

Bainbridge Township

History

Bartholomew Sharrai, a French Canadian, is credited as being the first permanent settler in Bainbridge Township. Another Canadian soon followed him; a man named Ruleaux, who filed claim to a piece of land adjacent to Sharrai's. Ruleaux built a crude log cabin, stocked it to the rim with whiskey and called it a tavern. Within two years, the area would be known as "Ruleaux's Place".

In February of 1836, James Enos and his two brothers purchased Ruleaux's Place in an attempt to make it a little more respectable. The tavern became one of the regular stops for stagecoaches traveling between St. Joseph and Detroit. Following this success, another tavern was erected which became the site of the first township elections in 1837.

The earliest trading in the township took place between the settlers and the Indians. The settlers exchanged knives, beads, and trinkets for Indian furs. With the construction of primitive roads, the trading continued through Yankee Peddlers who walked from house to house carrying satchels or backpacks. Even if no purchase was made, the peddler would stay for two meals and a night's lodging. Even shoemakers would travel from home to home and stay as long as it took to make shoes for the entire family.

Bainbridge Township remains primarily a fruit farming community, governed by friendly folks and dedicated to a good quality of life.

Observations

Bainbridge Township is located amidst rolling hills at the northeastern part of Berrien County. The Township's greatest strength is its wealth of good quality agricultural land. It is not surprising that fruit and vegetable farmers have dominated the community for the past century-and-a-half. The community wishes to keep its farming identity, so industry is discouraged and pressure to develop is shunned.

One very interesting aspect of Bainbridge Township is its community orientation. Although the Township residents communicate a good community spirit, they are socially divided. Due to its low population density and its proximity to Benton Harbor, Coloma, Watervliet, and Sister Lakes, Bainbridge houses four communities, each of which focuses on the nearest social/commercial hubs for their shopping and recreational needs. Consequently, the Township does not organize any social events, but contributes to these nearby communities.

A possible drawback for those who would like to live in Bainbridge Township is the lack of a water and sewer system. Its low population makes such a municipal system expensive and inefficient. Because of this and the lack of sufficient fire hydrants, the fire insurance rates are generally higher in Bainbridge than in the surrounding communities. In case of fire, the Township has the option of calling in firefighters from four different communities.

Community Vision

- Preserve and encourage historical agricultural character of the Township while allowing for open space opportunities for housing.
- Carefully evaluate potential expansion of commercial and industrial base.

All Demographic Information is based upon the 2009 Census Estimate

Population

1980 Census	2,879	
1990 Census	2,865	0.49 % decline
2000 Census	3,132	1.09 % increase
2009 Census Estimate	3,106	0.83 % decline

Personal Income

Median Family	\$49,904.00
Average per Capita	\$24,922.00
Median Household	\$44,724.00

Labor Force

Total Work Force	1,582
Employed	1,575
Unemployed	7
Unemployment Rate	0.44 %

Principal Economic Base Employers - Manufacturing

Greg Orchards & Produce
Helena Chemicals
Modern Light Metals
Wilbur-Ellis Michigan

Housing

Number of Dwellings	1,397
Owner Occupied	1,052
Renter Occupied	255
Median Rent	\$604
Median Home Value	\$134,700

Building Permits – 2010

	Number Issued	Dollar Amount
Residential	5	\$757,300.00
Commercial	2	\$618,000.00
Other	33	\$628,345.00
Total	40	\$2,003,645.00



Pipestone Lake

Government

Municipal Hall

Bainbridge Township Hall
7315 Territorial Road
Watervliet, MI 49098

Phone: (269) 468-8040
Fax: (269) 468-3498
E-mail: secretary@bainbridgetownship.org

Council Meetings

Second Monday of Each Month
Start: 7:00 p.m.
Planning Commission: Third Monday every other month at 7:00 p.m.

County Commissioner

Jon Hinkelman, District 2
2201 M-140
Watervliet, MI 49098
Phone: (269) 463-3385
jdhinkelman@qtm.net

State Governor

Rick Snyder (R)
P.O. Box 30013
Lansing, Michigan 48909
Phone: (517) 373-3400
Fax: (517) 335-6863
Rick.Snyder@michigan.gov

State Senator

John Proos (R), District 21
P. O. Box 30036
Lansing, MI 48909-7536
Phone: (517) 373-6960
Fax: (517) 373-0897
SenJProos@senate.michigan.gov

State Representative

Al Pscholka (R), District 79
Michigan House of Representatives
P.O. Box 30014
Lansing, MI 48909-7514
Phone: (517) 373-1403
Fax: (517) 373-3652
AlPscholka@house.mi.gov

U.S. Representative

Fred Upton, 6th Congressional District
2183 Rayburn H.O.B.
Washington, DC 20515
Phone: (202) 225-3761
Fax: (202) 225-4986
tellupton@mail.house.gov

U.S. Senators

Debbie Stabenow (D)
133 Hart Senate Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20510
Phone: (202) 224-4822
stabenow.senate.gov/email.htm

Carl Levin (D)
269 Russell Senate Office Bldg.
Washington, D.C. 20510
Phone: (202) 224-6221
levin.senate.gov/contact/index.cfm Access via website Contact Center

Public Services

Police

Bainbridge Township does not have its own police force. The Berrien County Sheriff's Department covers the Township.

