



ALL GOOD THINGS CLOSE TO HOME



from the
MAYOR

Whether you have lived in Oak Forest for one year or for 50 years, I am sure you are as interested as I am in making our community as attractive as possible so new residents and new businesses will want to relocate here. This is exactly what the City of Oak Forest is trying to do as part of our marketing campaign: All Good Things Close to Home.

What do we mean when we say All Good Things Close to Home? The answer is simply that Oak Forest is ideally located, which is one of the reasons many of us decided to make this community our home. Oak Forest has the advantage of its proximity to the I-57 and I-80 Interchange, as well as I-294, and we are fortunate to have a major commuter rail station in town. These expressways and rail facilities are used by people to get to work, commercial centers and leisure activities in Chicago, the surrounding areas and beyond.

In addition, Oak Forest is nestled within forest preserves, which not only serve as an enticement to bicyclists and joggers, but create a feeling of seclusion and peacefulness for those of us lucky enough to be surrounded by this naturally beautiful environment. These forest preserves have provided a wonderful setting in which to raise a family. Over the years, the City of Oak Forest and other public entities have worked to provide the infrastructure, schools, parks and library facilities that enhance not only the value of our properties, but the value of living in Oak Forest.

Our new marketing effort is meant to emphasize the attractiveness of living in Oak Forest to young professionals with families. To reach these potential homebuyers, we launched www.LivingOakForest.com, a fresh and inviting website that offers a real glimpse into what Oak Forest has to offer young families.

Please visit www.LivingOakForest.com and share it across social media platforms. You'll find Living Oak Forest on Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, Pinterest and Google+. Also, please stop by City Hall for your very own Living Oak Forest lawn sign, which includes the new logo seen here in the masthead of this newsletter.

The more residents we can involve in this marketing effort and the more publicity we can generate about it will help attract new people and new investment. Oak Forest has a lot to offer, but it is up to all of us to let others know what we like about living in our community.

The City of Oak Forest is doing its part to get the message to potential home buyers by bringing the All Good Things Close to Home campaign to Metra's LaSalle Street Station with a four-week advertising campaign, which kicked off on June 1. The simple yet eye-catching posters are sure to capture the interest of workers and employers in Chicago's Loop as well as families traveling downtown. The ads showcase active lifestyles and community events and direct people right to LivingOakForest.com. You can view the ads on the city's website at www.oak-forest.org.

The ad campaign also includes a digital billboard on I-80 in Joliet and a series of ads on Realtor.com. Based on the success of the initial promotion, the city will determine how to proceed with an expanded, multi-year campaign starting in early 2016.

Henry L. Kuspa, Mayor

Be a Living Oak Forest brand ambassador

1. Visit www.LivingOakForest.com
2. Follow and share Living Oak Forest on social media
 - ◆ Facebook: www.facebook.com/livingoakforest
 - ◆ Twitter: www.twitter.com/livingoakforest
 - ◆ Instagram: www.instagram.com/livingoakforest
 - ◆ Pinterest: www.pinterest.com/livingoakforest
3. Stop by City Hall for a Living Oak Forest lawn sign

New website touts what's great about living in Oak Forest



Laura Clemons
1st Ward Alderman

In May, we welcomed Alderman Jim Emmett and Alderman Denise Danihel to the City Council. I look forward to working with them to make our town the best it can be. As we said

hello to Jim and Denise, we said goodbye to Alderman Dan Ensing and Alderman Mark Keating. Thank you both for your service. I wish you the best in your future endeavors!

And speaking of endeavors, I am thrilled about the newly launched marketing campaign All Good Things Close to Home, which highlights the reasons why our town is an excellent choice in which to buy a home and raise a family. The marketing website, LivingOakForest.com, is fresh and vibrant and appeals to a younger demographic of potential homebuyers. While we cannot boast of a bustling retail or commercial environment, we can boast about our wonderful parks and recreational programs, our award winning schools, our incredible forest preserve system, our affordable housing, our convenient transportation options, our wonderful faith-based institutions, and so much more! Please visit LivingOakForest.com and share the link with your family and friends. Encourage them to share it with their families and friends to help spread the word near and far as to why we live in this great community. We all must serve as brand ambassadors to make this marketing plan a huge success. Together, we can make great things happen!

And, great things are happening at Gingerwood Park. How about that improved playground? I have received many compliments from residents who are enjoying the new facility to its fullest. Thank you to the Oak Forest Park District for this terrific investment

in the 1st Ward.

