



*Charter Township of Van Buren*

# *Lake Ledger*

**“Service in Action”**

**W i n t e r 2 0 0 4**



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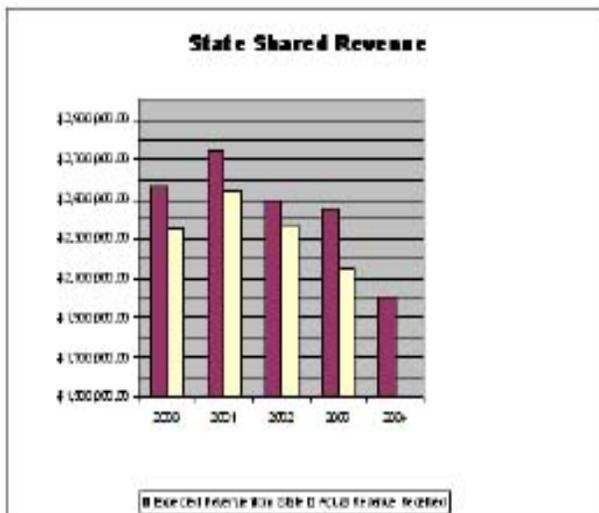
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## SUPERVISOR'S OFFICE

They say that time flies when you're having fun. It also flies when you're busy and all of us here at Township Hall have been busy. Development continues to occur, albeit at a slower pace than in years past (not necessarily a bad thing). The slow down, however, is most likely due to the economic conditions being experienced throughout the country. Whether it's the country, individual states such as California or Michigan, individuals such as you and me, or the township, all of us are experiencing in some manner the economic downturn that has occurred.

As you've also likely read or heard, the State is facing a \$900 million budget shortfall. Just like Van Buren, the State is required to balance its budget. Thus, the State is grappling with making cuts in order to balance the budget. As I write this in early December, everything from funding to schools, colleges, prisons and local government is on the table as the Governor and legislature attempt to deal with this serious matter. For Van Buren and other municipalities, a cut to "state shared revenue" the money returned to locals will occur. The question is, "how much?"



State shared revenue is a vital source of operating revenue for local governments. It is not "free" money or "extra" money. State shared revenue is money derived from the sales taxes everyone pays. It is sent to the State and the State returns a portion of it to local communities to help fund needed community services. In Van Buren, it is about 20% of the township's annual operating revenue. These revenues are deposited in the township's General Fund to pay for routine services such as police and fire protection, senior services, building and code inspections, animal control, recreation and environmental services and those services provided by the Clerk's and Treasurer's offices and my office. Revenues derived from water and sewer operations including the six-mill debt levy you see on your property taxes can only be used for services related to the provision of water and sewer

service. By law, water and sewer revenues cannot be used to supplement or provide General Fund operations.

The remaining 60% of General Fund operating revenue comes from fees related to permits, other service fees and in Van Buren, funds generated by landfill tipping fees or through the transfer of fees from the township's "fund balance" or savings/rainy day account. Any cuts the State may make to the state shared revenue could impact our ability to provide service to you.

The fate of state shared revenue is even more dramatic when one realizes that cuts have been made to this revenue source for the past four years, years in which our community has grown and costs for providing service have increased. To some degree, these cuts to state shared revenue have been masked due to growth in tax base that has occurred in Van Buren. However, because of the reductions to state shared revenue, and the increase in taxes not keeping pace with the cost for providing service, the Board has been faced with seeking other revenue sources. The Board of Trustees has had a greater reliance upon the Landfill Fund with two million dollars being transferred to the General Fund in FY2003 and another two million proposed for FY2004. The Board has also approved a drawn down of the township's fund balance or "rainy day" account to fund routine operations. Admittedly, one purpose for the monies that are found in either the Landfill Fund or the fund balance is to use them during times of economic difficulty. However, I would respectfully suggest that this is not a tenable approach to municipal financing for the long term, particularly because it is so difficult to build up funds in fund balance and because the landfill revenues will be realized for only a finite period of time (perhaps less than ten years). What happens then? Further, drawing down these funds precludes the ability for these funds to be used for other improvements residents tell us they would like such as a community swimming pool or better library services.

Also related to finances, have you heard about P.A. 191? This new state law changes the deadline by which charter townships must adopt their next fiscal year budget. Previously, charter townships were required by law to adopt the following year's fiscal year budget by November 1. P.A. 191 requires that the next year's budget now be adopted no later than December 31. This allows township boards more time to appropriately respond to a changing economic climate. Your Township Board adopted the FY2004 General Fund budget at its October 21 regular meeting. We also adopted the FY2004 Water and Sewer budget at that meeting.

Throughout this edition of the *Ledger*, you will find articles that speak to municipal finance. Why the emphasis? Because it takes money to provide service and in Van Buren, we believe residents get a fair return on the taxes they pay.

Also, we believe you should know how we get the money we do to provide service and how that money is spent. Remember, the township's financial records are public; you have a right to review and inspect them. If you're interested in doing so, stop by the Clerk's Office and through the Freedom of Information Act, your request will be processed.

Likely, you have received this *Ledger* during the often gray Michigan days of winter. Remember, Van Buren Park is open year round. Strap on your snow shoes or cross-country skis and take a walk through the park. It is sure to lift your spirits while you wait for the sun to come out.

Happy New Year.

Cindy C. King  
Township Supervisor

## CLERK'S OFFICE

Greetings and Happy New Year from the Clerk's Office.



Elections Clerk Loretta Speaks

We are beginning what will be a very active year for Clerk's Office staff beginning with the retirement of our Elections Clerk Loretta Speaks who has been instrumental in helping to run elections in Van Buren for the last eleven years and will be missed. Elections slated for this year currently include an August Primary and a November General Election. You may have noticed I didn't mention the Presidential Primary Election, which is held in February of the year in which we elect our President. Governor Jennifer Granholm signed Senate Bill 397, which cancels the Presidential Primary Election. Cancellation of this election will save the State of Michigan approximately \$7 million. The new law will not impact the election of 2008.

I want to get an early start in reviewing election information that will help both the public and my office during the election

cycle. First and foremost I can't stress enough the importance of checking your voter registration prior to elections to make sure your name and address are correct and that we don't have any missing information. This is particularly important for those people who went to a Secretary of State branch office, filled out the application but did not actually sign the application. A signature on the application is the final step in the application process and without a signature prior to the election a person is not registered to vote. So please, take the time to contact my office at (734) 699-8909 to check your information or you may use the Secretary of State's web site to review information. If we don't have a signature or there is some other problem with a registration it will be listed as rejected on the web site. The web site asks for your name and will bring up your voting location, type of equipment used and a sample ballot for your jurisdiction. This is a great way to check your registration prior to Election Day. The web site is [www.michigan.gov/sos](http://www.michigan.gov/sos).

Joannie D. Payne, CMC  
Township Clerk

## DATES TO REMEMBER

**Monday, January 19**

**Martin Luther King, Jr. Day** - Administrative offices closed in observance

**Monday, February 16**

**Presidents Day** - Administrative offices closed in observance

**Friday, April 9**

**Good Friday** - Administrative office closed in observance

## 2004 Historical Society Calendar

It's not too late to pick up a copy of the 2004 Historical Society Calendar at the Belleville Area Museum. Each month features a full-page vintage photograph including the Old North Bridge, the Belvil Theatre, 1950's Belleville sidewalk sales, and a 1910 view of Main Street. The calendars are published as a fund raiser for the Belleville Area Museum and are sold for \$6.00 each.

If you wish to place an order by mail, please call the museum at (734) 697-1944.

## TREASURER'S OFFICE

### 9-1-1

The Winter Tax bills are out and the Township has extended the collection due date until March 1, 2004 without penalty. Your payment must be in the Treasurer's Office by March 1, 2004. By law, the township cannot accept payments of property taxes after March 1, 2004. If a payment is postmarked March 1, 2004 but is not received until a later date it will not be 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 2003 Winter Tax Bill reflects millages levied and collected by the Van Buren Township Treasurer's office for remittance to various other taxing authorities. Of the 20.44880 mills levied on your township property, only 9.9245 mills and the 1% administration fee is collected for use by Van Buren for providing service to you. The remaining 10.5243 mills collected is sent to the taxing authorities reflected below.

