

CASCADE CONNECTIONS

A newsletter from Cascade Charter Township • Fall 2020



- + Pool Safety
- + Theft-Prevention Tips from Deputy Dieppa
- + Updates from the Fire Department

NEWS FROM THE SUPERVISOR



The Cascade July Fourth celebration has always been a highlight of summer. But this summer was like no other, with the pandemic altering how many of us spent the day.

Typically, the Cascade July Fourth parade is led by Cascade's own Uncle Sam, Sy Dykhouse, who has donned his red, white and blue topcoat and hat for well over 40 years to walk the parade route, followed by the grand marshal. This year's grand marshal was scheduled to be Jack Lewis, Cascade Township trustee, who is retiring at the end of this year.

Jack's tenure as a trustee first started when he was appointed in 1978 to fill a vacancy; he was elected to the office in 1980. After serving that term, Jack continued to serve Cascade as a member of the Planning Commission and the Zoning Board of Appeals. In 2001, Jack was one of the original founders of the Cascade Community Foundation. He continued to serve the foundation until just recently when he was recognized as one of the few honorary Board members for his dedication and commitment to the community.

In 2008, Jack was again elected as a Cascade Township trustee and re-elected in 2012 and 2016. Jack continued to serve on many Township committees, notably as the Board representative to the Planning Commission, where his knowledge and experience

were invaluable. His dedication to Cascade and its residents is much appreciated, and he will be greatly missed.

Earlier this year, Cascade residents once again pitched in and worked to protect our natural community by helping eradicate invasive plant species. For more than 12 years, we have had annual garlic mustard pulls in Peace Park and other locations in the Township. Residents have also stepped forward to help curtail invasive plants in their own neighborhoods.

A few years ago, the area-wide Invasive Species Strike Team secured a grant to provide a dumpster for the disposal of garlic mustard, and Cascade provided the site for it. Funding was no longer available for the last two years, but Cascade stepped up and provided a drop-off site and dumpster.

The Stewardship Network, a statewide organization that helps communities care for land and water, has held an annual Spring Invasive Species Challenge promoting garlic mustard removal. Its Spring Challenge began in 2008; more than 2.2 million pounds of invasive species have been pulled in the years since. For the last two years, Cascade Township has won the statewide heavyweight division, this year pulling 47,183 pounds. Our conservation efforts continue to play a positive role in our ecosystem and benefit us all.

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Robert S. Bunker". The signature is fluid and cursive.



Township Contacts

Township Hall Office Hours

Monday through Friday
8 a.m. to 5 p.m.

Supervisor

Rob Beahan; 949-1500
rbeahan@cascadetwp.com

Clerk

Sue Slater; 949-1508
sslater@cascadetwp.com

Treasurer

Ken Peirce; 949-6944
kpeirce@cascadetwp.com

Trustees

Jim Koessel
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Tom McDonald
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John Shipley
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Manager

Ben Swayze; 949-1500
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Assistant Manager

Stephanie Fast; 285-2327
sfast@cascadetwp.com

Assessing

Jennifer Genter; 949-6176
jgenter@cascadetwp.com

Building Inspections

Brian Wilson; 949-3765
bwilson@cascadetwp.com
Monday through Thursday, 7 a.m. to 5 p.m.
Friday, 7 a.m. to 1 p.m.

Community Development

Steve Peterson; 949-0224
speterson@cascadetwp.com

Fire

Adam Magers; 949-1320
amagers@cascadetwp.com

Sheriff/Non-Emergency Dispatch

336-3113

Community Policing Officer

Omar Dieppa; 632-6435
omar.dieppa@kentcountymi.gov



From the **CLERK**

Sue Slater

As I write this, we have just completed our August primary. More than 6,300 Cascade registered voters, or 41.15%, voted in the election, which is a 20% increase from the last election. It was extremely busy prior to the election with unprecedented volume of absentee ballots. Not only did we see an exponential increase due to the passage of Proposal 3 in 2018, but the impact of COVID-19 led to more than two-thirds of votes cast being absentee ballots.

I would like to give a public thank you to the superb election staff in the office, our faithful inspectors, the Building and Grounds Department for setting up all the equipment and, most of all, my extremely efficient deputy clerk, Padley Gallagher. Elections are well run because of these wonderful people.

Now, we get ready for November. Activity will pick up in September for the Nov. 3 general election. If you are interested in working in this election, you may submit an application found on our website: [cascadetwp.com/Clerk's Department/Elections](http://cascadetwp.com/Clerk's%20Department/Elections).

