

Scio Township

Spring 2010

COMMUNITY REPORT

In this issue:

BY LEW KIDDER, CHAIR, SCIO TOWNSHIP ROADS COMMITTEE

fix Me Now – Or fix Me Later

Like a house or a car or a lawnmower, roads cost money to build – and then they cost money to maintain. It's one of those pay me now or pay me later kind of things. Change the oil and filters on a regular basis, or scrimp on those costs and risk a major mechanical meltdown much sooner than wanted. Scio Township has 108 miles of public roads, every last inch of which is subject to the same basic conundrum: Fix me now – or fix me later. And like engine maintenance, "later" almost always adds up to much more than the sum of the "nows". So, what does "now" actually cost? A complete answer would, as one might expect, involve a long and complex list of conditions and what-ifs. But it is still possible to make some useful generalizations.

Primary and Local roads, some paved, some gravel

Before starting on that task, however, we need to break Scio's road system into smaller categories. Excluding the interstate system (I-94 and M-14), there are two formal classes of roads

in Scio: township primary and township local. Scio has 47.5 miles of primary roads. Scio Church, Wagner, Zeeb, Baker, Dexter, Miller, and Huron River Drive would be examples of a primary road. The remaining 60.5 miles of public roads in Scio fall into the "township local" category. Twenty-five miles of that total are categorized as local "connectors" – i.e., they serve not just as access to residences with frontage on those roadways, but provide "through" routes for a larger segment of the population. The Delhi's (North, East, West), Marshall, Park, and the portion of Liberty lying west of Zeeb are examples of connector roads. The remaining 35 miles of local roads are entirely within various subdivisions scattered across the Township – like the Polo Fields, the Uplands, and Scio Hills. Those roads are used almost entirely for access to the residences within those neighborhoods. Finally, it will be useful to know that of the 60.5 miles of township local roads, 33 miles have gravel surfaces. That fact influences the amount needed for upkeep – and unfortunately, not in the way one first might think.

Fix Me continued on page 2

Prescription Burn at Township Hall

David Borneman, (r), of David Borneman, LLC (www.restoringnaturewithfire.com), and David Read, Township Trustee, stand watch over the prescription burn conducted at Township Hall on March 16th. David Borneman, LLC and David Mindel (not shown) of Plantwise, LLC (www.plantwisere restoration.com) donated their services and conducted this burn at no cost to the Township. Thank you, Davids! For more information on the benefits of prescribed fire, go to: <http://mifirecouncil.org/resources>

Photo by Nancy Hedberg

The cost of keeping up

What is the cost of maintaining these assets? In a perfect world, reasonable people in the road business think in 20-year cycles. Day one of a paved road would find a newly built or newly reconditioned surface. Year five would see crack-sealing (currently \$6,000/mile of a two-lane road), year 10 would mean chip-sealing (\$20,000/mile), year 15 would see a second round of chip-sealing, and year 20 would be time for a two-inch blacktop overlay (currently, \$70,000/mile). Lots of things could bump that cost up – but since we are talking “perfect world” here, the total would come to \$116,000 over 20 years, or \$5,800/mile/year. How about the equivalent mile of gravel road? Start with regular grading (to keep potholes below car-swallowing size): five times per year on average, at \$150/mile/grading. Add in dust control at a current cost of \$800/mile/year (covers two applications). Plan on 6” limestone lifts once every ten years or so (\$60,000/mile, average \$6,000/mile/year) and finish with major ditch work every 20 years (\$40,000/mile, average \$2,000/mile/year). Average cost for the two decades of maintenance on a gravel road: \$9,550/mile/year or almost two-thirds more than for paved.

Wait, there's more

Would this cover all road maintenance costs? Hardly. Notice what isn't included: snowplowing, vegetation control (dead trees falling onto roadways), major drainage projects – like the unique issues faced by Huron River Drive, complicating factors such as sewers built beneath a road and super-sized roads (the Washtenaw County Road Commission gets funding for Jackson Boulevard as if it were still a two-lane road).

