

RIVER FOREST

Proud Heritage • Bright Future

The Village of River Forest Newsletter | October, 2021



Home Repair Help for River Forest Seniors

The Village of River Forest and its Age-Friendly Committee are continuing the strategic effort to address the needs of aging residents. Recently, the Village and its partnering agencies launched a Senior Home Repair Program that is available to all River Forest residents over the age of 60 that covers minor repairs in the home. Older adults can call pre-approved handypersons to get a trusted source for their repair needs and pay reasonable rates based on yearly income. Click [here](#) for more information. This program is the result of a partnership between River Forest, the Village of Oak Park and Townships, as well as [North West Housing Partnership](#).

The Village is committed to making River Forest a community for successful aging, including supporting residents who experience memory loss. River Forest is proud to have been the fifth governmental agency to be recognized by Dementia Friendly America in the State of Illinois. The Village collaborates with other organizations, such as the River Forest Township and

Dementia Friendly River Forest, to offer much needed services, as well as to provide programs that include older people, promote their engagement in the community, and enable them to age with dignity.

River Forest elected officials also represent the Village and serve as leaders in the region to support older adults in the community. Village President Cathy Adduci serves as chair of the [Metropolitan Mayors Caucus Age-Friendly Communities Subcommittee](#) (MMC), which convenes local leaders to share best practices, build partnerships and identify resources to better serve residents. Village Trustee Respicio Vazquez, who also participates on the MMC Subcommittee, serves as chair of the Village's Age-Friendly Committee.

To learn more about Aging in River Forest, click [here](#). For Township senior services and programs, click [here](#). For additional information on Dementia Friendly River Forest, click [here](#).

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Village Board Trustees



From Village President Cathy Adduci

All through the year, the Village Board of Trustees is evaluating our goals and objectives to ensure we are making decisions that continue to strengthen the River Forest community. To that end, the Board holds goal-setting workshops to meet and evaluate our guiding principles, relating to the annual budget and the [Village's Comprehensive Plan](#). Our next planning workshop will take place on December 6, and we encourage all residents to be involved in planning for the future. Please check back [here](#) for information about this upcoming meeting and view the [Village's current Budget](#) to review the priorities for the Fiscal Year 2022.

Sustainability continues to be an important topic in River Forest, and we are fortunate to have a strong group of devoted residents who serve on the Sustainability Commission. Initiatives they have introduced over the last year include the [Veg Out! Campaign](#) - which encourages people to eat less meat to reduce our carbon footprint, helping to certify River Forest as a [Community Wildlife Habitat](#), finding creative ways to **reduce waste**, and focusing on clean and renewable energy programs to reduce greenhouse gases. These efforts are important to ensure that River Forest not only says we are focused on sustainability, but that we are committed to taking real steps towards being sustainable. Thank you to the excellent work of our volunteer Commission members!

October is Breast Cancer Awareness Month, and I encourage residents to check with your doctor and get regular mammograms to ensure you are healthy. Early detection has been shown to save lives, so please spread the word.

There are so many wonderful cultures and ethnicities that make up our country, and they are entwined in our rich history. Hispanic and Italian Heritage Month and Indigenous People's Day are being celebrated this month, and we thank all of these groups for their deep contributions to American culture.

As we welcome October, I hope you can stop and take a moment to enjoy the beautiful fall colors that are beginning to show all around us. River Forest is quite a site during this season as apple picking and pumpkin carving become common activities for community members leading up to Halloween. Please remember to follow safety tips for those who trick-or-treat in the community, which can be found on pages 4 and 8 of this newsletter.

