

ALAMO TOWNSHIP NEWSLETTER

FALL 2012

OFFICE HOURS – GENERAL

Monday, Tuesday and Thursday

9:00 a.m. – noon

The Hall is often staffed beyond the posted hours.

OFFICE HOURS – TREASURER

Friday

9:00 a.m. – 5:00 p.m.

The Treasurer no longer has an office in her home. She is frequently at the Hall during regular hours.

OFFICE HOURS – ASSESSOR

Thursday

12:30 p.m. – 1:30 p.m.



Many Township forms are available on the website. (www.alamotownship.org) Completed forms may be mailed, faxed or dropped off (a drop slot is located to the south of the office door handle). Tax and assessment information is updated and posted on the Township website monthly.

**HOURS COULD CHANGE WHEN THE NEW
ADMINISTRATION TAKES OFFICE.**

DEPARTING TOWNSHIP OFFICIALS

As I get ready to leave office, I have found myself reflecting on my years of service and wanting to offer a heartfelt thank you or two to others leaving township service. Especially in the last 4-5 years, the Township has made noteworthy strides in its financial reserves, secured qualified personnel and consolidated most township services into one location. It affirmed and enhanced the Township's Land Use Plan to maintain a rural atmosphere while positioning us for the future. Consolidating key services at the Township Hall has been a long time coming and better serves residents. The newsletter and the website have developed into functional tools of communication and information. Careful money management allowed the Township to accelerate the preservation of its roads at a time when many townships are struggling to make ends meet. We sought and received grants that allowed us to

purchase a rescue vehicle to improve emergency response times and another to promote energy efficiencies that allowed additional improvements in township buildings. The Township Board made a number of difficult decisions that reflected the best interests of the Township as a whole. As I step away from township government, I am more than satisfied that those of us departing leave the township in a better position than when we were elected or appointed.

Thank you and best wishes to retiring Clerk Garilyn Sportel-Bogard. Garilyn has served as clerk for the last 8 years and chose not to run for reelection. Most people are familiar with her role with elections and as sexton. Service providers and staff know she has been responsible for generating payroll and payments of invoices. The Treasurer knows how related their work is in township accounting. In addition, the clerk is ultimately responsible for the accounting and safeguarding of all Township records. Her responsibilities have been numerous, technical and legally essential. It's a time consuming and complex job and Garilyn's warm smile and pleasant demeanor will be missed. She has big plans for her free time and I wish her the best.

Trustee Ron Feniger has actively served the Township in a wide variety of capacities beginning in 1997 when he became the Township's (unpaid) Recycling Coordinator and since that time has logged thousands of hours collecting paper, plastic and glass in all sorts of weather living out his passion to preserve our environment. He was first appointed Trustee in 1999 and was elected to the position in 2000, 2004 and 2008. He was not successful in retaining his seat in the 2012 primary. Ron served on the Zoning Board of Appeals for 9 years. He has served as a member of the Museum Advisory Committee since 2002 and as a member of the Planning Commission since 2009. He has ably represented the Township on various special projects and made the time to take a series of classes to become a Citizen Planner to better serve as a member of the Planning Commission. Ron has not sought attention for his work and deserves a large thank you for his years of dedication.

I probably should have introduced Barbara Fisher when I appointed her Deputy Supervisor in 2007 (before my surgery) rather than when she is leaving.

With my term ending, her appointment as my Deputy ends and she was not successful in her bid to succeed Garilyn as Clerk. Throughout my career in the insurance business and in township government I've surrounded myself with talent and Barb is no exception. Barb's previous work experience and knowledge have been assets to the Township; she has touched virtually every aspect of Township government. Because of her skills and through her initiatives, the Township has become more efficient while saving thousands of dollars. She has completed work previously done by the Township attorney, moved the Township forward with investments, suggested the pursuit of grants, and attacked the census project with enthusiasm and accuracy resulting in more dollars flowing into the Township. She brought that same professionalism to managing the Building Department when the Township "gifted" her this new responsibility. She is equally comfortable presenting the Township's case in a courtroom as she is in helping a resident load chairs. If it needs doing, she is there. She has provided hours of research, analysis, written documents, and support for me, the Township Board, Clerk, Treasurer, Fire Chief, Zoning Board of Appeals, Site Plan Committee, Planning Commission and others. In a relatively short time, Barb's mark on the Township has been significant, her accomplishments many and her memory, facts, objectivity and endless energy will be missed. Her focus has been the work without calling attention to herself or her contributions.

