



# Newsletter

Village of River Grove, Illinois April 2021



David B. Guerin Mayor

Lynn Bjorvik Trustee

Roger V. Sewell Trustee

Bob Thomas Trustee

Marjorie A. Manchen Clerk

Michele M. Obaya Trustee

Katie A. Muellner Trustee

Christopher J. Lilly Trustee

## From the Mayor's Desk

### Dear Friendly Neighbors,

Happy Easter to all! It was wonderful to see everyone at our Easter Egg Hunt, and we were happy that the Easter Bunny had time to visit us again. Easter means spring is in the air, and with the weather breaking, our neighborhood is coming alive once again. As we diligently start our spring cleanup and prep our homes for summer, we hear the crack of the bat on the radio. River Grove's baseball opening day is set for Saturday May 1st and Rockets softball opening day will take place on Sunday May 2nd; a sure sign of good things to come! I would be remiss if I did not mention how proud I am that our Village has once again been recognized as Tree City USA, as it has for the past 25 years. This is truly an honor for River Grove.

With life starting to open up, the Village has many outdoor community events planned. There will be concerts in the park, the highly regarded Unwined and Jazz event, and of course the return of our River Front Fall Fest complete with wonderful entertainment, carnival and great food vendors. Please see the insert in this water bill for a list of planned events so far. We hope you can make it out and I encourage you to say hello. If you are new in town or lived here since birth, I encourage you to talk to myself or any of the village officials and let us know what is important to you. Your voice matters and we are here to work for you!

In closing thanks for calling the Village of Friendly Neighbors your home and don't forget to vote on April 6, 2021. Remember my staff is always available to serve you.

Your friend and neighbor, David B. Guerin, follow me on twitter @davidbguerin

### River Grove has been a Tree City USA Community for the Past 25 Years

More than 3,400 communities, including River Grove, have made the commitment to becoming a Tree City USA. They have achieved Tree City USA status by meeting four core standards of sound urban forestry management: maintaining a tree board or department, having a community tree ordinance, spending at least \$2 per capita on urban forestry and celebrating Arbor Day. Since 1872, Arbor Day (the last Friday of April) has been recognized as a time to plant and appreciate trees. The Village of River Grove usually celebrates this day with a tree-planting ceremony. 6th graders from both River Grove and Rhodes Schools would attend, where they would participate in a bird house decorating contest. This year will be much different. On Friday April 30th at 10am, the Village of River Grove and the River Grove Beautification Committee along with the Public Works Department will commemorate the day by planting a tree at the newly constructed Lions Park on Ditka Drive. Please join us in the celebration of Arbor Day. We ask all that attend to please wear a mask and practice social distancing.



### First Responder Commendation Presentation

At the March 18th Village Board meeting, first responders (police and fire) were recognized for their outstanding work in battling the Paris Avenue fire the night of January 8. Many lives were saved due to their outstanding efforts.

#### Those recognized from the Fire Department:

Capt. Richard Raffin, Lt. Brian Clarke, Engineer Joseph Bowen, FF/PM Kevin Bjorvik, FF/PM Daniel Theusch, FF/PM Kevin Brennan.

#### The Police Officers recognized were:

Joseph Contorno, Kevin Kross, John Camardo, Patrick O'Connor and Frank Calistro Jr.



## Shout Out! Trustee Michele M. Obaya

Michele joined the Village in 2009 as part of the Recreation Department. She eventually became the Director of Recreation, a position she held until May, 2015 when she was appointed to the position of Trustee, Chairing the Recreation Committee. In 2017 she was elected to the position of Trustee, Chairing the Finance and Economic Development Committee, a position she continues in today. In her capacity as Trustee, Michele is also Co-Chair of the Public Safety Committee. In an unofficial capacity she is a member of the Special Events Committee, helping out wherever needed. Michele graduated with honors from Triton College with an Associate of Science degree and then Summa Cum Laude from Concordia University with a Bachelor of Arts degree. In December of 2020, Michele received her Master's Degree in Business Administration from Concordia University. Her wealth of knowledge is a great asset to the Board. She served on the River Grove School Board of Education from 2008 to 2013 where she was a member of the Superintendent Evaluation Committee, the Finance Committee, the Building & Grounds Committee and the Teacher Contract Negotiations Team. Michele is a member of and responsible for organizing the River Grove School Education Foundation and a former member of the River Grove School PTA, where she served as Chairperson of Special Events, as well as the River Grove Royals Athletic Club. On a more personal note, Michele has lived in River Grove with her husband since 1993 and together they have three sons. In her free time, she enjoys spending as much time as she can with her grandchildren, Lorenzo and Luna.



## River Grove Fire Department Providing Smoke Alarms

The River Grove Fire Department is working cooperatively with the nonprofit Illinois Fire Safety Alliance and Office of the State Fire Marshal to provide **no-cost smoke alarms to residents of River Grove**. These are available to owner-occupants either in single family homes or condos. The Be Alarmed! Smoke Alarm Installation program provides smoke alarms and fire prevention materials to Illinois fire departments in an effort to both educate residents on fire safety as well as to provide them with life-saving devices in their home. The program was developed to educate residents on the dangers of fire, how to prevent fire from occurring in the home, and to ensure there are working smoke alarms properly installed in homes. By utilizing 10-year concealed battery smoke alarms, it ensures that the power source cannot be removed from the unit and, if properly maintained, will last the life of the device. *“Smoke alarms are the most effective early warning device there is.”* says River Grove Fire Chief Sean Flynn. *“By merely having a working smoke alarm in your home, it reduces your chance of dying in a reported fire in half.”* *“Our goal is to make sure residents have the protection of a smoke alarm.”* says Chief Flynn. *“Because smoke alarms alone won’t prevent every fire death our program includes educating residents on how to create a home fire escape plan so they know what to do if their smoke alarm sounds.”*

Residents who wish to receive more information about River Grove's smoke alarm installation program should contact Captain John Paczesny at **(630) 606-1729**

## Triton College Violence Prevention Project

Triton College was awarded a grant in 2017 by the Department of Justice Office on Violence Against Women to reduce domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault, and stalking on campus. The Triton College Violence Prevention Project is a comprehensive, collaborative and survivor-centered program that:

- Provides education, prevention of and response to gender-based violence at Triton College in order to foster a safer community.
- Creates awareness of and addresses issues that impact students due to domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault and stalking.
- Encourages a comprehensive, coordinated community approach that provides services for survivors and enhances survivor safety. The Coordinated Community Response Team (CCRT) coordinates all prevention and intervention efforts, facilitates communication between key campus departments and community partners, ensures messages across efforts are consistent and reinforced, and ensures the system's response to victims is seamless, consistent, and supportive.

For more information on Triton College's Sexual Assault Awareness Month trainings and events, contact Aarika Miller, Project Coordinator for Violence Awareness at [aarikamiller@triton.edu](mailto:aarikamiller@triton.edu)



**Please Remember STOP Speeding...STOP Littering...and STOP at Stop Signs...FOR OUR KIDS!**