

Volume 8 Issue 1

February, 2008

# Superior Scenes

**3040 N. Prospect Road, Ypsilanti, MI 48198**

### Superior Township Board of Trustees

|                   |            |
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#### On the Web:

[www.superior-twp.org](http://www.superior-twp.org)

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734-482-3842 Fax

Water & Sewer Services

575 E. Clark Road, Ypsilanti, MI

734-480-5500

Office hours 8:00 AM until 4:30 PM

24/7 Emergency Service

For Water & Sewer Emergencies

#### Superior Township Fire Department

7999 Ford Road

Ford and Prospect Roads

Ypsilanti, MI 48198

734-484-1996

In Emergency dial 911

#### Fire Station #2

Corner of Harris and MacArthur

Dial 911 for Emergencies

Parks & Recreation

575 E Clark Rd, Ypsilanti, MI

734-480-5502

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## From our Superior Supervisor . . .

Superior Township is rarely in the newspaper in part because the Superior Township Board of Trustees works together to resolve issues and provide the best service possible. The Board of Trustees understands the difficulty our residents are having during these difficult economic times. There are several proactive actions the Board has taken to help.



**William McFarlane, Supervisor**

Superior Township was one of only two Townships in Washtenaw County NOT to charge property owners a 1% tax administration fee on taxable properties. Also, Superior Township was one of only two Townships NOT to pass a Headlee override on the authorized millages. The Township administrative staff will request the voted millage be reduced in the future.

ask the Board to reinstate it. This is because the Township has acquired higher insurance coverage and maintains a reasonable fund balance that can provide for the legal defense of the Growth Management Plan and Zoning Ordinance.

The legal defense millage will expire this year and the Township administrative staff will not

Superior Township is the only Township in Washtenaw County to receive a double AA-bond rating from Standard and Poor's. Our

*Continued on page 4*

## Superior news you can use

We have a brand new building for our Utilities Department at Superior Township. It is located at 9699 MacArthur Blvd.

"We are having an OPEN HOUSE on APRIL 19 from 10:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m. to show off our beautiful new building."

**COME FOR A TOUR AND REFRESHMENTS.**

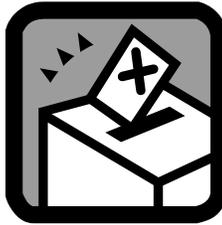


## News from our Superior Clerk

This is a busy election year. We already had the Presidential Primary in January. May 6 is the Annual School Election (April 7 is the last day to register). The Primary Election is August 5 (last day to register is July 7) and the General Election to elect the President is November 4 (last day to register is October 6). You may register at the Township Hall, a Secretary of State Branch Office, or from forms on-line. Please remember that if you register on-line, you **MUST** vote the first time in

person or apply for an absent voter ballot in person.

**STUDENTS** – if you want an absent voter ballot for the November election, and you have registered on-line, please come in person to apply for the ballot before you go away to school.



**Kay Williams, Clerk**

## Our Superior Township

Superior Charter Township is a carefully planned mix of urban and rural neighborhoods, interspersed with many square miles of farmland, woods, wetlands, and other natural open spaces. In addition, the rural settlement of Dixboro in the northwest corner of the Township and the historic homes along Plymouth-Ann Arbor Road and on the other rural roads provides a unique historic dimension to the area.

The 1881 *History of Washtenaw County, Michigan* expressed the sentiments of the early residents by stating “ ‘Superior’ is stamped upon its lands and is said to extend itself to the people and their homes.” It is still true. We pride ourselves on the diversity of our lands, our homes, and our people. In the 35.5 square miles of the Township, we have homes ranging from multi-dwelling apartments to \$18 million estates. We have small gardens behind subdivision homes and the 879 acre Ford Farm. We have tot lots, nearly 300 acres of Township Parks and Preserves, 239 acres of County Parkland, and over 650 acres of preserved open space, wetlands or farmlands. That is more than 1 ½ square mile of land, 5% of the total Township land, that will always be open. And we are working to preserve more land for ourselves and our children. So that wherever you live in the Township, you can easily walk to open

space. The new non-motorized trails will make it even easier.

The people of Superior Township are socially, economically, and racially diverse. According to SEMCOG estimates the current population is 13,015 (Jan. 2008). The 2000 Census reported that by race the Township is 62% white, 30 % African American, 2% Hispanic and 6% other races. 35% of us have a bachelor’s degree or higher, 23% have some college, and all but 9% of us graduated from high school. We have all age groups; 1/3 of us are families with children, 1/3 are families without children, and 1/3 live alone. The Township has 3,836 single family homes, 581 condo/apartment homes, and 831 mobile homes. Although about 10% of the population lives below the poverty level, the median household income is higher than that of the State of Michigan and Washtenaw County.

