

# Scio Township

## Summer 2012

### COMMUNITY REPORT

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Together  
we will  
continue to  
make this place  
we call home  
special  
to all of us.

FROM THE SUPERVISOR'S DESK – BY SPAULDING CLARK, SUPERVISOR

## Townships 101

### How general law townships serve you

**M**any people often think of cities, villages, townships and sometimes county governments as the same. Granted, they all have houses and families that call the community home, but the structure of government is actually quite different and distinct. What follows is a brief primer on township government provided through the Michigan Townships Association.

### History of Township Government

More so than any other form of local government, towns and townships are rooted in rural and small town traditions. New England towns of the 17th century were the first real local governments on the American continent, with Virginia counties running a close second. The nation owes many of its present ideas of local self-governance to these colonial organizations, including the town meeting and the election of citizens to individual offices and boards.

### There were townships before there were states

Township governments were actually in place in most of the midwestern states before they achieved statehood. A critical step in this process was the Northwest Ordinance of 1787, enacted by Congress to establish the initial government of the territory that eventually became the states of Ohio, Indiana, Illinois, Michigan and Wisconsin. The territorial governor and legislature began to create county and township governments in 1790, with the townships largely coinciding with the six-mile-square land divisions established in the deferral surveys of the region.

Originally, townships were the mechanism for exercising state authority by administering elections, assessing and tax collecting, and justice on the local level. Villages and cities were incorporated from townships to provide additional local services for population centers, with cities becoming a separate local government for all purposes, and villages remaining a part of the township jurisdiction for some purposes.

### Townships exist in 20 states

Today there are 16,504 townships in the United States, serving more than 57 million residents, according to 2002 Census of Government's figures. Township government operates in 20 states: Maine, Vermont, New Hampshire,

Massachusetts, Connecticut, Rhode Island, New York, New Jersey, Pennsylvania, Ohio, Indiana, Illinois, Wisconsin, Minnesota, North Dakota, South Dakota, Kansas, Missouri, Nebraska and, of course, Michigan. [Source: Grassroots Governments and the People They Serve, National Association of Towns and Townships]



### Township Government in Michigan

In Michigan, 50 percent of the state's population lives in one of 1,240 townships. You might be thinking, "So, how does this impact me?" It impacts you because YOU are one of them, and here at Scio Township, we want to help you understand how your local government operates.

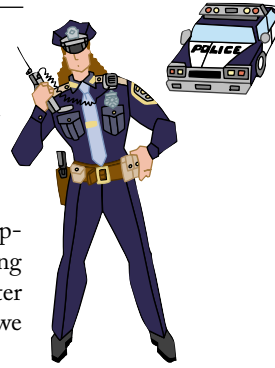
Townships, and counties, are statutory units of government, having only those powers expressly provided or fairly implied by state law. Township government is conducted by a township board consisting of either five or seven members—a Supervisor, Clerk, Treasurer, and either two or four Trustees. The number of Trustees is determined by the desires of the township's residents, whether the township has a population of over 3,000 or 5,000 registered electors, and if the township has charter status. The township board may also hire a manager, superintendent, assessor, police or fire chief, and other personnel to properly and efficiently operate the township.

### Serving You

State laws authorize townships to perform a wide variety of functions. Townships are required to perform assessment administration, tax collection, and elections administration. Townships may also choose to perform numerous governmental functions, including enacting and enforcing ordinances, planning and zoning, fire and police protection, cemeteries, parks and recreation programs and facilities, and many more. Townships are highly accountable to the residents they serve, in part because they are the form of government closest to the people. In Scio Township, we provide services that you tell us are of value to you. These include providing a Fire and Emergency Department; contracting with the Sheriff for police services;

*From The Supervisor's Desk continued on page 2*

contracting with the Road Commission for additional services such as dust control; being actively engaged in the effort to preserve land and open space; continuing the development of a business corridor along Jackson Road; providing water and sewer services to higher density areas of the Township; controlling and limiting development to appropriate locations in the Township; providing assessing and tax collection services; and providing voter registration services and conducting elections. Together we



will continue to make this place we call home special to all of us.

