

# SYLVAN TOWN NEWS



## Roads

There is now one less gravel road in Sylvan Township with the paving of Camp Jim Road. It is a great improvement and will be very much appreciated by all who travel it.

This past season many areas of the road right-of-way were brushed and trees were removed to help prevent roads being blocked with every wind event. The maintenance keeps our roads safer and reduces the "emergency" calls to remove a fallen tree. Many of the roads had new delineators installed on the curves which will help motorists see the road edge in low visibility conditions. West Sylvan Drive SW had guard rails installed to replace the aging and deteriorating cable barrier system. This was a much needed improvement. Speaking of safety, the Township has been receiving many reports of excessive speed on the local roads. The Township has purchased some radar speed signs to help drivers to be mindful of the speed they are going. These signs can also record other data that will be helpful for future planning and enforcement.

Part of a safe road system includes entrance and access onto and off of the Township roads. Sylvan Township has a Driveway and Road Standards Ordinance. This states the Authority and Purpose of the Ordinance and the standards for roads and driveways in Sylvan Township. If you are installing a driveway or building a road in Sylvan Township please stop at the Town Hall and apply for a permit before starting the project. The Ordinance can be viewed on our website.

The time of year is here when most of the roads will have some accumulation of snow and ice. Sylvan Township maintains about 60 miles of mostly paved roads. These vary from wide and fairly level with good visibility to narrow and hilly with less visibility. The Snow Plowing Policy can be viewed on the Township website. The Board of Supervisors encourage all to allow additional travel time during the snow and ice season. Again, we encourage all to help keep roads safe by notifying Sylvan Township with ideas and concerns. Please let us know your name and contact information so we can respond to your concern.

Thank you,  
John Wulff, Co-Road Supervisor

## Fall 2019 Important Dates

- November 28, 2019**  
Thanksgiving
- November 29, 2019**  
Town Hall Closed
- December 5, 2019**  
AWAIR Meeting - 6:45PM  
Regular Town Board Meeting - 7:00 PM
- December 24, 2019**  
Town Hall Closed
- December 25, 2019**  
Town Hall Closed

## MONTHLY MEETING SCHEDULES

Town Board Meets:  
1st & 3rd Thursdays

Planning Commission Meets:  
2nd Thursdays

Pillager Lake Park Advisory Board Meets:  
As required

Fire Association Meeting  
First Monday of each month - 7:00 pm at Pillager Fire Hall

Unless otherwise noted, all meetings begin at 7:00 pm at the Sylvan Town Hall.

**Sylvan Town Hall**  
(218) 746-3652  
Hours: Mon.-Fri.  
8:30-12:30 pm.  
1:00pm-2:30 pm  
Email us at:  
[clerk@sylvantwp.com](mailto:clerk@sylvantwp.com)  
Website:  
<http://www.sylvantwp.com>

For address changes, contact Cass County at 218-547-7260

**Town Board:**  
**Greg Booth:** Chair, Weed Inspector  
**John Wulff:** Vice Chair, Co-Road & Driveway  
**Greg Bennett:** Co-Road & Driveway  
**Arlene Schmit** Co-Road & Driveway Supervisor, Park  
**Yvette Dullinger:** Fire, PC Liaison

History Series Summary  
Dave Johnson, Planning Commission

Sylvan Township recently completed a historical lecture series that was presented from May through October. The lecture series highlighted the historical moments of Sylvan, Rosing, Fairview, and May Townships and the Cities of East Gull Lake and Pillager. This area has been given the name of "The Pillager Gap". The series explained many of the moments that give the residents of the "Gap" our sense of pride in our historical culture and the breathtaking environment in which we live.

The first presentation was given by Bryon Hargrave regarding the glaciers that eventually form the geographical features of the "gap" that impacted the resulting history of the area.

The second session looking into the native inhabitants of the areas was presented by Mike North a local historian. Mike helped us appreciate the lifestyle and the historical migrations of the native population. The third was also presented by Mike North, regarding the influences of the first non-native populations of the area. Mike discussed the early settlements of Crow Wing and the Chippewa agency located in the area along with some of the early leaders.

Mike was followed by another local historian, Ron Miles, discussing the Red River Ox Cart Trails. Ron focused on the "woods trail" that ran from St Paul to Pembina. The trail ran right through Sylvan Township again because of the terrain that was left by the retreating glacial activity. The rivers, then the cart trail, then the highway and railroad all took advantage of the "gap".

Don Wedll from the Mille Lacs Band gave a very interesting account of the 1862 uprising. The events leading up to the uprising along with the complex relationship among the native population, white settlers, civil war activists, government agents, etc. created an atmosphere that led to the uprising that impacted residents in the area.

The final presentation was given by Jeremy Jackson, a Brainerd native. Jeremy covered the Gull River sawmill and the town that came and went with it.

The attendance started at about 40 people, which was great, but built to 108 at one of the lectures.

The committee will meet after the first of the year to plan for next year's series. Surveys from the the lectures this year indicate attendees want to cover topics like early schools, native daily life, railroads, native plants, first families and their building and so on. If you have a topic you would like to see, let us know. If you would like to be on the lecture email list let us know that as well.

The lectures were recorded and can be found by visiting the Township website: [www.sylvantwp.com](http://www.sylvantwp.com) to see what you missed.

