

RETIREMENTS CHANGE FACE OF CITY ADMINISTRATION

Fall is a season of change — the leaves are changing color, the days are growing shorter, and the temperature is cooling down. Similarly, things are changing at City Hall with the recent appointments of a new city clerk, human resource manager, police chief, and deputy chief.

Neuman Appointed City Clerk

In July, Mayor Hank Kuspa and the City Council appointed Oak Forest resident David Neuman as city clerk — replacing Scott Burkhardt, who retired on July 1 after 19 years of service. Neuman will serve as city clerk until the seat is up for election in April 2017.

“David is a bright young man,” said Mayor Hank Kuspa. “His enthusiasm and interest in local government plus his volunteer spirit is what our city needs. It is exciting for me to see these young people want to get involved.”

Professionally, Neuman is a development manager for Prevent Child Abuse America, a non-profit organization dedicated to improving child well-being and preventing abuse and neglect. In this role, Neuman devises the organizations fundraising strategy, manages key projects, and maintains relationships with individual and corporate partners. Prior to joining Prevent Child Abuse America, Neuman served as a development and database assistant for SOS Children’s Villages of Illinois, a non-profit, child welfare agency

that unites brothers and sisters in foster care and provides a safe space to heal for at-risk youth.

Although no longer employed by SOS Children’s Villages Illinois, Neuman is a member of its Emerging Leaders Board, which is comprised of motivated and philanthropic young professionals who seek to promote the mission of the organization through networking and volunteering. Locally, Neuman is a member of the city’s

Citizens Advisory Council and the Oak Fest Commission. He also has served as a coach for the Oak Forest Barracudas Swim Association and the Oak Forest Park District’s cross country program.

Neuman, a graduate of Oak Forest High School and founder and president of its alumni association, earned a bachelor’s of science degree in political science and communication from Florida State University in Tallahassee. He also earned a master’s of professional studies in political management from George Washington University in Washington, D.C. While

living in our nation’s capital, Neuman worked as a staff assistant for Congressman Steve Southerland II.

With a couple of months under his belt, Neuman wants residents to know he is here to serve them. “I am honored to have your trust and promise to serve our city faithfully,” he said. “Two



David Neuman (right) is sworn in as city clerk at the City Council meeting on July 12.

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Appointments, continued from front page

things that are important to me are hard work and teamwork. I want you to know that I will be working all hours and days to best serve our city. I also want to invite you to visit with me so that together we can continue to grow Oak Forest."

Unlike former City Clerk Scott Burkhardt, who also assumed the role of collector, Neuman will serve solely as city clerk — maintaining the official records of the city, attending meetings of the City Council, keeping a record of council proceedings, and publishing approved resolutions and ordinances. He also will work closely with advisory boards and commissions to post agendas and maintain their minutes.

Neuman will hold office hours on Saturdays when City Hall is open. Please visit the city's website at www.oak-forest.org for exact dates and times. Or, schedule a meeting by contacting Neuman at 708-687-4050, ext. 1050 or dneuman@oak-forest.org.

City Hires Human Resource Manager

Shortly after Neuman was appointed as city clerk, the City Council approved an ordinance to create a human resource manager position. Previously, human resource duties were handled by Burkhardt, who also served as full-time collector.

"Several years ago, the City Council decided to merge the positions of clerk and collector," said City Administrator Troy Ishler. "But, seeing what our needs are now, we decided it was in the best interest of the city to put a stronger emphasis on human resources."

To fill that need, the city hired Dorienne Preer, a human resource professional with more than 30 years of experience. Her first day on the job will be October 3.

"We are thrilled to welcome Dorienne to the team," Ishler said. "She has an extensive background in human resource management, which will be a terrific asset for the city."

For the past 10 years, Preer has served as the human resource director for the Chicago Metropolitan Agency for Planning, which is the official regional planning organization for seven northeastern Illinois counties. In this role, Preer guided all human resource functions, including benefits, compensation and employee relations as well as recruitment, training and performance management. She also managed payroll and developed the organization's annual comprehensive benefits package.

