



# Genoa Township News

March 2003

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## We're in Quarantine and We're Infected

By Polly Skolarus

Livingston County is just one area in quarantine because of the Emerald Ash Borer. We are in the same pack as Macomb, Oakland, Washtenaw, Wayne and Monroe Counties. We're all infested and we need to stop the spread of the Emerald Ash Borer. The best way to do that is to tell you and ask you to tell your neighbors and friends about this invasive pest that is desiccating our beautiful ash trees. Don't let the ash go the way of the elm.



## The Emerald Ash Borer Don't Move Ash Firewood

It's fireplace time and the Emerald (the color of the beetle) Ash Borer is an unwanted hitchhiker. It is a wood-boring beetle that kills ash trees. This new invasive pest may have slipped into southeast Michigan a few years ago. Now the sound of chainsaws signals the end of thousands of dying ash trees along our streets and in nearby wood lots. The emerald ash borer probably invaded southeast Michigan in pieces of untreated wood from its native home in Asia. In a similar way, it can re-infest ash trees hundreds of miles away from its present location - through movement of infested firewood.

## What you can do to help.

Simply, **DON'T MOVE ASH FIREWOOD OUT OF THE (Livingston County) QUARANTINED AREA.** This pest came into Michigan as a hitchhiker. Don't repeat the process by taking it on vacation with you. Imagine how your favorite vacation spot would look with some or all of the beautiful ash trees gone.



## It's the law.

Transporting ash firewood is prohibited and Livingston County is under quarantine. Violators may be subject to fines and/or imprisonment. If you're not sure whether the wood is ash, it's better to be safe than sorry.

## Symptoms of ash borer infestations:

The crown of the tree will die-off and new side shoots will proliferate as in the picture. "D" shaped exit holes can be seen on the trunk. The bark will split like the tree is growing too fast for its skin. "S" tunneling can be seen on the trunk and branches. The Larva is a light green color approximately one- inch in length.



For more information contact the **Michigan Department of Agriculture** at (517) 373-1087 or on the Internet at [www.michigan.gov/mda](http://www.michigan.gov/mda) keyword: ash borer.

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## Polly's always-practical points

Our residents have been so kind as to lavish us with compliments about the professional look of our newsletter. At the same time they have inquired about possibly wasting their hard-earned tax dollars. In answer to all your comments and concerns, I first want to thank you for your kind remarks and then I want to thank **First Impression Printing and Graphics** and **Don Cortez** for their subsidy of this colorful newsletter. They have assisted us with the cost and we are able to bring this new look to you for only pennies more and issue.

Our goal is not only to keep you informed, but also to hold your interest as you peruse our quarterly newsletter. If you would like to see other information or materials in this newsletter, please let me know what is important to you. Our first and foremost concern is knowledge and passing that along to you.



## Updates:

- Our new fire substation is just about complete. It is located just off Dorr Road near the I-96 expressway. We are hopeful that it will be up and operating early this spring.
- Contracts for engineering for extensions to the Genoa bike/walk path were let to Boss Engineering. This next summer's expansion will run approximately one mile north and one mile south of Brighton Road along Bauer. Both projects should be bid in early spring.
- Lake Chemung residents have petitioned the Township Board for the creation of a special assessment district for aquatic weed control. The first public hearing was held on Monday, February 3, 2003. The second public hearing is scheduled for Monday, March 17th.
- Mountain View Subdivision has petitioned the Township Board for road improvement to Catalpa and Grand Circle. The Township General Fund will support this project out of the general fund with the township paying 25% of the cost and the residents paying 75% over three years with no interest.
- The American Red Cross will again be conducting a blood drive at the Genoa Township Hall on Friday, April 4, 2003. Our goal is to receive 35 units of blood that will help save 140 lives. Please call the Genoa Township Hall and ask for the Clerk's Department to schedule an appointment on that date. Our number is (810) 227-5225. "Together we can save a Life"!
- The Humane Society of Livingston County will be holding a Grand Opening for the new animal shelter located at 2464 Dorr Road in Genoa Township. Activities will take place on April 5, 2003, from 11:00 a.m. until 5:00 p.m. and will include a tour of the facility, story reading, face painting and dog obedience instructions for children as well as adults. Phone (517) 552-8050 for further information.