The Township has two major employment centers, St. Joseph Mercy Health System and Hyundai America Technical Center, Inc. Phase 1, both of which are growing and adding more jobs. St. Joe currently employs over 5,000 people providing jobs at all levels of service. Hyundai will soon employ 400 people, mostly in the high-tech sector, and plans on building a second phase.

# News from our Superior Treasurer

Brenda L. McKinney



**Our Treasurer  
Brenda L. McKinney**

The Township Board has applied for grants that have enabled us to install Non-Motorized Trails in the Township.

Please join us on April 19 for a walk along our Non-Motorized Trails and a tour of our new Utility Maintenance Building at their Open House at 9699 MacArthur. Hotdogs and refreshments will be provided.

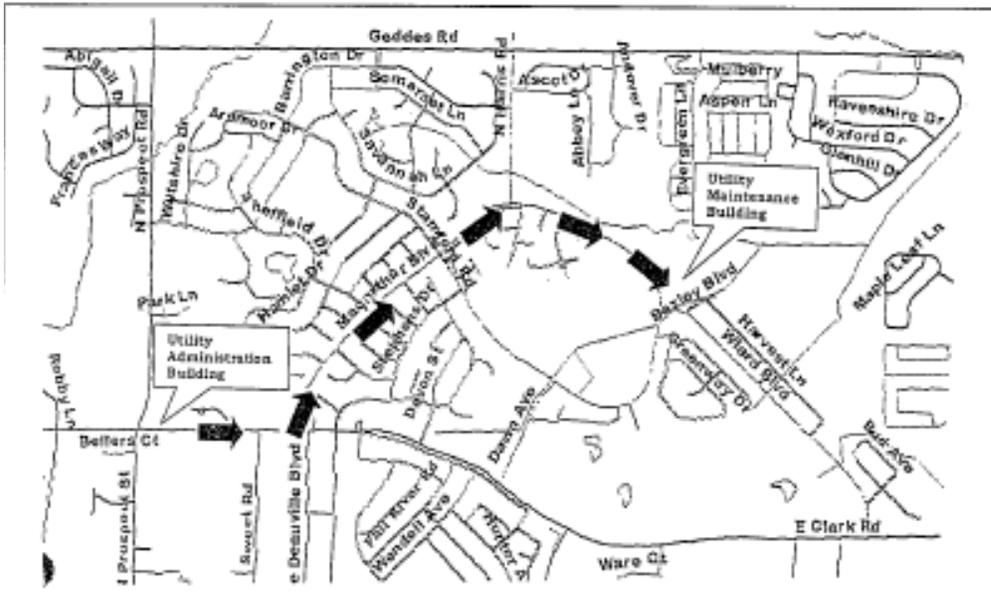
The walk will begin at the Utility Administration Building on Saturday, April 19 at 10:30 am. located at 575 Clark Rd., which is on the corner of Clark and Prospect.

Your Township Board came up with the Non-

motorized Trails Initiative as part of the Township's Growth Management Plan. The Non-Motorized Trails are for our residents to use and enjoy the beautiful sights of our Superior community. They are also here to provide us with a safe environment for healthy walking.

So far, trails are complete from Prospect and Clark to Devon picking back up at Clark and MacArthur just past Harris Road. Funding for the Non-Motorized Trails came from grant monies. Future trails are being planned from Ridge Rd. to Superior Rd. along Geddes. Eventually trails will be connected throughout the Township to allow you to "Walk the Township" safely.

## Non-Motorized Trail Walk Saturday, April 19, 2008 10:30 a.m.



*(Continued from page 1) Supervisor*

audits have been rated “unqualified” which is the highest rating obtainable.

Previously, the Township has asked voters for 3.5 millage for fire service. This year the Administrative staff will ask for only 3 mills for fire service. This will not have a negative impact on service.

The Township Assessor has indicated the State Equalized Value in the residential class will be lowered. Where *Taxable Values* and *State Equalized Values* are close, the new lower *State Equalized Value* will become the new *Taxable Value*.

Last year, Superior Township and Ann Arbor Township formed a collaboration using the Washtenaw County Sheriff Department deputies assigned to each township. This occurred after several years of negotiations with the Sheriff. Deputies from both Townships will be available to assist each community. This should result in requests for police service being handled much quicker. The resulting higher number of deputies improves service with out additional cost.

