



Thanks for taking part in the 2008 SPECIAL CENSUS... Everyone counts!

Messenger

— "A Glimpse of the Glen" —

Official Newsletter of the Village of Homer Glen

Volume 1, Issue 3

September 2008

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The Mayor's Corner...

"Sense of Community" by Mayor Jim Daley

I suspect many of us have different attitudes toward the change of seasons as we settle into the routines of autumn. "How many more golf games do I have left before my fingers are too cold to take a swing; how many days do I have left to lay by the pool; do I have any vacation days left?" Or are you like me, an avid football fan and can't wait for Monday night football to begin?

Whatever your attitude is toward fall, this season holds some of my best memories of Homer Glen. Autumn was the time when the Homer Stallions geared up for its season of football. As President of the Stallions for 5 years, and coach for 11 years, this was the time I felt a real sense of community with the other par-

ents of the stallion football club. When I moved here 24 years ago, it was somewhat of a culture shock for a south-side guy like me. Growing up in Chicago, we identified ourselves by either the parish or school we belonged to. We had our neighborhood events and gathering spots. However, in 1984, when I moved to this area, Homer Township represented a much smaller community in a rural setting, sandwiched between 2 rapidly growing communities. Orland Park had made a name for itself with its regional mall and claim as the golf center of the south suburbs; Lockport had a historic city center and an annual event on the I & M canal, "Canal Days", celebrating its historic past.

This fall, Homer Glen will

join with Homer Township to hold the first annual celebration of our rural past.

"Homer Harvest Days" will be held on September 13 & 14 at Trantina Farms, where the Township will be celebrating its grand opening and the reconstruction of the 1850's Austin-Welter Barn.

The event promises to be an impressive two days with exhibits, food and entertainment for people of all ages. This event, like the Village's first Arbor Day/Earth Day Celebration last spring and our first Christmas tree lighting, all help to create a greater **'sense of community'** for Homer Glen residents.

These events bring our residents, their families and

DID YOU KNOW???

Aluminum cans produced in the United States can contain at least 50 percent recycled content.

Recycling and reuse employs over 56, 000 Illinois citizens.





**MEET
YOUR
VILLAGE
STAFF**

ANN CASHMAN

As one of the “first responders” in the Building Department, you may be familiar with Ann Cashman, our permit technician. Ann is responsible for all of the contractor registrations and works hard to help the permit process go smoothly; “customer service” is her primary goal.

Ann has been with the Village since 2005 and in that time has obtained several certifications. This coupled with over 20 years in the construction industry make her an indispensable member of the Homer Glen team.

The ‘building business’ runs in the family. Ann’s husband, Pat Cashman, is the Chief Building Official for the Village of Mokena. They enjoy time with their two sons and four grandchildren when they are not working to help resolve the issues of development and permit processes.

Having lived in the area for over 40 years, Ann has seen the significant growth in the area and enjoys bringing her insight and knowledge to her position. We are fortunate to have Ann on staff for the Village of Homer Glen Building Department.

“Sense of Community” con’t.

friends, together to celebrate our past, present and more importantly, our future.

It is such an exciting time for our Village. Shortly we will know the results of our special census. By our estimates, the Village will be able to collect the revenue for over 1,000 residents that have been unaccounted for since 2004.

It is my hope that we will pass the threshold for

Home Rule and begin to control our own destiny by providing additional revenue through the collection of development impact fees. This additional revenue will allow us to plan for sewer extensions, drainage control projects, park acquisitions and development. We can also begin to plan for a town center that will provide our community with a central gathering place and identity unique to Homer Glen.

The Village has worked hard to establish an ethic that strives to protect our natural resources, maintain our quality of life and secure a strong economic future. For such a young Village, we have come a long way. I hope to see you at “Homer Harvest Days” as we celebrate our rural beginnings and build on the identity we are all so proud of.

**New Homer Festival Planned
for September 13th and 14th**

Starting this year, residents of the Homer area will have a harvest festival of their very own. The first annual Homer Harvest Days will be held on September 13th and 14th at the Trantina Farm (15800 W. 151st St.). The event will celebrate the unique rural character



and agricultural heritage of Homer Glen and Homer Township. It will also mark the grand opening of the Trantina Farm, a Homer Township Open Space property.