Current funding for roads

Now that we know what things cost, what revenue is available? Except for certain major projects eligible for partial federal funding, the Washtenaw County Road Commission (WCRC) gets almost all of its funds from the State under Act 51. For primary roads, the WCRC receives a base amount of \$1,382/mile/year with another \$8,804/mile/year as an “Urban Area Bonus” (about 80% of Scio is within the designated “Urban Area”) or \$10,186/mile/year. For local roads, the WCRC receives a base amount of \$1,501/mile/year and another \$1,467/mile/year as an “Urban Area Bonus” for a total of \$2,968/mile/year. Compare that with the costs outlined above.

A real life example

Complicating the issue is the fact that the maintenance estimates detailed above are “best-case” scenarios. What happens if you have roads that haven't received regular maintenance? The experience of Wing Meadows provides some insight. Wing Meadows, across Zeeb Road from the Montessori School, has 0.62 miles of paved roads that were built in the late 1960's and which, until last year, received little maintenance for the past two decades. When the neighborhood decided to take the bull by the horns and impose a Special Assessment District (SAD) on themselves, it was too late to do regular maintenance. Instead,

the road had to be pulverized and repaved at a cost of \$124,000 or \$200,000/mile. In the 20-year scenario of regular road maintenance, that equates to \$10,000/mile/year, 70% greater than the \$5,800/mile/year total if it had been properly maintained. And of course, Wing residents also suffered a number of hidden costs over the years, like additional damage to vehicles (tires, shocks) and diminished property values (which a property owner notices if forced to sell when the road in front is in lousy shape).

Adding it all up

We've thrown around a lot of numbers, enough to make your head spin. So, let's boil them down. Question #1: If all the public roads in Scio Township had been treated to a regular maintenance regimen over the years (Best Case), what would it cost to keep them there? Question #2: Given the fact that Scio roads have not been receiving adequate maintenance (Realistic Case), what will be the eventual bill if we continue the present policy?

Type	Surface	Miles	Best Case/ Mile	Total	Realistic/ Mile	Total
Local	Gravel	33	\$10,000	\$330,000	\$10,000	\$330,000
Local	Paved	27.5	\$5,800	\$159,500	\$10,000	\$275,000
Primary	Paved	47.5	\$5,800	\$275,500	\$10,000	\$475,000
Snow Removal		108	\$1000	\$108,000	\$2,000	\$216,000
Vegetation Removal		108	\$700	\$75,600	\$700	\$75,600
Pothole patching	Paved	75	\$200	\$15,000	\$600	\$45,000
TOTAL				\$963,600		\$1,416,600

On the revenue side, here's what the WCRC currently receives for Scio's Roads:

Type	Miles	Cost/Mile	Urban Bonus	Total
Local, Urban	50	\$1,501	\$1,467	\$148,400
Local, Non-urban	10.5	\$1,501	n/a	\$15,760
Primary, Urban	47.5	\$1,382	\$8,804	\$483,835
TOTAL		108		\$647,995

The two tables bring our dilemma into sharp relief. If assuming everything about Scio roads being hunky-dory, the current rate of investment dollars is falling over \$300,000/year behind the ongoing needs. But if we look at what has actually been happening and project the foreseeable consequences, the shortfall climbs to almost \$770,000 each year. That sounds like a problem.

What's To Be Done?

Is there a remedy? Sure – it's more money. Where does the money come from? That's not so easy, so let's take that up in the next newsletter. In the meantime, if you have a concern about your road, call the Township and ask to be put in touch with a member of the Roads Committee.

Dexter School Board Election

This is a sad thing when I feel I must retract my last statement, but alas! In the previous newsletter, I told you that we would all be going back to our usual polling places for the next election but that is not to be (yet). There will be an election for the Dexter Community Schools in May and so, in an attempt to save dollars where we can, the precincts have been consolidated once again for our May election. (Just remember your usual polling place when it's time for the August Primary!)

Consolidating to save money

The State of Michigan allows for consolidation of precincts when holding school elections. In May, Precinct 1 voters (Dexter Village area) will go to their usual polling place

at the Dexter Senior Center. All other precincts that have registered voters in the Dexter Community Schools will be voting at the Scio Township Hall. Those precincts are Prec. 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, and 8. Precincts 7 and 9 are the two precincts with only Ann Arbor Public Schools residents.