Superior Township and six other primarily eastern Washtenaw county communities contracted for and received a proposal for a regional police force. The Township will study the aspect of forming a regional police force or staying with the sheriff department. If a recommendation to form a regional police department is suggested a public hearing will be held for citizen input. The Township now has something to compare to the service the sheriff department provides regarding cost and deployment.

While the economy in general across the state and country presents a picture of gloom, the Superior Township Board of Trustees is proactive in reducing the burden locally. This may be one factor for the unparalleled growth in our managed growth community. In 2007, Superior Township issued 93 new single family residential building permits, more than any other Washtenaw County municipality.

Apparently, even more people want to live in a “Superior” Township.

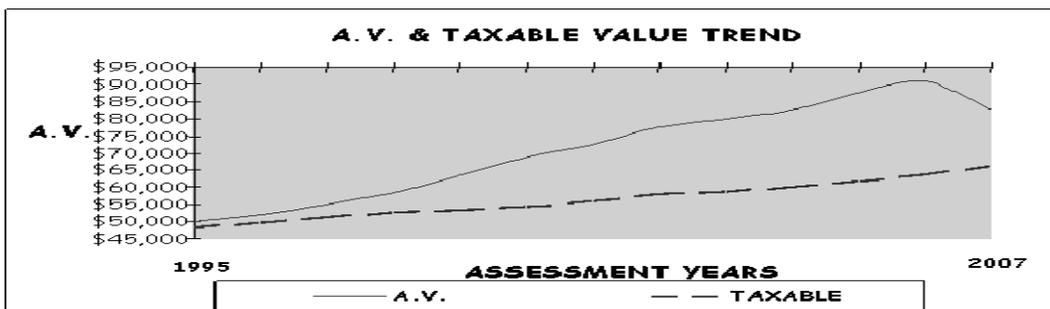
## Our Superior Assessor

Property owners who have purchased their homes in the last few years may see their TAXABLE VALUE lowered as our ASSESSMENTS starts to decline following the past years sales. For those of us who have owned our homes longer and there is a larger spread between the assessed and taxable value we will see the taxable value increased by the mandated state consumer priced index (cpi) this year being

1.023 %. The last week of February the Assessing Department will be mailing your Notice of Assessment and Taxable Valuation for the 2008 tax year. The Superior Township Assessing Department is mandated by the State on procedure and rules regarding valuation.

The example below demonstrates how assessed values and taxable values changed based upon market values and the CPI. Note that if the trend continues, taxable value will eventually be the same as assessed value (A.V.). The taxable value can never be greater than the assessed value.

An Example



## Our Superior Fire Department

Fire Chief J. Roberts



All of us at your fire department are proud of the accomplishments we have made during the year of 2007. We would like to make you aware of these successes by grouping them in categories with short explanations as follows:

### NEW APPARATUS

Our department took delivery of a new American LaFrance 2500 gallon tanker apparatus that allows a faster response coupled with state-of-the-art equipment in combating large scale fires.

Our county-wide Hazardous Materials Response Authority purchased an additional apparatus and we house it at our new station. The vehicle is full of equipment and four of our nine firefighters have been trained to a higher county-wide disaster response level that provides the very best service to our communities.

### DEPARTMENT TRAINING

We have three firefighters that are in the process of completing Fire Officer Level I and II classes that will certainly help qualify them for officer positions in the future. Fire fighters French, Braman and Kujawa received over 190 hours of additional training with most of it on their own time.

Captain Ron Smith is currently enrolled in the Eastern Michigan University Fire Staff and Command School that consists of over 400 hours of classroom instruction and will take one year to complete. He will become the first Superior Township fire fighter to accomplish this very lofty goal.

Fire Marshal Wayne Dickinson completed a 40 hour refresher course on fire inspections and 30 hours of arson and fire investigation training.

### COUNTY-WIDE INVOLVEMENT

Firefighters Jordan Braman and Donald Sanford are members of the Western Wayne Hazardous Materials Authority. Firefighter Braman is also a member of the Wayne County Techni-

cal Rescue Team.

Fire Captain Shaun Bach and firefighter Jeff French are members of the Washtenaw County Hazardous Materials Response Authority. Captain Bach and Firefighter Barry Conklin are members of the Washtenaw County Technical Rescue Team. They all attend every meeting, training and emergency response involving their individual teams.