The Village of Homer Glen and Homer Township have been working together to plan the festival, which will feature old-fashioned entertainment and games, children’s activities, demonstrations of long-lost activities of farm life, a petting zoo, antique tractors, hay rides, food, exhibitors, live music, and other amusements and diversions from a simpler and more rural era. One of the highlights of the event will be an unveiling of the recently reconstructed 1850’s Austin-Welter Barn.

For more information on the festival, including information on events and sponsors, please visit www.homerharvestdays.org. Volunteers are also being sought to work at the event. Please see the website or call the Village at (708) 301-0632 for details.

Hours for the festival are:

Sat. 11 a.m. to 6 p.m., Sun. 11 a.m. to 4 p.m.

ANNUAL HOMER COMMUNITY INDEPENDENCE DAY PARADE AND FESTIVAL A BIG SUCCESS!



Residents lined up along Parker Road to enjoy the annual Independence Day parade featuring over 50 participants including state, county, township and village officials. A welcome addition to this year's parade was the Lockport High School marching band, entertaining residents all along the parade route. Homer Glen was proud to welcome 30 teachers from around the world who were attending a Fulbright sponsored institute at the University of Illinois at Chicago. From 27 different countries, these remarkable educators came for six weeks to learn about the United States, its culture and people.

The Festival featured a food court including Pepe's Mexican Restaurant, Chesdan's Pizza, Popcorn by Boy Scout Troop #63 and Water, Candy and Snacks sponsored by local Girl Scout Troop. Entertainment was provided by a local High School group, Wright Radio featuring Joe Crylen and Brian O'Malley followed by the lead band, "The Staff".

Activities sponsored by Homer Library and the Book Mobile included a Magician, face painting and games enjoyed by children and adults alike. Dino Jumps, sponsored by the Northwest Fire Department, were a big hit again this year along with Homer Fire department fire hoses and water ball entertainment.

This year's parade and festival proved to be a fun-filled day of traditional family fun! Log on to our website for additional photos and volunteer opportunities at www.homerglen.org.



Cardinal Fitness and Meijer's Store Moving to Bell and 143rd

Lindley Ehlert, Village Planner

Cardinal Fitness' main headquarters will soon be relocating from their Orland Park offices to their new home within Founders Crossing on Bell Road. The Village Board recently approved the 1-story, 7,400 square foot office building that will house the corporate offices. The existing Cardinal Fitness Gym will remain within Founders Crossing North.

The proposed Meijers Store has been progressing through the annexation and development process and will soon be calling the northeast corner of Bell and 143rd its newest location in the southwest suburbs. Earlier plans approved by the county have been revised and Board approvals are expected in late September. The development includes a 156,000 square foot building with a drive up pharmacy, outdoor garden center, and a gas station.

Preliminary discussions have also begun for hotel and medical office facilities for the parcel at the northeast corner of 159th Street and Gougar Road. The Village will be working with property representatives at upcoming ICSC (International Council of Shopping Centers) events.



PRESERVE and PROTECT OUR STREAMS and CREEKS

Following are a few simple steps that will minimize stream bank erosion, improve drainage and help clean up our valuable streams:

- Remove large obstructions and man-made litter;
- Never dump leaves, grass clippings or other organic matter near or into a stream or creek (Illinois State statutes prohibit dumping grass clippings and other waste into creeks and streams);
- Never dump oils, grease or hazardous products into a stream;
- Plant and protect suitable vegetation along stream banks and adjacent areas; and
- Do not channelize (straighten) or disrupt stream bottoms.

For more information contact Trustee Marcia DeVivo, chairperson of the Long Run Creek Watershed Planning Committee, at:

mdevivo@homerglen.org

RECYCLING FACTS

Recycling one ton of old paper saves 7000 gallons of water...



Recycling the steel from six cars can provide enough steel framing for an entire new house.