The following is an example of the 2003 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	\$ 12.73
Wayne County Community College	2.48620	\$128.78
Huron Clinton Metro Park Authority	0.21610	\$ 11.19
Van Buren Twp. Operations	0.92450	\$ 47.88
Water/Sewer Debt	6.00000	\$310.80
Public Safety Operations	3.00000	\$155.40
<b>Subtotal</b>	20.44880	\$1,059.21
Administration Fee (1% of subtotal)		\$ 10.59
<b>Total Due</b>		\$1,069.80

Winter has arrived and we've all gotten busy with the holidays. I 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 you. If you have any questions call my office at (734) 699-8903.

Sharry A. Budd, CMFA  
Township Treasurer

### A Brief History of 9-1-1

In 1967, the Federal Communications Commission met with AT&T to establish a universal emergency number for our nation. 9-1-1 was chosen due to the fact that the number was easy to remember, easy to dial quickly and it was not designated as an area code or service code. On February 16, 1968 the first 9-1-1 call was placed by Alabama Senator Rankin Fite. A week later, a 9-1-1 system was implemented in Nome, Alaska. Subsequently, 9-1-1 systems quickly spread across the country. By the end of 1976, 9-1-1 was serving about 17% of the U.S. population. In 1979, 26% of the population had 9-1-1 service and nine states had enacted 9-1-1 legislation. By 1987, about half of the U.S. was covered by some type of 9-1-1 service. At the end of the twentieth century, 93% of the U.S. was covered by some type of 9-1-1 service, with 95% of that service being enhanced 9-1-1. According to the National Emergency Number Association, in 1992 approximately 150 million 9-1-1 calls were made in the United States.

### When to Use 9-1-1

No one likes to think that an emergency could happen in their life. Unfortunately, emergencies do happen and they seem to happen at the worst possible time. They occur when we least expect them and they require us to think quickly and act fast. 9-1-1 should only be dialed for a true emergency. An emergency is a situation where immediate assistance is needed from police, fire or medical personnel, or more simply - a situation where life, limb or property is in immediate danger. If you are ever in doubt of whether a situation is a true emergency, it is best just to dial 9-1-1 and allow the emergency dispatcher to determine if you need emergency assistance. Do not dial 9-1-1 for general information or to file a non-emergency report. For any non-emergency call or for information, you should call your police or fire departments general (7 digit) number. Common examples of emergencies that should be called into 9-1-1 are fires, automobile accidents with injuries, any type of medical emergency or any crime in progress. This list is not all-inclusive and you should use your own judgment and common sense when determining whether or not you should call 9-1-1. Dispatchers do understand that when you are in a vehicle and have no means to look up the general telephone number it is sometimes acceptable to call 9-1-1 to report an incident, even when it may not be a true emergency. 9-1-1 should also be used to report drunk drivers.

### What to Expect When You Call 9-1-1

If you are faced with an emergency and find yourself in a situation where you need to dial 9-1-1, there are some things you should know. First of all, do not assume that the dispatcher knows where you are, even if your community has enhanced 9-1-1 service (referred to as E911.) Be prepared to provide the exact location of the emergency including the

## VISTEON BEAM RAISING CEREMONY

address, building number, apartment number, nearest cross-street or intersection, or landmarks. Even if your location information shows up on the screen, the dispatcher will still ask for your location in order to confirm it. You should try to remain calm, speak clearly and answer any questions posed to you by the emergency dispatcher. The questions may seem pointless or repetitive to you, but rest assured the person you are talking to is trained and experienced and has only your best interests in mind. Here is a quick list of what you can expect and what you should do when calling 9-1-1:

- In an emergency, dial 9-1-1. The call is free from any telephone whether it is your home telephone, a pay telephone, or a cellular telephone. Your telephone bill is assessed a monthly 9-1-1 service charge, but there is no per-call charge.
- Don't hesitate. If you are faced with a potential emergency, call 9-1-1 right away. If there is any doubt as to whether you should call 9-1-1, just call and let the dispatcher determine what to do. Saving only a few seconds could make a big difference, especially when dealing with potential medical emergencies.
- Stay calm and state your emergency and the location of the emergency. Keep in mind that the dispatcher may not have your location on their screen. This is especially true with cellular phones. Remember, even if a dispatch center is equipped with enhanced 9-1-1 (E911) and an address and telephone number shows on the screen, dispatchers still ask for the address and telephone number in order to verify the accuracy of the information.
- Speak clearly, and answer any questions asked by the dispatcher. Again, even if questions seem pointless or repetitive to you, rest assured that the dispatcher on the other end of the line is a trained professional and there is a purpose behind every question.
- As long as it is safe to do so, stay on the phone until the emergency dispatcher tells you to hang up. Until emergency units arrive, you are their eyes and ears. You may even become their hands in a medical emergency, as the emergency medical dispatcher is trained to instruct you on how to perform first aid and CPR over the telephone until emergency crews arrive.



Left to Right: Peter Pestillo, CEO Visteon Corp., Robert Ficano, Wayne County Executive, Cindy King, Township Supervisor, and Jennifer M. Granholm, Governor.

October 15, 2003 was a typical fall day in Michigan. At the Visteon site, the air was filled with warmth and good cheer as a "beam raising" ceremony was held to honor the construction of the corporation's headquarters in Van Buren and to acknowledge the State's contribution of \$5 million to Wayne County to assist in road improvements related to the Visteon project. The crowd assembled included dignitaries, local elected officials, Visteon employees, representation from the trades industry and members of the business community. The ceremony included placing the final steel beam that had been signed by those in attendance in place after remarks made about this significant endeavor.

Governor Jennifer M. Granholm was the keynote speaker. She expressed gratitude that Visteon had chosen the State of Michigan as the location for their headquarters and the economic boost this project will have on the region. Joining her in recognizing Visteon's efforts were Wayne County Executive Robert Ficano and myself. All agreed that the locating of Visteon's headquarters in the State was a significant achievement that will positively benefit the state, county and township for some time to come.

The Visteon headquarters is the largest project being undertaken today in the State of Michigan. The \$270 million project incorporates into one location the corporation's executive, administrative, and research and development operations, including the relocation of about 3,200 employees who presently work out of approximately 15 different locations throughout Wayne County. In 2003, Visteon was ranked as Wayne County's second largest employer by *Crain's* business periodical.

### 9-1-1

Continued on Page Twenty One

Cindy King  
Township Supervisor

## COLD WEATHER BRINGS USE OF VARIOUS HEATING SYSTEMS

With the arrival of cold weather, it becomes even more important to check the heating system, space heaters, fireplaces and smoke alarms to prevent a destructive or even deadly fire, according to the National Fire Safety Council.

The Council said 28,000 people are injured in two million fires each year with 4,275 fire deaths. Nationwide there is a fire death every 130 minutes.

Heating is the second leading cause of home fires. Any material that can burn should be kept at least three feet away from any heater.

Working smoke alarms are the first defense against fire. A working smoke alarm can detect a small fire and provide crucial minutes necessary to prevent a tragedy. The Council indicates that approximately 90 percent of all homes have at least one smoke alarm, but surveys show that 20 percent do not work because the battery is either dead or missing.

Both homeowners and renters should be aware of fire safety, and renters should be aware they should have inexpensive renter insurance in case of fire damage. Insurance carried by owners of rental property does not cover tenants.

The Insurance Information Institute reports that fire breaks out in a home somewhere in the United States every 45 seconds and suggests three basic steps you can take to help ensure home safety. These steps include eliminating potential fire hazards, installing and maintaining smoke detectors and developing and practicing a family escape plan.

Eliminating hazards includes keeping trash in covered containers and disposing of it regularly, storing any flammable liquids in proper containers, avoiding overloading electrical circuits and frayed cords and being sure the home's electrical and heating systems are safe.