You must be registered to vote

Remember to vote on May 4 if you are a resident of the Dexter Schools district!

Last day to register before the August 3, Primary is July 6, 2010. The last day to register for the November 2, General election is October 4, 2010.

BY DAVID READ, TOWNSHIP TRUSTEE

Rescue 16-1 brought into Service

February 23rd saw the first use of Scio Township Fire Department's newest vehicle: Rescue 16-1. This vehicle was designed to respond exclusively to medical emergencies. Until Rescue 16-1 was put into service, it was necessary to dispatch one of our full-size "fire trucks" to every call. These engines are fully equipped to respond to all types of calls but are not practical for use on medical calls because their size prevents the responders from accessing many driveways. The responders are forced walk the last few dozen (or hundred) feet carrying all of their equipment. This significantly

increased the time it took to "put hands on the patient."

To remedy this situation, the STFD decided to purchase a medical response vehicle.

This made sense given that more than 50% of STFD's 850+ calls/year are medical in nature. Rescue 16-1 is a 2010 Chevy Tahoe 4X4. The vehicle was specially designed, modified, and equipped by members of the Township's fire department. By doing much of the work in-house, the Township saved a considerable amount of money. Commercially built and equipped, Rescue 16-1 would have cost in excess of \$80,000. The use of in-house design and labor held the cost to \$42,000.

According to Chief Carl Ferch, "Rescue 16-1 is the first major increase in service delivery capability in the last ten years. In addition, the reduction in maintenance costs is expected to offset the vehicle purchase price. A reduction in the workload of the larger engines will help to extend their useful life expectancy as well."

Come and see the newest addition to STFD's fleet on Firehouse Friday, April 23rd when we host W-4's Breakfast with Bubba brought to you by Key Bank, Suburban Chevrolet/Cadillac and Sevpro.

BY DARRELL FECHO, TOWNSHIP MANAGER

Emergency Siren Testing

Outdoor emergency warning sirens are tested at noon on the first Saturday of each month from March through September. If there is a threat of severe weather on that day, the test will be cancelled. Washtenaw County activates the sirens for the following emergencies: 1) significant severe weather (tornado warning or thunder-

storm with winds over 70 MPH), 2) a hazardous materials release in the area, or 3) a major national security incident.

In the case of an emergency, you should monitor the Emergency Alert System broadcasters: WEMU - 89.1 FM; WWWW - 102.9 FM; WQKL 107.1 FM; WTKA 1050 AM; or WLBY 1290 AM.

Township Utilities Director Wins Award

The Michigan Rural Water Association (MRWA) recently awarded the Co-Wastewater Operator of the Year honor to Scott D. Martin, Scio Township's Utilities Director. This award recognizes Scott's tremendous impact on the Scio Township Utilities Department by establishing process and structure in its operations. The Department provides public water and sanitary sewer services to approximately a quarter of the Township residents and nearly one-third of the land area. Taking over the Department in 2005, Scott investigated its procedures and identified many areas where Scio could improve their processes to better serve the residents of the Township and the environment.

Identified and eliminated I&I

Among other accomplishments, he developed a long range capital improvement program that was approved by the Township Board, implemented a sewer cleaning program to expedite flows and prevent backups, eliminated most of the inflow and infiltration (I&I) that overburdened the system, and oversaw improvements to the Zeeb Road pumping station. In addition, he implemented a more equitable billing system that rewards conservation by customers and developed a financial management program to track private developers, consultants and contractors on a "not to exceed budget" when installing public sewer and water infrastructure. Congratulations Scott!



BY THE TOWNSHIP VOLUNTEER RECYCLING CREW

Recycle Saturdays

Charlie Nielsen (3rd from right) and some of his volunteer crew help Township residents dispose of their recyclables on the third Saturday of the month from 8:00 until noon. However, twice a year, in May and September, we have special hours (8:00 am until 1:00pm) and we expand our list of acceptable items to include almost anything, including the kitchen sink! Certain items, such as florescent tubes and appliances with Freon, require a small fee, but most items can be recycled for free.

