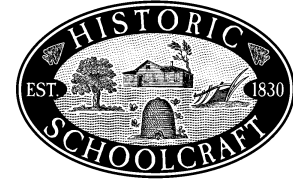


Village of Schoolcraft



Preserving our Past, Enriching our Present, Planning our Future

www.villageofschoolcraft.com

Village President's Message

It's Fall Already

As we enter the fourth quarter and some form of schooling is up and running, we find ourselves in different territory. All things are functioning but differently. At the Village Government level, all business is running along rather smoothly but with different ways of accomplishing the tasks at hand. We do most all meetings through Zoom, which has some advantages for participants like being at home or in a remote location. Travel time is non-existent, and dress as you like makes everyone more comfortable. I think most people are a little closer to family than before the virus outbreak which is a good thing, in my opinion. I also believe we all shop smarter now than before and do not use as much gasoline nowadays, all good things. Maybe mask wearing, washing hands and social distancing are good things for us to do anyway. I bet we have less cold and flu cases than last year and hopefully a lot less deaths due to the flu and driving automobiles as much. We are all getting along ok except for the people who have suffered job and business losses. Point being, we have adapted and even some good things have come out of this virus.

Soon we will be voting and maybe something good will come of that. Certainly, there will be major issues, but we will get through that as well and maybe the new year will bring a vaccine and a sigh of relief as things return to a "new normal".

Well, as some of us look to the near future, some old items came back to light. There are Council members wanting to discuss sanitary sewer in the near future. My feelings at this point are to wait a while longer until things are back to normal or close to it (after a vaccine) so we can all meet with others in close proximity without masks for the reasons that follow:

Back in March the Village Manager and myself contacted three of the surrounding communities to inquire about their methods of taking care of sewage. We were invited to one of the other town's sewage plant and found out about a new idea in sewage treatment that none of the Council had heard of before. The Village Manager and I toured this plant and were very impressed with this relatively unknown method of treatment. The good news is this method requires a small treatment facility and appears to be substantially less expensive to build. The takeaway is, the options in the past that have been presented to us are not the only choice. So, as stated in the April Newsletter I will appoint a Committee to investigate methods of sewage disposal currently available, and have them report back to Council their findings. When a decision is made as to the best method of disposal, then sewer advocates could seek information from engineering firms as to cost and feasibility. Several Council members and Village Government are in favor of this approach.

Vision Statement

The Village of Schoolcraft commits to building on its strong heritage while moving forward to a vibrant future as a community where all citizens are safe and secure, local businesses thrive, and residents and visitors alike are drawn to the variety of recreational and cultural activities.

Mission Statement

The Village of Schoolcraft seeks to enhance the community through development that contributes to its welcoming hometown atmosphere, complements its landscape and local business environment, and reinforces its rich history and quality schools.

2020 Quarterly Meeting Calendar

Village Council 7:00 p.m.

October 5	October 19
November 2	November 16
December 7	December 21

Planning Commission 7:00 p.m.

October 12	November 9
December 14	

Downtown Development Authority 8:00 a.m.

October 1	November 5
December 3	

Until further notice, all meetings are held on Zoom. Check our website, villageofschoolcraft.com to register for meetings and for updates.

Continued on page 2

President's Message, continued from page 1....

If a sewer system is proposed to the people of this Village again in the future, all concerned should know that it is the best fit for our people as far as cost, maintenance, expandability and longevity etc., and not just a money maker for a company who wants to build one for us! When a decision on type of treatment is made, a fair bidding method should be utilized to come to a final price.

If you are going to bring a project to the people, it should at least be the correct one! For all concerned.

When we can easily meet with others without the fear of spreading COVID-19, then we can send our Committee out into the other communities.

In the interim, we all have our other items to keep us busy: family, school, sports, and don't forget politics to wrestle with.

Hopefully 2021 will be a better year for us all.

Stay Healthy.

Sincerely,

Keith Gunnett
Village of Schoolcraft
Council President.

From the Village Manager's Desk

Hello to all of you and Happy Fall! I hope that this newsletter finds all of you safe and healthy as we continue to weather the storm of COVID-19, and the adjustments and changes that we have all made to adapt.

As I have mentioned in previous newsletter articles, we are all back to work and providing full services. The office is open Tuesday through Thursday from 10:00 a.m. until 3:00 p.m. Payments may be dropped off in our drop box located outside the entryway, and staff is here and available for phone calls Monday through Friday 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.

