

FLOSSMOOR NEWS

Spring 2023
Volume 32 / Number 4



COVER PHOTO BY THOMAS PHOTOGRAPHIC.

BUILDING CHARACTER THROUGH SPORTS

From left to right: Zach Hoekstra, Martez Harding II, Max Rudolph, Meah Harding, Xavier Pratt, Lucille Klika, Aniyah Harding and Alex Macri are just a handful of athletes that participate in Flossmoor's various athletics programs.

Spring into a New Sport
Registration now open for spring athletics
Page 3

A Chapter Closes
Debbie Kopas retires as HFPD Director
Page 4

Award-Winning Road
Berry Lane drainage work earns award
Page 10

village officials

Michelle Nelson, Mayor
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Gary Daggett, Trustee
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Brian Driscoll, Trustee
bdriscoll@flossmoor.org

Gina LoGalbo, Village Clerk
glogalbo@flossmoor.org

Bridget Wachtel, Village Manager
bwachtel@flossmoor.org

village numbers

Village Hall: (708) 798-2300
Fire: (708) 798-3885
Non-Emergency Police: (708) 957-4500
Non-Emergency TDD: (708) 647-0179
Public Works: (708) 957-4100
Building Department: (708) 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 Monday 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 4

St. Patrick's Day Parade | Flossmoor Community House. Flossmoor's annual St. Patrick's Day Parade is a great way to celebrate the holiday with friends, family and neighbors of all ages. Lineup begins at 12:30 p.m. at the Flossmoor Community Church Community House and the parade steps off promptly at 1 p.m.

April 1

New Resident Mixer — New Flossmoor residents are invited to join the Village of Flossmoor, Flossmoor School District 161, Homewood-Flossmoor High School 233 and other Village stakeholders for an evening of camaraderie, information and fun. Visit www.flossmoor.org for more details.

April 3

Brush Collection Begins — Free brush collection will occur monthly on the first week of each month, except for September. See page 6 for complete schedule. All brush to be collected must be set out by 7 a.m. the Monday of collection week, but no earlier than three days prior to collection. Visit www.flossmoor.org for complete details or contact the Flossmoor Department of Public Works (708) 957-4100.

April 4

Election Day — Find your polling place at www.cookcountyclerk.com.

April 8

Community Cleanup — Join the Flossmoor Green Commission, the Flossmoor Public Works Department and volunteers for a day of cleanup.

April 17

Vehicle Stickers and Animal Tags Purchase Deadline

April 22

Flossmoor Baseball & Softball Parade — 9:30 a.m. from Parker Junior High to Flossmoor Park. Come cheer on our community kids as they parade through town ending at Bronco Field to start the season!

April 29

Spring Tree Planting — Spring tree planting is back and the Flossmoor Green Commission is looking for volunteers! Visit www.flossmoor.org for more information and to sign-up. Volunteers must be 16 years old.

May 6

HF Park District Park Pride — 9 a.m. to 12 p.m. | All Area Parks Join in the fun as volunteers come together to beautify our parks for summer! All volunteers receive a t-shirt and lunch provided by a local business. Park Pride is a great opportunity for kids, scout groups, churches and other service organizations to give back to the community. Call the HF Park District at (708) 957-0300 or email jcarlson@hfparks.com to become a Park Captain.

May 29

Village Hall closed in observance of Memorial Day. Taps Across America will be played at 3 p.m. in the Downtown Traffic circle.

SPRING INTO A NEW SPORT WITH HF ATHLETICS

A sunny afternoon stationed at Mustang Field, enjoying freshly popped popcorn, chatting with friends and longtime neighbors, and enjoying a game of little league baseball. What could be better? Very few things, according to Carlo Gozzi, president of Flossmoor Baseball and Softball.

“It was a group of parents that started the league years ago and it’s still a completely volunteer-run organization,” said Gozzi. “We all work together to keep baseball America’s pastime.”

For nearly 50 years, Flossmoor Baseball and Softball has captured the hearts and minds of Flossmoor’s youth and taught them the determination and responsibility it takes to be committed to a seasonal activity.

