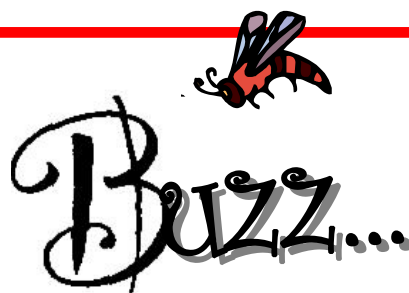




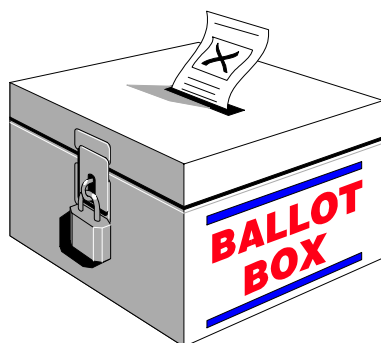
BelleFair



The Talk Around Town!

May, 2004

HOA Election Results



The fourth annual Homeowner Association meeting was held in the Meeting House on Monday, May 3rd at 8:00 p.m. This meeting is the annual election called for the purpose of electing residents of BelleFair to fill those positions which have become vacant on the Board.

The small turnout still managed to squeak through a required quorum of 51% of the homes in the community, although many of the required votes were from the proxies that were submitted. Considering that there are 261 homes in BelleFair, 177 "single family" houses and 88 village homes and maintenance included, the required 51% had to number at least 131 homes. A total of 138 votes were cast.

The reported results are:

For the free- standing homes: one candidate, and elected, Peter Schlactus

For the combined Village and maintenance- free homes, there were four candidates for two positions. The two elected were Chris Genovese and Susan Glass.

The new Board held its first meeting immediately after the annual meeting to elect its officers. Members addressed the extreme workload entailed in the Presidency, including monitoring contractors, working with American Leisure and conducting and organizing the business of the Board. A division of the work load seemed potentially beneficial.

Accordingly, by a unanimous vote, Peter Schlactus was made Co-President, along with current President Joe Livornese, for the upcoming year. There is precedent for this -- the first homeowner-elected Board three years ago had as Co-Presidents Carol Goodman and Roger Matles, who shared responsibilities. Chris Dunigan, David Gelfarb, and Chris Genovese were elected to serve as

BelleFair HOA Board '04-'05

Co-President	Joseph Livornese cafelivorno@aol.com
Co-President	Peter Schlactus jpschlac@optonline.net
Vice President	Chris Dunigan CFDun@aol.com
Treasurer	David Gelfarb dbgelfarb@hotmail.com
Secretary	Chris Genovese chrisand- Maria@optonline.net
Past President	Pat Sanders Romano promano646@aol.com

Check Out BelleFair's Website!

www.BelleFair.org

Site Manager:	Richard Kaufman American Leisure
Assistant:	Romaine Brown
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Hours:	7a.m. till close
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Fax:	690-1143
E-Mail:	manager@BelleFair.org

Communications Committee:

Peter Schlactus, Chair, Editor	
Mark Balfan	Carol Charitan
Janet Edelman	Leslee Fein
Mimi Raphael	
Connie Sanders	Cathy Zenenberg



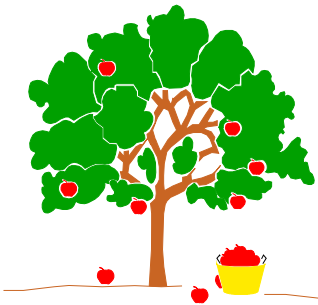
Elections (Continued)

Vice President (2nd year for Chris), Treasurer (3rd year for David) and Secretary respectively. Susan Glass subsequently resigned. A resident from a maintenance-included home will be appointed by the Board to fill her spot in the near future.

The Board's first meeting, which is open to the public, will be held Tuesday May 25th at 7:30pm at the Meeting House.

Be a BelleFair Committee Member

...PLEASE!



Are you curious about how BelleFair is run? Do you want to know what is REALLY going on here? Would you like to have a say in the organization of this community? Then JOIN A COMMITTEE. Help make this the community you dreamed about when you chose to live here.