Kristin Appointed Chief

In September, the city said farewell to Police Chief Greg Anderson, who retired after seven years with the department and 36 years in law enforcement.

"I am at a loss to say just how proud I am of our department and the accomplishments and successes we have had while I have been chief," Anderson said. "We have one of the best departments in Illinois and an extremely professional staff. I hope that the department continues that forward momentum. After 36 years in law enforcement it is time for me to pass the torch."

On September 13, Mayor Hank Kuspa and the City Council handed that torch to Tim Kristin, who has spent his entire career with the Oak Forest Police Department — climbing the ranks from patrol officer in 1992 to deputy chief of police in 2013.



Tim Kristin

"Not only is Tim a great police officer, he is a proven leader who is well respected within the department," said Mayor Hank Kuspa. "He has a true passion for the job and is eager to learn more, do more and achieve more. I know Tim will move the department forward in a positive, productive manner."

As deputy chief, Kristin coordinated training and continuing education for officers, supervised the city's 911 Emergency Communications Center, managed the community programs unit, organized investigative services, and played an instrumental role in helping the department to attain state accreditation. In 2015, Kristin was designated as a certified eligible police chief through the Police Chief Certification Program administered through the Illinois Association of Chiefs of Police. Kristin is among only a select few Illinois police command staff able to meet the stringent requirements of the program since its inception in 1998.

"I am grateful for this opportunity to serve the community where I was born and raised," Kristin said. "I will do my very best day in and day out to serve our residents and ensure our officers have the tools and resources they need to provide quality, effective service."

Sergeant Jason Reid, an 18-year veteran with the department and life-long resident was appointed deputy chief of police on September 13 to fill the vacancy left by Kristin.



from the MAYOR

There are two human components that comprise our efforts to help assure the city operates smoothly and, in many ways, more economically: professional staff and dedicated volunteers that help us make Oak Forest a safer place to live, create a more livable physical environment for our families, and develop plans and programs that improve the quality of life in our community.

In this issue of *FYI*, I would like to talk about volunteers and their efforts to help us improve Oak Forest. Not enough can be said about all those who serve on commissions created by the City Council, each with the purpose of helping the City of Oak Forest run more efficiently and effectively. City efforts are greatly enhanced with the help, advice, career expertise, and life experiences of volunteers on its commissions: Planning and Zoning, Senior Citizens, Youth, Economic Advisory, Crime Prevention, Cable Television, Consumer Protection, Green Steps, Streetscape, Citizens Advisory, Veterans, Civil Service, Police & Fire, and the newly created Friends of Oak Forest Animal Control. Each of these commissions has a particular mission to carry-out. My purpose here is to exemplify how volunteers that carry-out their commission's mission help save public funds and improve our town.

Over time, the City Council created some commissions out of a need to help resolve issues

that arose in Oak Forest, such as Cable Television, Crime Prevention, Economic Advisory, and others. Our newest commission, Friends of Oak Forest Animal Control, was recently created to help assist the city's Animal Control Department in the management of lost, stray or abandoned domestic animals. The city's responsibility to carry-out animal control needs to be done humanely and within guidelines set by the state of Illinois and administered by the County of Cook. In our efforts to control both the wild and domestic animal population, we must abide by the law. We also believe that we can accomplish our duties while at the same time promoting positive change in the animal advocacy arena. The commission has a goal that the City of Oak Forest becomes a no-kill community.

First Ward Alderman Laura Clemons proposed the creation of the Friends of Oak Forest Animal Control Commission. The mission of this commission is as follows: work in partnership with Oak Forest Animal Control to provide rescue and re-homing of unclaimed and abandoned local animals; improve facility conditions and increase the success rate of reuniting lost pets with their owners; and educate the community in responsible pet ownership and care. All of this is

done with the help of resident volunteers, at no cost to the taxpayers.

