

LifeCare Ambulance Membership Program Helps Families Avoid Out-of-Pocket Costs

MemberCare is a subscription program for LifeCare Ambulance Service that covers out-of-pocket expenses for medically necessary ambulance service.

How MemberCare works:

- It costs \$38 to join, and is good for a 12 month period.
- It covers a person, their spouse and any other legal dependants living in the household.
- If you need ambulance service, LifeCare will bill Medicare or your insurance company for any medically necessary ambulance trips to the closest appropriate medical facility. Any co-pays and deductibles your insurer requires you to pay are covered by MemberCare, and you are not responsible for paying those amounts.
- Your membership becomes effective three days after receipt of payment and a signed membership agreement.

MemberCare Benefits:

- An emergency ambulance trip costs over \$600. Many insurances are requiring higher co-pays and deductibles. With MemberCare, you have no out-of-pocket expense for medically necessary ambulance service.
- Medically necessary ambulance trips that are not covered by insurance, are rendered at a 20% discount from regular rates.
- Covers ground services provided by LifeCare Ambulance Service, within its entire service area to or from local and regional hospitals.
- Piece of mind – you never know when an emergency may happen to you or your family.

FOR AN APPLICATION OR MORE INFORMATION, CALL 1-800-267-1161



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MISSION STATEMENT
The City's Mission is to deliver high-quality services in a professional, efficient and nondiscriminatory manner to its residents and businesses; to continue to strengthen the economy and quality of life; and to ensure that the expression of views by citizens are recognized and responded to by the City.

A Newsletter Produced By The
City of Sturgis
For Its Citizens
**130 N. Nottawa St.
Sturgis, MI 49091
269.651.2321
www.ci.sturgis.mi.us**

The Sturgis Wire

City of Sturgis
130 N. Nottawa
Sturgis, MI 49091

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The Downtown Development Authority invites you to take part in



“WINTER BLUES”

Friday, January 18
5:00-8:00 p.m.

Downtown businesses will feature live music and food!

What's Happening At My House?: Tips to Help Control Utility Bills

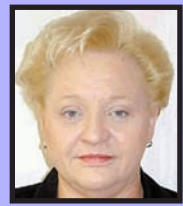
Many times a customer will call with a concern that a utility bill is too high. A bill is calculated based on consumption; the amount of energy or water used during a billing period. High water and sewer charges may be caused by a leaking toilet. Basic areas that cause a leak are the flapper or the water level in the tank. At the bottom of the toilet tank a large hole, called a drain hole, leads to the toilet bowl. A flapper plugs the drain hole to prevent water from flowing into the bowl. A chain attached to the flapper is also attached to the handle of the toilet. Pushing the handle lifts the flapper out of the drain hole and allows the water in the tank to run into the bowl. As the water in the tank drops to a predetermined level, the flapper falls back into the drain hole and the tank begins to refill. If the flapper does not sit properly in the drain hole, water from the tank continues to flow into the bowl causing high usage and a higher bill. By lifting the lid on the tank you can view the inner workings of your toilet. An adjustable float on the flushing rod determines the water level in the tank. The water level should stop at least one-half inch from the top of the overflow tube to avoid water continually dripping into the overflow tube and causing a higher bill.

STURGIS CITY COMMISSION

UPCOMING CITY COMMISSION MEETINGS

2nd and 4th Wednesday of each month – 7:30 p.m.

City Hall, 130 N. Nottawa Street



Mayor
Caralee Mayer
Precinct 1



Vice-Mayor
Karl Littman
Precinct 4



Commissioner
John Carmichael
Precinct 1



Commissioner
Barbara Fisher
Precinct 3



Commissioner
Suzanne Walters
Precinct 4



Commissioner
Michael Gay
At-Large



Commissioner
Kenneth Malone
Precinct 3



Commissioner
Ina Taulbee
Precinct 2



Commissioner
Karen Stephens
Precinct 2



The Sturgis Wire

A Newsletter Produced by the City of Sturgis for its Citizens • 130 N. Nottawa St., Sturgis, MI 49091 • (269) 651.2321 • www.ci.sturgis.mi.us

Excellence in Neighborhoods Initiative

One of the main factors that helps a city stay strong and prosperous is a good sense of community. In Sturgis, the City government, with help from other local groups and community members, has looked to grow this sense of community.

