

JULY/AUGUST 2010

OP/FYI

A NEWSLETTER
FROM THE
VILLAGE OF
OAK PARK

VOLUME 22 • ISSUE 3

Mid-Week Market now open



Area residents and commuters are invited to socialize, eat, play and shop local at Oak Park's newest weekly community event — the Mid-Week Market. More than a farmers' market, closer to a street festival, the Mid-Week Market is open from 4 – 9 p.m. every Wednesday through Sept. 15.

The market features fresh fruits and vegetables, a wide selection of ready-to-eat items and a range of goods and services from local businesses — all in the heart of downtown Oak Park on Lake Street, just east of Harlem Avenue. Local microbrews and wine are available for on-site consumption as well, along with food demonstrations and live music.

Officials say the Mid-Week Market is about bringing people together for food, fun and entertainment, while also introducing them to local merchants who make Oak Park such a great place to live, work and do business.

Designed to be a celebration of life in Oak Park, the market concept grew from a close collaboration between the Village and local business organizations, including Downtown Oak Park and the Avenue Business Association who are working together to showcase just how much the local economy has to offer.

The Mid-Week Market is expected to start slow, but grow to as many as 35 booths — about a third selling fresh fruits and vegetables, a third offering ready-to-eat food and a third local retailers selling a wide range of goods and services. Live acoustic music, microbrews and wine, along with ample outdoor seating, should make the market the place to be on Wednesdays.

Oak Park's new Mid-Week Market isn't just for locals, however. Its location is just steps away from the CTA Green Line stop at Harlem Avenue and the Metra west line stop at Marion Street. Parking is available nearby as well, along with numerous bicycle racks.

For more information, visit www.oak-park.us/midweekmarket or e-mail midweekmarket@oak-park.us.

Farmers' Market in full swing

The Oak Park Farmers' Market is open for business from 7 a.m. – 1 p.m. every Saturday through October. Now in its 35th season, the market is held in the Pilgrim Church parking lot just west of the intersection of Lake Street and Ridgeland Avenue. In addition to a variety of fresh fruits and vegetables, dried and cut flowers, bedding plants, honey and cheeses from Illinois and neighboring states, the market also offers warm donuts made on-site, juice and coffee, and live bluegrass music. For more information visit www.oak-park.us/farmersmarket, e-mail farmersmarket@oak-park.us or call 708.358.5780.



Marion Street bests Chicago River Walk

Oak Park's Marion Street/Westgate Street improvement project earned the top merit award from the Chicago Building Congress, besting the Chicago River Walk and Michigan Avenue Plaza in the infrastructure improvement category. The Oak Park project was in rarified air, sharing the winner's circle with several prestigious projects that took top honors in other categories, including the modern wing of the Art Institute of Chicago, which was chosen as the best in the new construction category. Oak Park officials called the award the capstone of honors the Marion Street/Westgate Street project has earned since its completion in late 2007. For more information on the award, call 708.358.5796 or e-mail village@oak-park.us. More information on Marion Street, including details on its other awards, is posted on the planning pages of www.oak-park.us/planning — just look for the Marion Street icon.

BUILDING & PROPERTY STANDARDS NEWS

Planning a block party? Know the rules

With the block party season in full swing, residents are reminded of a few easy to follow rules. The following guidelines can help make for a safe and successful block party experience:

- Use a north-south block. Due to public safety and traffic considerations, block parties are not allowed on east-west streets.
- Make sure emergency vehicles can get through if needed. Tables, chairs or other items should not project more than six feet from the curb. And don't stretch wires, ropes, nets, lights, banners or other items across the street.
- Supervise children at all times. Even though the street may be closed, accidents can happen.
- Use only street barricades provided by the Village. Cars parked in a street as a barricade may impede emergency vehicles, and could be ticketed.
- Do not plan a party for an alley. Alleys provide important access for utility companies and other services.
- Keep sidewalks clear. Sidewalks are public ways that may not be obstructed even during a block party.
- If alcohol is present, keep it on private property. Alcohol may not be sold.

For more information on block parties, call 708.358.5700 or e-mail publicworks@oak-park.us. A block party information packet is posted online at www.oak-park.us/community.

