

RIVER FOREST

Proud Heritage • Bright Future

The Village of River Forest Newsletter | July, 2022



Cross-Community Climate Collaborative

Last week, the Village participated in a Memorandum of Understanding signing with the Villages of Broadview and Oak Park for the Cross-Community Climate Collaborative (C4). The goal of C4 is to share sustainability strategies and reduce current greenhouse gas emissions by 45% through 2030. C4 further hopes to reach 100% reduction by 2050, in accordance with science-based recommendations.

Additional goals for C4 include donating resources to underserved communities who are looking to reduce carbon emissions and also implementing sustainable programs, which will improve air quality and energy efficiency. C4 will also promote the sale of electric vehicles and track greenhouse gas emissions to ensure targeted goals are met.

Two consultants, Urban Efficiency Group and Seven Generations Ahead, will be added during C4's second term to assist in awareness campaigns, and provide guidance and access to technical resources. To learn

more about the Village's plans to work towards becoming a more sustainable community, click [here](#).



Taking a regional approach to shaping global climate

Executive Leaders:



Mayor Katrina Thompson
Village of Broadview



Village President Vicki Scaman
Village of Oak Park



Village President Cathy Adduci
Village of River Forest

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From Village President Cathy Adduci

Dear River Forest residents,

I am thrilled to announce that since the signing of the Cross Community Climate Collaborative memorandum of understanding last week, ten additional suburbs have joined. This is an exciting group of diverse communities all focused on an important goal. To read more about the agreement, please read the article summarizing its goals on page 1 of this newsletter.

The C4 agreement is not the only sustainability-related accomplishment for our Village. On Monday, the Village Board adopted an Ordinance regarding single-use foodware for restaurants and places of eating. The ordinance requires that establishments only hand out single use foodware upon request. This effort will reduce the generation of waste, but does not negatively impact the business community. River Forest joins the City of Chicago as the only area communities that have a similar ordinance in place.

The Village's sustainability initiatives are being noticed. This week, Crain's Chicago Business named resident Eric Simon, the chair of the Sustainability Commission, as a notable leader in sustainability. Crain's highlights the accomplishments in community solar, composting and hazardous waste removal as reasons for this exciting recognition. Congratulations to Eric, the volunteer members of the Sustainability Commission and Trustee Lisa Gillis!

Please be safe this Fourth of July weekend and have a happy Independence Day!

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

Summer Fun at the Library

The library has a fun-filled calendar of events this summer, including all kinds of story times, crafting, yoga for adults and kids, concerts and more. Highlights for July include our **Encanto Singalong** on Friday, 7/15 at 6:30 PM, where you can join library staff and sing along to the songs of the movie. Singing with Nanny Nikki will take place on Friday, 7/22 at 10 AM. Nanny Nikki will sing songs and play games in the library garden. To register, click [here](#).

To see the full July schedule of library events, please visit the library [website](#).



VOLUNTEER



Volunteers Needed

Calling all volunteers! Oak Park Township is seeking volunteers to help serve lunch to seniors in the Township Senior Services dining room. Volunteers are also needed to deliver meals to homebound individuals throughout River Forest and Oak Park. For more information, please contact Laura Valcour, Nutrition Program Manager via email at lvalcour@oakparktownship.org or (708) 383-8060 ext.134.

Save the Date for Makin' Tracks 5K Walk/Run

The Makin' Tracks 5K Walk/Run is scheduled for Saturday, September 17 at 8 a.m. at Concordia University Chicago. The 5K Walk/Run will start at Monroe Avenue, just south of Division Street and finish at Concordia University. Early bird registration ends August 27. Click [here](#) to learn more or register. Click [here](#) for race sponsorship opportunities.

RUN 5K WALK
 2022 · River Forest
MAKIN' TRACKS

Save the Date!

**SATURDAY,
 SEPTEMBER 17**

RACE TIME: 8 AM

**CONCORDIA
 UNIVERSITY CHICAGO**

Village Department News

Police Department

Fireworks Safety and the Law

The purchase of certain types of fireworks may be legal in some neighboring states, but they remain illegal to use or possess in the State of Illinois. In addition to them being illegal, fireworks contain gunpowder, making their use dangerous in uncontrolled settings and without professional expertise. In 2019, 126 people in Illinois were injured and one person killed by fireworks between June 23 and July 20. Half of those injured suffered multiple injuries, and children under the age of 11 accounted for 22% of those injuries, according to the Illinois State Fire Marshal's report.

