

FALLASBURG BRIDGE REPLICA

Now on Display at the Vergennes Township Hall and Municipal Offices.

Representatives of the Fallasburg Historical Society placed an important piece of history at the Vergennes Township Hall. David and Tina Cadwallader and Craig Fonger delivered this 1/25th scale replica of the Fallasburg Covered Bridge. It was built in 1994 by Dwight Nash with some of the wood reclaimed from the 1994 bridge renovation. The stand was recently built

by David Cadwallader of reclaimed wood from the Fallasburg Village along with large pieces from bridge renovations mounted on one side and architectural drawings on the other. The large pieces of bridge and the architectural drawings are gifts from the Kent County Road Commission. The display is on permanent loan from the Fallasburg Historical Society to Vergennes Township and will be viewable at the township hall during business hours. We are so excited to have this piece that represents our local history here on display!



ZONING AND PLANNING, RYAN CARRIGAN

Zoning and Planning

- As we close out 2021 there are a few reminders related to our zoning code -
 - For those living on Murray or the Flat River, temporary docks must be out of the water by December 15th. You also cannot store watercraft within 25 feet of the Flat River and must be clear of boundary lines on Murray Lake.
 - Farm animals, particularly in residential districts, require an annual permit and structures housing farm animals may not be closer than 75 feet of a boundary/property line in any zoning district. Failure to renew a permit, or obtain zoning approval for farm animal structures, is a violation and may be enforced by the township.
 - Permits for fences, pools, sheds, and other accessory structures may also need approval of a homeowner's association. If you are in a platted neighborhood you may also want to check your property deed for additional restrictions that could prohibit these structures.
- The Planning Commission (PC) and Zoning Board of Appeals (ZBA) are seeking new members for terms beginning in 2021. The ZBA is the appellate body which can grant variances for many of the setbacks, location requirements, and other portions

of the zoning code that may make it difficult to build on or use a property. The PC is responsible for the future planning and land use of our township and review projects like recently approved commercial and industrial uses on Lincoln Lake or the installation of a rural recreation facility on Foreman. These are examples of recent projects the PC, and township board, has ruled on.

Application forms and a summary of job descriptions may be obtained on the township website www.vergennestwp.org, by emailing the clerk at clerk@vergennestwp.org, or at the township offices located at 69 Lincoln Lake Ave NE, Lowell, MI 49331.

Deadline for application submission is Thursday, December 16 @ 12 p.m. noon. Applicants will be considered at the December 20, 2021 meeting of the Vergennes Township Board.

Lastly, if you ever have any questions about your property, and what you can or cannot build on it, please don't hesitate to contact the township at zoning@vergennestwp.org.

Thank you and have a wonderful holiday season!

Vergennes Township

A Place Where People Like to Live
www.vergennestwp.org



69 Lincoln Lake Ave. NE., P.O. Box 208, Lowell, MI 49331 897-5671 Hours: M, W, – 9–3, Th – 9–Noon

WINTER 2021

SUPERVISOR: TIM WITTENBACH
TREASURER: JANINE MORK
CLERK: SHANTELL FORD
TRUSTEES: RICK GILLETT
DUANE RASCH

*Township Board Meetings are held the third Monday of every month at 7:00 P.M. in the Township Hall.
Planning Commission Meetings are held quarterly at 7:00 P.M. in the Township Hall.*

CLERK'S CORNER

by Shantell Ford, Vergennes Township Clerk

As 2021 wraps up we look back and ahead at so many things This has been a very busy year here at the township offices as we've watched the new building double in size as the office wing was added. We are in, and are now unpacking! The old building will be available for sale soon. Elsewhere in this newsletter is information on its former life as a Grange Hall. We are excited to announce that we will be hosting an open house here at 69 Lincoln Lake Ave NE on Saturday, January 29 from 9-11 a.m. Mark your calendars!

