



CASCADE CONNECTIONS

A NEWSLETTER FROM CASCADE CHARTER TOWNSHIP

Winter 2014

Office Hours:

Monday through Friday
8:00 a.m. - 5:00 p.m.

Township Board:

Supervisor:

Rob Beahan; 949-1500
rbeahan@cascadetwp.com

Clerk:

Ron Goodyke; 949-1508
rgoodyke@cascadetwp.com

Treasurer:

Ken Peirce; 949-6944
kpeirce@cascadetwp.com

Trustees:

Jim Koessel
jkoessel@cascadetwp.com

Jack Lewis

jlewis@cascadetwp.com

Fred Goldberg

fgoldberg@cascadetwp.com

Tom McDonald

tmcdonald@cascadetwp.com

Department Phone Numbers:

Manager:

Ben Swayze; 949-1500
bswayze@cascadetwp.com

Assessing:

Roger McCarty; 949-6176
roger@cascadetwp.com

Building & Grounds:

Amy Waugh; 682-4836
awaugh@cascadetwp.com

Building Inspections:

Brian Wilson; 949-3765
bwilson@cascadetwp.com

Fire:

John Sigg; 949-1320
jsigg@cascadetwp.com

Planning:

Steve Peterson; 949-0224
speterson@cascadetwp.com

Sheriff/Non-Emergency:

632-6100



FROM THE SUPERVISOR
ROB BEAHAN

After 27 years of Cascade community service, Cindy Janes reluctantly stepped down from the Township Board. Cindy and her husband Mark recently purchased a home nearby in Grand Rapids Township that required her resignation from the Board. Cindy had lived in Cascade Township for 30 years and during that period served the Cascade community in a variety of ways.

Cindy was initially appointed to the Planning Commission in the mid '80's and served on that until 1994. She also was very active in helping pass the fire millages and served as co-chair of the township Fire and Medical Safety Citizens' Committee in 2004.

In 2007 she was appointed as a Trustee to fill a vacancy on the Township Board and was subsequently elected in the following elections. During that period, Cindy served on numerous committees and was also the Township representative to the Grand Valley Metropolitan Council. She will continue to serve on the Cascade Community Foundation where she has been a member since 2005.

At the January 22, 2014 meeting, Tom McDonald was appointed to fill the vacant Trustee seat. Tom has also served the community in many capacities. For nine years Tom served on the Planning Commission, two as chair, and for three years on the Zoning Board of Appeals. He also was on the board of the Cascade Downtown Development Authority until his appointment as Trustee.

Tom also served on the Open Space Preservation Committee and helped head up the millage campaign to fund the acquisition of both Burton and Peace Parks. He helped immensely by working with staff to author a grant proposal from the Michigan Department of Natural Resources Trust Fund. As result, the Township received \$1.2 million toward the purchase of Peace Park.

Tom and his wife Dawn have lived in Cascade for 28 years and have a son Brendan, a student at Central Middle School. Dawn has also been very active in the community serving on numerous boards and committees. Tom owns a software development company in Cascade that deals mainly with manufacturing firms.

We owe a debt of gratitude to both Cindy and Tom. These individuals have given so much of their time and service to the community and helped make Cascade the special place it is.

THE GRAND RAPIDS TRIATHLON – JUNE 8, 2014



GRAND RAPIDS TRIATHLON 2014
Huntington Amway

This triathlon event is a challenge for all athletes of all skill levels to compete on a scenic, riverside course, perfect for the novice through the seasoned triathlete.

The Grand Rapids Triathlon is excited to announce they will be hosting USAT LONG COURSE NATIONALS on June 8, 2014. This means any triathlete who wants to qualify for the World Championship in Sweden in 2015, must come to the GR Tri to get there.

PLEASE NOTE: There will be road closures in the Ada/Cascade area on Saturday, June 7th and Sunday, June 8th. Find out more about this event and road closures at: www.grandrapidsriathlon.com or contact Andy Vidro at: andy@tris4health.com or call 616.805.3059.

