

# CAL & REGION

## ON THE RECORD

Why does social worker Barb Easterday have a magic wand?

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Sunday, January 20, 2008

# 84 Lumber sneaks up on CL Lumber yard built legally, but city officials not informed

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RIDGEFIELD - Beth Wirth laughed as she joked that her family didn't need night lights anymore.

But she's not laughing when she explains her worries about light pollution, an occasional alarm, and the impact of a newly completed lumber

yard across from her Prairie Drive home.

"We didn't know anything about it," Wirth said. "But what are you going to do? There's nothing really the little guy can do."

Wirth is not alone in her concerns.

84 Lumber, which supplies lumber products for professional home builders, designers and contractors, was built legally at 4001 Country

Club Road on land zoned for such a purpose.

But it was built quietly, with little to no notification, neighbors say. And heavy lighting, plenty of pavement and recent debates over the protection of Crystal Lake's namesake lake have raised officials' eyebrows.

"I don't think it came on to anybody's radar screen," Crystal Lake Mayor Aaron Shepley said.

Pierce Hardy LP, a sister corporation to 84 Lumber, bought the 11.547-acre plat in July 2006 from Ken Koehler, who also is the McHenry County Board chairman.

The plat already was zoned for industry, and thus didn't mandate any sort of public meetings or hearings before the county Zoning Board of Appeals, county records show.

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Oberheide's Soft Landings, 203 E. Main St., Cary. Proceeds benefit hospitalized veterans at North Chicago Hospital. Sponsor: AmVets Post 245 of Cary. Information: 847-516-8327.

• 1 to 4 p.m. - **Pinewood Derby.** Grayslake Middle School, 440 Barron Blvd., Grayslake. Small wooden-car races, food and other activities. Free. Sponsor: Cub Scout Pack 451. Information: 847-707-7432.

**Today and Monday**  
 • 9 a.m. to 1 p.m. - **AARP Drivers Safety Program.** Dundee Safety Center, 555 S. Eighth St., West Dundee. Open to ages 50 and older. Must attend both days. Cost: \$10. Registration and information: 847-426-4504.

**Monday**  
 • 10 a.m. - **Kishwaukee Trail Chapter, National Society Daughters of the American Revolution meeting.** Home State Bank Community room, Main & Route 14, Crystal Lake. Business meeting followed by "The DAR, Then and Now" program presented by Jeannine Kallal. Information: 815-337-1818.

• 2 to 3:30 p.m. - **Revisiting the Dream program.** Friendship Village of Schaumburg, 350 W. Schaumburg Road, Schaumburg. In remembrance of Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Free. Registration and information: 847-884-5000, ext. 5241.

Ridgefield's 84 Lumber recently opened at 4001 Country Club Road. Although the lumber supplies store was built legally, officials with the city of Crystal Lake said they were not aware of its construction.

# 84 Lumber says it wants to work with neighbors

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Permits to build the facility were issued in October 2006, and Jeff Nobers, 84 Lumber vice president of marketing and public relations, said it opened to business a little more than a year later.

Nobers said the site was chosen because it perfectly fit the company's needs for acreage, location in a booming area and access to railroad tracks.

"We clearly met or exceeded every regulation, every guideline, every rule in respect to building the store," Nobers said, adding that the company wanted to work with its neighbors to solve problems.

"We do make every effort to be a good neighbor," he said. "We hope we are and if for some reason we're not, we hope people will notify us."

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The development made Barbara Wheeler, the chairwoman of the County Board's Planning and Development Committee

"They're following all our rules and regulations, [so there's] not much you can do," she said "I just wish businesses and developers had the foresight to do best management practices."

Crystal Lake City Councilman Ralph Dawson said he was disappointed that no one from the county government ever notified the city about the building. Dawson said he hoped that the county would talk with the city before issuing building permits inside the watershed.

shed in the future.  
 "Where's our input?" Dawson asked. "What have we done for retention up there?"

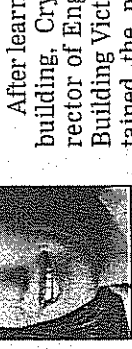
After learning of the new building, Crystal Lake Director of Engineering and Building Victor Ramirez obtained the planning documents for the lumber yard from the county. He said the city would look into any adverse impact the yard would have on the lake's watershed.

Chairwoman of the County Board's Planning and Development Committee

Barbara Wheeler

Obviously the watershed doesn't know political boundaries," Ramirez said. "It only knows it goes to the lake. One would think with all that sensitivity and time spent [on development] within the corporate limits there would be some attention given to projects outside the corporate limits but inside the watershed. ... It might be a lesson learned after the fact on what position the county should take on the watershed."

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Barbara Wheeler