

# CASCADE CONNECTIONS

A newsletter from Cascade Charter Township • Fall 2021



- + Yard Waste Pickup Program
- + Cascade Cleanup Day
- + Parks and Recreation Master Plan Survey

# NEWS FROM THE SUPERVISOR

## GRACE LESPERANCE

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Fall has come to Cascade! I hope this newsletter finds you enjoying the changing seasons. I know everyone is busy, but I want to encourage you to take a moment to share your thoughts (good and bad) with us over the coming weeks – and beyond.

We will soon mail initial questionnaires to all Cascade households as we begin our strategic planning process for the Township. We will also host multiple community gatherings and offer an online platform for residents to share feedback. We hope to hear from as many of you as possible, including residents we do not often hear from. Your feedback will help ensure every decision made by our boards, commissions and staff is based on and centered around the needs and wants of our residents and local businesses.

Too often, leadership can end up talking too much with themselves and not enough with the residents they represent. I decided to run for supervisor in large part for two reasons: I felt some of the decision-makers in Cascade were too focused on making the Township into a place they or others thought it should be and not enough on what the residents already living here actually wanted. Secondly, I felt we were not doing enough to preserve the quaint charm and unique character that makes Cascade such a desirable place to live.

The following email, written by longtime Cascade resident Ryan Bruneau, expresses a similar sentiment, better than I ever could:

*Cascade is to be a place of trees and falling, or cascading if you enjoy the pun, waters. Trees require open land, and we're not producing more, so we must protect what we have.*

*Is Cascade not to be an idyllic place to reside? The notion of continuous growth of population and associated development sounds like the lore of business rather than pleasure. I argue we live in Cascade to take a break from our business/vocation and that just maybe it doesn't need to grow 20% year over year.*

*I also draw parallels to the book entitled "The Not so Big House: A Blueprint for the Way We Really Live," by Sarah Susanka. In it, she offers a deceptively simple message: better, not bigger. I think that message rings true with respect to master planning Cascade. We don't need more structures and correspondingly more people backed up at traffic lights; instead, we need to offer those who currently live here a better way of life.*

*I would hope that with the bulk of our residents working from home over this past year+ of the pandemic, we all can/could appreciate the opportunity to escape to a greenspace over a lunchtime walk rather than having to drive to a neighboring community. My family moved to Cascade after falling in love with the fall colors and the meandering Thornapple. I take this as an opportunity to give back what it has given us.*

Thank you, Ryan and everyone else who has reached out and shared your thoughts. Although I have been admittedly slow to respond at times, your thoughts, opinions and ideas matter. Please do not hesitate to share them with me. I look forward to speaking with you and wish you all a wonderful fall.



# Township Contacts

## Township Hall Office Hours

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

## Supervisor

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glesperance@cascadetwp.com

## Clerk

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## Treasurer

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## Manager

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## Assistant Manager

Stephanie Fast; 285.2327  
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## Assessing

Jennifer Genter; 949.6176  
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## 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

Brian Hilbrands; 949.0224  
bhilbrands@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*

In the last newsletter, you met Deputy Clerk Krissi Brott. I'd like to introduce another new staff member in the Clerk's Office: Jennifer Jager.

### **Jennifer Jager, Election Specialist**

Jennifer comes to Cascade with a passion for all things related to elections. There's a great deal to do during an "off year" to keep up with all the updates and plan for the next election. Her background in election management is extensive and is only matched by her enthusiasm to serve Cascade residents.

In her new role, Jennifer is an essential part of training election staff and finding effective ways to prepare for future elections. She has been working in elections since 2012 and has accreditation through the state of Michigan.


When not in the office, Jennifer enjoys bird-watching, reading books and weightlifting. Her husband and three sons fill her life with joy.

Krissi and Jennifer are great additions to our staff. Please join us in welcoming them to Cascade.



## **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. Visit [cascadetwp.com](http://cascadetwp.com) and click "eNews" under "Quick Links" to receive monthly updates.



# A Man With a Plan:

## Early Land Speculation and Real Estate Development in Cascade

**M**ichigan Fever ran rampant in the Midwest in the 1830s. Catching it was easy — you opened a letter from a relative or friend who had already given in to it, you read about it in a newspaper or circular or you made a big bet hoping to make an even bigger fortune.

A variant, Grand River Fever, shaped Cascade Township as we know it today, bringing wagon loads of settlers to the area from Ohio, New York, Massachusetts and even County Wicklow in Ireland. They came here to farm, establish new businesses and engage in land speculation.

