



RIVER FOREST

Proud Heritage • Bright Future

The Village of River Forest Newsletter | September, 2022



Bonnie Brae LemonAid Stand

This annual fundraiser was founded after the September 11, 2001 terrorist attacks to cast a spotlight on this tragic day in our history - but also to provide opportunities to do something good in its aftermath. The Bonnie Brae LemonAid Stand is held each year on this solemn anniversary date, and this year's event will take place on Sunday (September 11) from 3 - 7 p.m. in the 700 block of Bonnie Brae. Unlimited lemonade, courtesy of Whole Foods, and other treats, including popcorn and cotton candy will be available, along with a photo booth, music, games and more! The Oak Park River Forest History Museum will be on hand to feature a look back over the last 20 years in our history. Other attractions will include a DJ and live music at the entertainment stage, kids' activities and storytelling from the River Forest Library, and places for families to sit and relax.

Simply make a donation and everything is free! Funds raised enable volunteers and participants - both young and old - to "turn lemons into lemonade." The group

has raised more than \$400,000 for River Forest area children's charities in the 21 years it has taken place. Online donations will also be accepted. To learn more or make an online donation, click [here](#).



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From Village President Cathy Adduci

Dear River Forest residents,

September is National Preparedness Month and it's the perfect time to **make a plan** in the case of an emergency and to **create a safety kit** to protect you and your family. To be proactive, you can sign up for alerts from the Village of River Forest [here](#). Learn more about steps you can take to be prepared by clicking [here](#).

Enjoy the beautiful fall colors in River Forest at two upcoming 5Ks. The Makin' Tracks 5K will take place Saturday, September 17 starting at 8 a.m. at [Concordia University Chicago](#) and proceeds will benefit the West Suburban Special Recreation Association, who provides recreation for adults and children with physical impairments, developmental delays or other disabilities. You can click [here](#) to register or to become a sponsor. There will also be a [Willard Elementary School 5K](#) on Sunday, October 2 beginning at 8:30 a.m. All ages are welcome to run, walk or roll to the finish line! The race is sponsored by the school's PTO and will help raise funds for the 2022-2023 school year. Click [here](#) to register or view options for donations or sponsorships. Consider supporting these great causes while spending time outdoors and view the beautiful fall colors in River Forest.

Finally, please join me next Sunday, September 11 at the 21st annual [LemonAid Stand](#). Please see the accompanying article in this newsletter for more information about the event. I'm proud of the enterprising young people involved in this effort, who are working to raise money for children's charities in River Forest and our surrounding communities - and commemorate Patriot day with charitable deeds!

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 Opens New Garden and Drive-up Book Drops

The River Forest Library's new book drops have arrived and are ready for your returns. The garden book drop now has a larger capacity and higher quality insulation to protect library materials from extreme weather. The "drive-up" book drop has also been replaced. This convenient book drop is located at the exit of the south parking lot of Roosevelt Middle School on Lathrop Avenue. Please note that the book drop is located on a one-way thoroughfare and is not accessible to cars during school drop-off (8-8:30 a.m.) and pick-up (3-3:30 p.m.) times. The Library is excited about these improvements and hopes returning library materials will now be easier and more convenient for everyone.



Makin' Tracks 5K Walk/Run

The Annual Makin' Tracks 5K Walk/Run is on Saturday, September 17 at 8 a.m. The event begins at Concordia University Chicago and then through the streets of River Forest. The charity beneficiary will be the West Suburban Special Recreation Association (WSSRA). Participants can walk or run in person and benefit an important organization. Online registration can be completed via [RaceEntry.com](https://www.raceentry.com), an easy to use platform! If you have questions, don't hesitate to reach out to the Park District at (708) 366-6660. To register, view the race map, become a charity runner and more, click [here](#). Your friends at the Park District can't wait to see you on the course!



Village Department News

Police Department

Drive Sober or Get Pulled Over!

As families and friends plan their end-of-summer celebrations for Labor Day weekend, the Police Department is partnering with the Illinois State Police, and law enforcement across the state, to stop impaired driving and help save lives.



The high-visibility "Drive Sober or Get Pulled Over" enforcement campaign began August 19 and will run through the early-morning hours of Tuesday, September 6. During this period, law enforcement will be stepping up efforts that are focused on impaired, unbuckled and distracted drivers.

