

March, 2013

ADMINISTRATION

Twp Hall - 668-0270
Cemetery
Clerk
Information
Manager
Supervisor

Assessing - 669-6494

Building - 668-0278

DARA – 482-5117

Fire - 669-0071
Administration

Planning/Zoning
669-6576

Police - 669-6578
Administration

Treasurer - 668-1411

CLINTON COUNTY

1-888-224-2450
Toll Free

**POLICE & FIRE
ASSISTANCE**

Fire - 9-1-1
EMT/Ambulance
Police - 9-1-1
State Police – 322-1911

TOWNSHIP BOARD

Supervisor
Rick Galardi
Clerk
Diane Mosier
Treasurer
Phyllis Daggy
Trustees
Johanna Balzer
Steve Musselman
Brian Ross
David Seeger

Manager
Rodney H. Taylor

www.dewitttownship.org

Welcome Township Trustee Johanna Balzer

In November, the Township Board was excited to welcome its newest member. DeWitt Township has been her home for her entire life. She and her husband Ron (married 42 years) live on the family farm, along with their two daughters, their husbands, and four grandchildren. Johanna graduated from Bath Community Schools, attended Lansing Community College, and earned a B.A. in social work from MSU. She provides leadership to the Clinton County Democratic Party and was named the 2012 Precinct Delegate of the Year by the Democratic Party for the 8th Congressional District. She is a past member of the Township's Compensation Commission, a current member of the Daughters of the American Revolution, an active member of the Farm Bureau, and is also involved with the Gunnisonville Historical Community Preservation group. In 2008, after more than 25 years of employment, Johanna retired as Associate Director of Michigan Church World Service/CROP.



TOWNSHIP RECEIVES PUBLIC ART GRANT

The Township is excited to announce that it is one of two communities receiving the very first Lansing Economic Area Partnership (LEAP) Public Art Communities Grant. The \$10,000 grant is awarded to a municipality to commission, create and install a piece of public sculpture that will strengthen economic development by enhancing the sense of place for residents, businesses and visitors. This grant will allow the Township to install a sculpture at the northwest corner Old US-27 and Sheridan Road and act as a gateway sign welcoming and defining the entrance to DeWitt Township for people traveling north out of the City of Lansing. A citizen Committee has been created to evaluate artists' proposals and the piece is expected to be installed by October, 2013.

For several years, the Township has been working to stabilize and grow the south central tier. The south central tier starts at the Township's southern border of Sheridan Road, and encompasses the neighborhoods east and west of Old US-27, north for approximately a mile and a half. Since the creation of the South Central Area Plan in 2009, the Township has undertaken more than 18 initiatives to help bring positive change and growth to this area.

The installation of a public art piece will allow the Township to continue its effort to make this area unique. Currently, as you drive north of Lansing, you are not aware that you have left the City of Lansing and are entering DeWitt Township. The Township's goal is to spur economic development and enhance the quality of life of the neighborhoods through a concerted effort of new programs and services. In a few years, we expect that when you say "Valley Farms Corridor," you will picture an area with a strong commercial corridor and growing neighborhoods with affordable, charming homes.

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The LEAP Public Art Communities Grant will allow the installation of an art piece/gateway sign that will strengthen civic identity and community pride and also create a cultural economy. Our goal is to create a surprising and unexpected element along the Valley Farms Corridor and then build on it by enhancing the streetscape, building non-motorized transportation assets, adding public buildings, improving building facades, and enhancing the overall quality of life for those living and working in the area. This art piece is only the beginning of placemaking for the corridor; however, it is a critical piece that will bring the energy to rejuvenate the corridor.

IT'S THE LAW

A new feature in our Newsletters is the "It's the Law" section. We've asked our Police Department to provide answers/articles to questions commonly asked by the public. If you have any questions on these articles, or have a suggestion for a topic, contact the Township's Police Department at 517-669-6578.

Question: How high can my motorcycle's handlebars be?

Answer: Handlebars of a motorcycle – Sec. 661a states "A person shall not operate on a public highway of this state (Michigan) a motorcycle or moped equipped with handlebars that are higher than 15 inches from the lowest point of the undepressed saddle to the highest point of the handle grip of the operator." This means "Ape Hanger Handlebars" may not exceed 15 inches above the lowest point on the motorcycle/moped seat. If so, you will be responsible for a civil infraction. Riders, check your handlebar's height to ensure you are in compliance.

Question: If you are driving northbound on Old US-27 and a school bus is stopped on the southbound side with flashing red lights, do you have to stop?

Answer: No. Michigan Motor Vehicle Code states if a highway has been divided into two roadways, by leaving an intervening space, (which would be the center turn lane or physical barrier) you need not stop upon meeting a school bus. Motor Vehicle Code 257.682(2).

