

# Village of Riverdale

## Bi-Monthly Newsletter

(March-April, 2007)

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### *A few thoughts from our Mayor*

Dear Residents,

Time has a way of moving faster the older we get, whether we want it or not. I cannot believe as I type this during the Blizzard of February, spring will be here before we know it and shortly after that summer. When you plan your summer activities, do not forget to use our park districts for recreation. They need you and your ideas to provide quality services.

I encourage you to build a relationship with your neighbors. The “nosey” neighbor, nine times out of ten, sees more than you think they see. With so many parents working, we all need the eyes of the retired to look after our property and our children.

We need your help in moving Riverdale forward. Please call about any vehicles you think may be abandoned and about any suspicious activities on your block. We need you to be our eyes and ears to stop problems before they start. I am also equally interested in anyone you think is doing a good job and deserves a thank you for being here.

Mark your calendars for June 30<sup>th</sup> and July 1<sup>st</sup> and plan to spend both days in Ivanhoe Park enjoying our 2<sup>nd</sup> Annual Gus Macker 3 on 3 Basketball Tournament. Get your own team of 4 players together and compete with other players from across the Chicago Southland region. We plan to have sports, games, entertainment and food in Ivanhoe Park for everyone.

Our implementation of E-Village is moving forward. E-Village operates out of our Resource Center at 137<sup>th</sup> and Wabash. Virtual reality is real in Riverdale.

After five years of meetings and conversations we are still negotiating with the Metropolitan Water Reclamation District for their property on the west side of Halsted and north of 138<sup>th</sup> St. While I understand that they by Federal Law are obligated to provide the Army Corps of Engineers with locations to place dredging from the Calumet River, I also have been informed that the Army Corps will not use this location. It is like a card shuffle, they want to stockpile land that is useless to the end user. We keep trying. Did you notice that this is the first time in over 20 years that they have painted their fence. They did not repair it but they did paint it along with the grass and street.

We have a problem each year with automobiles that do not get moved on street sweeping day. Reluctantly, we are hiring a meter maid this year. This means that if you do not move your automobiles on street sweeping days, you will receive a ticket and if necessary your vehicle will be towed. I really hate to implement this measure but with the number of cars parked on our streets it is the only way to get our streets cleaned. The days of the housewife sweeping the gutter are gone. I used to sweep mine, but now I am lucky to sweep the house. But I bet I will move that vehicle and insist that everyone in my house moves theirs on street sweeping day.

The Village Board and I are looking for ways to celebrate and reward resident homeowners. If you have any suggestions, please leave us a note. In order for your suggestion to be taken seriously, we must have your name, address and telephone number.

*Mayor Zee*



## **POLICE - STUDENTS BEWARE OF CYBER-BULLIES**

With the always-connected generation, e-mail, instant messages, message boards, web blog's, web sites, and cell phones, bullies are given a high-tech way to intimidate and threaten. Cyber bullying is no less severe than traditional playground bullying and is, in many instances, more psychologically harmful, with effects of longer duration. There is no escape. Cyber bullies can invade every facet of their victims' existence. It can be a 24/7 operation, permeating even the privacy of a bedroom.

Cyber harassment, also known as "cyber bullying," includes online threats and insults intended to embarrass, harass, or terrify. The practice is known to cause emotional turmoil, fear, and depression in children. It has, moreover, facilitated teen suicide.

One-quarter (25%) of students in grades 9-12 say they know someone who has been cyber bullied, and 21% of students in grades 5-8 do also. In both cases, students used their own personal definitions of cyber bullying. Students used their own definitions when asked whether they had been "cyber stalked," meaning repeatedly pursued or contacted by another person online and against their wishes. A surprising percentage of high school students (11%) indicated that they had been, and one in twelve (8%) middle school students indicated the same.

### **Cyber Bullying Tips for Students**

Tell a trusted adult about the bullying, and keep telling until you find someone who takes action.

Don't open or read messages from cyber bullies.

Tell a teacher or administrator at your school if it is school related.

Don't erase the messages-they may be needed to take action.

Protect yourself: Never agree to meet face to face with anyone you meet online.

If bullied through chat or instant messaging, the "bully" can often be blocked.

If you are threatened with harm, inform the local police.