Statistics have proven that people feel very strongly about how animals are treated and in particular domestic animals. The number of volunteers, as well as the number of donors that contribute funding to our animal care and rescue efforts, bear this out. To help reach our goals, I have appointed Dawn Isenhardt as chairman of this commission. She is a long-time animal rescue volunteer who helped found organizations such as Lulu's Locker Rescue and Chicagoland Rescue Intervention and Support Program.



Alderman Laura Clemons with Friends of Animal Control Chair Dawn Isenhardt (center) and her husband Mike Copp at the 2015 National Night Out.

I am proud of these volunteers who wish to make Oak Forest a leader in the rescue and treatment of animals. Should you wish to help or make contact, please refer online to www.oak-forest.org or Friends of Oak Forest Animal Control on Facebook. In conclusion, I would like to express a special thank you to Alderman Clemons and Chairman Isenhardt for their hard work and dedication relating to this effort.

Henry L. Kuspa

Henry L. Kuspa, Mayor



Laura Clemons
1st Ward Alderman
708-903-1845

Community Development has been very busy this summer – the Eagle Sports Range is set to open soon. The building looks great and I have heard from many residents who

are excited to take advantage of the facility. The Starbucks and ATI Physical Therapy building should be open and the new Ace Hardware store is moving along nicely. We are very excited for the increased local shopping opportunities these developments will bring.

Congratulations to the 2016 Forest in Bloom Winners! This contest recognizes your efforts to beautify your homes. The contest gets bigger each year and the judges enjoy visiting each entry. Thank you to everyone who entered the contest!

As fall approaches, please do not blow leaves into the street when cleaning up your yards. The leaves block the sewers which in turn can cause flooding during heavy storms. If you have a sewer in front of your home, make sure that the area is clear of debris. Don't forget you can schedule branch pick up for October 25 and November 29 by calling Public Works at 708-535-4090.

Finally, please do not park your cars over the sidewalk. This is a safety hazard for your neighbors. It is against ordinance to park your car across the sidewalk between the hours of 7 a.m. and 10 p.m., and non-compliance can result in a ticket and a fine.

Sign up for my email list. It's a great way to stay informed. Send your name and email address to lclemmons@oak-forest.org.



Rich Simon
2nd Ward Alderman
708-687-3738

Oak Forest is a pleasant and safe community and that can certainly be said for the portions of Oak Forest that comprise our ward, which is divided into two by 159th

Street. Most of the housing north of 159th Street is comprised of apartments except for three streets with single-family homes. Most of the area south of 159th Street is made up of single-family residences.

Every so often criminal activity may increase in the area south of 159th Street, either in Arbor Park or in the Friendly Oaks area. Because of their proximity to both forested areas to the south, as well as main thoroughfares that lead to I-57 and I-80, criminals see this as an advantage. As a result of some recent burglaries, I held a meeting in July with residents, Crime Prevention Commission members, police officers, and the mayor to determine interest in creating a Neighborhood Watch program. Residents responded with a resounding YES!

Toward that end, a second meeting was held in August to help structure the program. Crime Prevention Commission Chair Dennis Mitzner and I worked closely with interested residents to identify three components of

the program: keeping our eyes open for potential criminal activity; passing along information about how to keep our properties safer; and learning how to effectively keep in touch with our neighbors, as well as the police department, when problems do arise. The bottom line is this: If we all work together and show a common concern for one another's families and properties, our neighborhoods can be better protected from crime.

I have been an alderman in Oak Forest for almost 34 years. I have always done my best to keep in touch with residents who have put their trust in me to make good decisions that help protect the health, safety and welfare of their families, as well as the value of their properties. I see our new Neighborhood Watch program as another way to make our ward even safer and a more desirable place to live and raise a family. If you would like to get involved, contact me at 708-687-3738 or rsimon@oak-forest.org.

