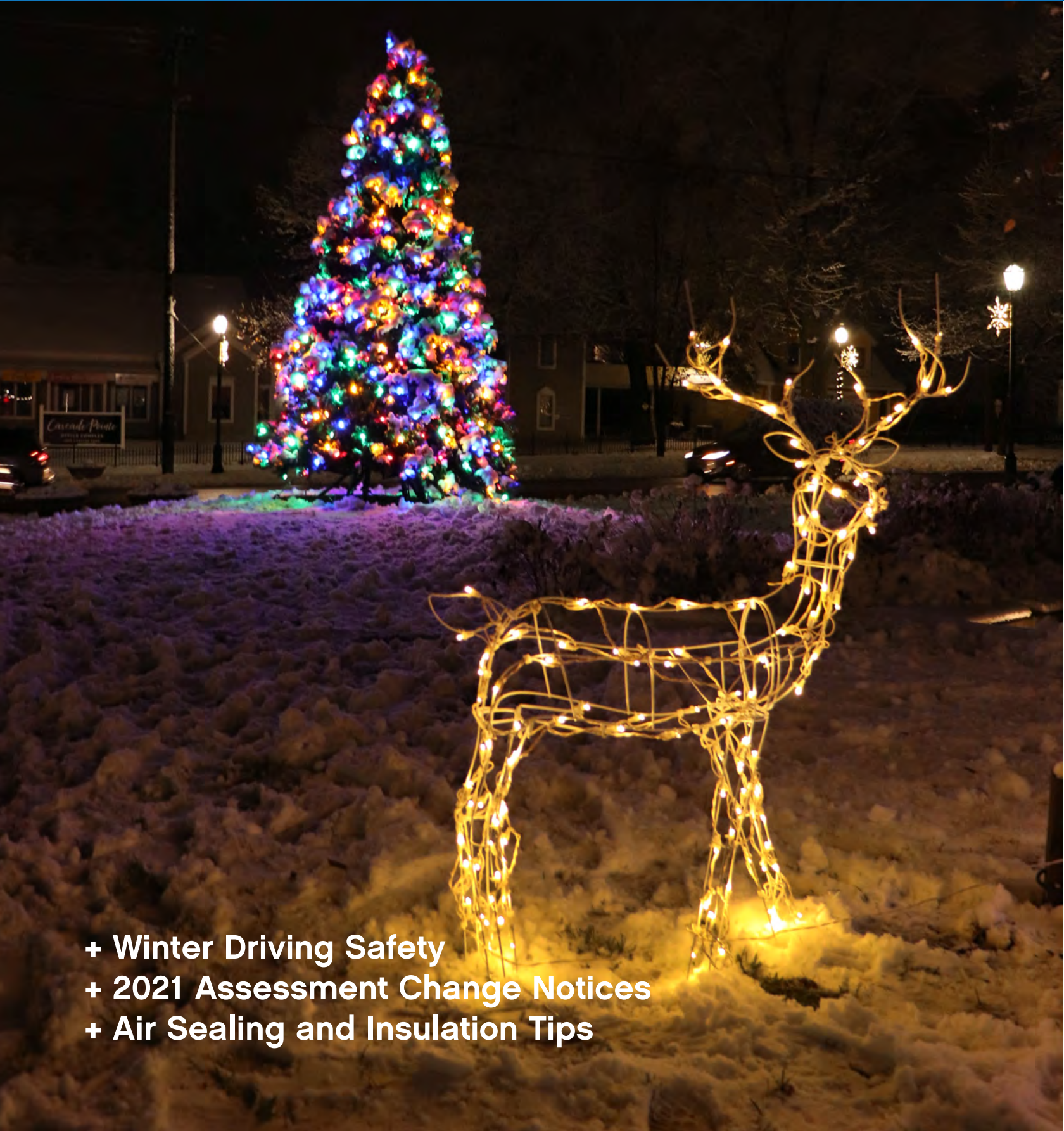


CASCADE CONNECTIONS

A newsletter from Cascade Charter Township • Winter 2020



- + Winter Driving Safety
- + 2021 Assessment Change Notices
- + Air Sealing and Insulation Tips

NEWS FROM THE SUPERVISOR



As the Cascade community prepares to celebrate the upcoming holiday season and begin a new year, I want to extend my best wishes to everyone in our wonderful community.

The year 2020 has been a time of great challenge and considerable change. As we approach the new year together, we will continue to meet those challenges and move forward as a community.

