



Charter Township of Van Buren

Lake Ledger

Ladies Christmas Tea

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Clara Blackard's Red Hat Table (guests include Emma Emerson, Muriel Bobo, and Arillian Bennett)



Gifts collected for Girlstown Foundation

September Days Senior Center started off the holiday season with the spirit of giving. The Center hosted a Ladies Christmas Tea on Thursday, December 2 to collect gifts for the Girlstown Foundation. Girlstown is committed to strengthening and preserving the emotional health of youth, their families, and the community. Their goals are to provide services with dignity, respect, and to assist their clients to achieve their full potential, without discrimination.

Volunteer hostesses decorated elegant tables that set the tone for this special evening. They brought in their finest china and flatware, linens and goblets, and ornaments to hang on the Christmas tree. Nineteen unique tables were created with themes including the Nativity, Winter Wonderland, and the rich purples and reds of the Red Hat Society.

LADIES CHRISTMAS TEA

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LADIES CHRISTMAS TEA

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The Christmas program began with a welcome by Janet Moran. Elaine Carter, Director of Funds Development, shared the history and mission of Girlstown and how the gifts will be used to help the girls start a new life. Program highlights also included stories from Linda Luke and dancers from Jan's School of Dance. Thanks to the hostesses, an elaborate dessert buffet was enjoyed by all. The evening came to a close with a time of singing. Bernice Raymond played the piano as the ladies sang their favorite carols.



Agnes Cook's table (guests include Flo Britt, Judy Quinn, Linda LeBlanc, and Claire Hein)

Over 100 guests gathered to enjoy a lovely time with friends and family, and also to show support for our community through Girlstown. Guests who attended this event were asked to simply purchase a gift from the Girlstown wish list, and by the end of the night it appeared that Santa had made an early stop at the center.

Special thanks to Janet Moran for bringing this great event to September days and sharing her creative talents with us as well as her compassion for those in need. Thank you also to the hostesses who prepared a beautiful evening for all of us to enjoy: Dorothy Bailey, Clara Blackard, Kelly Burd, Agnes Cook, Anna Haentzens, Penny Hill, Bridget Holt, Vera Ireland, Pat Kasenow, Janet Miller, Barb Mitchell, Suzanne Mominee, Janet Moran, Anne Peterson, Phyllis Queener, Lenore Razo, Lee Robson, Carol Shell, Caroline Sosa, Margaret Thompson, Susan Wisnewski, and Helen Wylie.

It looks like the Christmas Tea will become tradition at September Days. We hope you'll join us next year.

Sarah Scherdt
Senior Coordinator

SUPERVISOR'S OFFICE

As I look back on 2004, I am amazed by all that's taken place this past year. Not only was 2004 a remarkable year for all of us living in Van Buren, but it has also been an incredible year for the region, state and nation. Without a doubt, Election Year 2004 and the war in Iraq will be noted by many a historian as watershed moments. In Van Buren, we, too, have much that will be remembered as defining moments in our history.

Certainly, the opening of the Visteon headquarters will be recounted as a significant moment in Van Buren's transition to a more urban community. For many of us, we will think back on Ecorse Road and its reconstruction with some heartache and hopefully, a few laughs (as some ladies who attended the November BPW Fashion Show may recall driving on an incomplete part of the roadway!). Will you remember that 2004 was the year Walgreen's opened for business and Tim Horton's started providing hot coffee and doughnuts for that morning drive to work? I am sure none of us will ever forget the devastating fire that consumed Yankee Air Museum, a cherished community treasure.

Yes, as usual, much continues to occur in our township. These past three months have been no different. During this time, much of my focus has been on finding a suitable individual to lead the Department of Public Safety. The process has been quite different from our last search for a director. After conducting a six-month evaluation of the operations of the department and utilizing the expertise of consultants Bill Kelly and Tom Stone, we commenced searching for a leader to take over the director's position. After advertising the position on our website, in the *Detroit News/Free Press* and with several professional organizations, we received 64 resumes from interested individuals. Consultants Kelly and Stone interviewed 23 people who met our minimum qualifications and selected eight for additional evaluation. Mr. Kelly and Mr. Stone conducted extensive interviewing with each of these eight candidates being subjected to a three-hour interview. I attended all eight interviews, participating as an observer, and evaluating along with Kelly and Stone a list of finalists to recommend to the Board. We arrived at two individuals we could recommend to the Township Board for further consideration.

On September 30, the Board interviewed the two finalists. These interviews, broadcast live on VBTv 12 were open to the public and included questioning by not only the Board, but also questions being posed by members of the Public Safety Committee and the audience. At the Board's December 7, 2004 meeting, they chose Mr. Gerald Champagne, currently the Deputy Police Chief of the Romulus Police Department, as the individual with whom to enter into employment contract negotiations to serve as our new Director of Public Safety. As I write, negotiations are just beginning, but it is my objective to have a personal services contract to the Board in the near future.

From the start, the Board and I have shared an objective of ensuring the Department of Public Safety operates at a continued high level of effective service with a competent leader at the helm. That is one reason we undertook an evaluation of the department. Knowing the director's position has been vacant for some time, like you, we look forward to filling it and getting started on setting a vision for the department that will reflect the community's needs and wants and is one of sound, cost effective, high quality public safety service.

For the past few months, work has continued in designing a new Fire Station #2 to be located on the east side of Belleville Road, just south of Ecorse. Working with CDP Associates, members of the fire department and a subcommittee of the DDA have worked on design plans with a number of revisions taking place. We share a goal of creating a facility that will service the community for several years. Another objective is a facility whose design and construction reflect what we expect of new buildings being erected in Van Buren. The township will follow those design and construction standards imposed upon others who build in the community with the site plans being processed through the township's Department of Developmental Services and the Planning Commission. Current plans call for a four-bay, two-story station with space for public use such as voting and community meetings. The building will also include adequate space for equipment storage, housing headquarters and training needs.

The Fire Department continues with its operations plan in which two paid-call (volunteer) fire fighters are scheduled 20 hours per day, in two 10-hour shifts, at Fire Station #2. This change, that requires a significant financial investment, is one method we are using to improve upon response times. Reducing the time it takes to reach you when you call the fire department is but one way we are improving service for you. The township also recently took possession of two new engine trucks with one assigned to each station. This new apparatus, at a cost of about \$1 million, improves upon older apparatus that had been used for several years. These engine trucks have been designed to incorporate the latest fire safety technologies and are customized for the types of calls for service that we experience in Van Buren Township.

Are you aware that Van Buren Township's paid-call fire fighters also have full-time jobs? Yes, these men and women work full-time jobs and helped develop the operations plan that results in their being scheduled for 10-hour shifts at a maximum of 30 hours per week in the Fire Department. In many cases, our fire fighters realize 70-hour workweeks between their full-time and "volunteer" jobs. While it is true these fire fighters are paid for the shifts they work in Van Buren as well as the runs they respond too outside of their fire shifts, their dedication to the community is nevertheless noteworthy. In speaking with some of the officers in the fire

department, I learned that often they will communicate with each other their social activities to make sure someone is available, in addition to the scheduled fire fighters, should the alarm sound. This is in addition to working assigned shifts in the department (and their full-time employment obligations)! I, for one, am very impressed with people who give so unselfishly to make sure we are safe.

You may have noticed a new pole barn near the sled hill at Van Buren Park. Using Landfill Fund monies, the Board approved constructing this storage and maintenance facility to replace a pole barn that the township received in a "used" condition over 10 years ago. The Van Buren Recreation Department was also instrumental in the township receiving its third consecutive Governor's Council on Physical Fitness Award. This award, a Level 4 award, "demonstrates outstanding efforts at improving upon physical fitness" in the community and is something for which the community can be proud.

2004 also saw the formation of an Open Space Committee, a committee of residents who purpose is to evaluate and make recommendations to the Board with regard to preserving open space or using other development tools such as the purchase of development rights in order to maintain land in a natural, or "open" state. Addressing this topic is not easy and the committee has its work cut out for them. As with all of the township's commissions and committees, the meetings of the Open Space Committee are open to the public. They meet at 7:00 p.m. on the fourth Thursday of each month.

Yes, 2004 has been a busy year for Van Buren Township. The township remains a great place in which to live, work and raise a family. You are one of our greatest assets. My best wishes for a 2005 that is healthy and prosperous, and may you find time for those most important to you.

Cindy C. King
Township Supervisor

Mother/Son Rock N' Bowl Night

Friday, May 13 7:00 p.m. - 9:00 p.m.

Meet at Lodge Lanes, 46255 S. I-94 Service Drive

Eat pizza, bowl, and have a rockin' time.
Grandmothers, aunts and big sisters welcome.
Please register early, **SPACE IS LIMITED!**

**Prepayment with advance
registration is required.**

Van Buren Residents = \$15 per couple
Non-Residents = \$20 per couple
\$5 for each additional child



**Pre-Marshmallow Drop
Pancake Breakfast**



Saturday, March 19
8:00 a.m. - 9:45 a.m.



