

RIVER FOREST

Proud Heritage • Bright Future

The Village of River Forest Newsletter | September, 2021



Village Connects with the Community

The Village is focused on ensuring we are providing the most effective and timely communications for residents and stakeholders. This effort includes converting the design of our monthly newsletter into a new format, trimming down the weekly E-Newsletter, and adding a social media page to engage with as many interested individuals as possible.

Weekly meetings take place to plan out the sharing of information so you can stay informed, and includes the latest news from Village meetings and other initiatives, information from our departments (Police, Fire, Public Works, Finance and Administration), as well as other news from around town.

On the first Friday of the month, our monthly newsletter is sent out via the Village's email distribution list. This September edition is the first in

our new graphically designed format, which allows for longer-form articles including information from River Forest Township, the Park District, Library and School Districts 90 and 200. For the rest of the month, our weekly E-Newsletter is emailed on Thursday afternoons, and contains more brief articles on the latest news and information from the Village and community partners. The Village's Nextdoor social media page was also added earlier this summer, joining the Facebook and Instagram pages in the sharing of information on a weekly basis. The Nextdoor page is available exclusively to River Forest residents and unlike other social media pages where anyone, who lives anywhere, can follow them. Links to all Village communications can be found on the last page of this newsletter and also at vrf.us/Alerts.

For any questions about Village communications, email info@vrf.us or call 708-366-8500.

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Village Board Trustees



From Village President Cathy Adduci

Welcome to our newly-designed monthly E-Newsletter, which publishes the first Friday of every month! In addition to this publication, we continue to provide weekly E-newsletters emailed on Thursday afternoons. Since the start of the year, the Village has expanded and strengthened our communications, including adding Nextdoor as a social media page (exclusively available only to our residents), and the redesign of this E-newsletter with news from the Village and community organizations that serve our residents.

In August, 2021, the Cook County Treasurer’s Office sent property owners their second installment of their property tax bill. Residents will recall that the Village Board of Trustees approved a Property Tax Levy with a 0% property tax increase to ease the challenges residents may have experienced due to the pandemic. A history of strong, responsible financial policies allowed us to provide this temporary relief without reducing service to the community.

Increases in our tax bills are due to changes in how properties are valued for tax purposes. These property valuations, conducted by the Cook County Assessor’s Office, determine what portion of the overall tax burden is paid by each individual property owner. The tax burden is based on the decision of each individual taxing body, including D90, D200, Park District, Library, Township and the Village, whether or not to increase their tax levy to the residents.

If you are interested in learning more about where your tax dollars go, visit the Village’s Community Portal by clicking [here](#). This will provide you information not only about where your property taxes go (under property tax breakdown) but other useful information about your property. Additional property tax information is also available at www.vrf.us/PropertyTax. If you have questions regarding your tax bill, please click [here](#) and contact the River Forest Assessor’s Office.

It’s hard to believe that summer is coming to a close, as Labor Day traditionally caps the season off as we begin to look towards the fall. I wish you and your family an enjoyable holiday weekend and please be safe out there.

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

FD Backpack Safety Tips

As students head back to school, the Fire Department wants to make sure they stay safe! Backpack safety is an important part of making sure your student gets to and from school safely. When selecting a backpack for your student, make sure that it is the correct size: a backpack should never be wider or longer than your child's torso and never hang more than 4 inches below the waist. Other features such as high visibility or reflective material are also a safety benefit. Finally, check throughout the school year to make sure that your child's backpack is never over packed and too heavy for them to carry. For more on backpack safety, please click [here](#).



Police Win Award

In August, the Police Department (RFPD) accepted an award from the Illinois Association of Chiefs of Police in their state-wide Illinois Traffic Safety Challenge (ITSC). RFPD took first place in their category for the 2020 competition, which follows a first place and grand prize win in 2019. This year's report showed how the Department's efforts to improve traffic safety throughout the Village utilized traffic studies, various road and signage design, enforcement, public safety education and more.

The ITSC is a friendly competition between similar sized law enforcement agencies and acts as a template for law enforcement agencies to identify traffic issues, plan strategies, reduce social harm and improve the quality of life in their communities.

