

FLOSSMOOR NEWS

Winter 2015
Volume 25 / Number 4



CELEBRATE WINTER FLOSSMOOR STYLE!

Winterfest!

Enjoy the holiday season
with an afternoon in
downtown Flossmoor.

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Beware of Utility Scams

Protect your important
personal information and
understand your rights!

Page 8

Holiday Recycling

Make plans to participate
in the local tree and light
recycling program.

Page 14

village officials

Paul Braun, *Mayor* James Mitros, *Trustee*
James Crum, *Trustee* James Wilder, *Trustee*
Perry Hoag, *Trustee* Diane Williams, *Trustee*
Philip Minga, *Trustee* Pamela Nixon, *Clerk*
Bridget Wachtel, *Village Manager*

village numbers

Village Hall: 798-2300
Fire: 798-3885
Non-Emergency Police: 957-4500
Non-Emergency TDD: 647-0179
Public Works: 957-4100
Building Department: 957-4101
Emergency Only: 911

village meetings

Village Board Meeting
1st & 3rd Mondays of the Month at 7:30 pm

Plan Commission Meeting
3rd Thursday of the Month at 7:30 pm

Zoning Board of Appeals
4th Tuesday of the Month at 7:30 pm

Public Art Commission Meeting
2nd Monday of the Month at 7:00 pm

Community Relations Commission Meeting
4th Tuesday of the Month at 7:00 pm

Green Committee Meeting
3rd Tuesday of the Month at 7:00 pm

FLOSSMOOR NEWS is published for residents and businesses in the Village.

Please address comments to:
Office of the Village Manager
c/o Flossmoor News
2800 Flossmoor Road
Flossmoor, IL 60422

To place an ad in FLOSSMOOR NEWS, please contact:
Christine Reiser
The Times Media Company
(708) 891-0744
Christine.Reiser@nwitimes.com

calendar

flossmoor.org

November 26 & 27

Village Hall closed for Thanksgiving Holiday

November 28

"Under the Awning!" 11 am - 4 pm. Flossmoorbusinessassociation.com

December 5

Winterfest — Village Festivities begin at 2 pm
St. John's Cookie Walk — 9 am -11 am

December 24 and December 25

Village Hall closed for Christmas Holiday

December 31 and January 1

Village Hall closed for New Year Holiday

December 26 to January 18

Holiday Tree Recycling — Drop off anytime at Irons Oaks

Saturday, January 2

Tree Recycling Community Drop Off Day — 9 am to 12 at Irons Oaks

January 18

Village Hall closed for Martin Luther King Jr. Birthday
Community Relations — Community Day of Service

March 1 – April 15

2016 vehicle stickers and animal tags are on sale.

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ENJOY THE HOLIDAY SEASON

Get Outside Flossmoor and Get Your Winter On!

Think Local for Gift Ideas

Saturday, November 28, 2015 is Small Business Saturday, a day to celebrate and support small businesses and all they do for their communities. Please join your neighbors in supporting your local small business by shopping at a small business. For every dollar you spend in Flossmoor, one percent comes back to our community. So remember, shop and dine in downtown Flossmoor and in Flossmoor Commons!

Flossmoor Winterfest!

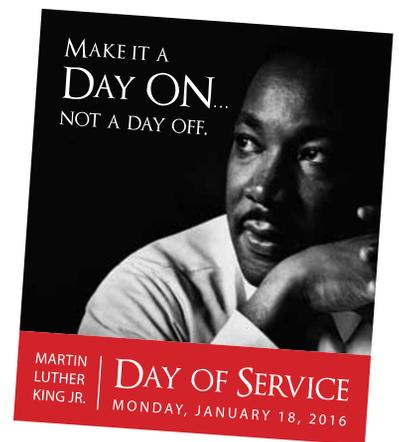
The Village of Flossmoor and Flossmoor Library are again hosting our annual Winterfest on Saturday, December 5. Activities take place at the Flossmoor Public Library (1000 Sterling Avenue). Don't miss Children's Story Time with Mayor Paul Braun from 2:00- 2:30 p.m. Then stay for the fun and our Children's Holiday Party from 2:30-4:30 p.m. Santa will take pictures with the children who stop by to share holiday wishes. Entertainment includes balloon creations, caricature artist, face painting, pictures and more! The tree lighting begins at 5:00 p.m. with Santa in front of the Library.

