



charter township

oshtemo NEWSLETTER

est. 1839

June 2016

Township Office Hours

Monday thru Thursday 8 am to 5 pm

Friday 8 am to 1 pm

(1st Thurs each month open at 9 am)

We will be CLOSED July 4th & 5th



Happy Independence Day!



'Music in the Park' is coming to Oshtemo!



Thanks to the support of area businesses and organizations, a family-friendly concert series will be held at the new gazebo in Flesher Field this summer. The series will include three concerts, one each in June,

July, and August. Performances include:

Sunday, June 12th - *Who Hit John* with special guest Megan Dooley

Sunday, July 17th - *Madcat Midnight Blues Journey* featuring

Peter "Madcat" Ruth

Sunday, August 14th - *The Tony Fields Trio*

Get creative and help beautify the park before each concert with our community art project. Hands-on art opportunities will be offered before each concert, starting at 4:30 pm. Music will begin at 5:30 pm. Picnicking is encouraged, and local restaurants will offer food for sale. Alcohol is prohibited. In case of inclement weather, concerts will be held at Voyage Church, 6339 Atlantic Avenue.

Special thanks to our sponsors: Mangia Pizza and Pasta Company, Oshtemo Rotary Club, Oshtemo Downtown Development Authority, Kalamazoo Landscape Supply, Metro Toyota, Secant Technologies, Kalamazoo Public Library, Harding's Friendly Markets, HobbyTown USA, Ted Hartleb Agency, Siegfried Crandall, P.C., Bright Futures Pediatrics, and Mingle.



****MARK YOUR CALENDAR ****

SHREDDING DAY

October 15th - 10am - noon

Township Hall Parking Lot

7275 West Main Street

Proof of residency required

Maximum - 10 banker boxes



2016 Dump Day Schedule

Township Hall Parking Lot

7275 West Main Street

9 am—3pm

Proof of residency required

June 25 July 30 August 27 Sept 24

Oct 29 Nov 19

Yard waste, kitchen garbage, dead animals, hazardous materials, or large quantities of building materials cannot be accepted.

Fall Leaf Drop Off Days—Nov 5 & Nov 19

2016 Summer Tax Information From the Treasurer's Office

Summer tax notices will be mailed June 30. Tax bills are sent to the property owner unless a mortgage holder has requested it, which they must do each tax season. If you receive a tax bill but have an escrow, you should forward the tax bill to your mortgage holder with a reminder they must request it. If your mortgage company has requested the tax bill, you will not receive a copy, but may contact us and we will be glad to send you one. You can verify taxes have been paid by contacting the Treasurer's Office at 216-5221 or on our website (www.oshtemo.org) which is updated daily. We accept credit cards at the counter, and online; a 3% processing fee is charged by our credit card vendor.

Summer taxes are due September 14. On September 15 a 1% fee will be added and 1% each month thereafter. Payments made by mail with a postmark of September 14 will be accepted, but must be received on or before September 18 - NO EXCEPTIONS.

Taxes received in our office between September 15 thru February 28 without the interest included, will be receipted and a bill will be sent to you for the interest owed.

Please note the Township Office hours are Monday thru Thursday 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. and Fridays from 8:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. There is a **drop box in the parking lot, which is checked daily.**

BLOOD DRIVE NEWS



Wednesday, June 29th 11 am—6 pm

Wednesday, August 31st 11 am—6 pm

Lunch/dinner fare & door prizes!

February winner was Ron Strzelecki

April winner was Dan Kenkins

Bi-Monthly Blood Drives at the Township Hall
Appointments can be made with Michigan Blood
by phone 1-866-MIBLOOD or e-mail miblood.org.

ELECTRIC TRANSMISSION LINES IN OSHTEMO TOWNSHIP



Over the objections of the Township and in spite of the fact a better route for the electric transmission lines existed near I-94, METC has nearly completed the new power lines in our Township. How did this happen? The Township Board did all it could to oppose the construction of the transmission lines within the Township. The Board joined with Township residents to oppose the transmission lines and were successful in winning a favorable ruling from the Administrative Law Judge at the Michigan Public Service Commission who first heard the case. However, the Michigan Public Service Commission overruled the Administrative Law Judge and approved construction of the transmission lines on July 29, 2013.