Before the party starts, designate a sober driver and don't let friends or family members drive impaired. Other important tips include:

- If you're hosting a gathering, ensure all your guests designate a sober driver in advance - or arrange ride-sharing. Also, serve lots of food and include non-alcoholic beverages.
- If you do not have a designated driver, ask a sober friend for a ride home, call a cab, or stay where you are and sleep it off until you are sober.
- Don't let friends leave your sight if you think they are about to drive impaired.
- Always buckle up – this is your best defense in a crash.

The Labor Day "Drive Sober or Get Pulled Over" campaign is made possible by federal highway safety funds administered by the Illinois Department of Transportation.

Fire Department

Fall Pet Safety Tips

There is nothing like the crisp, cool air of fall and the ever changing foliage to get you excited for the change of the season. Your dog, too, is probably welcoming a break from summer's hot, sticky weather. While the setting gets more beautiful, autumn is also a time where lurking dangers pop up for our furry friends. From household poisons to cold weather hazards, there are important safety issues to consider. Below are some tips to keep your pets happy and healthy during the coming months.

Be Cautious of Rodenticides and Cold Weather Poisons

The use of rat and mouse poisons increase in the fall as rodents seek shelter from cooler temperatures and attempt to move indoors. Rodenticides are highly toxic to pets and, if ingested, the results could be fatal. If you must use these products, please do so with extreme caution and put them in places that are not accessible to your pets.

Many people choose fall as the time to change their car's engine coolant. Ethylene glycol-based coolants are highly toxic to animals and spills should be cleaned up immediately. Consider switching to propylene glycol-based coolants, as they are much less toxic than other engine coolants.

Stay Clear of Mushrooms

Fall and spring are mushroom seasons. While 99% of mushrooms have little or no toxicity, the 1% that are highly toxic can cause life-threatening problems in pets. Since most toxic mushrooms are difficult to distinguish from nontoxic ones, the best way to prevent dogs from ingesting these poisonous plants is to keep them away from areas where mushrooms are present. Contact your veterinarian or the Animal Poison Control Center immediately at (888) 426-4435 if you witness your pet eating a wild mushroom.



Keep School Supplies Out of Paws' Reach

Fall is back-to-school time, and that means glue sticks, pencils, magic markers and other items that pets can ingest may be laying around. Although these items are considered low toxicity to dogs, gastrointestinal upset and blockages can occur if they are ingested. Be sure your children keep their school supplies out of your pets reach.

Public Works/Development Services

Village Continues to Invest in Alley Improvements

Investing in the reconstruction of Village alleys not only replaces the pavement that improves the driving surface, but it also addresses stormwater issues by improving drainage. The Village has a total of 32 alleys, and each one is approximately one block in length. There are currently four alleys under construction, with several more to begin over the coming weeks. These alleys will be completed later this fall, and then there will be a pause in the construction season over the winter. In the spring, the final three alleys will be reconstructed. At that time, all alleys within the Village will have been improved with some form of permeable material to help stormwater drainage. These projects are often referred to as 'Green Alleys' because their permeable pavers divert water from the Village's stormwater system, helping to sustainably recharge groundwater.

Please continue to use caution for the duration of the season when traveling through these construction areas - and thank you for your patience during times when Public Works is focused on infrastructure improvement.



Commission Spotlight

River Forest Sustainability



Traffic and Safety Commission

The function of the **Traffic and Safety Commission** is to review transit, parking and potentially hazardous traffic matters for the Village that have been referred to them. In order for an item to be brought to the Commission, a petitioner must follow procedures that include the completion of a petition indicating 75% of properties within the notification area are in support of the request. Residents and businesses in the area will be notified of the request and given the opportunity to attend the meeting. Recommendations by the Commission are then forwarded to the Village Board for final consideration and approval. Matters can also get referred to the Commission from the Village Board and Village Staff. All requests are submitted to Village Staff for review, and at times, may require study from the Village's Traffic Engineering consultant.

The Commission serves in an advisory capacity to the Village Board of Trustees and is comprised of seven members who are River Forest residents, and who are appointed by the Village President with the advice and consent of the Board of Trustees. As an example of some of the work that they do, the Commission played a key role in the creation of the Village's **Safe Walking Routes to School plan**, and is currently reviewing the **Northeast neighborhoods traffic study**.