Helen Goyings (Chairperson) and Bruce LaBrie have given their notices of resignation from the Planning Commission. Both individuals have brought informed, well-reasoned positions to the Commission and have been vocal advocates for the preservation of Township values, have sifted through information to determine what is best for the Township and what constitutes a special interest, and promoted adherence to the Land Use Plan. Helen took the classes to become a Citizen Planner and then went the extra mile to become a Master Citizen Planner. Her background in teaching government was invaluable to the Commission. Bruce's work in law enforcement and his work with the Allegan Road Commission were likewise invaluable. The Planning Commission is a vital part of township governance and their departures represent a significant loss. We wish them the best in their future endeavors.

The Township has been my life for the last 22 years. As Supervisor since 2000 and serving on the Zoning Board (now Planning Commission) for 10 years before that, I look forward to the future with both a sense of accomplishment and a sense of loss. As the "face" of the

Township, the Supervisor frequently is given credit when credit may not be due and blame when people are unhappy. In all honesty, of most of the elected positions within the Township, the Supervisor has the fewest powers. I am secure in the knowledge that I have served the community well, helped move the township in a positive direction and leave it in a far better position than when I took office. I have been blessed and humbled by your support throughout my tenure as your Supervisor. Thank you.

Some of the departing individuals have been more visible than others, but all have made positive and lasting contributions. On behalf of all of us, it has been a pleasure to serve and we will miss you.

All the best,

Bob Vlietstra, Supervisor



FALL CALENDAR

OCTOBER 13: RECYCLING & JUNK DAY

9:00 a.m. – 1:00 p.m. Township Park on DE Avenue.

THE TYPES OF MATERIALS THE TOWNSHIP MAY ACCEPT HAVE CHANGED. PLEASE CLIP AND SAVE THE NEW LIST (back cover)!!!

REGULAR RECYCLING is funded by the Township and provided without cost to Alamo residents. Curbside recycling is available from local waste haulers for those who prefer home pick-up.

JUNK DAY is funded by the Township and provided without cost to Alamo residents (ID required). In addition to regular recyclables, "junk" is accepted. "Junk" **excludes** cement, oil-based paint, tires, oil, hazardous materials (including old TVs and computers) and appliances containing Freon. TV's and computers may be dropped off, free of charge, at the County's Household Hazardous Waste (see article later in the newsletter) collection site. Metal is collected separately from trash; please keep this in mind when loading trucks/trailers.

OCTOBER 31: HALLOWEEN CANDY CHECK

Township Fire Station (7840 North 6th).

NOVEMBER 4 AT 2:00 A.M.: "FALL BACK"

Daylight savings time ends for 2012, set clocks back one hour. (Spring forward; fall back). **Please check your smoke and carbon monoxide detectors and change the batteries.**

NOVEMBER 6: GENERAL ELECTION

Polls open at 7 a.m. and close at 8 p.m. Precinct 1 votes at the Township Hall and Precinct 2 votes at the Alamo Community Church (just north of the Township Hall). Contact Clerk Sportel-Bogard if you need an absentee ballot. If you are 60 years and older you may request to be a permanent absentee voter. If placed on the permanent list, you will automatically receive an application for a ballot for each election. Persons who filed an application for the August primary and checked both the August and November elections will automatically receive a ballot (rather than an application) for the general election. Questions? Call Clerk Sportel-Bogard (382-3366).

NOVEMBER 10: RECYCLING

9:00 a.m. – 1:00 p.m. Township Park on DE Avenue.

NOVEMBER 15: CEMETERY REMINDER

Summer decorations must be removed no later than November 15.

DECEMBER 8: RECYCLING

9:00 a.m. – 1:00 p.m. Township Park on DE Avenue.



HOUSEHOLD HAZARDOUS WASTE

The Township funds the **Household Hazardous Waste** program to allow residents **free use** of this County service on a year round basis. The program accepts a wide variety of household waste, including electronics. The drop off site is located at 1301 Lamont (off Lake Street). For a message listing items accepted and hours, please call 373-5211 or visit: www.kalcounty.com/hhw/accepted.htm.



SERVING YOUR TOWNSHIP

This is your Township, **become involved**. All decision making and advisory boards welcome citizen attendance at their meetings. Appointments to the various Boards are time limited and typically made in December of each year: Zoning Board of Appeals, Planning Commission, Park Board (advisory), Board of Review, Library Board or the Museum Committee (advisory). Several vacancies are currently, or will be coming, available. An application form is available on the Township website and at the Township Hall. Completed applications should be submitted to the Township Clerk. The Township is best served when the composition of the boards represents a broad diversity of residents and geography.

RESIDENT RECOGNITION: DID YOU KNOW?

