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GRADUATION HELD FOR FIRST CITIZEN'S POLICE ACADEMY

In the Fall of 2014 the Beecher Police Department held its first citizen's police academy. The purpose of the academy is to make Beecher citizens more aware of the activities of the Beecher Police Department and how rules, regulations, state and federal law, and case law affect the response of officers to specific incidents. Participants were able to fire a taser gun, visit the County jail, participate in mock traffic stops, and learn the terminology of weapons used in law enforcement. The course was spread over a period of ten Thursday evenings.

Another citizen's police academy is being planned for the Fall of 2015. If you are interested in participating, please call Police Chief Jeff Weissgerber at 708-946-6388.



Pictured : George Schuitema, Ronald Kuhlman, Chief Weissgerber, Bradley Coats & Terri DeVos-Modrak

Village of Beecher

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President

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Ronald Kuhlman
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Jeffrey Weissgerber
Chief of Police

Harold "Bud" Cowger
Supt. of Public Works



*Greg Szymanski
Village President*

VILLAGE PRESIDENT'S CORNER

Periodically members of the Village Board are approached and asked about something going on in the Village. I thought I would share some of the most common questions with you.

► What is the current status of the golf course?

The first is to confirm that Cardinal Creek Golf Course has closed, and it will not re-open this year. The property is for sale and if anyone is interested in purchasing the property contact the Village Hall. The land is zoned open space which only allows for prairie and agricultural uses which includes passive recreation. We have had two recent inquiries about the course. They have been referred to Inland Bank. Alps Management Group is currently handling the maintenance of the course. We have sent a list of our concerns which includes mowing the fairways and greens, aeration of the ponds, and repairs or tear down of three buildings.

► Why didn't the Village purchase the golf course?

In a different economic atmosphere years ago, a referendum was placed on the ballot to purchase the course. IT FAILED. A referendum was also placed on the ballot for a park

Continued on Page 2

district. IT FAILED. Over the past two years, we have explored several options if the Village could purchase the course. Unfortunately in our current economic times, we cannot afford to do so and at the same time **have a balanced budget**. We have asked twice to have the course donated to us and the bank has declined to do so. We would still have to find the money to maintain it. We will continue to explore all options.

► **Did the Village do anything that would have caused the purchase of the golf course to fall through?**

There is a rumor that the golf course would have sold at \$175,000. If that were the case, we would have bought it. I have been told the bank hopes to get \$1,000,000 for the course. There is also a rumor that the Village made some type of stipulation concerning trees on the course. THAT IS ABSOLUTELY NOT TRUE.

► **What is all the hype about the Governor cutting LGDF Funds?**

The Local Government Distributive Fund (LGDF) is a state fund where a portion of the state income tax revenue is deposited annually (6 cents per dollar). Since 1969 it has been shared with local governments. This is **your** income tax money coming back to the Village of Beecher to help pay for essential services such as the police and public works departments. Governor Rauner made a proposal to cut our portion of revenue from the Local Government Distributive Fund by 50% (6 cents to 3 cents per dollar) in an attempt to balance the state's budget. If he succeeds we would lose in excess of \$200,000 annually in revenue. I hope you would agree this cut is unacceptable. We did not cause the state's financial crisis. In 2007 we made significant cuts in our budget in anticipation of the financial crisis. It is not our fault that they failed to do the same. Please contact your legislators and ask them to oppose any cuts to the LGDF. In summary, you would pay the same, but receive less in Village services, or you may even pay more.

► **When will the Village replace water mains?**

We are currently on target for beginning the loan and application process in the fall of 2015 to replace the Penfield water main. Construction on the mains would begin in 2016. We are hoping in 2018 to replace the street, make improvements and make repairs to storm sewers. We are also exploring options to have a plan in place to replace the remaining cast iron water mains which are located mostly west of Dixie Highway.

► **Now that winter is almost over, will you repair the damage caused by a snow plow?**

Yes. Please call the Village Hall and ask to be placed on the restoration list. When weather and time permits, we will repair your lawn. We apologize that a plow damaged your lawn. At times it is very difficult to see or find the curb line.

► **Are we making any progress on the railroad quiet zone?**

Yes. We have awarded a contract to the engineering firm of HR Green to do a crossing study. This should give us factual information whether we qualify for quiet zones, what changes need to be made to the crossings and its signals and an approximate cost. Once that study is complete, we can determine when and if we can afford to create the quiet zone, have discussions with the railroad and be ready if other funding sources become available.