Finally, we have three new retail businesses opening up in the our ward: Starbucks and ATI Physical Therapy at 159th Street and Cicero Avenue, and Family Dollar at 159th Street and Long Avenue. As your alderman, I will continue to do what I can to encourage new business development.

OAK FOREST SENIOR COMMISSION SENIOR HEALTH FAIR FLU & PNEUMONIA SHOTS UTILITY RELIEF PROGRAMS DRIVERS LICENSE RENEWAL EMERGENCY ID BRACELETS AND MUCH MORE	OAK FOREST PARK DISTRICT OCTOBER 6, 2016 FREE ADMISSION 10 AM TO 2 PM RIDE THE SENIOR BUS. CALL 708-535-4090.
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Jim Emmett
5th Ward Alderman
708-705-6895

This time last year, the City Hall façade received a much-needed face lift. The roof was replaced, a fresh coat of stucco was applied, and the landscaping and lighting around the

fire house were improved. Recently, even more improvements have been made to our municipal campus, including the installation of a new electronic sign and a flag depository.

In August, a new sign board was installed along the driveway on Central Avenue. The sign, which is equipped with lights, makes it easy to read after dark. It also includes images with text to better promote city news and events. Finishing touches are still being added to the flag depository, which sits at the corner of Central Avenue and James Drive. Residents are encouraged to drop off their worn, damaged or tattered American flags in the box outside Fire Station 1. The Veterans Commission or VFW will collect those flags and hold a flag retirement ceremony. Afterwards the flags will be burned and the ashes will be laid to rest in the depository.

The Oak Forest Social Services Corporation provided the funds to build the sign and depository. The corporation advances the common good and general welfare of residents by bringing civic betterments and social improvements to the city. In the past, it has provided funds to upgrade our cable studios, install the gazebo and Centennial celebration plaques, and build the veterans and 9/11 memorials. We are extremely grateful to the corporation for continually investing in our community.



James Hortsman
6th Ward Alderman
708-687-5307

Children are back in school. As always, we need to be careful and diligent to make sure our kids are safe as they walk or ride to school. Please watch out for the kids.

This year's National Night Out was fantastic. Thank you to the Crime Prevention Commission, especially Dennis and Janelle Mitzner for another great citywide event.

As the speakers at National Night Out mentioned, we need to be very aware of any odd or out-of-place activities in our area. If you have concerns about something, contact the police department's non-emergency number at 708-687-1376. Being diligent will keep our neighborhoods and homes safe.

The Community Awareness Fair and Senior Health Fair are just around the corner. Come out and enjoy these town gatherings. Also, stop by the last farmers market on October 1 at 156th and Cicero Avenue. A paper shred truck will be there from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m.

As we head into fall, please do not blow leaves or grass into our streets. The leaves and grass tend to clog sewers and prevent water from draining off our streets. If you have a sewer near your property, please do what you can to make sure that sewer is clear of debris. If you have any sewer issues, call Public Works at 708-535-4090.

As always, I am here to help you with issues as they come up. Contact me with your concerns at hortsman6thward@gmail.com, 708-687-4050, x1015 or 708-687-5307.



Denise Danihel
7th Ward Alderman
708-535-0911

Congratulations once again to City Clerk Scott Burkhardt on a well deserved retirement. I am hoping he has been enjoying it. To fill Scott's shoes, the city has appointed

David Neuman as part-time clerk and hired Dorianne Preer as full-time human resource manager. Welcome, David and Dorianne.

The new electronic sign at City Hall looks awesome. It's nice to see the city advertising what is going on in town, kudos to the city employees who have been working very hard to make this happen. It is great to see new buildings going up around town too. The Starbucks and ATI Physical Therapy buildings by the train station and Family Dollar on 159th Street are great additions to our community. It sure does feel good to see everything that the City Council and Community Development Department have been working on come to fruition. Hopefully, the Eagle Sports Range is or will be open soon as well.

