



CRESTWOOD

times

Newsletter of the Wisconsin Cooperative Housing Association

Winter 2023



2023 Crestwood Annual Meeting

by Barry Ownes

The WCHA Annual Meeting for 2023 took place on October 23. Around 40 households were represented by either one or two family members.

The WCHA finances were presented along with an audit report from Dawn Casper. The income and expense statement, which includes capital gains income from our invested assets shows a net income of \$1,850.90. The annual budget adopted at the beginning of the budget year came out essentially balanced. The budget uses a projected allocation of investment income from our financial assets; and so can differ, in either direction, from actual net gains.

The audit report did include two recommendations this year. First, is a request regarding documentation for expenses authorized and paid by individuals on behalf of the cooperative. The request is for a receipt on which the reimbursement request is clearly identified along with evidence of payment by the individual. This documentation makes the audit process more straightforward. Second is a suggestion to the board to consider retaining professional

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WCHA Deed Covenants in a growing city

by Barry Owens



Madison and it's surrounding communities are growing. Population growth in the city itself can only grow through increased density. The city has adopted some regulations and has made and considered zoning changes that could conflict with our Deed Covenants. The Deed Covenants can be reviewed either in the Crestwood Directory or at the [wchacrestwood.com website](http://wchacrestwood.com). The Board is planning to conduct a neighborhood project in which WCHA members (the owners of Crestwood property) will decide the future of our Deed Covenants. This article will identify the known or expected changes and the relationship to our Deed Covenants.

First, Madison has adopted a regulation covering Auxiliary Dwelling Units (ADUs). A summary of the regulation can be found online at The Backyard Homes Project. At present homeowners can seek city approval and add ADUs to their property. The WCHA Deed Covenant II suggests owners in Crestwood cannot. Deed Covenant II contains language that could prohibit any outbuilding from being used as a residence temporarily or permanently.

Our Deed Covenant I would also prevent ADUs being built as separate structures. But Deed Covenant I is in conflict with city zoning regulations that allow sheds, etc and we have not defended it for many years.

Second, Madison has adopted a regulation allowing for short term rentals of up to

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Winter 2023 Crestwood events

The Enrichment Committee is still in search of a volunteer Santa, as well as someone(s) to organize the Crestebeiner ski event over the winter, should snow conditions allow. Please contact Carey Dachik at careydachik@gmail.com

2024 Crestwood Directory

by Katt Adams

Hello Neighbor! This is a reminder to fill out the Directory Update form. Please respond by January 6, 2024.

The link to the form is: [2024 Directory Update Form](#) (see our website, Facebook page, email)

Now that I have my health sorted out, I am picking up the reins to get our new directory completed! If you have already filled out the form and nothing has changed, you don't need to do anything further. The main reason for doing it this way is to avoid the errors seen in previous data collection. Some of these mistakes were due to: transcription errors, illegible writing on the response forms, the collection forms not being filled out completely, and/or incorrectly. We will also be collecting information traditionally, with your friendly street captain stopping by with forms.

In mid-January, once the resident section is done, I will be sending out a new link via groups.io email and asking you to verify that YOUR information has been entered correctly. This document will be organized by street name for easy access. We try very hard to get it right the first time but we are not perfect! You do not have to reply if everything is correct.

Thank you very much for your participation—here's to the best directory yet!

Crestwood Annual Meeting (cont. from p.1)

services for parts of our accounting and tax work. We are organized as a for profit cooperative and must file income tax forms and pay any taxes due.

Reports from committees and the forester were either included in the annual meeting mailing or presented at the meeting. If you have questions or want to learn more about any of the committees, the contacts appear in each newsletter.

Three board member terms end each year. This year terms ended for Katt Adams, Barry Owens, and Chris Sessions, all of whose stood for reelection. Jill Laeyendecker, multi year board secretary, started a graduate program in September and found it necessary to step away from the board with one year remaining on her term. Jill was thanked for her service on behalf of the board and the neighborhood. Lisl Walsh stood for election to the one year term opened by Jill's departure.



is the newsletter of the Wisconsin Cooperative Housing Association. It contains information about the Crestwood area of Madison, WI, and is published quarterly. Submissions are welcome. The editor, Sally Averkamp, can be reached at aversigg@sbcglobal.net. Also join our neighborhood listserv: Go to <https://wchacrestwood.groups.io/g/all>, click "Sign up" in top right corner, and follow instructions.