As I begin my new responsibilities as your supervisor, I look forward to serving you. By actively listening to your priorities and concerns, we will try to ensure that all decisions we make are focused on what is in the best interests of our residents and community.

Establishing effective two-way communication with all residents will be a top Township priority for 2021. I want to hear from as many of you as possible. Effective immediately, I will schedule regular weekend and evening hours to hear your concerns, questions and thoughts about all Township projects and services. For now, those conversations will take place over the phone or on Zoom, until it's safe to hold in-person meetings once again. In addition to speaking at those scheduled times, please feel free to contact me directly via email or telephone regarding any community matters.

We will also be actively evaluating ways to enhance opportunities to gather and incorporate public comment regarding Township projects, services and initiatives. Your ideas are vital, your suggestions helpful, your comments welcome and your concerns important.

Wishing you and your loved ones a happy holiday season and a healthy new year!

Grace Lesperance
glesperance@cascadetwp.com
616.949.1501

Township Contacts

Township Hall Office Hours

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

Supervisor

Grace Lesperance; 949.1501
glesperance@cascadetwp.com

Clerk

Sue Slater; 949.1508
sslater@cascadetwp.com

Treasurer

Ken Peirce; 949.6944
kpeirce@cascadetwp.com

Trustees

Jim Koessel
jkoessel@cascadetwp.com
Tom McDonald
tmcdonald@cascadetwp.com
Timmy Noordhoek
tnoordhoek@cascadetwp.com
John Shipley
jshipley@cascadetwp.com

Manager

Ben Swayze; 949.1500
bswayze@cascadetwp.com

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@kentcountymt.gov



WINTER 2020 TAX INFORMATION

Winter 2020 tax bills and informational notices were mailed Dec. 1. Winter taxes are due on or before Feb. 16.

Payments are receipted on the same business day they are received. We recommend you allow seven days to ensure a timely delivery. Postmarks are not accepted. An informational letter is enclosed with the bill for alternative payment instructions and an E-Z pay application. Please include a phone number on your check in case there are any issues with the payment.

Your tax bill information is available 24/7 at cascadetwp.com:

- Click on Property/Parcel Lookup under Quick Links.
- Enter your parcel number, address or name in search bar.
- Click the Tax Information tab to view the property tax history along with current taxes.

Please note: On March 1, all unpaid real property taxes will be forwarded to the Kent County treasurer for collection.

If you do not receive a tax statement in December, please visit the Township's website at cascadetwp.com or call the treasurer's office at 616.949.6944.

virtual public engagement session: **FIRE STATION 1**

Please join us on Tuesday, Jan. 19 at 6 p.m. for a virtual public engagement session where Township officials and Progressive AE will present results of the facilities study for a new Fire Station 1.

This meeting comes after a six-month study that sought and secured community input regarding the Township's Space Needs and Facilities Study. Residents identified facilities used by the Cascade Fire Department as their top need.

Can't attend? Share your thoughts via a survey to be posted on cascadetwp.com on Jan. 20.

More event details will be posted on the Township's website and social media once the date gets closer.

sign up for our **E-NEWSLETTER**

Sign up for our e-newsletter to stay up to date on what makes Cascade a great place to live, work, eat and play. Please visit cascadetwp.com and click eNews under Quick Links to receive monthly updates.



Thank You, Cascade Community

Taken 2019

In my final column for Cascade Connections, I want to thank you for the opportunity to serve on the Township Board for the past 16 years.

I am thankful for all we have accomplished together during my years as supervisor and trustee. These achievements range from big projects such as the completion and extension of the pedestrian pathway system and the acquisition, development and improvement of parks and open spaces to less-visible but equally impactful successes such as balancing the budget, receiving an exceptional bond rating, creating the East Precinct and earning a higher Insurance Services Office rating for our Fire Department.

I am grateful for the opportunity to address challenges, improve public safety and strengthen community connections through dialogue and collaboration with residents, business owners, county and state officials and leaders of neighboring municipalities. Through these experiences, I have learned we have the same goals and we are more likely to achieve them by sharing our knowledge and resources.

There are many people to thank, starting with my maternal grandparents, who moved here in 1926. I also want to thank my parents, who taught me to take an interest in local government, and a mentor, the late Paul Slater, whose leadership laid the groundwork for our township's growth and the excellent quality of life we continue to enjoy here today. Many thanks, too, to former Township Board members, especially supervisors Wendell Champion and Michael Julien.

