



Official Newsletter of Alpine Township, Michigan

# Harvester

5255 Alpine Ave. N.W. Comstock Park, MI 49321 (616)784-1262

**Supervisor** *Greg Madura*  
**Clerk:** *Jean Wahlfield*  
**Treasurer:** *Jim Townsend*  
**Trustees:** *Ron Cordes*  
*Jim May*  
*Bill Schweitzer*  
*Mike Wahlfield*

## Community Events

Monday January 15 Township Board Meeting 7p.m.

Thursday January 18 Planning Commission 7p.m.

Monday January 22 Zoning Board of Appeals 7p.m.

Monday January 28 Historical Society 1p.m.

Thursday February 15 Planning Commission 7p.m.

Monday February 19 Township Board meeting 7p.m.

Tuesday February 20 Park and Rec Committee 7p.m.

Monday February 26 Historical Society 1p.m.

Monday February 26 Zoning Board of Appeals 7p.m.

Thursday March 15 Planning Commission 7p.m.

Monday March 19 Township Board Meeting 7p.m.

Monday March 26 Historical Society 1p.m.

Monday March 26 Zoning Board of Appeals 7p.m.

Friday March 30 Good Friday/ Offices Closed

Monday April 16 Township Board meeting 7p.m.

Tuesday April 17 Parks and Rec Committee 7p.m.

Thursday April 19 Planning Commission 7p.m.

Monday April 23 Historical Society 1p.m.

Monday April 23 Zoning Board of Appeals 7p.m.

## Supervisor's Report ...

*Greg Madura*

Happy New Year Alpine Township,

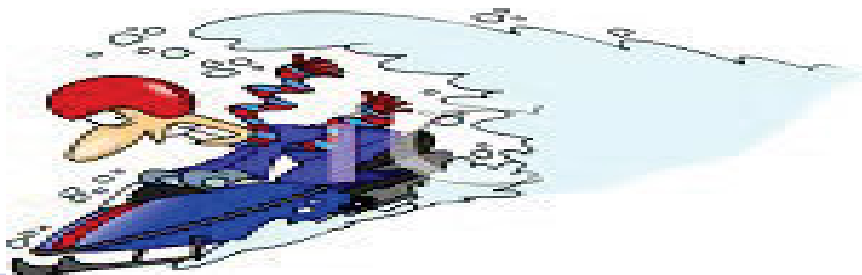
The holiday season has come and gone. Michigan's famous lake effect snow has dropped several inches of wet snow already. It is also the season to be extra careful, please be aware of thin ice on lakes, people walking in the roadways to keep fit or get somewhere important, and black ice. So please be careful.

But we choose to live here, so bring on the fun. If given the opportunity, go out and snowboard, snowmobile, ski, and my favorite winter activity, ice fishing. Seven Mile Road is open again, a major relief to many. We expect next year's sewer repairs to be minimal without tearing up any roads. The Township Board has approved two major road improvements for 2018: Bristol between 4 Mile Road and Alpine Church Ave., and Lantern Dr. and Court. If further funds become available, other roads could be repaired later in the year.

Alpine Township has a new community policing officer, Kent County Sheriff Deputy Jose Douglas. He is an experienced community policing officer and has introduced himself around the community to businesses, schools, churches and at many events that have taken place recently. We look forward to working with Deputy Douglas as he enriches us with his experience and jovial laughter, building community bonds and trust with students, and citizens of our great Township.

By the same token, Alpine Township would like to thank community policing officer Ryan Guernsey for his five years of service in the Township. He has been a positive asset to the community and we wish him the best on his next assignment.

Finally, the Township website will be kept up to date about the Plainfield Twp. water system and the Wolverine World Wide PFAS pollution issues as relevant news develops. We are assured by Plainfield Twp. that the water we are receiving is well within federal guidelines for PFAS.



Check out our revised website at [www.alpinetwp.org](http://www.alpinetwp.org).

## *Clerk's Comments*

*Jean Wahlfield*

### **WISHING YOU A HAPPY 2018**

#### **SAVE THE DATES – 2018 ELECTIONS:**

Tuesday, August 7, 2018 – Primary Election

Tuesday, November 6, 2018 – General Election

LEARN from yesterday, LIVE for today, HOPE for tomorrow!

