

FLOSSMOOR NEWS

Spring 2021
Volume 30 / Number 4



PHOTO BY THOMAS PHOTOGRAPHIC

GET OUT AND GET ACTIVE

Naima, Adia, Patipa, Kobie and Safiya Douglas get set to enjoy a family bike ride along the path at Flossmoor Park.

Metra's Reduced Rates
Enjoy a trip to Chicago for 50 percent less.
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Let's Play Ball
Flossmoor Baseball and Softball returns.
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Years of Service
Mayor Paul Braun reflects on retirement.
Page 12

village officials

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Joni Bradley-Scott, Trustee
jbradleyscott@flossmoor.org

Diane Williams, Trustee
dwilliams@flossmoor.org

Ananda Billings, Clerk
abilings@flossmoor.org

village numbers

Village Hall: 798-2300

Fire: 798-3885

Non-Emergency Police: 957-4500

Non-Emergency TDD: 647-0179

Public Works: 957-4100

Building Department: 957-4101

Emergency Only: 911

village meetings

Village Board Meeting

1st & 3rd Mondays of the Month at 7:30 p.m.

Plan Commission Meeting

3rd Thursday of the Month at 7:30 p.m.

Zoning Board of Appeals

4th Tuesday of the Month at 7:30 p.m.

Public Art Commission Meeting

2nd Monday of the Month at 7:00 p.m.

Community Relations Commission Meeting

4th Tuesday of the Month at 7:00 p.m.

Green Commission Meeting

3rd Tuesday of the Month at 7:00 p.m.



#Flossmoor365

Find us on social media! Look for updates, photos, videos and good conversation on Facebook and Instagram! We truly appreciate all the residents, business owners and visitors who have supported us and joined the conversation!

calendar

flossmoor.org

March 26

HF Park District Flashlight Egg Hunt — 6 to 6:45 p.m. (Ages 3-6), 7 to 7:45 p.m. (Ages 3-10), 8 to 8:45 p.m. (Ages 3-10) / Irons Oaks
Try this twist on the traditional egg hunt. Treat-filled eggs have been hidden in the forest at Irons Oaks. Enjoy a craft, then head out to the trails for the egg hunt. An optional game of flashlight tag will follow. Participants must bring a mask, flashlight and bag or basket to collect eggs. Registration is \$12 for residents and \$15 for non-residents. Visit www.hfparks.com.

April 4-10

Library Week — Visit www.flossmoorlibrary.org to see what events will take place.

April 5

Free Brush Collection Begins — Free brush collection will occur monthly on the FIRST week of each month. All brush to be collected must be set out by 7 a.m. the Monday of collection week, but no earlier than 3 days prior to collection. Visit www.flossmoor.org for complete details or contact the Flossmoor Department of Public Works (708) 957-4100.

April 6

Election Day — Get out and vote! Find your polling place at www.cookcountyclerk.gov

April 10

New Resident Event — 4 to 5:30 p.m. / Zoom — Join the Village of Flossmoor, Flossmoor School District 161, Homewood-Flossmoor High School 233 and other Village stakeholders virtually for an evening of camaraderie, information and fun. Sign up to receive Zoom details at www.flossmoor.org.

April 15

Vehicle Stickers and Animal Tags Deadline

April 22

Earth Day — Celebrate Earth Day with at-home projects and green initiatives. The Flossmoor Green Commission will share tutorials and project ideas for those interested. Visit www.flossmoor.org for more information.

April 23

Flossmoor Baseball and Softball Registration Deadline
Visit www.flossmoorbbsb.com for more information and other important dates.

MAKING FITNESS FUN IN FLOSSMOOR

The time has come to dust off those old sneakers, pump up those tires, and once again enjoy the fresh air and sunshine.

After facing one of the most challenging years and dealing with a historic month of snowfall in February, the community is ready to get out and start getting active. Flossmoor's local fitness clubs are ready to welcome newcomers who are ready to do just that.

One such group is the Flossmoor Running Club. While the group currently only has a few members, it is steeped in local history and boasts a tongue-in-cheek "Run to Eat" motto.

"We're not really traditional runners. We're more like dad runners," said Sam Cutrara, one of the club's long-standing members. "We're just trying to keep in good enough shape to one day enjoy our grandchildren."

The Flossmoor Running Group got its start in 1987 when longtime Flossmoor residents Howard Adelman and Jim Tapscott decided running with a companion was a lot more fun than running alone.

