

**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

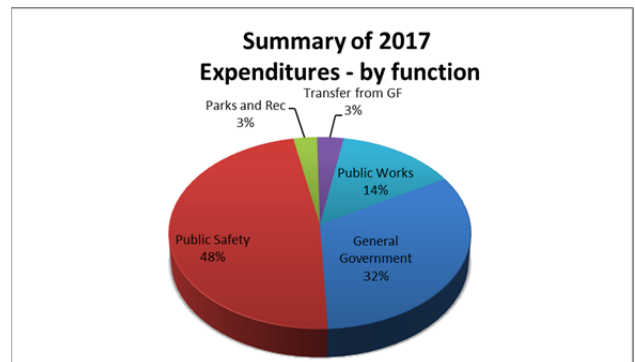
Manager  
Rodney H. Taylor

[www.dewitttownship.org](http://www.dewitttownship.org)

## TOWNSHIP'S FINANCIAL HEALTH

On October 10<sup>th</sup>, the Township Board held a public hearing on the 2017 Proposed Annual Budget. The proposed General Fund Budget is just over \$6 million. This is down from the 2016 budget because of some large projects this year: the purchasing of a fire engine, the sidewalk/pathway projects along Old US-27 and Schavey Road, and the purchase and demolition of a blighted/unsafe apartment building.

Public Safety expenditures make up 48% of this budget, which includes Police, Fire, and Building operations. The next largest share of the budget is dedicated to general governmental services. These include departments such as Clerk, Treasurer, Assessing, Planning, Township Board, Manager, etc. These expenditures make up 32% of the 2017 Township Budget.



One area that has seen large growth in the last few years is the public works category. This includes the Township's at-large share of maintenance on County drains and contributions toward road and sidewalk projects.

Assuming no changes to the 2017 Budget, the Township will be investing \$350,000 into road paving and maintenance projects. This increase in funding over the last several years has had a positive impact on our local road rating. Overall, since 2010, the quality of local roads has increased by 21%. While we are making great progress, we still have 41% of our local roads rated poor (rating of 1 to 4). Additionally, 49% of primary roads are ranked poor. The Township does not fund primary roads; however, these are our major roads such as Clark, DeWitt, Wood and Chandler.

Another big road project for 2017 is the Herbison Road project. A high ranking project on the Township's Non-Motorized Transportation Plan, this project is being made possible by leveraging 75% to 80% of the total cost of the project from State and County sources. This project will repave Herbison Road as well as add a 10 foot pathway from Old US-27 to Turner Road. We are also working with the City of DeWitt to have the pathway extend to the Sports Park and then on to the entrance of the school on Panther Drive.

On the revenues side, the largest source of revenue for the general fund is taxes, making up 45% of the estimated revenue for 2017. For the last four years, the Township has seen an increase in taxable value every year. Unfortunately, the average yearly increase has only been 1.7%. For 2017, taxable value increased by \$8 million or 1.8%. This equates to an increase of just under \$48,000 in additional revenue for the general fund.

While the upward trend for the last four years of increases in taxable value has been positive, taxable value is still down 3.8% or almost \$18 million from its high point in 2008. Since the beginning of the downturn in the economy and the associated decrease in taxable value, the Township has lost \$1,458,225 in revenue. It is estimated that it will not be until 2019 that taxable value fully recovers to its high point in 2008.

One of the largest factors inhibiting the Township in seeing increases in taxable value is Proposal A. This state law limits the increase in taxable value to the rate of inflation. For the last four years, the rate of inflation has averaged only 1.475%. The only reason we have seen larger overall increases in taxable value is because of new home construction and uncapping of values when homes sell.

Over the last seven years, the Township has seen approximately 31 new homes a year being constructed. This equates to approximately \$4,650,000 in new taxable value each year or about \$28,000 a year in new revenue.

The second largest source of revenue of the Township is revenue sharing. For 2017, we hope that revenue sharing will be stable with no real loss or increase over 2016. Unfortunately, because revenue sharing is based upon state sales tax receipts and the will of the State Legislature, it is difficult to predict actual revenues. For the last several years, the Governor has recommended removing a portion of revenue sharing known as CVT (City, Village, Township). If removed, this will decrease revenue sharing up to 3% or approximately \$30,000.

Overall, revenues are down 10% from the 2016 estimate and the 2017 proposed budget. The 2016 budget has almost \$1.5 million in revenues from state grants, an inter-fund loan, and the use of reserves. When these transfers are excluded, revenues saw approximately no increase.

### **General Fund Summary**

One of the primary indicators of health within a governmental entity is the fund balance percentage. The Township's policy is that the undesignated fund balance is an amount equal to 19 to 21% of the average of the last five years of expenditures, and that such balance be maintained at no less than 15%. For the year end 2017, the fund balance is projected at 19%.