SUMMER TAXES DUE

Summer taxes are due and payable as of July 1. The last day to pay your summer 2020 property taxes without penalty is Monday, Sept. 14. Postmarks are not accepted.

If you mail your check, please include your telephone number on the check in case there are any issues with the payment. Information is available on the Township website to help you verify the amount of summer property tax paid or the balance due.

You can review tax information 24/7 at cascadetwp.com:

- Click on 'Property/Parcel Lookup' under 'Quick Links' (left side of screen).
- Enter your parcel number, address or name in search bar.
- Click on the parcel number and the tax information tab.

Our office hours are 8 a.m. to 5 p.m., Monday through Friday. The office will be closed Monday, Sept. 7 in observance of Labor Day.

If you have not yet received your 2020 summer property taxes, call the treasurer's office at 616.949.6944. We look forward to assisting you.



HALLOWEEN AND BIRTHDAY DRIVE-BYS: AN UPDATE FROM THE CASCADE FIRE DEPARTMENT

Hello from your Cascade firefighters:

Halloween is approaching fast! As with most things in life these days, Halloween in Cascade is going to look a little different this year. Due to uncertainty around COVID-19, we will not be having the traditional Halloween at the fire station on Thornhills. Instead, your Cascade firefighters are going to bring Halloween to you!

In the next months to come, we will choose neighborhoods, have a central point picked in each neighborhood and send firefighters out in fire trucks with a goody bag containing fire safety materials, stickers and, yes, candy. This will allow us to interact, educate and enjoy all the great costumes in the safety of the great outdoors.

Speaking of great costumes, please stay tuned to the Cascade Fire Department Facebook page and the Township website for an exciting announcement coming soon regarding a new member of the Department.

In other Fire Department news: When COVID-19 conditions started, your Cascade Fire Department transitioned to doing birthday drive-bys for the children in our community. Great

news: we are going to continue doing them! This is a great way for us to connect with and bring happiness to your child's birthday celebration. If you would like to schedule a birthday drive-by, please call Cascade Station 1 at 616.949.1320, and we will be happy to set it up.

Last but not least, we want to reassure you that during these ever-changing times, your Cascade firefighters are here and ready to serve your emergency service needs, 24 hours a day, seven days a week. We thank you for your continued support.

Lt. Andrew Albright
Cascade Fire Department



4 Welcome, Brian Hilbrands!



It is our pleasure to introduce our new planner, Brian Hilbrands, to the Cascade Township team.

Brian joins us from Ada Township, where he served as the downtown development authority director. He graduated from Calvin College with a degree in business and geography and also earned a master of urban and regional planning degree from the University of Michigan.

Brian's wife, Kaitlyn, is a neonatal intensive care unit nurse, and they welcomed their first child in June, although they have already had some parenting experience caring for their golden retriever, Tobin.

Brian enjoys hiking, camping and being in the great outdoors with his family. Brian has already proven himself to be a vital member of our team and will be an amazing asset to the people of Cascade Township. Welcome, Brian!



LEARN MORE ABOUT POOL SAFETY

Swimming pools are regulated under the 2015 Michigan Residential Code. In-ground, above-ground and portable pools **must comply** with the code, which is designed to protect children from injury through the use of barriers.

There are many requirements for barriers, most commonly fences, including height, type, gates and latches. We recommend working directly with a pool installer familiar with all of the code requirements. In addition to fence barriers, the code requires alarms on doors and windows of the home that are part of that enclosure.

One newer option is to install an in-ground pool with an automatic safety cover. This approved device eliminates the need for a fence and alarms. Many new installations in Cascade and the surrounding areas have used an automatic safety cover, so you might see a new pool without a fence.

For above-ground pools, it is common that the sidewall height is more than 48 inches – this acts as the barrier when used with an approved ladder that can be secured when not in use. When a deck is installed around these above-ground pools, be sure your contractor is familiar with all the barrier requirements and has designed your structure to comply.

If you are planning a new pool, be sure the installer is licensed and obtains a permit from our office so we can verify all safety items are in place. Also, ask about the barrier and alarm requirements before entering into a contract.

Pools can be a great way to beat the heat. They can also be attractive to young children, so it is extremely important installation is done correctly. A reminder that required safety measures must be maintained for the life of the pool.

For more information, contact Cascade Inspection Services at 616.949.3765.