SIGN UP FOR ENEWS!

Cascade Township added an icon to the home page (www.cascadetwp.com) allowing residents, business owners, etc. to sign up for eNews. This is a news update service from Cascade Township. It is available to anyone wishing to receive periodic e-mail updates from Cascade Township on items related to Township services, government and events in the community.

2 CASCADE CONNECTIONS

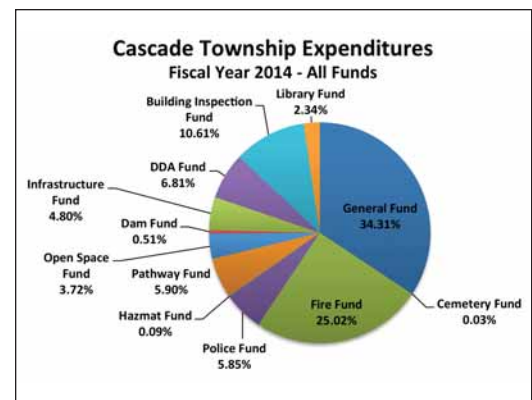
NEW YEAR BRINGS NEW BUDGET FOR CASCADE TOWNSHIP

As the calendar rolls over to 2014, Cascade Township also rolls over to begin our new fiscal year. Every year the Township is required to produce a balanced budget to outline the spending policies and priorities for the upcoming year.

For the Township, the production of the 2014 budget started back in the early days of fall. Creating the budget is a tedious process that begins with a review of the Township Board strategic priorities. The Township department heads then submit budgets for their individual departments that outline what they hope to accomplish, in alignment with the priorities of the Board. Once the department heads have submitted their expenditure requests, they are reviewed and scrutinized by the Township manager to ensure they fit the priorities of the Board, and are reasonable given the revenues that are expected. Once the final draft is completed, the budget is again scrutinized, but this time by the three member finance committee of the Township Board. The budget is then adjusted based on the recommendations of the finance committee, and then presented to the whole Township Board in a budget work session. The budget then gets one final revision based on the review of the Township Board before being presented to the Board for adoption in December.

While many of the expenditures can be pretty mundane (yes, we will be spending money on postage again) many of the expenditures can be pretty exciting as well. This year, the Township has budgeted a substantial amount of money for improvements to our parks. The Parks Committee is currently working on completing the 5-Year Parks and Recreation Master Plan, which will identify the improvements the money should be spent on. The Parks Committee is hoping to use those funds budgeted by the Township Board to match a Michigan Department of Natural Resources grant that could bring an additional \$300,000 for the potential project. Other projects the Township Board has budgeted for includes pedestrian/bike friendly infrastructure improvements in the Cascade Village area, water system improvement projects, the rehabilitation of 3-4 miles of local roads within the Township and the purchase of a replacement engine for the Fire Department.

For the 2014 Fiscal Year, the Township has budgeted for estimated revenues of \$10,089,923 and expenditures of \$9,802,967. The general categories or “funds” the expenditures are allocated to are broken down in the following chart.



The final approved budget for the Township is available on the township website (www.cascadetwp.com) to review. The final budget contains a plethora of information, including easy to read charts and graphs to help individuals understand exactly what services and projects their tax dollars are spent on. I would invite everyone to check out the budget and see what is in store for Cascade Township for 2014.

DOG LICENSES

The Treasurer's office will be selling dog licenses to Kent County residents on a regular basis for the entire year. We have always sold the licenses from December 1 to March 1. This is a new collaborative effort on the part of the County and the Township to offer another easy access service to the residents. We will sell both 1 year and 3 year licenses to coincide with the rabies vaccination expiration.

WINTER TAXES

The Winter property taxes are due on or **before Friday February 14, 2014**. If you did not receive a tax statement, please check the township's website or call the Treasurer's office at 616-949-6944. The last day that we will accept 2013 property tax payments is Friday February 28, 2014.