The Township's rating from Standard & Poor's is AA-. This is a high rating and reflects a strong capacity to repay debt. Statutes in the State of Michigan limit the amount of general obligation debt a government entity may issue to 10% of its total assessed valuation. The current debt limitation for the Township is \$49,566,560. The net outstanding debt of \$920,445 is only 1.8% of the legal debt limit. With such a low ratio, the Township's current debt levels have minimal impact on current operations.

Overall, going into 2017, the General Fund continues to be extremely strong and stable.

One of the challenges the Township will be facing in the next few years is payment to the defined benefit pension system. While most Township employees are on a defined contribution plan, the Police Unions' employees receive a plan through the Michigan Employment Retirement System (MERS). Over the last 11 years, this plan has the Township's contribution increasing an average of 11.4% a year, with most of these increases coming in the last several years. It is expected that these increases will be escalated in the next five years. While the Township is in a much better position than most of the jurisdictions in the State of Michigan, this will be an area that the Township will need to watch and manage closely.

### **Upcoming Dates to Remember.....**

November 5	Clerk's Office Open 8am-2pm for Absentee Voting and Election Business
November 5	2pm deadline to mail Absentee Ballots
November 7	4pm deadline to vote by Absentee Ballot in the Clerk's Office
November 8	Election Day – Polls open 7am – 8pm
November 20	12:00pm - new terms begin for Township Officers

# ELECTION NEWS – NOVEMBER 8<sup>TH</sup> GENERAL ELECTION

What's on the ballot in DeWitt Township? (Partisan Section) President & Vice President; 4<sup>th</sup> District Representative in Congress; 93rd District State Representative; State Boards – State Board of Education, University of Michigan Regents, Michigan State University Trustees, Wayne State University Governors; Clinton County Offices – Prosecuting Attorney, Sheriff, Clerk/Register of Deeds, Treasurer, Drain Commissioner, County Commissioner; DeWitt Township – Supervisor, Clerk, Treasurer, Trustees; (Non-Partisan Section) Judicial – Supreme Court Justice, Supreme Court Justice (Incumbent Position), 4<sup>th</sup> District Judge of Court of Appeals, 29<sup>th</sup> Circuit Court Judge (Incumbent Position); Lansing Community College Board of Trustees (full term and partial term), Local School District Board Members; Proposals - Clinton Area Transit System Millage Renewal, DeWitt Public Schools General Obligation Unlimited Tax Bond (for those in DeWitt School District).

## Your voter "status" and why it matters . . . . .

DeWitt Charter Township has 11,234 registered voters, and over 2,000 of those voters are on a "VERIFY" status. This means that there is something missing from your voter registration record, such as a required signature, or question about your registered address. We are required to handle these issues before letting a "verify" status voter cast a ballot, and in a busy election like we are anticipating for November, this could slow down the progress at the polls and delay your voting experience. We are attempting to clear up any "issues" with your voter registration status prior to Election Day. If any of the following apply to you, you should contact our office and make sure your voter status is active.

- You have moved into the Township but have not voted here within the past two years
- You have relocated within our community but have not voted at your new address since the move
- You have changed your name but have not voted using your new name
- You have recently turned 18 years of age and registered to vote with someone other than a Township representative or the Secretary of State. This is especially important for college students needing to vote by absentee ballot.

**Going to the polls to vote?** We anticipate that the longest lines in the Precincts will be the first thing in the morning, so plan accordingly. The polls open at 7 am and close at 8 pm. If you do not know your polling location or precinct, call the Clerk's Office at 517-668-0270 and they will get you to the proper location:  
Herbison Woods School – access from Herbison or Schavey Roads, Precincts 1 & 2  
Herbison Road Fire Station – Precincts 3 & 4  
DeWitt Township Community Center – 16101 Brook Road, Lansing, Precincts 5, 6 & 7

It helps to be prepared before you vote in the polls. Sample ballots are available in the Clerk's Office, or the following sites are available for you to view and print a sample ballot. You will need to know your voting precinct and school district to select the proper ballot.

[www.michigan.gov/sos](http://www.michigan.gov/sos), click on Election & Voter Information, and See Your Sample Ballot . . . . .or . . . .  
[www.clinton-county.org](http://www.clinton-county.org), click on Government, then Election & Voter Information under County Clerk

## ABSENTEE VOTING – You may want to give it a try this November.

As of September 1, 2016, the Township has:

- 11,234 registered voters
- 3,408 of those voters are over 60 years of age
- 1,197 of those over 60 are on the Township's "automatic" absentee application list

Does this mean that 2,211 Township voters over the age of 60 will vote in the polls at this November 8th Presidential Election? We want these voters to know they have the option of voting by absentee ballot. If you are planning to go to the polls in November, the Clerk's Office wants you to be aware:

- *If predictions are reasonably accurate, this will not be the typical election you have previously experienced when voting here in DeWitt Township*
- *This will be a fairly long ballot, thus making the wait longer*
- *The average August Primary turnout was 15% in our Township –historically, November could be 85%*
- *Stacking of that many voters can mean waiting outside in the unpredictable November elements*
- *Standing in a long line can be physically challenging for some*

**If you are over 60-you qualify to vote by absentee ballot in Michigan.** If you are in this group, why not vote at home? In DeWitt Township, absentee ballots are transported to the voting precincts to be tabulated with other ballots on Election Day. Please be assured that there is a very detailed balancing process that requires the Clerk's Office to account for, tabulate, and balance records for every ballot issued to every voter, including absentee voters. Among the other reasons to qualify to vote by absentee ballot, the most common are: 1) If you expect to be absent from the community 2) If you physically require the assistance of another to attend the polls.

If you request to be on the "automatic" absentee application list, the Clerk's Office will send you an application for an absentee ballot before every election. You can do this by calling the Township. When you complete the form and return it to us, we can send your ballot in the mail. Absentee ballots are generally available 45 days before Election Day. Coming into the Clerk's Office is also an easy way to arrange to vote by absentee ballot. Absentee voting is available now through 4:00 pm the day before the Election.

**Also: We are open Saturday, November 5<sup>th</sup> from 8 am until 2 pm for Election business, including absentee voting. Absentee Ballots are available until 4 pm on Monday, November 7<sup>th</sup>.**

Let us help make your voting experience one that is problem free. Call us at 517-668-0270, stop into the Clerk's Office, or email us at [dmosier@dewittwp.org](mailto:dmosier@dewittwp.org). We are here to help.



## **SEWER RATES REMAIN UNCHANGED FOR 2017**

For 2017, the Township is not expecting to make an increase in the sewer rates. While generally the sewer rates are increased due to inflation, we have been able to reduce some future expenditures. The sewer plant, SCCMUA (Southern Clinton County Municipal Utility Authority), has a long term capital management plan. This plan helps the plant plan for needed future replacements. Because we are planning for 30 years down the road, the plan changes from time to time. Recently, SCCMUA reevaluated the plan and made a few modifications. For example, one of the projects listed was a \$7 million project to replace a critical component in the plant known as the RBCs (Rotating Biological Contactors). While this project was five years away, SCCMUA staff did a complete evaluation on the need and options for this project. They came up with a new plan that would only cost \$450,000. While we still have millions of dollars in repairs to both the collection system and plant to undertake in the next few years, creative solutions have allowed us to find some reductions in expenses, which translates to the ability to hold sewer rates for 2017.

## **FALL MAINTENANCE TO-DO LIST**

- 1. Have your heating system checked.** Have a heating contractor technician inspect your furnace or heat pump to make sure the system is clean and in proper working condition. They also will check to make sure there is no carbon monoxide leakage. Also, change your furnace filters every two months.
- 2. Check your chimney.** Take a flashlight and look up inside your fireplace flue and check that the damper opens and closes properly. With the damper open, look up the flue and you should see daylight at the top of the chimney. There should not be any bird's nest, branches or leaves blocking the opening. Have a professional chimney sweep clean and check every year for creosote buildup.

3. **Eyeball your roof.** Inspect your roof from the ground with binoculars. Look for missing, damaged, or buckled shingles. Any loose, damaged or missing shingles should be replaced immediately. Check the flashings around the chimney and the rubber boots (flashing) around the vent stacks. Masses of moss on the shingles could signal roofing that's decayed underneath. Call a licensed roofer to check that out.
4. **Clean the gutters.** Having your gutters cleaned out could cost \$70 to \$200 depending on the size of the house. If your gutters are clogged, this could cause water back up against the house and damage the roofing, siding and wood trim, plus cause ice dams and leaks.
5. **Divert the water.** Add or repair extensions to your gutter's downspouts so the water runs four or more feet from the house foundation. This will help prevent foundation problems and water leaking into the lower level areas.
6. **Disconnect your garden hoses.** A hose that's left connected to an outside faucet will trap water inside the faucet. When the water freezes, it expands and can bust open the faucet. Start by disconnecting the garden hoses and let the water drain out of the faucet. If the faucet is not a frost-proof type, then turn off the shut-off valve inside your home. Sometimes, the pipe behind the faucet bursts and sprays hundreds of gallons of water inside the house. Also, drain the water from the garden hose to prevent freezing water from splitting the hose. Make this an early fall priority so a sudden cold snap doesn't sneak up and cause damage.
7. **Lawn irrigation system.** Have your irrigation system professionally drained to prevent burst pipes and damaged sprinklers heads.
8. **Stow your mower.** Your mower sits for six months with gas in its tank, the gas will slowly deteriorate and this can damage internal engine parts. Add a fuel stabilizer in the gas tank. Make sure you run it for 5 minutes to make sure the stabilizer reaches the carburetor. Another method is to run your mower dry before stowing it.
9. **Keep your family safe at home.** Replace your batteries in each smoke detector and carbon monoxide detector. Then vacuum them with a soft brush attachment. Test the detectors by pressing the test button. If you haven't already, install a smoke detector on every floor of your home including the basement and inside each bedroom. Also, the National Fire Protection Association (NFPA) says that smoke detectors should be replaced 10 years after the date of manufacture. You can check the manufacture date by removing the detector and reading the label.
10. **Fire extinguishers.** Every home should have at least one fire extinguisher rated for all fire types. Look for an A-B-C rating on the label. Keep one near the kitchen area; having one per floor isn't a bad idea. Check the pressure gauge monthly to make sure the extinguisher is charged.