The challenge helps agencies demonstrate and study successes from their programs. The ITSC provides law enforcement agencies with an opportunity to contribute to the Illinois' Strategic Highway Safety Plan and have a significant impact on the reduction of crashes, deaths and associated injuries across the state.

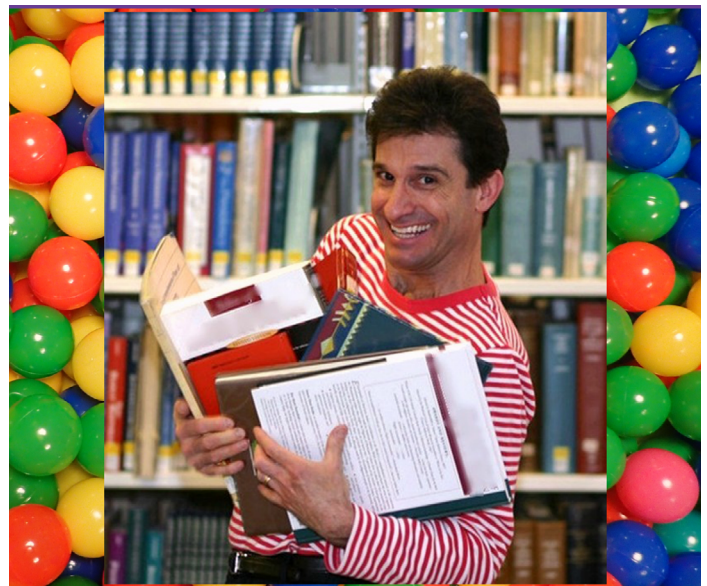


Library Fall Programming Kicks Off

The Library has an exciting line-up of fall in-person programs such as storytimes for kids, crafting and gaming for teens, and global films and coffee time for adults. The Library team will continue to monitor CDC and Illinois Department of Public Health guidelines, and will do its best to deliver programs safely as planned. Mask requirements and space limitations will apply as needed. Visit the website at riverforestlibrary.org for a full listing of programs, including some virtual offerings.

River Forest Public Library Foundation is generously sponsoring The Dooley Band Concert on Friday, September 10 at 7:30 p.m. Join Mike, Mick (Mike's son), Jim, and Claire (Jim's daughter) Dooley for a concert in the library garden. In the case of inclement weather, the program will be held indoors.

Kids of all ages won't want to miss Juggling Funny Stories with Chris Fascione on Sunday, September 12 at 2 p.m. This program will be held outside or be moved indoors if needed. Registration is required.



Village Department News

Public Works and Development Services

Permits

The Village recently implemented new permit software to help manage all building permits and contractor licenses. The software is called **LAMA** (short for **L**And **M**ANagement) and can be accessed at riverforest.onlama.com. It can also be accessed through the Village's website, at vrf.us/Permits. This software helps the Village maintain precise records of permit submittals and contractor licenses, and helps to ensure a more efficient review process. All applications can be made online 24/7 and applicable documentation can be uploaded at any time. Review correspondence is completed through the software to ensure direct communication with those parties closely tied to each submittal.



Fall Leaf Collection

The Village's annual 'Rake to the Street' leaf pick-up program, is unlimited and free, and runs from September 16 through December 4. Rake only leaves onto the street, leaving the curb exposed, where Village crews will collect them. Please don't mix grass clippings, brush or any other type of yard waste with your leaves (please advise your lawn care service). 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.

