

STEEPLE RUN NEWS

A PUBLICATION OF THE STEEPLE RUN HOMEOWNERS' ASSOCIATION

Volume 2, Issue 4

SUMMER 2007

A Message from Herb L.

In the previous issue of the Steeple Run News, I promised to bring Community Involvement, Sense of Value, and Compliance to our Steeple Run community.

Summer's here and I'm looking forward to the 2nd annual Steeple Run **Block Party**. Nancy E. and Karen M. are planning this year's event, with some assistance from Karen F., to make this year's Block Party even better than the last one.

Throughout this issue, you will find offers by vendors for work on your home, negotiated by the Board:

- Two vendors are offering a competitive price for **seal coating** driveways located in Steeple Run, scheduled for August 4 with a rain date of August 11.
- The Arrow **Septic Pump-out** program was so successful that we have scheduled another opportunity for SRHA members to have their septic system serviced in September 2007.
- We are currently negotiating with several Water Softener

Salt vendors to set up a **Water Softener Salt Delivery** Program that offers a competitive price for water softener salt delivered directly to the homes in Steeple Run.

These programs as well as others not mentioned have saved SRHA members' money—money that can be spent elsewhere and hopefully on something fun and enjoyable.

Now let's talk about garbage, yes garbage. Several homeowners have expressed an interest in having one vendor service the neighborhood for **all refuse needs, garbage, recycled items and yard waste**. Currently we have two vendors operating in Steeple Run. Within the last year, I have talked to both vendors about a reduced rate for homes in Steeple Run. Both vendors were willing to work with me, offering lower rates, even without total enrollment (less than 74 homes).

Currently three days a week these vendors drive into Steeple Run and are doing the same thing, picking up garbage. Over time these trucks weighing up to 60,000 pounds will degrade the roadway and eventually cost us more in tax dollars to repair

the streets they drive on. Steeple Run could reduce this type of traffic and save money at the same time if we can agree on one vendor. The Board is searching for a way to have all Steeple Run residents enrolled in the process of selecting the best vendor. **We would appreciate your feedback on this matter.**

Finally, the Board is in place to offer all of the above and more if deemed necessary. The Board is also in place to see that the Declarations of Covenants, Conditions and By-Laws are followed by all Steeple Residents. I would suggest, since it's currently the summer months, this is an ideal time to install or relocate driveway lamps. If you have questions about truck, RV, trailer, boat or camper parking, that you **consult the Declarations of Covenants, Conditions and By-Laws**. If you're still unclear as to what's allowed, please feel free to contact a Board member or come to a Board meeting so we can provide clarity to all your questions.

Enjoy the Summer,

Herb L.
President

NEIGHBORHOOD BLOCK PARTY

The Steeple Run Block Party will be held:

- Saturday August 4
- 2 pm—11 pm
- On Smith Road near Church Hill Lane
- Cost \$8 per person

Organized by Nancy E. and Karen M. with some assistance from Karen F., the block party is bringing back

the favorites from last year: a Bike Parade, Dunk Tank, Moon Walk, a live band, bonfire, games, food and drink.

135 people attended the 2006 Block Party and pronounced it a big success! Even the yellow jackets couldn't stay away!

Please join your neighbors on August 4th to renew old friendships and make new

ones. Mark your calendars now and deliver your RSVP to Nancy E. by July 20th.

RSVP forms have been delivered to every home and can be printed from the [website at www.steeplerun.org/social.html](http://www.steeplerun.org/social.html) and www.steeplerun.org/downloads.html.

Special points of interest:

- **JULY 19**—SRHA BOARD MEETING AT ALGONQUIN TOWNSHIP
- **JULY 20**—RSVP DEADLINE FOR NEIGHBORHOOD BLOCK PARTY
- **JULY 28**—RSVP FOR SEAL-COATING RSVP DEADLINE
- **AUGUST 4**—NEIGHBORHOOD BLOCK PARTY
- **AUGUST 4**—HASTINGS SEALCOATING APPLIED (RAINDATE AUGUST 11)
- **SEPTEMBER 8**—RSVP DEADLINE FOR SEPTIC PUMPOUTS
- **SEPTEMBER 15 AND 22**—SEPTIC PUMPOUTS