If you have any questions, call the DeWitt Township Building Department at 517-668-0278 or email at [crau@dewittwp.org](mailto:crau@dewittwp.org).

## SNOW REMOVAL

Winter will be here before we know it and with winter comes snow. As some may be aware, the Township adopted an ordinance last year that includes provisions for snow removal. Since the Township does not have a completely interconnected sidewalk system, the Township Board adopted a snow removal map to identify key corridors and neighborhoods to address snow removal from sidewalks and shared use pathways within an established time period. Listed below are some general requirements for snow removal:

- Sidewalks and shared use pathways shall be cleared at least 36 inches in width from the outside edge of the sidewalk or path furthest from the street.
- Snow and ice shall be removed from sidewalks or shared use pathways within 24 hours after accumulation or drifting of snow, sleet, or freezing rain; and businesses shall be cleared by the beginning of business hours of the next day, whichever is shorter to ensure safe passage.
  - Exception provided when the wind chill is below zero degrees Fahrenheit.
- In the event of a significant snow or ice event, an additional 48 hours shall be allowed for the removal of snow and ice from sidewalks or shared use pathways.

- o Significant snow/ice event means a period of snowfall of 6 inches or greater within a 24-hour period or ice formation of greater than ¼ of an inch.

The Township Board shall adopt an updated snow removal map again this year and it will be available for view on the Township's website and in the Planning Department this fall. We anticipate that the snow removal map will include the same areas included from last year along with improvements made on Schavey Road this year. The map would include the following areas:

**Neighborhoods Included:**

Arbor Meadows, Creekside, Creeping Brook, Crouner Farms, Hawthorne Woods, Hawthorne Woods East, Villages of Hawthorne, Heritage Glen, Heritage Meadows, Heritage Woods, Northway Hills, Oakland Hills, Ridge Rock, Saffron Hills, Sherbrook, Springbrook Hills, Springbrook Hills East, and Windy Ridge

**Road Sections Included:**

Old 27 (from Sheridan to Northcrest), State Road (from Old 27 to Brook Road), Brook Road (from State Road to Wieland Road), Wieland Road (from Brook Road to Old 27), Schavey Road (from Herbison to Clark Road), Old 27 (between Twinbrook and Webb Road and areas where there are direct and continuous sidewalk connections to Old 27)

Property owners that are found to be in violation of the ordinance for snow removal are subject to fines and/or penalties of a municipal civil infraction. For more information or maps, please visit [www.dewitttownship.org](http://www.dewitttownship.org) or contact the Planning Department at 517-669-6576 for further assistance.

**DO I NEED A PERMIT?**

DeWitt Township has a full service Building Department that provides building, electrical, plumbing and mechanical permits and the required inspections. The permitting process ensures that structures adhere to approved minimum standards of the Michigan Building Codes. This process protects homeowners, guests, and future property owners from unsafe building construction.

When it comes time to sell your house, it is not uncommon for the new buyers to ask for copies of permits on all major additions, renovations, or replacements. Also, some homeowner's insurance policies may not cover work done without permits and inspections, so the value of the property could be reduced and problems may arise when the home is sold. Also, when hiring a contractor, never pay in full prior to completion of the job and final inspection by the Building Department.

A permit is required for:

- New buildings, moving buildings, demolition
- Additions (bedrooms, bathrooms, family rooms, etc.)
- Residential work (decks, garages, carports, sheds, fences, fireplaces, pools, water heaters, etc.)
- Renovations (garage conversions, basement remodeling, kitchen expansions, etc.)
- Electrical work
- Plumbing work
- HVAC (heating, ventilating and air-conditioning systems)
- Any type of swimming pool capable of holding 24 vertical inches of water, including inflatable pools
- Commercial re-roofing, residing or window replacement
- Permanent and some temporary signs

On-site inspections will be required to make certain the work conforms to the permit, building codes and plans. More than one inspection is typically required on most projects. Permit applications can be obtained in person at the DeWitt Township Building Department during normal business hours. Permit applications are also available online in our Documents & Forms section. Completed applications can be mailed back or returned in person to the Building Department.