### RESPONSES

Our department responded to 1262 emergency medical and fire responses. The past five years has shown a gradual increase each year with 2007 having the highest totals.

### LOWER ISO RATING

Part of the Staff and Command class Captain Smith is taking involves a lengthy term paper concerning some aspect of your department or the fire service in general. He has chosen our ISO (Insurance Services Office) rating and will be taking an in-depth look at the possibility of lowering this rating. The rating is a scale insurance companies use in establishing costs for providing fire insurance to our community and is greatly affected by the fire department's efficiency.

### UPGRADING EMS RESPONSE LEVELS

Firefighter Jeff French is our department emergency medical services director and as such, has been investigating what additional training and equipment it would take to upgrade our licensure from emergency first responder to emergency medical technician-basic. Our department is taking a proactive approach to the possibility of providing a greater level of service to our community and will be in a position to advise of this in the near future.

As Fire Chief of the Superior Township Fire Department, I take great pride in reporting the accomplishments and future goals of our fire fighters that exemplifies why Superior Township is a great community to live in.

## Our Superior Wetlands

Sandi Lopez, Wetlands Board

### Another Wetland Restored!

You may have wondered what is going on with all the digging and flagging on the southeast corner of Vreeland and Prospect. What is happening is that the drainage tiles are being dug up, the ground is being graded and a wetland is being restored.

The area is part of the Rouge River Watershed. It was formerly a wetland, however in the past, farmers put in drainage tiles so they could farm the land. Although the land was being actively farmed, it remained fairly wet. When some wetlands and woods were destroyed on the corner of Michigan and Beck Roads in Canton to put up a commercial development, state law required the company to create a wetland to help offset the damage. The developer contacted the SMLC and the SLC and was able to work out terms that were a benefit to our Township and the Conservancy, while allowing the Canton development to continue.

The new wetland will cover approximately 3.2 acres. 2.1 of those acres will be forested wetlands, while the remainder will be wetland meadows, emergent and open water. There may be additional woods planted. Although the land is owned by

the Southeast Michigan Land Conservancy, a conservation easement on the constructed wetlands will be transferred to the MDEQ, as a secondary layer of protection for the land. When the work is done, there will be a path from Vreeland Road along a drier section, connecting to the paths through the LeFurge Woods Nature Preserve.

This spring the wetland planting will start. Watch for Red Maples, Silver Maples, Sycamores, Swamp White Oak and Pin Oak, planted at 300 trees per acre. The non-forested areas will be planted with a large variety of plants, including: Grasses and Sedges, Plantains, Swamp Milkweed, Asters, Joe Pye Weed, Sensitive Ferns, Coneflowers and Bulrushes. Wildlife habitat will be provided by laying down piles of trees, tree stumps, and logs.

The developer has agreed to monitor the area for 5 years, to make sure invasive species don't take over, debris is removed, and the wetland is stabilizing and becoming fully functional.



## Our Superior Fire Department

Superior Township Fire Department received a donation of fifty fire extinguishers from the Ann Arbor Pfizer research facility. The extinguishers will be used for public education and demonstrations of fire safety.

"At Pfizer, we're proud of our long tradition of community support," said Rick Chambers, Director, Worldwide Communications for Pfizer. "This donation of fire extinguishers is another way we can ease the transition for local organizations and provide an important benefit to the community of Superior Township."

The Superior Township Fire Department would like to thank Pfizer for the generous donation that will help make our public education program successful.



## From our Superior Utility Department

The Utility Department is in charge of operating and maintaining the water and sewer lines that serve most of the Township residents whose homes are south of Geddes Rd. It's our responsibility to make sure that there are adequate water and wastewater services available. In this issue, we would like to share with you just some of the many projects we have undertaken to make our community a better place to live.

We consistently strive to provide our customers a high level of service at the lowest possible cost. This is evidenced by the effort we put forth to only pass through to our customers the rate increases that are passed along to us. Although rate increases averaging approximately ten percent per year have been imposed by our suppliers and have, therefore, been passed through to our residents, the Utility Department's operating costs have been maintained with only one additional five percent increase in the past eleven years.

It is important for you to know that most of the improvements highlighted below have been largely funded through either connection fees from developers for growth that has occurred in the Township or through grants and alternate funding sources in order to minimize the cost to you, our customers.

