



News & Views

FROM THE TOWNSHIP SUPERVISOR

John F. Argoudelis, Plainfield Township Supervisor

As a departure from my usual history lesson, it seems appropriate to comment on the most recent national elections. The one thing both major party candidates agreed on was the need for change. We simply can't keep doing "business as usual" in Washington D.C. and I would wager that a strong majority of Americans agreed with this. The question then becomes: Who did you believe would really be an agent of change?

What change is most pressing? In my mind, more than anything else, energy independence is our greatest national priority. All of our worries about our economy, jobs, the environment and even foreign policy, one way or another are tied to energy and specifically our dependence on foreign oil. It is not only a national priority, but also a matter of national security that we get serious about implementing alternative energy and free ourselves from foreign oil.

I received my copy of The Economist magazine in June which ran a headline "The future of energy. It's closer than you think". I thought, "Oh no, another doom and gloom article about how we're running out of oil and will soon be living out of our back yard gardens". What I read however, was about all the wonderful technological advancements we've made over the last 20 years towards alternative energy sources and

energy independence, and how it's all "closer than you think".

Some of these alternative fuels are not just good ideas; they are reality and are being implemented today. With the increased price of oil (even at today's pulled back prices) they are economically competitive to use. Wind turbines today produce 1% of our nation's energy, but this is predicted to reach 15% by 2020. You may have heard about T. Boone Pickens investing \$2 billion in a wind farm in Texas this year. So are GE and other large corporations. The cost to produce electricity from wind power has been reduced to 8 cents a kilowatt hour (kwh) and is falling. That's awfully close to the cheapest electricity producer today which is coal at five cents a kwh.

The technology associated with solar energy has also made huge advancement. The cost of producing a kwh from solar power was 50 cents in 1995 and has been reduced to 20 cents a kwh today. The technology and efficiency is increasing dramatically. It is the most local of electricity producers as one can have a few units on their roof and produce enough electricity to even sell some back to the power company. All over southern Europe, homes have solar panels and hot water tanks on their roofs producing electricity and heating their water. While homes in cloudy climates would need more traditional

sources for electric, at least some of their electric needs can be met with solar power. Most of the new advancements in solar power are being developed right here in America at places like MIT. Geothermal power is also very promising. This method of producing electricity uses the existing and inexhaustible heat right under our feet. The Philippines currently generates 25% of its electricity this way. The US has 2,000 years worth of our current energy consumption in recoverable heat. It's clean, plentiful and working. Biofuels are already being used to fuel our cars. We're all familiar with ethanol and E-85 made from corn. But ethanol is also being made from sugar cane, beets, used vegetable oil and even the corn stalks instead of the corn (thus freeing up the actual corn to feed people). Some of these other biofuel sources are actually cheaper than oil.

Hybrid automobiles that burn ethanol, electric/gas and even purely electric are working and within the next two years will be mass marketed to the world. GM will launch the Volt by 2010 and the Toyota Prius will have an all electric version out soon. These new electric cars can reach 0 to 60 just as fast as most gas powered cars. They are viable transportation alternatives for most of us.

Nuclear power anyone? Did you know that 50% of the electricity produced in Illinois is from nuclear power plants?

Plainfield Township Presents... *by Ken McCafferty, Township Trustee*

Rules of the Road Become more familiar with road signs, test questions, new laws and gain the confidence needed to pass your drivers exam. Rules of the Road is sponsored by the Secretary of State. Held at the Plainfield Township Wednesday Feb. 25th, 1:30 - 3:30 PM. Pre-register for this FREE class by calling (815) 439-8812.

Triad is a group of seniors along with representatives from the Will County Sheriff's Department and local law enforcement agencies which meet to plan and promote senior safety issues for the community. The fourth Tuesday of each month, the triad committee meets and different informational topics are planned and discussed. Everyone is welcome to participate. Please call (815) 439-8812.

The "Senior News" is a bi-monthly newsletter mailed to senior citizens that are currently on the mailing list. The "SeniorNews" advertises all programs, services and activities geared toward senior citizens which are offered by Plainfield Township and the Plainfield Park District. If you do

not currently receive the newsletter and would like to be put on the mailing list, call (815) 439-8812.

Coping with High Cholesterol and the Holidays - Thursday, Dec. 11, 11 AM. Work with a Provena registered dietician and learn the differences between good and bad cholesterol foods. Learn smart strategies to keep your numbers under control. Free program held at the Plainfield Township! Call (815) 439-8812 to register.

Be sure to check the township website at www.plainfield-township.com for additional dates and details.

We are currently searching out individuals or organizations who can offer complimentary vision screenings, gardening seminars and programs discussing financial planning.

