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COMMUNITY ORGANIZATION

Bowmanville Bee

Newsletter Summer 2023

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Visit our website at www.bcochicago.org.

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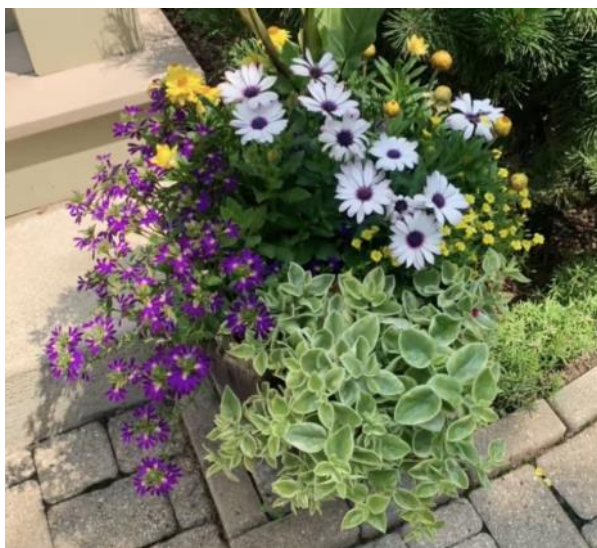
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President's Message

Welcome to Summer! We've already enjoyed two Bowmanville events this summer—the June Street Sale and July Garden Walk. Please see the recap and pictures from our successful Garden Walk on pages 8 -9 and photo below.

Despite a lot of competing neighborhood street sales on the same day, the Bowmanville Street Sale still had a good turn-out. 107 homes participated with yard sales. We had another beautiful clear day so that neighbors could fill the streets and chat while they shopped. I love the sense of community during the summer events—meeting new people, sharing stories, and getting to know one another better. This comraderie is what makes Bowmanville the great community it is.

Our final event of the summer is the Summer Social on August 19 with ice cream, bouncy house, huge water slide, fire truck, kids games, food, drinks and local beer, and great live music! So far we have our local bluegrass band and a new pop group lined up to entertain the crowd. I hope to see you there. Our summer social chairman and events team have been hard at work on this year's party, and it is shaping up to be another amazing day. Be on the look-out via email and social media for any weather related updates should they be needed.



Speaking of community, I am always excited to find new gems in the neighborhood, and I recently stumbled upon a fun way to get exercise close to home. During the pandemic, Christine Jacobs started an outdoor fitness club in Washington DC as a way of getting outdoors and connecting with neighbors during a disconnected time. It grew to a vibrant 300+ strong community. She's recently moved to Chicago and started a similar meet-up for HIIT (High-Intensity Interval Training) classes in Winnemac Park on Saturday mornings. I've attended several work-outs already and have enjoyed Christine's energy amidst the beauty of Winnemac Park. If you're interested, join her mailing list—bit.ly/northsidefitclub—all you need is a yoga mat, water bottle, and towel. We typically meet at 10 near Argyle and Seeley inside the park. I can't say I always keep up, but the workout is easily modified to suit one's level, and it's always fun and invigorating.

This issue of the Bee is jammed packed with info about neighborhood news—celebratory, sad, informative, various viewpoints and hopefully most of all, interesting. Thanks to all that have contributed and hope to see everyone out and about soon.

— Alysia

Mark your calendars!

BCO Summer Social

Saturday, August 19
12 pm—5 pm

*Ravenswood Ave between
Balmoral and Summerdale*



Remembering Our Beloved Neighbor, Joe Charles

"Life is hard, so you might as well do what you love."
— Joe Charles

By Betty Redmond



A great sadness came to our Bowmanville community when we learned of the passing on April 29 of Joseph "Joe" Francis Charles, Jr. from complications of a stroke. Joe, born December 6, 1951, is survived by his best friend, soulmate, and former spouse, Anne Boyle, as well as by many siblings and neighbors who counted him as a brother and a friend.

Before settling in our neighborhood, Joe graduated from Senn High School in 1970, attended Columbia College, and studied piano, guitar, harmonica and accordion. Steeped in Chicago's rich Blues and Jazz musical traditions, he soon hit the road on an epic cross-country musical tour. Returning to Chicago, he became a regular fixture on the local music scene and played with blues greats Big Walter, Floyd Jones, Eddie Taylor, Muddy Waters and Koko Taylor.

