in Laketown

A Quarterly Newsletter for the residents of Laketown Township

in this issue >>>

Supervisor’s message
News from the Treasurer
Clerk’s Notes and News
A Word from the Assessor
...and more

Wendy, We’ll Miss You

WOW! On Monday, October 1st my wife and returned to Laketown Township following a brief vacation. At our regularly scheduled work session the following Wednesday our Township Clerk, Wendy Van, announced that she would be submitting her resignation. Wendy has faithfully served on the township board for over thirteen years. I will miss her greatly. She has been faithful in attendance; competent in running elections; well organized and a joy to work with in bringing our township to its respected position. She is respected among her peers and replacing her will not be an easy task for the board. I am sure that those of us on the board will make every effort to make an appointment by the end of the current year. A notice to this effect will be included in this newsletter.

The person selected will be appointed by the board to complete Wendy’s unexpired term of office.

I look forward to the process and commit us to find the perfect township resident to serve as our Township Clerk. So, if you feel that you could be that person to serve our township as Township Clerk you should start drafting a cover letter and resume outlining your desire and qualifications. If you have any questions, you should feel free to contact any board member.

Wendy, we all love you dearly and wish you all the best and continued happiness as you move into this next phase of your life.

Elections are just around the corner and, as always, please study your ballot beforehand and VOTE!

Did you notice the changes in the format of the newsletter? Patty Meyer (Felt Mansion) is filling in as “editor” for this edition of our quarterly newsletter. Patty, please accept my thanks for stepping up in our time of need! It’s always great to be surrounded by friends willing to go the extra mile!
News from Herrick Library
by Andrea Goodell

Here's Your First Chance to Give Input on the HDL North Branch Expansion!
Herrick District Library's North Side Branch will be undergoing an expansion in the next few years, and the library would love your input as the process moves forward.
Sign up to join a kitchen table community conversation and share your thoughts over Crane’s cider donuts.
What should library leaders keep in mind as the North Branch is expanded?
What 2 - 3 things are most important to you?

- Wednesday, October 3 at 4 p.m., Main Library
- Thursday, October 4 at 4 p.m., Main Library
- Tuesday, October 23 at 12 p.m., Park Township Hall
- Tuesday, October 23 at 7 p.m., North Branch
- Wednesday, October 24 at 12 p.m., Holland Township Hall

Sign up for a conversation at herrickdl.org/events.

North Branch Expansion FAQ

The North Branch is being expanded? Wow, I didn't know!
Yep. When voters approved the Herrick District Library millage levy in 2016 one of our promises was to modestly expand the 5,000 square foot North Branch.

Is this expansion going to cost more on my tax bill?
Nope. HDL is saving money out of its operating fund to pay for the expansion. This means the library needs to save a few years for the project, leaving plenty of time to connect with the public for input on plans for the modest expansion.

Is this the only time HDL will invite public input about the North Branch?
Nope. This is the first of several opportunities that will take place over the next 12-18 months as we start to plan for the expansion. We promised to involve the community in planning for the expansion so here's the first of several invitations for you to participate. We can't wait to hear your input.

Changes Happening on Township Boards and Commissions

Due to his move from Laketown to Hamilton, Ryan Busscher will no longer be able to serve on the Parks Commission. We thank Ryan for his service. If you are interested in serving on the Parks Commission, please send your letter of interest and resume to Terry Hofmeyer, Laketown Township, 4338 Beeline Road, Holland, MI 49423. Or email to Terry@laketowntwp.org. Please submit by November 30, 2018.

At the October workshop meeting, Clerk Wendy Van Huis announced her retirement from the Laketown Township Board. Her retirement is effective November 30, 2018. The Township Board will appoint a new clerk to serve out the remainder of Wendy’s term (until November, 2020).

If you are interested in serving as clerk of Laketown Township, please send your letter of interest and resume to Terry Hofmeyer, Laketown Township, 4338 Beeline Road, Holland, MI 49423. Or email to Terry@laketowntwp.org. Please submit by November 30, 2018.
Holidays at the Felt >>>

Holidays at the Felt Estate are always magical. We have many opportunities for you to visit the estate this year, and your concert passes are eligible for any self-guided or guided tour. Note: Passes are not accepted for special Holiday Taste and Tour Events, nor for our October Darkness Tours.

Regular Holiday tour times are listed in the box to the right on this page.