Some 7th Ward residents have inquired about putting up a welcome sign by Oak Park Avenue and Forestview Drive. The city does not provide funds or maintenance for this type of signage; however, if residents would like to help build and maintain a sign, I am open to suggestions. If you have ideas or would like to contribute materials, time or talent, please send me an email at ddanihel@oak-forest.org.

Thank you to Public Works Engineer Darlene Milanowicz for having the entrance of Forestview Drive repaved in one day. That was awesome!

City Ends Electrical Aggregation Program

In 2012, following the passage of a voter referendum, the City of Oak Forest established an electric aggregation program to negotiate lower electrical rates for residents. The city selected FirstEnergy Solutions as its electrical supplier. However, now that the savings margin versus the ComEd base rate has narrowed, the City Council voted in May to end its contract with FirstEnergy Solutions.

Residents, who opted into the program should have received a termination letter from FirstEnergy Solutions and a supply service notice from ComEd confirming the current base rate of 6.46¢ per kWh. The base rate is reset every June and can vary from month to month. *No action is necessary to be moved to the ComEd default supply service.*

Residents who wish to switch to a new electrical supplier other than ComEd can view a list of eligible retail electric suppliers at www.pluginillinois.org. Please note that you cannot return to FirstEnergy Solutions for the next six billing periods. Regardless of which company supplies electricity, ComEd will deliver it to customers in Northern Illinois and will continue to maintain the electric system and restore service after storms or power outages.

All residents should beware of door-to-door solicitors, direct calls or direct mail pieces regarding electric supply and carefully review all contract terms to understand and avoid:

- variable rates,
- monthly fees added to a fixed rate,
- early termination penalties, and
- fine print that includes any auto-renewal provision at an unstated future rate.

You should never release your account number to a solicitor under any circumstance, unless you have decided to move to that supplier.

Questions? Call NIMEC, the leading municipal aggregator of electricity in northern Illinois, at 800-727-3820. Please leave your call back number and a representative will contact you within 24 hours.

Encountered an aggressive solicitor? File a complaint with the Illinois Commerce Commission's Consumer Services Division at 800-524-0795 or www.icc.illinois.gov/consumer/complaint.

Election Season Is Here

Early Voting at City Hall

Visit the City Clerk's Office to pick up a vote-by-mail form or vote early for the 2016 presidential election. Please note specific days and times for early voting:

- October 24 through October 29 and November 5 from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m.
- October 31 to November 4 from 9 a.m. to 7 p.m.
- October 30 and November 6 from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m.

2017 Municipal Election

The 2017 municipal election will be held on April 4. If you are interested in running for mayor, city clerk, treasurer, or alderman (Wards 2, 4 and 6), pick up an Interested Parties Memo at the City Clerk's Office. The filing period to be on the ballot is December 12 through December 19.

Recycling Events

CNB Bank Sponsors Paper Shred on October 1

CNB Bank & Trust is sponsoring a free paper shred event in conjunction with the Oak Forest Farmers Market on Saturday, October 1 from 10 a.m. to noon. The shred truck will be located next to the old Ace Hardware building at 156th and Cicero Avenue. Please enter the shred event on Waverly Avenue and proceed to 156th Street. Green Steps Commission members and other volunteers will be there to direct you. Please bring no more than three standard size paper boxes or bags of paper.

This is the last farmers market of the season so be sure to pull into the Waverly Commuter Lot after you visit the shred truck. The market has the best selection of fruits, vegetables, fresh flowers, and home decor. The market is open from 8 a.m. to 1 p.m.

Green Steps Hosts E-waste on October 15

The city's Green Steps Commission is teaming up with VetTech.US to recycle electronics and support our veterans on Saturday, October 15 from 9 a.m. to 1 p.m. at City Hall. Although most electronics are free to recycle, there will be a \$20 charge for televisions and computer monitors.