The Township challenged the MPSC ruling by appealing to the Michigan Court of Appeals, but to no avail. The Court of Appeals ruled against the Township on November 18, 2014. Not wanting to give up, the Township Board authorized counsel to file a request for leave to the Michigan Supreme Court to challenge the ruling of the MPSC and the decision of the Michigan Court of Appeals. Despite the odds, given the fact that only one in a thousand requests for leave is granted, the Township was granted application for leave to appeal on December 19, 2014. The argument which the Township raised and which the Supreme Court will hear is that the Electric Company cannot use the Township's streets without the Township's consent.

Article 7, Section 29 of the Michigan Constitution states: *"No person, partnership, association or corporation, public or private, operating a public utility shall have the right to the use of the highways, streets, alleys or other public places of any county, township, city or village for wires, poles, pipes, tracks, conduits or other utility facilities, **without the consent** of the duly constituted authority of the county, township, city or village;..." (Emphasis added.)*

Oral argument before the Michigan Supreme Court will be heard in October of this year. Both the Michigan Townships Association and the Michigan Municipal League are supporting the Township's position and have filed amicus briefs with the Supreme Court.

A victory at the Supreme Court would not remove the power lines from our Township. The Township's control is limited to its public rights-of-way and its streets. However, should the Township prevail, it is possible that the power company could be required to put the power lines underground for a distance of 250 feet on either side of the public right-of-way. While this is little consolation to the Township residents who have suffered from the negative impact of the power lines, it would reduce the visual impact, help maintain the rural character of the Township, enhance traffic safety, and reduce the utilities' burden on the Township. The battle to maintain the quality of life in the community is ongoing, and the Board is working to keep Oshtemo a pleasant place to live.

Staff Profile—Township Attorney Office

Jim Porter, Township Attorney and Kathy Barnes, Paralegal Administrative Assistant have over 40 years of municipality experience, ten of those with Oshtemo Township. We are fortunate to have both of them in-house, which allows for so much more to be done for our residents. Otherwise it would be cost prohibitive. The resident groups that have had the opportunity to work with Jim greatly appreciate his extensive experience and legal savvy. Jim always keeps the Township's long term interests in the forefront.

Jim has a wide array of duties as the Attorney for Oshtemo Township. He consults and is a resource for all boards and departments including, but not limited to assessing, planning, parks, police and fire. He is also a direct resource for the elected officials, such as the Clerk and Treasurer. Something else you may not know about Jim, he is also the prosecuting attorney for the Township. He works with the 8th District Court to handle parking tickets and speeding tickets issued under Township Ordinance. He also consults with the Ordinance Enforcement Officer on violations and complaints such as noise violations, police and fire false alarms, soil erosion and other general enforcement issues.

Having come from the private sector, Jim diligently and responsibly tracks his time by the minute and provides a monthly summary to all Township Board members. Imagine if each department had to use an outside consulting attorney. The legal costs would likely be twice the present cost and some work, such as citizen groups representation, would simply not be possible.

Thank you Jim Porter and Kathy Barnes for all you do for Oshtemo Township!



TOWNSHIP LICENSE IS REQUIRED FOR DOOR TO DOOR SALES or SOLICITATION

Anyone conducting door to door business is required to register with the Township Office. Our Hawkers, Peddlers & Solicitors Ordinance also requires that "No Trespassing" signs be obeyed or be subject to an ordinance violation ticket. Ask the solicitor if they have registered with the Township; they should have a license in their possession. To report soliciting without a license, please contact the Clerk's Office at 216-5224 or the Ordinance Enforcement Officer at 216-5227. If you have concerns of suspicious activity, contact the Kalamazoo County Sheriff's Dept at 383-8821, ext 6.

