



Wonder Lake is wired and on the web

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When I was preparing to move to Wonder Lake this past summer, I spent a considerable amount of time looking for information about the area. My relocation to Wonder Lake was largely due to a series of coincidences and a gut response to a town that was more like the little southern Illinois farm town I grew up in than any other I'd seen in the northern part of the state. I knew very little about the town or about McHenry County. To learn about the area, I did what a lot of people with Web access at their

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work desk do - I searched the Internet.

Much to my surprise, I found a Web site dedicated to Wonder Lake - Wonderlakelive.com. I bookmarked the site, and in the weeks that my old apartment filled with boxes, I must have logged on and clicked around a dozen times a day. I still use the Wonderlakelive.com site almost daily. The virtual community it creates is like having a friendly and knowledgeable neighbor right across my backyard fence who I can question and chat with any time of the night or day. The amount of information at my fingertips through this site is amazing. It shows the week's weather, provides local news and information, including a calendar of events, and links to several local businesses as well as maps of the area. The site has a classified section, a bulletin board, and links to entertainment venues, as well as community resources.

Impressed that a town as small as Wonder Lake would have its own World Wide Web address, I recently met with the people who put Wonderlakelive.com together, Mike Hasten, owner of Hasten Computer Solutions, and Wonderwave.net, and Sioux Bellinder (pronounced "Sue") have been working together at Hasten Computer Solutions for five years, a company spe-

cializing in data recovery, computer wiring, ethernet and telephone services with expertise in Apple systems. The pair moved the company and their families to Wonder Lake in 1998 after they found a home large enough to house them and still provide a roomy home office.

Just as I did, when Sioux and Mike moved to Wonder Lake, they spent time researching and getting to know the area. In Sioux's research, she amassed huge amounts of great information, and thought that "someone" should put it all together in one place. Eventually she decided she was the "someone" to do it, and Wonderlakelive.com was born. Sioux put together all the material, did the artwork and now serves as Webmaster. New photographs of the area are added to the main page as available, and digital photos of the area are always welcome. The Website includes a list of area organizations, and local groups are encouraged to send in their newsletters and events for additions to the site.

Wonderlakelive.com is not the only undertaking of Wonder Lake's own tech-gurus. The pair helped redesign the fire departments website, wlfpd.com, and now hosts the site and the department's e-mail. Sioux is working on the Website for the State Banks, including the Wonder Lake State Bank. Amazingly, after Wonderlakelive.com was up & running, Mike & Sioux again took the initiative to create a needed service for Wonder Lake. Hasten Computer Solutions recently expanded to offer Wonderwave.net, a local reliable internet service provider, with email. The duo had provided such services for their customers, and is now providing a local service with high quality equipment and personal service and support.

Wonder Lake may be a small town, but it has technological resources usually associated with much larger cities. Mike Hasten and Sioux Bellinder have put their training and expertise to great use serving our town, and are really interesting, community-active people, to boot. Wonder Lake is still a small town where neighbors keep each other up-to-date and chat to one another, probably still over the backyard fence on occasion, but we also have our own virtual neighborhood to explore and enjoy.