



**NEWS  
AROUND  
THE  
NEIGHBORHOOD**

*January 2013*

**2013 Board of Directors**

***Steve Probst, President  
Dave DeYoung, Vice President  
Denise Warren, Secretary***

***Joe Arias, Treasurer  
Ralph Flens, Director***

**WHAT IS BRIAR COVE?**

Dear Neighbors,

As we enter into 2013 and I reflect on Briar Cove, I have found myself asking "What is Briar Cove?." I know it is something far more than what one might see on the surface. I know it is something special to me and my family, but what makes it special? I know Briar Cove is special to my neighbors, but why? What could possibly make this small group of homes in a semi-isolated section of Schererville and Dyer so special?

I offer to you the concept of community. Community – A group or society helping each other.

I offer to you this poem by "Wayne":

Our Community was always here  
But scattered here and there  
It is sometimes hard to see  
But always it is there but in need of some repair

Time for us to see it  
And to give it of our best  
Then it will make itself be seen  
And it will do the rest

Likened to a big machine  
That now has gathered dust  
And many very important parts  
Have been seized up with rust

Now it will go when wiped with cloth  
Its softness will bestow  
With words that from our lips  
Do very gently flow

It is with the oil of kindness  
That frees up this big machine  
And gently give with outstretched hands  
A turn or two for free

Now soon it will be running  
And at its proper speed  
Because of built in governing  
Its speed will not exceed

And built-in safety it does have  
Look first for others needs  
And if we face with inner doubt  
The oil of kindness will help out.

The oil of kindness??? The oil of kindness... That's it! That is what makes Briar Cove so special. Briar Cove is a community where people work together and help each other creating that oil of kindness. I have witnessed it firsthand many times. I continue to witness it every day. Whether it is opening the door and finding the newspaper inside the storm door or seeing a neighbor putting another neighbor's trash cans up by the garage or a neighbor doing a simple repair for another or neighbors banding together to find a lost dog or neighbors helping each other with the garage sale or neighbors checking on each other during a winter storm or a summer heat wave or any of the other thousand ways we are kind to each other. All these acts provide the oil of kindness that keeps our community running smoothly.

(over)

In this day and age, with our neighbors losing their homes, it is especially important for us all to realize just how very lucky we are to live in this community that we call home. With it being so easy to turn away and not help each other, it is especially important for us all to remember what it means to be a community. Finally, remembering that our differing opinions make us better collectively for the perspective we gain is most vital to fostering kindness and concern.

So, with that said, I have a challenge for every member of our exceptional community in 2013: Please find a way to spread that oil of kindness, so we can continue to foster this community that is so special to us all. Thank you and have a great 2013!!!

Stephen Probst  
Briar Cove Board President

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Now here's what's going on in the neighborhood...

### **New Board of Directors/Meetings**

Steve Probst and Denise Warren were elected at the annual meeting in November. New officers are as follows:

Steve Probst – President  
Dave DeYoung – Vice President  
Denise Warren – Secretary  
Joe Arias – Treasurer  
Ralph Flens – Director

The following board meetings will be held at the Rockwell Clubhouse, 1821 Great Lakes Drive, Dyer, at 6:30 p.m.: January 24, April 18, July 18, October 17. The following board meetings will be held at the Dyer-Schererville Public Library, 1001 West Lincoln Highway, at 6:30 p.m., unless otherwise noted: February 21, March 21, May 17, June 21, August 15, September 19. The annual meeting will be on November 15, location to be announced at a later date. Please check our Website for last minute changes to dates and/or locations.

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

If you attended the last board meeting, you know that Susan DeYoung has graciously agreed to maintain the updates on our Website. Not only has she been keeping things current, she has totally revamped the site! Here are just a few of the changes:

- On the home page you'll see a new Google map!
- On the Calendar page, you'll see a Google calendar - click on an event on the calendar (i.e. board meeting) and you will see further details and a map!
- There is a new "Contact the Board" page, and a new "Ask the Property Manager" page. Use the Ask the Property Manager page if you have a question you'd like to see answered on the Website. Use the Contact the Board page to send a message to the board.
- There is a new FAQ page too. This page is a work in progress so check back frequently.
- Want to know what happened at a board meeting? You can download all of the minutes from board, special and annual meetings. You will need a password to open the minutes, and the password is "----". (request from Board)
- The photo page now allows you see pictures enlarged, or view them all as a slideshow! We could use more pictures, so if you have any you would like to share with the community, please send them to Susan at [briarcoveweb@gmail.com](mailto:briarcoveweb@gmail.com).
- We are working on getting the Briar Cove Directory on the Website too!