As I ride around the ward, I smile when I see families enjoying the playgrounds and sports fields. But, it reminds me that we need to obey speed limits and stop signs as we drive around the neighborhood. Also, please do not park your car across the sidewalk in your driveway. We must be respectful of our neighbors. By looking out for one another, we can make the most of the summer months ahead.

In closing, I want to thank each and every volunteer who contributes to our community. I'd like to give a spe-

cial shout out to the following residents and group: Edward Schenkenfelder for his years of devoted service in keeping Fieldcrest Drive spotless and free of trash; Tina Moslander and her neighbors for cleaning up Lockwood Avenue; and the Streetscape Commission for their never ending dedication to beautifying our town.

Oak Forest truly is a wonderful place to live. It's a gem in the south suburbs. I am humbled to play a part in the plans for its future and all of the exciting things to come.

Enjoy the summer!

City welcomes animal control officer



Chuck Toland
4th Ward Alderman

In March, after Mark Estrada resigned his position as animal control officer, I was asked to be a part of the selection committee for his replacement. Over a four-week period, we reviewed several

resumes and interviewed five very qualified candidates. I am pleased to report that we selected, and the City Council approved, Caitlin Cavanaugh as the city's new animal control officer.

The interview team unanimously selected Caitlin in light of her education, past training, volunteer work, and vocational experience. A graduate of Indiana Wesleyan University with a degree in criminal justice, Caitlin most recently served as a kennel attendant at Landheim Training and Boarding in Dyer, Indiana.

She is a member of the National Animal Care and Control Association and a past member and marketing chair of the Greater Lafayette Dog Park Association. Caitlin also has completed coursework through ASPCA and the Illinois Animal Welfare

Federation of which she is a member. Caitlin is also active in Team Paws Chicago, a charity racing and fundraising team, benefitting Paws Chicago, a national model and the Midwest's largest no-kill, humane animal shelter.

Caitlin will be instrumental in implementing the city's newly revised animal control policy, which gives her more flexibility in deciding whether to trap a wild animal. The policy also requires Caitlin to do more community outreach so that residents have a better understanding of what qualifies as an animal threat.

I think Caitlin will be a great addition to the police department and I look forward to watching her make the position her own. Our goal as a selection committee was to find someone who was not only knowledgeable about and skilled with animals but someone who could relate to residents' frustrations and/or concerns. I believe we found that person in Caitlin and I hope you agree if you are fortunate enough to meet her.

Road resurfacing, tree replacement programs underway

The Memorial Day holiday is behind us and many of us are outside getting our greenery up and growing.

Hopefully, we'll see some warmer, more consistent weather now that summer has arrived. But, the rain doesn't keep Oak Foresters in doors as was evident by participation in the city's successful spring events: the Citywide Garage Sale, the VFW's Memorial Day Ceremony, the Green Steps Electronics Recycling, and the Streetscape Plant Exchange.

Congratulations to all of our young graduates in town. Many families will be celebrating with parties, family gatherings, or other activities that go along with these wonderful events. Now that students are out of school, please keep watch for our children so that they can enjoy a safe summer.

The city's Public Works Department has started its annual Road Program. The list of streets for repair include: 155th Place, Pine,

157th Place, Las Robles Court, Las Robles, Las Flores, Oxford, 157th Street, 161st Street, Timber Court, and Kenton Avenue. To view a map of the streets, please visit the city's website at www.oak-forest.org and go to the Construction Notices page under the Public Works Department.

If your street is not on this list, do not despair. I have asked Public Works to consider patching potholes on several additional streets. If time and money permit, they will try to do some of those repairs that are so badly needed after the harsh winter we experienced.



Jim Hortsman
6th Ward Alderman

Public Works also has started the latest round of tree replacements in the city's parkways. As you will remember, all of our Ash trees had to be taken down due to the invasive

Emerald Ash Borer beetle. Some residents have asked Public Works not to replant trees in front of their properties while others are eagerly awaiting trees. If you have thoughts on the tree replacement process, please email me at jhortsman@oak-forest.org so that I can address your concerns with the City Council.

Summer is usually a time for home improvements. As you may have noticed, many residents are repairing their roofs from storms that came through our town last year. You may see our building inspectors examining roofs. If you have any questions or concerns about your roof or other work being done to your home, call the Building Department at 708-687-4050, ext. 1041.

I hope you are getting outside and enjoying summer. If you need help or have any questions, please email me at jhortsman@oak-forest.org or call me at 708-687-5307.

Knowledge is power when seeking solutions

In my campaign literature, I promised to be your voice and work hard to achieve the present and future goals of the City of Oak Forest and its residents, especially those in the 5th Ward. I am honored that you elected me to be your alderman and put your trust in me to take on the issues that are important to you. So, what are those issues?

