

THE PARK CRIER

WINDING BROOK PARK ASSOCIATION

President's Column

Summer has slipped past us again. It seems I just got the mower out and now I'm watching the leaves start to turn. Oh well, let's hope for a glorious fall.

As you know I have devoted a number of the recent columns to discussing the potential impact annexation would have on our neighborhood. I know this is causing a few feathers to be ruffled. I have discussed these in the past columns. Past columns are available on our website - windingbrookpark.com - under the tab for the Crier.

One of the biggest concerns about annexation is the effect on our property taxes. We have provided a link to the State of Indiana's Tax Estimator Tool. You can also find the link on the starting page of our website noted previously. You can find an example of how to fill out the information boxes on the estimator tool in the insert in this Crier along with a list of what changes, what doesn't, and what needs more investigation due to annexation.

Our findings, after comparing what our taxes would be if we lived in "Mishawka - PHM Schools" tax district versus today's "Penn Township - PHM Schools" Tax district and selecting for "Homestead-owner occupied residence" suggest minimal change, on the order of \$30 for a home valued at \$200,000. What does this mean? It means our property taxes will NOT soar through the roof like many have suggested. I urge you to test your own property tax impact with this tool.

It was recently brought to my attention that the **Penn Township Fire Department** is no longer an all-volunteer department. If you would like the details you can download a letter from Fire Chief John VanBrouaene at - <https://sites.google.com/site/wbpa01/home/crier> - it is titled "Penn Twp Fire Dept Letter Aug 2014.pdf" toward the bottom of the list.

September Board Meeting

In addition to Board members attending the September WBPA Board Meeting to hear featured speaker, **Ken Prince**, City Planner, for the City of Mishawaka, were a small group of WB residents passionate about their views of annexation. Facilitated by **Steve Ellis**, Board President, a question and answer session helped to dispel the myths and provided an opportunity to learn more about the process and its impact on residents. Also attending was **Kate Voelker**, Mishawaka City Council, 4th District which includes The Forest.



Ken Prince, Mishawaka City Planner



Above: **Kate Voelker**, Mishawaka City Council, 4th District

Above left: **Steve Ellis**
Left: **Victor Saavedra** and **Ginny Brummitt**



GREG AND SOOKA MACKEY

RESIDENTS

Have you ever wondered about the people who live behind the beautifully landscaped and lovingly cared for front yard that won the top prize for the 2014 *Winding Brook in Bloom*? **Greg and Sooka Mackey** have lived at 54736 Merrifield Drive for the past five years. They moved in on 8/08--their first night in their new home was spent sleeping on the floor! They have come a long way since those early days making this house their lovely home. It was inevitable that they would move to WB having many friends and clients who were residents. They even knew the previous owners once removed who completely renovated the house. Sooka says her passion for gardening began when they purchased a house in Swanson Highlands in South Bend that had a beautifully landscaped yard and felt compelled to maintain it but then needed to learn how to do that. She credits a friend who became her gardening mentor who helped her understand the elements of a successful garden and shared plants with her. When she and Greg moved to Merrifield, all that was there was some hostas and much of what you see today are perennials given to her from her mentor. Annuals are used as accents to provide some additional color. They are particularly excited about prairie trillium that are an endangered plant--theirs spreading and gorgeous in the Spring. Greg does marketing for Sullaire, a global producer of air compressors, both portable and industrial and has a design background. He was also a tennis pro at another time in his life. Sooka is a personal trainer and fitness instructor at ICE Fitness Center. They have two daughters, one in Los Angeles, and one in San Francisco who just gave them their first grandson. Greg and Sooka love to entertain as well as garden. They just purchased 200 tulip bulbs. Can't wait to see them in the Spring! They as a couple are as delightful as their front yard!

WBPA Board

Steve Ellis, President
Scott Kachmarik, Vice
President

Jane Mason, Secretary
Bill Bagatini, Treasurer
Laurel Eslinger, Crier Editor

Mike Babcock-Brian
Coffman-Lauren Dunbar-
Tammy Emery-Chris
Peregrine-Kathy Smith

Winding Brook Alert System

Have you signed up? 77 residents are registered. Won't you join them? Since its inception, alerts have gone out indicating burglaries in the neighborhood as well as lost pets. It is an expedient means of communication and sure beats a telephone tree!