I am deeply grateful to have served with excellent Board members, including Jack Lewis and Jim Koessel, who served alongside me on the Planning Commission before we became trustees, and Tom McDonald, whose work was instrumental in the development of open space, including Burton Park and Peace Park. I also wish to thank the Downtown Development Authority, Planning Commission, Zoning Board of Appeals, Parks Commission and Board of Review members and Fire Chief Adam Magers, who leads a team of first responders second to none.

My greatest appreciation goes to Township Manager Ben Swayze and all of our outstanding Township employees who keep Cascade running smoothly in all seasons and circumstances. Working together, our Board and Township staff have consistently met the challenges of the COVID-19 pandemic with innovative solutions, tremendous dedication and capable professionalism. It has been an honor to work with them, and I will miss coming into the office knowing that whatever the day might bring, we would face it as a team.

Above all, I am grateful for this beautiful place we call home, the satisfaction of serving it to the best of my ability and the friendships I've made along the way.

I will continue to want the very best for Cascade and the wonderful people who live here. Thank you for the privilege and honor of serving as your supervisor these past years.

With best wishes for a safe and happy holiday season,

Rob Beahan

PURCHASE A DOG LICENSE FOR YOUR FURRY FRIEND

Kent County dog licenses are available at Township Hall year-round. A current rabies certificate and proof of neuter/spay must be provided at the time you apply for the license.

Cascade Community Foundation Announces

Fall 2020 Grant Award Recipients

It's my pleasure to announce the recipients of Cascade Community Foundation's Fall 2020 grant awards. Dollars are made possible through the Joyce and Tom Wisner Fund and support nonprofits with dedicated service to you, the wonderful residents who make this community so amazing.

It should be no surprise that 2020 resulted in a record number of applicants. In fact, submissions nearly doubled during our spring and fall funding cycles. I want to applaud our Board of Directors for reviewing each applicant and selecting an esteemed few that best exemplify the foundation's purpose and impact.

Cascade Community Foundation's Fall 2020 grant recipients are:

- **Camp Henry** – Awarded \$2,000 to support more than 2,500 Forest Hills-area children enrolled in the camp's Maple Syrup program, which provides hands-on living and learning opportunities.
- **Hospice of Michigan** – Awarded \$1,250 to support the Open Access program and Charity Care, Grief Support and Quality of Life funds, as well as costs for medications, equipment and supplies for Cascade residents facing terminal illness.
- **Make-A-Wish Foundation** – Awarded \$1,250 to support direct wish costs for critically ill children in Cascade and the greater Forest Hills area, including two who are waiting to have their wishes granted.
- **Mary Free Bed YMCA** – Awarded \$500 for exercise programming during Mental Health Awareness Month next spring. The YMCA will host Free Yoga Fridays throughout May to encourage activity that is proven to benefit mental health.

On behalf of our Board of Directors, we are honored to fund these great partners and, as always, we encourage you to support Cascade Community Foundation or one of our amazing grant recipients with your generosity this giving season.

Justin Swan
Director, Cascade Community Foundation
justin.swan@casadecommunityfoundation.com



Winter Driving Tips from DEPUTY DIEPPA

Greetings from your community police officer.

As winter approaches, it's time to "relearn" how to drive in snowy weather. We all know driving on snow and ice can be hazardous. Here are some tips to make your travels safer during the winter months:

- Before driving, properly clear windows of ice and snow. It's important to make sure you can see all around your vehicle and not just a small hole in the windshield. Additionally, clear off the snow on the roof of your car. An abrupt stop can cause all the snow to fall forward and obscure your vision or blow off the back, striking a vehicle behind you.
- Check your vehicle's tires. Having appropriate tread and air pressure ensures your vehicle gets needed traction and grip. It's highly recommended you get snow tires.
- Slow down, give yourself more time and leave a much larger gap than usual between vehicles. And remember: Four-wheel drive doesn't mean you can drive as fast as you can.

It's easy to forget how vehicles handle in the winter and make small mistakes during the first snowfall. Keep these tips in mind and save yourself and others injury, car dings and tow bills.

Have a great holiday season and, most importantly, be safe!



air sealing and insulation: **REDUCE ENERGY COSTS AND INCREASE COMFORT**

Did you know older homes can have significant air leaks that can add up to much higher energy bills?

If you were to add up all the leaks in a typical home, it would be the equivalent of having a window open every day of the year.

Common areas for air leakage include:

- Knee walls
- Porch roofs
- Attic access panels
- Recessed lighting
- Attic fans
- Rim joists
- Windows and doors
- Fireplace walls

Often, a few tubes of caulk can have a dramatic effect on air leakage and provide a more comfortable home with lower energy costs.