On June 27, the Village Board of Trustees passed an ordinance, developed by the River Forest Sustainability Commission (RFSC), requiring food establishments to only provide single-use plastic utensils and individually packaged condiments for takeout and delivery orders only when customers request them. This change to "opt-in" will have minimal impact on businesses that sell food and beverage and reduce plastic waste significantly.

According to the National Resources Defense Council (NRDC) our reliance on single-use plastics means we are accumulating waste at a staggering rate. Worldwide, we produce 300 million tons of plastic each year, half of which is for single-use items that are used quickly, then thrown away. These plastics do not break down, they break up over time and become microplastics that can be found everywhere in our environment - including in humans, waterways like the Des Plaines River, and in animals.

This ordinance was modeled after the Chicago version implemented in January, and at that time it was the only municipality in Illinois to do so. River Forest was the second in the state to adopt such a measure, and improved on the Chicago ordinance based on the feedback of residents, experts and the River Forest food and beverage business community. The River Forest ordinance is not only one of the only ordinances like this in the region, it's the most impactful and innovative.

Also included in the ordinance was language to encourage the business community to "...make every effort to reduce use of plastic bags, polystyrene foam and excess packaging." The RFSC has also committed to studying the use of single-use plastic bags further.

Passage of this ordinance continues the Village's goals towards reducing greenhouse gasses as outlined in PlanItGreen, Oak Park and River Forest's sustainability plan, and through our commitments to The Greenest Region Compact and Chicago Climate Charter. The single-use plastic foodware ordinance went into effect in late August. More about this ordinance and the RFSC can be found at www.vrf.us/sustainability.

Someone to Know

Traffic and Safety Commission Chair Doug Rees has served the Village on the commission as a member since 2005, and as Chair since 2017. After working for 25 years as a private practice lawyer, he now serves in the Office of the Illinois Attorney General as the Deputy Attorney General in charge of civil litigation. Doug says it is an honor to represent the State and its officials to help resolve disputes and support good public policy.

A native of Omaha, Nebraska, Doug and his wife Lynn moved to River Forest in 1995 and have raised two children who are graduates of Lincoln, Roosevelt and Oak Park River Forest High School. For fun and relaxation, Doug plays and sings in a Rolling Stones cover band. He says he takes pride in living in River Forest, noting that his favorite parts are the beautiful neighborhoods for walking and bike riding, great local dining establishments, and its close proximity to Chicago and both airports.



**Douglas Rees, Chairperson
Traffic and Safety
Commission**

Organizations Serving River Forest



Township

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

Seniors: Time for Fall Home Repairs!

Are you a senior citizen and need home repairs this fall? Call the North West Housing Partnership (NWHP) Senior Home Repair Program, available to River Forest and Oak Park residents age 60+. Fees are \$20-\$40 per hour, depending on income. Eligible work includes grab bar installation, hanging pictures and sink or faucet repairs. **Please note:** this program does not include emergency repairs. Call Michelle at NWHP at (847) 969-0561 or email michellehill@nwHP.net with questions, or to set up an appointment.

From the Assessor's Office

As residents know, the 2nd installment tax bills are late, as they have not been calculated or mailed by the Cook County Assessor. The River Forest Township Assessor has been informed by the Cook County Assessor that they believe the 2nd installment tax bill may come out as late as November or December.

Sign up for the River Forest Township Assessor's email notifications by clicking [here!](#) Get notified to: apply for exemptions, appeal your property's assessment and get property tax bill due dates.

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

Library

Join the Library for these upcoming programs [and visit the library website to see everything that's happening!](#)

Tuesday, 9/6, 7-8 p.m., Book Buzz: Fall Book Preview, Adult

Calling all book lovers! Do you need reading recommendations? Come hear librarians tell you about the buzzworthy new books coming out this fall -- and share what you've been reading, too.

Thursday, 9/8, 7-8:30 p.m., Craft & Chat, Adult

Crafting isn't just for kids! At this session, resident librarian/baker Dorothy will give a delicious lesson in cake decorating. The Library provides the supplies, so just bring your creativity. Brought to you in partnership with River Forest Township. **Advanced registration is required.**

Saturday, 9/10, 7:30-9 p.m., Dooley Band Concert, All Ages

The annual tradition returns! Join this outdoor event in the garden for live music by River Forest natives the Dooleys, who have been entertaining Chicagoland for more than 50 years. In the event of inclement weather, the concert will be held indoors and is sponsored by the River Forest Public Library Foundation.

