

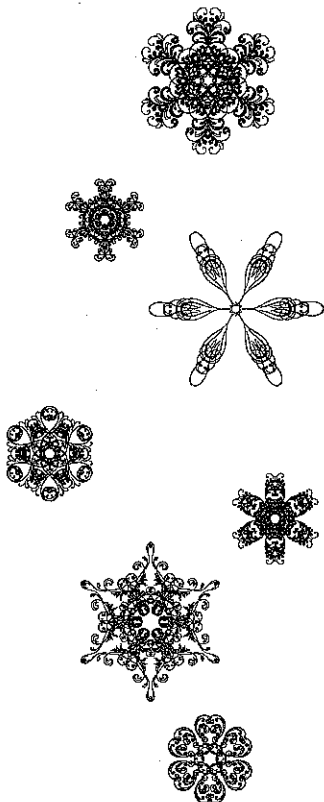
# CITY OF DOUGLAS NEWSLETTER

Holiday 2008  
Volume 4, Edition 4

*Happy Holidays  
from the City of  
Douglas council,  
boards, and office staff*

## HOLIDAY OFFICE HOURS

Douglas City offices will be  
closed December 24th,  
25th, 31st and  
January 1st.



The City of Douglas received an early Christmas gift in the form of grant money to be used in rehabilitating the Blue Star Highway Bridge. Michigan Department of Transportation has awarded a 95-percent matching grant that will cover an estimated \$3,369,650 of the \$3.5+ million needed to rehabilitate the 70-year old structure.

The City of Saugatuck shares responsibility with Douglas for the Kalamazoo River span that links them. Each city will contribute its share of the remaining 5% of construction cost plus 100% of design and engineering costs, or approximately \$320,000 each.

While bridge allocation funds are fiercely fought over, the Blue Star grant comprised well over half of MDOT's bridge disbursements for 2011 over its 11-county Southwest Region.

Outstanding news for Douglas!

## HOURS AND SCHEDULES

**CITY HALL** (269) 857-1438  
Monday-Friday 8:00am - 4:30pm

**COUNCIL MEETINGS**  
First and third Mondays 7:00pm

**PLANNING COMMISSION**  
Second Wednesday 7:00pm

**ZONING BOARD OF APPEALS**  
Fourth Tuesday 7:00p.m.

**DOWNTOWN DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY**  
Second Tuesday 6:00pm

All City meetings are held in Dutcher Lodge City Hall unless otherwise noticed.

**City Manager** David Kowal

**City Clerk** Jean Neve

**City Treasurer** Bob Drexler

**City Assessor** Kelley Ziesemer  
Office Hours: Tuesday 12:30-4:30pm  
Or by appointment

**Planning/Zoning** Ryan Kilpatrick  
Office Hours:  
Tuesdays 8:00am - 4:30 pm  
Thursdays 8:00am - 4:30 pm

**Police Department** Chief Ken Giles  
47 W. Center Street  
Douglas (269)857-4339  
Dial (616) 836-2038 or 911 after hours to speak to an officer.

**Department of Public Works** Max Rodgers  
(269)857-2763 Superintendent

**Building Permits** 1 800 626-5964  
Michigan Township Services  
111 Grand Street  
Allegan MI 49010

## **E-Mail Addresses for City Hall**

**General e-mail**  
douglas@douglasmichigan.com

**Manager David Kowal**  
dkowal@douglasmichigan.com

**Clerk Jean Neve**  
jneve@douglasmichigan.com

**Zoning Consultant Ryan Kilpatrick**  
rkilpatrick@douglasmichigan.com

**Treasurer Robert (Bob) Drexler**  
rdrexler@douglasmichigan.com

**Assessor Kelley Ziesemer**  
assessor@douglasmichigan.com



## **Did you know?????**

You may look up tax and assessing information on the City website. Log into: [www.douglasmichigan.com](http://www.douglasmichigan.com), then click into the civic information section. On "Our City" page you will see a link to "Tax and Assessing" information. City Council meeting minutes, agendas and financial statements are available at the City offices, the Library, or on the City website.

The City of Douglas Code of Ordinances is now online at: [www.amlegal.com/douglas\\_mi/](http://www.amlegal.com/douglas_mi/)

The proposed draft of the new zoning ordinance is available on the city website at [douglasmichigan.com](http://douglasmichigan.com).

Recycle bags are available, free of charge, at the City Hall. Used batteries are now being collected curbside. Homes within the City of Douglas are serviced every other Tuesday. Stop in and pick up bags and a schedule.

## MEET THE NEW COUNCIL MEMBERS

In November two new council members were elected to serve the citizens of Douglas along with two incumbents. Matt Balmer and Diane Bailey were re-elected to serve another two years. Matt Balmer was selected to serve another year as Mayor while Renee Waddell will again serve as Mayor Pro Tem. New members Dan Urquhart and Bob Sapita will join Matt, Diane, Renee, Greg Harvath and Martha Hoexter on Council during 2009.

