

BOARD OF TRUSTEES

Marilyn Fleis Supervisor
(231)276-9263
 Betty A. Tharp Clerk
(231)276-9263
 Brenda DeKuiper Treasurer
(231)276-9263
 Stacey Clous Trustee
(231)263-5992
 Mike Rademaker Trustee
(231)943-3044
 Roger Zeits Trustee
(231)276-9545
 Joe Lowe Trustee
(231)943-4354

BLAIR TOWNSHIP

Working together for a great community



WINTER NEWSLETTER 2007

"Happy 140th Birthday Blair Township"

1867 - 2007

MEETINGS

Township Board
 2nd Tuesday of every month at
 6:00 p.m. (except July 2:00 pm)

Planning Commission
 1st Wednesday of every month at
 6:00 p.m.

Zoning Board of Appeals
 2nd Wednesday of every month at
 6:00 p.m.

The public is welcome to attend all meetings.

OFFICE HOURS

Tuesday - Friday
7:30 a.m. - 6:00 p.m.

*Closed
Mondays & Weekends*

Holiday Schedule

2007 - 2008 Fiscal Year

Offices Closed:

New Year's Day

Memorial Day (observed)

Independence Day

Labor Day

Thanksgiving Day

Day After Thanksgiving

Christmas Eve

Christmas Day

Township Offices

will be closed on

all Election Days

SPECIAL NOTICE

TOWNSHIP OFFICES

CLOSED ON

ALL ELECTION DAYS

Recent remodeling in the Township Hall and Township Offices has given the Township Board no choice but to change the way we do business on Election Days. The overcrowding and the need for space in offices has forced the Township Board to relocate the Clerks, Zoning, Assessing and Water Office. Relocating Offices into a section of the Township Hall means we cannot permit interference of conducting the Election process and doing daily business in the same area. We are sorry for the inconvenience. Regular business hours will resume on the next scheduled business day.

BLAIR TOWNSHIP

2121 County Rd 633
Grawn, MI 49637

GENERAL INFORMATION

(231) 276-9263

WEBSITE

www.blairtownship.org

Alert!

The Township is using new user friendly email addresses.

Supervisor@blairtownship.org

Clerk@blairtownship.org

Treasurer@blairtownship.org

Zoning@blairtownship.org

Assessor@blairtownship.org

Water@blairtownship.org

EMS@blairtownship.org

Fire@blairtownship.org

Important Phone Numbers

Blair Township 231-276-9263
Blair Township Fax 231-276-5111
Water Office 231-276-0374

All Emergencies Dial - 9 1 1

POLICE * FIRE * EMERGENCY SERVICES

Police Office 231-276-7641

Non Emergency/General Info 231-995-5000

Medical Director Office 231-276-9354



Are you over 50?
Join the

Traverse City Senior Center

Did you know Blair Township contributed \$2,565 this year towards the Traverse City Senior Center for our Senior Citizens? If you are 50 years and over you can take advantage of a reduced membership. As a resident of Blair Township your membership dues are reduced to only \$15 annually. As a member you can enjoy many exciting activities in many Programs & Classes such as Exercise, Computers, Knitting, Chess, & more. You may enjoy Entertainment such as Dances, Cards, Birthdays, Dining Out, or Noon Meals Daily. Other highlights are Wellness Programs of Shuffleboard, Tennis, Golf, Massages, Reflexology and Support Services and Groups. Enjoy the Special Events from the Senior Games Expo, Veterans USO, and a Dinner Dance. Trips are planned locally, state side and over seas. There are many more events taking place. Newsletters are mailed bi-monthly to registered members. The Senior Center meets the social, recreational, and educational needs of adult members in an environment that is fun, safe, inclusive and courteous for all participants and guests. Contact the Senior Center today by calling (231) 922-4911.

New Voter Identification Requirement in Effect

Due to recent court ruling, every Michigan voter who offers to vote in the polls must comply with the requirement by showing picture Identification or by signing an affidavit attesting that he or she is not in possession of picture identification. (See MCL 168.523 for picture identification requirement)

Voters with picture identification: Voters can satisfy the picture identification requirement by showing a Michigan driver's license or a Michigan personal identification card.

Voters who do not possess either document may show any of the following forms of picture identification as long as they are current:

- Driver's license or personal identification card issued by another state.
- Federal or state government-issued photo identification.
- U.S. passport.
- Military identification card with photo.
- Student identification with photo from a high school or an accredited institution or higher education.
- Tribal identification card with photo.

