



NEWS FROM PLAINFIELD, JANUARY 2014

## Donations Enable Police to Search, Map Ponds and Lakes

Two donations, one from the Hendricks County Community Foundation and another from Guilford Civil Township, will enable the Plainfield Police Department to map and search ponds and lakes within the Town and Township.

“The significance of these donations is that we now have capability we didn’t have before,” said Detective Captain Scott Arndt of the Plainfield Police Department. “Not only do we not have to rely on another agency to do what we have to do, but we were also able to tailor the purchases to meet our own situation.”

The situation is that Plainfield and Guilford Township have numerous retention ponds and lakes that sometimes need to be searched. Often the water is murky and the ponds too small and shallow to get conventional boats into. Last year, sonar equipment of the type the Police have purchased was used on a small, remote controlled boat built by Watters Sonar Search and Rescue to locate the body of Morgan Johnson, who had been missing for two years. He was found in a small retention pond after Plainfield police used cell phone tower records to narrow Johnson’s disappearance to a confined triangular area.

The Hendricks County Community Foundation donated \$8,776.97 to fund the kayak, the boat equipment, the sonar equipment, and a trailer. Guilford Township’s donation, which will come in at just over \$13,000, will buy the Kubota, which can be used to haul the kayak and its equipment from one location to another. The police expect to take delivery of the Kubota this spring.



“With the kayak and the Kubota, we are well-positioned to do any subsequent searches for missing persons, should we have to,” said Arndt. He added that Kubota leaves a soft footprint in neighborhoods where they have to go in on a neighbor’s property.

“We plan to be out in the ponds in the spring and summer using the sonar to get a structure of each pond and see what’s in there,” said Arndt. “For training purposes, the more officers use the equipment the more proficient they become. And with the new trailer, we can transport to the Kubota to assist other cities and towns who might need a light, maneuverable sonar boat to search their ponds.”

## Plainfield Bond Rating Upgraded to AA+

Standard & Poor’s, one of the world’s leading financial market intelligence gatherers, has given the Town of Plainfield’s new bonds a AA+ rating. This is two steps up from their previous rating of AA-. The only rating higher than AA+ is AAA.

“The most recent evaluation was made because the Town has just issued bonds to provide infrastructure in *(continued on back)*

the Ronald Reagan/Northeast TIF District,” said Clerk-Treasurer Wes Bennett. “The Town will borrow money to create streets and expand water and sewer service in the area to help developers attract more businesses. Tax revenues from the district will then pay for the bonds.”

(A TIF District is a “Tax Increment Financing” District, where tax revenues from new business activity in the area are diverted from the regular tax collection and used to fund improvements in the area. TIF districts are often used as a method for cities and towns to create development in new locations. In this case, the Ronald Reagan/Northeast district is mainly farm fields being transformed into the AllPoints Midwest Business Park by developer Browning-Duke.)

Bennett said the importance of getting the higher rating is that the Town saved a significant amount of money over the life of the bonds. Had the developers had to issue the bonds, he said, many fewer infrastructure improvements would have been made because fewer dollars would have been available.

“The payoff to the higher bond rating is that more improvements will be made more quickly in that area,” said Bennett. “That means more businesses coming into the area sooner, providing new jobs and increased tax revenue. Plus, the infrastructure improvements help residents in that area, too. They receive the benefits of them without having to foot the bill.”

Standard & Poor’s evaluation cited the following factors in justifying the new rating: the strong economy in the region, the Town’s very strong budgetary performance, very strong cash levels to cover both debt service and expenditures, and strong management supported by good planning practices.

Bennett said this is the first time the Town has been rated under the new criteria Standard & Poor’s is using. He anticipates the Town’s water and sewer bond ratings, which are separate from the Town’s, will also go up when re-evaluated later in the year.

## Plainfield Parks & Recreation Department Honored by State Association

Plainfield Parks & Recreation received several awards at the Indiana Park and Recreation Association (IPRA) State Conference on January 16. Most notably, the department received the 2013 Outstanding Agency award, recognizing a department which has significantly enhanced parks and recreation in the community and/or Indiana.

In addition, Nate Thorne, Deputy Director of Plainfield Parks & Recreation was honored as the Outstanding Professional for 2013, and the department received Program Awards for their Silver Sneakers Program and the Optimist Miracle Movers. Finally, Renea Whicker, Plainfield Town Council Member and Parks Liaison, was recognized as the Elected Official of the year.

Each year, IPRA Awards of Excellence are presented to individuals and agencies across Indiana to honor their efforts—both personally and professionally—in the field of Parks and Recreation. Winners are evaluated by their peers in the industry based upon a scoring system for quality of the project, impact on the community, and creative solutions as well as other criteria.

Guilford Township also received a program award for their Summer Concert Series in Hummel Park, adding to Plainfield’s recognition as an outstanding community for parks and recreation.



*Members of the Plainfield Parks & Recreation Department display the numerous awards they won at the recent 2013 Indiana Park & Recreation Association meeting, including 2013 Outstanding Agency of the Year.*