Held at the Community Center,
46425 Tyler Road

Join us before the Marshmallow Drop for pancakes, sausage, assorted breakfast pastries, coffee and juice. Tickets will be available in advance.

\$5 for adult
\$5 for child (includes admission to Marshmallow Drop)



Marshmallow Drop

Saturday, March 19
Rain Date: Sunday, March 20

Located at the Softball Field,
46425 Tyler Road

You have got to see it to believe it. Watch as thousands of marshmallows are dropped from a helicopter. Children will turn in at least one marshmallow for a prize. There is no grand prize, only one marshmallow needed to receive a prize.

The First Drop will be at 10:00 a.m. Children will be divided into age groups: 4 & under, 5-7 years old, 8-10 years old.



\$2 per child

CLERK'S OFFICE

Greetings and Happy New Year from the Clerk's Office. On behalf of everyone in the Clerk's Office I want to extend a heartfelt "well done" to each and every person in our community who took the time to be a part of the electoral process by voting in the General Election. 2004 proved to be an extremely busy year in the election business and as we move forward with further implementation of the Help America Vote Act commonly referred to as HAVA we will see many changes. A couple of changes include upgrading election equipment and software to assist disabled voters and polling location accessibility. Election consolidation is another facet of the voting process which changes when elections may be scheduled and how often. It also affects how school elections will be handled and by whom. Our first meeting with Wayne County and the State of Michigan Election Bureau took place on December 10th. Follow up information will be provided as it becomes available.

A reminder that Van Buren Township's website www.vanburen-mi.org has been polling visitors on a number of topics related to living in Van Buren. I believe it is an informative and useful tool for those of you searching the web for information on local government. E-mail addresses are provided for many of the employees at the township. Drop us a note and tell us what you think of the site, ways to improve it, suggestions for additional information and links, etc.

The Clerk's Office has employees who serve as notary publics. We can notarize documents for you during regular business hours - 8:00 a.m. - 5:00 p.m., Monday through Friday. There is no charge for this service.

Finally, I want to introduce our newest staff member Joanne Montgomery as our Account Clerk for elections. Joanne joins us from the private sector and has been a great addition to our department.

Joannie D. Payne, CMC
Township Clerk

DATES TO REMEMBER:

- Monday, Jan. 17** Administrative offices closed in observance of Martin Luther King, Jr. day.
- Monday, Feb. 21** Administrative offices closed in observance of Presidents Day.
- Friday, March 25** Administrative offices closed in observance of Good Friday.

TREASURER'S OFFICE

The Winter Tax bills are out and the Township has extended the collection due date until February 28, 2005 without penalty. Your payment must be in the Treasurer's Office by February 28, 2005. By law, the township cannot accept payments of property taxes after March 1, 2005. Postmarks are not accepted and will be returned to you.

Just another reminder that if you have re-mortgaged or purchased a home, you need to notify my office so our records reflect the proper data for your taxes. We need you to keep us updated regarding what mortgage company the bills get sent to and if any change has occurred as to where you want the tax bill sent. We want you to help us keep your tax records correct.

The 2004 Winter Tax Bill reflects the millages levied by the different entities that the Van Buren Township Treasurer's office is responsible for collecting. The following is an example of the 2004 winter millage rates used to calculate the taxes due, based on a property with a taxable value of \$51,800. One "mill" is equal to \$1.00 of property taxes for each \$1,000 of taxable value. Therefore, the calculation to compute the taxes is as follows:

- a) Divide the taxable value by 1,000 (\$51,800 taxable value/1,000 = 51.8)
- b) 51.8 x each millage rate equals the tax due.

Taxing Authority	Millage	Taxes
Wayne County	6.63800	\$343.84
Wayne County Jail	0.93810	48.59
Wayne County Parks	0.24590	12.74
Wayne County Community College	2.48440	128.69
Huron Clinton Metro Park Authority	0.21540	11.16
Van Buren Township Operations	0.92020	47.67
Water/Sewer Debt	5.59060	289.59
Public Safety Operations	2.98620	154.69
Subtotal	20.0188	\$1,036.97
Administration Fee (1% of subtotal)		10.37
Total Due		\$1,047.34

Winter has arrived and we've all gotten busy with the holidays. I would like to wish you all a good new year and hope your holidays with family and friends are all you want them to be.

Remember my staff and I are always here to assist. If you have any questions, call my office at (734) 699-8903.

Sharry A. Budd, CPFA
Township Treasurer

WINTER SAFETY TIPS FOR MOTORISTS

Have your vehicle's battery inspected and replaced if necessary. Batteries do not like cold temperatures and are prone to fail at extreme cold temperatures.

Have your vehicle tuned up for winter. Have the belts, hoses and fluid levels inspected and the proper fluids added ensuring that the anti-freeze mixture is correct.

Inspect your tires. Make sure that they have adequate tread depth and inspect them for uneven wear. Check the tire pressure monthly and follow manufacturers' recommendations for proper cold weather tire pressure.

Inspect your wiper blades and replace if necessary and check your windshield washer reservoir to ensure that there are no leaks. Keep a spare jug of windshield washer solvent in the vehicle. Also have a good ice scraper and brush in your vehicle to remove snow and ice.

Use cold resistant lubricants on your locks and avoid washing your vehicle in sub zero temperatures. If your locks freeze, try heating the key with a lighter and inserting it into the lock. Be careful not to burn yourself and use thick gloves or pliers to hold the key while heating it.

Do not let your fuel tank fall below half a tank. This will help prevent moisture from entering the fuel lines and will help prevent them from freezing.

Keep an emergency kit in your vehicle. This should include spare cold weather clothing, i.e. boots, hat, gloves, coat, etc., blanket, shovel, first aid kit, flares, flashlight, jumper cables and food. Keep some rock salt, sand or cat litter in your trunk in the event you need it for traction. Lastly make sure you have your cell phone car charger with you in the car at all times along with your cell phone. If you are stranded in a remote area, stay with your vehicle.

Reduce your speed and give yourself a few extra car lengths distance from the vehicle traveling in front of you. This should allow for adequate reaction time for stopping.

The most important winter safety tip is to give yourself enough time to get where you need to go. Check the weather forecast and plan accordingly.

Patrol Officer Charles Bazzy
Van Buren Public Safety

TIPS FOR PERSONAL SAFETY DURING THE HOLIDAY SEASON AND THROUGHOUT THE YEAR

The holiday season is prime time for perpetrators to prey on the public. It is imperative that we become more aware of our surroundings and have the necessary tools to prevent becoming a victim. Being victimized can leave a lasting effect on oneself and can even become debilitating depending on the seriousness of the situation. The following are some common sense tips that can aid you in increasing your awareness level and will assist you from becoming a victim.

Driving a vehicle:

1. Keep a minimum of a half tank of gas in your vehicle.
2. Keep all valuables locked in your trunk and out of sight.
3. Always know where you're going and be knowledgeable of your surroundings.
4. During the night park in well lit areas.
5. Have your keys in your hand ready to go.
6. Always lock your vehicle.
7. If you feel you're being followed get to the nearest populated place. **Never, ever doubt** your intuition, if you feel something's wrong, it usually is.

Shopping/Parking lots:

1. Never leave your purse sitting in your shopping cart. (Believe it or not people do it all the time, and they wonder why it is stolen.)
2. Do not advertise your valuables.
3. Stay in well lit places, avoid dark alleys.
4. Be aware of your surroundings (Sound familiar?)
5. Keep a secure grip on your purse and bags and make sure all zippers are zipped, etc.
6. Pay attention to people just hanging around in parking lots.

Atm/Banking:

1. Use caution when using the ATM.
2. Do not let your pin number be easily accessible, in other words do not have it written down in your purse/wallet, memorize it.
3. Carry the least amount of cash and few credit cards with you.
4. Do not keep your "entire life" in your wallet or purse.

Far too often, over time, we become desensitized to our surroundings. Normal daily activities become very predictable. We cannot walk around with our heads in the clouds and have no idea what is going on around us. This makes a

FIRE DEPARTMENT UPDATES

Van Buren's fire fighters are quite excited about the two new fire stations planned for our community. With a great deal of cooperative effort, the Township's Board of Trustees and the Downtown Development Authority (DDA) have begun the process of making these two new facilities a reality. The architectural firm, CDPA, has already begun to design buildings that are functionally appropriate and aesthetically pleasing.



Van Buren Fire Department's 2 new fire engines

The two new fire engines bought by the Township this past summer have completed their "shakedown" periods and are now fully functional as part of our fleet. They have already played important roles in protecting lives and property in Van Buren.

