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COMMUNITY ORGANIZATION

Bowmanville Bee

Newsletter Spring 2023

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Visit our website at www.bcochicago.org.

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President's Message

We had a really successful Earth day celebration, despite mother nature not cooperating. Check out the update and pictures on pages 2-3. Before you know it, we will be celebrating our annual **Street Sale on June 3** with gorgeous weather! Check out the details for on page 11—deadline for seller registration is May 20. This issue I'm handing over the President's Message to Jeff Graves, the BCO Vice President and long-standing Bowmanville resident! Alysa

Jeff Graves, BCO Vice-President

I and my partner, Jack Beaupied, moved to Bowmanville in October 2003. So, I guess that means we're about to celebrate our 20th anniversary here on 2100 block of Summerdale.

It's really strange how time can both "fly by" and seem like "forever." When reminiscing about all the block parties we've enjoyed, or the many BCO events we volunteered for or attended, it seems like a lifetime of memories. But I can't wrap my head around being here 20 years already!

I'm a lifelong Chicagolander (yes, that's a thing). I was born and raised in Burbank IL, bordering Chicago along south Cicero Ave. As a young adult I skipped around all over the south suburbs and Chicago, eventually settling on the north side. I've had three careers: Dominick's Finer Foods, Information Resources Inc, and now a Realtor with @properties, where I'm also celebrating 20 years. I focus my business on the neighborhood where I live, and I just love it!

Helping the BCO Improve our Community

About a year into living in Bowmanville, a neighbor, Frank Pipal, "cornered me" and asked me to join the BCO Board. I've been on the Board ever since. I have held every executive position and chaired many committees. The Planning and Development Committee has been my main focus.

Work on that committee ebbs and flows depending on development activities at any given time. I was on the GreenSpace committee when our community saw an opportunity to purchase an old house on Bowmanville Ave and convert that land into our own park. Then a few years later, we did it all over again to purchase a vacant lot along Ravenswood Avenue, which is now the Gateway Garden. Both are beautiful open spaces for all of us to enjoy, and I'm so proud to have been a part of that work.

You will most likely see either Jack or me walking our Wheaten Terrier, Duncan, around the neighborhood. If you do, say hi! Duncan is super friendly and loves all other dogs. Some may remember our first Wheaten, Katie. We had an article about her in the 2018 Summer Bee (look it up on BCOChicago.org).

Other than spoiling our dog, we love to travel, hike, ski, drink craft beer, and mostly enjoy this great city and all our amazing neighborhoods. I feel extremely fortunate to have 'landed' in Bowmanville and hope to stay for at least another 20 years!



Jeff, Jack and Duncan

Nasty Weather Didn't Trash BCO's Earth Day Cleanup

It was a frigid and blustery Earth Day this year, with highs only in the lower 40s, intermittent drizzle and flurries, and even some graupel. Regardless, dozens of determined neighbors, fortified by the coffee, cider and donuts provided by the BCO, braved the elements to help clean

up our streets, parkways and gardens, covering nearly every street in the neighborhood. A big THANK YOU to everyone who took part in our 5th Annual Earth Day Cleanup for making it a sparkling success!



Some of our good neighbors at the cleanup

Congratulations to Bowmanville's Emerson O'Dell, a 5th grader at Chappell Elementary school, for winning the Earth Day Art Contest (see her winning entry below)! In addition to having her artwork featured here and on

posters in the gardens, she received a \$75 gift card to spend on art supplies. Emerson's stunning entry surely helped get neighbors excited to pitch in despite this year's inclement weather.



It doesn't have to be Earth Day to tidy up the neighborhood. Now and then, gather your family and a couple neighbors and head out to your alley or walk along the parkway to pick up trash.

No matter how you contribute, we thank you for helping Keep Bowmanville Beautiful!

*Artwork by
Emerson O'Dell*

COMMUNITY NEWS

Earth Day Tree Plantings

In addition to the regular Earth Day Clean-up, the BCO Gardening Committee also coordinated some special Earth Day garden workday events in the Bowmanville Garden. On two consecutive Sundays (including Earth Day!), volunteers prepared the soil and planted various shrubs and trees along the Bowmanville pathway. Volunteers even received training on proper tree and shrub planting techniques from resident expert Paul Naylor, who also coordinated all of the new trees and shrubs.



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Introducing BCO Board Members

Continuing our profiles of new and long-standing members of the BCO Board of Directors from prior Bee issues, please see introductions of some of our members.

Matt Murray and his wife, Rose, moved to Bowmanville in July 2020 after living in several other Chicago neighborhoods. Their family (and our community's population) has grown since then with the addition of Tessa, now two years old, and Patrick, born in October 2022.

