

ALPHA NEWSLETTER



Promulgations from the President

Dear Alpha Community,

I can't believe it's been a year since the last newsletter. I promise this one will be much more brief.

Hasn't the weather been something unusual?? A mild winter followed by temperatures in the 70's in February!! Who could have guessed??!!

Last year, 2016, started off a bit rocky. Scott Rowland, our only public works employee, began the year out not feeling well. Sadly, we lost Scott. A decorative tree was planted in Gazebo Park in memory of him. A plaque will be installed later this spring when the weather remains above freezing. Our thoughts and prayers continue to his wife Carolyn and his family. We greatly miss him still.

Last year I wrote of a project that we support with our whole heart. I am speaking of the American Legion rehab. Their roof project has been completed as well as a kitchen rehab and new furnaces. The Village, Alpha Community Team and the Legion have joined forces to see this cause to its fruition. The building is now able to be used year around for Wedding Receptions, birthday parties, graduation parties, etc. and, hopefully sooner than later, for a **Senior Citizens/Community Center**. Look for more updates to that building as time goes on.

Sincerely, Dean Kernan

ALPHA COMMUNITY TEAM (A.C.T.)

This team of individuals around the community have been very active this year. There has been some personnel changes but they are always in need of more volunteers. Their main purpose is to make the Village a more entertaining and better place to live for us all. They take on projects that the Village itself just can't do. You probably are already aware of all they do but here is a list of just a few items: Thrifty on 150 in conjunction with the Car Show, lighted parade, Christmas Tree Festival, planters on W "D" Street, decorate and upkeep of our Gazebo Park, Beautification Award. Please consider joining and bring some new ideas. (I'm still waiting for someone to organize the Alpha Pi (π) Day on 3-14!! Pi is shortened to 3.14 in math class!)

ALPHA POLICE DEPARTMENT

Our Police Department continues to provide service to our residents on a part-time basis. We appreciate the job they perform to help keep our community safe for our children in many ways especially keeping our streets safe from speeding cars. Due to the size of our village, the President (Mayor) can act as Administrative Police Chief. So Dean Kernan continues in that position. It's going to be Spring soon and that is the time of year when they will make their rounds and remind residents that it's time to clean up your yards. Let's all surprise them and have it done before you get that "special reminder." The Squad car saw many repairs this year because of it's age. But we were able to get them fixed in-house. (More on that to come!)

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STREETS AND ALLEYS

After a quick spring and the loss of Scott, our summer turned wet and warm. The grass grew rapidly as well as our village trees and bushes. Since we needed someone to fill in the everyday tasks of maintaining our streets and alleys, we hired Joey Lambin to help us out for the summer. He took care of keeping our lagoon mowed and weeded. With some help, he trimmed some low hanging tree limbs and brush. Those jobs took most of the summer. Some resurfacing has been done around water shutoffs and some cracks filled with rubberized sealant. After advertising and several interviews, we hired local resident Jeff Kessinger to fill Scott's position and eventually fill Keith Taflinger's position. Previously Jeff was employed for nearly 30 years at new car dealerships. I can't tell you in this short paragraph how many of your dollars he has saved us in repair costs to all of our equipment. Both Joey and Jeff finished off trimming the trees and brush around the village before Joey had to head back to school. The parking stripes on Main Street have also been painted.

WATER & SEWER

If you remember when Keith retired, Jeff McCready was hired through contract as our Water and Wastewater licensed operator. (As required by EPA) After Scott passed away, several individuals were trained to take daily water samples as required. Eventually Joey performed this task with occasional help from these other individuals. Then starting August 1st, Jeff Kessinger took over those duties. Jeff K. has been under Jeff M.'s tutelage starting from day one and has received many pointers on providing safe drinking water for our residents. Jeff K. immediately started taking classes in the evening at Black Hawk College to help him obtain his Drinking Water License. We sort of threw him into the "fire", you could say, by turning over the maintenance of our water system. Besides reading meters, one of the duties he performed was to flush all our hydrants in town. While performing that duty, he discovered several water main valves that needed attention. He also discovered a leaking water hydrant. He took care of both without hesitation. However, the water hydrant replacement didn't quite go as planned and we had more than half the town on a boil order. Unfortunate for the residents but beneficial to Jeff's knowledge base. (That's a nice way to say many lessons were learned!) Jeff took care of many backlogged work orders like replacing broken water meters. So fast forward a few months. After Jeff K's water classes and passing the difficult Drinking Water Exam, **Jeff is now our Licensed Water Operator**. He has just started his Wastewater classes at Black Hawk Collage. So hopefully in a few more months, he will be fully licensed for both water & wastewater. Jeff K and Jeff M will both continue to provide their services to obtain the best water possible for your use. Other items in this department, two lift station pumps have had to be repaired. These are very costly repairs. However, without them we would have sewage back-ups. There was also an electrical issue at the lagoon which caused damage to the generator transfer box and the circuit boards of the flow meter and transmitter. A new flow-meter and transmitter was installed.

THE BACK STORY

There's always more to be said about our great village than can go in a two-page newsletter. So I will try to keep this part brief as well. Let's see did anything happen this year that might be a bit unusual? We started allowing golf carts to be driven on most village streets provided they get a permit and are slow-moving vehicle compliant. Only two permits were issued. Both were JD Gator or "Gator like" vehicles. OH! And who can forget the Alcohol Referendum? A "NO" vote meant you were in favor of discontinuing the prohibition of alcohol sales in Alpha. The referendum was 236—No and 94—Yes. So in January, the board amended the Village Code and lifted the prohibition on the sale of packaged liquor. So far one license has been issued. The Village Board acts as the Liquor Commission and the Village President is the Liquor Commissioner. So far there have been no complaints or violations. Both Slow-moving vehicle permits and alcohol permits will expire at the end of April unless the permittee re-applies for a renewal.

Candidates for the positions of President, Village Clerk and three Trustees filed their petitions with the Clerk in December. Long time serving, Edna Mahalovich decided not to run for re-election. However, her daughter, Tena Anseeuw is running for one of the three trustee positions as well as Mike Petrovich and Dennis Shannon. Also Angie Spivey has decided not to seek re-election. However, our own Trustee, Tracy Peterson has filed to run for that position.

See the enclosed letter about planning for Alpha's future. We have an asset and an ally with Ron Medley's brother Russell, who is Extension Educator for Community & Economic Development with the University of Illinois Extension, is helping walk through this new adventure of mapping out our future.

We hope you enjoy reading this 2016-2017 newsletter. If you have an issue and need our help, please call our village number at (309) 629-9881 or you can call our village cell phone at (309) 945-7226. The answering service for both are available 24 hrs. a day. The cell phone will be answered between the hours of 8:00 AM to 5:00 PM. Thanks for reading... Dean