Berrien County Sheriff's Department
(269) 983-7141

Fire

The Township is covered by four fire departments:

Benton Charter Township Fire Department
Phone: (269) 925-3958
North Berrien Fire-Rescue Department
Phone: (269) 468-4412
Sister Lakes Fire Department
Phone: (269) 424-3145
Watervliet Fire Department
Phone: (269) 468-4233

Insurance Rate Classes: 5 & 6

Trash Collection

Reliable Disposal
Phone: (800) 677-1083
Type: Independent
Pick Up Day: Tuesday

Best Way Disposal, Inc.
Phone: (269) 463-3232
Type: Independent
Pick Up Day: Monday

Recycling

Berrien County Community Development
Jill Adams, Environmental Specialist
(269) 983-7111 Ext. 8234
Program information available online at www.berriencounty.org/recycle.

Water

Contact: Bainbridge Township Hall
Phone: (269) 468-8040
Source: Private Wells

Sewer

Contact: Bainbridge Township Hall
Phone: (269) 468-8040
Source: Septic Tanks

Telephone

A T & T
Residential Customers (800) 244-4444
Business Customers (800) 660-3000

Gas

Michigan Gas Utilities
1-800-778-3802
711 Starlite Dr. Benton Harbor, Michigan 49022

Electric

American Electric Power Company
(800) 311-6424
2425 Meadowbrook Road; Benton Harbor, MI

Education

Bainbridge Township is served by the following school districts:

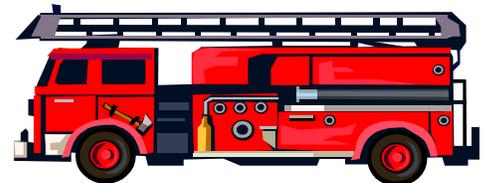
Benton Harbor Area Schools
Dr. Leonard Seawood, Superintendent
823 Riverview Dr.
P.O. Box 1107
Benton Harbor, MI 49022
Phone: (269) 927-0600
Student membership: 3,688

Coloma Community Schools
Terry Ann Boguth, Superintendent
2518 Boyer Road
P. O. Box 550
Coloma, MI 49038
Phone: (269) 468-2424
Student membership: 1,778

Dowagiac Public Schools
(Lewis Cass ISD)
Larry Crandall, Superintendent
206 Main Street
Dowagiac, MI 49047
Phone: (269) 782-4400

Eau Claire Public Schools
Mark Costello, Superintendent
6190 West Main Street
Eau Claire, MI 49111
Phone: (269) 461-6947
Student membership: 812

Watervliet Public Schools
Kevin Schooley, Superintendent
450 E. Red Arrow Highway
Watervliet, MI 49098
Phone: (269) 463-5566
Student membership: 1,309



Taxes

In March 1994, Michigan voters approved a new tax structure (Proposal A). The following table provides a simplistic look at the taxes currently levied within this community. Property tax is based now upon taxable value, not state equalized value.

General Taxes

General County	4.7723
Law Enforcement/ Public Safety	0.3500
Special Voted 911	0.2500
Senior Citizens	0.3000
LMC College	1.7854
Township	0.7491
Special Voted	0.2500
Subtotal	8.4568



School Taxes (Berrien RESA)

State Education Tax	6.0000
Non-Homestead (Business)	17.8308
Extra Voted Building & Site	2.0000
Debt Retirement	0.0000
Berrien RESA	0.1745
Special Education	2.1954

Subtotals

Homestead	10.3699
Non-Homestead (Business)	28.2007

Benton Harbor

6.0000
17.8308
2.0000
0.0000
0.1745
2.1954

Coloma

6.0000
18.0000
0.0000
1.4000
0.1745
2.1954

Eau Claire

6.0000
18.0000
0.0000
3.2500
0.1745
2.1954

Watervliet

6.0000
18.0000
0.0000
1.8600
0.1745
2.1954

School Taxes (LCISD)

Homestead	6.0000
Non-Homestead (Business)	18.0000
Debt Retirement	2.6500
Lewis Cass ISD	0.2026
Special Education	2.0291