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TREASURER'S REPORT

FISCAL YEAR	2006-07				YTD
	1st QTR	2nd QTR	3rd QTR	4th QTR	TOTAL
INCOME	5,180.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	5180.00
EXPENSES	1265.32	2359.02	1136.27	1626.32	6386.93

EXPENSE CATEGORY

Communications	250.36	289.36	539.67	192.64	1272.03
Legal	0.00	0.00	36.56	89.16	125.72
Maintenance	850.00	800.00	365.87	860.00	2875.87
Office Supplies	0.00			192.64	192.64
Insurance	0.00	1104.00	0.00	0.00	1104.00
Utilities	164.96	165.66	194.17	143.75	668.54
Social	0.00	0.00	0.00	148.13	148.13
TOTAL- ACTUAL	1265.32	2359.02	1136.27	1626.32	6386.93

TOTAL- EST

NET CASH FLOW

5000	General Contingency and Emergency Reserve	
2197	Property Repairs/Improvements Reserve	(1,206.93)

"THE CLOSE OF OUR FISCAL YEAR IS MAY 31. DUES ASSESSMENTS WERE MAILED IN MAY AND ARE PAYABLE JUNE 1ST — JUNE 30TH.

The close of our fiscal year is May 31st. We concluded the year with a bank balance of \$8056.98 as of May 31, 2007. This does not include accrued expenses of \$860.00 for lawn care in May that had not yet been billed. Therefore, our net balance at year end is \$7196.98. As anticipated we had a negative cash flow of \$1206.93 for the year, due primarily to the cost of liability insurance obtained last fall and the expenses related to the new Covenants and By-Laws.

Looking forward to the new fiscal year (June 2007–May 2008), we expect the budget to be in balance. Anticipated expenses for monument maintenance and possible surveys will be paid out of the reserve. Dues assessment notices were mailed in May and are payable June 1st to June 30th. We appreciate your cooperation and timely payment. We will continue to review ongoing expenses with a goal of providing value to all homeowners.

AMERICAN FLAG DISPOSAL



Have you noticed that your American flag was tattered or faded when you flew it on Memorial Day, Flag Day or the 4th of July? If so, it's time to replace it.

The old flag must be disposed of properly and with respect. American Legion posts have

previously organized ceremonies and performed this duty once a year but now there is a more convenient method available: Year round, there is an old mailbox collection bin in the parking lot of Algonquin Township, specifically for flags. From that collection point, the flag is retired in accordance with Federal laws.



NEW NEIGHBORS

Please extend a warm welcome to our newest Steeple Run neighbors. Shelli and Mike Reitcheck (pronounced “Re-Check”) and their children, Melissa (9th grade) and Michael (7th grade), left Boise Idaho to reside in the former Mulville home on Church Hill Lane.

Their phone number and email address were mailed with the print version of this newsletter and have been removed here from public view.

CONGRATULATIONS CLASS OF 2007!

At the end of the school year, 6 Steeple Run residents became high school alumni. Give a big round of applause to:

Mitchell B. will be attending the University of Colorado in Boulder

Mike D. will become an Iowa Hawkeye

Ben L. will call Taylor University in Upland, Indiana his home away from home

Kevin L. is heading 200 miles south to Eastern IL University

Matt M. will attend MCC this fall

Priyanka V. will be heading to Boston University for their 7 year accelerated medical program.

Congratulations everyone!

Interested in participating in the Fall Neighborhood Garage Sale in September? Please call or email Karen M. for further information.

Open Board Position

Sandi S. has resigned from the SRHA Board of Directors, after the birth of her second child.

As she has found herself “far too busy to maintain many of the responsibilities and commitments” she has made, she has graciously stated that she would prefer that her seat be occupied by someone else who has the time to contribute to the organization rather than remain empty as she is absent.

President Herb L. ac-

cepted her letter of resignation and the Board would like to thank Sandi for standing up and volunteering her time and talents to Steeple Run.

The Board also wishes to congratulate Sandi, Eric and Kathryn on the recent addition to their family.

The success of the SRHA depends on the time and contributions of its members. There are 5 Board positions to be

filled at the January 2008 Annual Meeting as current terms expire. Please consider raising your hand. Serving on the Board is more than volunteering. It’s an opportunity to stretch and challenge yourself, to act as a volunteer role model for our children, to meet new people and establish roots in the community, to see others’ perspectives and to provide an outlet for your latent talents.

