

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.

July 2008

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Inside this Issue

- SUMMER IS HERE!
p1 Highlights of Twp Park & Rec areas
- TWP CENTENNIAL CELEBRATION 7/5/09
p1
- ROADSIDE MOWING
p1
- A bit of HARRIS TWP HISTORY
p2
- IS IT A TOWNSHIP ROAD?
p3
- ROADSIDE CLEAN-UP DAY
p3 From a Supervisor's Desk
- CEMETERY POLICY on trees & shrubs
p3
- RECIPE CORNER
p3
- TOWNSHIP ORDINANCES
p3
- TOWN BOARD MEETING SCHEDULE
p4
- TWP CONTACT INFORMATION
p4

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

Harris Township Newsletter

Summer is here!

By Michele Smith, Clerk

I would guess that most everyone is glad that it finally feels like summer. Along with sunny days and warmer temperatures come lots of opportunities for outdoor recreation.

As I drive around our township, I am reminded of all the great recreational facilities that we have to offer our residents and visitors. I'd like to take this opportunity to highlight some of those areas.

CRYSTAL PARK is located off of Crystal Springs Road, about 1/2 mile from Zorbaz Restaurant.



At this park, you will find a covered picnic pavilion with 2 grills, 6 picnic tables, and four electrical outlets. **You may reserve this pavilion, at no charge, by contacting the clerk, Michele Smith (see page 4).**



For recreation, this park contains two tennis courts with benches, a full basketball court, a sand volleyball court, a horse-shoe pit, a large sandy playground area with benches, a baseball field with bleachers, a horseshoe court, and a skating rink with warming shack. A portable bathroom is maintained here all year long. This park has a fence around it, with several pedestrian by-pass entrances.

(Summer.....continued on page 2)

Harris Township's CENTENNIAL CELEBRATION



By Peggy Bishop, Treasurer

Well, the date has been set, and the planning is underway! Mark your calendars to attend an **old fashioned picnic on Sunday, July 5th, 2009 at Crystal Park** in celebration of Harris Township's 100th birthday.

We've ordered the tents, tables, and chairs – and now we hope we have enough people come to fill them. Our township has a population of over 3,000, but it is difficult to determine how many people will turn out for this event. This is one of the biggest challenges facing the planning committee.

In commemoration of the township's centennial, the planning committee has decided to do a photograph book instead of a long written history. The hope is to have lots of pictures with stories or captions to go along with them....but to do that, **WE NEED YOUR HELP – especially your old pictures and stories.**

A special request: If your family has resided in Harris Township since the 1920's or 1930's, please contact **Peggy Bishop, at 326-6368**. We'd like to hi-light some early township residents in our book.

The next meeting of the Centennial Planning Committee is August 20th, 2008 at 7:30pm at the Harris Town Hall. Everyone is welcome to attend.

ROAD SIDE MOWING



By Supervisor Gary Rosato

From the time grass starts growing along our Right of Ways (ROW), we receive many requests to do roadside mowing. Many people are not aware of certain regulations mandated by the state of

(Roadside Mowing...continued on page 2)

(Roadside Mowing...continued from page 1)

Minnesota regarding this maintenance action. The state mandates certain time periods for cutting roadsides to protect certain species of wildlife that could be affected by disturbing their nesting areas, especially in the southern parts of the state.

I will summarize a small part of the "Tree & Vegetation control in Town road Rights-of-way" as offered to us by the MN Association of townships:

Mowing Roadsides

(Minn. Stat. 160.232 - in part)

The sides of town roads may not be mowed or tilled except for as follows:

1. The first 8 feet from the road surface or shoulder, if one exists, may be mowed at anytime.
2. From July 31 to August 31 the entire ROW may be mowed.
3. After August 31 to the next July 31 the entire ROW may only be mowed if necessary for safety reasons and may not be mowed to a height of less than 12 inches.
4. Mowing may be done to maintain sight distance for safety and at other times as provided by rules adopted by the commissioner of MnDOT or by local ordinance (providing the ordinance does not conflict with the commissioners rules)

The town board understands the need for roadside mowing and will do the mowing as soon as we can. Mowing our ROWs is a routine function of our maintenance duties. We also recognize that many landowners (including myself) mow the ditches adjacent to our properties and we (the town board) favor that action as our neighborhoods are kept neat and orderly. Thank you to all of you for maintaining the ROWs!