Heating system installers and maintenance companies suggest those systems be checked before cold weather puts a strain on the system. Now is the time to have preventive maintenance checks to be sure everything is operating properly and to make any minor adjustments or repairs before serious problems develop.

The National Fire Safety Council said most home fires occur during sleeping hours, between the hours of 11 p.m. and 6 a.m. and one or more smoke alarms can double a family's safety.

The Council recommends placing a smoke alarm on each level of the home, near bedrooms and in the basement. They should be kept clean and batteries should be replaced twice a year.

Working with fire extinguishers, at least two, can help control or extinguish a small fire, but the Council urges that first make sure everyone is out of the house and that someone has called the fire department.

Be familiar with extinguisher operation and only attempt to fight a small fire that is contained to one area and be sure there is an escape route clear of obstacles to your back.

Don't stay in a room where there is smoke or fumes since most fire deaths result from smoke or fumes and not from heat or flames.

The Council indicates that more than a third of all fire-related injuries occur while people are trying to fight fires. **"If you are unsure about fighting a small fire - don't!"** the Council advises. **"Leave the area and call "9-1-1."**

In all of the fire safety instructions from FEMA, the U.S. Fire Administration, the National Fire Safety Council and Insurance Information Institute, the central theme is common sense. Look around the house and eliminate any fire hazards, be sure any electrical or fuel-burning systems or units operate properly and if a fire does occur, don't take chances. **Put safety first and call the professionals.**

Ron Folks, Battalion Chief  
Van Buren Fire Station 1

### FIRE FIGHTERS WANTED!!

The Van Buren Fire Department is looking for men and women who would enjoy the challenge of serving our community as on-call (part-time) fire fighters. If you are:

**Over the age of eighteen**

**A high school graduate**

**Possess a valid  
Michigan Driver's License**



Please stop by the Public Safety Department's Records window and pick up an application.

For more information, please call (734) 699-8930.

## WINTER SAFETY TIPS FOR THE HOME

The high cost of home heating fuels and utilities has caused many Americans to search for alternate sources of home heating. The use of wood burning stoves is increasing; space heaters are selling rapidly, or coming out of storage. Fireplaces are burning more wood and man-made logs.

All of these supplementary heat measures can be good. However, they are also a major contributing factor in many residential fires. Many of these fires are preventable. The following fire safety tips can help you maintain a fire safe home this winter.

### Kerosene Heaters

- Be sure your heater is in good working condition. Inspect exhaust ports for carbon buildup. Be sure the heater has an emergency shut off that operates in case the heater is tipped over.
- Never use fuel-burning appliances without proper room venting. Burning fuel (Kerosene, coal, or propane) produces deadly fumes, mostly in the form of carbon monoxide.
- Use **ONLY** the fuel recommended by the heater manufacturer. **NEVER INTRODUCE A FUEL INTO A UNIT NOT DESIGNED FOR THAT TYPE OF FUEL.**
- Keep kerosene and other flammable liquids stored in approved metal containers, in well-ventilated storage areas, outside of the house.
- **NEVER** fill the heater while it is hot or in operation. When refueling an oil or kerosene unit, avoid overfilling. Be careful with cold fuel, for it may expand in the tank as it warms up.
- Keep young children safely away from space heaters--especially when they are wearing nightgowns or other loose clothing that can be easily ignited.
- When using a fuel-burning appliance in the bedroom, be sure there is proper ventilation to prevent a build up of carbon monoxide.

### Wood Stoves and Fireplaces

Wood stoves and fireplaces are becoming a very common heat source in homes. Careful attention to safety can minimize their fire hazard. To use them safely:

- Be sure the stove or fireplace is installed properly. Wood stoves should have adequate clearance from combustible surfaces, and proper floor support and protection.
- Wood stoves should be of good quality, solid construction, and proper design, and should be UL listed.
- Have the chimney inspected annually and cleaned if necessary, especially if it has not been used for some time.
- **Do not use flammable liquids to start or accelerate any fire.**
- Keep a glass or metal screen in front of the fireplace opening to prevent embers or sparks from jumping out and unwanted materials (or people) from going in.
- Don't use excessive amounts of paper to build roaring fires in fireplaces. It is possible to ignite creosote in the chimney by overbuilding the fire.
- Never burn charcoal indoors. Burning charcoal can give off lethal amounts of carbon monoxide.
- Keep flammable materials away from your mantel. A spark from the fireplace could easily ignite these materials. Before you go to sleep, be sure your fireplace fire is out! Never close your damper with hot ashes in the fireplace!
- A closed damper will help the fire to heat up again and will force toxic carbon monoxide into the house.
- If synthetic logs are used, follow directions on the package. Never break a synthetic log apart to quicken the fire, and/or use more than one log at a time. They sometimes burn unevenly, releasing higher levels of carbon monoxide.

Van Buren Firefighters Station 1

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

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

## SUDDEN CARDIAC ARREST AND THE USE OF DEFIBRILLATORS, IN THE TREATMENT OF CARDIAC ARRESTS

The American Heart Association estimates that approximately 220,000 Americans die from sudden cardiac arrest each year. Sudden cardiac death is death resulting from cardiac causes that occurs unexpectedly in persons with known and unknown preexisting heart disease. It can afflict young and old, male and female, all races and persons of all socio-economic backgrounds. In most instances it occurs as a result of abrupt alteration in the heart's electrical rhythm which prevents the heart from pumping blood to the organs of the body.

Originally defibrillators were devices that could only be used by well-trained medical professionals in a hospital environment. Because the time from cardiac arrest to defibrillation is critical, efforts were made to take defibrillators out of hospitals and into the community where cardiac arrests were occurring.

The first attempts to accomplish this took place in the early 1970's, with defibrillators placed in ambulances and fire rescue vehicles being operated by well-trained medical professionals. But even over time, with these community based systems improving, survival rates were disappointing, with peak survival rates reaching only about 35%. These disappointing results were attributed to the inability of rescue personnel to reach victims quickly.

The medical community remained focused on ways to bring defibrillators closer to the victims, both physically and in time. Communities, businesses and airlines have also gotten involved and have instituted Automated External Defibrillators (AED) placements within their organizations.



LIFEPAK 500, AED Model that will be used in Van Buren Police vehicles.

### Spring Softball Leagues

Registration for returning teams starts:  
**Monday, March 15**

New team registration starts:  
**Thursday, April 15th**

**Deadline to register is Friday, April 30th.** A late fee of \$50.00 will apply if league money is not turned in by April 30th.

League Prices:

**Tuesday Recreational** = \$500.00 2 umpires  
**Wednesday Competitive** = \$500.00 2 umpires  
**Friday Co-ed** = \$460.00 1 umpires

(All fees include a minimum of 10 games, 1 or 2 umpires, lights, maintenance, double elimination tournament, t-shirts for 1st place and trophies.)

League starts May 11th with games starting at 6:30 p.m. Games are played on the Greg Brinkerhoff/Chuck Coleman Memorial Field.

**Managers meeting May 4th at 6:30 p.m.**

The Charter Township of Van Buren and Van Buren Police Department also felt this was important to our community. In a team effort to support our community, Huron Valley Ambulance instituted a program that would allow police & fire departments to purchase Automated External Defibrillators (AED) for half the cost of each unit with every unit purchased by a public safety department. The township was able to budget eight AED's for use in police vehicles. The fire department currently has AED's in their rescue vehicles and did not qualify for this program.

Van Buren Township police officers have been trained and certified in CPR/AED, and now join the forces with the fire department and Huron Valley Ambulance, to provide the highest level of care possible in a life-threatening medical emergency situation. Patrol officers who are on the street twenty-four hours a day, equipped with AED's and portable airway equipment can respond immediately, while volunteer fire personnel respond to the station for additional equipment & personnel.

