Rime Runs Crampant: Woodcreek felonies are rising; don't panic, though. **Throwing a Little Light:** one way to deter the bad guys. **Bump in the Night:** beware of the four-legged snacker. **The Little House Out in the Back:** no, not *that* one; but maybe you need a storage shed? **The Circle Remains Unbroken:** the results of the Board of Directors election from the October meeting. **The Next Time We Meet:** January's meeting and get-together. Reserve a space.

RIME RUNS CRAMPANT

Despite that humorous headline, this isn't a funny article. Woodcreek is typically a quiet place; but there have been two reports of break-ins to homes and vehicles in Woodcreek. A car stereo and insurance papers were taken from a vehicle on Matanuska Trail; and prescription drugs, jewelry, and a digital camera were stolen from a home on Ojibwa Lane.



Strangers have been in Woodcreek, and we haven't noticed them. We may not always recognize our neighbors, but we ought to be able to spot someone who doesn't belong around here.

Take a look at the vehicles that your neighbors drive, so that you'll be better able to identify a car or truck that you haven't see before. And if you see someone who isn't entering a home through either an overhead garage door or the front door of a house, be suspicious: most of us use our garages as the primary entrance to our homes, and we don't need to walk around to the back door to get in.

If you see someone suspicious around a Woodcreek home, consider calling the cops! The McHenry Police don't charge extra for investigating suspicious activity; they would rather check out a possible burglary-in-progress than need to investigate a burglary after the fact. The non-emergency number for the McHenry Police is **815.363.2200**; of course, if you think that you're observing a crime in progress, call **911**.

Woodcreek is a Neighborhood Watch community: at least that's the idea that's promoted by the blue-and-white sign that's posted below the first "Speed Limit 25" sign that you see when you drive into Woodcreek on Ojibwa Lane. This sign ought to be a deterrence to petty criminals; but if *you* don't watch your neighborhood, that sign means little.

Although these burglaries are out-of-place here in Woodcreek, don't fear for your safety. As the neighborhoods of McHenry go, Woodcreek is one of the safest places to be, day or night. Even the NASCAR moms are driving more slowly on Ojibwa Lane

Throwing a Little Light

Darkness is a friend to the lawless, so if you want a simple way to deter criminals, light up the outside of your house. Most of the homes in Woodcreek do not display any outdoor lights at night,

Throwing a Little Light, continued



which can give the appearance that the house is empty. Do you have lights on your driveway, on your garage, at your front door? Turn them on! Despite the cost of electricity for exterior illumination, that cost is far below the potential losses that you might suffer.

If you don't want to keep your lights on all night, consider motion-detecting lights that will illuminate an area when someone (or something) passes too closely to your home. Anything that is large enough for a motion detector to sense is probably something that you would want to know about. And, you can buy lights that are battery-powered, so that you don't need to install any new wiring; just install a couple of screws and mount the light. Use rechargeable batteries, and replace them as necessary.

At the October Board of Directors meeting, a suggestion was made that we could make a bulk purchase of motion-detecting lights, if enough Association members are interested. Are you interested? Join us at the January meeting at Dunnhill's and discuss this, or contact us (see the contact information at the end of this newsletter).

Bump in the Night

Speaking of things that dwell in the dark, be aware that coyotes have been heard and seen in Woodcreek. While they are almost no threat to humans, and will usually avoid you, they do eat small animals.

If you have cats or small dogs, this is not a good time to allow them outside while unattended or unleashed. Coyotes have been known to attack even when a human is nearby. So keep your pets on a leash and in your sight whenever they're outside. The average coyote weighs about 31 pounds, but it can attack and kill animals larger than itself, such as sheep and small deer.

As far as we can tell, there has been only one reported fatality from an attack by a coyote on a human, and that attack occurred in 1981; a three-year-old girl was killed. In McHenry County there have been reports of attacks on cats and small dogs, but no attacks on humans.

The Little House Out in the Back

The most common request from Woodcreek property owners is for a change to the Declaration of Covenants, Conditions, and Restrictions, Article V, Section 5, "Temporary Structures":

> No trailer, mobile home, recreational vehicle, tent, shack or other structure, and no temporary building or structure of any kind shall be used for a residence, either temporary or permanent. No trailer, mobile home, recreation vehicle, tent, shack or temporary building shall be exteriorly stored on any lot at any time. Temporary structures used during the construction of a structure shall be on the same lot as the structure and such temporary structures shall be removed upon completion of construction.