Since then, the group has cycled through a number of different members who join with different goals in mind. For Cutrara and the group's current members, the Flossmoor Running Club has become more of a social club, a great way to meet new neighbors, and provides the group with the drive to keep pushing their fitness goals.

The Flossmoor Running Club continues to meet four times a week at 6:15 a.m. on Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday and Saturday at the corner of Sterling Avenue and Central Avenue in Downtown Flossmoor. Cutrara's wife Betsy Cutrara, also organizes a women's only running group that meets at 6:00 a.m. Monday, Wednesday and Friday at Park Place in Flossmoor Park.

Running with a group of neighbors and friends not only provides motivation but also emotional support. That's what Alexandra Green appreciates most about being part of the Homewood-Flossmoor Community Running Club, a co-ed group that also welcomes children.

"A lot of us women have careers and young children and we might spend the whole run venting about life," said Green. "It's become a real emotional way for people to cope with what's going on. For that reason, it really stuck around during the pandemic too."

Those interested in joining the Homewood-Flossmoor Community Running Club can do so by joining the club's



Nick Quirke, Sam Cutrara and Sean Kelly are the current members of the Flossmoor Running Club and are all featured on the club's plaque at Sterling Avenue and Central Avenue.

private Facebook group. There, members can find information about running times, individual group runs, share personal goals and achievements, and help cheer on fellow runners.

Another great way to meet new neighbors is through the numerous cycling groups around the region. While local groups tend to be more informal, Steve Buchtel, the events coordinator at GoodSpeed Cycles in Homewood, said there are a number of ways cycling enthusiasts can get connected.

"The region has an amazing network of connected bike paths. For someone who wants to ride right from their drive-way, Flossmoor has pretty great access to that network," said Buchtel. "Early last year we started the GoodSpeed Route Club with the Ride with GPS cycling app. It has turn-by-turn maps and voice navigation for about 30 different routes, from little neighborhood strolls to routes that take you down to the Chicago Lakefront or the Indiana Dunes."

The Ride with GPS cycling app is a free app to download, and is available on Android and iPhone. In order to access the GoodSpeed Route Club library, you must sign up for a free membership. Due to the ongoing challenges of the COVID-19 pandemic, organized rides through GoodSpeed Cycles have been suspended for the time being. However, Buchtel is hopeful to relaunch the weekly Saturday morning family rides and Sunday morning adult rides this summer.

flossmoor faces & places

Cook County Reduces Metra Rates by 50 Percent

With the launch of Fair Transit South Cook, a three-year pilot project from the Cook County Department of Transportation and Highways (DoTH), in partnership with Metra, PACE and Regional Transportation Authority, you can now take a ride to Chicago and back for 50 percent of what it cost last year.

Launched in January, the pilot program aims to make transit more convenient for residents and essential workers in south Cook and north Will counties. Under the pilot, all riders on the Metra Electric and Rock Island lines will pay Metra's reduced fare rates, normally reserved for seniors, K-12 students and other eligible groups, for all tickets.

With the reduced fares, riders can now enjoy a one-way ticket for only \$3.25 or purchase a 10-ride pass for only \$31. The largest savings come with monthly pass purchases. When previously riders paid \$195.75 for a monthly pass from Flossmoor to Chicago, those riders are now only paying \$113.75. The reduced fare tickets are available now from ticket agents, ticket machines and the Ventra app.



It is the intention of the DoTH and its partners that the Fair Transit pilot will provide south Cook County residents with greater opportunities to make transit their choice for getting to work, school, shopping and regional destinations.

According to a press release issued by the office of Cook County Board of Commissioners President Tony Preckwinkle, the program comes following a Fair Transit public survey which was distributed in December 2020 and garnered nearly 500 responses from residents and transit riders. The results and comments are still being analyzed to better understand how the COVID-19 pandemic has shaped transit ridership and how the pilot can be most effective.

"Making transit an easier choice for our south Cook communities is a top priority and I am thrilled we have finally arrived at the point where we can put our vision of a regional transit partnership into action," said President Preckwinkle, in the release. "This is an important component of my administration's overall focus on equitable policies and programs to ensure that our whole community has the opportunity to prosper."

For more information about Fair Transit South Cook and to view the pilot's three-year timeline, visit www.cookcountyil.gov/service/fair-transit-south-cook.

