



# TOWNSHIP TATTLER

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February 2012

## Sherman Township Board of Trustees:

Rob Middlemis-Brown, interim Supervisor

Addy Schmidt, Township Clerk

Marilyn Kastelic, Township Treasurer

Bob Strykowski, Trustee

Deneen Connell, Trustee

## Sherman Township Constable:

Frank Kastelic

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## Above the fold: Every wonder what are the Township Officials' statutory duties?

By Rob Middlemis-Brown

Township government is conducted by a township board consisting of either five or seven members, depending upon the preference of the inhabitants and the population of the township. The board consists of a supervisor, a clerk, a treasurer and trustees. The township board may also serve in other specific capacities, such as a park or utility board.

The term of office for all



township officials is four years, commencing November 20 following the November general election, provided the newly elected officials have qualified for office by that time. To qualify, an elected candidate must take an oath of office before an approved officer, such as the township clerk, a county clerk, a notary public or a judge. In the case of the township clerk and the township treasurer, they must be bonded.

### Supervisor's Statutory Duties

- Is the township's chief administrative officer
- Moderates board meetings
- Is secretary to Board of

### Review

- Is township's legal agent
- Must maintain records of supervisor's office
- Develops township budget

### Treasurer's Statutory Duties

- Collects real and personal property taxes
- Keeps account of township revenues and expenditures
- Issues township checks
- Invests township funds in approved investments
- Collects delinquent personal property tax

### Clerk's Statutory Duties

- Maintains custody of all township records
- Maintains general ledger
- Prepares warrants for

## Straight from the Board: Think your assessment is too high?

If you have assessment concerns, bring them to the Board of Review. Appealing to the Board of Review protects your right to further appeals to the Michigan Tax Tribunal for valuation and exemption appeals and/or the State Tax Commission for classification appeals. Only assessments reviewed by the Board of Review can be appealed to these state bodies.

The Board may consider appeals of classification, tax

exempt or non-exempt status, equity (all properties to be assessed at 50 percent of True Cash Value), hardship and valuation. Historically, the majority of appeals were for valuation. The Board of Review has no control over millage rates or property taxes.

The Board functions: (1) Reviews assessment roll

received from the County Assessor to check for completeness, accuracy, uniformity and validity. (2)

Conducts public hearings each March to hear assessment and tax appeals from property owners.

Board Members: Frank Kastelic, Cindy Kastelic and Frederick Jarvi.



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## Where there is smoke . . . What's hot in the VFD

Here are some highlights of what is "cooking" at the Sherman Township Volunteer Fire Department:

- The VFD meets monthly to perform maintenance on vehicles and equipment and review training.
- The wildland-fire tanker was winterized. It is stored in the old fire house, due to lack of space in the fire hall.
- Art Niebzidoski is taking Fire Fighter 1 training this winter along with Hazard-

ous Material, First Aid, and CPR courses.

- The VFD will participate in the "Copper Dog 150" dog-sled race, providing road crossing security at three crossing locations along Gay-Lake Linden Road and one location along Gay-Mohawk Road
- No fire calls so far this winter!

### Fire Safety First

Winter Fire Safety Tips: Using Woodstoves and Fireplaces

- Have a certified chimney

sweep clean and inspect your fireplace annually.

- Place ashes outdoors in a covered metal container at least three feet away from anything that could burn.
- Prevent flue fires by burning dry, well-seasoned hardwood.
- Always use a sturdy fireplace screen of metal or heat-tempered glass. If children are present, use a special child-guard screen.



Trash-removal service by contract:

**Rural Garbage Pickup, (906) 233-9682**

## Is my trash costing me more?

*By Rob Middlemis-Brown*



**Dumpsters are expensive - estimated at nearly \$14,000 for 2012!**



Maybe or maybe not, depending on how much you produce. Buying bags and cans is expensive, let's evaluate all the facts.

In December 2011 the township board decided to get out of the trash business, when a private curbside trash-removal business offered to serve the Township residents at a low cost with an option for free recycling.

The dumpsters provided a convenient place to put trash at any time of day or night. However, that convenience also provided the opportunity for non-residents to illegally dump trash and for anyone to illegally dump construction materials and items too big to put into the dumpsters. A "first-come first-dump" situation meant that if you came late in the pickup cycle you had to leave your bags exposed to animals or take it home for later.

Here are some facts about

the dumpsters:

- The three-dumpsters held at best 105 bags, 40-gallon each, and would cost at least \$13,830 in 2012
- Costs had forced a cut to services to biweekly removal December thru April and weekly May thru November.
- Each household's "share" of the dumpsters amounted to less than 1 bag per week during May through November and 1½ bags per week during December through April (based on permanent residents).
- Individual annual cost worked out to be about \$3.21 per 40-gallon bag in the dumpster.
- The 34 permanent households would pay \$150 fee per year or about \$2.63 per bag for their share.
- The 97 seasonal households would pay \$90 fee per year or about \$3.75 per bag for their share.

It just didn't seem fair.

### Curbside is cheaper, tailored to your trash needs, and more savings through recycling!

The curbside system is much cheaper for each resident compared to the dumpsters. The curbside system starts at \$2.13 per 40-gallon bag and can go as low as \$1.96 per bag if you select a year around service. Compared to the dumpster system with an average cost of \$3.21 per bag, the curbside system saves over \$1.08 per bag or 34%!

