

Health Department can help residents deal with nuisance wildlife

The surprisingly large numbers of wild animals that call Oak Park home typically keep to themselves. But as winter weather makes their search for food and shelter more difficult, the odds of residents coming into contact with a wild animal increase.

Typically, the biggest problem with wild animals in a dense, built-up community like Oak Park is the property damage they can cause when seeking shelter. Squirrels gnawing a hole in the soffit to get into the attic and raccoons, skunks and opossums burrowing under decks, porches and garage foundations are among the more common nuisance issues property owners face. Even feral cats can cause issues.

Fortunately for residents, the Oak Park Department of Public Health has a Class C wildlife permit from the Illinois Department of Natural Resources. This permit allows the Health Department to lease traps to local property owners who want to try their hand at catching a wild animal rather than hiring a professional service.

Obtaining a trap from the Village is easy. Just visit Village Hall, 123 Madison St., between 8:30 a.m. and 5 p.m. Monday – Friday and complete a short application describing the animal you hope to trap. A cash or check deposit of

\$50 or \$75 is required, depending on the size of the trap. The deposit will be refunded as long as the trap is returned undamaged. The number of traps is limited, so be sure to call and check on availability.

If you catch an animal, the Health Department will dispatch the Village’s Animal Control officer to deal with the trap’s contents. What happens to the animal after it is trapped – whether release or euthanasia – depends on its propensity to spread disease. The Village doesn’t make that decision since state and federal laws govern how to deal with wild animals caught in populous areas.

The Illinois Department of Natural Resources offers extensive information on how to make a property less vulnerable to nuisance wildlife in urban areas, as well contact info for local



Oak Park Animal Control Officer Jason Pounds (left) explains how to properly use a trap to catch a small wild animal that has become a nuisance.

nuisance wildlife control professionals – just visit www.dnr.illinois.gov and use the search feature.

As for the coyotes and foxes that also call Oak Park home, officials say trying to trap them is difficult at best. Instead, eliminate any potential outside food sources, including unattended small pets.

For more information on dealing with nuisance wild animals in Oak Park, call 708.358.5480 or email health@oak-park.us.

Community visioning event set for Feb. 20

Envision Oak Park offers residents an opportunity to participate in a community-wide process to develop the long-range Comprehensive

Plan that will serve as a foundation for decision-making for decades to come. A vision kick-off event is scheduled for 7:30 – 9 p.m., Wed.,

Feb. 20 at the 19th Century Club, 178 Forest Ave. This event will help planners prioritize a broad set of issues, from economic development to diversity, from education to the environment, from neighborhoods to transportation, and much more. The event will include dialogue with the community and engaging techniques for gathering input. Residents are urged to bring a group of people so issues important to the future

of Oak Park can be discussed. To date, 21 Envision Oak Park workshops have been conducted with residents, neighbors, businesses and students to identify the key issues facing the Village. Although many voices have been heard, even greater participation is desired. For more information on the Comprehensive Plan, the process or this event, call 708.358.5418, e-mail planning@oak-park.us or visit envisionoakpark.com.





Electric vehicle charging stations installed in two public garages

Electric vehicle charging stations have been installed in two Village public parking garages. Chargers are located in the northwest corner on the fourth floor of the Avenue Garage on North Boulevard and just inside the Marion Street entrance on the first floor of the Holley Court Garage downtown. Each station will allow two vehicles to charge at the same time. The charging station in the Avenue Garage is connected to the solar panel array on the roof, providing clean, renewable energy to charge the vehicles. Typically, using a charging station requires a membership in a charging network. However, the Village will allow vehicle owners to use its membership — just ask at the security station in either garage. Officials say that a full recharge would take two to five hours, but most users likely will be just topping off while they shop or run errands nearby. Garage parking rates still apply, but the first hour is free. Parking always is free on Sunday. For more information, e-mail parking@oak-park.us.

Block party applications available

Applications for block parties are now being accepted. Some weekends fill quickly so events should be planned early to ensure preferred dates. Block party information and an application packet are posted at www.oak-park.us. Call 708.358.5700 for details. Residents also can join a block party information mailing list by sending an e-mail to clerk@oak-park.us — be sure to include your name, telephone and the block you represent.

Planning a block party? Know the rules

- 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.
- 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.