Jefferson Morrison was among the first to speculate in Cascade real estate. He purchased a large tract of land that stretched from Burton Street all the way to the river, with property on both sides of Cascade Road, which, like Burton Street, didn't exist at the time. Morrison may or may not have recognized his holdings when he and his wife, Caroline, canoed down the Thornapple to the Grand River en route to their home in the little town of Grand Rapids, where he had opened a general store. (The canoe carrying Caroline and their wedding gifts overturned in the rapids near here, so he might have been distracted.)

In 1836, with business partner Alexander McKinstry, Morrison platted his property, laying out a neighborhood of hundreds of homes and businesses situated on blocks of 12 lots each. His plan included streets named Sebewa, Grand, Jasper, Detroit and Oregon, among others. Today, Orange Street bisects Clinton, Chicago and Wall Streets on the Morrison-McKinstry plat.

Morrison had overestimated the Thornapple River's capacity to make Cascade a mill town to rival Grand Rapids, where the much larger Grand River provided vastly stronger waterpower. Little, if anything, came of his vision. Perhaps he lost interest in Cascade, or more likely he pursued other interests — he had many. At any rate, he sold his land to Joel Guild and his son, Consider (Sid), members of one of Grand Rapids' foremost pioneering families.

In those days, land changed hands often and quickly. By 1843, Stephen Hinsdale of Grand Rapids held the deed to most of the Guild property, which Morrison had platted just seven years earlier. In 1845, the Denisons began farming on a portion of the property, which was subsequently acquired by the Slater family in 1879.

The Guilds sold part of the land — the future village site — to D.S.T. Weller, who, like Jefferson Morrison, soon had big ideas for it. Believing he was on the verge of a real estate boom, Weller platted an extensive neighborhood of 1-acre plots. Nothing came of his plan, and he soon sold out to W. S. Gunn, who was still the owner in 1848 when Cascade was incorporated as a township.

The next man with a plan was George S. Richardson, a successful businessman and native of Stow, Ohio, who moved to Cascade in his 60s. In 1869, he bought some of Morrison's original acreage and platted a village of his own design. His plan was more realistic than the previous ones and formed the basis for Cascade as we know it today. Richardson had a genuine affection for the area, planting 100 trees in Cascade to celebrate the U.S. Centennial in 1876. The village as he envisioned it has changed, but some of the trees he planted continue to beautify Cascade today.

In the 20th century, land speculation gave way to real estate development, a practice that carries many of the same risks and rewards. Two hundred acres of land on the east side of the river was purchased in 1928 by Mary Wykes at the urging of her son, Roger, who foresaw Cascade's potential as an upscale residential suburb. Like his predecessors on the west side of river, Roger Wykes platted an extensive neighborhood, including a nine-hole golf course on 30th Street across from the cemetery. Pipes had been laid to three greens and two houses had been built when the Depression brought a halt to the enterprise. Roger had to be content with remodeling a cottage into an impressive year-round home located on the hill that was most recently the site of New Day Community Church.

The east side of the river was developed following World War II and became the Cascade Springs/Cascade Terrace neighborhoods. The streets and lots there today bear little resemblance to the Wykes plan.

No matter what your address is in Cascade, there's a good chance you live on land that has been bought and sold many times over the past two centuries — and perhaps long ago, an ambitious speculator made big plans for your neighborhood. If things had been a little different, who knows, the Cascade Barbershop might be standing at the intersection of Clinton and Detroit Streets instead of Cascade Road.

