

# BLOOMFIELD TOWNSHIP NEWSLETTER



## EMS adds growing dimension to fire services

There was a time when firefighters put out fires, and that was it.

But times change. And the needs and demands being placed on firefighters today are taking them into new directions.

Bloomfield Township is a largely residential community. It's well-established and is almost completely developed. Its population is holding steady at about 42,000, but it is changing. It's aging. And more senior care facilities are opening in the Township. That is bringing a fundamental change to the nature of fire department responses.

While the primary concern of the department remains in fighting fires, the demand for emergency medical services is increasing every year, far outpacing the number of fire calls. "EMS runs are escalating," said Fire Chief Dave Piché. "There's more of a demand on the system."

The numbers bear that out. EMS runs totaled 2,360 in 2011, 2,540 in 2012, 2,694 in 2013 and by mid-December of 2014 had reached 2,782, heading toward 3,000 by the end of the year. In the same period, the department logged 15 structure fires in 2011, 39 in 2012 and 19

in 2013. Ten years ago, the department responded to 3,262 total runs. By December count had reached more than 4,770 runs for 2014.

With the markedly increased need for EMS, changes are being

prepared for everything." The result is a well-rounded defense against the threat of fires and a quick, thorough response to medical emergencies as well.

And the department continues to look ahead. Under consideration now is a pilot program for a new service called Community Paramedicine. It involves having paramedics visit persons at risk even before there is a 9-1-1 emergency call. The idea is to be proactive and prevent them from having an emergency.

Working in cooperation with a local hospital, the medics would visit people released from the hospital to check that they are doing well, receiving proper care at home and ensuring they are not having trouble with their medication. The goal is to prevent them from having an emergency that would require them to go back to the hospital.

"We're seriously looking at it," Piché said. "It will give another service, another tier. It's pretty exciting."

More information about that will be coming soon. For now, the department remains focused on all of its tasks as it continues to evolve with the community.



More than ever, firefighters are being called to assist with medical emergencies.

made in personnel training. "Everybody now is a paramedic," said Piché. The department has 64 uniformed firefighters operating out of four stations across the Township.

"Everyone is cross-trained," Piché said. Even the fire trucks and ladder truck are licensed paramedic vehicles. They can provide initial care on arriving at a scene even before an ambulance arrives.

The Bloomfield Township Fire Department takes pride in the level of training its personnel receive. "We train a ton," said Piché. "We do training no one else is doing. We have to be



### BLOOMFIELD TOWNSHIP BOARD & 2014

#### ELECTED OFFICIALS

#### ADMINISTRATION

Leo Savoie, Supervisor  
Janet Roncelli, Clerk  
Dan Devine, Treasurer

#### TRUSTEES

David Buckley  
Neal J. Barnett  
Brian Kepes  
Corinne Khederian

#### APPOINTED POSITIONS

#### PLANNING COMMISSION

Thomas Petinga, Chairman  
Lisa Seneker, Vice Chairman  
Richard Atto  
Neal Barnett  
Tad Krear  
Richard Mintz  
Jeff Salz

#### BOARD OF APPEALS

James Aldrich, Chairman  
Carol Rosati, Vice Chairman  
David Buckley  
Brian Henry  
Tracy Leone  
Lisa Seneker  
Robert Taylor, Jr.  
Justin Winkelman, Alternate  
Pam Williams, Alternate

**Pictured above: Kathy Housey, Bloomfield Township Senior Services water yoga instructor. See the story on page 6.**

## Save the date...

### January 16

Last day for curbside Christmas tree pickup

### February 14

Last day to pay Winter Taxes without penalty

### March 15

Yard waste pickup resumes

### May 2

Household Hazardous Waste Drop-Off Day

Watch for Electronic Recycling day coming up in April - date TBA



#### 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

## Looking back at a busy year

Bound by state and federal laws, elections and passports captured the attention of the Clerk's Department in 2014. The Clerk's Office processes elections in Bloomfield Township and serves as a Passport Acceptance Agency for the U.S. Department of State.

Elections in August and November filled over six months of planning in the Clerk's Department. Beginning with the Aug. 5, Primary Election, voters in Bloomfield Township cast 9,210 ballots. This total represents a 26.23 percent turnout, which surpassed the Oakland County turnout of 20.61 percent. On Nov. 4, Township voters cast 20,837 ballots for a 62.03 percent turnout. These statistics outpaced Oakland County's overall turnout of 47.98 percent.