Saint John's Cookie Walk

The Church of Saint John the Evangelist will host its Annual Cookie Walk on December 5. The event will be held at the Church (2640 Park Drive) from 9-11 a.m. in the church's undercroft. The event is open to the public and raises money for local charities, such as PADS, South Suburban Family Shelter, Rich Township Food Pantry, and Respond Now. For more information, please contact St. John's Church at 708.708.4150.

Flossmoor Community Day of Service

On Monday, January 18, 2016 (MLK Day), the Flossmoor Community Relations will host their 2nd annual Flossmoor Cares Day. We will join forces with local non-profit organizations for services opportunities for the entire community. Please visit www.flossmoor.org for more information about the day and hope you can sign up to serve on this special day. Make your day off a "DAY ON!" Who will you help?





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Left to right: Flossmoor Fire Chief Christopher Sewell, Chicago Heights Lieutenant Christopher Bednarek and retired Chicago Heights Fire Chief James Angell.

HONORING A HERO

Off-Duty Firefighter Commended for Life-Saving Measure

This spring, Chris Bednarek, a firefighter and Flossmoor resident, was ready to help when a life and death situation literally came to him. When that happened, he was ready and saved someone's life.

Shortly before 10 a.m., Bednarek, a lieutenant on the Chicago Heights Fire Department, was working in his home when he heard the scream of someone in pain. "He looked up and saw a person, on fire, running through the backyards," Flossmoor Fire Chief Chris Sewell said. "Without any thought for his own safety Chris ran after, tackled, and put out the flames that were severely burning this individual."

Following the arrival of Flossmoor paramedics,

Bednarek assisted the emergency crew in the patient's initial treatment. The fire victim received second- and third-degree burns. Approximately 60 percent of the patient's body was burned, including burns to the airway.

"We transported the patient to Christ Hospital, and in no small part thanks to Chris's efforts, despite being severely burned, the patient is alive today," Sewell said. Village officials officially commended him in September for his heroism. "The exemplary actions of Chris, [our communications team], and our paramedics truly made a difference in someone's life," the fire chief said. "We sincerely thank all of them, and especially Chris, for their efforts in serving their fellow man."

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UTILITY UPDATE

Important Information for Residents

Understanding Alternative Suppliers for Nicor Customers

The Village does not offer a natural gas aggregation program; however, we want to ensure residents are fully aware of the “Customer Select” program that allows Nicor Gas customers to choose an alternative company to supply their natural gas.

How does it work?

Traditionally, a utility buys gas on the market and uses its pipelines to deliver fuel to your home. The utility is supposed to sell the gas at the same price it pays, with no markup. Opting for Customer Select Program means you will still pay Nicor to deliver gas to your home, but you will pay a different company to buy and supply the actual gas. Unlike your utility, the rates and services of your new supplier will not be regulated or reviewed by the Illinois Commerce Commission (ICC).

Are there other charges?

Yes, and these charges will inflate the advertised price. Some suppliers charge a monthly fee. Also, Nicor Gas charges all program participants a per therm Balancing and Storage Adjustment fee. The charge helps cover “balancing” costs for maintaining appropriate pressure in Nicor’s pipes. (Note: The impact of this charge is lessened by a 2 cents per therm “Transportation Service Credit.”) Also, beware of an “exit” fee if you want to get out of your plan before the term of service ends. Companies may have an “opt-out period” during which a customer can exit without being penalized. Find out when that period begins and ends.

What gas consumer protections does Illinois have?

State law mandates that any customer signing up with an unregulated supplier:

- Has up to 10 days to cancel a contract once the supplier’s charges first appear on the gas bill without paying a cancellation penalty.
- Can’t pay a cancellation penalty higher than \$50.
- Must give consent, through a signature and a third-party verification process, before being signed up for a door-to-door offer.

