



CITY OF DOUGLAS NEWSLETTER

Holiday 2009

Volume 5, Edition 3, E-newsletter #1

HAPPY HOLIDAYS TO ALL!

The City of Douglas council, boards, committees and office staff wish you peace and joy during this holiday season.

HOLIDAY OFFICE HOURS

Douglas City offices will be closed on December 24th, 25th, 31st and January 1st.



DOUGLAS ADOPTS NEEDY FAMILY

Again this holiday season the City Hall staff, council members, police and department of public works employees will be filling holiday wishes for a needy local family. Christian Neighbors is providing information on the family along with their wish list. There will be a collection box under our Christmas tree in City Hall for contributions of toys, games, clothing, and non-perishable food items. If you would like to help this family please stop in at City Hall to leave your donation. Gifts of money are always appreciated. Christian Neighbors West accepts donations all year at St.Peters Church, 163 St.Peters Drive, Douglas. Hours are Monday, Tuesday, Thursday and Friday 9:30 a.m.-12:00 p.m.

HOURS AND SCHEDULES

CITY HALL (269) 857-1438
Monday-Friday 8:00am - 4:30pm

COUNCIL MEETINGS
First and third Mondays 7:00pm

PLANNING COMMISSION
Second Wednesday 7:00pm

ZONING BOARD OF APPEALS
Fourth Tuesday 7:00pm (As needed)

DOWNTOWN DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY
Second Tuesday 6:00pm

All City meetings are held in Dutcher Lodge City Hall unless otherwise noticed.

City Manager David Kowal By Appointment

City Clerk Jean Neve

City Treasurer Bob Drexler

City Assessor Kelley Ziesemer By Appointment Tuesdays 12:30 - 4:30 p.m.

Community/Economic Development Director
By Appointment Ryan Kilpatrick

Police Department Chief Ken Giles 47 W. Center Street Douglas (269)857-4339 Dial 911 after hours to speak to an officer.

Department of Public Works Director
(269)857-2763 Max Rodgers

Building Permits 1 800 626-5964
Michigan Township Services
111 Grand Street Allegan MI
49010

E-Mail Addresses for City Staff

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douglas@ci.douglas.mi.us

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Community/Economic Development Director Ryan Kilpatrick
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Treasurer Robert (Bob) Drexler
rdrexler@ci.douglas.mi.us

Assessor Kelley Ziesemer
kziesemer@ci.douglas.mi.us

Department of Public Works Director Max Rodgers
mrodgers@ci.douglas.mi.us

Police Department Chief Ken Giles
chiefgiles@sdpd.us

Did you know?????

You may look up tax and assessing information on the City website. Log into: www.ci.douglas.mi.us then click on "Services", "Tax & Assessing" and "Property Tax & Assessing Information". The city zoning ordinance, code of ordinances and much more may also be found by logging into the city website.

The City of Douglas now offers the convenience of accepting credit cards for municipal payments. A third-party convenience fee will apply to cardholders who wish to pay via credit card.

Recycle bags are available, free of charge, at the City Hall. Homes within the City of Douglas are serviced every other Tuesday. Stop in and pick up bags and a schedule.





NOVEMBER ELECTION RETAINS INCUMBENTS

November 3rd voters chose to return the three incumbent candidates to their council seats. Martha Hoexter, Greg Harvath and Renee Waddell will retain their seats until November 2011. At the November 16th meeting city council members unanimously voted for Renee Waddell as Mayor and Martha Hoexter as Mayor Pro Tem.

