

# RIVER FOREST

*Proud Heritage • Bright Future*

The Village of River Forest Newsletter | December, 2021



## 2021 Year in Review

As 2021 comes to a close, the Village of River Forest is grateful for the many volunteers, collaborative partners, and Staff that serve the community. Despite the challenges of COVID-19, the Village has much to celebrate.

In February and March, the Village partnered with Jewel Osco and School District 90 to vaccinate over 700 seniors against COVID-19. Through the entire pandemic, the Village has been proud to partner with agencies and resident volunteers to provide high levels of critical public health service. Special thanks to River Forest residents Helen Kwan and members of the Senior Response Team, as well as Mario Ferro and members of the River Forest Citizens Corps for volunteering their time to help others.

The biennial local election took place in April. Cathy Adduci was sworn in for her third term as Village President and Trustee Respicio Vasquez was sworn in for his second term. Trustees Lisa Gillis and Ken

Johnson, along with Village Clerk John Keller, were sworn in as the newest members of the Board.

The initial phase of the Village's **Bicycle Plan** was implemented in April of this year. The Plan connects bicyclists to trails and major destinations and promotes bicycle safety.

In May, the Village welcomed the Sheridan at River Forest, a senior assisted living community. This new development offers needed housing options so older residents can age in place while also helps stabilize property taxes by providing additional funding for schools and other vital community services.

The Village Board established the **Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Ad Hoc Advisory Group** to engage residents to remove barriers that prevent the participation, engagement and an equitable and welcoming environment for residents, business members, visitors, employees in the municipal services community, and

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# Village Board Trustees



## From Village President Cathy Adduci

I am pleased to announce that on Monday, December 6, 2021, I will formally recommend that the Village Board of Trustees confirm my appointment of Brian Murphy to the position of Village Administrator. The Village Administrator serves a very important role for our community as the chief administrative officer and head of the Village's professional staff. The position is responsible for implementing the vision and carrying out the direction of the Village Board of Trustees.

The Village Board and I contracted with GovHR USA, a professional and well-respected nation-wide recruitment agency that specializes in these recruitments. We were lucky to have many great applicants to choose from who fit our goal of finding a collaborative, transparent and highly-regarded professional with strong communication skills. We interviewed several top candidates before making our final selection.



Brian Murphy

Brian Murphy comes to River Forest with 28 years of local government experience. Brian started his career in Michigan before his most recent 12 year tenure as the Village Administrator of Plainfield, IL.

Also at our December 6 meeting, the Village Board of Trustees will hold a planning session to discuss our strategic goals and priorities, as well as the tactics that will see them through. Taking steps like these are important in ensuring that everything we do is in service of our guiding principles:

- Providing a safe community.
- Making decisions that protect our property values.
- Working to stabilize property taxes.

The new Village Administrator will work hand-in-hand with the Board to ensure that the Village works to meet our goals so that we can continue to grow and improve as a community.

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

## 2021 Year in Review

continued from front page

civic engagement; and, in doing so, build trust amongst all parties.

The Village began working on a [Stormwater Master Plan](#), implemented [online building permit software](#), and created [lead service line replacement](#) and [sewer lateral repair](#) subsidy programs. The Public Works and Building Departments were also reorganized to streamline services.

2021 has been an excellent year for River Forest and it is not done yet. In December, the Village will welcome a new Village Administrator. See the Village President's letter on page 2 for more.



## Holiday Shopping Tips

The River Forest Police Department wants to remind online shoppers that in 2019, the [FBI's Internet Crime Complaint Center](#) got an average of 1,300 online theft complaints a day with a total of \$3.5 billion in losses to individuals and businesses. More and more common are complaints that goods purchased online are never received or stolen shortly after they are delivered. For additional online shopping safety tips, [click here](#) for information from the US Cybersecurity & Infrastructure Security Agency.

### Quick Tips to Avoid Package Theft:

1. Opt for curbside pickup at a local store or have packages delivered to your workplace.
2. Install security cameras near delivery areas.
3. Reroute or reschedule deliveries to fit your schedule.
4. Ask a neighbor to keep an eye out for deliveries (offer them the same courtesy).
5. Add delivery instructions to your order to place them somewhere more discreet.

### Quick Tips to Avoid Online Shopping Fraud:

1. Deal with reputable online retailers and beware of deals that are too good to be true.
2. Don't browse or shop using public Wi-Fi connections.
3. Use strong passwords and do not duplicate passwords for multiple accounts.
4. Avoid using debit cards to shop online. Credit cards are safer and do not have direct access to cash in your account.
5. Don't fall for email scams. Always verify the actual email address of the sender.