Avoiding Scams

- Don’t sign up for any offer on the spot. You may be charged a hefty termination fee if you later want out.
- Don’t give out your utility account number to any sales representative at your door or over the phone.
- Don’t sign up for a new supplier until you compare the prices and terms of service with other companies, including Nicore and ComEd.
- If you’re not interested in switching suppliers, ask your gas and electric utilities to put a block on your account, which will prohibit any unauthorized changes to your service.
- If you don’t want suppliers to bother you with a sales pitch, get on your utility’s do-not-market list. Nicor customers should call 1-888-642-6748 or ComEd customers should call 1-800-334-7661.

To make a complaint about a utility supplier, please contact ICC, Illinois Commerce Commission at 1-800-524-0795. Source: Citizens Utility Board



Utility Scams on the Rise

The Village of Flossmoor has learned that a number of alternative suppliers are targeting residents within the Village. Contact is being made on a door-to-door and by phone. Unfortunately, some suppliers are incorrectly suggesting to residents that they represent the Village’s supplier or ComEd, and want sign them to a lower energy rate. The competing suppliers are not representing the Village of Flossmoor, only appearing to capitalize on the Village’s electric aggregation program.

The Village’s electric supplier is Verde Energy. The agreement with Verde Energy provides an electric power supply at a fixed rate of \$.06871/kWh until July 2016. For more information regarding the program please visit the Village’s website www.flossmoor.org, under the “Village Services” tab. As a reminder, the Village’s program is voluntary; you may cancel at anytime with no penalty.

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NEWS TO USE!



Mayor for the Day

Parker Jr. High student Princess Jones recently served as honorary Mayor For The Day. She won the opportunity through the School District 161 PTO fundraiser. In September, Princess had the opportunity to officiate over a Village Board meeting along side Mayor Paul Braun and Village Trustees.

Street Plowing Procedures

Snowplowing begins when snow accumulated amounts to more than 2 inches. Plowing continues as long as is required to maintain passable roadways.

Plowing priorities are as follows: Central Business District, principle arterial streets, collector streets and parking lots, local through streets, and cul-de-sacs and alleys. When all roads have been opened, repeat passes will be made to clear them curb-to-curb, and intersections will be cleared completely. Remember, it is hazardous to blow snow into any public streets once the street has been plowed. All shoveled or blown snow should be piled in the yard or parkway.

Please take the time to shovel the public sidewalks for the benefit of students, mail carriers and other pedestrians. It's courteous and the neighborly thing to do!

Last Call For Flossmoor Yearbook

In partnership with the Thomas Photographic Service, the Village of Flossmoor invites all of our residents to be a part of the Flossmoor Yearbook. This is a great opportunity to show Flossmoor pride and community spirit. Don't forget your family, business or organization has until December 31 to have your picture taken to be featured in the Flossmoor Yearbook. All house numbers and street names will be erased from the picture to protect your privacy. The cost to participate is \$25, which includes a 4x6 print and your picture in the yearbook. Call 708-960-4265 to schedule your appointment.

Safety Reminders for a Joyous Holiday Season

As another holiday season approaches, residents find that their schedules become quite full of activities, and they become very busy. Everyone needs to take a moment out of their busy schedule to remind themselves of holiday safety. Typically, as the holidays approach the Police Department sees an increase in thefts. Here are some tips to keep the holidays safe and merry.

Make a house look as if someone is always home. Don't leave packages outside in front of your house. Keep lights on the inside and outside, using timers to achieve this when no one is home. If a house is the only dark one on the block, it sticks out. For extended trips away from home, remember to sign up for the Police House Watch. Register your house online at www.flossmoor.org under "Village Services" or come inside the Police Department to complete the form.

When shopping, don't overburden yourself with too many packages or bags; a purse or wallet could be an easy mark for thieves. Don't become too engrossed in shopping as to let your guard down. Don't place purchases inside the vehicle for all to see. While a person is in the store shopping, some thieves are in the parking lot shopping.

Remember to place bag and packages in the vehicle's trunk or out of plain sight.

Make sure all the vehicle's doors are locked. This simple prevention measure makes a big impact! The majority of thefts from vehicles occur from doors left unlocked.