Sincerely,

Cathy Adduci, Village President
Village of River Forest



**Erika
Bachner**



**Kathleen
Brennan**



**Lisa
Gillis**



**Ken
Johnson**



**Robert
O'Connell**



**Respicio F.
Vazquez**

Village Clerk



**Jonathan
Keller**

To contact the
Village Board
to submit a
comment or
question, click the
button below

Contact the
Village Board

News Around Town

Fire Department Open House

The Fire Department will be hosting its first Open House since 2019 on Saturday October 9 from 10 a.m. - 2 p.m. at the Fire Station located at 400 Park Avenue. Together with the Police and Public Works departments, and community partners NICOR and the West Suburban Consolidated Dispatch Center, the Department will be showcasing services available to River Forest residents. For more information please call the Station at (708) 366-7629 or click [here](#).



Public Works Superintendent Retires

After 28 years, the Village's Superintendent of Operations Mark Janopoulos retired earlier this week. Mark has been an integral part of the Public Works Department over the years and brought a vast knowledge of the Village's parkway tree network and underground utilities to work with him. If you've ever called the Village with questions about parkway trees over the last three decades, there is a good chance that Mark was involved in responding.

After serving as a Heavy Equipment Operator in the Marines, Mark left to work as a Fleet Manager with Vancom in 1986. In 1993 he began working for the Village, starting as a Maintenance Worker in Public Works before working his way up to Superintendent in 2001. In addition to managing the Public Works crews, he has played an important role in modernizing the Department. Mark brought innovation to the Village's snow fighting operations, ensuring that roads were safe for travel after snowstorms. His vast knowledge of the Village's fleet and infrastructure made him an invaluable member of the budget team. It is safe to say that few, if any, know more about River Forest's infrastructure than Mark does - and he will be sorely missed as he begins his well-deserved retirement.

Library Offers Fall Programs

Visit the Library website to see the exciting lineup of fall programs for all ages. Sunday, October 3 at 2 p.m., the library will have a special program which marks the 150th anniversary of the Great Chicago Fire. In *The Essential Great Chicago Fire*, William Pack weaves together technical details of the fire with vivid firsthand accounts from those who lived through the event in 1871, bringing alive all the excitement and terror in a multimedia storytelling event that will not soon be forgotten. This program is brought to River Forest residents through a partnership with River Forest Township.

Halloween Hoot and Howl

On Friday, October 8 from 5:30 - 8 p.m. it's time for Halloween Hoot n Howl. Join the Public Library, Park District and Trailside Museum at Thatcher Woods Pavilion for an evening of family fun - featuring live music, pumpkin painting, native animals, spooky stories, smores and more. This free event is recommended for children up to the age of 14 with a caregiver.



Village Department News

Fire Department

Fire Prevention Week

Fire Prevention Week is observed each year during the week of October 9 in commemoration of the Great Chicago Fire, which began on October 8, 1871, and caused devastating damage throughout the city. This horrific conflagration killed more than 250 people, left 100,000 homeless, destroyed more than 17,400 structures, and burned more than 2,000 acres of land. During Fire Prevention Week, children, adults and teachers learn how to stay safe in the case of a fire. Firefighters provide lifesaving public education in an effort to drastically decrease deaths caused by fires.

Learn the Sounds of Safety

The 2021 Fire Prevention Week campaign, "Learn the Sounds of Fire Safety!" works to educate everyone about the different sounds the smoke and carbon monoxide alarms make. Knowing what to do when an alarm sounds will keep you and your family safe. When an alarm makes noises – a beeping sound or a chirping sound – you must take action.

For more information, please call the Fire Prevention Bureau at (708) 714-3562 or click [here](#).

Fireplace Safety Tips

October is the perfect time to have your fireplace checked and cleaned. Click [here](#) for safety tips.

Police Department

Halloween Safety Tips

When trick-or-treating this year, please be sure to follow these important safety tips from the Police Department.

- Do not trick-or-treat alone: Kids under age 12 should always go trick-or-treating with an adult, and older kids should always have a friend
- Have a safe costume: Costumes should be visible to vehicles and others, should fit properly to prevent tripping and allow full vision, and be flame retardant or flame-proof.
- Find a safe path: Stay on sidewalks, obey traffic and carry a flashlight after dark
- Only approach homes that are well lit and only approach the front door.
- Check candy: Throw out candy with torn packages or holes in the packages, spoiled items or homemade treats from strangers. Keep hard candy or gum that could cause choking away from small children.