PROPERTY VALUE CHANGES FOR 2013

Annual "Change of Assessment" notices were mailed to all Township property owners the last week in February. Unless there has been new construction or improvements made to your property, Proposal A (enacted in 1994) limits your taxable value increase to 5% or the rate-of-inflation, whichever is less. For the 2013 assessment/tax year, the inflation rate multiplier is 1.024, which means your taxable value could increase up to a maximum of 2.4%. However, if your assessed and taxable values are the same, and the assessed value decreases, the taxable value will also reflect the same decrease. Your notice will also show: increase or decrease in the property assessment, change in taxable value, an approximate change in property taxes based on the new 2013 taxable value and also the percentage of Principal Residence (Homestead) /Agricultural Exemption that the property is receiving.

BOARD OF REVIEW – Will meet the week of March 11, 2013. Please see the specific times for appointments printed on the assessment notice, as well as published in the DeWitt-Bath Review and the Lansing Community News. The Board of Review serves as an appeal board, listening to the concerns of property owners regarding assessments and values established by the assessor. If you have a question regarding your assessment or wish to schedule an appointment with the Board of Review, please call the Assessing Office at 517-669-6494. Residential property owners should also verify that the "**% Exempt as Homeowners Principal Residence**" is also correct. If your residential property is your primary residence, the percentage should read 100%.

NEW CLINTON COUNTY 911 DIRECTOR TAKES THE HELM



Clinton County's new 911 Director, Christine Collom, comes to us from Isabella County. Christine worked for Isabella County in their 911 Center for 21 years, working her way up from Dispatcher to Director of 911. Christine looks forward to the challenges of working in a somewhat larger dispatch center. Her initial goals are to continue with and finalize some major projects already underway and to help find ways to streamline the efficiencies of dispatching.

Christine is married and has three children. She also comes from a background rich in emergency services with her father having been a firefighter.

CLINTON COUNTY ARTS COUNCIL

One of the area's cultural icons, the **Clinton County Arts Council (CCAC)**, provides residents with many ongoing art and cultural opportunities. Established in 1981, the Council offers something for everyone.

The CCAC has maintained an art gallery since 1983; offered summer art classes for children since the mid-1980's; created a Concerts in the Park program in the early 1990's; started a railway museum in 2005, complete with full-size rail cars, two of which are over 100 years old; began Homegrown Productions in 2007; and formed the Mint City Singers in 2012.



The **Art Gallery and Gift Shop**, located at 215 N. Clinton in downtown St. Johns, is open year-round. The Gallery sells the work of 60 artists and includes a Traveling Art Program which leases art works to local businesses. It also offers art classes for adults and children, as well as Sunday events held once a month featuring various CCAC artists. **On March 10th from 1 to 3 p.m., the Gallery will feature art work by students from the County's middle schools.** The Gallery is open 10 a.m. to 5:30 p.m. Tuesday through Friday, and from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. on Saturday.

Homegrown Productions, a theater troupe of local residents, offers musicals, dramas and variety shows throughout the year in the Wilson Auditorium which is also located in downtown St. Johns. Some of the shows are performed by highly-regarded groups like Happendance, while several others have been created, written and performed by local talent to enthusiastic audiences. **Their next production is Neil Simon's Plaza Suite which will take place March 15th, 16th and 22nd through the 24th.**

Throughout the summer, the Council sponsors **Concerts in the Park** which take place in the Performance Shell in the St. Johns City Park. The tempo is always upbeat, and the music ranges from classic rock to blues, to country, and lots more. Last year's schedule included local favorites Kitty Donohoe (Irish/Blues/Folk); Bullwhip (Country); Capital City Chordsmen (Barbershop) and others.



The **Clinton Northern Railroad Museum**, housed in the St. Johns Depot, includes historic railroad artifacts and two extensive model train lay-outs, both of which were built over 30 years ago and are being refurbished by volunteers. Outside, three historic rail cars, built in the early 1900's, sit on re-laid tracks. The work to restore them is being done almost entirely by volunteers. An upcoming fund-raiser to help buy restoration materials is **Ireland in Story and Song Continues, featuring Father Eoin Murphy, straight from Ireland, and the Mint City Singers. The program is on March 14th at 7 p.m. at the VFW Hall in St. Johns.** The Railroad Museum is open on Sundays, 1-3 p.m., May through October.



The **Mint City Singers** were formed to provide opportunities for people of the surrounding community to sing and perform in a community based choir. This is a group that gets around. They have performed at many local events such as National Night Out, numerous private venues and in 2013 plan to perform at the Mint Festival and Concert in the Park Series.