Mike Long  
Special Projects Coordinator  
Van Buren Public Safety

## SERVICE IS OUR BUSINESS

The men and women of the Van Buren Department of Public Safety have a long-standing commitment of providing the best possible service to our community. Some of our service enhancements in 2003 include utilizing grants to furnish our police vehicles with automatic external defibrillators (AED's), outfitting our fire fighters with the very latest protective garments, purchasing a second Thermal Imaging Camera, and equipping our police officers with less-than-lethal Taser weapons. While this equipment will help us to better serve the residents of Van Buren, our most important contributions continues to be a cadre of dedicated Communications Dispatchers, Fire Fighters, and Police Officers that have sworn to perform their duties to the best of their abilities. The next time you encounter a uniformed member of Van Buren's Public Safety Department, read the embroidered mission statement written in red on their shoulder patch. It says "Response and Service." It's an important part of our mission.

Al Smolen  
Acting Director of Public Safety

## VAN BUREN POLICE STEP UP MULTIPLE LESS LETHAL OPTIONS

This is the second article in a series of less lethal options available for police officers of Van Buren Township.

In the last *Lake Ledger*, I spoke about Van Buren police officers having had the availability of other options including mace, baton training, Kinetic Energy Projectiles and pepper ball weapons systems at their disposal while on duty. The purpose of these less lethal devices is intended to give officers many options when trying to control potentially violent situations without having to resort to using deadly force.

With the breakthrough of new technology in the past few years, Van Buren Township has been in the forefront again, increasing our officer's options in de-escalating situations involving combative or non-compliant subjects and reducing liability for the Township. We now will begin training our officers in the use of the Advanced Taser. Upon completion of their training, officers will be carrying these less lethal devices during their tour of duty.

A leading field study of seven watt TASER Technology at the Los Angeles Police Department found TASER technology had the lowest rate of injuries to both officers and suspects compared to all other force options studied. Fewer injuries mean safer jobs for officers and lower liability for law enforcement agencies.

This year, the Michigan Legislature has approved the Advanced Taser, as a less lethal weapon for law enforcement agencies in Michigan. This same type of less lethal technology has been available to police agencies around the country for years. Since legislative approval, many agencies, especially in Wayne County, are in the process of purchasing these less lethal devices for their officers. These departments include: Livonia, Northville Twp., Canton Twp., Ann Arbor, Westland, and Garden City to name a few.

Van Buren Township's insurance carrier, Michigan Municipal Risk Management Authority (MMRMA) has endorsed the use of these devices by police departments they insure. Furthermore, Michigan Municipal Risk Management Authority's "Risk Avoidance Program" (RAP) has 50/50 post-purchase funding reimbursement available for qualified member police departments, sheriff departments and public safety agencies seeking to purchase TASER devices. Our Department will be complying with the necessary qualification standards set forth by (MMRMA) prior to implementing this program.

Again, this is another step forward by our department in continuing to reduce the risk of injury to an officer and the person being subdued and ultimately could be a life saving technique by having another option in controlling potentially violent situations without using lethal force.

Sgt. Gregory M. Laurain  
Patrol Division Supervisor  
Western Wayne Co. Special Operations Team Commander

### Boaters Safety Class

Before you go out on the water this year, learn the fundamentals of boater safety. A person 12 but less than 14 may operate a personal watercraft if he or she has obtained a boating safety certificate before January 1, 1999.

Persons born after December 31, 1978 shall not operate a personal watercraft unless they obtain a boating safety certificate.



**Saturday, February 28**  
**Saturday, March 27**  
**Saturday, April 24**



**9:00 a.m. - 3:00 p.m. \$5.00 per person**

**Must bring:** Social Security Card for certification  
Lunch will be provided. **Registration is necessary!!!**



[www.belleville.lib.mi.us](http://www.belleville.lib.mi.us)

**New Hours:** Mon-Thurs 10:00 a.m. - 9:00 p.m.  
Fri & Sat 10:00 a.m. - 5:00 p.m.

### Family Reading and Science Program

Representatives from the Exhibit Museum of Natural History at U of M will conduct three hands-on programs at the library this winter. Parents and children ages 6-11 will have fun together exploring this year's theme of Wildlife Biodiversity. Participants will learn how to identify animal tracks, create take-home projects to make backyards more welcoming to wildlife, and learn what can be done to help protect wildlife in Michigan. Prizes will be awarded for children who complete a reading log during the program. Registration begins on January 12, 2004. Space is limited. Call the library for more information or to register.

Saturday, January 24, 3:00 p.m. **"Tracks and Traces"**  
Saturday, February 21, 3:00 p.m. **"Habitat Home"**  
Saturday, March 27, 3:00 p.m. **"What We Can Do"**

### Winter Story Times

Story Time registration begins Tuesday, January 20, 2004.

**Preschool Story Time** (Ages 3 1/2 - 6) - Enjoy five programs of stories, poems, and crafts at the library:

Mondays, 7:00 p.m. February 2 - March 1  
Wednesdays, 2:00 p.m. February 4 - March 3

**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:

Thursdays, 10:30 a.m. February 5 - March 4  
Thursdays, 11:15 a.m. February 5 - March 4

### Friends of the Library

Used Book Sale - Saturday, Feb. 7, 12:00 p.m. - 4:00 p.m.  
Used Book Sale - Saturday, May 1, 12:00 p.m. - 4:00 p.m.

Visit the Friends' website for further information:  
<http://www.belleville.lib.mi.us/friends.htm>

### Fred Was Fifty!

The celebrations for the fiftieth anniversary of the Fischer Library were a huge success! Over 220 people of all ages attended the party on November 8. They joined Beverly Meyer in a sing-along, and danced to the cool, bluesy beats of the Steve Nardella Band.

The library staff thanks all of the volunteers who contributed to make this celebration a true community event.



Director Debra Green lights the candles on the Fischer Library's birthday cake (Photo by William Zilke, *The View*).

### Have You Read a Good Book Lately?

Have you ever been so excited about that book that you wanted to share your thoughts about it with others?

Join the Fischer Library's book discussion club. The group meets at the library at 7:30 p.m. on the first Thursday of the month. All are welcome to attend (registration is not necessary).

**January 8, 2004:** *Ishmael*, by Daniel Quinn

**February 5, 2004:** *Theodore Roosevelt: A Strenuous Life*, by Kathleen Dalton.

### Back By Popular Demand

Join genealogist Ginger Bruder on a trip of discovery into your past. A three week genealogy workshop will be offered at the library on Thursdays at 7:00 p.m., February 12, 19 and 26, 2004. A field trip to the Burton Historical Library (at the Detroit Public Library) will be scheduled for Saturday afternoon, February 28.

Week One (Feb. 12): **Introduction to Genealogy**

Week Two (Feb. 19): **Vital Records**

Week Three (Feb. 26): **Internet Tools**

Call or stop by the library to sign up for this free program.  
Fred C. Fischer Library (734) 699-3291.

**Library History: 1992-2003**

The expanded library brought an expanded budget, bringing library expenditures per person from 25% of the state average to 50% of the state average. Library use doubled within three years of the addition. Slowly but surely we increased the book budget and collection size while adding multimedia collections such as music CD's, books on tape and CD, and DVD movies. In 1996, we were able to provide public Internet access on four computer stations thanks to another Rotary Cozadd grant. Internet use has increased every month and we now have a total of thirteen public Internet computers and two processing computers.

The bare bones budget that we stayed within during the construction and the following years has slowly evolved to where we could re-roof the original 1953 building, replace a worn out heating and cooling unit, and furnish office work space. The incremental improvements were difficult to achieve with funding from general funds of the City of Belleville and the Townships of Sumpter and Van Buren. Each year's budget increase was kept to an absolute minimum as we were always aware of each community's financial limit.

The library struggled to maintain quality service with an operating budget of half the state average, spending one long hot summer unable to replace the failed air conditioning unit. In 2000, the TriCommunity Library Committee took on the task of evaluating the 1992 agreement to find a way to better fund the library. After studying various formulas, first the Library Committee, then each of the three communities, voted for a new agreement. The resulting agreement changed the funding formula from one based only on library use to a three part formula equally based on use, population, and state equalized value.

