



NEWSLETTER

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 2022

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

I am sitting here watching a beautiful sunset out my west facing office window. The sky is beautiful hues of pinks and oranges. Thankfully I don't see many sunsets from this chair, but it is necessary sometimes. This past week's views out the window have included several deer walking through the grass until they noticed movement in the windows and fled, waving their white flags. There are many reasons why we enjoy and are thankful for the new building, and the wildlife ranks high on my list.

As I write this, we are entering a season of intentionally remembering and celebrating the blessings in our life and giving thanks. I trust you

can step back from the business of life and rejoice in your blessings and hug your loved ones.

Thank you to all of our incredible election workers! They work very long hours, some standing up for many hours at a time. Anyone interested in elections is always welcome to submit an application to work. It is a great experience to participate in the election process. An application can be found at www.vergennestwp.org -> 'Elections' -> 'Click here for Election Inspector Application'.

Blessings ~ Shantell



Continued on next page!

TOWNSHIP CEMETERIES

What does winter mean to the area cemeteries? The historic cemeteries are closed for the winter, with no snow removal. The active cemeteries, Alton and Bailey, do not have routine snow removal, only what is needed for burials. However, both cemeteries close for burials when the snow accumulation and frost in the ground makes it too difficult to dig graves. The cemeteries are cleaned of decorations after October 1st, but winter wreaths are permitted between November 15th and March 15th. Anything left will be cleared in the spring.

Please don't forget, no trees or shrubs can be planted on the graves, and the cemeteries are closed at dark. Please be respectful and honor those buried there.

Cemetery spaces are intended for the residents of the township, to have a final resting place near their home. Nonresidents can apply for an exception, but the price is \$500 instead of the resident price of \$250.

We will be looking for help again next May to place flags on the graves of our township veterans. Watch Facebook for the scheduling announcement, or feel free to email clerk@vergennestwp.org to be notified by email.

HERE WE GO AGAIN

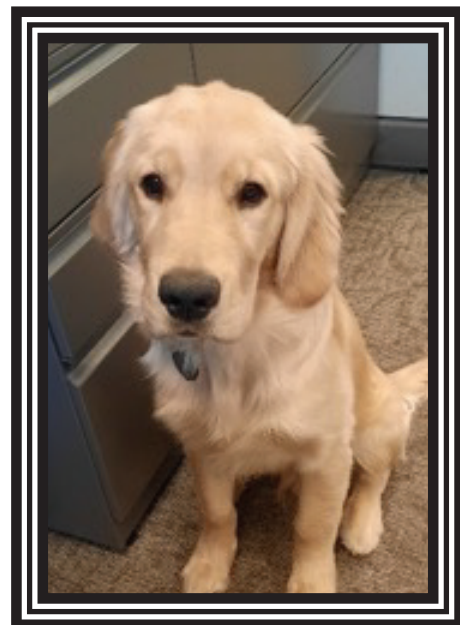
Here we go again! If you have been in the office lately, you probably saw a handsome golden retriever hanging around. His name is Rowland and he is an assistance dog in training for Paws with a Cause. I got him July 28 and he will be with me until sometime in June 2023. That date may change slightly depending on several factors, but June is a good estimate.

Rowland is working on all his basic commands and socialization. Once he leaves me, he will be evaluated and probably sent to the PAWS prison program. He will be matched up with two inmates who continue to work with him on some advanced skills. That will take 4-5 months. He then comes back to PAWS for further evaluation to see if he is a good match for anyone on the wait list for an assistance dog. Hopefully he is. He then gets more specified training to work with his forever person and eventually the "team" is certified. An exciting time for everyone!

If he isn't a match, PAWS works with other organizations to find a good fit for him. My previous pup Linus, you may remember, is now an electronic detection dog in Monroe County. Everyone asks how I can spend a year or more with the dog and then just hand him back to PAWS without an issue. I just tell myself that I

am one step in a process that is going to help someone live a fuller life in the future. You could do the same! Just go to the PAWS website, www.pawswithacause.org and read all about becoming a foster parent for one of these wonderful pups. Many homes are needed to help meet the demand for assistance dogs.

Stay Pawsitive!
Janine



FIRE DEPARTMENT

For all emergencies, always call 911. Vergennes Township is serviced by the Lowell Area Fire Department. Burn permits are issued by the Fire Department and can be applied for online at lowellfire.org. The fire department also sells reflective address signs. Whether your emergency

is fire, police or medical, the first responders need to find you, which means finding your house! A reflective address sign is extremely helpful to emergency personnel when it is an emergency and every second counts!! For non-emergencies, the fire department can be reached at 616-897-7354.

HISTORICAL VERGENNES

**Reprinted with permission from the Lowell Area Historical Museum's fall newsletter.*

Would you expect to find a gravestone along a pasture fence line in rural Vergennes township? Maybe not, but that is exactly where Henry Weekes chose to be buried in 1886.

Henry Weekes was said to be a great uncle of Harold Weekes, owner of Weekes Store in Lowell. He was single and worked for area farmers. He chose where he wanted to be buried when he died - along the boundary line between two farms.

When he died on March 11, 1886, a funeral service was held at his home. Henry was remembered as

being generous and noble in his dealings with mankind. Lowell's Rev. Husted's remarks at the funeral were brief, noted to be at the wishes of the deceased.