At your home, avoid flames. Instead of using a candle in a pumpkin, try an electric-candle or glowstick. Turn on exterior lights after dark. Make sure that a path is clear for trick-or-treaters by removing anything that could cause visitors to trip and fall. Keep family pets away from trick-or-treaters, even if they seem harmless to you. For more information about trick-or-treating during COVID-19, please visit page 8. Have a fun and safe Halloween!

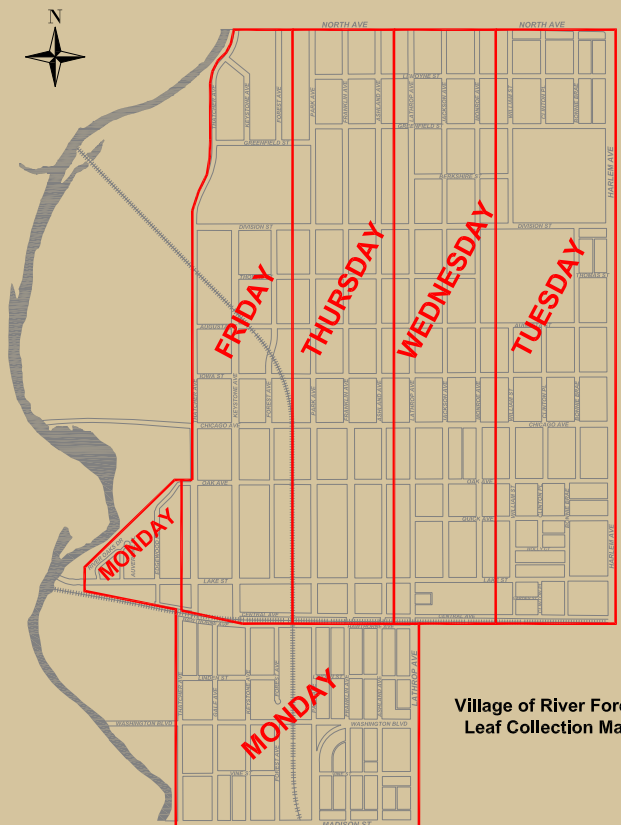


Fall Leaf Collection Available

The Village's annual 'Rake to the Street' leaf pick-up program is unlimited and free. The program has begun and runs through the first week of December. Rake only leaves onto the street, leaving the curb exposed, where Village crews will collect them. Please do not mix grass clippings, brush or any other type of yard waste with your leaves (please advise your lawn care service of this as well). Village crews will collect leaves only, beginning around 7 a.m. Please coordinate your lawn maintenance according to the following leaf collection schedule:

- **Mondays:** The area west of Thatcher including Edgewood, Auvergne, River Oaks and Lake, and all streets south of the Union Pacific Railroad tracks.
- **Tuesdays:** Harlem through, and including William.
- **Wednesdays:** Monroe through, and including Lathrop, north of the Union Pacific Railroad.
- **Thursdays:** Ashland through, and including Park, north of the Union Pacific Railroad.
- **Fridays:** Forest through, and including Thatcher, north of the Union Pacific Railroad.

To download a copy of the leaf collection schedule and map, visit vrf.us/LeafCollection.



Village of River Forest Leaf Collection Map

Committee/ Commission Spotlight

Sustainable River Forest *Keeping River Forest Green!*



Traffic and Safety Commission

The function of the **Traffic and Safety Commission** is to review transit, parking and potentially hazardous traffic matters for the Village that have been referred to them. The Commission serves in an advisory capacity to the Village Board of Trustees and is comprised of seven members who are residents of the Village, and who are appointed by the Village President with the advice and consent of the Board of Trustees. As an example of some of the work that they do, the Commission played a key role in the creation of the Village's **Safe Walking Routes to School** plan.