Village Council and Planning Commission meetings are held via ZOOM, and we invite you to attend. You can pre-register for all meetings by going to our web site at www.villageofschoolcraft.com. All meetings will be held via Zoom until further notice. If you have any questions or concerns, please be sure to give us a call at 679-4304.

Leaf pick up begins the last week in October, and ends November 30. Each year, we receive calls from our residents asking why their leaves have not been picked up. The DPW makes their way from one side of town to the other on a continuous basis. If your leaves are not picked up on the day you rake them to the curb, they will be as the DPW makes the rounds. Please rake your leaves to the curb but not in the road. Please do not mingle your leaves with brush, root balls, and other debris or they will **NOT** be picked up.

Beginning September 19th, the DPW Drop Off site will no longer be open during the week. You may now bring your brush or grass clippings to the drop off site on Saturday mornings between 8:00 a.m. and 9:00 a.m. If you plan on dropping something off, please contact the Village Office at 679-4304 during normal work day hours.

Hours for trick or treating on Saturday, October 31st are 5:30 p.m. to 8:30 p.m. Please see the information from the Center for Disease Control on page 4 of this newsletter.

Finally, the Village of Schoolcraft strives to provide excellent customer service to you by treating you with respect and providing accurate information. If you have any questions or concerns, please give me a call at 679-4304.

Cheri M. Lutz
Village Manager
cmlutz@villageofschoolcraft.com



Schoolcraft Police Department

I wanted to take a moment to talk about identity theft. For many, this may be a review; however, it is a growing crime trend in our country that is ever changing. I want to make every effort I can to give our residents the tools they need to recognize the red flags and protect themselves from this kind of crime.

Let's start off with the basic question of, what is identity theft? Identity theft is when someone uses your personal information, without your knowledge, for financial or personal gain. Who does this crime target? The perpetrators usually target elderly people, military members, and young adults; however, identity theft can happen to anyone. It is estimated that approximately 14 million people a year are victims of identity theft, or approximately 1 in 3 people in their lifetime will be the victim of identity theft. The good news is that there are steps that can be taken to reduce the risk of having your identity stolen.

The question often arises, how can identity theft affect me? The answer varies with each case. Often people find that their bank accounts have been drained of money. Others find that purchases are made under their name. Sometimes the suspects file fake tax returns in your name and claim the refund. The examples can go on and on. In almost all the cases, it drastically impacts the victim and can be very difficult to recover from.

Next, I want to share some tactics used by suspects to steal your identity. Probably the most predominant scheme used is to gain access to your personal information through phone calls under false pretenses. NEVER give out any sensitive or personal information to anyone from a phone call that you receive. You can look up the phone number yourself and call the company or organization back to verify that they need the information that is being asked for. Do not call back the phone number that you received the phone call from. Most companies will not ask you to reveal personal information over the phone, and in fact warn consumers against sharing that information over the phone.

People should be aware of other common tactics such as mail theft, trash theft/dumpster diving, purse or wallet snatching, and "shoulder surfing" which is where people listen in on private conversations to gain sensitive information. To avoid mail theft, it is recommended to sign up for "Informed Delivery" via the USPS website. This is a free service that will email you photos daily of the mail that you are supposed to receive. Other ways to protect yourself from mail theft is to use a mailbox that locks or getting a PO Box to receive mail in. To avoid your personal information being stolen through trash or dumpster diving, it is recommended that all sensitive information be shredded before placing it into the trash. Purse or wallet snatching is also a problem to avoid. Make sure that you never carry your social security card or other sensitive information such as pin numbers and passwords in your purse or wallet. Also, be aware of your surroundings and pay close attention to where your purse or wallet is at all times. Speaking of being aware of your surroundings, shoulder surfing happens when somebody eavesdrops on private conversations and gains your personal information. It is important that you are careful when discussing passwords, credit card numbers, and that you always shield keypads when entering in pin numbers or passwords.

