

Homeowners Association marks 50 years

Mr. Edecker's cows and wheat fields might be gone, but the memories live on.

The Medinah Homeowners Association celebrated its 50th anniversary last week with a gathering that included a sheet cake and an abundance of memories.

Medinah is the largest unincorporated area in DuPage County, according to Rick Main, association president.

"The (association) is the oldest, still-functioning homeowners association in the state," he said to a crowd of Medinah residents that lined the room at the Medinah Park District building where the celebration took place Nov. 8.

All residents of Medinah are eligible to belong to the association.

"They're members as long as they pay their \$20 monthly fees," Main added.

The association was established in 1957 as a way to use the collective power of Medinah residents to promote their interests in county and state governments, Main said.

When DuPage County proposed to widen Medinah Road, association board members worked to gather thousands of signatures to express residents' opposition to the plan, Main said. Board members also attended many county transportation meetings and took county board members on tours of the area where the widening was to take place, he added.

As a result of their collective efforts, Medinah residents were able to thwart the project, Main said.

Their next issue likely will be to fight proposed budget cuts to the County Sheriffs Department, which polices the area, he added.

Another mission is land and natural resource preservation. Members started the Medinah Park District by purchasing land for parks, Main said.

The park district and homeowners association acquired 100 more acres this year which will be part of Medinah's wetland restoration efforts, said Park District Commissioner Tom Guarino.

After Main and his wife, Charlotte, presented recognition awards to some of the members, reminiscences flowed freely from former board members and park commissioners during the gathering. Many longtime Medinah residents remembered picnics and bonfires and park district baseball games.

Medinah resident Doris Corso, a 55-year resident, showed off a property tax bill from 1953, which had an amount due of \$19.87 for the first installment. The second installment would require an additional payment of \$19.87.

Corso and her husband, Martin, moved to Medinah in 1952 to a house on Linden Avenue, which was the third house to be built on the block, she said.

Corso recounted how the cows of her neighbor, Mr. Edecker, would wander into her backyard every morning. And she remembered fondly the sight of his beautiful wheat fields.

"It was just waves of gold when the wind blew," Corso said.

Martin Corso was one of the first board members of the Medinah Homeowners Association, she added.

The homeowners association first came into being in 1957 to fight a water plan the county tried to implement that would affect Medinah, Main said. A vast majority of Medinah residents, about 95 percent, wanted to continue with well water, he stated.

Zoning issues were another reason for residents to band together.

"Medinah residents were interested in keeping housing density low, to make sure there wasn't over-development," said Main.

Development did come to Medinah, however. When asked, many residents cited development as the biggest change they saw over the past decades in Medinah.

"We still have open area and most lots are still about an acre" said 20-year resident Paul Fava. "It still looks like country here."