Joe performed extensively on the North Side club circuit at legendary Chicago venues such as Biddy Mulligan's, Minstrels and Wise Fools Pub. He was a member of Blues By Five, the first blues band to play at Kingston Mines.

Beautifying Bowmanville

Joe and Anne put down roots in Bowmanville in 1996 when they bought the 1890's farmhouse across the street from the site that became the first of four BCO Gardens. A master carpenter by day, he spent a decade transforming the farmhouse into an architectural masterpiece. Joe's creativity and attention to detail, and Anne's artistic sensibilities extended beyond the building itself as they transformed the grounds into one of the most beautiful home gardens in the neighborhood.



Their generosity was essential to our community garden installations along Bowmanville Avenue. These include the original ornamental centerpiece at the intersection of Leavitt, Balmoral and Bowmanville, the vegetable plots at the eastern end of the intersection, and the open GreenSpace to the west of it. For nearly three decades, Joe put in countless hours of planting, weeding, and (most critically) watering these garden spaces throughout every drought.

"Many hands make work light" when it comes to building community and creating a place where city neighbors can gather amidst the beauties of nature. Nevertheless, hard labor was required to build and nurture these spaces, so Joe and Anne frequently hosted many volunteers in their home and garden, providing respite, food and music. Joe also contributed his know-how, time, strength and sweat. His can-do volunteer spirit, sense of humor and love of music was an inspiration to the many neighbors who have made Bowmanville the welcoming haven it is today.

We'll Miss His Friendly Spirit

Neighborhood dogs and their human companions frequently enjoyed Joe's gregarious presence in the GreenSpace, throwing a ball for Zoe, the cattle dog. A few neighbors will recollect Joe's help as they launched a rescue mission to save an abandoned rooster left in a box in the cemetery. Neighborhood kids will treasure their memories of epic video games on newly acquired systems. All who knew him will miss the friendly chat they could rely on as he watered the lush parkway grass and garden and worked on the house he shared with Anne.



He will be sorely missed by his family, friends, neighbors, blues fans and fellow musicians. Our days were enriched by his companionship, humor and talent, and the soundtrack of our lives will be less rich and resonant with his passing.

"How about it for Joe Charles singin' and playin' the blues for you!"
— Koko Taylor

COMMUNITY NEWS

Benita's Hair Salon Closes

By Kathleen Mullen

After operating her salon at 2308 west Foster Avenue in Bowmanville for 47 years (right next to the Claddagh Ring), Benita has retired and closed her business. I and the many people from our neighborhood and beyond who came there to get their hair or nails done will miss her, her staff and her reliable five-star service.

Customers and passersby will also miss seeing the large chandelier in the middle of the room and the coffee table beneath it with stacks of magazines to browse through whenever you liked. The salon always had a pleasant vibe, usually with a few ladies lounging, chatting, or munching on snacks from clear plastic or tin bins not far from a full coffee pot.

Benita and her staff have been a real asset to Bowmanville for so long that it will be hard not to see her there anymore. Over the years, many people have left feeling "looking good" and nurtured by the caring service and sense of community in the salon. Thanks for all the good years, Benita. We wish you a fond farewell and all the best for your retirement!



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A Tavern We Can Be Proud to Call Ours

By Seth Captain, BCO Board Member

For some locals, this is the neighborhood of "5 Bars and No Churches." One of our taverns to keep on pouring is Big Joe's, anchoring Bowmanville's southeast corner for at least 60 years. Some know it as the "Turtle-Racing Bar," but it's much more than that.

You can learn *a lot* about *a lot* from reading. But you learn the story of a pub from listening to the regulars. A neighborhood tavern has always been the domain of the "true self," a place where one can go to experience both unfiltered thoughts and camaraderie. If the bar doesn't permit certain language, and the patrons don't offer you a stool and a smile, then that's not a true neighborhood tavern. Big Joe's permits, and it offers. And it was through three guys who have been regulars at the bar for over 50 years that some history was to be learned.