By text message:

text WBRESIDENT to 84483 to receive future text alerts.

By email:

enter your email address at the following link:

https://www.rainedout.net/team_page.php?a=a4a3c621564fe250c152

After you enter your email address, agree to terms of service and then you are finished. Ignore the section that asks for a Private Key.

You will receive alerts by email after you are signed up.

If you feel something is worthy of sending out via the alert system, please contact any Board member who will determine if that is the appropriate way to get your message out to the residents.

WBPA Board Nominations

Calling all Winding Brook residents who have an interest in serving on the WBPA Board of Directors. Think about stepping forward to volunteer your time and talents with this group of people who strive to keep Winding Brook the community we all desire to live in. Nominations will be approved at the January Annual Board of Directors' Meeting.

The next WBPA Board Meeting

Monday, November 17
7:00pm

Honkers Restaurant

**All residents are
encouraged to attend!**

Brick Mailboxes & County Right- of-Way

Did you know that you just can't put up a brick or stone mailbox without permits and locating it outside the County right-of-way? If not, read on to get the facts.

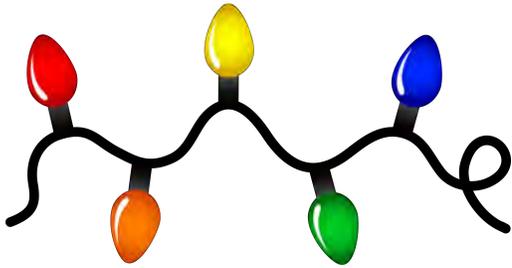
Brick mailboxes are very nice to look at and very durable, but, can, and have been the cause of damages and or serious injury. In case you are thinking of installing one on your property, you may be interested in the following:

According to the St. Joseph County Department of Public Works, St. Joseph County does NOT permit brick mailboxes that are placed within the County right-of-way. An approved permit from the Department of Public Works is required for ANY and ALL work performed on, below, or above the right-of-way. (landscaping, adding fill to the area, installing new or replacing an existing driveway, installing a brick mailbox etc etc.)

The right-of-way for Winding Brook Subdivision is 60ft., with the exception of Winding Brook Drive, which is 70ft. That means that the County right-of-way, on either side of the center of the road is 30ft. back, 35ft. back on Winding Brook Drive. County right-of-way is an area owned by the county should they need to do a road widening project, drainage work or for the purpose of utility work. Any brick mailboxes installed within that area are not permitted or approved mailboxes, and actually should be moved or removed, placed beyond the right-of-way line on the residents private property.

If you are interested in obtaining a permit to build a brick mailbox, there is an application process that includes drawings showing that the mailbox will not be built within the right-of-way.

Now you know!



*It's beginning to look a lot like Christmas!
Not really!*

In case you haven't heard, the WBPA Board approved a **Christmas Decorating Contest** for the 2014 holiday season. It will have a different look than those in years past with award recipients in the following categories:

- Best Overall WOW!**
- Clark Griswold Would Be Proud!**
- Best Front Door**
- Most Original**
- Best Theme**

The judging date will be announced in the December Crier.

Gingerbread House

Steve Ellis and Brian Coffman are hard at work on the rehab of the **Gingerbread House** that serves an important purpose during our *Gift to the Community*. The siding of the little house was crumbling and rotted and the insulation thin and sparse. The windows were plexiglass and were replaced. The exterior and interior will eventually receive a fresh coat of paint. New multi-colored lights will better illuminate the area around the house and give it a festive look and signage will be magnetic placards for each of the charities. This and other needed improvements are planned to make this a warm, safe space for our many volunteers during the *Gift to the Community*. A BIG thank you to Brian and Steve for their hard work!

AROUND THE PARK

Welcome!

