

BLOOMFIELD TOWNSHIP NEWSLETTER



Township tackles coronavirus threat

At first it seemed distant and just another news item. A new virus was detected in China, which sent that whole nation scrambling.

But that was half a world away. Then news reports started coming out that the virus had been detected in other countries, and it was growing worse daily. But that was still half a world away.

Then it was turning up in Europe, and talk was growing that this threat might come to the United States. It didn't take long for the "might" to be replaced by "will." But even then there was uncertainty. Just how serious was this new bug, dubbed coronavirus and COVID-19? There were even jokes about its name – coronavirus – as if it was a byproduct of a certain brand of beer.

But there was nothing funny about the reality of this often deadly disease as it reached the shores of the United States, first being detected in Washington state. By this point alarms were being sounded by health officials that we were in the midst of a worldwide pandemic that was going to sweep across the country.

Even then there was a certain degree of "it can't happen here."

But that was not the attitude in Bloomfield Township.

Early on the Township began making preparations for what could be a serious disruption of life for everyone in the Township including residents, businesses people, Township staff and even visitors to the community. Over the years the



Elected Officials, Department Heads and other staff met in the Emergency Operations Center to discuss plans for handling the COVID-19 crisis.

Township has periodically practiced for emergency situations that could affect the whole community, such as a tornado. In each case an Emergency Operations Center is set up on the Township campus where the department representatives gather to plan strategy to deal with the situation.

As the virus was detected in Michigan it was clear that drastic action had to be taken immediately. A meeting was held on Friday, March 13, bringing police, fire and personnel from other departments

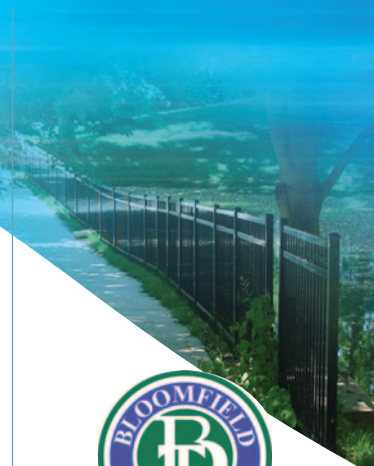
together to set an action plan. Preliminary work had already been done by the police and fire departments. Of immediate concern was the senior population. Bloomfield Township has a large number of senior citizens, and they are most at risk from serious complications from the coronavirus. It was decided

then that the Township Senior Center should close until the threat had passed. Protocols were also implemented for emergency responders on how to handle persons who might be infected with the virus.

In all cases the primary concern was, and is, the safety of all involved. That included Township

employees and visitors to the Township facilities. On Monday, March 16, a special department head meeting was held where all agreed that the Township offices should close to the public. This would minimize the contact between Township personnel and persons coming in to the Township facilities. But this did not mean that all work would stop. In fact, operations went on pretty much as usual. Those employees who could

Please see Coronavirus on page 5



**BLOOMFIELD
TOWNSHIP
BOARD
2020**

ELECTED OFFICIALS

ADMINISTRATION

Leo Savoie, Supervisor
Janet Roncelli, Clerk
Brian Kepes, Treasurer

TRUSTEES

David Buckley
Neal J. Barnett
Michael Schostak
Dani Walsh

APPOINTED POSITIONS

PLANNING COMMISSION

Thomas Petinga, Chairman
Jeff Salz, Vice Chairman
Richard Mintz
Neal Barnett
Richard Atto
Bruce Selik
Andrea B. O'Donnell

BOARD OF APPEALS

Carol Rosati, Chairman
Brian Henry, Vice Chairman
Robert Taylor, Jr.
Claudine Bacher,
Dani Walsh
Jocelyn Giangrande
Andrea O'Donnell
Jeffrey Drake, Alternate
Glenda Meads, Alternate



Board of Trustees
 TIME: 7:00 P.M.
 DATE: 2nd and 4th Monday
 LOCATION: Township Auditorium