Susan has devoted countless hours to revamping our Website. If you see her, please be sure to thank her. She is making our Website a one-stop shop for everything Briar Cove.

### **1<sup>st</sup> American Management**

If you have a question or need to report a problem, please contact Peter Bylen first. He will contact a board member, if necessary. He can be reached at 219-464-3536, ext. 310, or toll free at 800-990-3536. The after-hours number is

219-465-3956. You can also reach Peter by email at pbylen@1stpropertymanagers.com. More information can be found in the Management page on our Website (<http://www.briarcovehomeownersassociation.com/index.php/en/management>).

John R. Marshall, President of 1<sup>st</sup> American Management, received the Certified Property Manager of the Year award from the Institute of Real Estate Management. Congratulations, John!

### **Architectural Review Committee**

The Architectural Review Committee (ARC) is looking for a new member. The role of the ARC is to review, send back for more info, or approve exterior modification requests submitted by homeowners. The ARC meets every other Wednesday at Sheffield's Restaurant in Dyer at 6:00 p.m. for their \$4.95 hamburger special. The members of the ARC are Clarence VanWolde (Chair), Steve Probst (resigning), Dave DeYoung, Ken McCoy and Peter Kieft. If you are interested in joining the committee, or just want to learn more about it, please contact Steve Probst at [steve.briarcove@gmail.com](mailto:steve.briarcove@gmail.com).

### **Thefts**

Items were stolen from two cars in December. Please be sure that your cars are locked and any valuables are either removed or out of sight, including the garage door opener. It's just as good as a key if it's stolen!

An attempt was made to break into a home on Ludington Avenue over the Thanksgiving holiday. The intruders tried to get in through the sliding door, but the owners had an alarm system which scared the would-be thieves away. Please be sure to lock all your doors!

### **Winter Parking**

Schererville and Dyer Town Ordinances prohibit parking on any street when there is a snow fall in excess of 2". Please help Schererville and Dyer snow removal crews by making sure you park off the street when snow is forecasted. Keep in mind that if you leave your car in your driveway, the other half of the driveway will be plowed only if the plow can fit.

### **Pipeline**

Briar Cove Homeowners Association recently received a flyer and letter from Enbridge Energy. Ralph Flens contacted Mr. Proud, and the board's understanding is that the work will be done in the wetlands from the southwest end of Manistee/Charlevoix to about half way up Charlevoix, going east. According to Mr. Proud, a public meeting will probably be held sometime within the next 6 months. If you have questions, contact Susan Meeds at 815-216-3812 or 715-977-1905. If you did not receive the flyer or letter, you can view them on our Website in the Alerts & News page.

### **Annual Pet Licenses**

The licenses for pets in Schererville are due by April 1, 2013. You may license your pet for the year 2013 starting January 2, 2013 at the Schererville Town Hall, Clerk-Treasurer's Office. Please call 219-322-2211, ext. 5, for more info.

You can license your pets in Dyer at the Dyer Town Hall, Clerk-Treasurer's Office, by May 31st of each year. Please call 219-865-2421 for more info.

Fines range from \$25.00 to \$2,500.00 in each town for violations!

### **Dog Poo Poo**

Everyone should know this rule by now, but unfortunately it needs to be repeated again and again: Pursuant to Exhibit D, Paragraph 10, of our Declaration of Covenants, Conditions, Restrictions and Easements: "Owners of a cat or a dog shall be required to immediately remove all forms of excrement of such pets from the Property, including, but not limited to, lawns, driveways and parking areas, and such pets shall not be allowed to deposit excrement in any manner, or in any place, that would in any manner change or deface the Property, including any alteration in the uniformity of appearance of the lawn or landscaped area."

If you see someone not picking up after their pet, take a video and make sure you can see the person's face. Send the video to Peter and he will forward it to the board. If they don't recognize the person, the video will be uploaded to our Website for others to identify. Once the person is identified, the video will be shared with the appropriate authorities.

