Running with John...  

**Fire Station**  
Thanks to all who helped make the new Fire Station a reality. It will be a beautiful, lasting landmark for our area.

**Elections**  
Thanks to our Township Clerk Carolyn Boersma for all her work with elections in 2016. We had a Presidential primary in March, millage votes in the spring, a primary election in the summer and a major election in November. Carolyn is recognized in Ottawa County and the State of Michigan as an excellent Clerk for how well she does her job.

**Bike Path**  
The Krueger to Fruitport Rd Bike Path — We hoped to have this path completed by now. There is a significant problem with an underground AT&T fiber line which we were not notified about. This issue has to be resolved before the last part of the bike path can be completed. Yes, we are working hard to get that resolved. Thanks to the people at All Shores Church who have been so generous to provide us a permanent bike path easement on their property.

**Township Hall Building**  
Good Bye Old Township Hall — The building served us well for almost 60 years. As of Thursday, November 3, the demolition of the building was complete. The Village currently owns that site and they are seeking input to determine the property’s best future use.

**News from the Clerk**

**Elections 2016**
A BIG thank you to all the election inspectors who diligently worked to make all the elections in 2016 run smoothly. We had a 73% voter turnout for the November 8 election, which kept all our precincts busy. However, even with the heavy turnout, everything ran smoothly.

**Cemetery**
Thanks to Eric Schindlbeck, Tom Kerridge, Gary Braden and the seasonal workers, the Township Cemetery is looking great.

To help keep it looking great, your summer décor should have been removed by November 1. Winter décor may be placed on graves or gravesites from November 1 through April 1. However, grave blankets are not allowed.

Please be aware that flower urns that are unused for three years will be removed and stored by the Cemetery. These flower urns may be claimed at any time unless and until otherwise disposed of at the Cemetery’s discretion.

If you have unused Cemetery plots, you may sell them back to the Township for the price you paid. According to Township Ordinance, you may not sell them to a third party.
Deputy Spotlight

So was that person in front of you careless driving or reckless driving? What is the difference? Many people use the terms interchangeably but they mean vastly different things with the only common theme between them being driving.

Reckless Driving (257.626) is when someone intentionally goes about the manner of driving which puts themselves, others, and property at risk. The State of Michigan describes it as being “Willful and Wanton”. Reckless driving is a misdemeanor crime punishable by imprisonment for not more than 93 days or a fine of not more than $500.00, or both. Careless Driving (257.626b) is when someone did not necessarily go about the manner of driving which put themselves, others, and property at risk. The State of Michigan describes it as “Careless or Negligent” without wantonness or recklessness. Careless Driving is a civil infraction (which means a traffic ticket) and the fine varies depending on the county. The fine in Ottawa County is $185.00

The same crash could result in one citation or the other depending upon circumstances. Let’s take the example of a car leaving the roadway and striking a tree, injuring the driver. If it is determined the driver was driving erratically, fishtailing gravel all over the road, maybe showing off or racing, the driver will likely be cited for Reckless Driving. Why? Because the driver was intentionally driving in a manner which resulted in the crash. If the driver said they took their eyes off the road to see what was rolling around on the floor of their vehicle they will likely be cited for Careless Driving. Why? Because the driver was showing negligence by taking their eyes off the road, even for a moment, which resulted in the crash. This often happens when someone checks their radio station or reaches for something else in their vehicle.

Let’s be safe out there Spring Lake Township. Let us be the examples to everyone else of what a safe driver is. Slow down and save lives this winter.

Lukas Hill, Community Development Director

We are wrapping up the 2016 development season which has been quite active in many ways. Two new large residential developments have been reviewed, Arcadia and Spring Ridge. Arcadia is located just north of the Spring Lake High School and consists of 111 dwelling units with a mixture of single family homes and connected townhome style condominiums. This development will offer public access to ponds, parks, trails through natural areas, picnic shelters, and sidewalks connecting to the Township bike path system. Municipal sewer was extended from Cross Creek drive to accommodate this development and a significant amount of road work was completed on 148th Avenue to enhance traffic flow in this area that will get busier over time. It is expected that the construction of new homes will begin before the end of the year. Spring Ridge, still under current review, is located on the south side of Van Wagoner Street between West Spring Lake Road and 168th Avenue. This development consists of 50 new single family home sites with sidewalks throughout and two parks. A new bike path will be constructed along the Van Wagoner road frontage and hopefully will be connected to the existing bike path system.