# Help Shape the Future of Cascade Parks and Recreation

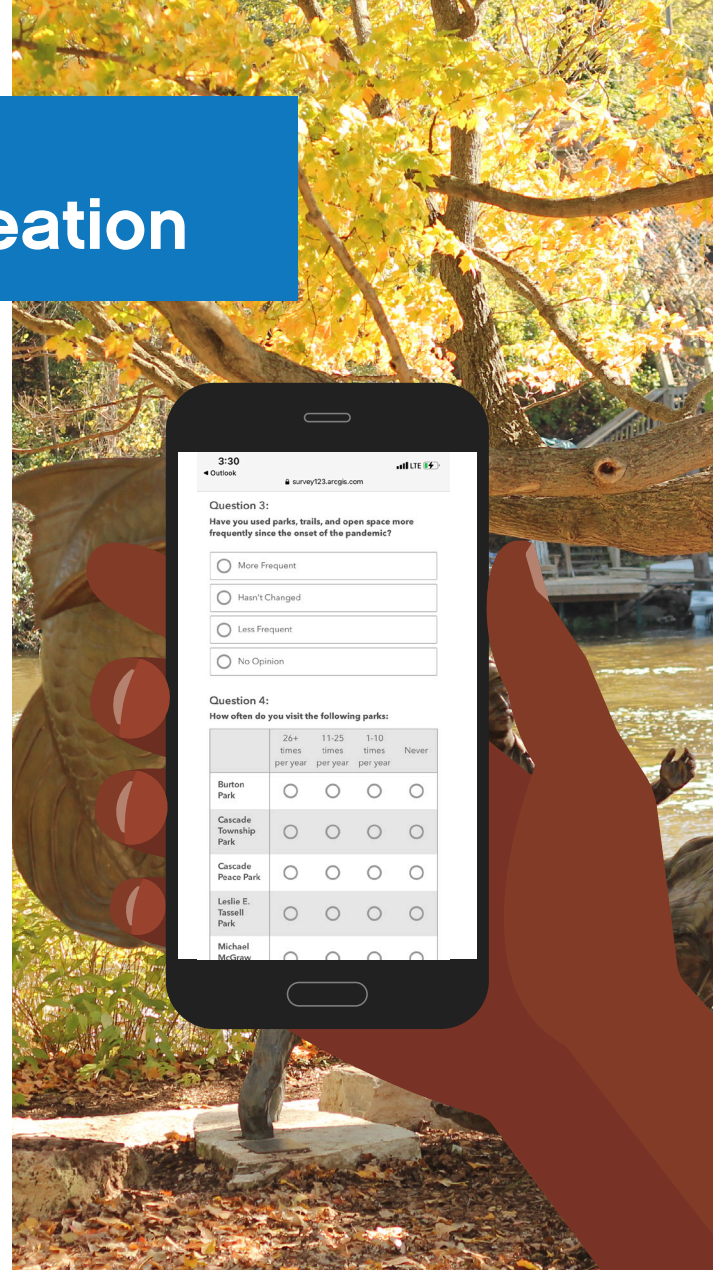
Our Parks and Recreation Committee needs your help as it works to update the Township's parks and recreation master plan.

Residents are invited to participate in a brief survey that will help shape the future of Cascade parks, recreation and open spaces. The online survey takes only a few minutes to complete and includes questions about how often you visit Township parks, the benefits of parks and recreation most important to you, your interest in expanded recreational opportunities in the Township and your support of a future proposed parks millage, among others.

Scan the QR code or visit [cascadetwp.com](http://cascadetwp.com) and click "Latest News" to share your feedback before Oct. 19.



SCAN  
QR CODE



## Meet Some of Your Residential Building Inspectors

If you have a home addition or remodeling project underway, chances are you will see one of our building inspectors periodically during construction. In total, Cascade Township has 10 full-time inspectors dedicated to ensuring our community stays safe and healthy.



**Bill Benoit**



**Dennis Rowlander**

Two of those inspectors are Bill and Dennis, who bring years of experience in the construction industry. In addition to field inspections, they perform plan reviews prior to issuing permits and are available to help with any code questions you may have.

We inspect to ensure compliance with the Michigan Residential Code, which provides minimum standards for construction. The plan review process is in place to prevent code-related issues during construction, so include as much detail as possible on your construction plans.

All of our inspectors are available for code-related questions at 616.949.3765. To view the department's phone directory, visit [cascadetwp.com](http://cascadetwp.com) and click on "Building Inspections" under "Services/Departments."

# CASCADE CLEANUP DAY

Cascade residents are invited to drop off non-hazardous household waste or office paper for shredding 9 a.m.-noon Saturday, Oct. 23 at Ada Bible Church, 8899 Cascade Road SE.

## Please note:

- You must be in line by noon to be eligible for drop-off.
- Commercial waste associated with professional contractors and other businesses is not allowed.
- Identification is required to verify your residency within Cascade Township.
- The Township reserves the right to refuse any object that is deemed too large or difficult to handle.
- The Ada Bible Church parking lot is a one-way entry from Cascade Road SE and exit to Quiggle Avenue SE – enter via Cascade Road SE, just east of Quiggle Avenue SE.
- No yard waste: You will need to use the Township's leaf pickup program, your curbside service or other source for leaves, branches, brush and all other yard waste.
- No hazardous material, such as concrete, shingles, tires, batteries, ashes, medical waste, fuel tanks, propane tanks and pool chemicals, is allowed. Liquid waste, such as paint, chemicals or oil, is also not allowed.

## On-site services:

- Arrowaste: For general trash and junk, appliances and scrap metal. Yard waste is not allowed.
- West Michigan Document Shredding: For shedding of up to 100 pounds of office paper, personal files and other personal, sensitive documents.

For questions, call Cascade Township Hall at 616.949.1500.