## *Treasurer's Corner*

*Jim Townsend*

**Winter Tax Bills** were mailed December 1, and payment is due February 14. Please remember that the Township does not recognize the mailing date as payment. We must receive payment by 5PM on the due date. For those using EZ Pay auto-deduct, payments will be pulled from your account on January 31.

**Sewer Bills:** The Township sends out quarterly sewer bills on the first day of January, April, July and October. They are printed on postcard stock, in green and white. Payment is due the last business day of the following month. The bills to be sent out January 1 are due on February 28. EZ Pay auto-deduct payments will be pulled February 14.

**Internet Banking/Online Bill Payment:** For residents who use this service through their bank, please remember that the Township does not allow access to its accounts electronically, so your bank produces a paper check that is sent to us through the mail and it may take up to a week to arrive at the Township offices.

**Fund Balances:** The Township holdings as of September 30 are as follows:

<b>General Fund:</b>	\$ 1,650,909.81
<b>Water Fund:</b>	\$325,764.14
<b>Sewer Fund:</b>	\$3,869,818.21
<b>Rusche/Comstock Park Drive Fund:</b>	\$189,982.34
<b>Trust &amp; Agency Fund:</b>	\$94,045.16
<b>Capital Improvement and Restricted Funds:</b>	\$1,963,499.00

For more information about the Township holdings and how they are invested, call Jim Townsend at 784-1262. Have a wonderful Winter!

### **HISTORICAL COMMITTEE NOTES**

April 15, 2018 **Annual Maple Syrup Contest.** Dulcimer players will be available for entertainment.

May 20, 2018 **The Antique Tractor Show** is back. Special Guests and Speakers, to be announced soon.

May 2-5, 2018— **The National Genealogical Meeting** will be held in Grand Rapids., at the DeVos Center. Alpine Historical will have a booth and display the history of Alpine Townships founding families. Come and visit us, all are welcome.

For all events please check out the Township website for more details.

## Comstock Park Branch Kent District Library

### FOR FAMILIES

#### **Heart to Heart Craft Party**

Celebrate Valentine's Day with snacks and crafts

**Wednesday, February 14, 10:00 AM**

### FOR YOUNG CHILDREN

**Toddler Time every Monday , 10:00 AM**

**Family Story time every Wednesday 10:00 AM**

**Rhyme Time Music and Movement every Friday 10 AM**

### FOR SCHOOL AGED KIDS

#### **Anatomy—The Human Body**

Discover what the inside of your body looks like.

**Saturday, January 6, 2:00—4:00 PM**

#### **Marble Runs!**

Build a Marble Run track that twists and turns.

**Saturday, January 20, 2:00—4:00 PM**

#### **Magna Tiles Mania**

Create cubes, pyramids or other shapes

**Saturday, February 3, 2:00—4:00 PM**

#### **Design like Da Vinci**

Drop in and channel your inner creator

**Saturday, February 17, 2:00—4:00 PM**

### FOR ADULTS

#### **Massage and Essential Oil Techniques**

Learn how to incorporate massage into your life and go home with a sample massage oil.

**Pre-registration required, Tuesday, Jan 16, 6:30PM**

#### **Learn to play Dungeons and Dragons**

Learn to play the quintessential tabletop role playing game, no experience necessary.

**Pre-registration required, Saturday, Feb 10, 2:00—5:00PM**

Did you know we offer one-on-one technology Training?

Sign up at the branch for a 45-minute session!

## Alpine Township Branch Kent District Library

### FOR FAMILIES

#### **Heart to Heart Craft Party**

Celebrate Valentines Day with snacks and crafts.

**Thursday, Feb 8 & Tuesday, Feb 13, 10:00 AM**

### FOR YOUNG CHILDREN—AGES 6 AND YOUNGER

#### **Family Story time**

Read and sing together. Enjoy stories, music and movement and rhymes that develop early literacy skills.

**Tuesdays and Thursdays, 10:00 AM**

#### **A Day at the Beach**

Bring your beach towel and join us for sandy activities

**Tuesday, Jan 16 and Thursday Jan 18, 10:00AM**

### FOR TEENS—GRADES 6-12

#### **Cabin Fever Cupcakes**

Sport your beach resort wear ( no bikinis) and decorate a summer themed cupcake.

