

Directors and Chapter Officers: This newsletter is mailed to chapter presidents and secretaries.
Please feel free to copy and distribute this newsletter to other chapter members.

MTA County Chapter Update

News for and from Michigan Townships Association County Chapters March 2008

DID YOU KNOW....

MTA offers online resources?

Fact sheets, booklets, bulletins and Web resources address various township topics in depth. Many provide handy sample language, checklists or charts, along with commentary and compliance tips.

Find information on summer tax collection, fireworks permitting, township millage questions, a model ordinance on outdoor and open burning and much more, when you visit www.michigantownships.org/resourcekits.asp.

There's Still Time to Participate in the Important LUCA Program



The most important thing that local communities can do to improve their census counts--and avoid unnecessary loss of federal and state funds--is to participate in the Local Update of Census Addresses (LUCA) program. Unfortunately, at least 684 Michigan cities and townships failed to register in the

LUCA program before the deadline. The good news is that, because the Library of Michigan is participating in the LUCA program on behalf of the entire state, it is still possible for these communities to submit their addresses through the Library of Michigan between now and March 31. Visit www.michigantownships.org/census.asp to find out if your township missed the deadline, and how you can make sure your township's information is submitted!

Sign up for 2008 Spring District Meetings

These meetings offer a great opportunity to connect with fellow township officials in your area. Hear the latest news affecting your township, and get valuable education on timely topics. Discuss issues with MTA staff and visit with vendors.

Spring District Meetings Will Cover Districts 1-13:

May 7: Tawas Bay Beach Resort, East Tawas
(District 10)

May 12: Kettunen Center, Tustin (Districts 9 & 11)

May 13: Crystal Mountain, Thompsonville
(District 8)

May 19: Soaring Eagle Inn, Mt. Pleasant
(Districts 12 & 13)

May 20: Holiday Inn, Alpena (District 7)

May 21: Treetops Resort, Gaylord (Districts 5 & 6)

May 28: Best Western Franklin Inn, Houghton
(Districts 1)

May 29: Heirman Center at Bay College,
Escanaba (Districts 2 & 3)

May 30: Little Bear East Arena, St. Ignace
(District 4)

Contact the MTA Education Department for registration details at (517) 321-6467 or www.michigantownships.org/edworkshops.asp

SAVE THE DATE:

America's Town Meeting
2008 Legislative Conference
September 30 - October 1
Washington, D.C.

**Strengthen Small Town Government!**

The purpose of the National Association of Towns and Townships (NATaT) is to strengthen the effectiveness of small town government. NATaT does this by educating lawmakers and public policy officials about how small town governments operate and by advocating policies on their behalf in Washington, D.C.

Join town and township officials from across the country at this once-a-year opportunity to advance small community interests.

Registration will be available soon!

Receive County Chapter Update by email

Interested? Send your name, county chapter title, township and county in an email to: tammie@michigantownships.org to receive future *County Chapter Updates* by email.

Plan to Attend Upcoming MTA Educational Programs!

At Your Service: Meeting Township Needs

April 15, 2008: Bavarian Inn Lodge, Frankenmuth

Tackle Two Topics in One Day:

Cemetery Management - 9 a.m. - Noon

Countdown to Election 2008 - 1 - 4 p.m.

April 16: Don H. Bottum University Center, NMU, Marquette

April 21: The Fetzer Center, WMU, Kalamazoo

April 22: Comfort Inn & Conference Center, Chelsea

April 23: Lapeer Country Club, Lapeer

April 28: Treetops Resort, Gaylord

April 29: Soaring Eagle Inn & Conference Center, Mt. Pleasant

Robert R. Robinson Memorial Scholarship Supporting Grassroots Leadership Education

The Michigan Townships Association administers a scholarship fund established in memory of Robert R. Robinson, former executive director of the association. The purpose of the scholarship fund is to help students in Michigan who are preparing for a career in public administration.

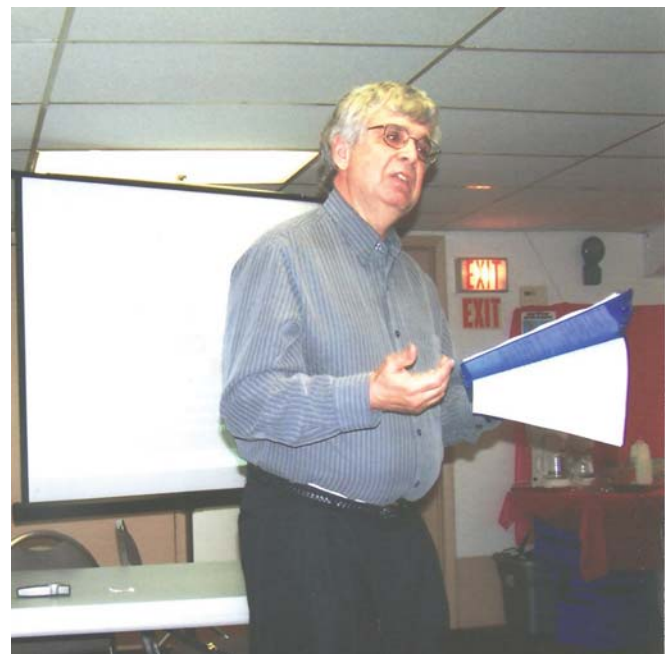
The scholarship is awarded on a competitive basis, as determined by the applicant's academic achievement, community involvement and commitment to a career in local government administration.