Numerous people contributed to the planning and election-day events. Behind the scenes, a part-time crew of five managed the absentee ballot requests, inspector training packets and precinct supplies. For each election, more than 300 election inspectors and youth assistants worked for Bloomfield Township. These dedicated individuals managed computers at the 32 polling locations, operated the M-100 tabulators, served on the absentee counting board, served as troubleshooters for problem situations, assisted election workers returning to the Township after the close of polls, audited reports, managed sup-

plies and equipment – and greeted voters with a smile.

Federal laws regulate our passport service. As an Acceptance Agency for the U.S. Department of State, our passport service continues to be in demand. Revenues and applications have increased, along with the number of return visitors. Many of our younger applicants, under age 16, return as their passports are only valid for

five years. Other returning visitors include siblings and spouses of previous applicants. Since its inception in 2005, our acceptance facility has processed over 9,000 passport applications.

Annual requirements include facility certification and training for the facility manager and staff. The U.S. Department of State's Passport Services established the Acceptance Facility Oversight (AFO) Office to main-

tain and improve the integrity of the passport application process. The AFO oversees the audit process for acceptance agencies and demands strict compliance to execution procedures.

Our adherence to procedures for elections and passports is critical. It ensures the integrity of the programs and improves the quality of service we provide. We thrive on greater efficiency and firm commitment to the laws which regulate elections and passports.



Clerk Jan Roncelli, far right, and staff are ready to assist residents with voting and passports. From left are Carol Miller, Natalie VanderMale, Deputy Clerk Deanna Mondock and Michele Whitty.

## It's not too late

Even though it's already cold, you still have time to put things out of public view that you may have been using during the fall cleanup. Place all lawn equipment, unused mulch bags, empty plastic containers, etc., into your garage. Also, keep in mind that any type of watercraft or campers/RVs/trailers may not be stored in your driveway. Property values are important to all communities. Contact the Ordinance Division at (248) 594-2845 with any property maintenance questions.







## A NOTE FROM

Leo Savoie, Bloomfield Township Supervisor

# No matter what, service is our top priority

It's hard to believe we are already beginning another year. It seems we were just getting over the freezing chill of last winter and we are already into another one – although so far we have dodged the fierce storms that have hit out East. And at least as this is being written, there's no sign of the Polar Vortex.

But whatever the weather, the business of running the Township goes on as usual. 2014 has been a year of challenges and successes – with more successes than challenges, I'm glad to say. Last winter pushed us to the limit as DPW crews were out 42 times plowing the snow. That's up from an average of 22 runs a season. And we used about 25 percent more road salt than we usually average.

The weather took a heavy toll on the roads as well, causing potholes and other damages. Last winter was probably the worst we've ever had for the roads. The severe conditions had another effect: the cost of road salt has doubled this year. But we're well positioned to take on what nature may throw at us before next spring.

And the cost of salt didn't impact our financial standing. The Standard and Poor's Rating Services gave our general obligation limited tax refunding bonds a AAA rating.

Only a few communities in Michigan have achieved that status, and it demonstrates the financial strength of the community.

Our viability is also shown by the increasing property values across the Township and number of new businesses locating in the Township. Our Planning Department is busier than ever reviewing plans and permits and conducting inspections for new restaurants, stores, houses and other developments. Bloomfield Township continues to demonstrate that it is an extremely desirable place to live and work.

The residents have shown their faith in the community, as well. In August, all the millage renewals on the ballot, to support Senior Services, Public Safety and to extend the Safety Path system, easily won voter approval. These were critical to maintaining the fine quality of life in the Township and the fact they were approved shows that residents appreciate what the Township offers.

While they weren't as vital as the millages, the Woodward Avenue Dream Cruise and Township Open House events held in August and October, respectively, were smashing successes. Both drew large crowds and gave us an opportunity to

showcase the Township.

That's important because Bloomfield Township places a high priority on customer service. We want the residents to know the folks in Town Hall, the Fire Station and Police Station and the Cable TV studio. We want them to feel comfortable coming to us with Township issues that concern them and which we can act on. We have an obligation to provide great service to the residents who have placed their trust in us to be stewards of the community. We try exceedingly hard to fulfill those expectations, and I think to a great measure we succeed.

But there are always challenges. We have not fully recovered from the financial collapse of 2008 and maintaining a healthy financial outlook is an unending task.

I mentioned the roads earlier and the terrible toll winter has taken on them. That being said, we did have six neighborhoods totaling approximately 10 miles replace their roads and it appears we have another four or five neighborhoods that will re-do their roads in 2015. We were very fortunate through the perseverance of Greg Jamian, the Chairman of the Road Commission for Oakland County (who is also a Bloomfield Township resi-

dent), to get Long Lake Road replaced. We will continue to work closely with the Road Commission to get as many large projects completed in Bloomfield Township as possible.