A couple of things to remember when you are gathering your recyclables:

If you can't lift it, chances are we can't either. Try to keep your recyclables in manageable containers.

If you are going to bag your recyclables, keep like things together. Keep plastic in plastic bags and paper in paper bags.

The enthusiasm of our community members who come to Recycle Saturday is very impressive! We often fill two containers to the brim and the corrugated cardboard container as well. Keep up the good work! Remember to come to Scio's Recycle Saturday on the third Saturday of the month, rain or shine. Look for our sign in front of Township Hall.

SCIO TOWNSHIP NEWSLETTER BY DAVID READ

Electronic Delivery of the Newsletter

We are now able to offer a paperless delivery system for this newsletter, saving the Township money and resources. Several hundred of you have taken advantage of this feature and I hope it is working well for you.

Subscribing is easy

If you choose to have the newsletter electronically "delivered", your household will no longer receive a paper copy, saving money and resources. To subscribe to this service, all you'll need is your email address and the Mail Code from the address label on this quarter's newslet-

ter. The Mail Code is comprised of parts of your name and address. For instance, if your last name is Smith and you live at 1234 Main Street, your Mail Code would be SMIT123MAINST. With this information at hand, go to: http://www.twp.scio.mi.us/newsletters/scio_newsletter_subscribe.html and follow the instructions. Please note that the above address uses underscores (_) not spaces. If you have any problems or questions, let us know at newsletter@twp.scio.mi.us. It is possible to subscribe multiple email addresses from the same household. Just be sure to use the correct Mail Code when subscribing.

Land Preservation: Halfway Through the Millage

The close of the Township's fiscal year 2009-10 on March 31st marked the halfway point of Scio Township's Land Preservation Program. This program is funded through the revenue provided by the millage passed in November 2004 ("Proposal J"), which was approved by voters with 75% support. The 0.5 mills levied has generated about \$3.5 million to purchase land and conservation easements in the Township. The Land Preservation Commission and Board of Trustees have used these funds to leverage other sources while meeting the ballot proposal's directive to "permanently preserve farmland, open space, wildlife habitat, scenic views, and protect drinking water sources and the water quality of rivers and streams, and provide new parks, recreational opportunities and trails."

More than 500 acres preserved

To date, your funds have contributed to the protection of nine properties totaling 519 acres (see map). Three more projects—135 acres—are in process and will close later this year. Four of the protected properties have public access. Two of those—the Fox Science Preserve (1) off Peters Road north of Miller Road and Scio Church Woods (5) on Scio Church Road west of Wagner Road—are owned and managed by the Washtenaw County Parks and Recreation Commission as nature preserves with parking areas and trails. The other two properties are privately owned but allow access as part of the conservation easement, which ensures they will remain as natural areas and open space forever. Those properties are the Botsford Recreational Preserve (6) off Miller Road just west of M-14 and the Green property (9) on Marshall Road west of Zeeb Road. Neither have parking areas yet but their trails are open to the public; the Greens' request that visitors contact them ahead of time at (734) 663-4968.

Farmlands protected

The other five protected properties are all conservation easements (deed restrictions that run with the property) on agricultural and natural lands but do not allow physical public access. Three are primarily agricultural properties: the Davenport farm (4) at the northeast corner of Parker Road and Marshall Road, which also features woods and frontage on Mill Creek, a state natural river; the Scherdt

farm (7) off Dexter-Ann Arbor Road between Zeeb Road and the Village of Dexter, which has woods and wetlands as well; and the part of the Gordon Hall property (2) which is in Scio Township, south of the historic mansion (which is in Webster Township but also protected by a conservation easement). The last two are mature woodlands: part of the Parker farm (3) off Parker Road south of Jackson Road (the farmland was protected some years ago in a State of Michigan conservation easement), and the Hathaway property (8) off Rose Drive. In both cases, the owners donated the property's development rights to the Legacy Land Conservancy, with the Township covering some costs in the transaction.