## From the Treasurer's Office:

### Dog License

Livingston County residents are required by law to obtain a license for their dog(s) each year. Fees for 2003 are:

- \$25.00 Male/Female
- \$7.00 Spayed/Neutered
- \$30.00 after February 28.

Licenses may be purchased in person or by mail. The documents needed to obtain a license are: a current rabies certificate, and proof of spay/neuter if applicable. If you are a new resident to the township, or if you have a new dog, the lower rate applies.

Make check payable to **Genoa Township**, and mail to **Genoa Township Hall 2911 Dorr Rd., Brighton, MI 48116.**



## Just a quick note from Gary McCrie

- Senator Valde Garcia will be closing his old office off Grand River and Dorr Road and will be establishing regular hours at the Genoa Township Hall to meet with constituents. Regular office hours will be established on a month-to-month basis. Watch your local newspaper for dates and times.
- Customers of the Marion, Howell, Oceola and Genoa (MHOG) water system do not need to use water softeners in their homes. If your utility bill indicates that you are an MHOG customer your water is municipally softened through a lime process to roughly six grains of hardness. Additional softening is unnecessary and can make the water corrosive to your plumbing. Save yourself time and money by disconnecting your old softener today.

## Our Lake Levels - At a New Low It's Nothing New - Just Part of Nature

By Paulette A. Skolarus

Lakes and water sports are a main source of recreation in Livingston County. When our lakes are low, we are all unhappy. Today, our inland lakes appear to be at an all time low. 2002 was a very dry year - very little rain and minimal snowfall. Mankind, watershed, rainfall, seasons and evaporation are all ingredients to be considered in dealing with our fluctuating lakes.

**Mankind** - Whether you believe it or not, you do make a difference. Domestic use such as how often you water your lawn, take a shower, or fail to correct your dripping faucet will impact our groundwater, our watershed and our lake levels. Since water in Livingston County is supplied by underground wells, the water pumped from the aquifer depletes the groundwater and subsequently the lake levels.

Watershed is a term used to describe all that land area surrounding a lake that feeds the lake. If the watershed ratio is small in

comparison to the lake, the lake will see many and great fluctuations in lake level. If the watershed is large, the lake will maintain a better overall balance in relation to depth. Therefore, when more land sheds its water into the lake, it provides a more stable lake level with less fluctuation.

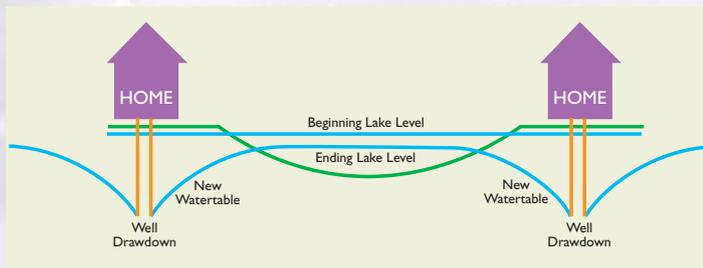
In reverse, the level of the lake is also a good predictor of the groundwater table. The groundwater table is the top of an area that is saturated with water. The water table may be very near the ground surface or may be hundreds of feet beneath it. Gravity moves water through the ground and into our lakes and aquifer. At the same time lake water will move into the ground and away from the lakes during drought. It takes a significant amount of water to raise the water table, and usually requires above normal precipitation for many months before any long-term effect is noticed.

**Rainfall** - The quickest way to replenish our lakes is rainfall. Rainfall also quickly diminishes the lake level as it moves away from the lake into the ground. It is easy to understand why lake levels are low when there is little rain or snow. A quick rain, however, is

just a temporary fix during a drought. The rainwater runs too quickly from the watershed to the lake because it does not have time to be absorbed into the ground since the ground is too hard to absorb the water.