In speaking to residents over the past several months, you've told me that you are concerned about economic development. Therefore, I plan on working closely with city staff and elected officials to find ways to increase our tax base by attracting new and larger commercial businesses to town — filling vacant storefronts and generating positive momentum. Ideally, I would like to bring a family-oriented restaurant to Oak Forest so that our families have more choices

when they go out to celebrate a birthday, an anniversary, that game-winning catch, or the lead in the school play.

You also told me that we need to improve our aging infrastructure. You want to see new sidewalks and streets



Jim Emmett
5th Ward Alderman

and you want a solution to the flooding that has plagued our ward for years. I want those things too. So, during my very first week as alderman I scheduled a tour of the ward with the Public Works management team. They took me out to the lift stations to show me how they operate and how they relieve flooding issues. Knowledge is power and now that I know the process and the issues, I hope to be a part of the solution.

Public Works also got me up to speed on how streets are selected to be resurfaced. Streets are designated for repair based on their condition and how heavily traveled they are. This approach makes sense. In order to add streets to the list each year, we need to find more money. My goal is to help staff seek the grant funds they need to repair more roads.

I am eager to keep learning more about the issues we face so that I can work toward resolving them. Oak Forest's future is important to me. My wife and I have lived in this town for the past 33 years and raised five children here. I'm proud to say that my kids live here and are raising their kids — my grandkids — in this community. I'm invested in Oak Forest. I hope you are too.

Opportunity is knocking, Oak Forest. Let's open the door



Diane Wolf
3rd Ward Alderman

Thank you to all of the residents who showed such support and encouragement to me in the April election. I am grateful to have another four years to continue the momentum we have

started with so many projects in town. As an alderman and a resident, one of my biggest passions is to bring out the beauty of our community – not only in our streets but within our residents too.

As you may have noticed, new planters and benches have been installed along Cicero Avenue. For years, my vision has been to bring this commercial corridor to life with flowers, benches, outdoor eating, and street art. Finally, things are taking shape and I'm extremely pleased with the results to date.

In fact, there's been quite a buzz around town and I'm pretty sure you know what I'm talking about, especially if you've driven or walked past the Metra train station recently. For those of you who do not know yet, let me start from the beginning...

My husband and I attend a monthly potluck dinner with the neighbors on Lamon Avenue. During one of our dinners, a lively discussion ensued about street art. Long-time resident Melissa Blank, who lived in a small town in South Carolina for a short time, told us how the town lined its main streets with doors from an old building that was scheduled for demolition. Local artists painted the doors, which became an attraction for residents and visitors alike to enjoy.

Instantly I thought, "What a perfect idea for the first Oak Forest street art project!" So, the city removed the doors from the vacant apartment buildings on 157th Street and placed them

around the Metra train station area. Residents Marina Durkin and Nick Blaettler, who I met during my re-election campaign, were excited to help organize the project. Together, we came up with the theme "Opportunity Knocks in Oak Forest."

In total, 19 doors will be painted by local residents, businesses and organizations. The artists will transform the doors from trash to treasure on site so residents and passersby can watch the magic unfold in front of their very own eyes. On June 27, we will "unveil" the doors at the Oak Forest Farmers Market and, hopefully, host a meet and greet with some or all of the artists. For those who cannot attend the unveiling, we will air it at a later date on CIC-TV.

I hope you are as inspired by Opportunity Knocks as I am. There

are so many positive things on the horizon for our town. Get inspired!

Check out our new marketing website, LivingOakForest.com, and share it with your friends and family. It's our job as residents to let people know why Oak Forest is a wonderful community.

Photos

Girl Scout Troop 60429, led by Callie Dornhecker, sketch and paint one of the doors in the Opportunity Knocks public art project. Once they complete the door, the Brownies will earn their art patches.

Opportunity
Knocks



28th Annual Oak Fest

ALWAYS FREE ADMISSION!

Wednesday, July 1 — 6 to 10 p.m.

6:30 to 9 p.m. Pamela Rose & Windy City Thunder

9:15 to 10 p.m. Salute to Hometown Heroes

Thursday, July 2 — 6 to 10 p.m.

6 to 6:45 p.m. Make It Last (acoustic)

7 to 10 p.m. Maggie Speaks

Friday, July 3 — 6 p.m. to midnight

6 to 8:30 p.m. The PriSSillas

9 p.m. to midnight Infinity

Saturday, July 4 — 3 p.m. to midnight

2 to 3 p.m. Carnival for Special Needs Friends

6 to 8 p.m. Bullwinkle

8:30 p.m. to MN April's Reign

3 p.m. Bean Bag Tournament Sign Up

4 p.m. Bean Bag Tournament

3 to 6 p.m. Family Fun Performances

6:30 p.m. Watermelon Eating Contest

Dusk FIREWORKS EXTRAVAGANZA!