“THANK YOU, SANDI, FOR STEPPING UP AND VOLUNTEERING YOUR TIME AND TALENTS TO STEEPLERUN”

Steeple Run Population Increases by 2

Two babies have been recently born to Steeple Run residents. Congratulations to Vonda and George L.

and to Sandi and Eric S. on the additions to their families.



STEEPLE RUN NEWS

PROPERTY TAX by Joe O.



“A PROPERTY OWNER WHO DISAGREES WITH HIS ASSESSED VALUE HAS 30 DAYS FROM PUBLICATION TO FILE A FORMAL APPEAL.”

Ad Valorem (according to value) property taxes are based on individual fair market property values and calculated using an established assessment rate and the tax rate. Each year, we receive a property tax bill which is based on the assessed valuation of our property. These taxes are collected for local cities, counties, and districts to fund municipal budgets for school systems, sewers, parks, libraries, fire stations, hospitals, etc. This tax is the primary revenue source for most of our local county and township government services, schools, and fire and park districts.

Tax Levy

A budget based on the projected revenue needs of each organization is shaped within one or more statutes and a governing board. Submitted to the County Clerk by December, the formal request for funding is termed a Levy. Typically the full funding request is not granted due to statutory limits on property tax increases; in McHenry County, the overall tax revenue increase is limited to the CPI (Consumer Price Index) increase or 5%, whichever is lower. Requests in excess of 5% result in published notice and a public hearing. When the final appraised property values are determined, the County Clerk divides the total assessed valuations for each taxing body (called its Equalized Assessed Value, or EAV) into the final approved levies (extensions) to determine the tax rate.

In Steeple Run, the current sum of tax rates is **6.65%**.

How the assessment is determined

The property tax is based on the equalized assessed market value on Jan. 1 of the year. This market value is determined by taking an average market value for the prior three years. For example the average market values used in determining the tax paid in 2006 was the three years from 2002-2003-2004. After the (3 year) average market value is determined, a Township Equalization factor is applied which is based on the median value of around 39,000 commercial and residential properties in Algonquin Township. The final Equalized property value is the basis for the assessment.

Exemptions

Complete information on available exemptions is available on the McHenry County website. The most common is the General Homestead Exemption which is available to an owner if it is their primary residence. (Note: Owners of a second home in another state may not qualify). Property owners over age 65 and those with household incomes below a certain level may also qualify for exemptions.

Property Value Comparisons

The assessor takes into account many factors in determining market value. Market value is the best judgment of the price that a willing and knowledgeable buyer and seller would agree upon for a property. Sale prices of nearby comparable-sized houses also have significant weight in determining our estimated values. Although a number of factors are taken into account in determining the market value, the location and square feet of living area, excluding unfinished basements and garages, are given the greatest weight in making the determination.

Property Assessment and Appeals Calendar

January-November

Each year in November, the Township Assessor reviews the properties in our township and submits the average market values to the County's Supervisor of Assessments, usually in November.

December

Approx. two weeks later (early December), the County publishes a formal **legal notice** of the values of those properties that are changed by other than the annual application of an equalization factor in the *Northwest Herald* newspaper. (Note: Every fourth year, all property values are published in the *Northwest Herald* newspaper. This will be the case in late 2007). Simultaneously, a post card with information on the tax basis for the coming is mailed to each property owner year. **A property owner that disagrees with his Assessed value has 30 days from the date of publication to file a formal appeal.** After that point, the values are fixed and cannot be appealed; however, a property owner can request a review at any time during the year by contacting the Township Assessor. A successful review could result in a change in valuation for future tax years.

Summary

How can I evaluate the fairness of my property valuation?

Information on your specific property is reported on the post card that is sent in December of each year. **Current information on all properties will be published in December of 2007. If you want to check your specific information, before the formal deadline, contact the Township Assessor.** The Township Assessor currently does not have detailed information on their web site, but they expect to have it available sometime later this year.

Algonquin Township Assessor: Robert Kunz
3702 Northwest Highway, Crystal Lake, Ill. 60014:
Tel 847-639-2700.
(Mon-Fri 8am-5 pm)
rrkunz@atastr.org

McHenry County www.co.mchenry.il.us provides detailed information on exemptions, filing dates, appeals process, etc.

