

Pipestone Township

History

Pipestone Township was an early target for land speculators. These speculators made handsome profits by purchasing land at \$1.25 an acre and selling it for \$2.50. Sales were made, yet permanent settlement lagged.

James Kirk, a Virginian, moved from the Niles area in 1837 to become the first settler in Pipestone Township. Having lived in a simple cloth tent and pole shanty with his family during the first summer months, neighbors came from distant communities to help build his log cabin before the winter hardships began. In that same year, another settler, Dr. Morgan Enos, a wealthy physician, joined Kirk. At that time the Pipestone area was rich in wildlife, manifested by hungry wolves and fearless bears. Pipestone Creek was known as the dividing line between rich farm lands to the west, and the "big meadow" on the east, one of Berrien County's largest swamps.

On February 16, 1842, Pipestone's population had increased sufficiently for it to be incorporated as a separate township. A total of 27 offices were filled at the first township meeting, apparently allowing all the voters to hold an office. The population continued to increase. In the early 1840's, William Boughton and Joab Enos drew up plans for a village called Pipestone. In 1846 when the township's population had grown to about 300, William Boughton erected a post office and became its first Postmaster.

The Village of Pipestone was never officially organized and was rechristened "Shanghai" around 1853 in honor of Dr. Enos' Shanghai breed of chickens. The story is that the Shanghai chickens crowed so lustily, the residents decided that the village should bear their name and character. In 1880, Shanghai consisted of two stores, a dozen or more homes, a grade school and two blacksmith shops. The village's growth was halted, however, when the Niles to Benton Harbor railroad tracks avoided Shanghai.

Partly due to the presence of the "big meadow" swamp, Pipestone never became a densely populated area and today remains a farming community.

Observations

Pipestone Township is predominately agricultural with few residential areas. This is partly due to the wetlands east of the Township, which do not allow for residential building projects. The Township is nicely located, however, in a very rural area in east Berrien County. The community enjoys a good fire department that is shared with Berrien Township and the Village of Eau Claire. It also has an excellent working relationship with the surrounding communities. The property values in Pipestone Township are generally lower than those in Berrien or Sodus, and very affordable. Farmers are keeping their agricultural community, so available residential lots are scarce.

The twenty miles of dirt roads in Pipestone Township are characteristic of its rural nature. Industry is welcomed by many of the Township residents, but it would have to locate in the industrial park of Eau Claire Village, half of which lies within the Township borders. Especially on the eastern border, much of the land is of clay that does not allow for new residential construction.

Although one plot of land has been zoned light industrial, Pipestone Township does not provide municipal water and sewer services. Its low population density would make such an effort expensive and inefficient. Pipestone Township remains a friendly and quiet farming community with very affordable housing opportunities.

All Demographic Information is based upon the 2009 Census Estimate

Population

1980 Census	2,364	
1990 Census	2,303	2.58 % decline
2000 Census	2,474	7.43 % increase
2009 Census Estimate	2,524	2.02 % increase

Personal Income

Median Family	\$51,708.00
Average per Capita	\$31,165.00
Median Household	\$48,607.00

Labor Force

Total Work Force	1,157
Unemployment Rate	5.9 %

Principal Economic Base Employer

Engineered Polymer Products	20 Employees
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Housing

Number of Dwellings	986
Owner Occupied	673
Renter Occupied	120
Median Rent	\$597
Median Home Value	\$127,100

Building Permits – 2010

	Number Issued	Dollar Amount
Residential	1	\$40,000.00
Other	29	\$537,417.00
Total	30	\$577,417.00

Education

Pipestone Township is served by the following school districts:

Benton Harbor Area Schools
823 Riverview Drive
Benton Harbor MI 49022
Phone: (269) 927-0600
Enrollment: 3,688

Dowagiac Public Schools (Cass County)
206 Main Street
Dowagiac, MI 49047
Phone: (269) 782-4400
Enrollment: 2,713

Eau Claire Public Schools
6190 W. Main Street
Eau Claire MI 49111
Phone: (269) 461-6947
Enrollment: 812

Government

Municipal Hall

Pipestone Township Hall
 P.O. Box 291
 7185 N. Elm Street
 Eau Claire, MI 49111
 Phone: (269) 461-6151
 Email: pipestonetwp@att.net
 Website: www.pipestonetownship.org

Council Meetings

Second Monday of Each Month
 Start: 8:00 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

Sharon Tyler (R), District 78
 Michigan House of Representatives
 P.O. Box 30014
 Lansing, MI 48909-7514
 Phone: (517) 373-1796
 Fax: (517) 373-5918
 sharontyler@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

Economic Development

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

Public Services

Police

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

Fire

Fire Chief: Tom Stiles
 Phone: 911
 Number of Stations: 1
 Professional Firemen: 0
 Part-Time Paid: 30
 Volunteers: 0
 Insurance Rate Class: 7

Trash Collection

By independent contracts with trash haulers.
 Please contact companies for further information.