2016 Election Dates to Remember

August 2nd—General Primary—last day to register is July 5th
November 8th General Election—last day to register is October 11th

Absentee Ballots

Any voter meeting one of the required criteria below can request an absentee ballot:

- age 60 years old or older—you can request to be placed on our permanent absent voter list and automatically receive an application for each election
- unable to vote without assistance at the polls
- expecting to be out of town on election day
- in jail awaiting arraignment or trial
- unable to attend the polls due to religious reasons
- appointed to work as an election inspector in a precinct outside of your precinct of residence



An absent voter application can be requested by phone or the application is available on our website under the “Applications” link. A ballot can also be requested by mail by providing your name, registered address, the address where the ballot should be mailed, date of birth and the reason for needing to vote by absentee ballot.

Voter and election information is also available from the Michigan Voter Information Center at www.michigan.gov/vote—you can:

- View your sample ballot for the upcoming election
- Track your absentee ballot
- Verify your voter registration
- Find your polling place

Please call the Clerk’s Office at 216.5224 with any questions regarding voter registration, polling locations or absentee ballots.



BE PREPARED FOR STORMY WEATHER.....With summer approaching the Oshtemo Township Fire Department wants you to be prepared for the storms associated with the seasonal change. Spring and summer bring a variety of potentially dangerous weather, including: heavy rain, thunderstorms, and tornados.

To best prepare yourself, use the resources available to you including noting conditions around you, TV, radio, weather alert devices and websites. The American Red Cross has valuable information that is easily accessible. For those who use a cell phone, the Red Cross offers apps for several different emergency situations, including severe weather.

KNOW THE DIFFERENCE

Thunderstorms – A thunderstorm is considered severe if it produces hail at least 1 inch in diameter or has wind gusts of at least 58 miles per hour. Every thunderstorm produces lightning, which kills more people each year than tornados or hurricanes.

Severe Thunderstorm Watch - Severe thunderstorms are possible in and near the watch area. Stay informed and be ready to act if a severe thunderstorm warning is issued.

Severe Thunderstorm Warning - Severe weather has been reported by spotters or indicated by radar. Warnings indicate imminent danger to life and property.

Tornados - Tornados are violent by nature. They are capable of completely destroying well-made structures, uprooting trees and hurling objects through the air like deadly missiles. Tornado intensities are classified on the Fujita Scale with ratings between F0 (weakest) to F5 (strongest). Although severe tornados are more common in the Plains States, tornados have been reported in every state.

Tornado Watch - Tornados are possible in and near the watch area. Review your emergency plans, and check supplies and your safe room. Be ready to act quickly if a warning is issued or you suspect a tornado is approaching.

Tornado Warning - A tornado has been sighted or indicated by weather radar indicating imminent danger to life and property. Go immediately under ground to a basement, storm cellar or an interior room (closet, hallway or bathroom).

Keep Your Family Ready

In case of a severe weather emergency, have a family disaster plan. Also, have an emergency preparedness kit ready. Your kit should include: first aid kit, flashlights, radio, batteries, bottled water, whistle to signal for help, canned food, can opener, blankets, rain gear.

Road Maintenance

Road maintenance work for 2016 has begun! See the list of projects below. Oshtemo's road PASER rating average in 2015 was higher than most of the other communities in Kalamazoo County. This is due to the long-standing Township Board practice of funding regular routine road maintenance. This practice has made prudent use of your tax dollars over the years.

The Township works on strategic capital road project funding, in response to residents' concerns. It is important to remember that the County Road Commission, through "Surface Transportation Program" (STP) dollars, only rebuilds primary roads in the Township, such as the South 9th Street improvements. The Road Commission funding is not sufficient to fund local (neighborhood) street reconstruction.