With the help of State Rep. Mike McCreedy and Sen. John Pappageorge we were able to get a bill passed to allow these road special assessments to stay with the property and not require these special assessments to be paid off when the property is sold. At the time of this writing we are just waiting for the Governor to sign the bill. There will still be work to do with the lending community and the title industry to implement this new law to make it work, but we are having those conversations at this time and can see the light at the end of the tunnel.

For now we continue to do everything we can in all aspects of operation to ensure the fiscal and physical health of Bloomfield Township. After all, it's our home.

I hope everyone has a safe and prosperous 2015. As always if you need anything, big or small, feel free to contact us. We are here to help and serve.

What's going on around town? You can find out on a weekly basis through the Bloomfield Township eNewsletter. The eNewsletter is now being sent every Thursday afternoon. It contains items on what's happening in the area as well as timely announcements, such as snow emergency and other weather alerts, changes of office hours and news bulletins. ENewsletters are also sent whenever there is an immediate need to relay a message to the public.

You can subscribe to the eNewsletter by going to the Township website, [www.bloomfieldtwp.org](http://www.bloomfieldtwp.org) and clicking on the box at the upper left of the page. Or send your email address to [gkowski@bloomfieldtwp.org](mailto:gkowski@bloomfieldtwp.org) and it will be added to the subscription list.

# Bloomfield Township Open House is a popular draw

Kids and adults alike found plenty to do at the Township Open House in October. The 2014 edition of the popular event again proved to be a powerful draw, with hundreds of persons streaming through the Township campus

throughout the day. Perfect weather helped ensure the success of the event.

For the kids, there were trucks to climb on, a fire hose to hold and pumpkin crafts to create. One of the most dramatic demonstrations of the day was done by firefighters who set a mockup of a bedroom on fire to demonstrate how quickly the flames can spread – and drive home the point that smoke alarms are critical. That, in fact, was the theme of the

event, held in conjunction with national Fire Prevention Week, which was Oct. 5-11. The theme of Fire Prevention Week was “Working Smoke Alarms Save Lives: Check Yours Every Month!”

But everybody got into the act. The police gave a demonstration of its K9 unit and offered rides in a police car. The Clerk’s Office sponsored a pumpkin craft area, the DPW put its heavy equipment on display, among other sights.

Adding a special touch was

a visit by a University of Michigan rescue helicopter, which landed near the Bloomfield Cable TV building.



The University of Michigan rescue helicopter was impressive as it landed by the cable TV building.

And there was plenty of free food.



Sparky the Fire Dog was especially popular with the kids.

## S&P rates Bloomfield Township bonds ‘AAA’

Bloomfield Township’s strong financial standing was affirmed once again as the Standard & Poor’s Rating Services gave the township a long-term AAA rating for its 2014 general obligation limited tax refunding bonds. It also affirmed its AAA long-term on the township’s previously issued general obligation debt.

The AAA rating is the highest level awarded.

“We consider Bloomfield’s economy to be very strong, with access to the broad and diverse Oakland County economy and access to Detroit,” S&P stated in announcing the rating.

S&P cited the township’s very strong economy, very strong budgetary flexibility, very strong liquidity, strong management conditions with good policies, strong budgetary performance and very weak debt and contingent liabilities.

“The township’s budgetary flexibility remain very strong, with reserves at more than 30 percent of expenditures for the past several years and no plans to significantly spend them down,” S&P stated. “The stable outlook reflects our view of Bloomfield’s continued consistent financial performance and underlying economy, supported by good management.”

“This is a reflection of the township’s continuing efforts to maximize our resources while using the best fiscal policies to benefit the taxpayers,” said Bloomfield Township Supervisor Leo Savoie. “We have always used best practices. The S&P AAA ratings affirm that.”

## Staffers earn certification

DPW employees Noah Mehalski, Marco Nervo and Steve Sierota completed training and received Michigan Public Service Institute certification.

MPSI consists of a three-year training program, which provides instruction expressly designed for city and county public service supervisors, managers and directors. The course is a series of three one-week sessions focusing on training in public service and enhancing individual growth and professional development. It also gives participants an opportunity to meet with people from other municipalities



Noah Mehalski, Steve Sierota and Marco Nervo achieved certification

across Michigan. Township Public Works Director Tom Trice, chairman of the MPSI for the past 23 years, expressed his pride in the accomplishments of his staff. “We are so proud they have been able to go through the program. It’s all about leadership and moving the Township forward. It’s nice to have Township support for the program,” he said.