Voters without picture identification: Michigan election law anticipates that not all voters will have picture identification. Voters who do not bring picture identification to the polls or do not possess picture identification can vote like any other voter by signing an affidavit.

A GREAT BIG THANK YOU

Blair Township wishes to thank life long township residents Elmer and Rose Schmuckal for donating the land along M-37 for the pump station project. Under Mr. Schmuckal's request the township will be improving the balance of the property for a walking and hiking trail to encourage area schools to utilize by identifying the trees and to make it an educational experience. The trail should be completed in the spring of 2008.

IS YOUR MAILBOX READY FOR WINTER?

Helpful Hints

*Is the wood board your mailbox is sitting on in good condition? Wood rots over time and a deteriorated board is a major cause of your mailbox landing in your front yard from the snow coming off the plow.

* Are the nails to the board loose? If so, it can become a projectile.

* How about the wood post in the ground? Again, an old wood post may be rotten or that one small knot in it may become the place where the post "splits."

* A simple check: If you can physically jiggle your mailbox installation and it "gives" a little, it will give out when the snow and ice removal season is here.

The Road Commission does not replace mailboxes and posts if they are damaged from snow and/or ice coming off from the plow as a result of snow removal. It is up to the landowner.

RENT THE PAVILION

Interested in renting out the Park Pavilion? There is a \$50.00 daily rental fee and a \$25.00 (refundable deposit) beginning January 1, 2008 for the guaranteed use of the Pavilion located in the Township Park. Picnic Tables, Restrooms and Electricity available. Please contact the Treasurer's Office for more details and availability. Call Brenda or Lynette at (231)276-9263 ext. 2.



RECYCLE SMART

Recycle Hotline: (231)941-5555

New drop-off recycling site is opening December 3, 2007 at 3770 Blair Townhall Rd next to the Northwestern Michigan Fairgrounds. The new site will be open 24/7 and will be in addition to the other 7 drop-off sites located throughout Grand Traverse County.

PASSPORTS

The Grand Traverse County Clerk's office accepts passport applications Monday through Friday, 8:00 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. The state department website has application information and forms that you can access at: www.travel.state.gov

SUPERVISOR'S CORNER

Dear Township Residents,

Things are moving along smoothly here in the township. We have added some much needed office space in the building. The Assessing, Zoning, and Water Departments will now be in the back of the building in the township hall located by the Supervisors' office. You will find them by entering the side door entrance to the Township Hall. The Clerk will then be moving into the former Zoning office.

The asphalt in the parking lot at the township has been seal coated. It was long over due. The township board felt it needed to be done as problems were worsening with the cracks. What a difference it has made. The Township Hall is showing its age. It was built in 1980 and maintenance repairs are inevitable.

I am hoping for a good old-fashioned winter. Please stay warm and safe. I hope you enjoy the winter. If you have any concerns or ideas feel free to call me here at (231) 276-9263 or at my home (231) 943-4074.

Marilyn A. Fleis
Supervisor

BLAIR COMMUNITY PLAYGROUND PROJECT

As most of you may have noticed, we were able to get the 5-12 year-old play structure up, however it is not ready to be played on. We had a couple of weeks of setbacks and then the rain came. In order for us to be able to install the rubberized tiles we needed at least four to five days with no possibility of rain and temperatures that would not go below 40 degrees for any length of time. Needless to say we will be installing the tiles come spring. If you would like to help with the installation please call me at 276-9263 ext. 102 and I will take your name and phone number so I can let you know when we have a date set.

I would like to send out a special thank you to all the wonderful businesses and residents that helped us to complete the second phase of the Blair Community Playground Project. Remember it is handicap accessible, so please let people you know, know about this wonderful community public park. There is more wonderful equipment planned, but when it gets put in will depend on when we raise the funds for it. I am continuing to write grants, but we also need your help and donations to complete all that is planned to give everyone a wonderful place to socialize and have fun.

The second annual Community Family Fun Day in the Park was a great success. We are planning a ribbon cutting ceremony sometime in late May or early June of 2008 for the 5-12 year-old structure and may have the Third Annual Community Family Fun Day in the Park at that time. Remember though this will depend on if the weather cooperates with us to be able to get the rubberized tiles in to complete the project.

