



Genoa Township News

November 2004

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No place for the Autumn-Olive

By Paulette A. Skolarus

We now have another invasive species of shrub or small tree that is growing all over Livingston County. That tree is known as the Autumn-Olive. The Autumn-Olive can grow to 20 feet in height. These shrub/trees out-compete native vegetation and interfere with natural plant succession because of their rapid growth. They propagate so quickly that the mighty Oak cannot compete.

The leaves of the Autumn-Olive have a dense covering of silvery scales and are highly aromatic with creamy yellow flowers appearing in June and July. The flowers are then replaced with clusters of berries. The berries are consumed by perching birds that then deposit the seed along with fertilizer beneath trees and along fencerows. Because Autumn-Olive is capable of fixing nitrogen in its roots, it can grow on bare, mineral substrates and dominate vegetation. Although Autumn-Olive provides a plentiful source of edible fruits for birds, ecologists have found that bird species variety is actually higher in areas dominated by native vegetation.

Autumn-Olive is a very troublesome invasive species in Livingston County. In addition to its prolific fruiting, seed dispersal by birds, rapid growth and ability to thrive in poor soils, Autumn-Olive resprouts vigorously after cutting or burning. Its growth creates heavy shade, which suppresses native plants that require direct sunlight. In the western United States it has become a major problem in woodlands, threatening even large, hardy native trees.

There is one good thing about this plant and that is that the berries are edible – although they taste like alum (an astringent mineral double salt). The berries may contain as much as 100 times the lycopene as tomatoes - the darker the berry, the more lycopene present in the fruit. However, you would need a lot of sugar to overcome the bitter taste.

The solution:

- Keep open fields cut to keep out this invasive neighbor. The Autumn-Olive is intolerant of shade and therefore does not grow in dense woodlands. Take down trees that are growing along fence lines. A single tree can produce 8 lbs of fruit that are then consumed and spread by birds and other wildlife.
- Cut trees at ground level when trees have begun to flower. This prevents seed production. Because Autumn-Olive spreads by suckering, resprouts are common after treatment. Cutting is an initial control measure, and success will require either an herbicidal control or repeated cutting of resprouts.
- Pull by hand – Autumn-Olive is effectively controlled by manual removal of young seedlings. Plants should be pulled as soon as they are large enough to grasp, but before they produce seeds. Seedlings are best pulled after a rain when the soil is loose. The entire root must be removed since broken fragments may resprout.

(Thank you to Gretchen Voyle of Michigan State University Extension for her insight and knowledge in preparing this report.)

2911 Dorr Road
Brighton, MI 48116
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Visit us online:
www.genoa.org



Polling Places for the November Presidential Election

Precincts 1 & 9

Cleary University

3750 Cleary Drive
Howell, MI 48843

Precinct 3

Community Bible Church

7364 West Grand River
Brighton, MI 48114

Precincts 4, 6, 7 & 8

Brighton Church of the Nazarene

7679 Brighton Road
Brighton, MI 48116

Precinct 5

Chilson Hills Baptist Church

4440 Brighton Road
Brighton, MI 48116

Precincts 2 & 10

Three Fires Middle School

4145 W. Crooked Lake Road
Howell, MI 48846

Obtain an absent voter ballot by stopping in at the Genoa Township Hall and filling out an application, or check out www.genoa.org and print out an application and mail it to Genoa Township Clerk, Paulette A. Skolarus, 2911 Dorr Road, Brighton, MI 48116. Ballots were mailed October 8, 2004 to those who applied.

Bored to Death

The emerald ash borer has done its damage. Now it is time for the cleanup. You can get rid of your dead ash wood by bringing the branches to LaMont Brothers Tree Service at 6785 Whitmore Lake Road, Whitmore Lake. Their phone number is (734) 663-4177. They are open from 7:00 a.m. until 7:00 p.m. (Monday through Friday), and on Saturday from 8:00 a.m. until 5:00 p.m. The trees are ground into pieces smaller than an inch – thus destroying the emerald ash borer. The end product is taken to a co-generation plant in Flint and then burned for electricity. The co-generation plant operates only on wood burning by-products. If you should choose to use some of that inner wood of the ash tree, it is still good. The ash borer does not penetrate the middle of the tree. Ash is used in the construction of axe and other tool handles when it is kiln dried.

Remember, that it is against the law to transport ash wood out of southeast Michigan. The last thing we want to do is infect our northern forests.

Storm-water

By Kelly Kolakowski

For over a year, Genoa Township has been working with Livingston County and other local cities, villages, and townships to address the impacts of storm-water on local rivers, lakes and streams. Storm-water is the water that literally "runs off" of your property when it rains or snows. It doesn't have to go into a sewer. It may just go into the street or into a nearby stream.

In Genoa Township, all storm-water drains to either the Shiawassee or the Huron River Watershed. The map shown to the right demarcates the boundaries of each watershed. A watershed is defined as the area of land where all of the water that is under it or drains off of it goes into the same place.

Storm-water is of particular concern to watershed protection because as the water flows over lawns, driveways, and parking lots it picks up fertilizers, oils, chemicals, salts, grass clippings, litter, pet waste, soils and anything else in its path. Because storm-water has the potential to carry these items directly into a body of water, it is imperative that efforts are taken to improve the quality of storm-water run-off.

Genoa Township recognizes that management of storm-water is crucial to the preservation and protection of the areas valuable water resources. Currently, the Township is participating in a collaborative process to help create a watershed management plan for the Huron Chain of Lakes Sub-watershed. The purpose of the watershed plan is to identify and implement actions needed to resolve water quantity and quality concerns in the watershed.