Flossmoor Public Library Enhancing Technology

The Flossmoor Public Library is stepping up its technology resources thanks to a \$10,000 federal grant from AgeOptions. With the \$10,000 grant the Library will be purchasing a collection of iPads and creating and sharing helpful instructional videos to close the digital divide between older library visitors and their access to technology.

The program is scheduled to launch this spring, and is open to all of Flossmoor, but Library Director Jamie Paicely asks that these technology kits be reserved for older patrons who have

suffered significant physical distancing from friends and loved ones.

"These easy to follow, instructional videos were made to help our community, especially the seniors, to keep in touch with families and friends during this difficult pandemic," said Paicely.

AgeOptions is the planning and service agency for the 30 townships surrounding Chicago, as designated by the federal Older Americans Act and the Illinois Department on Aging. AgeOptions provides funding and pro-

gramming for the 130 communities in suburban Cook County, administering more than \$15 million in federal and state funds.

The Flossmoor Public Library's technology kits are available for check out for up to three weeks. Those interested in checking one out for themselves or an elderly family member should contact Paicely or Janet Dicastro, Programming, Public Relations & Inspiration Station Coordinator at (708) 798-3600, to be added to the wait list.

Get Ready to Play Ball!

Through diligence, teamwork and patience, the Flossmoor Baseball and Softball Board announced the 2021 baseball and softball seasons will take place this spring with the first pitch being tossed on May 15. Families must register by April 23. In order to make the 2021 season a reality, the FBBSB Board spent months planning out every detail of the season to allow for a safe and fun environment. While baseball and softball are indicated by the State of Illinois COVID-19 transmission metrics as “lower risk” sports, the FBBSB Board made sure to consider all of the State of Illinois’ guidelines when implementing a rigorous safety protocol for the season.

According to Asmarah Clinkscales, board secretary, parents must complete a pre-certification for their child prior to every practice and game day to certify they are not showing signs of COVID-19 or any other cold or flu-like symptoms. Additionally, face coverings must be worn when entering or exiting communal spaces such as restrooms or concession stands, spectators may only attend in the outfield and must wear face coverings when not properly social distanced, only three players will be allowed in the dugout at a time, players will not be allowed to share equipment unless they are members of the same household, and the post-game handshake will be replaced with a “tip of the cap” gesture to the opposing teams.

Clinkscales expects there will be additional changes as the season commences and the organization has a better understanding of number of participants, number of teams, and any changes that may come from the state level.

“We understand it’s going to be a year unlike any other



and we plan on having a very fluid season,” said Clinkscales. “Our goal is simply to provide kids and families who are comfortable with playing, the opportunity to do so. It’ll be nice to see the parks full again.”

Register directly online by April 23 at www.flossmoorbbsb.com.

Important Dates to Remember:

- Outdoor Spring Workouts – Saturdays and Sundays from April 17–May 9
- Evaluations – May 1 and May 2
- Team Announcements – May 2
- Opening Day – May 15



Gardening for Pollinators

Indigenous hummingbirds, butterflies, bees, dragonflies and other pollinators bring life and beauty to our landscapes and support much of our food supply. Unfortunately, we lose tens of thousands of pollinators every year. Yet, there is much home gardeners can do to support our pollinators. When planning landscapes to benefit pollinators, think about how you can incorporate native plants that are high-value hosts for local pollinators. Many natives, including perennials,

shrubs, and trees, not only help to beautify the community, they are also great host plants for pollinators. Some great native options include oak trees, milkweed species, spicebush, hyssop species, bayberry shrubs, coneflowers, cherry trees and more.

When planting these species, it’s also important to employ some best practices to enhance your results. Local resident and master gardener Jackie Riffice says keep it simple in your garden by avoiding chemicals, selecting the best

mulch, and planting the right plant in the right place. She recommends *Bringing Nature Home* by Douglas Tallamy for those getting started.

Add native trees, shrubs, grasses or forbs, or even some non-native perennial and annual flowers to our landscapes by following a few of these basic principles. The things we do to beautify our small corners of the world can make a difference for the birds and the bees. Little changes can yield big results.

NEWS TO USE!