OBITUARY: Arline G.

Longtime Steeple Run member Arline G. passed away on April 8, 2007, after a long battle with cancer. The Board and residents of Steeple Run extend their deepest sympathy and condolences to her children, family and friends. Arline left us less than a month after the passing of her husband, Gerald.



OBITUARY: Mary Morehead

Former Steeple Run resident Mary Morehead, age 41, passed away Wednesday June 20th after a long battle with cancer. She is survived by her husband, Patrick, and their 4 young children.

Primarily known to the original owners in Phase 1, the Moreheads lived at 3806 Church Hill Lane in the 90s and remained in the area.

High Gas Prices Getting You Down?

Gasoline prices hit another record high. The last time we saw prices this high was after Hurricane Katrina in September 2005.

High gas prices are here to stay. The average American spends \$1000 a year more on gas than 5 years ago.

Calls for higher vehicle efficiency standards have been made by lawmakers to ease the Gas Pump Shock but more efficient cars are a few years off. Meanwhile, here are some tips to save you gas and cash!

1. Get the best car

Buy the most fuel efficient cars. The Top 5 are:

- Toyota Prius (60 mpg highway/51 mpg city),
- Honda Civic Hybrid,
- Toyota Camry Hybrid,
- Toyota Yaris and
- Honda Fit (38 mpg highway).

More rankings can be found at Edmunds.com.

2. Get Aerodynamic

Cut wind drag on your old car by taking off the roof rack and rear spoiler. Consider narrower tires. If you're going 35 mph+, close the car windows and turn on the A/C.

3. Be a Smart Parker

Park in the shade. Common in cars more than 5 years old, evaporative emissions occur when the sun shines on the steering wheel to steal gas from your tank. The shade will also keep the car cooler inside. Parking in the garage is the best option.

4. Resist the Munchies

Convenience stores make more money on goodies than on gas. Resist the snacks and keep your wallet full.

5. Lose Your Junk in the Trunk

Avoid storing unnecessary items in the trunk, especially heavy ones.

From Herb L., CNN.com and other sources

6. Change Your Driving Habits

Drive the speed limit and limit the aggression. Gas mileage decreases at speeds over 60 mph. Drive 'smoothly' as rapid acceleration and braking waste fuel and lower gas mileage. Get your foot off the gas and let your momentum carry you to stop signs.

Plan ahead and combine your errands to limit the number of trips made.

Don't circle parking lots looking for the closest spot. Park in the first parking spot you find to save gas, save time, and get some exercise. Don't idle your car for more than a minute to warm up.

7. At the pumps:

Tighten the gas cap to prevent gas loss through evaporation. Listen for the 'click' and don't top off your tank—it only seeps out and is wasted.

Fill up on Wednesday. Statisti-

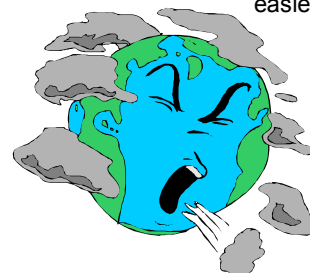


cally, gas prices are lowest this day. It's not true every week but over the long term.

Also, prices jump before a holiday so fill your tank at least 3 days before the holiday.

Fill up on cooler days or in the cool of the evening or early morning to benefit from the Universal Gas Law in action. Gas is denser in cooler temperatures and since the pumps measure by volume, on a cool day you're getting more gas for your money.

On Ozone Alert Days in the heat of the summer, always pump gas after dark; it won't save you any money but it will save our air quality and allow sensitive persons to breathe easier.





STEEPLE RUN NEWS

HOT TOPIC: Open Burning of Yard Waste in McHenry County

THE MCHENRY COUNTY DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH HAS PROPOSED AN UPDATED COUNTYWIDE BURNING ORDINANCE WHICH WOULD BAN BURNING IN OUR NEIGHBORHOOD.

The McHenry County Department of Health is considering a countywide ordinance update that will place restrictions on burning yard waste, making it difficult to burn in densely-populated areas such as Steeple Run.

They recently held forums to discuss the update with the residents. The forums also presented alternatives to burning.

