



RIVER FOREST

Proud Heritage • Bright Future

The Village of River Forest Newsletter | March, 2024



St. Patrick's Day Parade Is Saturday, March 2

Join the Forest Park Chamber of Commerce at 1 p.m. on Saturday, March 2 for the 28th Annual Forest Park St. Patrick's Day Parade, which steps off at the corner of Madison and Van Buren streets and will travel east on Madison Street to Elgin Avenue. Participants can enjoy a day in downtown Forest Park as they watch more than 65 parade entries, including bagpipers, marching bands, Irish dancers, local businesses, Medinah Shriner parade units, police and fire departments, and many more! For additional information on the parade, click [here](#).

Heavy vehicle and pedestrian traffic is expected in River Forest from noon until 2 p.m. leading up to, during and after the parade. Lathrop, Ashland and Park avenues, along with Franklin Street, will be open to local/resident traffic only. Madison Street will be closed from Lathrop Avenue to Park Avenue during the parade. There will

be parking only on the south side of Vine Street from Lathrop to Park avenues. River Forest Police will also have traffic control measures along Thatcher Avenue, between Madison and Lake streets. Be prepared to use alternate routes.



In This Issue

- Village President..... 2
- Village Board of Trustees.... 2
- News Around Town..... 3
- Department Updates..... 4-5
- Assessor News 5
- Sustainability..... 5
- Business Spotlight 5
- Local Organizations 6-7
- Older Adult Homes Modification Program 8
- Village Contacts..... 8



From Village President Cathy Adduci

Dear River Forest residents,

Over the past few weeks, the Village has received a significant increase in reports of idling freight trains along the Union Pacific Line. This nuisance is not acceptable, as there must be consideration given by the railroad to our nearby neighbors. I have requested an in-person meeting with Union Pacific officials, and have also requested assistance from our Congressman Danny Davis. We will continue to monitor a bill in Springfield, **SB1513**, that proposes limits to freight train idling in residential neighborhoods similar to ours.

The Village is working to identify all lead water service lines in River Forest and we need your help! As part of our commitment to meet the requirements of the Illinois Lead Service Line Replacement and Notification Act, we are working to determine how water is delivered to your home from the water main. To help us gather this information, you can take a short survey found [here](#). I encourage residents to complete this survey so we can completely eradicate lead piping from our water supply network.

Please save the date for this year's State of the Village Address scheduled for Monday, March 11 during our Village Board meeting, starting at 7 p.m. Residents will hear about Village accomplishments in 2023, and what they can look forward to regarding our goals for the new year.

Women's History Month is celebrated in March, and is a time to reflect on the contributions from women in our community, our nation and across the world. As the first female Village President of River Forest, I am proud to acknowledge trailblazing women who have demonstrated leadership and strength, and paved the way for equal opportunities and the acceptance of women in leadership roles.

Lastly, Daylight Saving Time will begin Sunday, March 10 at 2 a.m. As you set your clock one hour ahead for the coming new season, please make sure to change or check the batteries in all of your home's smoke and carbon monoxide detectors. This means spring is on the horizon!

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

Student Artwork Displayed at Public Library

Congratulations to all the young artists at Lincoln Elementary School whose artwork was displayed at the River Forest Public Library throughout the month of February! The artwork was on display for everyone to enjoy, and received many visitors. The library is a great place for families and kids of all ages, and offers many programs and events. Stop in or visit the library [online](#). You can view upcoming events [here](#). The library is not only about great books but a place for great experiences!



March Madness

On Saturday, March 23, the Athletic Board at **St. Vincent Ferrer School** (SVF) will be hosting their annual March Madness Fundraiser, which provides funds to purchase equipment for the array of sports offered to SVF students from kindergarten through 8th grade. Funds will also help to maintain the gymnasium, concession program, and assist in keeping the rising cost of sports participation down. This event will be held in SVF Kyte Hall from 6:30 – 10 p.m. and feature live games, raffles, and basketball squares. The cost is \$40 per person, which includes dinner by Nottoli, dessert, wine, beer or soda. For questions, please email dbolton@svfschool.org.



Introducing the Community Room

The **River Forest Public Library** just wrapped up the first phase of construction to add a second multipurpose room to their building. The new Community Room, located just off of the Children's Room, can hold 26 people and is perfect for meetings and small programs. Phase two of construction will complete the aesthetic elements of the space, which will include new furniture, cabinetry, technology and more, and will also complete installation of a bathroom adjacent to the room. The Community Room will be available for library card holders to reserve soon. Keep an eye on their [website](#) for updates.