LOCK, TAKE AND HIDE Vehicle Theft-Prevention Tips

Greetings from your community police officer:

Over the past few months, there has been a rise in vehicle thefts and theft from vehicles throughout Kent County. Some have reported their vehicles were taken overnight while parked in front of their homes, whereas others had it taken while they quickly ran into a business.

Car thieves appreciate all the help they can get, but there are effortless ways to prevent thefts from happening. Use the motto **lock, take** and **hide**:

- Turn off the ignition and **lock** your doors.
- **Take** your keys. Don't leave keys or fobs inside the vehicle, whether or not you have a keypad.
- **Hide** all valuables – in the trunk, under seats or remove completely from the vehicle.

Although some subjects seek out vehicles or property to steal, others engage in the activity if an opportunity presents itself. Don't be a victim and remember to **lock, take** and **hide**. Please reach out for more helpful suggestions on how to deter criminals – I'd be happy to share.

I hope you are enjoying your summer. My partners and I have been out on the trails riding bicycles. If you see us out, say hello. Be safe, and I hope to see you around!

Deputy Omar Dieppa
Omar.Dieppa@kentcountymi.gov
616.632.6435



KENT DISTRICT LIBRARY REOPENS FOR IN-BRANCH VISITS

As this newsletter goes to print, the Cascade branch of the Kent District Library has reopened to the public. KDL is working hard to offer as many services as possible while staying within the recommended guidelines to keep everyone safe and healthy and shares the following:

- **Modified hours and services:** On weekdays, KDL will be open to the public between 1 and 5 p.m., while offering curbside pickup services between 9:30 a.m. and 8 p.m. (6 p.m. on Fridays). On weekends, curbside service will close so KDL staff can provide face-to-face services during regular full hours (9:30 a.m. to 5 p.m. on Saturdays, and 1 to 5 p.m. on Sundays after Labor Day).
- **Masks:** In compliance with Michigan executive orders, masks are required to enter KDL branches.
- **Capacity:** In order to accommodate as many visitors as possible, KDL is asking patrons to limit their visits to one hour and maintain a distance of six feet from other people.

- **High-risk patrons:** We encourage high-risk patrons to visit us in the first hour of the day when we are usually less busy.
- **Closed areas:** The children's play area and the study rooms are closed at this time to minimize virus transmission.
- **Curbside pickup:** Place holds online or call Patron Services. KDL staff will notify you to arrange a no-contact pickup as soon as your order is ready.
- **Online programs:** Crowd-size restrictions can't stop KDL from continuing to offer great programs, even if they will be online instead of in the community room. Watch KDL's events page for information on storytimes, book clubs and more!

Keep an eye on kdl.org for the most up-to-date information on these and other services.

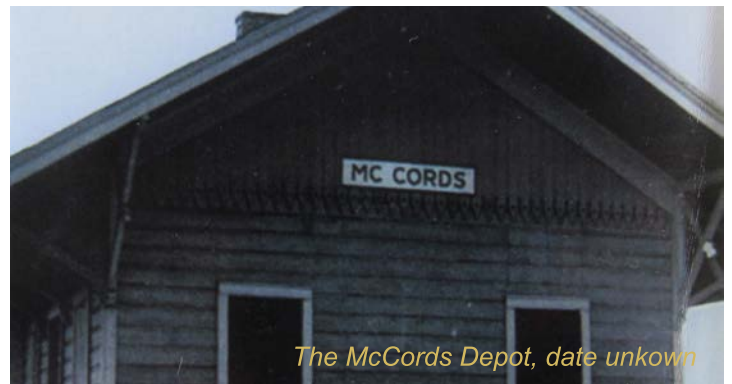
McCORDS BEFORE, DURING AND AFTER DEPOT

To walk through the quiet, quaint village of McCords is to step into the past.

Some of the houses were once log cabins, the original structures now hidden under clapboards and siding. There's a drive along the railroad tracks that leads to an area where coal darkens the ground. Narrow sidewalks that don't connect with each other run along the front yards of some of the old houses. The town hall still looks like it belongs on a postcard from New England, and the rusting sheet metal on the defunct feed mill now makes it a perfect location for senior pictures. McCords is not a ghost town, but it is a cozy spot where life takes place against the backdrop of local history.

McCords is located just south of 52nd Street on McCords Avenue, in the southeast corner of the Township, one of the first parts of Cascade to be settled by non-natives. Pioneers in the area included the Lintons, Clarks, Woods and Proctors, who had farms on 52nd Street; Horace Sears, one of Cascade's first settlers, had a farm south of the village. A large community of native people lived just north of the Linton farm, and it is still not unusual to find arrowheads in the surrounding fields.