Fish, Bezaz and Wags were playing their weekly mid-afternoon game of pool, happy to win a quarter, and almost as happy to lose one. It didn't take long for the memory train.

The Working Man's bar. That's what Joe's was. Well, it was Raven's Pub back then. Big George was running the place since at least the late 60s. And the large factory buildings now hosting Foster Self Storage and the recently deceased and desisted Empirical Brewing were bountiful repositories of eager drinkers. Not drunks and brawlers. Just hard workers looking to unwind and socialize. Friday payday was so popular that one could barely squeeze in the door. And there was a kitchen dishing out a house special every day. Don't get Bezaz started on the Thursday meatloaf: "I can cook, let me tell ya, but no matter how hard I tried, I could not re-create that recipe." And it wasn't all men. Women were there too. Guys even brought their kids for a Shirley Temple.

Then there was the "incident." They remembered it vividly – February 1974. Two cops shot and killed. A sawed off shotgun. A young local guy wanted for escaping arrest. The police watched the escapee go into Raven's. It was a crowded Friday, so nobody saw it. The murderer fled to Wisconsin, where he was later killed in a shootout.

Darts and Turtles

Big George wasn't going to let the popular tavern die. But the tragedy and resulting publicity were not good. So Raven's Pub became the 2 & 6 Pub. Allegedly (aren't all bar stories "alleged"?) Raven's / 2 & 6 was one of the first bars in America

to offer darts. "2 & 6" actually refers to the common dart score of 26, also referred to as scoring a "bed and breakfast," a reference to the long-ago cost of an English B&B (2 shillings & 6 pence).

Soon Big George was setting up a full in-pub dart store, and world-acclaimed dart mongers were coming to throw at the 2 & 6.



The bar was surrounded by dart boards including the acclaimed "Board #1." This is where the top players wanted to throw. Dart leagues blossomed. Soon the bar became so full of dart plaques and trophies that they ran out of room on the walls. There was no pool table here. For that, people went down the street to the copper bar, K's.

The early 90s saw a couple of major tavern changes in the area. The slashie, "Hahnsy's," (Hahn's liquor store) on Clark turned into the Hopleaf. "They actually kept the original bar," remarked Bezaz and retired CPS gym teacher Big Joe took over from Big George. The bar was renamed Big Joe's. The kitchen in the back was taken out for a pool table. Some of the dart boards were removed. Factories were closing. And Lincoln Park's Deja Vu had stopped hosting the obscure Chicago sport of turtle-racing.

So Big Joe brought in a new group of terrapins. They resided peacefully above the bar, Fish says, until some "\$%#*" called the Anti-Cruelty society and they were forced to bunker in the basement.

Con't on page 5

COMMUNITY INTEREST

A Tavern We Can Be Proud to Call Ours

Con't from page 4

Fish was the original announcer, seven glorious years of television interviews, groupies, and one particular patron who would spend the evening harassing his "cruel treatment" of loggerheads. You can still catch the turtles every Friday night, where a winning turtle could earn you a trip to Vegas – yes, *the* Vegas! And if turtles aren't sophisticated enough, you are invited to the bar daily for Final Jeopardy, where the bartender will hand you a free drink token if you guess correctly.

Big Joe's isn't flashy. The cocktails aren't made with obscure liqueurs. The beers aren't aged in a monk's cave. And nobody cares what irony is on your t-shirt. But with 60 years (possibly longer) of welcoming thirsty souls, it still maintains a true tavern spirit, something Bowmanville can be proud to call *ours*.



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Kraetsch Golden Anniversary!

By Martha and Merrill and Mary Kraetsch

Once upon a time, 50 years ago, a bride in pink and white and a groom in all white said 'I do' in a beautiful wedding ceremony surrounded by family and close friends. This August 25th Barbara and Mike Kraetsch celebrate their Golden Anniversary and the remarkable life they have built together.

Barbara and Mike are an endearing model of a relationship based on mutual respect, compromise, acceptance, and celebration. Barbara is the kite flying high in the air and following the wind wherever it might dip, and jive, and accent, while Mike holds the string firmly on the ground, steadfast and solid, while enjoying the adventure. Always encouraging each other to pursue their passions, together they have enjoyed traveling, taking in the arts, spending time with grandchildren, and gardening, while also dedicating themselves to solo pursuits. Mike is an avid golfer, while Barbara is an artist whose work can be seen in Andersonville.

