



# Frenchtown TODAY

Volume 13 - Issue 2 • FALL / WINTER 2010

## In This Issue

From the Supervisor's Desk	1
Clerk's Office Update	2
Treasurer's Office Update	3
Resort District Authority	4
Water Utility Director	5
Flood News	5
Frenchtown Senior Citizens	6
Library News	6
Frenchtown Recreation	7
Fall Open Burning	8
Meeting Schedule	8

## Points of Contact

FRENCHTOWN CHARTER  
TOWNSHIP - (734) 242-3282

Assessing	Department 2
Clerk	Department 3
Building	Department 4
<b>Supervisor</b>	<b>Department 5</b>
Treasurer	Department 6
Water (Billing)	Department 7
Water Plant	289-1015
Water Emergency	1-800-296-0154
Fire (Non-Emergency)	241-8853
Fire (Emergency)	911
Recreation	243-1732
Resort District Authority	289-2537
Senior Citizens Center	243-6210

### Or Visit Us At:

2744 Vivian Road  
Monroe, Michigan 48162

### Or on the Web At:

[www.frenchtowntownship.org](http://www.frenchtowntownship.org)



## From the Supervisor's Desk

By James McDevitt, Supervisor

### REFLECTION

As summer comes to an end, we again must attend to the busy schedules of fall and winter programs and the coming holidays of Halloween, Thanksgiving and finally Christmas. It is remarkable how quickly time moves along. I wish each and every one of you joy and contentment throughout the journey.

### BUDGET

By the time this reaches you, those of us working at Frenchtown will be well into budget preparation for the coming year. At this time, the Township seems to be in reasonably good shape with a balanced budget. We have carefully examined expenditures and will continue to strive to hold down costs as much as possible. If there are any questions regarding the process or you would like information on the Township's financial standing, several meetings take place in preparation of the budget. Also, a public hearing must be held before the final budget approval. Please feel free to attend any or all of these meetings if you wish.

### STORM RECOVERY

As a result of storms, many trees in our Township were uprooted or broken and some homes and property as well as power lines were damaged. This is a trying situation to deal with causing difficulty for some of our residents. I would like to thank all those who voluntarily assisted in clean up and helping neighbors in need. The cooperation was greatly valued. In particular, I would like to thank DTE for their fast response to the electrical problems resulting from the storms, Jim Spas, Director of the Resort District Authority and volunteer, Kenny Havekost, for their assistance with tree trimming and removal, our Township Maintenance Man, Greg Koszegi, and our Recreation Grounds Keeping Crew for all their clean up assistance and hard work. These are only a few of those who lent a helping hand. It is gratifying to witness people coming together to help one another and is very appreciated. This kind of response once again makes me proud to be a part of our fine community.

*(continued on page 2)*

## **TRASH SERVICE**

Overall, the trash collection program seems to be operating smoothly. Occasionally, however, there may be a glitch in service. Drivers change, trucks break down and weather conditions are all factors. The customer service number for Republic Waste Company is 800-878-4626. Please feel free to contact my office as well at 242-3282, department 5 to report a problem if necessary. I would like to stress again the importance of placing all of your trash, recycling and yard waste to be collected out to the curb by 7:00 A.M on your scheduled day.

There have been some calls indicating that trash containers (toters) are coming up missing. Should you notice anything suspicious such as trailers or pick ups loaded with these toters, please try to report the information to Republic Waste Company, the Township or the Sheriffs Department. A suggestion to try to track these containers is for residents to record the issue number on their container for their reference. It may be helpful in identifying your missing cart when a large number of them is observed at another location.

As a reminder, you must contact Republic Waste Service to inform them of a large item for collection twenty-four hours prior to your collection day. Usually, such a bulk item(s) is picked up by a separate truck on the same day as your trash day.

Lastly, please take pride in your living areas and be courteous of your neighbors by removing the trash receptacles from the road as soon as possible once the containers have been emptied. **Remember that leaving toters out to the road other than for collection is a blight and safety issue and also encourages damage and theft.**

## **LAWN MOWING CAUTION**

I have been contacted recently by a resident who nearly lost control of his motorcycle as he drove through a residential area. This was due to grass clippings having been blown on the street on which he was traveling causing slippery conditions on the pavement. I'm sure fresh grass clippings on the roads would affect any type of bike. Please take extra precaution to be certain grass clippings are not spread on the pavement when lawn mowing is being accomplished. It may prevent a serious accident.