Currently (restrictions revised July 1, 2003), open burning of landscape waste in unincorporated areas is allowed:

- Only on weekends in April, May, October and November
- Between dawn and dusk
- Must be more than 30 feet from any structure
- Must be constantly attended until fire is extinguished
- Provisions must be made to keep the fire from spreading

“Any open burning of landscape waste that is offensive or objectionable due to smoke or odor emissions when atmospheric conditions or local circumstances make such fires hazardous will be prohibited by the Code Enforcement Officer.”

Allowed are:

- BBQs used to cook food
- Temporary non-ceremonial campfires (less than 3 feet x 3 feet by 3 feet)
- Bonfires must be less than 5 feet by 5 feet by 5 feet and shall not burn longer than 3 hours. A permit from the Department of Planning and Development is required.

The proposed changes include:

- Burning must be more than 150 feet from a habitable structure and more than 50 feet from non-habitable structure (such as a play set)
- Open burning, recreational and bonfires must be supervised by an individual at least 18 years old until the fire is extinguished
- A fire extinguisher or garden hose must be at the open burning site
- Leaves, grass or shrubbery clippings are prohibited in bonfires and recreational fires.
- Ceremonial fires and bonfires burning brush (tree pieces) are exempt if notice has been given to the fire protection district and a permit has been

obtained from the Dept. of Health

In the proposal, open burning is not permitted:

- When the wind is in excess of 10 miles per hour
- When announced by the Dept. of Health that inversion conditions or an ozone alert exist
- Of any material other than **DRY** landscape waste and/or brush
- On easements
- When it is a visibility hazard on roads

This article is a quick summary. Please refer to the ordinance in affect and the draft ordinance available on the web for complete restrictions, enforcement, penalties, oversight, definitions, etc.

Alternatives to burning:

- Shred leaves on the lawn with the lawn mower
- Rent a chipper/shredder
- Rototill leaves into garden in fall
- Purchase curbside landscape waste collection from your waste hauler
- Drop off your brush at the Township during their periodic brush collection

CURRENT: <http://www.co.mchenry.il.us/common/countyDpt/PlanDev/pdOpenBurning.asp>
DRAFT: http://www.co.mchenry.il.us/common/CountyDpt/Health/PDFDocs/EHburningorddraft07_000.pdf

Pet Owners

Please remember McHenry County has pet regulations that are found in Article XVII . Section 5.17 addresses Barking Dogs. Simply stated:

No dog shall be allowed to bark, whine or howl

- For longer than 15 min.
- Intermittently for a period in excess of 2 hours
- Or between the hours of 10:00 pm and 6:00 a.m.

Section 6.01A declares that no dog or cat shall be allowed to run at large within a subdivision.

Protect your pets by having their ID tags on whenever they're outside so that if they get loose, they can be returned to you.



WANTED: 200+ ‘SICK’ NEEDED FOR PANDEMIC FLU DRILL

Looking for something different to do this summer? How are your acting skills—do they need honing? If Kramer of *Seinfeld* fame can do it, you can too! Be a mock ‘victim.’

The McHenry Co. Dept. of Health is looking for over 200 volunteers to participate in their pandemic flu exercise to test their readiness and preparedness in the event of a public health emergency. ‘Victims’ will be given a written script to follow.

The “Flip-Flop Flu” Mock Outbreak Drill will be held on

Saturday July 28th from 9-noon at the Johnsbury High School, 2002 W. Ringwood Road.

For additional information or to sign up, please call 815-334-0222 or email kaisel@co.mchenry.il.us.

A registration form is also available at the county website (<http://www.co.mchenry.il.us/common/CountyDpt/Health/PDFDocs/ERDrillVol07.pdf>); it can then be mailed or FAXed to the Dept. of Health.



ARROW Septic Tank Pump out September 15 & 22

Arrow Septic & Sewer is again offering Steeple Run residents a discounted rate for septic tank pumping on **September 15th and 22nd**.

SERVICE: For \$169, Arrow will empty a tank up to 2000 gallons (a \$20 savings over their standard price).

They will also perform a 5 point inspection with each pump out including:

1. Check the structural condition of the tank
2. Check the flow from the house to the tank (provided

the resident is available to flush a toilet from inside the home). If they have access to the inlet or outlet pipes, they will run a video scope through to inspect the condition of the pipes.

