

"We are like snowflakes, all different in our own beautiful way." ~unknown



2735 W. Giles Rd, Muskegon, MI 49445 P-231-744-2454 F-231-744-2506 website: www.laketon.org and also on Facebook

Laketon Township

2016 Winter Newsletter

Tibits:

- **Winter Taxes:** are due by 02/14/17—after this date penalties and interest will begin to accrue on any unpaid balance due.
- **SNOW PLOWING REMINDERS:** snow plowing season will soon be upon us—please: do not plow in fire hydrants and do not pile snow on the bike paths or sidewalks. Thank you.
- **Facebook Page:** The page was updated earlier this year. (the page name changed slightly to "Laketon Township Community Info".) The new page can be accessed using a link on the township website homepage (www.laketon.org) The old page still exists, but cannot be updated - so please "like" and use the new page!
- **Email mailing list:** If you'd like to receive these newsletters and occasional emails from Laketon Township—please send your email address to vwest@laketon.org and request to be added to the resident email list. If you've previously requested to be on the list but are not receiving the emails – please submit an updated/current email address.
- **Muskegon County Dog Licenses**—or dog tags as they are commonly known are available at Laketon Township all year round as the renewal is due the month of the dog's rabies shot. Please call if you have any questions M-F 8:30 am to 4:30 pm 231-744-2454.

Mullally Park—New Playground!

Good News for the Park!

In October, Laketon Township organized a community build project to replace badly aging/damaged playground equipment at Mullally Park. The old playground was dismantled by Laketon Township maintenance staff in late September in preparation for the new equipment to be installed in early October.

Mullally Park is a heavily used park. It is used by many youth leagues; including football, cheerleading, softball, baseball and lacrosse as well as many area children—including the summer "sports n shorts" program put on by White Lake Community Education.

The old equipment was not compliant with current playground regulations and was becoming dangerous.

Laketon Township applied for and received grant funds; but what really made this project possible was the community build volunteers.

Laketon Township would like to express thanks to all who gave their time and worked so hard to build this playground. Muskegon Northside Lions Club, Northside Lacrosse teams, individual members of the community as well as township employees and elected officials all worked together to bring about the successful installation of this playground. The new playground equipment is

now compliant with today's regulations and is handicap accessible. Keep an eye on the parks - future plans are in the works for spring 2017!

More photos are available on Facebook—check out the *Laketon Township Community Info* page!



Voter Turnout Statistics for Laketon Twp

On Tuesday November 8, 2016—Laketon Township had a grand total of 4,470 ballots cast for a turnout of 72.92%! (There are 6,130 registered voters in Laketon Township)

So how does that number break down?

Males cast 2,121 ballots—of the males registered to vote, that equals a male turnout of 70.72%

Females cast 2,349 ballots—of the females registered to vote, that equals a female turnout of 75.02%

Absentee voters cast 1,379 of the ballots, which means 3,091 voters passed through the polls in Laketon Township on election day. Absentee Voters accounted for 30.85% of the ballots cast

Overall, voters over the age of 60, had the highest participation—86.09% of those registered & over the age of 60 cast a ballot. Those with the lowest participation—were those aged 22—30 with a rate of 50.93%.

Laketon Township has 3 voting precincts—the turnout rate by precinct is as follows:

Precinct 1: 75.98%
Precinct 2: 74.50%
Precinct 3: 68.61%

Election Day here in Laketon Township went very smoothly, in large part due to the hard work of the Clerk's Department and the team of workers in each of the precinct polling locations and on the Absent Voter Counting Board. A HUGE THANK YOU to all who made this election day run so smoothly—as well as to everyone that participated in our Country's democratic process!

**THANKS
FOR VOTING!**

"When it snows, you have two choices—shovel or make snow angels" ~unknown

“The love of family and the admiration of friends is much more important than the accumulation of wealth and privilege.” ~Charles Kuralt:
(September 10, 1934 – July 4, 1997) was an American journalist. He was most widely known for his long career with CBS.