Elections

This year two elections were held in Vergennes Township. August 3 was the Special Primary, and November 2 was the Special General Election. I am so thankful for the Election Inspectors who worked this year. August workers were Barb Porter, Ivan Reynolds, Kate Dernocoeur, Kennedy Mebert, Katie Ford, Laura Becker, Keegan Mebert, Nathan Bush, Stephen Johnson and Marjorie Mayhew. November workers were Barb Porter, Kate Dernocoeur, Katie Ford, Erik Berrington, Catherine Swanstrom, Marjorie Mayhew, Stephen Johnson, Keegan Mebert, Stephanie Boerman, Aric Newsted and Dale Kropf. I especially want to thank Deputy Clerk Paula Thiel and former Clerk Heather Hoffman!

Applications are always accepted for the job of Election Inspector. To find an application go to www.vergennesstwp.org, click on 'Elections' and follow the link there. Simply print the application, and return the completed application by mail, drop box, or email clerk@vergennestwp.org.

Redistricting Information

Redistricting due to the 2020 census is nearly done. State and County officials have redrawn district lines within the state and county. This may affect precincts within the township. If your voting precinct or districts change you will receive a new ID card in the mail.

Blessings,
~Shantell

Goodbyes are always hard, even when there's excitement for new opportunities! The Township has been so blessed to have been served by Building Official and Inspector Mark Fleet for 17 years! The township is very grateful for the knowledge and experience that Mark has brought to the building department. Best wishes to Mark and his family ~ blessings on a very happy retirement!

Continued on next page!

Rentals

The Board/Community room including kitchen is available for rentals. The rental policy and application are available on the township website at www.vergennestwp.org.

Drop Box

Have you found our new drop box? Any documents or payments (no cash please!) can be left in our locked drop box in front of the flag pole. It is checked multiple times on days the offices are open and ALWAYS at tax and election deadlines.

FROM THE TREASURER, JANINE MORK

Winter taxes are due Monday, February 14, 2022. The treasurer will be in the office until 5 pm to collect taxes. Any payments received by 5 pm on the 14th, either in office, drop box or in the mail, will be considered on time. Payments received after that should add 3% to the balance owed. PLEASE, review your check to make sure the amount is correct, both in the box and written words. Any errors will result in a delay posting your payment. If it happens close to the due date, your payment may be considered late and will have a 3% charge added to the amount due.

If you mail your taxes via USPS, allow at least 14 days for the payment to arrive in the Township office. Postmarks are not accepted as an "on time" payment. This means it should be in the mail by the 1st of February. It is recommended that you drop your check off in the township drop box or bring it into the office during open hours. Credit/debit cards or e-checks are accepted to pay taxes. There is a fee which goes directly to the administering company. The Township only gets the tax amount. This option is available online, in office or on the phone. The last day to pay taxes online is February 23, 2022.

If you choose an online bill pay option through your bank, please be aware that those payments are

mailed to us via USPS. It is not an ACH transaction that is electronically transferred. Allow extra time for your payment to get to our office.

Partial payments can be made toward your tax bill through February 28, 2022. Anything owing after that will be turned over to Kent County for collection. Any interest or penalties will be accrued on the unpaid balance only.

If your mortgage company is paying your taxes through an escrow account, you will receive white, information only, bill in the mail. Follow up at least a week before the due date to ensure the bill was paid. This allows time to correct any errors or omissions. It is ultimately YOUR responsibility to make sure the taxes are paid timely. You can check for payment through the website, www.Vergennestwp.org. The mortgage companies send payments within two weeks of the due date.

Add your phone number to the remittance part of the bill. This makes it so much easier to contact you if there is an issue with your payment. This information is not kept on file in the Township.

Any taxes remaining unpaid on March 1, 2022 will be turned over to the Kent County Treasurer for collection.

BUILDING DEPARTMENT

With the retirement of Building Official and Inspector Mark Fleet, the Township Board voted to hire Cascade Township Building Department to run the building department for Vergennes. Currently Cascade already issues permits and performs inspections on all of the Township's Mechanical, Electrical, and Plumbing permits.

The goal is beginning December 1 residents who need a building permit can expect to fill out a 'Cascade' permit here or from our website, drop off all required items here, and fill out a

separate zoning permit with a separate fee. Our Zoning Administrator will do the normal zoning review. Next, Cascade will pick up the packet of information and will contact residents with any questions, or to notify you when the permit is approved.

All building questions and inspections will be handled and scheduled by Cascade Township. We look forward to continued excellent service and resident care that we have received from Cascade Township.