If you have any questions, please call the DeWitt Township Building Department at 517-668-0278.



## 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	Dates	Time	Registration Dates	Age or Grade	Cost (Res/Non-Res)
Preschool Play	10/6-12/15	10:00 am-12:00 pm	10/6-12/15	1-5yr.	\$2 drop in fee
Flashlight Pumpkin Hunt	10/18	6:30-7:30 pm	9/1-10/11	3-10yr.	\$5/\$10 (Per Child)
Haunted Halloween Trip	10/21	7:00 pm-12:00 am	9/1-10/15	Gr. 6-8	\$45/Child (Covers Bussing and Admission)
Fun Appetit	11/3-12/1	9:15-10:00 am	9/26-10/23	2-5yr.	\$24/\$40
Youth Volleyball Leagues	11/8-12/13	5:30-8:30 pm (times vary within)	10/1-10/23	Gr. 3-6	\$34/\$49
October Drop Your Kids Off (Evening)	10/14	6:00-11:00 pm	9/1-10/12	4-12yr.	\$15/One Child \$10 Each Additional
November Drop Your Kids Off (Evening)	11/5	6:00-11:30 pm	10/1-10/31	4-12yr.	\$15/One Child \$10 Each Additional
December Drop Your Kids Off (Evening)	12/16	6:00-11:00 pm	11/7-12/12	4-12yr.	\$15/One Child \$10 Each Additional
Dinner with Santa	12/12	5:30-6:30 pm or 6:30-7:30 pm	11/7-12/5	0-14yr.	\$6/\$10 (Child Fee) \$3/\$7 (Adult Fee)
Holiday Fun Club	12/22, 12/27, 12/28, 12/29	7:30 am-5:30 pm	11/1-12/12	5-12yr.	\$85/\$100 (All Days) or \$25/res; \$30/non-res (Per Day)

**DARA Mission:** DARA promotes community and quality of life through leisure services provided for the residents of the DeWitt Area. You can register for most DARA programs online by visiting their website at [www.dewittrecreation.org](http://www.dewittrecreation.org). DARA accepts Visa and MasterCard payments for online registrations. You may also print a registration form by clicking on the newsletter link from the home page and then mail it with payment to 1401 W. Herbison Road, DeWitt, MI 48820. Registration forms can be dropped off 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. Follow DARA on Facebook at <http://www.facebook.com/dararecreation> to receive the most up to date information.

## REBUILDING TOGETHER APRIL 2017

Since 2010, DeWitt Township has partnered with Rebuilding Together to help rehabilitate the homes and lives of low-income, elderly or disabled homeowners in the community. On Saturday, April 29, 2017, we will be doing it again! If you, or someone you know, would like to be considered for this program, please call 517-455-5068 (Rebuilding Together voicemail) and leave a message requesting an application or you may call the Township at 517-668-0278. There is no cost to eligible homeowners who are selected. Applications are available now!

To be eligible for this program, you must meet all of the following criteria:

- Own and reside in the home
- Property taxes up to date
- Homeowner's insurance is current
- You are disabled or 60 years of age or older
- Plan to be in the home for at least two years
- Unable physically and financially to complete the requested repairs
- Income at or below \$1,485 per month for a one-person household or \$2,003 per month for a two-person household

This organization operates solely on volunteers so we are always looking for both individuals and groups to help on Rebuilding Day. We are also in need of licensed contractors (all trades) to help with repairs, replacements, permits, etc. If you are interested in donating your services, please call Nicole at 517-668-0278.

## **HALLOWEEN SAFETY**

First-The Spooky News: According to Consumer Reports, more kids get hit by cars on Halloween than any other night. Halloween is one of the most anticipated nights of the year for children. Therefore, it is most important for parents and drivers to be extra vigilant. The reality is that twice as many kids get hit by cars on this night. Trick-or-Treat hours have been set for Monday, October 31st, 6-8 pm.

Here are a few Halloween Safety Tips:

- Never trick-or-treat alone.
- Wear shoes that fit well.
- Never walk near lit candles or luminaries while wearing costumes.
- Buy costumes and wigs labeled "Flame Resistant" just in case.
- Pick a costume that is safe for your child and easy to move in.
- Leave weapons or sharp objects at home-pirate swords-axes-knives-you get the idea.
- Fasten reflective tape to costumes to help drivers see you.
- Carry a flashlight to be seen and help others see.
- Stay on sidewalks whenever possible.
- Eat only factory wrapped treats.
- DO NOT ENTER into a home--unless you are with a trusted adult.
- As always, NEVER accept rides from strangers.

