

RIVER FOREST

Proud Heritage • Bright Future

The Village of River Forest Newsletter | May, 2024



Village Communications Remain a Top Priority

The Village is focused on ensuring that community members can access any and all information they would like to, through the many communication channels utilized on a daily and weekly basis. These include the Village website, E-newsletters sent out every week, and social media pages that are updated regularly to keep residents aware and informed.

Strong communication with residents, businesses and all River Forest stakeholders remains one of the Village's top priorities, and great strides have been made over the last five years as overall engagement has steadily increased. One example includes more than 3,500 subscribers (approximately 1,500 in 2019) for the Village **E-newsletter**, and a nearly 70% open rate for this weekly publication (the low end industry standard open rate is 15%), and strong engagement/followers on the Village's social media pages. These include **Facebook** (3,500 followers), **Instagram** (1,628 followers) and **NextDoor** (2,702 members) (at the time of this E-newsletter publication). When it is imperative that Village news reach every residence and business, water bills that are mailed out quarterly will include this information - such as when the Zoning Board of Appeals was recently holding meetings to consider zoning updates; notifications were sent via U.S. Mail along with the March 1 and April 1 water bill statements. As a standard practice, the

Village makes every attempt to reach as many residents as possible. For our older adults who live in our condominiums, the Village prints the monthly newsletter and delivers copies to their associations for distribution.

Village President Cathy Adduci is also starting quarterly meetings called "Meet with the Village President" to provide an in-person opportunity for all community members to ask questions or provide feedback in an informal setting. More information on this new communication and engagement opportunity that will take place May 18 from 9 - 10:30 a.m. at the River Forest Community Center can be found on page 3 of this E-newsletter. Please note: this event was previously scheduled at Good Earth Greenhouse, but due to a scheduling conflict on this date, a future event will be hosted at this local business.

Residents should also be on the lookout for a postcard in the mail in the coming weeks that will provide all the communication channels utilized by the Village, as well as information how to sign up for the WaterSmart program to be able to monitor water usage and avoid larger bills due to unknown leaks or other water issues.

In This Issue

- Village President..... 2
- Village Board of Trustees.... 2
- News Around Town..... 3
- Department Updates..... 4-5
- Sustainability..... 5
- Business Spotlight 5
- Local Organizations 6-7
- May 19 Events 8
- Village Contacts..... 8



From Village President Cathy Adduci

Dear River Forest residents,

As temperatures continue to get warmer, more people will be out on bicycles on or near our roadways. Please consider taking the [Ride Illinois Bike Safe Quiz](#) to ensure you understand the rules of the road to keep you safe, whether you are driving a car or on a bike! Also, please consider making it a family rule that every time you or your child rides a bike, a properly fitted bicycle helmet is worn.

A Village ordinance states any child under the age of 16 should wear a helmet, because it's the single most effective way to reduce head injuries and other serious injuries from bike accidents. More information on bicycle safety can be found [here](#). If any child needs a helmet, please contact our **Police Department** and we will be happy to provide a free helmet to any child. Plus, if our Police Department observes your child wearing a helmet, they will get a free certificate from our very own **River Forest Chocolates!**

Memorial Day is Monday, May 27 and we are looking forward to recognizing men and women from our community who serve or have served our country in the military during the Memorial Day Honor Roll Ceremony. I encourage you to nominate someone you know! Honoree submissions are due by Monday, May 20 and the submission form can be found [here](#). The ceremony will immediately follow the parade at 9:30 a.m. To learn more about Memorial Day Celebrations, click [here](#).

I want to invite all community members to join me for a new (and to be held quarterly going forward) in person opportunity to ask me any questions or provide feedback on Village operations and/or initiatives called "Meet with the Village President." This meeting is to become part of the Village's overall effort to stay engaged with our community.

Finally, I'd like to wish all of our moms a very happy Mother's Day on Sunday, May 12 and to remind residents to consider shopping locally in River Forest, when picking up a present for your loved one!

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

Casual Conversation with the Village President

Bring your questions and/or feedback about Village operations and initiatives and join Village President Cathy Adduci for "Meet with the Village President" on Saturday, May 18 from 9 - 10:30 a.m. at the **River Forest Community Center**. All community members are invited to attend and get answers to any questions they may have - please join Village President Adduci for this informational and informal event - which starting with this month's event, will begin to be held quarterly. For any questions, please call the Village at 708-366-8500.



Saturday
May 18
9-10:30 a.m.



Meet with the Village President

Bring your questions and feedback.

Community Partner of the Year!