Tax Payment Information Available on the Web

With the IRS income tax filing deadline approaching, Cascade Township property taxpayers may need to verify the amount of property tax paid in 2013. For your convenience, this information is available thru a link on the Township's website.

Instructions for the link on the website are:

- ▶ Assessing/Bldg/Tax Info. (from Quick Links)
- ▶ **Search Municipal Records (BS&A)**
- ▶ Search by Parcel Number, Address or Name
- ▶ Click on the parcel number on the next screen
- ▶ Click on the Tax Information tab and scroll down for the tax payment history

FROM THE DESK OF YOUR ASSESSOR...

Assessment Change Notices will be mailed on or before February 25, 2014. If you are a new homeowner and do not receive your notice by March 1st, please call our office. Registration of deeds and taxpayer name changes at the county level can take up to eight weeks.

In addition to change of assessment, the notice will indicate:

- If there was a transfer of ownership in 2013;
- If there is a Principal Residence Exemption on your property for 2014. If you **purchased the property in 2013, please check the PRE status carefully. Contact the Assessor office if the PRE status is wrong.**

Board of Review will hear assessment appeals on March 10 and 11, 2014.

- Appointments will be made beginning on March 1. An appeal application and instructions will be mailed to you when you make an appointment.
- Sales data and comparative information will be available in the Assessor's Office and in the Cascade Township Library beginning February 27.
- Letter appeals are acceptable if you are unable to attend a Board of Review hearing. Four copies of your letter and supporting documents must be received no later than March 10, 2014. Please send them to:

Cascade Township Board of Review
2865 Thornhills Ave. SE
Grand Rapids, MI 49546

- An appeal to the Board of Review, either in person or by letter, is a prerequisite for an appeal to the Michigan Tax Tribunal for residential properties. Commercial/Industrial properties do not have to appeal to the Board of Review to appeal to the State.

PROPOSAL A Reminders...

Property Transfer Affidavits must be filed with the assessor for any transfer of ownership that occurred in 2013.

Principal Residence (Homestead) Exemptions...

Filing deadline for new exemptions is June 1, 2014. Filing deadline for Winter only exemption is November 1, 2014. Exemptions in effect January 1, 2014, stay in effect for the calendar year.

You must **rescind** your exemption within 90 days of the date you no longer either own or occupy the property as your principal residence. Exemptions expire on December 31st of the year you move out.

Taxable Value Cap...

It is the **taxable** value that is capped by Proposal A – not the assessed value. The taxable value is used to calculate your taxes and is capped at 5%, or rate of inflation, unless there was a transfer of ownership in 2013, any new construction, field work, reappraisal changes or any other omitted real property. If there was a transfer of ownership on your property in 2013, your assessed value and

taxable value will be the same in 2014 because the taxable value was *uncapped*.

1.016 % is the inflation rate established by the State for 2014.

A special note to those who have purchased property in Cascade Township during the last year... Proposal A does not authorize the assessor to automatically set the assessed value of a property which has sold at one half of the sale price. An individual sale price may or may not be a good indicator of the true cash value of the property for a variety of reasons. Section 27(5) of the General Property Tax Act states that *“the purchase price paid in a transfer of property is not the presumptive true cash value of the property transferred.”*

Poverty Exemption Applications are available for those low income property owners who are unable to pay their property taxes. Applications are available at the Assessor's Office and are approved or denied by the Board of Review.

Veterans Exemptions Applications - Veterans whom the Veterans Administration has determined are 100% disabled are eligible for a property tax exemption. Surviving spouses are potentially eligible as well. The form is available from the Assessor's Office.

Did you know?

