

BROOKS TOWNSHIP

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CHAIN OF LAKES NEWS

Spring time will be very busy for the Chain of Lakes Sewer. As of the printing of this newsletter there have been 63 residents that have hooked up to the system. The remaining residents have until July 1 to connect. Because most residents are waiting until spring to connect there may be a delay in obtaining the plumbing permit needed to connect. Residents may want to apply for their permits as soon as possible to avoid any delay. Permits are effective for six months. Also, the COLA board would like to have residents in the district help put together a newsletter to keep everyone informed of what is happening with the system. The board would like input as to what residents would like to be kept informed about. If you would like to volunteer to help with this please call Lora Jones at 231-652-6763.

RECYCLING NEWS

Brooks Township is now coordinating with Recycling for Newaygo County (RNC) for our recycling needs. The recycling containers will be available in the township parking lot the 3rd weekend thru the 4th weekend of each month. This will give residents more opportunity to drop off their items. There have been a few changes on how to prepare your items. They must be sorted and caps removed. Please be sure your plastics are either #1 or #2. Please keep your newspapers, cardboard and magazines separate. Brochures are available at the township hall with all the information you will need to prepare your recyclables properly. On December 6, 2004 Recycling for Newaygo County opened a recycling collection and processing center in Fremont. It is located at 113 E. Cherry St. All items collected at the township will be taken there. The center will be open on Monday mornings 9:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m., Thursdays from 4:00-8:00 p.m. and on Saturdays from 8:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. County residents may drop off recyclables at no cost. If you would like to help in the cost of recycling you may become a member of the Friends of Recycling. You would receive a quarterly newsletter and would be eligible to vote or run for a seat on the board of RNC. A contribution for a household membership is \$40.00. There is also a need for volunteers to monitor drop-off sites, to work at the collection center in Fremont and to help with various projects. Contributions and donations will help the organization to become successful and to become sustainable. To get a recycling guide or for more information you may call the township at 652-6763, ext. 13 or Bob Pinder, Director of RNC at 924-5822.

Nature's Classroom Volunteer Training

If you are interested in sharing the excitement of seeing a pitcher plant for the first time on NCCS Camp Newaygo's Wetland Trail through the eyes of a seven year old or discovering the natural treasures of Brooks Township's Coolbough Prairie with a local Boy Scout group, this training is for you.

In establishing Nature's Classroom, NCCS Camp Newaygo is recruiting volunteer nature enthusiasts who will be trained to recognize the highlights of our natural areas. These volunteers will then lead interested groups on discovery tours to guide and educate others about these natural areas.

Coolbough Prairie training will be conducted by *The Nature Conservancy* on May 12 and the Camp Newaygo Wetland Trail training will be conducted by science teacher Terry Grabill on May 19. Plan now to attend! Both trainings will be from 3:30 p.m. to 5:30 p.m. For more details or to sign-up, contact Jane Vitek at NCCS Camp Newaygo, 924-0641, or email her at jvitek@nccsweb.org.

*Township Board Meetings are held on the 3rd Monday of the Month at 7 pm.
Planning Commission meetings are held on the 4th Monday of the Month at 7 pm.
Meetings are open to the public.*

Bits and Pieces

FROM YOUR ZONING DEPARTMENT

The Brooks Township board would like to thank Phil Roossinck for his 4 years of service to the zoning department. Phil retired at the end of the year. We would like to welcome Warren Bender as the new Zoning Official. Warren is in the office Monday-Friday 9 a.m. until noon. You may reach him at 652-6763, ext. 14. Please check with the Township before you begin any building project to see if you need to obtain a zoning compliance permit.

COOLBOUGH NATURAL AREAS

The Coolbough Natural Areas Environmental Commission would like to thank Wolverine World Wide, Inc. in Rockford for their donation of 100 shoe soles for trail markers for the Coolbough Natural Areas. Karl Reed, Manager, Mold Development for Wolverine was instrumental in helping the commission obtain this donation.

TOWNSHIP CALENDER

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| Mar. | 14 | Board of Review
(call for appt.) |
| | 16 | Board of Review
(call for appt.) |
| | 19-26 | Recycling |
| | 21 | Twp. Bd. Meeting |
| | 28 | Planning Comm. Mtg. |
| April | 16-23 | Recycling |
| | 18 | Twp. Bd. Meeting |
| | 25 | Planning Comm. Mtg. |
| May | 16 | Twp. Bd. Mtg. |
| | 21-28 | Recycling |
| | 23 | Planning Comm. Mtg. |

TRASH DAY 2005

Our annual trash day will be held on **June 4, 2005**. More details will be in the Spring newsletter and on our web site. To volunteer to help please call Chris Haynor at 652-6763, ext. 13.



MICHIGAN NATURE ASSOCIATION

(SUBMITTED BY ROD GEERS, MNA VOLUNTEER STEWARD)

The Michigan Nature Association (MNA) extends a welcome to you to come visit, walk, and enjoy the Newaygo Prairie and the Karner Blue Nature Sanctuaries, owned by the MNA in Brooks Township. The Newaygo Prairie is adjacent to Poplar Ave. between Croton Dr. and 56th St. The Karner Blue Sanctuary is on the east side of Spruce Ave. between Croton Dr. and 72nd St. Both sanctuaries are identified with blue MNA signs.

The MNA is a non-profit organization dedicated to purchasing and preserving properties in the state that have unique natural value. Principally that flora and fauna found there are endangered or threatened species. In the case of the Newaygo Prairie it is a number of species of prairie grasses and flowers. At the Karner Blue the habitat supports the federally endangered Karner Blue butterfly.

MNA was founded in 1952 and currently has 162 sanctuary properties across the state. Most sanctuaries are opened to the public, some have use restrictions. Hunting and motorized recreation vehicles are not allowed on any of the properties.

In August 2004, MNA with assistance from The Nature Conservancy, Michigan DNR Fire Management and the U.S. Forest Service conducted a controlled burn of approximately 50 acres. The location of the burn was the Newaygo Prairie Sanctuary. The purpose was to promote the growth of native prairie grasses and flowers and reduce the encroachment of shrub trees and invasive plants. The controlled burn is meant to mimic times past when naturally started fires intermittently burned the prairies unchecked by human. The prairie will be monitored on an on-going basis to evaluate the results.

MNA is always looking for new members and volunteers. For more information contact MNA at 517-655-5655. You may also email them at michigan-nature@michigannature.org. or visit their website and

ADOPT-A-HIGHWAY

If you haven't volunteered to help the Adopt-A-Highway program this should be the year you do. There are only 3 pickups a year and it only take a couple of hours to do a pickup. The more people we have the less time it takes. If you would like to volunteer and make a difference please call Chris Haynor at 625-6763, ext. 13.