Sunday, July 5 — 11 a.m. to 10 p.m.

11 a.m. to 1 p.m. 13 Tikis

1 to 3:30 p.m. Cadillac Groove

4 to 6:30 p.m. Make It Last

7 to 10 p.m. Hairbanger's Ball

11 a.m. to 4 p.m. Car Show

FEST HIGHLIGHTS

- NEW! Crafters Showcase open all day, every day
- Try your luck at bingo, open every day
- 10 food vendors to tempt your tummy
- Carnival open every day
- Specials and coupons available at www.oakfest.com

100% of profits go right back to the community!

For more information, visit www.oakfest.com.

Schedule subject to change without notice.

Upcoming Events

FAMILY FUN

Youth Commission Talent Show

July 25 — 7 to 10 p.m.

City Hall Gazebo

Free to participate and/or watch

National Night Out

Tuesday, August 4

6:30 to 8:30 p.m.

City Hall Gazebo

I Am An American Day Parade

September 6 at 11 a.m.

Central Avenue — 151st to 157th

Parade leads to Old Times Picnic

SENIOR CITIZENS

Fire House Breakfast

September 24 at 9 a.m.

Fire Station 1

Tickets \$2 at City Hall starting September 1

Senior Health Fair

October 8 — 10 a.m. to 2 p.m.

Oak Forest Park District

Free admission

FARMERS MARKET — TRAIN STATION

The Saturday StoryClub with Mrs. Brenda

First Saturday of each month

10 a.m. to noon

Bring a book, take a book exchange

Foreveru

August 15

10 a.m.

Anti-bullying presentation

Culinary Demonstration

September 5

9 a.m.

Demo by OFHS Teacher Ms. Vogel

Health & Wellness Screenings by Ingalls

September 19

9 a.m. to 1 p.m.

For more details, visit www.oak-forest.org.

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As a subscriber, you'll receive links to:

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- Upcoming special events
- Construction updates
- Community development initiatives
- Public safety reminders
- Senior and youth news

To subscribe, click on **Notify Me** at www.oak-forest.org.

Oak Forest Farmers Market

Now open on Saturdays at the train station

The 2015 Oak Forest Farmers Market is open every Saturday (except July 4) from 8 a.m. to 1 p.m. at the train station. Be sure to like the Oak Forest Farmers Market on Facebook to get the latest details on vendors, products and special events.

If you would like to volunteer, become a vendor or schedule an event at the market, please contact a committee member in one of the following ways:

- ♦ Email farmersmarket@oakforestparks.org,
- ♦ Send an instant message via Facebook, or
- ♦ Call Bridget Sanchez at 708-341-7344.

Not on Facebook? Stop by the Farmers Market Committee table at each market to get the latest information. See you at the market!

City names Mike Forbes building commissioner

In April, the City of Oak Forest named Mike Forbes as its building commissioner. Forbes replaced Gary Gerdes, who accepted a position with the City of Evanston in December.

"Mike will be an excellent addition to our management team," said Mayor Hank Kuspa. "Not only does he have extensive experience as a contractor and certified building inspector, his familiarity with planning and zoning and economic development will go a long way in the Building Department. In fact, he will have an active role in both of these areas as building commissioner."

Most recently, Forbes served as maintenance and construction superintendent for Electro Motive Diesel, a global provider of diesel-power engines for marine propulsion, offshore and land-based oil well drilling rigs and stationary power generation. In this position, Forbes was responsible for a 1 million-square-foot facility covering 130 acres of land. Previous to his work at Electro Motive Diesel, Forbes served as a journeymen carpenter. He also is owner of Forbes and Sons Construction, which is involved in every facet of the residential and commercial construction process from new construction to remodeling.



Forbes

Forbes received his residential building inspector certification from the International Code Council. He also studied building construction and code enforcement at South Suburban College in South Holland, computer information systems at Devry Institute of Technology in Addison, and liberal arts and science at Moraine Valley Community College.

Forbes, who lives in Oak Forest with his wife and kids, is an active member of the community – serving as a team manager for the Oak Forest Baseball Association and head coach for the Oak Forest Raiders Football program. Until his appointment as building commissioner, Forbes served on the city's Planning and Zoning Commission since 2004.

