

RIVER FOREST

Proud Heritage • Bright Future

The Village of River Forest Newsletter | February, 2024



Get the Lead Out

The Village is working to identify all lead service lines within the Village as part of a commitment to meet the requirements of the Illinois Lead Service Line Replacement and Notification Act. In response to these requirements, the Village began gathering information and taking all steps necessary to identify lead water services throughout the community. However, there is still a substantial amount of information that needs to be acquired in order to understand the full extent of

lead water services within River Forest.

The Village needs your help in identifying your water service material. To determine how water is delivered to your home from the water main, please take a few pictures and upload them [here](#). Thank you for assisting us in this endeavor. More information on this project can be found [here](#).

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Copper Piping Example



Galvanized Piping Example



Lead Piping Example



From Village President Cathy Adduci

Dear River Forest residents,

This coming Tuesday, February 6 is Safer Internet Day. Our Police Department has teamed up with the Cook County Internet Crimes Against Children Task Force to lead the way in Cyber Safety, as well as to help educate parents, caregivers, and teachers about safe internet practices that protect the health, safety, and welfare of all residents, but especially our children. Internet crimes against young people can absolutely be minimized through education and proactive discussions. For more information on internet safety, please click [here](#).

I'd like to congratulate Boy Scout Troop 66 on their 90th anniversary this year! The Troop was established in 1934 at Grace Lutheran Church and School, and has stood for leadership, resilience, and service – as it has helped to shape the lives of countless young men over the last nine decades. The Boy Scouts' annual Joining Night is Thursday, February 22, 2024 at 7:30pm at **Grace Lutheran Church and School**. All boys 11 years old, or who are 10 years old and have completed 5th grade, are welcome to attend with their parents or caregivers. For any questions, please **send them an email**.

This February, we also observe Black History Month, a time to recognize the contributions Black Americans have made to our community and our country. The Village Board will be approving a proclamation at its next Village Board meeting to celebrate Black History Month throughout River Forest.

And lastly, for those looking for the perfect Valentine's Day present, I encourage you to shop local and to support our small businesses if you are picking something up for the sweetheart in your life.

Sincerely,

Cathy Adduci, Village President
Village of River Forest



Village Board Trustees



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



Library Events

Public Library Foundation Hosts "After Hours for Booklovers" Event

This event will take place Friday, February 23 from 7-9 p.m. and **RSVPs** are requested. You can find your next favorite read at this event! Rebecca Vnuk, book reviewer and editor, will be sharing Top Reads as selected by library staff nationwide. There is a recommended donation of \$25 to benefit the Library Foundation. Bring your Book Group and make it a fun evening out! Non-alcoholic drinks and light snacks will be served. Wine will be available for purchase.



The new SWAN Library App is here!

Residents can manage their account, request titles and more. The new SWAN Libraries + app is free to all patrons and is now available for iOS and Android. If you are using the old version of the app, please delete and reinstall this new app. The old app will not include your most recent account information and other features. [Download](#) the app today!



There are limited timeslots available and spaces are filling up [register today!](#)

Eggstravaganza! **VIP BUNNY EXPERIENCE**

SATURDAY, MARCH 30 • TIMESLOTS START AT 9 AM

THE DEPOT • \$20 PER CHILD

Ages 1-12 • River Forest Residents only • Registration Required

Village Department News

Police Department



SAFER INTERNET DAY | Feb 6th, 2024

February 6th is Safer Internet Day, but Online Safety is important every single day. Cyber Safety begins with taking responsibility for our actions and thinking about what we share and who we interact with online.

Internet crimes against children can be minimized and quickly addressed with education, proactive discussions with youth and a better understanding of how easily and frequently children are exposed to online predators.

The River Forest Police Department is teaming up with the Cook County Internet Crimes Against Children Task Force to lead the fight in Cyber Safety.

Solving online victimization of children cannot rely solely on law enforcement. It is vital parents, children and care providers are educated and empowered to fight against online predators.

Additional resources:

ICACTask Force | www.icactaskforce.org/internetsafety

Net Smartz Kids | www.netsmartzkids.org

Sexting Tips for Parents and Youth | <https://icactaskforce.org/resource/RS00048309>

For more information, please contact Officer Megan Drake at 708-366-7125 or email mdrake@vrf.us.