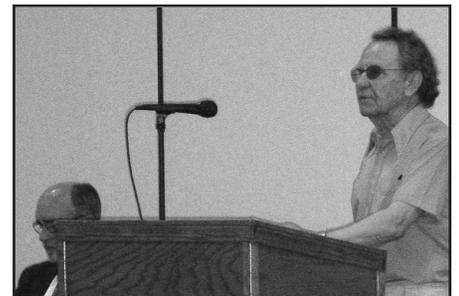
Residents and Village Work Together to Decrease Water Bills

Paula J. Wallrich, Village Manager

The room was charged with emotion as I sat listening to the testimony of Homer Glen residents. It was the public forum regarding the reconciliation charge filed by Illinois American Water. I was aware of the Village’s concern about the quality of service, past billing practices and cost of water, but had not witnessed the personal side of this issue before. Approximately 150 residents came out on this summer evening in July to make a statement about their water. Although I had hoped to see the room filled to capacity, after listening to their comments it became apparent that it wasn’t the number of residents that mattered. Any one of the comments was significant enough to get the attention of Mr. Bensko, (ICC Hearing Officer), IAW or the representatives from the Attorney General’s office who were in attendance. The professionalism of the resident’s testimony was impressive despite the emotional nature of the issue. Water is not a discretionary commodity. Mothers commented about limiting bath time for their children; fathers mentioned rationing their lawn sprinkling or washing their cars. Conservation was the common practice that Homer Glen residents have been compelled to adopt yet questions were left unanswered on what IAW was doing about ‘lost’ water. Testimony was given recounting episodes of broken hydrants, unmetered water usage during construction and water main breaks taking days to repair.

As I have attempted to navigate my way through all this new ‘water jargon’, terms such as ‘reconciliation’, ‘surcharges’ and ‘unaccounted for water’ are becoming familiar. It is a complex issue, but I believe the Mayor said it best when he stated, “anyone else would be out of business by now if they didn’t account for losses of this magnitude in their business practices”.

Illinois American Water representatives have agreed to meet with the Village to discuss ways to decrease the amount of unaccounted for water. Currently IAW is claiming 18.58% of the water metered at the source is ‘lost’ and consequently they are not being compensated for it. Water used during construction may be one opportunity to recoup some of these losses. We are hopeful that IAW will provide some additional ideas to curb this waste. In the meantime, staff has been directed to continue to work with our legal counsel and consultants to evaluate the possibility of acquiring the sewer and water facilities in Homer Glen as well as the water transmission line from Bedford Park. The Village is part of a consortium of villages that are working together to decrease the cost of water to our residents. We encourage our residents to stay involved in this issue. The public forum held in July was successful and we appreciate those that took the time to make comments to the ICC. Our website provides a link to the Illinois Commerce Commission where residents can also make comments regarding these issues. (<http://www.homerglen.org/Services/water.htm>) The Mayor and Village Board have pledged to continue to investigate this issue to provide quality water service at a fair cost to Homer Glen residents.



Homer Glen's New Village Park to Open Soon!

"Build it and they will come"....soon residents will enjoy the newest park in Homer Glen, Stonebridge Park in the Stonebridge Woods subdivision. Currently under construction, the 5.6 acre park will include a picnic shelter, a walking path around the park, sand volleyball court, tennis court, basketball court and state-of-the-art playground area.



After months of planning by the Homer Glen Parks and Recreation committee with valuable input from village residents and financial help from an OSLAD Grant, the park will be the largest park in the Village providing residents with an array of activities.



Summer Road Improvements

Mike Salamowicz, Development Services Director

As Chicagoland area residents have learned, with the arrival of spring we have also become accustomed to the arrival of construction season, and Homer Glen residents were not immune. This year the Village and the Homer Township Highway Department's maintenance program consisted of nearly 43,000 feet (over 8 miles) of roadway resurfacing. Work began in June and was complete on-time and within budget. Additional road paving was included due to savings realized from competitive bidding. We appreciate your patience during these times. The Township has done an excellent job in staying ahead of the road improvements in our area despite the pretty harsh winter.

The Village has been working closely with IDOT and the County Highway Department to coordinate improvements to 159th Street (IDOT) and 143rd and Bell Roads (County). Absent a State Capital Improvement Bill the widening of 159th will remain an unfunded, unscheduled road improvement project. Resurfacing remains on IDOT's 2010 schedule, however the Village will continue to lobby for interim improvements to address current life safety issues.

The County has identified Bell Road improvements from 131st Street south to 159th Street for Phase I engineering. Improvements to 143rd include the temporary signalization project at Lemont Road under current construction and ultimately widening 143rd Street between Lemont and Bell. Construction of 143rd street east of Bell Road to Will-Cook Road is scheduled to begin fall 2009. The intersection improvements remain a high priority for the County and the Village, however no firm date for construction has been set.