If you've driven near the intersection of Sumpter and Hull Roads lately, you've probably noticed a shiny new radio tower on the Northeast corner. This 93 ft. structure is part of some important radio enhancements for the Department of Public Safety. Van Buren's fire fighters and police officers will have much better radio communications when the tower goes on-line in early 2005.

The members of the Van Buren Fire Department wish all our neighbors a safe and prosperous New Year!

Allen Smolen
Fire Chief

TIPS FOR PERSONAL SAFETY

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BE SAFE, WHILE ENJOYING YOUR FIREPLACE

When the weather begins to turn chilly, there's nothing quite as cozy and warm as a crackling fire in the fireplace. It is very relaxing to sit near the fireplace and watch the flames dance around and feel the radiant heat. However, your relaxing evening could turn into your worst nightmare if you do not follow important safety tips before lighting a fire in your home.

More than 6,000 people end up in emergency rooms for injuries associated with fireplaces and fireplace equipment. A majority of the injuries occurred with children under five years of age.



Most fires escalate beyond the fireplace because of an overloaded fire, damage to the fireplace such as missing bricks, obstructed flues, ignition of nearby combustibles, and flying sparks. Fireplace related fires that extend beyond the fireplace could cause hundreds of thousands of dollars in damage if they are not properly used and maintained.

If you have recently purchased a home, it is important to have your fireplace and chimney inspected. A defective or deteriorating firebox and chimney can be hazardous to the structure of your home, as well as to your family. It is also wise to install a carbon monoxide detector in your home. A fireplace that is not operating correctly can produce toxic gas. Be aware that the suggestions below are not intended to replace an inspection by a qualified inspector.

Be prepared by beginning to think about fireplace safety BEFORE you start using wood heat in the cold months. Common sense tells us it is easier to do maintenance work in warmer weather and chimney cleaning services can be less busy and, in some cases, less costly earlier in the season.



Fireplace safety checklist:

- It is highly recommended to have your chimney inspected by a qualified professional before each heating season and have it cleaned if necessary.
- Use a metal screen or door in front of fireplaces and wood burning stoves to keep sparks and ashes from contacting the floor or furniture.
- Keep fires small. Ash buildup in the chimney can ignite with excessive heat caused by larger fires.
- Open a window 1"-2" when burning a fire. Good ventilation can provide adequate outside air for combustion and will minimize backventing. Backventing is caused by lack of adequate air that

leads to excessive carbon monoxide in your home and could result in carbon monoxide poisoning.

- Keep at least three (3) feet of clearance around stoves and fireplaces. This will let air circulate and keep furniture and flammable items away from the heat source.
- Store ashes in a covered metal container at least ten feet away from the house. Let them sit for a week or more before disposing of ashes in the garbage.
- Don't burn paper or pine boughs in the fireplace. They can float out the chimney and cause fires on the roof or beyond.
- Never use flammable liquids in wood burning stoves or fireplaces.
- Never burn charcoal indoors.
- Store firewood at least ten feet from the side of the house or garage.
- Chimneys should be free of cracks and loose bricks.
- All unused flue openings should be sealed with solid masonry.
- Inspect your walls and ceilings near the chimney line. If the wall is hot or discolored, immediately stop using the fireplace and have it inspected/repaired by a qualified professional.

Keep your relaxing evening near the fireplace an enjoyable experience. Be safe and keep warm throughout the winter months.

Ron Folks, Battalion Chief
Van Buren Township

Fire Department Mission Statement

The mission of the Van Buren Fire Department is the protection of life and property from the adverse effects of fires, medical emergencies or exposure to dangerous conditions through fire suppression, rescue, disaster preparedness, fire prevention and community education.

The members of this Department, working together, will provide a professional and caring environment that is fair, honest, ethical, and that treats all individuals with respect and dignity.

RADON AWARENESS IN VAN BUREN TOWNSHIP

"Indoor radon gas is a national health problem. Radon causes thousands of deaths each year. Millions of homes have elevated radon levels. Most homes should be tested for radon. When elevated levels are confirmed, the problem should be corrected."

-Surgeon General of the United States Health Advisory

What is Radon?

Radon is a naturally occurring radioactive gas that occurs in soils containing uranium, granite, shale, phosphate, and pitchblende. It is colorless, odorless, tasteless and chemically inert.



Where does Radon come from?

Soil, rock and water containing Uranium are the primary sources of Radon. The Earth's crust typically contains between 1 and 3 parts per million (ppm) of Uranium. (1) Soils and rocks with over 3 ppm Uranium are considered potential sources of Radon. Uranium, a natural radioactive element decays at a specific rate (extending over billions of years), releasing Radon as a by-product.

(1) Geology of Radon, U.S. Geological Survey, <http://energy.cr.usgs.gov/radon/georadon/3.html>

Effects of Radon

Radon is the second leading cause of Lung Cancer in the United States. Radon, due to its radioactive nature, breaks down to release an energy laden radioactive element called Polonium. This element present in the air upon breathing in is deposited in our lungs. It alters the DNA structure hurting the lung tissues, thus causing cancer.

The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency's most recent health risk assessment estimates that 21,000 lung cancer deaths each year are due to Radon.

Sources of Radon

The primary sources of Radon are:

- Soil and rocks beneath homes
- Well water
- Building materials

Water born Radon and Radon emitted from building materials are not significant reasons for concern as compared to Radon from soil. Radon from soil and rocks is the main cause of most health problems.

How does Radon enter a home?

Radon being a gas drifts upwards towards the earth's surface. It enters the lowest levels of a house using any available pathway. For structures with basements or slab-on-ground foundations, the entry points include:

- Cracks and pores in floor slabs, walls, and floor-wall joints;
- Openings around sump pumps, floor drains, and pipes penetrating floors and walls.

Air pressure inside your home is usually lower than air pressure in the soil around your home's foundation. Because of this difference in pressure, your house acts like a vacuum; drawing Radon in through foundation cracks and other openings. This effect is amplified during the winter months when the building is closed up.

It has been observed in numerous studies that Radon levels in the living areas of the houses are about 1.6 times higher in the winter than in summer.

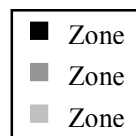
Radon Levels

Radioactivity is commonly measured in picocuries (pCi). The average indoor Radon level is estimated to be about 1.3 pCi/L and about 0.4 pCi/L of Radon is normally found in the outside air. The U.S. Congress has set a long-term goal that indoor Radon levels be no more than outdoor levels.

Is Radon a concern in Van Buren Township?

In 1988, the U.S. EPA and U.S. Geological Survey evaluated Radon potential in U.S. states and counties. The map developed assigned to each of the 3,141 counties in the US one of three zones based on the Radon potential:

- Zone 1: Highest Potential (>4 pCi/L)
- Zone 2: Moderate Potential (from 2 to 4 pCi/L)
- Zone 3: Low Potential (<2 pCi/L)



Wayne: Zone 3
Monroe: Zone 2
Oakland: Zone 2
Washtenaw: Zone 1

Wayne County has been designated a Zone 3, low potential. However, it is estimated that 10% of homes in Wayne County will have screening levels greater than 4 pCi/L while 40-50% homes in Washtenaw County will exceed this level. A report by the Michigan Public Health Institute estimated that more than 600 new lung cancer cases in one year in Michigan would be attributable to Radon.

In 1987-88, the Michigan Department of Public Health and U.S. EPA initiated a statewide residential indoor Radon survey. The survey found that approximately 12 percent of the homes in Michigan (that's 1 in 8 Michigan homes) would have Radon-screening levels greater than 4 pCi/L.

What steps do Van Buren Residents need to take?

Homes with elevated levels of Radon have been found in all three zones. The truth is, any home could have a Radon problem. Clearly, the amount of Radon in a house is affected by factors in addition to the presence of uranium in the underlying soil. The way a house is built can increase the risk - so even in areas of low Radon potential, some houses can have unhealthy Radon levels.

Radon is a tasteless, odorless and colorless gas, there are no physical signs or warning symptoms to let you know you are being exposed to Radon in your homes.

The only way to know whether your home has a problem - or whether you are at risk - is to test!

Test Kits and Test Results

Luckily, testing for Radon is simple and fairly inexpensive. If elevated levels are found, applying some Radon reduction techniques can reduce Radon levels.

While your neighbor's test results may provide some indication of the potential for a problem in your home, Radon levels can vary significantly from lot to lot and home to home. Don't rely on your neighbor's test results to determine your risk. **Test your own home and be certain!**

Test kits are available at:

Wayne County Health Department
5454 S. Venoy Road
Wayne, MI 48184
(734) 727-7400

Homes with Elevated Levels

If your test results show elevated levels of Radon, there are several Radon reduction techniques that can be utilized. The most common techniques involve sealing cracks and installing simple venting systems to release Radon gas. Additional research will be required to determine what techniques apply to your home.

