

Living the Life

Loving where she lives
Leads one woman to
Spread the good word



Beverley and Richard Roeschel think they've found a modern day Mayberry at the Four Seasons community of Belvidere. Right: Community residents enjoy a card game during a recent St. Patrick's Day party.



Aunt Bee is alive and well and living in Mayberry. OK, not THE Aunt Bee and not THAT Mayberry, but Beverley Roeschel of Belvidere has been given that moniker from time since she swears the Four Season manufactured home community she lives in is "just like Mayberry."

Beverley, 60, and her husband Richard, 72 moved to Four Seasons 11 years ago and have been smitten with it ever since. Beverley's enthusiasm led her to participate in a promotional video produced for Four Seasons that was televised nationwide. On camera, she compares the community to Mayberry because "It's friendly and safe." Once the ad aired Beverley started getting the Aunt Bee references, she relates although the stylish retiree doesn't resemble Aunt Bee's bun-wearing homey style in any way. The video also gave Beverley a bit of local celebrity.

"I go into restaurants and people recognize me," she says. "And one time I was in church and when I turned around a woman said to me, 'I know who you are. You're on TV it makes me laugh.'"

Making the move

The Roeschels' desire to simplify their lives put them on the road to Four Seasons.

"We lived in the Schaumburg area and were both working at Harper

College (in Palatine) at the time," says Beverley. "I was a buyer for the college, buying all the supplies for the college and bookstore. We wanted a smaller type of atmosphere and wanted to move away but not too far away, from family, friends and work."

Richard had a friend who lived in Four Seasons so the couple took a ride to Belvidere to see for themselves.

"The location was good," Beverley says. "We're right off the toll road and we're close to Rockford, which has everything—restaurants, theater, sporting events."

The Roeschels also like the affordability and roominess of their three bedroom, two bath manufactured home. But what really clinched it was the neighborliness. While the community is not age-restricted, there are a lot of residents in their age bracket leading to easy friendships and shared interest.

"Four Seasons has the small town effect, yet we're close to a big city," adds Beverley. "There are no solicitors. If your doorbell rings, you know it's your neighbor. Everyone knows everyone here. It's not a gated community, but it's like one. Residents keep up their place. They water their grass and take a lot of pride in their homes."

After work

After commuting to their jobs for a few years, Richard and Beverley retired from Harper and had the time to

get more immersed in Four Seasons' community life.

Richard lends a hand helping his neighbors with different chores such as mowing lawns and Beverley has taken on the role of activities organizer, a role that began in her own home.

"I was hosting a group of five or so women in my house for cards on Wednesday nights," Beverley relates. Four Seasons Property Manager Glenn Terrell overheard Beverley and her friend Judy Webb talking about their game night and asked them to host a game night in the clubhouse.

The game nights are held the first and third Saturdays of every month and consist of card and dice games. "people bring hors d'oeuvres. The park provides coffee and pop and gives out cash prizes, sweatshirts and hats and we run it all," Beverley says.

In addition, Beverley serves as hostess on bus trips out to Diamond Joe's casino in Dubuque that Four Seasons organizes three times a year. The park provides breakfast and Beverley gets games going like bingo, complete with cash prizes and gifts, to keep things lively. Four Seasons sponsors several other social events during the year, she says, such as luaus by the community's pool in the summer, a breakfast once a month and several holiday parties, including a recent St. Patrick's Day party.

The game nights help to keep people active and involved," says Bever-

ley." It helps people to form friendships. Sometimes you find out you grew up in the same area. I've seen smaller groups develop out of this that get together to go out to dinner or start a bowling group."

This and more

Beyond the gates of Four Seasons, the Roeschels take advantage of what the town of Belvidere has to offer, some of which is within walking distance such as the American Legion post, just a block away, and the VFW. Once a week the couple goes to the Boone County Keen-Age Senior Center to play pinochle and socialize.

"They have activities there five days a week," says Beverley. "Boone County is wonderful."

The offer health screenings. They are there to take you anywhere you want to go."

The Roeschels have been very happy with their move to Four Seasons and their own little piece of Mayberry.

"When the blizzard hit this year, everyone was helping each other out," says Beverley. "If someone goes on vacation you have neighbors looking out for your place. My neighbor watched our cat the whole time we were away. We watch out for one another. You get that close. It's a friendly community, with nice people. You don't have to worry here."

Just like Mayberry.