

FOUNDERS' GROVE NEIGHBORHOOD ASSOCIATION

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Thinking about solar power for your home?

6 things to consider

As we approach summer, the sun shines brighter, bringing the sound of humming air conditioners and the screams from higher electric bills. Some neighbors have gone solar to turn the sun's power into their home's own energy. So you may be asking: Is my home good for solar? Before considering a solar photovoltaic (PV) system, think about:

1. Your home's total energy consumption. Electricity usage is measured in kilowatt hours (kWh), and the average American home uses 11,000 kWh a year. The less energy needed to operate your home means a smaller solar PV system on your roof. Programmable thermostats, LED lights, air-sealing caulking and improved insulation are all low-cost energy-saving solutions.

- **Pro tip:** The Ecology Action Center in Normal offers home energy audits for residents of Bloomington & Normal. See their website of energy-savings tips at: bit.ly/eacenergy

2. The age and type of your roof. Solar modules can last 30-35 years, so having a roof under 5 years of age is optimal for a solar installation. Mounting racks and panels can be removed and replaced for a new roof, but you would like to avoid that extra cost. Solar installers prefer to install on asphalt, metal or membrane roof, compared to tile, slate or cedar shake shingles which tend to break.



- **Did you know...** Solar panels protect the underlying roof and can withstand hail damage from most storms.

3. Orientation to sun exposure. Southern exposure is the best for solar energy. East and west facing roofs produce about 10-15% less energy than southern exposure, but still work for most homes. Northern facing roofs typically are not cost-effective installations. Check out Google's Project Sunroof (sunroof.withgoogle.com) to see how many usable hours of sunlight your roof receives.

• **Other factors:**

- ◇ A good solar proposal will take into account nearby shading from trees and the pitch of your roof to accurately estimate your sunlight resource.
- ◇ City building code regulations restrict panel placement near the roof edges and top ridge line, limiting the square footage available for your system.

4. Federal tax credits and state incentives. These reduce the cost of solar by 60-65%.

- The Federal Investment Tax Credit provides a tax credit of 30% of the total cost of the solar PV system.

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PREZ on the EDGE - By Amanda Hill on Mercer, Board President

Hi neighbors!

Most of you know we are a neighborhood association that doesn't collect dues, but relies heavily on donations and fundraising events. That said, we'll do a pop-up lemonade stand to raise funds for the neighborhood association during the weekend of FGNA yard sales. We will have



lemonade, baked goods and gondola meal deals for sale.

If you would like to contribute any baked goods, please email fgnabloomington@gmail.com and we will arrange to pick up your items. We will set up our stand out front at the Embrys, 1320 E. Grove Street. Please help us spread the word and stop by for lunch or a treat any time during the yard sales to support your favorite neighborhood!

Also, make sure to check out the back of this newsletter or find us on Facebook for details on all of the summer events we have planned. It is sure to be a great summer in Founders' Grove!



Cheers,
Amanda

GET INVOLVED: Board terms are up at the end of this year. If you'd like to learn what serving on the Board involves — or just want to help with neighborhood events in an unofficial capacity — contact a current board member or email fgnabloomington@gmail.com

About Founders' Grove Neighborhood Association

FGNA is a 501c3 organization formed to enhance the community in which we live. Every residence on and between Oakland, Mercer, Washington and State streets is a member invited to join any and all events. No dues are required, and activities are funded by donations.

Donate by:

- Cash in FGNA jars at events
- PayPal to fgnabloomington@gmail.com
- Check to: FGNA (c/o Neil Gridley), 1219 E. Washington St., Bloomington, IL 61701

2022-2023 FGNA Board

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	Member at Large: Connie Boznos connie.boznos@hotmail.com	Member at Large: Todd Vincent jtvincent@att.net	

GOALS

- Celebrate and preserve our neighborhood's unique character and history.
- Promote communication and a sense of community between neighbors, with many social gatherings.
- Keep neighbors informed about city projects that may affect them and give our neighborhood a voice in city decision-making.
- Keep the neighborhood safe and traffic under control.
- Help our neighborhood schools & businesses thrive.
- Share expert info on topics of interest such as gardening and home restoration.

SOLAR, continued from page 1

This tax credit is a dollar-for-dollar reduction of your federal tax liability and can be carried forward for one year. However, the tax credit is not refundable, so the incentive is less valuable if you do not have much tax liability. Check with your tax advisor on how the credit would apply to your financial situation.

For more info on how a solar photovoltaic system works, visit EnergySage and their Solar 101 info at energysage.com/solar/

- The state of Illinois provides Renewable Energy Credits to offset the cost of solar installations. These credits are based on the energy generated from your system and typically cover another 30% of the cost of the system. The credits are issued as a check to the homeowner about a year after your system is up and running. The Illinois Shines program (illinoisshines.com) explains Illinois' solar Renewable Energy Credits.