This new formula has resulted in enough funding to add a librarian as well as additional programs including tot time, book discussions, and genealogy workshops. We have also upgraded our computers, our telecommunications line, and added computer workstations. The 2002-03 budget brought morning hours on Saturday, and the 2003-04 budget brought a 20% increase in library hours, bringing the total hours open to 58 hours a week with 6 days of morning hours and 4 days of evening hours. We are also adding a new stack of shelving to hold our expanding book collection as well as new units to house our burgeoning media collection. With this new shelving and the additional computers, this building is now full and soon will be bursting at the seams.

**Belleville Area Museum**

405 Main Street

**Hours:**

Tuesday - Saturday 12:00 p.m. - 4:00 p.m.

**Closed Holiday Weekends**

**Admission:**

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

**Tours By Appointment (734) 697-1944**



**Historical Society Meetings**

**January 15, 2004 at 7:00 p.m.**

*Program:*

**Jane Carr on Coming to Michigan  
Via the Erie Canal**

**February 19, 2004 at 7:00 p.m.**

*Program:*

**Nancy Lautenbach "Hats as Wearable Art"**

All Historical Society Meetings are held at the Belleville Area Museum. The programs are free and the public is welcome to attend.

**Festival of Holiday Trees**



Belleville Area Historical Society Tree

The Eighth 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 were on display. The museum also hosted the City of Belleville's tree-lighting ceremonies on December 5 and a Children's Christmas Ornament Workshop on December 20.

## Recreation Program Winter 2004

### 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

### Break out with CULTURE Spring Break Camp

Spring Breakers, are you ready to have a week filled with culture? Don't be left in the dust playing video games or surfing the net.

April 12 - April 16

10:00 a.m. - 4:00 p.m., get a culture shock.

Everyday meet at the community center at 10:00 a.m. Recreation staff will take your youth to various museums and art centers throughout the area.

\$99.00 per Van Buren youth, \$114.00 non-resident youth (Bring a bag lunch everyday) 10 participant min., 20 participant max.

Parents please make sure youth are dropped off and picked up on time.

### 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 17 - March 23**

**Tuesdays, April 20 - May 25**



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

VB Resident = \$30.00 Non-Resident = \$35.00

### Movie Bound Minors

Parents, want to get rid of those crazy kids for an evening?

Tired of taking the kids to the movies to find yourself fighting the crowds to stand in line all to watch some silly movie your kids want to see? Well just forget about it, and let the recreation department take your youth to the movies.

Once a month the rec. dept. will take your kids in the rec. mobile to the movies. Movies will range from PG/PG-13 and parent signature will be required for any youth to see PG-13 movies.

**Ages for this program are 12-15**

**Van Buren student = \$12.00 per movie**  
**Non-Resident student = \$14.00 per movie**

which includes, supervision,  
transportation and movie.

Call the week before the trip for  
movie and time.

**Every fourth Friday of each month:**

January 23, February 27, March 26,  
and April 23.

**Need 7 kids to go**  
**Maximum of 14 kids**

**Pre-Marshmallow Drop  
Pancake Breakfast**

Saturday, April 3  
8:30 a.m. - 10:30 a.m.  
Community Center Gymnasium



Join us before the Marshmallow Drop for pancakes, sausage, coffee and juice. Tickets will be available in advance. Get your picture with Buster Bunny for \$2.00

**Adults = \$5.00**

**Child = \$5.00**  
(includes admission to Marshmallow Drop)

**Marshmallow Drop**



Saturday, April 3  
10:00 a.m.

**Rain Date:**

Sunday, April 4  
1:30 p.m.

Thousands of marshmallows will be dropped from a helicopter to be turned in for candy!

- 1st Drop:** Walking Toddlers - 4 years - 10:00 a.m.
- 2nd Drop:** 5-7 years - 10 minutes after the 1st drop.
- 3rd Drop:** 8-10 - 10 minutes after the 2nd drop.

Van Buren Township softball field located in the back of the Township Hall at 46425 Tyler Road.

**\*\* Times are approximate \*\***

**Cost: \$2.00 per child**

For further information, please contact the Recreation Department at (734) 699-8921.

Businesses interested in donating candy, please contact Meghan Mutch at (734) 699-8921.

**Make It & Take It**

Searching for all those creative youth who want to make an art project and take it home. Every other Tuesday 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.

**January 20, February 3, February 17, March 2, March 16, April 6, and April 20.**

**Ages for the program are 7-11.**

Please wear appropriate clothing for this program. Projects can get messy.

**\$40.00 if you sign up for all seven classes or \$10.00 a class.**  
Save big money by signing up for all seven classes.

Please register a week prior to each class.

**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.



**Mondays & Wednesdays**  
**10:00 a.m. - 12:00 p.m.**

Van Buren Residents = \$2.00/child  
Non-Residents = \$3.00/child

**Awesome Adventures -  
Winter**

**Youth ages 8-12**  
**Teen ages 13-15**

This winter will offer a series of recreational activities. Activities including indoor rock climbing, cross country skiing, downhill skiing, tobogganing, ice skating and snowshoeing. Please check our website or contact Meghan Mutch at (734) 699-8921 for more information. Space is limited!

### March 1st Open Registration for all Camps



**First Session:** June 14 - July 9  
**Second Session:** July 12 - August 6

**Day Camp:** (ages 7-10) Held at Van Buren Park  
 Van Buren Resident = \$220 Non-Resident = \$235

**Tween Camp:** (ages 11-12) Held at Van Buren Park  
 Van Buren Resident = \$220 Non-Resident = \$235

**Club Teen:** (ages 13-15) Held at the Community Ctr.  
 Van Buren Resident = \$240 Non-Resident = \$255

**Tot Camp:** (ages 4-6) Held at Quirk Park  
 Van Buren Resident = \$185 Non-Resident = \$200

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

**Introducing a new camp for "inbetweeners", Tween Camp** for 11-12 year olds. This camp will be a mixture of activities from day and teen camp. \$220 per tween.

For an additional fee we are introducing another feature to our camp program. **For an extra \$100.00 per session, per camper** you can drop your camper off at the Community Center at 8:00 a.m. (that's only \$5.00 a day.) Camp staff will be on hand to supervise your camper before the bus comes to pick them up to take them to Van Buren Park. This program will help those who do not want to leave their camper home alone waiting for the camp bus.

Please make certain that your child is dropped off no later than 9:15 a.m. at the community center. This will ensure your child won't miss the bus to camp.

### Fabulous Food/Wine Pairing

Have you ever wondered how to really appreciate the taste of wine? Come to the Bayou Grill to learn all 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.**



March 25

April 29

May 27



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**

### Ballroom Dance

Learn the basics of Beginning Ballroom Dancing. American: Foxtrot, Waltz, Swing or Disco Hustle. Latin: Cha-Cha, Tango, Mambo, Rumba, and others.

**Wednesdays, January 21 - February 25**  
**Wednesdays, March 3 - April 7**

**American Combo**  
 7:00 p.m. - 7:55 p.m.

**Latin Combo**  
 8:00 p.m. - 8:55 p.m.

**Couples Rates:**

Van Buren Residents = \$45.00  
 Non-Residents = \$60.00  
**Both Classes,**  
 Van Buren Residents = \$55.00  
**Both Classes,**  
 Non-Residents = \$70.00

**Singles Rates:**

Van Buren Residents = \$25.00  
 Non-Residents = \$40.00  
**Both Classes,**  
 Van Buren Residents = \$35.00  
**Both Classes,**  
 Non-Residents = \$50.00



### Celebrate Women's Month

Join us for a reception to celebrate the women of Van Buren Township who have been pioneers of ideas or institutions of the past and present.