## Look up Sylvan Township Residents

Vickie Kettlewell, Planning Commission

Look up. See the stars. That was part of the goal when Sylvan Township started its “dark skies” initiative last winter. Part of the reason many live in Sylvan Township is the environment around us – from lakes and forests, to wetlands, wildlife and birdlife. And, we like to look up – see the stars and maybe dream a little.

When Sylvan initiated its “Dark Skies” idea it was meant to help residents think about ways they could help keep our skies dark through various kinds of lighting designs, or easy ways to change outdoor lighting, or suggestions on ways to assess lighting needs, and ways to mitigate needed lighting. Some asked, “what is light pollution?” It is the artificial light that accumulates and begins to diminish the dark sky, so to the human eye we often see a glow of light on the horizon, often we can’t see many stars when looking up, or it feels like twilight and is never really dark out.

We listed resources and the township itself implemented downward, LED lighting for its premises. Part of that effort was to share with residents “how we did this.” The Township is happy to share information on what they installed.

Sharing information can be very helpful to others and through “how to” stories, making resources available and giving recognition to good lighting design, it might also be a way of building community. Dark skies efforts not only enhance the experience of the night sky, the darkness is essential to natural cycles – especially sleep, and circadian rhythms. For wildlife, light pollution can disrupt mating, migration, navigation ability and predator-prey behaviors. Darkness is important.

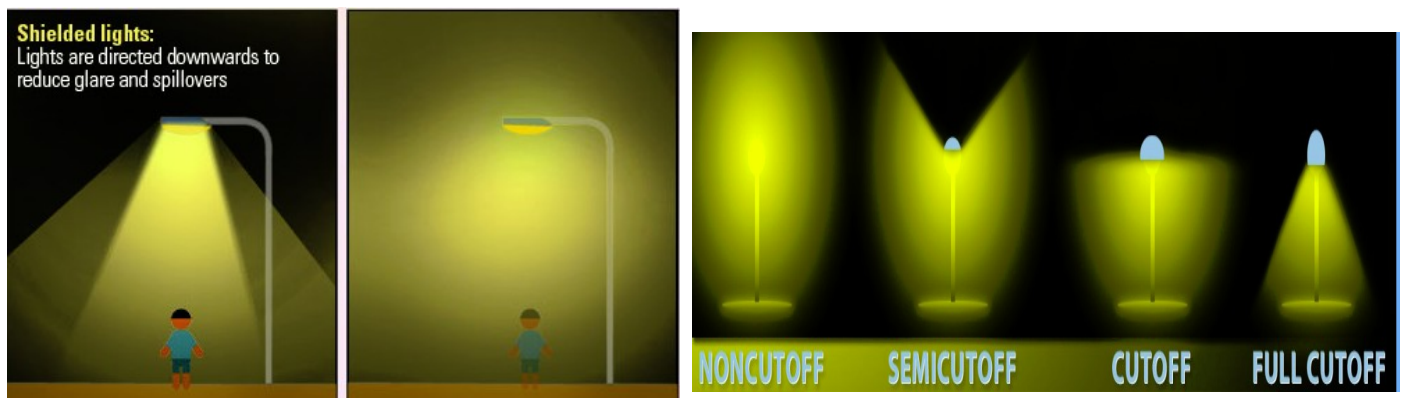
When the Township launched its effort to lower the impact of lighting, it also wanted to recognize residences or businesses that have implemented lighting that helps keep our skies dark.

Now, we need your help. If you, your business, a neighbor or a business you are familiar with, has lighting, or has implemented efforts to mitigate their lighting, we’d like to know about them, or you. We want to recognize those efforts. And, if willing to share – we’d like to share the “how I did this” story via our newsletter.

Please send us an email or call us with a nomination. We will follow up with the nominees.

Thank you residents for your help, and look up and see the stars, one of the treasures of this place.

Below are some lighting examples from the [Macdonaldobservatory.org](http://Macdonaldobservatory.org) that explain lighting differences:





Sylvan Township  
12956 24th Avenue SW  
Pillager, MN 56473

Phone: (218) 746-3652  
Fax: (218) 746-3612  
Website: <http://www.sylvantwp.com>

#### Sylvan Park Update - Dave Johnson, Planning Commission

Sylvan Township recently called a meeting of some of the original people who had attended a visioning session to determine the direction of the development of the Sylvan Lake Park. The committee was called to get an update on the progress to date that has taken place in the park. The consensus was that we are still on the right path for development.

The park has increased in size due to the addition of a section of the original plat that was set aside for public use. The total acreage is now approximately 77 acres. One trail has been developed to date and is newly seeded. The same week we received a two inch rainfall which washed some of the seed away. Next spring it will be available for hiking and this winter should make an excellent place to snowshoe.

So far approximately 2000 feet of trail has been developed with another 4900 feet planned over the next 2 or 3 years. Along these trails there will be tables or benches to enjoy the outdoors and get in touch with nature. The trail that has been developed takes you into a maple forest that is very peaceful to walk through and runs along two wetland that have ducks and geese in the spring.

The pit area of the park has been cleaned up, and with the removal of the brush and stumps, a good supply of topsoil which had been saved for restoration was discovered. There are about 3 acres in the pit area of the park that needs restoration. The hub for the trail network will be there along with a buffer of wildflowers and natural grasses. Filling in the remaining area will be a variety of trees, primarily pines. There are 2 HUGE rocks that were left behind by the glaciers as a reminder of the power of nature.

Overall the progress has been slow but steady and the plan is to have an additional trail to the high point of the park and much of the native planting done in 2020. The trees may be phased in over the next two years.