Congratulations to John Hayley and his team at Unbreakable Fitness for earning the Community Partner of the Year Award from Opportunity Knocks (OK). The business was honored because they host and co-create wellness programs for residents with developmental differences that OK serves, along with their commitment to establishing a mixed-ability workforce. Most recently, Unbreakable Fitness entered a softball team in this year's OK Classic and took the top team fundraising honors by raising more than \$8,500! Congratulations to John and the OK staff for their work in the community and philanthropic efforts!



Trailside Museum's Spring Festival

Join the Trailside Museum for their annual Spring Festival this Sunday, May 5 from noon - 3 p.m. at the **Thatcher Woods Forest Preserve**. The event will have nature activities for the whole family, including guided flower and nature walks, birdhouse building, gardening and more. For additional information, click [here](#).



Historical Preservation Awards

The Historic Preservation Commission is currently accepting applications for the 2024 Historic Preservation Awards from homeowners, architects, or contractors who have helped to maintain the historic character of the Village. For more information or to apply, click [here](#).

Nominations must be received on, or before July 26 to be considered for one of this year's awards.



Village Department News

Village Administration

Village President Meets with Governor Pritzker

Last week, Village President Cathy Adduci met with Governor J.B. Pritzker to advocate on behalf of River Forest as part of Illinois Municipal League's Lobby Day. President Adduci and six other mayors focused their discussion around funding that the State of Illinois has either taken away from municipalities, or proposals to do so – amid ever-rising costs and mandates by the State that often come with no funding mechanisms. Village President Adduci asked the Governor to consider the impact that legislation has on public safety, healthcare and for maintaining vital infrastructure, including streets and sidewalks, water and sewer systems and so much more that supports quality of life throughout the state.



Among specific topics covered were the State's withdrawal from fully funding the Local Government Distributive Fund (LGDF), in addition to the proposed elimination of the 1% grocery tax and Tier 2 pension reform. All three issues either have, or will negatively impact municipal budgets for every community in Illinois, jeopardizing funds that help to deliver needed services to community members.

Since 2010, municipal leaders have been asking the State to restore LGDF to the original 10% funding level to support village and city operations. In place of these funds, the State communicated that taxes from video gambling and cannabis operations could replace them. In River Forest, we do not allow gaming and we do not have a cannabis retail shop. The decrease of LGDF funding forces municipalities to find other ways to fund core operations.

The proposed elimination of the 1% grocery tax was also a topic of discussion, which if instated, would create immediate and significant budget gaps for all Illinois municipalities. In River Forest, the expected loss of revenue exceeds \$1 million annually. The Governor has proposed to allow local municipalities to pass a 1% grocery tax instead while the Illinois Department of Revenue will then take a 1.5% of the 1% tax as an administration fee.

The final point of discussion related to Tier 2 public safety pensions, which have helped municipalities throughout Illinois address the State's pension funding crisis. Tier 2 pensions were established in 2011 to curb the growth of pension costs. The State is considering legislation that would revise Tier 2 benefits to match more generous Tier 1 benefits, which would be a costly endeavor for municipalities. Pension funding preempts local municipalities authority.

Village President Adduci, along with other community leaders, will continue to bring these issues and requests to help communities throughout the State to stay strong and continue to deliver services to their communities.

Police Department

Burglary Prevention

It's always important to keep your home and valuables safe. The Police Department would like to remind residents about strategies to prevent burglaries and thefts in our neighborhoods. Tips including refraining from sharing vacation plans or announcing when you will be away on social media, among other tips that can be found [here](#). By implementing practical measures and adopting a vigilant mindset, you can significantly enhance your safety, and the security of your property and possessions.



"Click It or Ticket" Campaign

The Police Department is stepping up traffic enforcement and reminding motorists to "Click It or Ticket" for the upcoming Memorial Day festivities. Memorial Day weekend marks the unofficial start of summer and is a popular time for social gatherings and travel. Whether you are driving down the block or across the country, the Department urges motorists and passengers to buckle up. This safety campaign will run from Wednesday, May 22 - Tuesday, June 4.

**AS ALWAYS - FOR THE SAFETY OF OUR COMMUNITY
IF YOU SEE SOMETHING, SAY SOMETHING.**

Fire Department

Stroke Awareness and Fall Prevention Seminar

Monday, May 13, 2024 from 9am-10am
at 800 N. Harlem Ave
River Forest, IL 60305

*The River Forest Fire Department is partnering with
The Sheridan of River Forest to host our annual seminar. This year we will discuss
the signs and symptoms of a stroke.*

Senior Outreach Event

The Fire Department is working with The Sheridan at River Forest for a senior outreach event on stroke awareness and fall prevention. A pancake breakfast will be included in the event on Monday, May 13 at 9 a.m. The chefs of The Sheridan will cook breakfast, and members of the Fire Department will serve our senior residents. For questions or to reserve your spot, call **708-366-7629**.