Crestwood Board

President, Barry Owens, 608-236-0262
Vice President, Cynthia Albrecht, 608-238-3774
Treasurer, Katt Adams, 608-233-4895
Secretary, Lisl Walsh, 860-377-5114
Pawel Moldysz, 715-207-1033
Chris Sessions, 608-233-1678
Jan Tuccinardi, 608-233-1217
Meg Wise, 608-238-2201
Susan Wulfsberg, 608-233-1727

Crestwood Committees

Enrichment – Carey Dachik
Finance – Rose Stephenson
Forester – Jeremiah Yahn, 608-698-6273
Greenways – Dawn Casper
Joyce Garden – Rik Rosenlund
Kiosk – Kristen Clausen
Newsletter – Sally Averkamp, aversigg@sbcglobal.net
Playground – Leslie Dressler
Website – Jill Laeyendecker, 608-609-3516
Welcoming – Barb Roeber
Woods & Trails – Barry Owens & David Tenenbaum

The discussion topic for the evening was the WCHA Deed Covenants. More on that subject is covered in two other articles in this newsletter.

The question "do we need Deed Covenants?" was raised. A good question. The board believes we should look into implications of a decision and get a reading neighborhood sentiment before moving toward implementing a decision. There was a suggestion the neighborhood should have a vision. It seems best that younger residents who feel some commitment to Crestwood should be well represented in such an undertaking. Another suggestion is to learn about city planning processes and the current status of neighborhood plans. It was subsequently learned that the concept of neighborhood plans is no longer

WCHA Deed Covenants (cont. from p.1)

30 nights. A summary of the regulations can be found online at [ZTRHP1-FAQ](#). The city calls these accommodations Tourist Rooming Houses (TRH). Popular phrasing includes Air B&B, VRBO, etc. It is possible there could be opposition to the presence of a TRH in Crestwood. The Board is not aware of any at present. The current wording of WCHA Deed Covenant II includes the phrase "nor shall any residence of a temporary character be permitted".

The interpretation of these words *could* be argued to prohibit rental under a lease of property in Crestwood; but they have not been interpreted that way for a long time. The interpretation rests on the word temporary. A narrower interpretation would not object to traditional rentals, but would draw the line at short term rentals as permitted under Madison's TRH regulation.

The project we will undertake will, among other things, guide the Board toward a decision whether to defend an interpretation of Deed Covenant II that would prevent short term rentals in Crestwood. Alternatively, we could launch a project to re-write the Deed Covenants, which cannot be modified unless new language is either approved by a majority by January 1, 2028 or approved by 100% of WCHA members.

A part of a decision to defend or re-write the Deed Covenants would be an analysis of the cost vs benefit of a defense of either approach.

Third, Madison has changed the definition of single family, broadening it to include up to five unrelated adults and their dependents. This change supports

included in city planning; but the idea of gaining an understanding of the city process and activities still makes sense.

The subject of a proposed apartment complex on Old Sauk Road was raised. It is at some distance west of Crestwood School but did call into focus the notion that traffic arteries seem to be primary areas for larger scale development corridors. Crestwood does include seven homes on Old Sauk Road.

Thoughts about purchases of multiple properties by real estate investors were expressed.

Please stay tuned as the WCHA works toward a decision about what posture to take with regard to Deed Covenants.

the need to increase availability of housing in a market with a shortage of supply. Opposition to this is possible based on reasoning that it would decrease the sense of a close and active neighborhood association.

Fourth, we have heard there is likelihood in the not-far-distant future that single family zoning could be changed to make both flats and duplexes permissible.

WCHA is in an area zoned single family. The Board will be looking into how these changes could affect the neighborhood and whether Deed Covenants are a way to prevent changes, if there are any, that the WCHA members collectively oppose. We will need the help of neighbors to do this. The article below describes formation of a committee to investigate the identified changes and the presence or likelihood of others. We will also need to learn the views of neighbors as this project proceeds. Listening sessions are likely to be one way.

Help Wanted with Deed Covenants

The WCHA Crestwood Board is looking for volunteers to be part of a Deed Covenants Committee. This group would gather information, devise a plan to educate WCHA stockholders about the issues, gather neighborhood opinions, and present their findings to the board. Anyone with an interest in joining this committee is invited to contact WCHA vice-president Cynthia Albrecht at 608-238-3774 with questions or to volunteer. Younger members of the community are especially invited to participate.