For more information call:

Wayne County Health Department
 (734) 727-7400

OR

Michigan Department of Environmental Quality Indoor Radon program at 1-800-RADON GAS/1-800-732-6642

OR

Van Buren Township Environmental Department
 (734) 699-8913

Dan Swallow
 Environmental Director

IMPORTANT ITEMS TO STORE IN CASE OF AN EMERGENCY:

Basic Supplies: There are seven basics you should stock in your home for times of emergency. Water, food, first aid supplies, clothing, bedding, battery powered radio, and battery powered flashlight (include some extra fresh batteries).

Water: Store one gallon of water per person per day. Keep at least a three day supply of water for each person in your household. (Remember to include pets.)

Food: Store at least a three day supply of non-perishable food. Select foods that do not require refrigeration or cooking. If any food requires warming, several cans of Sterno should also be stored.

First Aid: Assemble first aid kits for your home and cars. Excellent kits are commercially available. Don't forget to include any prescriptions or special medications needed.

Clothing and Bedding: Include at least one complete change of clothing (with footwear) per person plus blankets, sleeping bags, thermal clothing and rain gear.

Sanitation: Toilet paper, towelettes, feminine supplies, personal hygiene items, plastic garbage bags, disinfectant, and plastic bucket with tight-fitting lid.

Van Buren Emergency Management

NOTICE OF WATER & SEWER RATE INCREASE EFFECTIVE JANUARY 1, 2005

User fees, rates, and interest earnings are the sources of operating revenues for Water Departments. Federal and State regulations require that these sources of revenue cover the cost of operation, maintenance and replacement. Although we have a voted 6-mill water and sewer tax levy, the use of the tax revenue has been restricted to debt service, construction, and infrastructure system rehabilitation and improvements. It has not been used for our operating expenses.

As you may know, water and sewer rates from the Detroit Water & Sewerage Department have increased annually every year. The water rate charged by Detroit Water & Sewerage Department to the Van Buren Water Department has increased from \$4.87 per 1,000 cubic feet (\$0.65 per 1,000 gallons) in 1992 to \$13.08 per 1,000 cubic feet (\$1.75 per 1,000 gallons) estimated rate for 2005, a **169% increase**. Van Buren's water rate is currently \$1.65 per 1,000 gallons. Our sewerage disposal costs have increased from \$492,189 in 1992 to \$1,400,800 estimated for 2005, a **185% increase**. Our current rate to customers for sewage disposal is \$1.50 per 1,000 gallons.

The Detroit Water & Sewerage Department conducts an annual water and sewer rate survey of all of its customers. The rate survey compares the wholesales rates Detroit charges to the municipality for water and sewer with the rates charged to retail customers by each municipality (including flat rate charges such as meter charges and sewer maintenance) and calculates the difference in dollar amounts and percentages. These differences reflect the local municipalities' "markup" over Detroit Water & Sewerage Department costs. The "markup" is actually the rates the local municipalities charge for the costs of operation, maintenance, replacement, and in some cases, debt service (financing of local system construction and improvements) for their local water distribution and sewer collection systems. Of the 120+ customers of the Detroit Water & Sewerage Department, Van Buren Township ranked fourth lowest in January 2004 in the percentage of "markup" or rates above the wholesale rates charged by Detroit. (A copy of the rate survey is available on our website at www.vanburen-mi.org under the Water Department information, or can be mailed to you by request.) This extremely low "markup" does not provide adequate funding for our costs of operating the water and sewer system.

IMPORTANT INFORMATION REGARDING SEWER BACKUPS OR BASEMENT FLOODING CLAIMS

Michigan statute, Act 222 Public Acts of 2001*, clarifies municipal liability for sewer backups. A key provision of the statute requires that a person seeking compensation for property damage or physical injury must file a written claim within 45 days of the event.

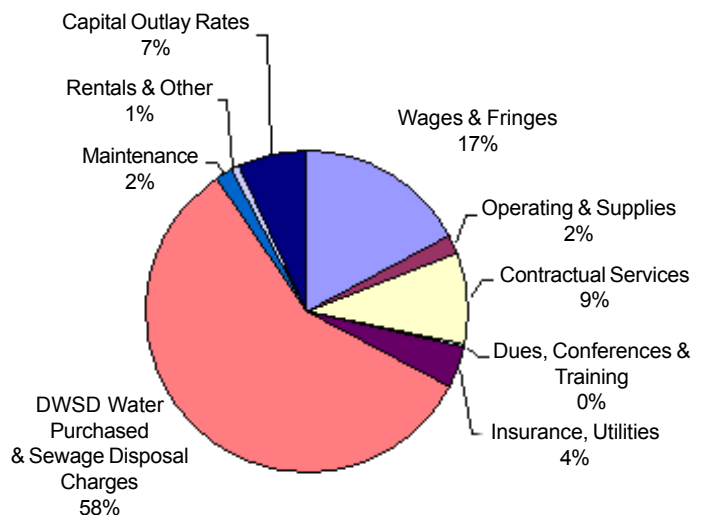
If you experience an overflow or backup of a sewage disposal system or storm water system, you must file a written claim with the Van Buren Township Water Department within 45 days after the overflow or backup was discovered. Notice must be mailed to Van Buren Township Water Department, 46425 Tyler Road, Van Buren, MI 48111. Failure to provide the required notice will prevent recovery of damages.

Contact the Van Buren Water Department at (734) 699-8925 immediately upon discovery of an overflow or backup. Like you, the Water Department considers a sewer backup or basement flooding an emergency, and will respond to your call day or night, holidays and weekends.

* The full text of P.A. 222 of 2001 is available on our website: www.vanburen-mi.org under Departments, Water & Sewer or copies are available upon request by calling (734) 699-8925.

Below is a chart showing the Water Department's estimated operation and maintenance expenses for 2005. The chart excludes costs such as debt service, system improvement capital outlay and depreciation that are not paid from rates. The primary costs over which we have direct control are wages and fringes. As you can see from the chart, those expenses are only 17% of the total.

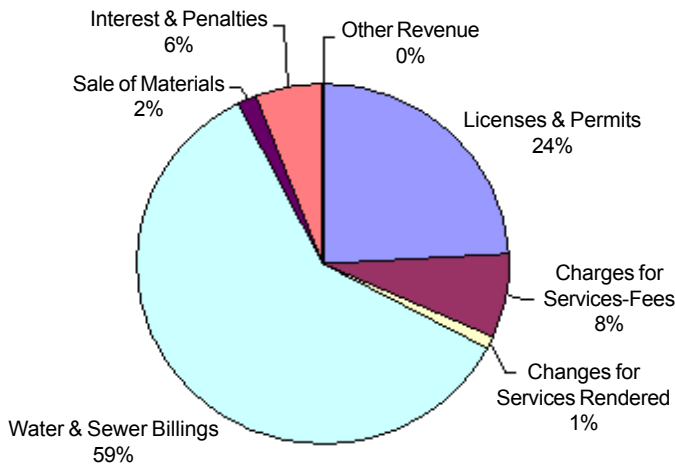
2005 Total Budgeted O & M Expenditures Excludes Debt, System Improvements-Funded by Tax Levy & Depreciation



It is clear that we cannot continue to sell services for less than they cost. Until May of 2003, rates charged to Van Buren Water Department customers had not been increased since 1992. Nor had rates been adjusted since 1992 for increased Van Buren Water Department costs for operation and maintenance of the water distribution system and the sanitary sewer collection system. Because we had not raised rates, our operating cash was being depleted.

Below is a chart of our projected revenues for 2005. As you can see, water and sewer billings currently provide only 59% of our annual operating revenue. Water and sewer billings to customers should provide approximately 90% of revenues.

**2005 Revenues
Excludes Taxes**



As our customers were advised in previous mailings regarding rates, the Water & Sewer Commission has determined that to raise rates all at once to catch up to costs would cause hardship for our customers. Therefore the Commission has recommended gradually increasing rates over several years. The Commission recommended and the Township Board has approved the Commission recommendation to increase rates effective January 1, 2005 from \$1.65 to \$1.97 per 1,000 gallons for water consumption and from \$1.50 to \$1.64 for sewage disposal.

Below is the impact on an average residential customer with a 1" meter, using 7,500 gallons of water per month (22,500 gallons per quarter):

Avg. user	Units	Water	Sewer	Water Meter Crg
2004	22.5	\$37.13	\$33.75	\$5.00
2005	22.5	\$44.33	\$36.90	\$5.20

Sewer Maint Crg	Quarterly Bill	Quarterly Difference
\$4.00	\$79.88	
\$4.60	\$91.03	\$11.15

Even with this rate increase, Van Buren Township's "markup" over Detroit Water & Sewerage Departments rates charged to us remains one of the very lowest in the metro area.