That same mindset, coupled with his own experiences in youth sports is what inspired Martez Harding and his wife Keshawn, to start the Homewood-Flossmoor Kings youth football and cheerleading club.

“The program was built and is based around mentoring,” said Harding. “Football and cheer are the hook to get the kids interested, then once they get involved in the program, that’s when we really dive into the mentorship where we discuss social issues and the real-life issues that kids face.”

When the HF Kings football and cheer teams are not occupied with practice or games, that’s when Harding’s vision comes to life. Supported by Mentoring Director Mikkal Harris, a licensed therapist, the HF Kings mentoring sessions are all steeped in the program’s founding values: discipline, integrity, scholarship, community and service.

It is in these sessions that Harding and the rest of his team are able to make meaningful connections with children from various communities and backgrounds. While the organization may be named the HF Kings, there are several players that filter in through surrounding communities. While Harding’s goal is to eventually build the program, which is only three years old, to serve as a feeder for the Homewood-Flossmoor High School football team, he maintains that he will never turn an athlete away who wants to join the Kings.

“We are open to everybody who wants to be a part of the culture of our program,” said Harding. “We are providing kids a unique opportunity that they might not have in their own community, so we don’t want to turn anybody away who is just looking for a good program.”

Another great athletics league offered to kids in the Homewood Flossmoor area is HF Vikings youth hockey. Despite the club’s small size compared to its competition, the HF Vikings have added an impressive number of banners to the walls of the Homewood-Flossmoor Ice Arena.

Program Director Chris Cimoch credits the club’s



success to the hearty passion the Homewood and Flossmoor communities bring to the sport.

“Hockey takes a lot of commitment, but we do tend to attract some pretty good players in the area,” said Cimoch. “We’re a special program.”

That seems to be a trend when it comes to athletic opportunities in Flossmoor. Each sport, recreation and other physical activity offered to the youth in the community features something new and exciting at each level. One thing that remains consistent throughout, however, is the dedication and commitment that parents, families and community members give to each of their respective activities, ensuring that kids across Flossmoor are given the best opportunities possible.

As Harding says, these are the opportunities that can help shape the adults that children grow up to be.

“I went to school in the inner city on the south side of Chicago. When I was younger, I could have gotten into a lot of things that were not good, but instead, I got involved with football. I had really good coaches who treated us like their sons and I truly believe that kept a lot of us safe,” said Harding. “When my kids were born, I was doing all these same things for my kids, and I thought, if I can do all these things with my kids, I can do this with their friends and other kids too. There is nothing like the reward of seeing a kid grow up and knowing that you were a part of it.”

For more information about youth sports programs in Flossmoor, visit www.hfparks.com or reach out to Flossmoor Baseball and Softball, HF Kings and HF Vikings youth hockey directly to learn how to get involved.

flossmoor faces & places

Debbie Kopas Retires



During the course of her 32-year career with the Homewood-Flossmoor Park District, Debbie Kopas has achieved a number of personal and professional goals. She's enjoyed the professional relationships she's shared with colleagues and community partners. She even played an instrumental part in opening a restaurant. That

was never something she anticipated in her career.

But, Kopas said, that is exactly what has made her career so remarkable.

"It's like running a bunch of businesses all under one umbrella. There are so many facets to it; so much more than meets the eye," said Kopas. "When you put your kid in a flag football league, you don't think about all the planning it took to put that league together. From the public's perspective, it should look effortless and that's what we try to do."

When Kopas entered the world of parks and recreation, she had no idea what to expect. Nor did she ever think that what started as a part-time accounting job would lead to her becoming Executive Director 15 years later.

"I didn't even know you could get a degree in parks and rec," Kopas says candidly.

Kopas quickly realized the learning would not stop

there. Just two years after being hired as a part-time accountant, Kopas moved into the role of Business Manager, working closely with the Executive Director. During the 15 years she spent working (literally) side-by-side with the former Executive Director, Kopas had the opportunity to work with members of each department of the Park District, taking pieces of information from each to help strengthen her knowledge of the organization.