By MARTY MAYO, ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT ACTION COMMITTEE (EDAC)

## Scio Business News

Scio is a cool place to do business and a lot of cool companies do business in Scio!

**W**e've been saying it for a while, but here it is again – Scio is a cool place to do business and a lot of cool companies do business in Scio!

### Bells and Balloons in Scio Township

Scio is home to a world renowned hot air balloon company – Cameron Balloons. Cameron Balloons ([www.cameron-balloons.com](http://www.cameron-balloons.com)) is the largest brand of hot air balloons in the world. There are only two companies that make Cameron Balloons, one in Bristol, England and one in Scio Township. While there are several hot air balloon makers in the U.S., our Cameron Balloon company is the largest U.S. manufacturer of hot air balloons. To be the largest in the country you have to produce between 35 and 45 balloons a year. The company has been owned by Andy Baird since 2001, but it was founded in the 1970's by Bruce and Tucker Comstock, who were distributors for the British firm. They started manufacturing balloons in 1982, and moved to their current location in Scio in 1986.

Cameron Balloons specializes in making special shapes – like Micky Mouse or Cinderella's Castle balloons. So who wants to have a hot air balloon? There are three main client types: corporations that want balloons with their logos for PR purposes; "Big Ride" companies that take anywhere from 10 to 20 tourists up to view the sights; and individual sport and pleasure enthusiasts. The last category accounts for a third to a half of Cameron Balloons' business.

It takes about eight weeks to make a hot air balloon, but Cameron Balloons has several in the works at any given time. They produce a little under one per week on average. And, just FYI, a smaller, sport and pleasure balloon of about 90,000 cubic feet might cost anywhere from \$35,000 to \$40,000, including the balloon and all of its equipment.

### From Balloons to Bells

Another cool Scio company is the Harmony Hollow Bell Company ([www.harmonyhollow.com](http://www.harmonyhollow.com)). It is one of three small bell companies in the United States. The founder, Jeffrey Cross, wanted to do something creative with his life. He taught himself how to design, mold, cast, assemble, and market his own bells. This has been a family business ever since. Jeffrey drew on his father's extensive foundry background to help him create the unique timbre of his bronze bells. In 1977 Jeffrey died and the company was taken over by his brother Bradley, a former Peace Corps volunteer, who has owned the company ever since.

Harmony Hollow bells stand apart from all other small bells, because of their clear, pure and lasting tones. Hit a small bell anywhere and you will know if it is a Harmony bell. If it clunks or the tone dies away quickly it is not from Harmony. This clarity of tone is due to the unique formula for the bronze that is used in the bells.

The company's bells are classified as "outdoor decorative arts." Harmony has experienced stiff competition from China in the past decade, which produces an array of items for outdoor decorations.

But China can't produce the totally unique and clear tones of a Harmony Hollow bell. The company now markets its bells as gift items to celebrate special occasions or to mark awards. The honoree's name can be poured along with the bell. Otherwise, Bradley sells his bells primarily through his website and at a few art fairs. The bells are so sturdy and special that they have a 350-year guarantee!

Bells and balloons – two longstanding stars in the galaxy of Scio's businesses. What other gems are we to discover in Scio's business community?



## Elections 2012

### Election news

2012 is a big election year for everyone, and we are really looking forward to your participation at the polls this year. You can plan to vote at your regular polling place in August and November, but if you have forgotten where your regular precinct-polling place is, you can easily check it on-line. It is easy to have your questions answered by checking the Secretary of State's "Voter Information Center". The State's website address is: <https://webapps.sos.state.mi.us/mivote/>. We will have information on the Township's website as well, but if you are interested in finding out if your absentee ballot has been sent or received by the Clerk, the State's website will provide that information. If you don't have computer access, you can always call the front desk here at the Township.