## YARD WASTE PICKUP PROGRAM FALL 2021

Yard waste tags are free and available 8 a.m.-5 p.m. Monday through Friday in the Cascade Township Hall front vestibule, 5920 Tahoe Drive SE.

**Yard waste will be picked up each Monday starting Oct. 18 through Dec. 6.** Please have your yard waste at the curb by midnight the night before pickup.

Place a tag on each bag of leaves or bundle of branches. You must use the new orange sticker on each bag or bundle for pickup. If you have the old blue tags, stop by Township Hall and exchange them for the new stickers.

Only paper bags can be used. Bags cannot exceed 30 pounds. Grass clippings, dirt, sod, cement, sand and rocks are not accepted. Sticks should be no longer

than 4 feet in length, and branches, logs and stumps cannot exceed 1 inch in diameter.

This service is available only in the restricted burn area. To view the restricted burn area map, visit [cascadetwp.com](http://cascadetwp.com) and click "Maps" under "Reference Desk."

Yard waste dumpsters will be available Oct. 18-Dec. 6 behind the Thornhills Fire Station, 2865 Thornhills Ave. SE.

For more information about the Township's fall yard waste program, visit [cascadetwp.com](http://cascadetwp.com) or call 616.949.1500.

# Local Foundation is Asking How You Would Shape America's Modern Classroom

The Cascade Community Foundation's Q&A Livestream Series will turn to education in 2022 with a landmark investigation into a rather simple question: What's required to make Forest Hills Public Schools the incubator for modern classrooms in America?

Designed to spark dialogue around often-avoided topics impacting the suburbs of Grand Rapids, the Foundation's Q&A Livestream is an online video series that has attracted thousands of viewers curious about diversity and mental health.

Next summer, the series will focus on one of our most complex issues: education. Episodes of "The Modern Classroom" will be announced soon.

*Over the past year, so many of us have taken on a dual role with our children, serving as both parent and teacher," said Justin Swan, CEO of the Cascade Community Foundation. "When bright people are thrust into new roles, innovation and ingenuity take root and new ideas flourish."*

The Foundation hopes to harness that spark in an effort to advance education by lending a platform for dialogue around innovative curriculums and alternative classroom models that already exist but have struggled to gain footing.

*"We want to invite these ideas to the table right now and encourage conversations between parents and educators who have been working together for the past year," Swan said. "Right now is the perfect time to welcome parental input, because they have a better understanding of education and a renewed appreciation for teachers and educators."*

The Foundation is inviting parents who have taken on the role of teacher over the past year to visit [qalivestream.org/modernclassroom](http://qalivestream.org/modernclassroom) and share their experiences.

The Foundation's 2021 annual survey is a great opportunity for community members to provide input on topics they want to see covered in an upcoming season of Q&A Livestream, as well as help the Foundation maximize its local impact. The survey is available at [surveyccf.com](http://surveyccf.com).

If you or your business want to support "The Modern Classroom" or other Q&A Livestream topics, call 616.499.2060.



## Cascade Firefighters Are COMING TO YOU THIS HALLOWEEN

Hello from your Cascade firefighters.

Halloween is fast approaching, and your Cascade firefighters again are bringing the holiday to you.

Throughout October, we will choose neighborhoods and central points and send firefighters out in fire trucks with goody bags containing fire safety materials, stickers and candy. Ember, our department's mascot, will join us to see the best-ever Halloween costumes the kids of Cascade can come up with.

Keep an eye on the Township's website and Facebook page for information on neighborhoods and times.

**Lt. Andrew Albright, Cascade Fire Department**





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

## Cascade Charter Township

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# New Programs at the Kent District Library Cascade Township Branch

The Kent District Library – Cascade Township Branch is looking forward to the return of weekly children’s activities and two new programs for adults this fall.

For children, there will be Babytime on Mondays, Yoga Storytime on Wednesdays and Family Storytime on Tuesdays and Thursdays. All storytimes will take place 10 a.m. in the Wisner Center, 2870 Jacksmith Ave. SE. Visit [kdl.org/location/cascade-township-branch-events/](http://kdl.org/location/cascade-township-branch-events/) for event descriptions and changes.

For adults, the cookbook club In Good Taste will meet the third Thursday evening of each month September through

November. All are welcome to join in the conversation around and sharing of participants’ favorite recipes. The former Apple User Group has been expanded to a more general Tech Help Group. Librarians will be on hand 10 a.m. Fridays to help you with your phone or other device.

The branch has reopened its play area, coffee station and study rooms. Three of the private study rooms may now be reserved online at [kdl.org/private-rooms/](http://kdl.org/private-rooms/). Reservations of up to three hours may be made up to 30 days in advance. Two additional rooms are also available on a first-come, first-served basis.