She believes those learning experiences allowed her to tackle some significant projects in her 30-year career, including the construction of The Clubhouse at Dolphin Lake and Wiley's Grill at Coyote Run Golf Course.

"The Clubhouse at Dolphin Lake used to be a pool and people were sad when we had to close it, so we knew whatever we built in its place had to be great," said Kopas. "Having an amazing team made that all possible. Likewise, when we opened Wiley's, we completely renovated it in two months. I have this saying that I operate really well in chaos, but I don't want to live there."

As Kopas prepares to hang up her Executive Director hat this June, she looks forward to spending at least the first few months relaxing and chaos-free. What she does after that, she's not entirely sure. Either way, Kopas knows her exit will be bittersweet.

"It's really hard for me to imagine getting up and not coming here," said Kopas. "The day I walked in for my first interview, I felt at home. It was completely different than any other job I'd had. I know I'm leaving it in great hands, though, and that makes me feel ok."

Get to Know Your Flossmoor Police Department

Being able to connect with Flossmoor residents and offering them security and aid is what Flossmoor Police Officer Lisa Morris enjoys most about her career. It was a desire to help people that led to Morris' passion for law enforcement in the first place. After studying sociology in college, her interest in what drives people shifted her focus to pursuing a career in law enforcement. During her 16-year career in Flossmoor, Morris has enjoyed the opportunity to connect with people through a variety of roles, including as a member of the South Suburban Emergency Response Team, as a field training officer and evidence technician, and as a DARE instructor.

No matter what role she is serving, or what team she is a part of, what matters most to Morris is that she is a positive influence in the community.

"Knowing that whether it's a simple act like deterring a crime by doing residential patrol or a more complicated act, I am serving the community and that's what I know I am meant to be doing," said Morris.



Roots Run Deep: Irons Oaks Continues a Century of Connecting People with Nature

Yearning for a summer escape away from the bustling city, Adelmor M. (A.M.) Bates – who built a fortune on an innovative paper bag – in 1916 built his utopia on 16 and a half acres in the quiet, unincorporated town of Flossmoor. A gift to his wife and three children, the estate included a 13-room mansion, cement swimming pool, tennis court and a stable near a meadow for his son to practice polo. That son, Mark, would later make the estate his year-round home, adding a pond and formal showplace gardens, an attraction used at the time by the South Cook County Garden Association.

More than a century later, the same patch of land offers different diversions to a much larger swath of the population, thanks in great part to the efforts of Betty Irons. A staunch proponent of reconnecting people with nature and by all accounts, a force of nature herself, Irons played an instrumental role in establishing what is now enjoyed by locals as the Irons Oaks Environmental Learning Center.

In addition to miles worth of walking trails open to the public daily from dawn to dusk, Irons Oaks offers programs for all ages, ranging from high ropes courses and monthly night hikes to pre-k nature camps, birthday parties and corporate team-building programs.

Cheryl Vargo, director of the center for the past 12 years, may rival Irons in her passion for both the place and its mission. According to Vargo, connecting residents with their roots in nature is particularly vital these days in combating pandemic-induced isolation. Events, including the upcoming Squirrel Appreciation Day, and classes, including parent-tot groups and Preschool in the Park, an ongoing summer program with rotating locations, are all designed to foster connection with the natural world.

“I’m of the opinion that the person who is dirtiest had the most fun,” said Vargo.

The center’s mission, she says, to offer controlled and supervised risks, safely allowing people to test their boundaries. Part of that testing process could include one of two high-ropes challenge courses or a lesson in belaying at the climbing wall, should one be so inclined. Each can accommodate groups of 14, and the team-building aspects associated have proved popular.

“We were so busy; we needed two courses,” Vargo explains.

The climbing wall stands on the former site of the Bates mansion, the hydrangeas lining the former driveway now leading to a parking lot mounded with mulch from the center’s annual Christmas tree recycling program. Vargo



PHOTO COURTESY OF IRONS OAKS

A group of young adventurers search high and low for something interesting during an afternoon hike at Irons Oaks Environmental Learning Center.

explains the initial plan to rehab the structurally unsound mansion for offices was found prohibitively expensive. The current center, constructed in 2010 along Western Avenue, offers programming for all ages, from toddlers to seniors. Of particular joy to Vargo is the reconnection with nature, particularly for children. She conducted socially-distanced family outings and night hikes during the height of the pandemic, and noted that seeing a gentleman who visited the park daily for exercise lifted her spirits in her months of working alone.

