

February
2008

Chesterfield Neighbors

This issue's highlights:

President's Report	1
Treasurer's Report	1
Selling Your Home	2
Corn Bread Muffins	3
Girl Scout Food Drive	4
Neighborhood Watch	4
Meet Your Neighbor	5
Rules & Regs Corner	5
COP Bytes	6

Upcoming Board Meeting Dates:

All meetings will be held at 7:00 pm at Valley Community Bank, 75 S. Randall Rd,

February 25: Workshop: Rules, Regs & Bylaws, Chesterfest Summer Party Planning

March 31: Quarterly Board Meeting

April 28 : Workshop

June 30: Quarterly Board Meeting

July 28: Workshop

August 25: Workshop

September 29: Quarterly Board Meeting

October 27: Workshop

November 24: Workshop

December 29: Annual Homeowners Association Meeting

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For up-to-date information, see our web site at www.chesterfieldhomeowners.com.*

President's Report

Brian Rominski

Congratulations to our newest Board member, Brian Beatty, who was appointed to the treasurer/secretary position this year. He will be a welcome addition.

The 2008 budget of \$74,450.00 was approved at the annual meeting. This budget represents *no increase in the annual assessment for 2008*. Some of the annual maintenance projects the Board is planning include: replacement of a portion of the bike path, seal-coating the entire bike path, tree replacement at the main entrance, mulching at the main entrance, wetlands maintenance, pond maintenance, and irrigation repair.

The Board is also pleased to announce that we have \$50,000.00 in the reserve account. This reserve account is required by law to provide for capital expenditures and future repairs and replacements to our common areas.

The Board has also made the commit-

ment to become an active voice in the Village of North Aurora. We have contacted the mayor, village trustees, village engineer, and police chief to discuss our neighborhood concerns, including reducing speed limits, installing stop signs, and the development of the vacant property along the south end of Chesterfield. We want to open a dialogue between ourselves and village officials. If anyone hears of any activities that may affect our neighborhood, please make the Board aware.

We will have four board meetings this year. All other months will have a board/committee workshop. (See the schedule at left.) Each workshop will have a different topic and also provide a time for committees to meet. If you are interested in becoming involved in your community and homeowners association, visit www.chesterfieldhomeowners.com or e-mail any of the Board members for more information.

Treasurer's Report

Brian Beatty

As of December 31, 2007, the Chesterfield Homeowners Association has \$11,212.51 in checking and \$50,000 in reserve. We have no current outstanding liabilities.

Since October, 2007, we have collected \$3,600 in delinquent assessments. Fifteen other accounts have been turned over to collections in the last quarter.

The Board is receiving proposals for replacing the dead trees at the main entrance to our subdivision.

Selling Your Home in a Buyer's Market

Raquel Konopacki

If you are anything like me, you are wondering what is happening to the housing market. There are horror stories of people trying to sell their homes with no success or having to give a home away for much less than it should be worth. New home builders are struggling to sell homes or filling for bankruptcy.

When I was looking for our home in the spring of 2003, the market was much different. It was a seller's market. A "good" house (under 10 years old, in a good neighborhood, etc.) was under contract within 15 days and could sell for more than the listing price. If a house was on the market for 60 days or more, you could bet there was something wrong with the house and you would need to put a large amount of money into it.

In just five years, the housing market has become a buyer's market. As of the end of January, there are 133 homes for sale in North Aurora, three of them in Chesterfield. The average market time for homes still on the market is 106 days for North Aurora and 104 days for Chesterfield. The charts to the right break this down further based on the price ranges where most of the homes in Chesterfield are listed.



After speaking with Jennifer Bennett, a Realtor® with the Sue Lane Team, I had a better understanding of the market. Homes are being sold, but it is taking much longer than in the past. From July 2007 through January 2008, 57 homes have sold in North Aurora, with an average market time of 85 days, (The Chesterfield average is 89 days.) The average sale price for a Chesterfield home was \$290,857, compared to North Aurora's average of \$275,455. The more expensive homes in North Aurora are taking longer to sell than the lower-priced homes.



Active Home Listings in North Aurora (Selected price ranges)

Price	# of listings	Avg. days on market
200,000-249,999	18	93
250,000-299,999	18	120
300,000-349,999	25	109
350,000-399,999	29	109

Closed Home Listings in North Aurora

Price	# of listings	Avg. days on market
200,000-249,999	14	63
250,000-299,999	13	57
300,000-349,999	11	107
350,000-399,999	6	120

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“Canned” Corn Bread Muffins

Marian Samuels

Not only does this recipe use canned corn, but the muffins are baked in cans! They're very moist and go great with a nice hot bowl of chili.

