



The Beecher Bulletin

"Your Village Newsletter"



Inside this issue:

| | |
|--------------------------|-----|
| Board Meeting Highlights | 4,5 |
| Brush Collection | 7 |
| Dog Tags on Sale | 7 |
| Fourth of July Wrap Up | 6 |
| Halloween | 7 |
| Holiday House Walk | 8 |
| Leaf Pick-up | 1 |
| Light the Park | 3 |
| Memorial Tree Fund | 2 |
| NIXLE | 3 |
| Trustee Meyer | 6 |
| Upcoming Events | 8 |
| Water Quality | 6 |
| Winter Weather Parking | 7 |



HELP "LIGHT THE PARK"

Campaign under way to raise \$90,000 for new ballfield lights in Firemen's Park

The Village's Parks and Recreation Committee has established a new campaign to raise \$90,000 for the replacement of the baseball field lights in Firemen's Park Field #1. The current lighting system was installed in the 1970's and has served the community well. Volunteers put up the lights and raised funds for the project at that time. However, it is getting difficult to keep the 1,200 watt light bulbs on as the ballasts overheat and wiring becomes older. The wood poles are also beginning to show age and need to be replaced. A special boom truck is needed to service the lights since some of the poles are over 50 feet high.

The Village received a proposal to replace the lighting system entirely with aluminum poles and high efficiency lighting which uses a software application and comes with a 50 year warranty. The cost of this new system is \$90,000 and the decision was made to try to raise the funds for this project over the next year not only from throughout the community but from major corporate donations. An account has been created and already \$1,300 has been raised just by word of mouth. The goal is to raise this \$90,000 in time for the 2015 baseball season.

Continued on next page

Village of Beecher

OFFICIALS

Greg Szymanski
President

Trustees:

Scott Wehling
Ronald Kuhlman
Gayle Ahrendt
Brian Cleary
Jonathan Kypuros
Marcy Meyer

Janett Conner
Clerk

Kim Koutsky
Treasurer

Robert O. Barber
Administrator

Jeffrey Weissgerber
Chief of Police

Harold "Bud" Cowger
Supt. of Public Works

CURBSIDE LEAF COLLECTION FOR ENTIRE VILLAGE

Began October 8th

Beecher Public Works began leaf collection on Tuesday, October 8th. Leaves raked in rows along the curbside are picked up by a large vacuum machine used by Public Works crews on a weekly basis until the week of Thanksgiving. When placing leaves along the curb for pickup, it is asked that these simple rules be followed to ensure that your leaves will be picked up:

- ✓ Leaves should be placed in a pile or row in the parkway between the sidewalk and curb as near to the street as possible. In areas without curbs, leaves should be placed on the grass or parkway at the edge of the street.
- ✓ Do not mix grass, twigs, brush or pet waste with the leaves.
- ✓ Leaves must be raked; not mulched (mulched leaves should be placed in yard waste bags which will be collected by Star Disposal).
- ✓ Do not rake leaves onto the street or into storm ditches. (It doesn't take many leaves to plug the storm drains and cause flooding.)
- ✓ The leaf machine will make at least one pass per week down each street in the Village.
- ✓ There are no special pick-ups.





MEET TRUSTEE MARCY MEYER

Newly-Appointed to the Village Board to fill Vacancy

When Greg Szymanski was elected Village President last April, he was required to leave his Trustee seat upon his oath of office as President. This left an opening on the Village Board which is required to be filled by the Village President with the consent of the Board of Trustees within 90 days of the vacancy. The names of several candidates were provided to the newly-elected Village President by the Trustees and residents of the community and Marcy Meyer was then selected from this list.

Trustee Meyer is a long-time Village resident and she and her husband Jake reside in the Prairie Pointe Townhomes. She is currently employed at Metropolitan Eyecare in Beecher but she was once the Economic Development Coordinator of the Village. Mrs. Meyer is also a member of the Beecher Lions Club and the Beecher Fourth of July Commission and a past member of the Beecher Chamber of Commerce and the Beecher Planning and Zoning Commission. Her appointment runs through April of 2015, when the next municipal elections are scheduled for three Trustee seats. Marcy Meyer becomes the third woman in Beecher history to hold a seat on the Village Board, after Gwen Dean (1976-1997) and Gayle Ahrendt (1997-present). This is also the first time in Beecher history that two women have served together on the Village Board. Despite this low number, the Village Board has had female representation since 1976.