Village Department News

Public Works



May Is Building Safety Month

Have you ever wondered why building codes exist? All communities need these codes to protect their residents from disasters such as fire, weather-related events including floods, and structural collapse, among others. Building codes are the best way to protect homes, offices, schools, stores, and all buildings. For example, building codes contain specific venting requirements on gas appliances to ensure safe operation, as well as proper use and installation of electrical wiring. See the below safety tips from the International Code Council to keep you and your family safe while using appliances and outlets in your home or at work.

Appliances: Gas appliances, such as water heaters, furnaces and boilers, need plenty of air to operate safely. Otherwise, they will produce excessive, deadly carbon monoxide (CO). CO is odorless, colorless and toxic - which means you can't see, taste or smell it. It causes headaches, dizziness, disorientation, nausea and fatigue. This gas can kill, so be sure to maintain your gas appliances.

- Schedule an annual appliance inspection, cleaning and tune-up by a qualified specialist.
- Have vents and chimneys inspected by a qualified expert at least once a year.
- Have a technician check the combustion air provisions for your appliances.
- Store combustibles and flammables far away from gas appliances

Electrical Cords: Overloaded receptacle outlets and undersized electrical extension cords can cause a fire or create a risk for electrocution.

- Do not overload electrical cords or power strips, because both have a designated load capacity. Be sure the total amount of energy used by appliances and lights plugged into the cord or strip does not exceed that capacity.
- Use only listed power strips that have integral overload protection and have been tested by a product safety laboratory.
- Do not use appliances that have damaged cords.
- Extension cords should not be used as a substitute for permanently wired receptacle outlets.

For more information, visit buildingsafetymonth.org

Sustainability



International Compost Awareness Week

The first full week in May is International Compost Awareness Week (ICAW) – an educational initiative designed to showcase compost production and demonstrate compost use. The week of May 5 - 11, residents can join the Village in celebrating ICAW's 2024 theme, "COMPOST...Nature's Climate Champion." The theme incorporates the focus on one of the initiatives of the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals, which is "Take urgent action to combat climate change and its impacts." With the goal of decreasing the amount of organic waste sent to landfills, the Village and Lakeshore Recycling Systems offer a yard waste and food scrap compost program for residents. Click [here](#) to learn more about the Village's Curbside Composting Program and how to sign up. The Illinois Food Scrap & Composting Coalition will be hosting a variety of online and in person events throughout ICAW to learn more about compost and composting. Find more information and virtual event registration details [here](#). ICAW provides a very unique opportunity to have some fun, while learning how you can impact your little corner of the world!

Please explore the River Forest Sustainability Commission's [Guide to Sustainable Living](#) for other upcoming events and for further tips on how you can fit elements of sustainable living into your busy lives.

Business Spotlight



Whole Foods Market seeks out the finest natural and organic foods available, maintains the strictest quality standards in the industry, and has an unshakeable commitment to sustainable agriculture. Whole Foods has been a staple in the River Forest community since 1994 and is planning to expand their market this fall. To learn more, or place a grocery pickup/delivery order, click [here](#).

Please support our 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 through weekly E-newsletters and on its social media channels. 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](#).

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.

River Forest Township Seeks New Township Clerk

If you're interested in serving your community or looking for part-time work, River Forest Township is currently seeking candidates to fill their Clerk position.

The new Clerk will be appointed May 21 and must be willing to run for the office of Township Clerk in the April 2025 election for a 4-year term. Candidates must be registered voters residing in River Forest for a minimum of one year.

Although the position is clerical in nature, the subject matter is multi-faceted. Township staff and officials are passionate about what they do to fund and deliver general assistance to community members in need, along with services related to mental health, senior services and youth and family services. For more information about the Township and the Clerk position, click [here](#).

The Clerk's salary is \$7,035 per year (there are no benefits), and is based on a 5-hour, (on average), work week, which consists of in-office work, meetings and community events.

Interested individuals must apply by May 8. If interested, please send a cover letter explaining your interest in the position and qualifications, along with your resume, to clerk@riverforesttownship.org.

Need-Based Youth Scholarships Available for Summer Programs

Are you in need of financial support to help pay for your child's summer programs? River Forest Township can help. The Township offers need-based scholarships for youth residents aged 5-17. Scholarships normally require cost-sharing between the family, the Township, and the program and residents should inquire with the program to determine qualifications. Assistance is available at the River Forest Community Center, Park District, Oak Park River Forest High School, School of Rock and other organizations. Call the Township Youth and Family Services Department with questions at 708-445-2727.

