



**NEWS  
AROUND  
THE  
NEIGHBORHOOD**

*March/April, 2009*

One aspect of feeling SAFE in a Neighborhood is knowing your neighbors. Spring is here and with it comes the opportunity to meet and greet many of your neighbors who weren't able to get around much due to the cold winter. Why not take this opportunity to take a walk around the neighborhood and say hi to folks you may see along the way. If you prefer, pull a lawn chair up at the front of your garage and say hi as people pass by.

Board of Directors Position Change. Elaine Gadomski has taken over the role of Secretary, and Denise Warren is a Director.

Rules and Insurance Committee. This Committee has a new Chairman and three new members: Susan DeYoung (Chairman), Virgil Jordan, Denise Warren, Patti Jongsma and Paul Hess. They meet on Saturday afternoons every few weeks and are reading our governing documents, line by line, and are going to suggest proposed changes to the Board. If you have any reasonable suggestions for changes to any of our governing documents, please e-mail Susan at [susansbooks@yahoo.com](mailto:susansbooks@yahoo.com). If you do not have internet access, please give your suggestions to Peter Bylen, who will pass your suggestions along to Susan. Another goal of this Committee is to prepare a list of what items are Association expenses and what items are a homeowner's expense. This will be helpful for existing and new homeowners, since most of us understand now that "maintenance free" doesn't mean "free."

Website Updates. We have a new "Archives" section where you can find past newsletters and memos from 1<sup>st</sup> American. We also have a new "Tips and Reminders" section, which is broken down by season and is a culmination of tips and reminders that have been printed in past newsletters and memos from 1<sup>st</sup> American. Be sure to check them out!

Helping Hands. Many of our homeowners have skills that could help other homeowners, such as electrician, painter, seamstress, pet sitter, accountant, typist, etc. A homeowner suggested that if some of these skilled homeowners would be willing to share their skills, whether for a fee, for free or for trade, we could put a list on our Website. The only requirement would be that the service has to be provided by a homeowner, not a friend or relative of a homeowner. Neither the Board nor the Association would be "recommending" these people. We would just be providing a place, our Website, to list these services. It would be the homeowner's responsibility to check references, any licensing/bonding requirements and any fees/charges. Of course, any outside work would still require approval by the Architectural Review Committee.

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We've already had one homeowner offer the following: "I have replaced my fabric mesh basement screens with metal screening. I still have the jig I made to keep the frame square and the tool I bought to reinsert the rib. I can remove, and replace the screens for \$15.00 each." We have another homeowner who needs a ride to the grocery store and the library every week or two. If you're willing to take someone shopping or maybe pick up a few things for someone who can't leave the house, that's a service to share and you'll be a helping hand.

If this is something you're interested in, whether you have a service to provide or you are looking for a service, please e-mail the Board at [briarcoveboard@yahoo.com](mailto:briarcoveboard@yahoo.com). If there is enough interest, we will add something to the Bulletin Board section of our Website.

Solicitors. Soliciting is allowed in both Dyer and Schererville with the proper permits issued by the respective towns. The solicitors permit must be carried by the solicitor and shown upon request. If the solicitor does not have a permit, ask them to leave and report the situation to the police. For further information, please contact the respective towns.

Schererville Watershed Survey. The town of Schererville has a survey sheet available at the town hall and on their Website regarding flooding issues, ponding of water on property, etc. The surveys will be reviewed by the town and the town engineer for recommendations on a resolution. The watershed management survey can be found in the *Download* section of the town Website ([www.schererville.org](http://www.schererville.org)).

Siding. The Association is not responsible for repairing or replacing siding. Should you need any siding replaced, please contact Peter Bylen for vendor names. If your siding is damaged by the lawn maintenance crew, you should contact Peter immediately so the vendor can be notified.

Snow Removal. As you know, we had a lot of snow this winter. To date, the Association has paid \$25,536.00 for snow removal. Remember you can always view the monthly budget summary on our Website in the Budget & Cash Flow section.

Railroad. As you may have noticed, there are standing railroad cars behind Charlevoix Way on the Norfolk-Southern tracks. The latest information that we have received is that this is due to the slow economy. The cars are not being used at this time and thus are being "stored" on the tracks. Regarding the increased rail traffic, the full impact of the increased rail traffic will not be immediate, again due to the slow economy and the need for track work to be done in Matteson, Illinois.

Stinky Issues. Picking up after your dog is a must, however, please return the litter to your home. The Board has received reports that these bags of litter have been thrown in the bushes by the waterfall. We don't know yet if this is being done by residents of our own community or not, so if you witness someone throwing these bags in the bushes, please report it to Peter Bylen immediately.

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Also over the last year or so, someone has been throwing empty chewing tobacco cans and chewing tobacco spit bottles along the street divider at our main entrance. It is illegal to willfully throw trash from your vehicle. Please do the right thing and dispose of it at home.

### Spring Things:

- ◆ Watch for the sprinkler turn on notice in the mail. You will be asked to turn on the sprinkler controls between April 15 and April 22 and then call Schererville Irrigation at 322-0890 to advise them that you have done so. If assistance is required, they can walk you through the process. Schererville Irrigation will then be able to complete the startup of the system from the outside and, if necessary, make adjustments or repairs. The system will be activated throughout the community once the weather warrants.
- ◆ With spring comes the focus on the outdoors and landscaping modifications. Don't forget to use the Exterior Modification Request form for all exterior modifications. You can find the form with this mailing and on our Website. After completing the form, submit it to Peter Bylen either by mail (1<sup>st</sup> American Management Company, 3408 Enterprise Avenue, Valparaiso, IN 46383-6953, by e-mail (pbylen@1stpropertymanagers.com) or by fax (219-465-6014). Peter will then forward the request to the Architectural Review Committee, who will review the request at their next monthly meeting (they try to meet on the second Tuesday of every month). You will receive their decision within a day or two after their meeting, but you must wait to receive the official approval from Peter by mail before you can begin the work, and then you must place the approval certificate in your front window while the work is being done.
- ◆ When planning flowers or potted trees for your front porch please be careful not to obstruct access to the front door or obscure your house numbers.
- ◆ If you see little mounds of dirt in your lawn (created by those nasty little moles), please contact Peter immediately.
- ◆ Forever Green has taken a sample of our soil to determine the mixture of fertilizer that will be the best for our lawns. The sample will also determine the amount of watering that will be necessary. Our fertilizing schedule this year will be as follows, which will begin in April and end in the fall:

Round 1 – Fertilize

Round 2 – Weed Control

Round 3 – Grub control and Fertilize

Round 4 – Weed Control

Round 5 – Fertilize

Insurance Requirement. This is another reminder that if you haven't complied with the insurance requirement (Declaration, Article V), you must do so immediately. In order to

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comply, your insurance policy must name Briar Cove Paired Cottage Association as an additional insured on the liability portion of your HO-3 all-risk casualty insurance. This provision is in place for the purpose of keeping the Association informed as to whether or not each Owner is carrying the required HO-3 all-risk casualty insurance, and is to the benefit of all homeowners.

Open Board Meeting. The June 18<sup>th</sup> Briar Cove board meeting will be held at the St. John Community Center, 1515 Lincoln Highway, at 7:00 p.m. If you would like to attend and observe how our meetings are conducted, feel free to attend. This is NOT a mandatory meeting of the community, just an opportunity to attend a board meeting.

***[www.briarcovehomeownersassociation.com](http://www.briarcovehomeownersassociation.com)***