HEALTH NEWS

www.oak-park.us/health

Vaccinations...for whooping cough, meningitis and chicken pox are available to Oak Park residents ages 11 – 18 through the Oak Park Department of Public Health under a grant from the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act. For more information, call 708.358.5485 or e-mail health@oak-park.us.

Community walking group...*Walk and Talk* is seeking participants. The program is sponsored by the Oak Park Department of Public Health, West Cook YMCA, Park District of Oak Park, American Association of Retired Persons (AARP), West Suburban Hospital and Rush Oak Park Hospital. For more information on how to join and receive a free pedometer, call 708.358.5485 or e-mail health@oak-park.us.

Free nicotine replacement patches...are available through the *Break the Habit Program*, sponsored by the Oak Park Health Department with funding from the Illinois Department of Public Health Tobacco Free Communities fund. Residents age 18 and over are eligible. To register, call 866.784.8937.

Community conversation on health care reform...is scheduled for 7 p.m., Wed., Aug. 11, at Village Hall, 123 Madison St. Health care reform experts will speak and answer questions about the recent legislation. The presentation is co-sponsored by the Oak Park Department of Public Health and the American Association of Retired Persons (AARP) Illinois. For more information, call 708.358.5492 or e-mail health@oak-park.us.

Protection from heat vital...for everyone, but especially the elderly and individuals with chronic diseases. On excessively hot days, avoid strenuous activity and stay inside whenever possible. In addition, wear lightweight, light-colored clothing and hats, drink lots of water and take regular breaks if involved in physical activity. And be sure to check on relatives, friends and neighbors – especially the elderly – when temperatures rise. Residents who don't have access to air conditioning are encouraged to take advantage of Oak Park's free cooling centers at Rush Oak Park Hospital, 520 S. Maple Ave., and West Suburban Medical Center, 3 Erie Court. Free transportation is available by calling the Police Department's non-emergency telephone number, 708.386.3800.

www.oak-park.us/building

Inspectors checking for violations...

Building & Property Standards Department inspectors are continually checking single-family homes and apartment buildings for code violations as part of the Neighborhood Walk Program. For nuisance violations such as garbage, debris and overgrown brush, inspectors will leave a notice on the door as a reminder to clean up and remove the materials. However, for building maintenance issues related to code violations that pose a danger, the property owner will be notified by mail. If you receive a violation letter, please take care of your repairs within the period specified in your letter. For more information call 708.358.5430 or e-mail building@oak-park.us.



Verify contractor status online...

Verifying the status of a contractor's license and insurance is just a click away. A feature on the Village website at www.oak-park.us/onlineservices searches the Building & Property Standards permit tracking database to determine if a contractor's credentials with the Village are up to date, a step that can help avoid unnecessary delays at the permit counter since a contractor's license and insurance must be current for a permit to be issued. The Village does not recommend contractors for any work or provide an opinion on a contractor's past performance. Any contractor who provides the proper documentation may register with the Building & Property Standards Department to perform work within the Village. For more information on building related matters, call 708.358.5430 or e-mail building@oak-park.us.

Police asking citizens to rate their encounters



Citizens who have encounters with Oak Park Police officers are being asked to rate how they felt the interactions went as part of a University of Illinois Chicago study. In June Oak Park Police began offering many of the individuals with whom they come into contact an opportunity to participate in a survey as part of a long-term research project designed to collect data that could help improve police procedures and approaches in not only Oak Park, but also the state and nation. The study is part of the National Police Research Platform administered through UIC's Center for Research in Law and Justice. The goal, officials say, is to systematically collect data that will help establish benchmarks for what represents excellence in policing. Oak Park and River Forest are the first communities in the region to be part of the study. Two police districts in Boston also are part of the initial survey project. Participating in the survey is simple. As police reports are filed, a letter is sent to each individual asking them to take a survey either by telephone or online. The letter includes a special code that ensures only one survey is completed for each encounter. None of the survey information is collected by the Oak Park Police Department. All survey responses are anonymous and managed by the UIC researchers. Police encounters that involve traffic accidents and stops, as well as most non-violent crimes, are part of the survey. However, encounters that result from injuries as well as those involving juveniles will not be surveyed. For more information on Oak Park's role in the survey project, call 708.356.3800 or e-mail police@oak-park.us.

