

**GVMC ON THE ROAD**

Former Speaker of the House Tip O'Neal once said, "all politics is local". In our region we definitely know the truth to that statement. Some of the goals within our Strategic Initiative to "Ensure Trust, Credibility and Confidence" pertain to attending as many board, professional associations and partner organization meetings as possible. These meetings help to communicate directly with our members and the public about GVMC and give me the opportunity to answer questions and hear directly local issues and concerns.

So far, I have met with 8 of our member boards as well as the Urban Mayors and Managers, the Lansing staff of the Michigan Municipal League, the West Michigan Local Government Managers Association, our Legislators and also the Chamber of Commerce along with several other groups.

If you would like to schedule a time for me to visit your board, service club or professional association, please feel free to call or email. The presentation can be any length to fit your schedule.

Don't Forget to Reserve Your

Quarterly Luncheon Tickets

for

April 9th with Mark Murray

RSVP to Gayle at mccrathg@gvmc.org

Spotlight on Cooperation

Governmental cooperation is not a new idea in our region. Sixty-two years ago the townships of Byron and Gaines formed the Cutlerville Fire Department. Founded in 1950, the department is shared between the two townships with each paying the costs to provide service within their jurisdiction. The cost of the and full-time firefighters are also shared between the partner townships. Additionally, the Chief serves both the Dutton and Cutlerville Fire Departments in another cooperative agreement. At the close of each quarter any needed financial adjustments are made based on actual calls for service.

The Cutlerville Fire Department is located on the boarder of the two townships at 68th and Division Avenue. Located in a station financed cooperatively in 1981 the department also has 6 pieces of fire apparatus including a 105 ft. ladder truck purchased in cooperation between the two townships and the Kent County Fire Commission. Last year the department responded to 1,929 calls.

Ultimate oversight of the department is through the Cutlerville Fire Authority with representatives of both Byron and Gaines Townships. The Supervisors of both townships serve on this board which is responsible for policy issues, budget oversight

(Spotlight continued)

and all personnel issues including labor negotiations.

Another partnership serving the area is the Tri-County Training Consortium established in 2001. There are 175 firefighters from the townships of Byron, Gaines, Caledonia, Thornapple, Leighton along with Wayland, Cutlerville, and Freeport involved in the program. According to Dutton/Cutlerville Fire Chief Russ Jansen, *"there is hardly any cost involved to the participating townships in maintaining and operating the Tri-County Training Consortium."*

Don Hilton, Supervisor of Gaines Township and Vice Chair of GVMC, stated, *"I believe the cooperation between our townships has benefited our citizens in several ways. We have been able to pool resources and provide quality well-trained firefighting personnel and medical first response to our citizens. Through joint purchasing we have not only reduced costs, but maintained a fleet of up-to date fire trucks and response units. I believe that our firefighters are trained well enough to respond with any Fire Department in the County and equipped well enough to be able to respond to most disasters."*