5. Net metering credits from excess energy. In the summer, solar homeowners tend to produce more energy than their home consumes. Excess energy is sent out to the utility's grid, and the homeowner is paid for this excess energy through a process called net metering. For Ameren Illinois customers, the utility provides a 1:1 credit for this energy, meaning the homeowner can take the value of the energy produced during the day and apply it to their bill for nighttime use at the same value. The excess net metering credits roll over each month and can be used in the winter. At the end of 12 months, Ameren settles the credit exchange and any unused credits are eliminated. Then the process begins again.

6. Warranties. There are many qualified solar installers in our area. High-quality installers typically offer a performance warranty guaranteeing the energy production of their system and a labor warranty on their workmanship. Solar PV systems have very little maintenance, but you will want to ask about your installer's service capabilities. Solar panels and inverter manufacturers (which flip the sun's energy from direct current to alternating current for your home) tend to carry 25-year warranties on their products.

<p>Neighbor to Neighbor Classifieds</p> <p>Writing assistance/tutoring from recent Purdue University grad with English degree, a year of tutoring experience and a passion for helping students with reading and writing skills. Will help with any type of writing: college essays, resumes/CVs, cover letters, personal statements. Flexible availability. Tutoring online or in-person. Email rachelarosen14@gmail.com</p> <p>Need a hand? Pet-sitting, mother's helper, babysitting, mowing, yardwork, watering plants, cleaning house, taking out trash. Katherine Graehling, penguinqueen14@hotmail.com</p>	<p>Yard Sale Reminder: Deadline is May 30 to get on the group map for the June 2-3 FGNA sales. Details on the back page.</p> <p>Want to submit a free one-time classified ad?</p> <p>Have a newsletter topic? sonyajeremy@yahoo.com</p>
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The Ripple Effect: Lend a helping hand to neighbors in Founders' Grove

By Rev. Tom Cici

This summer, Centennial Christian Church and our friends are offering to help residents of the Founders' Grove neighborhood in doing small outdoor work projects. Homeowners should pay for materials, but Centennial Christian Church and friends will provide labor and small tools.

Tentative dates for this mission project are July 29, July 31, August 1 - 5, and August 12. **Please mark your calendars and plan to join your neighbors on as many dates possible!**

So far, we have seven locations in: the 2000 block of E. Jackson; 200 block of Woodland; 1400 & 1500s blocks of E. Taylor; 200 & 400 blocks of Leland; and 1200 block of E. Grove.



Our neighbors from these locations are requesting outdoor painting, repairs of porches, painting a wrought iron fence, cleaning out gutters, pouring concrete for sidewalk, new fence and outdoor landscaping.

If any of these work projects interest you and you can lend a "helping hand," please contact Pastor Tom Cici at Centennial Christian Church office (309) 828-2185 or cell (and texting) (765) 541-0611; or email marian64tom57@gmail.com.

Let's work together and give it a try! What do you say? Thank you so much!

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HELLO, NEIGHBOR! Meet LeeAnn & Kevin Rasmus on State Street

By Todd Trainor, FGNA Social Chair

LeeAnn & Kevin reside on the other side of State Street. Were you aware... the Founders' Grove Neighborhood boundary exists on both sides of Washington, Oakland, Mercer and State streets?

These great folks have been married 45 years, meeting in Urbana, Ill. LeeAnn is a retired nurse, and Kevin retired from COUNTRY Financial as a computer architect. They have one grown daughter and son-in-law with a granddaughter who reside in Wapella, Ill., and their son and daughter-in-law reside in Albany, N.Y. And let's not forget their German Shepherd pup, Harper.



While sitting down with LeeAnn, she recalled they were attracted to Founders' Grove for its beauty and unique style of homes. Also, their children attended all the local D87 schools of Washington Elementary, BJHS and BHS, which have the rare accessibility of all being walkable from the Founders' Grove neighborhood.

LeeAnn mentioned she feels like they are a part of something living in Founders' Grove – it's a neighborhood community. She said they don't always partake in all the activities/events, but they have options! They are frequent participants of FGNA Euchre and have hosted.

They love the cleverness and creativity the FGNA Board puts into functions, whether they are traditional or new. LeeAnn mentioned loving the egg word search held during our recent Covid pandemic.

They called the FGNA newsletter the "foundation and core of the neighborhood," saying, "Don't ever do away with the paper version of the newsletter!"

These two plan to enjoy retirement by living life to the fullest – loving on their 5-year-old granddaughter, traveling, visiting with friends, and Kevin enjoys the outdoors by biking and ice fishing when he has the chance!