Subtotal

Homestead	10.8817
Non-Homestead (Business)	28.8817

Economic Development

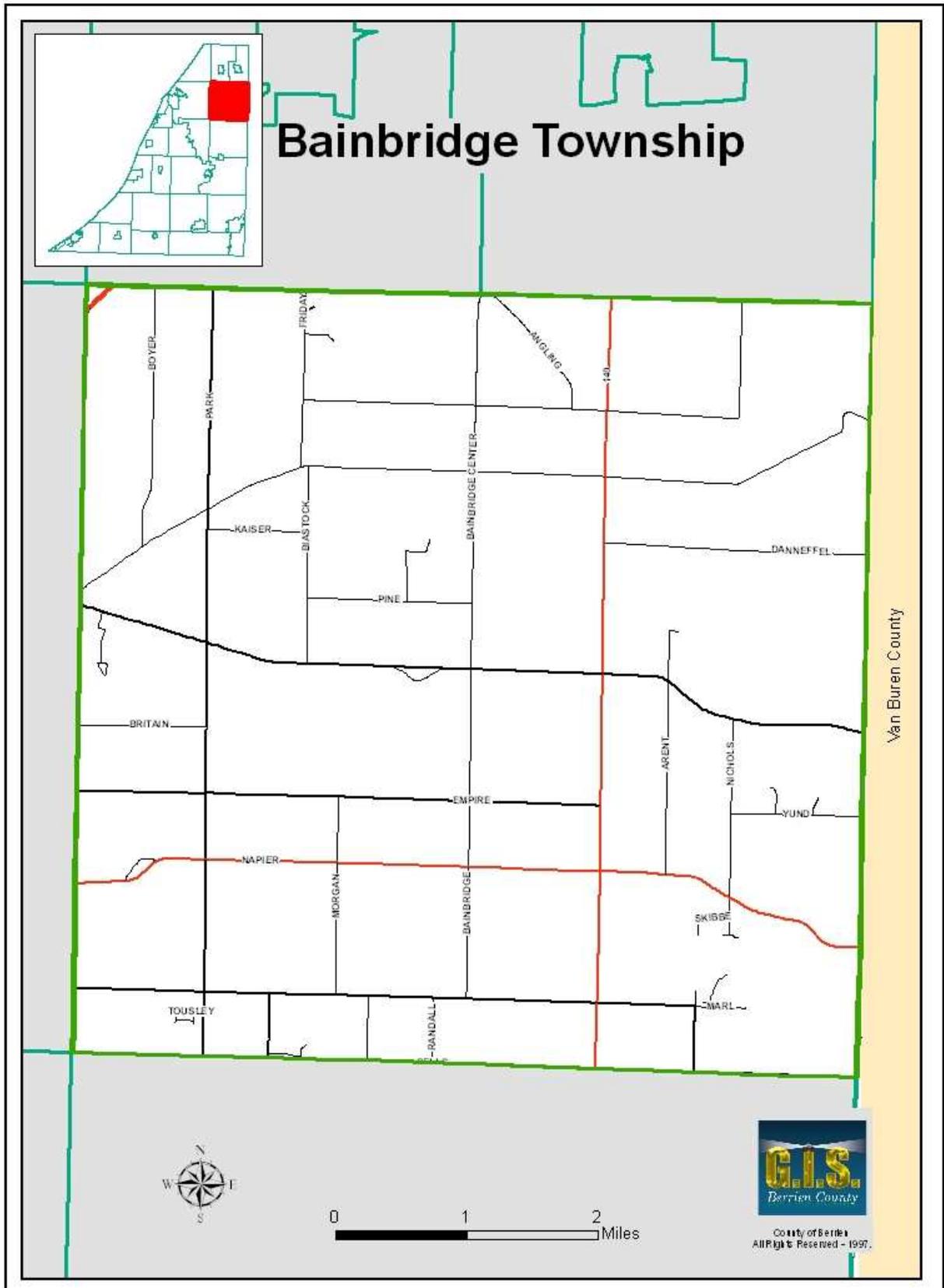
Berrien County Community Development Department
 701 Main Street
 St. Joseph, Michigan 49085
 Contact: Daniel Fette, Director
 Phone: (269) 983-7111, Ext. 8617

North Berrien Community Development
 Chana Kniebes, Community Development Coordinator
 P.O. Box 1028
 Coloma, Mi 49038
 Phone: (269) 468-4430



Climate

	<u>January</u>	<u>July</u>
Average Maximum Temperature	32F / 0C	82F / 28C
Average Minimum Temperature	18F / -8C	61F / 16C
Days over 90F or 32C	11	
Days below 0F or 18C	4	
Days of Growing Season	162	
Average Annual Rainfall	37" / 94cm	
Average Annual Snowfall	70" / 178cm	



This Community Snapshot has been prepared by the Berrien County Community Development Department. For more detailed information on services available in Berrien County, please visit our website at www.berriencounty.org/CommunityDevelopment.

Every effort has been made to ensure the accuracy of this information. However, as data is constantly changing, Berrien County will be held harmless for any omissions or errors contained herein.