Leveraging our money

Partnerships are the keyword in Scio's land preservation program. The appraised value of properties protected thus far is over \$8 million, but Scio's share is just over \$3 million. Put another way, for every dollar that we in Scio Township have contributed to protecting over 500 acres of land, more than two and a half dollars have been leveraged from other sources.

Key partners have been the Washtenaw County Parks' Natural Areas Preservation Program, the City of Ann Arbor Greenbelt Program, the federal Farm and Ranchlands Protection Program and the donation of value by landowners. That amount of leverage makes Scio Township's program a terrific bargain for its citizens.

The work continues

In addition to the projects underway, the Township has received 18 applications for another 550 acres and will be sending out an annual letter and application to landowners in the spring. Land values have dropped significantly since the program's inception and there is currently little competition from developers, so now is a great time to use our limited resources most effectively. The Board of Trustees and Land Preservation Commission thank the citizens of Scio Township for their commitment to conserving our outstanding natural and agricultural lands and will continue to protect them in a cost-efficient manner.

Preferred Hauler List for trash collectors

Scio Township maintains a list of preferred haulers for solid waste and recycling services. The Township does not provide these services directly. However, the Township publishes fee schedules from haulers with the understanding that these prices are the maximum rates charged to residents. Participation in this program is strictly

voluntary. This gives individual residents an opportunity to make an informed choice among participating haulers. Detailed information is available on the Township Web Site, <http://www.twp.scio.mi.us/news/Solid%20Waste%20Preferred%20Haulers>

Photo Contest Update

Since the passage of "Proposal J" in 2004, the Township of Scio has protected eight properties within the Township. Using funds raised by the Township millage as well as funding from other governmental agencies when available, Scio has protected farmland, woodlands and open space. In an attempt to share the beauty of these properties with its residents, the Scio Land Preservation Commission (LPC) is having a Land Preservation Photo Contest. We invite residents to submit photographs, taken on any protected property listed below, which highlight the beauty of the property and the reason it was preserved.

Images from all four seasons

We will be accepting digital photographs until June 1, 2010 - we want to provide the opportunity to get images in all four seasons. Please submit your digital photographs to ScioPhotos@gmail.com. Files should be no larger than 1MB. They should be named and include the site photographed, but should not include the photographer's name. All entries will be coded and judges will not have access to names of the photographers. Judges will be two Scio residents who are also members of the Ann Arbor Camera Club.

Photos can be used on website

Prizes will be awarded for first place (\$100), second place (\$50), third place (\$25) and Honorable Mention. Photographs will be judged on composition and ability to convey the natural beauty of our Township as seen on these protected parcels. All photographs selected may be used by the Township to document the beauty of these parcels. All

entrants, therefore, give permission to the Township of Scio to publish and display all or portions of submitted images. The only compensation to be

awarded, other than that for contest winners, will be the accreditation for each of the photographs we publish. Please document permission from any

recognizable person in a submitted photograph for use of their image.

Check before you go

Some of these properties are visible only from public roads or onsite and only with prior approval. Please note below those properties for which permission must be obtained. Photographs taken at any time on the following properties are eligible. As more properties are protected, additional notice will be provided:

Fox Science Preserve Located on the east side of Peters Rd. one-half mile north of Miller Rd. Operated by Washtenaw County Parks. Open to the public during daylight hours. Parking area with informational kiosk.

Davenport Farm Accessible for photographers but please call Mr. Davenport at 734-395-5595 before entering his property. Located on the east side of Parker Rd. and the north side of Marshall Rd., east to the bridge over Mill Creek.

Scio Church Woods Preserve Located on the north side of Scio Church Rd. one-half mile west of Wagner Rd. Operated by Washtenaw County Parks. Open to the public during daylight hours. A small on-site parking lot is available.