Sewer backup protection grant program accepting applications

Applications are now being accepted for a program that provides financial assistance to property owners who install systems to protect their homes from sewer backup during a heavy rain event. Anyone who meets the program guidelines can apply, regardless of income. Work eligible for funding through the Sewer Backup Protection Grant Program includes installing an overhead sewer system or a backflow prevention system. Eligible homeowners may qualify for a grant of 50 percent of the total cost of sewer backup prevention improvements, up to a maximum of \$3,500. Details on the program, including the application materials, are posted at www.oak-park.us/sewergrant. For more information on the program, call 708.358.5410 or e-mail housing@oak-park.us.



Early childhood screenings offered

Free mini-screenings for Oak Park three and four year old children will be offered from 8:15 to 9:45 a.m., Wednesdays Feb. 6 and April 10 at Whittier Elementary School, 715 N. Harvey Ave. School District 97's special services department will assess vision, hearing and other areas for indications of health or developmental concerns. For more information or to schedule a screening, call 708.524.3131.

Life-saving carbon monoxide detectors required by law

An investment of about \$30 for a detector can be the difference in life and death when it comes to deadly carbon monoxide that can leak from a malfunctioning gas appliance such as a furnace or water heater. Because it is impossible to see, taste or smell the toxic fumes, carbon monoxide can kill before you are aware it is in your home. That's why state law requires homeowners and landlords to install carbon monoxide detectors within 15 feet of every room used for sleeping. Alarms can be battery powered, plug-in with battery backup or wired into the AC power line with a secondary battery backup. The alarm can be combined with a smoke detector if the unit complies with established standards and the alarm differentiates the hazard. The property owner must supply and install all required alarms. Landlords must ensure that alarms are operable on the date a lease is initiated. While tenants are responsible for testing and maintaining the alarm after the lease commences, landlords must provide written instructions. Carbon monoxide detectors are not substitutes for smoke detectors, fire officials caution, so both devices are essential. For more information, call 708.445.3300 or e-mail fire@oak-park.us.

Program helps families learn to prevent substance abuse

Parents are encouraged to participate in an evidence-based, family-focused alcohol, tobacco and other drugs education and prevention program offered on Thursday evenings by Oak Park Township Youth Services. The program, called *FACE-IT (Families Acting Collaboratively to Educate and Involve Teens)*, is a winner of a National Exemplary Award for Innovative Substance Abuse Prevention. For more information or to register, visit www.oakparktownship.org or call 708.445.2727.

Pilot carpet recycling program launched

In an effort to provide a green disposal solution, the Village has teamed up with Indianapolis-based Heritage Recycling LLC to provide curb-side collection and recycling for used carpet and padding. The pilot program, set to launch on March 1, will be similar to the yard and bulk waste sticker programs currently offered. Stickers will cost \$2 each and can be purchased at the Cashier's Office in Village Hall, 123 Madison St. Carpet and padding must be cut or folded into rolls no larger than four feet long and not exceeding 50 pounds each. The rolls should be free of tape, tack strips, nails, knife blades, wet glue and debris, and placed in a dry location such as on or under a porch or in a garage. Pickup will be scheduled by calling the telephone number or visiting the web site listed on the sticker. Each roll will require three stickers. The discarded carpet and pad will be recycled and turned into new products or used as a fuel source. For more information about this and other recycling opportunities, call 708.358.5700 or publicworks@oak-park.us.

Film festival to focus on environmental issues



More than two dozen solution-oriented environmental films will be screened at venues throughout Oak Park and River Forest March 1 – 3 as part of the second annual One Earth Film Festival, organized by Green Community Connections, a grassroots organization devoted to creating a sustainable future in the Oak Park and River Forest area. Each film screening will be followed by an audience discussion intended to foster understanding of climate change, sustainability and the power of human involvement.

This year's event will feature a filmmaking contest for students from upper elementary school through college. Information, including a list of venues, films, dates and times will be posted at greencommunityconnections.org.

New resident information posted online

Anyone new to Oak Park can find a wide range of useful information posted on the Village web site at www.oak-park.us/newresident. The page offers 13 fact sheets on topics most requested by those considering moving to Oak Park or who have arrived recently. From general facts, information and useful contacts to parking rules, entertainment and recycling, the fact sheets can help newcomers navigate the ins and outs of the Village. Individual fact sheets or the entire packet, compiled in an Adobe Portable Document Format (pdf), can be viewed online or downloaded for printing or future reference. Information also is available by calling the Community Relations Department at 708.358.5405 or via e-mail to community@oak-park.us.