Greg Szymanski
Village President

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ANNUAL WATER & SEWER RATE INCREASE ON MAY WATER BILLING AND ANNUAL REFUSE RATE INCREASE ON JULY WATER BILLING



The annual water and sewer rate increase will be reflected on the May 2015 water bill. Water rates will be increased by 10 cents per thousand gallons and sewer rates by 10 cents per thousand gallons effective March 1st. These annual increases were previously implemented to keep up with rising costs for chemicals, testing supplies, electric, natural gas and other materials needed for keeping the water and sewer systems running.

The overall increase for a resident who uses 8,000 gallons or less of water will be \$1.60 per billing period.

If you live in one of the newer subdivisions and pay a Lift Station (LS) charge on your water bill, the lift station charge will also increase by 2 cents per thousand gallons of water used.

An annual refuse rate increase will be reflected on the July 2015 water bill. The refuse rate will increase by \$1.00 per billing. In March of 2013 the Village negotiated a new 10-year contract with Star/Homewood Disposal for refuse and recycling collection services. These annual increases are necessary to keep up with rising landfill tipping fees, maintenance, and manpower costs associated with these services. However, entering into a 10-year agreement has enabled us to lock into fixed rates even if costs increase further than anticipated.


MOSQUITO CONTROL PROGRAM



It's that time of the year again! The Public Works Department will begin spraying for mosquitos on Thursday evenings beginning at the end of April. Spraying will begin around dusk and be completed by around 1:00 a.m. Spraying can only be conducted when the weather conditions meet certain criteria. Temperature, wind speed, and precipitation may prevent a spraying on Thursday evening. If this is the case, spraying may be delayed until Friday evening or pushed ahead to Wednesday evening. Weekly spraying will continue through September unless mosquito counts are low.


During mosquito spraying we want to remind you to keep children away from the spray fog cloud directly behind our spray trucks. If you have asthma or any other type of breathing problems, you may want to remain inside with doors and windows closed during application in your area. It is important to note that the chemicals used for the Village's mosquito program are non-toxic to humans and animals.

For further information, questions and comments about the Mosquito program please call Public Works Superintendent Bud Cowger at 946-3636 between 8 a.m. and 4 p.m. Monday through Friday.



DON'T BE A VICTIM OF PHONE "SPOOFING" OR SCAMS

Recently there has been an increase in reported phone scams in the area. Every year, thousands of people lose money to telephone scams - from a few dollars to their life savings. Scammers will say anything to cheat people out of money. Some seem very friendly - calling you by your first name, making small talk, and asking about your family. Some may be harassing or making threats to get you to give them your personal information claiming to be from the IRS or a local bank. The phone number could even come from what looks like a legitimate or familiar number. With current technology these con artists have many different ways to fool you.



If you get a call from someone you don't know who is trying to obtain personal information, asks you to send money for any reason, threatens or pressures you - it's likely a scam. Hang up immediately, write down their phone number and report it to the Federal Trade Commission (FTC) on their website at www.consumer.ftc.gov/articles/0076-phone-scams or call the FTC at 1-888-382-1222. If you want to verify the phone call is legitimate, look up the company or organization's phone number they claim to be representing, call them directly and confirm the information. It's better to be safe than sorry.

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VILLAGE BOARD MEETING HIGHLIGHTS

The following actions were taken by the Beecher Village Board since the Fall of 2014:

- ✓ Authorized a contract with Carta Concrete in the amount of \$30,675 and the purchase of \$30,000 in materials for the construction of a new picnic pavilion in Firemen's Park. Funding is provided by the Beecher Fourth of July Commission.
- ✓ Supported federal legislation requiring new standards for rail tank cars transporting hazardous materials through the Village.
- ✓ Approved the distribution of up to \$70,000 in MGM escrow funds to the Preserve at Cardinal Creek Homeowners Association upon indemnification for improvements to the subdivision which were never completed as promised.
- ✓ Authorized the completion of leak detection in the entire Village for an amount not to exceed \$10,000. There is a major water leak somewhere in the Village as indicated by well pumping rates but it has not surfaced.
- ✓ Purchased 601.35 tons of road salt from Central Supply in Elgin, IL at a cost of \$65,697.52 or \$109.25/ton to get through the winter of 2014/2015.
- ✓ Authorized the letting of bids for the resurfacing of the east end of Fairway Drive in the Spring of 2015.
- ✓ Approved a contract with Webfoot designs to redesign the Village website for www.villageofbeecher.org.
- ✓ Approved an application as a member of the South Suburban Enterprise Zone.
- ✓ Approved a reimbursement of 50% of the Village's property taxes for a period of 10 years for any newly-constructed industrial building as an incentive for more development.
- ✓ Approved a property tax levy for 2015 with a 0% increase.
- ✓ Approved an intergovernmental agreement for participation in the Will County All-Hazards mitigation plan.
- ✓ Approved a phase I report application to the IEPA for a low interest loan to complete the watermain replacement project on Penfield Street.
- ✓ Learned that the Village has received a \$148,000 Safe Routes to Schools Grant for flashing lights and new school speed zone signage for all of the public schools.
- ✓ Adopted a five year financial plan for fiscal years 2015 through 2019.
- ✓ Authorized an agreement with the Illinois Department of Revenue for the sharing of sales tax data.

The Village Board meets on the second and fourth Mondays of each month at 7:00 p.m. at the Beecher Village Hall, 625 Dixie Highway. Residents are always invited to attend these meetings. Board meetings can also be viewed on WPAL Channel 4 or on You Tube.



2015 FOURTH OF JULY CELEBRATION LESS THAN 3 MONTHS AWAY!
Melrose Fireworks and Maggie Speaks set to return; several new bands scheduled



The Beecher Fourth of July Commission has recently released its preliminary schedule for this year's Fourth of July Celebration in Firemen's Park. Since the Fourth falls on a Saturday this year, the Commission has decided to end the celebration with the fireworks show at 10 pm on the Fourth followed by the car drawing at 11 pm on Saturday night. There will be no festival on Sunday, July 5th. Family entertainment is provided on an abbreviated schedule in the late afternoon and evening of Friday, July 3rd.

This year the festival starts off with a bang as "Maggie Speaks" takes to the stage on Wednesday, July 1st. "Final Say" is the headliner on Thursday, and two bands are scheduled for Friday: Iron Horse beginning at 2:30 pm and Kingfish at 7:30 pm. KO Bossy closes out the celebration on Saturday night. A&A Attractions will offer \$20 wrist bands for all of their amusement rides on Wednesday, Thursday and Friday evenings. The popular Beecher Chamber of Commerce Pork Chop Dinner will be served from 4-7 pm on Friday.

Mark you calendars and come on down to the park the first week of July! Below is a more detailed schedule. Details are subject to change:

Wednesday, July 1st - 6 pm to Midnight

5:45 pm - Kiddie and pet parade (line-up at 5:15 pm)
 6-10 pm - \$20 Wrist bands
 7:30 pm - 11 pm - Maggie Speaks on main stage
 11 pm - Early bird car drawing

Thursday, July 2nd - 6 pm to Midnight

6-10 pm - \$20 Wrist bands
 7:30-11 pm - Final Say on main stage
 11 pm - Early bird car drawing



Friday, July 3rd - 3 pm to Midnight

2:30-7:30 pm - 4-H Farm Expo
 4-7 pm - Chamber of Commerce Pork Chop Dinner
 2:30-5:30 pm - Iron Horse on main stage
 5-6 pm - Magician
 6-10 pm - \$20 Wrist bands
 7:30-11 pm - Kingfish on main stage
 11 pm - Early bird car drawing

Saturday, July 4th - 12 noon to Midnight

7-7:50 am - Lions Club 5K Run/Walk Registration
 8:15 am - Lions Club 5K Run/Walk begins
 12 Noon - Carnival and all stands but beer open
 3 pm - Beer stand opens
 2-3:30 pm - Parade line-up and registration
 3 pm - Float judging
 4pm - Parade
 7-11 pm - KO Bossy on main stage
 10 pm - Fireworks
 11 pm - Car drawing
 12 midnight - Festival closes

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VILLAGE BRUSH COLLECTION PROGRAM



The 2015 brush collection program began on April 6th. Brush pick-up will occur every other Monday on the same day that recycling is picked up by Star Disposal and will continue through November. To ensure your brush is collected by the Village, you are asked to follow the rules below:

1. Brush is to be placed out to the roadside by 7:30 a.m. on collection day. Brush put out the same day of pick-up is not guaranteed to be collected that week.
2. All brush should be placed to the front of the property (next to the road - but not on the road) for pick-up.
3. Grass clippings, leaves or mulch mixed with brush WILL NOT BE PICKED UP. Grass clippings, leaves and mulch should be disposed of in yard waste bags except in the fall when the Village collects leaves with a leaf machine.
4. Brush pick-up is intended for branches removed during routine trimming or due to storm damage. Entire trees that have been taken down by a private resident or contractor will not be picked up by the Village. A 5 minute rule applies: A brush pile should take no longer than 5 minutes for Public Works to pick up.

