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FALL 2021

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# WATERBURY NEIGHBORHOOD NEWS

*From the Waterbury Neighborhood Association*

## PRESIDENT'S LETTER

### Hello neighbors!

I hope this newsletter finds you well. As fall approaches there are a few things I'd like to share with you all.

First, National Night Out was a success. After NNO was canceled in 2020, we wanted to participate this year so long as it could be done safely. As expected, many neighbors came out to enjoy ice cream and activities. Thank you so much for joining us!

That brings me to another social event we've been looking forward to hosting. I'd like to invite you to join us for Oktoberfest on October 9. We will have activities for children and adults alike, so we welcome all of you to join us for one last hurrah before we hunker down for winter.

Additionally, I wanted to mention a couple of things relating to our community as a whole. I'm sure most of you have been affected by the many road improvements in progress. While the infrastructure improvements are desperately needed, I know we are all anxious to have them completed. Ingersoll from Polk Boulevard to 42nd Street is scheduled to complete November 15 but we can expect Ingersoll as a whole to be under construction for the foreseeable future while the bike lanes and the street scape project are completed. They will be paving Grand Avenue from 63rd Street (1st Street) to 5th Street through late fall.

It's also time to start thinking about local elections. While nominations are not quite closed, there are already competitive candidates running for school board (District 1 and at-large) and city council (Ward 3 and at-large). Find information about our local candidates online. Elections are November 2.

Lastly, leaf cleanup can be a big chore around our beautiful neighborhood in the fall. As in years past, I encourage our neighbors to look to students in the area for help. You can check Roosevelt events and Nextdoor Waterbury on the App for resources. If you are interested in a yard waste bin, there is form online through Des Moines Public Works.

I hope you all have a great fall!

May you be safe, healthy, and happy.

Kelsey L. Knight

**Our front cover this fall is a coloring page.  
If you'd like to share your image, please send it  
to us on Facebook @waterburyneighbors**

## WNA EVENTS

### *Celebrate fall with us at* *Waterbury's Annual* **OKTOBERFEST**

**Live Music, Food, & Beer  
Pumpkin Decorating & Kids' Activities**

**SATURDAY, 10/9 • 4-6PM  
61st & Grand, Vibrant Credit Union Lawn**



### Newsletter Ads

If you're a local business owner or Waterbury neighbor, and are interested in running an ad in a future newsletter, please let us know! We'd love to feature local Waterbury and neighbor-owned businesses in future newsletters. We publish twice a year, in Spring and Fall, and newsletters are sent to all 1,100 households in the Waterbury neighborhood.

Please contact us at [news@waterburyneighbors.org](mailto:news@waterburyneighbors.org), or reach out over Facebook for more information on sizing and prices.





## 2021 Luminaries

It's been wonderful to see so many luminaries spread throughout the neighborhood over the past several years. Thanks to everyone that makes Waterbury beautiful on Christmas Eve! If you have participated in the past, your team captain will contact you in November or December. If you'd like to participate for the first time, or have any questions, please contact us! Kits are \$15 for 36 candles and 36 white bags, and are picked up and paid for in December. As in 2020, socially distanced pick-up will be available, please talk to your Block Captains for details.

**Diane Becker** | dianebecker25@icloud.com | 203-858-4051

**Alice Peterson** | alicevp207@aol.com | 515-326-2363

## Roosevelt News and Events

Roosevelt Marching Band students are selling annual value cards for \$10. Cards can be used again and again at over 20 local businesses until they expire (9/1/2022). To purchase a card, contact a marching band student or by emailing trhsbandboosters@gmail.com



## The R Party is Back!

The Roosevelt Foundation's R Party is an evening to support several of Waterbury's neighborhood schools. The event benefits the Roosevelt Foundation and TRHS Activities, as well as future Roughriders' schools including Merrill, Hanawalt, and Hubbell. This year's event will include both an online fundraiser and in-person event in November. More details and tickets will be available at trhsfoundation.org - all are welcome, please join us!