Citizen volunteers always needed

When it comes to citizen involvement in the process of making public policy, few communities can match the opportunities offered in Oak Park, where volunteers serve on more than 20 separate advisory boards, commissions and committees. As part-time lawmakers, the Village president and trustees rely on the boards and commissions to do much of the investigative work associated with particular issues. These citizen volunteers conduct in-depth studies, evaluate research and hold meetings that create the public record so critical to Village Board actions. A varied group of volunteers is sought to represent the Village's diversity, and renters as well as homeowners are encouraged to apply. For more information on volunteering, visit www.oak-park.us/volunteer, call 708.358.5670 or e-mail clerk@oak-park.us.

HOUSING NEWS

housing@oak-park.us

Down payment assistance...Home ownership may be closer than some think with \$10,000 in down payment assistance from the West Cook County Housing Collaborative for select updated and rehabbed homes. Financing and the supply of homes is limited. To apply, call the HUD-certified West Cook Homeownership Center at 708.771.5801. An application also is available online at www.WestCookHomeownership.org.

First-time homebuyer seminars...Individuals interested in learning more about buying a home and securing a mortgage are invited to attend free seminars offered every month by the Oak Park Regional Housing Center. Seminars are held at 7 p.m., the fourth Tuesday of each month in Village Hall, 123 Madison St. The next seminar is Tues., Feb. 26. For more information, call 708.771.5801.

Multi-family rehab loans...Owners of multi-family buildings with seven or fewer units may be eligible for forgivable loans of up to \$5,000 per unit and an additional \$2,500 per unit for qualified energy upgrades under the Village's Small Rental Rehab Program. Energy funds are available only until March 31. For details, call 708.358.5410 or e-mail housing@oak-park.us.

Single-family rehab loans...Loans are available to income-eligible residents to correct health and safety issues and building code violations in their single-family homes. The program offers no-interest loans of up to \$25,000 that do not require monthly payments. Loans are repayable after 20 years or when the property is transferred. Call 708.358.5410 or e-mail housing@oak-park.us for more information.

Energy, water efficiency rebates and tools...A Village program funded by the Oak Park River Forest Community Foundation offers rebates to help homeowners reduce energy waste and use. The Energy and Water Efficiency Rebate Program will offer \$50 to approximately 50 single-family households to conduct an energy audit and \$100 to 50 households to install low-flow toilets. Another 250 households will receive free efficient shower heads and faucet aerators. For details, call 708.358.5410 or e-mail housing@oak-park.us.

Energy tracking tools...Oak Parkers who sign up for and link their utility bills to a free online energy-use tracking tool can help the Village earn up to \$25,000 for community projects, as well as receive free energy assessments and rebates for efficiency improvements. The tracking tool – EnergyBUZZ – is part of the Nicor Gas Community Challenge, which offers access to a range of programs for residential, multi-family and business properties. While homes and businesses can receive free energy assessments and rebates for energy efficiency improvements, apartment building owners can receive free faucet aerators, showerheads, light bulbs and programmable thermostats. Officials say energy efficiency not only helps families and businesses make ends meet, improvements also benefit the community by putting more money into people's pockets to spend at area businesses, contributing to the local economy and job growth. CNT Energy, a nonprofit organization dedicated to helping people and communities save energy and money, administers the Community Challenge program on behalf of Nicor Gas. For more information on the program, visit www.nicorgasrebates.com/Challenge.com.

Don't hesitate to call 9-1-1

Oak Park's community policing approach relies on residents taking an active role. If you see unusual activity, suspicious people or vehicles in your neighborhood, call 9-1-1 immediately. For more information on the Community Policing Program, or to contact your Resident Beat Officer, call 708.386.3800 or visit www.oak-park.us/police.