Planning Commission
 TIME: 7:00 P.M.
 DATE: 1st and 3rd Monday
 LOCATION: Township Auditorium

Zoning Board of Appeals
 TIME: 7:00 P.M.
 DATE: 2nd Tuesday
 LOCATION: Township Auditorium

NOTE: The Charter Township of Bloomfield will provide necessary reasonable auxiliary aids and services at all meetings to individuals with disabilities. All such requests must be made at least five days prior to said meeting. Please contact the Bloomfield Township Clerk's Office, 4200 Telegraph Road, P.O. Box 489, Bloomfield Hills MI 48303--0489, 248-433-7702, Fax: 248-433-7714

Coming up...

**August 4
 Primary Election**

March, May, and August Elections 2020

The minor elections for 2020 seem to be capturing the attention of many voters, to the degree that our voter registration in March 2020 increased by 10 percent.

The March 10, 2020 Presidential Primary remains the most exciting and yet exasperating election processed by the Bloomfield Township Clerk's Department. One would have thought we were electing the President of the United States with all the interest created by the candidates, especially on the Democratic ballot. The requests for absentee ballots brought our totals to 50 percent more than the same election in March 2016.

Compounded with the absentee ballot applications sent by the Vote Project, which included the wrong return address, we also assisted 500 voters requesting a new ballot to assure their vote counted for one of the remaining candidates. Precinct workers welcomed over 10,000 voters who waited patiently to receive their ballots upon selecting a Democratic, Republican or Ballot with Proposals Only. The overall

turnout was 48 percent, the same as in March 2016, due to the increase in registered voters for the March 10, 2020 election.

Moving to the May 5, 2020 Bloomfield Hills School District Special Election,



preparation for it began at the end of February with ballot orders. By March 11, 2020, Covid-19, the Novel Coronavirus, began to spread across the State of Michigan. The threat of infecting voters and inspectors at the precincts and even in an Absentee Voter Counting Board room motivated the Bloomfield Hills School District to reconsider the date of the election. On Friday, March 20, 2020, the

School Board passed two resolutions. The first resolution was to withdraw the bond proposal from the May 5, 2020 election, followed by a second resolution to place the \$200,155,000 bond on the ballot for the August 4, 2020 election.

The August 4, 2020 election is an open primary. Unlike the closed primary on March 10, 2020, wherein the voter selected one ballot style in writing, the August voter can only vote one partisan section on this ballot. The election is a nominating process for Democrats and Republicans vying for state, county and local races on the November 5, 2020 ballot. In addition, precinct delegates, who are candidates for the county convention, are on every ballot, as well as nonpartisan judicial candidates. Likely other proposals besides the Bloomfield Hills School District Bond proposal will also appear on the ballot. Voters on the permanent absentee application list will receive a dual application for the August and November 2020 elections.

Stay tuned and stay healthy!

Voters say 'yes' to millage

In the end, it wasn't even close.

In the March 10 election the Township millage renewal was approved by a margin of 11,170 votes in favor to 6,034 against.

The millage of 1.24 mills was approved for 10 years and is a renewal of a millage first authorized in 2010.

It was a big win for supporters of the millage as it was approved been a nearly

two-to-one margin.

In other election results, Joe Biden topped the Democratic primary with 7,365 votes followed by Bernie Sanders with 3,087. Donald Trump led the Republican side with 4,593 votes.

Another big win-



ner was the Detroit Institute of Arts. Its millage renewal passed by a margin of 13,265 to 4,300 in the Township. Across the Tri-County area, the DIA millage fared just as well passing in Oakland, Wayne and Macomb counties.

School millages for Birmingham and Pontiac also passed. They were on the ballot only in certain areas of the Township.



A NOTE FROM

Leo Savoie, Bloomfield Township Supervisor

Dealing with the COVID-19 challenge

I had planned to focus on the results of the March 10 millage renewal election in this column, and in fact already had one ready for publication. But events intervened. Those events specifically are the coronavirus (COVID-19) and how we in Bloomfield Township are dealing with it.