- ▶ Annual changes of assessment are based on sales in the neighborhood. We have at least 75 sales neighborhoods in Cascade. Your neighborhood rarely consists of just the homes on your street.
- ▶ Your taxable value can never exceed your assessed value.
- ▶ The June 1st filing deadline for Principal Residence Exemptions applies to new applications only. You do not need to reapply each year.
- ▶ It is your responsibility as a taxpayer to review your property record card periodically to be sure you agree with all the information that is currently of record.
- ▶ The assessing staff is available Monday thru Friday from 8:00 am to 5:00 p.m. Feel free to come in or call 949-6176 if you have any questions on your property. The assessing system is quite complex, and we are always willing to help our taxpayers understand how the system works.
- ▶ **The assessor is not permitted by State Law to automatically set your new assessment at one half of your purchase price.**

BOARD OF REVIEW MEMBERS

Barbara Manus-Averill
 John Meyer
 Sara Fazio

SAVE THE DATE...

Spring Yard Waste Pickup Program – Mondays, April 7 through May 2, 2014

Information regarding spring clean up day and dumpster days will be provided in the Spring newsletter and on our website at www.cascadetwp.com.

WHAT TO DO IF YOU ARE THE VICTIM OF IDENTITY THEFT

Identity theft is a common form of fraud that takes place when someone, without your permission, acquires goods or services utilizing your identity. This crime is averaging 15 million victims a year in the United States and a total of \$50 billion in losses. Ouch!! I thought that might warrant me telling you what to do if you are made aware that your identity may have been stolen.

- File a police report with your local law enforcement agency. Get that complaint number because you will need it later.
- Run your credit report. Check for any suspicious charges. This should be done annually, as quite often it takes months or years for you to know your identity was stolen.
- Contact the 3 credit bureaus and advised them your identity was stolen and they will ask you for the police report number. Tell them of the suspicious charges on your credit report and that you did not charge them.
- Check bank statements as well as credit reports and dispute any transaction(s) that you personally did not make. Cancel any credit cards or accounts that you did not open.
- Change your passwords and pins as well as get new credit and debit cards.
- Contact the Federal Trade Commission (FTC) and request an Identity Theft Affidavit form.
- Last, be diligent. This is a long process with several parties involved. Keep communicating with the parties involved to resolve the issue as quick as you can.

Be safe and aware,

Ryan Roe, Deputy
Kent County Sheriff Department
ryan.roe@kentcountymi.gov



KENT COUNTY HOUSING REHABILITATION PROGRAM

Cascade Township has allocated funds for this program. If you need assistance, please call the number below to see if you qualify.

Kent County's Housing Rehabilitation Program is administered by the Kent County Department of Community Development in cooperation with the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development.

Eligible Repairs

- Repair or replacement of major structural & mechanical systems
- Disability access and ADA repairs
- Pest & hazard abatement
- Energy saving improvements
- Connection to water and sewer lines

Are You Eligible?

- Do I own and occupy my home?
- Do I meet the income eligibility criteria presented below?
- Do I live within Kent County, outside of Grand Rapids or Wyoming? (Grand Rapids & Wyoming administer their own Housing Rehabilitation Programs)
- Is the home improvement I'm interested in necessary?

Financing Types

- **Deferred Payment Loans**, a non-interest bearing loan, with no payback required unless the borrower sells or transfers title or discontinues residence in the dwelling. Payments may be made voluntarily on a Deferred Payment Loan.
- **Grants**, homeowners who are income eligible and are also 62 years or older may be eligible for a grant to be used for accessibility improvements, hazard abatement and emergency repairs with partner agencies.

Income Limits

Number of Persons in Household	Maximum Allowable Income
1	\$33,400
2	\$38,200
3	\$42,950
4	\$47,700
5	\$51,550
6	\$55,350
7	\$59,150
8	\$63,000

For more information please call the Kent County Community Development Department at (616) 632-7410 or visit: www.accesskent.com/YourGovernment/Departments/CommunityDevelopment/Housing_Rehabilitation.htm

ELECTRICAL SAFETY TIPS AT HOME

On any given day, it's likely that most people use several different electrical appliances. With electric appliances being so common in modern homes, it's easy to forget that there are very real risks and hazards associated with their use. Take the time to brush up on the principles of safe operation - and make sure that everyone in your home is aware of them - in order prevent unnecessary exposure to hazards and safety risks.