From the Treasurer Lori L. Archer

A few things you should know about tax bills:

1. Original tax bills are mailed to the property owner/taxpayer, unless there is a mortgage with an escrow account. If you have an escrow account that pays your property taxes the mortgage company should be requesting the bill. In this case, the bills are sent to them and a copy of the bill is sent to the property owner/taxpayer. Questions about your escrow account should be directed to your mortgage company.
2. Tax payments that are post-marked by the due date are accepted as paid on time if received within 4 days of the original tax due date.
3. If any summer taxes are not paid by the time winter tax bills are sent; you will find a message on the winter tax bill that states summer taxes are still owing, but not an amount—you'll have to call for the balance due.
4. Check payments for taxes are accepted as conditional payment—if returned by the bank, the tax bill will be unpaid. Penalties and interest will be applied as prescribed by law. A \$30.00 fee will be charged on all returned checks.
5. Tax bills are issued twice per year and do not cover specific months. State law determines which items are on each bill, the two bills together make up the annual property taxes due.
6. 2016 tax due dates: Summer bill—levied 7/1/16 due by 9/14/16. Winter bill – levied 12/1/16 due by 2/14/17. Penalty &/or interest begins to accrue the day after the due date.

Property Taxes: Did You Know?

- Property taxes are based on the taxable value of the property.
- The taxable value can NEVER exceed the assessed value.
- The taxable value can only increase at the rate of inflation or 5%, whichever is less—exceptions: new construction.
- The State of Michigan determines how much the taxable value increases each year.
- Annual changes in the assessment are based on sales studies of similar homes in similar types of neighborhoods.
- It is ILLEGAL for the assessor to set the new assessment solely based on that property's sale price.
- It is the responsibility of the property owner to file a PRINCIPAL RESIDENT'S EXEMPTION, if they qualify.
- March Board of Review is the only time the assessment (SEV) can be appealed. An appeal MUST be made to the March Board of Review in order to qualify to appeal to the State Tax Tribunal.
- It is the responsibility of the property owner to review the annual ASSESSMENT CHANGE NOTICE (this notice comes out in late February).
- Property Information is available on our website at: www.laketon.org (click on online bill pay) You will be prompted to create an account (user id/password). Property owners can obtain information on their property free of charge—to look at information on other properties will incur a charge. Once an account has been established, property taxes and sewer usage bills can be paid on the site (fees apply).



Important News for Small Business Owners Regarding Personal Property –Tax Exemptions

Many small business owners may be eligible to file for an exemption from Personal Property Taxes. A affidavit MUST be files with the assessor's office EVERY YEAR! The is form 5076 and is available on the Laketon Township website.

This form is DUE back to the assessor by no later than February 10th. Again, this form MUST be completed and returned to the assessor EVERY YEAR! The State of Michigan is NOT allowing any extension of that deadline. Any forms received after the February 10th deadline WILL PAY THE TAX. So please, file on time!

From the Desk of the Building Official:

Should I Hire a Licensed Contractor? Yes—it's for the protection of you and your home!

Michigan State Law REQUIRES all persons performing RESIDENTIAL CONTRACTING work on jobs valued over \$600.00 to hold a valid Residential Builders License or Residential Maintenance & Alteration License issued by the State of Michigan. This is true for all work requiring a

permit, as well as work not requiring a permit. If the contractor is not licensed: there is no recourse with the State for help should any problems arise with the contractor or if damage is caused by the contractor.

Be cautious if a contractor asks you to get the permit. There is likely a reason he can't get the permit.

Don't be shy, ask to SEE the license of any contractor you are considering hiring. It is also a good idea to ask if the contractor carries liability insurance and ask to see proof of any liability insurance he/she has in place.

If you have any questions about licensing requirements or permits, please call the Laketon Township Building Official and Inspector Chris Hall.

“A dream doesn't become reality through magic; it takes sweat, determination and hard work.” ~Colin Powell; a retired four-star general in the U.S. Army. He was the 65th U. S. Secretary of State and the first African-American to serve in that position.