These rules are set in place to provide an efficient and cost effective brush collection program for Village residents. Any questions about this program should be directed to the Village Hall. Thank you for your cooperation!

YARD WASTE BAGS



Collection of yard waste bags by Homewood/Star/A&J Disposal resumed April 6th. Yard waste bags may be placed at the curb for regular Monday pick-up until the end of November. Yard waste bags should not be placed out to the curb for pick-up prior to 5:00 p.m. the day before pick-up. Residents must use bags with the Homewood/Star/A&J Disposal logo on them or purchase a sticker to put on other brands of yard waste bags. The cost of the bag includes the fee for disposal of the yard waste. Bags can be purchased at various local businesses and at the Village Hall. The Village Hall charges \$2.60 per bag and \$2.25 per sticker. Yard waste bags without the Homewood/Star/A&J Disposal logo/sticker will not be picked up.

ASH TREE REMOVAL UPDATE



The Ash Borer has struck the Village with a vengeance. Last year, about 30 ash trees were identified on Village parkways as being diseased and have been marked with a white "X" for takedown. Public Works has not yet gotten to all of these trees. Also, we expect more parkway trees to die this Summer. The Village hopes to replace many of these trees and 30 trees were budgeted for replacement this coming Fall. However, the State of Illinois may be reducing the Village's funding which may delay this replanting. If this happens we may provide the residents with the option of replacing these trees on their own.



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Lawn and Garden

- Use pesticides and fertilizers **sparingly**. When use is necessary, use these chemicals in the recommended amounts. Avoid application if the forecast calls for rain; otherwise, chemicals will be washed into your local stream.
- Select **native** plants and grasses that are drought- and pest-resistant. Native plants require less water, fertilizer, and pesticides.
- **Sweep up** yard debris, rather than hosing areas down. Compost or recycle yard waste when possible.
- Don't overwater your lawn. Water during the **cool** times of the day, and don't let water run off into the storm drain.
- Cover piles of dirt and mulch being used in landscaping projects to prevent these pollutants from blowing or washing off your yard and into local waterbodies. Vegetate bare spots in your yard to prevent soil erosion.



***Storm drains connect to waterbodies!
Remember: Only rain down the drain!***

For more information, visit www.epa.gov/npdes/stormwater or www.epa.gov/nps

To report possible illegal discharges to the storm drain system, call the Village of Beecher at 708-946-2261.

BEECHER TREE FOUNDATION MEMORIAL TREES



Since the Beecher Tree Foundation's inception in 2002, some residents have decided to plant a memorial tree to remember a special person, date or occasion. These trees have been planted in one of our parks for a donation and the person's name or occasion has been engraved on a plaque in the Village Hall. A tree is a living tribute that stays green for many years to come. We have 16 donors on our memorial tree plaque at this time.

Please contact Ron Kuhlman at the Village Hall at 946-2261 if you would be interested in purchasing a memorial tree.

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DRUG DISPOSAL CONTAINER AVAILABLE AT POLICE STATION—724 PENFIELD STREET

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





Village of Beecher

625 Dixie Highway / 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
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DO YOU PAY YOUR WATER BILL THROUGH AN ONLINE BILL PAY FROM YOUR BANK ACCOUNT??

Do you pay your water bill directly from your checking account using your bank's online e-bill or e-pay option? The Village wants to remind residents to be sure to include your account number with your payment and make the payment at least a week before the due date. When you process these payments from your checking account, the bank sends the Village a paper check so you need to plan for bank processing time and the time to mail the check from your bank to the Village Hall. Many people think when making payments this way the money is sent electronically and don't realize a paper check is sent out. This may cause you to incur late fees if the check doesn't reach the Village by the due date.



UPCOMING EVENTS



Chamber of Commerce Car Cruise Nights

1st and 3rd Wednesdays from May 20th thru September 2nd

Bicycle Rodeo • Saturday, May 30th in Firemen's Park

Chamber of Commerce Garage Sale Days • June 12-13

Youth Commission Family Olympics • June 14th in Firemen's Park

4th of July Celebration • July 1-4 in Firemen's Park

Youth Commission Movie Night Out • July 25th in Firemen's Park

Tractors For a Cure • August 1st in Firemen's Park

Youth Commission Camp Out • August 15-16 in Firemen's Park

Lions Club Annual Beef Roast/Craft Show • August 22nd in Firemen's Park