In order to be considered by the Robert R. Robinson Memorial Scholarship Fund Board of Directors, applications must be received no later than May 31, 2008.

2008 Scholarship applications are available by contacting MTA Public Affairs Liaison Jennifer Hoff at (517) 321-6467, ext. 247, or www.michigantownships.org/downloads/2008_application.pdf.

Attention Township Clerks:

Coming in April! Watch the mail for the 2008 annual salary survey for fiscal years beginning January and April.



Ronald A. Young, Alcona County Road Commission manager and president of the County Road Association of Michigan (CRAM), explains funding and revisions to road maintenance definitions at the Alcona County Chapter's January meeting. His presentation on funding is available on the CRAM website at www.micountyroads.org.

Alcona County

October 30: MTA District 7 Director Ken Gauthier reported on legislation and upcoming training opportunities. Tom Frazier, MTA legislative liaison, discussed the state budget crisis, election issues and legislation. Bonnie Wichtner-Zoia, MSU Extension director, discussed the EDC community action plan and tourism.

January 29: MTA District 7 Director Ken Gauthier discussed the annual conference attendance, educational opportunities, and current and pending legislation. County Road Commission Manager Ronald Young discussed road funding, maintenance, and improvement. County Commission Chair Kevin Boyat explained tax collection billing rates. A scholarship to a college-bound student pursuing local government was approved.

Alpena County

February 18: MTA District 7 Director Ken Gauthier reported on the MTA annual conference, TGA training dates, and 2008 IRS gas mileage reimbursement. County Solid Waste Authority Administrator Sandy Cunningham reported on recycling. A county report on winter conditions and road maintenance was given. Howard Viegahn, candidate for House District 109, attended. The following officers were elected: Arnold Domke, president; Ron McDonald, vice president; and Brenda Fournier, Secretary/Treasurer.

Antrim County

February 26: MTA Operations Manager Penny Haney gave a presentation on internal controls. The planned establishment of an injection well was discussed.

Charlevoix County

January 28: MTA District 5 Director Charles Veneros discussed the annual conference attendance, HB 4780, over-assessing of assessors, MTA Township Excellence Award, revenue sharing, grassroots network, and the 2010 census.

Delta County

October 25: Cindy Davis, MTA member information specialist, provided information on MTA resources to help in the daily operations of a township. Members of the Delta County Road Commission, Equalization Department and Board of Commissioners were in attendance.

January 24: Matt Johnson, director of the governor's Upper Peninsula office, spoke on the administration's efforts to improve the economy.

Eaton County

October 22: Rep. Rick Jones (R-Oneida Charter Twp.) gave an update on the state budget crisis. A representative of Sen. Birkholtz (R-Saugatuck Twp.) gave a legislative update, including the issue of disposal of trash from Canada. MTA District 20 Director Linda Towsley spoke about budgets, provided a conference update, and reminded clerks to do training and accuracy tests by January 3. Steve Leese, county 911 director, talked about new programs.

February 25: Rep. Rick Jones (R-Oneida Charter Twp.) provided an update on what is happening in Lansing. Sen. Patricia Birkholz (R-Saugatuck Twp.) gave a legislative update. Linda Towsley, MTA District 20 director, encouraged "grassroots" sign-up, attendance at the legislative conference in March, and participation in MTA's legislative candidate survey for the 2008 elections.

Emmet County

October 17: MTA District 5 Director Charlie Veneros attended. The following officers were elected: Damien Henning, Littlefield Township, president; Joseph Mikolajek, Bliss Township, vice president; Dennis Keiser, Bear Creek Township, treasurer; Robert Sandford, West Traverse Township, secretary.

Gogebic County

August 7: County Clerk Joan Luhtanen discussed passports. County Commissioner George Brunswick reported on boat landing and restroom repairs, updating Indian burial grounds, the milfoil problem and water level at Indian Lake, the veteran's office, the health department, Holmes Park, Crystal Manor, and the Call Center.

Grand Traverse County

December 6: Doug Mansfield, MTA District 8 director, encouraged attendance at the MTA annual educational conference. The Boardman River Dams project was discussed.

January 3: Dennis Aloia, Grand Traverse County administrator, discussed the county solid waste program. Larry Fleis, county commissioner, reported on the approval of \$100,000 for the Boardman Dam Study, and a joint meeting with the City of Grand Traverse on a Brownfield Redevelopment Authority. Jim Maitland, county commissioner, reported on evaluating budget costs and services. John Sych, director of planning, reported ordinance language for electronic billboards. The new county septage plant and Conservation Center were discussed.