Statistics indicate that an average household can reduce their trash over 60% if they recycle and compost non-meat food items. You might easily go with every other week pickup service if you cut the amount of garbage bags by half through recycling and composting! With the new system, you pay only for trash you produce as a household and you

have the option of recycling and composting to save you both money and help the environment! Here are some facts about the curbside pickup:

- Service is tailored to your need; make less trash and it costs you less!
- Year-round service for weekly 2-bag pickup is \$1.96 per 40-gallon bag
- Biweekly, monthly, or seasonal service for 2-bag pickup is \$2.13 per 40-gallon bag
- If you have more trash for a particular pickup, extra bags are only \$1.00 each.
- Curbside pickup will save you about 26 to 56% compared to the dumpster system depend-

ing on the type of service you choose

- You can save even more money if you separate your recyclables from the trash as those items are picked up for FREE!



Items that were illegal to place in the dumpster will not be allowed in regular trash pickup, either. **But!** the contractor, Rural Garbage Pickup, is willing to assist residents with pickup and disposal for a fee.



### Focus on a Neighbor: Ed Harjala

by Sherry Middlemiss-Brown

Last September, at the Auxiliary's fall feast, I had the privilege of meeting a fascinating Sherman Township neighbor. Ed Harjala, 89-years-young, can ski snow snakes around me.

Ed lives in Copper City during the ski season, but his off-season days are spent largely in Hermit's Cove. At the age of 70-something, Ed could be found on his skis in the off-season, roller-skis that is, racking up 2,000 miles during the summer. When not on skis, he was rowing his wooden boat along the shore, an hour out and an hour home each day.

Ed can claim celebrity in the cross-country ski world. As a veteran completing 19 Birkebiener Ski Races, the largest cross-country ski marathon in North America, the officials honored Ed by opening a new class for the competition, the 85-year-old category. Ed most recently skied the Kortelopet, a 14-mile Birkebiener event. He had hoped to race this year, but has decided against it.

Not only does Ed love and live his passion, but he shares it with others. Both he and his wife, Dots, volunteer at Calumet's Swedetown Trails. They work in

the chalet, but a conversation with Ed is enough to energize any reluctant skier to head out onto the trails.

You may see Ed this March 10, watching the Great Bear Chase, a 26K, 43-mile race at Swedetown Trails. Although he may not be racing, he will surely support the skiers that do.



Ed skiing in the 2002 Birkebiener-Kortelopet race, Hayward, Wisconsin



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We are on the web at  
<http://keweenawcountyonline.org/township-sherman.php>

**Sherman  
Township —  
a great place  
to live.**

A township of



## Sherman Township -- a great place to live.

Nestled on the east shore of the Keweenaw Peninsula, Sherman Township provides a lovely spot for a permanent or a vacation home. The area has one of the lowest populations in the state, but the township offers the amenities associated with a community. Gay, the township's only village, provides a central focus for Sherman Township activities and contains the icons familiar to township residents. The Gay smokestack, seen for miles, is a navigational aid. The Gay Schoolhouse reminds us of an important heritage. The Community Hall provides handicap accessible meeting space and houses the Auxiliary's Sale and Bazaar. Visit the memorabilia on the stage of the Community Hall to learn more about our community's history. The Township Hall houses the Sherman Township government offices.

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Board of Review

**Tentative 2012 Meeting Schedule:** Organizational Meeting on March 6 at 10 a.m. Taxpayer Appeals Meeting on March 12 from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. and March 14 from 3 p.m. to 9 p.m.

**Appeal Documentation:** Residents wishing to appeal valuation should provide documentation to support why their assessment is too high. Provide documentation of comparable houses in your neighborhood that sold at lower prices than your appraised value or provide a recent appraisal reflecting the fair market value of your home. The Board of Review will complete a Petition to the Board of Review listing the decision and give it to the Assessor for adjustment.

You may obtain documents for appeal at: *Petition to Board of Review* - Form # L-4035 and instructions available at [http://www.michigan.gov/documents/2602f\\_2607\\_7.pdf](http://www.michigan.gov/documents/2602f_2607_7.pdf)

*Taxable Value Calculations Worksheet* - Form # L-4035a and instructions available at [http://www.michigan.gov/documents/3128f\\_2660\\_7.pdf](http://www.michigan.gov/documents/3128f_2660_7.pdf)

*Homeowners Principal Residence Exemption Affidavit* - Form #2368 and instructions available at [http://www.michigan.gov/documents/2368f\\_2605\\_7.pdf](http://www.michigan.gov/documents/2368f_2605_7.pdf)

*Request to Rescind/Withdraw a Homestead Exemption* - Form # 2602 and instructions available at [http://www.michigan.gov/documents/2602f\\_2607\\_7.pdf](http://www.michigan.gov/documents/2602f_2607_7.pdf)

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Statutory Duties

- township checks
- Records and maintains township meeting minutes
- Keeps the township book of oaths
- Is responsible for special meeting notices
- Keeps voter registration file and conducts elections
- Keeps township ordinance book
- Prepares financial statements
- Delivers tax certificates to supervisor and county clerk by September 30

### Trustee's Statutory Duties

- Is a Township legislator, required to vote on all issues
- Is responsible for township's fiduciary health
- Performs other duties as assigned by board

