



COUNTY OF NEWAYGO QUARTERLY NEWSLETTER

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In This Issue:

Spotlight: Physical and Economic Development Chairman Pat Gardner	3
Newaygo County Welcome Center Opens	3
The Pothole Problem	3
Trillium Springs Opens	3
Household Hazardous Waste Collection Day	3
Spotlight: The Department of Human Services Building	4

Sheriff's Department Opens South County Substation

The Newaygo County Sheriff's Department, in conjunction with the City of Grant and the County Board of Commissioners, has opened a South County Substation. The substation is located in the Grant Police Department, within the Grant Municipal Offices, at 280 S. Maple Street.

In addition to the substation, the Sheriff's Department has also taken steps to redistribute officer assignments and resources based upon population and requests for services. Ten officers have been assigned to three different regions of the county, while the remaining seven will patrol the county at-large.

The changes are part of efforts on behalf of the Sheriff's Department to put more enforcement officers on the road, provide for a quicker and more visible response, and to compensate for the reduction in state and local law enforcement personnel.

Although the station, which opened in March, will not host regular hours of availability to the public, it is home to four officers. Through the use of the latest technology, these officers are capable of receiving and processing many of the common, routine complaints that in the past would have come through the Sheriff's Office in White Cloud.

"The City of Grant has really stepped up for the southern portion of the county by recognizing the benefit of assigning officers to a substation within the city. They have taken our officers in and have been very supportive every step of the way," stated Undersheriff Brian Boyd.

The Sheriff's Office and the State Police will still respond to calls for service based on the closest car concept to ensure the shortest possible response time.

County Gets New Health Insurance Agent

In an effort to help control the rising cost of providing health insurance coverage to County employees and their families, the County Commission recently decided to change the County's Agent of Record to Cadillac Insurance Company.

The decision came after a Health Insurance Representation subcommittee, made up of employees and elected officials, concluded that the County was not exploring adequate means to address the rising cost of health insurance coverage and recommended the switch.

The subcommittee conducted a lengthy and thorough process that took nearly a year and involved Requests for Qualifications (RFQ), reference checks, and several public interviews.

Cadillac Insurance Company represents nearly half of the counties in Michigan and comes with a great deal of experience and knowledge in the administration of health insurance benefits.

The county hopes the change is the first of many to help control runaway insurance costs, without having a major impact on employee benefits.

In an effort to be more responsive to residents and to allow for more participation in county government, the Newaygo County Board of Commissioners has decided to hold a night meeting. The meeting will be held on Wednesday, May 9, 2007 at 6:30 p.m. in the Administration Building, located at 1087 Newell Street, White Cloud, MI.

Spotlight: Pat Gardner, Physical & Economic Development Chairman



I would like to take this opportunity to thank the voters of Newaygo County for entrusting me to help lead our great county.

While I have only served as a commissioner for seven months, in that time I have familiarized myself with many of the services we provide to the public, learned a lot about the operation of our county, and been fortunate enough to be appointed as the Chair-

man of the Physical and Economic Development Committee.

It is both an exciting and uncertain time to be a public servant in the State of Michigan. On the one hand, many new, exciting changes are taking place that could have positive affects for future generations of Newaygo County residents. On the other, an overall uncertainty is pervasive from the State-down to local units of government-on the prospects of the economy, the delivery of public services, and the tax structure best suited to fund it.

In terms of economic development, our county has been fortunate to weather the storm better than many others. But, our prosperity has not happened by chance. It is the direct result of enterprising, collaborative efforts between both public and non-

profit organizations and private business.

Most recently those efforts have resulted in the creation of the Newaygo County Convention and Visitors Bureau (CVB), a non-governmental entity authorized to assess up to 2% of the cost of a hotel/motel room to be used to promote the County's tourism industry.

With tourism being the County's second largest industry, behind agribusiness, efforts to help Newaygo County compete with other tourist destinations not only make sense, but are essential to the future economic framework of the county.

This economic framework will compliment, rather than compromise, our glorious natural resources for jobs!

Pat Gardner, Commissioner

Welcome Center to Greet County Visitors

As its second largest industry, tourism is a driving force behind Newaygo County's economy, and efforts to increase and enhance tourism opportunities in such a competitive market have resulted in some new collaborations and partnerships.

In the coming months, The Newaygo County Tourist Council (NCTC) will be merging with the newly formed Newaygo County Convention and Visitors Bureau (NCCVB) to provide enhanced visitor services. In addition, Newaygo County, in partnership with the new NCCVB and the Newaygo County Economic Development Office (NCEDO), and with assistance from the Fremont Area Community Foundation, is reinforcing those efforts with the development of a Welcome Center to assist travelers with local information.

The new Welcome Center is located on M-37 mid-way between

Newaygo and White Cloud, at the Newaygo County Sports Park. The county owned facilities have served a variety of uses over the years, from the thrill of iced toboggan runs and a ski hill, to most recently offices for the PRIDE Youth Program.