The Council is fortunate to receive funding support from membership fees, sponsorships by local businesses; and grants from Michigan Council for Arts and Cultural Affairs and the National Endowment for the Arts, as well as through numerous fundraising events. For more information

about the CCAC and its events check out our website at www.clintoncountyarts.org.

DeWitt Kiwanis...*investing in local youth and community improvement.*



"Kiwanis International is a global organization of men and women volunteers, dedicated to improving the world, one child and one community at a time."

The DeWitt Kiwanis Club was chartered in 1987 by local residents to do exactly what the preamble states. The Club meets weekly and learns about needs in the community through guest speakers. The Kiwanis organization offers members leadership opportunities, District training events, conventions, and opportunities to meet and exchange ideas with other Kiwanis clubs throughout our Division and the Michigan District.

DeWitt Kiwanis has a 45 minute breakfast meeting on Wednesdays at 7:00 AM at the Prairie Creek Golf Course, 800 E. Webb Drive in DeWitt. Drop in to visit and have breakfast, or call the numbers listed below. Here is a list of local Kiwanis projects:



3rd graders enjoy "Dictionary Jeopardy"

- The Club annually funds two \$1,000 Scholarships for DeWitt High School (DHS) Seniors.
- The Club recognizes two Junior High School Students of the Month each month.
- The Club provides financial support to Safe Center, a resource for help with domestic and sexual abuse.
- Annually, since 2001, the Club has provided each DeWitt 3rd grader with a personalized Student Dictionary.
- DeWitt Kiwanis supports a Builders Club at the DeWitt Junior High School. They plan and perform service projects in the school and the community, and experience leadership.
- DeWitt Kiwanis supports a Key Club at the DHS, which also plans and conducts service projects in the school and community.
- The Club enjoys Ringing for the Salvation Army each December. Key Club and Builders Club students often team with us.
- Each Thursday throughout the school year, members volunteer to read to kindergarten classrooms at Fuerstenau.
- We serve lunch at the City Rescue Mission twice each month throughout the year.
- A major fundraiser for the Club is the Howard Soltow Golf Tournament held each June at Prairie Creek.
- The Club built the original Cross Country Course for DHS and the community, back in 1988. In 2012, the Club built a new starting area for the course.

The Club is eager to meet you. Contact Bill Fullmer **517-230-2629** or Bill Bupp **517-669-3665** for further information.

SO WHERE DOES ALL OF THAT WATER GO, ANYWAY?

We have all seen the grates at the edge of the curb or in the ditch beside the road. When it rains or snow and ice melts, these drains take stormwater away quickly through underground pipes to assure that roadways will not flood. What we might not realize is that this stormwater is not treated at a treatment plant. Instead, these pipes empty into creeks and streams that feed the wetlands, lakes, and rivers in the Township and County. This means that the actions we take in our own yards and driveways can have a very direct impact on these natural resources.

Sediments are soil particles that erode from bare earth, yards, construction sites, and crop land and then wash into the storm drains. Once they make it to streams, lakes, and rivers, they can cloud the water and block the sunlight that encourages healthy plant growth. They also deposit on stream and river beds, covering the gravel that many fish and aquatic insects use to spawn. Accumulated sediment deposits fill streams and rivers, reducing their capacity and increasing flooding problems. Pollutants can attach themselves to sediments, increasing the chances that they, too, will make it to creeks and streams.

To reduce the erosion of sediments:

- ✓ Stabilize bare soil with grass seed and mulch as soon as possible.
- ✓ Direct downspouts to grassy areas and use splash blocks.
- ✓ Sweep paved areas instead of hosing them down to prevent dirt and other debris from washing into storm sewers.
- ✓ Wash cars, boats, and other recreational vehicles on grassy areas to assure that sediments are not washed away. It also allows the ground to act as a natural filter for detergents and chemicals such as gasoline and oil.

Nutrients come from pet and yard wastes (including grass clippings and leaves), and misapplied fertilizers. They can result in the over-fertilization of lakes, streams, and rivers and in the growth of undesirable weeds and algae. Excess algae can block sunlight. When bacteria decompose pet and yard wastes, it consumes oxygen and can make it more difficult for fish to survive.

To reduce nutrients:

- ✓ Test your soil before applying fertilizer; some soils already contain the proper nutrients for plant growth.
- ✓ Calibrate fertilizer applicators to make sure that they are applying appropriate amounts.
- ✓ Avoid applying fertilizer before or during rain when it can be washed off lawns and into streets and creeks.
- ✓ Keep pet and yard wastes away from storm drains; yard wastes can always be composted.

Household products can contain chemicals that will pollute creeks, lakes, and rivers, killing plant and animal life. Household products should be properly disposed of. Never dump cleaning materials or automotive fluids, such as motor oil or antifreeze, into storm drains or onto the ground. Motor oil and other automotive fluid leaks can be cleaned up with kitty litter or other absorbent material, and disposed of in a waste container.