No Parking Reminders

Parking is not permitted on the Village streets at any time after 2 inches of snowfall and on the hydrant side of the street. Vehicle owners are responsible to monitor weather conditions to avoid problems if a two-inch or greater snowfall occurs at any time. Parking on Village streets is prohibited between 3:00 a.m. and 6:00 a.m.



Gino Miles

Art Commission Dedicates New Sculpture

Artist Gino Miles was on hand this fall for the public dedication of his sculpture, *Inamorata* into the Flossmoor Sculpture Program. *Inamorata* was installed last fall at the corner of Argyle and Park Avenue. The piece has become a wonderful addition to the collection, which is on exhibit now.

The Cost of Flood Insurance

The price of a flood insurance policy depends on the location of the property. In high flood risk areas, where coverage is often mandatory, policies cost more. Most of the country falls within the moderate-to-low risk areas for flooding.

In moderate-to-low risk areas, where the risk of flooding is still very real, customers have lower cost flood insurance options available in the form of the NFIP's Preferred Risk Policies (PRP). Even though flood insurance isn't federally required, anyone can be financially vulnerable to floods. In fact, people outside of mapped high-risk flood areas file nearly 25% of all National Flood Insurance Program flood insurance claims and receive one-third of Federal Disaster Assistance for flooding. When it's available, disaster assistance is typically a loan you must repay with interest.

Homes and businesses may qualify for the low-cost Preferred Risk Policy, with premiums starting as low as \$129 for a home and its contents. Many consumers don't know that the new PRP policies are also available to business owners and renters. Customers have the option to purchase building coverage, contents coverage, or both. Building policies start at \$20,000 and go up to \$250,000. Contents coverage starts at \$8,000 and goes up to \$100,000. For more information about flood insurance visit www.floodsmart.gov.

Prevent Frozen Water Lines

With the past two winters being extremely harsh and cold, several properties in the Village experienced frozen water service lines outside and frozen pipes inside. Please take steps to prevent this from happening this winter. Residents who will be out of town should have a friend, relative, or neighbor check on their home during severe cold spells. Make sure that your inside water shutoff actually works and that everyone knows where this important valve is located. For more tips on preventing frozen pipes and water lines, please visit flossmoor.org and click on the Public Works page.

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HOLIDAY RECYCLING

After the Glitz and Glitter of the Season Flossmoor Recycles Right



The Village encourages residents to participate in the Annual Community Tree and Lights Recycling program! Evergreens are biodegradable, which means they can easily be reused or recycled for mulch and other purposes. Please do not throw your real Holiday Tree in the trash. Trees left curbside are not recycled but are simply placed into landfill and waste valuable space.

Give a gift to nature this season! You can drop off your tree to Irons Oaks at the Vollmer Road parking lot anytime between December 26 and January 18.

For those wanting a little extra help with their tree, the Community Drop off date is Saturday, January 2. Our volunteers make it easy for you to drive in and assist in grabbing your tree from your vehicle and adding it to our pile. In most cases, you don't even need to exit your vehicle. Join us for refreshments and a warm fire as we ring in the New Year!

Pick ups are also available in the HF area on Saturday, January 9 for the those unable to bring your tree (elderly or disabled). You must schedule a pick up at 312-804-0496 or got to info@christmastreerecycling.com.

Have your holiday lights lost their twinkle? Last year the HF community collected a whopping 1,600 pounds of lights! Drop off

your broken light strings and extension cords off anytime Monday, November 23 to Monday, January 18 at any of the following six locations: Flossmoor Village Hall (box located at Police Department Entrance), HF Ice Arena, HF Racquet Club, Irons Oaks, Irwin Center and Wiley's Grill.

For more information or if you have questions regarding the program, please visit info@hfchristmastreerecycling.com.

IDLING Gets You Nowhere

We care about our air! As we begin the winter months, it is a good time to remind residents not to idle. Pledge to turn off your engine. Why is it important to prevent your car from idling? An idling vehicle emits 20 times more pollution than one traveling 32 miles per hour!