In preparation for its use as a Welcome Center and the offices for the NCCVB, the Newaygo County Parks and Recreation Department, and NCEDO, county workers, over the winter, painted and renovated the interior of the main office building.

Future plans for the Welcome Center include public computer terminals with internet access, allowing visitors to access lodging and attraction websites; an improved display area for tourism providers; landscaping for the grounds; an exterior kiosk for after hours information; and a new highway sign. Plans are also being developed for a future partnership



between Newaygo County and the Newaygo Community Recreation Authority to renovate the John Graves Lodge at this site.

The new Welcome Center should compliment the Newaygo County tourism industry by providing hard to find information about many local attractions and services. "We have long desired to provide a staffed Welcome Center for Newaygo County visitors and these new partnerships finally allow us to achieve our dream," commented Tourist Council President, Roman Miller.

Welcome Center hours will adjust with the seasons, with week-day hours year round and additional weekend hours during peak seasons.

Pothole Season in Full Swing!

Have you been dodging potholes this spring? Potholes become plentiful during Michigan's annual freeze-thaw cycles. Potholes form when waters flows into cracks, freezes, expands, and then pushes away the roadbed under the asphalt. When temperatures rise, the ice liquefies, leaving an unsupported gap that eventually becomes a pothole due to the weight of traffic.

The best remedy for potholes and crumbling roads is total reconstruction. However, this is also the most expensive solution and transportation funding that fails to keep pace with the increase in cost of maintaining roads and the overall increase of doing business, makes it impractical. Road Commissions, instead, are forced to utilize temporary fixes, such as patch material to fill the holes or only resurfacing the worst sections to preserve roadbeds.

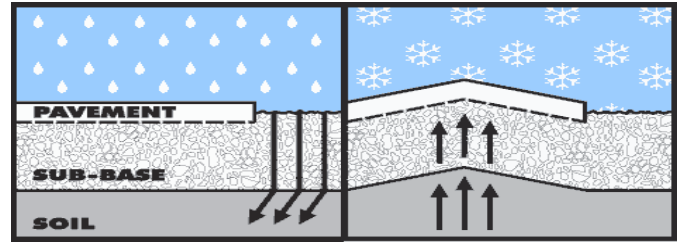
The State Gas Tax is a road commission's main source of funding and with less revenue, the long-term fixes necessary to eliminate or reduce the damaging effects of things like winter thaw, can not be made. Michigan's gas tax is fixed at .19 a gallon and has not seen an increase since 1997. Unfortunately, since there is no built-in inflationary mechanism, today, that amount is worth only about .15.

The good news is that The Michigan Transportation Team has launched a Drive MI Campaign to notify lawmakers of the lack of transportation funding and the risk it poses to drivers in Michigan. Please visit www.drivemi.org for more information on Michigan's transportation network and the Drive MI Campaign.

In the meantime, the Newaygo County Road Commission and its employees will continue to go the extra mile to maintain safe roads for public travel. Our workers constantly patrol for and repair potholes, but we can't be everywhere at once. We appreciate Newaygo County citizens and law enforcement officers alerting us to large, dangerous potholes on County roads. To report potholes on state highways, call the Michigan Department of Transportation (MDOT) at 888-296-4546.

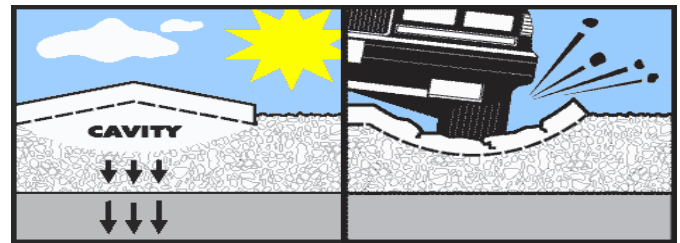
Remember, whenever you see Road Commission workers, please be careful, slow down, and watch for both potholes and the work crews who are out repairing them.

Kristin Luchies, Office Manager
Newaygo County Road Commission



Moisture seeps below surface

Freezing moisture expands



Freezing melts creating cavity

Weight collapses cavity

ATTENTION ALL NEWAYGO COUNTY RESIDENTS HOUSEHOLD HAZARDOUS WASTE COLLECTION

The Newaygo County Board of Public Works has arranged for the **FREE** disposal of your Household Hazardous Waste at the Newaygo County Road Commission Garage on **June 9, 2007**. Household Hazardous Wastes include all toxic materials, pesticides, automotive fluids, oil based paint only, and batteries found in your home or garage. **Appointments are Required** and can be made by calling (231) 689-7225.

Please leave your name and number and someone will return your call to set up your time and document the type of household waste you have.

The cost of this program to the county is approximately \$68 per participant **and all donations are greatly appreciated.**

Hazardous Waste generated by business **WILL NOT** be accepted.

Household Hazardous Waste only, Please.

Trillium Springs Senior Housing Development Opens

Imagine being a senior in Newaygo County. You can no longer maintain your yard or remove the mounds of snow in your driveway. How about managing the stairs in your home? Or the upkeep on a house? What are your options? Where would you go?