Serious injuries associated with fireworks include burns, blindness and other injuries from the heat, explosions, flame and projectiles that fireworks produce. River Forest ordinances prohibit any person from using, selling, delivering, exploding or possessing fireworks in the Village all year (425 ILCS 35 / IL Pyrotechnic Use Act). The term "fireworks" includes firecrackers, cherry bombs, M-80's, bottle rockets and Roman candles. If you purchase large fireworks in a neighboring state and bring them back to Illinois, you are violating Interstate Commerce Laws, as well as local ordinances.

The Police Department will thoroughly investigate all fireworks complaints. If someone is found to be in violation, the items in question will be confiscated and the person(s) involved will be arrested and/or charged when appropriate. This applies to both adults and minors.

Contact Officer Ben Ransom of the Police Crime Prevention Unit at (708) 366-7125 ext. 343 or e-mail bransom@vrf.us if you have any questions regarding fireworks laws.

Fire Department

Summer Safety During Extreme Weather

Rising temperatures and extreme heat over the summer months can be deadly - and being aware of the dangers can help you have a safe and enjoyable season.

Heat-related illnesses or fatalities can be prevented by taking precautions during the summer months when temperatures rise. Never leave children, older adults or pets in parked cars, even for a brief period. Car interior temperatures rise quickly even with the windows slightly open. Temperatures inside a vehicle can rise 30-40 degrees in as little as 20 minutes. The effects of hot cars can be more severe for children as their bodies warm at a faster rate than adults.

Stay hydrated by drinking at least two quarts of water daily, even if you don't feel thirsty and avoid drinking alcoholic beverages and caffeinated drinks. Also, avoid overexertion and strenuous activities whenever possible. Take advantage of cooling centers, swimming pools and air-conditioned spaces. A few hours a day in air conditioning can help prevent heat-related illnesses. Make sure pets have a shady, cool spot where they can escape out of direct sunlight, and ensure that a large bowl of fresh, cold water is available to them. Heat stroke is the most serious heat-related illness. It occurs when the body can no longer control its temperature. Symptoms include nausea, dizziness, headaches, confusion and a rapid pulse. If you or someone around you experiences these symptoms, seek medical

attention immediately, as they could be symptoms of heatstroke. For more information, please call the Village at (708) 714-3562.

Public Works/Development Services

Summer Construction Improvements

Each summer, the Village begins work on a variety of construction projects to maintain and improve infrastructure, and to make River Forest a great place to live and work. Residents can expect certain projects annually, such as work related to streets and sewers. The Village's Street Patching and Maintenance programs extend the performance of pavement still in good condition through either patching defective areas or applying preservation materials and sealing cracks - minimizing costly repairs by prolonging the life of the pavement. Street rating identifies those in poor condition and slates them for resurfacing as part of the Street Improvement Program. If roadway maintenance is not performed annually, it will eventually result in total pavement failure and requires reconstruction, which is at a significantly higher cost than resurfacing. These projects are partially funded by Motor Fuel Fund tax dollars that are distributed by the State to municipalities based on population.

Sewer Lining and Point Repair programs improve the sewer system and help prevent costly repairs due to failing sewer mains. Portions of the sewer system are cleaned and televised annually. These videos help Village staff examine the conditions of the sewer network and determine which sections are in need of partial replacement or being lined, which provides structural support.

The Curb and Sidewalk program consists of the removal and replacement of defective curbs and sidewalks throughout the Village, which is surveyed by region on a 3-year cycle. Repairing damaged sidewalks is vital to keeping the Village traversable. Click [here](#) for more information about the Curb and Sidewalk Replacement Program.

The Village has a total of 32 alleys and to date, 17 have been reconstructed to replace asphalt pavement with some portion of permeable materials to mitigate stormwater impacts on nearby properties. This summer/fall, 11 more alleys will be reconstructed, with one along Madison Street being deferred due to redevelopment. The remaining three alleys are scheduled to be completed in the spring of 2023. Impacted residents will receive letters from the Village with more information as construction start dates are planned.