These are small steps, but when a whole community participates, they can make a big difference.

Upcoming Dates to Remember.....

March 29	Offices Closed – Good Friday
April 11 5-8 pm	DeWitt Community Showcase
May 7	Election Day
May 27	Offices Closed – Memorial Day
July 4 & 5	Offices Closed – July 4 th Holiday
July 19	Meadows Celebration – A Blast in the Moonlight

DARA RECREATION NEWS & UPCOMING EVENTS

The DeWitt Area Recreation Authority (DARA) is located at the DeWitt Township Community Center, 16101 Brook Road, Lansing, MI 48906. Information regarding any event or program can be obtained by calling the DARA office at 517-482-5117. You may register for programs in person at the DARA office, the DeWitt Township Hall (1401 W. Herbison Road, DeWitt) or DeWitt City Hall (414 E. Main Street, DeWitt).

Program Name	Actual Dates	Time of Program Operation	Registration Dates	Age or Grade	Cost (Res/Non-Res)
March Drop Your Kids Off (evening)	3/22	6:00 -11:00 pm	2/1-3/18	4-12 yrs.	\$15/one child \$10/each additional
March Drop Your Kids Off (all day)	3/29	7:30 am – 5:30 pm	2/1-3/25	5-12 yrs	\$25/one child \$20/ each additional
3 v 3 High School Basketball Tournament	3/28	12:30 pm – completion	2/1-3/25	9 th -12 th Grade	\$30 per team
DARA Egg Hunt	3/23	3:00 pm sharp @ Valley Farms Park	No registration	1-10 yrs.	Free
April Drop Your Kids Off (evening)	4/19	6:00-11:00 pm	3/1-4/15	4-12 yrs.	\$15/one child \$10/each additional
Spring Youth Soccer League	4/13-5/18 Sat. Games	9:00 am-1:00 pm (time varies within)	3/1-3/22	4-6 yrs.	\$34/\$49
Adult Golf Lessons	4/10-5/8 Wed or Thurs	6:00-7:00 pm (Hawk Hollow)	2/1-4/3	18 yrs. & Up	\$60 straight fee
3 v. 3 High School Basketball <i>NEW!</i>	4/9-5/14 Tues. Games	5:00-9:00 pm	3/1-3-29	9 th -12 th Grade	\$30/45
Mini Matisses <i>NEW!</i> Preschool Art Class	4/10-5/1 Weds	9:30 am-10:15 am	3/1-4/3	2-5 yrs	\$25/\$40
Sports Starter Spring Session	4/8-5/13 or 4/11-5/16	Mon. 5:30-6:15 pm & 6:30-7:15 pm or Thurs. 9:30-10:15 am	3/1-3/29	3-5 yrs.	\$34/\$49
Spring Break Fun Club	4/1-4/5 Mon-Fri	7:30 am-5:30 pm	2/1-3/15 or when full	5-12 yrs.	\$105/\$120
Basketball University	4/11-5/2 Wed. Nights	5:45 pm – 8:45 pm (times vary by grade)	3/1-4/5	1 st -8 th grade	\$35 straight fee
Youth Yard Sale	5/11	9 am-12 pm	4/5-5/3	5-12 yrs.	\$10/booth
Adult Softball Spring/Summer League	First week of May- late July 12 games +tourney	Evenings Men's Upper/Lower & Co- Ed Leagues	Begins 3/1 until full	18 yrs. & Up	\$290/team + Ump Fee Individual Player Fees: \$5 Res./\$20 Non-Res.
May Drop Your Kids Off (evening)	5/24	6:00 pm – 11:00 pm	4/5-5/20	4-12 yrs.	\$15/one child \$10/each additional
May Drop Your Kids Off (all day)	5/27	7:30 am – 5:30 pm	4/5-5/20	5-12 yrs	\$25/one child \$20/ each additional
T-ball & Pee Wee Baseball	6/3-7/11 Weekday Games	6:00 pm or 7:15 pm Game Times	4/5-5/3	4-7 yrs.	\$44/59
Adult Soccer Leagues Coed and Womens	6/1-7/7	Sunday evenings	4/5 5/24	18+	\$150/team +Ref Fee Individual Player Fees: \$5 Res./\$20 Non-Res.
Summer Fun Club Day Camp	6/10-8/23 (11 weeks)	7:30 am – 5:30 pm	Begins 4/5 & open until full	5-9 yrs.	\$105/\$120 per week
Double Digit Day Camp	6/10-8/23 (11 weeks)	7:30 am – 5:30 pm	Begins 4/5 & open until full	10-14 yrs.	\$105/\$120 per week
Adult Open Volleyball	Wed & Sun Ongoing	7:00-9:00 pm	Drop in	18 yrs. & Up	\$2 per visit

You may register for most DARA programs online by visiting our website at www.dewittrecreation.org. DARA accepts Visa and Mastercard payments for online registrations. You may also print a registration form and mail it in by clicking on our newsletter link from our home page. You may drop off registration forms at the DeWitt Township Hall (1401 W. Herbison Rd.) and DeWitt City Hall (414 E. Main Street) as well. Call the DARA office at 517-482-5117 if you have any questions. You may also follow us on Facebook at <http://www.facebook.com/dararecreation> to receive the most up to date information.