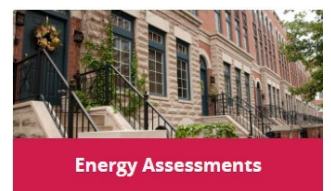
## Leaf Collection Ends December 10

The Village's annual "Rake to the Street" leaf pick-up program will conclude on Friday, December 10. When raking your leaves, ensure you rake 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 7:00 a.m. Please coordinate your lawn maintenance according to the [leaf collection schedule](#).



## ComEd Offering Energy Assessments

ComEd is providing residents free home energy assessments. A ComEd Energy Advisor will visit your residence and examine your heating system (e.g., furnace or boiler), cooling system (air conditioner), water heater, and appliances. After the assessment, the Energy Advisor will then provide you with personalized recommendations identifying additional ways to save energy and lower your monthly bill. For more information on the home energy assessment visit, [click here](#) or visit [comed.com/WaysToSave](https://www.comed.com/WaysToSave).





# Village Department News

## Fire Department



### Fire Safety for the Season

The holiday season is a time for family and friends to gather, but can often include traditions that present a greater risk of fire. Here are some tips to consider to stay safe this holiday season.

When purchasing an artificial tree, look for the label "Fire Resistant." Although this label does not mean the tree won't catch fire, it does indicate the tree will resist burning and should extinguish quickly. When purchasing a live tree, check for freshness. A fresh tree is green; needles are hard to pull from branches, and when bent between your fingers, needles do not break. The trunk butt of a fresh tree is sticky with resin, and when tapped on the ground, the tree should not lose many needles.

Choose flame-resistant or flame-retardant decorations, replace any string of lights with worn or broken cords or loose bulb connections, and read the manufacturer's instructions for the number of light strands to connect. Turn off all light strings and decorations before leaving home or going to bed.



Keep matches and lighters up high in a locked cabinet, keep lit candles away from decorations and other things that can burn, blow out lit candles when leaving the room or going to bed, and ensure that children and pets stay away from lit candles.

For more holiday fire prevention tips, [click here](#)

## Prepare Your House for Cold Weather

As we head into colder weather, it is important to make sure that your house is prepared to withstand the extreme temperatures that typically occur during the winter months. The cold weather, ice and snow can cause substantial damage to a home unless the proper efforts are made before sustained cold weather sets in. Here are some tips to prevent damage from occurring:

### Window Drafts

Winter drafts can drive energy bills sky high if not addressed in a timely manner. By reducing air drafts, you can lower your home's energy costs by up to 20% per year. There are many products available for this purpose such as shrink film, temporary caulking and various weather stripping products.



### Ice Dams

Clogged rain gutters or downspouts can lead to ice dams which may damage roofing and could lead to leaking in interior spaces. Making sure gutters and downspouts are clear and able to flow water away from the home in an appropriate manner can be critical to preventing these issues.

### Frozen Pipes (Exterior)

Many homeowners don't realize that hose bibs are susceptible to freezing as they may be holding water at a location that is exposed to sub-freezing temperatures. Freezing water in a hose bib can rupture piping and can lead to excessive water leaks inside or outside the home. The best way to prevent this is to disconnect and store hoses for the winter and to close off and drain hose bib lines if possible. There are also products available to insulate a hose bib if the line cannot be drained.

### Frozen Pipes (Interior)

If your interior pipes and/or faucets are located on an exterior wall that is not properly insulated, they may be at risk of freezing during extended periods of extreme cold. Oftentimes, opening cabinets (e.g. under a sink) may allow more heat into the area and can prevent freezing. Allowing faucets to "slow drip" can also prevent freezing due to the constantly moving water, though this should only be exercised during extreme events to minimize excessive water usage.



# Committee/ Commission Spotlight



## Plan Commission

The function of the **Plan Commission** is to oversee the adoption and maintenance of the Village's **Comprehensive Plan** that articulates the Village's general land use policies. The Plan Commission can also provide recommendations to the Village Board regarding a variety of land use and planning issues. The Commission 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.

The River Forest Comprehensive Plan sets forth long-range recommendations for the maintenance and enhancement of the community and for desirable improvements, developments, and redevelopment in selected locations. The Plan is River Forest's official policy guide for land use and development. It considers not only the immediate needs and concerns of the community, but also projects improvement and development 15 to 20 years in the future. The Comprehensive Plan provides guidelines by which the Plan Commission, Development Review Board, and Village Board can review and evaluate private development proposals. In 2017, the Village began the extensive process of updating the Comprehensive Plan, which was approved in 2019. To learn more, [click here](#).

## Someone to Know

**P**lan Commission Chair David Crosby has served the Village through his role on the Commission as a member since 2014, and as Chair since 2019. He also serves as a member of the Development Review Board which is made up of four Plan Commission and three Zoning Board of Appeals members. David is an architect by trade and established David Crosby Architects in 2003 as a design firm dedicated to the practice of architecture and interior design. He is also an Adjunct Interior Design faculty member at College of DuPage.