Outlets

Every cord has to plug into an appropriate electrical outlet, but these tempting niches are inviting to unwelcome objects that can cause shorts and fires. Use these electrical safety tips at home to keep outlets safe:

- Block unused outlets by changing to a solid cover plate or using childproof caps per Consumer Product Safety Commission recommendations.
- Do not overload outlets with multiple adaptors or power strips; relocate cords instead.
- Never put any object other than the appropriate size plug into an outlet.
- Install ground fault circuit interrupter outlets in potentially hazardous areas such as near pools, crawl spaces, kitchens, bathrooms and unfinished basements.
- Keep all outlets properly covered with secure plates that cover all wiring.

Electrical Fire Safety Tips

When an electrical short or spark does happen, it is vital to understand what to do to prevent or put out an electrical fire to keep the damage and devastation from spreading. You should, of course, call 911 or other appropriate emergency services immediately in case of electrical injury or fire.

Do not allow children to play in proximity to small or large electric appliances.

- Replace any tools that put off even mild electric shocks.
- Replace any light switches that have a tendency to flicker.
- Replace any light switches that are hot to the touch.
- Avoid overloading extension cords, sockets and plugs.
- Do not ever force a three-prong plug into a two-receptacle socket.
- Know where fuse boxes and circuit breakers are located as well as how to properly operate them.
- Never attempt electrical repairs or rewiring without proper certification and experience.
- Do not put water on an electrical fire; use a dry fire extinguisher or baking soda instead.

Staying Safe at Home

Even though electricity is commonplace, there is still quite a bit of danger associated with improper use. Carefully observe all safety measures when using electricity to keep you and your family safe.

– Cascade Inspection Services



WE WANT TO HELP YOU HELP THE GREATER CASCADE COMMUNITY!

Don't just be, Belong.



Cascade Community Foundation

The Cascade Community Foundation is now accepting grant applications for Spring of 2014. Grants from this fund address the

needs throughout Cascade, and the surrounding areas typically focusing on, *Nurturing Neighbors*, giving residents a chance to make safe and healthy choices; *Enhancing Places* through improvements to community places and spaces; and *Connecting Community* by bringing people together for community events. A typical grant award is between \$100 and \$5,000.

Applications are due by 5 p.m., Friday March 14, 2014. Applications will then be reviewed by the CCF Grants Committee and final decisions will be made by the Board of Directors during their April meeting.

Applicants must be organizations with 501(c) IRS status. Applications can be found online at cascadecommunityfoundation.com.

Funding for the biannual grants awarded by CCF is made available through earnings on the Tom and Joyce Wisner Fund or the Foundation's General Endowment Fund. Donations to the CCF endowment fund are always welcome and provide a way to make a permanent investment in the community for ever-changing needs. For more information, go to the website at cascadecommunityfoundation.com or contact us at (616) 499-2060.

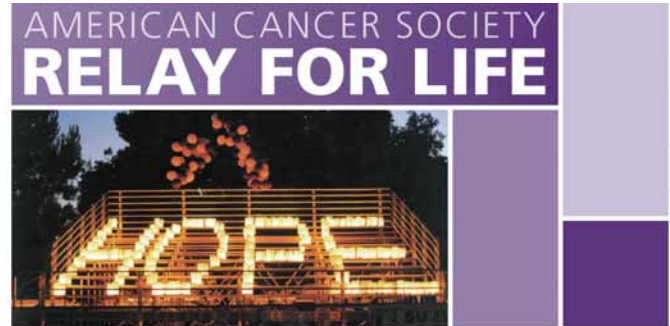


FOREST HILLS BUSINESS ASSOCIATION

Membership to the FHBA is open to all entities interested in the Forest Hills area businesses and community. Membership runs from January through December and is priced at \$150. 2014 memberships are available now! Call 616-977-0729 for more information or visit : www.fhba.org.