## **CLOSING REMARKS**

Since there will not be another newsletter until February of next year, I would like to take this opportunity to wish everyone a beautiful fall and winter season. Hopefully, the winter weather will be mild and the coming holidays most enjoyable for all.

# Frenchtown TODAY

Published by

**Frenchtown Charter Township**

2744 Vivian Road • Monroe, MI 48162

Telephone: (734) 242-3282

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Mark J. Baker, Clerk

Rhonda S. Sommers, Treasurer

Hedwig Kaufman, Trustee

Jack Lindquist, Trustee

Don Lingar, Trustee

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### **Newsletter Committee:**

Kraig A. Yoas, Editor

Hedwig Kaufman

Jack Lindquist

**Volume 13 • Issue 2**  
**FALL / WINTER 2010**

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## **Clerk's Office Update**

By Mark J. Baker, Clerk

It is my sincere hope that each of you has found a way to enjoy the summer. Here in Southeast Michigan we really do get four different seasons and as you get this Newsletter we are looking at Fall and Winter not far over the horizon. As your Township Clerk one of the things at the top of my mind this fall, is the November Election. Because people's lives have a way of changing, Frenchtown really needs to add to our pool of Election Precinct Workers. Precinct Workers are paid \$10 + an hour, and all you need is to be a U.S. Citizen and a resident of Monroe County. You attend a short 2 hour class put on by the County Clerk and you are then certified as a Precinct Worker.

I am also thinking about winter and February, because Monday February 7th will be the first day for Township Residents to sign up to use the Kiwanis Park Hall for 2011. The method for first day sign up has been changed to be as follows. Residents will gather in the township hall between 9:00 am and 9:30 am. At 9:30 am for example if 17 people are in line the numbers 1-17 will be put in a bucket and each Resident in line will draw a

*(continued on page 3)*

## Clerk's Office Update *(continued from page 2)*

number and hold that number. Once that is done, the numbers 1-17 would be put in the bucket again and a Township employee will draw a number, the Resident in line holding that number drawn will be the first to request a Kiwanis Park Hall Rental date. This method will be repeated till all the Residents in line have been served. If more Township Residents show up after 9:30am that day, they will go into a second round of drawings. The system used in the past was NOT sanctioned by the township and was unfair to those who were not aware of how it was working, or, as in some cases, was NOT working for all the township residents seeking an early opportunity to reserve a Kiwanis Park Rental Date. Please remember, the township resident making the rental agreement **MUST SIGN** the agreement at the time the agreement is made.

Here's wishing you all things good this autumn and winter!



## Treasurer's Office Update

By Rhonda S. Sommers, Treasurer

### *Hello from the Treasury Department!*

We hope you are getting the best out of another beautiful Michigan summer! By the time you receive this we will likely be very busy with our Summer Tax Collections. Just as a reminder, the Summer Tax Bill is due Tuesday, September 14, 2010.

Other notable fall/winter Treasury dates are:

**Tuesday, November 30, 2010 - 2010 Winter Tax Bills are scheduled for mailing.**

Payments may be accepted without interest or penalty beginning December 1, 2010 through February 14, 2011. *Multiple payments may be made during the billing period.*

**Tuesday, December 14, 2010 - December Board of Review meeting.**

This Board meets to review principal residence, qualified agricultural and poverty exemptions as well as defined qualified errors.

**Monday, February 14, 2011 - Due date for both 2010 Summer Deferred and Winter Taxes:**

For this due date, a Post Office Date will be accepted as timely if received within 7 business days of the postmark. (Please note that "Postmark Policies" may vary by collecting agencies!)

**Monday, February 28, 2011 - Last day to pay locally before 2010 Real Property Taxes are returned delinquent:**

On March 1, 2011, the 2010 property taxes are considered delinquent and are turned over for collection to the Monroe County Treasurer.

*Please always remember to call ahead for observed holiday hours and to confirm our last business day for 2010 credit of your winter tax payment. These dates are set annually by the Township Board.*

You may place after hour payments into our locked drop box located just left of the main entrance doors. **Drop Box** payments are considered received on the following business day.