Right now, that is even more important than the millage renewal election. We have never seen anything like this pandemic that is sweeping across the world. There have indeed been worse disease attacks, but not in our lifetimes. Yet when the first news reports of this attack arrived we knew this was going to be extremely serious. So several weeks ago, long before most communities began to seriously address the situation, we in Township Hall held meetings to look at our options and to plan strategy.

It wasn't easy. We had an understanding of what to expect but no one could be fully prepared for the reality of what was happening when the virus began spreading across America. But we took stock of our areas of vulnera-

bility and what we needed to do to deal with them. Obviously, public safety personnel were identified as particularly vulnerable because of the nature of their work. Police officers and firefighter/paramedics have direct contact with the public, and often in the most difficult situations. We instituted special safety procedures, such as allowing only one emergency responder wearing a protective suit into a potentially dangerous situation to evaluate it before other personnel would follow. Extra, even extreme, disinfectant procedures for equipment were put in use. Public safety personnel have their temperatures taken daily since even a slight fever can be an indication that someone is infected with the virus.

Beyond public safety we are continuing such operations as road and water services, while monitoring trash pickups to be prepared in case something prevents the trash pickup company from doing its job.

We took the difficult but absolutely necessary step of closing Town Hall to the pub-

lic and having most employees work from home. That had to be done not only to protect the employees but also members of the public who would come into Town Hall to do business. But it's important to note that we did not shut down operations. In a lot of ways it's business as usual in Town Hall, only it's done in a different way. Township offices can be contacted by phone or email and through the Township website, www.bloomfieldtp.org.

Department heads now hold weekly briefings - with proper social distancing protocols followed - to be up to date on the latest developments.

We also closed the Township Senior Center, which is especially important because older people are particularly vulnerable to COVID-19.

And that brings me to the topic that I really want to stress. As I stated above these measures have been taken for the health and safety of our employees and the people they come in contact with. Those people mainly are you - the residents of Bloomfield

Township. The welfare of the residents of Bloomfield Township is paramount to me, the elected officials and the Township employees.

Every measure we consider is based on the principle of how this will affect the residents.

I cannot stress this enough. We have gone through some tough, even bitter times, with the recent elections. And I have been urging that we put political differences aside as we address this far bigger issue. And maybe that will be a good thing that comes from all of this. When we are all facing the same crisis it helps put other issues in perspective. After all, we really are one big family.

In the meantime, I urge you all to be aware of what the Township is doing. A prime source of accurate information is the Township website. Just click on the "COVID-19" button on the home page. And watch for messages from the Township on social media, but be careful of other social media sources. There is a lot of misinformation out there.

And finally, stay strong, be safe.

BTSS still serving residents who need assistance

Meals on Wheels for 60+

This service is available to 60+ adults practicing self-isolation. If you or someone you know is interested to learn more about temporary deliveries please call 248-723-3500. One weekly package offers 3 or 5 full entrees with beverage delivered on Mondays between 10:30 and noon. They are \$5 per meal and more than one may be ordered. Eligibility is for people 60+ of any income level. We have support for residents who may be unable to contribute. Trained staff use all safety protocols and do not enter any home.

Wellness Checks

Additionally BTSS staff will be happy to make wellness calls Monday-Friday for interested seniors. Please call BTSS at 248-723-3500 if you know of any Bloomfield seniors who are in need of assistance with meals and/or essential medical transportation. The senior center will monitor calls Monday-Friday 8 AM - 4 PM.

School alarm prompts fast action

The alarm was sounded at 11:58 a.m. Thursday, Dec. 19, and within seconds the school liaison officer responded. Even as he did, police and firefighters were alerted and began rushing to Bloomfield Hills High School.

It was extremely serious. The alert was a BluePoint alarm, which meant an active shooter was in the school building.