**Pre-registration required, Monday Feb 5, 6:30PM**

### FOR ADULTS

#### **Massage and Essential Oil Techniques**

Learn how to incorporate massage into you life and go home with a sample oil.

**Pre-registration required, Wednesday Jan 24, 6:30PM**

#### **The Art of Papermaking**

Learn techniques to create decorative sheets of paper.

**Pre-registration required, Wednesday Feb 21, 6:00PM**

#### **Alpine Avenue Book Discussion**

**Wednesdays 6:30PM**

**January 3 , *Loving Frank* by Nancy Horan**

**February 7, *In the Unlikely Event* by Judy Blume**

#### **Let it Snow—January 2 through March 31**

The Winter reading program is back, read a minimum of six books to earn prizes. Participants who finish an additional four titles are entered into a drawing for an I-Pad.



Kenowa Hills Public Schools  
**Education inspired.**

# ALPINE ELEMENTARY COMMUNITY OPEN HOUSE

**Tuesday, January 23 | 6:00 - 8:00 p.m. | 4730 Baumhoff NW  
Comstock Park, MI 49321**

Join us as we celebrate the completion of \$7.2 million in construction projects! Everyone in the Kenowa Hills community is invited to celebrate the major renovations and upgrades completed at Alpine Elementary. Enjoy a tour of Alpine's:



- Impressive gymnasium addition
- Brand new secure entrance
- Interior work throughout all of the building

### **Open House Family Scavenger Hunt**

During the open house, families and community members can take part in a fun scavenger hunt, which will take you around the school. Those who complete the hunt will be entered into a drawing for an **Ozobot Evo!**



**Where Do My Tax Dollars Go?**

You write a check out to Alpine Township to pay your property taxes; but very few of those tax dollars remain with Alpine Township. Most of the money is dispersed to other entities.

The property tax rates are expressed in mills. A mill is 1/1000 of a dollar and generates \$1 per \$1,000 of taxable value. Property taxes are computed by multiplying the taxable value of the property by the number of mills levied. The figure below illustrates where taxes collected by Alpine Township are distributed. Although millage rates can change annually, the 2017 data below provides an excellent snapshot.

<b>2017 Homestead Millage</b>	
<b>Taxing Body</b>	<b>Number of Mills</b>
<b>Kent County</b>	<b>5.0662</b>
<b>Alpine Township</b>	<b>1.8915</b>
<b>Kent District Library</b>	<b>1.2774</b>
<b>Senior Millage</b>	<b>0.4978</b>
<b>Zoo and Museum</b>	<b>0.4381</b>
<b>Veterans</b>	<b>0.0497</b>
<b>Kent Intermediate School District</b>	<b>5.6694</b>
<b>Grand Rapids Community College</b>	<b>1.7788</b>
<b>School Operating Tax</b>	<b>NA</b>
<b>State Education Tax</b>	<b>6.0000</b>
<b>Local School Debt (pick 1 of the 3) :</b>	
<b>Comstock Park School District</b>	<b>10.9469</b>
<b>Kenowa Hills School District</b>	<b>4.4100</b>
<b>Sparta School District</b>	<b>8.1500</b>

- Properties without the Principal Residence Exemption also include an additional 18 mills for the school operating tax.
- A Property Tax Administration Fee of 0.50% is included on the tax bill.
- Special Assessments may appear on the winter tax bill. A Special Assessment charge against the property for a public improvement that confers a special benefit enjoyed by the general public.



Total taxable millage in each of the three school districts for a Principal Residence:

Comstock Park	=33.6158 mills
Kenowa Hills	=27.0789 mills
Sparta	=30.8189 mills

Educational Institutions (State Education Fund, Grand Rapids Community College, Kent Intermediate School District and local school districts) receive the bulk of the tax dollars collected. For example, in the Comstock Park School District in 2017, 73% of taxes received are for educational institutions and 6% of the taxes received remain with Alpine Township.