### WEB SITE UPDATES

I have made a couple of additions to our site: (<http://www.frenchtowntownship.org>). We have had such a positive reaction to the availability of our tax and assessment information that we want to expand our service. You may now view your current **water/sewer utility billing** as well! I have also added a link to the available data on our home page identified as: On-Line Parcel Information. Access still remains available through the [on-line tax information] button found on the Treasurer page.

**How it works:** once you sign in, a third party vendor provides **free** access to **your** information. You can print a tax receipt, see if your water/sewer account is current or check your latest assessment for free! You may notice that the top of the page includes the date and time of the last information upload. Please don't hesitate to call our office for assistance if you need help getting started.

*Note: Access to information on other parcels not currently in your ownership is available at your request for a fee. I believe*  
*(continued on page 4)*

## Treasurer's Office Update *(continued from page 3)*

the current cost for a non-owner is \$1.00 for utility billing and \$2.00 for tax or assessment information. The vendor will request your approval of any charges prior to granting access to the additional data.

### Water Tips:

- If you suspect a leaky toilet, an easy test is to place a few drops of food coloring in the tank - if after several minutes the color shows up in the bowl without a flush, there is a leak.
- If you have a water powered sump-pump backup system, be sure to exercise it regularly so that it shuts completely off after use or it may stick partially open and continue to run un-noticed.
- Based on our current rates and the water pressure of the service, a continuous leak from a 1/16" hole [○] could cost in excess of \$378.00 over a 3 month period.
- Utility bills are scheduled for mailing in January, April, July and October.

### Sanitary Sewer Tips:

- **PLEASE DO NOT FLUSH:** disposable diapers, Swiffer cleaning towels, rags, sanitary products, or any fibrous towels, even when labeled as flushable. **These items do clog sewer mains and pumps increasing operating and maintenance costs and OUR RATES!**
- Dumping cooking grease or oils down sinks or toilets will cause a build up and eventually a stoppage.
- Pour water in floor drains and sinks on a regular basis to keep traps full of water. This will help to prevent foul sewer odors from entering your home.
- If you experience a sanitary sewer problem, call the Wastewater Treatment Plant for 24 hour / 7 day service at (734) 241-5926. An experienced crew will respond and assist with diagnosing the problem and give further instruction on what needs to be done. This service is available to all Wastewater System customers at no charge.
- Upon request the Wastewater Treatment Plant staff can televise a private sanitary sewer line from the house to the public sewer main at a fee of \$30.00 per visit during normal working hours.

### **SCHEDULED DUE DATES FOR FALL/WINTER UTILITY BILLS:**

October 20, 2010 - Section 1 & 2 are due.

January 19, 2011 - Section 1 & 2 are due.

November 4, 2010 - Section 3 & 4 are due.

February 2, 2011 - Section 3 & 4 are due.

Please call 242-5902 #7 if you do not know your section number. Un-timely payments will receive late and applicable mailing fees. If payment arrangements are needed, please call when you receive your water bill. Once water is turned off for non-payment, arrangements will not be available.

**For Your Convenience:** Monroe Bank & Trust branches throughout Monroe County continue to accept timely Frenchtown water bill payments at no charge to you.

**Automatic Debit Customers:** PLEASE, remember to notify us of any changes to your ACH account. If a debit is returned for any reason, the account receives the same handling fees as a returned check.

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## **RESORT DISTRICT AUTHORITY**

By James Spas, Director

### **STORM DAMAGE**

On June 6, 2010, a tornado hit the Resort District causing widespread tree damage. A number of associations had fallen trees blocking roads by early afternoon. The associations with volunteers had opened roads for traffic. On Monday, June 7th, the Resort District began the task of removing brush, cutting hanging limbs and removing damaged trees. As of July 8th, brush and hanging limbs are taken care of. We are still taking down damaged trees. This storm has cost the Resort well over \$100,000 to date. It is estimated that the final cost will be around \$200,000.

### **ZONE 1 CONSTRUCTION**

Work has begun on the Flood Protection Project for Zone 1 (Grand Beach to Stoney Creek). Most temporary staging areas are established and H-Pilings are being installed with precast concrete wall panel installation started in late July. This project is slated to be complete in May 2011. The total cost of this project is five million fifty thousand dollars (\$5,050,000).