3. Check the condition of the outlet baffle
4. Check the septic field
5. Check the level at which the tank is running

PAYMENT: If the access lid to your tank isn't easily accessible and exposed for the driver. A digging charge of \$20 per 15 minutes of dig time labor will be added.

Payment is due at time of service (cash, checks, credit card).

If you will not be home at the time of the service, please call their office (815-459-5558) to arrange payment or to disclose where you will leave the check for the driver to collect. A complete listing of services are available at their website <http://www.arrowseptic.com>.

CONTACT: Please contact **Herb L. (815-xxx-xxxx)** by **Sept. 8th** to sign up for this service.



The SRHA Board does not recommend the use of any contractor over another, nor does the Board guarantee the cost or quality of the services but offers this as information to SRHA members to use as they see fit. Any additional bids for this type of service are always welcome.

HASTINGS Asphalt Services August 4th

Hastings Asphalt Services is once again offering a discount to SRHA members for blacktop sealing. A minimum of 10 members is required to qualify for the same day discount pricing. Hastings will be applying sealcoat in our neighborhood on **Saturday August 4th** (Rain date August 11th).

Please contact Russ Hastings (814-459-3238) by July 28th to register. He will

visit your home and give you an estimate on the spot.

The average size driveway in Steeple Run is approximately 4000 sq ft or \$224 to seal and includes machine cleaning, pre-treating stains and a one year guarantee on all materials and workmanship except when applied to cracks. Each household is billed separately.

“TWO VENDORS ARE OFFERING A COMPETITIVE PRICE FOR SEALCOATING DRIVEWAYS LOCATED IN STEEPLE RUN, SCHEDULED FOR AUGUST 4.”

PAGNI'S Sealcoating & Pavement Specialists

Pagni's Sealcoating is offering a discount to SRHA members for their hand applied SAKKRETE sealcoating. Cleaning of the surface and treatment of all stains is included. A one year guarantee with 100% satisfaction is also included.

Please contact Lexi or Colleen at Pagni's (815-477-1547) by July 28th

for a quote. They have a listing of our addresses and quotes already prepared. Be sure to mention the Steeple Run discount. There is no minimum number of participants needed. If you accept Pagni's quote, you arrange the service date with the vendor to suit your schedule.



Going on vacation? Remember to tell a trusted neighbor, lock your doors and windows, make your home appear lived in by using timers on the lights, stopping the paper and the mail and having your lawn mowed in your absence.



A PUBLICATION OF THE STEEPLE RUN HOMEOWNERS' ASSOCIATION

Questions? Comments?
Volunteering? Contact:
Jill Peterson—editor
E-mail: secretary@steeplerun.org

We're on the Web at
www.steeplerun.org

FREE McHenry County Discount Prescription Drug Program



McHenry County is participating in a nationwide prescription drug discount card pilot program sponsored by the National Association of Counties (NACo) and dispensed by Caremark.

This prescription drug discount card is available free to all county residents and may save you money on many of your medicines.

- average savings is 20%
- no limits
- no age requirements
- no income restrictions
- family coverage is available
- Mail service for 90 days supplies
- pet prescriptions covered

- use anytime your prescription isn't covered by insurance.

Cards can be obtained at:

McHenry Co. Administration
667 Ware Road, Woodstock
815-334-4000

Nunda Township Offices
3510 Bay Road, Crystal Lake
815-459-4011

According to the *Northwest Herald*, a card can also be obtained by calling your County Representative or the County at 815-334-4000.

More information is available on the internet at the McHenry County website:
<http://www.co.mchenry.il.us/>

[common/CountyBrd/brdPrescription.asp](http://www.co.mchenry.il.us/common/CountyBrd/brdPrescription.asp)

FAQ:

<http://www.co.mchenry.il.us/common/CountyBrd/PDFDocs/NacoPresFAQ.pdf>

The NACo/Caremark Website:

https://naco.advancerx.com/advpcsrx_MemberSite/index.jsp

Some of the participating pharmacies in our area include (in no particular order):

- Osco
- Kmart
- Sam's Club
- Dominicks
- Walgreens
- Target
- CVS on Randall Rd.