Bowmanville has proven to be a great place to raise a family, and they are very pleased to have made this neighborhood their home. The proximity to Winnemac Park, the walking distance to Andersonville and Lincoln Square, and their amazing neighbors have made the challenges of having a young family much easier. Matt and Rose look forward to seeing the neighborhood, and their family, continue to grow for many years to come!

Donna Martin lives on the lower 1900s block of Berwyn. She grew up in the south suburbs of Chicago and moved to the city in 1998, where she lived in Lincoln Park, the West Loop, Andersonville, and Ravenswood.



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BOARD NEWS

Introducing BCO Board Members

Donna Martin con't

In 2012, she and her husband Ted bought a time-capsule fixer-upper in Bowmanville and have been very slowly renovating it. Up until last year, they still had a tiny 1950s kitchen!

Donna has (lightly used) degrees in Architecture from UIUC and the Pastry Arts from the French Pastry School. When she's not out of town working as a meeting facilitator, she spends her time baking (obviously), knitting, learning to sew, and working on projects around the house. She has two energetic dogs, Frances and Olga.

Donna helped organize the Metra pedestrian tunnel mural restoration project in 2016 and has always been interested in keeping Bowmanville beautiful, welcoming, and fun. So she decided it was time to join the BCO Board.

Donna would like to help bring more public arts projects to the neighborhood, so please send in your ideas to publicart@bcochicago.org.



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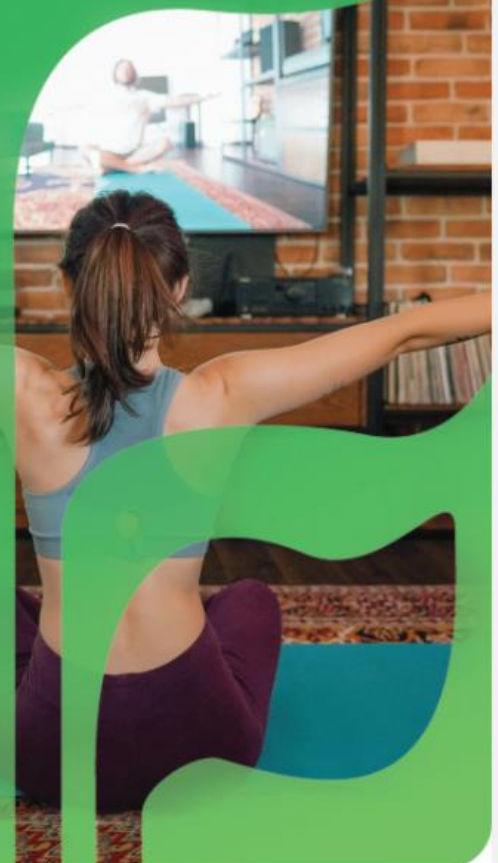
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COMMUNITY INTEREST

When Summerdale Made the Headlines

By Seth Captain, BCO Board Member

On the northwest corner of Winchester and Foster, across from K's Dugout, sits a squat stone-block building with a stark exterior and a large empty parking lot. You've probably passed it countless times and said to yourself, "Why has nobody redeveloped this yet." Or "That empty parking lot would make a great ice rink, a playlot, or maybe even a farmers' market with a vegan hot dog stand."

Those with an eye for architecture may have wondered, "What are those star-and-stripes designs under the windows?" But no matter what one has thought of the building, a puzzling question remains: "What was this place?"

If you've been in Bowmanville for less than 20 years, you might be surprised to learn that this 1930s New Deal structure, crafted from Indiana limestone, is the former home of the Summerdale Police Station, which was retired in 2002. The station's employees were known for their heavy patronage of K's bar, and the building is

famous for an explosive scandal that almost sank the political future of Mayor Richard J. Daley.

Not all Law and Order

The 1960s in Chicago began with the headlines, "Summerdale Scandal." Before Fred Hampton frightened Mayor Daley with Panther Power, the DNC gave him an excuse to go after Yuppies, and Joe Kennedy used Da Mare to get Handsome Jack in the Oval Office, the actions taking place at 1940 W. Foster Avenue forced Daley and our police department into the spotlight.