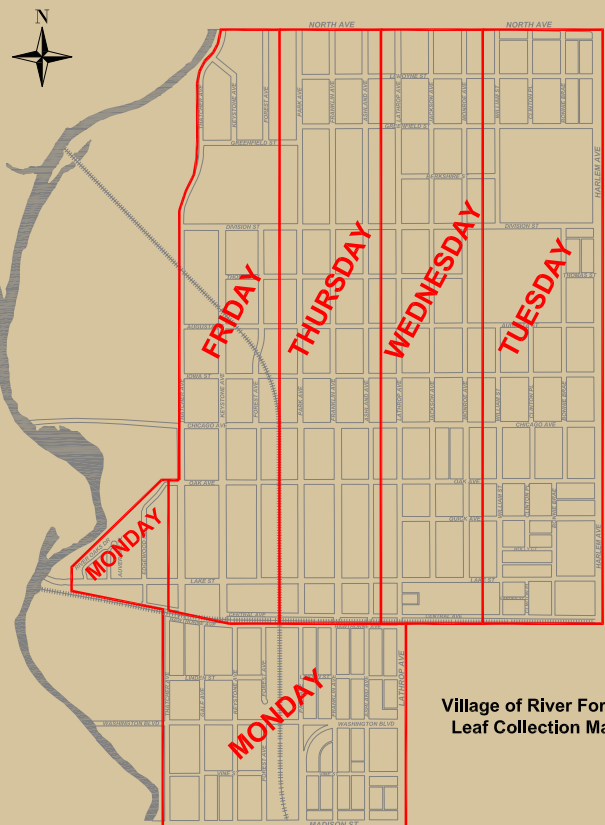


Building Codes

The purpose of building codes is to ensure that the built environment in River Forest is constructed in such a manner that protects the health, safety, and welfare of the public. Building codes can be traced back to 1772 BC, when Babylonian Emperor Hammurabi enacted the Code of Hammurabi, a portion of which regulated building construction. Since that time, building codes have evolved to cover all aspects of building construction including structures, electricity, plumbing, and more.



Throughout the region and the nation, model building codes have been developed and promulgated by the International Code Council (ICC) and updated periodically to take advantage of the most recent improvements in the building industry. Currently, the Village operates under the ICC Code Series, 2003 Edition and it is being proposed that the Village update and adopt the ICC 2018 Code Series. These changes would not take effect until January 1, 2022. For more information on the proposed code updates, visit vrf.us/CodeUpdate.



Village of River Forest Leaf Collection Map

Committee/ Commission Spotlight



Historic Preservation Commission

River Forest is a historic community committed to protecting, preserving and promoting its rich heritage. Structures in River Forest include historical styles such as Gothic Revival, Victorian, Prairie School, Tudor Revival, Bungalows, Buurma Built, Art Deco, and Moderne. Some of these homes were designed by architects such as Frank Lloyd Wright, William Drummond, Spencer and Powers, E.E. Roberts, and their contemporaries.

To help preserve its rich architectural heritage the Village formed a seven-member volunteer Historic Preservation Commission in 2009. The Commission acts as an advisory body to property owners who plan to demolish or modify the exterior of architecturally significant properties. The Commission also works to proactively preserve these significant properties by educating the community on the Village's historic and architectural heritage.

In 2013, just less than 300 properties in the Village were designated as being architecturally and/or historically significant. These properties are recognized for their contribution to the Village.

Visit vrf.us/HistoricPreservation to learn more about Historic Preservation in River Forest. There you can also [view videos](#) or even take a walk around town using a [brochure](#) made by the Commission.

Someone to Know

Historic Preservation Commission Chairperson Dave Franek was an original, founding member of the Historic Preservation Commission in 2009. Through two separate terms, Dave has served as Chairperson for the Commission for 10 years. The Wednesday Journal recognized Dave as its 2016 Villager of the Year. A native of New England, Dave and his wife Mary moved to River Forest in 1999 when they purchased a home that is now recognized as a significant property. Dave is now retired after working as a commercial real estate attorney for 38 years.

Chairperson Franek says that he has always taken an interest in history and architecture. He now spends time as a volunteer interpreter with both the Frank Lloyd Wright designed Unity Temple in Oak Park and with Wright Plus, an annual event sponsored by the Frank Lloyd Wright Trust. Dave takes pride in living in the River Forest community and serving the local historic preservation effort, noting that he feels the collection of residential architecture within River Forest and the surrounding Villages of Oak Park and Riverside is unmatched throughout the country.

Sustainable River Forest *Keeping River Forest Green!*

In 2019, the Village and School District 90 jointly sponsored a study to map the safest walking routes to each of our schools. A report was created, along with exhibits, showing safe routes to each elementary and middle school in the Village. Early in the school year is a great time for families to review safe routes from their home to their students' school. The maps were designed to ensure the safety of all pedestrians (including students) and bicyclists while traversing the Village. Additionally, walking or biking to school provides great benefits to the environment by avoiding car usage and engine idling during drop-off and pick-up.