Crestwood: An appreciation

by Robert DeMars and Janet Tuc-
cinardi

Robert DeMars 1928 - 2023

Recently you may have seen an elderly gentleman in a wheelchair being pushed along Bordner Drive. Even if it wasn't particularly cold, he would be layered in a warm cap, gloves, scarf, jacket, and flannel pajamas. His eyes alert to everything around him, especially another friendly soul to chat with. That man was Bob DeMars, and he was always attended by his son, Adam, or daughter, Amy, on his daily ride through his beloved Crestwood.

You may think "beloved" is a schmaltzy word to describe how one feels about his neighborhood; but you would be wrong. And I will tell you why.

Not long ago I thought that it would be fun to talk to the older residents of Crestwood about their recollections of the neighborhood. Bob was the first person who popped into my head. He was always a presence in the neighborhood. When my family moved to our home on Bordner Drive in 1985, I would see Bob running through the neighborhood. When he stopped, we'd have a quick chat. Bob could do that because he wasn't on his phone or wearing earbuds. He wasn't tuned into himself, but the world around him. Later, Bob wouldn't run, but jog by the house, then walk, then walk with sticks, then came the wheelchair. Always passing by with a friendly smile, wave, or a joke ("Hey Bob! How d'ya feel?" "I feel with my hands!"), or if you were lucky a nice chat. One of the things I loved about Bob was that, although he was a very intelligent, award-winning researcher and professor, but never lost his Bronx roots.

On one of Bob's outings with his son, Adam, I told him my idea. He said, "Funny. Recently, Adam and I were discussing what we thought was special about living in Crestwood. He suggested that my long residence in Crestwood might make my thoughts especially interesting to Crestwood residents and that it might be a good idea to publish my thoughts in the



monthly newsletter..."

We met at Bob's home on Sunday morning, November 5 with his daughter, Amy, present.

Bob and his wife, Ann, bought their home at 217 Bordner Drive in 1959 for \$20,500. It was a Model D Erdman home, designed by a local architectural firm. The brochure for the home states, "Compare the many features of this spacious home with houses costing \$2,000 to \$4,000 more, and you'll know why so many families are building Erdman homes."

But what is really interesting is why Bob and Ann wanted a home in Crestwood.

"We purchased the home because it was in a beautiful neighborhood. But I was also influenced by the behavior of the real estate agent who was showing me homes. One day, when he was showing me around and as we descending down Rosa Road toward Elder Street, I remarked that I had seen the home that interested us and was favorably impressed. The agent remarked that we would not want to live in that neighborhood because a "n----" lived there. (His words) I ordered him to stop the car. I got out of the car, walked across the tot lot and told the family we would buy their home. We

thought it would be good to grow up in a neighborhood that was racially diversified."

Over the years, Bob and Ann made changes to their home that they shared with their four children: Mark, Matthew, Adam, and Amy. Modifications included a large bedroom area, and a modified breakfast area with a large picture window.

However, there were issues with water. The first night in the house, Bob and Ann arrived to find the basement flooded with water up to their knees and mud on the bottom of the floor. There was a stream in the backyard. Bob recalled that it was so vigorous that sometimes logs flowed down the stream! Eventually the City built a stone culvert, and water was diverted to the drainage ditch, probably Bordner Park.

In 1959, Bordner Park was a mess; only the footprint of past gardens remained. (Perhaps from when it was a Victory Garden in WW II). Of course there was no playground, tennis or basketball courts or baseball diamond. However, thanks to Bob, there was an ice rink. The City would grade the area that is now the ball field, and a volunteer would flood the area with water that would freeze for a neighborhood ice rink. This involved Bob getting

Crestwood: An appreciation (cont. from p.3)

a key to a utility box where the hose and spigot were, and standing in the cold for hours to flood the rink. Of course the payoff was “watching people of all ages pushing babies in carts, skating, playing hockey and crack the whip, and performing tricks.”

Crestwood is blessed with nearby woods and prairie that attracted various birds. Bob became interested in bird watching when he was a Boy Scout in the Bronx. He would often ride the “El” and the subway, to get to Brooklyn, and eventually walk along miles of beach on Long Island to bird watch for hours. In the neighborhood, he and Ann would take walks in Owen Woods where he could spot bobolinks, a field bird.