If you have any programming suggestions, or there is a particular topic that you would like to see offered at the Township, please contact the PTP coordinator, Ken McCafferty via the website at www.plainfield-township.com.

PLAINFIELD TOWNSHIP OFFICE DIRECTORY

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436-8308

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Administrative Assistant

Monika McMillen
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M-F 8-4

Assessor

Richard Martin
436-5110

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M-F 8-4

Highway Commissioner

Sam Reichert
436-6090

Secretary Hours:
MWF 9-1

Commissioner/Staff Hours:

M-F 7-3
Evenings by appointment

Clerk

Anita Gerardy

Tax Collector

Steve Cammack

Trustees

Ken McCafferty
Paul Pesevento
Kim Sandstrom
Charles Willard

Community Services

General Assistance
Emergency Assistance
Emergency Preparedness
Flood Prevention
Youth Services
Voting Booths
Senior Summer Picnic
Senior Winter Luncheon
Snow Removal
Weed Control
Street Maintenance
Food Pantry Facility
Environmental Mosquito Control
Community Gardens
Senior Shuttle
Senior Services Coordinator
Passport Services
Disabilities Committee
Amplified Phone Information
Plainfield Township Presents...

TOWNSHIP COMMUNITY GARDENS

Ken McCafferty, Township Trustee

Someone once said, "There's no greater joy than toiling in a garden" and someone else said, "Ohh my aching back, my sun burnt head and yuck, these filthy finger nails!!!" If you were around the Plainfield Township Community Garden plots this past spring and summer, you might have heard either or both of the aforementioned quotes. You might have even heard a few other "choice" phrases! Well as with any new (in this case, resurrected) project there will be bumps (chunks, wires, scrap etc) in the road. The community gardens are located just to the east of the township administration at the circle drive. This past season over 50 individuals and organizations toiled the soil and many received a bounty of fresh veggies. There is no denying the fact that gardening is work; and in the case of last year, hard work.

Last season we had church groups, youth groups, boy scouts and several

individuals have their hand at gardening. Several gardeners donated their excess harvest to the food pantry. Gardeners grew everything from beets to tomatoes and carrots to lettuce. We even heard of some tasty sweet corn!



Our goal is to continue to make improvements to the garden plots each year. Soon we will spread and mix in the compost we created over the past season and chisel plow the plots. In the spring we will disc the plots, measure them out and again offer a small piece of Plainfield soil for gardeners to toil. Details on reserving a plot and pricing will be made available on the township website in late March or you may contact the office as well.

If you have a suggestion, that might help to continue improving the plots, please contact Township Trustee, Ken McCafferty at 815-436-8308.

DISABILITIES COMMITTEE UPDATE



*Paul Pesavento,
Plainfield Township Trustee*

The Plainfield Township Disabilities Committee celebrated its Seventh Annual Disabilities Picnic for challenged children this past September at Plainfield Park District's River Edge Facility. The weather was absolutely perfect and Jensen Entertainment provided its usual great program. Additional entertainment consisted of a magic show, music with a DJ, caricature artists sketching portraits of children and games. Lunch was also served. Approximately 65 children and family members attended this free event and a great time was had by all. It was an excellent opportunity for Plainfield Township parents who have a challenged child to mingle with other families.

Special thanks go out to the Disability Committee volunteers; Peter Blazina, Jill Wiitanen, Sandy and Mike Schweikert for all their help in organizing and working the picnic as well as the Township Board who continue to support this event. Without their cooperation, this event would not be possible.

The Plainfield Township Disabilities Resource Manual is current being updated and is expected to be completed by January 1, 2009.

Also available to Township residents are wheelchairs, port-a-potties, walkers, shower seats, canes and crutches through the Medical Loan Closet. Call the office for further details.

Paul Pesavento
Plainfield Trustee

Good News for Veterans!



If you are a veteran; whether returning, disabled or the surviving spouse of a veteran, you should contact the Plainfield Township Assessors office to see if you qualify for a special exemption.

"From the Township Supervisor" Continued...