The Water Department is committed to delivering clean, safe drinking water, providing adequate fire-fighting flows and effective hydrant maintenance, cleaning and maintaining the sewer collection system to prevent sewer backups, complying with ever-increasing federal and state regulations, and giving excellent service to all of our customers.

Van Buren Water Department customers have enjoyed extremely low rates for a very long time. Although we regret that rates must be increased, we will do our best to continue to manage and operate the water and sewer systems in a professional, cost-effective way.

If you have any questions, or if we may be of assistance, please call the Water Department at (734) 699-8925.

Patti J. Duha
Water & Sewer Director

TIPS FOR PERSONAL SAFETY

Continued from Page Six

person easy prey for a perpetrator. Walk tall, holding your head high, and be assertive in your physical presentation of yourself. Don't make yourself a target for crime. Criminals are always watching, waiting, and reading your body language to see if they can victimize you. These are just a few suggestions to help guide you in becoming aware and aid you in staying safe.

Officer A. Naif
Van Buren Public Safety

Please call 9-1-1 **ONLY** if there is an **EMERGENCY!!**

For all non-emergencies, please call (734) 699-8930.

Recreation Program - Fall 2004

Tots of Fun

This program is designed for children to expand their motor and social skills in a nonstructural, safe and fun environment. Tots of Fun is simply a drop-in playtime for children ages 2-5.

Parent or guardian must accompany children at all times.



Tuesdays & Thursdays
10:00 a.m. - 1:00 p.m.



Van Buren Residents = \$1.00/child
Non-Residents = \$2.00/child

Babysitter Certification Class

Learn the proper techniques of babysitting from American Red Cross.



Saturday, March 5
10:00 a.m. - 4:00 p.m.



Ages 11 and up - **No exceptions!!**
Pizza included.

Van Buren Residents = \$60.00
Non-Residents = \$75.00

Youth Cheerleading

Instructor, Laura Abney, former Eastern Michigan University Cheerleader, will teach students the basic fundamentals of cheerleading including sidelines, cheers, jumps and routines.

Mondays, January 24 - February 28
Mondays, March 7 - April 18 (No class April 4)
Mondays, April 25 - May 30

5:00 p.m. - 5:45 p.m.	6-10 years	R = \$50.00 NR = \$65.00
6:00 p.m. - 6:45 p.m.	11-14 years	R = \$50.00 NR = \$65.00
7:00 p.m. - 8:00 p.m. (Includes gymnastics and tumbling)	15 and up	R = \$55.00 NR = \$70.00

Cheerleading Clinic: Wednesday, January 5th
6:00 p.m. - 7:30 p.m.

Make it...Take it Creative crafts for ages (7-11)

Searching for all those creative youth who want to make an art project and take it home. Every other Thursday you can create an art project such as bubble painting, window art, paper mache, etc... or maybe you have a craft idea you'd like to do. We are always looking for other ideas.

Thursdays:

January 20, February 3, February 17, March 3,
March 17, April 7 and April 21



6:30 p.m. - 8:00 p.m.



\$10.00 per class - please sign up at least one week prior to each date so that we can plan accordingly.

Just Gymnastics



Saturdays
March 5 - May 14 (9 weeks)
(No class March 19 or March 26)



Beginners
1:30 p.m. - 2:15 p.m.
2:15 p.m. - 3:00 p.m.

Ages: 7 and up
Van Buren Residents = \$60
Non-Residents = \$75

Tot Tumbling
Ages: 4-6
11:30 a.m. - 12:00 p.m. Van Buren Residents = \$55
12:00 p.m. - 12:30 p.m. Non-Residents = \$70

Intermediates
Ages: 7 and up
3:00 p.m. - 4:00 p.m. Van Buren Residents = \$65
Non-Residents = \$80

K-9 Obedience Class

Join dog trainer of 40 years experience, Lila Warner, for **six weeks** of one on one training. What to bring: your dog, a training collar and a six foot leash. **Dogs must be six months or older.**

We teach you to train your own pet under our supervision. Must bring proof of rabies, distemper, and a recent proof of negative fecal report to the first class. Your dog's tags must be up to date as well.

Only 18 and older can train.
7:30 p.m. - 8:15 p.m.

Tuesdays, February 15 - March 22

Classes are held at the Belleville High School (small gymnasium)



Van Buren Resident = \$30.00
 Non-Resident = \$35.00



Jazzercise

A 60-65 minute dance exercise class that includes warmup, 30-35 minute aerobic workout, weight training and stretching. Now with fresh new moves and new music it's pure motivation. Please call Patti Rukkila for class information at (734) 340-3686.

Ongoing, Mondays & Wednesdays
9:30 a.m. - 10:30 a.m.
 (childcare \$2.00)



and

6:30 p.m. - 7:30 p.m.

and



Ongoing, Saturdays 9:15 a.m. - 10:15 a.m.

4 week EFT (electronic funds transfer) = \$35.00
 8 week (cash or check) = \$80.00
 Walk-in = \$8.00

****Register with Jazzercise ****

Van Buren Township Rec. Department Youth Authority

"Teen Scene"

Caution! Only if you're a teen (ages 12-17) who wants to have fun may you continue reading...

Become a member of the Van Buren Township Parks and Rec. Youth Authority. This committee will meet once a month at the rec. center to organize fun, educational, creative activities.

Be a voice and show self expression in your community. We are looking for a president, vice-president, treasurer and secretary to run this committee. Consider getting active in your community by planning events, volunteering, attending or offering workshops, fundraisers etc... the possibilities are endless!

Contact Recreation Manager Jennifer Morris for more information.

First meeting scheduled:

Tuesday, January 25 at 5:30 p.m.
(Come hungry, pizza provided)

Mother/Daughter Tea Party

Sunday, May 1
12:00 p.m. - 2:00 p.m.

To celebrate that special bond between mother and daughter, come join us for our 4th annual mother/daughter tea party. Held at the Van Buren Community Center, mothers and daughters will take part in tea and sandwiches while enjoying Deborah Allen's Sweet Little Tea Parties.



Van Buren Residents = \$15 per couple
 Non-Resident = \$20 per couple
 \$3.00 for each additional child



Deborah will show the proper etiquette for drinking tea all while having fun and making a memorable event.



March 7th Open Registration for all Camps

First Session: June 13 - July 15 (No Camp Monday, July 4)
Second Session: July 18 - August 19



Tot Camp: (ages 4-6) Held at Quirk Park
Van Buren Resident = \$265 Non-Resident = \$280

Day Camp: (ages 7-10) Held at Van Buren Park
Van Buren Resident = \$300 Non-Resident = \$315

Tween Camp: (ages 11-12) Held at Van Buren Park
Van Buren Resident = \$300 Non-Resident = \$315

Club Teen: (ages 13-15) Held at the Community Ctr.
Van Buren Resident = \$320 Non-Resident = \$335

Camps include: games, crafts, field trips, socialization with peers, and a chance for campers to just be a kid while enjoying the outdoors.

It is highly recommended for parents/guardians to attend camp orientation. Letters will be mailed home with dates/times of meetings.

Transportation, field trips, t-shirts and supervision are included in price.

Break out with Culture Spring Break Camp

It's that time of year again for youth to break out of the "norm" to spend the week experiencing different cultures. Get the opportunity to think out of the box and see how different (or the same) you are as compared to another's culture.



March 28 - April 1
10:00 a.m. - 4:00 p.m.

Ages: 9-12



Meet at the Community Center at 10:00 a.m. Recreation staff will drive your youth to various cultural places throughout the area.

\$99.00 per Van Buren Youth (includes lunch)
\$114.00 per Non-Resident Youth (includes lunch)

10 participant min. - 20 participant max.

**** Please make sure youth are dropped off and picked up on time. ****

Wedding Dance Preparation Class

This class prepares couples for their first dance at the wedding. Also will introduce couples or singles dances used to music played at any reception such as Disco Hustle, Swing or Rumba.

Fridays, January 21 - February 18
7:00 p.m. - 8:00 p.m.

Van Buren Residents = \$20.00
Non-Residents = \$35.00

Give them something to talk about at any wedding. Learn the basic moves to feel comfortable while out on the dance floor.



Community Dance Socials

3rd Saturday of the month

January 15, February 26 (not third Saturday due to an event), March 19, April 16

Dance Lessons: 7:00 p.m. - 8:00 p.m. \$4/person
Dancing: 8:00 p.m. - 11:00 p.m. \$7/person

Variety of music from big band, country to top 40's.

Do you want to have some fun? How about socializing with others who enjoy dancing?

Snacks and great dancing! (or bring your own)

T'ai Chi Chuan & Meditation

T'ai Chi Chuan is the traditional Chinese martial art practiced for self defense. T'ai Chi improves balance, flexibility, muscle strength, and cardiovascular to release tension by exercising all muscle groups and emphasizing breathing.



Fridays, January 7 - February 4
Fridays, February 18 - March 18
6:00 p.m. - 7:30 p.m.