Easter Eggstravaganza

This popular event will take place on Saturday, March 30 and begins at 9 a.m. with a **VIP Bunny Experience** at The **Depot!** The fun will include face painting, balloon twisting, donuts, goodie bags, and a private egg hunt. There is a cost associated with the VIP event, spaces are limited, please click [here](#) for additional information and to register.

At 11 a.m. on this day the annual Egg Hunt begins at **Keystone Park West**. Children ages 2-10 can search for filled eggs - and those who are lucky enough to find a golden egg will receive a special prize! There is no cost or reservation needed for this event. For more information, click [here](#).



Village Department News

Public Hearing Notice



Commercial Zoning Districts Public Hearing

The Zoning Board of Appeals hearing that was continued from January 11 will take place Thursday, March 14 at 7:30 p.m. at [Village Hall](#) to continue discussions on potential zoning ordinance amendments. Proposed changes to Village ordinances would apply to the four commercial districts in town, and are aimed at simplifying regulations to encourage businesses and developers to come to River Forest. Among the potential changes are adjusting height maximums for buildings, decreasing residential density requirements for lot areas, and easing parking restrictions. All of the proposed changes are intended to clarify the Village Code while promoting economic development. To read more about the meeting and proposed amendments, click [here](#).

Administration

Lake & Lathrop Development Site Update

The Village is expecting to receive updates regarding the development site located at Lake and Lathrop in the coming weeks. In January, a Motion to Reconsider their removal from this project was entered by Lake Lathrop Partners LLC and Sedgwick Properties, an authorized agent acting on behalf of Lake Lathrop Partners LLC, before the Cook County Circuit Court. The Judge did not issue a ruling at that time, and set the next hearing date for Monday, March 18. In the meantime, the court-appointed receiver, Ascend Real Estate Group, is working alongside Wintrust Bank and both are currently responsible for the property. Both groups will be proceeding with their plans to market the property to prospective developers. Previous updates on this important project area in River Forest are available on the [Village website](#). When there are additional updates regarding this development site, the Village will share that information via our weekly Enewsletters.

Police Department

Tips for Buying and Selling Online and In-Person

In our modern world, the buying and selling of many items have moved online, while others continue to do this in-person. The Police Department is providing the following tips for the safety of residents who are purchasing or selling items with other private citizens. See below for things you need to know!

- Always meet in a public place, preferably with surveillance cameras.
- Tell someone about the meeting and meeting location.
- Do not meet at your home/residence.
- Always meet during the daytime.
- If it is a high-priced item, sell/purchase at a bank or local police department.

- Do not pay in cash and do not accept personal checks as payment.
- Do not use your personal email. Create an email to use solely for buying and selling.
- Keep your cell phone and other personal belongings close.
- Do not reveal any of your personal information.
- Require a signature at delivery for any items you ship.

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

Fire Department

Severe Weather Preparedness Week

As we head into spring, residents should remember to pay attention to severe weather warnings and alerts. Illinois ranks fourth in the U.S. for the most tornadoes per square mile, and many communities across the State are also susceptible to flooding. Just one inch of water can cause \$25,000 worth of damage in your home. More information about weather alerts can be found [here](#).

There are many steps residents can take to be prepared for severe weather:

- Keep all important records and documents in a secure waterproof container.
- Take an inventory of possessions using lists and photos/videos.
- Insure your property and possessions.
- Know how to shut off electricity, gas, and water.
- Compile an emergency kit and "go bag" that includes items for your family for at least three days during extended power outages or evacuations.
- Make sure all flashlights have fresh batteries and are working.
- Generators should only be run outside; Do not house them indoors or in enclosed spaces.

Additional Planning information from the Illinois Emergency Management Agency can be found [here](#) and [here](#). For more information on Severe Weather Preparation from the National Weather Service, [click here](#).

Public Works

Electronic Waste Pickup – Sign Up By March 13!

[Lakeshore Recycling Systems](#) (LRS) is now accepting requests for electronics waste pickup from your home, provided at no extra cost. This collection will be made on your regular pick-up day, during the week of March 18 - 20. The deadline for electronics pickup requests is Wednesday, March 13. LRS will collect up to seven (7) accepted items total, with no more than two (2) TV's or computer monitors per collection, per household.