We collect cans and bottles anytime at the township hall in the treasurer's office as donations towards the playground project. Monetary donations are also accepted, needed and much appreciated. Your name will be on a plaque for donations of \$10.00 or more when the project is complete. A dollar from each resident would go a long way in being able to complete the project ASAP. Checks can be made out to **Blair Township Playground Project** and sent to **2121 County Rd 633, Grawn, MI 49637** Remember, TOGETHER WE CAN BUILD IT! I hope everyone has a Happy Holiday and a very prosperous New Year!
Brenda DeKuiper, Township Treasurer (*Playground Chairperson*)

BATTALION 5 CORNER

The cooler temperatures bring many fire safety concerns. Some ideas to keep your home safe from fire include getting your chimneys professionally cleaned, cleaning your dryer vent ductwork, and replacing any heat tapes you may have on plumbing not protected by a heated area. Heat tapes are the cause of many fires and are commonly used on water pipes under mobile homes. They may work very well for a couple of years but thermostats often fail causing the tape to remain heated. In warmer temperatures, the increase in heat often deteriorates the insulation which melts and causes shorts in the wiring.

Daylight savings time is an excellent reminder time to change all the batteries in your smoke detectors. Detectors that are hard-wired should still have a battery for back-up so these should be changed also. While you are changing those batteries, why not test them and practice a fire drill so everyone will know how to get out in case of fire. If you do not have smoke detectors, we have ways of getting them for you. Just call the station and leave your name and number and we will ensure you are protected.

Please remember that the stove in your kitchen is not designed to heat your house or even a room in it. It is very dangerous to leave them on with the door open. One of the dangers is carbon monoxide. Carbon monoxide is a colorless, odorless, and invisible gas that is very dangerous if you are exposed to it. Along with your smoke detectors, you should have a carbon monoxide detector.

Lastly, if you are able, please help us by keeping the fire hydrant in front of your home clear of snow. This will ensure that we can use it without delay in case of fire. If you have any questions or concerns, please call the station at (231)-276-6341 and we will help.

Chief Jim Carroll

CLERK'S CORNER

Dear Residents,

As you may have heard my office is being relocated into the former Zoning office. This office has more room for the township records. We will still be there to answer all your questions but hopefully with more workable space. Lori and I are preparing for a busy year in 2008 with all the elections including the Primary and the Presidential. Please be sure to remember to vote at the township. We no longer will be using the Fire Training Center on Nimrod Road. Precinct # 1 will remain voting in the township hall. Precinct # 2, # 3, # 4 will all be voting in the Township Fire Station. We will be using three Fire Stalls in there to accommodate the three precincts. Thank you for your cooperation. If you forget where to vote please don't worry. We will have workers available in directing voters to their correct polling locations. Also, a new law is in effect. All voters must show a photo ID to obtain a ballot, otherwise an affidavit must be signed by each voter.

If you have internet access please take advantage of the election info online. Applications for Absentee Ballot requests can be printed, signed and mailed to my office.

Please call our office if you have any questions or concerns at (231) 276-9263 ext 1. Have a Happy Holiday Season.

Your Clerk,

Betty A. Tharp

Deputy Clerk Lori L. McGee

ZONING CORNER

It is that time of the year when projects are starting to get completed, remember to call the Zoning Department and County Construction Codes to get final inspections.

Decks, fences, sheds all require land use permits. Make sure you stop by the office to pick up an application or get one from www.blairtownship.org, Planning and Zoning Page.

There is a list of commonly asked questions on the web page to help get quick answers about building in Blair Township.

Commercial property owners Every new tenant requires a re-occupancy permit, even if it is the same use. Make sure to tell your new tenants to stop by the office to get the paperwork.

As always, if there are any questions feel free to call (231.276.9263 ext. 4), or to stop by or send an email zoning@blairtownship.org.

Sara Kopriva

Zoning Administrator

TREASURER'S CORNER

Dear Township Residents,

The summer sure flew by with lots going on. Water Assessment bills, Summer Taxes, over 1091 Water Bill customers, Community Family Fun Day and the second phase of the new playground. Now that things have calmed down a bit we have revised the tax and assessment bills. Please let us know what you think of the new look. We continue to work on collecting delinquent Personal Property Taxes. If you own a business in the township or live in the mobile home park and have received a notice regarding Personal Property Tax, please contact us. We hope everyone has a very Happy Holiday Season and a Joyous New Year.