## **Trash and Recycle Bins**

It is important that the trash and recycle bins are not set too closely to one another as the arms from the refuse truck need sufficient space to properly take hold of the container. Reminder that our rules state "all garbage receptacles shall be located and stored in such a place as to not be visible from any ground level location in the Project, excepting only on those days of garbage collection..." Schererville regulations also state that the receptacles shall be placed in the residential building or "behind screening, fencing or covering that effectively hides them from view."

## **Holiday Decorations**

Remember that all holiday decorations must be taken down by the end of January.

## **Board Openings**

It's not for another 11 months, but there will be two positions open on the Board in November. Please consider running for a position.

## **Winter Tips**

**Frozen Pipes.** If you are going to be away from home for more than a day or two, you should turn off your water to prevent freezing pipes. Even if you leave your heat on, the power can go off for an extended period of time and a substantial amount of damage can occur if a frozen pipe bursts, not only to your home, but to your attached neighbor's.

**Hoses.** Don't forget to disconnect your hoses from the outside of your homes (failure to do so can cause pipes to burst over the winter), and to remove pots and decorations from porches to permit snow removal.

**Water Spots/Ice Dams.** Water spots are possibly due to ice dams where the freeze cycle lifts shingles and melted snow/ice makes its path. A roofer is the right person to inspect and repair any damage; damage related to ice dams is not covered by warranty and would be at the homeowner's expense. Once the outside is taken care of, and depending on the size of the stain, you might only need to touch the spot up with paint. Ask the roofer if they feel that the insulation might be saturated and need replacement. The roofing subcontractor used by Olthof is Eenigenburg Roofing (219-365-8879). 1st American Management also recommends Korellis Roofing in Hammond (219-844-1400).

## **Tom Schmitt, Town Councilman**

In case you missed the annual meeting, Tom gave a great update on what's going on in Schererville. He was kind enough to summarize his update in an email for those that couldn't attend the meeting. The summary is also enclosed.

## **Pyramid Contractors**

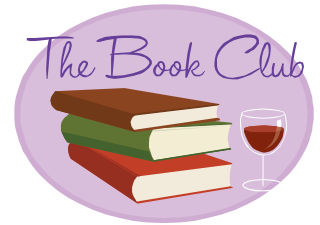
Peter has received many calls inquiring if Pyramid Contractors is still in business. Apparently they are busy with new construction and not servicing individual homes right now. The board is not recommending any vendor, but a few homeowners were happy with: Withams Heating & Cooling (219-865-8181), Lansing Heating & Air Conditioning (219-365-3050 or 708-474-4650) and Siemer Heating & Cooling (219-923-9234).

Peter Bylen 1st American 219-464-3536 Ext 310 / 800-990-3536  
pbylen@1stpropertymangers.com

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



# Karen's Korner



## Living Green

According to the United Nations Food and Agriculture Organization, water use has been growing at more than twice the rate of the population increase in the last century. By 2025, 800 million people will be living in countries or regions with water scarcity.

In developing countries, 70 percent of industrial wastes are dumped untreated into waters where they pollute the usable water supply. This is particularly alarming because much of our food supply comes from these countries and the foods we are putting in our bodies contain these toxic chemicals.

We've heard it before: disposable plastic water bottles are harming our environment by depleting our oil supplies. Picture this -- fill a water bottle  $\frac{1}{4}$  of the way full and this is the amount of oil it takes to produce and distribute a bottle of water. All totaled, this amount of oil is enough to fuel approximately 1 million cars for one year. Recycling only one water bottle saves enough energy to power a 60 watt light for six hours. The sad truth is that 22 million water bottles end up in landfills every year; only one in six bottles actually get recycled.

Bottled water is expensive both on the pocketbook and on the environment. We are fortunate to live in a community with a good water source where contamination is not a real issue. The bottling companies have created a false sense of need in the U.S. for bottled water by convincing us that our tap water is tainted and bottled water is the solution. The following is a link to a video which disputes many of the industry claims: <http://www.storyofstuff.org/movies-all/story-of-bottled-water>.

On an individual level there are things you can do to help alleviate not only water shortages, but the drain on natural resources associated with the bottling and distribution of bottled water.