Fire Department

National Burn Awareness Week

Approximately every 60 seconds, someone in the U.S. sustains a burn injury that is serious enough to require treatment. These injuries can range from minor to life-threatening, and are particularly hazardous for children and the elderly, who are more vulnerable to serious complications. Unfortunately, many burn injury survivors will sustain serious injuries, leaving lasting physical and emotional scars.

Recognizing the seriousness of this issue, February 4-10 is **National Burn Awareness Week**. This time of year is dedicated to raising awareness about burn dangers and prevention, with a goal to reduce the burn injuries and the associated risks.

The theme this year is, "Flammable Liquids Burn." These liquids, such as gasoline, pose a significant fire risk - and safe handling is crucial to prevent tragedies. Please remember to:

- Always store gasoline in a well-ventilated area away from the house and not inside your home.
- Use only approved containers for storage.
- When handling any flammable liquids, stay far away from any heat sources, sparks, or open flames, and do not ever use gasoline to start or accelerate a fire.

Other Safety Precautions:

- Test hot liquids and keep them away from the edges of counters.
- Don't cook while holding a child.
- Wear protective gear when handling chemicals.
- Follow work safety guidelines when using equipment.
- Don't use electrical appliances near water.

Home Heating Safety

Home heating is the second leading cause of fires in the U.S. and it's that time of year when people use space heaters and other sources to warm up their homes. To reduce the risk of heating-related fires, the Fire Department recommends the following steps:

- All heaters need space. Keep children, pets and things that can burn (paper, matches, bedding, furniture, clothing, carpets, and rugs) at least three feet away from heating equipment.
- If you must use a space heater, place it on a level, hard and nonflammable surface (such as ceramic tile floor), not on rugs, carpets or near bedding or drapes.
- Plug power cords directly into outlets – never into an extension cord.
- Never leave a fire in the fireplace unattended and use a glass or metal fire screen to keep fire and embers in the fireplace.
- Never use a cooking range or oven to heat your home.
- Turn off portable space heaters every time you leave the room or go to sleep.

Winter Travel Safety

Stay off the road if possible during severe weather. If you must drive in it, remember to follow these tips:

- Make sure everyone has their seat belts on and give your full attention to the road.
- Don't follow other vehicles too closely. Sudden stops are difficult to make on snowy roads.
- Don't use cruise control when driving in winter weather.
- Don't pass snow plows.



Sledding Safety

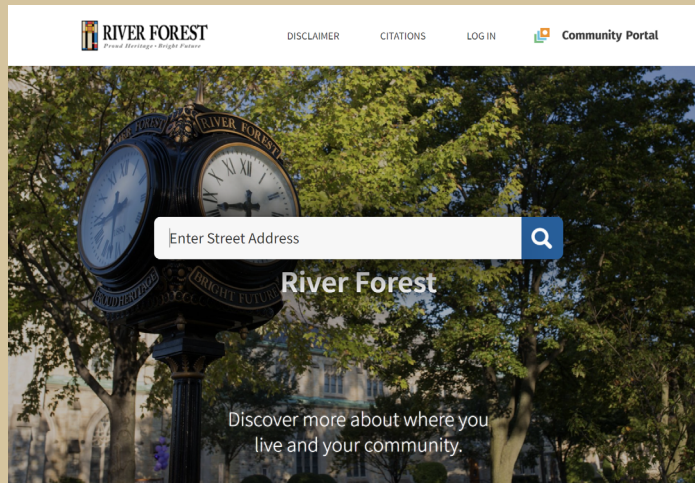
Awareness of one's surroundings and adherence to safety guidelines does not take away from the thrill of sledding, but a trip to the hospital most likely will. Please be careful out there and follow the below safety tips:

- Make sure all sledders wear a helmet – sledding injuries often include skull fractures
- Make sure all equipment is in good condition, free of sharp edges and cracks.
- Check slopes for bare spots, holes or obstructions, such as fences, rocks, poles or trees.
- Don't sled on or around frozen lakes, streams or ponds.

For more safety tips and information, call the Fire Prevention Bureau at 708-714-3562.