Evening Guided Tour Dates: Friday and Saturday Evenings, December 8, 14, 15, 21, 22, 28, 29

Time: 6:00 – 8:00 p.m. -- Guided tour begins at 6:05

Cost: Adult $20/per person

  Senior Citizens ages (62+) and Students: $15/per person

  Children ages 12 and younger: Free

Afternoon Guided Tours Dates: Sundays and New Year's Day: December 9, 16, 23, 30, & January 1, 2019

Time: 2:00 - 4:00 p.m. -- Guided Tour Starts 2:05pm:

Cost: Adult $20/per person

  Senior Citizens ages (62+) and Students: $15/per person

  Children ages 12 and younger: Free

Self-Guided Tour Times and Dates: Most Mondays through Wednesdays

December 10, 11, 12, 17, 18, 19, 26, 31

Time: 2:00 - 4:00 p.m.

Cost: Adult: $15/per person

  Senior Citizen (age 62+) and Students: $12/per person

  Children: Age 12 and Younger: Free

Dates subject to change please check our website www.feltmansion.org

For Taste and Tour Information, see www.feltmansion.org
Hazardous Waste Collection Day

News from Republic Services: The LAKETOWN TOWNSHIP HOUSEHOLD HAZARDOUS WASTE collection will occur at Republic Services of Holland (formerly Chef Container)/Westshore Recycling and Transfer Station at 4368 60th St in Holland on November 3, 2018 from 8:00am until 11:30 am.

In order to control the flow of vehicles as well as the quantities of hazardous waste to be disposed, we will be issuing vouchers for this scheduled event. Please pick up your vouchers at the Republic Services of Holland office before the scheduled collection date. Our office hours are Monday-Friday from 8am until 5pm. You will need a valid ID and a current account with us to obtain a voucher. Additionally, please note the following guidelines:

- Vouchers are valid only for the date noted.
- A valid voucher must be presented at the time of drop-off.
- Vouchers will not be issued on the day of drop-off.
- There is a limit of 200 lbs. of material per voucher.

Because of the legal chain of custody required on hazardous waste you will be required to sign a disposal form. Westshore Recycling and Transfer Station reserve the right to reject any items.

Below is a list of items accepted:

**ACCEPTED ITEMS:**
- Aerosol cans
- Antifreeze
- Batteries
- Battery acids
- Detergents
- Degreasers
- Drain Cleaners
- Fertilizers
- Gasoline
- Grease
- Inks
- Light bulbs
- Mercury containing articles
- Oil
- Oil-based paint
- Paint thinner
- Pesticide
- Propane
- Solvents
- Thermometers

**ITEMS NOT ACCEPTED:**
- Compost
- Asbestos items
- Lead paint items
- General waste cleaners
- Electronics
- Freon products
- Latex paint products
- Tires
A Stroke in the Right Direction
by Jesse Luyk
Instructional Program Manager
Holland Community Aquatic Center

With the school year underway, I am reminded again how great a privilege it is to be confident in the water. Each school day between 150 and 250 elementary students come through the doors of the Holland Community Aquatic Center for swimming lessons. For some of these children, the two weeks of lessons during the school year is the first and only exposure they have to learning water safety and swimming skills. In West Michigan, teaching water safety and swimming skills is both a preventative measure and an incredible opportunity! With the abundance of water surrounding our community, instructing children in proper water safety saves lives.

Each summer, our community endures numerous drownings and water-related injuries, many of which could be prevented with the knowledge and skills taught through water safety and swimming instruction. Our local environment lends itself to a diverse range of water related recreational activities like boating, fishing and swimming at the beach. The ability to swim effectively creates the opportunity to utilize these natural resources for enjoyment, fitness and competitive outlets.

Each day as we fill our pools with students, I am also reminded that swimming is a skill that takes practice over time to develop. Recently, I read an article titled How Long Will It Take for My Child to Learn to Swim and I appreciated the thoughtful response, "Every child is different and therefore it is impossible to give an exact answer to this question. But the good news is that practice and exposure are the keys to learning. If you want your child to learn quickly they will need to visit the pool regularly...While your child can learn basic swimming skills like breath control, floating and propulsion quickly, parents should be under no illusion, mastering good swimming technique and water safety skills will take years to accomplish." (“How Long Will It Take for My Child to Learn to Swim?”, 2018)

The author continued with the notion that ongoing swim instruction is a worthwhile investment in the lives of our children because swimming is both a lifesaving and lifelong skill. I fully agree!

At the Holland Community Aquatic Center, our instructional team is committed to Creating opportunities in aquatics for people of all abilities through excellence in swimming instruction. The HCAC Swim School is proud to offer swimming instruction year-round through school partnerships, community lessons, summer programs and private lessons. I encourage you to check out the HCAC Swim School programs at www.hollandaquaticcenter.org/programs/.