We take 20,000 breaths each day. Vehicle emissions are bad enough for adults, but kids breathe 50% more air per pound. Breathing exhaust can trigger asthma, bronchitis, and emphysema. It increases susceptibility to respiratory infections and decreased lung function. Asthma is the leading cause of school absences.

Every gallon of gas produces 20.4 pounds of carbon dioxide. Vehicle idling has a powerful effect on the outdoor air quality at the local and community level. Idling your vehicle increases emissions by 13 percent.

What should I do?

- Turn off your engine when waiting longer than 30 seconds.
- Maintain your vehicle to increase gas mileage and decrease emissions.
- Reduce vehicle warm-up idling to 30 seconds, even in cold weather.
- Avoid using a remote starter.



business spotlight

Residents Warmly Welcome Royalty Cleaners

If you had a chance to open a business, where would you locate it? If you were Nnadozie Nwabara, you choose a spot close to home. The Olympia Fields resident, who went to school in Flossmoor from grade school to junior high chose a spot at Flossmoor Commons. He opened Royalty Cleaners on June 3 at 19862 Kedzie Ave.

"We were looking for locations in various locations in the south suburbs and even some locations in Indiana, but we decided that we should provide our services to our own community," he said. "We believe that keeping businesses in our community is very important to the growth of our community and its economy.

The community has welcomed Royalty Cleaners with enthusiasm, Nwabara said. "The response has been fantastic. The community has been supporting us from our opening and the support has been growing ever since. People seem to enjoy the product that they receive from us, which is stellar service and quality cleaned garments."

What Nwabara likes best about doing business in Flossmoor is getting to know his customers. "I get to know them and their stories. I get to really feel the pulse of the community and what is going on in it. The customers have truly wanted our business to be successful, and they show their support for us every day."

H-F Chronicle Prints First Edition

In just two weeks, the *Homewood-Flossmoor Chronicle* raised enough money from the community to put out its first print edition. *The Chronicle* quickly met and exceeded its goal of \$3,500 through a fundraising campaign on Indiegogo.com and at a community open house at Grape & Grain in Homewood.

"We were blown away by this support," said Eric Crump, who launched the Chronicle in June of 2014. "It showed us that people are hungry for news about these communities, and they're willing to support us with their own money. You can't get more solid feedback than that."

The next step was reaching out to local business leaders, many of whom were glad to be part of the inaugural edition. "The first paper will be a collector's edition," Crump said.

The paper has been distributed through both towns. Plans call for *The Chronicle* to be printed monthly in 2016.



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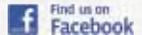
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flossmoor faces & places

Flossmoor Celebrates the Talents of Extraordinary Teens

Flossmoor is lucky to have many terrific residents. Some of them, although quite young, are already exhibiting considerable talent and heart, and village officials are not only taking note, they're making a point of recognizing them for their effort. "We are very proud to have these stellar young people as part of our community," said Mayor Paul Braun. Among them are Janet Amuh, an accomplished artist; Hannah Levy, who helped organize Flossmoor's first Martin Luther King Day of Service; and Nora Grasse, Julia Schwieterman and Marcia Schwieterman, who planted the first H-F community garden.

The Artist

Like a lot of children, eleven-year-old Janet Amuh has been creating art with various media for as long as she can remember. "I get ideas from books I read and movies I see," she said. Three years ago, she happened to go to a friend's birthday party at Tall Grass Arts Association in Park Forest. Her mother, Shelley Amuh, said "I could see that she loved it." Janet began taking art classes with Patricia Moore at Tall Grass. Her interest and considerable talent began to bloom with a little bit of mixed media, watercolor, charcoal and pencil.

Last year, to give her daughter a wider experience, Shelley signed Janet up for classes at the Art Institute of Chicago. "What I love about it is that they take the kids into the galleries, and they draw in there," Shelley said. A sixth grader at Parker Junior High School, she has achieved a goal that can take artists years. She has sold two paintings, one she donated for the silent auction hosted in honor of the 60th Anniversary of Tall Grass, and another in the gallery there that sold as well. Janet plans to be an artist when she grows up, but that's not all. "I'd like to be an artist," she said, "but also a women's activist."