New this summer to 15632 Winding Brook Drive are **Ron and Tiffany Greske** and their two sons. Joining them is Chip, a golden doodle! The Greskes moved here from Bristol, IN. Ron works for the Gel Spice Company as National Accounts Manager. You may have noticed the lovely new landscaping that now graces the front of their house! They are enjoying the neighborhood and their new neighbors.

Recently moving here from a southwest Pittsburgh suburb is **MaryAnne Scheuble** who is now living with good friend Jane Mason at 54756 Winding Brook Drive. MaryAnne has two sons—one at the University of Dayton and the other in Pittsburgh. MaryAnne works for Cressy Memorial and moved here to help consolidate business operations. Her focus is Hekman Contract Furnishings. She was previously a pre-school teacher and sold Mary Kay. MaryAnne also does alterations. Look for her ad on the back page.

Don't forget to keep your dog on a leash and get that pooper scooper out. Be respectful of your neighbors' yards and their safety.

With Sympathy

Rich Worthington of Springmill Drive passed away unexpectedly on August 12. He was a long time resident of 27 years. Rich could be seen through the years walking his beloved dogs Reesie and Molly of days past and more recently Izzy and Ivy. A life-long resident of Mishawaka, Rich graduated from Penn High School, class of 1966, where he started the Penn Chess club with Paul H. Schmucker before graduating. He spent his formative years developing a love for knowledge, a dedication to his work, and an unrelenting passion for Notre Dame football, Chicago sports, and most importantly the Chicago Cubs – a passion that was seemingly tested every summer. Rich is survived by his wife, **Sue McKinnell**, and son **Ryan McKinnell**. The family asks that donations be made to the South Bend Pet Refuge: 4626 Burnett Drive, South Bend, IN 46614.

Updated Dues List

- Higginbotham-Dunbar**
 - Voor**
 - Price**
 - Augsberger**
 - Phelps**
 - Emery**
- Thanks for supporting your neighborhood!**



Steve Ellis and Brian Coffman working on the Gingerbread House



Wednesday

October 15

7:00pm

Honkers Restaurant

Day Road

Child Safety

Concerns

Speaker:

**Sgt. Kris Hinton,
Investigator**

**St. Joseph County Special
Victim's Unit**

If you are a parent, grandparent, or just care about kids, please plan to attend this important meeting focusing on issues related to child safety.

New Neighborhood Watch Sign

Winding Brook Drive now joins Merrifield with its own Neighborhood Watch sign!

Mailbox Vandalism Continues

It has been reported that Carriage Lane was hit with mailbox vandalism. Please keep an eye out for who is doing this and call the police.



Halloween Party

Come all you ghosts and goblins to the

Annual Winding Brook Children's Halloween Party

**October 31
4:00pm**

15624 Robin Lane

Snacks, drinks, and games provided

Hosted by Chris and Christine Peregrine

Race to Save Lives 5K, 10K, 5K Walk of Hope

**November 8
Start and Finish at
St. Joseph Regional Medical
Center**

**Event benefits Suicide
Prevention Center of
St. Joseph County**

**The race will pass through
Winding Brook.**

Things to Do In Michiana this Fall

1. Go to Fernwood Botanical Garden and Nature Preserve west of Niles to see the amazing Stick Sculptures.
2. Visit Wellfield Botanical Garden in Elkhart
3. Visit Buchanan, MI to view the scarecrows that line the streets.
4. Drive north out of Buchanan along Redbud Trail to enjoy the river road and fall colors.
5. or you can rake leaves!

**Winding Brook Website:
windingbrookpark.com**

**WBPA
PO Box 6566
South Bend, IN 46660**

**WBPA email address:
wbpahome@gmail.com**

FROM THE EDITOR

If you are reading this then you are among those WB residents who read the Crier. I am reaching out to you to help provide information for future editions as it can be challenging to find enough to fill these pages. So please keep me in mind when new neighbors move in, you hear of births or deaths or other life events.

Thanks!