Bob Sapita, 852 Center Street, has lived in Douglas for 2 years. Dan Urquhart, 119 Chestnut Lane, previously served on the Village Council during the late 1990's. Both Dan and Bob have been appointed to serve as the Douglas representatives to the Kalamazoo Lake Sewer and Water Authority Board. Welcome Bob and Dan!

2008 Winter tax statements were mailed during the first week of December and are due by February 17, 2009.

If you have not received a tax statement please call the Treasurer's office at (269) 857-1438.

Look for the 2009 recycling schedule with your tax statement. January pick up dates are the 13th and 27th.

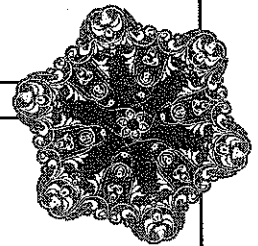
## 2009 Mardi Gras Parade

It's time to begin planning your costume for 2009 Mardi Gras. The parade theme will be "Kings and Queens".

Contact John Thomas, Parade Coordinator, at 857-8738 for further information.

## DISASTER ASSISTANCE

Allegan County Emergency Management and Homeland Security Department has been granted a Small Business Administration (SBA) Disaster Declaration as a result of the rain flood event that occurred from September 9 through October 14, 2008. Residents and businesses affected by the severe storm flooding can apply for low-interest disaster loans from the U.S. Small Business Administration. Loans up to \$200,000 are available to homeowners to repair or replace damaged real estate. Homeowners and renters are eligible for loans up to \$40,000 to repair or replace damaged personal property. SBA customer service representatives will be on hand at the Disaster Loan Outreach Center located at the Kalamazoo County Fairgrounds, 2900 Lake Street, Kalamazoo, MI., to issue loan applications and answer questions about the disaster loan programs. The center will be open beginning November 19th. The SBA Customer Service Center may be reached at 1 800 659-2955.



### **Do you have an unused cell phone?**

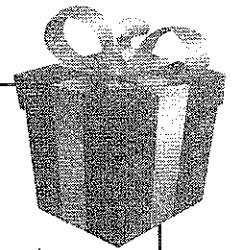
The Allegan County Sheriff's Office is collecting used cell phones in cooperation with the *911 Cell Phone Bank*. Donated phones are shipped to the *Cell Phone Bank* where they are assessed to determine their best use. Some are re-sold with a portion of the proceeds being returned to the Sheriff's Office for the benefit of Senior Citizen programs.

Phones that are not re-sold are erased, tested and charged to be distributed as free 911 emergency phones for senior citizens and victims of abuse.

To donate old cell phones or to receive a free 911 emergency phone, contact Lt. Mike Larsen at (269) 673-0500, ext. 4520.

### **CONCERNED ABOUT DOUGLAS PLANNING AND ZONING ISSUES?**

The City of Douglas is accepting applications to serve on the Planning Commission. Responsibilities include: reviewing site plans for special use, site condominium, planned unit development and subdivision requests to determine compliance with local and state ordinances; recommending zoning ordinance amendments; and reviewing, drafting and adopting a comprehensive plan for Douglas. Planning Commission members meet once a month, on the second Wednesday of each month. Availability, commitment year-round, and training session attendance is required. Send a letter describing your interest or stop in City Hall for an application.



### **BE PART OF THE SOLUTION**

You can help Public Works crews clear our roadways as quickly as possible by not parking cars on the street when snow removal operations are in progress.

### **FIRE SAFETY CHIMNEY CHECK**

With the onset of cold weather, fireplaces can make your home cozy and warm. To keep your family safe, the City offers several fire safety facts of which all homeowners should be aware. Chimney fires, more commonly referred to as flue fires, can be a home's worst enemy. Proper chimney maintenance reduces the buildup of creosote, a black, tarry substance that blocks passageways that can potentially ignite. To reduce this buildup, homeowners are encouraged to burn hardwood, as less creosote will be released into the chimney. Also, curing the wood during the warmer seasons for three to six months will help yield a hotter burning fire wood with less creosote. A chimney should be thoroughly cleaned on a yearly basis, or more often if heavily used, as there is a greater potential for flue fires if soot and creosote accumulate in the chimney. The flue should also be carefully inspected inside and out by properly trained professionals. Remember, proper maintenance is the best way to fight chimney fires.

### **HOLIDAY SAFETY TIPS**

According to the U.S. Fire Administration, each holiday season, fires claim the lives of over 400 Americans, injure 1,650 more, and cause over \$990 million in damages. The City of Douglas would like to offer the following fire safety tips to ensure a safe and happy holiday season.

