

### Welcome to New Members

Tonia Arrington  
Boyan Dimitrov  
Fenell Doremus & Viro Greco  
Diane Filbin  
Suzanne Harwood  
Michael Kandarev & Deanna Derrig  
Patrick Pyszka  
Steve Rish  
Sarah Roos  
Haifa Zabout

### Thanks to Contributing Members

Sylvia & Michael Redmond  
Kathleen Trainor

### Welcome to Friends of GRO

Mara Bregenzer  
Erich Doering  
Deb Doetzer  
Rich Harris & Ronna Feldman  
Rahul Sanghrajka  
Lisa Sorich  
Aris Yanibas  
Dorothy Zuckert

### Corner Garden Contributors

Gloria Berkwitz  
Beth Carlisle  
Boyan Dimitrov  
Erich Doering  
Fenell Doremus & Viro Greco  
Michael Kandarev & Deanna Derrig  
Patrick Pyszka  
Robert & Alma Sargis  
Paul & Sari Shuman  
Kathleen Trainor

January &  
February  
2006

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## VOTE TO BE TAKEN AT FEBRUARY MEETING

The GRO Betterment Committee has received a proposal for:

**“the release of a portion of the Greater Rockwell Betterment Fund to be used for promoting the Rockwell Crossing business district and for events surrounding the closing of the Rockwell Brown Line station. These funds are to be used for the betterment of our community during the impending Brown Line crisis.”**

Come to the GRO meeting on Tuesday, February 7, at 7:30 p.m. to hear the proposal and vote on spending approximately 4% of the Betterment Fund to help promote our business community.

**Monday, January 23  
Monday, February 27  
GRO NIGHTS at the GRILL  
Dine with your neighbors  
at Rockwell's Grill  
7:30 P.M.  
Rockwell & Eastwood**

## Rockwell Station to Close

FHP Techtonics, the construction company renovating the Western to Kimball Brown Line, has scheduled with the CTA to close Rockwell Station for a period of six months beginning **February 20, 2006**.

Go to [www.ctabrownline.com](http://www.ctabrownline.com) for the 90-day construction schedule.

Sign up for GROnews emails at [www.greaterrockwell.org](http://www.greaterrockwell.org) to receive updates. When GRO knows—you'll know.

## Bells ~~Are~~ Were Ringing

On December 13, 2005, GRO received a report from a neighbor living at Rockwell Crossing. He couldn't sleep because the signal bells on the new crossing warning system were ringing with EVERY train ALL NIGHT LONG!

GRO contacted the CTA, whose response was that turning the bells off at night “was inconsistent with the minimum standard practice for crossing warning systems.” The CTA cited several publications containing the relevant state and federal guidelines.

However, our examination of the guidelines turned up no re-

quirement that the bells had to be on 24 hours a day in a residential zone.

On Monday, December 19, GRO sent a letter to U.S. Congressman Rahm Emanuel, copying our local newspapers. Both the Chicago Tribune and the Sun Times expressed interest in the story, and by 4 p.m. the CTA reversed its decision and had the bells turned off that night.

CTA's decision is “pending further investigation,” so they may review all relevant guidelines, but we have been assured by the CTA that nighttime bells will not be turned on again without prior consultation with the community.

## A Season of Giving: It Really Added Up

Rockwell Crossing merchants and residents of GRO teamed up to make the Christmas season a brighter one for some needy Chicago residents. From December 3 through December 25, GRO residents made donations of food, clothing, toiletries, and toys at participating merchants to benefit local charities, and the drive was a great success.

- ✿ Bloom Yoga collected over 20 bags of clothing for the White Elephant.
- ✿ The Old Saints Church on Wilson was thrilled with the gloves and toiletries collected by Scents & Sensibility and Beans and Bagels to distribute at their Tuesday night soup kitchen.
- ✿ Many children received the gift of a toy through donations made to Devrim Cleaners.
- ✿ The 244 pounds of food collected by Ruff Haus Pets for the Greater Chicago Food Depository provided 183 meals.
- ✿ Lake Claremont Press collected 5 boxes of books for donation to an after-school tutoring program and an interim housing shelter for single mothers.
- ✿ The Common Food Pantry was so pleased with the 20 bags of food collected by Rockwell's Grill that owners Kathy and Bryan Crelly are considering holding further drives throughout the year.

Participating merchants enjoyed the opportunity to meet neighborhood residents and work together to benefit those less fortunate. A big thank you to the residents for their generous donations and to the merchants for starting what is likely to become an annual tradition.

TRACY BARTHOLOMEW

## A Tuition-Based Preschool at Waters?

Waters Elementary School is hoping to open a tuition-based preschool program this fall if there is sufficient interest among neighborhood parents. They will need at least 18 applicants by Feb. 15 in order to open in September 2006.

The program will be full time on weekdays from 8 a.m. to 6 p.m., Monday through Friday, at a cost of \$200 per week for kids three and up. It will be run by the Chicago Public Schools.

There will be an informational meeting in early February. You can find out more at the Web site of a neighborhood parents' group—[www.WatersToday.org](http://www.WatersToday.org).