Recharging the groundwater raises the water table and provides a long-term benefit to the lake level. A soaking rain does just what it says soaks the ground for the best groundwater recharge. Runoff from snowmelt can raise water levels during the spring either as it flows over the land to the lakes and rivers or as it filters into the soil. Mild temperatures that produce a slow, steady snowmelt cause a significant amount of infiltration that recharges the groundwater. This increased groundwater helps

sustain water levels over a longer period of time. However, a pronounced, rapid warming often produces more snowmelt than the soil can absorb. The



result is mostly surface runoff into rivers that produces short-term rises like those caused by a heavy rain. The word "spring" is just that, a slow release of winter water into the land.

**Evaporation** - A constant factor in dealing with diminishing lakes and streams. Air temperature, direct sunlight, humidity, and wind all take their toll. Cold winter winds deplete the open water of the lakes until such time as the lakes freeze over. Hot summer winds moving over the cooler lake water cause the surface water on the lakes to evaporate. It is difficult to measure evaporation but it can be readily seen in the ever-dropping lake levels, especially during a drought.

**Seasons** - Lake levels begin to rise when grass no longer needs to be cut. A significant amount of water is depleted during the growing season due to transpiration, which is the natural uptake of water into the root system of plants for nourishment. Since plants are the main source of evaporation from most watersheds, once they stop photosynthesizing, they also stop growing and evaporating water. Our late autumn did not help us this past year.

## Spring Yard Cleanup

Collection dates have been scheduled for Saturday, April 26th and Saturday, May 10th. Residents may drop of their yard waste - NO GRASS PLEASE- at the Genoa Township Hall from 9:00 a.m. until 12:00 p.m. Mister Rubbish will have trucks on site and assist you in emptying your vehicle. Please recycle - don't burn.

## A Reminder from Township Treasurer Robin Hunt

### Summer Tax Collection Beginning July 1, 2003

As you may already be aware, there is going to be changes in the property tax collection process beginning in 2003. The State of Michigan passed Public Act 243 of 2002, which requires the State Education Tax (SET) on all property in the state to be collected on a summer property tax bill. **As a result of this law, all taxpayers will be receiving a summer property tax bill every year starting in July 2003.**

The SET is the 6-mill tax that was created in 1994 as part of Proposal A. The tax, while collected by the Township, is actually a state tax used to support all school systems in the state. For 2003 only, the tax rate will be reduced from 6-mills to 5-mills. In 2004 the rate will return to the usual 6-mill rate. While the SET will be paid in the summer, the early collection of the SET will not change the overall amount of property taxes paid each year. Beginning in 2003, the SET will not be collected on the December winter tax bill as it has been in the past.

Genoa Township taxpayers in the Howell School District have already been receiving a summer tax bill. The Howell Schools collection will remain the same (1/2 the school tax in the summer the other 1/2 in the winter) with the addition of the SET tax in the summer.

The best way to estimate what your bill will be in July is to find your 2002 Winter Tax Bill, then find the line item titled "State Ed Tax" then locate the dollar amount to the right. This is what will be shifted to the summer bill (a little less for 2003). For taxpayers in the Howell School District expect that amount plus what you were billed on your 2002 Summer Tax bill. For taxpayers in the Brighton, Hartland and Pinckney Schools you will only receive the SET plus a 1% Administration Fee. This is only an estimate based on the taxable value for 2002.

Summer tax bills are mailed out July 1st and are payable without penalty through September 14th.



Genoa Township

2911 Dorr Road, Brighton, MI 48116



### Genoa Township Board Members

#### Supervisor

Gary McCrie

#### Clerk

Paulette Skolarus

#### Treasurer

Robin Hunt

#### Trustees

Todd Smith

Jim Mortensen

Anthony Combs

Jean Ledford

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