Hundreds of students began to evacuate the building. Others stayed behind, locking themselves in their classrooms. "I was amazed by the students and teachers," said BHHS Principal Charlie Hollerith. "They followed the

training tremendously."

All the students and staff acted properly as they were trained to "Run - Hide - Fight" depending on their situation.

Within two minutes more than 30 Bloomfield Township police officers were

on the scene and they were joined by about 30 more from

a host of other communities. Even a helicopter was brought



Within minutes after the alarm sounded, police secured the school area.

in to secure the area.

A careful room-by-room

sweep of the building was done but no assailant was located. It had been a false alarm. Police are investigating if it had been a student prank, an equipment malfunction or a simple accident.

In any case the experience showed that the intense training done regularly by emergency responders paid off. The response was done with military precision, and by 1:45 p.m. staff was allowed back in the building.

The exact cause of the alarm was not determined but it appears to have been accidentally activated.

Police, firefighters create a Christmas story

You could tell by the big grin on Jaylin's face this was going to be a special Christmas.

Jada, 8, and K'Niya, 7, were pacing inside and outside the house they share on Burgess Street in Detroit.

isn't easy holding everyone together but they try. The kids are bright and extremely well-behaved. They don't have to worry about being on Santa's list of who has been bad. But that made the waiting even harder.

Around noon on Monday, Dec. 23, the big guy made it, bringing bags of gifts for the kids.

Santa's trip, complete with a Bloomfield Township fire truck and police car, came about through a special effort on the part of some Township employees and officials.

Each year the Township Department Heads chip in together to buy a gift for the supervisor and his wife. It's a way of saying thanks and

Merry Christmas (or Happy Hanukkah) to a terrific leader and great boss. But this time Supervisor Leo Savoie asked that instead of a gift the money be used to brighten Christmas for a family in need. The Yatooma Foundation was contacted. It operates a program that does just that. It found a family whose Christmas needed brightening.

And that led to the big delivery the Monday before Christmas. Along with the gifts the kids got to climb in the police car and fire truck. It was a memorable day for everyone.

"This is truly a blessing," said grandma Patricia.



Santa had bags of gifts for a special family.

Even before the fire truck and police car arrived, Jaylin, age 12, and his cousins Imani, 6,

The kids are all fatherless and being raised by their grandmother and mother. It

Check the dashboard

How does Bloomfield Township stand financially compared to other communities?

You can find out at a glance by looking at the dashboard. It can be found on the home page of the Township website, www.bloomfieldtwp.org. Just look for Citizen's Guide and Dashboard under Quick Links at the right of the home page.

A wide array of financial information about the Township and data about communities across Michigan is available on the site.

Filling the Boot for a good cause

Bloomfield Township firefighters/paramedics sure know how to fill their boots. And not just when they're fighting fires. Members of Fire Fighters Local 3045 hit the pavement recently with their boots in their hands. They were taking part in the Muscular Dystrophy Association annual Fill the Boot campaign to raise funds for MDA. Each year the firefighters stand along area streets asking people to



MDAS ambassador Jessica Hetzel receives a major donation from the Township firefighters.

drop cash donations in boots they hold.

This year the firefighters raised a whopping \$18,262.

That put the Township firefighters among the most successful in the state. Over the past 15 years

they have raised \$101,230 for MDA. The money is used to support MDA programs.

On Monday a special check presentation was held with Jessica Hetzel, MDA ambassador, receiving the check on behalf of MDA.

Jessica, who suffers from MD, said she appreciates what the donation can help accomplish, including supporting her favorite activity: attending MDA summer camp.

Coronavirus from Page 1

do their jobs from home were advised to do so. Obviously, that is not possible for everyone. Police and firefighter/paramedics have to be on the road and have contact with the general public. But they were informed on the best practices and given proper equipment to protect themselves from exposure to the virus.

Some Township services have been curtailed, such as the issuing of passports and building inspections, but in general Township operations are continuing as usual. Township Hall has been closed to the general public but contact with the individual offices and departments is still possible by phone or email.