Thank you to **Brad Holmes, Asphalt Restoration, Inc.**, for generously donating time, product and equipment to patch the canyon that was growing across the driveway at the Township Hall.

Paula Kohler, Ph.D., was recently featured in the Western Michigan University Magazine. Dr. Kohler is the WMU Associate Vice President for Research as well as a Research Officer. She is a noted authority in higher education specializing in effective transition practices that prepare youth with disabilities for college, careers or other post-secondary experiences.

Sometimes there’s time to learn about our neighbors while volunteering at Recycle Saturdays and we learned that long-time recycling volunteer **Don Carpenter** is a two-time formation skydiving **world champion** and a multi-year **national champion!** Who knew??? What wonderful memories and incredible achievements!!



BURN PERMITS

Burning in barrels is restricted to brush, leaves and paper and does not require a permit. Per Township Ordinance, all other burning is restricted to leaves and brush and requires a (no charge) permit. **E-mail** name, address and dates burning is planned to firedept@alamotownship.org and a permit will be returned, promptly, by return e-mail. Persons without internet access may contact 345-3010 for a permit; it may take up to 24 hours to be authorized.



THIS AND THAT

From the Road Commission: Make sure your mailbox is in good repair for the winter.

From the City of Kalamazoo: A Kalamazoo Community Service Van, sponsored by the Michigan Department of Transportation, is available to governmental agencies, non-profits or others as may be approved. More information is available at the Township Hall.

From the Michigan Township Association: In November and December, millions of businesses across the U.S. will receive an Economic Census form. Every five years, the Economic Census develops a comprehensive portrait of American business. Timely and accurate data is vital to effective public policy and important to local governments and businesses.





ALAMO TOWNSHIP
7901 North 6th Street
Kalamazoo, MI 49009

PRST – STD
U.S. POSTAGE
PAID
KALAMAZOO, MI
PERMIT #82

RECYCLABLES ARE LIMITED TO WHAT OUR RECYCLER CAN ACCEPT

ACCEPTABLE ITEMS: Food boxes, aluminum cans, tin or steel cans (including aerosol cans), plastic tubs, jars or trays, plastic bottles (#1–#7), glass jars/bottles, hardcover & paperback books), junk mail, flattened cardboard, magazines, catalogs, paper bags.

Newspaper & inserts, office paper & file folders are collected by the Scouts and are also accepted by our recycling provider.

Please **flatten and remove labels from cans**; labels may remain on glass, but lids should be removed. Thank you for **flattening large plastic containers like milk jugs**.

NOT ACCEPTABLE: Pizza boxes, wet or soiled paper, yard waste or wood, Styrofoam, plastic bags, electronics, ceramics or dishes, trash, motor oil containers, household hazardous waste or light bulbs, window glass or mirrors.

ALAMO TOWNSHIP OFFICIALS 🏠 MEETING SCHEDULES

Alamo Township Hall	7901 North 6 th Street	382-3366	Township Website: www.alamotownship.org Township E-Mail Addresses: bldgdept@alamotownship.org clerk@alamotownship.org deputysupervisor@alamotownship.org firechief@alamotownship.org firedept@alamotownship.org (burn permits) info@alamotownship.org planningcommission@alamotownship.org supervisor@alamotownship.org treasurer@alamotownship.org Board of Trustees Meeting 2 nd Monday of each month (7:00 p.m.) Fire & Rescue Officers' Meeting 4 th Tuesday of each month (7:00 p.m.) Fire Station Park Board Meeting Last Tuesday of each month (6:00 p.m.) Planning Commission Meeting 1 st Tuesday of each month (7:00 p.m.)
	Fax	552-4733	
Supervisor	Bob Vlietstra	382-3366	
	Cell	501-2288	
Clerk	Garilyn Sportel-Bogard	382-3366	
Treasurer	Mary Stoneburner	382-3366	
Trustee	Ron Feniger	381-8478	
Trustee	Dawn Potter-Williams	375-4820	
Fire Chief	Terry Kizer	217-3993	
Assessor	Sherry Burd	762-2386	
Building Department	K. Cardiff/B. Fisher	382-3366	
Building Official	Kevin Cardiff	365-3766	
Deputy Supervisor	Barbara Fisher	382-3366	
Museum Curator	Brian Smith	217-3247	
Ordinance Enforcer	Laura Hoffman	217-0291	
Park Board (Advisory) Chair	Lou Conti	806-5506	
Planning Commission Chair	Helen Goyings	388-2877	
Recycling Coordinator	Ron Feniger	381-8478	
Sexton	Garilyn Sportel-Bogard	382-3366	