### Wastewater Service Projects

**2000 - Construction of an Interceptor Sewer Line** - The purpose for this line is to collect the wastewater from several smaller sewer lines in the Township and to transmit the collected wastewater to the Ypsilanti Community Utilities Authority (YCUA) wastewater treatment plant. This multi-million-dollar project was a joint effort between Superior Township and YCUA and addressed the need to replace the more than forty year old existing line. The new line was designed to accommodate the existing current area zoning for water/sewer.

**2005 - Construction of a Sewage Lift Station** - A new pump station was installed to serve the portion of Section 36 (Ridge Road area, South of Geddes Road) of the Township that is in

the urban service area. The lift station was designed to include advanced technology and appurtenances to ensure proper operation and longevity and was paid for by the developers.

### 2007/2008 - Sanitary Sewer Evaluation Study (SSES) Project

- The purpose of this project is to investigate the condition of the existing sanitary sewer lines through manhole inspections, smoke testing and televising in order to identify problem areas and assist us in prioritizing our maintenance and rehabilitation efforts appropriately. Through a grant, approximately 90% of the project's costs are being funded by the State of Michigan. The results of this investigation will likely identify the need for several additional projects that will help to ensure proper sewage flow and will extend the life of the sanitary sewer lines.

### Water Service Projects

**2000 - Reliability Study Project** - We performed a Reliability Study, which reviewed the Township's water demands over a 20-year period. This resulted in recommendations for several projects, both large and small, for needed improvements to our overall water system.

**2004 - Wiard Road Water Main Replacement Project** - This approximately 40 year old water main, which had experienced an increasing number of problems, was replaced at the same time the road was repaved in order to help reduce costs.

**2004 - Prospect Road Water Main Improvement Project** - This project consisted of installing approximately one-third mile of new water main along Prospect Road, between Berkshire Drive and Club Lane. This installation completed the looping of water mains in that section in order to provide much needed redundancy for residents who live on the western side of our water district.

**2004/2005 - Second Connection Project** - Until this project was undertaken, our water service area was fed by a single connection to the YCUA water system, which is located near

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*(Continued from page 7)*

the intersection of Dawn Street and Clark Road. The construction of a second connection near the intersection of Geddes and Ridge Roads has provided a second water system connection to YCUA, and also created an additional connection for YCUA to the Detroit water system. This project involved the installation of a pressure control valve, in addition to providing much needed redundancy for our water system; it also improved the pressure and fire protection conditions in the Township.

#### **2006/2007 – New Booster Station/Third Water Connection**

**Project** - Due to large elevation changes in our service area and the proximity of the existing connections, it was determined that a third connection to the YCUA water system was necessary in order to increase overall system reliability. The third connection was made at the corner of Leforge and Clark Roads and involved the installation of a booster station, which is programmed to flow more water in times of high system demand in order to meet the needs of current as well as future water users.

#### **2007/2008 – Clark Road Sanitary Sewer and Water Main**

**Project** - This combination water/sewer line project consists of the replacement of the sanitary sewer lines running through the back yards of a number of homes on Clark Road, between Devon Street and Clark Drive, in order to improve the overall flow from these homes and to reduce the cost of maintaining these lines. This project also includes the removal and relocation of approximately 1,000 feet of water main in that same area that is in close proximity to several homes. The water portion of the rehabilitation was 50% funded by YCUA.

#### **General Projects**

**2006/2007 – Maintenance Facility Project** - Probably the most evident of the construction projects that the Utility Department has embarked upon is the new 12,500 square foot Maintenance Facility located on MacArthur Boulevard, near Wiard Road. This location previously contained the remnants of an apartment complex called Woolman Oval, which was

abandoned in the late 1970's. The clean-up of this site was part of the construction project. This new facility is used to house Utility Department service trucks, equipment and materials and includes offices and work areas for our Maintenance staff. It also allows for heated storage, which is critically needed for the equipment we use for underground excavation and for sewer cleaning.

In addition to the previously mentioned construction projects we've made technological advances or have expanded our services in the following areas:

#### **Meter Reads via Radio - Completed in 2007**

New meters and meter reading equipment has been installed that allows us to take meter readings simply by driving by your home, which has reduced our meter reading time from what would have been approximately four days per month to approximately 6 hours per month.

#### **Geographic Information System (GIS) - Began in 2000-Ongoing**

We now employ the use of GIS, which is a type of map-making technology that allows us to display roads, sewer, water main, property lines, etc. through a digital data base. Each feature in the database contains valuable information, such as the size of a pipe, or the date it was installed.