FIRE DEPARTMENT NEWS

www.oak-park.us/fire

Generators require caution...Hoping to avoid weather-related power outages, many residents have turned to portable generators as a temporary solution. Because of the inherent risks, the Oak Park Fire Department has issued the following safety tips:

- Follow the manufacturer's instructions for correct placement and mounting locations.
- Operate generators only in well-ventilated, outdoor locations away from all doors, windows and any openings.
- Never use a generator in an attached garage, even with the overhead door open.
- Never refuel a generator while it is running — turn it off and let it cool first.
- Store generator fuel in a container designed and labeled for that purpose. Keep the container away from living areas.
- Use only heavy-duty, outdoor-rated, three-prong extension cords. Check for cuts, frays and plugs, especially near the grounding pin.
- If you must connect the generator to the house wiring to power appliances, have a certified electrician install a properly rated transfer switch in accordance with national and local electrical codes.
- Install carbon monoxide (CO) alarms in your home, as required by state law.

Avoid risks around downed power lines...When severe weather brings down power lines, public safety personnel urge residents be aware of the danger. Their advice — always assume power lines are live, since even momentary contact with a live power line can injure or kill. If a power line comes down, ideally, a firefighter or police officer will stand by the site until utility workers arrive. But when emergency conditions are widespread, personnel may not be available for this level of service. In those instances, affected streets or alleys are blocked and the area around the downed wire isolated by yellow warning tape. Residents who see a downed power line should call 9-1-1 right away and report the location. For more information, call 708.445.3300 or e-mail fire@oak-park.us.

Child safety seat inspection by appointment...The Fire Department has set up a special telephone line to accept requests for child safety seat inspections. Parents of young children can call 708.358.5604 to request an appointment for a car seat inspection by a certified technician. Requests also can be sent by e-mail to fire@oak-park.us. Parents will need to bring their vehicle owner's manual and car seat manufacturer's manual along with the seat they wish to have inspected. Residents are asked not to come to the Fire Department for an inspection without an appointment. As on-call firefighter/paramedics, the technicians may not be available if duty calls.

Smart meter program goes live

With smart meters now installed throughout Oak Park, residents can access daily electricity usage information online at www.comed.com/smarttools. To use the Smart Tools website, consumers will need to set up an account using their ComEd bill and an e-mail address. An active account allows access to usage information and planning tools to help better manage electricity use and cost. To help customers use the web site and its online tools, ComEd has scheduled a series of area seminars, including from 7 – 8:30 p.m., Tues., July 20 at the Oak Park Public Library, 834 Lake St., and Tues., July 27, at the Forest Park Public Library, 7555 Jackson Blvd. The ComEd pilot program is testing smart meters in more than 100,000 locations in the Chicagoland area. Other nearby communities participating in the smart meter pilot program include Bellwood, Berwyn, Broadview, Forest Park, Hillside, Maywood, Melrose Park and River Forest. At the end of the pilot program, ComEd will evaluate what was learned and make a recommendation to the Illinois Commerce Commission regarding the potential benefits of installing smart meters across the entire ComEd service territory. For more information on the program or the training sessions, call 773.269.4067 or visit www.comed.com/smartmeter.

POLICE NEWS

www.oak-park.us/police



Deter bicycle thieves... Bicycle thefts tend to increase during warmer weather. By following these steps, residents can help deter bicycle thieves:

- Never let anyone you do not know take your bike for a ride.
- Beware of two people on one bike. Bicycle thieves often travel in pairs this way.
- Trust your instincts. If you feel someone is going to take your bicycle, shout for help.
- Stay in the company of friends — there usually is safety in numbers.
- Think twice about resisting — your bike can be replaced, you cannot.
- Call the police immediately if you see anyone suspicious hanging around a bike rack, in a neighbor's yard or near a garage.
- Register your bike with the Village. Should your bike be stolen and later recovered the registration provides information about its rightful owner.
- Never leave your bike unlocked or unattended.
- Lock your bike even when it is stored in a closed garage, enclosed porch or basement common area. Even if a thief gets inside, a properly secured bicycle is not an easy target.

Parents are urged to share these tips with their children. For more information, call 708.386.3800, e-mail police@oak-park.us or talk to your Resident Beat Officer (RBO).