Matters can get referred to the Commission from the Village Board, Village Staff, residents and businesses. Requests are submitted to Village Staff for review and at times, may require study from the Village's Traffic Engineering consultant. In order for an item to be brought to the Commission, the petitioner must follow **procedures** that include the completion of a petition indicating 75% of properties within the notification area are in support of the request. Residents and businesses in the area will be notified of the request and given the opportunity to attend the meeting. Recommendations by the Commission are then forwarded to the Village Board for final consideration and approval

River Forest Tree Trails

Bundle up and get outside with your family to complete the **River Forest Tree Trails: On Your Block** activity sheet. Whether young in years or young at heart, Tree Trails is a fun activity for the residents! Email a photo or scan of your answers to sustainability@vrf.us by October 31, 2021 for a chance to win three months of free **curbside composting** service! This unique, fun and socially distant way to get to know the trees on your block was created by the River Forest Sustainability Commission. Get outside and try it out.



Waste Collection Survey - Resident Input Needed

The Sustainability Commission (RFSC) wants your input! Click [here](#) to complete the RFSC Waste Collection Survey, which will take approximately 5-10 minutes to complete. Resident feedback will be utilized to help the Commission make recommendations to the Village Board of Trustees regarding waste collection services. The survey closes at noon on Friday, October 8.

Sustainability Commission Seeks Student Commissioners

The Sustainability Commission is seeking applicants for student commissioners for the 2021-2022 school year (the term runs from 11/1/21 - 9/30/22). Click [here](#) for the application. Completed applications should be submitted to Sara Phyfer at sphyfer@vrf.us by Friday, October 15.

Someone to Know

Traffic and Safety Commission Chair Doug Rees has served the Village through his role on the Commission as a member since 2005, and as Chair since 2017. After working for 25 years as a private practice lawyer, he now serves in the Office of the Illinois Attorney General as the Deputy Attorney General in charge of civil litigation. Doug says that it is an honor to represent the State and its officials to help resolve disputes and support good public policy.

A native of Omaha, Nebraska, Doug and his wife Lynn moved to River Forest in 1995 and have raised their two children who are graduates of Lincoln, Roosevelt and Oak Park River Forest High School. For fun and relaxation, Doug plays and sings in a Rolling Stones cover band. He says he takes pride in living in River Forest, noting that his favorite parts are the beautiful neighborhood for walking and bike riding, great local dining establishments, and its close proximity to Chicago and both airports.



Doug Rees

Organizations Serving River Forest



Township



Many Township services and programs are returning to meeting in-person. To learn more, visit RiverForestTownship.org, the River Forest community calendar at rfhappenings.com, or email Supervisor Carla Sloan at supervisor@riverforesttownship.org.



Sibshops Resume In-Person

Sibshops is a program specially designed for siblings of kids with special needs, disabilities and health challenges. The goal is to have fun and share experiences with each other, as well as with specially trained facilitators. Lunch is provided on Saturdays from 11:30 a.m.-1:30 p.m. on October 2 and 16, November 6 and 20, and December 4 and 18 at Thrive Counseling Center, 120 S. Marion Street in Oak Park. The cost is \$10 per session and scholarships available. For more information or to register, call Laurie Johnson at (708) 383-7500 x308 or email ljohnson@thrivecc.org.

Seniors: Sign up for the Community Connect Weekly Email

Every Friday, you can receive the free Community Connect email newsletter! Community Connect is full of information about upcoming events in River Forest, Oak Park and surrounding communities, geared toward older adults-but of interest to everyone. To be added to the list, email Betsy Kelly at communityconnectmail@gmail.com. This newsletter is supported by River Forest Township and Arbor West Neighbors.