The Little House Out in the Back, continued

The reason for this section of the Restrictions was to prevent a cluttered look in Woodcreek by not allowing the permanent outdoor storage of materials and large vehicles. But in recent years some property owners have identified a need for some sort of outdoor storage, particularly of swimming pool equipment and riding mowers. Although these items can be stored in the owner's garage, they are large enough to prevent owners from using their garage for its primary purpose: parking their cars indoors. And this Restriction does not allow for useful, decorative structures such as gazebos.

Rick Johnson has prepared a petition, a survey of the property owners in Woodcreek and their opinion on this proposed change. The petition says, in part,

> We are requesting that the term "Temporary Structures" exclude outbuildings such as gazebos, sheds, pool houses that comply with the forth set guidelines and are approved by the Woodcreek Architectural Committee.

The "guidelines" that are mentioned here have not yet been codified, but they would most likely decree that whatever the structure, it must have an appearance similar to the main house, with similar siding and roofing. The structure must be compatible with the house that it is associated with; we do not want to declare that pre-built sheds, such as those sold at the local hardware stores, are permissible.

We haven't yet devised a method to bring this survey to the property owners in Woodcreek. A door-to-door survey was considered, but was rejected because there is no guarantee that any particular owner would be available at whatever time the surveyor arrived at a house. (There are several absentee owners, also.) But, if you attend the January meeting at Dunnhill's, we will definitely have the petition there for your attention.

The Circle Remains Unbroken

At the WPOA Board of Directors meeting on October 21, Ed. Floden decided to stay on as the Secretary, after realizing that he would be forced to write the Association newsletter and maintain the web site even if he were *not.* the Secretary.

Gerry Stueckemann will continue as the Treasurer, with the occasional help of Heide Oravetz. Mike Bown and Jerry Hawkinson remain as President and Vice President, respectively.

The Next Time We Meet

The next Board of Directors meeting is scheduled for Tuesday, January 20, 2009 at Dunnhill's. (Yes, both "Tuesday" and "January 20" are the same day, unlike the January 2008 meeting.) The meeting will begin at 7:00 PM, or shortly thereafter. Appetizers will be provided, and there will be a cash bar.

Here's a chance to meet your neighbors and discuss the important issues affecting Woodcreek, such as the "Great Outbuilding Controversy" and the rising crime rate. We really want to see you there; we haven't had a large community gathering in several years, and we'd like to meet you too. And we need your opinion on the outbuildings!

Please return the postcard that we've enclosed with this newsletter, as soon as possible, so that we can prepare for this annual meeting and get-together.

Behind the Scenes

The Woodcreek Property Owners Association is *you*. We're just the volunteers who do the busy work.

WPOA Officers		
President	Mike Bown	815.385.1279
Vice President	Jerry Hawkinson	815.385.4696
Treasurer	Gerry Stueckemann	815.344.7958
Secretary	Ed. Floden	815.363.4701
Parks Director	Bill Conley	815.578.0572

The WPOA web site is located at <http://www.WoodcreekMcHenry.org>. Our e-mail address is <wpoa@WoodcreekMcHenry.org>. If you need to mail something to us, send it to WPOA, P.O. Box 721, McHenry, Illinois 60051-0721.

Future Meetings

The Board of Directors of the Woodcreek Property Owners Association usually holds its Quarterly Meeting on the third Tuesday of the first month in each calendar quarter. The meetings for 2009 will be held on January 20, April 21, July 21, and October 20. The January meeting will be held at Dunnhill's, 1501 South Route 31, McHenry. The locations of the April, July, and October meeting are to be determined. The meetings begin at 7:00 PM.

About The Newsletter

The Newsletter of the Woodcreek Property Owners Association is published once per calendar quarter, but not on any specific day. The Newsletter can be read online on the WPOA web site, where a PDF copy of The Newsletter can be downloaded.

The articles in the Newsletter of the Woodcreek Property Owners Association are written and edited by Ed. Floden, unless otherwise noted. Send your complaints, suggestions, and accolades to <wpoa@WoodcreekMcHenry.org>.

("The Newsletter of the Woodcreek Property Owners Association"? What kind of name is that? We need something shorter. Maybe "Woodcreek Warbler"? "Woodcreek Gurgler"? "Retention Pond Quarterly"? C'mon, everyone, send a suggestion to me. —*Ed.*)