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NEIGHBOR

Local company provides flags for July 4th holiday

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For the last 20 years, one local company has been posting more than 30,000 American flags around the mailboxes and driveways of Prospect Heights, Mount Prospect and Wheeling residences in an effort to spread patriotism on Independence Day.

ERA American Brokers is a realty company originally based in Prospect Heights but now located in Mount Prospect.

Every year, around June 30, ERA hires a team of local children to post the free flags at thousands of locations, before the Fourth of July.

"It's a way to put money in some kids' pockets," said Kris Mulcahy, ERA real estate broker. "Just a few nickels for the summer."

To prepare for the mass distribution, the company begins work in February.

And for the next four months 70 to 80 employees, volunteers and hired help hand place business cards on each flag.

"I'm not going to kid you," Mulcahy said. "It's a form of marketing, but the general intent is to send out a patriotic message."

She also said the flags help the community celebrate the nation's birthday as well as show pride and unity while U.S. troops are in Iraq.

Jeff Jurergensen, a five-year resident of Prospect Heights, who saves his flags to use for next year, said he looks forward to getting them.

"I save them and add them to our collection," he said. "I thinks they're doing a great thing for the community."

Although ERA is not the originator or exclusive American flag distributor in town, Mulcahy said her company does give out the largest number in the area.

She added, however, the company doesn't get to every house.

But, if someone wanted a flag, she said she would personally bring one to their homes.

"The flags are a very large expense for our company, but that's not the issue," she said. "If they want a flag or even extra flags, we'll give it to them."

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