The Giver

The day that honors Dr. King was turned into a service event that drew about 150 Flossmoor residents last January, turning a federal holiday into a day that touched lives young and old in neighboring suburbs. Launched by the village's Community Relations Commission, the day offered three projects, each one popular with several groups that shared their energy and heart that day in the spirit of Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.

Hannah helped organize volunteers at the Village Hall, where children made cards for senior citizens while residents donated food for Respond Now in Chicago Heights. She also created a newsletter to let participants know of future opportunities to volunteer. "I think it's important to bring the community together to all work for one cause because it gets people into the spirit of volunteerism," she said. "It's very easy way for people to get involved."

Hannah also found the experience particularly gratifying. "I think it is important to get myself in the routine in making service an important part of my life," she said. "Helping people (especially those in my community and the surrounding communities) is always worth my time." On a broader scale, she added, "It is important to honor MLK and work to be community leaders like him. I can sacrifice one day of the year (aside from the planning meetings) to be part of something this important."



Eleven year old artist Janet Amuh



Troy Paschal, a participant, with Hannah Levy

flossmoor faces & places {continued}



Nora Grasse, Julia Schwieterman and Marcia Schwieterman

The Organic Gardeners

Three Homewood-Flossmoor High School students said organizing the area's first organic community garden was an enjoyable learning experience for them, their fellow students and local residents. They even received funds from a generous H-F alumnus, who wants to remain anonymous.

Nora, Julia and Marcia grew lettuce, basil, thyme, tomatoes, and pumpkin vines. There were a few caterpillars that all but destroyed the brussel sprout plants; onions didn't do too well; and the cilantro was slow to come in, but for a first attempt the three gardeners were happy with the progress.

The garden is in a space on the east side of the south building. The seniors worked during the winter months with a garden designer who helped them choose plants and design and place their growing boxes for best sunlight and growth. They even persuaded students in the Applied Academic program to cut the cedar planks, and maintenance staff to stack them to keep pests out.

The young women organized volunteers to fill the boxes with soil and plant the seedlings. Many thanks to H-F's National Honor Society, members of the zoology/biology Zoobots Club, and several Flossmoor community gardeners for lending a helping hand!

Students sold their produce at the Homewood Farmers Market this summer and fall and shared produce with the HFHS Foods class. Next they plan to collect recipes for a healthy eating cookbook.

Register for the Flossmoor Police Academy

The Citizen Police Academy is designed to help participants understand how the Flossmoor Police Department operates, and fosters improved relationships between police officers and citizens who work together to enhance quality of life issues in the community.

The 12-week program is scheduled to begin Thursday evenings in February 2016. Application deadline is January 15, 2016. Applicants must be at least 18 years of age, live or work in the Village of Flossmoor, and will be subject to a background check.



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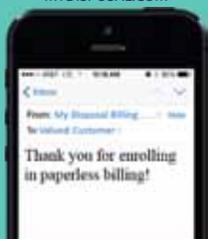
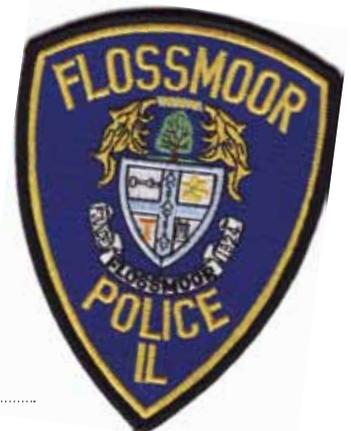


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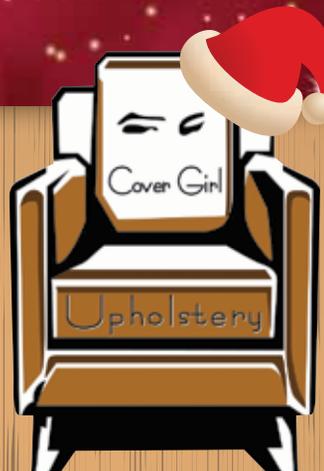
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