

MAY/JUNE 2022

OP/FYI

A NEWSLETTER
FROM THE
VILLAGE OF
OAK PARK

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Village celebrates return of major outdoor in-person community events

With local vaccination rates high and hospitalizations down, Oak Park is cautiously bringing a sense of normalcy back to the community with the return of three major celebrations of diversity and inclusion.

A Day in Our Village – June 5

Oak Park's annual A Day in Our Village festival is set to return Sunday, June 5 after a two-year hiatus due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

The premier community event will be held from 11 a.m. to 4 p.m. in the familiar confines of Scoville Park by Lake Street and Oak Park Avenue.

Activity booths representing Oak Park civic, cultural, social service, educational, religious and business organizations will fill the park along with live performances and a food court featuring local restaurants.

First held in 1973, A Day in Our Village has long provided an opportunity to showcase the diversity and variety of ways to get involved in community life. Organizations or businesses interested in hosting a booth can register through May 13 at www.oak-park.us/DIOVregistration.

For more information, contact 708.358.5405 or dayinourvillage@gmail.com.

Juneteenth – June 19

The entire community is invited to join in Oak Park's celebration of Juneteenth, an occasion considered by many as the true anniversary of emancipation in the United States.

The festivities begin about a week prior to the holiday with a flag-raising ceremony at noon on Saturday, June 11 in the courtyard at Village Hall, 123 Madison St. The

ceremony will include speeches about the history of Juneteenth and live music.

The celebration continues with a parade and community picnic on Sunday, June 19. The parade will begin at 11 a.m. near Jackson Boulevard and march north on Ridgeland Avenue to Augusta Street, with a community picnic to follow throughout the afternoon at Taylor Park, 400 Division St.

For more details, including how to sign up to participate in the parade, visit www.oak-park.us/juneteenth.

4th of July Parade

The many dimensions of Oak Park will once again be on display when the July 4th parade steps off at 10 a.m. on Monday, July 4 from Longfellow Park for the first time in two years.

Local organizations and businesses are invited to bring a float, march, play music, carry banners, ride bicycles, skate, drive vintage cars or just dress up to commemorate the nation's birthday.

Registration and sponsorship forms are available at Village Hall, 123 Madison St., via email to community@oak-park.us and on the Village website at www.oak-park.us/parade. The deadline to register is June 24.

Parade participants will line up by Longfellow Center, 610 S. Ridgeland Ave., and march north on Ridgeland Avenue to Augusta Boulevard and disperse at Whittier School.

For more information about participating or to volunteer to help out at the parade, call 708.358.5407 or email community@oak-park.us.

Fireworks may return, too — check www.oak-park.us/calendar for updates.

Village resumes immobilizing vehicles

This spring the Village resumed immobilizing vehicles that have five or more unpaid parking citations by placing a boot on the wheel to prevent driving. The Village had paused the process of immobilizing vehicles at the start of the COVID-19 pandemic in early 2020. Registered vehicle owners will receive a notice giving them 21 days to pay all outstanding citations to avoid immobilization of their vehicles. Notices are sent to the address listed as the vehicle's registered address with the Illinois Secretary of State or the applicable state department of motor vehicles if the vehicle has an out-of-state registration. A \$150 fee will apply to all vehicles that are immobilized. Towed vehicles will incur additional charges. Vehicle owners will be able to pay online to have the immobilization device removed. Questions should be directed to the Village's Adjudication Office at 708.358.5630 or hearings@oak-park.us.

Bike the Beat returns

The Oak Park Police Department's community policing initiative, *Bike the Beat*, is returning this season to a zone near you. Residential beat officers will be biking through an area, or zone, and stopping to engage with residents during each Bike the Beat. The RBOs ride along the streets to meet with residents, answer questions about the community, listen to feedback and even register bikes on-site. Officers are assigned to serve as RBOs for eight geographic zones throughout the Village. More information about Bike the Beat, including dates for upcoming rides, is available at www.oak-park.us/biketthebeat.