These were questions raised by the Newaygo County Department of Human Services Board many years ago when a plan surfaced for Independent Senior Living in Newaygo County.

With the March 22, 2007, Open House for Trillium Springs, and the assistance of the Newaygo County Board of Commissioners and the help of Newaygo County voters, who approved a millage to build Trillium Springs Senior Housing Development, those questions were answered.

Trillium Springs is a 24 unit complex consisting of 18 one-bedroom and 6 two-bedroom units compete with all appliances— including in room washer and dryer. Rent includes all utilities (with the

exception of telephone) and the Life Link system through NCCS, which gives seniors and their families the security of knowing help is close at hand if an emergency arises.

The option of additional services such as housekeeping, laundry, meals and nursing assistance allows seniors to live independently for as long as possible.

If you would like more information about Trillium Springs please call 231-924-2020 and ask for a Trillium representative.

1087 Newell Phone: (231) 689-7200
 P.O. Box 885 Fax: (231) 689-7205
 White Cloud, MI 49349-0885 www.countyofnewaygo.com

The Newaygo County Board of Commissioners

Chairperson	Adam Wright	District 5	(231) 652-1589
Vice-Chair	Stan Nieboer	District 3	(231) 924-0594
Finance Chair	Dan Powell	District 7	(231) 834-0957
Finance Vice-Chair	Julia Bird	District 1	(231) 924-9344
Commissioner	Chuck Trapp	District 2	(231) 689-6260
Commissioner	Bob VanBelzen	District 4	(231) 652-5603
Commissioner	Pat Gardner	District 6	(231) 834-0230

Regular sessions of the Board are held the second and the fourth Wednesday of each month at 9:30 a.m. in the Board of Commissioners Room located in the Administration Building.



The DHS Building is located at 1018 Newell Street and has a maroon roof. Parking is available from the entrance off North Street.

Spotlight on the Department of Human Services Building

The State of Michigan Department of Human Services, formerly the Family Independence Agency, is located on the main level of this building. Circuit Court Probation and Parole, Emergency Services, and 911 Central Dispatch have offices in the lower level. For more information on these offices, visit the county web site www.countyofnewaygo.com.

Department of Human Services

The Department of Human Services operates a broad range of income support and social services programs. Nearly 14% of the County's residents receive some form of income assistance through DHS and almost 19% receive Medicaid health benefits. Total yearly expenditures for the Department in Newaygo County are over \$62 Million dollars with Medicaid accounting for \$41 Million of that total. Day Care Assistance, Medicaid Eligibility, the Food Assistance Program (formerly Food Stamps), Family Independence Program (formerly ADC), State Disability Assistance, State Medical Program and State Emergency Relief are income support programs, while social service programs involve Child Protective Services, Children's Foster Care, Adoption, Juvenile Justice, Foster Home Licensing, Abuse and Neglect Prevention, Adult Protective Services and Adult Home Help/Independent Living Services. Protection programs operate 24 hours a day/7 days a week and can be accessed by calling (231) 689-5575.

911 Central Dispatch

911 Central Dispatch answers all emergency telephone, cellular, and Voice over Internet Protocol (VoIP) calls for service within Newaygo County and dispatches calls to all Police, Fire, and EMS units. 80% of call volume is related to law enforcement while the remainder is divided between fire and EMS. In June 2003, Central Dispatch moved into the lower level of the DHS Building. The new office includes updated equipment that enables dispatchers to locate cell phone callers using Global Positioning Satellites (GPS). The ability to pinpoint the caller's location has already helped several lost hunters and victims of severe car accidents who were unable to give their location. Central Dispatch is supported by a county wide surcharge on wire line telephones and a small monthly fee charged for wireless cell phones. In addition to the 911 lines, Central Dispatch has a non-emergency number. If you need to reach the office, but aren't in an emergency situation, please call (231) 689-5288.

Emergency Services

The Emergency Services Department is responsible for preparing Newaygo County to respond to emergencies both man-made and natural. Capability Assessment Reviews are conducted to analyze existing response plans for strengths and weaknesses and to develop strategic planning for the future. Working with local emergency response agencies such as fire and police departments and first responders, Emergency Services plans practice disaster scenarios that test the effectiveness of response plans as well as interagency coordination and communication. In addition, Emergency Services is also responsible for training local officials in the use of procedures such as the National Incident Management System and working with neighboring counties to determine how Homeland Security grant money is distributed throughout the region.

Circuit Court Probation and Parole

The Michigan Department of Corrections/Newaygo County Probation & Parole Office employs five full time Probation & Parole Agents who provide adult felony supervision. Agents work with parole, supervision of those who have been released from prison; probation, supervision of those who have been convicted but not sent to prison; and tether, supervision using an electronic monitoring device. One agent acts as the Pre-sentence Investigation writer and is responsible for providing Newaygo County's Circuit Court with sentencing information and recommendations for the Judges. In addition to Newaygo County, the office supervisor provides support and is responsible for Mecosta, Osceola and Oceana Counties. Office hours are 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. Monday through Friday. The office telephone number is (231) 689-7250.