DARA Mission:

DARA promotes community and quality of life through leisure services provided for the residents of the DeWitt Area. Thank you for your continued support!

LANSING/DEWITT SUNRISE ROTARY CLUB



Rotary was founded in 1905 and is, today, the oldest international philanthropic organization. With a motto of "Service Above Self," the main objective remains service to the community and around the world. There are 1.2 million Rotarians in 34,000 clubs, located in 180 countries. These professional members volunteer at home and abroad to support education and job training, combat hunger, improve health and sanitation, and work for world peace. One of Rotary's greatest accomplishments is the eradication of polio, a devastating crippling disease. Rotarians have contributed over \$280 million toward this effort since 1985 and are 99% complete in eliminating this dreaded disease, worldwide.

Lansing/DeWitt Sunrise Rotary Club has 30 members that meet weekly on Thursday mornings at the Capital Region International Airport. Community service programs include, among others, Thanksgiving baskets for the needy, elementary student's backpacks, support of Crown Boxing in north Lansing, Volunteers of America clothing drives, youth support of DeWitt High School with scholarships, leadership camp, and Student of the Quarter awards. International efforts include medical, educational, and MSU study abroad missions to Huamachuco, Peru, youth job mentoring in Calcutta, India, and the provision of clean water to residents of the Dominican Republic. Benefits of membership involve professional networking, personal fellowship, education, and an opportunity to give back to the community.

Please feel free to join us for breakfast on any Thursday morning, 7:30-8:30 am, at the Capital Region International Airport. For additional information or membership criteria, contact Paul Tate at 517-647-7276 or Steve Musselman at 517-668-1209.

9th ANNUAL MEADOWS CELEBRATION - A BLAST IN THE MOONLIGHT

Mark your calendars. The 9th Annual Meadows Celebration is set for **Friday, July 19th**. It's sure to be an afternoon of family fun and a night of entertainment and fireworks at Granger Meadows Park.



CLEAN SWEEP

Clean Sweep will be held on Saturday, May 4, 2013. It's time to get rid of that junk taking up space around your house and haul it down to the Granger Landfill. This is a free program to DeWitt Township residents that allows you to haul a load of junk to the landfill with DeWitt Township picking up the bill. **You must be a DeWitt Township resident and must make an appointment to participate.** For more information or to make your required appointment, call the Township Hall (517-668-0270), beginning Monday, April 1, 2013. Space is limited.

WORKING ELECTIONS IN THE TOWNSHIP

Interesting facts about elections:

- each state has its own Election Law
- Michigan is not a state of "intent" (remember the hanging chads and how did that Florida voter intend to vote?) so the voter must cast their vote in a manner required by law so that vote will be counted
- every ballot issued to the Township is numbered, and must be accounted for or tabulated
- in last year's November Presidential Election, 2,187 absentee ballots were issued to DeWitt Township voters, and 2,154 were returned by our voters to be counted in the precinct on Election Day
- in a large participation election such as last November, it takes as many as 100 Election Inspectors, in addition to numerous Township staff, to conduct the election process.

The Township has seven Precincts. The person who manages each Precinct on Election Day is the Chairperson. This is a tough and challenging job, which requires much preparation and planning. Last November most Township Chairpersons and some inspectors worked as many as 20 straight hours. Please give them a big THANK YOU when you see them out and about in our community.

2012 CHAIRPERSONS:

Nancy Bogner	Sue Chapin	Gail Junion-Metz	Carol Neil
Mary Bowers	Nikki Fowler	Rick Nalett	Vicki Planey

Election Inspectors who worked in a 2012 Election:

Jane Allen	Margaret Chapman	Suzanne Kollmeyer	Bernice Ramsey
Tom Bailey	Debra Churchill	Nancy Kreider	Don Riel
Wally Bailey	Larry Drolett, Jr.	Jim Kurt	Molly Ruble
Norm Beck	Rick Evans	Lael Lineberry	Barb Russell
Gloria Bekke	Lori Fox	Peggy Lippert	Leonard Schumann
Lois Binkley	Tina Gardner	Sandra Lockwood	Rick & Vicky Shepherd
Norene Blodgett	Al & Billie Gladstone	Sue Lusty	Ken & Rae Smyth
Doug Bowers	Doris Goad	Catherine Many	Ray & Elaine Snyder
Helen Boyle	Alexander Goodie	Deb Marines	Geneva Speas
Dale Brown	Dave & Elissa Greenburg	Carol McDonnell	Eugena Stahl
Tamra Buehler	Barb Hardwick	Kathy McNeilly	Donna Stephens
John & Gwen Burgess	Al Harrison	Allen & Neva Miller	Denny & Sue Stiles
Marie Buxton	Gloria Holt	David Neil	Delores Tomanica
Dorian & Shirley Carroll	Camille Hudson	Janet Nekola	Julie Trierweiler
Carol Case	Janet Hundey	Janice O'Connor	Marilyn Washington
Jane Casler	Deb Jaquette	Bob & Sandy Oleson	David Whitlock
John & Sue Chapin	Carol Johnson	Sue Anne Oliver	Mary Ann Woodcock

DeWitt Students who worked as Election Inspectors in 2012:

Lizzy Anast	Nicholas Howell	Gracie Noyola	Rumeet Waraich
Katie Batterbee	Michelle Jonas	Kaylie Stripling	Sydney Ware
Elaina Earl	Kayla Lewis	Philip Talley	Oliver Yockey
Dillon Green	Hannah McManus	Alexandra Toth	

Recently Retired Election Inspectors:

Leo & Pauline Balcer	Lora Mae Higbee-Brazee	Chuck Ruble
Marguerite Botke	Suzanne Kovacevich	Koreen Smith
Jean Feher	Dave Lusty	

THE LOOKING GLASS RIVER – THE HISTORY OF A TOWNSHIP AND REGIONAL TREASURE

Submitted by the Friends of the Looking Glass River

Each year more and more water enthusiasts: kayakers, canoeists, race teams, floaters, swimmers, retriever dogs and owners, picnickers, birders, sight-seers, photographers, anglers, and hunters among them, discover the Looking Glass. Many regulars consider it the hidden treasure of mid-Michigan's rivers. They know that miles of her upstream reaches resemble the wild, scenic and building-less beauty and solitude of Northern Michigan streams. They know her pools, riffles, cool waters and cobble / gravel bottoms are home to dozens and dozens of aquatic life species that support dozens more healthy species of fish, reptiles, birds, mammals, and thousands of tree and plant species.

The watershed is home to a diversity of wildlife: ducks; geese; herons; sandhill cranes; king fishers; songbirds; raptors (eagles, hawks, merlins, falcons, kestrels, owls); black, fox, red and "flying" squirrels; opossums; muskrats; minks; raccoons; badgers; black and red fox; coyotes; whitetail deer and many others. Residents and river users have recently begun reporting the return of river otters, beavers and cougars to the Looking Glass River watershed.

Fish species in the river include: seasonal salmon and steelhead (thanks to fish ladders in Grand River dams), pike, largemouth and smallmouth bass, rock bass, bluegills and other cichlids, carp, mullets/suckers, bowfin, and other warm-water fish and minnows. A wide range of insects, crustacia, muscles (some rare and endangered), reptiles and turtles also inhabit the river, and although they are listed as rare, spiny soft-shell and Blanding's turtles are common in the Looking Glass.

Desirable communities are noted by the quality of their school systems, efficient governments, fair tax structures, well-maintained infrastructure, proximity to parks and green spaces, air quality and abundant natural resources; mature stands of deciduous and coniferous trees, and high-quality lakes and streams among them. As residents come to realize the connectedness of all these community resources and appreciate the effects thereof on their lives, they place higher value on these quality of life indicators. Volunteer groups spring up to care for these community natural resources realizing governments and taxes cannot do it alone.

One such volunteer community group is Friends of the Looking Glass River (FLG), founded by Gloria Miller and DeWitt Township resident Larry Arbanas and others, whose board-directed activities include: annual community education events, public service events such as the annual fall LogJamBee to clear logjams to make the river safe for recreationists and to help prevent soil erosion and sedimentation to the stream. FLG advocates for more safe public access to the river, and assists governmental units including DeWitt Township with river-related work projects. FLG also fields a 24-member team in the Capital City Dragon Boat Race every Labor Day. *The Looking Glass River Dragons* took silver this year and bronze last. Township resident and veteran dragon boat paddler Ione Berg captains the *Dragons*.

The Friends of the Looking Glass board of directors joins with your DeWitt Township officials, administration and staff, in asking that each of you and your families reflect on the value that you place on your considerable community assets and seriously consider volunteering with a community group on a regular basis. In order that *all* area volunteer groups remain viable they need vibrant new blood, they need creative new ideas, and a projects list. There is no shortage of the latter. For more information on the Looking Glass River or to join the Friends, visit www.lookingglassriverfriends.org.

