

Mission Statement:

The Harris Town Board strives to enhance the quality of life, protect the environment, and maintain the economic stability for the residents of their community.

June 2009

Volume 3, Issue 2

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Harris Township
C/O Michele Smith, Clerk
30037 Harris Town Road
Grand Rapids, MN 55744

Harris Township Newsletter

Don't miss the 
**Harris Township
Centennial Picnic**
**Sunday, July 5,
2009**
at Crystal Park

Harris Township will soon be celebrating it's 100th birthday, and we want you to be a part of this historic event! So, mark your calendar to attend an old-fashioned picnic. The BBQ picnic will be held at **Crystal Park** on **Sunday, July 5, 2009, from 11:00am - 3:00pm.**

Lunch will be served by Wylde Thyme Catering, **beginning at noon.** They will be grilling hamburgers and hotdogs, and serving them up with baked beans, pasta salad, coleslaw, potato chips, watermelon, pickles, coffee and lemonade. **Food and beverages will be offered free of charge,** but when it's gone, it's gone (so come early - rain or shine! ☺). -----



The Schwann's ice-cream truck will be at the Township Centennial Picnic on July 5th, noon - 3pm, offering **free** frozen treats for young and old alike! **YUM !!**



Old fashioned games for kids of all ages will be held throughout the afternoon of July 5th, 2009.

Commemorative Coffee Mugs



will be on sale with this logo.



Be sure to get yours at the picnic on July 5th!

Questions? Contact Michele Smith at 259-0844, or email her at michelesmithclerk@msn.com

1909 - Harris Twp Established

By Gary Rosato, Supervisor

Imagine what life was like back in 1909; I can't. To me, today's knowledge is my world as I know it and trying to put myself in early 1900's frame of mind just isn't possible.

In 1858, Minnesota became a state. You'd think everything was built, roads went everywhere, and people had provisions as they needed them. That may have been the situation around the waters of our capital, but a short ride north proved so different.

Northern Minnesota was wild, tough, and unforgiving territory. Perhaps a playground to some wealthy visitors, but to the homesteaders, it was a continuous array of hard work, disappointments and pure survival. Did the early residents know that? I hardly think so, as they lived and breathed the northern Minnesota experience everyday. It was just the way of life.

They lived, like us, they endured the isolation, like us; What? We are isolated? In relationship to the metro areas, yes. We sometimes endure limited supplies of quality items, such as building materials, or state of the art technology. But that's northern Minnesota: Make do with what we have; raise families to the highest standards available in our area; survive.

In 1909, some residents started a new township in our area of northern Minnesota. It was a way to make their life better, and - with their insights of the benefits of organization - a way to make a better community which we continue to do.

I'm very proud to be a member of the Harris Town board for over 20 years.

-----Gary Rosato -----

From a Township Supervisor's Desk

By Larry Key, Supervisor

My article was going to be about the origin of the Harris Township Cemetery, but I could not find all of the information I was looking for.



I believe the cemetery was established on or around July of 1926.

Who was the original owner of the property? I believe it was the Erickson family, but if someone could verify that, I'd be most appreciate. This portion of the cemetery is what we refer to as "Section 1". It is the southern portion of the cemetery, near the River Road.

The portion of the cemetery adjacent to Section 1 is referred to as "Section 2"; this property came from the Cronk family.

The portion of the cemetery behind the flagpole and Veteran's memorial we call "Section 3" and was purchased in 1991 from Mary Kronk.

The newest section of the cemetery that we are currently developing was also purchased from Mary Cronk.

The balance of the township property at the cemetery and Service Center was purchased from the Merrit estate.

If anyone has information or corrections, please call Larry Key at 218-244-5248. Thank you!

Harris Township's Centennial History Book



By Michele Smith, Clerk

As many of you know, Peggy Bishop retired as our Harris Township Treasure in March of 2009. She served the township since 1981 (that's 28 years!). Luckily for us, Peggy did agree to stay on our Centennial Planning Committee as long as she was feeling up to it.

Peggy was instrumental in gathering and organizing information for our township history book. We now need someone to start putting all that information together into a 'book format'.

This is a very big job! If anyone would be willing to take on this project, or could recommend someone who might be interested/experienced, please call me or anyone on the Centennial Planning Committee: Gary Rosato, Dennis Kortekaas, Larry Key, Mike Hendricks (see page 4 for contact information).

We hope to have the book done by November 2009. -----

Did You Know in 1909:

- Life expectancy was 47 years
- There were only 8,000 cars and 144 miles of paved roads in the USA
- The maximum speed limit was 10mph in most cities
- The average wage: \$0.22/hr
- The American Flag had 45 stars
- Women washed their hair once a month with borax or egg yolks
- The three leading causes of death were Pneumonia, Tuberculosis and Diarrhea
- Mothers Day & Father's Day did not exist
- There were 230 murders in the entire USA
- Only 6% of Americans graduated from high school
- Only 14% of homes had a bathtub

Road Inspections



By Dennis Kortekaas, Supervisor

Harris Township has about 33 miles of roads that are inspected yearly by its Supervisors in the spring. The roads are divided into three sections, and the supervisors each take an area of specified roads to inspect. Road conditions are written on special evaluations forms.

