

Bits and Pieces**By Township Supervisor Tom Biel**

As the long awaited summer finally arrives in Somerset Township there brings the yearly questions about roads. Since Prop 1 failed and I understand why, that still leaves us with road repairs and not enough money to fix them. The money we receive from millage amounts to \$48,000 for the year. That has to cover routine repair work on all our township roads and leaves little for any projects. Don't forget the Fourth of July fireworks at the park and each month there will be a Music in the Park+day for all to enjoy. The new Disc Golf is about ready to go at the Park this summer, this is becoming a very popular sport here in Michigan and we will have a course right here in Somerset Township. McCourtie Park is booked almost every weekend for different events and the Park and Rec Committee is doing an excellent job on keeping the grounds up for your enjoyment. Delores and her crew have done a great job in keeping the Jerome Community Building looking great and having many events planned for this year. Have a great summer.

Treasury Department

Pamela Esterline Beck, Treasurer
Brenda Paul, Deputy Treasurer
Hours: Monday and Thursday
9am-5pm

Payments must reach my office by

Monday, September 14, 2015– 5:00PM

Please read the message to taxpayer in the upper left corner of tax bill.

For additional Treasury information, visit
www.somersettownship.org

Clerk's Corner:

Deborah Spicer, Clerk
Janet Binder, Deputy Clerk

Other than our May Election, this has been and will be a slow Election year for our Township. Thank you to all who participated in the May Election. The state's average percentage of participation in the May Election was under 20% where Somerset Township had an average participation of over 25%! That doesn't seem like a high average for compared to the states; I believe Somerset Township residents care about our state and government.

For those of you living in the Hanover/Horton School District, you do have an August 5th Election. The school has 2 proposals on the ballot and due to the fact that that is the only item for our area, Hanover Township will be running the full Election. Those of you on the Absentee Ballot Voter's list, you should have received or will soon receive your Absentee Ballot Request Application. May sure you send it back to Hanover Township and no Somerset Township. If you prefer to vote in person, your place to vote is the Hanover Township Offices located at 311 Fairview Street in Horton.

Assessing Office

**James Bradley, Somerset Township
Assessor**

**Hours: Monday 9 to 12 and 1 to 5
Tuesday & Wednesday 9 to 12 noon**

Are you recently a permanent resident of Somerset Township? If so, be sure to file your Homeowners Principle Residence Exemption form timely. This will make a significant savings on your property taxes. Forms for Homeowners Principal Residence Exemptions and Property Transfer Affidavits are also available through links on the bottom of the Assessors web page.

The Assessing Department will be updating property record cards throughout the township during the 2015 summer and fall season as part of the standard Assessing Administration process mandated by the State of Michigan. These visits will not necessarily increase your tax bill unless new structures/additions are discovered; usually caused by not obtaining proper permits. Some structures/additions may not require permits, but may still add value to your property, therefore requiring this update process for the township to remain in compliance with State Tax Commission guidelines.

If you are in need of dividing or combining properties, contact Assessor Jim Bradley at (517) 688-9223 ext. 216.

Jerome Community Building

Many improvements have taken place at the Jerome Community Building. They have taken out the back stairs, added more counter space and a second door in the kitchen and widened the opening to the side room to accommodate the rest of the rooms. New windows and air conditioning have been installed as well as the walls and woodwork being painted. A few years ago, a handicap ramp was installed. During the fall and winter months, they have a monthly fundraiser with music, food and drawings. If you haven't been to see the new improvements, come on down and take a look

Fire & Rescue

Scott A. Friess
Fire Chief/EMT

Fred Newton Jr.
Asst. Chief/EMT

A little note with the Fourth of July coming up just to remind everyone that since fireworks are now legal, remember to be safe in the use of fireworks. The support the residents have shown to the Somerset Twp. Fire Dept. in the past is heartwarming and greatly appreciated by our firefighters. Your letters, phone calls, or that small plate of cookies let us know your fire department personnel are excelling in customer service, which is what our goal is on every response regardless day or night. We would like to thank everyone that has donated to our fundraisers that we put on, every little bit helps and is greatly appreciated.