MNRTF GRANT AWARDED

The Township applied for, and received, a grant from the Michigan Natural Resources Trust Fund (MNRTF) for the installation of a canoe/kayak launch and bank stabilization at the Looking Glass Riverfront Park located on Herbison Road. The project includes the removal of the existing platform and headwall, bank stabilization, ADA path and parking, and the installation of an EZ-Launch. The City of DeWitt also applied for the same grant for a canoe/kayak launch at their Riverside Park. Total cost of the project is approximately \$115,700, with the grant paying for up to 67% or \$78,000. (see page 12 for a picture of the EZ-Launch)

COMPLETE THE STREETS NON-MOTORIZED TRANSPORTATION PLAN IN PROGRESS

For many decades, the focus on developing roads in America has been on moving cars as quickly and efficiently as we can. Unfortunately, this has created road networks that sometimes are not conducive to other forms of transportation such as bike and pedestrian traffic. Recently a new concept known as “Complete Streets” has emerged. Complete Streets takes a broad look at the area within the road right-of-way and designs this area to enable safe, attractive, and comfortable access and travel for all users, including pedestrians, bicyclists, motorists and public transport users of all ages and abilities.

For well over a year, DeWitt has been working towards creation of a Complete Streets plan or, also known as, a Non-Motorized Transportation Plan (NMTP). The Plan will provide a guide for the future development of assets such as sidewalks, pathways, wide shoulders, and bike lanes. It is recognized that these assets greatly add to the quality of life of a community and its ability to grow and prosper. By having a strong network, it helps make a community more inviting and enjoyable to live, work and play.

The process for developing a Non-Motorized Transportation Plan started with DeWitt Township’s Strategic Plan and Comprehensive Plan which recognized the importance and need for non-motorized transportation. A non-motorized transportation committee was formed by the DeWitt Township Board, that currently consists of 11 residents and 2 Clinton County representatives, who were tasked with identifying issues, goals, and prioritizing future projects. The committee is close to completing their work, and a draft Non-Motorized Transportation Plan will be available for public review and comments this spring. Once the Plan has been reviewed by the public, it will be forwarded to the Planning Commission and Township Board for review and implementation.

Once the Non-Motorized Transportation Plan and associated ordinances are officially adopted, it will require new developments to comply with these requirements. The recommendations of the Plan will also be integrated into future road maintenance projects. An example of this is Turner Road. In 2012, the Road Commission added a bike lane to Turner Road between Sheridan and State Road. By 2015, Turner Road will be repaved and widened all the way to Herbison Road.

If you would like more information about the Non-Motorized Transportation Plan, please contact the Planning Office at 517-669-6576.

UPCOMING COMMUNITY EVENTS

DeWitt Community Showcase – Thursday, April 11th 5 – 8 p.m. DeWitt Charter Township, DeWitt Public Schools, the City of DeWitt and the DeWitt Area Chamber of Commerce and our sponsors proudly present our Second Annual Community Showcase. This event, in partnership with other community supporters, is intended to highlight our community businesses and non-profit groups. For more information, visit www.dewittcommunityshowcase.org.

Medical Disposal Programs – Properly dispose of unwanted or expired medications through one of the programs noted below. Do not put medications “down the drain” or in the trash.

March 23rd - from 10 a.m. – 2 p.m. at the Bath Township Senior Center, 14480 Webster Road, Bath.

April 13th - from 9 a.m. – 2 p.m. at Recycle Rama! Ingham County Health Department, 5303 South Cedar Street, Lansing

April 20th – from 8 a.m. – 2 p.m. at the Clean Community Event in St. Johns. Location to be provided when an appointment is made.

June 7th - from 2 p.m. – 5 p.m. at the Sparrow Clinton Hospital Pharmacy, 901 South Oakland Street, St. Johns

Recycle Rama! – April 13th from 9 a.m. – 2 p.m. at the Ingham County Health Department, 5303 South Cedar Street, Lansing. All area residents are encouraged to take part in this tri-county recycling effort. For more information and a list of acceptable items, visit the Department of Waste Management’s page at www.clinton-county.org.

This event is brought to you by Board of Water & Light, City of East Lansing, City of Lansing, Delhi Township, Ingham County Health Department, Peckham, Inc. Michigan Energy Options, Michigan State University, and Community Emergency Response Team.