Village Department News

Public Works



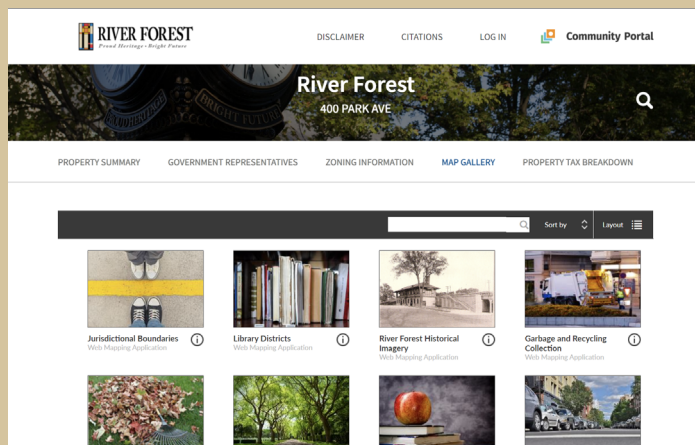
Community Portal/GIS

Have you ever wondered what your zoning district is in River Forest, who your elected representatives are, how your tax dollars are allocated or find records on services on public utilities? This information and more can be found on the Village website through a tool called **Community Portal**. You can visit his portal via the Village website by entering your address in the "Find your property" search bar or by clicking [here](#). The Portal is separated into the following categories:

- Property Summary
- Government Representatives
- Zoning Information
- Map Gallery
- Property Tax Breakdown

Through the links provided in each category, you can find helpful information such as your property's Parcel Identification Number, your State and Federal Representatives, community maps, and a breakdown of your annual tax bill.

This data is made available through the Village's GIS (Geographic Information Systems) software. GIS is a system that creates, manages, and analyzes data, while connecting it all to an interactive map. Assets such as public utilities (sewer, water main, street lights, parkway trees and more.) can all be represented in geographic space. Information - such as repair and maintenance records and photos, can also be stored. Additional information, such as parking restrictions, aerial imagery, and zoning districts are also included, allowing Village Staff to analyze a vast amount of data in an efficient and organized way.



Sustainability



Conserve Energy When Dishwashing

Do you "clean" your dishes before putting them in the dishwasher? If so, then you are wasting water and the energy it takes to heat the water. Modern dishwashers do a great job, particularly in combination with today's detergents. The enzymes in detergents dissolve food thoroughly, so just scrape off any bigger pieces of food on dishes. Be sure to clean out the trap in your dishwasher periodically for best performance. If you feel you must pre-rinse, use your dishwasher's pre-rinse cycle, which is more efficient than manually rinsing. Just make sure your dishwasher detergent contains enzymes, including, amylase, subtilisin, or generic "enzymes" - and you're good to go!

Be sure also to use the shortest washing cycle that gets your dishes clean. Many dishwashers have "fast" or "eco" cycles. Cleaning out the filter on your dishwasher frequently will help the system run most efficiently.

Dishwashers can also be replaced with a pair of "dishwasher drawers" for more flexibility. The two drawers take up the same space as one conventional dishwasher and provide a convenience so you can use a single drawer for a small load - or both drawers for a larger load. Another advantage of drawers is that you can use two different settings - for example, one setting for the delicate items and another for the heavy-duty load. Residents who use less dishes on a regular basis might want to consider a single dishwasher drawer and use the extra space for additional storage.

Business Spotlight



Braids by Quita

Braids by Quita is open Tuesday-Saturday from 7 a.m. - 7 p.m. They specialize in crochets, braids, locs and natural hairstyles. For pricing or to make an appointment, call 708-522-1451 or click [here](#).

If you have a business located in River Forest with a valid business license, it can be featured in the Village's business spotlight. Send an email to share your information. Visit the [Shop River Forest](#) web page on the Village's website for a list of businesses in the Village.

Organizations Serving River Forest



Township

To learn more about Township programs and services, visit RiverForestTownship.org, the River Forest community calendar at rfhappenings.com, or email Supervisor Carla Sloan at supervisor@riverforesttownship.org.

Townships of Illinois (TOI) Scholarships

Each year, the Townships of Illinois (TOI) organization awards several \$2,000 college scholarships to high school seniors planning to attend a full-time college/university in Illinois. Applicants must be U.S. citizens and residents of Illinois. Demonstrated leadership, civic responsibility, social consciousness and/or community service are also required. The applications can be found [here](#), and the deadline to apply is March 1. Contact Supervisor Carla Sloan at cb Sloan.rf township@gmail.com or 708-366-2029 x11 if you are interested.