Now, with spring approaching, Vargo looks forward to sharing her love of the space through more events and programs, including a nighttime Easter Egg hunt for grownups and continued chances for children to safely connect with nature. The real goal, Vargo says, is simple;

“People often perceive nature – the woods – as an unsafe place,” said Vargo, noting part of the center’s role is combating that misperception. “Our goal is to get kids out of the house, off the couch, and out into the woods to peek under rocks, to relax under a tree listening to birds, or crossing creeks on logs. Just getting out to see all the wonder nature has to offer.”

NEWS TO USE!

Free Brush Collection

The Village of Flossmoor's free brush collection returns this April with a minor change to the collection schedule. Flossmoor Public Works crews will continue to collect brush on the first full week of the month from April through October, except in September, when collection will be delayed a week due to Flossmoor Fest. The brush collection program is only available to single-family residential dwellings and is intended to provide an easy and convenient way for residents to dispose of tree branches from their property. Residents are invited to put branches out for collection no later than 7 a.m. on Monday of their scheduled week. Collection will take place during regular work hours from 7 a.m. to 3:30 p.m., Monday through Friday. Guidelines for the program can be found at www.flossmoor.org. For additional information, contact the Public Works Department at (708) 957-4100.

Collection Schedule

- April 3 – April 7
- May 1 – May 5
- June 5 – June 9
- July 3 – July 7
- Aug. 7 – Aug. 11
- Sept. 11 – Sept 15
- Oct. 2 – Oct. 6



Annual Water Billing Schedule

Keep an eye on your mail as water bills have started to arrive in homes. Water bills are mailed quarterly, with a third of the community billed each month. Keep these dates in mind, so you know when to expect your bill. If you're worried 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. In an effort to offer convenient, innovative payment options to the residents of Flossmoor, you can now pay your water and sewer service online. Please note all credit cards will include a service fee of \$4.95. This fee is not charged or collected by the Village of Flossmoor. Contact us with questions or visit us at www.flossmoor.org to learn more.

Host a Block Party this Spring

Spring is a great time to get out and get to know your neighbors, and what better way than by hosting a community block party! Building friendly relationships between neighbors makes us an even more vibrant Village and the process couldn't be easier.

Step 1: Set up a Block Directory

Step 2: Host a Block Party Planning Meeting

Step 3: Send Out Block Party Invite

Step 4: The Day of Your Block Party

Step 5: Stay Connected with New Friends

You do the planning and Flossmoor will provide barricades, a visit from one of our emergency services departments, and a stopover from a Village representative. Contact other community partners like the Homewood-Flossmoor Park District and Homewood Disposal for additional resources.

Visit www.flossmoor.org for more party-planning information and to complete the online block party application.

Check Your Home for Water Leaks

Nobody wants to experience the unpleasant reality of an unexpectedly high water bill. By taking a simple, proactive step, you can detect and fix a leak before it costs you money. The Village of Flossmoor encourages residents to check water meters at least once a month. 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 on your meter or take a picture with your phone before you leave your home for a few hours. Check the meter again when you arrive back home. If the number changes while you're gone, you likely have a leak. Regularly check indoor and outdoor faucets too! The cost of forgetting to turn off an outdoor faucet can be steep. Also, remember to turn off your hose and check it for leaks. If your indoor faucets are leaking, contact a plumber to repair the issue. If you're up to it, even watching a video on YouTube might help you do simple repair work yourself.

Spring Tree Care Tips

The Village of Flossmoor needs your help! After planting more than 300 trees during Plant the Gem, the Flossmoor Public Works Department is asking residents to help pitch in and make sure these new trees get the care they need. Flossmoor Arborist Dave Becker shares these tips for important spring tree care.