"Light the Park" continued

However, we need your help. If you wish to make a tax-deductible contribution to this project you can write a check to "Light the Park" project and mail it in care of the Village of Beecher. Your money will be deposited in the "light the park" account until we reach our goal and order the new lighting system. If you have any questions you can call Trustee Scott Wehling at 708-946-2261.



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GET IN THE KNOW! GET IN ON NIXLE!

***New instant communication tool to be used
for only emergencies and important messages***

Did you know that the Beecher Police and Public Works Departments are using a new information tool to let residents know about incidents and issues that have occurred or may occur in the Village? Would like to be notified if Dixie Highway is closed, a boil order is issued, or a child is missing in your neighborhood? If you own a cell phone that receives texts then you have to get connected with NIXLE. It is very simple. Just click on the NIXLE link on the Village's website homepage at villageofbeecher.org and complete some requested information. In the future, the village plans to use this new tool to provide warning to residents about closed roads, water pressure loss, boil orders, missing children, and other incidents where residents need to be notified in a timely manner. This new tool will not be used for severe weather events like tornados. Weather events and national security are the responsibility of the federal national weather service and there is a different notification system for these types of warnings. NIXLE is for the local police and public works agencies who wish to notify their constituents of any incident or inconvenience which may occur in specific neighborhoods.

For example, in August the railroad closed the Hodges Street crossing on a Friday for repairs. If you had NIXLE, you would have known this in advance! As this new system is implemented, more messages will be forthcoming. So give NIXLE a try, and stay informed on local emergencies and incidents in the Village!



2013 FOURTH OF JULY CELEBRATION WRAP-UP

After another successful year, plans are already underway for next year

Thanks to some gorgeous weather and good attendance, the 2013 Beecher Fourth of July Celebration will go down as the highest grossing (\$175,823) and second-highest net profit (\$39,483.04) celebration since the Commission took over from the Beecher Volunteer Fire Department in 2000. Some of the costs associated with the celebration include entertainment (\$19,870), fireworks (\$29,100), parade (\$7,183) publicity (\$10,820) and the cost of the raffle car (\$23,838). In other words, the Commission is \$90,811 in the hole on opening day. But thanks to the Beecher community, there never seems to be a problem filling that hole!

This leaves the Commission with \$46,944.27 in available funds for next year's celebration, and an additional reserve of \$60,000 in the event some type of calamity causes a loss to the celebration's net proceeds in future years. There has been some discussion on replacing the beer stand in the next year or so since the current one is in real bad shape. The Commission's mission is to keep all of the net proceeds for use within Firemen's Park. Since 2000, the Commission has spent over \$215,000 on capital improvements to the park.

Planning is already underway for next year. A new carnival has been booked for 2014, and a new fireworks company with some new ideas has also been hired for the July 4th show. The dates of the celebration will be Wednesday, July 2nd through Saturday, July 5th.

The Beecher Fourth of July Commission consists of nineteen members and one ex-officio member appointed by the Village President. The Commission is always looking for volunteers to work at the festival. Contact the Village Hall if you would like to volunteer.



BEECHER MEMORIAL TREE FUND

Fall is a good time of year to consider planting a memorial tree to remember a special person, date or occasion. A tree can be planted in any of our parks for a donation and the person's name or occasion will be engraved on a plaque in the Village Hall. The names will be listed in the Spring 2014 newsletter. It is a living tribute that stays green for many years to come. We have 15 donors on our memorial tree plaque at this time. Please contact Trustee Ron Kuhlman at the Village Hall at 946-2261 if you would like to purchase a memorial tree.