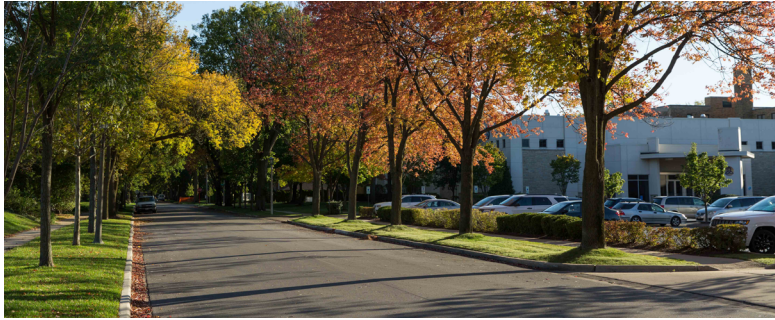
Visit the Village's construction page at www.vrf.us/Construction for more details on these capital projects and project updates.

Finance Department

Water and Sewer Rate

As approved by the Village Board in the FY 2023 Annual Budget on April 25, 2022 the combined water and sewer rate has been increased 6% (.68 cents per 100 cubic feet). The new combined water and sewer rate is \$11.89 per 100 cubic feet. The increase is based on the City of Chicago rate increases and for future operating and capital costs.

Commission Spotlight



Police Pension Board

The Police Pension Board was established and functions under the provision of the Illinois Compiled Statutes. The Board has five members, two of whom are appointed by the Village President. Appointed members are required to be either a resident of the Village, or one of the members appointed by the Village President may be the Village's Finance Director, in which case the residency requirement does not apply.

Members serve 2-year terms and attend quarterly meetings. In addition to these meetings, pension board members must complete the State of Illinois mandated training of 32 hours in the first year, and 16 hours every year thereafter.

The responsibility of the Police Pension Board is to manage the pension fund's investments, review pension applications and make recommendations concerning pension funding levels.



Someone to Know

Police Sergeant Michael Swierczynski currently serves as President of the Police Pension Board. He has served on the Police Pension Board for seven years, with three as its President. He is a graduate of the Northwestern School of Police Staff and Command, and has completed numerous other supervisory training programs and courses. He started at the Police Department in 2004 and was promoted to the rank of Sergeant in 2015. Sergeant Swierczynski's responsibilities include supervising the police day shift, training at the department, the gun range and numerous other areas within the department.

Sergeant Swierczynski believes the most important responsibilities of the Police Pension Board are communication between the board members and the Village, being a fiduciary, and ensuring the best interests of the pension fund are being met. This also helps to ensure the contributions from Village residents are being reviewed, while making sure that retirees' benefits can be met.

Sergeant Swierczynski has been married for more than 20 years and has four children, ages 1, 8, 15 and 20. In his spare time, he enjoys spending time with his family and taking part in the many activities they are involved in. He also actively volunteers at his church food drives and through other programs that assist and support the community.

River Forest Sustainability

River Forest residents Julie & Paul Greenberg recently decided to take action and offset their energy use with rooftop solar on their home. After getting a few different bids for systems throughout 2020 and 2021, they decided to contract Certasun for the installation in late 2021. Certasun reviewed their previous ComEd bills to ensure the sizing was appropriate to offset their annual energy use, ultimately deciding on an 11.5-kilowatt system powered by Sunpower solar panels. Since ComEd offers net metering, if more energy is produced during the day than is needed for their home, ComEd applies a credit to offset any energy used at night when the panels are not producing. The Greenbergs decided to do a few minor roof repairs and also had ComEd replace their meter ahead of the installation. After giving the go-ahead, the contractor began obtaining permits and was able to begin installation shortly thereafter. The system was installed a few days after they arrived on site.

Julie often finds herself checking the mySunPower app to see their daily and real time energy produced, and has enjoyed seeing more energy produced than consumed in the spring months. The couple reports they are very happy with their decision and found the process to be easy once they decided to move forward. The installer managed all of the permitting, procurement and coordination required with ComEd. The Greenbergs eventually look forward to adding an electric car charger to their garage to better utilize any excess electricity.