Native Wisconsinites, Barbara and Mike followed their children and grandchildren to Chicago in 2014 and have been Bowmanville residents for the last nine years. Active in the neighborhood and engaged in community events, you will regularly see Barbara and Mike volunteering or walking the neighborhood catching up with everyone they meet along the way.

The move to Chicago was an unexpected late chapter in their lives, both unsure as to what to expect. They now remark



frequently that they have made more friends and feel more connected to their neighborhood than at any other point in their lives. Thank you Bowmanville!

When you see Barbara and Mike out and about, please join their children and grandchildren in congratulating them on their remarkable milestone of 50 years together, happily ever after.



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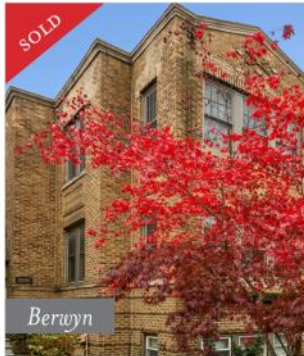
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COMMUNITY EVENTS

Garden Walk

By Alysia Stiles Kinsella, BCO Board Member

On July 15, the BCO hosted the 23rd Anniversary Bowmanville Garden Walk. For the most part, the weather cooperated and was clear except for a brief afternoon downpour that had guests huddled wherever they could manage in the hosted gardens. This year the Garden Walk included 25 neighbor hosted gardens, 4 community garden spaces and numerous street corner parkway gardens.

As in prior years, volunteers from the University of Illinois Extension Master Gardener Program sat at a table near the BCO Greenspace and answered guests' questions on anything horticulture related. Additionally, our returning three Master Gardener judges, Pierre Poinsett, Sean Gardner and Patricia Morin, toured the hosted gardens providing advice, inspiration and if requested, judging for the Best in Show Garden. This year's Best in Show winner was Maria Valesquez whose garden featured bountiful and colorful flowers and relaxing parakeet chirping. The judges also noted that all the gardens were in excellent form this year, noting the care and pride our Bowmanville neighbors take in beautifying whatever space they may have.

While we had many great entries to our annual photo contest, the winner this year was Secret Path by Patrick Brandell (see below). Patrick's photo will be featured on the cover of next year's Garden Walk Program and posters.

Throughout the day, the garden hosts spent time with guests discussing their planting choices and efforts, in addition to showing great hospitality with interesting drinks and snacks. In turn, the hosts learned that guests came from as close by as West Andersonville or Ravenswood across Foster and from as far away as Elmhurst, O'Hare, Tinley Park, Evanston, or Oak Park, to name a few. Many people have attended multiple years and continue to travel to Bowmanville for our annual Garden walk.

Many thanks to all of the people who opened their gardens and hosted guests, the many volunteers who helped the event run smoothly, and our great sponsors who continue to support Bowmanville and our events.



Winning Photo
Secret Path by Patrick Brandell

COMMUNITY EVENTS

Garden Walk



Local Farmers Markets Bring the Country to Us

By Kathleen Mullen

From mid-June thru mid-October, streets and parking lots near Bowmanville are turned into farmers markets that offer a cornucopia of good things and give our community a real summer vibe. Supported by local Chambers of Commerce, dozens of vendors participate. If you haven't yet visited at least one of them, you owe it to yourself to do that.

Lincoln Square Farmers Market. Perhaps the best known in the area, this market is in Lincoln Square where Leland, Western, Lincoln Avenues intersect. It's open Tuesdays 7:00 am – 1:00 pm and Thursdays 3:00 – 8:00 pm. The Tuesday morning one offers a chance to grab something quick before getting on a bus or the Brown line. The Thursday evening one is great for taking a relaxed stroll, having a snack or buying something for dinner. Plus, there are free outdoor concerts nearby at Giddings Plaza on Thursday evenings 6:00 - 8:30 pm until August 17. This market is sponsored by the Lincoln Square Ravenswood Chamber of Commerce, www.lsrcc.org.