Upcoming events are highlighted below:

- | | |
|---|---|
| February 13 –
CYBER CRIME
Featuring: Kim Downey
7:30 am – 9:00 am
Location: The Wisner Center | April 10 –
Gilda's Club
7:30 am – 9:00 am
Location: Rehmann Group |
| March 13 –
NFIB: National Federation of Independent Business
Featuring: Charlie Owens
7:30 am – 9:00 am
Location: Kumon Math & Reading Center | April 19 –
Electronic Recycling, Document Shredding & Highway Cleanup
9:00 am – 12:00 pm
Location: Integrated Architecture |
| March 15 –
Forest Hills Community Expo!
9:30 am – 2:30 p.m.
Location: Ada Christian School | |



**Hate Cancer?
Join us in Fighting Back!
Relay For Life of Forest Hills**

June 6-7, 2014 from 2:00pm-2:00pm
Ada Christian School
Ada, Michigan

- What is Relay?
- Organized, overnight community fundraising walk
 - Teams of people camp out around a track
 - Members of each team take turns walking around the track
 - Food, games and activities provide entertainment and build camaraderie
 - Family-friendly environment for the entire community

Because it's a team event, individual participants are not required to be there the entire time. But it's so much fun, you'll find it hard to leave!

For more information and question, please contact ACS Staff Partner Elizabeth Balder at Elizabeth.balder@cancer.org



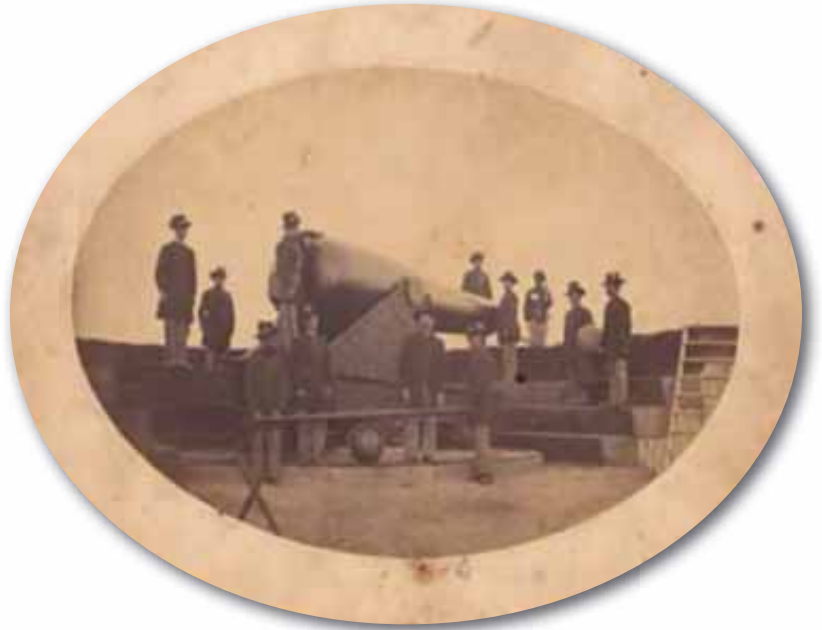
Celebrate. Remember. Fight Back.®

RelayForLife.org | 1.800.227.2345

CASCADE CIVIL WAR VETERAN, WILLIAM WHEELER DENISON

Cascade can be proud to realize that an estimated one hundred men served the North in the Civil War. We know of seventy who are buried in Cascade cemeteries.

William Wheeler Denison was a man looking for adventure when the Civil War began. According to the Cascade Chronicles, "In the spring of 1861 William Wheeler Denison, thirty-one, had gone to Wisconsin on a 'land-looking' expedition." Upon hearing President Lincoln's call to arms, William enlisted April 24, 1861 in Company A, 1st Heavy Artillery, Wisconsin.