New Township Committee Members Sought

River Forest Township is looking for a new volunteer member for its Township Youth Services Committee which meets most first Wednesdays of the month at 6 p.m. and its Township Senior Services Committee that meets most third Wednesdays at 7 p.m. Committees play a strong advisory role in Township programs and subsequent funding. For more information, contact Supervisor Carla Sloan via email supervisor@riverforesttownship.org or call (708)-366-2029 x11.

riverforesttownship.org - 708-366-2029 x11

Park District

Deck the Depot with River Forest Park District

Celebrate the season with a holiday trolley ride around River Forest complete with treats and the reading of the Polar Express story. This event will take place on Saturday, December 11 during dedicated time slots from 9 a.m. - 1:30 p.m. starting at the Train Station in downtown River Forest. At the Depot, participants can enjoy a decadent hot chocolate bar, crafts and pictures with Santa. In-person registration opens on Monday, October 11 at 8:30 a.m. for River Forest residents; online registration will not be accepted. This event is for residents only. Please note: the accompanying photo was taken prior to the onset of COVID-19 in March of 2020. Face masks are required. [Click here](#) for details.



Holiday Tree Trimming

Join the Park District in celebrating the Holiday Season by participating in our annual Tree Trimming! Community businesses, organizations, and neighborhoods are invited to sponsor a tree that will be on display along Lake Street in Memorial Parkway. A tree with lights will be provided and sponsors will bring, and hang their own decorations while festive music plays in the background. Individually wrapped cookies will also be provided. Kids can bring letters to Santa and place them in Santa's mailbox. Register your group for one of the slots available. Please note: the accompanying photo was taken prior to the onset of COVID-19 in March of 2020. [Click here](#) for details.



rfparks.com | 708-366-6660

Library

Sunday Hours are Back

Once again, the Library is open on Sundays from 1 - 5 p.m.

SWAN Mobile App Offers Mobile Checkout

Short on time? Next time you visit the Library, you can use the SWAN mobile app on your phone to check out books and other materials from the Library. Learn everything you need to know about the SWAN app and this new convenient feature [here](#).

riverforestlibrary.org | 708-366-5205

Organizations Serving River Forest



Oak Park and River Forest High School



Roosevelt Middle School



Willard Elementary School



Lincoln Elementary School

District 200

Eight Oak Park and River Forest High School students have placed as National Merit Scholarship semifinalists in the 2022 program. Seniors Katherine Gearhart, Rebecca Gutierrez, Christopher Hedrich, Gabriel Huang, Maeve Mascarenhas, James McConnell, Henry Skalla, and Cory Yu qualified by taking the Preliminary SAT/National Merit Scholarship Qualifying Test (PSAT/NMSQT) as juniors in October 2020 or January 2021.

Less than 1% of 1.5 million high school seniors qualified as semifinalists, by being among the highest-scoring entrants in their state. National Merit semifinalists have the opportunity to continue in the competition for roughly 8,700 scholarships worth more than \$40 million, which will be announced in the spring.

In addition, seniors Alani Espinosa, Madeline Gerona, Juan Gonzalez, Rebecca Gutierrez, Audrey Johnston, Tyr Jaques, and Camila Ramos have been recognized as National Hispanic Scholars for scoring in the top 2.5% of Hispanic and Latinx students taking the PSAT/NMSQT.

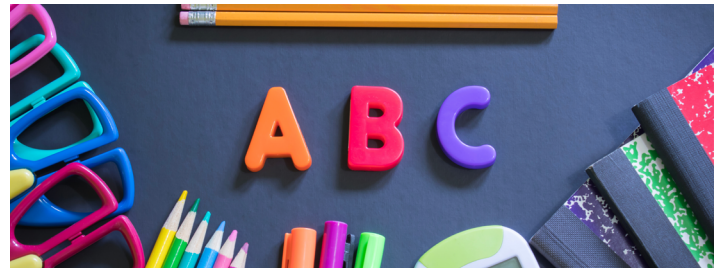
Seniors Dante Berry and Zen Phillpotts have been recognized as National African American Scholars by College Board for scoring in the top 2.5% among African American students taking the PSAT/NMSQT.