Ravenswood Farmers Market. This market takes place from 4:00 – 8:00 pm on Wednesdays (through October 11) in the parking lot of the Ravenswood Evangelical Covenant Church at 4900 North Damen Avenue. In addition to vendors, there are children's activities and a stage for musicians. This market is supported by the Greater Ravenswood Chamber of Commerce, www.GRCC.org.

Andersonville Farmers Market. This market takes place on Catalpa Avenue, which is blocked off between Clark and Ashland, just south of the Jewel food store lot on Wednesdays 3:00-7:00 pm. It's supported by Andersonville Chamber of Commerce, andersonville.org. One of the vendors is First Slice, which provides food for those in need weekly, www.firstslice.org.



Farmers markets don't just provide a source of high quality food and crafted products. They also offer a neighborly way to shop and interact with others in a friendly outdoor environment. To find out more about each market and other neighborhood events, click the links given above for the Chambers that sponsor them. Plan to visit one of them soon!



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BOWMANVILLE ADVICE

Ask Aunt Bee

Welcome to the 2nd edition of our neighborhood advice column, Ask Aunt Bee, 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,

This is the best time of year, it really is. But I find myself getting rather irked when I'm walking along a sidewalk in the middle of the day and have to go out into the street to avoid getting hit by the water from a sprinkler that's blocking my way. I'm pushing a baby stroller and walking a dog, so that's very inconvenient. Are there any rules about not watering the sidewalk or about the time of day to water? I don't want to appear grumpy and wonder if I'm wrong to complain about this.

Signed, irked and soggy in Bowmanville

Dear IASIB,

I agree that this is indeed a lovely time of year. Seeing our neighborhood's beautiful gardens and parkway areas while taking long walks is one of the things that I enjoy most about our community. I certainly can empathize with you about having to dodge a water sprinkler, which can make you feel that you're playing a videogame with hazards to pass through. But I can also empathize with our neighbors who are struggling in this drought to keep their gardens alive and who may feel that dashing through a water hazard is one of the joys of summer. So let me share a number of considerations.

The Chicago Department of Water Management and the State of Illinois have regulations regarding watering lawns and gardens. Specifically, from May 15 to September 15, sprinkling is permitted from 5:00 am until 8:00 am, and from 7:00 pm until 10:00 pm, Mondays through Fridays. On weekends and holidays, there are no restrictions on when you can water. However, water should always be used in a way that avoids waste. Watering in the morning or evening benefits your lawn most because less water is lost to evaporation at these times.

According to the U.S. Drought Monitor, severe drought conditions are now present in multiple areas in northern Illinois and northwest Indiana, including Chicago. So, while we need to water our gardens and lawns, it makes sense to use as little as necessary and avoid the wasteful practice of watering sidewalks, driveways or streets.

Finally, and certainly not least, be an ally to people with disabilities. This means keeping sidewalks clear and easily passable. Sprinklers, hoses or other obstacles are more than an inconvenience if you are using a wheelchair, mobility cart or walker. So you're not wrong to complain, IASIB. With a little care, we can have both gardens that are beautiful and sidewalks that are safe and easy to walk on.

Dear Aunt Bee,

Thanks so much for your response in the Spring issue to the letter from Alley Crossings With Fear (ACWF). The danger you pointed out about drivers who simply blow their horns without stopping when they come to the end of an alley is very real. The horn-blowing is also annoying to the people who live in adjacent apartments or homes. I would like to add that the "toot and roll" practice is not only unsafe and annoying, but also illegal. The Municipal Code of Chicago, Section 9-24-060, Right-of-way at sidewalks, specifies that:

"The driver of a vehicle emerging from an alley, driveway or building shall stop the vehicle immediately prior to driving onto any sidewalk or sidewalk area extending across an alleyway, yield the right-of-way to any pedestrian as may be necessary to avoid collision and, upon entering the roadway, shall yield the right-of-way to all vehicles approaching on the roadway."

This, as well as signaling which way you plan to turn, is the correct way to exit an alley. Let's all do that!

Signed, Fan of Aunt Bee

Dear FAB,

Thank you for letting us know about the legal requirement to stop before exiting an alley. Hopefully, this will help put a stop to the dangerous and annoying practice of "toot and roll." I'm a big fan of neighbors like you!