COVID-19 vaccines, testing available

The Oak Park Health Department's mobile response van will be out in the community offering COVID-19 vaccines and testing throughout the spring and summer. If you have an upcoming community event such as a block party, picnic or any other public gathering and would like the mobile response van to stop by, complete the online request form at www.oak-park.us/vaccine. The website also includes the latest information about vaccine eligibility and upcoming mobile response van events. COVID-19 vaccines are free and individuals can receive their primary vaccine series or a first or second booster dose if eligible.

Services available for homebound residents... The Oak Park Health Department offers a variety of services to residents who are homebound. If you or a relative are homebound, you may contact the Health Department to schedule an in-home COVID test, COVID vaccination or booster shot. Flu shots also are available. Call the Health Department at 708.358.5480 or email health@oak-park.us for more information on scheduling an in-home service.

Placing items in parkway trees prohibited

The Village is actively enforcing restrictions against items like swings, lights, ropes and seasonal decorations placed in parkway trees. These objects can create a public hazard for passersby, as well as threaten the health of the trees. When items are observed hanging from a tree on public property, the adjacent property owner will be notified and given time to remove them before Village crews act. For more information on tree care and safety, visit www.oak-park.us/trees.

Local business directory available online

From salons to yoga studios, healthcare to retail and restaurants, Oak Park businesses have much to offer. When planning to order online or shop in person, residents are urged to support the local economy by looking first to Oak Park businesses. A directory of local businesses is posted at www.pickoakpark.com, a website created specifically to support Oak Park businesses and help residents shop local. The online directory allows users to find information on more than 1,000 licensed businesses in Oak Park by type and location. Business owners can make sure they are listed by submitting information directly at www.pickoakpark.com. Participation is free and submissions are accepted anytime.

Construction season underway

Warmer weather typically means construction, and this year is no different. The highest profile project impacting Oak Park is the resurfacing of Harlem Avenue. The Illinois Department of Transportation is managing the project, which extends along the Village's entire western border on the busy north/south state highway and continues south toward 26th Street in Berwyn. On a smaller scale, work is underway on the Village's sewer improvement project on LeMoyne Parkway between East and Edmer avenues. The Public Works Department is also managing local street resurfacing and alley improvement projects at various locations in the Village. Find weekly project updates and an interactive map displaying this year's construction projects at www.oak-park.us/construction. For more detailed information on any specific construction work, call 708.358.5700 or email publicworks@oak-park.us.

Vehicle license sales begin in May

Village vehicle licenses for the 2022/2023 season go on sale in May. Every Oak Park resident who owns or leases a motor vehicle is required to purchase a local license before July 15 to get the lowest rate, which increases by \$20 after the deadline. Failure to purchase a license also could result in a ticket. A current vehicle license is needed to purchase a parking permit. Windshield decals are no longer issued. Parking enforcement officers use remote electronic recognition technology to scan license plates to ensure compliance. Vehicle license rates vary by type of vehicle, with discounts for senior citizens, persons with disabilities and active-duty veterans. Vehicle licenses may be renewed online at www.oak-park.us/vehiclelicense. For more information, call 708.358.7275, visit www.oak-park.us/parking or email parking@oak-park.us.

Village Hall to host early voting

Suburban Cook County voters can cast an early ballot for the upcoming Gubernatorial Primary Election from June 13 – 27 at Village Hall, 123 Madison St. Hours will be 9 a.m. to 5 p.m., Monday – Saturday, June 13 – 27 and 10 a.m. to 4 p.m., Sundays, June 19 and 26. Village Hall also will offer grace-period registration during early voting hours for those individuals who missed the registration deadline. Valid identification is required to register during the grace period and a vote must be cast immediately after registration. A driver's license or picture ID is preferred, along with an additional item such as a lease or utility bill with the current address. More information is available by calling 708.358.5672 or emailing clerk@oak-park.us. Information such as polling sites by address also is available at www.cookcountyclerk.com/elections.

Latest local water quality report is online

Oak Park residents interested in knowing about the quality of the water they drink can find the latest annual report at www.oak-park.us/waterqualityreport. Each year, the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency requires communities to provide details on the quality of the local drinking water. In addition to analyses of substances in the water, the report also includes facts about the community's drinking water delivery system and source. An archive of past water quality reports is posted at www.oak-park.us/waterquality. For more information on Oak Park's drinking water or if you would like a paper copy of the annual water report, call 708.358.5700 or email publicworks@oak-park.us.