Check Regularly for Water Leaks

Few things are worse than an unexpectedly high water bill. Taking one simple, proactive step can help you detect and fix a water leak before it costs you money. Once a month, read your water meter before and after you leave home. If your meter is in a convenient location, the best way to determine if you have a leak is to see if your water meter changes when you're not using any water. Turn off all faucets, write down the reading or take a picture with your phone, then check it when you come home a few hours later. If the number changes while you're gone, there is a good chance you have a leak.

Regularly check indoor and outdoor faucets, too. The cost of forgetting an outdoor faucet can be steep. Remember to turn off your hose and check it for leaks. If your indoor faucets are leaking, watching a quick video on YouTube might even help you do the repair work yourself.

Vehicle Stickers and Animal Tags

2021 vehicle stickers must be purchased and displayed by Thursday, April 15. For all vehicles registered to a Flossmoor address, including leased vehicles, company cars and vehicles kept outside of the Village, you are required to purchase and display a current Flossmoor vehicle sticker.

Animal tags for your dogs and cats also must be purchased by Thursday, April 15. Applications are included with the vehicle sticker renewal form sent to all households. If your application does not arrive in the mail, email info@flossmoor.org to have one mailed to you. As a reminder, late fees were waived for 2020, but have resumed in 2021. Anyone who did not purchase a vehicle sticker in 2020 will be required to purchase a 2020 sticker in addition to a 2021 sticker during the renewal time period. Visit www.flossmoor.org for more information.

Keeping Flossmoor Green

The Village of Flossmoor Department of Public Works, in partnership with Flossmoor Green Commission volunteers, successfully planted a total of 66 trees on Village parkways in 2020, with the majority of those coming from the Village's new tree planting program.

Starting last year, the new program offers free parkway trees to residents. Each tree is carefully selected for the parkway tree program based on how well it will grow on Village parkways and how it promotes tree diversity. Currently, the Village of Flossmoor contains a high percentage of maple and honey locust trees, which are beginning to show signs of decline due to age and environmental factors. The loss of these trees provides an opportunity to plant a diverse urban forest, reducing the concerns for a significant impact of a future insect or disease.

Public Works staff and volunteers planted a number of oak and hickory trees in the spring of 2020, in preparation for the expected decline of the Village's older oak and hickory trees. While, many of the older native oak and hickory trees located on Village and private properties are in good condition, they will eventually begin to decline and the new trees planted in 2020 will replace the current trees, helping to maintain these important native trees for future generations.

Additional trees that were planted in 2020 include: bald cypress, cucumber tree magnolia and sweet bay magnolia, blue beech, catalpa, Kentucky coffee tree and sour gum.

Village tree planting program applications for fall 2021/spring 2022 planting will be available on the Village website, www.flossmoor.org, in summer 2021. To request an application be mailed to you directly, contact the Flossmoor Public Works Department. For additional information or tree selection assistance contact Flossmoor Public Works at (708) 957-4100.



Flossmoor's Next Top Models

The Flossmoor marketing campaign is well underway and we want you to be part of it! The most important part of promoting Flossmoor is being authentic in our advertising efforts, which means featuring happy Flossmoor residents and families in our materials! If you're interested in being photographed for the Flossmoor marketing campaign, email flossmoor365@flossmoor.org.

Water Bills

Water bills are mailed quarterly. A third of the community is billed each month. Keep these dates in mind so you know when to expect your bill. If you're worried that your bill hasn't arrived, call Village Hall at (708) 798-2300 and we will provide you with your balance.

- Account number begins with "01": Bill is mailed on the 25th of January, April, July and October.
- Account number begins with "02": Bill is mailed on the 25th of February, May, August and November.
- Account number begins with "03": Bill is mailed on the 25th of March, June, September and December.

Bills are due 28 days after the mailing date and are subject to increasing late fees if not paid.

Did You Get Your Permit?

Permits may seem like a bother, but they should provide you some assurance that your project is being completed to code. With a permit, you are provided an inspection and a review of the work to make sure it is safe and meets our current adopted codes. The risk of not obtaining a permit could be greater than just the cost of a ticket; it could also mean shortcuts and less than standard work by contractors. Building permits are required for many home improvement projects, to both the interior and exterior of the home, as well as for certain accessory uses and structures.

Administrative permits are also required for dumpsters and portable storage containers at no cost to residents. Applications are available at www.flossmoor.org. The website also provides fact sheets detailing what work requires a permit and submittal requirements. In addition, the Village strongly recommends that homeowners obtain multiple bid proposals from reputable contractors that are able to offer references of previous work completed.