- Inspect trees for dead, diseased and damaged branches. These branches can and should be removed to promote tree health and safety. The best time to perform pruning work is before the trees leaf out in spring.
- Add extra mulch around trees. Mulch helps the soil retain moisture, adds nutrients back to the soil and reduces the frequency of weeds. Total mulch thickness should be no more than three to four inches and should be brushed away from the trunk.
- Inspect trees throughout the spring and growing seasons. Look for any signs of insects or disease, especially during the rainy months. Many diseases thrive in wet spring conditions. Contact the Flossmoor Public Works Department if you are concerned about the health of your parkway tree.
- Water trees as needed beginning in the spring. Newly planted trees need as much as 15 gallons of water a week. Continue watering throughout the growing season for ideal tree health.

Vehicle Sticker and Animal Tags

Vehicle stickers must be purchased and displayed by Monday, April 17. 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 in the lower right-hand corner of the front windshield. Residents may purchase vehicle stickers in a variety of ways starting on Wednesday, March 1. Please make checks payable to the Village of Flossmoor.

- Village Hall (2800 Flossmoor Road) Monday through Friday, 8:30 a.m. to 5 p.m. In-person credit card payments accepted.
- By mail (stickers will be mailed): Village of Flossmoor, 2800 Flossmoor Road.
- Drop Box: Located in the parking lot of Village Hall (stickers will be mailed, cash payments not accepted.)
- Village Hall Lockbox: Located inside the Police Department (stickers will be mailed, cash payments accepted.)
- Schedule of Fees: Cars \$40 (Seniors 65 and older may receive one sticker per household at \$15), Trucks — A or B \$40; Over B \$65, RV \$40 and Motorcycles \$20

Animal tags for your dogs and cats must also be purchased by April 17, 2023. Applications are included with the vehicle sticker renewal form sent to all households. Contact Village Hall if you did not receive an application. Visit www.flossmoor.org for more information.

Flossmoor Launches Community Calendar

Wouldn't it be nice to find a calendar that features all of the events happening around Flossmoor in a given month, all in one simple place? Great news! In an effort to ease that search and enhance the connection between intergovernmental partners, the Village of Flossmoor recently launched the "Community Calendar" on its promotional website www.discoverflossmoor.com.

The Community Calendar is a one-stop source that features upcoming events for the Village of Flossmoor, Flossmoor Public Library, Homewood-Flossmoor Park District, Homewood-Flossmoor High School and Flossmoor School District 161. No longer will residents have to wonder if it's a Village event or a Park District Event, a high school event or an elementary school event, and better yet, they will know exactly which organization to contact for more information.

The Community Calendar will be updated on a monthly basis, so be sure to visit www.discoverflossmoor.com frequently to see what's in store for Flossmoor all year long!



school spotlight

Wiz Kids Camps Offers Elementary Extracurriculars to District 161



Shavonna Harris spends her workday teaching sixth graders at Parker Junior High School about the solar system, living organisms and all things science. When she leaves her classroom at 1201 School Street, she trades in her junior high teacher hat for her mentor and advisor hat and welcomes a classroom of second graders into her Wiz Kids Camps after-school program. Wiz Kids is a new addition to Flossmoor School District 161, offering elementary-aged students the opportunity to explore different clubs, athletics programs and more. For Harris, it has been a rejuvenating experience that allows her to flex her education muscles in new ways.

"I had never worked with second graders before, so I was a little nervous about how they would respond to me and whether or not we'd have fun, whether they'd be engaged," said Harris. "When I walked in that first day, it seemed like their excitement right away was at (level) 10. They were participating, engaged, full of energy, and I was feeding off their energy. It's the end of the day for all of us, but the energy they gave me woke me up and invigorated me."

That has been an unexpected yet positive result for Amabel Crawford, learning and curriculum director for Flossmoor School District 161. Since beginning the Wiz Kids program in the winter of 2022, students have been engaged and participatory at all grade levels. But, the response she's seen from the teachers and Wiz Kids mentors supervising the classrooms and leading the after-school program has been a pleasant surprise.