From the Fire Department

## Dealing with deadly flash overs

What looked like a semi-trailer spewed smoke that rose above the surrounding trees.

When the rear doors of the trailer flung open, out streamed a group of firefighters. They had just spent some time in an inferno. And they learned how to come out alive.

In September the Township Fire Department conducted a special training on how to deal with "flash overs." Those are the lethal



The firefighters learn to handle flash overs in a realistic setting.

situations when smoke, gas and heat build up in an enclosed area, then spontaneously ignite into a wave of flame.

Flash overs can be deadly, and preventing them takes special firefighting skills.

Township firefighters, as well

as firefighters from other area departments, took part in the training, using a special vehicle from Oakland Community College, which provides a closed interior where flash over conditions can be created.

The training in the field followed two hours of classroom instructions, and was made possible through a grant the fire department received.

## Solid waste contract extended with Rizzo

After several months of negotiations, the Township Board approved a proposal in November to extend the current solid waste contract with Rizzo Environmental Services for an additional eight years, though June 30, 2023.

The original contract was an eight-year agreement that began in July 2007, and was set to expire on June 30, 2015.

The rates will increase by 8 percent on July 1, 2015. For the typical curbside service this would increase the quarterly rate of \$45.98 to \$49.66, an increase of \$14.72 a year or just 28 cents a week. The rates would then remain steady, with no increases, for the entire length of the contract.

The proposal would keep in place all the services that Township resi-

dents currently enjoy, such as unlimited weekly trash, bulk items, recycle and yard waste pickup. In addition, the recycling program



Rizzo Environmental Services workers pick up trash, recyclables and yard waste.

would be enhanced to include a new Recycling Rewards program and larger 65-gallon, rolling recycling carts. The Recycling Rewards program will offer residents the chance to earn coupons and discounts from participating retailers every time they recycle and the 65-gallon

recycling carts will be available on a voluntary basis, provided only to those residents that request one, and will be provided free of charge.

These new rates and enhancements to the recycling program will not take place until July 1, 2015. However, in preparation for these changes, the

Township will begin generating a list of residents who would like to receive a 65-gallon recycling cart when the new program starts. If you are interested, please call the Department of Public Works at (248) 594-2800 and your name will be added to the list.

## Free tax aid offered

AARP trained volunteers will provide free assistance in preparing and filing your federal, state and local returns at the Bloomfield Township Senior Center. The aid will be offered on Mondays and Tuesdays, Feb. 9, 10, 23 and 24; March 9 and 10; and April 6 and 7.

The service is available for tax payers with middle/low income. Some restrictions apply.

Registration for appointments begins on Friday, Jan. 2, for Township residents and on Monday, Feb. 2 for non-residents. An appointment is required. Call (248) 723-3500.

## Aid for minor home repairs available

Bloomfield Township seniors age 60 and older can receive help with minor home repairs through a Community Development Block Grant received by Bloomfield Township Senior Services.

The maximum household income for a one-person household is \$36,050, and for a two-person household is \$41,200.

If you believe you may qualify, contact Denise Kolkmeier at (248) 723-3500.



# BLOOMFIELD TOWNSHIP

4200 TELEGRAPH ROAD  
PO BOX 489  
BLOOMFIELD MI 48303-0489

PRSR STD  
U.S. POSTAGE  
**PAID**  
ROYAL OAK, MI  
PERMIT #759

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

## Finding comfort in the Senior Center pool

Selling commercial real estate, Kathy Housey knows how to move property. Now she has learned how to help people move in a unique way.

Housey combines fitness moves with yoga and takes them into the water at the pool in the Senior Center where she offers classes on Fluid Moves and Aqua Yoga Flow. Troubled by some leg problems, Housey realized that yoga helped ease the pain, and doing movements in the water provided just the right amount of pressure and support to make it more effective.

Housey got professional certification so she could share what she experienced.

"It helps people," she said. "And it sends a message to women that you don't have to do high intensity water aerobics."

When she started the

classes about four years ago some folks were skeptical of her program and her classes drew only a handful of participants. But it didn't take long to convince people that the

water works. Classes now typically have 22-25 participants.

"People take multiple classes," she said. "They're in the water with me three times a week."

The results range from improving body movement to benefitting from the mental effects of practicing yoga. It even helped one woman lower her blood sugar.

The classes also provide a time and place for socializing. "People come together and bond," she said.

For more information on the Senior Center, go to the Township website, [www.bloomfieldtp.org](http://www.bloomfieldtp.org).



Kathy Housey at the Senior Center pool where she mixes yoga with water.