**Tuesday, March 16**  
**6:00 p.m. - 7:30 p.m.**  
 (before Township Board Meeting)  
 Van Buren Township Hall

Do you know a woman who has made a difference in Van Buren Township? We want to hear her story. Please call Meghan Mutch at (734) 699-8921. (light refreshments will be served)

## 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**

<i>Name</i>	<i>Relationship</i>	<i>Phone</i>

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

## HURON RIVER INITIATIVE HELPS BELLEVILLE LAKE & SAVES MONEY

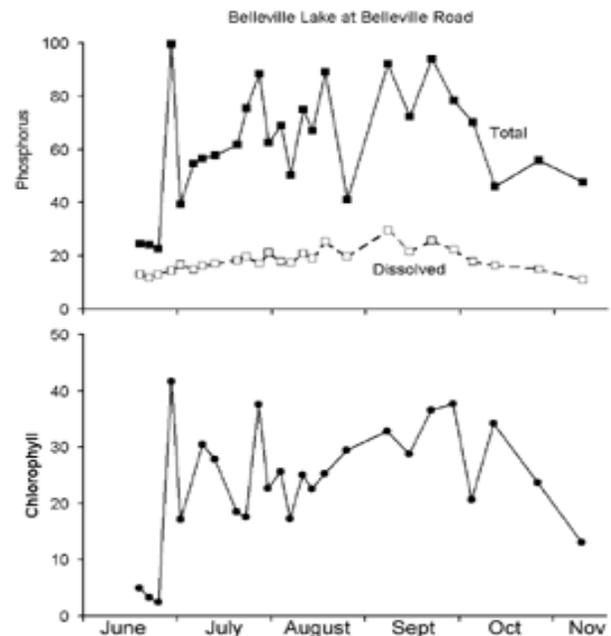
Many people do not realize that Belleville Lake is not a natural lake system; it is actually an impoundment on the Huron River formed by the French Landing Dam. Because of this fact, Belleville Lake is not only subject to land use activities that occur locally, but upstream land uses also influence it. The Huron River system flows through Southwestern Oakland County, Southern Livingston County, Northern Washtenaw County, the cities of Ann Arbor, Ypsilanti, and finally Ford Lake; before ever reaching Belleville Lake. These influences make it essential for Van Buren Township to work together with the other stakeholders in the Huron River watershed in order to address the water quality concerns in Belleville Lake.

A good example of collaboration among stakeholders is the Middle Huron River Watershed Initiative (MHRWI). The Initiative is a partnership between the State agencies, Universities, local governments, and private companies; coordinated by the Huron River Watershed Council (HRWC). The Middle Huron geographic area covers nearly 300 square miles, 16 Townships, 3 Cities, 3 Villages, and 2 Counties; roughly between Chelsea and Van Buren Township. The Initiative is now in its 7th year and has made some real-world improvements.

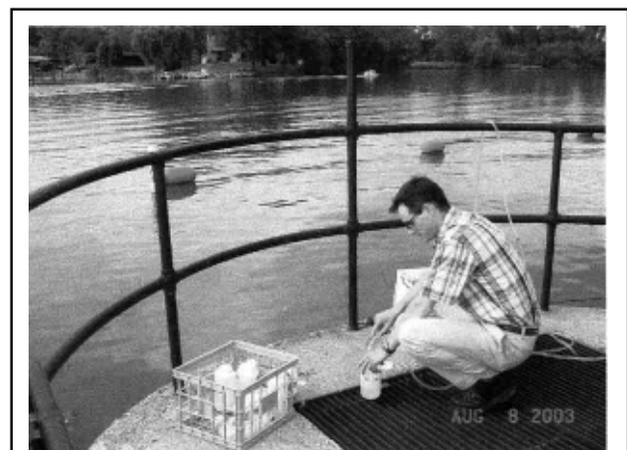
A main concern in the Middle Huron River Watershed is the nuisance algal blooms that occur in the summer months in Ford and Belleville Lakes. These blooms impair recreation activities such as swimming and water skiing and are a sign of poor water quality. The blooms are triggered by high phosphorous levels in the River and Lake waters, which originate from both point sources - discharges out the end of a pipe; and non-point sources - polluted runoff from residential lawns, pavement, agricultural fields, and many other scattered sources. Under the federal Clean Water Act, Total Maximum Daily Load (TMDL) regulations, the Michigan Department of Environmental Quality (MDEQ) was required to determine the phosphorous levels that would restore water quality in the Lakes. The TMDL study, completed in 1996, resulted in an objective of 50% phosphorous reduction.

Rather than submit to costly new regulations from the MDEQ, the communities within the Middle Huron River Watershed proposed a voluntary agreement in which they would work together with point and non-point source pollution generators to reduce the amount of phosphorous entering the Rivers and Lakes. The point sources, which are comprised of mainly municipal wastewater treatment plants, have agreed to install new technology to remove phosphorous. A few of the waste water treatment plants have already completed upgrades and are starting to see reductions in phosphorous output. The non-point source partners, like Van Buren Township, have agreed to work with their residents to reduce the level of phosphorus that runs off in the storm water.

Because non-point sources of phosphorous involve so many different land uses and activities, it is very difficult to demonstrate that small, individual actions can influence the water quality of the River and Lakes. For example, it is nearly impossible to show a Van Buren Township homeowner that by choosing a low or zero phosphorous fertilizer for their lawn, it will improve the water quality of Belleville Lake. Similarly, it is difficult to justify the time and effort of parking lot sweeping to a small business operator. However, if you multiply these little changes by over 525,000 residents in the Huron River Watershed, it can make a big impact.



Recently, the U.S. EPA awarded a three-year, \$750,000 grant to the University of Michigan researchers who are collaborating



Van Buren Township Environmental Department Intern, Matt Stone-Palmquist, collects water samples for the Middle Huron Study.

## OUT IN THE PARKS

with the Middle Huron River Watershed Initiative. The EPA is taking a fresh look at the Middle Huron River Watershed in an effort to develop new techniques to reduce nutrient levels and the associated algal blooms. Researchers currently are conducting their first field season of intensive sampling at 12 sites along the Middle Huron from Zeeb Road in Ann Arbor to Haggerty Road in Van Buren Township. They are probing the chemistry of the River system plus analyzing interactions with weather and water flow.

Dr. John Lehman, Professor of Ecology and Evolutionary Biology at the University of Michigan is heading up the project. The research team includes faculty, students, and staff from the College of Literature, Science and Arts and the School of Public Health. Van Buren Township is helping with the project by providing access to sampling sites on Belleville Lake and some in-kind services. Throughout the summer and fall, Van Buren Township staff collected weekly samples at the French Landing Dam and supplied them to Dr. Lehman's lab for analysis.

Through the watershed-wide efforts of the Middle Huron Watershed Initiative and encouraging small, individual changes by our residents and businesses at the local level, Van Buren Township hopes to maintain Belleville Lake as a safe, healthy recreational centerpiece of our community.

Dan Swallow  
Environmental Director

### VBTV 12

At VBTV 12, we pride ourselves in keeping our community informed and entertained with an information bulletin board that 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](http://www.vanburen-mi.org), for program dates and times and other information regarding our community.

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 that our community has to offer.

Ally Acosta  
Cable Operations Manager



New trees planted at Quirk Park

I don't think I'm alone when I say it seems like fall lasted all of about ten minutes, and winter is fast on its trail. Hopefully everyone had a wonderful holiday season. This past fall the soccer fields at Quirk Park got their first real tryout. All the fields came through well and have been seeded and given some work so as to be ready for the kids to return in the spring. This fall also saw the planting of several trees at Quirk Park that make up phase 1 of the plantings we have planned for the area. The trees required a little help to get through a couple of windy nights, but look nice and add a great deal to the aesthetics of the park.

In the early part of the fall we held a public meeting where we received some tremendous ideas on what citizens would like to see for the newly acquired Rigg's Heritage Park development. The meeting generated three plans created by the people in attendance and we are now in the process of synthesizing those plans into one with the help of design professionals from McKenna Associates.

The fall and winter has found the park staff busy working on our various parks so they'll look good when the warm weather returns. This is the time when maintenance, trimming and repairs from summer use take place. We're always working to make your parks in Van Buren as nice as possible.