If you have any pictures of beauty, fun, or any thing of interest from our township, I'd love to post them on our website! Please email them to me at michelesmithclerk@msn.com.



A Bit of Harris Township History



By Peggy Bishop, Treasurer

When I started researching Harris Township's history, in anticipation of the Centennial in 2009, I was surprised to learn that there were more elected positions "back then" than we currently have today.

In addition to running for Supervisor, Clerk or Treasurer, residents could also run for Assessor, Justice of the Peace, and Constable. The first Assessor was E.H. Dorothy. The first Justice of the Peace was S. G. Benzing. The first two constables were Geo H. Jacobs and Martin Duffing.

In 1913, J.M. Romans was elected as the Town School Superintendent. There were no other entries for this position but it is unclear why no other Superintendents were elected. I would venture to say that the school district probably took over that position.

I also found that from 1909 to 1913, another elected position was an Overseer of Roads. Duncan Harris (who are township was named after) and J.H. Carlson were the first two Road Overseers elected. After 1913, these positions did not show up in the election results.

Currently, our township residents are able to elect three Supervisors to the Harris Town Board, plus one Clerk and one Treasurer. The township election takes place on the second Tuesday of March every year. The Supervisors serve a three year term, while the clerk and treasurer serve two year terms.

Township government may be the lowest form of government, but your Officers of the Harris Town Board feel that it is the most accessible form of government for our residents.



(Summer...continued from page 1)

WENDIGO PARK is located at 28184 Sunny Beach Road, just off of Wendigo Road / Co. Rd #67 - at the site of old Wendigo School



At Wendigo Park, there is a baseball field with bleachers and dugouts, a half basketball court, 2 tennis courts, a sand playground area with benches and an ice-rink and warming shack. A portable bathroom is maintained at the park all year long.

WENDIGO PICNIC AREA is located just past 28543 Sunny Beach Road, about 1/2 mile from Wendigo Park. It has three cement picnic tables with two grills, and is located on the shores of Pokegama Lake. There is a public walk-in access, which works well for canoes and kayaks. A new entrance was recently added to this picnic area, which makes it easier to find. A fence will be added soon.



POKEGAMA LAKE & BRIDGE is located - well, everyone knows where it is, but have you experienced the new walkway that runs along side and underneath the bridge?



It's a paved walkway from the old Harbor Restaurant, across the lake, to a parking lot near Zorbaz. It's a delightful walk, with floral beauty, the sounds and smells of the lake, and a view of Pokegama Lake unlike any other. *(Summer....continued on page 4)*

Is it a Township Road?

By Julie Kennedy – SEH / Harris Township Engineer

Often times, Township Supervisors and staff hear inquiries from residents such as "When is the Township going to fix Airport Road?" or "When are they going to grade Whispering Pines Road?" While Harris Township maintains over 30 miles of roads, **not all roads within the Township are their responsibility to maintain.**

There are basically four jurisdictional categories of roads within the Township: State Roads, County Roads, Township roads, and private roads.

To find out which roads fall under what jurisdiction, visit the Township website, at <http://www.harristownshipmn.org>, and click on the "Roads" button. Copies of maps may be requested from the Clerk at michelesmithclerk@msn.com or 327-9930.

From a Township Supervisor's Desk

By Larry Key, Supervisor



In August of 2003, the Harris Town Board amended the Harris Cemetery policy to state that **there shall be no planting of shrubs and trees on graves or lots, effective August 13, 2008.** The Board did this in order to obtain uniformity and efficiency in maintaining the cemetery and to keep the cemetery attractive.