They also organized field trips with neighbors to visit birding sites near and far. A particularly memorable trip was to Carney, Nebraska to see thousands of cranes. Neighbors who joined the caravan include some very lovely neighbors who have passed: Jane and Syd Wood, Harry Ludwig, and others.

Bob showed me a picture he particularly loved; he and Ann in front of a field of sunflowers on Old Sauk Road. That was an excursion he took with neighbor, Beth Duvick. He appreciated the photo so much that Beth had it matted and framed for them.

Bob said, “We’re a crane family.” He wasn’t just referring to his avocation of bird watching. “Cranes mate for life.” At that, he showed me a photo of Ann and Bob’s gravestone, with two cranes en-

twined and the date of their marriage.

In recent years, as Bob was unable to do walkabouts with his binoculars, his son Adam kept his bird feeders full so he could watch goldfinches, house sparrows, downy, hairy, red-bellied and woodpeckers, Cooper’s hawk, blue jays, grackles, red and white nut hatches, and more at his picture window.

Bob said Crestwood is “unique” that “the homes are arranged to promote interactions between neighbors because of the dead-ends and absence of sidewalks. The neighborhood is shaped like a big hug. You are encircled almost everywhere, except the exit points on both ends of Bordner Drive. There are no thoroughfares. “So when we go out, we’re in the street...the absence of sidewalks makes us encounter people.” Walkers, runners, strollers with babies, wheelchairs with older folks, dogs (and more dogs), skaters, uni-cycles, pogo sticks are all over. (Note: drive carefully) He reflected that in the city crowded sidewalks on both sides of the street didn’t facilitate conversing with neighbors.

The Annual Crestwood Fourth of July Parade and Picnic was Bob’s favorite neighborhood event. For many years he served as the Parade Marshall. Wearing a tall red and white striped hat, he would read the Declaration of Independence to those assembled at the top of Bordner Drive (see photo on p. 3). Then lead the parade down Bordner and back up. Distributing ice cream after the parade is a Crestwood tradition that all enjoy. Where the ice cream is distributed, there is now a

bench in memory of Bob’s wife, Ann.

Today, so many of us are in such a rush, even when we’re relaxing, we’re multi-tasking. Not Bob. He was proud of the fact that his ride through the neighborhood took an hour instead of ten or fifteen minutes.

I’d like to end with my favorite memory of Bob and Ann. One evening decades ago, about dusk, I was still in my garden when Bob and Ann walked by. We said our hellos, then Bob took Ann in his arms and they began dancing a fox trot under the streetlight at Bordner and Cedar Place. It was magical.

I will miss seeing Bob. I am certain we didn’t agree on all political issues, but you know what? That didn’t stop us from liking or respecting each other. What a gentleman! What a neighbor!

After the interview, Bob mentioned that perhaps he should change the title of the article he was drafting from ‘Crestwood: An Appreciation’ to ‘Crestwood: A Thank You’.

But it is us who have Bob to thank for enriching our lives and being the ultimate Crestwoodite.

There will be a Memorial Service for Bob sometime in the spring. Wouldn’t that be a grand time for the neighborhood to get together?

Thanks to Vicky Tobias and Meg Wise for technical assistance.

Merlin Bird ID

Many are already familiar with the free Merlin Bird ID phone app created by Cornell University School of Ornithology. It makes birding so much easier, especially for identifying birds by their song which has always been a weak spot for me. Now I can simply walk through the woods (or my own backyard) with the Merlin Bird “Sound ID” on and watch it identify every bird song I hear. I was so amazed the first time I did this to find that a frequent bird call was an entirely different bird than I thought.

Their website at <https://merlin.allaboutbirds.org/states>:

“Merlin is designed to be a birding



coach for bird watchers at every level. Merlin asks you the same questions that an expert birder would ask to help solve a mystery bird sighting. Notice that date and location are Merlin’s first and most important questions. It takes years of experience in the field to know what species are expected at a given location and date. Merlin shares this knowledge with you based on more than 800 million sightings submitted to eBird from birders around the world.

Merlin also asks you to describe the color, size, and behavior of the bird you saw.

Some people experience birds through the viewfinder of their camera, and putting a name to the bird they just photographed can be both rewarding and educational. The Photo ID feature in Merlin allows anyone with a camera to snap a photo and get a list of suggestions. Photo ID is yet another method to help you identify the birds you encounter.”

Simply by using the Merlin app we are aiding Cornell to track more birds and adding that information into their international database.

—Sally Averkamp