**QUESTIONS DON'T HAVE
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VILLAGE BOARD MEETING HIGHLIGHTS

The following actions were taken by the Beecher Village Board since the Spring of 2013:

- ✓ Approved \$9,900 in police department purchases and training to improve rapid deployment response.
- ✓ Approved a contract with ME Simpson for leak detection of the entire water system in the amount of \$9,125. Eight leaks were identified with a combined water loss of 22,000 gallons per day and all eight of these leaks were repaired.
- ✓ Approved the establishment of a cancer awareness memorial at the northwest corner of Firemen's Park and created the "Ribbon of Hope Commission" to raise funds and to construct the monument.
- ✓ Approved a special use permit for the construction of a silo at Dutch American Foods to store sugar.
- ✓ Approved a 10 year residential refuse hauling contract with Homewood (Star/A&J) Disposal. Adopted an ordinance establishing a refuse rate structure for the next 10 years for residents to pay on their waterbills.
- ✓ Approved Beecher's participation in a corridor study of IL #394 and IL Route #1 from Interstate 80 to the Kankakee County line.
- ✓ Adopted updated building codes including the 2006 International Code replacing the 1999 BOCA Code and the 2001 International One and Two Family Code. More recent International Codes require sprinklers in homes and it was decided not to adopt these codes at this time.
- ✓ Approved a resolution honoring former Village President Paul Lohmann and former Village Treasurer Nelson Collins for their many years of service.
- ✓ Appointed Marcy Meyer to fill a vacancy on the Village Board and Kim Koutsy as Village Treasurer. Nelson Collins was then appointed Deputy Treasurer.
- ✓ Authorized the refinancing of \$704,000 from the 2002 water tank and booster station loan dropping the interest rate charged from 5.25% to 2.5%. This refinancing saved the Village approximately \$96,800 in interest charges over the last 10 years of the loan.
- ✓ Approved an agreement with the Beecher Fire District for the use of Village water to fight fires in unincorporated areas.
- ✓ Combined the Streets and Alleys Committee and Sewer and Water Committee into one committee to be called the Public Works Committee. Created a new committee of the Village Board called the Economic Development and Community Relations Committee.

Continued on next page

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Steve Koehn
Vice President

Board meeting highlights continued

- ✓ Approved the purchase of a new fiberglass plow and hitch for the 1988 Ford F800 dump truck from Lindco of Merrillville in the amount of \$9,399.46.
- ✓ Approved a plat of resubdivision for R.L. Reising Sales to allow for the sale of three separate parcels. The middle parcel containing the showroom and service area is to become a Dollar General. The property to the south and to the north will be sold in the future.
- ✓ Changed the term of office for Planning and Zoning Commission members from seven years to two years. Appointed Paul Lohmann to the Commission replacing Kim Koutsky who had earlier been appointed as Treasurer.
- ✓ Authorized the replacement of the Gould Street warning siren in the amount of \$9,859 from Federal Signal. The old siren, installed in 1990, had failed to operate during the July test.
- ✓ Approved a contract from Baxter and Woodman Engineers in the amount of \$50,000 to complete an update of the 2004 water and sewer master plans to include the entire Beecher School District. These plans will then be used to develop a comprehensive master plan for the Village in 2014.
- ✓ Approved participation in the Illiana Corridor Council. \$500,000 in planning funds has been allocated to the Council from IDOT for conducting land planning along the proposed Illiana Expressway corridor.
- ✓ Approved the hiring of Jim Pratl as a new public works employee replacing Bill Merritt who retired. The sewer plant will continue to be operated contractually by John Szweedo of Baxter and Woodman Engineers for a fee of \$45,000 per year.
- ✓ Approved the purchase of a new skid steer loader to replace the 1999 skid steer in the amount of \$28,750 from De Jong Equipment of Beecher. Also approved a long term maintenance agreement for the new loader for \$1,185.
- ✓ Approved a 3 year agreement with Synagro at the amount of 4.4 cents per gallon for the hauling of liquid sludge out of the sewer plant and authorized the removal of 300,000 gallons of sludge per year.
- ✓ Canceled the second meetings of the month in November and December, 2013 and moved the first meeting in November from Monday the 11th to Tuesday the 12th due to the Veterans Day holiday.