A LOOK BACK

The building at 10381 Bailey is the old Vergennes Grange Hall. The Vergennes Grange was formed in January of 1874 with 65 members. The first officers were Morgan Lyon as the 'Master' and J. W. Walker as 'Secretary'.

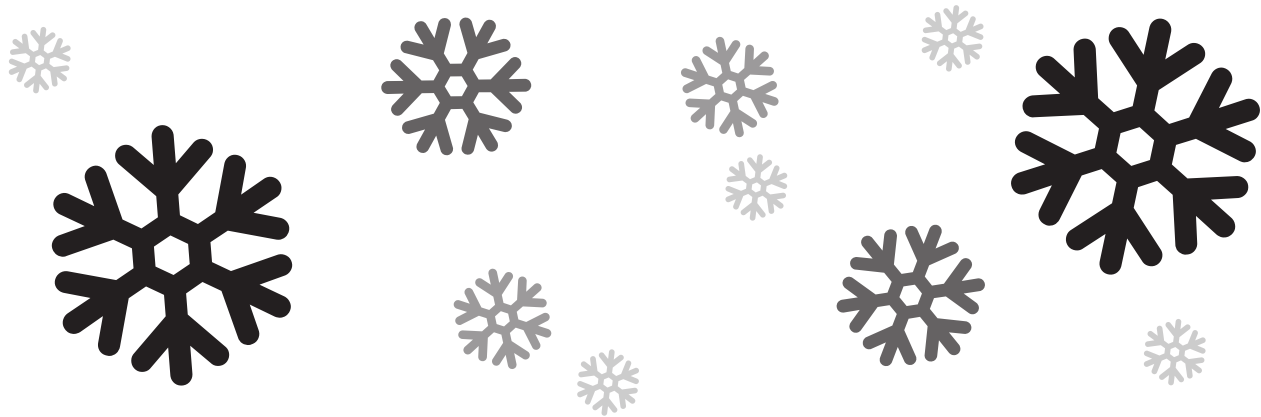
The Grange was officially called The National Grange of the Order of Patrons of Husbandry. It is a social organization in the United States that encourages families to band together to promote the economic and political well-being of the community and agriculture. In a rural area such as Vergennes, it was a hub of activity for the whole community. The members donated money within the community for worthy causes. The Grange also lent out the building to civic groups. The Junior Farm Bureau regularly used the hall for their meetings.

In 1915 M.L. and Florence Bailey, signed a lease allowing the Grange Hall and property to be also used by the Township as a Township Hall. In 1917 the Vergennes Grange held a community banquet for the boys of the community who were to

soon leave to serve in the army and navy for what is now called World War I. They estimated 150 in attendance! Songs sung were "When We Whip the Kaiser", "America" and the evening concluded with "God Be With You Till We Meet Again".

Headline and news clipping from the Lowell Ledger on October 20, 1927 - "Next Meeting Board of Trade at Bailey Corner. The president announced that the next meeting of the Board of Trade will be held at Bailey Corners October 31, when Vergennes Grange will serve a roast chicken dinner and urged a full attendance, as these outside meetings are of mutual benefit to Lowell and the community visited."

The Grange hall began being used only for township purposes in 1934, and in 1973 it was deeded over to the township. It was used for township meetings and offices until September of 2021. Soon the next chapter will begin. Watch for published press releases, the township website www.vergennestwp.org and facebook page when the building becomes available for sale.



FROM THE ASSESSOR, CORY BURNS

The State of Michigan is doing an audit of the township's Principle Residence Exemptions (PRE). The Michigan Department of Treasury (Treasury) entered into a contract with Tax Management Associates (TMA) to audit principal residence exemptions (PRE) in counties designated by the Treasury. The contract was in response to legislative concerns and statutory requirements within Public Act 206 of 1893, the General Property Tax Act. TMA will determine which PRE-filings do

not comply with MCL 211.7cc rules. If you receive a questionnaire of any sort from them please DO NOT ignore this request as this may affect your PRE status.

If you have any questions, I'd be happy to help, please contact me.

Sincerely,

Cory A. Burns
(616)897-5671

Email: assessor@vergennestwp.org