Bicycles and sidewalks... Specific rules apply when it comes to riding a bicycle on a Village sidewalk. Riding on a sidewalk by anyone of any age is prohibited in the business districts. And only those under 15 years of age may ride on a sidewalk anywhere else in the community. Youngsters riding on sidewalks always must yield to pedestrians. For more information on bicycle rules and safety, call 708.386.3800 or e-mail police@oak-park.us.

Open windows may invite burglars... Residents who leave their windows and patio doors open overnight to catch a summer evening breeze could unwittingly become targets of burglars who cruise neighborhoods looking for just such an opportunity. Oak Park Police urge residents who want to leave windows and outside doors open to use devices that prevent entry by limiting travel of the sash or door. Making sure patio furniture cannot be used as a makeshift ladder to reach higher windows also is important, police say. For more security tips and even an assessment of one's home, residents should contact their Resident Beat Officer, who will examine the property and offer practical suggestions for improving security. To contact your RBO, visit www.oak-park.us/police where detailed information is posted.

Don't hesitate to call 9-1-1... Oak Park Police rely on residents taking an active role. If you see unusual activity, suspicious people or vehicles in your neighborhood, don't hesitate to call 9-1-1 immediately. For more information on the Community Policing Program, or to contact your Resident Beat Officer, visit www.oak-park.us/police.

Police to host free youth basketball camp

Oak Parkers ages eight – 14 are invited to participate in a free youth basketball camp sponsored by the Oak Park Police Department. The annual camp, now in its 17th year, is scheduled for Mon., Aug. 2 - Fri., Aug. 6. Sessions will be held from 8 a.m. – noon at the West Cook YMCA, 255 S. Marion St. Activities will include group instruction, team play, one-on-one, full-court games, contests and awards. Pre-registration is required. With space limited to 60 participants, early registration is urged. Applications are available at the Oak Park Police Department in Village Hall, 123 Madison St. and online at www.oak-park.us/police — just click on the basketball. For more information, call 708.358.5542 or e-mail police@oak-park.us.



Village earns 26th consecutive Tree City USA award

The Village of Oak Park has been named a Tree City USA community by the Arbor Day Foundation for the 26th year in a row. The award, sponsored by the Arbor Day Foundation in cooperation with the National Association of State Foresters and the USDA Forest Service, acknowledges the Village's commitment to providing the highest quality of care for the more than 18,000 trees on parkways throughout the Village. For more information on the Village's forestry programs, call 708.358.5700 or e-mail publicworks@oak-park.us. More information on Tree City USA is posted at www.arborday.org/treecityusa.

Clip and Save

Who to Call at Village Hall

Dial Direct (area code 708)

| | |
|---|--|
| TTY | 711 |
| Automated Info Line | 445.3340 |
| Adjudication | 358.5479 |
| Building and Property Standards | 358.5430 |
| Licenses/permits | 358.5433 |
| Codes/status of plans | 358.5434 |
| Property complaints | 358.5443 |
| Inspections | 358.5440 |
| Community Planning/ Development | 358.5420 |
| Business Services | 358.5648 |
| Housing | 358.5410 |
| Historic Preservation | 358.5417 |
| Zoning | 358.5449 |
| Community Relations | 358.5405 |
| Graffiti Hotline | 358.5429 |
| Neighborhood Programs | 358.5405 |
| Finance | 358.5460 |
| Utility Billing Inquiries | 358.5478 |
| Fire (non-emergency) | 445.3300 |
| Human Resources | 358.5650 |
| Job Hotline | 358.5650 |
| Police (non-emergency) | 386.3800 |
| Crime Tip Hotline | 434.1636 |
| Public Health | 358.5480 |
| Animal Control | 358.5680 |
| Public Works | 358.5700 |
| Parking | |
| Day Parking Passes | 358.DAYS |
| Night Parking Passes | 358.NITE |
| Parking Office | 358.PARK |
| Snow Hotline | 358.SNOW |
| Extended Passes | 358.5750 |
| Village Clerk | 358.5670 |
| Village Manager's Office | 358.5770 |
| Village Web Site | www.oak-park.us |
| Police, Fire and Medical EMERGENCIES | 911 |