The following is a description of some of the committees. The only requirement for serving on one is to be age 16 or older and a resident in good standing. If you are interested, leave your name and phone number at the Meeting House reception desk, together with the name of the committee you are interested in, and someone will get back to you.

LANDSCAPING COMMITTEE:

Responsible for landscaping of the common elements and the maintenance included homes. This includes reviewing the current status of our landscaping, determining areas to be repaired or replaced by the HOA, monitoring performance of landscape professionals hired by the HOA, reviewing and negotiating contracts with the landscape maintenance provider(s), and coordinating with the Finance Committee for a budget.



COMMUNICATIONS COMMITTEE:

Responsible for the BelleFair Buzz newsletter, the Homeowner Directory, and the community website, in order to disseminate HOA news, activities, and matters of interest to the BelleFair community. This group needs a couple of good "reporters" and take-charge types as Peter transitions over to his duties as Co-President.

BUDGET & FINANCE COMMITTEE:

Develops the operating budget and monitors ongoing expenditures and revenues. A succinct description of a vital and busy group.



ARB:

The ARB is now an appointed body. Each fall, residents are invited to express interest in serving to the Board, which appoints 7 members to serve a one-year term beginning December 1.

SPECIAL EVENTS / ACTIVITIES:

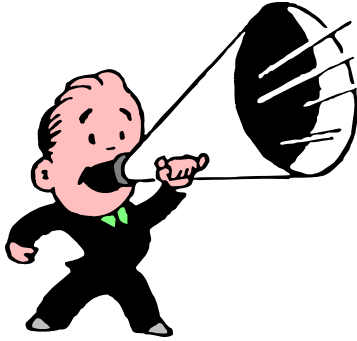
What do the BelleFair Spring Carnival, the Halloween Party, the International Pot Luck Dinner, the Wine Tasting Evening, and other community-building events have in common? The dedication and fun of the group that envisioned and organized them along with our Property Management company.



Editor's Note: Look out for possible new opportunities to get involved in areas such as Roads and Safety, Classes (adult or youth), Café/Deli Liaison, and Meeting House Facilities. Let us know if you'd be interested in any of these.



Board Member's Remarks from Annual Meeting



The following is are remarks that I was unable to deliver at this year's Annual Meeting. I hope it lays out a good picture of what you can expect from me as your Co-President this year. — Peter Schlactus

“I am very grateful to all of you, my neighbors, for your vote of confidence. I am going to work hard during the next two years to justify your support. Let me use explain why I'm involved and what you can expect from me.

Perhaps Spectrum's vision of a COMMUNITY that spans generations and brings neighbors together was motivated in part by self-interest and market value. It still doesn't diminish the fact that many of us were attracted to this place by that vision, and not just the amenities and the architecture. The big challenge for BelleFair as I see it, is to show that we can capture the best essence of small-town COMMUNITY in the midst of a metropolitan bedroom suburb in the 21st century.

So what does that mean? Certainly the trains must run on time, as they say. High ideals are no substitute for good government and fiscal responsibility. We cannot and should not accept poor service or shoddy appearances, nor should we simply try to spend our way to happiness. But I will aim for more.

I will be looking for ways to involve more of you in Committees and projects. For example, I think people other than Board members should head up committees so that we don't end up with a small clique of leaders. I think we need to form and reform groups to consider how best to keep up and run the Meeting House, how to keep our streets safe (you know national statistics show that most speeders are not outsiders but local residents), and also to manage our relationships with the day care center and the café (which, hopefully, will have a new owner very soon).

The Board doesn't have to spend hours like it does now dealing with every issue practically from scratch. Instead, we should let many residents contribute with research, opinions, options and recommendations. We should give your work the respect it deserves, and ultimately make the executive decisions and follow through.

Another goal will be to continue to improve communication among the Board, the committees, our managing agent, and all residents – and even between members of the Board, itself. I have focused on communication over the past two years and yet I know full well that more can be done. Too many neighbors complain that their questions and concerns go unanswered. Many times the Board or our agent is working on it – but you know what they say about the tree that falls in the forest with no one around to hear – did it really make a sound?