Pictured: National Merit semifinalists, National Hispanic Scholars, and National African American Scholars who were able to attend the annual family breakfast to honor them on September 9.



oprfs.org | 708-383-0700

District 90



District 90 Is Closed Monday, October 11

All District 90 schools and offices will be closed on Monday, October 11. Please enjoy the three-day weekend!

Do you know about FRED?

FRED is a free and independent peer support group for parents and caregivers of children, teens and young adults with mental illness. Since 2007, FRED has empowered parents to navigate the mental health system and advocate for their children. The group is led by trained parent volunteers and meets in person and online to share resources, experiences and support, and to host expert speakers. FRED eases isolation and offers shared knowledge, skills, confidentiality, and the support of other parents who understand. All parents are welcome. Please visit the recently launched [FRED website](#) (supported by a grant from River Forest Township) that offers a wealth of helpful resources.

In addition to online resources, FRED offers Zoom support meetings on the first Tuesday of the month from 7 - 8:30 p.m. and the third Tuesday of the month from 12 - 1:30 p.m. FRED is based in Oak Park and River Forest, and serves families throughout the Chicago region.

district90.org | 708-771-8282



Business Corner

La Parrillita Mexican Grill is located on North Avenue, just west of Harlem Avenue. They serve up delicious, fresh Mexican dishes, from tacos and burritos to tamales, made fresh daily. Stop by or **order online** for your next lunch or dinner, or call (708) 657-4440 for La Parrillita's many catering options! La Parrillita is a small shop that has garnered national recognition being featured on the Food Network's 'The Best Thing I Ever Ate'. Owner Jackie Kotarba has worked diligently over the last year-and-a-half to increase La Parrillita's **online ordering** capabilities and partners with local schools and community organizations for fundraisers. Please help to Shop River Forest and support this local favorite!



Halloween During COVID-19

As you prepare your family for Halloween festivities, please be aware of the continued risks of COVID-19 exposure during trick-or-treating. For families that choose to trick-or-treat this year, please be considerate to those residents who have made a decision not to participate.

Downloadable signs are available to put on your front door or another visible location so those who are trick-or-treating know whether your home is participating. Click [here](#) for a RED 'no trick-or-treaters' sign if you are choosing not to participate this year. Click [here](#) for a GREEN 'trick-or-treaters are welcome' sign if you decide to pass out candy this year.

Trick-or-treating is Sunday, October 31 from 3 - 7 p.m.

To promote social distancing, residents can consider alternatives

to door-to-door trick-or-treating such as leaving individually wrapped candy or treats spread apart on a table on their front walkways, sidewalks or any outdoor space that allows for at least 6 feet of social distance from the door. Anyone participating in trick-or-treating, including those distributing candy, should wash their hands or use hand sanitizer frequently, especially before consuming candy. If social distancing is not possible, individuals are encouraged to wear proper face covers, regardless of vaccination status. A costume mask, such as those worn for Halloween, is not a substitute for a face cover. If face covers are worn under costume masks, please ensure this does not create breathing problems for young children, and if so, consider discarding the costume mask. Do not participate in trick-or-treating if you are feeling unwell, if you are awaiting COVID-19 test results or if you know you have been exposed to COVID-19.



Follow the Village on Social Media



Sign Up For Email and Alerts



River Forest Events



Village Contact Information

Village Administration
708-714-3520
Acting Village Administrator
Lisa Scheiner

Finance Department
708-714-3524
Director Rosemary McAdams

Fire Department
708-714-3560
Acting Fire Chief Bob Nortier

Public Works and Development Services
708-714-3551
Director Jeff Loster

Police Department
708-714-3540
Chief James O'Shea

Emergency Services
Dial 911

400 Park Avenue River Forest, IL 60305
708-366-8500
708-366-3702 (fax)
Monday 8 a.m. – 7 p.m.
Tuesday- Friday 8a.m. – 4:30 p.m.