The example below is for the Comstock Park school district, the figures would be somewhat different in the Kenowa Hills and Sparta school districts. For a home in the Comstock Park School District with a taxable value of \$65,000, the annual total tax bill would be \$2,185.  $[(33.6158 \text{ mills} \div 1,000) \times \$65,000] = \$2,185$  total tax bill and is broken down thus:

\$712	Comstock Park School District	\$1,587	Education functions
\$390	State Educational Tax		
\$369	Kent Intermediate School District		
\$116	Grand Rapids Community College		
\$329	Kent County	\$452	Government functions
\$123	Alpine Township		
\$83	Library	\$146	Social/Cultural functions
\$32	Seniors		
\$28	Zoo/Museum		
\$3	Veterans		
\$2,185	Total Tax Bill		

Using the above example, the \$123 that Alpine Township would retain would help pay for local road maintenance; public transit; fire, rescue, and medical emergency services; police protection; parks; cemeteries; Twp. museum and activities of the Historical Committee; maintenance of Twp. buildings and grounds; election administration; Twp. newsletter; zoning administration; building inspections and other services.

For more information on the Township's revenue sources, expenditures and various funds; see the newly updated Alpine Township Finance Primer available on the Township's website under the Public Documents tab along the left side menu bar.

### **What is the difference between Assessed Value and Taxable Value?**

In 1994, Michigan voters approved a constitutional amendment known as Proposal A. Proposal A was designed to limit growth in property taxes by the Consumer Price Index (CPI) until ownership in the property is transferred.

Since Proposal A, property taxes are based upon taxable value. A property's taxable status is determined as of December 31st each year.

**Assessed Value:** The assessed value of a property is an estimate of 50% of its usual selling price as appraised by the Assessor.

**Taxable Value:** The taxable value of a property is the lesser of the assessed value or the prior year's taxable value (with adjustments for new building additions or losses) multiplied by the lesser of the current year's inflation rate (CPI) or 5%. In most cases, the taxable value of a property has no relationship to market value. However, in the year after a property ownership change, the taxable value becomes the same as the assessed value.

The taxable value is used to determine a property's tax bill and is computed as follows:

$$\text{Taxable Value} \times (\text{Millage} \div 1,000) = \text{Property tax bill}$$

## Zoning News

In 2017 Alpine Township issued over six hundred home improvement permits. While many contractors applied for approval for these improvements, there were over forty projects that were investigated because the required permits were not issued. This caused unnecessary hardship for those homeowners seeking to improve their residence.

We would like to remind all residents that any improvement project requires zoning and/or building approval prior to the start of the project. Only renovations involving cosmetic changes to your property (painting, carpeting, tiling, countertops, etc...) are exempt from these requirements.

Examples of the type of improvements requiring permits and inspections are:

- House and accessory structure additions
- Replacing furnaces, water heaters and electrical services.
- Remodeling rooms or finishing a basement.
- Kitchen or bathroom remodels.
- New roofing, siding, or windows.
- Accessory Building greater than 200 square feet in size.
- Swimming pools greater than 5,000 gallons and deeper than 24”.
- Installing Egress windows.

Exterior Decks.

Examples of work not requiring a permit:

- Repairing leaking pipes.
- Lawn sprinkler systems.
- Replacing light and bathroom fixtures.
- Playground and similar equipment.
- Repairing windows, doors exterior surfaces (fixing in place)

Accessory Buildings less than 200 square feet in size \*\*

\*\* A Zoning permit is required for all accessory structures less than 200 square feet.

If you are considering a project or have any questions regarding the Township Zoning Ordinances or the State of Michigan Building Codes, we would be happy to provide you with assistance.



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[www.alpinetwp.org](http://www.alpinetwp.org)*

**Township Offices will be closed to recognize the following Holidays:**

Monday, January 1-----New Year's Day  
Friday, March 30-----Good Friday  
Monday, May 28-----Memorial Day  
Wednesday, July 4-----Independence Day  
Thursday, July 5-----Independence Carry Over  
Monday, September 3-----Labor Day  
Thursday, November 22-----Thanksgiving  
Friday, November 23-----Thanksgiving  
Monday, December 24-----Christmas Eve  
Tuesday, December 25-----Christmas  
Monday, December 31-----New Year's Eve