Additional benefits to air sealing and insulation include:

- Reduced noise from the outside
- Less pollen, dust and insects entering your home
- Better humidity control
- Lower chance for ice dams

New homes are required to be constructed with a continuous air barrier that prevents the loss of conditioned air from inside the home. Homes are now built so “tight” that mechanical ventilation is required to provide fresh air inside the home.

For more information on how to reduce energy costs, please visit energystar.gov or contact the Building Department at 616.949.3765.

the cascade historical society

NEEDS YOUR OPINION



The Cascade Historical Society wants to improve the visitor experience at the township museum.

The Historical Society soon will begin working with an organization that has a successful tradition of helping museums develop more meaningful and interesting exhibits. This effort includes determining what Cascade residents think about when they consider the township’s history.

It’s quite simple: When you think about Cascade, what do you think of?

The Historical Society invites you to participate in this important project. After all, it’s not what the Historical Society thinks – it’s what you think.

Send your thoughts to cascadehistory@cascadetwp.com.



From the assessing department: **2021 ASSESSMENT CHANGE NOTICES**

Assessment change notices will be mailed on or before Feb. 19.

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

- If there was a transfer of ownership in 2020.
- If there is a principal residence exemption, or PRE, on your property for 2021. If you purchased the property in 2020, please check the PRE status carefully. Contact the Assessing Department if you think the PRE status is incorrect.

If you are a new homeowner and do not receive your notice by March 1, please call the assessor's office. Registration of deeds and taxpayer name changes at the county level can take more than eight weeks.

March Board of Review Will Hear Assessment Appeals March 8-9

- Sales data and comparative information will be available in the assessor's office and online beginning Feb. 20.
- Appointments will be made beginning Feb. 25. A Board of Review petition (Michigan Department of Treasury Form 618/L-4035) and instructions will be emailed to you when an appointment is made.
- Letter appeals are accepted 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 8. Please send them to the Cascade Township Board of Review, 2865 Thornhills Ave. SE.
- An appeal to the March Board of Review – 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.

Cascade Charter Township Board of Review Members

Barb Manus-Averill
Sara Fazio
John Meyer
Louis Berra (Alternate)
Susan Mozley (Alternate)

Online Tools and Resources for Assessment Services

Assessing tools are available 24/7 at cascadetwp.com:

- Online Property/Parcel Lookup
- Assessing Forms
- Residential Sales by Neighborhood
- Residential Property Characteristic Report Listed by Address
- Annual Residential Reappraisal/Review

Assessing tools are available 24/7 at accesskent.com:

- Register of Deeds Self Service Web
- Property Search With Mapping Services
- Parcel Viewer (iMap)





PRSRT STD
US POSTAGE
PAID
GRAND RAPIDS, MI
PERMIT NO. 657

Cascade Charter Township

2865 Thornhills Ave. SE
Grand Rapids, MI 49546
(p) 616.949.1500
(f) 616.949.3918
cascadetwp.com

HEATING SAFETY TIPS FROM THE FIRE DEPARTMENT

As most of you already know, 2020 has been a memorable year. Your firefighters have been working hard to stay healthy and provide our residents with the high level of service you have come to expect. As of Nov. 8, your firefighters have responded to 1,672 calls for service.

The calendar has turned to fall with winter soon to follow. The National Fire Protection Agency offers the following home heating safety tips:

- Keep anything that can burn at least 3 feet from heating equipment, such as a furnace, fireplace, wood stove or portable space heater.
- Have a 3-foot “kid-free zone” around open fires and space heaters.
- Never use your oven to heat your home.
- Have a qualified professional install stationary space heating equipment, water heaters or central heating equipment according to the local codes and manufacturer instructions.
- Have heating equipment and chimneys cleaned and inspected every year by a qualified professional.
- Remember to turn portable heaters off when leaving the room or going to bed.
- Always use the right kind of fuel, specified by the manufacturer, for fuel-burning space heaters.
- Make sure the fireplace has a sturdy screen to stop sparks from flying in the room. Ashes should be cool before putting them in a metal container. Keep the container a safe distance away from your home.
- Test smoke alarms at least once a month.

For more winter safety tips, please visit [nfpa.org/education](https://www.nfpa.org/education).

Thank you to all who came to see our firefighters and Ember during our Halloween events! Reminder, we are still doing birthday visits from a distance to make your child's birthday special. Call to schedule: 616.949.1320.