Excellence in Neighborhoods Initiative

One program that seeks to do this is the new “Excellence in Neighborhoods” Initiative, adopted in July by the Sturgis City Commission. The new initiative, that is a partnership between the City of Sturgis and the Sturgis Neighborhood Program, is a comprehensive strategy designed to improve neighborhoods and stabilize property values by facilitating the building of community pride through responsible homeownership.

The focus of the effort is on what it means to be a “Great Neighbor”; both helping others with their unmet needs and being accountable for properly maintaining their own properties. Several efforts are part of the new initiative, including programs to help those in need fix up their properties, efforts to build neighborhood cohesion by developing designations, and efforts to educate new homeowners (see sidebar).

For further information regarding the “Excellence in Neighborhoods” Initiative please contact Monica Smith, Executive Director for the Sturgis Neighborhood Program (SNP), at 651.4780 or Todd Campbell, Assistant City Manager, at 659.7230.



Neighbor2Neighbor

This program combines the efforts of community volunteers and organizations to assist residents in need of repairs such as painting, landscaping, and rubbish removal. The focal point of this program will be a “work weekend” when projects are completed throughout the community. The inaugural event has been tentatively scheduled for Spring 2008.

Neighborhood Pride Week

A “Neighborhood Pride Week” will be established to promote and improve neighborhoods, as well as featuring educational events such as home ownership classes.

Neighborhood Designations

A committee of volunteers from each neighborhood will be assembled to create name designations for the City's various neighborhood areas. These designations will both assist in increasing neighborhood pride and be useful in organizing meetings to receive public input.

Education Efforts

Education of homebuyers and homeowners is a key component in successful community housing programs. Educated homeowners are more likely to be aware of community property maintenance codes and emergency service providers including foreclosure prevention agencies.

Local Police Encourage Parents' Participation in “Project Stopped”



A new program called “Project Stopped” is on the rise. Funded by AAA, the program is now in its second year. The creative program, started through the Sheriff's Association, allows parents of young drivers to register their vehicle with the Michigan Sheriff's Association at www.michigansheriff.com. A “STOPPED” sticker is sent to the parent to be placed on their windshield. Should police in any participating department pull over a vehicle with such a sticker for any reason, police can log the stop on the MSA website and the parents will receive a letter to make them aware of the reason for the stop.

Local SOS offices are promoting this program with literature and encouraging parents to participate. Sturgis Police have also provided information on this program to the local schools and encourage parents to participate. Project Stopped is a tool to encourage teens to be responsible with privileges associated with driving a motor vehicle.

Sturgis Rising: A Message from the City Manager

Nothing can improve a community like developing and implementing well thought out planning efforts. 2007 was a year of planning and preparation for the future. Every person, every family, every community faces disappointment, challenges, and even failures, but success is defined by how we respond to adversity. Are you wondering what City leadership is doing to make Sturgis better? I would like to highlight seven initiatives that are changing Sturgis for the better:

1. **U.S. 12 Street Reconstruction Project** – Undoubtedly, this streetscape makeover will have a positive impact on how Sturgis is perceived in the region. Listen closely, because visiting families, friends and business executives are commenting on the attractiveness of Chicago Road. This is exactly the message that we want to send to the world.
2. **Excellence in Neighborhoods Initiative** – Focused on preserving neighborhoods, the initiative addresses needed improvements in the City's aging housing stock. The bottom line is that the appearance of a community's housing tells a story. With the implementation of the Excellence in Neighborhoods Initiative, Sturgis' housing story will read as having safe, quaint, and attractive neighborhoods.
3. **Economic Development Strategic Plan** – A first ever planning effort to identify specific business sectors prime for growth in Sturgis. Led by the Sturgis Economic Development Corporation in partnership with the Sturgis City Commission and the Sturgis Improvement Association, the plan will be used as a blueprint to retain and attract business and industry.
4. **Major Infrastructure Reinvestment** – The City completed major water, sewer and street capital projects in 2007. Replacement of water and sewer systems may not be glamorous, but are a sign of vitality and health. Since the City Commission's creation of the Street Repair Fund, over \$800,000 will be invested in local streets in a three year period. We're eating the “street elephant” one bite at a time . . . and its working.
5. **Business Development Team (BDT)** – The BDT was implemented to assist existing and new business prospects with understanding zoning and building regulations, identifying grants and incentives and referring needed business services. With the goal of facilitating prospects efficiently through government processes and eliminating unnecessary referrals, the BDT makes the City of Sturgis a great place to do business.
6. **I-9/M-66 Corridor Project** – In partnership with Sturgis Township, LaGrange County, St. Joseph County and the City of Sturgis, the I-9/M-66 Corridor Project is an effort to tap the tremendous development potential of the Indiana Toll Road. Businesses and people expect certain commercial/retail amenities that only locate in prime logistical locations with solid infrastructure. Although only one piece in the economic development puzzle, the I-9/M-66 Corridor Project will be important in moving Sturgis forward.
7. **The Sturgis eWire** – A first-class community requires first-class communication to its residents and businesses. The City developed *The Sturgis eWire*, an electronic newsletter to communicate useful, accurate, and timely information. Don't be the only one out of the loop. Sign up today at www.ci.sturgis.mi.us.

Sincerely,



Michael L. Hughes, City Manager

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CURRENT
RESIDENT

More Expansion, More Jobs: A Message from Sturgis EDC Director John Hayes

From Mayer Tool & Engineering and SeKure Domes & Mirrors on the north side of Sturgis to Sturgis Molded Products and Morgan Olson on the south side, this last year of manufacturing investment and job growth has been impressive. Between these firms we have a wide variety of vehicle accessory manufacturers, automotive component producers, plastic molded consumer and automotive products, paper products, carton / packaging materials, custom commercial printing, nutritional products, vehicle construction, tool and die, metal fabrication and welding, appliance components, machine manufacturing, aviation services, industrial fastener and coating suppliers, shear and tool manufacturing, medical prosthetics manufacture, and a variety of other necessary manufacturing support services.

We are unable to know of every capital investment, new hire, or facility expansion, but can attest to a few in 2007 and others in progress:

- **VCI** – a planned \$900,000 investment into 38,000 sq. ft. of facility expansion to accommodate 25 new jobs.
- **Parmatube** – a \$1.5 million dollar expansion, creating up to 30 new jobs.
- **Abbott Nutrition** – \$26 million in facility improvements and 15 or more new jobs.
- **Americraft Carton** - \$2 million investment in facility and equipment with 25 new jobs projected.
- **Michigan Tool Works** – occupancy of the former Gateway Shopper and four new jobs.
- **Shop 66** – rehabilitation of the former Continental Accessories north building and 15 new jobs.
- **Fantail Brewing Company** – redevelopment of the former Elks Lodge, and 10 or more new employees.
- **Lakeland Paper** – machinery investment of over \$400,000 and four new jobs.
- **Midwest Tool** – office and warehouse expansions.
- **LTI** – planned expansion of 7,000 sq. ft.
- **Sturgis Molded Products** – 15,000 sq. ft. of expansion with a \$2 million investment.
- **Morgan Olson** – production increases requiring hire of 175 additional employees.

There have also been other job opportunities created “south of the border” by Cruiser RV, Doubletree, and Sunrise Valley that have benefited the entire labor market. With more inquiries being received on industrial park properties, we have no reason not to expect continued job formation in 2008. The City of Sturgis pledges to continue its support and assistance in development that complements the surrounding retail and residential community. Our hats off to these businesses!



Kiwanis Parenting Fair Coming in February

Mark your calendars! It's that time of year again. The Kiwanis Parenting Fair is scheduled for 8:45 a.m. to 3:00 p.m., Saturday, February 2, 2008, at Sturgis Middle School. The fair is a day designed to explore some parenting concerns through two keynote presentations, mini-session choices, and/or browsing over 60 exhibits that deal with children, families or parenting. There is no charge. The event is totally FREE. That even includes lunch!