Here's how it works:

1. Click on the Electronic Waste Pick-Up link in the upper right side of the [LRS webpage](#).
2. Once you have filled in your address information and selected items you have for collection, click submit and a submission confirmation will appear.
3. Materials must be placed in the front of your home at the curb near the parkway no later than 7 a.m. on the collection day.
4. Collection does not take place in the alley due to the nature of the materials.
5. Small electronic items may be placed at the curb in a brown paper bag or a small cardboard box.
6. Label the box or bag as E-Waste so the crew can easily see it.

LRS partners with E-Works from Elk Grove Village, a R2 state certified, non-profit electronics recycler to properly recycle and manage e-waste collected from your home. Please visit the [Village Website](#) to learn more.

Township Assessor News

New Exemption Application Mailing Date Expected This Month

The Cook County Assessor will be mailing out exemption booklets this month. Homeowner's can also apply for these exemptions on-line.

First Time Exemption Applications

Taxpayers applying for the first time for property tax exemptions will be able to find applications on the [Cook County Assessor](#) and [River Forest Township Assessor Office](#) websites, with availability expected in mid – late March. Exemptions include:

- Homeowner's Exemption (have lived in the home since before January 1, 2023)
- Senior Citizen (66 years of age in 2024)
- Senior Freeze (66 years of age, live in home two years, 2022 income below \$65,000)
- Disabled Homeowner
- Disabled Veteran
- Returning Veteran

Homeowner's and Senior Exemptions

These exemptions will automatically renew, unless you have made a change to your home's deed.

Senior Freeze Exemption Application

This exemption must be filed every year. This year you will use your total household income from 2022 to determine if you qualify (2022 income below \$65,000). The River Forest Township Assessor's Office can help determine your eligibility and help you file.

Disabled Veteran's and Returning Veteran's Exemptions

These exemptions must be filed every year.

For more information, or to file online at the Cook County Assessor's website, click [here](#). Contact River Forest Township Assessor, Pamela Kende by calling **708-366-2787** or send her an [email](#).

Business Spotlight



River Forest Animal Hospital has been caring for pets in our community for more than 50 years. The location strives to deliver personalized care to all patients, and its services and facilities are designed to assist in routine preventive care for young, healthy pets. Visit the website at riverforestvet.com/ or call **708-366-8370** to schedule an appointment.

Please support local businesses whenever possible! If you have a business located in River Forest with a valid business license, it can be featured in the Village's business spotlight. If you'd like your business to be featured, please send us an email. You can find a listing of River Forest businesses on the Village's [Shop River Forest website](#).

Sustainability

RECYCLING GUIDELINES

YES!

METAL
Steel & Aluminum Containers and Foil

PAPER
Cardboard (flattened), Office Paper, Newspaper, Magazines

Clean & Empty
Replace lids & caps

Put material in loose - Not in Bags

GLASS
Containers: Bottles & Jars Only

PLASTIC
Containers: Bottles, Tub, and Jars Only

CARTONS

NO!

No Plastic Bags
No Product Wrap (return clean to retailer)

No Big Items (Electronics, Wood, Propane Tanks, Scrap Metal or Styrofoam – check with local authority for other options)

No Shredded Paper

No Tangles (Hangers, Hoses, Wire, Cords, Ropes or Chains)

No Clothing (Textiles or Shoes (donate))

No Food, Liquid, Diapers, Batteries or Needles

These Guidelines represent the common items accepted in most recycling programs.
For more information visit LRSrecycles.com.

LRS

Help Improve Our Recycling Rates!

There has been uncertainty communicated in the news media about whether recyclable materials are actually being recycled. To ensure that our community is doing all it can to make sure this happens, we can rethink what and how we recycle to increase recycling rates. Periodically reviewing the sticker on your Lakeshore Recycling Systems (LRS) recycling bin will remind you of what you can, and cannot recycle.

The Village's Sustainability Commission recently reached out to LRS to learn more about the things that inhibit an efficient recycling program. They include:

- ♻️ Soft plastic should not be placed in the recycle cart. Filmy plastic of any kind, including zip-locks, bubble wrap, plastic padded envelopes, garbage bags, produce and bread bags can jam the recycling system. Plastic bags can be recycled at Jewel Osco. Also, Temple Har Zion and Oak Park River Forest High School are currently collecting plastic bags - which will be made into benches.
- ♻️ Do not bag recyclables - because this makes them difficult to sort. Please leave recyclables loose in your cart.
- ♻️ Clothing or textiles do not belong in the recycling cart. Whenever possible, donate clothing to local charities such as the Economy Shop or schedule a free pick-up from a textile recycler, such as simplerecycling.com.
- ♻️ Do not put plastic tubes, hoses, or 'tangles' in recycle carts - these items also jam up processing equipment.
- ♻️ Be sure there is no food waste in the recycling bin - put compost food scraps in your organics bin or backyard compost, and remember to rinse out recyclable containers.