Citation
**Enjoy Fall in and around the Felt Estate**

Darkness tours give visitors the rare opportunity to explore the mansion and grounds in the dark of night. Guests will hear eerie stories and legends from the Mansion’s mysterious past (and perhaps encounter an ancestor or two). Adding to the intrigue, world-renowned magician, Steve Marshall, will return, bringing us “Fears and Superstitions,” a frightening magical ghost show, performed in the spirit-filled ballroom in the upper reaches of the mansion. Also, Shadow Spirit Paranormal Investigators (S.S.P.I.) will be presenting the group’s recent findings of paranormal activity at the Felt Mansion. For ticket information, see www.feltmansion.org

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**From Heather Jahr**

**News from the Assessor**

Hello from the assessing desk:

I want to take this opportunity to introduce myself to the citizens of Laketown Township, as well as let you know about a few important “assessing” dates coming up. My name is Heather Jahr. I grew up in Bay City, Michigan. I attended GVSU and received a B.S. in Natural Resource Management.

After serving as the Gardener for Cascade Township for just under a decade, I decided it was time for a change. My opportunity came in 2013 when I was offered a contract position doing field reviews, building permit inspections, and data entry for the Assessor of Cato Township. In 2015, I took a full-time position with the City of Kentwood’s Assessing Department. Fairly quickly, I began to search out education and certification opportunities in the Assessing field. From 2015 to 2018 I received my MCAT (Michigan Certified Assessing Technician) and MCAO (Michigan Certified Assessing Officer) certifications from the State Tax Commission, and I am currently enrolled in the MAAO (Michigan Advanced Assessing Officer) certification course.

I am enjoying the opportunity to apply the skill set I have developed here in Laketown Township. This is truly a beautiful part of Michigan, and a wonderful community to work with, and for. If you have any questions regarding your property’s assessment, please don’t hesitate to give me a call or stop into the office.

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Now for a few dates to put on your calendars:

- **November 1st** — Filing deadline to apply PRE to the 2018 winter tax levy
- **December 11th** — December Board of Review

To those of you I have met already, thank you for welcoming me so warmly, and to those of you I have yet to meet, I look forward to making your acquaintance.

With Best Regards, Heather Jahr
Despite a tremendous morning downpour and hot humid afternoon, 90+ volunteers cheerfully tackled a work day out of the office and in the parks for the annual United Way Day of Caring held Thursday, Sept. 20. Projects included: planting over 14,000 sprouts of dune grass at the beach, weeding the gazebo and clearing overgrowth from the blueberry rows at Huyser, trail maintenance at Sanctuary Woods, and grounds clean up at Shore Acres. A big thank you to the following companies who provided help: Children’s Advocacy Center, Haworth, West Michigan Works, Interact Club of Grand Haven, Elzinga & Volkers Inc., Fifth Third Bank, Huntington National Bank, and Macatawa Bank.

The lottery for permission to hunt deer at Huyser Farm was held Saturday, Sept. 15. Please note that only individuals who were selected in this process may hunt deer at this location during bow season. A special thank you to Graafschaap Hardware for coordinating the application process of this annual event.

If you live near Lakeview School Park located along 32nd St, and Lugers, a Master Plan for that Park has been completed. The City of Holland, which owns this property, held two public planning sessions and was very welcoming to accept and include input from our township residents since a good portion live in that area. This Plan is often the first step needed to apply for grants and is used as a guide for development. Future recreational opportunities planned at this location include the following: pickle ball, volleyball, and basketball court, t-ball and soccer fields, a splash pad, restrooms, picnic shelters, and improved parking.

“Pack it in-pack it out” signs have been installed recently at Farview Park. This concept encourages visitors to take their trash with them, and was based upon a resident suggestion. We will be monitoring the success of this idea to see whether it can be expanded to other parks with the goal of reducing yearly costs for trash service while keeping the parks clean.

Progress continues on the processes needed for the Beach grant, such as completing a survey, obtaining appraisals, etc.

Ryan Bosscher announced his resignation from the Commission due to moving out of the township. We appreciate his many contributions which included map design, concept drawings for beach improvements, and involvement with Lakeview School Park to name a few.

Winter may be around the corner but there is always a need for volunteer help in the parks. Trailblazers sought! If you have a sense of adventure, enjoy a challenge, and like to explore the woods, several of our parks need trails created, marked, and mapped. This would make a great project for an Eagle Scout, club, employer team, or weekly activity for you or your family, etc. Please contact the township office if you are interested in this opportunity or would like to adopt a park.

We appreciate resident involvement on parks maintenance issues and activities throughout the year. A “Meat and Greet” light meal was provided by the Commission on Wednesday, Sept. 19 at the gazebo at the Township recreation complex as an opportunity to share ideas and say thank you.
This newsletter will start with an update on a few staff changes over the last few months. Sarah Bushee, one of our full-time staff, has accepted a full-time position with the Elmwood Fire Department near Traverse City. She is commuting for that job and will still respond with us as a Lieutenant and paid-on-call firefighter when she is in the area. Due to the many contributions and projects Sarah got off the ground and will still oversee in the future we are a better department today. Thank you Sarah.