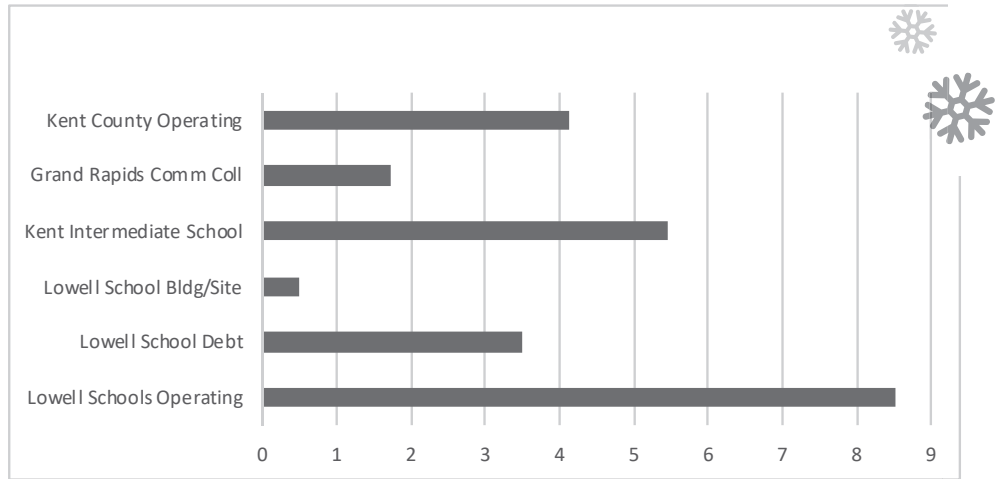
He was then buried according to his wishes. According to family of the landowner, Henry asked that his horse be buried with him when it died. It was said this request was also granted. Though it is on private property, his gravestone can still be seen today.



WHERE YOUR TAX MONEY GOES

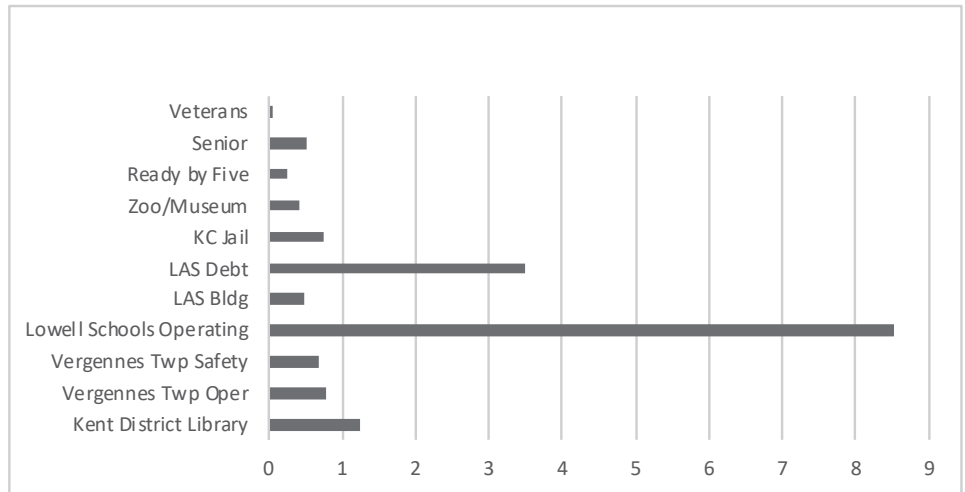
Summer Tax Breakdown

Lowell Schools Operating	8.51205
Lowell School Debt	3.5
Lowell School Bldg/Site	0.4883
Kent Intermediate School	5.4447
Grand Rapids Comm Coll	1.7085
Kent County Operating	4.131



Winter Tax Breakdown

Kent District Library	1.2355
Vergennes Twp Oper	0.7933
Vergennes Twp Safety	0.6883
Lowell Schools Operating	8.51205
LAS Bldg	0.4883
LAS Debt	3.5
KC Jail	0.7546
Zoo/Museum	0.4206
Ready by Five	0.2409
Senior	0.5
Veterans	0.05



ZONING AND PLANNING, RYAN CARRIGAN

With the end of the year fast approaching there are some zoning and building reminders the Township wanted to share. First, as a yearly reminder, all docks are required to be out of rivers and lakes by December 15th. Please be mindful when pulling them out if you haven't done so and be sure to keep them out of the required setbacks. As a reminder, dock can go back in on March 15th.

In development news, Vergennes Township has seen a lot of activity in the OE Bieri Industrial Park with about half of those parcels now being or having plans to be built out. New occupants include an electric company, an excavating business, and space for contractors and similar businesses. Activity near Vergennes and Lincoln Lake includes an expansion of Whistle Stop Storage, the new Priceless Storage, and HFS Equipment Sales. Arrowhead Golf Course also recently got approval

for an expanded driving range facility, which should add some year-round golf opportunities in the near future.

Lastly, please remember our zoning and building process has changed. Zoning Compliance from the Township is required before building permits are issued. The easiest way to get materials submitted would be to submit everything electronically through Cascade Township. They will then notify Vergennes for any zoning compliance that needs approval and then reach out to you once everything has been signed off by the township.

As always, if you have any questions about applying for a permit, or want further zoning related information, you can contact Ryan Carrigan, Zoning Administrator at zoning@vergennestownship.org.