Beechy becomes full-time building inspector

Dave Beechy, who served as interim building commissioner after Gerdes' departure, now serves as a full-time building inspector. Beechy, previously served as the city's part-time building and apartment inspector for the past four years.

Officer Todd Arthur assumes community programs role

In May, Oak Forest Police Officer Todd Arthur began overseeing community programs for the Oak Forest Police Department. In this newly created role, Arthur, a 20-year veteran of the department, manages three new community initiatives: the Explorer Program, Too Good for Drugs, and the Citizens Police Academy.

“Todd is extremely personable and charismatic, which is why I believe he will do so well in this role,” said Police Chief Greg Anderson. “He is a proven leader, who understands the importance of police-community partnerships and enjoys making connections with residents, especially young people.”

Explorer Program

In April, Arthur kicked off the Explorer Program at Oak Forest High School. The program is the preeminent career orientation and experience program for young people contemplating a career in law enforcement or a related field in the criminal justice system. The program promotes personal growth through character development, respect for the rule of law, physical fitness, good citizenship and patriotism.

Eight high school students have been selected to participate in the program and will report to the police department in uniform in July.

Too Good for Drugs

In August, Arthur will launch Too Good for Drugs, a school-based drug pre-

vention program designed to reduce elementary students' intention to use alcohol, tobacco, and illegal drugs, while promoting pro-social attitudes, skills, and behaviors. Too Good for

Citizens Police Academy

Drugs seeks to build the self-confidence of students so they are better able to make healthy choices and achieve success. Finally, in early 2016, Arthur will open the Citizens Police Academy, which



Community Programs Officer Todd Arthur and gym teacher Jim Panozzo engage students at St. Damian School's Food, Fun and Fitness Day in May.

will offer residents insights into how police officers perform their duties and how the department serves the community. The purpose of the academy is to foster better communication between citizens and police through education. The academy will create a nucleus of well-informed citizens who possess greater insight into police practices and services. Graduates of the academy can share their knowledge and experiences with the community as opportunities arise – creating a win-win situation for the police department, participants and the community.

To learn more about these and other community programs, visit the police department's tab on the city's website at www.oak-forest.org. Or, contact Officer Arthur at 708-687-4050, ext. 1219 or tarthur@oak-forest.org.

2014 Water Quality Report

The City of Oak Forest's 2014 Consumer Confidence Report is now available online. The report contains important information about the source and quality of your drinking water. In an effort to be more environmentally responsible, the city is no longer mailing a printed copy to all residents. If you would like a printed copy, please call the City Clerk's Office at 708-687-4050 or email cityofoakforest@oak-forest.org to request one.

Download the 2014 Water Quality Report at

<http://www.oak-forest.org/DocumentCenter/View/1347>

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resident feedback

Please use this section to share with us your comments, suggestions, questions, problems, or compliments.

Please send your comments to: City Administrator, City of Oak Forest, 15440 S. Central Avenue, Oak Forest, IL 60452. If you would like a response, include your name, mailing address, e-mail address, or daytime phone number. *FYI* is published by the City of Oak Forest for residents, business owners and friends of the city. The publication includes news and information about city-sponsored activities and events.

Stay informed! Subscribe to the city's weekly e-newsletter by visiting the Notify Me section at www.oak-forest.org And, be sure to "Like" us on Facebook at www.facebook.com/cityofoakforest and "Follow" us on Twitter at www.twitter.com/cityofoakforest.

City of Oak Forest

Mayor - Henry L. Kuspa
City Clerk - Scott Burkhardt
Treasurer - JoAnn Kelly

Aldermen

- 1st Ward - Laura Clemons
- 2nd Ward - Richard D. Simon
- 3rd Ward - Diane Wolf
- 4th Ward - Charles P. Toland
- 5th Ward - Jim Emmett
- 6th Ward - James Hortsman
- 7th Ward - Denise Danihel

City Officials

- City Administrator - Troy Ishler
- Finance Director - Colleen Julian
- Fire Chief - David Griffin
- Police Chief - Greg Anderson
- Public Works Director - Rich Rinchich
- Community Development - Adam Dotson
- Building Commissioner - Mike Forbes
- EMA Director - Robert Small
- Taxpayer Advocate - Guy Gattone

City of Oak Forest

15440 S. Central Avenue
Web site: www.oak-forest.org

Office Hours

Monday - Friday: 9 a.m. to 5 p.m.
Select Saturdays: Visit website

City Phone Numbers

- City Hall: 708-687-4050
- Police, non-emergency: 708-687-1376
- Fire, non-emergency: 708-687-6050
- Public Works: 708-535-4090
- Animal Control: 708-705-5690