



Summer, 2005

## Visit our new website!

If you dream it; it will come. We have had many requests for information via the World Wide Web. Now we can say, "Just visit [www.chikamingtownship.org](http://www.chikamingtownship.org),"

We have been working with web designer John Ruder of Genesis Web Design and now have a site on line. So far, it looks better than we ever imagined. Over the next few weeks we will make sure it's as inclusive as possible.

The feeling was to have everything online, but we asked each department what they felt should be in their section on the website and worked from there. We have eight departments that you can visit: Administration, Water-Sewer, Building Dept., Park Board, Cemetery, Public Safety, Voting and Our Township.

Under Administration you will find a list of the Township Board members, their meeting date and time and an archive of minutes for the year. There is also information on the assessor, the Board of Review and information about your assessment. You will find links to get a Deferment of Summer Tax form, Homeowners Principal Residence Exemption Affidavit and a Request to Rescind Homeowner's Principal Residence Exemption form. If you want to figure out what your property taxes will be, you can view a millage spread sheet. There will also be a copy of the current newsletter.

If you check out the Water-Sewer Department you will see a list of employees, water and sewer rates and the list of charges for tap-ins and other services. There is also an archive of minutes from the Utility Board. In addition we've included answers to the most asked questions and helpful information such as "Why am I getting a water and sewer bill when I haven't been there all winter?"

The Building Department will probably be the most visited page as you will be able to print out building, electrical, plumbing and mechanical permit applications, applications for a Special Land Use, Zoning Board of Appeals Variance or Land Division and Building Permit Information

& Requirements. Of course, you will find a list of our helpful personnel and inspectors and how to get in touch with them. You can also find out who is serving on the Planning Commission and Zoning Board of Appeals and read the minutes from previous meetings.

The Park Board page will keep you abreast of what's happening at our parks and preserves. It includes a listing of the elected Park Board members and an archive of their minutes. You can also see pictures of the various parks and a listing of where they are located along with the rules and regulations.

If you are curious about our two cemeteries you will find a listing for our sexton and the various costs for a grave and cemetery services. There is also a listing of the rules and regulations.

The Public Safety Department is a wealth of information. You can learn about the Police, Fire and First Responder Departments and their monthly activity. Get to know who is on the Public Safety Commission and what the issues are through their minutes. There

is also information on burning permits and fire safety along with details about our False Alarm Ordinance and how to avoid false alarms.

If you visit our Voting Page you will find links to the Change of Address/Voter Registration form and Absentee Voter Ballot Application. It will also give you information on our two precincts, voting locations and the new laws concerning school elections.

Finally, there is the page about our township where you will find a history of our township, profile and demographics.

Take a peek and send your comments to us via the e-mail link. We're going to work with it for a year and then make any needed adjustments.



**New CHIKAMING TOWNSHIP LOGO can be seen in full color on the website. Logo was designed by ZBA board member Mike Hojnacki using township staff suggestions.**

### How should we celebrate our 150th anniversary?

On March 6, 2006 Chikaming Township will be 150 years old! The township was organized on March 6, 1856 and Silas Sawyer was elected its first supervisor.

We want to plan a special celebration that includes all of our diverse residents, second homeowners and town centers. We have Union Pier, Lakeside, Harbert, Sawyer, Prairie Club, Bethany Beach, Woodlawn Beach, Highland Shores, Tibberon Shores and Birchwood to name a few. In order for it to be a success, we need input and cooperation from all of these areas and the business and church communities.

The time to start planning is now. We need your input. Write or e-mail us your ideas. You can e-mail [chiktwpadm@hawi.net](mailto:chiktwpadm@hawi.net).

### Construction on the rise in Chikaming

The Zoning Administrator's fiscal year report for 2004 showed \$30,385,444 in new construction. Included in that figure was \$8,693,042 for 32 new homes and \$6,446,022 for the replacement of ten homes. This is up \$8,877,235 in new construction from 2003's total of \$21,508,209. So far this year, through May, the Building Department has issued permits for \$11,776,104 in new construction.

**PLEASE, NO DUMPING OF PERSONAL GARBAGE AT THE CEMETERIES OR BEACHES!**

# NOTEWORTHY

## ***Did you get your new voter ID card?***

As part of the new election laws governing school elections, all voters were sent a new ID card with their new school polling location. The last time we sent out new cards was in 2002. We received about 300 cards back due to undeliverable addresses!

Here's the problem. The proper address for your voter's ID card is the physical location of your home. Then, if your mailing address is different, that is listed in another section. However, many of you did not give us or update your mailing address so the card was returned. In many cases, the card in 2002 and the one sent out in April were both returned. Some of you received cancellation notices. Others had their voting status changed to "challenged" due to return of ID card.