May is Mental Health Awareness Month!

The Township annually funds 17,000 hours of mental health and disabilities services to assist residents. May is a dedicated time for communities and organizations to recognize and share the message that mental health matters. Look for the mental health awareness campaign in the Wednesday Journal each week during May, sponsored by the Township and generous community partners. Visit the website at riverforesttownship.org for mental health resources.



**MENTAL
HEALTH
AWARENESS MONTH**

riverforesttownship.org - 708-366-2029 x11

Park District

Registration has Begun for Summer Programs

Looking for activities this summer? Registration for Park District summer programs has begun for River Forest residents! Non-residents are able to sign up for summer programs beginning Monday, May 13. To view available programming and to sign up, click [here](#).



Memorial Day Event

River Forest Park District, the Village, and Kiwanis Club of River Forest-Oak Park are proud to present the 98th annual River Forest Memorial Day Parade, Ceremony and Community Picnic on Monday, May 27. The parade kicks off at 9:30 a.m., beginning at Augusta Street and Ashland Avenue, and will travel south on Ashland Avenue to Lake Street, then west to Keystone Park where the parade will end with a ceremony and a FREE hotdog lunch. The mission of the parade is "to recognize and honor the men and women of the Armed Forces of the United States of America, and especially those who have made the ultimate sacrifice". **Any individual or business interested in entering a float or walking in the parade must register by Monday, May 20.**

- [Download the Parade entry form](#)
- [View the Parade Route](#)

rfparks.com | 708-366-6660

Library

Visit the [calendar](#) to see everything happening at the Library. There are events and activities for all ages. Below are some highlights:

Get Ready for Summer Reading 2024, June 6-August 3!

Summer Reading Kickoff Party Thursday, June 6, 2:30-4:30 p.m.

Start the summer off right with the Library's annual Summer Reading Kickoff Party! Sign-up for the summer reading program and you'll receive a ticket for a free scoop of ice cream. Festivities will include a live music performance by School of Rock Oak Park, a photo booth, face painting, and a bubble performance. Get ready to "Read, Renew, Repeat" this summer! The Kick Off Party is generously sponsored by the River Forest Public Library Foundation. *In case of rain, the event will be held inside.

All age groups are invited to participate in our summer reading programs that will keep residents reading all summer long and provide opportunities for prizes along the way.

Saturday, 5/18, 11a.m.-12 p.m.: Bluey Meet and Greet, Families

Come to the library for a meet and greet with Bluey! Get your picture taken with Bluey, and take home some fun activities! For families.

riverforestlibrary.org | 708-366-5205

Organizations Serving River Forest



Oak Park and River Forest High School



Roosevelt Middle School

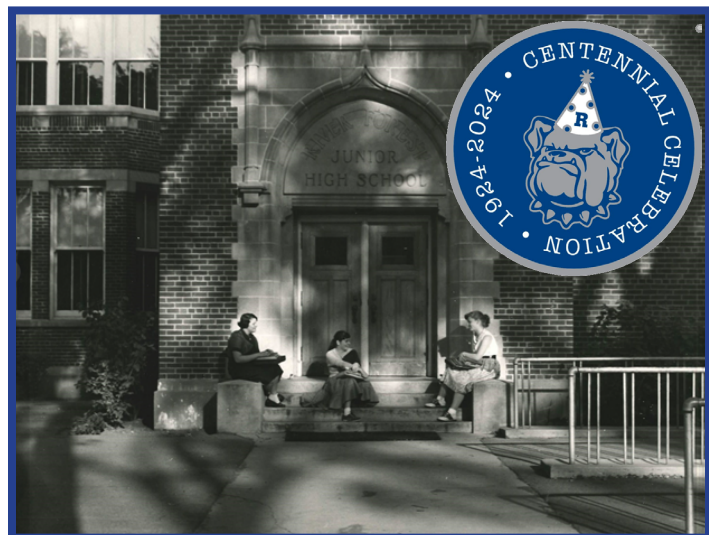


Willard Elementary School



Lincoln Elementary School

District 90



Roosevelt Centennial Celebration is Sunday, May 19

Join the Roosevelt Middle School Centennial Celebration on Sunday, May 19 from 10 a.m. - 1 p.m. This event is free and includes an open house, live music, food vendors, and displays of historic photos. Do you have a memory, photo or artifact in your attic you'd be willing to share or display at the event? Contact the planning committee via email at rms100year@gmail.com.