With a little extra vigilance by residents, we can all greatly reduce the amount of waste that goes into landfills.

Organizations Serving River Forest



Township

To learn more about Township programs and services, [click here](#), visit the River Forest [Community Calendar](#), or email [Supervisor Carla Sloan](#).

Welcome to Memory Café!

Memory Café offers a coffeehouse atmosphere with engaging programs for individuals experiencing memory changes, along with their caregivers. The group meets on the third Tuesday of every month from 2 – 3:30 p.m. at [Township Senior Services Center](#), both in person and on Zoom. Gatherings offer opportunities for socialization, training, and education in a safe and friendly environment. The next Memory Café will take place on March 19 and the topic will be “Health and Healing” with Brian Thompson. For more information and/or to register, call **708-383-8060** or send an [email](#).

The Loft at Eight Corners Welcomes 7th & 8th Graders

[The Loft at Eight Corners](#) in Brookfield, is expanding its mental wellness services to include 7th and 8th graders, in addition to high school students. The Loft is made possible due to a partnership with NAMI Metro Suburban and Pillars Community Health, and welcomes all teens. Their services are designed to equip young people with the tools they need to navigate their mental health journey. The location is open Monday-Friday from 1-8 p.m. and weekends from 10 a.m.- 6 p.m. To learn more, [click here](#).



Spring is Around the Corner...Time for Home Repairs

Seniors age 60+, are you ready for some spring home repairs? Call the Senior Home Repair Program, provided by nonprofit, North West Housing Partnership (NWHPP)! Repairs are completed by insured and reliable professionals. Eligible work includes grab bar installation, hanging curtains, sink repair, and more. **Please note:** emergency repairs **are not** included in this program. Fees range from \$20, \$30 or \$40 per hour, depending on the senior's income. This service is sponsored by Township Senior Services, the Villages of River Forest and Oak Park, and offered through NWHPP. For more information, or to make an appointment, call **847-969-0561**.



riverforesttownship.org - 708-366-2029 x11

Park District

Summer Camp Registration Opens March 4

Resident **registration** for River Forest Park District Summer Camps opens Monday, March 4 at 8:30 am.



The Park District is hiring for summer camp staff! [Click here](#) for the full list of job opportunities and qualifications, and to apply!

rfparks.com | 708-366-6660

Library

Get Growing with the Mini Seed Library

This March, visit the River Forest Public Library's new Mini Seed Library and “check out” up to three packets of seeds. There will be flower, vegetable and native plant seeds available to get you started, as well as plenty of books to provide guidance and inspiration. At the end of the season, you will have the opportunity to return your saved seeds back to the library for community use during the next growing season.

Visit the Library's [calendar](#) to see everything that's happening! **The Library hosts events and activities for all ages. Below are some highlights for Adults:**

Sunday, 3/3, 2-3:30 p.m., Life Lessons from the Happiest People on Earth: Every year, the World Happiness Report is dominated by the same countries: Denmark, Iceland, Finland, Sweden, and Norway. What is it about these Scandinavian countries that makes life so pleasant? Join guest speaker Jez Layman to learn about the unique practices of these nations.

Sunday, 3/10, 2-3:30 p.m., Kathleen Fleming Author Event: Novelist Kathleen Fleming visits the Library to read from, and discuss, her historical fiction, including her latest book, *A Menacing Luster*, about the “radium girls” of the 1920s who were poisoned by radiation at their jobs. She will also give a talk on working conditions for women in the late 19th and early 20th centuries, a subject featured heavily in her books.

Wednesdays, 1-2:30 PM, Great Decisions: 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, a recorded video lecture will be played and then discussed as the topic for the group. Readings for each session will be available at the library two weeks in advance and include: **3/6:** Science across borders and **3/20:** U.S.-China trade rivalry.

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

D90 Schools Earn Top Designations from the State of Illinois

District 90 (D90) public schools earned two Exemplary Designations and a Commendable Designation - the top two of the five leveled Summative Designations - included in the Illinois State Report Card. The report card is an annual evaluation of all schools in the state that is conducted by the Illinois State Board of Education.

