three-year leadership development course taught at Central Michigan University, the Michigan Public Service Institute. They learn how to tap into the strengths of each of their employees to put together an effective team of workers.

Please see DPW on page 5

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

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BLOOMFIELD TOWNSHIP



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