Do you have questions, comments or concerns about neighbor relations, city life, public services, BCO activities, or other topics relating to Bowmanville, please submit them to news@bcochicago.org. Aunt Bee would love to hear from you.

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It's Time to Ban Leaf Blowers!

By Paul Naylor

In Chicago, the changing seasons are heralded not only by the transformation of the trees and a difference in temperature, but also by the sounds and smells of an army of gas-powered leaf blowers that descend come spring come fall. Behind all their deafening noises and strong petroleum smells, the only thing leaf blowers do is push leaves — along with dust and trash — from one person's parkway or yard to another. In terms of actually removing debris, they are completely inefficient.

Plus, they create problems much worse than having a few leaves on the ground. The fumes they generate contribute to our city's shocking levels of air pollution, as does the dust they throw up from parkways, which in Chicago commonly contain lead, cadmium and other contaminants. Any leaves that leaf blowers do manage to blow away generally end up on the street, and therefore over the sewer grates or down the storm drain, leading to street flooding, sewer backups, and messy streets, especially during the winter, when the City does not clean them for months.

The Whole Concept Is Wrong

But aside from this, it's the concept of the leaf blower that's most grating. The idea seems to be that if you can clean your carpet with a vacuum, you can also "clean" your yard with a leaf blower. But a yard or parkway is very different from a carpet! Fallen leaves return nutrients and organic matter to the soil, protect tree roots from frosts and drought, and provide shelter for beloved overwintering insects such as bees and fireflies. And to think we pay money to have them removed!

As a student, I worked briefly on a landscaping team. Part of my job, of course, involved leaf blowing, a task none of us liked doing. When grudgingly distributing the machines to our team, the message was essentially, "These are a real waste of time, but it looks like you're doing serious work and justifies what we charge." Instead of paying landscaping companies to blow away leaves, then paying for mulch to put in your garden beds, why not get a rake, and move those leaves onto your beds. Job done. Zero dollars spent. And a fantastic show of fireflies come summer!

As of April 1 of this year, the City of Evanston banned all gasoline and propane-powered leaf blowers, and restricted the hours of use for electric leaf blowers. I suggest we do the same in Chicago.

How can you help make that happen? Contact our Alderman, Andre Vasquez, at 773-654-1867 or info@40thward.com and ask him to take action to ban these noxious machines. Contact

the City of Chicago's Department of Public Health, which is responsible for ensuring a healthy environment for citizens, at 312-747-9884 or healthychicago@cityofchicago.org and ask them to do the same.

In the meantime, if you use a landscaping service, ask them to switch from using leaf blowers to using rakes and brooms to remove and properly dispose of any grass clippings, leaves or other debris from sidewalks or other areas where they are not desired. And if you use a leaf blower, do the same. If you can't leave the leaves or other yard waste in place to decay and enrich the environment, consider composting them.

But don't just blow or rake them from your sidewalk or yard to the street. It may be a bit more work, but it's excellent exercise and a real benefit to our lungs, our ears, and our neighborhood.

Do you have an opinion about topics relevant to the neighborhood or your neighbors? Send your article to news@bcchicago.org to be included in our next Opinions section.

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NEIGHBOR OPINIONS

Fireworks in Winnemac Park Down by Half

By Russ Klettke

Our beloved Winnemac Park was in the news last month. Reports regarding opposition to the illegal annual fireworks extravaganza there the night of July 4 were on CBS Chicago-TV (two stories), Block Club Chicago (two stories), and the *Chicago Tribune*, and it was referenced in stories on WBEZ-FM and NBC Chicago News. Social media pages for Bowmanville, Andersonville, and Winnemac Park Dog Owners also had discussion about it.

This year, Alderman Vasquez responded to community members' pleas to do something about this illegal activity. He communicated with the Chicago Police Department about enforcing long-standing state and Park District laws against this nuisance and shared that information with the press, as well as in 40th Ward communications. CPD promised to cooperate by blocking off the Amundsen lot parking and preventing individuals from carrying fireworks onto park property.

Was It Effective?