# Water Utility Director

By Rich Weirich

We are now in full swing of our four-year Orion Automatic Meter Reading (AMR) system change out program. We have made the changeover from the Ramar Reading System to the Orion Reading System. As we go through this process, you might see our Water Department employees in your yard. Most of the old Ramar Readers can be changed from the outside of your home. There may be a few that we need to get into the house to complete the work, so if you see one of our notices on your door, please call to schedule an appointment to complete the work.

As we move through summer and head into fall, we want to remind everyone to make sure all their water lines are protected for the winter. If you leave your home vacant in the winter, make sure you have the water shut off and your lines blown out. General practices for all homeowners are; blow out your sprinkler lines, make sure your crawl space entries are closed up, protect any water lines from freezing, turn off all outside spigots and disconnect hoses from them. Doing a little bit in the fall can save you from problems in the winter.

Just a quick reminder: Our current emergency phone number is 800-296-0154; this is an emergency paging system. After the tone, please leave your name, address and phone number and someone will get back to you as soon as possible. If you have any problem with the emergency pager, please feel free to call 734-289-1015. The Water Operator on staff will take your information and relay it to the on-call service man.

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## Flood News

By Annette Hopper

### MAPS OF THE LOCAL FLOOD HAZARD AREA:

Maps showing the Special Flood Hazard Areas (SFHAs) as identified on the Federal Flood Insurance Rate Maps (FIRM) are available at the Frenchtown Charter Township Hall, 2744 Vivian Road, in the Building Department, and from the FEMA Flood Map Store on the FEMA website at <http://www.msc.fema.gov>

### FLOOD INSURANCE:

Property owners in flood hazard areas are often unaware of the risk of floods and do not carry adequate flood protection insurance to cover potential losses. If you don't have flood insurance, talk to your insurance agent. Homeowner's policies do not cover damage from floods. However, because Frenchtown Charter Township participates in the National Flood Insurance Program (NFIP), you can purchase a separate flood insurance policy. There is a 30-day waiting period before flood insurance goes into effect, so don't delay. For further information about flood insurance, view FEMA's website at <http://www.floodsmart.gov>

### FLOOD SAFETY:

Floods are one of the most common hazards. Most communities in the United States can experience some kind of flooding after spring rain, heavy thunderstorms or winter snow melts. For an up-to-date forecast of flood threats, check the following website: <http://www.fema.gov/areyouready/flood.shtm>

### FLOOD PROTECTION:

There are several ways to protect your home from flood damage. The Building Department can assist you in identifying methods that might be appropriate for your property. To obtain flood hazard (floodplain) information, call the Building Department at 734-242-5900, ext. 4.

# Frenchtown Senior Citizens, Inc.

By Barbara Mazur, Executive Director

The center is open to those 55 years and up. Dues are \$18.00 per year. You will need to be a member to participate in activities with the exception of a lunch program, Bingo, and travel program. Lunch served at noon asks a donation of \$3.00 for persons 60 years old or older and \$5.00 for persons under 60 years of old.

The Men's Pool League meets Thursday, September 9, at 1:00 p.m. and continues until the end of April. New pool players are always welcomed.

Women's Pool League begins on Tuesday, September 7 at 1:00 p.m. and will continue until spring. Look for more information about "Chicks with Stix" in our monthly newsletter and on our website: [www.frenchtownsenior.com](http://www.frenchtownsenior.com).

Mark your calendar for a fun Halloween Party in late October, food music, costumes, and dancing to live music. Information will be on our website.

Watch for information about our fall rummage sale.

A fall card party will be held in November.

Our annual Holiday Dance will be in December.

All this information will be on our website.

We are able to offer Physical Therapy. You will need a prescription from a physician. Medicare/Insurance will be billed for services. Stop by Tuesday or Thursday afternoons to meet the therapists.

We do have a contract with Veterans Administration for Adult Day Care Services. Call us at 734-243-6210 for more information.