Clean Community Event – April 20th – from 8 a.m. – 2 p.m. in St. Johns. The Clinton County Dept. of Waste Management (DWM) is planning for the Spring Clean Community Event. This valuable event assists residents to recycle or properly dispose of just about any household generated waste item. For more information and a list of acceptable items and fees, visit the Department of Waste Management's page at www.clinton-county.org. To schedule a required appointment, contact DWM at 989-224-5186 or email recycle@clinton-county.org.

DEWITT DISTRICT LIBRARY INSTITUTES FEE FOR NON-RESIDENT LIBRARY CARDS

As of January 1, 2013, the DeWitt District Library (DDL) has instituted a non-resident library card fee for patrons that do not reside within the DDL's service area. DDL's service area includes residents of the City of DeWitt, DeWitt Township, Bath Township, Riley Township, Olive Township and the portion of Watertown Township who reside outside the Grand Ledge school district.

The annual non-resident fee for an individual card is \$15. Alternatively, a \$30 annual fee will provide a family membership including cards for each member living at the same address. Cards expire one year from date of issue. Non-residents, who work, attend school, own property or a business in the DDL's service area will be eligible to receive a library card at no charge. Proof of employment, school enrollment, or property tax receipt required.

Charging a non-resident fee is standard practice among libraries in Michigan. The DDL has experienced tremendous growth in circulation and computer usage while simultaneously facing decreases in revenue. The Library's budget is largely comprised of funding from property tax allocations from within its district.

The DDL Board of Trustees determined the non-resident card fee by dividing the annual operating cost by the number of the residents in the Library district.

Individuals purchasing an annual membership will have access to the same materials and services available to DDL residents as provided by the policies and their vendor contracts. The Library offers a wide variety of services to non-residents. All in-library services and collections, telephone and in-library reference and information services and all library programs are provided at no cost.

NEWS BITES

CEMETERY ORNAMENTATION – All winter flowers and ornamentation need to be removed from the gravesites by March 15th. Any items left on the gravesites after March 15th will be disposed of by our cemetery personnel. Artificial flowers may remain if they have been placed in an approved urn; however, if they should become faded and unsightly, they may also be removed by staff.

Thinking Spring: No glass, plastic or clay containers of any type are allowed within the cemeteries and they will be removed immediately by staff. Shepherds hooks or hanging containers of any type are also prohibited and will be removed. If you have any questions about the placement of flowers and/or any other ornamentation, please contact the DeWitt Township Clerk's Office at 517-668-0270 and we will be glad to assist you.

UPDATING DIGITAL PHOTOGRAPHS - This Spring, the assessing office staff will continue to visit various residential neighborhoods to take new digital photographs of the exterior of homes to update property records. Since 2011, approximately 2,400 photos have been updated. Assessing office staff will always have pictured ID that identifies them as Township employees.

TOWNSHIP NEWSLETTER

MERCURY THERMOSTAT COLLECTION AND MERCURY THERMOMETER EXCHANGE – The Dept. of Waste Management accepts old mercury thermostats and mercury health thermometers year round at their office located at 1307 E. Townsend Road, Suite 102, in St. Johns. Residents are encouraged to transport their old thermometers and thermostats in plastic ziplock baggies. Thermometers will be exchanged for a new digital one. Thermometers can also be exchanged at the Township Hall and SCCMUA (3671 W. Herbison Road, DeWitt). *Limit of one digital thermometer per person.*

DOGS IN PARKS - Per Chapter 30-22, Section (V) of the Township's Codified Ordinances - Dogs and other household pets cannot be brought onto park property, unless posted. The only areas posted to allow dogs are Padgett Park and in the non-paved section of Granger Meadows Park (located on the south side of Granger Meadows Lane). Dogs must be on a leash of not more than six feet, be under control, and all feces must be immediately removed.

REMINDER – DEWITT'S REDEEMER UNITED METHODIST CHURCH FOOD BANK - you can drop off non-perishables any time of the year at the DeWitt Township Hall. A box is located in the Police Department's lobby. The lobby is always open.

FOLLOW US - www.dewitttownship.org, www.facebook.com/dewitttownship, <http://twitter.com/DeWittTownship>, <http://flickr.com/DeWittTownship>. Find agendas, minutes, community events, job openings, event photos, election information, planning notices and much more.



COMMUNITY E-MAIL BLAST LIST – You can sign up to receive community e-mail blasts regarding community information. Register your e-mail address at www.dewitttownship.org.

INDOOR FACILITY RENTALS - (Community Center gym, kitchen or activity room) are handled through the DeWitt Area Recreation Authority at 517-482-5117. **OUTDOOR FACILITY RENTALS** – If you would like to rent a park picnic pavilion, softball field, inline skating rink, or soccer field, call the Treasurer's Office at 517-668-1411.



Photo of the canoe/kayak EZ-Launch system to be installed at the Looking Glass Riverfront Park located on Herbison Road.