

aroundthe**state**

townships in the spotlight



Onekama Township

Onekama Township (Manistee Co.) has grown from a few settlers in 1867 to a community today of 2,500.

Known as the “Two Lake Town,” it features the inland Portage Lake with a channel connecting to Lake Michigan. The inland lake was identified by the original surveyors as “O-nek-a-ma-engk” or “portage,” which the Native Americans did when traversing between land and the lakes.

Much has happened in the area since 1867. The community is known for agricultural farms and produce, fishing, boating and other water sports, hunting, and a variety of other summer and winter activities. It has also grown to include several parks, churches, a school that features a full schedule of extra-curricular activities for all ages, restaurants, and small shops.

The township’s biggest accomplishment recently includes a re-decorated township hall and fire hall. The new look includes landscaping, an irrigation system, exterior signage and bulletin board, exterior painting, and installation of a memorial and flags. Interior lighting and emergency power to the building have been updated, and an energy-efficient



heating system has been installed in both the fire hall and township hall. A new roof and surveillance cameras have been installed throughout the building. The former furnace room has been remodeled into a kitchenette. A new telephone system is in place and the digital storage of records has begun. Funds for the remodeling projects came from a designated building fund; the surveillance cameras were funded through a grant from the Michigan Township Participating Plan.



The township also recently purchased an Alexis International fire engine and a 2016 Ford Explorer Interceptor Emergency Medical Response Vehicle for the fire department.

A large group of community volunteers and several organizations are the backbone of the community for numerous projects, and are instrumental in fostering its progress and growth. Some of their activities include the Petunia Parade, Concerts in the Park, Onekama Days with a parade, fireworks and events, Scarecrow display along Main Street and Christmas in Onekama.

The township is looking to the future with anticipation of more progress and accomplishments.



Authored by Mary Lou Millard. Photos courtesy of (from the top left to bottom left) Peter Armstrong, Al Taylor, Dan O'Connor, Mike Lough and Clinton Osborn.