Please contact the Flossmoor Building Department with any questions at (708) 957-4101.



Flood Insurance

Flood season is upon us and if you're not prepared ahead of time, it may sneak up on you, and a sneaky flood is a dangerous situation. There are a number of ways to prepare for flood season, but one of the best ways to protect yourself, your family and your home, is by signing up for flood insurance. Unfortunately, most homeowner's and renter's insurance policies do not cover flood losses. But, Flossmoor residents are in luck! Because the Village of Flossmoor participates in the National Flood Insurance Program (NFIP), you can protect your home and property by purchasing a flood insurance policy. Flood insurance should be purchased sooner rather than later, as there is a 30-day waiting period before the policy becomes effective. Flood insurance plans can be purchased through any licensed insurance agent, so contact your local agent today to see if you qualify for flood insurance.

Why Purchase Flood Insurance

- Flood insurance claims are paid even if a disaster is not declared by the President.
- More than 20 percent of NFIP claims come from outside of mapped Special Flood Hazard Areas. There is no payback requirement.
- Flood insurance policies are continuous and are not non-renewed or canceled for repeat losses.
- Flood insurance reimburses you for all covered building losses up to \$250,000 for residential occupancies and up to \$500,000 for businesses. Contents coverage is also available up to \$100,000 for residential and up to \$500,000 for businesses.
- The average cost of a flood insurance policy is about \$600 annually. The cost of a preferred risk policy is less than \$200 annually, if you live in a low to moderate risk area.

school spotlight

Building Homegrown Teachers

When the COVID-19 pandemic hit and students traded their classroom desks and notebooks for remote learning at dining room tables with laptops, parents across the country quickly stopped to praise the unwavering work of teachers. Parents saw an up close and personal glimpse of what their children's day-to-day classroom routine looked like and what teachers experienced with a classroom full of eager learners.

Courtney Pesha, career and technical education teacher at Homewood-Flossmoor High School, recognized that shift in perspective as an opportunity for society to come together to start encouraging young students to look at teaching as an important and rewarding career path.

"I think there is this inherent nature in teachers, I think you're born with it. But, how we as a society talk about teachers, talk to teachers and support teachers, plays a significant role in whether a student wants to become a teacher or not," said Pesha.



H-F High School students read to preschoolers in the Little Vikings Preschool as part of the Child Development and Theory course at HFHS.

Currently, the United States is experiencing a significant teacher shortage, recently compounded even more by the COVID-19 pandemic. According to the Illinois State Board of Education, the state of Illinois currently has nearly 4,500 unfilled education positions, which includes administrators, school support personnel and teachers, with teachers showing the highest number of vacancies. Since 2017, the number of unfilled teaching positions has increased by

nearly 1,000 positions in the state.

Dr. Jennifer Hester, curriculum director at HF High School, believes this data indicates a trend in fewer high school students choosing to pursue college for their career. School districts across the state of Illinois also made the same deductions based on the data, which led to the implementation of career and technical education programs of study.

"Schools are expected to provide pathways and courses that develop academics for students, but also provide career learning, exploration and workforce experience," said Hester. "In high school, we're really trying to cultivate that interest, building a little background knowledge on the intricacies of the workforce."

Classes like Pesha's Child Development and Theory are designed to do just that.

The yearlong class, open to sophomores, juniors and seniors, is separated into two categories: a theoretical side and a practical side. The first half of the class is dedicated to child growth and development in a classroom setting. During the second half of the class, students are able to work directly with children, teaching them developmentally appropriate curriculum in the Little Vikings Preschool.

Students who excel in the Child Development and Theory class are able to, with Pesha's approval, enroll in the program's second level, Early Childhood Education, where students can earn an ECE Level 1 Credential.

"That class is still not fully geared toward becoming a teacher, but it is definitely where you start to see those students who are interested in being teachers," said Pesha.

While the ECE courses are just the beginning stages of developing future teachers, Pesha and Dr. Hester are both passionate about growing the careers in education program at HF High School. Not only to address the ongoing teacher shortage in Illinois and nationwide, but to also inspire current HF High School students to want to return to their alma mater.