The keynote speakers for this year are Charlie and Nancy Adams from South Bend, Indiana. Former WSBT TV News and Sports Anchor, now motivational speaker, Charlie Adams can speak from experience about parenting. Charlie and his wife, Nancy, have six children between them! Charlie and Nancy wouldn't trade the adventures of a big family for anything in the world! They will share their hilarious family stories and helpful insights on raising children in Michiana.

Charlie and Nancy will present two keynotes: one in the morning called “Real Life Parenting” and one in the afternoon called “Parenting from the Trenches.” Both are humorous looks at parenting with real life scenarios and what they have learned will help parents that attend. Although they are not parenting experts, they are raising the typical “Brady Bunch” in ways that work for them. Come, laugh, be inspired and affirmed that you are also doing the right things to raise children.

Watch for more information and flyers in January. You may also visit us on the web at www.sturgisps.org. For information on the parenting fair, tab “About Us,” scroll down to “Sturgis Youth and Family,” and click on “Kiwanis Parenting Fair.”

Winter Tips from the Department of Public Services

Welcome to winter! Here are some tips to help make this season a safe one:

Snow Plowing: Department of Public Services (DPS) crews begin snow removal when it accumulates to around two inches. Crews use dump trucks, pick-up trucks, graders, and loaders to clear City streets and parking lots. This equipment is large and well lit so that it can be seen by motorists. If you must drive during a snowstorm, use caution and don't follow too closely behind the equipment. This will help crews prevent accidents. Always remember, if you can't see the truck driver's mirrors, they can't see you. If possible, give the equipment operator the right of way. It will make his job easier and allow him to make the roadway as safe as possible as quickly as possible for all drivers.

Salting: City crews apply salt to the roadway when it becomes slippery. They will first apply salt to state highways within the City limits and to all City intersections. City streets could be slippery between intersections, so if it is snowing, slow down and give yourself plenty of room to stop.

Sidewalks: Please shovel your sidewalks as soon as possible after a snowfall. This allows people (especially school children) to walk safely on the sidewalks, away from traffic and off of the street.

Parked Cars: Please move any parked automobiles from the street prior to or as soon as possible after a snowfall. This will dramatically cut the time required for clean up, and helps crews get City streets clean from curb to curb.

Driveways and Sidewalks: When clearing your driveways and sidewalks, please don't push or pile the snow onto the roadway. Drivers hitting a pile of snow could lose control of their vehicle. Also, dropping temperatures may cause snow piles to freeze resulting in damage to City equipment during plowing operations.

Snow Emergencies: During a snow emergency, only emergency vehicles (Police, Fire, DPS) should be on the road. Traffic other than emergency vehicles increases driving hazards and slows down cleanup operations. So please, if you don't have to be out during a major snowstorm, stay home. It makes the job the emergency services personnel have to do easier, and gets you back on the roads faster.

Work Zone Safety: DPS crews frequently have to work directly in the street. They may be doing leaf or brush pick up, street surface repair, repairing or replacing broken water pipes, cleaning, or repairing sanitary and storm sewer lines. Whenever possible they set up signs or cones directing traffic around their work area. They also wear bright, reflective clothing. When you see DPS workers, PLEASE SLOW DOWN. They are working for you to maintain City infrastructure and roadways.

Christmas Tree Disposal: The City's compost site will be open from Wednesday, January 2, through Monday, January 21, for tree disposal. The gates to the site will be open, and an area will be clearly marked where they may be deposited.

**Thank you for your cooperation, and have a
safe and wonderful winter season!**

Doyle Community Center Notes

The Doyle Community Center will soon be offering the following programs:

Adult Floor Hockey League — \$250 per team. Entry deadline is December 14.
Men's & Women's Indoor Soccer Leagues — \$300 per team. Entry deadline is January 4.

Youth Tennis Classes — For ages 5 years through 12th grade. Session 1 begins the week of January 9. Session 2 begins the week of February 13.
Saturday Night “Free for All” — Every Saturday night this winter from 7:00-9:00 p.m. for grades 6-8 and from 9:00 p.m. to midnight for grades 9-12. FREE!
Date with Dad — Friday, March 7, from 6:30-9:00 p.m. For girls ages 3-12 and their dad. \$20 per couple in advance.

