Dear Friends and Neighbors,

Take heart, we have just recently passed the astrological midpoint between the winter solstice and the spring equinox. And we are just now two months away from closing the first year of this new Board. So let’s take a look at what happened in the Village over the past ninety cold and snowy days.

H1N1 Resident Support
Thanks to Jan Pink’s Safety and Security Committee’s research, we were able to send you updates and specific information about the Swine Flu. Information about precautions and availability to shots allowed our residents to be better informed with information directly from the County and CDC than what was available through other public media. If you did not receive these alerts, it is because we do not have your email address in our records. To add your name for these and other Village alerts, please send an email to me at: jray@mettawa.com. You can also make this request at www.mettawa.org. Remember, to save money we only send alerts via email.

Disaster Preparedness
Recently, I joined Chairman Pink for a free half-day disaster preparedness simulation hosted by a Lake-Cook County incident association that Mettawa recently joined. This event made it quite evident that often the most effective response to natural disasters, like an earthquake or the effects of nearby earthquakes, is a well-thought-out local response. We became aware of the recently renewed interest in the New Madrid Fault (NMF) due to the recent earthquake in Illinois about 40 miles from here. Why the New Madrid fault? Well between 1811 and 1812, four catastrophic earthquakes on the NMF seismic zone including parts of Illinois, with magnitude estimates greater than 7.0, occurred during a three-month period. If a reoccurrence of this activity happens, there is little evidence that it would immediately impact us like Haiti. However, there is concern for us because of the gas, communications and electrical facilities located in the critical earthquake area that would be greatly impacted. This is not meant to frighten you but to let you know your Board and Safety and Security committee will do research that can inform and prepare you for such an event or other disaster scenarios.

Following this event, we added a new tab on the Village web-site: “Emergency Contacts” that will be refined over the next few months with additional information. Additionally, the S&S Committee will produce a document for each resident of critical information for residents to know as our part of “preparedness” for a disaster we hope we never see.

Snow Plowing RFP/Salt Purchase
This year we put the Village Snow plowing out for Bid. This action was managed by Trustee Armstrong’s Roads and Trails Committee supported by Trustee Maier’s Finance Committee. This action and the ultimate vendor selection are expected to generate a savings to the Village for this service. Separately, the Village purchased salt and has worked with the Vendor for inventory of our salt at a Lake Bluff municipal facility. This salt inventory is controlled by a “chit” sign-out sheet so we can carefully manage our inventory.

Cutting of dead trees
You may see a crew working throughout the Village taking down dead trees that are either on Village easement property or that run the risk of falling on Village roads. Most of these trees are concentrated on Little St. Marys Rd.
Trails
Lastly this committee is in the early stages of extending two existing trails in the Village. We expect this year the trail on Old School Road will likely be extended all the way to St. Marys allowing Westside residents to more easily access the Forest Preserve trails. The second trail extension is likely to extend the trail on Bradley south. More details on these later.

RFP for Legal Counsel
Trustee Maier’s Finance Committee initiated a bid process at my request for our Village Counsel position. This is being done to find a better contract structure for better controlling our legal fees. We hope to have a two-part contract: 1) fixed price for general Village business and 2) a fixed hourly fee schedule for other variable work. The process has yielded responses from some new firms which will be interviewed soon by the Board.

New Deputy Treasurer
It was my pleasure to recently appoint resident Rita Tavakoli as our new Deputy Treasurer reporting to Tom Lys, Village treasurer and the Finance committee. Rita has had many years of experience in large company corporate finance management in several countries. While she is learning the ropes on municipal finance, we altered our contract with the previous Deputy Treasurer to a per-hour consulting role as backup to Rita and the Village. We expect to see some new developments in the reporting and trending of the Village financials so that we keep our overhead low with an increase in resident services.