"HF is full of opportunity and promise and we really want future teachers to be interested in knowing what a great organization it is to work for," said Dr. Hester. "It is important that we connect kids with universities, build relationships with the undergraduates, pre-service graduates, graduates who are in school to be teachers, provide them opportunities for student teaching, and then hopefully bring them back to us. Maybe some of their friends, too."

business spotlight

Flossmoor Station Restaurant & Brewery Named an Illinois Made Maker

Flossmoor Station Restaurant & Brewery earned the honor of being named a maker in the Illinois Department of Tourism's annual Illinois Made program, which spotlights the people, products and experiences authentic to Illinois.

Launched in 2016, the Illinois Made honors were also created to inspire local residents and visitors to explore the unique destinations and hidden gems across the state that provide one-of-a-kind experiences. Flossmoor Station joins 30 other statewide small businesses in this year's honors, including 17 women-owned businesses, the largest number recognized since the start of the program.

The Illinois Office of Tourism promotes Illinois Made makers and drives foot traffic to the selected businesses by including them in trip itineraries, events, seasonal campaigns and the annual Illinois Made Holiday Gift Guide, which encourages consumers to support small businesses throughout the holiday shopping season.

"I did some research on the program and feel very privileged to be a part of it. It's quite an honor to be one of [the] small businesses in Illinois that received this award," said Carolyn Armstrong, owner of Flossmoor Station Restaurant & Brewery. "Being in business almost 25 years (this

July) has been very rewarding and I'm so happy to be a staple in Flossmoor for many generations of families throughout the years."

The Chicago Southland Convention and Visitors Bureau nominated Flossmoor Station Restaurant & Brewery along with eight other southland businesses. In addition to Flossmoor Station, Wild Blossom Meadery & Winery out of Chicago was also selected as a maker in this year's honorees. Previous Chicago Southland CVB winners include Homewood Bat Company, Lotton Art Glass in Chicago and 5 Rabbit Cerveceria in Bedford Park. The Illinois Made program currently features over 175 makers and helps drive foot traffic into local businesses around the state.



Carolyn Armstrong, owner of Flossmoor Station Restaurant & Brewery, and Mayor Paul Braun celebrate Flossmoor Station being named an "Illinois Made" Maker.

Skip Amazon, Shop Flossmoor

As restrictions were placed on non-essential businesses and in-person shopping become more difficult in 2020, online shopping saw a huge spike accounting for nearly a quarter of all retail sales in 2020. While it shouldn't come as a surprise that Amazon saw a significant benefit from the e-commerce growth in 2020, what may surprise some Flossmoor residents is that many of the items that can be purchased on Amazon, can also be purchased right here in Flossmoor, in-person and online, with many offering a higher quality experience.

Looking for a statement art piece for your family dining room? Pay a visit to Conservatory Vintage & Vinyl to find a collection of vintage pottery or a set of stunning, yet functional, antique glasses. Or, shop an entire gallery of mid-century modern furniture.

"There really isn't a comparison between Amazon and many of the products we sell in our store," said Chogie Fields, owner of Conservatory Vintage & Vinyl. "Our inventory includes preowned rarities and pieces of history, few newly made items."

Interested in upgrading your suit collection? Stop by Valentino's for Men and schedule an appointment for a custom styling or tailoring, or shop the entire collection of fine Italian menswear. Have a favorite pair of shoes that need an upgrade? Visit Ricardo and Shareese Tovar at Tovar Shoe Repair for a custom design or top-notch repair. A number of other specialty businesses call Flossmoor home, as well. Healthy Hounds not only provides specialty pet foods and supplies, but also pet nutrition advice and counseling. If you're interested in exploring a raw diet for your four-legged

friend, Lisa Payette and her team will share their knowledge to help you take that first step.

Morgan Sullins at Gypsy Fix will be sure you find everything you need to give the best gift to a friend or loved one. With clever coffee mugs, custom jewelry or handmade handbags, there's a good chance you'll find it at Gypsy Fix, which makes Flossmoor such a unique and special place to shop, said Sullins.

"People don't typically think of Flossmoor as a shopping destination, but that's what we're hoping to do. Make Flossmoor a destination," said Sullins. "People shouldn't have to go to Tinley [Park] or Orland [Park] every time they need something; we have enough talent locally."

Visit www.flossmoorbusinessassociation.info to see what other shopping destinations Flossmoor has to offer.

department updates

Flossmoor Police Department Welcomes New Officer



Officer Cepriana Monteleone

Since adolescence, Cepriana Monteleone has felt a calling to dedicate her career to public service. It has taken many forms over the course of her life and now landed her in the role of Flossmoor's newest patrol officer. Though she's not originally from Flossmoor, Officer Monteleone quickly felt a strong connection to the community and its residents.