And coming in February . . .
The 3rd Annual Hunting & Outdoor Expo
Stay tuned for more information.

For information on these and other events, please contact the
Doyle Community Center at 659.8110!

Connect with your Community

The **Sturgis eWire**

Weekly update of City of Sturgis events, topics of interest, City services,
emergency notifications, emailed directly to you!
REGISTER NOW! or learn more about the eWire ...

Go to www.ci.sturgis.mi.us



The Downtown Development Authority, Sturgis Area Chamber of Commerce and the City of Sturgis are partnering to help promote local businesses. The Sturgis Wire will feature a new section titled, “Local Business Spotlight”. The purpose of the “Local Business Spotlight” is to promote newsworthy items about new and existing businesses. Our hope is that the “Local Business Spotlight” will be another valuable tool in promoting and creating awareness of our businesses, keeping them strong and healthy. Submittals for the “Local Business Spotlight” should be sent to Todd Campbell at tcampbell@ci.sturgis.mi.us. Todd can also be contacted at 659.7230.

Cottin's Hardware — Sturgis Plaza 715 S. Centerville Road



Cottin's Hardware owners Dan, Jim, and Bob Cottin in the paint department of their store.

A true family business, the sign outside Cottin's Hardware says it all: “100% Cottin Since 1975.” The company was founded by Daniel and Jacquelyn Cottin after moving to Sturgis from the Chicago area. Sons and current owners Dan, Bob, and Jim Cottin each grew up in the business, working at the store from an early age and gaining valuable expertise. A full service hardware store supplied by Do It Best, Cottin's offers staples such as electrical and plumbing supplies, paint, and general items to a variety of residents, contractors, and local business owners. The over-riding focus of Cottin's Hardware is customer service. As a family business locally owned and operated, one of the owners is always at the store assuring personalized service and accountability. This message of service is one instilled in his sons by Daniel Cottin, and best stated by the sign in the store that all new hires see first: “Customer Service Supersedes all Other Duties.”

Designs by Vogt's — 222 W. Chicago Road

A full service retail florist located in downtown Sturgis, Designs by Vogt's prides itself on customer relations and quality products. With carefully crafted, personalized designs, Designs by Vogt's understands that a large part of their business is about meeting the emotional needs of their customers. This commitment to customer service is carried over with the business' name, which dates back to 1911 and the original shop florist, John Vogt. Recently, with the blessing of the Vogt family, owners Doug and Karen Bates opened their new store, using the lessons learned while working at Vogt's themselves. What sets Designs by Vogt's apart is not only the emphasis on customer service, but also the quality of their products. Great care is taken to ensure that arrangements stay alive as long as possible and that the flowers used are only of the highest quality. The Bates' also try to keep arrangements grounded in nature, incorporating elements from around the area into their creative designs.



Owners Doug and Karen Bates work together on an arrangement at Designs by Vogt's.

Sturgis Aviation — 901 W. Lafayette Street



Sturgis Aviation owners Danny King and David LaPorte next to one of the company's repainting projects.

Sturgis Aviation specializes in the stripping and repainting of general aviation aircraft, from single engine planes to corporate jets. A highly specialized field, Sturgis Aviation primarily works on corporate aircraft from the Great Lakes region, but draws customers from the entire country. Owners Danny King and David LaPorte have been in the aviation business for many years, starting Sturgis Aviation in 1999 after leaving a larger company. Over the eight years they have been in business, the operation has expanded, necessitating adding a second hanger in 2005 with a third breaking ground this year. The company averages three jobs a month, and has increased sales 40 percent this year. While their customers come primarily from outside of town, Sturgis Aviation prides itself on being a good corporate citizen, buying as much of their products and equipment locally as possible and hiring locally as well. They currently employ six full-time and three part-time workers.