Ingredients:

1½ cups shredded Monterey jack and cheddar cheese blend
 2 boxes corn muffin mix
 2 large eggs
 2/3 cup buttermilk
 2 cups creamed corn
 Butter-flavored nonstick cooking spray
 10 empty (6 oz.) tomato paste cans, cleaned

In a large bowl, mix all ingredients except for ½ cup shredded cheese. Set aside.

Spray the inside of the cans with cooking spray. Fill each can about 2/3 full with the corn muffin batter.

Divide the remaining ½ cup shredded cheese evenly over the top of the batter.

Place the cans on a baking sheet and bake for 20 minutes or until golden brown.

Can also be baked in a muffin tin or cake pan.



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Closed Home Listings in Chesterfield

Street	List price	Sale price	Closed date	Market time	Bedrooms	Bathrooms
Chesterfield	\$269,900	\$257,500	4/23/2007	33 days	3	2.1
Flynn	\$279,900	\$272,000	6/15/2007	46 days	3	3.1
Graham	\$283,000	\$275,000	4/30/2007	108 days	3	2.1
Flynn	\$289,900	\$280,000	6/11/2007	73 days	3	2.1
Harding	\$319,900	\$307,500	3/22/2007	206 days	4	3.1
Stewart	\$315,000	\$315,000	5/21/2007	27 days	3	2.1
Stewart	\$332,000	\$329,000	7/24/2007	130 days	5	2.1

If you are trying to sell your home, you will want to take into consideration the price of your home, the number of homes in your price range, and the average time on the market.

Maybe you're not ready to move but want to know what you can do to improve the value of your home. In the next newsletter, I will discuss which improvements add the most resale value and “buyer appeal” for the least investment.

Jennifer Bennett, Sue Lane Team Re/Max Excels, can be reached at 630-262-6505. Her team is located at 1772 S. Randall Road, Suite 100, Geneva, IL 60134.

Girl Scouts collect food to “Help Stop Hunger in 08”

Patty Graw, Vega Service Unit Manager

Girl Scout troops from the Vega Service Unit - Fox Valley Council will be holding our annual food drive from March 13th thru April 26th to help local food banks that service North Aurora, Batavia and Aurora. Our theme this year is "Girl Scouts Help Stop Hunger in 08." This is an excellent chance for you to make a difference by helping us “take the bite out of hunger” in our own community. Please join in this effort with your neighborhood Girl Scouts to help out our less-fortunate neighbors.

People who receive food through a food pantry are low-income families, senior citizens, working households whose incomes don't stretch far enough to put food on the table every day of the month, and other individuals in need. Our goal is to collect **6,000 pounds of food** for our local food banks. We're hoping to bring in enough food to help the food banks through the slower collection months of late spring and early summer.

Please donate only items that you and your family would eat. Check that items are still within their “Use Before” Date. The food pantry will not accept opened items, items without labels, or dented cans.



To donate items for our food drive, please place them on your front porch on **Saturday, April 19th**. Girl Scouts from the Chesterfield subdivision will be collecting the items. If you would like to drop off your items, you may leave them on the porch at 619 Thompson Ave.

If you have any questions, please contact Patty Graw at 254-7991 (cell) or 801-0405 (home).

Forming a Neighborhood Watch

Randy Zaleski

Neighborhood Watch is a program of neighbors watching out for each other during the workday, evenings, vacations or any other absence. The purpose of the Neighborhood Watch program is to create an alert neighborhood by using simple crime-prevention methods. The program works through the mutual aid of neighbors watching the property of other neighbors.

This has several advantages, including the fact that your neighbors know who you are, what type of car you drive, and who belongs at your residence. A patrol officer driving by your home might not recognize someone as a stranger in your yard. However, an alert neighbor could call 911 to alert police to suspicious activity.

Neighborhood Watch does not promote vigilantism. Members of Neighborhood Watch groups are never asked to put themselves in harm's way to prevent crime. They should only observe and report suspicious activities to the Police Department.

The best way to form a Neighborhood Watch on your block is to contact the **Crime Prevention Division of the North Aurora Police Department** at **630-897-8705**.

A Neighborhood Watch is a great way not only to meet your neighbors but also to get involved with the community in a more proactive way.

Meet Your Neighbor: Bruce Worthel

Marian Samuels

Welcome to the second installment of "Meet Your Neighbor." This month we are going to get to know Bruce Worthel. Bruce and his wife, Barbara Young, moved to Chesterfield in 2000.

Bruce has worked at Fermilab since 1983, when he started as a day worker. He says "the only requirement for the job was that you be walking down Kirk Road at the right time." Later that year he became an operator, one of the people who run the accelerator and control the particle beam. He worked his way up to crew chief and is now a technical writer and manages the operator training program.