## **SCHOOL'S OPEN--DRIVE CAREFULLY**

Drivers are asked to be especially vigilant for pedestrians during the before and after school hours and to SLOW DOWN through school zones. According to Triple A Traffic Safety, nearly 1 in 4 child pedestrian fatalities occurred between 3pm and 7pm.

Here are some recommendations for drivers and parents to help keep kids safe:

- SLOW DOWN--Speed limits in school zones are reduced for a reason. A pedestrian struck by a car at 25 mph is 60% less likely to be killed compared with a vehicle traveling just 10 mph faster.
- ELIMINATE DISTRACTIONS--Research shows that taking your eyes off the road for just 2 seconds doubles your chances of crashing. Children can be quick, crossing the road unexpectedly or emerging suddenly between two cars. In this day and age, kids can also be on their phones or other electronic devices and not paying attention. Reduce risk by not using your cell phone while driving. Talk to your kids about paying attention when walking and talking or texting on their phones with their heads down.
- REVERSE RESPONSIBILITY--Every vehicle has blind spots. Check for children on the sidewalk, in the driveway and around your vehicle before backing up. Teach your children to never play in, around or under vehicles.
- WATCH FOR BICYCLES--Children on bikes are often inexperienced, unsteady and unpredictable. Slow down and allow at least 3 feet of passing distance between your vehicle and a bicyclist.
- TALK TO YOUR TEEN--Car crashes are the leading cause of death for teens in the United States and nearly 1 in 4 fatal crashes involving teen drivers occur during the after school hours of 3pm to 7pm.

## **JOGGERS-BE SAFE-BE SEEN**

On August 16th, 2016 between 6 - 6:30am, a young DeWitt woman was jogging on Airport Road between Howe and Cutler Roads. She thought she broke her leg while jogging and was confused and disoriented. She crawled off the road and into a ditch and somehow managed to call 911. It became apparent that she had been hit by a car. She will survive; however, she has a long road to recovery. The case is still open. If you have any information on who might be responsible, please call the DeWitt Township Police Department at 517-669-6578 and ask to speak with Detective Schaberg or Chief Russell. Follow these rules:

- If you are going to run, two is better than one and knowing your companion is best.
- Run in a familiar area.
- Do NOT run in a heavily wooded, poorly lit or secluded area.
- If you are running alone, don't wear headphones/earphones.
- If possible, don't run in the dark or in bad weather--pouring rain, white outs, etc.



- Always wear bright colored clothing to improve your visibility. Wear reflective clothing at night.
- Vary your route (or pattern) of running. Don't run the same place the same time every day.
- DO carry a whistle or high decibel battery powered personal alarm device.
- If followed, go to the nearest residence, open business or group of people.
- If possible, run on a sidewalk or pathway. If running on the road, run against traffic so you can be aware of your surroundings.

Be Careful out there--Be Safe and Be Seen!

## VOICES FOR CHILDREN

Submitted by CASA

Recently, when talking with a community member about the work of CASA-The Voice for Clinton County's Children, encouragement was given to share more about the hard stuff and difficult situations Clinton County children we serve have experienced. We share some of our CASA (Court Appointed Special Advocates) kiddos' experiences with caution only because we don't want to think it, we don't want to go there. We don't want to think about a toddler being the caregiver for a younger sibling; a pre-teen being a caregiver for a parent; little ones who disclose sexual abuse and maybe are not believed; little ones in a home with no available food; kiddos who struggle with big emotions; and little ones who have been home during a drug raid.

It is easier to think about kiddos getting ready for summer vacations, going to the beach, having sleep overs, camping--anything but the unsafe and scary situations described. Wrapping our brains around situations no child should experience can be difficult--the situations described are a very brief snapshot of what has happened to Clinton County children.

There are bright spots in these difficult situations—the 9 Clinton County CASA Advocates who support and advocate for children who are in foster care. Their work includes play dough, board games, coloring, helping with homework, playing outside, and navigating life skills. Through the interactions with the children, CASA Advocates present information to the Court to ensure children's voices are heard throughout their experience in the foster care system.

Consider how YOU can be a bright spot and provide a voice to Clinton County children.

- Become a CASA Advocate (kids are waiting!)
- Participate in our events
- Make a financial gift to our program
- Educate yourself and others
- Stay informed through our Facebook page
- Help to spread the word
- *Everyone can do something*

If you would like more information about CASA Advocacy in Clinton County, we would be happy to speak with you. Our work is not easy--but it is always worth it. For more information, please contact our office [517-599-7145](tel:517-599-7145), [clintoncountycasa@gmail.com](mailto:clintoncountycasa@gmail.com), or visit our website [ClintonCountyCASA.org](http://ClintonCountyCASA.org).

## COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT UPDATE

The Township has been experiencing the construction of a lot of projects over the past several months. Listed below is a brief snapshot of some of the current projects that are underway or have recently been approved:

The Quarry Apartments are well into their second phase of building apartments on Clark Road that includes the construction of 19- ten unit buildings that will have attached garages incorporated into the buildings themselves which will be substantially different from the first phase of the development. Currently, four of the buildings are under construction in the second phase.

A new 26,000 square foot sports performance complex is being constructed on Airport Road between Clark and Herbison Road. The facility will contain a gym, a physical therapy component, classrooms, and an indoor turf facility. They are anticipating having the gym open by the end of the year.

Goddard School is an early childhood development center that recently was approved by the Planning Commission to be located at the site of the former L&L grocery store near Herbison and Old 27. The former L&L building will be demolished to provide new opportunities for development of the site.

A new Sparrow FastCare is open in Meijer. The facility provides basic medical services for common, non-life threatening conditions.

Zeeb Pet Health Center, formerly located at the SW corner of Herbison and Old 27, recently moved into the Banquet Center building located behind Bob Evans and Speedway on the east side of Old 27.

Celink is a call center, located in Clark Corners, is expected to have 80 employees.

## DEWITT AREA CHAMBER OF COMMERCE UPCOMING COMMUNITY EVENTS

**ZombieFest.** The Chamber is inviting all Zombie enthusiasts to participate in the ZombieFest scheduled for Saturday, October 22 from 1-4 pm. Free makeup will be available from 11 am -1 pm, Zombie Hunt and Game Walk begins at 1 pm with Wrap-up party, costume contest and prizes for participants from 3-4 pm.

**Annual Chamber Halloween Decorating Contest** will be held Monday, October 24<sup>th</sup>. If you love to decorate for Halloween, then you will enjoy competing with other homeowners for top prizes awarded by the Chamber. Be sure to enter your home by Wednesday, October 19<sup>th</sup> to be eligible for prizes.

The DeWitt Chamber will be hosting a number of events during the Christmas Holidays. **Festival of Trees** will be hosted from November 29<sup>th</sup> - December 3<sup>rd</sup>. Visit the Chamber Office located at 113 S. Bridge Street, DeWitt between the hours of 2-7 pm and bid on your favorite tree. Proceeds will benefit families in need at Christmas. The Chamber's **Light Parade** will also be held on December 3<sup>rd</sup> with step-off time at 5:45 pm and ending with fireworks after the lighting of the tree. The **Christmas Decorating Contest** is open to all residents in the DeWitt area. The more lights the better! Register your home by Friday, December 16<sup>th</sup> to be eligible for judging and prizes on the 19<sup>th</sup>.

**Red Tie Affair** is a terrific evening out and is scheduled for Saturday, February 11, 2017. Prime rib buffet, great entertainment and silent auction. Proceeds benefit the Chamber's Scholarship Fund.

Visit the Chamber's website for additional event details. [www.dewittareacc.org](http://www.dewittareacc.org) or contact the Chamber Office at 113 S. Bridge Street, DeWitt, 517-624-2953.

## SERVING THEIR COMMUNITY

### SCCMUA Commissioner - Mark Helinski



Mark and Rachel Helinski live in the Looking Glass Subdivision, so in 2005 when the Township was looking to fill a vacancy on the Southern Clinton County Municipal Utilities Authority (SCCMUA) Board, Mark's application caught our eye. Mark, a Civil Engineer, lives just west of the SCCMUA facility, in a neighborhood that benefits from open communication with the SCCMUA staff and Board.

SCCMUA, (or the Clean Water Plant) processes wastewater from the four owner municipalities of DeWitt Township, Bath Township, the City of DeWitt, and Watertown Township. For those of you who do not have a septic tank and drain field, when you flush, "it" is headed for this Herbison Road facility just west of Schavey Road. Mark serves as one of ten Commissioners on the SCCMUA Board.

Mark says that he has learned about regionalism from serving on this Board, where the needs of four communities can be met in a shared facility. He says that he continues to serve because it has become a part of his life, kind of like an additional family member because he cares about the organization's health and maintenance so that it will be here for all of us for years to come.

When Mark is not serving or working, he enjoys the outdoors, loves to go camping and to the beach with his family, and attending sporting events and concerts. Carter, his oldest son, will be attending Michigan State University this fall studying Environmental Studies and Sustainability (ESS). Jared, his youngest son, is a senior at DeWitt High this fall, and he is active with the High School Soccer Team and the Marching and Jazz Bands. From Mark: "I had a teacher in High School stress that in order to make a difference in the world, you have to give back. My SCCMUA appointment and prior Soccer Club involvement is just one way that I could give back and be involved with my community and neighborhood."

### **DARA Commissioner - Doug Simon**



In 2003 the Township spent many months negotiating with the City of DeWitt to agree upon a partnership which resulted in the formation of DARA, the DeWitt Area Recreation Authority. DARA has been a successful partnership for both the Township and the City, ensuring the citizens are well served for their recreation needs, at a cost which is far less than operating two separate recreation departments. Since 2004, Doug Simon has been an important part of this success, serving as a member of the DARA Board and Chairman since 2013.

