

HARVESTING GOODNESS

SPOTLIGHT ON WE GROW DREAMS GREENHOUSE AND GARDEN CENTER

“...IN THIS PURSUIT, WE HONOR THE CONCEPTS OF HUMAN DIGNITY, RESPECT, HARD WORK, FELLOWSHIP AND FRIENDSHIP.”

AS THE LARGEST EMPLOYER OF PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES IN THE AREA, WE GROW DREAMS Greenhouse and Garden Center at 1055 West Washington Street, provides both employment and job training in a not-for-profit environment.

Its mission has remained the same for more than 15 years, which is “to provide people with disabilities the opportunity to lead fulfilling lives and to train and work in a supportive, safe and caring environment while producing and providing products and services to the community”. Those retail products and services include a wide variety of flowers, bedding and vegetable plants, hanging baskets for every season, and handcrafted garden accessories made by team members.

For the last four years, volunteers from the Illinois Extension Master Gardeners of DuPage have assisted team members at We Grow Dreams as gardening mentors and coaches. According to We Grow Dreams Executive Director Gregg Bettcher, “Their presence here has added a great deal of plant expertise, teaching practices and, of course, invaluable volunteer hours. Combined with their efforts and

the hard work of our team members, we regularly log more than 100 hours of work per week, making it possible for our organization to meet our planting goals.”

The collaboration with the Master Gardeners Program has yet another benefit. For the past four years, its volunteers have planted vegetables in raised beds which We Grow Dreams team members harvest and donate to the Northern Illinois Food Bank. By the end of August 2021, over 175 pounds of assorted vegetables have been donated, and the beds continue to produce tomatoes and peppers, with squash due in September and October. People helping people, help people – that is a harvest of goodness.

Please support the mission of We Grow Dreams and plant seeds of opportunity for people with disabilities. For more information about seasonal products for purchase, visit wegrowdreams.org. For information on volunteer opportunities, please call (630) 293-0100.

The City is proud to work with the many organizations which do amazing things for our community and will spotlight them throughout the year. If you know of one such organization, please let us know at rmackey@westchicago.org.



West Chicago City Hall
475 Main Street
West Chicago, IL 60185

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Ruben Pineda,
Mayor

Nancy Smith,
City Clerk

Michael Guttman,
City Administrator

CITY COUNCIL

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James Beifuss
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Ward 2

Jayne Sheahan
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Ward 3

Christine Dettmann
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Ward 5

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(630) 673-9142

FROM THE *mayor*

AS WE CLOSE OUT THE YEAR, I am happy to report on our progress with the Central Main Street Redevelopment Plan.

The original Plan, created in 2007 and updated in 2017, lays the groundwork for transit-oriented development, focusing on residential units that will capitalize on the proximity to Metra and encourage greater use of current downtown amenities.

Eight new townhouses are on track for the empty lot at the southwest corner of High and Center Streets, with garages and access from the alley. The City-owned property is in the process of sale to the developer. Construction should begin later this year, with completion in 2022.

In-depth discussions are underway with the developer of

two luxury apartment buildings along Main Street on the east and west sides of Chicago Street. The building proposed is four stories tall, containing 225 total residential units, plus a 4,500 square foot commercial space. The total cost of construction is \$49,000,000, and the construction would likely start in 2022. The developer is seeking assistance using bonds associated with a new TIF District, after the existing one is terminated prior to expiration.

A 24-unit apartment building is currently under construction on Main Street just east of City Hall. This developer specializes in housing for disabled residents.

It's great to finally make progress on a redevelopment plan that will no doubt benefit current and future generations of West Chicagoans.

✓ TAKENOTE

What is a Plat of Survey and why is one needed to obtain certain building permits?

A PLAT OF SURVEY IS A DOCUMENT THAT IDENTIFIES

the property lines and dimensions of a parcel of land. The Plat of Survey includes structures such as houses, garages, sheds, driveways, patios, etc. To create this type of map, the land must be surveyed and certified by an Illinois licensed land surveyor.

Submitting a Plat of Survey is required when applying for a building permit for the following projects:

- Additions to a House
- Stoops or Stairs
- Detached Garages or Sheds
- Fences
- Driveways
- Pools
- Decks, Patios and Porches
- Pergolas

A Plat of Survey is the only way to determine important information related to reviewing and approving

your request for a building permit, such as:

- Property line setbacks
- Total lot area
- Total hard surfaces
- Identifying the area and location of existing property improvements

It is also important to have this document available if there are questions on where your property lines are or where a structure is in relation to a property line.

Typically, buyers receive a Plat of Survey when they purchase property. Check your closing documents from the purchase of your home. You might also try checking with your real estate attorney

to see if he/she has a copy. Finally, if you still cannot locate one, you will probably need to hire a land surveyor to create a new one for you.



ENVIRONMENTAL NEWS

TODAY, WEST CHICAGOANS ARE MAKING EVERYDAY CHOICES WITH GREATER CARE to sustain a healthier life and a cleaner environment for themselves and their families. Our community embraces its environmental stewardship responsibilities to improve the quality of life for all. The West Chicago Environmental Commission, in partnership with SCARCE and the Green Disciples of the First United Methodist Church, is spearheading two environmentally-conscious events, a Pumpkin Composting Event in November and a Holiday Light Recycling Event from November – January. Please visit westchicago.org for all the details.



GALLERY 200 CONTINUES TO BRING VIBRANT WORKS OF ART TO THE COMMUNITY THIS FALL.

A new selection of fine art and gifts will be featured the entire month of October for the annual **Artoberfest Show and Sale**. The warm colors of the season inspire themes for paintings, drawings, photography, fabrics and wearable pieces of art. Several artists will be included, representing a wide variety of styles unique to each artist. An Opening Reception for the month-long exhibit will be held on Friday, October 1, 2021 from 6:00 - 9:00 p.m. The Reception is free and open to the public and is a great way to support the artists in our community.

Fun and functional fused glass art will be on display for the entire month of November in a show and sale titled, **Fused for You – A Touch of Glass**. The work of Gallery artists Sue Tripp and Rita Skarha will be featured in addition to invited guest artists Valerie Baxter, Maria Baechle and Rob Baechle. Those interested in meeting the artists, enjoying refreshments, and learning more about the process and technique

of creating fused glass art may do so by attending an Opening Reception on Friday, November 5, 2021 from 6:00 – 9:00 p.m. As an added enhancement, the calming music of members of the Living Waters Native American

Art by Rob Baechle

Flute Circle will be performed at the Reception. The holiday season begins with thoughts of gathering and giving. The artists at Gallery 200 have put together their annual show and sale, **Small Gifts of Art**, for the entire month of December. These affordable pieces of unique art created by local artists in a wide range of media make great gifts for family, friends, or self. Enjoy the festive atmosphere and meet the artists who have made it possible at the Opening Reception on Friday, December 3, 2021 from 6:00 - 9:00 p.m.

Can't make time to bring out your inner

artist? Want to connect with like-minded people in your community? **BYO Creativity** is for you. BYO (bring your own) Creativity was started by some West Chicagoans who were frustrated that their busy lives never let them set aside time to be creative. Together with



Gallery 200, they organized a regular time and place to welcome others to work on their projects and socialize with other locals. No matter your skill level or craft of choice, please join the group the second Saturday of each month from 10:30 a.m. – 1:30 p.m. Pop in whenever you'd like, for however long you'd like, during BYO Creativity events on October 9, November 13, & December 11, 2021.

Participants bring their own materials and projects and masks are required. More information at: facebook.com/groups/byocwc.

COMMISSION NEWS

The West Chicago Cultural Arts Commission is pleased to announce Linda Schmitt as the recipient of the **People's Choice Award for the 2021 Art Banner Exhibit, Take Flight**.

Schmitt's watercolor, *Taking Off*, is an expression of the beauty of nature and soaring above life's challenges into new and exciting possibilities. The Commission is grateful for the support of all the participating artists, and those who took the time to vote for their favorite. The theme for the 2022 Art Banner Exhibit is *Renewal*, and the Commission hopes it will resonate with everyone as we approach 2022 and its bright prospects. The call for art is out and applications are already online. Visit westchicago.org for all the details.

Christmas in July was a great prelude to Frosty Fest coming up in December. With visitors from the North Pole, characters from the movie Frozen, an iceless skating rink and a marvelous performance by the DuPage Symphony Orchestra (DSO), the West Chicago Park District scored a homerun. The DSO, led by Music Director and Conductor Barbara Schubert, treated the audience to Christmas favorites from around the world. The City wishes to thank the DSO for the gift of their music, and looks forward to a bright future of further collaboration.

Dates TO REMEMBER

- October 1 Gallery 200 Art Reception
- October 9 BYO Creativity
- October 30 Downtown Trick-or-Treat
- November 5 Gallery 200 Art Reception
- November 6 Pumpkin Composting Event
- November 7 Daylight Saving Time Ends
- November 11 Veterans Day
- November 13 BYO Creativity
- Nov through Jan Holiday Light Recycling
- Nov 25 & 26 City Hall Closed
- December 3 Gallery 200 Art Reception
- December 4 Frosty 5K
- December 4 Frosty Fest
- December 11 BYO Creativity
- Dec 23 & 24 City Hall Closed
- December 31 City Hall Closed



SERVICE DATE REMINDERS

- Oct 4 - 29 Fall Hydrant Flushing
- Oct 25 – Nov 27 Free Leaf Collection
- Through Nov 1 Brush Collection
- Through Nov 30 Yard Waste Collection

Visit westchicago.org under Residents for full details on services and under Community Calendar for additional community events.



West Chicago Forward

THE WEST CHICAGO PLAN COMMISSION WILL CONDUCT A PUBLIC HEARING, tentatively scheduled for Tuesday, December 7, 2021, to review and make a recommendation on the City's new *Comprehensive Plan: West Chicago Forward*. The Plan Commission and City staff have been working with the City's planning consultant, Muse Community + Design, to create the Plan

since November of 2020. Since work began on the Plan, community outreach has been a top priority in understanding community needs and developing Plan recommendations. The public hearing is an opportunity for interested residents and businesses to view the draft plan and provide comment. Stay informed on the scheduling of the public hearing by visiting westchicagoforward.com.

Welcoming New Staff

THE CITY WELCOMED TWO NEW INDIVIDUALS TO ITS SENIOR MANAGEMENT TEAM THIS SUMMER, Police Chief Colin Fleury and Public Works Director Mehul Patel. Both bring a wealth of experience and talent to their positions.



**POLICE CHIEF
COLIN FLEURY**

Chief Fleury is a 27-year law enforcement veteran, who most recently served as Deputy Chief of the Elgin, Illinois Police Department. During his tenure at the City of Elgin, he led 182 sworn police officers and 86 civilian personnel. He was responsible for Internal Affairs investigations, Policy Review and Implementation, 911 Communications Center, SWAT, Crisis Negotiations Unit, Response to Resistance (use of force) Review and more. His solid foundation in community policing and engagement will

serve to strengthen relationships with residents, community partners, local prosecutors and local and federal law enforcement agencies.



**PUBLIC WORKS DIRECTOR
MEHUL PATEL**

Mehul Patel is a licensed Professional Engineer in the State of Illinois as well as a Certified Floodplain Manager. His 15 years of work experience is a mixture of consulting engineering as well as municipal engineering working on variety of projects including transportation, underground utilities, and stormwater management. Most recently he worked as the Assistant Director of Public Works for the Village of Bensenville, where his responsibilities included oversight of design and construction of capital improvements, private develop-

ments, permitting, agency coordination, budgeting as well as daily oversight of operations within the streets, forestry and utilities divisions. He holds a Bachelor's degrees in Civil Engineering from the University of Illinois at Chicago. He has also received training from the Illinois Public Service Institute and the National Incident Management System (NIMS).



JOIN HEALTHY WEST CHICAGO AND THE WEST CHICAGO PUBLIC LIBRARY DISTRICT for a fun family virtual cooking class from the comfort of your home on the **THIRD WEDNESDAY** of every month. Learn tips on eating healthy, saving time in the kitchen, how to involve kids in food preparation, and so much more. Recipe ingredients are provided to the first 25 registered participants, and a designated time to pick up the supplies from the Library will be emailed. This class is free of charge and offered on a first come, first served basis. Register online at healthywestchicago.org/new-events.

ACCORDING TO THE CENTERS FOR DISEASE CONTROL (CDC)

the COVID-19 vaccination helps keep you from getting COVID-19. The vaccines currently available in the United States are effective at preventing COVID-19, and are important tools to stop the pandemic. Learn more at cdc.gov/coronavirus.



cdc.gov/coronavirus