David has been a resident of River Forest for nine years. When David and his wife decided to move out of the city, they thought they wanted to live in Oak Park and rented an apartment over Trader Joes while they were looking for a house. While there, David found that he kept turning toward River Forest when walking his dog. David says they fell in love with the sense of calm in River Forest and truly love all of the outdoor space for their three children and two dogs.

David says that it is an honor to be a part of the community-driven process of the Plan Commission and that he enjoys listening to and incorporating multiple viewpoints into our future plans. He and his family volunteer by fostering dogs with Wright Way Rescue. You may see him around town or running through the forest preserve with his dog Flo!



**David Crosby**

# Snow Reminders

**A**s winter arrives, residents are reminded of the following regulations to ensure River Forest streets and sidewalks are passable after snow events:

- No parking on Village streets for 8 hours following a snowfall of 2 inches or more.
- Residents and business owners must remove snow and ice from sidewalks in front of and adjacent to their property within 24 hours after an event.
- Snow or ice frozen on sidewalks that cannot be removed without injury to the pavement should be treated with an abrasive material until weather permits further clean-up.
- Snow removal contractors are prohibited from using snow blowers between the hours of 1 a.m. and 5 a.m.
- The placement of snow or ice on any Village owned street, alley or sidewalk is prohibited.



Residents are encouraged to deposit snow onto parkways (instead of in the street) to help prevent driveway aprons from being covered as plows pass. The River Forest Fire Department asks residents to assist in keeping hydrants clear of snow, which makes them easier to locate in emergencies.

Visit [www.vrf.us/Snow](http://www.vrf.us/Snow) for safety tips about gas venting, winter driving, shoveling and snow blowers.



# Organizations Serving River Forest



## Township



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

### Seeking members for the Youth Services Committee and the Mental Health Committee

River Forest Township is looking for two volunteer residents, one to serve on the Township Youth Services Committee (meets most 1st Wednesdays, 6 pm), the other to serve on the Mental Health Committee (meets most 1st Tuesdays, 6:30 pm). These Committees play a strong advisory role in Township programs and funding related to youth or mental health/developmental disabilities. Experience with youth or in the mental health/disabilities field is helpful but not required. For more info, contact Supervisor Carla Sloan, [supervisor@riverforesttownship.org](mailto:supervisor@riverforesttownship.org) or 708-366-2029 x11.



### Did you know...

Both River Forest and Oak Park Townships loan gently used medical equipment to residents free of charge, such as wheelchairs, walkers, and shower chairs. Available for pickup at Oak Park Township, 105 S. Oak Park Avenue, Oak Park. Donations are also welcome. Call 708-383-8005 to determine specific equipment availability or arrange a donation drop off.

Temporary Handicapped Parking placards are available at River Forest Township, 8020 Madison Street (located at the River Forest Community Center) or River Forest Village Hall, 400 Park Avenue. Good for up to 90 days. Residents must bring IL form VSD62 signed by a physician; [click here](#) to obtain a copy of the form.



[riverforesttownship.org](http://riverforesttownship.org) - 708-366-2029 x11

## Park District



# River Forest Park District

### The Park District Winter Guide is Here!

The Park District is gearing up for another winter season full of activities! This winter season, the Park District offers a wide selection of programs and activities to suit your interests. Whether your interests are in learning musical instruments, new dance styles, participating in rec basketball games, or STEM activities, the Park District has programs and activities for you!

Registration for winter programs begins on December 6 for residents and December 20 for non residents. [Click here](#) to view the programs and activities offered this winter season.

[rfparks.com](http://rfparks.com) | 708-366-6660

## Library

Visit the [library website](#) to see everything that is happening at your Library. Please note our upcoming closure dates: 12/24, 12/25, 12/26 and New Year's Day.

Kids and teens, take advantage of some boredom busters at your library for those chilly days during winter break. Kids ages 3-10 years can pick up a winter break bored bag of fun crafts and activities to do at home. Pick up at the library between December 17-22. Bags that are not picked up will be given away on 12/23. **Registration required.**

Tweens, why not sign up for a [gingerbread house](#) that you can take home to work on, or register for a Tween Library in a box? Each box contains a book hand-picked to match your reading preferences, and a bunch of themed goodies. The book and goodies are yours to keep, just return the box. Register now: [grades 5-8](#), [grades 8-12](#).

Adults are invited to join us on **Sunday, December 12 at 2 PM, for Edith Head: The Woman Who Dressed Hollywood.** With the always popular, educational entertainer Martina Mathisen, you will discover why Edith Head was the most influential costume designer in Hollywood history. Brought to you in partnership with River Forest Township.