During this year we added a support group for those with Parkinson's Disease. The group meets on the third Tuesday of the month at 1:00 p.m. The facilitator is from Erie West Hospice. We are associated with the Michigan Parkinson's Disease Foundation. No charge for this service. Open to the public.

Stop in and see the trips we are offering. Many are one day trips, overnight, and longer overseas trips. Remember any questions, please don't hesitate to call or stop by.

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## Library News

By Jane M. Steed, Community Librarian for the Frenchtown Area Libraries

"The trees behind the library have been cleared away and the roof has been repaired. A violent early June storm blew trees down throughout our township and knocked almost every tree down at our Vivian Library, landing one on the roof!!" Thanks to great work by the township and library staff, we were back to work and open for business in just a few days.

Summer continued with great events at our three township libraries and a fabulous 10th Birthday Party at our Frenchtown-Dixie Branch. But now it is time to think about what's coming to your local libraries for this fall and winter. Remember you can always check out library events at [www.monroe.lib.mi.us](http://www.monroe.lib.mi.us).

Story times begin the week of September 12th. Frenchtown-Dixie story-times are on Wednesdays at 10:30 a.m., with a Small Fry story time on Thursdays at 11:00 a.m. Preschool children are welcome at our Vivian Library for Story times on Thursday mornings at 10:30 a.m., and Friday mornings at our Blue Bush Branch, also at 10:30 a.m.

A Monday morning play group will be held at Frenchtown-Dixie each week at 10:30 a.m.

We will once again celebrate autumn with our Pumpkin Parade on Tuesday, October 19th at the library on Nadeau Road. Children 10 and under can trick-or-treat at the library in a safe, "non-scary" setting. We look forward to this wonderful event each year.

Library patrons will once again get a chance to create a "family" scarecrow this fall. Check the library's web site, this fall, for locations and details. We are anticipating a visit, or two, from crowd pleaser, Paul McCormack and his Classroom Critters. Paul shares his expertise with a variety of amazing and sometimes exotic live animals in a wonderful hands-on event.

*(continued on page 7)*

## **Library News** *(continued from page 6)*

Come December, the holidays will be celebrated in our three branch libraries, with maybe a visit or two from "Mr. Claus" himself. Plans and travel arrangements from the North Pole are still being made.

Throughout the year, library patrons are invited to join various book clubs at our libraries. Our Vivian Library hosts and afternoon book club on the fourth Monday of the month at 1:00 p.m. A Mystery Book Club takes place on the first Wednesday of each month at our Blue Bush Branch starting at 6:30 p.m. Join the library ladies, at Frenchtown Dixie, on the 2nd Tuesday of the month for book club at 6:30 p.m. And for the first few months of 2011, the "I Love a Mystery Book Club" from the Ellis Library will be meeting at Frenchtown-Dixie on the 2nd Wednesday of the month at 10:15 a.m. And don't forget our Soup for the Soul Book Club on the 2nd Thursday of the month at 6:30 p.m. at Frenchtown-Dixie. Finally, home schoolers: check out the Blue Bush Book Club, just for you, on the 4th Monday of the month at 1:30 p.m.

When January 2011 arrives, we will resume our story time schedules at our branch libraries. Be sure to visit your local branch library for some good books and movies to enjoy during the long cold months of winter. Please check our calendar of events at [www.monroe.lib.mi.us](http://www.monroe.lib.mi.us).

The Friends of the Frenchtown Area Libraries will again be sponsoring a blood drive for The American Red Cross. Mark your calendars for February 21, President's Day. Visit the Frenchtown-Dixie Branch Library and donate the "gift of life."

The Ellis Reference and Information Center (the main library for the Monroe County Library System) will be closed for renovations from July 2010 until the spring of 2011. During this time, the hours at the Frenchtown-Dixie Library will be increased to include Sunday hours starting in September. We will also have additional computer stations and reference staff on site during the Ellis closure.

On behalf of the Monroe County Library System and the staff of our three Frenchtown libraries we wish you all a beautiful autumn, a joyous holiday season and a warm and cozy winter.