To find the safest walking route to any given school or location, which includes the Community Center, Grace Lutheran, Lincoln, Roosevelt (from the north), Roosevelt (from the south), St Luke, St Vincent and Willard, visit the following link and click on the corresponding name: vrf.us/SafeRoutes. The map and legend for each location can help to identify the applicable route, which are identified with purple, arrowed lines. Please take particular note of recommended crossing points on each street also provided on the web page, which is also where you can view the full report.



Dave Franek

Organizations Serving River Forest



Township

Township Assessor

2nd installment property tax bills for Tax Year 2020 are now available on the Cook County Treasurer's website cookcountytreasurer.com. Residents should have received their bills in late August. The due date for payment is October 1, 2021.

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.

The Senior Home Repair Program Is Here!

The new North West Housing Partnership (NWHF) Senior Home Repair Program, is available to River Forest residents age 60+. In the first month, there were 39 requests for service, with 14 orders completed by handyman David, including three repeat customers. Fees are \$20-\$40 per hour, depending on income. Eligible work includes grab bar installation, hanging pictures and sink/faucet repair. Emergency repairs are not included. Contact Michelle at NWHF at **847-969-0561** or email michellehill@nwfp.net with questions or to set up an appointment.



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 and specially trained facilitators. Lunch is provided. Saturdays, 11:30 a.m.-1:30 p.m., 9/18, 10/2, 10/16, 11/6, 11/20, 12/4, 12/18, at Thrive Counseling Center, 120 S. Marion Street, Oak Park. \$10/session fee; scholarships available. For more information or to register, contact Laurie Johnson at **708-383-7500 x308** or ljohnson@thrivecc.org.

Sounds Good Choir Is Back!

The Oak Park/River Forest Sounds Good Choir resumes in-person this fall. Singers age 60+ are welcome; no audition is required. Registration opened August 2 and is recommended online at soundsgoodchoir.org. Proof of vaccination is required for all in-person singers. Rehearsals are Tuesdays, 9:30 - 11 a.m., at the Nineteenth Century Club, beginning September 7. For more information, visit the website or email info@soundsgoodchoir.org. Need-based scholarships are available to River Forest residents through the Township.

riverforesttownship.org - 708-366-2029 x11

Park District

River Forest Park District Autumn Registration

It's time for Autumn Registration at the Park District! To view the Autumn Fun Guide, visit rfparks.com. Check out the expanded selection of STEAM classes, upcoming special events, Platform Tennis Annual Passes, youth sports and more. The Park District hopes to see you and your family this fall!



Virtual Makin' Tracks 5K Walk Run with WSSRA

The River Forest Park District is hosting the 2021 Virtual Makin' Tracks 5k Walk/Run. Walk or run 3.1 miles anytime from Friday, 9/17-Sunday, 9/19, submit your miles, and receive a race shirt. All net proceeds benefit West Suburban Recreation Association (WSSRA) to provide superior recreation services for adults and children who have a physical impairment, developmental delay, a mental disability, or any other type of disability. [Click here](#) to register.

rfparks.com | 708-366-6660

Library

The New York Times - Digital Access Now Available

You can now access The New York Times (NYT) from your computer, tablet, or mobile device and read all the latest news, lifestyle articles, and international coverage - with no paywalls, compliments of the Library. Visit riverforestlibrary.org/digital to find instructions on how to enjoy the NYT online.