ABBEY BOTKIN

This month's editor is June Huitt

**NEW AND RENEWING MEMBERS: IF YOU HAVE PAID YOUR DUES BUT HAVE NOT RECEIVED YOUR MEMBERSHIP CARD, CALL BEA TERSCH AT 561-0794.**

GROnews is published by the Greater Rockwell Organization (GRO), a community group dedicated to making our neighborhood a safe and pleasant place in which to live. Tenants, homeowners, landlords, and business owners are welcome to join us in improving our community.

### Officers

*President:* Abbey Botkin (989-6861, [president@\\*](mailto:president@*))

*First Vice President:* Les Kniskern, (506-2830, [vp@\\*](mailto:vp@*))

*Second Vice President:* Chuck Woodring (418-1822, [2vp@\\*](mailto:2vp@*))

*Secretary:* Bea Tersch, 561-0794, [secretary@\\*](mailto:secretary@*))

*Co-treasurers:* Ron and Lois Graziano, 509-9679, [treasurer@\\*](mailto:treasurer@*))

\* email officers at [greaterrockwell.org](http://greaterrockwell.org)

### Board of Directors/Committee Chairs

*Member Services/Welcome:* Maria Bappert (728-8127); *Newsletter:* June Huitt (275-3210); *Public Safety:* Maria Bappert (728-8127); *Special Events/Outreach:* Heather Steingruebl (506-7063); *Streetscape/Beautification:* Bea Tersch (561-0794); *Streetscape/Corner Gardens:* Mary Conway (907-8502); *Urban Development:* Patti Huetteman (506-0795); *DAC Liaison:* Sara Spitz (275-7786)

### Newsletter drop points

Carol's Hair Care, 2556 W. Lawrence  
Lake Claremont Press, 4650 N. Rockwell  
Rockwell el station, Rockwell & Leland

### Address correspondence to:

[newsletter@greaterrockwell.org](mailto:newsletter@greaterrockwell.org) or  
GRO Newsletter, P.O. Box 25561,  
Chicago IL 60625-0561

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GRO logo created by Randy Sweitzer

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773-604-8585

## Get Fit at Galter

Through GRO's arrangement with the Galter LifeCenter at Foster and Francisco, you can get fit at a discount.

Galter has a huge array of aerobic and conditioning machines plus more than 85 free classes, including yoga, pilates, water aerobics, tai chi, step, cycling, kickboxing, boot camp, weight training to music, balletone, and swimming.

A few classes and workshops—CPR, first aid, meditation, family self defense, pre-and postnatal fitness, baby and me—have an additional fee.

Galter also offers free physical therapy consultation for weekend warriors and special classes for those with physical limitations, such as arthritis, osteoporosis, cancer treatment, or Parkinson's.

Massage therapy, watsu (water shiatsu), and acupuncture are available by appointment. Blood pressure, glucose, and cholesterol screening are offered frequently; nutrition and weight management counseling is also available.

Now for the bargain price. Galter's regular fees (\$210 initiation and \$72 monthly for individuals) are already moderate for a full-service health club, but through a special arrangement for GRO members, the low individual initiation fee is \$60, with a monthly fee of \$48 (for couples, \$80 initiation and \$79 monthly).

Additional family members 16 and above are \$30 more monthly.

Get more information from  
Galter LifeCenter  
www.galterlifecenter.org  
773-878-9936

or call Lois Graziano, GRO treasurer and Galter staff member, at 773-509-9679.

Show your GRO membership card to get the discount when you

## Real Estate Taxes Will Rise Without Cap

Thank you to those of you who mailed postcards or came downtown to the rally in support of the new state bill to renew the 7% Homeowners Exemption supported by the Tax Reform Action Coalition (TRAC), of which GRO is a member. If the exemption is not renewed, the 2006 reassessments will include the portion of the prior reassessment that was exempted PLUS any new increase because of rising property values. We cannot let that happen.

Currently the maximum exemption is \$20,000. TRAC is also asking that this \$20,000 "cap on the cap" be removed so that it really becomes a 7% cap and is asking that it be expanded to cover all properties.

While the state legislature is in session now through April 7, take a moment to call Governor Blagojevich (217-782-0244, 312-814-2121), Speaker Madigan (217-782-5350, 773-581-8000), and President Jones (217-782-2728, 773-995-7748). The message is simple: Renew the 7% Homeowners Exemption bill; make it permanent and remove the "cap on the cap." **Don't take away our property tax relief.**

Stay tuned for news of TRAC's efforts to promote acquisition-based assessing. For more information or to join TRAC, check out their Web site at [www.trac-il.org](http://www.trac-il.org).

PATTI HUETTEMAN  
CHAIR, URBAN DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE

## GRO to Join NCBG's Board

The Neighborhood Capital Budget Group is a decade-old coalition of nearly 200 community-based organizations and local economic development groups in Chicago dedicated to improving neighborhoods through well-planned, targeted public investment. Its mission: To ensure the quality of our infrastructure in order to ensure the quality of life for our communities.