Finally, just as the “New Urbanism” concept behind BelleFair was an innovation, and applying it to the established New York real estate scene somewhat daring and risky, so too we need to think out of the box, experiment with community-building in new ways and with fresh ideas. I hope all of you will contribute the lion's share of those ideas, as well as some measure of time and energy to see them through to success.

In the meantime, my door (and my mailbox and fax machine and email box) is wide open for questions as well as suggestions, for complaints as well as compliments. As I said in my written statement, the feedback I get here is overwhelmingly constructive and positive. This is no thankless task. I encourage more of you to get involved and see that for yourselves. Thank you very much.” — Peter Schlactus



Water Aerobics Test the Waters!



A small but enthusiastic group of women of assorted ages has been enjoying water aerobics in our indoor pool under the direction of our certified swim instructor, Gina, and we are still surprised that our enthusiastic group is so small. The only reason we can figure for this small turnout is that there are so few in BelleFair who understand the enjoyment and benefits of water aerobics.

The Aquatic Exercise Association says “The magic is in the water” and cite the following benefits:

Buoyancy: Body weight is reduced, putting less stress on your joints.

Resistance: You get 12 times the resistance of air.

Cooling Effect: Excess heat is eliminated better.

Arthritis: Reduced stress on joints allows for longer workouts, says the American College of Osteopathic Family Physicians.

Osteoporosis: Water workout may help develop balance and improve posture, We meet on Tuesdays and Thursday mornings at 9:00 am. Come for a free trial class and when you discover how much fun it is, and how good you feel afterwards, you can sign up for either or both days.

Alana Renee Jones: A Staff Profile



Don't be too hard on Alana during the month of May---this is final exam time at the John Jay College of Criminal Justice, where she is in her next-to-last year.

As head lifeguard and assistant site manager, Alana is on duty at BelleFair from 3:00 in the afternoon until closing, at 9:00 or 10:00 p.m., depending on activities. Then it's home to New Rochelle for more studying in the house she owns and shares with an all-black cat named Moonlight.

Alana was raised in White Plains and attended Woodlands High School. She was a lifeguard at the YMCA and worked at Lyons Farm before coming to BelleFair, where she has been for three years, making her the longest-serving employee after Richard. When she graduates from John Jay next year, she would like to go on to law school, perhaps Cardozo, to study entertainment law. In ten years, Alana sees herself as a member of a prestigious law firm, or perhaps opening her own practice.

During Spring break this year, she vacationed in Jamaica, which she loved, and she has also traveled to Hawaii, Cancun, and her mother's birthplace, Switzerland, where she had a chance to practice her German.

Attending school and working such long hours at BelleFair leave her little time for outside activities, but she enjoys quiet time at home, reading books such as “Naughty or Nice” by Eric Jerome Dickey, her favorite author.

School and exams will soon be over, and we'll be seeing Alana at the pool again.

Fines Instituted for Dog Doo and Pet Pee



Dog excrement and urination on common land and other residents' properties is creating damage and posing a hazard to residents. At its April meeting, the Board agreed to institute a fine system for residents who do not pick up after their dogs: \$50 for first offence, \$100 for second, \$150 for third and additional offences. Anyone can report an incident to the Property Manager on duty. If dog owners do not take this seriously, the Board has discussed additional measures that it hopes not to have to resort to. The Board will continue to monitor this issue and plans to address urine as well, since this causes the most damage to lawns. Suggestions from homeowners are welcome too.