The Village Board meets regularly on the second Monday of each month and on an as-needed basis on the fourth Monday of each month at 7:00 p.m. at the Washington Township Center, 30200 Town Center Road. All residents are invited and encouraged to attend these meetings. Agendas and minutes of meetings can be found on the Village's website, www.villageofbeecher.org. Meetings are also broadcast on Comcast Channel 4 and are on www.youtube.com. Please refer to Channel 4 (WPAL) for meeting broadcast schedule.



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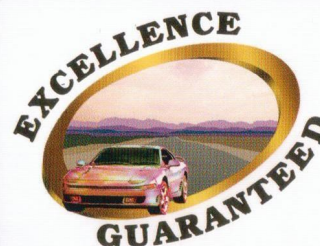
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PROTECT WATER QUALITY IN YOUR OWN YARD EVERY SEASON!



FALL

- ✓ Gardens need bedcovers. When cleaning out vegetable and flower gardens, don't leave the soil bare for the winter. Use chopped leaves as mulch or plant a "green mulch" to add nutrients and organic matter to the soil.
- ✓ Plant! Early autumn is the best time to transplant shrubs and other perennials and to reseed lawns. Choose grass seed mixes that match your site. Consider adding a little clover seed for a free source of nitrogen fixation. Early autumn is the best time for a single dose of fertilizer for good grass root growth and a healthy lawn next spring. Slow-release or organic fertilizers stay where plants can use them and out of the local waters and wells. Keep watering all new plantings until the ground is frozen to give the roots plenty of opportunity to grow.
- ✓ Save the leaves. Leaves have lots of landscaping uses. Make a compost pile, chop them and mulch the landscaping and garden beds, or create new beds under the trees from which they fell.

WINTER

- ✓ Rethink snow control. Sand and salt from snow removal are two major sources of water pollution they aren't exactly good for the lawn or other plants either. Use them sparingly, if you must. Consider sweeping up sand between storms to re-use, cutting down on the total amount used over the winter.
- ✓ Dream and plan. Winter is the time to plan for next spring. If one doesn't exist, create a master yard and map out which areas are doing well and which need improvement or replacement. Read magazines and booklets, visit garden centers or call extension centers to research interesting native plants that meet your needs and are suited to your specific site characteristics. Identify any invasive landscaping plant species that are taking over the natural ecosystem around your property and learn how to control them. A little planning in the quiet of winter can prevent wasted money and stressed out plants and people the heat and hurry of summer.

To learn more or report possible illegal discharges to the storm drain system, call the Village of Beecher at 946-2261.

(Source: Clean Water Fact Sheet, produced by NEMO and Sea Grant Connecticut)



DRUG DISPOSAL CONTAINER AVAILABLE AT VILLAGE HALL

The Village Hall has a container for disposal of unused or expired prescription & non-prescription medications. The container is located just inside the Village Hall front door. No needles, medical supplies or hazardous waste will be accepted. The medications are removed periodically and taken to a local hospital for incineration.

DON'T PAY LATE FEES!

The Village offers "Autodraft" to pay your water bill. The water bill amount will be deducted from your bank account on the due date each billing period. Download an Autodraft form from our website or contact the Village Hall for a form (no convenience fees apply for Autodraft);

OR

Pay your water bill online using "EPAY". Go to www.villageofbeecher.org and click on EPAY located on the right side of the page (convenience fee applies with EPAY).



Reminder: Water bills go out on the 5th of every odd month and are due on the 30th of that month.

NOTE: THE LAST DAY STAR DISPOSAL WILL PICK-UP YARDWASTE BAGS IS MONDAY, NOVEMBER 25TH.

VILLAGE BRUSH COLLECTION PROGRAM TO CONTINUE THROUGH NOVEMBER

Brush pick-up occurs every other Monday on the same day that recycling is picked up by Star Disposal. This program will continue as a convenience to residents and to help keep the community looking well-groomed. Since the chipper cannot grind up vines and bush clippings, residents are required to place them in Star Disposal yard waste bags. Tree limbs from routine trimming or storm damage can be placed on the parkway for the brush chipper every other Monday (on recycling day) for pick-up, but not entire trees with trunks, branches exceeding 6" in diameter or bushes with root balls. If a residence violates these rules, the items will not be picked up.