Backflow preventers required...As Oak Parkers get ready to put their lawn sprinkling systems back online for the season, they are reminded that federal, state and local regulations require a device that prevents any water from flowing back into and possibly contaminating the municipal water supply. Cross connections between in-home devices and the public water supply typically are protected by a valve called a backflow preventer. Property owners are required to have these valves installed and checked annually. Most plumbing contractors can install backflow preventers and are certified to test them. But it is not just water irrigation systems that require backflow-prevention valves. Residential backflow preventers typically are found on systems for filling swimming pools and water features, and on fire sprinkler systems. If your heat is supplied by radiators, the hot water boiler should have a backflow preventer, too, as should a water softener. Toilets, bathtubs, sinks, hot water heaters and other standard plumbing fixtures do not require backflow preventers. For more information, call 708.358.5700 or email publicworks@oak-park.us.

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 email publicworks@oak-park.us for more information.

Citizen input needed to help create five-year public health plan

The Oak Park Health Department is seeking community input as it creates the five-year strategic *IPLAN* that will be the foundation for public health services and programs available to people who live, work, play and go to school in Oak Park. The Health Department provides services like animal licensing and control, health education, restaurant inspections, connections to local health care systems, emergency preparedness management and response, and communicable infection and disease prevention. As a state-certified health department, the Oak Park Health Department completes a community health assessment and strategic (IPLAN) every five years that serves as a guide to the public health initiatives and programming. Community members have a vital role in this process, and have many opportunities to provide input at local events and meetings throughout the spring and summer. The Department also is working closely with community partners including Oak Park Township, River Forest Township, Rush Hospital and Oak Park Township's Community Mental Health Board to create and implement the IPLAN. To learn about opportunities for community involvement and for updates on the process, visit the IPLAN page on the Village website at www.oak-park.us/IPLAN22.

Parking restrictions eased for holidays

As a courtesy to residents and their guests, the overnight parking restrictions will not be enforced on most Oak Park residential streets during several holidays in the months ahead. Restrictions will remain in effect in areas reserved for overnight permit holders, such as Village-owned lots, on-street enclaves and on-street parking zones. All other parking regulations also remain in effect, including daytime posted restrictions and regulations related to traffic and public safety. For more information on parking in Oak Park call 708.358.7275 or email parking@oak-park.us.

- **Memorial Day** – Restrictions lifted at 2:30 a.m. Sat., May 28 and resume at 2:30 a.m. Wed., June 1
- **July 4** – Restrictions lifted at 2:30 a.m., Sat., July 2 and resume at 2:30 a.m. Wed., July 6
- **Labor Day** – Restrictions lifted at 2:30 a.m., Sat., Sept. 3 and resume at 2:30 a.m. Wed., Sept. 7
- **Thanksgiving** – Restrictions lifted at 2:30 a.m., Wed., Nov. 23 and resume at 2:30 a.m., Mon., Nov. 28
- **Christmas/New Year** – Restrictions lifted at 2:30 a.m., Sat., Dec. 17 and resume at 2:30 a.m., Tues., Jan. 3, 2023

When it comes to recycling, Oak Parkers have options

Oak Park residents served under the Village refuse hauling contract have more options available than most communities to help reduce the typical contaminants found in recycling carts, including at-home pick up of electronics and common hazardous household waste such as cleaning solutions and vehicle fluids. In addition, Oak Park offers a fee-based composting program that allows participants to toss most soiled paper and food containers like pizza boxes into a special cart. Foam containers and plastic bags remain a challenge, officials say, but clean plastic bags can be returned to most major grocery and big-box stores for proper recycling. The Village also has a bag fee to encourage residents to rely on reusable bags. More information is posted at www.oak-park.us/recycling.

Refuse collection schedule... The Village provides refuse collection services once a week for all residential buildings with five or fewer units. Owners of larger multifamily dwellings and commercial buildings must contract directly with private refuse haulers. All trash, recyclables and yard waste are scheduled to be picked up on the same day of the week. For more information, including the pickup schedule, call 708.358.5700, email publicworks@oak-park.us or visit www.oak-park.us/refuse.