- ✓ Use a stainless steel or reusable plastic water bottle for day trips and save bottled water for when on extended trips.
- ✓ Drink tap water for home use or install a water purifier on your faucet or refrigerator.
- ✓ When washing dishes by hand, don't let the water run while rinsing. Fill one sink with wash water and the other with rinse water.
- ✓ Use the garbage disposal sparingly.
- ✓ For cold drinks keep a pitcher of water in the refrigerator instead of running the tap.
- ✓ Wash your fruits and vegetables in a pan of water instead of running water from the tap.
- ✓ Put food coloring in your toilet tank. If it seeps into the toilet bowl without flushing, you have a leak. Fixing it can save up to 1,000 gallons a month.
- ✓ Don't use running water to thaw food.
- ✓ Soak pots and pans instead of letting the water run while you scrape them clean.
- ✓ Turn off the water while brushing your teeth and save 25 gallons a month; turn off the water while you wash your hair to save up to 150 gallons a month; turn off the water while you shave and save up to 300 gallons a month.
- ✓ Make sure there are water-saving aerators on all of your faucets.
- ✓ If your dishwasher is new, cut back on rinsing. Newer models clean more thoroughly than older ones.
- ✓ When you are washing your hands, don't let the water run while you lather.

## Briar Cove Book Group

The Briar Cove Book Group is reading *Before I Go To Sleep* by S. J. Watson for their January 16 discussion. The story is about Christine who has been robbed of her memories by a terrible accident. She cannot remember the past - or even yesterday. Determined to discover who she is, she has begun keeping a journal before she goes to sleep. Before she can forget again. But the truth may be more terrifying - and deadlier - than she bargained for...

The books this month are provided by the Lake County Public Library and if you would like to participate in our discussion, contact Karen Davis at ----- to obtain a book.

An email from Tom Schmitt, Schererville Town Councilman:

Hope this reply is not too late for your letter. Thanks to all of you for the invite to talk to your homeowners. It was nice to see such a large crowd. As I said at the meeting your HOA is one of the best that I have seen.

The silent crossing issue should finally rap up in the next 4-6 weeks, with the installation of the delineators on the road by the tracks. After that then there is one approval from the railroad, and then the blowing of horns will stop by the trains. This work will be completed at night, as 213th will have to be closed. This will be easier and not affect daily traffic.

The land by Main and U.S. 41 is back in action to develop a shopping mall. This was the huge project that originally came before us 5 years ago. The economy took a hit to the worse and the project halted. Now, Boyer Construction and Regency Shopping Centers have teamed up to start building with many stores and restaurants. The list of stores coming to this area will be announced at the end of the year. But we are sure there will be high scale stores and good places to eat.

There are of course are other new businesses coming to town. The new Team Toyota car dealership is open, the new Menards is being built, with the present one sold, (new owner will be announced soon) the New Assisted Living home is close to being done at U.S. 30 and Austin, a new Hampton Inn Hotel is being built just south of 30/41 intersection, and finally the many strip mall fronts are getting filled. So it's starting to look positive again on construction. Also, we have built more new homes (30) this year then probably the last two years.

The safety of our residents is very important, and our police department and fire department keep looking at ways to improve their service. The police department structured two new task forces this year, one to fight drug activity and major crime, along with a traffic team to address traffic areas that give us the most problems. A lot of arrests have been made, some major breaks into drug trafficking, and many tickets written in our heavy traffic areas. As you know the stop sign at the entrance of Briar Cove has been a problem for years on drivers running the stop sign. Periodically we put an officer there to write tickets for all the drivers that disobey the stop sign. We have adjusted the signs and have tried to keep the mowing done nearby to make sure the sign is highly visible at all times. We also have made improvements to the lighting at the entrance also. The Fire department is still planning to remodel the Plum Creek fire station next year, to make the station suitable to house the fireman, so we can cut down on the response time on the west side of town. This will help to service Briar Cove quicker.

Our Parks department has been really busy this year with the updates at most all of our parks. We also are continuing work to further complete more bike trails. Our hope in the near future is to start on the next phase of our trail from the town hall area North West under route 41 and connect near 213<sup>th</sup>, then to go around Briar Ridge and connect to the Munster trail. We are also half done with our new Parks Department community center which is being built at our Sherwood Park. This will house our parks department and be able to supply the space needed for all of our programs that is offered.