Sort of. I was in the park before sundown, from 8:00 – 9:45 pm, and again after 11:00, when the park was almost empty. From my observations, disappointed spectators — turnout was lower than in previous years — were underwhelmed by a much-diminished show and were seen streaming out of the park by 9:00 pm. That's because most of what occurred before 9:30 pm was ground-level pyrotechnics — more noise than flash, not spectacular bombs bursting in air. There were some fireworks rockets, but mostly after 9:30 pm, just before Chicago Police shut things down at 10:00. In previous years' loud fireworks went on until midnight.

One hopes word about the new restrictions and what can be deemed a “dud” show at the park this year will lead fireworks fans to choose other options next year, such as the legal — and better — fireworks shows at Navy Pier and other venues.

Air Quality Suffered

Much of the media coverage focused on air quality matters, prompted in part by the wildfire smoke from Canada in the week prior to the Fourth. I was able to get air quality sensors on a loan program from the US Environmental Protection Agency that enabled us to measure airborne particulates before and after the fireworks in Winnemac Park this year.

The findings were that particulates of all sizes (PM1, PM 2.3 and PM10) each more than doubled. Of greatest concern are PM1, which are the finest particulates (1 micrometer or less), small enough to penetrate deep into the respiratory system. PM1 particulates measured in the afternoon at Winnemac were in a concentration of 4 to 8 micrograms per cubic meter; during even the subdued fireworks event in the evening, the PM1 particulates measured between 17 and 26, a concerning increase.

The blue haze we sometimes see from fireworks (when we are downwind or have a large amount of fireworks activity in nearby alleys) contains several additional noxious elements that are not measured by the US EPA sensors. They include sulfur dioxide, carbon monoxide, lead, copper, cadmium, barium, and strontium, each of which produce colors on explosion and can be hazardous to young children's lungs and to individuals with respiratory conditions.

A newly reactivated Winnemac Park Advisory Council, which officially supported Alderman Vasquez's actions for July Fourth, will discuss this event at their regularly scheduled meeting at 6:00 pm on August 9 in the Jorndt Stadium meeting room. The Council is also focused on matters pertaining to accessible bathroom facilities, maintaining and protecting the natural areas and mature trees, trash management, park safety, and park programming. Meetings and the work of the Council are open to the public.

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Give Our “Street Kids” Some Love!

By Tim Noworyta



One of the things that makes Bowmanville such a pleasant place to live is our lovely tree-lined streets. Maples, ashes, locusts, lindens, oaks and other varieties shade our sidewalks, soothe our eyes and provide habitat for birds, squirrels and insects. In the spring, catalpas, crabapples,

magnolias, pears and others delight us with their flowers and scents. In the fall, they all enrich the shortening days with splashes of red, yellow, orange, maroon and brown. And all summer long, they cool hot days, provide us with oxygen, and absorb harmful carbon dioxide.

Often, we take the trees planted along the parkway (the space between the sidewalk and curb) for granted. But they didn't just happen. They all had to be planted, most often by the City, but

also by groups like Openlands' Treekeepers — who deserve our thanks for the hundreds they've planted — or by neighbors wanting to fill a barren stretch of parkway.

Also, once planted, the trees don't just magically grow. Along with sunlight, they need to get enough water for photosynthesis, by which the chlorophyll in the leaves absorbs light energy and, using water and carbon dioxide, the leaves convert these ingredients into the carbohydrates the tree uses to build its roots, branches and leaves.

No Water, No Trees

Water is especially important for newly planted trees and those only a year or two old. That's because young trees don't have a large root system to get the water and other nutrients from the soil that they need to grow, as well as to build a solid base to keep them from toppling in high winds. To develop that system while sustaining the leaves and branches, they need a lot of water.

But when there's not much rain, there's not enough water. In a dry year like this — despite recent rains, we're still in a drought, and the ground dries quickly in summer — even the more established trees suffer.