Clip and Save

Who to Call

Dial Direct (area code 708)

Village Hall	www.oak-park.us
TTY	711
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	358.5420
Historic Preservation	358.5417
Zoning	358.5449
Business Services	358.5648
Housing	358.5410
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	358.7275
Day Parking Passes	option 3
Extended Pass	option 4
Night Parking Pass	option 2
Parking Permits	option 5
Snow Hotline	option 1
Vehicle Stickers	option 5
Village Board	358.5784
Village Clerk	358.5670
Village Manager's Office	358.5770
EMERGENCIES	911
Park District	www.pdop.org
Administration	725.2017
Customer Service	383.0002
Building & Grounds	725.2050
Business Operations	725.2015
Public Library	www.oppl.org
Main Library	383.8200
Maze Branch	386.4751
Dole Branch	386.9032
School District 97	www.op97.org
Administration	524.3000
School District 200	www.oprfhs.org
Administration	434.3107
Township	www.oakparktownship.org
Senior Services	383.8060
Youth Services	445.2727
General Assistance	383.8005
Assessor Services	383.8005

Stay connected...

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Register now to vote in April local elections

Oak Parkers who want to have a say in who sits on the boards of the Village, Park District, Public Library, Township and both school districts will have their chance come April 9, the date for the next Consolidated Municipal Election. But to cast a vote, one must be registered. Registration is offered from 8:30 a.m. – 5 p.m., Mon. – Fri. at Village Hall, 123 Madison St. Voter registration also is offered from 9 a.m. – 5 p.m., Monday – Friday at Oak Park Township, 105 S. Oak Park Ave. Two types of identification are required, at least one with the current address. The deadline to register is Tues., March 12. For information, call 708.358.5670 or e-mail clerk@oak-park.us.

Earth Fest seeking sponsors

Sponsors are now being sought for the Village's third annual celebration of green living — Earth Fest — scheduled for Sat., April 20, in the LEED® Gold-certified Public Works Center, 201 South Blvd. Sponsors not only receive special recognition in event promotional materials, they also help move the community forward toward the important goal of living sustainably. Earth Fest celebrates green living by encouraging and educating people on how to live more sustainably to support a healthier planet. This year's event will highlight organic farmers, eco-friendly landscapers, local chefs and restaurants, games and activities for children, items for sale, and entertainment. In addition, recycling booths will be available for eyeglasses, sun glasses, hearing aids, unused medications, rechargeable batteries, cell phones and old blue jeans. Sponsors earn the opportunity to not only educate but also to engage and empower people to make healthier choices for themselves, their families and the planet. Sponsorships range from \$125 to \$1,000. A sponsorship form is posted at www.oak-park.us/earthfest. For more information, call 708.358.5778 or e-mail sustainability@oak-park.us.

Celebration to say goodbye to old ice arena

Residents are invited to be part of history on Sat., Feb. 16 as the Park District bids farewell to the old Ridgeland Common in preparation for a major renovation of the flagship facility. Alumni from Oak Park River and Forest and Fenwick high schools



Photo: David T. Kandler

will get things started at 4 p.m. with the last hockey game played on the old rink. The game will be followed by a special figure skating exhibition and then two hours of public skating to music performed by Chicago Blackhawks organist Frank Pellico. Appearances by former Blackhawks players, games on the ice and photo portraits on the Zamboni

also are planned. Prizes will include an hour ice rental and a birthday party package in the activity room when Ridgeland Common reopens, as well as autographed hockey jerseys and pucks. Admission is \$6 or free with a rink pass. Skate rentals are available for an additional \$2 and the concession stand will be open. For more details on the event and renovation visit www.ridgelandcommon.org.

Plan for parking when it snows

Residents who rely on on-street parking are urged to monitor local forecasts and plan accordingly when snow is predicted. The Village has specific rules that govern parking when it snows — rules that are enforced seven days a week, including holidays — to ensure streets can be properly plowed. When a snow emergency is declared by the Public Works Department, all parking is prohibited on the main streets posted as snow routes. Parking on other streets is restricted to one side from 8 a.m. until 10 p.m. in residential areas and from midnight to 8 a.m. in designated commercial districts, the side determined by the odd/even date. To find out if snow-related parking restrictions are in effect, call 708.358.SNOW (708.358.7669) for a recorded message. Cable television subscribers can tune into VOP-TV, broadcast on Comcast channel 6 and AT&T channel 99. Residents who sign up at www.oak-park.us/notifyme will be alerted via text or e-mail. The snow emergency parking rules and a list of frequently asked questions also are posted at www.oak-park.us/snow.