LeeAnn said they are blessed to be in a neighborhood community of wonderful people of all ages with many families. They are staying forever!!

Know of an interesting neighbor to feature? Email sonyajeremy@yahoo.com

TIDBITS

A tip for rainy days

Remember to help keep any storm drains in front of your house clear of leaves and yard debris to minimize standing water in the streets.

FGNA flower garden needs volunteers to keep flourishing!

Our garden at the corner of Towanda & Washington Streets needs volunteers to periodically pull weeds and prune. No huge time commitment. If you can help, email fgnabloomington@gmail.com.

Old house lovers... Tour of Homes

The Old House Society 2023 Tour of Homes, from 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. on June 10, will feature homes in and around Normal's historic Broadway Street. Broadview Mansion at 1301 S. Fell also will be open. Tickets are \$25 for general public and \$20 for Old House Society members (includes a bonus house!). They are available at AB Hatchery; Casey's Garden Shop; The Garlic Press; Growing Grounds; Old House Society Architectural Salvage Store and online at bit.ly/2023ohstour. They also will be available the day of the tour, if not sold out.

JUNE

NEIGHBORHOOD YARD SALE DATES:

- **May 30 deadline** to be listed on neighborhood sale map and use a yard sale sign. \$4 fee. To join in, email lollarmatt@hotmail.com your street address and up to 5 specific items or item categories you'll sell.
- **June 1 pickup:** Those who've registered for a sale will pay their \$4 and pick up their sign and maps at the Quarterly Member Meeting at Centennial Christian Church (see below)
- **Fri & Sat, June 2 & 3: Sale dates.** Times will vary by sale, but generally run 9 a.m. to 2 p.m.

Thurs., June 1 at 7 p.m. – Founders' Grove Quarterly Meeting/Yard Sale Pickup, for all residents

- **Speakers:** Erin Herbez from Parklands Foundation, a non-profit to preserve historic natural lands in the Mackinaw Valley watershed by protecting, ecologically restoring and managing these lands.
- **Where:** Centennial Christian Church, 1219 E. Grove St. Use South entrance to the hall on lower level.

Fri., June 9 at 6 p.m. – Founders' Grove Neighborhood Assn. Social

- **What:** Gathering for food, drinks & fun. Bring your beverages, a dish to share, cash for 50/50 drawing
- **Where:** TBD. Check Facebook as the date nears.

Sat., June 24 at 4 p.m. – Summer Solstice & Pizza Oven Block Party (Family-friendly)

- **What:** Come hang with neighbors and build your own personal pizza! The neighborhood association will provide dough, sauce and cheese. Neighbors are asked to donate additional pizza toppings to share.
- **Where:** TBD. Check Facebook as the date nears.

JULY

Tues., July 4 at 9 a.m. – Annual 4th of July Parade & Potluck Brunch

- **What:** Decorate your bikes, wagons, strollers, scooters, etc. to join in the parade — or line the streets to watch the patriotic display. Then bring a dish to share at an outdoor brunch right after the parade.
- **Where:** Meet at corner of Grove & Woodland for the parade, which travels west to Harwood, south to Taylor, east to Vale, north to Grove. Followed by potluck brunch in Mike & Nancy Schulz's backyard, 1322 E. Grove.

Fri., July 14 at 6 p.m. – Founders' Grove Neighborhood Assn. Social

- **What:** Gathering for food, drinks & fun. Bring your beverages, a dish to share, cash for 50/50 drawing
- **Where:** TBD. Check Facebook as the date nears.

AUGUST

Fri., Aug. 11 at 6 p.m. – Founders' Grove Neighborhood Assn. Social

- **What:** Gathering for food, drinks & fun. Bring your beverages, a dish to share, cash for 50/50 drawing
- **Where:** TBD. Check Facebook as the date nears.

Sun., Aug. 13 at 2 p.m. – Vinyl Hullabaloo

- **What:** Bring your own records or flip through the many crates of vinyl available to find popular or obscure tunes for our favorite DJ to play on the turntable. BYOB, lawn chair & snacks to share.
- **Where:** Matt Lollar's backyard, 1304 E. Grove.

RECURRING MONTHLY EVENTS

A **Euchre Club** and **Music Guild** also meet most months. At Music Guild, select & share songs from bands/artists that align to a monthly theme. **Mystery Book Club** usually meets 3rd Thursday of each month & **Washington Street Book Club** usually the 4th Tuesday. For more info, email fgnabloomington@gmail.com

Events, dates & times listed are to the best of the Board's knowledge at time of printing

To stay up to date on the latest, watch for FGNA events on Facebook (www.facebook.com/FoundersGrove), visit fgna.org or sign up for email updates by contacting Bob Dawson at bob@dawson1.com.