If you did not get a new voter's ID card this past April, please contact the Township Office to make sure your home and mailing addresses are correct. Also, when you go to renew your driver's license, make sure you give both addresses because our computer information is shared.

Thank you for helping us keep our records up to date.

## ***FROM THE TREASURER...***

### ***County to collect a third of their tax this summer***

Berrien County has informed us that starting this summer they will collect a third of their General Operating millage, or 1.60330 mills, on the summer tax bill. In 2006 they will collect two thirds of the millage, and then finally in 2007 they will collect all of their General Operating millage in the summer.

Treasurer Dorothy Simmons says that the trend is to eventually only collect property taxes once a year during the summer. Watch for all of the winter taxes to gradually shift over onto the summer tax bill.

## ***Burning permits required***

State law requires a permit to conduct any outdoor burning whenever the ground is not snow-covered. The burn permit process is designed as a way to communicate when it is safe to burn yard and household debris, and how to do so appropriately. Air quality and solid waste regulations prohibit open burning of construction and demolition waste. You can obtain a burning permit at Township Hall at 14900 Lakeside Road in Lakeside, MI. Remember: You are responsible for any fire, smoke or odors created from open burning and for any damage that results from your fire.

## ***Chikamingling set for July 23***

The township staff and those who attended enjoyed Chikamingling so much this past July that we're going to do it again on Saturday, July 23rd from 11:00 a.m. until 1:00 p.m. In case you missed it, the administrators, staff, commissioners and other personnel of Chikaming Township invited all the year-round folks, second home owning folks and business owning folks to come and sit for a spell, talk things over, see the sights and mingle for awhile. Hence, the name Chikamingling.

The event will be held again at the Public Safety Building at 13535 Red Arrow Highway in Harbert. Besides mingling and refreshments, Carol & Kaye's Dixieland Band will play from 11:30 until 12:30. We're going to have the official unveiling of the Township's new website and logo as a special event. The Fire Department will have Little Squirt there for the children, along with a tour of the Fire Department and Police Department. All the departments will be available to answer questions and present information.

For the Senior Citizens, a representative from Social Security has agreed to come and explain a new Medicare prescription drug benefit that begins January 1, 2006. This new benefit will make extra help available to those that cannot afford the new drug plan. The extra help, called a subsidy, could assist with the deductibles, co-payments and premiums. The Social Security Administration is responsible for taking and processing the applications for this extra help. The representative coming to Chikamingling will bring along applications for the new Medicare subsidy, along with brochures and pamphlets.

Come and join us again for a township Chikamingling.

**At the first annual Chikamingling the township staff served hot dogs and lemonade to residents young and old.**



## ***Development of Chikaming Park & Preserve under way***

If you've driven by the Chikaming Township Park and Preserve on Warren Woods Road, you would have seen Hollerbach Excavation's heavy equipment creating a road and parking areas. This should be done by the end of June.

Phase II is scheduled to start sometime in July. This involves the construction of a shelter, two bathrooms, a fishing platform, prairie viewing platform and trails. In addition, the property is being cleaned up and the entrance will be improved with landscaping. They expect that the construction and most of the trail work will be completed in October.

In an effort to replace the forest, approximately 23,000 trees were planted in some of the open, farmed fields this past spring. Many species were planted, repeating the diversity already present on the property. Buffers of evergreens were also created at the roadways and the adjoining property.

## ***Household Hazardous Waste Disposal 2005***

There will be free household hazardous waste disposal in the county courtesy of the County Landfill Use Fund. It is open to Berrien County residents only and not to businesses or institutions. They will accept oil-based paint, paint remover, motor oil, oil filters, gasoline, antifreeze, batteries, pesticides, toxic cleaners, lawn chemicals, furniture strippers, flammable materials, home medical waste, Mercury containing items and more. They will not accept Latex paint, which can be dried and placed next to your trash can with the lid off, propane tanks, ammunition, fireworks, computers, appliances and tires. Items are free except for large quantities. For more than two car batteries the fee is \$1.00 a battery. On liquids the first ten gallons are free and after that it is fifty cents a gallon.

Upcoming dates at nearby locations are:

**AUG 24, WED, 3-7:** Apple Valley Market next to Andrews University across from the Fair Grounds in Berrien Springs.

**SEPT 17, SAT, 9-1:** County Health Dept. at M-139 & Starlite Drive between Nickerson & Napier, near the Sparkle Car Wash in Benton Township.

**SEPT 24, SAT, 9-1:** New Buffalo City Fire Dept. in downtown New Buffalo off US-12 on N. Harrison.

**OCT 15, SAT, 8-12:** SE Berrien County Landfill 1/2 mile from US-12/US-31 Int., on Chamberlain Road.

If you have any questions, call (269) 983-7111 Ext. 8234.