Kiosk offers in-person water bill payment option

Oak Park property owners can now pay their water bills 24/7, 365 days a year at a new kiosk located in the Police Department lobby in the lower level of Village Hall, 123 Madison St. The kiosk will accept checks, credit/debit cards and cash, and issue payment receipts. The kiosk cannot provide change, however, but if paying with cash any excess amount will be credited to the account. Plans are to have the kiosk accept payments for other services as well. Property owners also can pay their water bills electronically, either by using a credit card online or setting up an automatic debit from a checking, savings or credit card account. In addition to water, the quarterly bill includes charges for sewer, garbage disposal and recycling. For more information, call 708.358.5478 or email waterbilling@oak-park.us.

Clip and Save 

Who to Call

Dial Direct (area code 708)

Village Hall	oak-park.us
TTY	711
Adjudication	358.5630
Development Customer Services	358.5420
Business Services	358.5425
Neighborhood Services	358.5410
Housing	option 1
CDBG	option 2
Property complaints	option 3
Permits & Inspections	358.5430
Planning	358.5440
General questions	option 1
Historic Preservation	option 2
Zoning	option 3
Finance	358.5460
Utility Billing Inquiries	358.5478
Fire (nonemergency)	358.5600
Human Resources	358.5650
Job Hotline	358.5650
Mayor & Trustees	358.5784
Police (nonemergency)	386.3800
Crime Tip Hotline	434.1636
Public Health	358.5480
Animal Control	358.5680
Public Works	358.5700
Parking	358.7275
Village Clerk	358.5670
Village Manager's Office	358.5770

EMERGENCIES 911

Park District	www.pdop.org
Administration	725.2017
Customer Service	725.2000
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	383.0700

Township	www.oakparktownship.org
Senior Services	383.8060
Youth Services	445.2727
General Assistance	383.8005
Assessor Services	383.8005
Mental Health Board	358.8855
Transportation	383.4806

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Community events

What's Blooming on Harrison...

The Oak Park Arts District has set May 21 for the annual What's Blooming on Harrison event. The business association is planning to once again offer a family-oriented event with an art fair, children's carnival, music stage, food, makers booths and more. Find more information at www.oakparkartsdistrict.com.

Thursday Night Out... Downtown Oak Park's popular dine-around series *Thursday Night Out* is set to take place from 5 to 9 p.m. every Thursday from June 2 to August 25. The event features restaurants in the downtown business district along Lake and Marion streets offering a variety of drinks, appetizers, entrees and desserts on the Thursday Night Out menu, with the option of eating in or carrying out. Tables are also set up along Marion Street for patrons to enjoy dining al fresco. More information is at www.thursdaynightout.com.

Be prepared for severe weather

Tornadoes, lightning, flash floods, damaging winds and destructive hail strike Illinois each spring, summer and fall, sometimes with incredible violence. Being aware of severe weather safety rules and knowing what to do might save your life, which is why the National Weather Service urges you to develop a safety plan for use at home, work, school, driving and during outdoor activities. For more information, visit www.ready.gov/severe-weather and www.ready.illinois.gov.

Know the terms... A tornado watch means severe thunderstorms and tornadoes are possible over the next few hours, so be prepared. A tornado warning means a tornado has been sighted by a trained storm spotter, or intense rotation that will likely produce a tornado has been detected by Doppler radar — get to a place of safety immediately.

Still time to help craft local climate plan

Opportunities abound to help set the Village of Oak Park's future sustainability, resiliency and emissions reduction goals. The process to craft a community-wide *Comprehensive Sustainability and Climate Action Resiliency Plan* is in full swing, with the Village's climate plan team hosting conversations with community members, reviewing feedback from a dedicated website and writing the first draft of the plan. Residents are invited to share their input directly through the dedicated portal at www.oak-park.us/climateplan. Or take it a step further and host conversations with family, friends and community groups with the help of discussion guide available on the portal and at any Oak Park Library location. The climate plan team hopes to present an early draft of the community-driven strategies to the Village Board in May. The climate plan team will continue to gather community feedback at the Oak Park Farmers' Market on opening day May 21 and at A Day in Our Village on June 5. For more information on the plan, visit www.oak-park.us/climateplan or email climateplan@oak-park.us.