Park District

Autumn Class Registration at the Park District

The River Forest Park District autumn registration has begun! Programs such as pickleball and tennis lessons, a variety of special events, youth basketball leagues, dance, STEAM, parent tot classes and more are being offered. To view the Autumn Fun Guide, click [here](#).

Family Campout

Join the Park District staff at Priory Park for a Family Campout! This overnight GREEN camping experience is for all ages held on Friday, September 23 at 6:30 p.m. until Saturday, September 24 at 7:30 a.m. Participants will enjoy a campfire with s'mores, snacks and more. One adult must attend per family and camping equipment must be provided by attendees, including tents and sleeping bags. Registration is required for this FREE event, and you can do so by clicking [here](#).



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



[riverforestlibrary.org](https://www.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

Oak Park River Forest High School will be closed in observance of the Labor Day holiday on Monday, September 5

Safety and Security Update

During the summer, Oak Park River Forest High School undertook a comprehensive review of its emergency response procedures, to ensure the school is doing everything possible to protect the safety of students, staff and visitors. As a result of this review, changes to procedures for this school year include:

Communications: The district will issue a brief holding statement as soon as possible and will follow up with a more detailed communication once it has reviewed and confirmed the facts of the situation.

Campus Safety Staff: More seasoned officers on the 34-member team will be shifted to the most critical areas of the building, and a new bathroom log will ensure bathrooms are being monitored multiple times each class period.

Training: Annual online Campus Safety training will now be in-person, to provide professional development that is engaging and interactive, and allows the opportunity for questions and follow-up.



Student IDs: The high school is returning to the requirement that students not just show, but wear their IDs for entry into the building, and at all times throughout the school day.

Emergency Response: Emergency response documentation has been revised, with clearer, more concise directives provided in every room.

Collaboration with District 97 and the Village of Oak Park: School officials are working on an intergovernmental agreement with the Oak Park Police Department to establish common protocols for both District 97 and District 200. An important and pending conversation is the exact nature of the collaboration with the Oak Park Police Department, including whether an officer should be identified as a primary liaison to the school.

Incident Command System (ICS): ICS is used by public agencies to manage emergencies with a standardized approach that delineates the roles and responsibilities of specific personnel during crisis. The Campus Safety management team received ICS training in July, with training for all incident command positions in August.

Drills: The school will conduct at least one drill during student lunch periods to ensure students and teachers are prepared for incidents that could occur during these times.

oprffhs.org | 708-383-0700

District 90

In addition to District 90 offices and schools being closed on Monday, September 5 for the Labor Day holiday, students will be dismissed early on Friday, September 30, with faculty and staff participating in professional development activities during the afternoon. For more information, contact your student(s)' school.

School Traffic Zones and Extracurricular Activities Return

As students throughout the Village establish their routines in traveling to and from school, it is crucial that motorists pay greater attention to reduced speed in school zones, and to the return of specially marked one-way streets during school hours.

In addition, District 90 schools have been in session for several weeks as students and teachers return to the important work of learning and teaching. Students' experiences of participating in high-quality classroom instruction are often supplemented by extracurricular activities and field trips. These supplemental instructional opportunities can be memorable portions of a student's school experience. After two years of reduced extracurricular activities and field trips due to the pandemic, District 90 schools are again offering these activities and field trips. Depending on the grade level and/or classroom, District students will be visiting the Fermilab, holding Back-to-School family activities, supplementing classroom instruction with a Field Day, and participating in activities such as Chess Club and a variety of sports teams, as well as many other endeavors.



district90.org | 708-771-8282

Backyard Yoga

Enter a garden oasis, shed some stress and relax with friends - for a great cause! Join the Hephzibah Children's Association for a backyard yoga retreat, led by instructor Karina Quintara on Saturday, September 24 at 5:30 p.m. Participants will enjoy an evening of outdoor yoga followed by refreshments until 8 p.m. All proceeds will benefit Hephzibah, a non-profit organization that enhances the safety and well-being of children, while preserving the dignity of their parents and family. Tickets can be purchased [here](#) and the location will be sent with the confirmation. This event is organized by Hephzibah Oak Park Auxiliary member, Dorota Szerszenowicz-Olweny, who can be emailed [here](#) with any questions.



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.