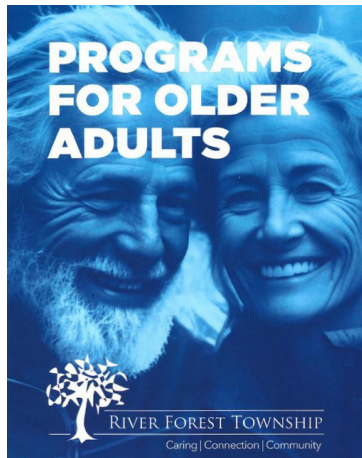


TOI 2024 Scholarship Application is open!



Informational Flyers Mailed to all Village Residents

The Township's new information flyer for older adults was mailed to all River Forest residents and businesses in January. This mailing contained important info about the many programs and services in River Forest and Oak Park for seniors, including the Home Repair, HomeSharing, and Active Adult Programs. Please keep the flyer handy in case you, or someone you know, needs this information. If you didn't receive one or need additional copies, please email Betsy Kelly at bkelly.rf township@gmail.com or call 708-366-2029 x13.



First Installment Tax Bills Due March 1

The 1st installment tax bills are 55% of the previous year's total and any exemptions residents qualify for are only reflected on the 2nd installment tax bill. Tax bills can be paid at any of the Chase Bank locations, the Cook County Treasurer's Office at 118 N. Clark Street in Chicago, or online at CookCountyTreasurer.com. Exemption booklets will be mailed by the Cook County Assessor when they are available.

To sign up for e-mail notifications from the River Forest Township Assessor regarding matters concerning your property, follow [this link](#) and select **Township Assessor Updates**.

riverforesttownship.org - 708-366-2029 x11

Park District

Garden Slot Registration is Coming Soon!

The River Forest Park District and the Village are offering residents the opportunity to rent 4' x 10' garden plots for the purpose of a vegetable garden. Registration for a single garden plot will open on Monday, February 26. Registrations are only being accepted at The Depot (online registration is not available), 401 Thatcher Avenue. Hours are Monday-Friday from 8:30am-4:30 p.m. Participants are required to complete a registration form, sign a waiver, and make full payment before being assigned a garden plot. An ID and a copy of water bills are required for proof of residency.



rfparks.com | 708-366-6660

Library

Upcoming Events

Visit the [Library's Calendar](#) to see everything that's happening with events and activities for all ages. Below are some highlights:

For Adults

Sunday, 2/4, 2-3:30 p.m., Hidden Messages in Negro Spirituals on the Underground Railroad: Connie Martin, teacher and Illinois Road Scholar, helps the Library commemorate Black History Month with this presentation on the powerful and sacred songs of enslaved Africans. Join Connie as she explains how these Negro spirituals were not only expressions of the hope to be free, but actually contained hidden messages to help enslaved fugitives find freedom. Brought to you in partnership with River Forest Township.

Sunday, 2/18, 2-3:30 p.m., Biomimicry: Looking to Nature to Solve Today's Problems: Naturalist Kim White, with live animals in tow, joins the Library for a talk on how the natural world has helped solve human problems. How did a Kingfisher improve a high-speed train? How has a gecko helped astronauts? How do hedgehogs reduce the chances of concussion? These examples and many more will be discussed. Brought to you in partnership with River Forest Township.

Wednesdays on 2/7, 2/21, 1-2:30 p.m., Great Decisions Adult: Come talk about the most pressing international issues of our time in this eight-part discussion series from the Foreign Policy Association. In each session, attendees will watch a recorded video lecture and then discuss the topic as a group. Readings for each session will be available at the library two weeks in advance.

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 90

Kindergarten Information Night

All River Forest families with children who will start Kindergarten in August of this year are invited to attend Kindergarten Information Night on Thursday, February 8 at 6:30 pm, happening simultaneously at both Lincoln Elementary, 511 Park Avenue, and Willard Elementary, 1250 Ashland Avenue.

This event is for all parents and caregivers with children who will be five years old, on or before September 1 (2024). The program includes an overview of the Kindergarten experience in District 90 schools, a tour, and a chance to meet school leaders and ask questions. Participants will also learn about how to register their children.



Kindergarten Information Night

6:30 PM Thursday Feb 8
at Lincoln and Willard Schools

D90 Schools Selected among the Best Public Schools in the State by US News and World Report

All three River Forest schools were selected as one of the best public schools in the state of Illinois by US News and World Report. The selection is based on state proficiency tests and individual school performance.