### Keep us updated

Are you a 'Snowbird'? Do you plan to head south before the November General Election? Every election cycle I have a number of applications returned because voters on the Permanent Absent Voter list have headed south and forgotten to let me know. Let's work together to be sure

you receive your ballot in the mail! If you plan to be gone, please call the Township offices to tell us where your ballot should be sent. Here's another pointer when filling out your Absent Voter application: be sure to read the application thoroughly and fill out every applicable blank. Please note that there are two places for your signature on the application. One attests to the reason for your request, the other is the application to vote. If anything is missing, we will need to call you to come in to complete the missing information, and it is hard to find unlisted phone numbers in the phone book. J

### Don't forget to register

October 9, 2012 is the last day to register to vote in the 2012 November General Election. If you have a change of address please be sure to update your information with the Secretary of State's office, or here at the Township offices as soon as possible. You only have to register once (unless you move) and you can check your registration status by going to: <https://webapps.sos.state.mi.us/mivote/> Address changes must be made within 6 months of your permanent move.

The last day to  
register before  
the General  
Election  
is Monday,  
October 9.



BY IRWIN MARTIN, CHAIR, LPC AND BARRY LONIK, LAND PROTECTION CONSULTANT

## Land Preservation Update

### The Success Continues

Scio Township's Land Preservation Program has closed on another major farmland preservation project. This project is near the southwestern corner of Scio Township, on the west side of Strieter Rd. north of Scio Church Rd. It consists of prime agricultural soils, a riparian corridor along Frey-Fitzsimmons Creek and a series of ponds and adjacent wetlands. The property is near the Schneider property protected in 2010 and is in the heart of Scio Township's priority area for agricultural preservation. The property is owned by Jerry & Ruthann Helmer, who bought it as an investment in 1992. The Helmers have been renting the land to a local farmer and intend to continue doing so. The property is 136.7 acres in size.

Scio Township purchased a conservation easement on the property, allowing for agricultural use and protection of its natural resources while prohibiting residential development. The project was assisted by grants totaling \$355,400 from the U.S. Department of Agriculture Farm and Ranchlands Protection Program. Scio Township's land preservation millage contributed \$504,600. The Helmers donated a portion of the appraised value so the Township's share of the purchase price was 58%. As is usually the case with agricultural conservation easements, there is no public access on the Helmer property. Nevertheless, protecting its

scenic, natural and agricultural resources are of tremendous benefit to the Scio Township community. The Scio Township Board of Trustees and Land Preservation Commission are enormously grateful to the Helmers for their commitment to keeping their land open and productive forever.

### 15 properties now protected

With the completion of the Helmer conservation easement, Scio Township has now preserved 706 acres on 11 properties. These farms and open space properties are now protected from development, which allows future generations to enjoy locally grown agricultural products and the scenic beauty of our township. In addition, Scio millage funds contributed to two new popular County preserves, the Fox Science Preserve and the Scio Church Woods Nature Preserve, and provided permanent public access to two other beautiful properties. Several additional properties will be protected in the next few months. The Scio Land Preservation Commission has been able to leverage our millage dollars and have obtained matching funding for all acquisitions. In fact, only 40% of the total costs of protecting these properties came from Scio land preservation funds. We hope to be able to continue to preserve farmland and open space well into the future. Our millage is up for renewal in November of this year. The Land Preservation Commission encourages you to get out and vote.

Scio Township  
has now  
preserved  
706 acres on  
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## Jackson Road Cruise 2012

The weather co-operated for the 4th Annual Jackson Road Cruise held on July 14th. It was hot but there were no rain clouds to spoil the fun and the sun added extra luster to

the rainbow of classic cars. Dozens of vehicles, old and new, restored, or works-in-process, were on display and hundreds of folks enjoyed the largest Jackson Road Cruise to date. The 2:00 parade along the Boulevard, led by the Scio Township Fire Department, capped a fun-filled day.