Mike Capel, a Laketown resident and member of the Graafschap Fire Department since 2016 was hired on August 20, 2018 to fill the full-time Deputy Chief/Fire Inspector position previously held by Sarah. Mike is a Paramedic and has over 25 years of experience in Fire and EMS services. He started his career in 1992 as a paid-on call Firefighter with Hamilton where he currently holds the rank of Captain. He started Full-time in the Fire/EMS field in 1995 working for Mercy/AMR ambulance, Covert Township Fire Department, and most recently for the Gerald R. Ford Airport. Mike is finishing up a two-week course for his Fire Inspector one license and will test for that in late November. Congratulations Mike.

Zoey Hallam, Noah Sall, and Sean Reilly recently passed the National Registry exam and are licensed EMT’s. Their commitment to further education and service to the citizens we serve is to be commended. Great job Zoey, Noah and Sean.

October is Fire Safety month and the theme for this year is Look. Listen. Learn. And we celebrated our first annual Fall Fire Safety Fun Day at the Felt this year. We reinforced: Be aware. Fire can happen anywhere. Go to https://www.usfa.fema.gov/prevention/outreach/fpw.html to see the details and learn how to be fire safe. Also remember the Graafschap Fire Department will do free home safety surveys upon request. Contact the fire station at 616.396.4060 to setup an appointment.

The following are a few statistics for the first 9 months of 2018 for the State of Michigan. There have been 91 fire deaths in 68 fires an increase of 23% from this point last year. The overwhelming majority “39%” of fires deaths happen between the hours of midnight and 6am. 45% of the fire deaths this year have been in the age group of 40-69.

A person has approximately 1-2 minutes to escape a fire in his home; fifteen years ago escape time was over 10 minutes. The reason for this drastic change is due to the number of plastics and petroleum products that are used in most modern furnishings, and the toxic fumes they create. Because of this short amount of time to escape, your normal path out of the home is more than likely not your best choice.

Always make sure you have two ways out and sleep with your door closed. Sleeping with your door closed will give you valuable time to escape through a window or door directly to the outside. It is vitally important to have working smoke alarms on every level of your home and in every sleeping area. Installing smoke alarms, free of charge, is another service provided by the Graafschap Fire Department.

Enjoy fall and be fire safe.
PHOTOS FROM FIRE SAFETY FAMILY FUN DAY AT THE FELT

OCTOBER 6, 2018

MANY THANKS TO THE FIREFIGHTERS, EMT’S, POLICE, AND OTHER EMERGENCY PERSONNEL WHO TOOK PART TO MAKE IT A GREAT DAY!

WE HOPE TO MAKE THIS AN ANNUAL EVENT.

DURING THE EVENT, FIREFIGHTERS DEMONSTRATED USING THE “JAWS OF LIFE” NECESSARY FOR EXTRICATING ACCIDENT VICTIMS FROM CRUSHED VEHICLES. THIS WAS A FASCINATING DEMONSTRATION!

WE HAD A GREAT CROWD AT THE FIRE SAFETY DAY DESPITE RAINY WEATHER. ACTIVITIES INCLUDED FACE-PAINTING, FREE LUNCH, FREE CHILD ID BY NEW YORK LIFE, PHOTO OPS, HORSE-DRAWN WAGON RIDES, COLORING BOOKS, AND FIRE SAFETY DEMONSTRATIONS. AND, OF COURSE, ALL THE GREAT FIRE TRUCKS AND EMERGENCY VEHICLES!
Wendy Van Huis, our Township Clerk, plans to retire from the Township Board at the end of November. During her years of service, Wendy Van Huis gave hundreds of hours of her time making the Township a great place in which to live, work, dream, and play. Her dedication as Clerk to her community is evidenced by her tireless work for Laketown Township.

Wendy served on the Township Board for 13 years, beginning in January, 2005. Her accomplishments are many.

Wendy was an integral part of saving Gibson Church – now known as the Chapel at Shore Acres. With her determination, she and the volunteers at the Felt Estate, raised funds to move the chapel to its current site and restore it to its original beauty.

Her energy continues to pour into the Felt Estate. Wendy joined the Friends’ board when the restoration was still new and has brought the mansion to a level of independence which would have been impossible without her help and support.

As a Township board member, Wendy’s support and encouragement of others who serve brought about The Thursdays at the Felt Summer Concert series, the ongoing restoration of the Huyser Farm, the improvements at the Laketown Beach, and the continuing efforts in all of Laketown’s parks. Wendy worked endlessly to provide great services while striving to keep costs low.

Her fingerprints are on this community. She shaped Laketown Township with her wit, dedication, integrity, and hard work. Wendy: you will be missed.

Enjoy your retirement!