Out of 2,582 public elementary schools in the state, Lincoln and Willard were ranked #50 and #101. Among public middle schools in the state, Roosevelt was ranked #50.

The methodology is based upon state assessments of students who were proficient or above proficient in mathematics and reading/language arts while accounting for student backgrounds, achievement in core subjects, and how well schools are educating their students. Student-teacher ratios are applied to break ties in the overall score. The determinations are based on publicly available data from the U.S. Department of Education. Learn more at [U.S. News and World Report](https://www.usnews.com).

district90.org | 708-771-8282

District 200

OPRFHS Needs YOUR help to log 150,000 Hours by June 30!



Do you volunteer? Be sure to log your hours for the Sesquicentennial Challenge!

Organizing a clothing drive for Ukraine...creating handmade cards for hospital-bound children...distributing winter essentials in Englewood...creating a garden for the spinal cord unit at Hines Hospital...rescuing injured birds...and more! These are just some of the ways that Oak Park River Forest High School (OPRFHS) Huskies across the country - as well as local community members - have volunteered their time during the past six months, and then logged their hours toward the OPRFHS Sesquicentennial Challenge!

The challenge is a year-long effort to accrue 150,000 hours of volunteer service in honor of the high school's 150th anniversary - the Sesquicentennial - which is this year. As of mid-January, 38,339 hours, - or 26% of the goal - has been logged. Help OPRFHS to meet this goal!

Whether you're a current/former/future Huskie student, alum, employee, retiree, relative or simply a member of the local community, your service hours count, no matter your cause, as long as they were/ae completed between July 1, 2023, and June 30, 2024. Just complete the quick form on the OPRFHS website at OPRFHS.org/OPRF150. If you want to feel inspired to join the challenge, visit the OPRFHS YouTube channel at bit.ly/OPRFchallenge to see the one-minute "I Want to Serve" video students helped create, featuring some famous OPRF alums.

OPRFHS wants everyone to join together and demonstrate a true impact on communities, states, nations, and the world through a magnificent milestone of community service!

Save the Date!

On Sunday, May 19 from 1-4 p.m. OPRFHS will commemorate the Sesquicentennial Year with a Huskie Pride Community Picnic, featuring alumni band the Jade 50's. Stay tuned for more details!

oprfrhs.org | 708-383-0700

Be Cautious of Retail Energy Suppliers



Many residents may have received mailers from retail energy providers, such as Clean Choice Energy, encouraging recipients to enroll in their program. Please be aware that these programs are not endorsed by the Village of River Forest. The only Village-endorsed programs are the Electric Aggregation Program and Community Solar Program, and both of these are administered by MC Squared Energy. Please be aware that retail energy suppliers often charge higher electricity rates than the standard ComEd rate. Representatives from the Village or MC Squared Energy will not solicit door-to-door, or by telephone. Any solicitor who comes to your door or calls and asks you to switch to a supplier is not associated with the Village, MC Squared, or ComEd.

The Electric Aggregation Program is an opt-out program and does not require any action for enrollment. MC Squared automatically processes resident enrollment and acquires Renewable Energy Credits on behalf of the Village. Residents pay the same rate as the published monthly ComEd rate (and always will), and there are no enrollment fees or early

termination fees. Billing and service remains the same as residents continue to receive a monthly ComEd invoice. If the Village decides to end the program, all accounts served by MC Squared will be returned to ComEd service. Learn more about the Village's electric aggregation program [here](#).

The Community Solar Program is a voluntary subscription program where subscribers receive net metering credits on the supply portion of their electricity bill and support the development of new renewable energy resources without needing to install equipment on their property. Only MC Squared and their partner company, NexAmp, are authorized to offer these subscriptions to residents. After enrolling, MC Squared bills for 90% of the net metering credits to your credit card as the community solar subscription fees, saving residents 10%. Delivery and other charges separate from electricity supply remain the same on your ComEd bill. Learn more about the Village's community solar program [here](#).



Follow the Village on Social Media



Sign Up For Email and Alerts



River Forest Events



Village Contact Information

Village Administration
708-714-3563

Village Administrator
Matt Walsh

Finance Department
708-714-3524

Director Rosemary McAdams

Fire Department
708-714-3560
Chief Tom Gaertner

Public Works and
Development Services
708-714-3551

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.