January 2017 Newsletter

MEET THE COMMISSIONERS

From left – Eric Dorrien, Gaye Terwillegar, Mark Bone, Jim Geisler, Steve Glaser, Jeanette Snyder, and Scott Noesen.

All Midland County Board of Commissioners meetings are held in the Board Room on the first floor of the County Services Building, 220 W Ellsworth St., Midland, MI. Meetings are open to the public unless otherwise noted on the agenda.

Minutes of the Midland County Board of Commissioners are posted after they are officially approved. Find Board meeting agendas and minutes and view live meetings here. Contact your County Commissioner by email or call the Board of Commissioner’s office at (989) 832-6775.
LOCKES CELEBRATE 25 YEARS AS FOSTER PARENTS

“I love it,” says long-time foster mother Rachel Locke (pictured with her husband, Gail, and daughters Tammy and Shelly). “I get to help the kids get a good start in life. Later I hear about their lives and their successes and can feel proud.”

Rachel and her husband Gail will celebrate 25 years of fostering Midland County children in April. Licensed through the Midland County Probate and Juvenile Court, the Lockes have helped to raise more than 100 children, ages nine to 17. As foster parents they provide a safe and nurturing environment for children, helping them get a strong start in life, learn important life lessons, and stay in school.

“Foster parents are people like the Lockes who believe in investing in the future of children by giving them hope for a happy and successful life,” says Midland County Probate & Juvenile Court Foster Care coordinator Jodie Garner. “They are really just sympathetic people who have unconditional love and understanding for all children and are able to provide a safe, nurturing, and stable home environment.”

The Midland County Foster Care Program provides training and services to support foster parents. These services range from specific training in how to deal with challenges of problem youth to moral support for the foster parents. Learn more about becoming a foster parent.

As seen on Facebook...

Effective Jan. 1, Michigan’s AMBER Alert protocol is changing to ensure these lifesaving alerts are reserved for the most dire of child abduction cases. Learn more from the Michigan State Police.
COUNTY EMPLOYEES MAKE HOLIDAYS BRIGHTER

Midland County employees banded together for the 35th year to spread Christmas cheer to a family in need of extra help. Staff from the Register of Deeds Office organized the effort which began with a raffle at the County’s Christmas potluck.

Money raised through the $100 Visa card raffle was used to purchase gifts and food for the holidays. Raffle winner, Nancy Krouse, Bd. of Comm. administrative assistant, donated the card back to be used for the family and some employees also donated extra gas cards and gift cards.

The gifts were delivered to the appreciative family by County employees on Dec. 20.

Kim Ade, Circuit Court Probation (left), and Beth Murray, Register of Deeds, help organize the County’s generous holiday efforts.

COUNTY EMPLOYEES RECOGNIZED FOR SERVICE

Thirty-four dedicated Midland County employees were honored for their years of service at a December Board of Commissioners Executive Committee meeting. They are:

• 30 years – Mary Chetkovich

• 25 years – Louis Landon, Sheriff; Julie Ruppel, County Clerk; Tracy Thomas, Sheriff; Gregory Hall, Sheriff

• 20 years – Nancy Krouse, Board of Commissioners; Randy Bunting, Treasurer; Ann Gaydos, Sheriff; Denise Mason, Finance; Andrew Abnet, Information Technology

• 15 years – Dorene Allen, Probate Court; Brandon Charbonneau, Sheriff; Jessee Milks, Sheriff; Marc Hale, Sheriff; Shelly Peters, District Court; Sarah Whitmer, Friend of the Court; Lisa Maxwell, Information Technology; Wade Lamblin, Facilities Management; Dena Fritz, Pinecrest; Susan Burdick, Probate Court

• 10 years – Adam Wright, Sheriff; Christopher Cantrell, Information Technology; Kristine Parrott, Sheriff; Valerie Doolan, District Court; Mary MacInnes, Health; Michael Kirby, Juvenile Care Center; Amber Blevins, Sheriff; Suzanne Ault, Human Resources

• 5 years – Sylvia Burgess, Pinecrest; Jason Rotarius, Probate Court; Ryan Slep, Prosecuting Attorney; Michael Noble, Parks and Recreation; Tammy Holsworth, Treasurer; Benjamin Hinson, Sheriff
WINTER DRIVING REMINDER
Stay Safe, Make Good Decisions

Sheriff Scott Stephenson reminds drivers to prepare for winter with the following vehicle safety tips:

- Check tires, engine oil, antifreeze and brakes
- Buckle your seat belt and make sure your passengers do
- Reduce your speed in snow, sleet, and ice
- Allow yourself plenty of braking space on slick roads
- Lightly pump your brakes when stopping on ice
- Avoid distractions such as cell phones and eating
- Listen to the radio for information on conditions
- Pull off the road to a safe place if necessary
Midland County Veterans Service Officer is your advocate for veterans and their dependents, ensuring that those eligible receive the Veterans Administration (VA) benefits that they have earned through military service. Midland County can help in the procurement of United States Veteran Affairs Department and State of Michigan Veterans benefits.