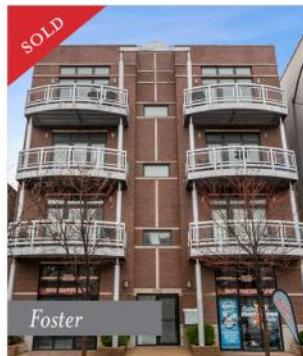
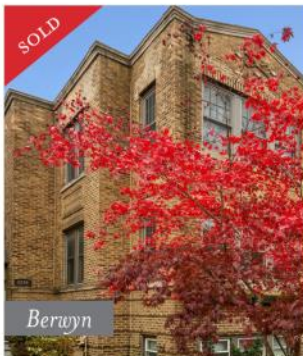
"Summerdale Scandal" sounds like a salacious Netflix show your spouse falls asleep to while you raid the fridge. But what news came out in January of 1960 to merit that headline? The story of the "Babbling Burglar." Richard Morrison was a 23-year-old skilled thief facing 20 years in prison for multiple robberies. He "babbled down" his term by detailing an elaborate crime ring that involved eight police officers of the now vacant police station at Foster and Winchester.



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COMMUNITY INTEREST

When Summerdale Made the Headlines

Con't from page 6

In a 15-month crime spree, the officers, along with Morrison, looted mostly retail stores, stealing everything from drapes and antifreeze (yes, antifreeze) to shotguns and outboard motors. What the officers didn't steal by themselves, they, or their wives, placed "orders" for with the Babbling Burglar.

The value of the stolen merchandise would be worth roughly \$1 million dollars today. Many businesses were forced to close, some having been looted multiple times. Some homeowners reported burglaries to the very officers who stole from them. And these officers did the burglaries on duty, keeping a cache of robber's tools in their patrol cars.

National Impact

The Summerdale Scandal became a national sensation, and, with the next mayoral election just a few years away, Daley was very nervous of losing his throne to an eager rival, the Republican state's attorney, Benjamin Adamowski. So he appointed an outsider, Orlando Wilson, Dean of Criminology at UC Berkeley, to head up and overhaul the Chicago police department.

The changes Superintendent Wilson instituted over the next seven years changed policing across the country. He took the police chief out of the mayor's office, boosted pay for officers, introduced professional exams, started the Internal Affairs division, and turned policing into a respected profession rather than the corrupt practice it had been throughout the nation.

A CPD robbery spree sounds quaint compared to later instances of offenses by the police reported in the news, but historians, and even ChatGPT, agree that policing took a major leap forward after the Summerdale Scandal.

What's Next?

What will happen to this building and its spacious parking lot? For several years it was destined to be the future home of the Griffin Theater. But the theater's board was unable to pivot the \$1 purchase (not a typo) into a functioning theater as costs to renovate the building soared to over 1.5 million dollars. So it remains vacant.

Do you have any ideas for the building and parking lot that would make the site an asset for our community? If so, let Alderman Vasquez know. You can use this contact form, [40thward.org/contact](https://www.40thward.org/contact), or you can stop in at the 40th Ward office and share your ideas.

Editor's note. This article is based on information from the following sources:

- Cohen, A. & Taylor, E., American Pharaoh: Mayor Richard J. Daley - His Battle for Chicago and the Nation. Back Bay Books 2000
- Peterson, V., The Chicago Police Scandals, in The Atlantic Monthly, October, 1960
- Thomas, W., Cops Turn Burglars! City Horrified in The Chicago Tribune, February 23, 1960
- Rogers Park / West Ridge Historical Society, Summerdale District, September 17, 2014 (See details about the scandal at https://www.rpwrhs.org/w/index.php?title=Summerdale_District)



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How I Learned to Stop Worrying and Love the Potholes

By Jordan Dubin, 40th Ward Operations Coordinator



I've lived in Bowmanville for about a year and got involved with Alder Andre Vazquez's office last September. After hearing from many neighbors how responsive our Ward staff are, I decided to start volunteering at the office, answering constituent calls and helping with basic requests.

Since then, I've learned some of the ins and outs of Chicago's bureaucracy and how to help you navigate it. There are many things you can come to our office for (we're located at 5620 N Western Avenue), but I'd like to tell you how to notify us about common issues — like potholes!

The Best Way to Contact Us

We love getting phone calls and especially walk-ins; interacting with the community is my favorite part of the job. Even when folks are upset, knowing that we're discussing tangible problems feels productive.

But the best way to get in touch with our office is through the contact form on our website, 40thward.org/contact. This form has space for you to describe your request in detail, provide the best way to contact you, and even submit photos of issues like dead or overgrown trees or broken streetlights. We are always happy to fix your problems, and if we can't do it, we know who can. I encourage you all to use the contact form to get in touch with us and report things you think could improve the neighborhood.

I scour the streets for things for our office to fix whenever I walk my dog. In the winter I appreciate the solitude and warmth radiating from everyone's homes. In the spring, I get to admire lovely gardens or the chickadees and cardinals in the trees. And year-round, I dodge cars zooming down Leavitt between Bowmanville and Foster!