Sunday Hours are Back

The Library will once again be open on Sundays from 1 - 5 p.m., beginning Saturday, September 11.

riverforestlibrary.org | 708-366-5205

Organizations Serving River Forest



Oak Park and River Forest High School



Roosevelt Middle School



Willard Elementary School

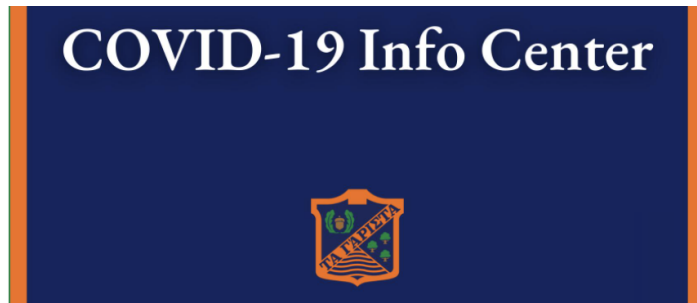


Lincoln Elementary School

District 200

Community Vaccination Is Essential for Schools

With the start of classes on August 16, Oak Park and River Forest High School welcomed all students into the building for the first time since March 2020. The learning environment isn't fully back to normal, however. All students and staff must wear masks, weekly saliva testing will be in place, and quarantining after close contact to COVID-19 cases is still necessary.



Returning to pre-pandemic conditions at the high school is going to require a community-wide effort. How can you help? The number one recommendation from the Centers for Disease Control is to get vaccinated against COVID-19. Vaccination is safe and effective, including against the highly contagious Delta variant, and it's free.

For 18 months, students have had only the options of remote or hybrid learning, and the toll that has taken is very real. To stem the tide of rising transmission rates and ensure that no one has to repeat that experience, District 200 urges all eligible residents to get fully vaccinated as soon as possible. Not sure where to go? Visit bit.ly/VaccinateOPRF for a list of ways to get vaccinated.

oprffhs.org | 708-383-0700

District 90



District 90 Safe School Reopening

Keeping District 90 Safe

The school district has instituted essential safety measures to keep District 90(D90) students, families, faculty and staff as safe as practical. Two key measures that may affect the entire community: All students, staff, and visitors must wear a face cover over the nose and mouth while inside District buildings. The mask-wearing mandate is required regardless of one's vaccination status and complies with the Governor's recent executive order. Additionally, all three D90 schools will refrain from holding any mass gatherings or large community events indoors or outdoors with children present, until at least November 1. At that time, the District will reassess the conditions regarding COVID-19 community transmission.

Days Off for District 90 Students

Students will have several days off from school during September. The entire District will be closed for the Labor Day holiday on Monday, September 6, and Thursday, September 16, is a non-attendance day for students. Dismissal will be early on Friday, September 25, with faculty and staff participating in professional development activities during the afternoon. For more information, contact your student(s)' school.

district90.org | 708-771-8282



Business Corner

Throughout September and October, the Oak Park River Forest Chamber of Commerce will be celebrating local businesses that make the community special. Join the celebration by spotlighting your favorite local business. Was there a business that adapted to the pandemic? A business that courageously opened their doors or went above and beyond curbside service? How about a local business that supported and celebrated front-line workers and first responders? What business did work towards social justice and/or creating community impacts beyond their goods/services? Visit https://form.jotform.com/DM_Burton/business-spotlight-soire, share your thoughts and support a local business today!



LemonAid

The 20th annual 9/11 Charity **LemonAid** Stand event will be held on Saturday, September 11 from 3 - 7 p.m. on the 700 Block of Bonnie Brae. After a virtual event in 2020, this year's event is back LIVE with lemonade, popcorn, a photo booth, cotton candy, music, games and more! The residents in this area have recognized the 9/11 anniversary by doing something good for the community, and 'turning lemons into lemonade.' Since its inception, more than \$400K has been raised for children's charities in the River Forest area. Visit 9-11lemonaid.com to learn more and donate.

Friends of the Children is a first-time LemonAid charity. They find kindergartners facing the greatest obstacles in Austin and North Lawndale and pair them with a salaried, professional mentor,

called a 'Friend'. These giving individuals commit to staying with the child, no matter what, for the next 12.5 years. Guests will have the opportunity to meet some of these outstanding Friends at this year's LemonAid.

The Children's Clinic of the Oak Park River Forest Infant Welfare Society was a 2009 LemonAid partner, and they're back with a huge mission! They are currently raising funds to open a 15,000 sq. ft. clinic to replace their current 4,000 sq. ft. space. This means greatly increasing the dental, medical and behavioral services to the more than 3,500 current children being served. See plans at LemonAid for the LemonAid Room in the new building.



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
Chief Kurt Bohlmann

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 8am – 4:30pm