\$15 = Van Buren Resident \$18 = Non-Resident

All levels of Tai Chi are encouraged to sign up.

Yoga

Instructor Qi-Qi Zhou-Das will teach you the beginning techniques of yoga. Either begin the day stress free with our Wednesday & Friday morning classes or end the day shedding negativity with our Monday evening classes. Become flexible, improve muscle tone and overall strength. This class is great for first time participants as well as experienced yoga participants. Floor mat required.

Mondays: January 17 - March 21
6:45 p.m. - 7:45 p.m. or 8:00 p.m. - 9:00 p.m.

Wednesdays: January 19 - March 23
8:15 a.m. - 9:15 a.m.

Fridays: January 21 - March 25
8:15 a.m. - 9:15 a.m.

10 week class:

Van Buren Residents = \$65 Non-Residents = \$80
\$8 walk-ins - please pay instructor

Fabulous Food/Wine Pairing

Have you ever wondered how to really appreciate the taste of wine? Come to the Bayou Grill to learn this information and more. Chef Ernest O. Prokos of the Bayou Grill and other wine experts will demonstrate the techniques for experiencing wine while indulging in samples of diverse food.

Thursdays, 6:00 p.m. - 8:00 p.m.



January 27

February 24

March 31

April 28



Held at the Bayou Grill
located at 404 Main Street

MUST Register at the Recreation Department

Van Buren Residents = \$30.00 per class
Non-Residents = \$35.00 per class

Registration/Waiver Form

Participant's Name _____

Parent's Name _____

Address _____

City _____ Zip _____ Age, if under 18 _____

Phone (h) _____ (w) _____

In case of Emergency - person should be available during program hours

Name	Relationship	Phone
------	--------------	-------

Activity	Day and Time of Class	Fee

of classes _____ **Amount Paid** _____ **Receipt #** _____

I hereby accept all responsibility for and will not hold the Charter Township of Van Buren, Van Buren Township Board of Trustees and/or Van Buren Parks and Recreation Department or its employees liable for any loss, damage, or injury to property or any person as a result of involvement in Van Buren Township's recreation classes or programs.

In the event of sudden illness, accident, or injury which may occur while myself or my child is participating in an activity supervised by Van Buren Township employees, when neither the parents or guardian can be contacted, I hereby give my consent for emergency medical treatment as shall be necessary under the circumstances by any physician licensed under the laws of the State of Michigan.

I understand that the Township may take photographs for use in Township publications and news releases without my written consent.

I have read the above waiver/release of liability and understand it.

Signature (Parent or Guardian, if not over 18)	Date
--	------

Please Mail to: Van Buren Recreation Department, 46425 Tyler Road, Van Buren Twp., MI 48111

SCOUTS RECEIVE LEADERSHIP EDUCATION AND EARN A MERIT BADGE

Leadership training and education for young Americans must be a priority and made available to our young people at each and every opportunity. To that end when the boys and girls of the St. Anthony Parish Cub Scouts of Pack 793 invited Supervisor Cindy King to their Pack meeting to fulfill requirements of a government merit badge, the Supervisor capitalized on the opportunity. Meeting face to face with these young leaders-in-training gave Cindy the venue to explain government leadership roles and township operations and to describe the processes, resources and values that are important components in running Van Buren Township. The Supervisor kept the hour-long meeting moving and provided some added value with her insights and stories garnered over her extensive career in Township government.

Supervisor King discussed the history of our community noting that a very significant date in Van Buren Township's history is April 6, 1835. This is the year our community became a Township and Supervisor King pointed out that we became a township two years before Michigan became a state. The Scouts also learned that our Township is named after the 8th President of the United States, Martin Van Buren. The Supervisor led the scouts through a discussion about the difference between a charter township and a general law township and that Van Buren, like other Michigan townships, are represented by 7 elected members of the named Board of Trustees.

The discussion included the significant influence of Belleville Lake, the many recreational opportunities available here as well as the impact of the lake on traffic and public safety access between the northern and southern areas of Van Buren.

Director Kelley wrapped up the meeting by giving the scouts a general overview of the Township zoning map and future land use map. The members of the Pack then quickly went to land uses they would like to see in the Township and that discussion dominated the rest of the hour.

Lastly, the Supervisor challenged the scouts with an assignment. They were instructed to find the names of the Township's elected officials and their respective positions, participate in the Township's "Monthly Quick Poll", and write a list of ten land uses they would each like to see in the Township.

In true scouting form the challenge was answered by Cub Scouts Sean Eau Claire, Jeff Neal Tyler, Aaron Johnson and Nick Frabotta. Their lists of land uses included:

Recreational land uses:

Water Park, swimming pools, more parks and sledding hills (the Township has THE sledding hill at VBT Park), dog parks, Cedar Point and Six Flags Parks, Universal Studios, a bike trail and basketball courts.

Retail/Stores:

Music stores, Target, a super mall, Max & Erma's, candy stores, video game stores, Best Buy, hobby shops, a Krispy Kreme donut shop and more family restaurants.

Community oriented land uses:

Hospitals, daycare and senior care facilities, smoother roads, free stuff for kids to do, public gardens, seating at the soccer fields, an orchard, and more dentists (not like my dentist I hope).

Cub Scout Pack 793 thanks you for the opportunity to meet you and the Township wishes you all the luck in your pursuit of excellence (a.k.a. merit badges).

Bryce Kelley
Planning & Economic
Development Director

VBTV 12

At VBTV 12, we pride ourselves in keeping our community informed and entertained with an information bulletin board which runs twenty-four hours each day whenever a program is not airing; programs highlighting the classes and activities around the township; and live broadcast of Township Board Meetings. You can also check us out at our website, www.vanburen-mi.org, for program dates and times and other information regarding our community.

This winter we will continue with our regular line-up to bring you shows like the Belleville Chamber Report with Janet Millard, and the Museum Historical Society Program. If you wish to own a copy of a program you've seen on VBTV 12, give us a call at (734) 699-8900 x 322.

Don't forget to tune in to VBTV channel 12, to catch our exciting programs, and for up to date township information so that you can participate in all of the exciting opportunities our community has to offer.

Ally Acosta
Cable Operations Manager

Fred C. Fischer Library

167 Fourth Street
 Belleville, MI 48111
 (734) 699-3291

“Black History Alive”

Thursday, February 10, 7:00 p.m.

Using musical instruments, storytelling and African artifacts, this exciting, interactive program brings history to life and traces the Black man’s story from ancient Africa to modern times. Since 1995, Jacqueline Galloway-Blake has presented over 100 programs in schools and public libraries. This program is geared toward elementary school children through adults.

VAN BUREN FIRE DEPARTMENT WINS MRPA COMMUNITY SERVICE AWARD



Van Buren Fire Department Smokehouse

Congratulations are in order for the Van Buren Township Fire Department. The Fire Department will be receiving the 2004 Community Service Award from the Michigan Recreation and Park Association.

Over the course of six years the Van Buren Fire Department has provided the residents of Van Buren with a valuable safety educational tool, the Van Buren Fire Department Smokehouse.

The MRPA Community Service Award is presented to organizations or individuals who have made outstanding contributions to the Michigan Recreation and Parks Association communities.

The Smokehouse has a miniature living room and can be filled with smoke to show how fast smoke can fill a room. Participants see first hand what happens during a fire. Youth also learn what safety steps to follow during a fire. This educational resource has been used a lot at a host of parks and recreational events. This valuable resource has gone a long way to educate many youth about the danger of fire and smoke. The youth also learn that fire personnel are people too. Thank you!

Bruce Ross
 Director of Recreation & Facilities

WELCOME VISTEON



Visteon World Headquarters

As 2004 draws to a close the Visteon World Headquarters Complex is nearing completion on their 263 acre site located south of Ecorse Road and east of I-275 in Van Buren Township. Visteon Corporation is a tier one automotive supplier with over 75,000 employees at plants located in 25 countries with annual revenues over \$17 billion. This state-of-the-art Corporate Headquarters will soon be home to more than 3,200 employees. Van Buren Township is pleased to welcome them to our community and wish them a happy holiday season and prosperous New Year.

Steve Pugsley
 Executive Director of the Local
 Development Finance Authority

Belleville Area Museum

405 Main Street, Belleville
 (734) 697-1944

Open: Noon to 4:00 p.m. Tuesday through Saturday

Admission:

Adults: \$1.00 Children: \$0.50 Family: \$3.00

February Historical Society Meeting

February 17, 2005 at 7:00 p.m.

Program:

James Mann

of the Ypsilanti Courier

**“The Quirk Connection:
The Quirk Family
in Belleville and Ypsilanti”**

At the Belleville Area Museum
405 Main Street
Belleville

The program is free and
the public is welcome to attend.