Pedestrian safety is a passion of mine, and I'm lucky to work in a place that's always looking to make walking and biking in our neighborhood easier and safer. One thing

I've already alerted our office about is the intersection of Leavitt and Summerdale, which lacks a stop sign.

We Would Welcome Your Input and Ideas

We're always working to improve our ward, but we can't do that without learning about the issues that affect you every day. Whether you've got a brilliant plan for a new bike lane or just want to see some action on that pothole that never seems to go away, we want to know. You can send us your infrastructure suggestions by using the link bit.ly/40FIXIT, and our staff will review them. We prioritize the most urgent needs, but every single suggestion is considered.

As a fellow neighbor, I know how important it is to feel like our local government has our backs. That's why we're here, and we're always happy to chat about anything you might need. So don't be a stranger, alright? We'll see you around the Ward!

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BOWMANVILLE ADVICE

Ask Aunt Bee

Introducing Aunt Bee, BCO's Advice Maven

Welcome to our new neighborhood advice column, where no question is off-limits. Topics like neighbor relations, dog etiquette, local traditions, dealing with Chicago's weather, city services, and BCO activities are all fair game. Please submit questions to news@bcochicago.org.

Dear Aunt Bee,

I'm hoping you can clear up a debate I'm having with my neighbor. When I drive through our alley and come to where it crosses the sidewalk, I stop and move VERY slowly. I make sure no one is coming and am extremely cautious. My neighbor, on the other hand, drives through quickly, toots three times as they come to the end of the alley and goes into the street without looking. How did I learn to go slowly? I watched a young teenager nearly get hit. They were wearing headphones and didn't hear the toots. My neighbor insists they are being cautious enough by giving a warning honk and that this is the "Chicago way!" Who is correct?

Signed: Alley crossings with fear

Dear ACWF,

Ah yes, this is an age-old debate, and I am delighted you brought it up. Your neighbor is not wrong that the "toot and roll" is indeed a traditional Chicago way of passing through the alleys. It gives a fair warning, but puts the onus on the pedestrians to watch for cars. However, this practice pre-dates the many ways people shut out the sounds of their environment. And anyone with teens knows that they are rarely without something that does that. In this debate I will say that you are correct and are passing through the alley in a safer way. But as this neighborhood has many residents who subscribe to toot-and-roll, please be very cautious when you cross the alleys and tell your kids to do the same.

Dear Aunt Bee,

I love walking my dog in our neighborhood. She is very friendly and enjoys meeting other dogs. But I notice that sometimes, other dog owners cross the street as we approach, apparently to avoid us. Is this a Bowmanville thing? I really want my dog to socialize, and this seems a bit un-neighborly.

Signed: Hurt Feelings and Four Paws

Dear HFFP,

I would love to meet you and your dog, and I'm sure many other dogs and their people would, too. I had a dog once that we rescued and that generally was the sweetest guy. But sometimes things would set him off that we couldn't predict. So we would have to cross the street when a dog we didn't know was coming, because we wanted to protect everyone involved. Enjoy your walks and greeting the dogs you do get to meet. But don't assume anyone is unfriendly if they cross — there could be a very good reason for that. Live and let sniff!

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Caddyshack Revisited

By Liz Gershfeld, BCO Board Member

I don't think I noticed the mounds of dirt until our second summer in Bowmanville. I assumed the first one I saw was the detritus of an unfinished project. Then I started seeing more of them. "Might be moles — too bad for the people who have them," I thought smugly. Until...

Once the dirt mounds started appearing in our yard, they dominated my attention. I discovered that, indeed, we had moles, and that the game "whack-a-mole" was more documentary than cartoon. I channeled my inner Bill Murray character from Caddyshack, and the fight was on.

Nothing Worked

Our neighbor suggested pushing the handle of a broom into the center of the piles and pouring black pepper down. Tried it. New holes popped up. We bought little solar motion detectors that emit a high pitched sound when triggered. No more moles where we placed these devices, but they popped up in new spots in the yard. And the sounds were less than Zen. We bought synthetic coyote urine. It stank up our yard and they kept coming.

Finally, I had it. My family knew to stay out of my way. I went out in the yard and dug up the lawn one scoop at a time over the course of a weekend. I put down mulch, a few plants, small boulders and river stones. I'm happy with it, and thank the moles when I see it.

Recently I've noticed around the neighborhood the telltale "runways" of a similar animal called a vole. Voles do not leave piles of dirt like moles do. They leave a different sign of their appearance: runways. Vole runways are shallow, smooth tunnels that are usually about two inches wide. They are often found in grassy areas or near gardens. Voles use their runways to travel from one food source to another.