Lincoln Elementary Fine Arts Night is Monday, May 20

Community members are invited to enjoy student musical performances and view art on display throughout the school during Fine Art Night at Lincoln Elementary School on Monday, May 20 from 6-7:30pm.

Willard Students Art on Display at the River Forest Library

Check out the artwork created by Willard Elementary School students with Art Teacher Ms. Dana Parker, on display throughout the month of May located upstairs in the school. Congratulations, artists! If interested, please call Willard School 708-366-6740.

Willard 5K - May 19, 2024

Gather your family and let's make this event truly magical - whether you choose to run, walk, stroll, hop, skip, or boogie across the finish line. The mission is to raise critical funds for the Willard PTO.

Registration is \$25/person. and sponsorship opportunities are available! Contact Candace Taylor at Willard.Fall5K@gmail.com for sponsorship inquiries.



District 200

OPRFHS Students Win at College Level Competition

Three Oak Park and River Forest High School (OPRFHS) students recently were selected as the only high schoolers in the state to give oral presentations at a university-level competition, at the Illinois State Academy of Science's annual meeting. Not only that—all three students took first place in each of their respective categories!

The students are members of OPRFHS's Investigational Research, Design, and Innovation (IRDI) class, in which students design and conduct a novel research project aimed at filling a gap in published research. IRDI students must find a published expert in the field to mentor them as they work toward creating a formal research poster and paper that is submitted to local, state, and national/international science competitions.

In the health science category, junior **Abby Falkoff** investigated the potential for croton and white oak—two plants native to Central America—as a new, cheaper, more easily accessible treatment for Guatemalans with type 2 diabetes. In the microbiology category, senior **Noah Campbell** tested a novel method for using an inexpensive, ubiquitous, and resilient strain of bacteria, *Bacillus licheniformis*, to address the significant environmental problem of acid mine drainage. And in the engineering and technology category, junior **Anne Claud** researched how to increase cars' fuel efficiency by recovering lost heat from the catalytic converter; her findings have implications that include reducing the carbon footprints of non-electric vehicles.

"It was definitely a new experience competing against people who were at least five years older than me," Abby said. "All the presenters were very passionate about research, which made the conference interesting and fun, and not as scary as I thought it would be."

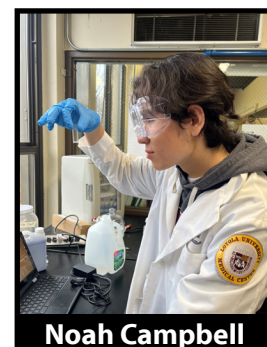
Noah concurred. *"It was definitely a little intimidating at first to be following a presentation done by a Ph.D. and three or four graduate students. It was amazing to see how curious and engaged these people actually were in our projects. They asked us questions, shared some laughs, and really made me feel like one of their peers."*



Anne Claud



Abby Falkoff



Noah Campbell

Mark Your Calendars for Sunday, May 19

There are several family-friendly events happening in River Forest on Sunday, May 19.

The day begins at 8:30 a.m. with the second annual Willard 5K, which takes place at **Willard Elementary School** to help the Willard Wizard’s PTO raise money for the school. The race will be a 2-loop course and the start line will be at the corner of Greenfield Street and Franklin Avenue. Participants can run, run/walk, or walk - and children are welcome! Come on out and support a local school and their hardworking PTO. Register or learn more [here](#).

After the race, participate in the Roosevelt Middle School Centennial Celebration from 10 a.m. - 1 p.m. This day of festivities is free to attend and will include an open house, tours, and an introduction from Village President Cathy Adduci. Attendees can also look forward to live music, food vendors and a display of photographs and memories. To learn more, click [here](#).

In recognition of Asian American & Pacific Islander Heritage Month, The River Forest Public Library is hosting “A Family History of Japanese-American Incarceration” from 2-3:30 p.m. Area resident Lourdes Nicholls will tell the story of her family’s experience in an incarceration camp for Americans of Japanese ancestry during World War II. Hear the personal story of her family’s harrowing journey from immigration through incarceration at the Manzanar camp, to final release—and the legacy that has been passed on. This event is possible through a partnership with the River Forest Township. More information can be found [here](#).

Finally, Oak Park River Forest High School (OPRFHS) is hosting their Community Block Party Saturday, May 19 from 1 - 4 p.m. at **the Mall on the west side of OPRFHS**, where you’ll also have the chance to take a lap around their new track! Join OPRFHS for a fun day featuring the legendary alumni band - The Jade 50’s, along with a variety of food trucks, face painting, bounce houses, and other family-friendly activities. Click [here](#) to learn more.



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.