"This is a huge opportunity for our kids to have this program free of charge and the timing worked out because we have Parker teachers who can come teach the elementary

programs because they get out earlier (than the elementary schools)," said Crawford. "I'm really grateful for the staff that signed up for this because we can offer something to every grade level. It's a great collaboration between our district and Wiz Kids."

Though the program is still in its infancy, it is already at full capacity, with kids being added to waiting lists. With lessons in coding and entrepreneurship, and activities surrounding theatre and debate, among many others, the level of engagement from students isn't hard to believe. It also helps, said Crawford, that many of the mentors brought in by Wiz Kids are early college or high-school-aged students.

"Wiz Kids does a wonderful job training them in how to work with little kids, how to be good role models, how to keep everyone safe," said Crawford. "They're still under the care of our staff, but they're young people and the kids respond differently to a senior in high school than they do a teacher or administrator."

Gabrielle Austin, a Homewood-Flossmoor High School senior, is one of a handful of hired counselors that works in the after-school program, and while it is a paid position, her own experience attending the Wiz Kids summer camp made the decision to accept the position an easy one.

"I definitely like the people who run it and knowing them personally makes me feel really positive about being a part of it," said Austin.

While she didn't personally teach Austin when she came through Parker Junior High School, Harris said she looks forward to the day one of her Wiz Kids second graders comes through the doors of her science classroom. For now, though, she's enjoying the new experience and looks forward to what is to come.

"The program is still new, but so far, the kids have been really, really excited and I think they're really enjoying the different activities," said Harris. "I have also been enjoying the experience because it gives me a chance to do something different. It's giving me an opportunity to work with different students and see other people that I don't get to see. It's been really great."

Wiz Kids is funded in part by Flossmoor School District 161 through the Elementary and Secondary School Emergency Relief (ESSER) fund. The program is offered to second through fifth-grade students and will run until the end of the 2023-24 school year.

business spotlight

Healthy Hair Institute of Cosmetology Now Open

When Tameka Conley walked into Edward Douglas 19 years ago to start her new job as a shampoo assistant, she would have never guessed that she would one day be the owner of her very own salon and spa.

Looking back on that memory years later, Conley couldn't imagine her life playing out any differently.

"I really liked being in that atmosphere, so when I told all of my family and friends that I was going to cosmetology school, they all said 'about time,'" Conley said with a laugh.

Conley earned her cosmetology license in 2008 as she built her clientele working at Edward Douglas. While she sincerely enjoyed her time working with mentors at Edward Douglas, the time came for Conley to expand her horizons and fulfill her dream of opening a salon that promoted total body wellness and education.

"The idea is to be a one-stop-shop. Clients aren't just coming here to look pretty. They are, but I want them to walk away understanding why the products we used were used or why the techniques we used were used," said Conley. "We want people walking away getting their money's worth."

The Healthy Hair Institute of Cosmetology specializes in a number of services, from chemical-free styling and scalp restoration, to manicures, pedicures and massage therapy.

Karyn Brings the Vegan Lifestyle to Flossmoor

When Karyn Calabrese established the first of her two businesses, Karyn's Inner Beauty, in 2021, the health and wellness spa received high praise and a rush of new clients. She quickly learned that Flossmoor elicits a feeling of warmth and welcoming, and she knew it was where she belonged.

That is why when Calabrese opened the doors to her long-awaited plant-based, vegan restaurant, Karyn's Kitchen, located at 3331 Vollmer Road, the immediate positive response did not surprise her a bit.

"I love and adore Flossmoor. People seem to respond to life differently here than in the hustle and bustle of the city. There is a different

connection and here, humans treat each other like humans," said Calabrese. "I'm so grateful to be in this last chapter of my life out here, doing the things I love, and sharing it with people who have embraced it."

Karyn's Kitchen offers diners a variety of plant-based specialties, from the restaurant's signature Jerry's Pizza — an homage to Calabrese's husband — to the shredded jackfruit barbecue pulled "pork" sandwich and Karyn's famous, plant-based jerk chicken. There is also a large variety of raw options for those interested in exploring the raw vegan diet.

In addition to the food offerings,



Tameka Conley is living her dream as owner and operator of her very own salon and spa, Healthy Hair Institute of Cosmetology located at 19710 Governors Highway, Suite-10 in Flossmoor.