Vehicles required to display current stickers

Owners whose vehicles are not displaying current stickers are at risk for a \$50 fine. Proof of payment is not a defense against a citation for failure to display the sticker by the July 1 deadline. Vehicle owners still can renew online and receive a 10 percent discount, but will be assessed a \$20 late fee. Online renewals require the unique web identification number on the renewal form mailed to previous year's sticker holders. Payment through the online system must be made with a credit or debit card, and stickers will be delivered via U.S. Mail. In-person renewal at Village Hall, 123 Madison St., remains an option, but also will include a \$20 late fee after June 30. The Office of the Village Clerk is open until 7 p.m., Mondays for new sticker purchases and renewals. Regular hours are 8:30 a.m. – 5 p.m., Tuesday through Friday. For more information, visit www.oak-park.us/clerk, call 708.358.5670 or e-mail clerk@oak-park.us.

Middle school students honored

Fifty-five Oak Park middle school students were honored for fostering positive human relations. Teachers and staff of Oak Park schools nominated students for the award, selecting those who demonstrate concern for others and respect for individual differences. This is the 28th consecutive year of the award program, which is coordinated by the Oak Park Community Relations Commission. The 2010 award winners are:

Ascension

Laura Devitt

Gwendolyn Brooks

Tosin Adeyemi
Cecilia Aguire
Katie Appel
Christopher Bolden
Kirsten Cabacungan
Katelyn Czachor-Bobola
Hannah Gorin
Derrick Griffin
Helena Harmon
Charlie Hoffman
Alexis Kosik
Tiffany Lance
Olivia Lenzo
Jackson Lewis
Nkabila Mwakoyoma
Latroy Robinson
Emma Sanye

Patrick Spencer
Tess Trinka
Emily Walker
Eugene White

Percy Julian

Alexandra L. Barcia
Vanessa Brown
Kelly Cerniglia
Caroline Coughlan
Zoe Gearing
Ella Gill
Molly Guarino
Carly Johnson
Taylor Mayfield
Connor McIlwain
Margaret Mitrovich
Mitchell Parton
Amit Russell
Fiona Ryan
Lauren Rynne

Rory Schrobilgen
Dana Schwartz
Skyler Seed
Hannah Sherman
Owen Sorensen
Haley Thompson
Lindsey Zdziarski-West

St. Edmund

Danielle Porter
Maya Rice
Christian Rodriguez

St. Giles

Rocco Curio
Rebecca DiSomma
Noelle Fajardo
Joe Griffin
Jimmy Kowalczyk
Grace Lipo
Daniel Zawacki
Grace Zimmerman

Roosevelt Road streetscape work poised to begin



Work to improve the streetscape and walkability of Roosevelt Road could begin as early as this month. Funded in part with \$7 million in state and federal funds, efforts will focus on creating a more pedestrian-friendly, landscaped and vibrant commercial corridor along the busy thoroughfare shared by Oak Park, Berwyn and Cicero. The initial groundwork for the project first was laid in 2000 when the Berwyn Development Corporation, working with the City of Berwyn and the Village of Oak Park, received a state grant to develop general guidelines for improving the Roosevelt Road corridor. That plan, released in 2003, recommended that the three communities adopt a shared vision and unified zoning regulations to make it possible. The project took a dramatic step forward in 2006 when Berwyn and Oak Park, along with the City of Cicero, signed an intergovernmental agreement pledging to work together to revitalize their shared border. Creation of specific design plans for streetscape improvements and new consistent zoning regulations for all three communities were authorized in 2007. Streetscape design plans were adopted in 2008, and the zoning regulations approved in 2009. The only remaining obstacle was to secure funding for the project, a hurdle swept away by a commitment for funding made by the Illinois Department of Transportation in December. Work will start at Harlem Avenue and move east to Austin Boulevard in three phases – Harlem to Oak Park Avenue, Oak Park to Ridgeland Avenue and Ridgeland to Austin, working on the south side to north side in each phase. Construction is expected to be completed by August 2011. For more information on the project, including copies of the planning documents, visit www.rooseveltroad.com.



Volunteer of the year...is Steven Glass, chair of the Housing Programs Advisory Committee. The award is presented each year to a resident whose involvement in the community goes above and beyond the call of duty. Glass, an Oak Park resident since 2003, is vice president of Quality & Innovation for Access Community Health Network. Among the activities that helped earn Glass the award was his work to re-vamp the Village's housing programs including diversity assurance and multi-family housing incentives.