Mike's Pizza and Subs — 112 W. Chicago Road

Mike's Pizza and Subs in downtown Sturgis has been a community staple since its inception in the 1980s. In 2004, ownership was taken over by Barry and Cindy Summey, first-time business owners. Barry had long been interested in cooking and the restaurant business and saw taking over Mike's Pizza and Subs as a change of pace and a chance to fulfill a dream. Today Mike's Pizza and Subs features a variety of pizza, subs, and salads on its menu, with soups featured in the fall and winter months. The Mike's Special pizza is a favorite on the menu, a thick crust pizza loaded with 10 toppings. With a number of regular customers and a cozy setting, Mike's Pizza and Subs is a wonderful place to eat and spend time. The owners often have a chance to come out and talk with their customers, and the store is currently being remodeled to emphasize more of the historical character of the shop. Incorporation of historical Sturgis memorabilia and exposure of original architecture all are giving Mike's Pizza and Subs a new atmosphere that recalls the community's past.

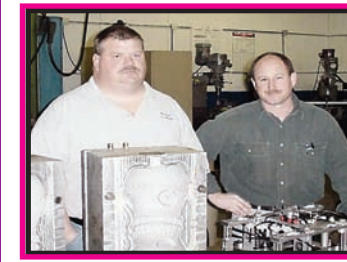


Cindy and Barry Summey of Mike's Pizza and Subs.

Local Business Spotlight



Michigan Tool Works — 618 N. Centerville Road



Michigan Tool Works owners Brent Morgan and Pete Stemen.

Lifelong Sturgis residents Pete Stemen and Brent Morgan have seen their business, Michigan Tool Works, grow exponentially since they started a little more than two years ago. Friends since childhood, both owners say the Sturgis community is the key to their success. Starting with their high school teacher that got them interested in machining, through their early days gaining experience while working at area

businesses, to the support today of local businesses who use their services, Michigan Tool Works is an organization rooted in the Sturgis community. A tooling and machining company, Michigan Tool Works aims at being a one-stop machine shop, handling machine building for manufacturing, creation of both injection and blow molds for plastic production, die repair, fixtures and gauges, and much more. A little over a year ago, Michigan Tool Works moved into its current location at Progress and N. Centerville Road, working to completely renovate a building that had been empty for several years. The owners are constantly looking to the future, investing in their business and looking to give back to the community that gave them so much.

Fantail Brewing Company — 119 S. Nottawa Street

Opening in mid-December, the Fantail Brewing Company aims to bring a bit of the Caribbean to Sturgis. A restaurant and brewpub, the Fantail will incorporate its island theme not only into the decor, but also the food, putting a Caribbean twist on a number of favorite foods. When it opens, the Fantail also expects to have five of its own beers on tap, with seasonal brews mixed in throughout the year. Owners Stan Longstreet and Mike Smith have made every effort to see that their new



A view from the east of the Fantail Brewing Company located at 119 S. Nottawa Street.



Fantail Brewing Company from the North.

restaurant pays tribute to the building's historic past by uncovering the original brick and hardwood floors and refurbishing the exterior. In keeping with their theme, they see the restaurant as a place with a relaxed atmosphere. They plan to initially use two floors of the building, with the basement providing a recreation area for kids and adults and a space for parties, while the main floor serves as the more formal dining space.

Look What's Happening at the Auditorium



The holidays are almost here and if you need a place to come and relax and let us do the work, join us for the Sunday Buffet from 9:30 a.m. to 1:30 p.m. every Sunday and let us cook for you. If you need a holiday party catered, we can assist there also. We have an exciting array of great dishes that can make any holiday party a success. Again this year we have many delicious pies available for sale, just call 651.8541 to place your order.

The Sturgis Council of the Arts will present “America” at 8:00 p.m., January 26, 2008. The 1970's group produced hits like “A Horse With No Name,” “Tin Man,” and “Lonely People.” Josh Gracin will also be on stage Saturday, March 15, for a great evening of music entertainment. Just call 659.7211 for ticket information.

Then on January 22, 2008, we will venture to Alaska with the first Travelogue of 2008. It is a great way to travel the world from your seat. Before each show there is a pre-show dinner. Come and join us for a family-friendly evening of entertainment. Call 651.8541 for details.

Don't forget if you have a meeting, party, reception, or an event of any size, our staff here at the Sturges-Young Civic Center & Auditorium will be glad to assist you in making it a great success.

*From all of the staff at the Sturges-Young Civic Center
and Auditorium,
we wish you all a Safe and Happy Holiday!*