Your Treasurer,

Brenda DeKuiper, *Treasurer*

Lynette Ferman, *Deputy Treasurer*

ASSESSOR'S CORNER

Just a little reminder, Mid-February your 2008 ASSESSMENT CHANGE NOTICES will be in the mail. **Please review the notice** and if you find what you think is an error, give us a call. We can be reached at (231)276-9263 ext 107 or ext 108. Mark your calendar for the March Board of Review so you may have any problems taken care of at that time.

If you would like an estimate for your 2008 taxes, please give us a call after the middle of March 2008. We should know the millage for the township by then. Have a safe and wonderful winter season, we will be out in the spring inspecting property again.

Winter Greetings from the Assessing Department,

Aaron G. Plowman, *Assessor*

Carrie H. Bautzmann, *Secretary*

Marvel Mallory, *Field Inspector*

WATER DEPARTMENT CORNER

The winter months are upon us and we would like to remind you to be sure your meter and water pipes are insulated and protected from the cold and wind. Be sure that your crawl space or skirting around your home is secure and sealed to prevent frozen pipes which could burst or the freeze plate from breaking and costing you dollars.

Just a reminder that the Blair water system is a customer read program. Please be sure to read your meter every month and report it to the water department either on your bill stub, by email, or phone in. You may leave a message with the reading, date, and address if you wish to do it after hours. The water department email; water@blairtownship.org, our phone number; (231) 276-9263 ext# 113. Please be aware that if we do not receive your water reading we will have to estimate your usage. Often times the billing program will tend to estimate higher than actual usage, especially during the colder months when usage tends to be lower. We wish you all a Happy New Year!

Lisa Guerrieri
Blair Township

Marty and Patrick (*Wade Trim*)
Operations & Maintenance

EMERGENCY SERVICES CORNER

Hello to everyone. Prevention is in the air (note the cooling weather), it is a good idea to have your furnaces checked for proper cycling and ventilation. Take time to purchase ice melt or salt for your walks and driveways, and dig out your shovels.

Safety, Safety, Safety...and let's not forget to drive for the appropriate road conditions. Leave a little bit earlier to make appointments and slow down. When you're approached by an emergency vehicle pull over to the right and move out of center turn lanes and intersections.

I would also like to take this opportunity to remind parents as well as children to practice water safety techniques at all times when around lakes and rivers. Ice thickness can vary greatly in inland waters due to changing water currents and springs.

Please feel free to stop in and have your blood pressure checked, meet all the staff or look at our equipment. Have a safe and enjoyable winter.

Daryl L. Case

Medical Director

BLAIR TOWNSHIP

140 YEARS

1867 - 2007

A NEW TOWNSHIP WAS BORN

How the township came to be

To all Whom it may Concern:

Notice is hereby given that an application will be presented to the Board of Supervisors of the County of Grand Traverse, at their meeting to be held at Traverse City on the Tenth day of April, A. D. 1867, praying them to create and provide for the organization of a new Township to be called the Township of Blair, to consist of the territory described as follows, viz: that part of town twenty six north range eleven west that lies north and east of Boardman River, it being the northeast corner of said town. A map of the survey of said territory will be presented with this application. dated at Traverse this 15th day of January, 1867. William Monroe, Macus L. Monroe, Peter N. Johnson, R. E. Stetson, Wm. M. Hess, M. B. Jennings, John D. Hess, F. R. Stevens, Abram Adsit, Theodore Monroe, Lyman H. Luke, Abel Ivory, S. A. Lardner, H. E. Wightman, Kendall Kennett, J. W. Monroe, H. W. Clyde, Thos. H. Clyde, Henry Monroe, C. F. Hadley, Geo. H. Wightman, Jacob Stadelbauer, W. J. Wolfe, E. Rice, W. Saunders.

In matter of the petition of William Monroe, and 24 others, praying for the organization of a new township comprising the following territory, to wit; Township 26 north, of range 12 west, and township 26 north, of range 11 west, excepting so much of the same as lines north and east of the Boardman River.

On motion, Resolved, That a new township be and is hereby organized comprising all of township 26 north, of range 11 west, and all of township 26 north, of range 12 west, to be known and designated as the Township of Blair, and that the first election be held on Saturday, the 27th day of April, 1867, at the house of Timothy R. Stevens, in said township, and that A. W. Wightman, Thomas H. Clyde, and Wm. N. Hess be inspectors of said election; Thom.. H. Clyde be appointed to post notices of the same.