Tax Revaluation Alarming and Error-Prone



In interviewing many of the residents of BelleFair, it is obvious that few are happy with the results of the revaluation of our homes. The list of complaints includes some of the following from those people who have discovered gross errors in their valuations, such as:

- 1) A second floor, where there isn't one
- 2) Additional bedrooms that do not exist
- 3) Additional bathrooms that do not exist

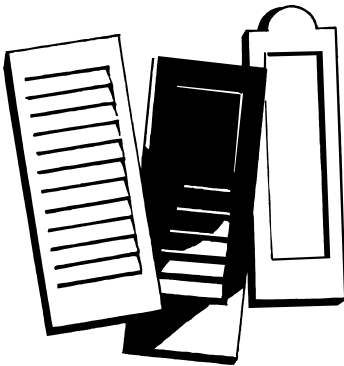
Also listed as a complaint was the difficulty of getting an appointment to speak with someone (MJW Consulting: 866-814-7114) or the fact that phone calls had not been returned. Another complaint mentioned that information on a given home was not changed by the Board of Review, even after an error was pointed out by a homeowner.

While some people have had some success and had their valuation lowered, others have found the appeal process frustrating and non-productive.

Many have been shocked by what they consider to be very high valuations, and almost everyone is apprehensive about the effect of the revaluations on their taxes. Gary Zuckerman and other members of the Village's Assistance Task Force, speaking at a meeting on Thursday, May 6th at the Senior Center, claimed that the revaluation numbers were not going to be used for reassessment of taxes.

The bottom line seems to be that if you still have a complaint about your revaluation, you have from June 1-15 to file a grievance with the Board of Review.

Richard's Report News to Use...



Dog owners! You **MUST** curb your pets. Not only are you creating unsanitary and unsightly conditions, you are breaking the law. Also there are new rules regarding fines (see below).

- If your **shutters are fading** and need to be replaced, contact:
Mid-America Building Products
Attn: Warranty Department
29797 Beck Road
Wixom, Michigan 48393
Phone: 800-521-8486
Fax: 888-459-3647
- **ARB meetings** are held on the third Thursday of each month. If you want an application to be considered at a meeting, submit it by the second Thursday of that month.
- The new **children's basketball net** is for **SMALL CHILDREN ONLY!** This new play equipment has already been broken after only a short time, and a part needs to be replaced. **NO DUNKING PERMITTED!**
- We ask that the nannies and children be more **respectful of the playground** area, placing rubbish in the proper receptacles.
- We also want to **thank Sterling Glen**, especially Tom Sadlowski, for helping BelleFair by repairing a deteriorated section of sidewalk on High Point Circle at no cost to BelleFair.



BelleFair Beefs



Budget Busters: Snow and Insurance.



The **entrance signs** are still not properly lit. A white board placed behind the black sign or painting the lettering gold would solve the problem. The other sign needs more light, as only 'Fair' is illuminated.

- Parking in the back lot at night is an accident waiting to happen. The **stairs are not adequately lit**, even though this 'beef' is not a new one.
- Now that we have the luxury of being able to put out our garbage cans by our garage doors, why do residents still leave them out after pickup? Put your **garbage cans back in your garage** as soon as you can!
- Another accident waiting to happen: the **stop sign at Millenium and Legendary** must be invisible to some drivers. Stop means STOP. You do not have the right of way.

The 2004 BelleFair Budget is already straining under the double-whammy of extra snow removal costs and sharply increased insurance premiums. Surcharges by our landscaping contractor for removal of heavy snowfalls, which are provided for in our contract, reached about \$28,000 this past winter. This is similar to the prior year's surcharges, which led to an assessment of maintenance-included (M-I) homes. So far, the Board has not levied a new assessment as it monitors the M-I budget, but such a move remains possible if necessary.

Based on an analysis conducted after last year's snows, costs are allocated between the M-I and HOA budgets on a 2/3 to 1/3 proportion. Shoveling out everyone's walks, driveways, and sidewalks simply takes more resources than the private roads and common buildings.

The insurance situation is not unrelated to the winter either. BelleFair made a sizeable claim for water damage due to leakage from sprinkler pipes, which burst after freezing in the Meeting House. This was the 2nd such claim in two years. Under current tight market conditions, the three brokers we used had little to show for their efforts as the expiration deadline approached. Our current broker ultimately prevailed upon our current carrier to renew us, but at a cost of about \$85,000 or about \$20,000 more than last year.

Adding insult to injury, the new insurance no longer covers loss due to sprinkler leakage at all - neither at the Meeting House nor at the M-I homes (see Insurance Alert article).