VetTech.US is a program of the Keeling Family Foundation dedicated to training and preparing veterans for the IT career field while simultaneously collecting and recycling/re-purposing e-waste.

Every Smoke Alarm Has an Expiration Date: What's Yours?

Does your home have a smoke alarm? According to the National Fire Protection Association (NFPA), the answer is likely yes: NFPA research shows that most American homes have at least one. But do you know how old your smoke alarms are? If you're like most people, you're probably not so sure.

A recent survey conducted by NFPA revealed that only a small percentage of people know how old their smoke alarms are, or how often they need to be replaced. That lack of awareness is a concern for the Oak Forest Fire Department and NFPA, along with fire departments throughout the country, because smoke alarms don't last forever.

"Time and again, I've seen the life-saving impact smoke alarms can have in a home fire, but I've also seen the tragedy that can result when smoke alarms aren't working properly," said Oak Forest Fire Chief Jack Janozik. "That's why we're making a concerted effort to educate our residents about the overall importance of smoke alarms, and that they do have a life limit."

NFPA 72, National Fire Alarm Code®, requires smoke alarms be replaced at least every 10 years, but because the public is generally unaware of this requirement, many homes have smoke alarms past their expiration dates, putting people at increased risk.

As the official sponsor of Fire Prevention Week for more than 90 years, NFPA is promoting this year's Fire Prevention Week campaign, "Don't Wait - Check the Date! Replace Smoke Alarms Every 10 Years," to better educate the public about the critical importance of knowing how old their smoke



alarms are and replacing them once they're 10 years old. Fire Prevention Week is October 9-15, 2016.

The Oak Forest Fire Department spends the month of October educating younger citizens on the importance of fire safety. The fire department visits all of the schools and day care facilities in Oak Forest, as well as offers fire station tours to local preschools, day care, scout troops, and special needs youth to educate them on different and important fire safety skills.

"Firefighter Nick Smith has been our fire prevention educator for the past three years and has done a wonderful job teaching kids by using fire prevention videos, demonstrating stop drop and roll, discussing family fire exit plans, and so much more," Janozik said.

To find out how old your smoke alarm is and its expiration date, simply look on the back of the alarm where the date of manufacture is marked. The smoke alarm should be replaced 10 years from that date (not the date of purchase). The Oak Forest Fire Department also says smoke alarms should be tested monthly and batteries should be replaced once a year or when they begin to chirp — signaling that they're running low.

For more information on smoke alarms and this year's Fire Prevention Week campaign, "Don't Wait: Check the Date! Replace Smoke Alarms Every 10 Years," visit www.firepreventionweek.org.

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Chamber of
Commerce

**FUN FREE
FAMILY EVENT**

**36th Annual
COMMUNITY AWARENESS FAIR**
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Oak Forest High School • 151st & Central

**Saturday
October 1, 2016**

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compliments, or questions to:
City of Oak Forest, 15440 Central Avenue,
Oak Forest, IL 60452.

City of Oak Forest

Mayor – Henry L. Kuspa
City Clerk – David Neuman
Treasurer – JoAnn Kelly

Aldermen

1st Ward – Laura Clemons
2nd Ward – Richard Simon
3rd Ward – Diane Wolf
4th Ward – Larry Schoenfeld
5th Ward – Jim Emmett
6th Ward – James Hortsman
7th Ward – Denise Danihel

City Officials

City Administrator Troy Ishler
Finance Director Colleen Julian
Fire Chief Jack Janozik
Police Chief Tim Kristin
Public Works Director Rich Rinchich
Community Development . . . Adam Dotson
Building Commissioner Mike Forbes
Human Resources Dorianne Preer
EMA Director Robert Small
Taxpayer Advocate Guy Gattone

City of Oak Forest

15440 Central Avenue
www.oak-forest.org
www.livingoakforest.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

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Comcast 19, WOW 6, U-Verse 99