March 6: MTA District 8 Director Doug Mansfield discussed individuals running for legislative office and the MTA legislative policy platform. Scenic Michigan First Vice President Jim Lagowski gave a presentation on enhancing scenic and rural character. County Commissioner Larry Fleis announced an increase to Road Commission members from 3 to 5. He also discussed non-criminal user fees and HB 4323. County Planning Director John Sych addressed changes to zoning, the Planning Enabling Act, and the Brownfield Redevelopment Authority.

Ingham County

October 23: County Clerk Mike Bryanton gave a tour of the county clerk's office. County Commissioner Randy Schafer discussed future road patrol in the county.

January 23: County Road Commission Chair Larry Smith introduced County Road Commission Director William Conklin. They spoke on cost sharing for paving roads and weight loads on bridges. County Commissioners Randy Schafer and Steve Dougan led a discussion on eliminating road patrol by the sheriff's department, stressing public safety as a basic service. The County Road Commission was complimented on the tornado clean-up.

Kalamazoo County

February 27: Rep. Lorence Wenke (R-Richland) discussed the state budget. Rep. Jack Hoogendyk (R-Texas Twp.) reported on increased state spending and gave a legislative update. MTA 2008 President Gary Cramer commented on his presidency, resources available on the MTA Web Site, reintroduced bills on annexation, and an annexation bill affecting only 38 townships. He introduced Jeff Sorensen, Cooper Charter Township supervisor, as the new MTA District 19 director. John Niemela, director of the County Road Association of Michigan, stressed the need for additional road

funding and possible resources for getting it. George Cochran, Kalamazoo Charter Township trustee, offered copies of a document titled *How Your Township Government Affects You*, available at the next meeting.

Kalkaska County

January 21: The following officers were elected: Betty Dunham, chair; Bethel Larabee, vice chair; Don Darke, Secretary; and Mike Winter, treasurer. New MTA poverty exemption and board of review resources, establishing a municipal violations bureau, and possible state-mandated centralized garbage pickup and sewer disposal systems were discussed.

Kent County

August 23: MTA District 15 Director Jim Stover gave an update on the MTA Summer Legislative Forum and on cooperation between townships and neighboring jurisdictions. MTA Executive Director Larry Merrill spoke on HB 4780 and other legislative issues.

November 29: Don Hilton, Sr., MTA past president, reported on HB 4780 and the dates of the MTA annual educational conference. Daryl Delabbio, Kent County administrator/controller, and Roger Morgan, county commission chairman, gave a state of the county report. Road Commission Manager Jon Rice reported on the 2008 road budget.

Lapeer County

December 18: A county Emergency Medical Services contract and road salting were discussed.

Manistee County

October 24: MSU Extension Director Elaine Bush spoke about tourism. Portage Lake Watershed Forever Plan Advisory Board Member Mike Acton discussed the watershed plan and a point of sale septic ordinance. County Sheriff Dale Kowalkowski reported on a new all-terrain-vehicle and the animal control ordinance. County 911 Director Jim Espvik announced a mock disaster and pandemic preparedness drill, and flu shot availability. Public safety, PILT payments, revenue sharing, and the presidential primary were also discussed.

Missaukee County

January 24: MTA District 9 Director Steve Ebels attended. David Bertram, MTA legislative liaison, gave a 2008 legislative update.

Ogemaw County

December 13: The annual Christmas banquet was held. Diane Randall, MTA District 10 director, presented Steve Steinhauser, who is retiring as supervisor of West Branch Township, with a certificate of service from MTA. MTA Information Services Liaison Evelyn David attended.

Presque Isle County

February 5: MTA District 7 Director Ken Gauthier reported on the annual conference, upcoming Board of Review training, MTA legislative conference, HB 4780, the governor's state of the state address, and HB 5647, which would amend property tax transfers. Sheriff Bob Paschke reported on jail overcrowding, a grant to purchase a 4x4 vehicle for rescues in the woods, and concerns about traffic. Drain Commissioner Charles Lyon presented the proposed Storm Water Management Plan. County Prosecutor Rick Steiger reported on the new assistant prosecutor. John Campbell,



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president of Big Fish Environmental, gave a presentation on their aerobic septage processing facility in Charlevoix.

Saginaw County

December 12: The annual holiday dinner meeting was held. Guest speaker Greg Skufka, site manager for the Dow Corning Hemlock Semi-Conductor building project, gave an overview of future developments at the plant.

January 22: The annual meeting was planned and a slate of officers was developed for an election at the next meeting.

Schoolcraft County

October 24: Cindy Davis, MTA member information specialist, acquainted members with MTA services and resources. Sheriff Gary Maddox discussed possible updates to the current blight ordinance. Additional discussion included HB 4780, the Hatch Act, and adding more MTA workshops in the U.P.

January 31: The chapter discussed reports that drug activities and related drug problems in the U.P. have grown to equal those of bigger cities. Members of the county road commission reported on the Rural Task Force annual state transportation improvement program. Blight issues and animal control were also discussed.

St. Clair County

January 24: Bill Anderson, MTA legislative liaison, discussed upcoming boards of review in an environment of declining property values.

MTA has a new publication!

AN INTRODUCTION TO TOWNSHIP BOARD MEETINGS

Purchase copies by contacting MTA Education Aide Gloria Huhn at (517) 321-6467, ext. 227.