## Outdoor Warning Siren Test Notification

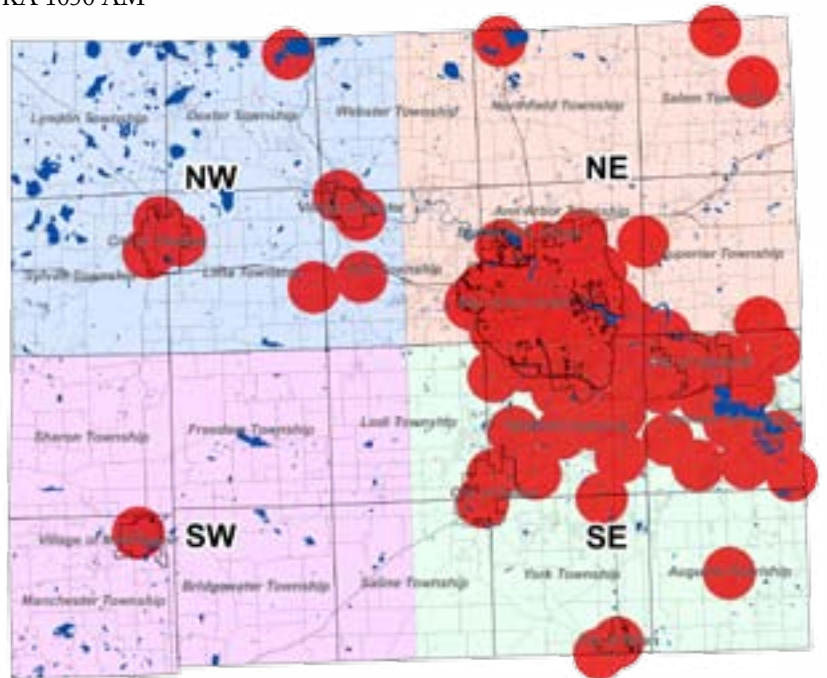
**W**ashtenaw County's 39 warning sirens (see map left) will be tested at noon on the first Saturday of every month from March through September. If there is a threat of severe weather on the day of a test, it will be cancelled. Except for scheduled testing, the sirens will be activated for the following emergencies:

- The National Weather Service has issued a tornado warning
- A severe thunderstorm has been detected with damaging winds in excess of 70 MPH
- A hazardous materials accident requires immediate protective action by the public
- An attack on the United States is imminent, underway or has recently occurred

Warning siren activation is a signal to members of the public to immediately go indoors and monitor local Emergency Alert System media outlets for official information.

Washtenaw County's emergency broadcasters are:

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WWWW 102.9 FM      WTKA 1050 AM



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## Planning Commission Update

The Planning Commission has been busy conducting public hearings and site plan reviews

**T**he Scio Township Planning Commission has been busy conducting public hearings and site plan reviews for a number of projects which are in various stages of opening, construction, site plan process, or awaiting Board of Trustees approval.

### Rezoning requests

Most recently, **Menards**, a home improvement store, received approval of their rezoning request. The applicant is a contract purchaser of the North Phase of the Honey Creek Project approved in 2007. Township residents would recognize this as "the Farmer Grant's site". The C-2 re-zoning request is consistent with the Scio Township Master Plan. The next step will be to work with Menards on their site plan.

**PrintTech** was approved for a rezoning request from C-2 to I-1 zoning. The applicant is a commercial printing company. This rezoning request is for property on Dino Drive and is consistent with surrounding zoning and the Township Master Plan. Approval will allow the applicant to build additional space and continue operations in Scio Township.

**Ruland - Animal/Veterinary Hospital** conditional use request was approved. The applicant proposes to locate an emergency veterinary hospital for small animals and exotic pets at 5245 Jackson Road. The facility will be approximately 4800 square feet. Service will be for emergency and critical care 24 hours per day/seven days a week; staffing will include seven technicians and up to four doctors.

