



# Genoa Township News

Summer 2005

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## Naturally Spectacular Genoa Township Host of this summer's LACASA Garden Market

**By Paulette A. Skolarus, Clerk**

This summer the Genoa Township Park will host the LACASA Garden Market Tour. The event is scheduled for the weekend of July 9<sup>th</sup> and 10<sup>th</sup>, each day from 10:00 a.m. until 4:00 p.m. The five-acre park, located at the Township Hall on Dorr Road, is just a small portion of the nearly 45 acres of open field and meadow owned by the Township. Irene Cahill, a Registered Forester with the City of Lansing, has been working to turn the park into a place where residents can learn about native plants and trees. "Native habitat is diverse and benefits wildlife, birds and butterflies," Irene said.

Karleen Schafer is a Landscape Architect, township resident and the park coordinator. Karleen helped with the landscape design of the park. "The park has really grown over the five years we have been working here," Said Karleen. "It is a living sculpture." Irene and Karleen oversee the maintenance every season. They coordinate work with the Boy Scouts, Girl Scouts, master gardeners and other volunteers. It is strictly a labor of love for both women.



*photo by Polly Skolarus*

The park with its native plantings helps retain the rural character of Genoa Township. Native plants prosper simply because they have adapted to the Michigan environment. Diversity of plants offers protection for the natural habitat since a single bug, such as the Emerald Ash Borer, can wipe out the landscape if only one species is propagated.

Luann Schonfield chairs the LACASA Board. "We are pleased that Genoa Township will host the Garden Market," Schonfeld said. "It is the perfect location. The Township Hall has a large parking area, use of the facilities and a nice garden, which is really special because of the native plantings."



*photo by Polly Skolarus*

LACASA is an acronym for Livingston Area Council Against Spousal Abuse. LACASA is a nonprofit agency established in 1981 that provides support and shelter to victims of domestic violence, sexual assault and child abuse. In addition, they provide counseling services to perpetrators of domestic violence.

2911 Dorr Road  
Brighton, MI 48116  
Phone: 810.227.5225  
Fax: 810.227.3420

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[www.genoa.org](http://www.genoa.org)

## Naturally Spectacular *(continued from page 1)*

The Township Board has a bigger plan for the entire 45-acre parcel. The first is preservation of natural open space. The second step is constructing a small fishing dock at the bottom of the hill near the existing ponds. Access to the pond will be along an asphalt path that will eventually connect to



*photo by Polly Skolarus*

the existing bike/walk paths along Brighton and Bauer Roads. The pathway will wind around the township hall and up to the future soccer fields on the east side of the property and then meander down to the ponds and then up again near the fire station

and back onto Dorr Road. Park benches will be strategically located along the path for residents to rest.

Please join us this July for the LACASA garden tour:

## Water Storage - Getting ready for the summer demand

**By Mike Archinal, Manager**

Customers in all phases of the Oak Pointe and Northshore communities are currently under water use restrictions. Residents with **odd** numbered addresses are permitted to wash vehicles and water their lawns on **odd** numbered days. Residents with **even** numbered addresses are permitted to wash vehicles and water their lawns on **even** numbered days. **All** Oak Pointe and Northshore customers are asked to reduce all water usage between the hours of 5 a.m. to 9 a.m. and 5 p.m. to 7 p.m.

A new water storage tank is currently under construction at Oak Pointe Drive and Brighton Road. This 500,000-gallon tank will address the system's water storage needs. The tank will include 216 cubic yards of concrete, 80 cubic yards of shotcrete and 23,466 pounds of reinforcing steel. Erection of pre-formed panels began on May 31<sup>st</sup>. Construction is on schedule with completion anticipated in late July. This new tank will limit the need for future water use restrictions.



*photo by Mike Archinal*

Workers guide one of the pre-formed concrete panels into place. A 240-ton hydraulic crane was used to lift the panels.

## The Trouble with Some Trees

Sometimes a bargain just isn't a bargain. Be a little picky when choosing trees for your landscape. Just because it is on sale doesn't mean that it is a good deal. The Sycamore, Russian Olive, Norway Maple, Mulberry, Cottonwood and Box Elder are just a few that should be avoided. The primary problem with most of these trees is that they invade septic fields and/or underground pipes. Some take up a lot of space and others damage neighboring plants. Still others drop a foul-smelling fruit.

Stick with trees recommended by arborists. Trees that offer shade can reduce your energy bills in the summer. Evergreen trees planted on the west side of your home can buffer the ice and winter weather. When looking for trees to plant in your yard, plant a variety. This practice will deter a massive removal of trees should they fall victim to the Emerald Ash Borer or the Dutch Elm disease. Species encouraged in this area are Silver Maple, Sugar Maple, Horse chestnut, River Birch, Tulip tree, Swamp White Oak, Dogwood (cornus florida), White Pine and Kwansan Cherry.

## To Genoa Township Residents

### **Subject: The Zeeb Property**

You have likely read and heard accounts of the sale and potential development of the “Zeeb” gravel pit and the two state-owned parcels in the vicinity of Brighton and Chilson Roads. In 2003 we received application from the purchaser of the gravel pit to develop homes and condominiums on the 172 acres that has been mined for at least 50 years. We looked favorably on the proposal for several reasons, namely that it was a reasonable reclamation of the land and the revenues generated from the sale of sewer and water connections associated with the project will allow us to fund some much needed water and sewer improvements at Oak Pointe.