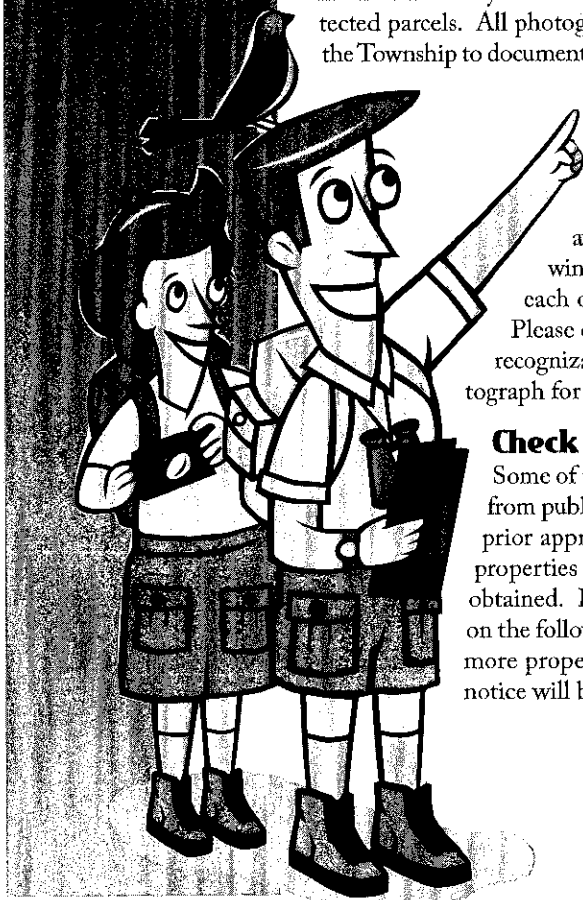
Botsford Located on the south side of Miller Rd. just west of the M-14 intersection; look for the sign for the Botsford Recreational Preserve. Open to the public during daylight hours. Parking along the utility right-of-way just past the entrance. The protected land is on the west side of the property; the buildings on the east side are not included.

Gordon Hall (Scio portion; requires permission from the Dexter Area Historical Society unless photographing from Island Lake Rd.). Located adjacent to the railroad grade west of the Village of Dexter. The historic mansion is on the Webster Township portion of the property; the Scio portion is to the south (left as one faces the mansion).

Scherdt A beautiful farm surrounded by wooded lots. Mr. Scherdt has graciously agreed to allow photographers on his property. Photographers are welcome to come by any time. While there is no need to call first, it is recommended that the photographer stop by the house and inform the landowner when he/she arrives. The address is 6541 Dexter-Ann Arbor Rd. Please note that the easement area (the subject of the contest) is beyond the buildings and the first hedgerow.

Hathaway Located in Section 24 off Rose Drive east of Wagner Rd. While the Hathaway property does not have public access, it is adjacent to the Botsford property and can be photographed from there.

Green Located in Section 16 off Marshall Rd. west of Zeeb Rd. Public access to the Green property is permitted but Dan and Norma request that visitors contact them first by calling (734) 663-4968. However, access is prohibited during all firearms seasons for White-tailed Deer (*Odocoileus virginianus*). The terms of the easement provide for a parking area but one has not yet been installed. For the time being, visitors should ask the Greens where best to park.





Get involved in your community

Scio Township Information

Scio Township Hall
827 North Zeeb Road
Ann Arbor, MI 48103
(734) 665-2123; info@twp.scio.mi.us
visit us at: www.twp.scio.mi.us

Township Office Hours

Monday to Friday 9 a.m. – 5 p.m.

Utility Department Hours

Monday to Friday 8 a.m. – 4 p.m.

Township Board of Trustees

Spaulding Clark, Supervisor . . . esclark@twp.scio.mi.us
Nancy Hedberg, Clerk nhedberg@twp.scio.mi.us
Donna Palmer, Treasurer depalmer@twp.scio.mi.us
Richard DeLong, Trustee
Christine Green, Trustee
Jack Knowles, Trustee
David Read, Trustee
Darrell A. Fecho, Township Manager (734) 665-2123

Board meetings are held on the second and fourth Tuesdays of the month at 7:00 p.m. in the Township Hall. E-mail sent to townshipboard@twp.scio.mi.us will be forwarded to all members of the township board.