Laurel Eslinger

Expert Sewing Services

MARYANNE SCHEUBLE

* Alterations: for Bridal, Tailored Dresses & Suits
* Window Treatments/ Home Décor
* Repair Projects

412.498.7999

54756 Windingbrook Drive, Mishawaka, IN 46545

****Free!****

4-car train for Christmas display needs a new home. Interested? Contact Rose Grover, Springmill Drive, at 259-0315 or 274-5553 for the particulars.

Choo-Choo!

To use the Tax Calculator go to - <https://gateway.ifonline.org/CalculatorsDLGF/TaxCalculator.aspx>

Select correct year (2014) - Select St. Joseph for County

Enter Assessed Valuation (\$200,000 used in examples below)

Select "Homestead ..." for Property Type

Select Tax District Use "Penn Township-PHM Schools" for current Tax District ... to Compare use "Mishawaka(Penn) - PHM" to find difference between the two different Tax Districts

Deductions will automatically be checked

Click "Estimate this Bill" for results

The examples below show the estimated property tax for a \$200,000 home in Winding Brook home today and what it would be if annexed.

https://gateway.ifonline.org/CalculatorsDLGF/TaxCalculator.aspx

Estimated Tax Bill - 2013 Pay 2014	
Gross Assessed Value	\$ 200,000
Net Assessed Value	\$ 100,750
Gross Annual Taxes	\$ 2,637
Minus Savings Due to Property Tax Cap	\$ 637
Taxes Due to Property Tax Cap Exempt Tax Rates	\$ 502
Net Annual Tax Bill Estimated	\$ 2,502
Tax Rate Details	
Total Tax Rate:	2.6172%
Property Tax Cap Exempt Tax Rate:	0.4883%
Property Tax Cap:	1%
Maximum Property Tax Bill:	\$ 2,502

https://gateway.ifonline.org/CalculatorsDLGF/TaxCalculator.aspx

Estimated Tax Bill - 2013 Pay 2014	
Gross Assessed Value	\$ 200,000
Net Assessed Value	\$ 100,750
Gross Annual Taxes	\$ 4,293
Minus Savings Due to Property Tax Cap	\$ 2,623
Taxes Due to Property Tax Cap Exempt Tax Rates	\$ 534
Net Annual Tax Bill Estimated	\$ 2,534
Tax Rate Details	
Total Tax Rate:	4.213%
Property Tax Cap Exempt Tax Rate:	0.297%
Property Tax Cap:	1%
Maximum Property Tax Bill:	\$ 2,534

What Annexation Means to Us...

Below are lists of impacts to our neighborhood if annexation into Mishawaka occurs.

Things that will happen if annexed:

1. Property taxes will increase minimally (see other side of this page to check how much yours may go up).
2. Water bills will go down by as much as 15%.
3. Our electric service will improve (better response and preventative maintenance).
4. Our trash/recycling service costs will go down for almost all.
5. Our leaf pick up in the fall will improve (no cost and more frequent pickups).
6. Better code enforcement (getting unattended properties improved/cleaned up).
7. Sidewalk along Day Road will be requested.
8. Improved snow plowing of streets.
9. Representation in City governing councils in addition to current County Council representation.
10. House numbers will change from 5 digits to 3 or 4 digits (Mishawaka standard)
11. Mishawaka Police Department coverage.
12. Mishawaka Fire Department coverage.
13. More city attention to Henry Frank Park.
14. Open burning of leaves/debris/trash not permitted.

Things that will remain the same if annexed:

15. No change in school district (we remain in PHM Schools).
16. We continue to be represented by a County Council representative.
17. Street names stay the same.
18. Private security patrols can continue (if desired).
19. Annual "Gift to the Community" (Christmas lights displays for local charities) continues.
20. Winding Brook Park Association will continue.
21. Home fire pits/recreational fires still permitted.

Things unknown or negotiated if annexed:

22. Sewer lines (laterals) to be run down streets that do not have them.
23. Impact on Homeowners insurance.
24. 4-Way stop signs for high traffic intersections.
25. How many and where street lights to be installed.
26. How many and where sidewalks will be installed.