On motion, Resolved, That this board now adjourn. Board adjourned accordingly.

Happy 140th Birthday Blair Township

FROM ALL THE ELECTED OFFICALS, STAFF & EMPLOYEES

Marilyn Fleis, Supervisor	Betty A. Tharp, Clerk	Lori L. McGee, Deputy Clerk
Brenda DeKuiper, Treasurer	Lynette Ferman, Deputy Treasurer	Joseph Lowe, Trustee
Stacey Clous, Trustee	Michael Rademaker, Trustee	Roger Zeits, Trustee
Aaron Plowman, Assessor	Carrie Bautzmann, Assessing Secretary	Marvel Mallory, Field Inspector
Sara Kopriva, Zoning Administrator	Lisa Guerrieri, Water Coordinator	Carl Bearinger, Maintenance
Daryl Case, Medical Director	Eric Somsel, Paramedic	Nicole Blonshine, EMT/Firefighter
Matthew Tallman, EMT/Firefighter	Mike Luther, Paramedic	Eric Darling, EMT/Firefighter
Grant Johnson, Paramedic	Jim Carroll, Fire Chief	Marty & Patrick, Water System

Plus all the Part-time Staff, other Boards & Commissions, and Volunteers

A BIT OF HISTORY

The first settlement in this township was made in 1859 at Monroe Center by William Monroe. This was about 12 or 13 miles south of Traverse City. His brothers soon followed and many of them bought lots in the newly platted cemetery. Some of the early settlers were here before that and are noted in the listing for the 1881 plate map.

Grawn was surrounded by a large farming area comprised of choice farm lands which were sold to the early settlers for approximately 50 cents an acre.

The township of Blair was organized by the board of supervisor's in April, 1867. The first supervisor was Thomas H. Clyde. It included what is now Green Lake Township, which split off in 1883.

Some of the settlements in Blair Township are now only names on the map. Grawn is the largest of the towns. It was platted and recorded by James R. Blackwood and was given the name Blackwood. When the Pere Marquette Railroad came through and built a station they named it Grawn Station. The name was shortened to Grawn when the village was given a post office on Oct. 19, 1890. It was then officially called Grawn. Grawn was the name of the village's most prominent citizen, Professor Charles T. Grawn. Before moving to the Traverse City area, Professor Grawn was superintendent of State Normal School at Mt. Pleasant. He resigned in 1894 to become superintendent of Traverse City Schools, a position he filled for 13 years. He was also the maternal grandfather of Michigan Governor William G. Milliken. The first postmaster was William H. Gibbs. In a description shortly after 1900 it was described as having a population of about 200 and contained a hotel, stores, blacksmith shop, harness and shoe shop. A daily stage ran from the town to Wexford Co. There was a Methodist Episcopal Church. By 1905 Grawn was on its way to becoming a fairly good-sized town. It had two sawmills, shingle mill, barber shop, drugstore, three general stores, a produce company, hardware store, saloon, millinery shop and a big two-story hotel. It's population was about 300, and still growing.

Monroe Center had the first post office on Feb. 28, 1866 with Mrs. Pauline Monroe as it's first postmistress. It operated until Aug. 30, 1910. There was a Methodist Episcopal Church. There also was an Odd Fellows Hall and Dining Room which cost \$2500.

Another small town was Slights or Sleights. It was formed around the sawmill of Kelley & Covell. It's station on the Grand Rapids & Indiana Railroad was first named Sleights. It's post office was called Slights and Charles T. Covell became its first postmaster on Mr. 3, 1893, succeeded by Walter N. Kelley on Apr. 23, 1895 and Frank S. Dean on Apr. 23, 1898. The office was moved to Keystone on Dec. 21, 1898. Keystone was a station on the Grand Rapids & Indiana Railroad in 1874. The post office was closed again on Apr. 15, 1908.

William Beitner built a lumber mill by the Boardman River in 1878 and it continued in operation until 1904. A station for the Grand Rapids & Indiana Railroad was built here in 1878 and called Beitner. A post office by that name was opened on Aug. 5, 1880 with Benjamin Hunter as its first postmaster. This office was transferred to Keystone on Oct. 9, 1883. On Feb. 1, 1893 they reopened the Beitner post office with Elsie Beitner as its postmistress. The office closed Mar. 26, 1895.