If you are interested in participating in the planning process or if you would like to learn more, please contact Kelly Kolakowski, Township Planning Coordinator at (810) 227-5225 or check out the newly added "storm-water management" page on our website www.genoa.org.



From the desk of the Supervisor...

As we enter autumn and ultimately winter there are some projects the township is working on that you should be aware of:

- Discussions between the Brighton Area and the Howell Area fire authorities relative to a possible merger are ongoing. While the will to make this important event occur is strong, as always, the devil is in the details. I continue to be encouraged by the willingness of all the parties to sit together and have frank and candid discussions about the common good that appears possible. While a merger will not necessarily reduce costs, it will afford all the governing bodies economies of scale as we replace and improve equipment. A community of our size needs only so many pumper trucks, engines, grass rigs, and aerial trucks. By sharing that equipment we remove the necessity for duplication. Further, as the struggle to recruit, train and retain good personnel continues, a merged fire authority allows us to share the men and women who work so hard to protect us. Also, it will allow us to do a fire station master plan so that we can locate the future stations in the areas most needed without regard to municipal boundaries. I will continue to work hard on your behalf to make this historic step a reality.
- The Township Board, Planning Commission and Zoning Board of Appeals have undertaken a sizable project to completely update the

township's master plan and zoning ordinance. This is a very important process for not only us but for all of our residents as well. This work will show us where our community is going and specifically what Genoa Township will look like 10-20 years in the future. As always, we welcome your questions and comments and look forward to your input. Please watch for meetings on this important subject on our web site (genoa.org) under the meeting agenda and minutes section.

- You may have read in the newspapers about a new idea for the Grand River and Dorr Road area. Initially dubbed "Downtown Genoa" it is a project in its infancy that will look to bring attached "brownstone housing" and downtown-like retail to that area. Our initial vision is for winding streets, sidewalks, stores and public gathering areas. Early indications are that the entities that have the land under contract like our ideas and are interested in working with us to see this project move forward. Please watch for meetings on this exciting project and feel free to attend meetings, contribute and ask questions. Our best work is done with your involvement.

Best wishes for a beautiful autumn.

Gary T. McCrie
Genoa Township Supervisor

Fall Leaf Collection

The fall leaf collection has been scheduled for Saturday, Oct. 30, 2004 and Nov. 13, 2004 at the Genoa Township Hall. Residents may drop off leaves and small brush from 9:00 a.m. until 12:00 noon on those two days.

Christmas Tree Collection

Mister Rubbish/Waste Management will pick up Christmas trees on the three consecutive weeks following the Christmas holiday. Trees must be cut in lengths not to exceed four feet and placed at the curbside with your regular refuse for disposal.

Notice

Persons mailing payments for water/sewer billings should allow at least ten mail days for payment to be received at the Township Hall. Payments are "not accepted" by the postmark date. Payments must be received by the due date. Note: There is a drop box at the front of the Township Hall.

Lawmakers Approve Early Tax Collection

On September 30th Gov. Jennifer Granholm signed SB 1111-1112 allowing the shift of the County Allocated Millage Portion of your taxes to the summer tax bill, which is levied July 1st from the winter tax bill, which is levied December 1st.

The collection change means that starting in 2005 taxpayers will pay one-third of the County Allocated Millage in July, two-thirds in July 2006 and all of the County Allocated Millage in July 2007. Therefore, reducing the December bills by the same.

What does this mean to you?

The current County Allocated Millage rate for Livingston County taxpayers is 3.4514. If you own a \$200,000. home the following is an estimate on how this change will effect you: In July 2005 approx. \$115. will be shifted to the summer tax bill (reducing the winter by the same), \$230. in 2006 (again reducing the winter bill) and \$345. in 2007 with no County Allocated Millage on the Winter Tax Bill.

If you have any questions please feel free to contact the Genoa Township Treasurer's Office at 810-227-5225.

2004 Summer Taxes

The 2004 Summer Tax bills were mailed out to all Genoa Township property owners in July. If you did not receive a bill please contact the Treasurer's Office right away. The summer taxes were due September 14th. You can still pay your summer bill at the Township until February 28, 2005 however there are additional penalties now due. If you deferred your summer tax, a reminder will be sent with your winter bill, a duplicate bill will not be sent. For those who did not defer their summer taxes and are still showing due, a delinquent notice will be sent with your winter bill.

2004 Winter Taxes

The 2004 Winter Tax Bills will be mailed to all property owners the first week of December and are payable thru February 28, 2005. If you do not receive your bill please contact us, so that we can send another copy. If you move or change your mailing address please notify the Genoa Township Assessor's office in writing. Failure to receive your tax bill does not waive penalties and interest. Tax payments can be made at the Township Office by cash or check, Monday-Friday 9:00-5:00, or by mail to 2911 Dorr Rd., Brighton, MI 48116. If paying by mail please allow at least 10-14 days for delivery, postmarks are not accepted. For your convenience there is a drop box located by the front door for after hours payments.

Don't forget to license your dog(s)

The 2005 Dog Licenses will be sold from December 1, 2004 thru February 28, 2005.

Dog License Fees for 2005: \$ 7.00 Spayed/Neutered
\$25.00 Male/Female
\$30.00 All dogs after February 28, 2005.



Genoa Township

2911 Dorr Road, Brighton, MI 48116



POSTAL PATRON

Genoa Township Board Members

Supervisor

Gary McCririe

Clerk

Paulette Skolarus

Treasurer

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Trustees

Todd Smith

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photo by Victoria Moilanen