### **Preventing Senior Telemarketing Fraud**

Many legitimate companies and charities solicit consumers by phone and consider it an effective way to raise money or increase company business. Unfortunately, others are simply up to no good. The National Crime Prevention Council believes seniors can prevent telemarketing fraud by being educated consumers. According to the FTC, nearly 25 million Americans are victims of consumer fraud each year. Senior citizens continue to be a rapidly increasing segment of the population, and that makes them a prime target for con artists and thieves. Americans who are 65 or older represent about 13 percent of our country's population, and their population will only continue to grow as the Baby Boomer generation begins to enter that age range.

Studies have shown that senior citizens are more at risk to be targeted by telemarketing scams than other age groups, and fraudulent telemarketers direct anywhere from 56 to 80 percent of their calls at older Americans. These con artists believe that senior citizens are vulnerable and more susceptible to their tricks. However, NCPC is helping many seniors to be shrewd and savvy citizens by keeping these tips in mind:

Offers too good to be true usually are. Ask to receive the "unbelievable deal" or the "amazing prize offer" in writing so you can read it carefully before making a commitment.

- Never give out your personal information over the phone or Internet unless you have initiated the contact. Legitimate business callers will never ask you for this information over the phone.
- If a caller asks you to pay for an offer in advance or asks for your credit card number or Social Security number, tell the person *you don't give out personal information over the telephone.*
- Remember that legitimate telemarketers won't be turned off if you use these techniques. They will appreciate dealing with an educated consumer. *It's not rude – it's shrewd!*

### **Keep Your Identity To Yourself**

According to the U.S. Postal Service, there were almost ten million incidents of identity theft in the United States in 2004 at a cost of \$5 billion to consumers. Identity Theft is the fastest growing crime in our communities. Victims report spending 30 hours, on average, cleaning up after an identity crime at an average cost of \$500.

It's in the newspapers every day and on the news every night. People worry that someone will run up charges on their credit card or fleece their bank account while their back is turned. There is reason to worry. All a thief needs is your Social Security number to commit identity theft. This crime is relatively easy to commit, but investigating and prosecuting it is complex and time-consuming. But once you know the facts and some preventive measures you can take, you can win the fight against identity theft!

Identity thieves commit their crime in several ways:

They steal credit card payments and other outgoing mail from private, curbside mailboxes.

They dig through garbage cans or communal dumpsters in search of cancelled checks, credit card and bank statements, and pre-approved credit card offers.

They hack into computers that contain personal records and steal the data.

They file a change of address form in the victim's name to divert mail and gather personal and financial data.

**REMEMBER: Three (3) important steps, If you have been the victim of Identity Theft:**

First, report it to Riverdale Police Dept, then report it to the three major credit bureaus; Trans Union 800-680-7289, Equifax 800-525-6285, and Experian 888-397-3742; also contact the Federal Trade Commission (FTC) by calling their hotline number at 1-877-438-4338, lastly report the Fraud to each of your creditors so they can put a fraud alert on your accounts.

## **CLERK'S CORNER**

### **CONSOLIDATED ELECTION – APRIL 17, 2007**

Be sure to vote on April 17 for all municipal boards such as Village Board, School Board, Library Districts, and Park Boards. Voters will be able to "Early Vote" at any one of 32 selected sites throughout Cook County. The Village of Riverdale is not one of the early voting sites, but does have a listing of the sites, the closest ones are South Holland or Harvey municipal buildings. You may vote at all county offices including Circuit Courthouses and downtown at 69 W. Washington.

### **BUSINESS LICENSE RENEWALS**

All businesses in the Village of Riverdale must renew their licenses BEFORE May 1. Renewal applications will be sent out during the month of March.

Remember, no business may operate in the Village without a valid license and licenses must be prominently displayed in your place of business.

### **VOTER REGISTRATION**

Voter registration can be done at Village Hall through Tuesday, March 20. Grace period voter registration is available ONLY at Cook County Clerk David Orr's office, 69 W. Washington, 5<sup>th</sup> Floor from March 21 through April 4 only. Persons who register during the grace period must also vote at the same time. The hours at the County Clerk's office are from 9 – 5 daily and Saturday and Sunday from 9-Noon.