For 2016 routine road maintenance, the Township is under contract with the Road Commission. The Township is investing \$300,000 for this work, with the Road Commission contributing an additional \$185,000 from its allocation of state roadway funding annually distributed to them. Maintenance work will occur on the following:

Local roads:

South 1st Street
Croyden Ave
Driftwood Ave
Green Meadow Dr



Neighborhood roads within nine plat developments:

Bela Sera
Country Trails Homesites
Oshtemo Business Park
Oshtemo Woods
Pine Acres
Sky King Meadows
Springwood Hills
Western Wood
Whitegate Farms

North 10th Street

Summer Road Construction Project Road Re-Surfacing and Sewer Installation

North 10th Street will be closed to through traffic between West Main Street and H Avenue beginning Monday, June 13th and will remain closed through at least Labor Day, September 5th. Weather depending, additional roadwork and shoulder closures may extend into October. North 10th Street will remain open to LOCAL TRAFFIC ONLY, except for where there is open trench work, with sewer pipe actively being installed.

Truck Route Traffic Detour

During the road construction project, truck route traffic will be detoured as follows:

- North 9th Street between West Main Street and H Avenue will be open to two-way truck traffic.
- H Avenue between North 9th Street and North 10th Street will also be open to allow two-way truck traffic.

10th Street Traffic Detour (Including Trucks)



Tennis Lessons return to Oshtemo Township Park

Tennis lessons for youths and adults will be offered again this year at Township Park, located behind Township Hall at 7275 West Main Street, Kalamazoo. The lessons are taught by certified tennis professional Warner Offord of Let's Serve Tennis Club. Sessions, times and fees are listed on the Oshtemo Township website at www.oshtemo.org

New this summer! Drawing Lessons at the Drake Farmstead

Artist and Township Resident Patricia Babladelis will offer drawing lessons this summer at the Drake Farmstead, 927 North Drake Road, Kalamazoo. The class is designed for budding artists with a desire to create and for experienced artists sharpening their skills. The course is hands-on and will include still life set-ups. Classes will be held on Tuesdays from July 5 to August 2. Class time is 5:30 to 8:30 p.m. Cost is \$60 per person, \$50 for Oshtemo Historical Society members. All proceeds from the class will be donated to the Oshtemo Historical Society and designated for restoration of the Drake Farmstead. To register, visit www.oshtemo.org or contact Karen High, Oshtemo Township Parks Director, at (269) 216-5223.

Oshtemo Parks Endowment Fund

Please consider a donation to the Oshtemo Township Parks and Recreation Fund at the Kalamazoo Community Foundation! Below are step-by-step instructions to make it easy to donate.

- 1) Access the Kalamazoo Community Foundation website at <http://www.kalfound.org>
- 2) Select the Give Now button
- 3) Enter the Amount
- 4) Under Designation Select "Another Foundation Fund (Enter name of the fund in the "Other" box)
- 5) In the box that appears enter: Oshtemo Township Parks & Recreation Fund
- 6) Enter billing and credit card payment information.
- 7) Give yourself a pat on the back for helping to ensure the future of our parks!



Oshtemo Rotary's 18th Annual OSHTEMO FUN DAY

August 20th 8:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m.

Fletcher Field—South 9th Street

Pancake Breakfast 8 am—11 am

Rotary Concessions—11 am—4 pm

Tethered hot air balloon rides (weather permitting)

Fire & Police Vehicles/Demonstrations

Big Yellow Banana Car & Big Submarine Car

Magician

Vendor Booths

Childrens Activities including bouncers, obstacle course,
and petting zoo

DJ & live music all day

and much, much, more!!

Parking, admittance to the park and exhibits are free.





Oshtemo Movies in the Park

Oshtemo Township Park, 7275 West Main Street

Free admission

All movies start at dusk

Pre-movie activities for kids

Free popcorn (courtesy of Kalamazoo 10)

Bring your own seat (blanket or lawn chair)

Presented by **Oshtemo Friends of the Parks
& Oshtemo Branch—Kalamazoo Public Library**

For more information: www.oshtemofriends.org



June 16



July 21



August 18



Music in the Park

Concert Series presented
by Friends of the Parks

Flesher Field,
3664 South 9th Street, Kalamazoo
Hands-on art 4:30 - 5:30, Music 5:30-7:00.
Bring a picnic supper; food will be available
for purchase.

