

Winter 2009

SOLOTON

Established in 1857

Township

From the Supervisor's Desk: Robert Ellick

**SOLO^{} TOWNSHIP
ADMINISTRATION AND
EMPLOYEES**

*SUPERVISOR
ROBERT ELLICK*

*CLERK
JOHN RIDEOUT*

*TREASURER
HEATHER ZENKER*

*TRUSTEE FRED
GUNNELL*

TRUSTEE RICH STRAUB

*ADM ASST. LINDA
BADGEROW*

*DEP. CLERK MARY LOU
POULSEN*

*ZONING ADMIN:
TONY KRUTHOFF
ASSESSOR: TOM DOANE*

Now that we the people have purchased a new parcel of land on Algoma at Wiersma it's time for ideas for use's. At the current time we plan on having the spring 2010 township cleanup days at that location. It will be a more convenient and safer location. The address is 15101 Algoma, but watch for our public notice in the Cedar Springs Post early this spring, just to be sure. Also we are looking for Venders for a summer 2010 Farmers and Crafters Market please let us know if you are interested in participating. We need ideas for days and times for the markets, what you would like to see for crafting and produce from a selling stand point as well as a purchasing stand point. You can contact us at 696-1718 or by E- Mail at www.solontwp.org. We are planning on having road work done on 21 Mile west of Mcphail to improve sight distances at the intersection. Also limestone and gravel on other areas within the township. The Township should be informed on the status of the grant for a new Fire Station at the Algoma

site in late Dec. 2009 at that time we will have a better idea on what the next steps will be. If we receive the grant then hopefully construction will begin in late spring or early summer 2010.

Merry Christmas and
Happy trails Bob Ellick

Solon Township Holiday Hours

Closed Christmas Eve and Christmas Day

Closed New Year's Eve

Closed New Year's Day

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Fire Department: Chief VanderMey

Winter is upon us....

Many emergencies occur each winter as people try to keep their homes warm and get around in cold, stormy weather. Home fires December, January, and February are the leading months for home fires and associated deaths in the United States. Heating equipment is the second leading cause of home fire deaths in the U.S. and the leading cause during December and January. Each year, more than 200 Americans die from carbon monoxide poisoning. CO is produced by fuel-burning motor vehicles, appliances, and heating systems. To avoid winter emergencies I

have put together a check sheet to keep your home warm and safe.

1. Install a carbon monoxide (CO) alarm near bedrooms and on each floor of your home. If your alarm sounds, press the reset button, call emergency services (911), and immediately move to fresh air. Know the symptoms of CO poisoning: headache, fatigue, dizziness, and shortness of breath.
2. Make sure heating equipment is installed properly. Have them inspected and tune up yearly
3. Keep portable space heaters at least 3 feet from anything that can burn, including bedding, furniture, and cloth-

ing. Never drape clothing over a space heater to dry.

4. Have your fireplace chimney and flue inspected each year and cleaned if needed. Open the flue and use a sturdy fireplace screen when you have a fire burn only untreated wood; never burn paper or pine. Pieces can float out the chimney and ignite your roof, a neighbor's roof or nearby trees.
5. If you use a wood-burning stove, have the chimney connection and flue checked each year. Make sure the stove is placed on an approved stove board to protect the floor from heat and coals.
6. Never use your range or oven to heat your home, even for a short time.
7. Lets not forget the more common winter fire hazards such as problems with holiday decorations and lights. These emergencies can be prevented by using common sense, employing safe practice, and reading and following the manufacturer's instructions

Helping people help themselves keeps everyone safe, which is our number one job.

Thank you Joyce VanderMey Solon Twp. Fire Chief

2010 CENSUS

by John Rideout

In the coming months the U. S. Census Bureau will be contacting you by mail to begin it's decade census. Never before has the census played such an important role in your lives as residences of Solon Township.

Besides just getting a head count to determine how you will be represented in congress the data gained is a major determining factor in where money is spent. As an example the federal government uses population data to allocate funds in a number of areas such as:

- Title 1 grants to school districts
- Head start programs
- Women, infant and children (WIC) food grants
- Public transportation
- Road construction
- Programs for the elderly
- Emergency food and shelter

Most importantly to Solon Township is that it determines how much funding we receive from the state in sales tax funds (revenue sharing) to conduct the township business. Such things as fire & rescue services are funded primarily by this money. As you are painfully aware the State of Michigan is continuing to cut costs due in part to declining sales tax revenue for

townships and cities. This sales tax revenue is the main source of funding for Solon Township. The current budget of \$298,550.00 in sales tax revenue, is \$20,000 less than last year and as a result of the recent budget situation in Lansing it is expected to decrease an additional \$20,000 this year.

However, there is a bright side to this. In the springs of 2006 Solon Township conducted a mid-decade census with the hope of increasing our funding. While that funding didn't materialize it did establish that Solon Township is one of the fastest growing townships in Kent County. At that time we showed an increase of 23% in the population growth over the count in 2000. Based on these projections Solon Township can expect an increase in 2011 and beyond from revenue sharing which hopefully will make up for our current losses. In short we are hopeful that we won't have to cut services.