The majority of the township roads are tarred, but there are some gravel ones as well. On tarred roads, we look for cracking, potholes, or loose fragmented tar. Gravel roads are checked for potholes, wash-boarding and rutting. Both types of roads are inspected for drainage issues and their overall maintenance. All road conditions are rated from 1-3, with 1 being bad, 2 being okay and 3 being good. Roads are also rated for their traffic volume, with a 1 representing the highest volume. In addition, we check to make sure signage is in place and not obscured or damaged. This includes speed limit, stop ahead and stop signs.

After all the roads have been evaluated, the Board of Supervisors conducts a "Road Meeting" to review the road inspection results and determine which of the roads had the highest priority rating for getting fixed. Harris Township residents are invited to this Road Meeting to voice any concerns over their particular road. Notice of the meeting is both posted and published in the Grand Rapids Herald Review.

If there are ever issues or concerns involving a Township Road, please don't hesitate to contact one of the Supervisors to discuss the matter. -----

Paul Bunyan Update

Harris Township's attorney found that Paul Bunyan has franchise line extension permits in LaPrairie, Cohasset, Grand Rapids Township, and the City of Grand Rapids. These four communities plus Harris Township make up the Grand Rapids Area Cable Commission. Per Attorney Shaw, it should be straight forward for Paul Bunyan to grant the same to Harris, provided it is on the same terms and conditions as the Mediacom agreement where their areas would overlap. The attorney has forwarded a letter to Paul Bunyan, but has not received a response,

Gravel Road Maintenance

By Julie Kennedy, Township Engineer



The Town Board recently implemented a master planning schedule for the regular maintenance of the Township's seven miles of gravel roads.

The plan calls for a new lift of gravel material to be placed on about 1.4 miles of selected roads each year. This schedule allows for all of the roads getting new gravel about once every five years.

The roads for each year are selected on a pre-determined rotational basis that considers the last application of gravel as well as the location of the roads to help reduce the mobilization costs.

In addition to providing regular new lifts of gravel, several of the gravel roads receive annual applications of a hydroscopic stabilization product. The product, commonly referred to as 'dust guard', draws the moisture from the air and keeps the road surface damp to help control the release of dust.

The new master plan for graveling roads will also assist the Town Board in their budgeting process, done at the end of every year.

If you have any concerns comments about a township gravel road, please contact any of your township supervisors. (For a list of township roads, please go to www.harristownship.org and click on "roads".) -----

Harris Township CENTENNIAL 1909-2009



NEIGHBORS, SHORES & MORE

Neighbors, shores and more...

By John Jokela, Treasurer

You might have seen this motto on the township website by now. It aptly describes to me what Harris Township has going for itself. As a newsletter column I thought I'd use it as categories for topics. And this time I'd like to share a piece of *shore* and also *more*.

In choosing our home ten years ago, my wife Lisa and I had many criteria, one being near a park or trail. The Golden Anniversary State Forest is one mile from our home and is where I often get my doses of the "north woods". The Forest was established in 1961 to commemorate the golden anniversary (50 years old) of the Division of Forestry. The southern portion, the bulk of the forest, is nearly all in Harris Township.

The Cow Horn Lake trails are non-motorized and perfect for hiking, running, mountain biking, cross country skiing, snowshoeing and geo-caching, of which, me and my family take in them all. Access with parking is 1-1/2 miles down Danson Road off Wendigo Road or one mile further down Wendigo Road.

Between the trailheads are three 'loops' each offering a different feel to the forest. Then cutting through the center is the Boomer Blue trail, a wide and smooth trail, starting from the Wendigo Road parking. In the winter, this trail is one of only two "dogs-welcome" public ski trails in our area.

...Continued on page 4

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Grand Rapids, MN 55744

RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED

HARRIS TOWNSHIP 2009 MEETING SCHEDULE

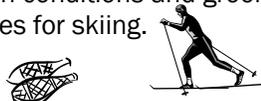
The Harris Town Board will meet on the following dates in 2008, with the meetings starting at **7:30 p.m.**, and held at the **Harris Town Hall**, 21998 Airport Road.

Regular Meetings: (Second Wed. of the month)	Planning & Development Meetings: (Fourth Wed. of the month)
July 8	July 22
August 12	August 28
September 9	September 23
October 14	October 28
November 10 - NEW	November 18
December 9	TBD – if needed



(Neighbors, shores and more... continued from page 3)

KAXE.ORG has daily updates in the winter on conditions and grooming schedules for skiing.



One of my favorite stories of being in the forest was three years ago on a ten-below zero morning, snowshoeing near the western shore of the pond near Wendigo Road. This late January day, enjoying the solitude and serenity, I walked past a snow covered beaver lodge and out the top was a chimney of steam and 8" column of ice from the continuing activity within, even in such cold.



The resources and opportunities of public lands such as Golden Anniversary are yet one more asset to our township and I highly encourage dedicating some mornings or afternoons to taking advantage this summer or even better, next winter!



For Cemetery Information, contact Clerk Michele Smith at 327-9930 or MicheleSmithClerk@msn.com

Town Hall Rental
BONNIE KEY - 327-0435

BOARD DIRECTORY

- Supervisors:**
- > Larry Key..... 244-5248
 - > Gary Rosato 326-4704
 - > Dennis Kortekaas... 326-1882

Clerk and Cemetery Sexton:

- > Michele Smith327-9930
michelesmithclerk@msn.com

Treasurer:

- > John Jokela327-8759

WEBSITE: (check out our new look!)
www.harristownshipmn.org