Voting is your right – be sure to exercise it!

## **FIRE DEPARTMENT**

### **Clothes Dryer Safety & Maintenance**

In most cases, clothes dryer fires can be prevented. Failure to clean is the number one factor contributing to clothes dryer fires, followed by mechanical and electrical failures.

Clogged dryer vents may make the dryer operate incorrectly and raise the temperature of the dryer high enough to ignite lint or nearby combustibles. If you notice heavy clothes such as blue jeans or towels taking a long time to dry, or clothes feel hotter than usual at the end of the cycle, then a clogged exhaust vent is likely the problem.

Disconnect, clean, and inspect the dryer duct and venting every couple of years, or hire a professional company to clean the dryer components. Some dryer vents may need more frequent inspection, such as in homes with complex construction where the dryer vents exceed 6 feet from the outside. Also, smaller stack dryers and dryers that are older and do not have moisture sensors or high temperature safety limit controls should be checked more frequently.

Outside wall dampers should have a covering that will keep out rain, snow, and dirt. Do not use wire screen or cloth of any kind to protect the exhaust opening. It can collect lint and clog areas of the dryer vent. Make sure the dryer vent system and damper are in good repair.

Recommendations for clothes dryer safety include the following:

- Never put synthetic materials such as rubber, plastic, foam, or pieces of cloth that have been used to sponge up flammable liquids in the dryer, even if previously washed.
- Clean the lint out of the exhaust pipe and the rear of the dryer regularly.
- Inspect your lint filter for rips each time you use it. If it is ripped, replace it.
- The exhaust pipe should be as short as possible & have limited bends to allow for adequate airflow.
- Use UL- approved rigid aluminum or steel exhaust duct, NOT white vinyl hose.
- Never let your clothes dryer run while you are out of the house or asleep.

- Have gas-powered dryers inspected by a professional annually to ensure that the gas line and connection are intact.

### **NEW ILLINOIS CARBON MONOXIDE LAW AFFECTS HOMES AND APARTMENT BUILDINGS**

Every dwelling unit be equipped with at least one approved carbon monoxide alarm within 15 feet of every room used for sleeping purposes.

### **PROPERTY MAINTENANCE TIPS**

During the early spring, the following are tips to help you conserve energy and maintain your property:

- Replace batteries: smoke detector, CO detector, Clock radios, Thermostat
- Change or clean filters and fans: furnace, stove exhaust, bathroom exhaust, dryer vents
- Check positioning of splash back under gutters: Rain water should carry 5 feet from foundation walls
- Check weatherstripping on the bottom of exterior doors and the overhead garage door.
- Shake exterior stair railings to determine their stability.
- Check door and window screens for repair/replacement.
- Trim plants and shrubs so that they are no closer than 18 inches from the foundation.
- Treat the lawn in April for pre-emergent crab grass.
- Consider installing ceiling fans to save on summer cooling costs:

Electric bills are decreased only if the homeowner turns up the thermostat.

Ceilings must be at least 8 feet high to install a ceiling fan.

Ceiling fans must be approved by Underwriters Laboratories (UL).

A 52 inch blade is the most common fan sold.

The down draft created by the fan is 1 – 2 feet wider than the blade's path

Edited by Adelle Swanson, Riverdale Library

### **Spring Cleaning is Coming! – April 14th**

Get ready for the annual spring clean up day. Items must be placed where Tri-State picks up your weekly garbage. Items that will be accepted for pickup are furniture, clothing, bicycles and other unwanted household items. White goods, such as refrigerators, *doors removed*, stoves, washers and dryers will also be picked up. No construction materials, hazardous waste (used oil, paints or chemicals) tires or batteries will be accepted. Questions concerning spring clean up call Public Works at 841-2202

### **Street Sweeping**

Along with spring comes street sweeping. Please obey the street sweeping signs on your street. Failure to remove parked vehicles on street sweeping days will result in the issuance of parking tickets. For detail of the street sweeping policy and schedule call Village Hall (841-2200) or Public Works (841-2202).

**Village Holiday Closure  
Friday, April 6, 2007, Good Friday Observance**

***BE SAFE – When you change your clocks on March 11th, change the batteries in your smoke detectors and carbon monoxide alarms!!***