

Village of Paw Paw

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“Notes From Larry”

FROM: Larry Nielsen, Village Manager

Date: September 28, 2007

Greetings! Time seems to have flown by since arriving in Paw Paw. In that time I have met many fine people. I look forward to meeting more and more every week. I am impressed with Village staff. Their response to storms and work with the festival has been great. The Public Service and Police Department staff really worked hard and well. They, and the volunteer firefighters, provide a great service to the community. Residents can be proud of these public servants.

In this space I'll comment on some things going on in Paw Paw. There are many things going on as this dynamic community keeps growing and changing.

Electric Service Charge. A recent writer of a letter-to-the-editor correctly pointed out the Village has a \$10 service charge on residential electric bills which had not been separately listed on customer bills. This charge is established by state statutes, case law and local ordinance several years ago. The Village tweaked its computer software program so your new bills will show the service charges separately.

Brush and Leaf Collections: As the Village looks to end brush pick up for 2007 and begin leaf collections, the Village asks residents cooperation to make both go smoothly. DPS crews work hard to provide this service. You need to help by not mixing leaves and brush; or by not mixing in anything else with your rows leaves or your piles of brush. Leaves should be raked in rows along the edge of the roadway rather than just big piles. Brush should be stacked with cut ends toward the street, in piles not higher than 4 feet, and with pieces not longer than 8 feet or 4 inches in diameter. Your cooperation helps keep crews moving to serve as many as possible in a safe and cost efficient manner. Thank you for cooperating.

Water Supply: Recent news regarding prior CCNA discharges which are now having an impact on groundwater is also a concern to the Village. According to the Michigan Department of Environmental Quality (MDEQ), drinking water division, Village ground wells continue to supply safe, high quality water to its customers. A barely detectable trace of one thing everyone is watching for, EDTA, was found in one of our three wells. But, it is important to note that our water is safe! We, CCNA, and the MDEQ will continue to monitor the water supply to make sure we can assure you your water is safe for drinking, cooking, and bathing.

Maple Lake Dam Repairs: Beginning in October the lake level will begin dropping 6 inches a day until it has dropped a total of 3 feet. This will allow the Village to make repairs to the wing walls at the dam. Ackley Lake level will also drop 3 feet. While that is being done, volunteer clean up days are being organized for October 20 and 27. Watch for more information

about how you or your group can volunteer on those days to clean up around the Maple and Ackley Lake. For more information on volunteering contact the Maple Lake Association or John Small, Director, of the Village's Department of Public Services.

Trash and Rubbish Service: While not a new discussion within the Village, the Village Council did recently authorize me to collect information regarding a Village-wide, single contractor trash and rubbish service. When collected and presented, this information will help residents and the Council determine if combining buying power can lower costs while providing the same or increased services. Information will be collected through the month of October and should be ready for distribution to residents in November. Everyone will have a chance to comment on the findings and options before action, if any, will be taken. Many communities have found contracting for services has lowered costs while increasing services such as curbside recycling, yard and garden waste removal, large item clean-up days, etc. Keep watching for further information on this topic. This issue can be emotional. One waste hauling company sent letters to their customers urging them to oppose the idea. That is interesting to me because that company holds a similar contracts in another SW Michigan community. Why is it Okay for them in that community but it wouldn't be Okay in Paw Paw?

Wine and Harvest Festival: What fun! Lets give a loud 'Bravo' and a big round of applause to the volunteers, community groups and businesses that get involved to support the annual festival. Go ahead, take a bow, you deserve it.

Until next time. I'm Larry Nielsen, Village Manager