



G.A.P.S. Newsletter

Gerrish Alternative Policing Strategies

"Community with Police...Caring & Sharing Together"

DECEMBER 2024

WISHING YOU A SEASON FULL OF JOY,
BLESSINGS, AND GOOD CHEER!

Happy Holidays

• FROM THE GERRISH TOWNSHIP
POLICE DEPARTMENT •



Spread Some Holiday Cheer!

One of the most popular Christmas customs is gift-giving. This custom is tied to the story of the Biblical Magi who brought gifts to Jesus shortly after his birth. Those gifts were gold, frankincense and myrrh. Throughout history gifts began as simple items such as candles, pottery, spices, wooden figurines which were often handmade. Books, fruits, nuts, and baked goods were humble and heartfelt gifts.

In 1870, Christmas became a federal holiday in the U.S. and different countries gift-giving practices vary. Gift-giving began to be commercialized in the 20th century and gifts could be purchased from retailers instead of homemade.

Currently trends indicate that the most lavish and expensive gifts are given to those closest to us and many recipients still value handmade gifts over store-bought. There has also been an increase in charitable giving, sometimes in honor or in memory of someone.

This giving season, please consider helping out those right here in our own community with a monetary gift or items for our Gerrish Twp. Police Department's Shop-With-A-Cop Program and the Gerrish Twp. Fire/EMS Department's Stuff the Ambulance Event. See the back page of this Newsletter for more information on these annual holiday projects.

"For it is in giving that we receive" ~ Francis of Assisi

Christmas Traditions

It's the most wonderful time of the year...family and friends gather to exchange gifts, share in a special Christmas dinner, choosing which traditions you want to keep and what new and fun traditions you come up with for your family. However you celebrate this year, make it special and memorable. Here are some Christmas traditions that date back as early as the 1600s:

Candy canes first version started as straight peppermint sticks until the "hooked" style "cane" that we know today was created in Georgia, made by hand until a machine was invented that launched Bob's Candies into mass production by Bob McCormack and his brother-in-law Gregory Keller. Christmas trees have been part of winter festivals since ancient times. The first decorated Christmas tree was placed inside a house in the 16th century. **Poinsettia plants originated in Mexico and were tied to a legend of a poor girl wanting to celebrate Jesus's birthday but had no money for a gift. She gathered weeds from alongside a road and placed them in a manger and they miraculously bloomed into beautiful red stars. They blossomed in the U.S. during the 1920s as a decorative Christmas flower.** Christmas caroling became popular in 13th century Europe as a way to spread joy and cheer to many people at one time. Mailing Christmas cards began in 1843 in Victorian England. Sir Henry Cole illustrated and designed the first holiday card that was mass printed and mailed in the Penny Post.

UPCOMING EVENTS/MEETINGS:

DECEMBER 6th

ACT NOW Executive Board Meeting
10:00 am @ Gerrish Twp. Police Dept.

DECEMBER 14th

Food Truck Distribution @ Roscommon Area Schools
Bus Garage (10:00 am until food is gone)

DECEMBER 14th

"Stuff the Ambulance"
11:00 am - 3:00 pm @ Gerrish Twp. Fire Station

DECEMBER 16th

Shop With A Copy "WRAP PARTY"
5:00 pm @ Gerrish Twp. Police Dept.

DECEMBER 25th



SGT JOHN WYBRANIEC RETIRING

John Wybraniec began his law enforcement career when he graduated from the Kirtland Community College Police Academy in 1999. He became a Deputy for the Roscommon County Sheriff's Office in 2001. Due to his specialized training and case management, he was promoted to Detective Sgt. in 2005 and then to Detective Lt. in 2016. He retired from the Sheriff's Office in good standing in 2018 and joined the Gerrish Township Police Department in December of 2018. John received many awards and completed a variety of specialized training to include crime scene investigation, forensic examination of computers and digital evidence, accident re-construction and many school-based certifications just to name a few! He was appointed the RAPS School Resource Officer in 2023 and was promoted to Sergeant at the beginning of this year. His last day with the Department will be December 18th after devoting the last six years of service to our Township and community. He will be truly missed but we all wish him the best in his retirement and future endeavors! With his retirement comes a vacancy on our Department for a Full-Time Road Patrol Officer. We are currently accepting applications for this position and will even sponsor someone to attend the local police academy if they are interested in a law enforcement career. If you know of anyone who is already certified or would like to become a certified police officer, please have them reach out to Lt. Norm LaBonte at (989) 821-5207 Ext. 287.

SHOP WITH A COP

Since 2002, the Gerrish Township Police Dept. and ACT NOW have sponsored our Shop-With-A-Cop community program and have brightened the holidays for 168 families including 583 children and 279 adults! We sponsor up to 7 families each year.

If you would like to make a donation to our Shop-With-A-Cop program, please contact Julie at (989) 821-5207 Ext. 291 or send checks payable to ACT NOW, c/o SWAC, 3075 E. Higgins Lake Drive, Roscommon, MI 48653.

ACT NOW is a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization and all donations are tax exempt. We will gladly provide a donation receipt upon request.

If you would like to come help volunteers that meet to wrap Christmas gifts for our Shop-With-A-Cop families, please let Julie know as we need a headcount and will be serving refreshments and finger foods. The "WRAP PARTY" is December 16, 2024 at 5:00 pm at the Gerrish Township Police Department. Call (989) 821-5207 Ext. 291 if you plan on attending.

Gerrish Township Fire/EMS Presents:

Stuff the Ambulance

Gerrish Township Fire/EMS Department will be hosting their Annual STUFF THE AMBULANCE this holiday season.

This year donations will support "Threads and More" serving Roscommon & Crawford Counties Kids Ages 0-18



DECEMBER 14, 2024

11:00 am - 3:00 pm

Gerrish Fire Station - 2997 E. Higgins Lake Dr.

Contact Asst. Chief-EMS Kristi Gilliam with any questions at (989) 745-8008

THANK YOU FOR YOUR SUPPORT!!

We will gladly accept donations any time at the Gerrish Twp. Fire/EMS Department if you are unable to make it on the day of the event.

For more information about "Threads and More" visit their website at <https://linktr.ee/threads018>