On another traffic related note, area drivers should soon be able travel north on Gouger Road again. Due to delays on the construction of the new Gouger Road configuration, crews have begun patching the existing Gouger Road between 151st Street and State Street. It is anticipated that Gouger Road will be returned to service sometime in September.

CRIME TIPS

from Sgt. Michael D. Homberg

Most property crimes are crimes of opportunity. The following recommendations may prevent you or your neighbors from becoming a victim of a property crime.

1. Make sure your residence is locked and secured especially at night.
2. Lock your vehicle at all times, especially when parked in your driveway.
3. Do not leave valuable items in your vehicle.
4. Keep your garage door closed and locked whether you are home or not.
5. Report suspicious activity to the Police. This includes strangers walking or driving around your neighborhood.
6. Lastly, follow your instincts, if it doesn't seem right it's probably not, so report it to the Police.

If we all work together we can greatly reduce the opportunity for someone to commit a property crime.





Homer Township Public Library

Celebrating 25 Years of Service to the Community

The Homer Library is celebrating its 25th anniversary this year! The library serves as the community's center for information, facilitating knowledge and learning, promoting the joys of reading, and supporting the needs of the Homer community.

Serving both Homer Glen and Homer Township, the Homer Township Public Library is located at 14320 W. 151st Street, in Homer Glen. The library began in a small one room location with an original staff of one. Now with a staff of 30+, it proudly serves more than 600 visitors each day and recently added hours on Sunday evenings from September to May.



To celebrate their first 25 years, the Library hosted an anniversary "Festival of Culture " event on June 7th, 2008. This event was partially funded by a LSTA grant and featured cultural entertainment, children's ethnic crafts, strolling mariachi bands and around the world food stations. State Representative, Renee Kosel along with Homer Glen Mayor, Jim Daley, and many local dignitaries were present along with over 1500 attendees, celebrating this milestone event in our Library's history.

Each month the Library hosts numerous events, workshops, reading programs, community outreach programs and houses a diverse collection of more than 100,000 items that include both fiction and non-fiction books, bestsellers, classics, a full range of CD's, magazines, recorded books, large-print, audio-visual materials and children's collections, including school text books. September is Library Card Sign up Month. Plan to visit the Homer Library and log onto www.homerlibrary.org to find out what exciting events are taking place this month.

We salute the Homer Public Library for their 25 years of excellence in serving the residents of Homer Glen and Homer Township.



A year long celebration for the Homer Chamber of Commerce 20th Anniversary will culminate on November 20th at Di Nolfo's Banquet Hall. Participating businesses will be recognized at the event which will include a Grand Prize raffle of \$2500 to be given away.

The Chamber started in 1988 with 12 Charter members. To date, the Chamber membership has grown to over 280 members.

Throughout the year the Chamber hosts a variety of business events including a monthly Chamber Luncheon, Business After Hours, and networking events. The Chamber also offers new business owners various resources to help establish successful businesses within the Township. A yearly Chamber Community Expo and Health Fair highlights many of the businesses throughout the community. This year the event is scheduled for September 20th at Hadley School, 157321 Bell Road. In honor of the Chamber's 20th Anniversary, a raffle give-away of \$500.00 will be drawn by one lucky winner.

The Chamber established a **Scholarship** program which awards one \$1,000.00 scholarship to a 2008 graduating student who is a resident of Homer Township or has a parent or guardian that is a Homer Township Chamber member. The **Honor Card Program** is a positive recognition program honoring students from the Lockport/Homer area schools for high academic achievement and/or perfect attendance.

Be sure to support your local businesses "Shop Homer Glen and Homer Township". To find out more about the Homer Township Chamber, log on to the website at: www.homerchamber.com.

Congratulations to the Homer Township Chamber of Commerce on your 20th Anniversary!

HOME FIRE SAFETY –

by Steve Wydeveld,
Chief Building Official



A unique study was performed by the Fire Protection Research Foundation of the National Fire Protection Association, called the Residential Electrical System Aging Project. Steve Wydeveld, Board Member for the Foundation and Chief Building Official for the Village of Homer Glen revived this project that had been ‘on the shelf’ for many years.