For more information about getting rooftop solar in River Forest or joining the community solar program, please visit www.vrf.us/Sustainability.



Michael Swierczynski
President, Police
Pension Board

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.



Seniors: Participate in the ICE Packet Program

River Forest seniors can now receive a free "In Case of Emergency (ICE) Packet." The packet holds medical information, so during a medical emergency, first responders can access this information quickly to provide the appropriate medical care. Upon receipt, place the ICE packet on a refrigerator door or an open area in the home where it can be easily seen by first responders. For more information, email Betsy Kelly at bkelly@riverforesttownship.org or call 708-366-2029 ext 13.



Need-Based Scholarships Available for Summer Youth Programs

Do your young people want to participate in summer activities at places like the River Forest Community Center, River Forest Park District, Oak-Park River Forest High School, or the School of Rock? Need-based youth scholarships of up to \$250 are available through River Forest Township for River Forest children and teenagers ages 5-17. Costs are shared between the Township, summer youth programs, and the family of the applicant. Please note that scholarships do not cover daycare. Applications must be completed by the referring program/agency. For more information, ask at the desired summer program or contact River Forest Township via email at supervisor@riverforesttownship.org or call 708-366-2029 ext. 11.

riverforesttownship.org - 708-366-2029 x11

Park District

Party in the Park

The River Forest Park District is partnering with the River Forest Public Library for Party in the Park on Thursday, July 21 from 7:30-10 p.m. Enjoy the movie Luca, a balloon artist, the Bubble Guy - Scott Ingerson, and library activities. This family-friendly event is free for all. Bring a lawn chair and blanket and movie snacks will be provided. Learn more [here](#).



Park District Summer Programs and Camps

The River Forest Park District summer camps and programs are underway but there are a variety of programs still open for registration. Click [here](#) to view the Summer Fun Guide, which lists the programs and activities available through the Park District. The Autumn Fun Guide will be available on rfparks.com on August 1.

rfparks.com | 708-366-6660

Library



Summer Reading Programs for All Ages Run Through August 6

What better way to enjoy warm summer days than relaxing with a good book? The library has summer reading programs for all ages, with incentives and prizes to add to the reading fun! The library's Summer Reading Program encourages patrons to read throughout the summer. Research shows that reading over the summer helps school-age kids prevent the "summer slide" and helps them to be ready to learn when they go back to school in the fall. For adults, it's a fun and relaxing activity that also keeps the mind engaged. So don't delay! Register on [Beanstack](#) today and join the fun. For more information and a how-to guide to registering for the reading challenge, click [here](#). For more information on the program and prize details, click [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

Cause for Applause

According to U.S. News & World Report, Oak Park-River Forest High School is ranked 39th out of 724 high schools in the State. Nationally, Oak Park-River Forest High School ranks 848th out of 17,843 high schools.

The list below are some of the highlights of students' achievements from the second semester.

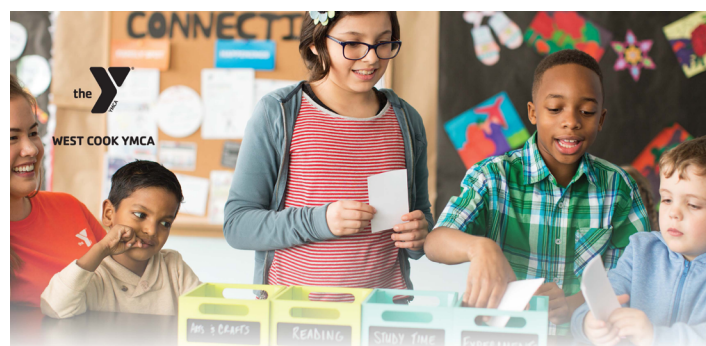
- **Forty-three graduates** in the Class of 2022 earned the highest grade point average possible and received the Scholarship Cup, the Oak Park-River Forest High School version of valedictorian.
- Junior **Maya Souden** won the Illinois BioGENEius Challenge, qualifying her for the international level in the world's most prestigious high school competition for original research in biotechnology.
- Chemistry teacher **Katie Kralik** earned National Board Teacher Certification, arguably the most respected recognition a teacher can achieve.
- Led by the **Environmental Club**, Oak Park-River Forest High School won first place in the high school category of the Illinois Green Schools Project Awards.
- Math teacher and field hockey head coach **Kristin Wirtz** was named Illinois Field Hockey Coach of the Year for 2021.
- The **Science Olympiad team** brought home the school's first-ever medals in the state competition, including a first-place win for **Addy Smith** and **Ezekiel Wells** in Gravity Vehicle.
- Students **Flynn Mitchell**, **Bennett Parker**, **Isabel Farren**, **Luke Lazzara**, **Amelie Kim**, **Tim Mellman**, **Ben Guillot**, **Roan Egan**, and **Ruby Drexler** displayed their artwork in the prestigious Illinois High School Art Exhibition.
- Senior **Ian Kelley** won the Class 3A state track and field championship in the 300-meter hurdles.
- Led by the **Freshman Class Council** and Faculty Senate, Oak Park-River Forest High School won the Beyond Hunger CAN DO Community Challenge, raising enough funds to provide 21,150 meals to people facing food insecurity.