Township News

Property tax exemption renewals... Oak Parkers who bought their homes prior to 2020 and received property tax exemptions last year should receive automatic exemptions renewals this year, including exemptions for senior citizens and disabled veterans. Any homeowner who purchased a home in 2020 will have to complete an exemption application at www.cookcountyassessor.com or pick up an application form at Oak Park Township, 105 S. Oak Park Ave. More information is posted at www.oakparktownship.org.

Caregiver support class... A free six-week class will be offered help caregivers learn to reduce stress, improve time management, make tough decisions and access resources. *The Powerful Tools for Caregivers* class is scheduled for 10 to 11:30 a.m., Wednesdays, from May 11 to June 15 at the Stickney Township North Senior Center, 6721 W. 40th St. Call 708.636.8850 to register. Caregiver support also is available locally — call 708.383.8060, ext. 116 for more information.

Celebrating seniors... Free events are scheduled at the Oak Park Township Senior Services Center, 130 S. Oak Park Ave. as part of *Celebrating Seniors Week*, May 12 – 19. Events include:

- **Chair yoga**, 1:30 to 2:30 p.m., May 12
- **Blood drive**, 2:30 – 6 p.m., May 13
- **Reframing Aging**, 3 to 4 p.m., May 16
- **Storytelling and writing workshop**, 1 to 2:30 p.m., May 17
- **Zumba Gold class**, 1:30 – 2:30 p.m., May 18
- **Sing-a-long with Rick Pickren**, 1:30 - 2:30 p.m., May 19

Home energy assistance... Income-eligible residents can apply for helping paying their utility bills through the *Low-Income Heating Energy Assistance Program* (LIHEAP). For more information or to apply call 708.383. 8060 or visit www.cedaorg.net.

Home repair help... Oak Park residents age 60 and older can get help with simple home maintenance repairs through the North West Housing Partnership. Repairs are done by insured, reliable professionals who charge hourly fees based on household income. For more information call 847.969.0561 or email michellehill@nwHP.net.

Transportation services... The Oak Park Township provides transportation to seniors and those with disabilities who need a ride to medical appointments or run errands. Call 708.383.4806 to reserve a ride in a wheelchair lift equipped bus. A \$1 per ride donation is suggested.

View with a smartphone camera.



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

OP/FM

Village President Vicki Scaman

Trustees

Susan Buchanan
Lucia Robinson
Chibuike Enyia
Jim Taglia
Ravi Parakkat
Aarti Walker-Peddakotla

Village Clerk

Christina M. Waters
Kevin J. Jackson

Village Manager

Residential Customer Local
Oak Park, Illinois

Postal Carrier
Pre-Sort

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



Farmers' Market to kick off 47th season

The Oak Park Farmers' Market returns for its 47th season on Saturday, May 21. The Market is held from 7 a.m. to 1 p.m. every Saturday from opening day through October in the Pilgrim Congregational Church parking lot, 460 Lake St., one block west of Ridgeland Avenue. In addition to a variety of fresh fruits and vegetables, honey, cheese, frozen meat, bread and baked goods, the Market also features donuts made on-site, fresh coffee and live bluegrass music. More than 20 regional vendors will again offer sustainable, organic and locally sourced goods this season. The first two Markets of the season will feature Go Green Days with a focus on environmental sustainability. Other special events are planned for throughout the season. While the Market is expected to operate much like it did before the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic, officials continue to monitor local COVID-19 metrics and will incorporate appropriate mitigation measures if necessary. All vendors accept Link cards, and a majority of the vendors accept credit/debit cards, as well as WIC and senior coupons. For more information call 708.358.5780, email farmersmarket@oak-park.us or visit www.oak-park.us/farmersmarket.

Block parties return to pre-pandemic rules



The Village has returned to pre-pandemic rules and regulations governing block parties and sales. All restrictions have been lifted and residents once again can have two block parties and/or sales per season. The online block party registration portal is open at www.oak-park.us/blockparties and the number of events per weekend returned to 30, up from the 20 allowed during the height of the pandemic. A block party requires a petition signed by at least 10 separate addresses on the block, or a majority of residents on a smaller block. The Fire Department still will not be going out to individual block parties, however, as staffing and scheduling challenges are assessed. For more information, contact Public Works at 708.358.5700 or publicworks@oak-park.us.