Costco
You have either received an email from me or read in the papers that we resolved the two law suits surrounding the land sale of property for Costco. Shortly after we resolved these law suits, we closed and completed the sale of the 17 acres near the corner of Rt. 60 and Riverwoods. As part of the settlement and contract amendments to come out of these negotiations, the Board was able to work out terms to improve the berm height and landscaping on the Riverwoods Road Costco site. Improvement to traffic movement was also negotiated as was landscaping screening for three residents who front Riverwoods Rd. We also insisted that the Costco facility be at least Silver-level LEED certified. Among other conditions the Village received a refund on our legal fees for this suit. While the residents who contributed to the suit will receive a return of their contributions to the lawsuit, no one on the board will be allowed to take any refund. Costco is hoping to have their store open in November of this year. See PR release at: http://mettawa.org/category/news/

I would like to hear from you on your desire to attend a town hall meeting on this topic. We don’t want to spend the Village money for the meeting if attendance would be low. If however, you would want to see the details of this situation aired in a town hall meeting, please send me an email or letter of your interest.

JAWA annexation for water to Mettawa
There was a recent opportunity for me to formally request of the Central Lake County Joint Action Water Agency (JAWA) to annex the Village of Mettawa into their water district. If approved by the County, your Board will have the ability, if approved for budget, to extend Lake Michigan water service to all Village residents. Some 30-40% of residents are already receiving this water. While this non-obligation request is the right thing for your Board to pursue, it is an involved decision process: the cost to run water lines throughout the balance of the Village and to determine the value of this service to residents who have already spent thousands to install a deep-well for their properties. We anticipate a decision on our annexation request from the County within the next ninety days following a capacity study they are conducting.

Strategic Planning
Thirty-eight residents recently met with the Board at the Hilton Hotel to take the first step in developing a Strategic Plan for the Village. While the Village Board has ultimate responsibility for developing and approving a Strategic plan for the Village, we wanted residents to participate in the process early-on to provide their input. You can see the results of this effort under “News” on the Village web-site. We wish to thank resident Don Joseph for facilitating this well-received meeting.

90-day Reviews with Board and Staff
A new process of sitting with each Board, committee chair and staff to review communications and working style each ninety-days was installed by me to help us work better as a team as we serve you, the residents.
**HSBC Detention Pond Retrofit**

Working closely with both HSBC and the Lake County Stormwater Management team, we were able to agree on a retrofit design for the detention pond at the NE corner of Bradley and Riverwoods Blvd. The retrofit, which is partially completed, is being redone to improve both the storm water infiltration function as well as the natural beauty of the pond. This project should be completed in early spring with final contouring and plantings. This retrofit is being funded primarily by HSBC to help improve the beauty and water management of your Village.

**HSBC and Grainger Open Houses**

Many residents were able to join in the two special opportunities to join in tours and presentations of how these two company facilities were awarded GOLD-level LEED certification for “green-building” sustainability. These two events were eye-opening to know the cost and effort these two Companies expended to ensure the Village’s natural environment was preserved and sustained. We were surprised to learn that HSBC even offers a full-service branch bank with an ATM at their facility on Riverwoods Blvd. These two events were scheduled and managed by resident Holly Hirsch, who is a member of the US Green Building Council. For more information on HSBC branch bank on Riverwoods go to: [http://www.us.hsbc.com/1/2/ul/pn/p1/04_SB8K8tLMLIM3SlzPy8b69lCPn9x3yOrk-NOx1BNz3XAX3dP-ZAMr4nA3/mOC-1yPl0z3wPv3z51HfY3yQADG78AM/2w1/1LDUvJkSW8wNT89UJF-J8OQrQ3ZzRel5zQyHvNNJ3E5S9Ozk7M58ATJnNTVfVDCxol383x29BIMVQYFegU009wP0tFb0001hVx3lDA4Af0awc0fXT9RAnyY1526RZbVQRWzJWWvIcPF7OC_T_003UNU1O09D4ID0QDL61000000_fmpCT](http://www.us.hsbc.com/1/2/ul/pn/p1/04_SB8K8tLMLIM3SlzPy8b69lCPn9x3yOrk-NOx1BNz3XAX3dP-ZAMr4nA3/mOC-1yPl0z3wPv3z51HfY3yQADG78AM/2w1/1LDUvJkSW8wNT89UJF-J8OQrQ3ZzRel5zQyHvNNJ3E5S9Ozk7M58ATJnNTVfVDCxol383x29BIMVQYFegU009wP0tFb0001hVx3lDA4Af0awc0fXT9RAnyY1526RZbVQRWzJWWvIcPF7OC_T_003UNU1O09D4ID0QDL61000000_fmpCT)

**Joint Traffic Study with Lake Forest and Green Oaks**

The Board has approved participation in a joint traffic study as a first step in exploring the possibilities of joining the east-side Oasis access road to Field Drive in Lake Forest. There is a belief that this linkage access would limit some transient traffic on Bradley Rd. This could allow for trucks and car traffic to turn east on the Oasis access road north of the Bradley Bridge, and access Field Drive and ultimately south to Rt. 60.