From Camp Randall in Madison, Wisconsin, William writes to his brother Henry in Cascade, Michigan, "It is very uncertain how long we shall be soon stationed here, having been ordered to Washington as soon as we are in marching order. I enlisted some time ago – about the first that started out – believing that it was a just cause and not only that but the duty of all who could, without making too much of a sacrifice to do so, for we are all deeply interested in the protection of the Union and the maintenance of respect among the nations of the world. The great American flag has, in a fairly short time, acquired such respect. When traitors have banded together for the purpose of tearing down and treading underfoot that glorious ensign of liberty, it's good to remember that the oppressed of all nations have fled for protection under her folds, and she has become the most honored flag upon the face of the earth. It is high time that every liberty-loving citizen should walk boldly up and offer his services to his country in this, its most trying time of need."

In July 1862 William, who is still stuck in his routine duties at Battery Rogers protecting Washington, D. C., writes to his brother to obtain Henry's political help. "It was not the desire to hold a higher position than my present, that prompted me to write you on the subject but rather that I might change my condition get a position that would call me into the field into more active service, and not be compelled to serve out the time of my enlistment in the monotonous duties of garrison life although not very laborious but not enough of vanity." Henry, who was Cascade Township Clerk from 1860 to 1865, was unable to assist William in obtaining a higher position or in moving into more active service. William did achieve the rank of Corporal.

Like many veterans, William Wheeler Denison became chronically ill during the Civil War and was given a disability discharge March 19, 1864. William received a monthly pension of \$8 which was increased to \$25 on May 6, 1867. He passed away from his disability on August 7, 1867 leaving no widow or children, but a father and mother, neither of whom were dependant for support from the son, but the son was dependant upon the father."

William Wheeler Denison died at age 38 and is buried in Cascade Cemetery next to his father, Gideon H. Denison, mother, Christiana Dibble Denison and other family members. The Denisons settled in Cascade in 1845 or 1846 according to Chapman's History of Michigan.

This article is a continuing series presented by the Cascade Historical Society to commemorate the Civil War sesquicentennial. Articles will feature familiar Cascade family names such as Beard, Buttrick, Danforth, Holt, Patterson, Spaulding, etc.

If you would like us to search our records for your family's history, please email your request to cascadehistory@cascadetwp.com. We meet monthly at 9:30 a.m. on the first Thursday at the old Cascade Township white building located at 2839 Thornapple River Dr. near Cascade Road. You are invited to experience Cascade history with us.



Cascade Charter Township

2865 Thornhills Ave SE.
Grand Rapids MI 49546
phone: 616.949.1500
fax: 616.949.3918
www.cascadetwp.com

PRST STD
U.S. POSTAGE
PAID
GRAND RAPIDS MI
PERMIT No. 1

Pathway News...

As I write this newsletter on January 5th, 2014, I get the sinking feeling the winter of 2014 will never come to an end. That is, of course, ridiculous. We all know that winter will be over sometime in June. Not one for indoor activity, I seem to be able to pinch an inch of extra winter girth around my mid-section. My wife doesn't gain weight in the winter, but she says that at her age, she can pinch an inch of loose skin from almost anywhere she tries. You can bet that when the weather lifts, we will be out on the pathways trying to shore up the effects of winter and aging. It's fanciful thinking, but getting older requires a lot of that. In the meantime, I am willing to venture out in this weather and walk at least four times a week at a minimum of three miles per walk.

I still find small amounts of trash on and around the trails. I manage to fill up one or two plastic bags and place them in the convenient trash bins located along our wonderful trail system. I find that as much as I enjoy keeping our trails clear of trash, I am equally joyful for the trail system itself. Our trails are clear all winter long. Yes, we pay to have that done, but it still takes dedicated individuals to get out there every time it snows and keep them clear of ice and snow.

Spring is a long way off, but until it gets here, you can get out and enjoy winter. As you enjoy your winter walk, be sure to take a moment to thank the driver of that plow you may encounter on the trail. They do a great job of keeping our trail system clean and clear for our enjoyment.

KEEP CASCADE BEAUTIFUL.

Kris Taylor – Pathways Coordinator