BOARDS, COMMISSIONS AND COMMITTEES

City Council

Lisa Greenwood
Greg Harvath
Martha Hoexter, Mayor Pro Tem
Bob Sapita
Eric Smith
Dan Urquhart
Renee Waddell, Mayor

Planning Commission

David Burdick
Ron Dellartino
Candace Dugan
Paul Marineau
Christopher Nern, Chair
Alexa Urquhart
Karen Van Pelt

Zoning Board of Appeals

Jeff Greenwood
Kenneth Kutzel
Tarue Pullen
Bill Schumacher, Chair
Alexa Urquhart

DDA

Nancy Ayers
Jeffrey Blandford
Helen DeGeatano
Sam Kendall
Marc Owens
Bill Schumacher
John Slater
William Smith, Chair
Renee Waddell

Assessment Board of Review

Linda Anderson
Maria Droz
Paul Marineau

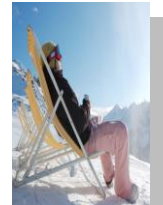
Adopt the Nearest Hydrant! Help out the Fire Department

In case of emergency seconds count! Please assign someone in your household/neighborhood with the responsibility of keeping fire hydrants on or near your property clear of snow.



Leaving the area for the winter?

If you would like the Police Department to check on your residence while out of town please call the office at (269) 857-4339. Have a safe and healthy winter!



Lisa Greenwood Appointed to Fill Council Vacancy

At the October 5th meeting of the City Council, resident Lisa Greenwood was appointed to fill the council vacancy created by the resignation of Matt Balmer. Ms. Greenwood has been a resident of Douglas since 2004. She and husband Jeff, who serves on the Zoning Board of Appeals, own a home on Spring Street where they have completed many renovations. Lisa brings over 16 years of business experience to the council having been employed with Haworth, Inc. since 1993. We welcome Lisa to the council where she will complete an unexpired term until November 2010.

General Tax Information to Remember

The City of Douglas sends out tax statements twice a year. The summer bill is mailed to property owners the first week of July and is payable by September 14th. The winter bill is mailed the first week of December and is payable by February 14th. The summer and winter bills combined cover a calendar year tax obligation.

If you have not received your tax statements by the middle of July and December please call the Treasurer's office for a duplicate copy.

To qualify for a Principal Residence Exemption (P.R.E.) you must own and occupy your residence by May 1st. Your drivers' license, voters registration and federal income tax return must reflect this address. If you have a 100% P.R.E. exemption you are exempt from paying the school operating millage and will see the word "EXEMPT" on that line of the tax bill. Notices of assessment change are mailed in February. A time to protest assessed value is scheduled every March.

WATER STREET CLOSURE AND RECONSTRUCTION



As you may have noticed, the City has been forced to close a section of Water Street between Randolph and South Streets. The City's engineering consultant determined that Water Street has begun to fail and in order to protect the public safety, a temporary road closure would be necessary. Latitude Engineering has been engaged to perform design and construction related services for Water Street. We estimate that the design for necessary repairs will be complete in December and bidding for construction will begin very soon thereafter. Our engineers expect a construction schedule of approximately six to eight weeks. It is our hope that Water Street will be reopened with a gravel surface in mid-winter. The final paving will take place in the spring. During this construction phase we ask that the use of Water Street be limited to local traffic only and encourage motorists to be mindful of their speed when traveling in residential areas.

You can help our Public Works crews clear our roadways as quickly as possible by not parking cars on the street when snow removal operations are in progress.



Christmas Tree Recycling

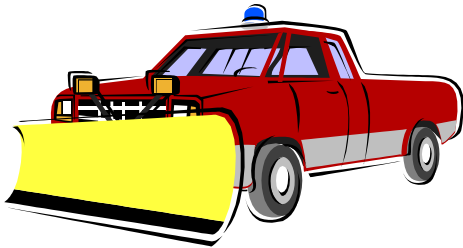
Bring your used Christmas Tree to the designated area at Schultz Park from December 26th to January 15th for recycling. Happy Holidays!

GET INVOLVED!

The City of Douglas offers citizens a variety of opportunities to participate in local government. The following boards and committees look for new members yearly.

Planning Commission
Zoning Board of Appeals
Downtown Development Authority
Assessment Board of Review

If you are interested in serving on any of these committees, please send a letter explaining your interest in that board. Applications are kept on file until needed. Send your letter to the attention of the Mayor at City of Douglas, P.O. Box 757, Douglas, MI 49406.