- Running a scam or fraud is another time-tested method for identity thieves. Often thieves will contact their victims through email, text, mail, and social media. Here are some suggestions to avoid being a victim.
- Be aware of current scams. I suggest for people to watch or read the news. Additionally, they can go to consumer.ftc.gov and click on the section that says "scams" for updated information on current scams occurring.
- Before providing any information, verify that you know who you are dealing with. Don't trust email addresses given to you by unknown people.
- Never reply to messages asking for personal information and avoid clicking on links sent in these messages.
- Never send money or account information to anyone that says you won a prize.
- If you are going to give to a charity, make sure it is legitimate. If you have doubts, you can go to the give.org website.
- Avoid being pressured into something. Take time to make sure you are not being scammed.
- Be careful of imposters. Often thieves will pretend to be family members, friends, government agencies, and companies to gain your sensitive information.

Finally, what to do if you think your identity has been stolen. The first thing is to call the business or company where the fraud took place. Make sure you talk to the fraud department and they freeze or close your accounts, that way no more charges can be made. When you talk to the business or company, make sure to get a case or reference number. Next, contact one of the three U.S. credit reporting companies and alert them to your identity theft. That company is obligated to inform the other two U.S. credit reporting companies. After that is completed, order a credit report. By law you are entitled to one free report a year. Then contact the FTC, you can do this online or by phone and file a complaint. The website for the FTC is ftccomplaintassistant.gov and the phone number is 1-877-438-4338. After you have completed that, file a report with your local law enforcement agency. Make sure to bring the information you have acquired from the previous steps.

Hopefully, you will never be a victim of identity theft. This short article I have written gives some basic steps to reduce the risk of being a victim. I encourage everyone to take them to heart. Once someone becomes a victim of identity theft, it is often a tedious and frustrating process to correct the accounts that have been affected. To make matters worse, the perpetrators often work outside of U.S. borders and prosecution is extremely difficult. If anyone ever has a question, please reach out to law enforcement and ask. I would be more than willing to spend some time discussing any questions you may have to help you avoid becoming a victim.

Chief Scott Boling
Schoolcraft Police Department

**Village of Schoolcraft
Trick or Treat
5:30-8:30 p.m.
October 31, 2020**

At the September 21, 2020 Council meeting, the Council approved the Trick or Treat hours. However, in an effort to avoid the spread of COVID-19, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention recently issued a list of high-risk activities during Halloween.

These high-risk activities include both door-to-door trick-or-treating and events where kids get treats from the trunks of cars in a parking lot, indoor haunted houses, costume parties, going on hayrides with people who aren't in your household or fall festivals in rural areas.

Office Closures

- November 26, 2020
- November 27, 2020
- December 24, 2020
- December 25, 2020
- January 1, 2021

**Wishing all of you a
happy, healthy and safe
Holiday season!**

**Fire Hydrant Flushing
October 13, 2020**

Be sure to run your water before doing laundry to prevent yellowing.

Brush Pick-Up

The last day for brush pick-up is Monday October 26, 2020. Brush must be out by the road by 7:00 a.m. on October 26, 2020.

Leaf Pick Up

Leaf pick up begins the last week of October. Leaves must be placed out by the road by 7:00 a.m. on November 30, 2020 for final pick up.

DO NOT PUT LEAVES IN BAGS.

- Only leaves will be picked up. Please keep debris out of leaf piles.
- Do not combine leaves with sticks, root balls, trash or stones.
- Piles of leaves should be within 6 ft. of the edge of the street, but not in the street.

Winter Streets and Sidewalks

During the snow season, we ask for your patience and cooperation regarding snow removal. It is our goal to remove it as quickly and safely as possible.

Our first priority is to open major and local streets. This can be accomplished more efficiently if vehicles are not parked along the street. When possible, please be sure to park off the street during the winter months.

Once the snow has been removed from the streets, the DPW will remove the sidewalks of snow. Be sure your vehicles are not blocking the sidewalks. Village residents who have placed decorative fences along the public sidewalks may wish to remove them during the winter months to avoid any damage that may occur during the snow removal season.

Snow Removal

State and Local Ordinance prohibits the plowing of snow into or across sidewalks and streets as it leaves snow or slush on the roadway. This ordinance is for vehicular and pedestrian safety.

Please be sure that when you are clearing snow from your driveway you are also keeping it off the sidewalks and roadway.

Your cooperation will be greatly appreciated by our winter walkers.



269-649-2901
PO Box 263, Vicksburg, MI 49097

They Say It Takes a Village...