The 2016 building season in the Township has been steady with 15 new single family homes being constructed with an estimated value of $6.6 million. Work is also continuing on the Little Black Lake project where a new kayak launch and nature trails have been suggested for consideration. The Village of Spring Lake also is also experiencing a variety of redevelopment including the new Fire Station, expansion of the Mill Point Medical Facility, the new Mill Point Senior Housing project, Marina Bay expansion, a new storage building at Barrett Boat Works, and the new school building at St. Mary’s Church.

Planning Update

According to the Township Code, snow may not be deposited from a driveway onto a sidewalk, path or public street. If you use a plow service, make sure the driver knows the rules, because the homeowner will receive the citation.

Deputy Travis Babcock, Community Policing

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Manager’s Update

Thank you, Larry Mierle

Thanks to Larry Mierle for his 40 years of service to the residents of Spring Lake Township. Larry has served on both the Zoning Board of Appeals and the Board of Trustees. It’s really remarkable the amount of time and public service that Larry has given to the community. When you consider 40 years of service, that happens so seldom anymore. We’re just pleased and honored that he would serve us that long.

Gordon Gallagher, Township Manager

Welcome, Jerry Rabideau

The Board of Trustees welcomes the newest member, Jerry Rabideau. Jerry is a teacher at Spring Lake High School. He is a graduate of Grand Valley State University and Western Michigan University. Jerry has previously served the residents of Spring Lake Township as a member of the Recreation Committee.

DPW Update

Kyle Botbyl, Water/Sewer Supervisor

Fall has arrived and winter is not far behind it. With these changing seasons come falling leaves and snow. The DPW wishes to remind residents that piling leaves or snow on the bike paths is an ordinance violation. We attempt to maintain the bike path system in passable condition for the enjoyment of our citizens. Also any persons who have a fire hydrant on their premises shall try to keep the fire hydrant and the surrounding area within a four-foot radius free and clear from piled and accumulated snow. Your cooperation is greatly appreciated.

Parks Update

Pete Eliopulos Parks Supervisor

Rycenga Park Restroom Expansion
We are adding four individual family restrooms to our current restroom facility at Rycenga Park. With the growing number of people that utilize this amazing park on a daily basis, our current restroom was just too small to handle the demands. The project is on schedule with a completion date of December 15, 2016 or sooner.

Assessing News

Heather Singleton, Assessor

New construction has increased and sales are steady. If you want to know the impact a change you have made will have on your assessment, please give us a call. We are here to assist.

Our department is open Monday thru Friday, 8 am to 5 pm by phone and for walk-in traffic. If your concern is complicated, it is recommended that you make an appointment, so that we can address your concerns uninterrupted. Visit our website and you may find the answers to your questions among the links or a copy of a form that you may need.

Please contact our office with any address changes to ensure that you receive your bills and assessment change notices.

Our direct department number is (616) 844-2108. Our e-mail addresses are as follows: dnorth@springlaketwp.org and hsingleton@springlaketwp.org. Our website: http://www.springlaketwp.org/departments/assessing-department/
New Fire Station Completed

Brian Sipe, Fire Chief

The construction is complete and we are now operating out of our new fire station. We are very proud to be able to build this facility with no millage tax increase.

When we designed this facility, we focused on three key aspects. The first is our operations. This facility has allowed us to consolidate two stations down to one which allows our operations to be more efficient. This also gives us the opportunity to consolidate equipment, which provides a long-term cost savings. The second aspect is sustainability. Not only have we constructed a facility that will last for the next 50-plus years, we have been able to incorporate highly efficient mechanical, plumbing and lighting systems. We have even added solar panels across our entire apparatus bay roof and currently we are on pace to be the first LEED Silver fire station in the State of Michigan. The third aspect is the health and safety of our men and women. We have been able to provide a room to keep our turnout gear in, rather than keeping it in our personal vehicles, minimizing the exposure to toxins that collect on our gear during fires. We also have equipment to properly wash that gear to get rid of the toxins. Finally, we have provided a fitness room which has been outfitted with equipment provided through a Federal grant. All these aspects are components that we didn’t have at either of our former stations.

Along with a new station, we have an new address and a new phone number. The new station is located at 106 N. Fruitport Rd. If you are trying to reach our department, please call 616-215-1590 or email slfdoffice@springlaketwp.org. Thank you to the community for your continued support for this project and the Spring Lake Fire Department.

Recreational Vehicles (campers, trailers, motor homes and other similar equipment) need to be stored in a side or rear yard at least 4 feet away from property lines beginning December 1. Thank you for your cooperation!