Brush pick-up will continue through November, and begin again in April, 2014. Brush will not be picked up during the Winter months unless there is a storm and then the crews will go out on an as-needed basis.



WINTER WEATHER IS APPROACHING ***Be Aware of Street Parking Regulations***



With winter approaching, the Village wants to remind residents that for a period of twenty-four (24) hours after a snowfall of two inches or more, it is illegal to park on any residential Village street or in any business district public parking space commonly maintained by the Village between the hours of 1:00 a.m. and 6:00 a.m. This includes curbed streets and driving lanes but does not include parkways maintained by residents.

This regulation gives the Public Works crews the ability to adequately clear the streets and parking areas of snow and ice. Violators of this ordinance are issued a ticket by the Police Department either before or during snow removal operations. The Village reserves the right to tow parked vehicles at any time which cause a traffic safety hazard as a result of heavy snowfalls. It is also illegal to deposit snow onto public streets. When clearing your driveway, direct the snow into the yard and not the street. This allows Public Works to keep the streets clear for vehicular traffic for safety reasons.



HALLOWEEN



Trick-or-Treat hours are 4-7 p.m. on Thursday, October 31st



The Lions Club Annual Weenie Roast will begin in Firemen's Park at 6 p.m. on Halloween.

In addition to the Weenie Roast, the *Lions Club* will be hosting a pumpkin smash & hayride in Firemen's Park (673 Penfield Street) on Thursday, October 31st from 6-8 p.m.

Have fun & be safe! ***** Check candy before eating



DOG TAGS GO ON SALE MONDAY, DECEMBER 2ND

Dog tags go on sale at the Village Hall on Monday, December 2nd. The price is \$10 per dog and the deadline for purchase is March 14, 2014. After the March 14th deadline, the price of dog tags increase to \$15 each. The Village Hall will need to know the dog's name, breed, color and date of last rabies vaccination. Dog tag fees are used to pay for the services provided by Dr. McKay and Beecher Veterinary Clinic for picking up, feeding and boarding stray animals and lost pets.



Village of Beecher

724 Penfield Street/P.O. Box 1154
Beecher, IL 60401

Village Hall Hours

Monday thru Friday:
8:00 a.m. - 4:30 p.m.

Village Hall Phone

946-2261

Emergency Police & Fire
9-1-1

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UPCOMING EVENTS

Youth Commission Trunk or Treat • Saturday, October 26th from 6-8 p.m.

Trick or Treat hours • Thursday October 31st from 4-7 p.m.

Lions Club Halloween Weenie Roast • Thursday, October 31st from 6-8 p.m.

Holiday House Walk • Sunday, December 1st (see below)

Chamber of Commerce Festival of Lights Parade • Saturday, December 7th

**Breakfast with Santa • Sunday, December 8th beginning at 8 a.m.
at Cardinal Creek Golf Course (Call Golf Course at 946-2800 for reservations)**



BEECHER'S 10TH ANNIVERSARY HOLIDAY HOUSE WALK

Sunday, December 1, 2013 • 2:00 p.m. - 7:00 p.m.



The Beecher Beautification Commission will be holding the 10th Annual Holiday House walk on Sunday, December 1st. The house walk will begin at Midland States Bank, Beecher Branch where you will be able to purchase raffle tickets for a special raffle, holiday gift baskets and a 50/50 raffle (This year the raffle winners will be drawn at the Breakfast with Santa on December 8th). Refreshments will also be available. **Tickets are \$10 each** and may be purchased in advance at the Village Hall, Midland States Bank, First Community Bank & Trust, any Beautification Commission member or that day at Midland States Bank. The house walk is open to those 12 years of age and older. (Midland States Bank is located at 951 Dixie Highway.) If you are interested in putting your home in the house walk, please contact the Village Hall.