The need for assistance goes up during difficult times — job losses, lack of socialization, foreclosures, and fear for what's to come can put tremendous stress on individuals, especially our low-income and senior neighbors.

South County Community Services (SCCS) is aware that these stressors are often difficult to manage, and we are committed to providing solutions. We are honored to be a part of "your village" during these difficult times!

As a hub for nearly 25,000 residents living in the Southern tier of Kalamazoo County, our mission is to work with families to improve their quality of life. We provide services to individuals of all abilities, income levels, and cultures, and we strive to connect individuals at all life stages with the resources they need to manage life's challenges.



Senior programming is available to provide resources, referrals, and one-on-one assistance to individuals 60+, to help them age in place safely.



Transportation is available to those who are unable to drive or manage public transportation, through door-to-door rides to medical appointments.



SCCS Pantry is available to provide food to any person who is hungry and in need of food.



Emergency financial assistance is available to help with utilities, housing, and healthcare to eligible individuals.

Additional services and programs are available at South County Community Services that could be helpful. If you or someone you know needs assistance or has concerns, please visit us online at <https://southcountycs.com/get-help/> or give us a call during our business hours (Monday-Thursday 9:30 am – 5:00 pm) to discuss your needs and schedule an appointment with one of our trusted staff members.



WHAT'S NEW at the SCHOOLCRAFT COMMUNITY LIBRARY??

Beginning Monday, September 14th the Schoolcraft Library will be open for browsing hours, copying, faxing and computer use. Curbside will continue during this phase as well. We will not be able to offer workspace, room bookings or programming at this time. Our hours will remain: M, Tue, Th 11-4pm and Wed 1-6:30. Face masks and social distancing requirements will be enforced. We are looking forward to seeing you!!!

FINE FREE



It is the mission of the Library to provide equal access to information, services and opportunities that empower, enrich and enhance the quality of life for all. Fines can be a barrier to that access. Eliminating that barrier opens doors to all in our service area to utilize the resources that our library offers. For this reason, we are very excited to be going FINE FREE. Our full policy is available on our webpage under our Policies tab and also at the desk.

BOOK CLUB IN THE PARK- The Prairie Page Turners will be meeting on Wednesday September 23 at 2pm in Burch Park to discuss **We Went to a Murder** by local author and book club member Barbara Vortman. Please bring a chair and come join the discussion! All adults are welcome. Please contact us at 679-5959 if you wish to purchase a copy of her book.

1000 BOOKS BEFORE KINDERGARTEN: This is a free reading program promoting early literacy for children ages 0 through pre-K. It encourages children and their caregivers to share 1000 books together before Kindergarten. A reading log for recording the number of titles read is provided along with various incentives earned at regular intervals, including hardcover books to add to your home library collection. Stop in at the circulation desk to sign up your child today!

Please watch our website for upcoming online programming!

SCHOOLCRAFT COMMUNITY LIBRARY : 330 N. CENTRE STREET SCHOOLCRAFT, MI 49087 : (269) 679-5959

www.schoolcraftlibrary.org

Village Directory

Administrative Office 269-679-4304
Police Department 269-679-5600
Department of Public Works 269-679-5658
Associated Gov. Services 1-800-627-2801

Village Council

President: Keith Gunnett
Trustees: Russell Barnes
Todd Carlin
Kathy Mastenbrook
Michael Rochholz
Sy Spears
John Stodola

Messages for the Village Council can be left at the Administrative Office or on Village Staff email.

Village Staff

Manager: Cheri Lutz, cmlutz@villageofschoolcraft.com
Finance Director/
Asst. Manager: Tammi Youngs, tyoungs@villageofschoolcraft.com
Clerk/
Treasurer: Theresa O'Leary, toleary@villageofschoolcraft.com
Police
Chief: R. Scott Boling, sboling@villageofschoolcraft.com
Sergeant: Jamie Edwards
Officers: Joe Bippus
Matt Britton
Joe Geiser
Henry Kite
Eric Ray
Aux. Officers: Dick Simon
DPW Super: Rob Coffman, rcoffman@villageofschoolcraft.com
Equip/Water
Operator: Adam Wood, awood@villageofschoolcraft.com
Grounds/
Maintenance: John Stiver
Office Dog: Teddy

Village of Schoolcraft Fall 2020 Newsletter



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The Village of Schoolcraft
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Schoolcraft, MI 49087
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