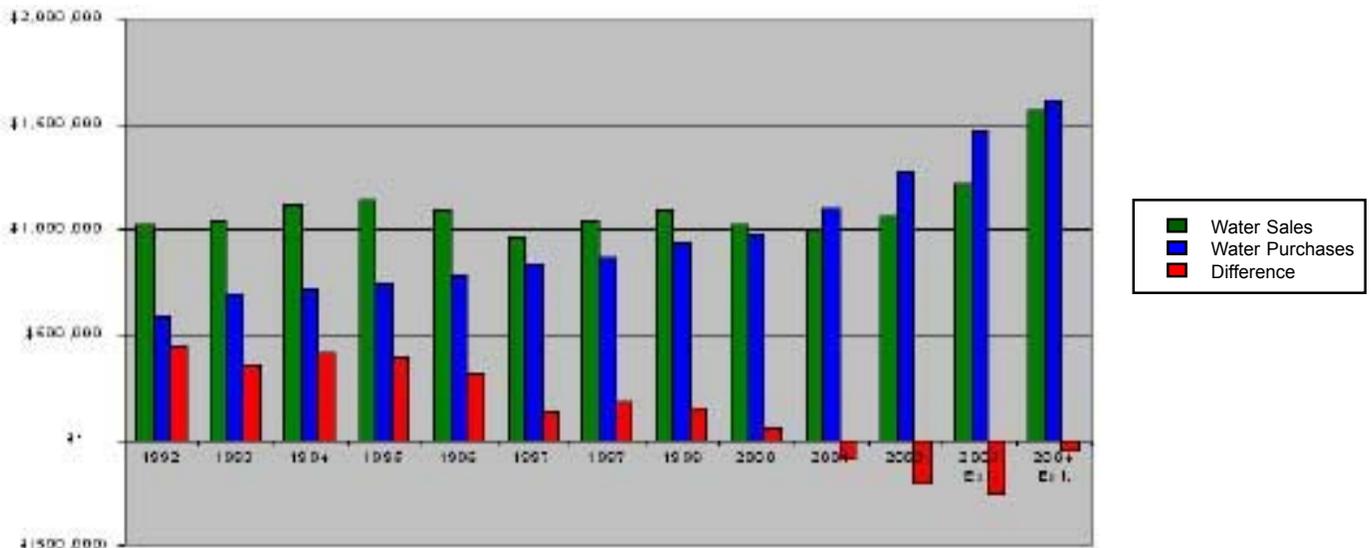
No matter the season it's great to see increased amounts of patrons using the various parks and facilities the township has to offer. The winter isn't any different. The parks are still great for sledding, hiking, building a snowman, or just enjoying the outdoors. Come enjoy yourselves, remembering to always respect each other and the facilities.

Vincent Averill  
Parks Manager

### NOTICE OF WATER & SEWER RATE INCREASE EFFECTIVE JANUARY 1, 2004

User fees, rates, and interest earnings are sources of operating revenues for Water Departments. Federal and state regulations require that these sources of revenues 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 changed by the 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 \$11.83 per 1,000 cubic feet (\$1.58 per 1,000 gallons) estimated rate for 2004, a **143% increase**. Our sewage disposal costs have increased from \$492,189 in 1992 to \$1,239,000 estimated for 2004, a **151% increase**. Our current rates to customers for water consumption and sewage disposal are \$1.37 per 1,000 gallons and \$1.36 per 1,000 gallons, respectively. It is clear that we cannot continue to sell services for less than they cost.



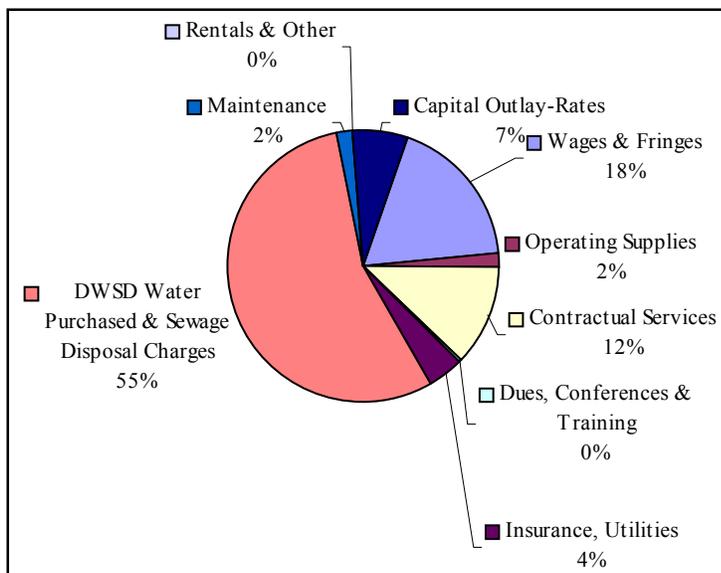
**Sewer Sales Vs. Purchases**

Until last May, 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. Two major sources of revenues that had helped to keep our rates low are less than in previous years: Interest earnings are less because of lower interest rates being earned on a much lower cash balance; tap fee revenues are also lower than in previous years.

In fact, the Detroit Water & Sewerage Department conducts an annual water and sewer rate survey of all of its customers. The rate survey compares the wholesale 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 second lowest in January 2003 in the percentage of "markup" or rates above the wholesale rates charged by Detroit. (A copy of the rate survey is available on our web site at [www.vanburen-mi.org](http://www.vanburen-mi.org) under Water Department information, or can be mailed to you by request.) This extremely low "markup" cost does not provide adequate funding for our costs of operating the water and sewer system.

To the right is a chart showing the Water Department's estimated operation and maintenance expenses for 2004. 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 18% of the total.

As our customers were advised in a mailing last April, 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 approved the Commission recommendation to increase rates effective January 1, 2004 from \$1.37 to \$1.65 per 1,000 gallons for water consumption and from \$1.36 to \$1.50 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):

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.

**NOTICE OF WATER & SEWER RATE INCREASE**

Continued on Page Twenty

## BUILDING, PLANNING & ORDINANCE SERVICES

***“Turn right down the corridor just inside the main doors to the Township offices and it’s the first counter on the right, just below the words “Developmental Services.”***

These directions or some facsimiles are given each and every day to people who want to do anything from **build a deck on the back of their home, report overgrown weeds on a parcel of land or develop a corporate village to house the second largest Tier 1 automotive supplier in the world.**

The Building, Planning & Ordinance divisions of the Department of Developmental Services, like other divisions/departments in Van Buren Township, are here to serve as well as provide service to **YOU**. **YOU** means all citizens, residents, business owners and other persons interested in moving to and/or developing in our community. The Department staff is a professional group that welcomes your questions and is trained to interact with and provide information to **YOU**.

Our staff is here to explain the various zoning and building regulations, inspect and monitor the numerous sites under development, issue building and trade permits, provide information on developments in the Township, police and enforce zoning ordinances and do it in a manner that is as understandable and as direct as possible to **YOU**.

These divisions are responsible to review and manage the technical and physical aspects of building and development under the jurisdiction of the Township’s Zoning Ordinances and Building Codes. Technical and physical aspects include zoning compliance and enforcement, storm water management, landscaping, planning and building plan review, the issuance of building permits and performance of field inspections. And as with any service organization, especially a government service agency, there are a myriad of other items and problems that arise in the normal course of business that our staff is generally able to help, investigate and work through with **YOU**.

We report to the Township Supervisor and serve the Board of Trustees, the Planning Commission, the Board of Zoning Appeals and the Board of Construction Appeals. Further we are accountable to **YOU** the citizens, residents and business owners of the Township. The level and competency of service the Building, Planning & Ordinance division provides is our highest priority and the Department wants to hear from **YOU**.

Eleven women and men make up the Department’s staff. These eleven dedicated people want to meet **YOU**, help **YOU** and serve **YOU**.