The Township also is making a special effort to alert everyone of this new reality and how to deal with it through social media. Residents are advised to watch for the Township Facebook, Nextdoor, Instagram and Twitter postings. But there's a warning. Please be very wary of what is posted on non-official social media. Much misinformation is being circulated on social media. Also, residents are advised to sign up for the Township's eNewsletter, which carries

important information from the Township. It is issued weekly at a minimum. To sign up, go to the Township website, www.bloomfieldtwp.org.

In fact, the website is a principal source of information on the coronavirus and how it affects the Township. A new "button" linking to the page dedicated to the coronavirus (COVID-19) has been added to the homepage of the website. The information found on this page is accurate and up-to-date.

Further, the Township has set up a Help Line to assist residents facing food shortages, prescription needs or any non-emergency needs. Call 248-723-3455. Hours of operation are 7 a.m. to 5:30 p.m. Monday – Friday and 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. Friday – Sunday.

And the battle goes on. Indications are the virus will be around for possibly several more months. Until it is gone or a drug is developed to neutralize it, life is going to be different for all Americans. But as the situation changes from day to day, the Township monitors it and adapts its operations to deal with it in the safest, most effective manner.

Clerk crew is simply the best

The staff at the Township Clerk's Office know their way around passports.

They are so good at handling passport applications that even the U. S. government is impressed. The Clerk's Office got a perfect score in a recent audit done by the U.S. State Department.

"You play an essential role in helping American citizens obtain their passports, and we are proud to work with such a great team of people who help provide the public with quality service and information," the Clerk's office was informed.

"I am very proud of our 100 percent passport audit by the U.S. Department of State. The stellar results demonstrate the expertise provided by our Township passport acceptance agents," Township Clerk Jan Roncelli said.



Always ready to help with passports (and anything else) are (from left) Deputy Clerk Deana Mondock, Township Clerk Jan Roncelli and Administrative Assistant Zack Thomas



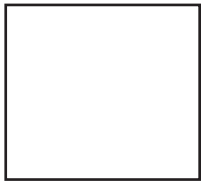
BLOOMFIELD TOWNSHIP

4200 TELEGRAPH ROAD
PO BOX 489
BLOOMFIELD MI 48303-0489

TOWNSHIP DIRECTORY

Water/Sewer Emergency
433-7730

Administration	433-7700
Accounting	433-7712
Assessor's Office	433-7710
Building Division	433-7715
Clerk's Office	433-7702
Community Cable	433-7790
Engineering & Env.	594-2800
Fire Non-Emergency	433-7745
Ordinance Division	594-2845
Planning Division	433-7795
Police Department	
Administration	433-7750
Non-Emergency	433-7755
Animal Welfare	433-7757
Investigations	433-7760
Alarm Info	433-7775
Property	433-7777
Records	433-7776
Public Works	
Road Division	594-2800
Water & Sewer	594-2800
Senior Services	723-3500
Adult Day Service	723-3530
Treasurer's Office	433-7705



Trustee Neal Barnett learns lifesaving service

Bloomfield Township Trustee Neal Barnett got some firsthand experience on being a firefighter/paramedic as he participated in a day-long training exercise.

The lesson included how to administer emergency care in an ambulance, how to safely remove someone from a wrecked car, how to handle firehoses and even experience the perils of

fighting a real building fire and dealing with hazardous waste.

It was all part of a special event held by the OAKWAY Mutual Aid Group, a consor-

tium of 10 area fire departments that work and sometimes train together at the Oakland Community CREST Center in Auburn Hills.

Periodically municipal elected officials and other employees are invited to be part of the training. "It's a great experience," Barnett said. But it wasn't easy. "Getting used to the weight of all that equipment was hard," Barnett said. "It shows what it takes to get the job done," Fire Chief Mike Morin added. Representatives from

several Oakland County communities participated in the exercise.



Trustee Neal Barnett helps maneuver a simulated patient into an ambulance.



Barnett suited up in heavy firefighting equipment.