Clearly, Doug recognizes the importance of DARA. His children were active in DARA programs, where he volunteered as a coach. He says that he agreed to serve because he has always felt it is important to give back to the community, but that he continues to serve because of his commitment to the continued success of DARA. He notes that support from the Township Board and City Council has made it easy for the DARA Board to focus on helping DARA to continue to grow and meet the ever changing needs of our community.

Doug, originally from Delta Township, and his wife of 21 years, Amy (originally from DeWitt) moved to the Township in 1997. Their daughter Threse is a freshman at MSU and their son Nick is a senior at DeWitt High School. Doug is employed by the Michigan House of Representatives, currently as the Deputy Business Director. When he is not following MSU or DeWitt athletics, serving on the DeWitt Travel Basketball Association Board or as President of the Hawthorne Woods Neighborhood Association, he enjoys officiating youth sports, playing golf and traveling.

When asked what he has learned in his service to the community, Doug says "I have learned the value of partnership and cooperation between communities. DARA is able to serve the needs of both the Township and the City of DeWitt at an incredible savings to taxpayers. I have seen firsthand how DARA adds to the quality of life for families in DeWitt."

### **Planning Commissioner – Abby Lorenzen**



Since December of 2013, Abby Lorenzen has served as a Planning Commissioner in DeWitt Township, along with eight other residents of the Township. The Planning Commission is a statutorily required Commission, charged with duties and responsibilities defined by the Planning and Zoning Enabling Acts, and is an independent, non-political entity consisting of residents who make decisions and recommendations regarding land use.

Abby, a Purdue graduate and mom of four boys under the age of seven, is not your typical Planning Commissioner. However, she tells us that she serves on the Commission because she loves DeWitt. "We did not even look for homes in any other place because we simply knew that DeWitt was a good fit for us. I want to see DeWitt continue to grow without losing the charm that attracted me in the beginning and serving on the Commission allows me to take part in the development of my community."

Accepting the appointment was a family commitment, since her husband Nick must be in 'full dad mode' while she attends evening Planning Commission meetings.

Abby says "I think what I have learned is how dedicated the Township leadership is to this community. Opinions may differ, but everyone is genuinely working to bring out the best in DeWitt."

## TOWNSHIP NEWSLETTER

### NEWS BITES

**NEW 4-WAY STOP SIGNS** –By the time you receive this Newsletter, the Airport Road and Stoll Road intersection will be a 4-way stop. Please be aware of this change and drive carefully.



**ACCOUNTABILITY AND TRANSPARENCY** - In an effort to increase transparency and accountability, the Township has created a number of systems and documents that are designed to visually review the status of our government. It is intended to help the user quickly evaluate key indicators. Over time, it helps citizens, business owners, staff, and elected officials measure and monitor the overall health and direction of our local government. These documents can be found on the Township's website at [www.dewitttownship.org/OurDepartmentsServices/ManagersOffice/TownshipFinances](http://www.dewitttownship.org/OurDepartmentsServices/ManagersOffice/TownshipFinances).

**NEW BUILDING CODE** - The State of Michigan has adopted the 2015 Michigan Residential Code (MRC). This became effective on February 8, 2016. DeWitt Township started administering and enforcing this Code as of that date. All current building plans that were approved prior to this date will still be inspected to the 2009 Michigan Residential Code (MRC).



**COMMUNITY INPUT** - If there is an issue/topic you would like us to address in future Newsletters and/or the E-News, contact the Manager's Office at 517-668-0270 with your request.

**WELCOME ABOARD** – Laura Plaza, Jeff Moon, Mike Stone, Corey Bulock, John Esch, Mike Hawkins, Jordan Dick, Ben Wycowski, and Kevin Hazel – all new employees of the Fire Department.

**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 it's posted otherwise. 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 and be under control. Pet owners are responsible for immediately removing feces.

**PROTECT OUR WATERSHED** - There are many ways to ensure that the Looking Glass and Grand River watersheds are free of pollutants. One of the easiest is to use phosphorus free fertilizer. For more tips and information visit [http://www.mywatersheds.org/public\\_education.html](http://www.mywatersheds.org/public_education.html).

**TOWNSHIP E-NEWS** – You can sign up to receive the Township's E-News which provides monthly Township and community news. Register your e-mail address at [www.dewitttownship.org](http://www.dewitttownship.org).

**LEGAL PUBLICATIONS** - DeWitt Township utilizes the DeWitt-Bath Review for legal publications. Also, the Township's website, [www.dewitttownship.org](http://www.dewitttownship.org), is a good source for information about public hearings, zoning issues, and general information.

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