## Fall Tree Planting

From the tunnel of sycamores lining Polk Boulevard to the arches of oaks over our gardens and sidewalks, Waterbury's tree canopy is part of what makes our neighborhood feel so special. Last year's derecho damaged many local trees, several over a century old. If you're looking to replant this fall, here is some information from Iowa State University Extension:

*Most container-grown and balled and burlapped deciduous trees and shrubs sold at garden centers are excellent candidates for fall planting. Notable tree species that can be successfully planted in the fall include maple, buckeye or horsechestnut, alder, catalpa, hackberry, hawthorn, ash, honeylocust, Kentucky coffeetree, crabapple, Amur corktree, spruce, pine, sycamore, linden, and elm. Most deciduous shrubs are easily planted in fall; however, broad-leaved evergreens like rhododendron and narrow-leaved evergreens like yew prefer to be planted in the spring.*

*Fall planting (mid-August to mid-October) takes advantage of favorable soil temperatures and moisture conditions that promote the root growth needed to sustain plants through their critical first year in the landscape. Unfortunately, our midwestern climate is unpredictable, and even the toughest plants may die if fall or early winter weather is severe or erratic. But if healthy, vigorous plants are chosen, if proper post-planting care is given, and if slow-to-establish species are avoided, fall planting of trees and shrubs can be as successful as spring planting. (Source: ISU Extension, August 2021)*

Information on the Street Tree Program for Des Moines residents can be found at: [https://www.dsm.city/departments/public\\_works-division/forestry/new\\_tree\\_planting.php](https://www.dsm.city/departments/public_works-division/forestry/new_tree_planting.php)





# HAPPENING IN WATERBURY



## National Night Out

National Night Out was back in Waterbury this August! It was great to see so many of you at our summer ice cream social, and to be able to reconnect with neighbors. The Des Moines Fire Department stopped by with a ladder truck for kids of all ages to explore, Des Moines Police Officers were there to meet and greet neighbors, treats from Thelma's and lawn games were a hit, and the Blank Park Zoo provided a great hands-on presentation to an attentive audience of little ones. Our tortoise guest especially loved sampling the grass on Polk boulevard, much to the kids' delight.

Thanks to everyone who came out this year! A special thanks to our neighbors at Two Rivers Bank & Trust for sponsoring this year's event and supporting our community and the Waterbury Neighborhood Association.

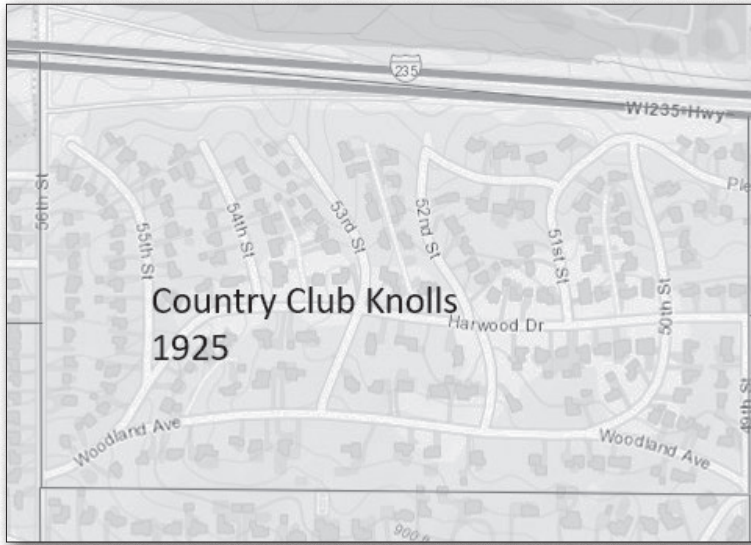




## Country Club Knolls Development

Over the next several issues, we'll take a look at the history of individual housing developments throughout the Waterbury area.

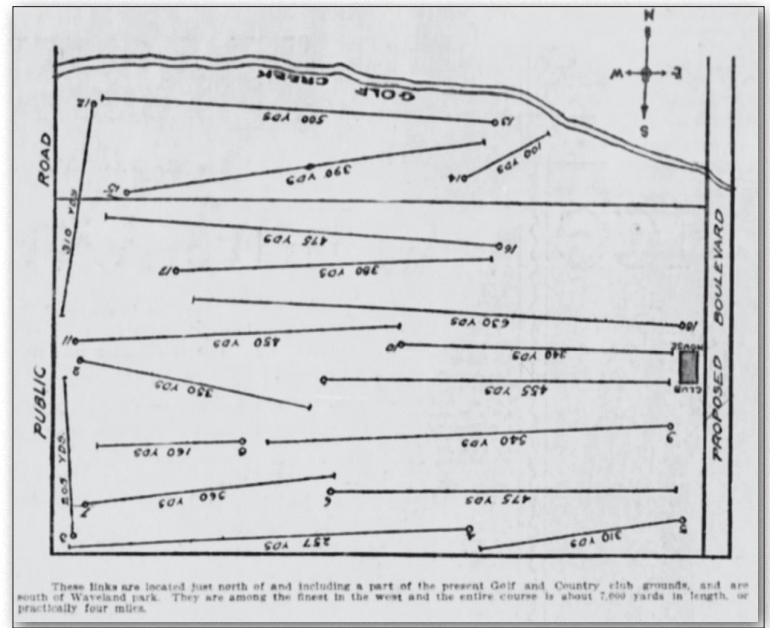
Country Club Knolls is the largest development in size and number of houses in the Waterbury neighborhood. It was the site of the second Des Moines Country Club prior to being developed in 1925.