Bryce Kelly  
Director of Planning & Economic Development

## NOTICE OF WATER & SEWER RATE INCREASE

Continued from Page Nineteen

At the same time we will continue to do more with less by utilizing efficiency and technologies:

- Outsourcing of cleaning of sanitary sewers eliminated. Since late 1999, staff is now performing this work with no increase in the number of employees.
- Discontinued furnishing and installing water taps for developers.
- Implemented a capital charge for water taps so that development “pays” for a portion of our investment in the water distribution system. Sewer tap charges have also been increased.
- Obtained a federal grant to install natural gas generators at eight of our sanitary sewer pump stations. This will increase reliability of the pump stations while reducing our costs.
- Purchased a new utility billing system that is highly automated. Once the system is implemented, we will begin replacing all of our older meters to ones that can be read using radio technology. Because of the rapid growth in customers, we would otherwise have to add billing and meter reading staff without these improvements.
- Continued to seek Federal and State grants to offset rate adjustments.

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 Duha  
Director of Water & Sewer

### Library Meetings

***The Tri-Community Library Committee*** meets the second Wednesday of each month at 2:00 p.m.

**Meeting dates:** Jan. 14, Feb. 11, Mar. 10 and Apr. 14

***The Friends of the Library*** meet on the first Saturday of each month from 9:30 a.m. - 11:00 a.m.

**Meeting dates:** Jan. 3, Feb. 7, Mar. 6 and Apr. 3

## GET UP & GET ACTIVE

Van Buren Township Parks and Recreation Department is excited to announce the approval of a \$5,000 grant from the Michigan Recreation and Parks Association. The grant will be used to implement a new recreation program called, "Get Up & Get Active." This program will provide youth with an abundance of nontraditional, physical activities as well as providing information on nutrition and staying positive. This program will take place at the Van Buren Township Recreation Department and transportation is available if needed. This program will take place every other Saturday during the summer. Youth that register with the recreation department will be transported from their homes (if needed) by the recreation department. Participants will be brought to the community center for a breakfast snack and stretching. Once we have finished with the daily inside activities, we will begin with the scheduled events. Youth will be broken into groups of two or more. A chart will be created with youth earning points so they can see how well they are performing in this program. On the last day of the program, a Fitness Day will be implemented for the registered youth and their families. This day will be filled with physical activities, healthy picnic foods and awards for all participants.

Scheduled events will vary each Saturday with such activities as our newly developed Vita Course at Quirk Park, a walking scavenger hunt around the township, creating a mini garden at the recreation department, even performing in team building activities. A public health advisor will be on hand to provide youth with useful nutrition information. Youth will also be able to earn points for keeping track of what activities they perform during the week as well as what they eat.

This program will definitely give youth a boost in self-esteem. Youth will be able to meet new people or "hang out" with their existing friends. "Get Up & Get Active" will focus on the importance of staying healthy and staying positive and how to deter from the negatives of life.

This program will begin at the conclusion of the school year and end when school resumes.

Look for more information on this program in the next edition of the Van Buren Township Parks and Recreation brochure. If you have any questions about this program or others, please call Recreation Manager Jennifer Morris at (734) 699-8921.

Jennifer Morris  
Recreation Manager

## Mother/Son Hoedown



**Friday, May 14**  
**7:00 p.m. - 9:00 p.m.**  
Van Buren Community Center



Howdy! Grab your lil' partner (child) and join us for our annual Mother/Son dance. Enjoy a western hoedown with dancing, food, fun, and a special gift for the both of you. Grandmothers, aunts, and big sisters welcome. Western attire recommended but not required. **A keepsake photo will be available for \$2.00.**

**\*\* Purchase your tickets before Friday, April 30 and be entered to win a half-day Salon Package at Charisma Salon.**

Van Buren Residents = \$15.00 per couple  
Non-Residents = \$20.00 per couple

Please register early, **SPACE IS LIMITED!!!**  
(Prepayment with advanced registration is required)

### 9-1-1

Continued from Page Five

If reporting a crime, be ready to describe any suspects or vehicles involved. For suspects, try to have a good description including race, sex, height, weight, hair color/length, facial hair and clothing description, as well as direction of travel. For vehicles, try to remember make, model, year, color, direction of travel and license plate if possible. Try to get as much information as possible, but do not put yourself in danger.

9-1-1 has been successful in saving countless lives. This is not only because of dispatchers, police officers, firefighters and medics. Undoubtedly, it can also be contributed to those who knew what to do when faced with an emergency. Remember to educate your children on 9-1-1 and if you would like, call and set up an appointment for you and your child's class or group to come in for a tour of the emergency services facilities in your community - we would welcome you to come in for a visit.

Rob Martin, Dispatcher  
Van Buren Public Safety

## TRASH GUIDELINES:

### Homeowners of Brand New Homes:

Please call the Community Services Department 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.**

### Damaged Containers:

Broken or damaged containers supplied by Waste Management may be replaced or repaired if necessary. Please 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 (734) 292-0800 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:

As holidays arrive the trash schedule is subject to change. Always set out your trash on your normal day. Waste Management will try to do two days in one in order to catch up the routes. We frequently receive calls when residents have not set their trash out on their normal day expecting Waste Management to be a day behind. The only day in which trash is collected a day later is for those whose trash day falls on the actual holiday **not those that are the day following.**

### 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!!**

### 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.

**COMPOST GUIDELINES:**



**\*\*ATTENTION HOMEOWNERS \*\***



**Compost pick up ended the last week in November.  
Pick up will resume the first full week in April.**

During the time period from November to April compost will not be picked up at curbside and cannot be taken to the landfill. Homeowners must store left over compost until pick up resumes in April when the landfill accepts compost.



If you have any questions, please contact the Community Services Department at (734) 699-8926.



\*\* Compost Guidelines will be included in the Spring 2004 Edition of the *Lake Ledger* \*\*

**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 9th Annual

# Daddy/Daughter Dance

Friday, February 13 and Saturday, February 14  
7:00 p.m. - 9:00 p.m.

 **Van Buren Community Center**   
(Princess Theme)

Purchase tickets before Friday, January 30 and be entered to win a limousine ride to and from the dance. (Limo provided by A-One Limousine)

Join us for a night of fairy tale endings for you and your daughter. Show your princess just how special she is with an enchanted evening of dancing, food, fun and a special gift for both of you. This year will be a princess theme. Princess attire for girls is recommended but not required. Grandfathers, uncles and big brothers are welcome.

**Van Buren Residents = \$15.00 per couple  
\$5.00 each additional child**

**Non-Residents = \$20.00 per couple  
\$5.00 each additional child**

**A keepsake photo will be available for \$2.00**

(Prepayment with advanced registration is required)  
**SPACE IS LIMITED!!!**

## Township Meetings

**Board Meetings:**  
1st & 3rd Tuesdays 7:30 p.m.

**Work Study Meetings:**  
1st & 3rd Mondays 4:00 p.m.

**Environmental Commission:**  
2nd Wednesday 7:00 p.m.

**Planning Commission:** 2nd  
& 4th Wednesdays 7:30 p.m.

**Water/Sewer Commission:**  
4th Monday 7:00 p.m.

**Downtown Devel. Authority:**  
2nd Tuesday 5:30 p.m.

**Local Devel. Finance Authority:**  
2nd Tuesday 2:00 p.m.

**Cable Commission:**  
2nd Thursday 7:00 p.m.  
(Meets January, March,  
May, July, Sept & Nov,  
changes will be posted)

**Board of Zoning Appeals:**  
2nd Tuesday 7:00 p.m.

**Public Safety Committee:**  
2nd Tuesday 5:30 p.m.

**Recreation Committee:**  
2nd Tuesday 7:30 p.m.

**Endowment Committee:**  
2nd Tuesday 1:00 p.m.

## Board of Trustees

**Cindy C. King** ([cking@vanburen-mi.org](mailto:cking@vanburen-mi.org))  
Supervisor . . . . . 699-8910

**Joannie D. Payne** ([jpayne@vanburen-mi.org](mailto:jpayne@vanburen-mi.org))  
Clerk . . . . . 699-8909

**Sharry A. Budd** ([sbudd@vanburen-mi.org](mailto: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

Copyright 1991. Van Buren Township permission is granted to reproduce with recognition given.

### Editor:

Christina Harman  
Community Services Department

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