Alcohol is prohibited.

In case of inclement weather, concerts will
be held at the Voyage Church,
6339 Atlantic Avenue.

For more information:
www.oshtemofriends.org

FREE CONCERTS

Sunday, June 12th

Who Hit John?

with special guest Megan Dooley

Sunday, July 17th

Madcat Midnight Blues Journey

featuring Peter "Madcat" Ruth
Bring your harmonica for a lesson before the concert!

Sunday, August 14th

The Tony Fields Trio



Oshtemo Rotary



Kalamazoo
Public Library

Harding's Friendly Markets • HobbyTown USA • Ted Hartleb Agency
Siegfried Crandall • Bright Futures Pediatrics • Mingle

Thank You Metro Greenhouse and Voyage Church!

A special thank you to John and Beth denHartigh, owners of Metro Greenhouse at 1603 North Drake Road, for donating flowers to beautify our Township parks. And thank you to the volunteers at Voyage Church for planting the flowers. The colorful blooms are very welcome after a long winter! If you or your organization would like to donate or volunteer, contact Karen High, Oshtemo Township Parks Director, at (269) 216-5223 or khigh@oshtemo.org.

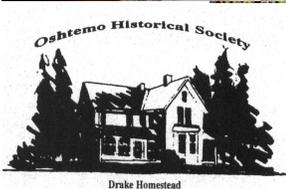


A New Park Envisioned at the Drake Farmstead

Oshtemo Township is moving forward with plans to create a new park at the Drake Farmstead, located at 927 North Drake Road. The 26-acre park will ultimately offer a place for people of all ages to interact with nature and history, both indoors and out. Elements of the new park may include:

- ◆ the historic brick farmhouse built in 1852 – the centerpiece of the park - will be a living history center available for tours and small events like bridal showers or high teas.
- ◆ a barn for classes on cooking, gardening, or art, or for large events like wedding receptions, concerts, or community gatherings.
- ◆ a gazebo behind the house will be surrounded by historically-inspired flower gardens and will offer a welcome place for a stroll or a summer wedding.
- ◆ an outdoor classroom and garden area, where school children can learn how to grow food, plant an orchard, and dig in the soil.
- ◆ a corral for displaying animals and plenty of open space for special events.
- ◆ a food forest where people can forage for ripe berries, pick apples, or harvest nuts.

Park improvements will occur in phases, with the first phase of construction anticipated in 2017. Improvements are based on the Master Plan for the property that was developed in 2015 with input from the public in brainstorming sessions and design workshops. The Master Plan can be viewed online at Oshtemo.org/parks-and-recreation-facilities/. For more information, contact Karen High, Oshtemo Township Parks Director at khigh@oshtemo.org or (269) 216-5223.



Oshtemo Historical Society



Drake Homestead

OSHTEMO HISTORICAL SOCIETY NEWS

As you make your plans for this summer, we have two dates we would like you to put on your calendar.

Thursday, June 16th, our monthly program will be presented by Dan Spegel, Heritage Trail Coordinator of Michigan DNR. He will tell us about the “The Kal Haven Trail Becoming a Heritage Trail” and how the Drake Farmstead may be represented along the trail. The meeting will be held at the Oshtemo Township Hall, 7675 W. Main beginning at 7:00 p.m.

This **July**, we will not have an event at the Drake Farmstead, as we have had in the past due to the landscape work that is underway on the property and for the safety of our guests. There will be a lot of changes coming, both in the Drake House and on the surrounding property, so watch for more information in coming months.

Saturday, August 20th, join us at the Oshtemo Rotary Fun Day, at Flesher Field Park on South 9th Street. This is a family friendly fun event. Please stop by our table and say hello.

For more information about the Oshtemo Historical Society, please visit our website at www.oshtemohistoricalsociety.org

7275 West Main Street
Kalamazoo, MI 49009
Ph 375.4260 Fax 375.7180
<http://www.oshtemo.org>

