

Coldsprings Township News



Issue #8

January 2009

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Mancelona, MI 49659 587-5032
Email: neubie@torchlake.com

Clerk: Mary Hodges
7216 Little Twin Lake Road NE
Mancelona, MI 49659 587-8460

Treasurer: Brenda Lambert
8353 Covert Road NE
Mancelona, MI 49659 (231) 620-5644

Trustee: Dee Bondy
8054 Ford Road NE
Kalkaska, MI 49646 258-5640

Trustee: Denny Corrado
P.O. Box 1441
Kalkaska, MI 49646 258-2519

Assessor: David Grimm
5893 Way Road NW
Rapid City, MI 49676 331-6370

Dist 2
Commissioner: Lou Nemeth
416 Plum Valley Road NW
Alden, MI 49612 331-6365
Email: lnemeth@peoplepc.com



This is the 8th newsletter that I have prepared and distributed since I was elected as Township Supervisor, and includes the 2008 Trash Labels. As I have mentioned in past newsletters, this newsletter may not be totally inclusive of things past and things to come, but it will at least give you an idea of what your elected officials are accomplishing or considering. As usual, all feedback is most certainly welcome and desired.

Mike Neubecker

TAX ASSESSOR

Our tax assessor, Dave Grimm is available the 1st and 3rd Tuesday of each month from 1:00pm to 3:00pm at the township hall. If you would like to call him during those times, please use the number for the hall noted at the top of this page. Further, on days that he is not at the Township Hall, he can be reached via his home phone

number or address which are listed to the left. Normally, if you call his home phone number, you will receive a recorded message. Please leave your name and phone number, and he will return your call as soon as possible. If you are having trouble trying to reach him after a reasonable amount of time, do not hesitate to contact the Township Supervisor or any other member of the Board.

From Your Treasurer:

Office hours at the Township Hall for collection of taxes will be Mondays and Thursdays from 9:00am until 12:00 noon. Tax payments can be made at the Township Hall Office or checks can be made out to "Coldsprings Township" and mailed to:

Brenda Lambert, Treasurer
8353 Covert Road NE
Mancelona, MI 49659

2009 Township Board Meeting Schedule

(All meetings start at 7:00pm at the Township Hall)

Monday, January 12th
Monday, February 9th
Monday, March 9th
Monday, April 13th
Monday, May 11th
Monday, June 8th
Monday, July 13th
Monday, August 10th
Monday, September 14th
Monday, October 12th
Monday, November 9th
Monday, December 14th

Please try to attend at least one meeting each quarter. Your input regarding Township operations is very important to us!

Important Phone Numbers

Sheriff Department:	258-8686
Kalkaska DNR:	258-2711
County Road Commission:	258-2242
Kalkaska Recycle Center:	258-3369
Animal Control:	258-3309
DNR Burning Permits:	1-866-922-2876

TRASH REMOVAL

Again this year we have contracted to have 4 large-item pickups along with our regular trash removal days (Mondays). We have provided 4 labels (numbered 1-4) to each taxpayer with this newsletter. Please remember that **PRIOR** to placing an item out for pickup, it is requested that you contact **AMERICAN WASTE** at the number on the label to advise them of what you are placing out for pickup and where the pickup is located. In some instances, large items may not necessarily be picked up on normal trash day. However, if called prior to our normal pickup day of Monday, large items will be removed within a day or two of our normal pickup day.

If you have more than 4 large items that you need to dispose of, or are "cleaning up" and need to dispose of items in quantity, Kalkaska County operates a trash recycling facility located at the Island Lake Road facility. You can contact the Island Lake Road facility at 258-3369 to find out their operating hours (it varies by season), and what items they will or will not accept.

AMERICAN WASTE DOES NOT pick up trash on any private roads. Residents/property owners on private roads are required to leave their trash for pick-up **no earlier than Sunday afternoon** at the intersection of their private road and the county-maintained road intersecting it. Each township property owner is allowed five 30 gallon bags for pickup each week. On weeks that have a holiday on the regular Monday pick-up day, trash will be picked up on Tuesday instead. Questions concerning missed pickups should first be directed to **AMERICAN WASTE AT 258-9030**. If they are unable to provide you with a satisfactory response, do not hesitate to call one of your township board members at the numbers listed on the first page of this newsletter.

Trash will NOT be collected on Memorial Day (May 26th) or Labor Day (September 1st), but will be collected the day following. Please note on your calendar.

CEVFR

The Coldsprings/Excelsior Volunteer Fire Department Board of Directors meet the first Wednesday of each month at 7:00pm at the Fire Hall located at 6617 Country Road 612 East. The public is invited and encouraged to attend these meetings.

CEVFR is always looking for individuals interested in becoming an active part of Fire and/or Rescue within the joint townships. If you are interested, or know of someone that may be interested in joining the Department, please let us know.

MANISTEE LAKE IMPROVEMENT BOARD

The Manistee Lake Improvement Board has set a Special Assessment District for improvements on the lake. The Board is comprised of: Mike Neubecker, Chairman; Norman LaCroix, Secretary/Treasurer; Normal Groner, Trustee; Lou Nemeth, Trustee (appointed from Kalkaska County Board of Commissioners); and Francis Kelly, Trustee (Kalkaska County Drain Commissioner). They are working hard to address the problems with Eurasian Milfoil Weed and Pond Weed in the lake, along with improving the fisheries. Minutes of the MLIB are included on the Coldsprings Township Web Site.

TOWNSHIP ROAD IMPROVEMENTS

Denny Corrado continues to be the Township's representative to the Kalkaska County Road Commission meetings. We are STILL trying to ensure that our voice is heard at the Road Commission to address the concerns with grading, plowing and improvements of secondary roads throughout the township.

We hope that you, as taxpayers, would make your interests and concerns known to the County Road Commission. Their phone number is (231) 258-2242.

The section of Starvation Lake Road that was ground- up west of Barnhardt Road was resurfaced (finally) this past fall. However, the Road Commission did not pay a single cent for it and the money had to be paid through the Township Improvement Fund. The original invoice was \$246,000, and the township has paid \$200,000 of that amount to-date. We are strongly questioning the remainder the Road Commission billed us for "Rental" of the Road Commission equipment to prepare and complete the job, equipment that was already paid for through taxpayer funds. We're still working on it.

COLDSPRINGS TOWNSHIP WEBSITE

The township has a very active Website which can be found at www.coldspringsexcelsior.org. We are placing the approved minutes of each board meeting on this Website, along with minutes of the Board of Review. This Website can also access Excelsior Township information (under construction), the Coldsprings Excelsior Volunteer Fire and Rescue Department (CEVFR); and the Coldsprings Excelsior Taxpayers Association (CETA).

As always, suggestions for improvement of this Website are welcome, and can be addressed to the Webmaster through the Website, or to the Township Supervisor at the email address noted on page 1 of this newsletter.

Burning Permits

Just a reminder that a permit is required for outside burning. When permitted, only grass, leaves, brush and branches may be burned, and the fire **MUST** be attended. A burning permit (if they are being issued at the time) can be obtained by calling the toll-free number (1-866-922-28876). This is a voice-activated number which will give instructions about what can and cannot be burned, and then connect you to a person who will take your information and issue a burn permit number. The permit is only good for the day that you call.

ELECTIONS

All elections (Including school elections) for registered voters living in Coldsprings Township are held at the Coldsprings Township Hall, 6515 County Road 571.

Kalkaska Public Schools will be holding an election on February 24, 2008, requesting a renewal of the 18 mills operating millage on non-resident properties.

Anyone that would like an absentee ballot for any election can contact Mary Hodges, Township Clerk, at 587-8460 or 587-8633.

WHAT IS "PROPOSAL A" AND HOW DOES IT IMPACT ME? (Courtesy of the Michigan Township Association)

The failing economy and the crash of the real estate market that Michigan is experiencing has led many homeowners to take a second look at their property tax bills. Residents can't help but wonder how Michigan's tax system works.

Proposal A was added to the Michigan Constitution in 1994 by a vote of the people to address how property taxes are determined. Prior to the enactment of the Proposal A, the state constitution required that every property owner pay property taxes based on the fair market value of their property. While the system insured that everyone would pay their fair share, it could be very punishing to the individual taxpayer. Whenever housing markets escalated quickly, it was not unusual for some homeowners in the community to see their tax bill jump by 20 percent or more in one year.

SIGNIFICANT CHANGES TO THE PROPERTY TAX SYSTEM

When Proposal A was approved, it contained two significant changes to the property tax system: The first was to significantly cut school property taxes and the second was a provision that significantly limited how quickly individual property tax bills could increase from year to year. Proposal A stated that the value of property used to calculate property taxes could not increase each year by more than the increase in inflation, or 5 percent, whichever is less, until the ownership of the property changes.

Property owners have seen the benefit from this valuation cap for years. Each year every property owner receives a statement from the township that indicates the property's State Equalized Value. This amount represents 50 percent of the current value of the property. The value is determined by the township's assessor, who is required to follow procedures established and monitored by the state. However, the more important number is the Taxable Value, which is the amount used to actually calculate property taxes. Any difference between the State Equalized Value and Taxable Value shows how Proposal A has limited your property taxes.

INEQUITY IN THE SYSTEM

While Proposal A protected individual property owners, it has created inequities. When a house is sold, the new owner must pay taxes on the full value of the property, with the same cap on future assessment increases. This means a person who has owned the same home for the last 14 years is likely paying much less in property taxes than their neighbor who just moved in three years ago, even though both homes may be identical.

The newest fairness issue has been exposed with the falling housing market. Our state law that (Continued on the back page).....

Coldsprings Township
Mike Neubecker, Supervisor
7860 Twin Lake Road NE
Mancelona, MI 49659-8831

-First Class Mail-

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implements Proposal A directs that the Taxable Value must increase by the rate of inflation any time the Taxable Value on a piece of property is less than its State Equalized Value. This occurs even if the value of the property is decreasing. This continues until the State Equalized Value and Taxable Value are equal, at which point any further decline results in real property tax reductions. This leads to the question asked by many: "Why did my property taxes go up when the value of my home just went down? "

As administrators of the property tax system, the township can only point to the constitution and the decision made in 1994 by the residents of this state that a predictable property tax assessment was more important than an equitable assessment.

The economy is hitting everyone. Some property owners—generally those who have owned their homes for years—are seeing increases in their property tax bills and many are

seeing real declines. Local governments also feel the strain and have been struggling for years to maintain services due to declining funding from the state. The expected decline in property tax collections—our most important revenue source—simply means we must also do more with less, just like our residents are doing. It doesn't diminish our responsibility to maintain a community that is a great place to live, work and raise our children. We intend to continue to do what we can to provide you with the services that you expect in a cost-efficient way.