As a result of GRO's work with NCBG's Campaign for Better Transit and our continuing efforts in preparing for the Brown Line renovation project, NCBG offered the Greater Rockwell Organization a position on their board of directors.

In December, the GRO board accepted this offer and is sending, along with membership dues, representatives Les Kniskern and Chuck Woodring to begin attending their board meetings in January.

structure, tax increment financing (TIFs), school construction and repair, and public transportation. We believe our connection to this organization will prove to be an invaluable asset in helping the growth of our community.

For more information about NCBG, go to [www.ncbg.org](http://www.ncbg.org).

### Don't be embarrassed by pet odor again!

You love your pet, but accidents happen. I know, because I'm a pet owner too! That's why I've spared no expense in researching the very best, most effective methods and pet-friendly ways to remove pet odor. There's also NO RISK to you with my 100% MONEY BACK Guarantee. If you're not thrilled, it's FREE!

AllStar Carpet Care LLC

## Recycling Pickup Still a Bargain

Our neighborhood is one of the few to have an easy alternative to blue-bag recycling—the Resource Center recycling service. The Resource Center is a nonprofit organization that guarantees that 99% of the items they take are actually recycled.

Each week the Resource Center truck picks up separated cans, bottles, and paper from your alley or curb. The cost this year is \$84 (\$1.62 per week). This increase of \$12 over last year is only one dollar a month, or 25 cents a week, an amount most of us spend frivolously.

The increase is due to several factors: (1) Insurance premiums in all areas have increased dramatically, (2) the price of diesel fuel has increased at the same pace as natural gas, and (3) City of Chicago licensing fees have also risen.

You can sign up for the pickup service by contacting the Resource Center at 821-1351.

If you prefer, you can use the Resource Center's free drop-off site at beautiful North Park Village, 5801 N. Pulaski, a nice place to visit.

Mike McNamee, Director for Recyclables Collection, has another recommendation. In the Beverly–Morgan Park area, a pilot program is in place that is working very well.

In that 4 × 10 square block area, the city has distributed blue recycling carts used only for recyclables. The city picks up the recyclables on a different day from regular refuse; 95% of what is collected can then be sold. The city's current blue bag program necessitates paying to have the garbage sorted and paying to dump some of it in landfills.

Contact Alderman Schuller's office (348-8400) if you would like to have this program implemented in our neighborhood.

SARA SPITZ AND BEA TERSCH

## January/February Calendar



### January

- 23 Monday, 7:30 p.m. GRO Night at the Grill.** Rockwell's Grill, Rockwell & Eastwood
- 24 Tuesday, 7 p.m.** 19th District CAPS Beat Meeting. Kindred Hospital, Rockwell & Montrose, top floor meeting room
- 29 Sunday.** Lunar New Year. The Year of the Dog begins.

### February

- 6 Monday, 7 p.m.** Horner Park Advisory Council. Horner Park Fieldhouse, Montrose & California
- 7 7:30 p.m. GRO Monthly Meeting.** Luther Memorial Church, Campbell & Wilson
- 14 Tuesday, 6 p.m.** Gross Park Advisory Council. Gross Park Fieldhouse, Lawrence & Washtenaw
- Valentine's Day. Don't be stingy with those valentines.
- 20 Presidents Day.** Honor the giants of our national past.
- 27 Monday, 7:30 p.m. GRO Night at the Grill.** Rockwell's Grill, Rockwell & Eastwood
- 28 Tuesday.** No CAPS meeting in February
- Mardi Gras. Send a kind thought to New Orleans.

**COMING IN MARCH—THE ANNUAL GRO POTLUCK**

## HarvesTime Doubles Its Size

If it seems like it happened overnight, it pretty much did. On December 13, after HarvesTime's normal closing at 9 p.m., crews worked through the night stocking the new addition and reconfiguring the older section.

When they opened half an hour early the next morning, regular customers of the store at Lawrence & Talman must have felt like Dorothy did when she landed in Oz.

The new space provides a great showcase for the store's stellar produce section and new meat and deli counter. The expansion doubled the square footage of the store, permitting larger aisles and room for the more than four hundred new items that have been added.

HarvesTime (as well as Edgewater Produce on Clark) is owned and operated by Chris Dallas and his brothers. Chris and his wife Gail lived in the GRO neighborhood when they took over the previously

Korean grocery store 11 years ago.

HarvesTime is evolving along with the neighborhood. It has maintained its charm by continuing to offer its ethnic specialties, custom meat and deli service and incredible produce. At the same time, who could object to the addition of prepackaged meats, frozen pizza, pet food and more selections of cheeses, ice cream, cereal, and cleaning products?

Plans include more organic choices, a wider selection of breads and more prepared foods in the deli. Of course they are open to suggestions so if you don't see what you want, be sure to let them know.

With the expansion and the continued response to what customers want, you may find fewer reasons to go anywhere else for groceries. As Dorothy learned, your heart's desire just might be in your own back yard.

PATTI HUETTEMAN