Glass was honored at the recent Evening of Appreciation, a special night set aside each year to recognize the many residents who volunteer to serve on one or more of the Village's 25-plus boards and commissions. The award was presented by the Village Board and Citizen Involvement Commission (CIC) whose volunteers recruit, interview and recommend individuals for the Village's other citizen boards and commissions that advise the Village Board. For more information about opportunities to serve on a Village board or commission call 708.358.5670, e-mail clerk@oak-park.us or visit www.oak-park.us/volunteer.



Village of Oak Park
Village Hall
123 Madison Street
Oak Park, Illinois 60302-4272



Village Manager
Thomas W. Barwin
Village Clerk
Teresa Powell
John Hedges
Jon Hale
Glenn Brewer
Ray Johnson
Colette Lueck
Jan Pate
Trustees
David Pope
Village President



Residential Customer Local
Oak Park, Illinois

Postal Carrier
Pre-Sort

Permit No. 26
Oak Park, IL
PAID
U.S. Postage
Standard
Presort

PUBLIC WORKS NEWS

www.oak-park.us/publicworks

Electronics drop-off program...Residents can safely recycle old electronics and related items from 9 a.m. – noon, Saturdays, July 31 and Aug. 28, at the Public Works Center, 201 South Blvd. Acceptable items include computers, peripherals, laptops, monitors, televisions, cell phones, rechargeable batteries, printers, fax machines, MP3 players, portable digital assistants, video game consoles, video cassette recorders/players, digital video disk players, zip drives and scanners. Residents must unload their own items. Call 708.358.5700 or e-mail publicworks@oak-park.us for more information.

Avoid missed yardwaste collections...Place containers and bags where they can be seen easily from the collection truck. A green yardwaste sticker must be attached to each paper yardwaste bag, 32-gallon container and bundle of brush no larger than two feet in diameter and four feet long. Yardwaste is picked up on regular collection days. Yardwaste stickers cost \$2.10 each and are available at Village Hall, 123 Madison St., as well as at Jewel Food Stores, 438 Madison St., 7036 Roosevelt Road, 7525 Lake St. (River Forest); Dominick's Finer Foods, 259 Lake St., 7501 North Ave. (River Forest); Dressel's Ace Hardware, 1137 Chicago Ave.; Fair Share Finer Foods, 6226 Roosevelt Road; and Schauer Ace Hardware, 7449 Madison St. (Forest Park). Call 708.358.5700 or e-mail publicworks@oak-park.us for more information.

Keep Oak Park Beautiful...Residents, community groups and business owners are invited to adopt a block by committing to removing litter from their adopted area at least once a month for a year. Keep Oak Park Beautiful will provide trash bags, refuse stickers, gloves, safety vests and an adopt-a-block sign listing the name of the participating individual or group. In the meantime, Oak Parkers are urged to help by picking up litter in their neighborhoods. Call 708.358.5700 or e-mail publicworks@oak-park.us for more information.

Watering restrictions in effect...As part of the interstate compact for preserving the Great Lakes, summer watering restrictions are in effect May 15 through Sept. 15. Outdoor water use is limited Mondays through Fridays to even-numbered street addresses on even-numbered days, and to odd-numbered addresses on odd-numbered days. Newly planted grass seed, sod, trees and shrubs are exempt from the restrictions for their first 30 days of growth. Call 708.358.5700 or e-mail publicworks@oak-park.us for more information.

Condo association training set

The last in a series of education courses intended to help condo associations increase their knowledge of proven successful practices is scheduled for 7 – 9 p.m., Wed., July 14. Entitled Risk Management of an Association, the program will be held at Village Hall, 123 Madison St. The course is offered by the Village in partnership with the Association of Condominium, Townhouse and Homeowners Associations (ACTHA), and is intended for individuals who currently are on an association board, thinking of joining a board or want to understand how an association should operate. No advance registration or fee is required. For more information, call 708.358.5410 or e-mail housing@oak-park.us.

Single-family rehab loans available

Single-family rehab loans are available to help Oak Parkers who meet income criteria restore their homes. No interest loans of up to \$25,000 for single-family houses are made to correct health and safety issues and building code violations. Loans are repayable after 20 years or when the property is transferred, with no monthly payments. For details, e-mail housing@oak-park.us or call 708.358.5410.