Mind your Moles and Voles

They are both small, burrowing mammals, but have some key differences.

- Size: Moles are typically larger than voles, measuring 4 to 7 inches in length, while voles typically measure 5 to 8 inches in length.
- Appearance: Moles have short tails, while voles have long tails. Moles also have a pointed snout, while voles have a rounded snout.



- Diet: Moles are carnivores and eat insects, grubs, and worms. Voles are herbivores and eat plants.
- Habitat: Moles are found in moist, loose soil, while voles are found in a variety of habitats, including meadows, forests, and gardens.

Another sign of vole activity includes damage to plants. Voles will eat their leaves, stems, and roots, which can damage or kill them.

An Ounce of Prevention...

There are a number of things you can do to prevent moles and voles from coming into your yard, for example:

- Keep your lawn short. They prefer to burrow in long, unkempt grass.
- Remove any debris or piles of wood from your yard. They like to use these as hiding places.
- Aerate your lawn regularly. This will help to loosen the soil and make it less attractive to moles.
- Plant mole and vole-repelling plants around your yard, including marigolds, daffodils, and castor beans. Garlic, chives, onions, leeks, lavender, peppermint, rosemary and tansy are also known to repel them.

If you have moles or voles in your yard, I feel your pain. Good luck — the struggle is real!

BOWMANVILLE EVENTS

BCO Street Sale

Saturday, June 3, 2023

\$10 for BCO Members
\$15 for public
Free for "With Honey" Members

Mark your calendars for June 3rd for the return of our huge BCO Street Sale! All residents living in the BCO boundaries — Foster to Bowmanville, and Ravenswood to Western Ave. — are invited to participate as sellers (with registration). **Registration Deadline is May 20.**

<https://bcochicago.org/events/bowmanville-street-sale>

Questions? Send an email to events@bcochicago.org

Volunteers Needed!

Please consider volunteering a small amount of time to assist us in organizing the Street Sale this year. We are seeking help with putting together and distributing packets and posting signs. To volunteer, please email: events@bcochicago.org

Don't forget the Garden Walk coming up on July 15!

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BOWMANVILLE COMMUNITY ORGANIZATION COMMITTEES



Bowmanville's community newsletter, *The Bowmanville Bee*, is published quarterly with the goal of sharing the neighborhood buzz and promoting local business. We work closely with BCO members and neighbors to gather local stories that help make Bowmanville the unique and proud community. The Bee urges the submission of relevant content to news@bcochicago.org.



The Communications Committee provides many ways for the BCO to connect to the community and for the community to make its voice heard through the BCO. These include our website, Facebook, the Bowmanville Bee, Instagram and email eBlasts. Contact: comm@bcochicago.org.



The Events Committee is one of the best ways to meet neighbors throughout the community, and have a lot of fun while you're at it! Each year we continue our Earth Day Clean-up in April, Annual Street Sale in June, Bowmanville Garden Walk in July, and Summer Social in August. If you can help let us know! We need help to make it happen. We are always looking for new twists for annual events and new event ideas. **Contact** events@bcochicago.org.



The BCO Gardening Committee continues to enhance and maintain our community garden spaces. The BCO acts as a steward for the pathways, garden spaces and vegetable plots along Bowmanville Avenue and along Ravenswood at Balmoral, including the Greenspace by Rosehill on Bowmanville and the bump-out planters at Berwyn and Bowmanville. We continue to look for opportunities to expand and improve on green spaces in our area. We are thankful for our vegetable plot and community volunteers! We look to the entire community to join our efforts in implementing a sensible and enduring stewardship plan for all of our open spaces and as we endeavor to improve our natural surroundings. **For more details and to pitch in, contact the garden committee at** gardening@bcochicago.org.



The Membership Committee focuses on ways to continually engage and support our community and grow our membership base. We reach out to new neighbors and new and renewing members. Not a BCO member, go to our the BCO website to join. **Contact** membership@bcochicago.org. **Get involved, you won't regret it!**



The Planning & Development Committee gathers periodically to discuss issues of change, development and improvement of our fine community. P&D interacts with local residents, businesses, and the Alderman's office to influence the evolution of our community. The P&D committee meets as issues arise. **Contact** planning@bcochicago.org.



The Public Art committee was formed in 2010 to explore the idea of a mural in the Berwyn pedestrian tunnel at Ravenswood. That idea became reality very quickly! A restoration of the painted interior took place Summer 2016. Want more public art? **Contact** publicart@bcochicago.org to get involved or with new ideas.

BCO MEMBERSHIP— JOIN TODAY!

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