**AUTOMATIC BILL PAYMENT
FOR YOUR WATER BILL**

Van Buren Township is now offering our water customers the option to enroll in the Automatic Bill Payment Program. The Automatic Bill Payment Program makes it easier to pay your water bill by automatically withdrawing funds from your checking account. Complete the attached form, return it, and start enjoying the following benefits:

- No checks to write
- No postage to pay
- No trip to Township Hall to pay your bill
- No late penalties

You will continue to receive a water billing statement 3 weeks before payment is due. Your payment will be automatically withdrawn from your designated bank account on your regular bill due date.

You may withdraw from the Automatic Bill Payment Program at any time by giving the Water Department a written 2-week notice.

Please continue to make payments on your water bill until you receive a water bill marked with the words, “Auto Withdrawal-Do Not Pay”.

For additional information or questions, please call the Water Billing Office at (734) 699-8925 or via e-mail at: ksmith@vanburen-mi.org.

Sharry A. Budd, CPFA
Township Treasurer

(cut and mail form)

Customer Account Information

Last Name First Name

Mailing Address: _____

Phone(s) day: _____ Evening: _____

Banking Information

Name of Financial Institution: _____

Account number: _____

Savings

Checking

Water Account Information

Service Address(s): _____

Water account number(s) to enroll: _____
(example 009999-000)

Please attach a voided check or savings deposit slip that includes the financial institution name, routing number, and account number and mail it with this form to:

**Automatic Payment Plan
Van Buren Water Department
46425 Tyler Road
Van Buren Twp., MI 48111**

I authorize the Van Buren Township Water Department to deduct my payment from the designated account listed above. I understand that I can discontinue this payment service at any time by notifying the Van Buren Township Water Department in writing with a 2-week notice. I understand that if my account has been closed without advance written notice to the Water Department, my payment will be treated similarly to a check with insufficient funds and the payment will be reversed and late penalties will be applied to my account.

Customer Signature (This form cannot be processed without your signature)

Signature Date

FRED C. FISCHER LIBRARY

167 FOURTH ST.
BELLEVILLE, MI 48111
(734) 699-3291



www.belleville.lib.mi.us

Hours: Mon - Thurs 10 - 9, Fri & Sat 10 - 5

Celebrate the Past:

Join us on Thursday, February 17, for a reception inaugurating the new digital microfilm reader/printer that the Belleville Rotary purchased. View the microfilmed *Belleville Enterprises* from the past 100 years, the first edition of the *Belleville Area Independent* from 1995, or past issues of *The View* from the mid 1980's.

Refreshments will be served from 5 to 7 p.m. Ribbon-cutting will be at 6 p.m.

Envision the Future:

After celebrating the 50th anniversary of the library - "Fred is Fifty" - last November, the Tricomunity Library Committee is now looking to the future. In October an RFP (request for proposal) for a planning facilitator was sent out. Deadline for proposal submission is December 13, 2005. By January 2005 we expect to begin the planning process.

This will be a major undertaking - as is suitable for the next fifty years. We will be evaluating different governance structures to determine what is needed for our best future; coming up with an improved service plan; and a building needs assessment.

Book Discussion Group

The Fischer Library's book discussion group meets at the library at 7:00 p.m. on the first Thursday of the month. All interested adults are welcome to attend (registration is not necessary).

Featured books include:

- Jan. 13* *The Life of Pi*, by Yann Martel
(* 2nd Thursday of January)
- Feb 3: *Reading Lolita in Tehran*, by Azar Nafisi
- Mar 3: *No. 1 Ladies Detective Agency*,
by Alexander McCall Smith



Mastadons and the Ice Age

This is the theme for the 2005 Family Reading and Science Program presented by U of M's Museum of Natural History. To participate in the reading program portion, pick up a reading record at the circulation desk, and write down the number of hours your family is reading together (either aloud or silently). Once your family reaches 15 total hours, before Thursday, March 31st, bring your reading record to the library, and each participating member of your family will be able to choose a free book! The hands-on science programs described below are for children ages 6-11 plus a caregiver. Registration for the three programs begins on Monday, January 10, 2005.

Saturday, Jan. 29, 3:00 p.m.

"Distant Elephant Cousins in Michigan"

See mastadon and mammoth teeth as big as your head, and construct a miniature mastodon environment.

Saturday, Feb. 26, 3:00 p.m.

"Lost Giants of the Ice Age"

Learn about giant animals that lived in the United States 11,000 years ago, and make your own La Brea Tar Pit.

Saturday, March 26, 3:00 p.m.

"Where Did the Mastadons Go?"

Find out what happened when the glaciers melted.

Winter Story Time Registration

Story Time registration begins Monday, Jan. 10, 2004.

Preschool Story Time (Ages 3 1/2 - 6)

Enjoy five programs of stories, poems, and crafts:

Mondays, 7:00 p.m. Jan. 24 - Feb. 21

Tuesdays, 10:30 a.m. Jan. 25 - Feb. 22

Toddler Story Time (Ages 2 - 3 1/2)

Along with their parent or caregiver, the toddler enjoys stories, fingerplays, songs, and action rhymes with the librarian:

Wednesdays, 10:30 a.m. Jan. 26 - Feb. 23

Wednesdays, 11:15 a.m. Jan. 26 - Feb. 23

Friends of the Library

The annual meeting and election of officers will be held Saturday, January 22. Check the website for details.
<http://www.belleville.lib.mi.us/friends.htm>. Used Book Sales: Saturday, Feb. 5, 12:00 p.m. - 4:00 p.m.

COMMUNITY CELEBRATES THE MUSEUM FESTIVAL OF HOLIDAY TREES



L to R: "A Multitude of Angels filled the Sky" Created by the children at Open Arms Lutheran Church & Daycare, "Strawberry Confection" Belleville National Strawberry Festival, "Came Upon a Midnight Clear" Compliments of the Deagon Wood Family

The Ninth Annual Festival of Holiday Trees took place at the Belleville Area Museum during the month of December. Over 50 trees and wreaths beautifully decorated by community groups and businesses were on display.

As the many lovely trees and wreaths were brought into the museum, we were soon overflowing with all the traditional symbols of Christmas - thousands of lights and ornaments, ribbons and bows, pine cones and gingerbread men.

All of the trees and wreaths were a wonderful setting for the many Christmas activities centered at the museum - the City of Belleville Tree Lighting Ceremony on the evening of December 3, the Chamber of Commerce Christmas Parade on December 4, and our Children's Christmas Ornament Workshop on December 18. And, of course, the museum hosted visits to the museum by several school classes, scout troops, families, and guests in town for the holidays. Our Festival of Holiday Trees has become a very popular event in our community, and it is easy to understand why.

The festival would not be possible without all those who decorated trees and wreaths. Our grateful thanks go to all those groups.

2005 - BELLEVILLE'S CENTENNIAL YEAR

In 1905, the little rural community of Belleville incorporated as a village, and from this point forward functioned as the commercial and social center of Van Buren Township.

In this year of 2005, Belleville will celebrate its 100th anniversary, and to mark this historic event, the Belleville Area

Museum & Historical Society plan to open a series of special exhibits. To be entitled "100 Years of Community Life," the exhibits will focus on several fundamental community elements which the city and township share, including the school system, post office, library, and lake, as well as several historic civic organizations.

The museum is accepting the loan or donation of memorabilia for this exhibit, including photographs and newspaper articles, old library cards, 1905 calendar, old post cards & stamps, school report cards, class lists, etc. We are also seeking documents and items representing the history of long-time community organizations, including membership rosters, programs, scrapbooks, tokens, etc.

If you have any artifacts you wish to loan or donate to our Centennial exhibit, please contact the museum at (734) 697-1944.

Diane Wilson
Museum Director

2005 CENTENNIAL CALENDAR

The Belleville Area Historical Society's 2005 Centennial Calendars are now on sale at the Belleville Area Museum.

The year 2005 marks an important milestone in the history of the Belleville/Van Buren community. Exactly 100 years ago, in the spring of 1905, the legislature of the State of Michigan voted to incorporate the village of Belleville. With several special events planned for the city's 100th anniversary, this special calendar edition has been designed as a keepsake of the Centennial year.

The 2005 Centennial Calendar contains a brief history of the community and many vintage photos of its earliest basic institutions, such as the Old Red Mill around which the community formed, the brick school on Third Street, the Methodist Church, and the Masonic Temple. Calendar dates highlight several important happenings of the first decade of the 20th Century, when such things as corn flakes, crayolas, and paved roads were first introduced.

Cost of the Centennial Calendar is \$6.00. Calendars are available to Belleville Area Historical Society members at the discounted price of \$5.00. They can be purchased at the museum during its regular hours - Tuesdays through Saturdays, noon to 4:00 p.m.

Calendars are also available at several local businesses and can be purchased by mail. To obtain an order form, please call the museum at (734) 697-1944.

TRASH GUIDELINES:

Homeowners of Brand New Homes:

Please call the Community Services Department at (734) 699-8926 to order your garbage container (toter) and recycle bin. You should receive them both within 2-3 weeks following your call.

Please use a 32 gallon or smaller container until you receive your toter. Boxes are not acceptable rubbish containers.

Toters and additional containers:

Please bag all items placed in toters or additional containers. Bagging the trash keeps your toters/containers cleaner and does not allow items to stick or freeze to bottom. **Please DO NOT place LOOSE TRASH in toters/containers or they will not be picked up.**

Additional containers must not exceed 32 gallons and must not weigh more than 50 lbs.

Please write your address on all containers!

Damaged Containers:

Broken or damaged containers supplied by Waste Management may be replaced or repaired if necessary. Please call (734) 699-8926 to notify us if your container needs to be replaced or repaired.

Waste Management will only provide maintenance or replacement of cart due to normal wear and tear including broken wheels, worn out bottom, broken or bent front bar or lid damage.

Stolen Containers:

If your Waste Management toter is stolen or missing, you will need to contact Waste Management at (800) 796-9696 to acquire a new one at a cost of \$85.00. If you do not wish to purchase this container you may use a 32 gallon or smaller container at the curbside.

Holiday Pickup Schedule:

There are no changes to the current pickup schedule.

ATTENTION HOMEOWNERS:

Yard Waste Pick-up season has ENDED, pick up will RESUME the first full week of April.

All Homeowners:

Your trash must be set out the night prior to pickup day. Waste Management starts rubbish removal early and there is not a set schedule for the starting point of each route. Trash that is missed due to late set out will not be picked up until the following week - **NO EXCEPTIONS!!**

Please put your address on all containers!

Special Pickups:

Refrigerators, freezers, and air conditioners are the only items that need to be called in ahead for special pickups due to Freon. These items will be picked up by a different truck than the normal trash truck. Doors on refrigerators/freezers must be removed and the shelving units from inside must also be removed and properly disposed of in a rubbish container.

To schedule a special pickup, please call the Community Services Department at (734) 699-8926 **one day prior to pickup day.**

If you are moving:

Please leave the rubbish container and recycle bin that were provided by Waste Management on the property for the next homeowner as the cart remains the property of Waste Management.

Large Quantities of Trash:

All remodeling material or large amounts of rubbish must be taken to the landfill directly. As a Van Buren Township resident you have the option to utilize the landfill (Woodland Meadows) free of charge. This is a courtesy that is passed on to our homeowners. Please keep in mind that this *privilege cannot be extended to contractors. Commercialized vehicles and/or commercialized jobs are prohibited.* In order to utilize the above privilege you must provide a driver's license that reflects a Van Buren Township address when you enter the landfill. Yard waste and household waste must be kept separate.

Attention Mobile Home/Manufactured Home and Apartment residents:

If you wish to recycle, you may take your recycleables to the Woodland Meadows Recycling Center.

Woodland Meadows is located on the south side of Van Born Road just west of Hannan Road. The Landfill is open Monday through Friday from 8:00 a.m. - 5:00 p.m. and on Saturday from 7:00 a.m. - 11:00 a.m. To contact Woodland Meadows please call (734) 326-0993.

Home Generated Medical Waste Disposal

The improper handling and/or disposal of home generated medical sharps (needles, syringes, etc.) can pose serious health risks to the generator, solid waste collection and land-fill personnel, and everyone in the community. It is unlawful to dispose of home generated medical sharps in a refuse container unless they are contained as below. Waste Management will refuse waste that is not properly packaged.

Objects such as needles, syringes, lancets and other sharp objects used for medical purposes should be placed in either a purchased medical sharps container (from a pharmacy or health care provider) or a heavy plastic metal container. The container should be puncture-proof with a tight-fitting lid.

Household containers, such as heavy-plastic detergent bottles may be used if the following precautions are observed:

- Use heavy-duty tape, such as electrical or duct tape, to secure the lid to the container.
- Write the words "Not Recyclable" on the container with a black permanent marker. This helps to ensure the container is not inadvertently mingled in with recyclable materials.
- Do not use a clear container.

- Do not over-stuff the container with sharps (fill it only about 3/4 full). This can increase pressure on the lid and cause a release of the medical sharps.

Once you have followed these precautions, the container may be placed in your refuse container for disposal. While waiting for a full container, keep it out of the reach of children and pets. Always wash your hands after handling or touching medical sharps.

Seasonal Toter and Container Issues

As winter sets in, trash packaging and the placement of trash toters, containers and recycling bins becomes more critical. Please take care to place all your containers in a location to avoid damage from snow clearing equipment.

- Place your trash toters/containers and recycling bins at the end of your driveway, where it is still easily accessible from the road.
- Do NOT place your trash toters/containers and recycling bins out in the roadway, where they could be inadvertently hit or damaged.

RECYCLING GUIDELINES:

Plastic

Bottles and Containers: Must be marked on the bottom with a 1 or 2 symbol. Butter tubs and trays from microwaveable foods are not acceptable. Rinse and remove all caps.



Please Recycle!



Tin



Tin Cans: Remove all labels and rinse them out before placing in bin.
Aluminum: Containers and foil.

Paper



Newspapers: Including all inserts, advertisements, and magazines that are delivered with them.
White Paper: Including office paper, computer paper, and envelopes.
Brown Paper Bags: Keep them separate from your paper.

Glass

Bottles and Jars: Any color except brown. You do not have to peel the labels off or remove the little plastic rings that remain from twist off caps. Rinse and remove all caps.

Cardboard

Cardboard: All cardboard boxes must be broken down (including moving boxes) into 3' x 3' bundles. Cardboard boxes are not acceptable rubbish containers.

** No pizza boxes **



The 10th Annual Daddy/Daughter Dance



Friday, February 11
Evening Dance 7:00 p.m. - 9:00 p.m.

Saturday, February 12
Matinee Dance 5:00 p.m. - 7:00 p.m. (ages 5 & under)
Evening Dance 7:00 p.m. - 9:00 p.m.

Located at the Van Buren Community Center
46425 Tyler Road

When you arrive you will walk the red carpet, have your picture taken and then dance the night away. Refreshments will be served. Grandfathers, uncles and big brothers are welcome. (Prepayment with advance registration is required.)

There will be no refunds. No tickets sold at the door. Tickets are limited.

Van Buren Residents = \$15 per couple
Non Residents = \$20 per couple
\$5 for each additional child

Win Dinner & Limo Ride to Daddy Daughter

Purchase your Daddy/Daughter tickets by January 28 and be entered to win dinner and a limo ride to and from the dance.

Township Meetings

- | | |
|---|---|
| Board Meetings:
1st & 3rd Tuesdays 7:30 p.m. | Cable Commission:
No longer meets regularly. |
| Work Study Meetings:
1st & 3rd Mondays 4:00 p.m. | Endowment Committee:
2nd Tuesday 1:00 p.m. |
| Environmental Commission:
2nd Wednesday 7:00 p.m. | Board of Zoning Appeals:
2nd Tuesday 7:00 p.m. |
| Planning Commission: 2nd & 4th Wednesdays 7:30 p.m. | Public Safety Committee:
2nd Tuesday 5:30 p.m. |
| Water/Sewer Commission:
4th Monday 7:00 p.m. | Recreation Committee:
2nd Tuesday 7:30 p.m.
(Meets February, April, June, August, October & Dec, changes will be posted) |
| Downtown Devel. Authority:
2nd Tuesday 5:30 p.m. | |
| Local Devel. Finance Authority:
2nd Tuesday 2:00 p.m. | |
| Open Space Committee:
4th Thursday 7:00 p.m. | |

Board of Trustees

- Cindy C. King** (cking@vanburen-mi.org)
Supervisor 699-8910
- Joannie D. Payne** (jpayne@vanburen-mi.org)
Clerk 699-8909
- Sharry A. Budd** (sbudd@vanburen-mi.org)
Treasurer 699-8903
- Phillip Hart**
John Herman
Jeffrey Jahr
Walter Rochowiak
Trustees 699-8910

Township Departments

Public Safety

- Director of Public Safety 699-8930
Police, Fire, Dispatch 699-8930
Animal Control 699-8930
Emergencies 9-1-1

Developmental Services

- Bryce Kelley, Planning & Economic Development Director 699-8913
Patti Duha, Director of Water & Sewer 699-8944
Ordinance Enforcement 699-8913
Dan Swallow, Environmental Director 699-8913

Community Services

- Bruce Ross, Director of Recreation & Facilities. 699-8926
Cable 699-8926
Parks & Recreation 699-8921
Linda Combs, Senior Director 699-8918
September Days Senior Center 699-8918

Lake Ledger

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Editor:

Christina Harman
Community Services Department

Charter Township of Van Buren
46425 Tyler Road
Van Buren Twp, Michigan 48111-1299

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