"It is a diverse and very close-knit community, which I am proud to be a part of and to

learn from," said Monteleone. "I enjoy talking to people in casual conversations and all the citizens I have talked to and interacted with have all been friendly."

Prior to joining the Flossmoor Police Department, Monteleone served for eight years as an Automated Supply Specialist in the Army National Guard. Toward the end of her service, Monteleone worked as a full-time Federal Supply Specialist Technician. Monteleone's passion for public service started much younger than that, however. When she was just 14 years old, Monteleone joined a Police Explorer Program that shaped her understanding of law enforcement and encouraged her to pursue it as a career.

"I learned a lot of valuable lessons from the program and it helped me grow as a person," said Monteleone. "I enjoyed interacting with my peers, volunteering at community events, and learning from police officers [who] were willing to share their time and experiences."

Monteleone graduated from the police academy in December and completed field training in early 2021.

Keep Yourself and Your Property Safe

As threats of carjacking, vehicle thefts and property thefts continue to increase in the greater Chicagoland area, the Flossmoor Police Department wants to remind Flossmoor residents how they can stay vigilant in protecting their property, and ensure the safety of themselves and their families. Despite a significant increase in carjacking in the City of Chicago, the Flossmoor Police Department is happy to report there have been no reports of carjacking in Flossmoor. That, however, does not lessen the importance of being prepared and aware. If you are the victim of a carjacking, vehicle theft or if your property has been stolen, dial 911 and officers will be dispatched to your location immediately.

Tips for Avoiding a Carjacking:

- Always be aware of your surroundings and trust your instincts
- Lock your doors immediately when entering your car and drive away
- Look around for suspicious persons sitting in vehicles or loitering in the area before entering or exiting your vehicle
- Park in a well-lit, visible area
- Keep your windows up and doors locked
- Keep your cell phone in your pocket

Summer Road Projects

Following the successful November 2020 Streets, Sidewalks and Flooding Infrastructure Referendum, the Flossmoor Department of Public Works went to work on applying for and securing grant funding for the Flossmoor Road viaduct improvement project.

With grant funding, not only can projects be improved upon from their original designs, but more bond money can be dedicated to street reconstruction and resurfacing across Flossmoor.

Flossmoor Public Works director John Brunke anticipates that the \$2 million Berry Lane project will be funded, in large part, by three individual grants: one from the Metropolitan Water Reclamation District of Greater Chicago, one from the Army Corps of Engineers and one from the Illinois Environmental Protection Agency.

Additionally, a Stormwater Partnership Program from the MWRD will also cover a majority of the estimated \$900,000 drainage projects on Hagen Lane and Douglas Avenue. Construction on the drainage project is expected to start in summer 2021.

The first phase of the Village's comprehensive street rehabilitation plan is also expected to start summer 2021.

All street rehabilitation work will take place on residential streets, as was indicated by the proposal and approved referendum vote. It is anticipated that four to five months of work will take place this year, so residents should expect lane closures in selected neighborhoods. Residents will be informed of the work and potential detours prior to the start of construction. To stay up to date on current construction projects visit www.flossmoor.org.

commission corner

Help the Flossmoor Seed Library Grow

Did you know that the Flossmoor Green Commission, in partnership with the Flossmoor Public Library, hosts a seed exchange library? This free, community service encourages the collection, growing and sharing of heirloom seeds and plants, that are not only delicious and beautiful, but environmentally sustainable.

The practice of seed saving and sharing goes back thousands of years and is essential for a healthy and sustainable food future. The mission of the Flossmoor Seed Library is to preserve food crop heritage for future generations by collecting, growing and sharing heirloom seeds and plants that are adapted to thrive in the soil and climate of the region.

Getting started is easy for amateur and veteran gardeners alike. Visit the Flossmoor Public Library and the seed card catalog, where the seeds are stored, and “borrow” any of the vegetable, herb or flower seeds. Plant the seeds and when your vegetable, herb or flower goes to harvest, allow some of the plants to go to seed. Then, return some of your seeds to the library to ensure the continuous collection of seeds.