**Scio 1, LLC**, conditional use request was approved for the use of warehouse space located at 300 Jackson Plaza. This space is currently zoned light industrial, and will be used for tennis instruction including creation of tennis courts.

### Site Plan approvals

**Zippy Auto Wash**, Zeeb Road south of Jackson Boulevard, conditional use and site plan were approved. The project is a 140-foot car wash tunnel using energy efficient equipment, pumping stations and recycling systems. A similar facility has been in operation for a number of years in Pittsfield Township. Construction has started.

**Pirates Cove**, 8225 Jackson Road, received approval for a new building site plan.

Built in 2001, the facility opened with only four of its eight planned buildings. Four buildings were deferred for future construction. The approval was for two of the four remaining buildings.

### Recent projects

From the previous year approvals, Culvers Restaurant, 5910 Jackson Road, has completed its construction and now is open. Also, the Mini-Cooper auto dealership, 3500 Jackson Road, is in construction.

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# Get involved in your community

## The Scio Township Community Report

Is published quarterly by the Scio Township Board of Trustees for the residents of Scio Township.

Editor  
David Read  
  
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Julie Tanguay  
  
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David Read

## Scio Township Information

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Ann Arbor, MI 48103  
(734) 369-9400; [info@twp.scio.mi.us](mailto:info@twp.scio.mi.us)  
**visit us at: [www.twp.scio.mi.us](http://www.twp.scio.mi.us)**

### Township Office Hours

Monday to Friday 9 a.m. – 5 p.m.

### Utility Department Hours:

Monday – Friday 8 a.m. – 4 p.m.  
Utilities emergency: . . . . . (734) 651-4770  
Utilities Administration: . . . . . (734) 369-9350

### Township Board of Trustees

Spaulding Clark, Supervisor  
Nancy Hedberg, Clerk  
Donna Palmer, Treasurer  
Richard DeLong, Trustee  
Christine Green, Trustee  
Jack Knowles, Trustee  
David Read, Trustee

Board meetings are held on the second and fourth Tuesdays of the month at 7:00 p.m. in the Township Hall. E-mail sent to [townshipboard@twp.scio.mi.us](mailto:townshipboard@twp.scio.mi.us) will be forwarded to all members of the township board.

### Scio Township Department Heads

Carl Ferch, Fire Chief  
Scott Martin – Utilities Director  
James Merte – Assessing

### Other Phone Numbers

Emergencies . . . . . 911  
Fire Department Administration . . . . . (734) 665-6001  
Sheriff's Department,  
Zeeb Road Sub-Station . . . . . (734) 994-8105  
County Building Inspection Services . . . (734) 222-3900

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## Washtenaw County Information:

[www.ewashtenaw.org](http://www.ewashtenaw.org)

### Water Resources Commissioner:

(734) 222-6860; [drains@ewashtenaw.org](mailto:drains@ewashtenaw.org)

### County Road Commission

(734) 761-1500; [wcrcc@wcroads.org](mailto:wcrcc@wcroads.org)

### County Commissioners:

District 1 – Rob Turner  
(734) 341-6612; [turnerr@ewashtenaw.org](mailto:turnerr@ewashtenaw.org)  
  
District 2 – Dan Smith  
(734) 449-2985; [smithd@ewashtenaw.org](mailto:smithd@ewashtenaw.org)  
  
District 3 – Alicia Ping  
(734) 548-5160; [pingad@ewashtenaw.org](mailto:pingad@ewashtenaw.org)  
  
District 9 – Leah Gunn  
(734) 663-7307; [gunnl@ewashtenaw.org](mailto:gunnl@ewashtenaw.org)  
  
District 10 – Conan Smith  
(734) 662-0268; [smithco@ewashtenaw.org](mailto:smithco@ewashtenaw.org)

## State Information:

[www.michigan.org](http://www.michigan.org)

### State Representative

District 52 – Mark Ouimet  
(517) 373-0828; [markouimet@house.mi.gov](mailto:markouimet@house.mi.gov)