After that plan was brought forward, the State of Michigan announced that they would be auctioning off two parcels of land, 50-acres and 80-acres, adjacent to the gravel pit. We initially asked the state to donate those parcels to the Township as they have done in other areas of the State, however we were unsuccessful. The reason was that the parcels were acquired with state fish and game funds and also federal funds. Because of the method used to acquire these parcels, the law requires that the parcels be sold at “fair market value.” An appraisal done for the State pegged the value at 4 million dollars. The township does not have that kind of money available for such a purchase.

Our next strategy was to seek funding through an appropriation from the State itself. There seemed to be some hope after consulting with State Representative Chris Ward and State Senator Valde Garcia, however it became clear after further study that State funds were not available given the current budget conditions. We came to the conclusion that the most favorable and practical way for us to live with the reality was to partner with the developer of the adjacent gravel pit and develop a plan that would be as palatable as possible to the neighbors and the township at large. The goal of this partnership is to negotiate the density of the site early in the process and to attempt to include public amenities in the overall project such as soccer fields and other public open-space areas. We currently have an option on the property that includes the developer exchanging a parcel of land they control in the northern part of Howell in exchange for the two state owned parcels.

At the current time we are working with the developer and performing our “due diligence” portion of the purchase/exchange. We have met with the township residents living near the development to inform them of our plans. It is our intention to continue this process again in the near future so that we keep our residents informed of our plans and to seek their input in the process. As many of you have experienced on this and other projects, we maintain an open door policy on all of these land use issues and welcome your thoughts, concerns and advice as we proceed. We are continually impressed with the amount of positive ideas and thoughts we glean from our constituents.

As always, I welcome your questions, concerns and comments on this and any other issues affecting Genoa Township.

Gary McCrie  
Genoa Township Supervisor

### **Genoa Township Treasurer's Office:**

Robin Hunt, Township Treasurer	810-227-5225, ext. 17	email: robin@genoa.org
Renee Gray, Deputy Treasurer	810-227-5225, ext. 18	
Judi Smith, Assitant	810-227-5225, ext. 16	

Even though all payments made at the Genoa Township offices are received at the Treasurer's counter, **seperate checks are still needed for the different types of services** (e.g. taxes, special assessments, sewer/water utility payments, etc.) Most of the idfferent payments are either paid to different entities or deposited into different banks. Than you in advance for your cooperation.

## Remember, it's not just toxic to you...

Did you know that many household products are dangerous to our kids, pets, and the environment? These materials pollute our waterways if washed or dumped into storm drains or roadside ditches that lead directly to our lakes and rivers. Household cleaners, pesticides, gasoline, antifreeze, used motor oil, and other hazardous products need to be labeled, stored, and disposed of properly.

So what can you do to help? Simple. Here are some steps you can take to carefully dispose of household wastes and help keep our water clean.

**Identify it.** Be aware of household products that can harm children, pets, and the environment. The words "danger," "caution," "warning," or "toxic" indicate that you need to be careful in how you use and dispose of the product.

**Less is better.** Reduce waste and save money by purchasing only the materials you need. When possible, choose less toxic alternatives. For example, try cleaning your windows with vinegar and water.

**Store properly.** Keep unused products in their original containers with labels intact. Select cool, dry storage areas that are away from children, pets, and wildlife.

**Disposal is key.** Never dump cleaners, chemicals, motor oil, and other toxic materials down storm drains, roadside ditches, sinks, or on the ground. Contact the Livingston County solid waste program at (517) 545-9609 for household hazardous waste disposal locations, guidelines, and dates.

For easy steps on protecting our lakes and rivers, visit [www.semcog.org](http://www.semcog.org). Remember, our water is our future—and it's ours to protect.

## 2005 Summer Tax Bills

The 2005 Summer Tax Bills will be mailed out to **all** Genoa Township property owners on July 1, 2005. If you do not receive a bill please contact the Treasurer's Office right away so that we can send you another copy. Summer Taxes are due September 14, 2005. Any payments received after the due date will be charged a penalty. Payments can be made in person or by mail to the Township Treasurer's Office either by check, cash or money order. For your convenience there is a drop box located near the front entrance for after hours payments. Please allow sufficient time for mailing, as postmarks are not accepted. If you qualify, you can defer your summer tax by completing the form enclosed with your summer bill and filing it with our office prior to the due date.

Genoa Township property tax information is now available on our website. Go to [www.genoa.org](http://www.genoa.org) and click the link "Assessing & Property Tax Data." You can search by name, parcel ID number or address. Once you find the parcel you are looking for, click "Details" then scroll down and click "Tax Information".

Tax payment details for 2004 are good through February 28, 2005 only. Payments made at the Livingston County Treasurer's office are not reflected on the Genoa website. The 2005 tax payment information will be updated weekly.



photo by Victoria Moilanen



Genoa Township  
2911 Dorr Road, Brighton, MI 48116



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### Genoa Township Board Members

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Gary McCrie

#### Clerk

Paulette Skolarus

#### Treasurer

Robin Hunt

#### Trustees

Todd Smith

Jim Mortensen

Steve Wildman

Jean Ledford