I know since Chernobyl and Three Mile Island the construction of nuclear plants has halted. But remember these accidents occurred 20 and 30 years ago respectively. Technology and safety have advanced tremendously over the last 30 years making nuclear power much more efficient and safe. We have more of it than anyone in the world and should utilize it in our quest to free ourselves from foreign oil. Even Patrick Moore, one of the founders of Greenpeace is on board. My conclusion after reading all of this? We in America have the technology, the strength and the money to become energy independent and we're not that far away. No one power source will replace oil, but a combination of these alternative energy sources will greatly reduce and eventually marginalize our need for oil. Many of them are feasible and competitive economically now that oil is much more expensive. Better yet, most of them are renewable and green. Even better, people like T. Boone Pickens and large corporations like GE are investing heavily in these industries. Why? Because they know how "close we are" and they see large future profits in alternative energy and want to get in on the next "gold rush". It won't happen overnight and there may be some bumps in the road. There won't be a day when the oil spigot is suddenly turned off. Oil dependency will be reduced over time as these alternative sources come on line and compete with the price of oil. History shows that as late as the 1940s our primary energy source was still coal, not oil and that oil's share of our energy sources has actually decreased recently as some of these alternative fuels have started to grow. It also shows that our primary

sources of energy changed gradually over time from wood to coal to oil to gas, nuclear and renewables. Two great by-products of alternative energy production will be the creation of quality jobs for Americans and the billions of dollars currently being shipped to the Middle East will be staying right here and circulating through our economy instead of theirs.

What we need now, more than anything else is LEADERSHIP from Washington that makes energy independence THE national priority. LEADERSHIP that can inspire America to achieve this great goal of energy independence and use the strength of public support to defeat the lobbyists who represent special interests. LEADERSHIP appealing to our sense of patriotic duty in a great national quest for energy independence much like the nation was unified to fight World War II or send a man to the moon. We as everyday Americans need to demand it and make those choices in our personal lives to support alternative energy production. We need LEADERSHIP that commits billions of dollars to energy independence rather than to the so many wasteful things we've thrown billions at. So after all the nice speeches at the conventions, and the long campaign, our choices have been made. We have a history making new leadership team. Lets hope that they can work in a non-partisan fashion to rise above the petty partisanship and cozy relationships with special interests to actually address this great national priority.

Source: *The Economist*, June 21-27, 2008.

News & Notes

*John F. Argoudelis,
Plainfield Township Supervisor*

Plainfield Township has adopted an official Plainfield Township flag. The Egret symbol representing the rare waterfowl which lives here in the Township has been retained. We've also utilized the traditional shade of green which nods to the traditional colors of Plainfield. The intention was to create a flag of classic and dignified design. We hope you like it.



Our Youth Advocacy Council (YAC) has been formed and is functioning. YAC is the only youth entity that represents all teens from every school in Plainfield. You'll soon be able to visit the YAC webpage from our website for information on all that's important to the Township teens. We welcome your comments.

With the holidays approaching, we wish you a Happy Thanksgiving and Merry Christmas.

ASSESSOR'S NEWS

ARE YOU RECEIVING ALL OF YOUR TAX EXEMPTIONS?

*Erin Kljaich, Township Chief
Deputy Assessor*

- General Homestead Exemption reduces the assessed value on your primary residence by \$5,500. No application is required.
- Senior Citizen Homestead Exemption reduces the assessed value on your primary residence by \$4,000. If you are 65 or older, you can apply.
- Senior Citizen Assessment Freeze keeps your assessment from increasing. If you already qualify for the Senior Homestead Exemption and your household income is less than \$55,000, you may qualify.
- Disabled Persons' Homestead Exemption reduces the assessed value on your primary residence by \$2,000. Please call the office for additional information.
- Disabled Veterans' Standard Homestead Exemption reduces the assessed value on your primary residence by up to \$5,000. Veterans with a service-connected disability may qualify.
- Returning Veterans' Homestead Exemption reduces the assessed value on your primary residence by \$5,000. If you are returning from active duty, you may qualify for this "one-time" exemption.
- Please visit the website www.plainfieldassessor.com or call the office at (815) 436-5110 for application instructions and a list of required documentation.

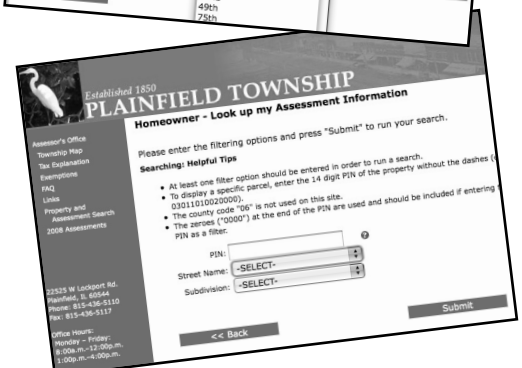
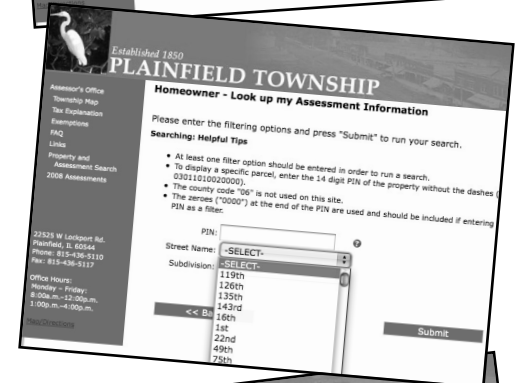
ASSESSMENTS IN A DECLINING MARKET