The original Des Moines Country Club started in 1897 and was located at the intersection of Ingersoll Avenue and Polk Boulevard on land owned by J.S. Polk. The Country Club in 1903 turned the land back over to Polk after they secured a 20-year lease on what would eventually become Country Club Knolls. The land was leased from brothers J.K. & W.H. Gilcrest. The brothers had moved from Ohio to Iowa in 1856 and started the Gilcrest Lumber Company. This company would later merge with the Jewett Lumber Company and become known as Gilcrest/Jewett Lumber Company today.

The new 18-hole course was designed in 1904. A new clubhouse opened in 1906 on 49th Street near the southwest corner of Harwood Drive. Renda Lutz reported in a 2002 Register article:

*A large wraparound veranda offered wonderful views. The interior was trimmed in antique oak and filled with leather upholstery. There were billiard rooms and parlors. The third floor offered guest rooms and access to a rooftop walkway. Locker rooms and a bowling alley were in the basement. Des Moines Golf and Country Club was the site of many tournaments and social events... Archery, baseball, trap-shooting and cards also were offered at the club.*



The club's lease was set to expire in 1923. To relocate the Des Moines Golf and Country Club in October 1922, obtained 147 acres in West Des Moines from the Ashworth family off White Pole Road, now known as Ashworth Road. Dowling High School is currently located on a portion of the old golf course.

In December 1923, Burt German and 20 businessmen formed the Country Club Knolls Investment Company. They reportedly paid \$500,000 to the J.K & W. H. Gilcrest company for the land to start the residential development.

Burt German (1873-1956) was prominent Des Moines builder and realtor. As a young man German was the third head football coach for the Iowa State University (1894-1898). In 1917, just prior to the Country Club Knolls project he developed the Forestdale residential project. Forestdale is north and east of the intersection of Forest Avenue and 41st Street and is known for its curvilinear layout



When Burt German passed away in 1956 the Register published this editorial:

*Burt German, a Good Citizen. Burt German, who died at the age of 83 the other day, was one of the best known citizens of Des Moines, as a real estate dealer and as, an all-around worker for community betterment. Mr. German was active in the campaign to bring city manager government to Des Moines. He also was one of the leaders of the Des Moines Downtown Kiwanis Club in promoting the annual Cerebral Palsy Benefit football game. As a real estate man, Mr. German developed 20 Des Moines sub-divisions. He was chairman of the real estate board's postwar committee. Burt German was well-known as an athlete. In his younger days and played football for both the State University of Iowa and Iowa State College. He was a strong supporter of Iowa State College football teams and frequently accompanied the team on out-of-town games. Most of all, Burt German was known as a friendly, good-hearted citizen of Des Moines. He will be missed. He developed 20 Des Moines subdivisions; was chairman of the Real Estate Board's postwar committee; and he perpetuated his name in Germania drive and the name of his birthplace in Maquoketa drive two of his subdivisions. Mr. German was born in Maquoketa, Apr. 19, 1873.*

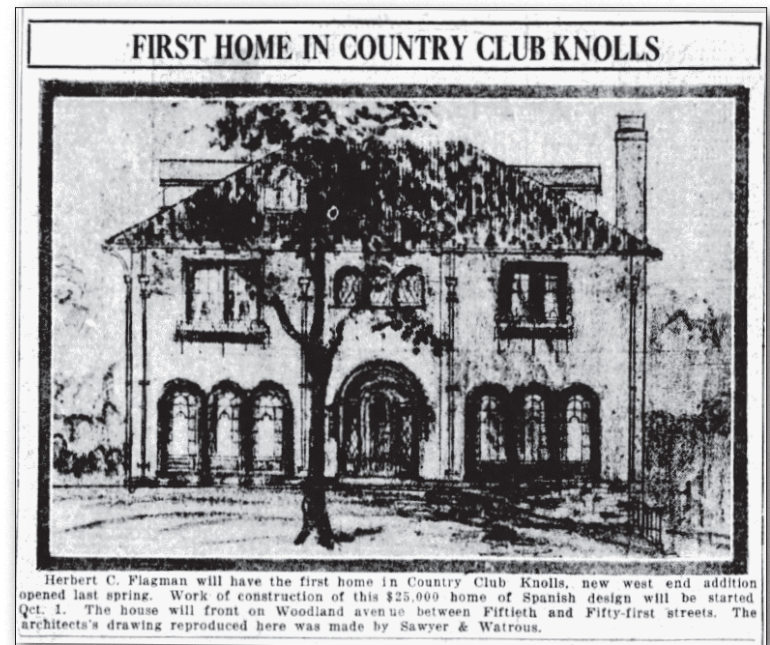
By early 1925 marketing of the new residential subdivision had begun. Below is some of the text used in promoting the development:

*The opening of Country Club Knolls early in June will mark a real epoch in the history of Des Moines. It marks the beginning of a newer, finer type of residence section in this city. It witnesses the passing of one of the historic beauty spots of the. west end. For years this great tract of 80 acres has been one of the beautiful show places of the city. Its gently rolling hills, its stately trees, its exquisite surroundings have set it apart from all other sections. Nature never endowed an equal area more richly. Now it is to become a magnificent residence section.*

*Richly endowed by nature, Country Club Knolls was ready-made years ago, as- a perfect site for wonderful homes. It stands at the crest of west Des Moines. Its gently rolling swells are high above the city. They are covered with hundred-year-old oaks and elms. They are carpeted with turf that was carefully prepared for years for one of the city's best golf courses. All around Country Club Knolls lie the finest residence sections of the city. It is the one tract left untouched in this center of magnificent homes. When it is gone the last of the beautiful ground, available in the west end will be gone forever. And nowhere else in the city are the conveniences for living so perfectly combined. To the south lies Country*

*Club Boulevard with its splendid mansions. To the north is beautiful Waveland Park and the famous Waveland golf course. To the east is Polk Boulevard, Gil Mar Park, Roosevelt High school and Hubbell school. To the west are great woods and open country for hiking and picnics. The Ingersoll carline is just one block south and beautiful Greenwood Park two blocks south.*

Below is a drawing of the first planned house in Country Club Knolls that was expected to start construction in October 1925 and a 1956 aerial photo showing the Waveland Golf Course next to Country Club Knolls prior to the freeway.



# MEMBERSHIP RENEWAL



## Waterbury Neighborhood Association 2022 Membership and Volunteer Form

**Online Option:** Join or renew at [www.WaterburyNeighbors.org](http://www.WaterburyNeighbors.org)

### Personal Information

First Name:	Last Name:	
First Name:	Last Name:	
Address:		
City:	State:	ZIP:
Email:		
Home Phone:	Cell Phone:	

### Please Select

- ☐ \$30 Family/Household Membership
- ☐ \$25 Single/Senior Family Membership
- ☐ \$250 Sustaining Membership (10 years)
- ☐ \$500 Lifetime Membership
- ☐ \$20 Non-Resident Membership
- ☐ Gift to the Foundation\* of \$\_\_\_\_\_

**Please send checks to:**

**Waterbury Neighborhood Association  
P.O. Box 12054  
Des Moines, Iowa 50312**

Please make membership checks payable to the Waterbury Neighborhood Association. Membership is voluntary and follows the calendar year.

\*Foundation gifts are tax deductible; please make these checks payable to the Waterbury Neighborhood Foundation.

### Volunteer Opportunities

I am also interested in the following (please check all that apply):

- |                                     |   |  |
|-------------------------------------|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Trees      | <input type="checkbox"/> Improvement Projects | <input type="checkbox"/> Social Events                   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Newsletter | <input type="checkbox"/> Membership           | <input type="checkbox"/> One-time Project                |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Gardens    | <input type="checkbox"/> Social Media         | <input type="checkbox"/> Board of Directors (it's easy!) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Luminaries | <input type="checkbox"/> Advertising          | <input type="checkbox"/> Other _____                     |

**If you haven't paid your 2021 dues yet, it's not too late!**



Waterbury Neighborhood Association  
P.O. Box 12054  
Des Moines, IA 50312

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### **Are You New to Waterbury?**

If you are new to our lovely neighborhood, we wish you a hearty welcome! If you are looking to get involved in the neighborhood, we always have a need for the following volunteers:

- Advertising
- Assisting at Events
- Fund Raising
- Gardening
- Special Projects
- Web Content Generator
- Welcome Committee



If any of these options sound interesting, please send us a note at [news@waterburyneighbors.org](mailto:news@waterburyneighbors.org)

**Please be sure to check  
Waterbury's Facebook and  
other social media for the fall  
volunteering updates!**

**Be well, stay safe,  
and we hope to  
see you soon!**



Waterbury Neighborhood

[waterburyneighbors.org](http://waterburyneighbors.org)



@WaterburyDSM