- If using a live tree for decoration, be sure to use a fresh tree and keep it well watered. If many needles fall off after bouncing the trunk on the ground, the tree has been cut too early, and has most likely dried out. A dry tree is more likely to ignite when placed by flame or sparks among other heat sources. When disposing of your holiday tree, please remember to not burn tree branches or needles in a fireplace or wood-burning stove.

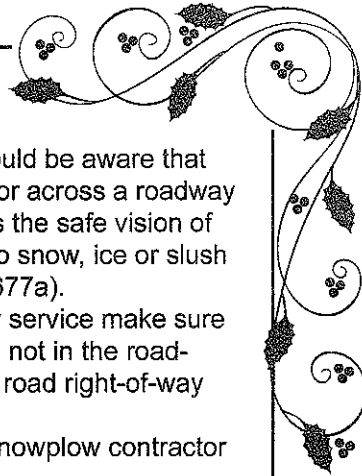
- All decorations should be nonflammable and placed away from heating vents or other sources of heat. Wrapping paper should never be burned in a residential fireplace; it may ignite and cause a flash fire. Each year, homeowners are encouraged to inspect holiday lights for frayed wires, gaps in insulation or broken sockets. Always use lighting that have the "UL" or "FM" label indicating that proper product testing has been performed. Always use a fire screen and burn only materials appropriate for fire places and frequently remove fireplace ashes in a metal container to reduce any chance of rekindling. Before retiring for the night, be sure that all electrical decorations are unplugged and candles and fireplace have been snuffed out.

## SNOWPLOWING

Snow plowing contractors and the residents they serve should be aware that State law prohibits the disposal of "snow, ice or slush onto or across a roadway or the shoulder of the roadway in a manner which obstructs the safe vision of the driver of a motor vehicle". The law further states that no snow, ice or slush can be deposited on any roadway or highway (MCLA 257-677a).

The City recommends that residents who have a snowplow service make sure the snow from their driveway is deposited on their property, not in the roadways, the road right-of-way or a neighboring property. The road right-of-way extends wider than the paved section of roadway.

If you call the City with problems or concerns regarding a snowplow contractor it is helpful if you can identify the contractor.



### **BOARDS, COMMISSIONS AND COMMITTEES**

#### **City Council**

Diane Bailey  
Matt Balmer, Mayor  
Greg Harvath  
Martha Hoexter  
Bob Sapita  
Dan Urquhart  
Renee Waddell, Mayor Pro Tem

#### **Planning Commission**

David Burdick  
Ron Dellartino  
Christopher Nern, Chair  
Alexa Urquhart  
Karen Van Pelt  
Renee Waddell

#### **Zoning Board of Appeals**

Jeff Greenwood  
Kenneth Kutzel  
Tarue Pullen  
Bill Schumacher, Chair  
Alexa Urquhart

#### **DDA**

Nancy Ayers  
Matt Balmer  
Helen DeGeatano  
Mary Glinski  
Jeffrey Mead  
Tanya Sheridan  
John A. Slater  
William Smith, Chair

#### **Assessment Board of Review**

Linda Anderson  
Herb Conlon  
Maria Droz

#### **Community Relations**

Alan McPhail  
Carol A. Peterson

### Christmas Tree Recycling

Bring  
your used  
Christmas Tree  
to the designated area  
at Schultz Park from December  
26th to January 15th for recycling.  
Happy Holidays!

### **Adopt the Nearest Hydrant!**

In case of emergency, seconds count! Please assign someone in your household/neighborhood with the responsibility of keeping fire hydrants on or near your property clear of snow.

### **Leaving the area for the winter?**

If you would like the Police Department to check on your residence while out of town please call the office at (269) 857-4339. Have a safe and healthy winter!

City of the Village of Douglas  
86 W. Center St.  
Douglas MI 49406-0757  
phone: 269 857-1438  
fax: 269 857-4751  
www.douglasmichigan.com  
douglas@douglasmichigan.com



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US POSTAGE  
PAID  
PERMIT #3  
DOUGLAS MI

### **HOLIDAY HAPPENINGS**

Businesses in Douglas will be participating in Festive Fridays each Friday in December. Shops are open until 9:00 p.m. with many offering special sales or serving refreshments.

The 2008 Douglas Holiday Ornament is available in the Center Street shops. The Kirby House has a special ornament available that would make a great gift for those born at the Community Hospital (now Kirby House).

Visit the Old Schoolhouse for gifts and award winning books filled with Douglas history. Don't miss the horse and carriage rides throughout the holiday season.

Tour the festively decorated streets and enjoy dining and drink specials in many of the restaurants.

Find a "Toys For Tots" collection box at the Saugatuck-Douglas Police Station, 47 W. Center Street. Help out local families in need by donating a non-perishable food item at Douglas City Hall. All food donations will go to Christian Neighbors West serving Douglas, Saugatuck, Ganges, Glenn and Pullman.

Many restaurants, bars and organizations usher in the new year with festive events followed by a spectacular fireworks display over the harbor at midnight on December 31st.