**Clear Communications**

We have been working for several months to allow installation of wireless antenna on the top of the CDW building. These small-profile antennas, when installed, will be shielded from view with a low “stealth” façade above the current roof. You may have seen “Clear” advertisements on TV of late. They are the service provider who will operate these antennas. When the work is completed (<90 days) this wireless service will finally offer a high-speed wireless communication service to residents in the Village who do not have, can’t get or don’t want cable or other slower-speed communication service.

**Census**

With the U.S. Census process beginning, the Better Business Bureau (BBB) advises people to be cooperative, but cautious, so as not to become a victim of fraud or identity theft. See more on this topic under “News” on the Village web-site.

**FYI…….**

- **Roundabout to be constructed at Everett and Riverwoods Rd.**
  We have been told that Lake County will begin the construction of a new roundabout this spring/summer with an expected completion of November, 2010.

- **Soil and Water Conservation District of Lake County**
  Save water and your water bill with a “Rain Barrel” which are for sale…visit [www.lakeSWCD.org](http://www.lakeSWCD.org) of call 847-223-1056

- **Native Plant Sale**
  Choose from more than 60 varieties of flowers and grasses that thrive in local garden conditions and provide native wildlife habitat. Proceeds benefit Lake County Forest Preserves “EnviroPatrol” program. *May 8th*.....*9am-3pm*; *May 9th*.....*10am-3pm* at Independence Grove Libertyville. [www.independencegrove.org](http://www.independencegrove.org)

- **LC Forest Preserves buy Mettawa parcel on Everett Rd.**
  A 5-acre purchase was approved in January which will offer a continuation of high-quality woodlands and expands LCFP’s opportunity to extend a trail along Everett Rd. This was the Kindy property. Mr. Kindy was one of the village founding Trustees. His Widow was previously the owner of the property.
• **The Grainger Foundation awards $500,000 for restoration.**
  Only weeks after Grainger Woods was honored with one of Illinois’ most coveted environmental distinctions, officials with the Preservation Foundation of the Lake County Forest Preserves announced that they will add new luster to the site, thanks to a $500,000 donation from The Grainger Foundation.

  The donation will in part fund a comprehensive ecological restoration of the 308-acre Grainger Woods Conservation Preserve. Late last month, the Illinois Department of Natural Resources (IDNR) designated a 169-acre portion of the site as an Illinois Nature Preserve, a status conferred only on the state’s most ecologically sensitive public lands.

  Grainger Woods was formed from 257 acres of land donated to the Lake County Forest Preserves by W.W. Grainger, Inc., in 1996. For more information: http://www.lcfpd.org/preserves/index.cfm?fuseaction=home.view&object_id=188&type=P

**New Residents**
We wish to welcome three new residents to Mettawa and hope they enjoy their new homes.

- Carey and Sangston Woodruff moved to a home on Westwoods
- Mr. and Mrs. James Howatt moved to a new home on Meadowoods
- Moon and Eunju Do moved to their new home on Trail Drive

**Village Board – next quarter**
Your Board is already busy with those activities that need management during the last quarter of the Village fiscal year which ends at the end of April. We will be taking some action on the following list, to name a few:

- New fiscal year budget and two-year proforma
- RFP for Roadway edge cutting - - twice this year.
- Plans to celebrate Mettawa’s 50-year anniversary
- Completion of the Village Strategic Plan
- Two new trail extensions

  We invite you to attend our Village Board meetings to see what this Board is doing for you, the resident, and our Village. We meet every third Tuesday of the month at the Hilton Hotel at 7:30pm.

Kind regards,

  **Jess D. Ray**

  *Mayor*

  **Village of Mettawa**

  847-482-1630