District 90

Registration for Returning Students

Families with students returning to District 90 in the fall can still register for the 2022-2023 school year by accessing their PowerSchool accounts. All returning student registrations will be processed electronically through the online PowerSchool platform. This platform contains all the forms and information necessary to complete the registration process. If you have an incoming kindergartener or new student and have not contacted District 90, please email Josephine Ribaudo (District Registrar) at ribaudoj@district90. For more information about registering returning students, please visit the District 90 website at www.district90.org. Students return to school on Monday, August 22, 2022.



HERE FOR YOU, FOR A BETTER US

THE YMCA AFTER-SCHOOL SIGNATURE PROGRAM: A Safe, Enriching, and Supportive Environment

The After-School Signature Program complements the West Cook YMCA's Power Scholars Academy in supporting our students year-round, focusing on developing the whole child through academic support and social emotional, cognitive, and physical development of each scholar through a sense of belonging, achievement, and building positive relationships. The After-School Signature Program is a family commitment to providing a seamless transition from the school day, ensuring scholars participate 5 days a week for 2.5 hours each day to ensure they experience the daily dosages of academic supports such as homework assistance and tutoring, as well as enrichment activities such as Art, STEM, engage in daily physical activity social-emotional development activities, and have an after-school snack.

Registration Open for D90 & West Cook YMCA After School Program

District 90 and the West Cook YMCA are partnering again to offer the After-School Signature Program for the 2022-23 school year. Students will experience academic support, such as homework assistance and tutoring. They will also benefit from enrichment activities such as art and STEM, participate in daily physical activity, social-emotional development activities, and receive an after-school snack. The YMCA After-School Signature Program follows the School District 90 Calendar, and for days those students are in school, the afterschool program will run, including half days or early release days. The program will not run on days school is closed, including inclement weather closures. The program is held Monday-Friday from the end of the school day until 6 p.m.

Hosted at Lincoln and Willard Schools, the program is open for 1st through 4th graders, with a limit of 30 students per school. For more information and to register, please click this link: www.westcookymca.org/d90register.

Chamber's 'Takeout Stakeout' at Yolk

Join the Oak Park River Forest Chamber of Commerce (OPRFCC) for some tasty networking! Residents are invited to the OPRFCC's next 'Takeout Stakeout' on Friday, July 8 from noon - 12:30 p.m. at **Yolk**. Participants are welcomed to begin networking at noon, with the takeout lunches being served promptly at 12:30 p.m.

'Takeout Stakeout' is a fun meetup designed to support local businesses and encourage residents to dine locally, while promoting businesses and organizations. The cost for lunch is \$16 for members and \$20 for non-members, which includes tax and tip. Parking is available in the lot on the west side of the restaurant. To view the lunch menu or to register, click [here](#).



Follow the Village on Social Media



Sign Up For Email and Alerts



River Forest Events



Village Contact Information

Village Administration
708-714-3520

Village Administrator
Brian Murphy

Finance Department
708-714-3524

Director Rosemary McAdams

Fire Department
708-714-3560
Chief Tom Gaertner

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.