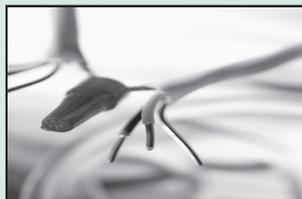
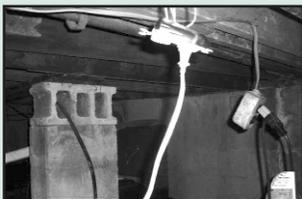
The project was based on inspections of electrical systems and equipment in a sampling of older homes across the country. The assessment included a ‘look within and behind the walls of each home’ and also detailed testing of selected components. After the detailed inspection of each home, technicians also collected ‘key electrical system components’ such as receptacles, switches, light fixtures, junction boxes and breaker panels, etc. After collecting the key components all materials were shipped to Underwriters Laboratories (UL), in Northbrook for evaluation and testing.

The findings of the study are as follows:

1. “Failure to meet well recognized, proven safety code provisions found in the National Electrical Code.”
2. “Failure to properly install and maintain important electrical equipment. “

As a follow-up to the study a website has been created to further educate the public in regard to the study’s findings, www.homefiresafety.com. We encourage the public to view the site and read the informational reports of this project.

Safety is always foremost in our minds at the Village and we hope it is with you as well!



Fall safety tips....

With the autumn right around the corner, the Village of Homer Glen is encouraging residents to take advantage of the yard waste services provided by NuWay Disposal. As a safe alternative to burning, all yard waste can be picked up on your regular pickup day from April 1st through November 30th, at no extra cost!

Burning creates environmental and health repercussions. Of all the material you burn, 7% to 9% ends up in the air which can lead to serious health problems and environmental issues.

If you must burn, please take the necessary steps to minimize the danger and the nuisance of the resulting smoke.

- For safety reasons, please keep open burning fires on private property at least 50 feet from all structures and vegetation.
- Recreational burning in approved containers or fire pits need to be at least 25 feet away from structures.
- Never burn when the wind speed is below 5 MPH or over 15 MPH, or on cloudy days.
- All fires must be constantly attended with some type of extinguishing agent present for immediate utilization, such as garden hoses.

The adopted Fire Code specifies that open burning is allowed without prior notification to the Code Official only for the following: recreational fires, highway safety flares, smudge pots, burning of leaves, branches or bushes originating on an owner’s property and similar occupational needs.

To obtain open burning permits, please contact your local fire district.

Remember to be courteous to your fellow residents and help keep our community and environment healthy.

Mark your calendar...

AMERICA RECYCLES DAY – November 15th

www.americarecyclesday.org

Trantina Farm Grand Opening and First Annual **Homer Harvest Days**



September 13th & 14th, 2008

Saturday 11 a.m.-6p.m., Sunday 11 a.m.-4p.m.

Located at the Trantina Farm - 151st St. east of Gougar Rd.

- * **Live Music**
- * **Food Tent**
- * **Petting Zoo**
- * **KIDS' BARN**
- * **Outdoor Games**
- * **Square Dancing**
- * **Antique Tractors**
- * **Hay Rides**
- * **Artisans & Crafts**
- * **Demonstrations**
- * **Old-Time Entertainment**
- * **and much more...**

Acres of Old-Fashioned Fun

www.homerharvestdays.org



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Community and Nature . . . in Harmony

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Village of Homer Glen Mission Statement

The Village of Homer Glen is committed to preserving, protecting, and enhancing our community's quality of life through responsible residential and economic development while utilizing sound fiscal management. We will strive to maintain open space, preserve our unique rural character, and safeguard our natural resources. The village encourages community involvement in order to maintain and cultivate a balance of family, agriculture, business, environment, and cultural diversity for present and future generations.

PRSRTD STANDARD
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Village of Homer Glen Officials

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Jim Daley

Clerk

Gale Skrobuton

Trustees

Marcia DeVivo

Russell Knaack

Christopher Locacius

Mary Niemiec

Margaret Sabo

Laurel Ward

Village Board Meets

2nd & 4th Tuesday of the Month

Plan Commission Meets

1st & 3rd Monday of the Month

Please refer to our Website for weekly updates
regarding meeting times and agendas

www.homerglen.org

To the Homer Glen Resident at: