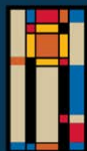




Village of River Forest



RIVER FOREST

*Proud Heritage • Bright Future*

Thank you for taking the time to read the Village's E-News. These messages are sent approximately once per month and include timely information regarding Village events, news and other useful information. We strive to keep the content brief and relevant to the issues that matter most to the community.

## Message from the Village President



Dear River Forest Residents,

Last week, I provided an update on the vaccine distribution information that has been shared from the Cook County Department of Public Health (CCDPH) and the Illinois Department of Public Health (IDPH). If you have not already, please read that message by clicking [here](#).

The CCDPH, which has jurisdiction of River Forest, is ultimately responsible for distributing vaccine doses for our residents. The Village is working with the County and other partner agencies to have the latest information and is ready to help however we can.

**The CCDPH is now inviting residents to sign up to receive information about the vaccine distribution plan. This survey does not register individuals to receive the vaccination, only to receive regular updates about the availability and distribution of the vaccination. River Forest residents should click [here](#) to complete the survey.**

The State of Illinois announced that in the next phase, Phase 1b, residents over the age of 65 will be eligible to receive the vaccination along with frontline essential workers as outlined by the Advisory Committee on Immunization Practices (ACIP). Click [here](#) to learn more.

CCDPH plans to provide some direct vaccinations, but most will be administered by partners, such as hospitals, other healthcare facilities (e.g. clinics, nursing homes, etc.) and retail pharmacies per federal contracts. At this time, we are still in Phase 1a, which focuses on health care workers (particularly those who treat COVID patients) and residents and staff at long-term care facilities.

The Village will continue to share all vaccine distribution information with residents. If you have questions, please review the resources below and contact your primary care physician. You may also call the River Forest COVID-19 Senior Response Team at 708-613-1642 or Village Hall at 708-366-8500.

- [Cook County Department of Public Health Vaccine Information](#)
- [Illinois Department of Public Health Vaccine Information](#)
- [Centers for Disease Control](#)

Between Sunday, December 27, and Saturday, January 2, River Forest had 28 new positive cases; 282 tests were completed, resulting in a positivity rate of 9.9%. The week before, from Sunday, December 20, to Saturday, December 26, there were 23 new positive cases of COVID-19; 393 tests were completed, resulting in a positivity rate of 5.9%. For more on COVID-19 data, please read a previous COVID-19 Update by clicking [here](#).

The Village will continue to update you on COVID-19 case data. Residents can also view this by visiting the following sources:

- [Illinois Department of Public Health](#)
- [Cook County Department of Public Health](#) (CCDPH, click "Case Data by Town")

- [Enigma Forensics](#) (utilizing data from the IDPH and tracking it day-by-day)

Please remember that Governor Pritzker and the Illinois Department of Public Health's (IDPH) Tier 3 resurgence mitigations are still in effect. Click [here](#) for the complete list of Tier 3 Resurgence Mitigation requirements.

### Free, Community-Based COVID-19 Tests

Community-based, state-run COVID-19 testing sites are open to everyone regardless of symptoms or other criteria. No appointment, doctor referral or insurance is needed, and testing is free. Testing is crucial to identifying new cases and taking immediate action to prevent additional spread. The list of free, community-based testing sites is available by clicking [here](#).

### River Forest January Supper Club

The River Forest Supper Club is back with a January family meal subscription plan to start off the new year! The One Off Hospitality Group will be offering its fully prepared meals from: [avec](#) on 1/14, [Publican](#) on 1/21, and [Big Star](#) on 1/28. Meal pick-up will be on those dates between 4:00 - 6:00pm at the River Forest Public Works Garage (45 Forest Ave). Click [here](#) for more information and to purchase a subscription to enjoy meals from these award-winning restaurants! Orders must be placed by Sunday, 1/10 and quantities are limited, so place your orders now!



### Shop River Forest

If you are able, please support local businesses. Shop local and help support our restaurants and businesses during these difficult times, especially through [Takeout 25 Oak Park](#), a local campaign geared toward getting commitment from residents to spend \$25 each week on takeout from local restaurants through the winter months.

### Business Spotlight:

- [Elle Belle Box](#) is a premium gift box service with products that are sourced as locally as possible in the River Forest, Oak Park, and Chicago area. Formed and owned by River Forest resident Lisa Munro, Elle Belle Box was launched mid-COVID pandemic as a way to help support small businesses in our community and has partnered with River Forest businesses like [Blackout Baking Co.](#) and [River Forest Chocolates](#).
- [Butter Cream Flour](#) is a River Forest home bakery owned by resident Laura Riff that specializes in buttercream cakes and cupcakes with sleek and current designs. They build decadent cakes made from scratch with high-quality ingredients and flavorful fillings, topped with a special buttercream recipe that is just the right balance of silky and sweet! Check them out!
- [PS Dinner's Ready](#) is owned by local chef and River Forest resident Peter Schonman and specializes in ready-to-eat take-out and catering prepared meals. Chef Schonman is preparing family-style meals that are a nutritious, affordable alternative to cooking at home, that still feel like cooking at home. Visit [psdinnerready.com](#) today or call 619-458-4436 to learn more and order.

For more River Forest businesses, visit the Shop River Forest page of our website at [vrf.us/ShopRF](#). Don't see a River Forest business listed on the Shop River Forest page? Want your business to be featured? Email [info@vrf.us](#).

Congratulations to all of the [Wednesday Journal Villagers of the Year](#), especially Helen Kwan for her leadership in managing the River Forest COVID-19 Senior Response Team!

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads 'Cathy'.

Cathy Adduci  
Village President

### Village Spotlight

Did you know the River Forest Police Department holds quarterly community meetings? The meetings are intended to help keep residents informed and introduce members of the Department to the community. Department members review a range

of topics during the meetings including scams, recent crime trends, crime prevention tips, and general safety tips. Representatives from community organizations and government agencies are also often featured as guest speakers to discuss the programs and services they offer and provide subject matter expertise. These meetings also offer an open forum for residents to ask questions to members of the Department. The next Community Safety Meeting is scheduled for Wednesday, 1/27 at 6PM and will be held virtually. Meeting details will be published to the Village calendar [here](#) in advance of the meeting. A recording of the meeting will also be available for those unable to attend at the time.

## Snow Removal

Please do your part to be a good neighbor - especially during snow events. Remember to:

- **Help others** - if you are able, lend a hand in helping your neighbors shovel snow, especially if they are elderly or in need.
- **Shovel the sidewalk** - Village Code requires residents and business owners to remove snow and ice from sidewalks in front of and adjacent to their property within 24 hours after an event. Snow or ice frozen on sidewalks that cannot be removed without injury to the pavement should be treated with an abrasive material until weather permits further clean-up.
- **Not park on the street** - parking is not permitted on any Village street after two inches of snow or more has accumulated on the street, and for up to eight hours after the snowfall ends, to allow snow plows to safely clear the street.
- **Shovel hydrants** - if you have a fire hydrant near your home, help first responders by clearing snow to make sure that they have a clear path.
- **Don't dump snow in streets, alleys, or sidewalks** - the placement of snow or ice on any Village owned street, alley or sidewalk is prohibited.

## Village Hall Closure

Village Hall will be closed on Monday, January 18 in observance of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Day. Garbage service will not be affected.

## River Forest Police Department



Fraud claims with the Illinois Department of Employment Security (IDES) were reportedly up from 13,000 in 2019 to 186,000 in 2020. That is a 1,300% increase! The River Forest Police Department wants to remind you how to spot Unemployment Insurance Identity Theft, and what steps to take if you are victimized by this popular scam.

Click [here](#) to learn more. Stay tuned for information on the River Forest Police Department's presentation on fraud and scams later this month.

## River Forest Fire Department

The River Forest Fire Department would like to remind residents that being prepared for snowfall can help prevent injuries. Click [here](#) for sledding and [here](#) for snowmobile safety tips, and click [here](#) for safety tips for snow shoveling and snow blower use.

The more time that has passed since being cut, the greater fire risk real Christmas trees pose due to becoming very dry. Click [here](#) for more information about recycling trees.

## GREEN NEWS

### Compost Your Live Christmas Trees, Wreathes and Garland through Roy Strom



Christmas trees, wreathes, garland and other holiday compostable decorations will be collected every Tuesday during the month of January by Roy Strom. The holiday greens must be placed on the parkway prior to 7AM on these days. Please be sure to remove all lights, tinsel, ornaments, metal hangers, plastic material and stands prior to placing at the curb for pick-up as these materials will prevent the item from being properly composted. All compost made from these items will be distributed as part of compost shared each April with Roy Strom customers who pay for curbside composting. Click [here](#) to learn more about the VRF curbside composting program.

### Got New Gadgets as Gifts? Recycle Old Electronics and Help Others at the Same Time

Before the pandemic, all residents in the West Cook County Solid Waste Agency Region (which includes River Forest) were able to drop off old electronics at the Village of Burr Ridge Public Works Department. That facility is operated by a not-for-profit company called eWorks, which was established in 2009 to create employment opportunities for people with disabilities. eWorks achieves this mission by providing competitive recycling, refurbishment and resale services of all types of office and industrial technologies and consumer electronics.

Because some municipal facilities have been closed during the pandemic, eWorks has opened up their facility in Elk Grove Village (1201 Estes St) to the public to collect electronics directly from residents. Please note that there is a fee for televisions and monitors, which can be paid [online](#) in advance to avoid contact. Click [here](#) for more information.

### **A New Year's Resolution for 2021 - Use Less Plastic**

The River Forest Sustainability Commission is asking River Forest residents to commit to using less plastic in 2021. Get started by using fewer single-use plastics such as bottles, bags, straws, and cups.

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## **SCHOOL DISTRICT 90 SPOTLIGHT**

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### **Meeting for Families with Students with Disabilities**

District 90 is conducting a meeting on Thursday, 1/14/21, at 9AM via a Zoom to discuss the District's plans for providing special education services to students with disabilities who are homeschooled within the District for the 2020-2021 school year. If you are the parent of a homeschooled student who has been or may be identified with a disability, and you reside within the boundaries of River Forest School District 90, you are urged to attend. Please contact [Denise Matthews](#), Director of Special Education, for more information.

### **D90 Closed for Dr. King Holiday**

D90 will be closed for the Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. holiday on Monday, 1/18/21.

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## **PARK DISTRICT SPOTLIGHT**

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### **Winter/Spring Registration**

The River Forest Park District Winter/Spring registration is underway. Click [here](#) to view the Fun Guide and upcoming programs.

### **Outdoor Winter Fun**

The River Forest Park District offers an outdoor ice rink at Constitution Park. The rink is open daily from 9AM-9PM through March 1, weather permitting. Click [here](#) for details. The Sled Hill at Keystone Park is also open daily, weather permitting, from 7AM-7PM. Both the sled hill and ice rink are unsupervised.



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## **RIVER FOREST LIBRARY SPOTLIGHT**

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Please visit the Library [website](#) to see everything that is happening at your library. An exciting line up of virtual offerings can be seen on the [calendar](#). At this time, the Library building remains closed to the public until further notice. The Library is offering [curbside/vestibule service](#) for pickup of holds and program kits.

### **Please Welcome the New Director**

The Library is thrilled to announce the appointment of Emily Compton-Dzak as the new Director of the Library. Emily currently works as the Assistant Director and Head of Adult Services at Winnetka-Northfield Public Library District and has 20 years of experience in the library field. The Board of Trustees and staff at River Forest Public Library would like to extend our sincere gratitude to Operations Manager, Joanna Bertucci, and Children's Services Manager, Amy Grossman, for acting as Interim Co-Directors for the duration of the search for a director. With their guidance, the Library remained under consistently strong leadership. Click [here](#) to read the full story.



## TOWNSHIP ASSESSOR SPOTLIGHT

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### Exemptions

Homeowner and Senior Exemptions renew automatically. **Due to COVID-19, for 2021 only**, the Senior Freeze, Veterans with Disabilities, and Persons with Disabilities Exemptions will automatically renew and appear on your second installment tax bill. Please click [here](#) for a Q & A on auto-renewal of exemptions.

### Property Tax Bills

The first installment tax bills have been posted to the Cook County Treasurer's [website](#). The first installment is always 55% of the total previous year's tax bill and is due Tuesday, March 2, 2021. **Due to COVID-19 they have waived late payment penalties for two months.** All assessment changes due to the triennial reassessment and all exemptions will be taken into account on your second installment tax bill.

Tax bills may be paid [online](#) OR at Chase Bank OR by sending a check to the Cook County Treasurer.

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## TOWNSHIP SPOTLIGHT

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Many in-person Township services and programs have been moved to a virtual platform this winter. To learn more, visit [www.RiverForestTownship.org](http://www.RiverForestTownship.org), the River Forest community calendar at [www.RFHappenings.com](http://www.RFHappenings.com), or [email](#) Supervisor Carla Sloan.

### Sibshops Start on January 16 by Zoom

Sibshops return this winter/spring on Zoom! This program is specially designed for *siblings* of kids with disabilities, mental health issues or physical illness. Funded by River Forest Township and led by facilitators from Thrive Counseling Center.

For 1st-7th grade siblings. Siblings share with each other and the facilitators, while engaging in fun activities. 1/16, 2/6, 2/20, 3/6, 3/20, 4/17, 5/1 and 5/15. 11:30AM - 1PM; \$5 per session; \$30 for 7 sessions. Need-based scholarships available. For more info or to register, please contact [Laurie Johnson](#) or 708-383-7500 x409.

### Memory Café meets 3rd Tuesdays by Zoom

Memory Café is a welcoming place for individuals living with memory changes, along with their families, friends or care partners. Enjoy conversation and activities in an informal setting. Sponsored by Senior Services of Oak Park and River Forest Townships, with support from RF Public Library. Pre-register in the Library program [calendar](#) to obtain the link.

### Oak Park Township Survey

River Forest Township and Oak Park Township share in the delivery of many human services to River Forest residents. Oak Park Township is inviting all residents of Oak Park and River Forest to take a brief survey to help them understand the community's impression of Oak Park Township. Your feedback is very important, and the information gathered through this survey will help direct future communication efforts. Click [here](#) to access the survey.

The survey will take about 10 minutes to complete and is being administered confidentially through a third-party consultant who will provide results to Oak Park Township in aggregated form. Individual responses will be held in strict confidence and not shared directly with Oak Park Township. The online survey will be open from 1/8 - 1/17 and summary results will be posted on the Oak Park Township [website](#).

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## AROUND RIVER FOREST

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Still looking for more River Forest info? Click below.

[River Forest Community Calendar – RFHappenings.com](#)

[Village of River Forest](#)

[River Forest School District 90](#)

[OPRF High School District 200](#)

[River Forest Park District](#)

[River Forest Public Library](#)

[River Forest Township](#)