The policy for trees and shrubs seems to be the hardest policy to enforce. However, the rest of the policy on Trees and Shrubs read as follows: "Any existing trees or shrubs that are already on lots, should they die, shall *not* be replaced. Maintenance of trees and shrubs currently planted at the cemetery will be done only if they become a menace to other sites, pedestrians, or create an unpleasant atmosphere. An existing tree or shrub may have to be removed to allow for excavation of an adjoining grave, and the township will not guarantee that it will be replanted or of its survival if it is replanted."

Your help by following the Harris Cemetery policy is greatly appreciated. Thank you!

(A complete cemetery policy is available at several posting stations at Harris Cemetery and is posted on our website: www.harristownshipmn.org.)

Recipe Corner

By Peggy Bishop, Treasurer

Special K Bars

6 cups Special K cereal
1 cup sugar
1 cup light corn syrup
1 cup peanut butter
1 cup chocolate chips
1 cup butterscotch chips



Measure Special K into a large bowl and set aside. Combine sugar and syrup in medium sized saucepan. Cook over moderate heat until mixture boils. Remove from heat. Stir in peanut-butter and mix well. Pour over Special K cereal and blend well. Press into a buttered 9x13" pan. Let stand in a cool place to harden.

Topping: Melt chocolate and butterscotch chips together over hot (not boiling) water. Stir until melted. Spread evenly over Special K mixture. Cool until firm, and then cut.

THIS IS AN EASY, NO-BAKE RECIPE...GREAT FOR SUMMER.

ENJOY! ☺

Roadside Clean-up Day

By Supervisor Dennis Kortekaas



On Tuesday, May 6th, Harris Township held a township wide roadside cleanup day. This was the day that the Officers of the Town Board cleaned the ditches along the two mile section of River Road they've adopted. This was also the day the Board encouraged residents to clean their own roadside ditches.

A dumpster was provided from sun up to sun down at the Harris Town Hall for residents to bring their roadside debris for free disposal. This cost the township over \$250.00 and there were only 4 bags of roadside debris put in it.

If anyone has any ideas on how to make this annual event more successful, with more participation, please contact me at 326-1882, or email the Clerk at michelesmithclerk@msn.com.

HARRIS TOWNSHIP ORDINANCES

(Below is a brief summary of the laws of Harris Township. Please see our website for the complete ordinance wording.)

Ordinance #1 - Consumption of Intoxicating Beverages:

Prohibits the consumption of intoxicating beverage on all properties owned and maintained by Harris Township. This includes the parks and town hall.

Ordinance #2 - Subdivision Bituminous Surfacing:

Describes circumstances whereby the initial bituminous surfacing of a subdivision may be shared by the developer/landowner and the township if certain requirements are met.

Ordinance #3 – Lodging Tax in Harris Twp

All bed & breakfasts, resorts and hotels must charge a 3% lodging tax, used to fund the Grand Rapids Area Visitors & Convention Bureau

The board is considering creating an ordinance #4 for restrictions on use of township public water access sites.

Harris Township
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30037 Harris Towns Road
Grand Rapids, MN 55744

RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED

HARRIS TOWNSHIP 2008 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)
August 13	August 27
September 10	September 24
October 8	October 22
November 12	November 26
December 10	(tentative)



WEBSITE:
www.harristownshipmn.org

(Summer...continued from page 2)

If you haven't taken a walk along the Pokegama Lake bridge-side trail yet, I would highly recommend it. It's really something to see!



Our township community offers many beautiful and well maintained parks, trails, and picnic areas right in our back yards. I hope you will get out this summer, and take advantage of them. ☺

(To see many color pictures of our parks and recreational areas, please visit our website at www.harristownshipmn.org, and click on the "Parks and Recreation" button, on the left sidebar.)



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

Town Hall Rental
BONNIE KEY - 327-0435

BOARD DIRECTORY

Supervisors:

- > Larry Key..... 326-3608 or
244-5248
- > Gary Rosato 326-4704
- > Dennis Kortekaas... 326-1882

Clerk and Cemetery Sexton:

- > Michele Smith327-9930
Or michelesmithclerk@msn.com

Treasurer:

- > Peggy Bishop.....326-6368