As such when you receive the Census Bureau questionnaire I would like to encourage each of you to take the time to complete it and return it as quickly as possible. In cases where the questionnaire is not returned a census worker will be sent to your home to help you complete the information. Again, I can't overstate how important this is to our community, thank you in advance for your cooperation.

Assessor's Office: Tom Doane

Assessment notices negative CPI

How things can change in a year. Last year the Consumers Price Index (CPI) was the highest ever at 4.4%, and this year is the lowest at -.3%

(.997 multiplier). Since the CPI for assessment purposes is less than one, all real property taxable values will be reduced unless the property sold during 2009 or there was a physical change. If there was not a transfer of owner on your property in 2009 or physical changes, your 2010 taxable value is calculated by multiplying your 2009 taxable value

by .997. If there was a transfer of ownership on your property in 2009, your 2010 taxable value will be the same as your 2010 state equalized value (SEV).

If you have questions or concerns, please don't hesitate to call the assessor's office for more information.

Township Tidbits: from the Administrative Assistant, Linda Badgerow

Kent County Health Department

The township office now has water test bottles for our residents who wish to submit a water sample to the health department. We also have Kent County and State of Michigan maps that are free to our residents.

Kent County 4-H Plat books for 2010. Kent County plat books will be available at the township office for \$25.00. All proceeds go to the Kent County 4-H clubs.

You can access Solon Township Online. We are welcoming our residents to visit us at www.solontwp.org. You may access the minutes from the Township Board meetings. Residents can also contact township officials via e-mail through our links. There is a link on our website that you can pay your taxes with a credit card. You may also find permits for the building department. Please check this web site out at your convenience and give us any suggestions about what you would like to see included. Thank you.

Treasurers Info: Heather Zenker

The Kent County Animal Control advised our office that the dog licenses will not be available until sometime in early January. Please call our office before coming to purchase your license to be sure that we have received them.

If you mail in your tax payment and wish to have a receipt for your records, you must include a self-addressed, stamped envelope and we will be happy to provide you with a receipt. We can not mail receipts without your SASE.

If you plan to deduct your property taxes on your 2009 Federal Income Tax, they must be paid by December 30. The township offices will be closed on December 31, 2009. You will have until Monday February 15, 2010 to pay your winter taxes without interest or penalty. Solon Township treasurer's office will continue to collect taxes until March 1, 2010. Have a happy and safe holiday season.

You may pay your taxes at the township office Monday thru Thursday 9 AM to 5 PM.

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2305 19 Mile Road NE
Cedar Springs, MI 49319

Phone: 616-696-1718

Fax: 616-696-3970

Email: <http://www.solontwp.org>

Solon Township Offices are open Monday through Thursday from 9:00 AM to 5:00 PM.

Supervisor: Mon-Thurs 9:00 AM to Noon

Clerk: Mon. & Tues. 9:00 AM to 5:00 PM

Deputy Clerk: Wed & Thurs 9:00 AM to 5:00 PM

Treasurer: Mon. Wed. & Thurs. 9:00 AM to 5:00PM

Deputy Treasurer: Mon-Thurs 9:00 AM to 5:00 PM

Zoning Administrator: Mon. and Wed. 9:00 AM Noon

Building Administrator: Monday & Wednesday 9am to 11 am please call for various hours)

Assessor: Mon. and Wed. 9:00 AM to 5:00 PM

Phone 616-696-1718 Fax 616-696-3970

(Hours are subject to change, please call for up to date office staff hours.)

Hazardous Waste Collection... on Fridays from 10:00 am until 2:00 pm. You must call for an appointment at 1-888-217-2850 or 616-336-3695. This is a free program for Kent County residents for household hazardous waste. The Kent County Department of Public Works collection center is located at the North Kent Transfer Station located on 10 Mile Road near Rockford.

Cedar Springs Area Residents – HELP NEEDED - En-Gedi Community Survey

En-Gedi, a non-profit 501(c) (3), is a Christ-centered organization dedicated to strengthening the Cedar Springs Community and surrounding areas through

the building up of families.

En-Gedi's current focus is in serving students 6th – 12th grades with:

- "The Place" to hang out
- Mentoring, tutoring, and an opportunity for community service
- Special events and activities such as a skate park, concerts, dodge

- ball tournaments, and more
- Intramural athletic programs

The quick and easy survey can **preferably** be completed online through the McAfee Secure, TrustE, and Better Business Bureau certified blog site of:

<http://>

EnGediCommunitySurvey.blogspot.com:80

Paper copies may be obtained by request at www.EnGediYouthCenter.com, e-mailing EnGediYouthCenter@gmail.com, or by calling 696-8432.

Survey must be completed online or returned by mail **no later than Thursday, December 31, 2009.**