Richard Martin, Township Assessor

Home values are dropping every month. The media reports statistics about Florida, Las Vegas, and Southern California, but the same problem exists here in Plainfield. Your house would probably sell for 10% to 15% less than it would a year ago, if you could find a buyer. Why then has your assessment not gone down, and are you paying too much in taxes? The answer to the first part of the question is that assessments are based on sales from the previous three. In 2005, 2006, and 2007 house prices rose. The second part of the question is determined by two factors: First- How much money does each taxing body want and need? District 202 needs a lot. There is one pre school, one academy, 17 elementary schools, seven middle schools and four high schools plus an administration building to support. Other taxing bodies require less, but all need money to provide the services required.

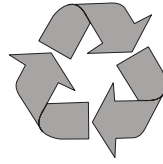
Your power is in your vote. We are all watching the Presidential race, but how many of you know school board, library board, fire protection district, etc. members and how they spend money. Second- Is your property assessed fairly compared to other properties? Your assessment represents the percentage of the value of real estate in the entire Township. Therefore if it is determined that all properties are assessed under the same standards, your percentage of the entire Township does not change, and your tax bill remains fair, not necessarily low, but fair.

To assist you in checking your real estate bill against other similar properties, the Assessor's Office publishes assessments in the paper, (Plainfield Sun, Friday, August 22, 2008) and has installed a new web site. Visit us at www.plainfieldassessor.com and you can review all information yourself. Picture #1 shows what the screen should look like. Select Property and Assessment Search. Picture #2 look up my assessment information. Picture #3 enter your pin starting with 03.



PLAINFIELD TOWNSHIP OFFERS RECYCLING PROGRAM

Steve Cammack, Tax Collector



Did you know that here at the Township Administration Offices, you can have your recycling needs met? Big or small we can handle it all. Last year the Township recycling bins collected over 10 tons of material which included glass, aluminum, plastic, newspaper, paper and cardboard. The bins are located on the south side of the building and are accessible 24 hours a day.

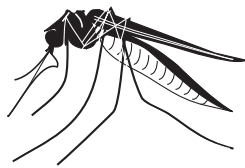
The goal this year is to collect 20 tons of recyclables and continue

providing services such as these to the residents of the township. We need your help to spread the word that this service is available. It may be easier for you to use the recycling bin at your home, but if you have the need for a larger unit or have a moment to take a quick drive, feel free to use our bins.

With your help, our goal can be accomplished.

CLARKE MOSQUITO CONTROL NEEDS YOUR HELP

Plainfield Township contracts with Clarke Mosquito Control to monitor and spray for mosquitoes throughout the township. New Jersey Light Traps, which are placed in strategic areas to collect data, are used to check annoyance levels, temperature, and rain levels. Homeowners have volunteered to place the electric traps in their yards to provide necessary information for Clarke to



schedule sprayings. Presently a location is being sought in the Plainfield-Naperville Road/Route 126 area. If you are interested and would be willing to help, please contact Jack Thennisch at 630.671.3129. Clarke reimburses each homeowner at the end of the summer with a check toward electricity used by the trap.

Plainfield Township Senior Shuttle

The Senior Shuttle runs 5 days a week from 9 AM until 3 PM and the cost is \$2 each way. Call 1-815-436-1112 for reservations.

SENIOR NEWS

Kathy Whalen - Senior Coordinator

Senior Shuttle Bus

Since the launch of the Senior Shuttle Bus Program on June 1, 2007, ridership continues to increase. Seniors have been calling Monika at the Township Office at 815.436.1112 to arrange bus service to run errands to the local stores, hair appointments, banks, mall, and doctor appointments. The bus stays in the Plainfield area and streets around Provena St. Joseph Hospital and surrounding doctor's offices and medical centers. Hours of operation are Monday through Friday from 9:00am to 3:00pm. The cost is \$2.00 each way and reservations must be made in advance. Our friendly drivers average 400 miles a week and approximately 30 residents use the bus consistently.

Senior Christmas Luncheon

Plainfield Township & Plainfield Park District will once again be sponsoring the Christmas Luncheon for all Plainfield Township Senior Citizens on December 13, 2008 at the American Legion Hall in Plainfield. Lunch will be served at noon with entertainment and door prizes to follow. To ensure there is enough food, a reservation must be made by calling the Plainfield Park District at 815-436-8812.



Reservations will be taken from November 1st – December 1st. The deadline for reservations is December 1st.