## ***Frenchtown Recreation***

By Larry Chinavare

Well it's hard to believe but the summer is starting to wind down and school will be starting soon. I would like to thank all the directors for the summer programs. Adult Softball, Richard Green, Golf, Kyle Beaudrie, Youth Baseball/Softball, Ann Gerlach, Tot Lots, John Naveaux, Tennis, Jessica Traster, Martial Arts, Merry Garrett, and Adult Umpire Scheduler, Jim Duvall. They all do a great job, as we had over 1200 children and adults participating in our summer program this year. This year we were down on girls softball at the 11 & 12 division but were able to have enough 9 and 10 year old girls to have our own league. John Naveaux reported that the Tot Lot program was doing fine and some of the designated tot lot areas were up in numbers and a few were down from last year. I will not be able to give baseball/softball league results or how our teams did in the Monroe County Fair Tournament, because of my deadline to get this letter in for print. I will provide that information in my next Newsletter. Congratulations to all the teams who participated this year and a special thanks to all the coaches for the time they donate to our program. Without them the program would not be a success. I would also like to thank Mike Bross, Greg Guyor and the Summer Workers who do a great job of keeping 6 to 8 ball fields groomed each day along with all the grass cutting and park maintenance they perform.

Park 3 at 2144 Stewart Road now has the Basketball Courts in place, a Park Shelter and a 1/2 mile walking path, which weaves around the entire park. The Soccer Field has youth soccer goals and we will be adding full size goals by the fall. The new play structure added last fall has been a big hit with the kids and is getting a lot of use. Park 3 is slowly taking shape and is a great addition to our park system.

In conjunction with Jefferson Schools we will be having a youth basketball league this fall for 3rd, 4th, 5th and 6th grade boys and girls. You don't have to attend Jefferson Schools to participate. We will be sending flyers to the schools in the Township when school starts in the fall. We plan on starting the league in October and ending in mid November. Games will be played on Saturdays.

Please keep the following dates in mind: the Halloween Party will be held on October 30th at Kiwanis Park on Nadeau Road from 1:00 PM till 2:30 PM and The Christmas party will be held on December 18th at the Frenchtown Senior Citizens Center on Vivian Road next to the Township Hall from 1:00 PM till 2:30 PM. More information will be available on the Frenchtown Charter Township Web Site. And as a added note I would like to thank Chair Person Jamie Fix of the Christmas and Easter Parties last December and this spring. Both parties were well attended and a special thanks to Heidi Lindsenmeier for arranging Miss Monroe County and her court to attend and entertain at the parties.

Have a great rest of the summer and as a reminder I am located in the Recreation Building/Senior Citizens Building and my phone number is 243-1REC / email: [lchinavare@frenchtownsenior.com](mailto:lchinavare@frenchtownsenior.com). Your comments and concerns are always encouraged.

**Frenchtown Charter Township**

2744 Vivian Road  
Monroe, Michigan 48162

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## Fall Open Burning

The dates for Fall Open Burning are October 20 to November 30. Open burning is for **Yard Waste Only** (ie... grass clipping, leaves, brush, tree limbs), no building materials, garbage, tires or anything that creates black smoke. Burning needs to be in a contained 3 x 3 area and monitored until extinguished, and please take into consideration the weather conditions before burning. If residents have any questions about burning they can call the fire department at (734) 241-8853.

# 2010 Township Meetings Schedule

### Township Board

- 2nd Tuesday . . . . . 3:00 p.m.
- 3rd Tuesday / Workshop Meeting . . . 10:00 a.m.
- 4th Tuesday . . . . . 7:00 p.m.

### Planning Commission

- 1st & 3rd Thursday . . . . . 7:00 p.m.

### Zoning Board of Appeals

- 2nd Wednesday . . . . . 7:00 p.m.

### Recreation Commission

- 1st Tuesday . . . . . 6:00 p.m.

### Resort District Authority

- 2nd Wednesday . . . . . 3:00 p.m.

All meetings will be held at the Frenchtown Charter Township Hall, 2744 Vivian Road, Monroe, Michigan, except the Recreation Commission, which will meet at the Frenchtown Recreation Center, 2786 Vivian Road, Monroe Michigan.

### Additional Meetings

Lake Erie Transit, 1105 West Seventh St., Monroe  
1st Thursday - 9:00 a.m.

Senior Citizen Board, 2786 Vivian Road, Monroe  
3rd Wednesday - 9:00 a.m.

*Mark J. Baker, Clerk*