[riverforestlibrary.org](http://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

Save the Date! Monday, January 10, 5 - 7 p.m.

### Imagine OPRF Project 1 Ribbon Cutting & Tours



Celebrate with OPRF High School as we unveil the most extensive renovations to our campus since the 1960s! The first project of the multi-phase Imagine OPRF facilities plan, this stage has focused on creating a secure central hub of student spaces, where they can study, collaborate, and socialize.

This is an outcome of the community-engagement phase of creating Imagine OPRF, when students shared that they want to spend more time in the building, especially before and after school. Having spaces such as the library and tutoring center scattered throughout the million-square-foot campus has made that difficult.

Community members will be able to tour the three-story addition that comprises the revamped South Cafeteria and new Student Resource Center, an expanded Student Commons and Balcony that already are proving to be well used by students, and a truly welcoming Welcome Center. We hope you'll join us on January 10!

[oprfs.org](http://oprfs.org) | 708-383-0700

## District 90

### District 90 Closed for Winter Break

District 90 will close for winter break starting on Monday, December 20, 2021, with classes resuming on Monday, January 3, 2022. The Administration Offices will be open on Monday, December 20 through Wednesday, December 22, with limited hours of operation from 8 a.m. – 3 p.m.



### Inclusion Preschool Lottery is Open

The lottery for the District 90 Inclusion Preschool for the 2022-2023 school year is available online until **December 3, 2021, at 11:59 p.m.** Students selected by the lottery will be invited to attend D90's Inclusion Preschool Program located at Willard School for the 2022-2023 school year. **If you know a family with a preschool child, please share this information with them.** Lottery results will be emailed to applicants by January 19, 2022.

Applicants can access our online lottery application by visiting the **2022 – 2023 ONLINE LOTTERY APPLICATION** until **December 3, 2021.**



[district90.org](http://district90.org) | 708-771-8282



Pictured: River Forest Chocolates

## Business Corner

**T**rade in the hustle and bustle of over-packed malls for a relaxing shopping experience at River Forest small businesses!

Small businesses invest back into the community by using local vendors, employing local people, and keeping their profits close to home instead of shipping them elsewhere. Local, small businesses also generate revenue that supports services such as funding the school district, emergency management services, and infrastructure projects in the Village.

River Forest small businesses offer unique, one-of-a-kind products with a local flavor. If you are unhappy with the lack of service at many big, national chain stores, you will be pleasantly surprised at the personal attention you get by shopping at the Village's small businesses.

If you shop locally in River Forest instead of traveling elsewhere to spend your money, you are not just supporting our businesses; you are supporting River Forest!

The Chamber offers digital community gift cards redeemable at Oak Park-River Forest area businesses. [Click here](#) to purchase a gift card and support a local business!

Are you looking for more businesses? Visit the Oak Park-River Forest Chamber [website](#) for a listing of businesses in the area.



# Sustainability

*This piece is guest written by Charlotte Meyer, a River Forest Sustainability Commission Student Commissioner and Oak Park River Forest High School student. Visit [vrf.us/Sustainability](http://vrf.us/Sustainability) to learn more about the Commission's goals and programs you can participate in to help create a more sustainable environment.*

**T**his November, I was honored to be sponsored by Chicago-area sustainability nonprofit Seven Generations Ahead to attend the UN Climate Change Conference in Glasgow, Scotland. The conference, also known as COP26, or the 26th Conference of Parties, brought together delegates from around the world to represent their countries in climate change negotiations, and I was there as an observer to take in all the information I could, and bring what I learned back home.

The most impactful part of my experience was meeting people from around the world, each with their own stories about how the climate crisis had affected their lives and countries. I met activists from Germany who fought to save German villages from being displaced by coal mines. I met a teenage activist from the Cayman Islands who mourned the death of the coral reef she swam in as a kid. I met a delegate from Tonga, a small island country east of Australia, who was working to protect his country from floods that could wipe his island away. Meeting these people and hearing their stories gave me a deeper personal perspective on the urgency of climate change.

I hoped I would see countries make ambitious pledges to reduce their greenhouse gas emissions, and the conference did get off to a good start: by the fourth day, an impressive amount of countries had signed pledges to end illegal deforestation and reduce methane emissions. However, the final treaty made, known as the Glasgow Climate Pact, is predicted to allow the planet to heat up

more than 2°C by 2100, which is enough to make the effects of the climate crisis irreversible.

While finding this out was disheartening, I learned that the climate crisis is too urgent to let disappointment stop you from acting. It's currently harming people around the world, including here in Illinois -- more destructive floods have started becoming more common in southern Illinois, bringing devastation to crops and their farmers. I am determined to use the knowledge and perspective I've gained overseas to help further River Forest's efforts to combat climate change.



Charlotte Meyer Pictured here in Glasgow



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.