



**NEWS
AROUND
THE
NEIGHBORHOOD**

June, 2009

April Showers Bring More Than Flowers

Merriam-Webster defines "rumor" as "talk or opinion widely disseminated with no discernible source." Dictionary.com defines it as "a story or statement in general circulation without confirmation or certainty as to facts." There have been rumors brought to the attention of the board that our monthly assessments are going to be raised, or that a large amount of money will be added to the annual budget to cover what our volunteers did for free. The board wants to dispel these rumors immediately.

As you may know, the Association had to ask our volunteers to stop doing the good things they were doing for our community for liability reasons. If one of the volunteers were injured while working around the community, the Association would be responsible. 1st American Management Company and our board have discussed this issue with our attorney and with our insurance company. You might think that the volunteers could sign a waiver and life as usual could go on. We all know that all it takes is a smart attorney to get that waiver thrown out. The board, on behalf of the Association, cannot put the Association at risk for what could be thousands of dollars in medical bills and attorneys' fees, dollars we would all have to pay. The board is still looking to see what

options, if any, may be available to protect the interest of the community.

The Association will, of course, have to hire additional workers to do the work that the volunteers did. The board will work hard to fit the additional costs in the grounds care budget. Our monthly assessment will not be raised for these extra costs alone.

This is not an easy decision. Each member of the board is a volunteer. Each member of a Committee is a volunteer. The board values these volunteers and understands that community volunteers bring homeowners together for a common purpose...to keep our community beautiful and the best place to live.

The board strongly encourages you to contact Peter Bylen at 1st American (219-464-3536, ext. 310 or pbylen@1stpropertymanagers.com) or the board (briarcoveboard@yahoo.com) if you have a question, if only to validate or dispel what you hear from others. As indicated in our last newsletter, the June board meeting is an open meeting, and everyone is encouraged to attend. This is your opportunity to attend a board meeting and ask questions after the meeting. It will be held on June 18th at

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the St. John Community Center, 1515 Lincoln Highway, at 7:00 p.m. This is NOT a mandatory meeting of the community, just an opportunity to attend a board meeting, where questions can be answered and rumors can be dispelled.

Now here is what's going on around the neighborhood:

Sprinklers

You may have noticed some sprinklers on at the end of April. Schererville Irrigation was going around turning the system on and checking to see what repairs, if any, needed to be made. There was a miscommunication and they left the sprinklers on (yes, in the rain). When the board was made aware of this, Schererville Irrigation was contacted and they turned the sprinklers off.

At the time of this mailing, the sprinklers are off. PLEASE do not turn on the sprinkler valve yourself. We will have to call Schererville Irrigation to come out and turn them off, and each time we will be billed for a service call.

Trash/Recycle Bins

A homeowner found someone's federal tax return cover sheet in his bushes that contained personal financial information. The homeowner shredded it, but keep in mind that what goes in the recycle bin may end up in a neighbor's yard on windy days!

Emergency Light Switch

Due to the similarity of our home styles, it can be difficult to find a particular address, especially at night. Emergency responders can lose precious minutes trying to locate the correct house. An

Emergency Light Switch insures your house will be found as quickly as possible. Homeowner Gerard Dupczak has come across a product that other residents may be interested in having installed in their homes. The Emergency Light Switch has three positions: on, off and flashing. You simply replace the standard front outside light switch with the Emergency Light Switch. If you need to dial 911 for help you can tell the operator to look for the flashing outside lights. You then move the switch to the flashing position and your outside lights will flash continuously to signal the emergency personnel trying to find you. This is effective during the daytime as well as at nighttime. After help arrives you can move the switch to the constant on or off position. The switch installs easily, usually in less than 10 minutes. No special wiring is required. After cutting off power to the light at the circuit panel, you simply remove the switch plate cover, remove the old switch and install the Emergency Light Switch. Replace the switch cover and turn the power back on. You are done! The switch is not sold at Home Depot, Menards or Lowes. Gerard found a supply online and has a few available for \$10. If you are not comfortable working with electricity, he can install the switch for you for a small fee. You can call Gerard at .

Home Businesses

If you suspect a neighbor is running a business out of their home, you must file a formal complaint with the Town of Schererville or Dyer, and may have to be a witness at a hearing. Several people have complained to the board that some neighbors are running businesses out of their homes. Home offices are allowed in Briar Cove, provided that

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they do not increase traffic within the property. If you are concerned that a neighbor is running a business, please contact the respective Town to file a formal complaint.

Pets

If your pet is outside, it must be kept on a leash at all times. Please respect each homeowner's property and do not walk your dog in their yards. If you do see a neighbor walking on your property, please ask them to stay off of your property. If you are not comfortable asking them personally, please call the police immediately.

Mulch

Only cedar mulch (natural color) is permitted. Any other type or color would be a violation and should be removed/replaced.

Stop Signs/Speed Limits

Stop signs and the speed limit must be observed for the benefit of all the residents.

Sidewalks

The board has received several complaints of sidewalks flaking/crumbling. This can be caused by a number of factors when the concrete was poured, and it is not an Association expense to repair. The common sidewalks are the responsibility of the Towns of Schererville and Dyer to maintain. The sidewalks from the driveway up to the front door are the homeowner's responsibility to maintain.

November Elections

November seems like a far way off, but it is the month when new Directors are elected for the following year. Please start thinking now about running for a board position. As you probably know, it is a thankless job, and the pay isn't great (\$0). You have to read, abide by, and enforce our governing documents, whether you agree with them or not, but you will be contributing to the decisions made that affect the entire community.

Painting

As you may know, the painting of our homes began at the end of May. With the exception of the models, the closing date of the unit was used to determine the order in which the homes will be painted. You will be receiving a letter from 1st American if your home is in the first phase. The painting will start at the north end of Pentwater Lane. It will proceed onto New Buffalo Drive, follow through to the east side of Manistee to Charlevoix Way, and return on the south side of Charlevoix Way back onto the west side of Manistee and pick up on the North side of Mackinaw (this route is subject to change by the painting contractor). Weather permitting, and if sufficient funds are available, an additional five units may be painted this year.

The work will consist of painting of the exterior cedar, including cedar in the rear of the homes. Mailboxes, shutters (front shutters only), caulking and the white door trim are included. Screen doors must be left unlocked to enable the painter to paint the white trim around the door frame. If you would like your front door painted, please let the painting contractor know, or notify Peter

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Bylen. If you choose to have your front door painted, you must be present, as the door must be left open for at least several hours to allow it to dry. If you cannot be home when your front door is painted, you should make arrangements with a trusted friend or neighbor to be there for you. The contractor cannot warranty the work unless the door is given sufficient time to dry. You need not be home for the painting contractor to paint your exterior, but it would be helpful to remove any hanging plants/flowers on or near the surfaces to be painted. Your help will facilitate the painting process.

The painting contractor will also move the address numbers from over the door to above the garage. Your irrigation

system may be temporarily turned off while the contractor is painting your unit. Please exercise care while the contractor is in our neighborhood, including extra care while the contractor is painting your unit. This is a large project and please keep in mind that our normal maintenance, lawn mowing, fertilization, etc., will continue during the painting.

The cost for the above work is already included in your monthly assessment.

Driveway Seal Coating

The first of two phases of seal coating the driveways will begin around August. Half of the driveways will be seal coated this summer, and the other half will be seal coated next summer. More information will be provided at a later date.

www.briarcovehomeownersassociation.com