Sidewalk shoveling required...Property owners who shovel their sidewalks are doing more than making it safer for pedestrians of all ages, they are complying with the law. Village ordinance requires snow and ice to be removed from the public sidewalk within 24 hours following any snow, sleet or freezing rain. Being a good neighbor is important, too, so property owners are urged to help those who may need help clearing a sidewalk. For more information on the shoveling requirement or help resources, call 708.358.5700 or e-mail publicworks@oakpark.us.

Warming centers available...Anyone needing relief from the cold can visit a local warming center, including Village Hall, 123 Madison St. West Suburban Medical Center, 3 Erie Court, is open from 5:30 a.m. – 8:30 p.m., and Rush Oak Park Hospital, 520 S. Maple Ave. from 8:30 a.m. – 5 p.m. Both hospitals are open seven days a week and hours may be extended when weather conditions warrant. Village Hall is open from 8:30 a.m. – 5 p.m., Monday through Friday. To find out if the warming center is open after hours, call West Suburban Hospital at 708.383.6200, Rush Oak Park Hospital at 708.660.2211 or Village Hall at 708.383.6400. If transportation is needed, call the Oak Park Police Department's non-emergency number 708.386.3800.



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



OP/FM

Village President David Pope

Trustees

Glenn Brewer
John Hedges
Ray Johnson
Adam Salzman
Bob Tucker
Teresa Powell
Cara Pavlicek
Village Clerk
Village Manager

Residential Customer Local
Oak Park, Illinois

Postal Carrier
Pre-Sort

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

Board names Pavlicek Village Manager



After a national search that attracted 41 applicants, the Village Board in January unanimously approved the selection of Cara Pavlicek to oversee the day-to-day administration of municipal services and programs as Oak Park's Village Manager.

Pavlicek had served in an interim capacity since March 1, 2012 following the resignation of Tom Barwin, who held the post for nearly five years.

Actually, Pavlicek has been with the Village since June 2008 when she was brought in to lead the Parking & Mobility Services Department, which manages a complex system of meters, surface lots, garages and thousands of permits and vehicle stickers.

Officials cited her extensive municipal management experience coupled with hands-on knowledge of Oak Park's many programs and services as being key to making her the perfect candidate to fill the top executive role. Her role in developing the 2013 budget was especially illuminating of her skills, they said.

Prior to coming to Oak Park, Pavlicek served nearly three years as the village manager of Downers Grove. She came to Illinois from Las Vista, Nebraska, where she served eight years as the city administrator following two years as an assistant. She began her municipal government career as an administrative analyst and administrative assistant to the city manager of Des Moines, Iowa.

Pavlicek holds a Master of Arts degree in public affairs from the University of Iowa and a Bachelor of Arts degree in economics from the University of Washington. She also is credentialed by the International City/County Management Association (ICMA), an organization that develops and advances professional local government management.

Oak Park has operated under the village manager form of government since 1953. Under this form of government, a board of elected officials sets policies and hires a professional manager to oversee the day-to-day administration of government services and programs.

Only one other woman has served as Oak Park's village manager, but that was in an interim capacity and for only two-months in 1986. Pavlicek is Oak Park's 10th village manager.

Oak Park Village Managers

- Mark Keane: 1953-1962
- Harris Stevens: 1962-1971
- Lee Ellis: 1971-1976
- Jack Gruber: 1976-1980
- Ralph DeSantis: 1980-1985
- J. Neil Nielsen: 1986-1992
- Allen Parker: 1992-1995
- Carl Swenson: 1996-2006
- Tom Barwin: 2006-2011

Follow policymaking on TV and online

Residents interested in keeping up with local municipal policymaking can follow Village Board activities on television and online. Village Board meetings are broadcast live on VOP-TV, which is available to Comcast subscribers on channel 6 and AT&T Uverse customers on channel 99. In addition, Village Board meetings are streamed live and archived online at www.oak-park.us/boardtv. The online meetings data base even offers the option to search the meetings archive using key words to find a particular topic of interest. Users also can view a video by meeting date, and choose to view only the portion of the meeting that addresses the topic of interest, just by clicking on the agenda item. For those residents who want to dig even deeper into the details, complete board packets — the materials trustees use to prepare for meetings — are posted at www.oak-park.us/agendas. The same page also posts the approved minutes of meetings, which are the official record of Village Board actions. Both web pages also offer information on how to contact the entire Village Board or individual officials either by telephone or e-mail. For more information on Village board practices and process, e-mail village@oak-park.us.