Having a robust supply of seed is crucial to sustaining the seed library. Donations can also be made in the form of materials, such as labels and seed envelopes. You can also volunteer your services to help organize and maintain the seed library and other seed library related programs. Books and other materials are also available to help you decide what seeds you should plant and how to plant, collect and store your seeds.



PHOTO BY LARRY BURROWS

Thanks for Supporting Public Art

Thanks to a huge response from the community, 22 new engraved bricks will be added to the traffic circle in Downtown Flossmoor.

The Flossmoor Public Art Commission hosted two promotional drives to encourage the purchase of an engraved brick, prior to the price increase to \$125 in March. The price increase is designed to cover the cost of the brick, so that more of the proceeds from the sale can be used to benefit the Flossmoor public art collection. This includes maintaining the Village's existing sculptures, introducing new sculptures to the rotation, and placing new pieces of public art all around Flossmoor.

You can continue to support the Flossmoor Public Art Commission and show your love for Flossmoor by purchasing an engraved brick, adopting a bench, making a direct donation or adding a monetary donation amount to your quarterly water bill. Visit www.artflossmoor.com to learn more about the public art collection and ways to donate.

Another Successful Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Day of Service

The Flossmoor Community Relations Commission celebrated another successful Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Day of Service this year, despite limitations on in-person service projects. Though this year did offer some new challenges with the COVID-19 pandemic, the community still came together to make a difference for a number of organizations this year.

One of the newer projects that saw a great turnout this year was the Versiti Blood Center blood drive hosted by Omega Psi Phi Fraternity Inc Chi Lambda Lambda Chapter.

With the help of volunteers, the Versiti Blood Center was able to collect 42 units of blood. According to Hubert Stalling with Omega Psi Phi, the 42 units is the most the fraternity has collected during a single blood drive they've hosted.

You Matter 2 Inc. organizers also shared their results following the 2021 Day of Service, and the community stepped up in a big way to provide lunches and handmade blankets for South Suburban PADS and Project Kennedy. More than 30 blankets were donated to Project Kennedy for cancer patients and their families, and an incredible 479 lunches were packed with love and messages of hope to members of South Suburban PADS.

Lastly, the Flossmoor Community Relations Commission's DIY Bundles project saw significant participation from the community. The group collected hundreds of bundles (two minivans full!) to be distributed to partner organizations: the South Suburban Family Shelter, Respond Now and South Suburban PADS.

The Flossmoor Community Relations Commission wants to send a sincere thank you to everyone who continues to support the Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Day of Service and for making this year's Day of Service a special one.

Village of Flossmoor

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A LOOK BACK...



Mayor Paul Braun

After nearly two decades of public service to the Village of Flossmoor, Mayor Paul Braun is set to retire this year, and he said he does so feeling proud of where the Village stands today.

Braun took what he calls the “traditional path” to becoming Mayor of Flossmoor, starting with service on the Village’s Plan Commission, moving to serve on the Village Board of Trustees, and

then being elected in 2009 to the office of Mayor.

Some of Braun’s highlights during his 12 years as Mayor include establishing the Flossmoor Green Commission, forging substantial and beneficial relationships with state and federal representatives, maintaining the Village’s financial sustainability, and growing the Village’s economic development.

Of those achievements, Braun is especially proud of the relationships the Village has established with regional partners. Because of those relationships, the Village has been able to benefit from regional grant programs and has become a strong advocate for the south suburbs.

While Braun will no longer be serving the Village of Flossmoor in an official capacity, he said he will continue to

be an advocate for Flossmoor and will continue to assist the Village when there is a need.

For his final Mayor’s Message, Mayor Paul Braun wanted to leave you all with this:

“As others have said, being mayor is a job of a lifetime but it is not a job for a lifetime. It has been my pleasure and honor to serve this wonderful community for the past 12 years, and I will greatly miss the terrific board members and Village staff who I have worked with over the years. I can say with confidence that the dedication shown by past Village Board members and staff has made Flossmoor what it is today, a welcoming, beautiful and connected community. The accomplishments that we have been able to achieve would not have been possible but for the excellent work of Village staff and the Flossmoor Village Board of Trustees, for which I will always remain grateful for their help and collegiality.

It is my hope that that the next Mayor and Village Board of Trustees will be able to build on the progress that we have made these past 12 years to assure that Flossmoor will continue to be a wonderful place to live, work, and raise our families. I remain available at any time in the future to help the community that Mib and I love so much.”

Sincerely,

Paul Braun
Mayor