### State Senator:

District 18 – Rebekah Warren  
(517) 373-2406; [senrwarren@senate.michigan.gov](mailto:senrwarren@senate.michigan.gov)

### Governor:

Rick Snyder  
(517) 373-3400; [rick.snyder@michigan.gov](mailto:rick.snyder@michigan.gov)

## Federal Information:

[www.usa.gov](http://www.usa.gov)

### U.S. Representatives:

District 7 – Tim Walberg  
(202) 225-6276; e-mail via [www.walberg.house.gov](http://www.walberg.house.gov)  
  
District 15 – John Dingell  
(202) 225-4071; [www.house.gov/dingell](http://www.house.gov/dingell)

### U.S. Senators:

Debbie Stabenow  
(202) 224-4822; [senator@stabenow.senate.gov](mailto:senator@stabenow.senate.gov)  
  
Carl Levin  
(202) 224-6221; e-mail via [www.levin.senate.gov](http://www.levin.senate.gov)

### President of the United States:

Barack H. Obama  
(202) 456-1111; [president@whitehouse.gov](mailto:president@whitehouse.gov)



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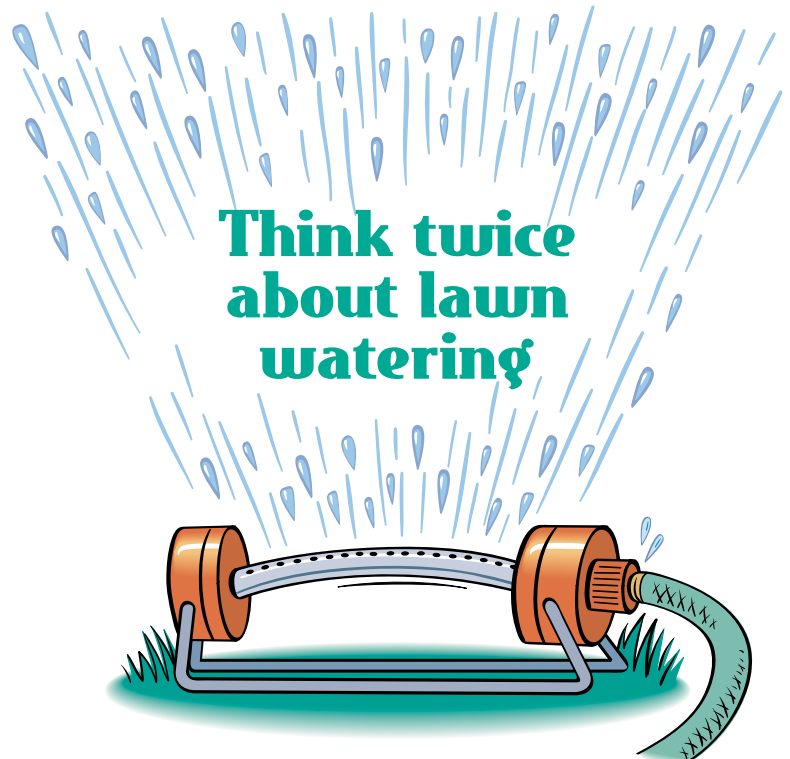
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## Water Restriction Policy

**T**o encourage conservation of water, the Scio Township Board of Trustees has adopted a Voluntary Water Restriction Policy for Scio Township residents in the water service area. It can be found on our website at: [www.twp.scio.mi.us/administration/Policies/utilityvolunteerwaterrestrictionspolicy](http://www.twp.scio.mi.us/administration/Policies/utilityvolunteerwaterrestrictionspolicy)

However, during this time of record heat and extended dry spell we would ask that all residents, especially those on well and septic, think twice about lawn watering. We have had a few reports in the last few weeks of homeowners whose wells have (temporarily) gone dry. We haven't placed a ban on watering as of yet but we ask that you be cognizant of your water usage.



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