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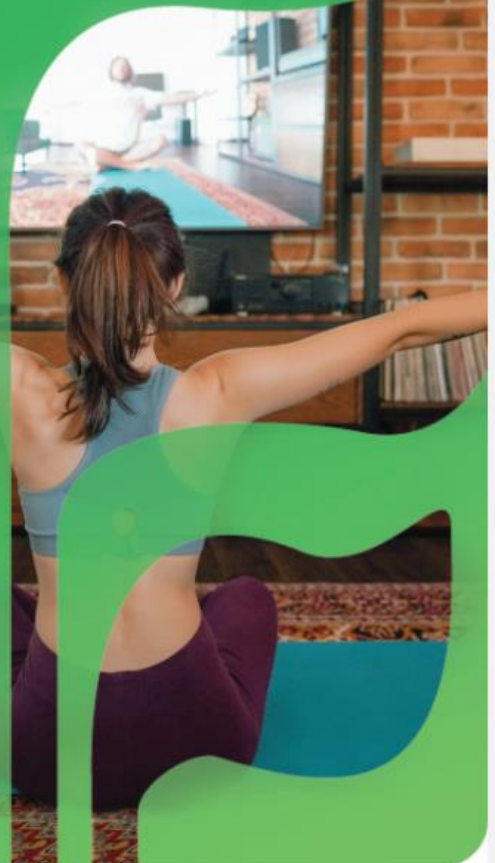
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NEIGHBOR OPINIONS

Give Our “Street Kids” Some Love!

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That's because there's not much water in the soil, and the bulk of whatever the tree roots can absorb is lost to transpiration. That's the process by which water escapes through the small holes (stomata) in the leaves through which they absorb carbon dioxide and release oxygen.

In fact, according to an article in the Purdue University *Landscape Report*, "How Do Trees Use Water" (August 24, 2021), while trees can absorb between 10 and 150 gallons of water daily, less than 5% remains in the plant for growth. They therefore rely on water in the soil to rehydrate during the night. When that water is not available, the stomata close, and the tree's growth slows — or stops. Without enough water, trees weaken and die.

They Need You

Trees along the parkway — called “street kids” by the forester Peter Wohlleben in his book, *The Hidden Life of Trees*, which I highly recommend — have an especially tough time of it. The soil they're planted in is often compacted and not very good. Their roots are confined by sewers, pipes and other urban infrastructure. While there may not be much space between the sidewalks and the paved streets for water to get down to the roots, the salt that's spread on these surfaces can run off and burn them. Tall buildings restrict sunlight and boost wind speed, which increases evaporation and damages leaves and branches. Bottom line: the city can be a tough place for trees to grow.

But you can make it easier by showering these street kids with love in the form of water. A rule of thumb is that a tree needs about 10 gallons of water per week for every inch of its trunk's diameter. So a tree with a two-inch wide trunk would need around 20 gallons a week, one with a three-inch trunk, 30 gallons, and so on. If it hasn't rained, the only source of that water is **you**.

So, if there's a tree near you — especially a newly planted one — that no one seems to be caring for (drooping or flagging leaves and dry, hard ground around the trunk are good signs that it needs water) **please water it!** I have seen too many lovely young trees planted by the city die from lack of water.

You can use a hose (it takes about 5 minutes of watering at medium pressure to provide 10 gallons of water) or a bucket (a household bucket is usually around 2.5 gallons, or half of a 5-gallon bucket). If a tree needs 20 gallons a week, that means either five gallons four times a week, 10 gallons twice a week, or all 20 at once.

If there isn't mulch around the base of the tree, two or three inches of wood chip mulch spread as far as its branches reach will reduce evaporation of water from the soil, making it more available for its roots. But don't put more than four inches, because that can smother the roots and keep water from reaching them. Also, don't pile mulch against the trunk of the tree, which can cause rot and other problems.

They Don't Have to Be Yours

If the tree that needs water is not right in front of your place, ask the neighbor where it is if you can give it some. If you live in an apartment, ask the landlord to water it, or ask if you can. If you live in a condo, ask the same of the managers. When you see a tree struggling in front of a shop or business, ask the people inside to give it some water. Too often, trees planted along apartment buildings or in front of shops are ignored, even when it's clear they need a drink.

When watering a newly planted tree with a mulch ring around the base, pour the water slowly into the center of the cone near the trunk. For larger trees, note how wide the branches spread. That's roughly how wide the root system is, so water that area all around the tree.

If you can't reach anyone to ask about watering, just do it! The parkways and sidewalks are public city property, so you would be doing community service by helping to keep our trees alive and our Bowmanville beautiful. Our trees — and all of us — will thank you for that.





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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.

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