#### **Supervisory Control and Data Acquisition (SCADA) - Began in 2004-Ongoing**

One of the more advanced pieces of technology is our SCADA system, which gives the Utility Department direct information and control over the status of our water booster stations and our sanitary sewer lift stations. The Utility Department Director and his staff are notified immediately of a problem and can quickly take appropriate action.

**Online Payments (Began in 2007-Ongoing)** - Payments for water/sewer bills can now be made online from your bank

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*(Continued from page 8)*

account (savings or checking) or by credit card through the Township's web site.

**Land Purchase for Future Water Storage (2008)** - The most recent endeavor of the Utility Department was the purchase of a piece of property adjacent to our existing water booster sta-

tion (corner of Leforge and Clark Roads) to be used for future water storage needs. A water storage facility will further enhance our water system's reliability. In addition, the use of water storage to offset peaks in water demand will allow the Township to reduce costs from our suppliers and pass on the savings to our customers.

## Our Superior Parks

### Superior Township Parks Have Something For Everyone!

Superior Township is fortunate to have many parks available for the enjoyment of our residents and visitors. From passive use natural areas to playgrounds, our parks have something to offer everyone!

#### Neighborhood Parks In Superior Township Include:

**Oakbrook Park**, which has a plays cape and a softball diamond, with plenty of space for other sports in its expansive field.

**Norfolk Park**, which has a connecting trail to Oakbrook Park, and features a large sheltered picnic area that can be reserved for gatherings.

**Community Park**, which, along with a play structure, has a tennis court and fields for other activities.

**Schock Park**, which is adjacent to Superior Township Hall, and is a lovely spot for a picnic.

**Fireman's Park**, which is adjacent to the fire station, and features a large playing field, is also the location for the Superior Township branch of the Ypsilanti Public Library.

**Harvest Moon Park**, which has a sheltered picnic area, playground equipment, and a popular basketball court.

Passive Use Parks in Superior Township include:

**Schroeter Park**, which is 33 acres and includes trails through

woodlands and fields perfect for walking or skiing.

**Cherry Hill Nature Preserve**, which has miles of trails through woods, wetlands, and meadow areas, and is great for bird watching and quiet hikes.

Superior Township also offers a Summer Learning Camp for kids for 8 weeks every summer, which provides recreation and summer fun with a curriculum that emphasizes learning.

We at Superior Township Parks encourage all residents to take advantage of your many recreational opportunities here!



# Our Superior Neighborhood Watch

John Hudson is Township coordinator for Neighborhood Watch. If you have concerns or questions about crime in the Township and would like to receive Neighborhood Watch information by email, including monthly crime reports and alerts, contact [Jhudson300606MI@comcast.net](mailto:Jhudson300606MI@comcast.net) or 734-657-4001.

Neighborhood Watch meets bimonthly with representatives from The Washtenaw County Sheriff. Meetings are open to all and are held at 7:00 on the third Tuesday every other month. The next meeting is March 18th at Old Town Hall, 3040 N. Prospect, across from Township Hall. A deputy is usually in attendance, and at various times other presenters are included. Last year, for example, we had a presentation by Washtenaw Office of Emergency Preparedness.

Neighborhood Watch is an effective means of community enforcement and relies on community awareness and communication. In the past, cooperation between neighbors and police successfully ended a string of burglaries. Interest in Neighbor

hood Watch is growing, with new members in Brookside and Oakbrook. Active members of Superior Township Neighborhood Watch are currently attending a Citizen's Police Academy sponsored by Washtenaw County Sheriff's Dept.

There are several ways to become involved. Becoming part of the email alert list will ensure that you receive updates on crime and meetings. Attending meetings presents an opportunity to discuss police matters directly with County Officers. Hope to see you on March 18<sup>th</sup>.

★★★★★★★★★★★★★★★★★★★★★★★★★★★★★★★★★★★★★★  
 ★ *Geddes Road Closures* ★  
 ★ *The intersections of Geddes and Leforge, and Geddes and Superior are getting major improvements this spring. Beginning March 1, Leforge will be closed south of Geddes. Some time between April 1 and April 15, Geddes will be closed between Prospect and Hickman for approximately 45 days. Detour signs will be posted with alternate routes.* ★  
 ★  
 ★ *The Leforge/Geddes intersection will be getting turn lanes and a traffic signal, and a roundabout will be constructed at Superior/Geddes. The two projects are being built together to keep the disruption of traffic at a minimum. Thank you for your cooperation.* ★  
 ★  
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# Our Township is Superior!

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