Parks and Recreation Committee

The Parks and Recreation Dept. started working on a Disc Golf course last fall for McCourtie Park. This spring the baskets were installed and ground cleared for the fairways. Nine "holes" were laid out around the tennis courts and baseball field and north of the stream. The "Lady In Blue", Disc Golf course is being used almost on a daily basis. Some finishing touches remain, such as adding signage to mark the course and a rules sign and signs at each tee. Three waste receptacles will be added around the course to help keep the course clean. We received some volunteer help in cleaning brush from several fairways, from Disc golf enthusiasts from Hillsdale, Jackson and Ann Arbor. Before the course was cleared of brush, players were showing up to try out the new course.

We completed another tennis court and basketball court in June, using the same Sports deck material used on the first tennis court. Both the golf course and the tennis/basketball courts have received strong positive feedback.

Painting of the inside and outside of the Berm House was completed in June and a new overhead door was installed replacing the last wooden overhead door. Plumbers located the septic tank checked and cleaned the line and installed a new toilet in the bathroom.

Electric service in the berm house continues. The replacement of outside sconces on the front of the Berm house was just finished to enhance the front. Lighting in the utility bays and garage areas will complete the inside portion of the project. Electric service will be run to the ponds for "fountains" in the ponds.

Replacement fence around the ponds is a project being looked into. The condition of the cement walls and the duration of the cement is being assessed currently.

"Music in The Park" had its first event Friday June 12th. July 4th will be the next event, before the Fireworks display, and August 21st will be the last event for the summer.

We have begun receiving reservations for vendors for the Longest Yard Sale in America, scheduled August 7, 8 & 9th.

Some modifications have been made to the Park Reservation Agreement form to clear up some areas about start and stop times for using the park and when a gate attendant is needed. People wanting to reserve the park for their event are reminded to contact the Township Clerk's office

Police Department

Chief Eric Stolberg

The Somerset Township Police Department has been very busy through the half way point of 2015. Incident numbers for the Police Department are up approximately 68% as compared to last year. Hillsdale County Central Dispatch's statistics corroborates this data, showing that through May of 2015 the

Department has had 563 dispatched calls as compared to 192 in 2014. We are hopeful this rise in activity has gone un-noticed by the township residents as we have strived to continue the same level of commitment and service to this community as we always have.

As we look forward to the summer of 2015 we can again look to the data and statistics for trends in public safety. The warmer weather and schools being out for summer will bring more people outdoors to shake off cabin fever. We would like to remind all motorists of this as they travel down our roadways. Please slow down and be extra mindful of children who may often pay more attention to their ball rolling into the street than the car driving by.

Another trend during this time of year is an increase in vehicle break-ins and home burglaries. In a proactive attempt to reduce this problem, we ask residents to lock and secure your homes, garages and boats while away and always lock your car doors. Many burglars will spend no longer than 60 seconds to try and break into a home or car. (National Crime Prevention Council) Good locks and good neighbors who watch out for each other can be big deterrents to burglars. If you see something suspicious, please call 911 immediately and an officer will respond. With your help, we can cut down crime and keep Somerset Township a warm and friendly place to call home.

http://www.hillsdalecounty.info/downloads/2015_pd_stats.pdf

Library

Barb Nemeth

Story Hour with **Connie Weatherby** begins Tuesday, July 7th for children ages 5-12. Stories begin promptly at 9:30 and will be available for 6 weeks. Fifteen spots are available. Guardian must be present with child/children at all times. Some crafts will be provided during this time. Please call 688-9223 with any other questions you may have.

There are more than a hundred reasons why we should read. Besides being fun and relaxing, you will learn more about you and the world around you. You can do it anytime, anywhere, alone or with friends. Start a summer book club to discuss what you have read. Books can inspire, challenge, and increase our knowledge. They are better than movies, and when reread are usually better than a rerun on TV. There are millions of stories to choose from, why not stop in soon to see what interests you.

The Township Book Sale will be July 28th through the 31st during regular business hours. Come in and find what is available for your summer reading enjoyment. We are still accepting donations of books in good, clean condition, preferably with a copyright of 2000 through 2015+. We cannot accept college books and/or encyclopedias.

Library hours are Monday through Thursday 9:00-12:00 and 1:00-5:00. Friday 9:00-12:00.