The salon also offers a full line of skin care services and other wellness treatments.

Services are by appointment only, and Conley herself works to pair each new client with the technician best suited to their needs, offering clients the best experience possible.

"You can go to plenty of places, but we believe we are the unicorn in the industry," said Conley.

Contact the Healthy Hair Institute of Cosmetology today at (702) 625-3682 or visit them online at www.healthyhairinstitute.co to view the full line of services.

Calabrese will also be offering cooking classes and lifestyle coaching in the new space, tying together the theme of overall wellness between both of her businesses.

"I didn't want a large restaurant space; I've already had that. I wanted a space where I could also teach people," said Calabrese. "My entire business is about educating people to look, feel and do better for themselves. I've been doing this for 50 years, so I think I'm kind of an expert by now."

Karyn's Kitchen is open from 11 a.m. to 7 p.m. Tuesday through Saturday. Visit www.shopkaryns.com to learn more about Calabrese and her businesses.

department update

Berry Lane Drainage Improvement Project Wins Project of the Year



Drone footage from the Metropolitan Water Reclamation District of Greater Chicago shows the progress of the Berry Lane Drainage Improvement Project. The Berry Lane project recently earned Project of the Year from the Southwest Branch of the American Public Works Association.

Flossmoor's Berry Lane Drainage Improvement Project is now award-winning after earning the Project of the Year Award in the Environment category (projects less than \$5 million) of the Southwest Branch of the American Public Works Association (APWA) Chicago Metro Chapter. With the award, Flossmoor's project automatically advances to the greater Chicago Metro Chapter for further award consideration, with the potential to reach the APWA's national level of recognition.

"This is the first time we've won a project award from APWA, so we're pretty excited about it," said John Brunke, Flossmoor Public Works Director. "This is a unique project; it's not just a storm sewer improvement project. It's unique in that we have all these different funding sources, it features newer green infrastructure technology with the permeable pavers, and we used newer best management practices."

In addition to the use of permeable pavers, the Berry Lane Drainage Improvement Project was nominated by the Village's engineering firm, Baxter & Woodman, because of its success in earning significant grant funding. While the

project was mainly funded by a \$1.5 million Section 219 Grant from the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, as a green infrastructure project, the Berry Lane Drainage Improvement Project also earned \$700,337 in funding from the Metropolitan Water Reclamation District of Greater Chicago and the Illinois Environmental Protection Agency. The remaining cost of the project came from bond funding.

"Taking on a project of this scope with the support of partners who are pushing for greener infrastructure, aligning with the values of the Village of Flossmoor, was an honor in itself," said Mayor Michelle Nelson. "Now, to see this project being recognized on a regional level and possibly a national level, I think this speaks volumes to how we can continue to push projects that support environmental sustainability."

The APWA Public Works Project of the Year Award was established to promote excellence in the management and administration of public works projects by recognizing the alliance between the managing agency, the consultant/architect/engineer, and the contractor who, working together, complete public works projects.

commission corner

CRC Thank You

The Flossmoor Community Relations Commission (CRC) is thrilled to report another successful flagship Martin Luther King Jr. Day of Service project with Sleep in Heavenly Peace. Thanks to the efforts of more than 80 volunteers, participants were able to assemble the parts for 38 beds. These beds will be delivered to children in need across the south suburbs by volunteers with Sleep in Heavenly Peace and others, including members of the Flossmoor Fire Department. The CRC would like to extend their thanks and gratitude to the Flossmoor Public Works Department for hosting the project in their facility and providing a clean and inviting atmosphere that was later covered in sawdust! The CRC would also like to thank the Flossmoor Volunteer Fire Department Corporation for fully funding this project for the second year in a row, donating \$3,000 to purchase the materials to build the beds. Lastly, the CRC would like to thank the Flossmoor Fraternal Order of Police for supplying lunch to hungry volunteers. If you were unable to participate in the bed-building project, keep an eye out for next year, as the Village of Flossmoor hopes to partner with Sleep in Heavenly Peace for years to come!