Lincoln Elementary School's performance was in the top 1% of all K-8 public schools in the state. Willard Elementary School's performance was in the top 3-4%, and Willard earned the Exemplary Designation for the second year in a row. Roosevelt Middle School earned a Commendable Designation, demonstrating improved achievement on the Illinois Assessment of Readiness over last year in both English Language Arts and Math, as well as an exceptional performance on the Illinois Science Assessment.



Roosevelt Middle School Centennial Celebration Is May 19

Save the date! The Roosevelt Middle School Centennial Celebration will take place at noon on Sunday, May 19. The planning committee for this event has organized a day of festivities, including an open house, tours, and a display of photographs and memories. The committee welcomes your participation!

If you have a memory of your days at Roosevelt you are invited to share it! If you have Roosevelt photos, videos, or artifacts tucked in an attic or someplace else that could be displayed at the open house, or if you're interested in joining the planning committee or volunteering at the event, please contact the planning committee [here](#).

Kindergarten Registration Is Open

River Forest families with a child starting Kindergarten in D90 schools in the fall of 2024 are encouraged to start the registration process by emailing [Registrar Devin Howe](#). Students whose registration is completed can participate in the Kindergarten Jumpstart event Friday, April 26, where they will be able to meet teachers and new friends in a kindergarten classroom. Please check the [D90 website](#) for information about residency requirements and registration forms.

District 200



D200 Earns Green Award for Sustainability Efforts

District 200 Board President Tom Cofsky and Superintendent Greg Johnson have won a Green Award from the Village of Oak Park's Environment and Energy Citizens Commission. Green Awards recognize leadership in advancing equity-centered climate action, climate resilience, and sustainability.

"It's a way for local community members to recognize the amazing sustainability work that folks are doing in the community, but that sometimes flies under the radar," said Liz Lukehart, the commission chair. "Our hope is also that the award winners will inspire others in the community to get engaged in sustainability efforts."

Mr. Cofsky and Dr. Johnson were nominated by Oak Park River Forest High School (OPRFHS) senior Manolo Avalos, president of the high school's Environmental Club. Manolo and other students worked closely with district leadership to develop the school's sustainability policy and plan, which were approved in 2022. The policy requires achieving significant sustainability goals, including reducing the school's greenhouse gas emissions by 100% of 2010 levels by 2050.

"Under their high-functioning leadership, OPRF has undertaken an exemplary Sustainability Plan, transforming it into a model for other local school districts," Manolo noted in his nomination. "This ambitious plan includes aggressive energy efficiency, waste reduction, conservation, and education goals that inspire students."

Students in the Environmental Club have developed a scorecard to monitor the district's progress on its sustainability goals, and meet regularly with D200 leadership to ensure milestones are being met.

"It is an honor and a privilege to work alongside our students in this work," Mr. Cofsky said. "They get it! It is our future and theirs that is at stake. We can't wait for others to take the lead in this area. If we don't, who will?"

Seniors Can “Age in Place” in Their Homes Through Free Program

North West Housing Partnership (NWHP), a Schaumburg-based nonprofit that provides housing opportunities for low to moderate income residents, is launching a free program that helps seniors to be safer and more independent and “age in place” in their homes. The Older Adult Homes Modification Program (OAHMP) is made possible through grant funding provided by HUD and offers free home modifications to reduce the risk of falling, and improve overall safety and accessibility for income qualified seniors ages 62 years of age and up living in various suburban Cook County communities, including residents of River Forest.

OAHMP provides an Occupational Therapist (OT) as part of the program who visits seniors in their homes to evaluate their physical abilities and needs. The OT then recommends home modifications that can include (but are not limited to) the installation of grab bars, railings, risers for chairs and sofas, temporary ramps and more. These vital changes in the home environment can help seniors and their families avoid the high costs of moving to nursing homes or other assisted living facilities, while improving the seniors’ quality of life and physical capabilities in their own homes.

In addition to the OT, a registered nurse evaluates any health challenges and subsequent physical needs, and an insured handyperson will perform the work, at no cost to the homeowner. If you are a senior homeowner in need of safety and accessibility modifications to continue living in your home, or a caregiver for a senior who has these needs, please call NWHP at 847-969-0561 to learn more

Older Adults Home Modification Program (OAHMP)





Eligible Modifications :

- Grab Bars
- Chair Lift*
- Electrical Repairs
- Smoke/CO Alarms
- ADA Toilet
- Showers
- Sinks and More!

*subject to pricing






NORTH WEST HOUSING PARTNERSHIP

Call Us: 847-969-0561



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.