Best Way Disposal	(800) 246-5992
Michiana Recycling & Disposal	(800) 722-9710
Reliable Disposal	(800) 677-1083
Waste Management	(800) 443-5646

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: Eau Claire Village Hall
 Phone: (269) 461-6173

Sewer

Contact: Eau Claire Village Hall
 Phone: (269) 461-6173

Telephone

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

Gas

Michigan Gas Utilities
 1-800-778-3802

Electric

American Electric Power Company
 (800) 311-6424

Chamber of Commerce

Berrien Springs / Eau Claire Area
 P.O. Box 177
 Berrien Springs MI 49103
 Phone: (269) 471-2484
 www.bsechamber.org

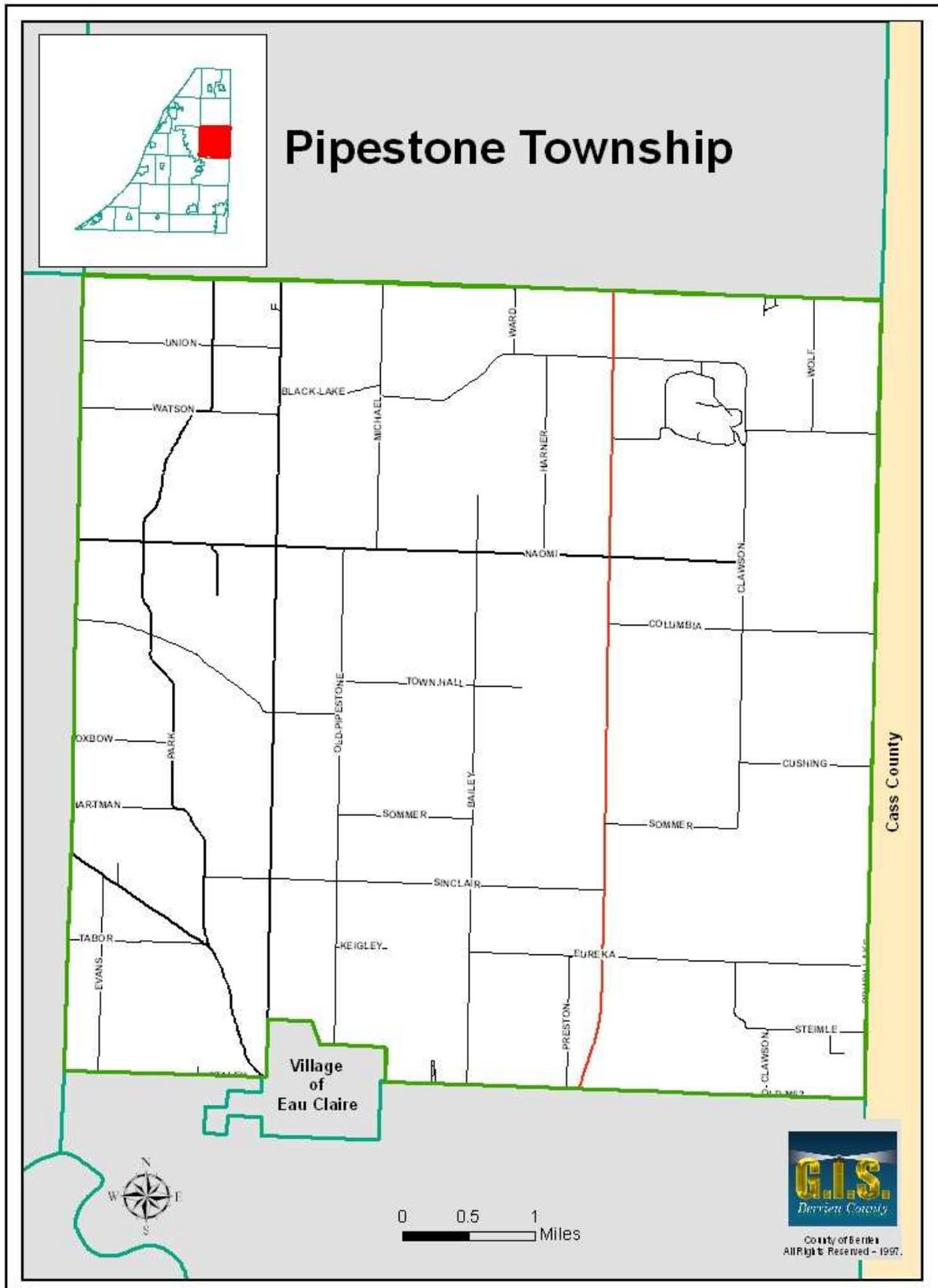
Taxes

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	0.8832
Special Voted	0.0000
Subtotal	8.3409

School Taxes (Berrien RESA)	Eau Claire	Dowagiac (Cass)	Benton Harbor
State Education Tax	6.0000	6.0000	6.0000
Non-Homestead (Business)	18.0000	18.0000	17.8308
Extra Voted Building & Site	0.0000	0.0000	2.0000
Debt Retirement	3.2500	2.6500	0.0000
Berrien RESA	0.1745	0.2026	0.1745
Special Education	2.1954	2.0291	2.1954
Subtotals			
Homestead	11.6199	10.8817	10.3699
Non-Homestead (Business)	29.6199	28.8817	28.2007



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.