Thanks to a generous donation from the Flossmoor Volunteer Fire Department Corporation, volunteers successful built 38 beds during the Sleep in Heavenly Peace bed-building event in honor of Martin Luther King Jr. Day of Service.

Green Commission PCs for People

The Chicago Southland Green Committee (CSGC) hosted its first Martin Luther King Jr. Day of Service project with the support of Vicki and Ryan Stevenson in the use of their space at HF Homes in Downtown Flossmoor. The CSGC, which the Flossmoor Green Commission is an active member of, is an intergovernmental effort to promote environmentally-conscious activities among residents, businesses, schools, villages and participating governmental agencies in the Chicago Southland area through events, advocacy and public outreach. The CSGC partnered with PCs for People, which refurbishes donated and outdated technology and then provides them to low-income individuals and families in need. The CSGC had 20 volunteers work in shifts from 9 a.m. until 1 p.m. during the Day of Service event and together, they collected three pallets of desktops, laptops, tv's, computer monitors, power cords and cables, and more.



Homewood-Flossmoor High School students lend a helping hand at the PCs for People e-waste recycling drive sponsored by the Chicago Southland Green Committee during Martin Luther King Jr. Day of Service.

PHOTO BY AMY KENT.

Purchase a Brick to Support Public Art

Are you looking for a way to help support Flossmoor's public art? Consider purchasing a brick to be added to the Downtown Flossmoor traffic circle. For only \$125, you could cement a legacy in Flossmoor, whether for a loved one, a precious pet, your family heritage or a beloved group of friends, and help support Flossmoor's sculpture program. These proceeds are used to keep Flossmoor's sculpture collection vibrant by maintaining the Village's existing sculptures, introducing new sculptures to the rotation, and placing new pieces of public art all around Flossmoor. Visit www.artflossmoor.com to learn more.

Village of Flossmoor

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SERVICE PROJECTS SHINE ON MARTIN LUTHER KING JR. DAY

This January, the Flossmoor Community Relations Commission celebrated the 9th annual Martin Luther King Jr. Day of Service with a total of 23 service projects, a massive bed-building drive and a classical music concert that raised \$1,200 for NeighborScapes in Harvey. Hundreds of volunteers came together to make a difference for a number of organizations this year and the Village received more project support from local businesses than ever.

For the second year in a row, the Chi Lambda Lambda Chapter of Omega Psi Phi Fraternity, Inc. hosted a community blood drive, this year partnering with Lamda Tau Omega of Alpha Kappa Alpha Sorority, Inc., making this year's blood drive bigger and better. The drive successfully collected 67 units of blood for Versiti Blood Center to help aid as many as 201 people, setting a new record for the fraternity's blood drive collections.

A Martin Luther King Jr. Day of Service staple project, You Matter 2, Inc., once again hosted a lunch-making drive in support of South Suburban PADS and made tie blankets for Project Kennedy. After donating blood, Congresswoman Robin Kelly jumped in on the blanket making which resulted in 70 blankets being donated to Project Kennedy, which provides services to cancer patients, their families and communities. Volunteers with You Matter 2, Inc. also assembled more than 400 lunches that were delivered to South Suburban PADS.

New this year was the Bricks of Hope project organized by Flossmoor Village Clerk Gina LoGalbo. The LoGalbo family collected 139 LEGO sets, including a large donation from the Flossmoor Fire Department, that will be donated to Bricks of Hope to support its mission to help children who are hospitalized build hope, spark connections and encourage creativity through building with LEGOs.

Another new project, though likely not one needed to be repeated, was the renovation of Park Place in Flossmoor Park by Hidden Gem Half Marathon coordinators.



Approximately 20 volunteers came out to paint and clean the commonly used community space to brighten the environment and make it more enjoyable for residents to use. The Hidden Gem planning committee donated \$2,000 for paint, supplies, furniture and decor that were purchased at The Cancer Support Center.

So many other amazing projects took place on Martin Luther King Jr. Day, and the Village of Flossmoor would like to send a sincere thank you to everyone who participated and continues to support Flossmoor's annual Day of Service!