Ross Ahlich, Midland County Veterans Service Officer, reminds veterans to review the list of benefits and visit the website for more information or contact him at 220 W. Ellsworth Street, Midland, MI 48640, 989-832-6843, rahlich@co.midland.mi.us.

### SUMMARY OF BENEFITS FOR MICHIGAN VETERANS

#### Federal Veterans Benefits
- Service Connected Compensation
- Dependency and Indemnity Comp.
- Survivor Plan Benefits
- Federal Education Benefits
- Veterans Affairs Medical Services
  - Medical Care
  - Outpatient Care
  - Respite Care
  - Palliative Care
- Pension-Basic, Housebound and Aid
- & Attendance Retirement Benefits
- Memorial Burial Benefits
- Insurance Benefits
- Homeless Veteran Programs

#### State Veterans Benefits
- Michigan Veterans Trust Fund
- Michigan Veterans Homes
- Michigan V. Homeowners Assistance-Mortgages and Tax Relief
- Soldier Sailor Relief Act
- State Education Benefits

### Across the Counties

#### IMPORTANT BILLS EXPECTED TO BE BACK IN ACTION

After the Nov. 8 election, Republican legislators, who hold significant majorities in the state House of Representatives and Senate, said they wanted to tackle big issues in the final weeks of the Legislature before the session ended. In December, however, legislators tabled several controversial issues, including stricter voter ID.
laws, anti-union picketing bills, tax incentives for businesses, and pension and health care cuts for teachers and municipal retirees. These issues are expected to be back this year when the session resumes on January 11.

THREE WAYS TO PROTECT YOURSELF FROM THE FLU

Every year, millions of people get sick, hundreds of thousands are hospitalized, and thousands to tens of thousands of people die from flu. Centers for Disease Control (CDC) urges you to take the following actions to protect yourself and others from flu:

• Get yourself and your family vaccinated

A yearly flu vaccine is the first and most important step in protecting against flu viruses. Everyone 6 months or older should get an annual flu vaccine by the end of October, if possible.

• Take everyday preventive actions to help stop the spread of flu viruses

Avoid close contact with sick people, avoid touching your eyes, nose, and mouth, cover your coughs and sneezes, wash your hands often (with soap and water), and clean and disinfect surfaces and objects that may be contaminated with flu viruses. Cover your nose and mouth with a tissue when you cough or sneeze, and stay home for at least 24 hours after your fever is gone.

• Take antiviral drugs if your doctor prescribes them

Antiviral drugs can be used to treat flu illness, making illness milder and shortening the time you are sick. They also can prevent serious flu complications, like pneumonia. CDC recommends antiviral drugs be used early. Read more on fighting the flu.

In the Community

MICHIGAN STATE GOVERNMENT FINANCE - PROVIDING LOCAL SERVICES WITH SHRINKING STATE RESOURCES

Friday, January 20, 11:45 a.m.
Midland Senior Services Trailside Activity and Dining Center
4700 Dublin Ave.

The Midland Area League of Women Voters, in partnership with Midland County Senior Services, will host a panel discussion on a segment of MI State Government Finance at the Trailside Activity and Dining Center in Midland. We will learn how our local governments are providing services with shrinking state resources. Midland City Manager Jon Lynch, Midland County Controller/Administrator Bridgette Gransden, and Jerome Township Treasurer Laura Grubaugh will serve on the panel.

To register for the program, call 633-3700 by 9am on January 18. Please be sure to specify if registering for the program only or for the program and lunch. Attendees planning to have lunch need to arrive by 11:30 am at Trailside. Space is limited in the room, so please call ahead to reserve a spot. Lunches are by suggested donation for those over 60, or $6 for those under 60, payable at the door.
From the Midland Police Traffic Safety Team...

The top five highest crash intersections in Midland for 2016 include:

1. Eastman Ave. and W. Wackerly Rd. - 42 crashes
2. Eastman Ave. and N. Saginaw Rd. - 26 crashes
3. Buttles St. and Jerome St. - 25 crashes
4. E.Patrick Rd. and S. Saginaw Rd. - 21 crashes
5. Eastman Ave. and Airport Rd. - 21 crashes

The majority of the crashes at intersections involve people rear-ending cars in front of them because drivers are not paying attention. With the winter months here, this is a good time to be extra cautious when approaching intersections. Snow covered roads require a greater distance to bring your vehicle to a stop. Therefore, speeds that you would typically drive on a clear road may lead to crashes during wintery conditions.

Want to receive a reminder each month when our newsletter is published?

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