SNOWPLOWING

Private snow plowing contractors and the residents they serve should be aware that State law prohibits the disposal of "snow, ice or slush onto or across a roadway or the shoulder of the roadway in a manner which obstructs the safe vision of the driver of a motor vehicle". The law further states that no snow, ice or slush can be deposited on any roadway or highway (MCLA 257.677a). The City recommends that residents who employ a snowplow service make sure the snow from their driveway is deposited on their property, not in the roadways, the road right-of-way or a neighboring property. The road right-of-way extends wider than the paved section of roadway. If you call the City with problems or concerns regarding a snowplow contractor it is helpful if you can identify the contractor.



The 2009 City of Douglas
Holiday Ornament of the Bentley
Building is available in the shops on
Center Street.
Stop in City Hall to view the display
tree featuring all the past years'
ornaments.

NOTICE OF YOUR RIGHTS REGARDING THE NATIONAL DO NOT CALL REGISTRY



You have a right to give or revoke notification of your objection to receiving telephone solicitations via the National Do Not Call Registry.

Telephone numbers placed on the National Do Not Call Registry will remain on it permanently due to the Do-Not-Call Improvement Act of 2007, which became law in February 2008. Read more about it at <http://www.ftc.gov/opa/2008/04/dncfyl.shtm>.

Registration is free and will not expire.

Cell phones and fax numbers can also be registered.

To obtain more information or to register online, contact <https://www.donotcall.gov> or call 1-888-382-1222 or to register by TTY, call 1-866-290-4236.

The Village Grows Up

The Village of Douglas grew up to become a “City” on December 13, 2004 when the citizens voted to take control of their own destiny. The past five years have been filled with struggles but also with many accomplishments.

Looking back, some of the major accomplishments include:

- √ Hired new Department of Public Works (DPW) Director and personnel
- √ Replaced DPW equipment with new updated equipment and vehicles
- √ Provide quicker response time to brush, leaf and snow removal
- √ Drains periodically cleaned, cleared and maintained
- √ Regularly scheduled maintenance for trees, sidewalks and streets
- √ Improved care of parks, beach, boat launch ramps and restrooms
- √ Installed improved Union Street boat launch ramp
- √ Improvements to Beery Field and Schultz Park
- √ Improved procedures to better regulate community events
- √ Downtown Center Street streetscape improvements
- √ Realigned Center / Water Street intersection
- √ Purchased upper level of Dutcher Lodge
- √ Professional staff of Manager, Clerk, Treasurer, Community / Economic Development Director, Assessor
- √ Hired new Police Chief
- √ Purchased new police vehicles
- √ Developed and adopted new Zoning Ordinance in accordance with the guidelines of the Tri-Community Plan
- √ Recodified the City Code of Ordinances
- √ Advanced technology with updated computers, servers, and certified IT provider
- √ Advanced technology on new website with current up-to-date, easy, online 24-hour access information for residents
- √ Improved audio / video recording equipment for broadcast of meetings
- √ Publish city Newsletter
- √ All property records reviewed and updated. Completed citywide reappraisal
- √ Provide Center Street 911 Emergency Call Box
- √ Maintain statewide voter files and absentee voter list, provide voting equipment for vision / hearing impaired voters, staff voting precinct at City Hall
- √ Initiated the Kalamazoo Harbor Master Plan Committee and Tri-Communities Master Plan Committee
- √ Installed Emergency Warning Siren
- √ In cooperation with the City of Saugatuck secured funding grant for Blue Star Highway Bridge rehabilitation

**NEWS FROM ALLEGAN COUNTY RECYCLING CENTER
Curbside Recycling Changes From Bags to Bins in
2010**



In April, current recycling households will be receiving one bin from Allied Waste. This new bin will be used to place your recyclable materials in for curbside collection. The current bag collection will be terminated after your bin is received in April. Collection in the City of Douglas will remain on the same schedule with pickup every other Tuesday. More information on these new bins can be found in a Recycling Newsletter produced by Allegan County Recycling Coordinator Ben Williams, located on the City website at www.ci.douglas.mi.us by clicking under "Services".