How did Bruce move from operating a particle accelerator to technical writing? In the late 1980s and early 1990s, he was asked to write documentation after his boss found out that his science fiction and fantasy stories were starting to get published. He went back to college and received a degree in Writing and Language from Aurora University in 1996. In 1997 he became a full-time writer for the group.

Besides his work at Fermilab, Bruce has a variety of other interests. He has been studying martial arts for 23 years and has a black belt in Kyukido, which combines taekwondo, hapkido, and jujitsu. Bruce teaches Kyukido at Fermilab and at Fox Valley Black Belt Academy in West Chicago. Bruce has also studied American Sign Language at Waubensee Community College, in order to communicate with a deaf family member. He enjoys the beauty and challenge of this non-verbal language.

Bruce has always had a love of all things Shakespeare. In 2002, his wife noticed that First Street Playhouse was having auditions for "As You Like It," one of his favorite plays, She dared him to go and try out – so he did. He waited for a call but didn't hear anything. Two weeks later the director called to ask if he was still interested because they needed someone who could sing and play guitar for the part of Amiens. That's how it all started, and now Bruce acts in three or four community theater productions a year. His wife is not so sure she should have ever dared him to audition that first time.

For the past five years Bruce has been part of the Midsummer Theatre Troupe, doing Shakespeare in the park every July in the Fox Valley and nearby communities. In 2007 he performed with the Troupe in "A Midsummer Night's Dream" in Aurora, Geneva, Naperville and Wheaton. Bruce also acted in several other plays last year, including the "Sunshine Boys" at the Woodstock Opera House and "And Then There Were None" at First Street Theater in Batavia. In past years he's performed at the Riverfront Playhouse in Aurora, the Albright Theater in Batavia, and the Steel Beam Theater in St. Charles.

Bruce is currently rehearsing for the dual roles of Mark Twain and the Doctor in "Big River" at Elgin Community College, opening February 22 and running through March 2. All of Bruce's Chesterfield neighbors are encouraged to see the play and enjoy his acting.

If you know an interesting neighbor you'd like to see profiled in this newsletter, send an e-mail to communication@chesterfieldhomeowners.com.

Rules & Regulations Corner

Brian S. Rominski

A portion of the February 25th Board/Committee workshop will be devoted to discussing Association bylaws, which the Board will be updating. If you have any suggestions or comments, please come to this meeting.

Board/Committee workshops take place on the last Monday of the month, in months when there is no quarterly Board meeting. All meetings take place at 7:00 pm at Valley Community Bank, 75 S. Randall Rd., North Aurora. See page 1 for a list of all 2008 meetings.

Chesterfield Neighbors

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We're on the Web!

See us at:

www.chesterfieldhomeowners.com

COP Bytes / Citizen's Police Academy

Lisa Snyders

Within the last six months, several homeowners have voiced concern over issues occurring in our subdivision such as vandalism to fences or personal property, dogs found off the leash, and so on.

Did you know that the North Aurora Police Department publishes **COP Bytes**, a weekly e-mail newsletter and summary of the service calls responded to by the NAPD? Each **COP Bytes** listing provides the date of the police or fire service call, the general location of the occurrence, the type of complaint filed and the resolution of the issue. Reading through the entire list can be a bit time-consuming, but I find it helpful to scan through the list so I'm aware of any issues reported close to my home.

If you wish to start receiving the weekly **COP Bytes** e-mail, send your subscription request with the area where you live to Robyn Stecklein at rstecklein@vil.north-aurora.il.us. You can also sign up by calling the Police

Department at 630-897-8705.

Do you want to connect with the police department on a more personal level? The NAPD hosts a **Citizens Police Academy** that puts residents in direct contact with police officers who can provide a better understanding of what our police department does. This year's Citizen's Police Academy begins on February 19 and runs for nine consecutive Tuesdays (except for March 25) from 7:00 pm to 9:30 pm. There may still be space available. If you're interested, contact Robyn Stecklein for an application. (Applicants must be 18 years of age or older.)

Remember, no matter how small the disturbance, it's important to report all suspicious or wrongful activity to the Police Department.

Thank you for helping keep our community safe!

Don't forget to pay your annual assessment!

Pay by February 28 to avoid late fees

If you haven't received your assessment bill or need to change any of your information, contact Kelly Henry at Baum Property Services, 630-897-0500 or e-mail Kelly@baumprop.com.

Make this YOUR newsletter!

Chesterfield Neighbors welcomes articles from all Chesterfield homeowners and residents.

If you have some interesting information you'd like to share with your neighbors (gardening tips, recipes, local information of general interest), send your submission to communication@chesterfieldhomeowners.com or mail it to our management agent (see box at left) marked "Chesterfield Neighbors newsletter."