This year's budget does contemplate extra expenses such as these, but the scale of the increase exceeded expectations. While this year's revenues should be sufficient, it may not be possible to build up our capital reserves to the extent we hoped for.

What can you do to help? **First**, stay current on your dues. When budgets are tight, cash flow becomes critical. The Association cannot afford to tolerate late payments and will be aggressively pursuing delinquent accounts, as well as unpaid late fees, fines, etc. **Second**, volunteer to serve on the landscaping committee, which is about to bid out our major landscaping and snow removal contracts. **Third**, volunteer for the budget and finance committee. With greater participation we could create working groups to better manage the insurance renewal process and other projects. **Lastly**, feel free to express your opinions (politely) to our Managing Agent or Board Members, but try to include constructive suggestions and be prepared to be part of the solution.

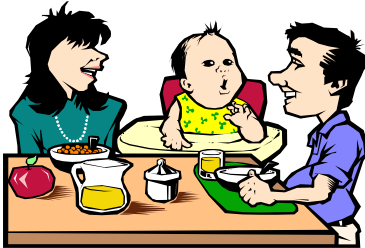


Insurance Alert for Maintenance-Included Homes

Due to new restrictions on the HOA's insurance (see Budget Busters article), residents in Maintenance-Included homes are urged to make sure their personal insurance policies cover damage to their homes stemming from sprinkler leakage. It will likely not be possible to purchase such insurance without **buying full homeowners coverage on your home.**

Ironically, this unfortunate development comes right on the heels of the Board working out an approach to eliminate duplicate home insurance by providing certificates of insurance M-I homeowners can use to satisfy lenders while dropping personal insurance. While the Board will energetically seek to rectify the situation, until further notice we do not recommend that homeowners drop their individual coverage. And any who have already done so should promptly consider reinstating such coverage to protect against sprinkler leakage.

Cornerstone Sale Imminent?!



Recently, the Board interviewed Gigi and John Cavini, a young 'mom & pop' who have operated stores in Greenwich and concessions at area clubs, such as the Griffith golf course in Greenwich. The couple would like to make BelleFair their new business home, and have successfully negotiated terms with Cornerstone. Terms of a new lease with BelleFair are currently being negotiated.

John and Gigi would respond to community needs by introducing a deli/market operation that maintains the ambience of the current cafe while providing a greater range of less fancy and more family-oriented food and grocery options at reasonable prices. They are open to new services and special events, such as cooking facilities, increased seasonal outdoor seating, a children's party room, table service, and more. To assure quality and maintain a personal touch, Gigi and John plan to personally run and oversee the operation themselves. They also support the creation of a liaison group of BelleFair residents to keep lines of communication open.

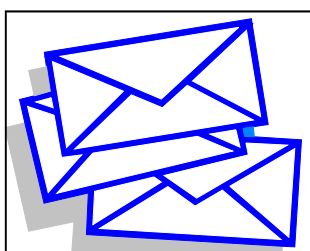
Finally, the couple has agreed to reimburse BelleFair for all costs connected to their space. This includes items such as property taxes and capital maintenance that the HOA has had to pay in the past, in effect subsidizing the café's operations. This could free up nearly \$15,000 in resources to attend to community needs. Also, in the future the HOA will retain control over who operates the store (vs. now where Cornerstone has the right to sell without Board approval, although they have cooperated fully with us).

If this deal goes through, all BelleFair residents will need to step up and support the new store. Active patronage is the key to its success, and only by showing that such a venture can succeed here will BelleFair be able to maintain quality services without costly subsidies. Please plan to do your part.

Annual Meeting Date to Change



Responding to feedback from homeowners, at its April meeting the Board resolved that henceforth the Association's Annual Meeting will be held on the first **Tuesday** in May. Please mark your (long-range) calendars accordingly.



Your questions, comments, complaints, compliments, ideas, suggestions, opinions, orations, ventings, and family news are eagerly desired for future editions of the Buzz. Please email to our text editor, Janet Edelman, at janetedel@aol.com