Scio Township Department Heads

Carl Ferch, Fire Chief (734) 665-6001
Scott Martin – Utilities Director (734) 665-2606
James Merte – Assessing (734) 665-2123

Phone Numbers

Emergencies 911
Administrative Offices (734) 665-2132
Fire Department Administration (734) 665-6001
Sheriff's Department,
Zeeb Road Sub-Station (734) 994-8105
Utilities Emergency (734) 651-4770
Utilities Administration (734) 665-2606
County Building Inspection Services . . . (734) 222-3900
County Drain Commissioner: (734) 994-2525

The Scio Township Community Report

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dents of Scio Township.

Editor

David Read

Graphic Design

Julie Tanguay

Photographer

David Read

County Information:

Washtenaw County Road Commission

(734) 761-1500; wcrs@wroads.org

Washtenaw County Commissioners:

District 1 – Mark Ouimet

(734) 663-0927; ouimetm@ewashtenaw.org

District 2 – Ken Schwartz

(734) 686-4445; schwartzk@ewashtenaw.org

District 3 – Jessica Ping Mills

(734) 260-7844; pingmillsj@ewashtenaw.org

District 9 – Leah Gunn

(734) 663-7307; gunnl@ewashtenaw.org

District 10 – Conan Smith

(734) 662-0268; smithco@ewashtenaw.org

State Information:

State Representative

District 52 – Pam Byrnes

(517) 373-0828;

pambyrnes@house.mi.gov

State Senator:

District 18 – Liz Brater

(517) 373-2406;

SenLBrater@senate.michigan.gov

Governor:

Jennifer M. Granholm

(517) 373-3400;

e-mail via www.michigan.gov/gov

Federal Information:

U.S. Representatives:

District 7 – Mark Schauer

(202) 225-6276;

e-mail via www.schauer.house.gov/contact

District 15 – John Dingell

(202) 225-4071;

e-mail via www.house.gov/dingell

U.S. Senators:

Debbie Stabenow

(202) 224-4822;

senator@stabenow.senate.gov

Carl Levin

(202) 224-6221;

e-mail via www.levin.senate.gov

President of the United States:

Barack H. Obama

(202) 456-1111; president@whitehouse.gov

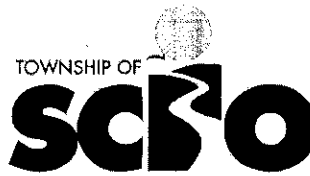
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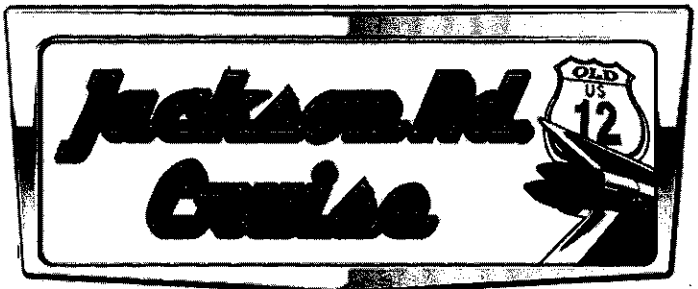
Let us help keep your
pets happy & healthy!

BY SCOTT HEDBERG, CHAIR, SCIO ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION

Jackson Road Cruise is Back

Last May, the Scio Township Economic Development Corporation (EDC), assisted by 20 business leaders, 67 sponsors and 23 community volunteers, presented the First Annual Jackson Road Cruise. By all accounts, the first offering was a resounding success.

This event showcases the Jackson Road business community, generates donations for local charitable organizations, stimulates awareness of the variety of commerce along the Boulevard and provides a good time for cruisers and watchers alike.



Drive. We will start the day with a parade of fire trucks and police cruisers. Meijer's NE parking lot will be the main checkpoint but there is a full day of events planned at many other places along the Boulevard from Wagner to Baker Roads. In addition, there will be rallies with all types of cars, cycles and other vehicles. The final schedule of events will be posted on the website.

You can help

Once again the EDC is asking for financial help through sponsors. Varsity Ford, Dunning Toyota and Suburban have committed so far. We hope for your continued support for the 2010 event. Go to JRCruise.org for up-to-date information.

Save the Date

The Second Annual Jackson Road Cruise will be held on Saturday May 22nd, 2010. A special feature this year is the celebration of the Grand Opening of the newest section of the Boulevard from west of Zeeb Road to Dino