The railroad transformed McCords from a sleepy hamlet into a bustling village starting in 1885. Soon, a depot was needed to serve the surrounding community. Several sources report that there was fierce competition between McCords and Whitneville for the depot location.



The McCords Depot, date unknown

Beulah Wood Henry (1909-99), a lifelong resident of McCords, remembered rumors that McCords "bought" the station through illicit payoffs and local political pressure. Land for the depot was reluctantly donated by John McCord, whose farm was bisected by the train tracks. When the depot opened in 1888, it needed a designation on the train schedules, and so it was named for McCord or, more likely, for his farm. McCords quickly became the name of the village, the street and the post office.

John McCord led a long life that winds through conflicting historical records. He was most likely born in Ohio in 1840 or 1845 and married Jemima Kline (born 1853) in St. Joseph County in 1869. They had no children. On the 1894 map of Cascade Township, Jemima's name appears as the owner of the 74-acre farm where the depot is located. They divorced in 1902.



The 1900 census lists John McCord as a resident of Cascade, married, but his wife is not living in his household. A 1907 map of the Township shows him living on a different farm, still close to the village, farther east of his original property, which he had sold to Peter Semeyn. Later that year, he married a woman named Nettie. They divorced in 1910. John spent his last days in the Ionia County Home. He died at age 88 in 1929, his strongest tie to McCords being that he gave it his name.

While John McCord entered obscurity, the village of McCords prospered. By the early 1900s, it had all the amenities of a small town, including a post office, the village hall, two general stores, a bank, a coal yard, a barber shop, a blacksmith shop, a garage, a livery stable, a lumberyard, the feed mill and a sawmill, in addition to the railroad depot. These businesses served local families as well as passengers arriving or departing by train. Handsome elm trees shaded the street, sheltering the houses and storefronts lined up along the west side of McCords Avenue, facing the wetlands where the Grey Goose Creek sparkles on its way to the Whitneyville mill pond and, from there, the Thornapple River.

With the coming of the automobile, people became more likely to go to Cascade or Alto for goods and services and eventually the businesses in McCords closed their doors. Passenger service ended, but the depot continued to be used through the 1950s for the delivery of lumber and coal until it, too, shut down, according to Sybrant Dykhouse, Cascade's foremost train enthusiast. McCords became tranquil and quiet again.

The elm trees have long disappeared, and there are no retail businesses in McCords today, but many of the

buildings from the village's prime are still standing. Over the years, the hall has been used as a church, a meeting place and a rental for family parties and reunions, and today it is a beautiful home. The mill, built by Mahlon Thomas, was purchased by John Kleinheksel in the 1940s and did a brisk business as a feed mill until the small farms in the area began to disappear. Briefly, it was used as a manufacturing facility for Honeywood, an Amway competitor, but it sits empty now.

The big house across the street is where Rolland and Louise Colby had their general store. Farther up the street, the former stable is in use as a garage behind what was the home of John Krum, who ran the coal yard and made deliveries throughout Cascade and Ada until the late 1960s. At the base of the hill, the foundations of the blacksmith shop are hidden in tall grass.

If you have your own memories or photographs of McCords and would be willing to share them, please contact the Cascade Historical Society by leaving a message at Township Hall at 616.949.1500 or cascadehistory@cascaadetwp.com. We would love to hear from you.

You can learn more about Cascade, including the tragic train crash of 1903, in "Cascade Chronicles," a book about the history of our Township. Copies are for sale at Township Hall.

The Cascade Historical Society usually gathers at the Old Township Hall at 9:30 a.m. on the first Thursday of the month. Recently, it has been necessary to cancel meetings to comply with COVID-19 regulations. We welcome new members and visitors, but please contact the Township to find out if the meeting you wish to attend is still scheduled.



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Welcome, Carrie Beels!



Please join us in welcoming our new elections specialist, Carrie Beels, to the Cascade Township team.

Carrie lives in Cascade with her husband and four children and is excited to serve in a position at the Township in which she can give back and serve her community.

While community focus is important to Carrie, she also has a passion for health and wellness. When she is not at work or caring for her family, you can find her at the gym working on her fitness goals or enjoying a good book. She attended Grand Valley State University with an emphasis in legal studies.

Carrie is looking forward to assisting residents with the upcoming election. Welcome, Carrie!