Household Hazardous Waste Disposal

The Allegan County Health Department offers proper disposal of household hazardous waste by appointment. Many yard, garden, garage and household hazardous products may be disposed of by dropping off at Allegan County Health Department. Contact Ben Williams at (269) 673-5415 to schedule an appointment.

Other Recycling Options

Your Resource Recovery Card allows you drop off tires, appliances, Styrofoam and metal at the Allied Waste Transfer Station. Located at 3310 M-40 Highway, Hamilton, the transfer station is open on the 1st and 3rd Saturdays of the month between 9 am and 12 pm. (Transfer Station is closed during January and February.) Resource Recovery Cards are available at City Hall.

LAKESHORE MICROBOOST, INC.

Another option for yard waste disposal

Lakeshore Microboost, Inc. ("LMI") produces a line of chemical free "green" products, designed for agriculture, horticulture, hydroponics and other organic and green industries. LMI's founder, John Huyge developed methods for combining high carbon feedstocks, such as yard waste with high nitrogen feedstocks, such as farm manure and converting these into specialty soils, soil additives and biostimulants. The LMI workplace is the quintessential "green" facility. Yard waste may be delivered by City of Douglas residents. Manure is procured from local farmers. Wood chips come from local tree services and LMI's own landscaping projects. These ingredients are mixed and directed to other processes at the LMI facility.

MICROBOOST is located at 6271 Whitehorse Lane, in Saugatuck Township. Take Blue Star Highway to Old Allegan Rd. Turn right onto Old Allegan. Turn left at 63rd Street then right onto White Horse Lane.

Yard Waste may be dropped off during open business hours.

Monday - Friday
9 A.M. to 5 P.M.
Saturday
10 A.M. to 2 P.M.

This site is available for disposal of yard waste at no charge to Douglas residents. No stumps or large wood debris. Loose yard waste only, no bags. This site operates on the honor system. Please place your debris with similar debris piles.

DOUGLAS HOLIDAY HAPPENINGS

Businesses in Douglas are all dressed up for the holidays. There is a competition for the most festive store decorations. Most shops are open until 8:00 p.m. with many offering special sales or serving refreshments. **“Festive Fridays”** begin November 27 and continue thru December 18.

Visit the Old Schoolhouse Holiday Gift Shop for gifts and award winning books filled with Douglas history. **A Portrait of Ox-Bow** by Douglas resident Judy Anthrop would make a wonderful gift. The Shop is open the first three Saturdays and Sundays in December from 1 to 5 p.m. at 130 Center Street.

Don't miss the horse and carriage rides, Fridays and Saturdays, throughout the holiday season.

Tour the festively decorated streets and enjoy dining and drink specials in many of the restaurants. Pancake Breakfasts continue all year round on the second Sunday of each month at St. Peters Church.

Find unique gifts, created by local artists, at the Holiday Open House held at Everyday People Cafe on Wednesday, December 2nd and Tuesday, December 8th from 5-8:00 p.m. Enjoy complimentary appetizers while browsing the displays.

Help out local families in need by donating non-perishable food items at Douglas City Hall. All food donations will go to Christian Neighbors West serving Douglas, Saugatuck, Ganges, Glenn and Pullman.

Many restaurants and bars usher in the new year with festive events followed by a spectacular fireworks display over the harbor at midnight on December 31st.

Plan to **“Tell Your Story - You Are The Program”** on Wednesday, February 10th at 7:00 p.m. at the Old Schoolhouse.

It's not too early to decide on your costume for the annual Mardi Gras parade on Fat Tuesday, February 16, 2010. Join the fun, food and foolery for a New Orleans style parade through downtown Douglas at 7:00 p.m.