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NEWS



FEBRUARY

VOLUME 38 | ISSUE 1 | 2024



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OLD IRVING PARK NEWS | Volume 38 Issue 1 February 2024

A publication of the Old Irving Park Association by, for, and about people living in the neighborhood. Old Irving Park neighborhood boundaries include Addison on the south, Montrose on the north, Pulaski on the east, and the Milwaukee District North Line on the west (from Addison to Irving Park) continuing with the freight/Amtrak railroad tracks from Irving Park to Montrose (i.e., east of Knox Ave.). A map can be found on our website.

The Old Irving Park Association (OIPA) is a non-profit, all-volunteer community group active since 1983. The Old Irving Park News is published ten times a year.

www.olderirvingpark.com

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Delivery Staff

Devin, Owen & Asha Alexander
Cynthia & Dan Andrews
Bridget Bauman
Sara Bishop
Sandra Broderick
Colleen Callahan
Barbara Chadwick
Gayle Christensen
Adrienne Chan
Adrian & Oliver Christiansen
Barbara Cohn
Drew & Brandy Corboy
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Meredith O'Sullivan

Street Banners

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New Neighbor Packets

Claudia Hine

Parents Committee

Justin Antony

Erin Sarris

Emily Weseman

Delivery Coordinators

Meredith O'Sullivan (Chair)
membership@olderirvingpark.com
773-551-4533

Lynn Ankney (Co-chair)

Kate Roche (Mailings)

Barbara Chadwick

Hollie Himmelman

Theo Kuhnlohe & Bil Susinka

Advertising

Colleen Kenny, oipaadvertising@gmail.com

Editor / Design & Production

Kearns Design Group

k.kearns@kearnsdesign.com

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MESSAGE FROM THE BOARD



NEW IN 2024

— Lynn Ankney, Meredith O'Sullivan,
and Jeff London

Last June, we told you about our efforts to modernize how we manage our membership data. We needed to move away from a spreadsheet (and loads of pivot tables) to an actual database capable of sorting and reporting. Why was this necessary? We are fortunate to have the “problem” of managing 600+ household memberships in our vibrant civic organization. For a one square mile neighborhood in Chicago, that’s a robust number of us who care enough to join a group “because good neighborhoods don’t just happen.”

How we did it and why it worked

Get the right people on the team. **Meredith O'Sullivan**, Director of Membership, and **Lynn Ankney**, Treasurer, collaborated with OIPA member and database professional **Jeff London**. Jeff runs his company, London Net Studio (London-NetStudio.com), and is an expert in the FileMakerPro database tool. Meredith and Lynn don't own any companies, but they are experts in what they do for OIPA. We also had a part-time fourth team member, **Jeffrey Cannon**. Jeffrey (a Mayfair

resident and brother of two OIPA Board Members) was helpful in the early stages of the project and popped in and out of our near-weekly Zooms to help us bring the project over the finish line.

Use a mix of new and old tools. The key to this change was finding a database that would “talk” to our current WordPress website (www.oldirvingpark.com) and our payment system, Stripe. Much of “the two Jeffs” work relied upon coding bridges (Jeff tells us the right word here is “integration”) between the new database and existing website and payment platforms. Our goal was to make everything work together while keeping things seamless for you, our members.

What's new, and what's in it for you?

It's all about the email address. For everyone who joins or renews their OIPA dues online, we manage your membership in our new database via the email address you provide upon joining. (For those who join/renew via check, we'll input you into the database manually. Pretty please consider joining/renewing online in the future!)



MESSAGE FROM THE BOARD

What's my membership status and info?

Do you ever wonder if you're a current member, or when your membership expires, or if we have your spouse in our records? We now have a page on our website where you can access your membership profile to answer all those questions and even update your household information. It's called "Membership Assistance" and is accessible under the "Membership" menu item.

Another new addition to website

Bonus content! OIPA assumed financial responsibility for the **Keep OIP Clean** movement last autumn. Kostner neighbor **Dan William** began this grassroots campaign and has since joined our Board of Directors. We have a dedicated webpage that explains the origins of and goals for Keep OIP Clean, as well as a direct link to donate. You can access Keep OIP Clean on our website (under the Sponsorship menu): <https://oldirvingpark.com/keep-oip-clean/>

What does this mean for OIPA Board Members and the future?

A friendly reminder: We're not to be lifers! The conclusion of this project has gone a *long* way in simplifying and improving how we manage our membership. We hope that new OIP residents will take the opportunity to join our Board to serve this great organization. Meredith and Lynn have served on the Board since...well, Meredith can't remember how long she has been on the Board, and Lynn thinks she was pregnant with her daughter, Elise (now a freshman in high school). We love this organization, but the name of the game in keeping a volunteer organization thriving is fresh ideas, enthusiasm, and energy to propel forward.

The bottom line

Adopting the FileMaker platform as OIPA's membership database centralizes and simplifies record keeping. Integrating services that are already working into an intuitive interface eliminates double entry. The new system collects web form submissions and payments efficiently so OIPA can keep pace with our growing membership.

Thanks & final thoughts

Meredith and Lynn would like to thank Jeff London and Jeffrey Cannon for contributing their skills, patience, and humor to bring our organization's membership management into the future.

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Summarized Minutes of the Board of Directors Meeting on December 6, 2023 – Nicholas Plagman-Frank, OIPA Secretary

Meeting Scheduled for 7 pm via Zoom

Meeting Started: 7:03 pm

Attendees: Colleen Kenny, Lynn Ankney, Anne Swingen, Adrienne Chan, Meredith O’Sullivan, Michael Cannon, David Ryan, Merry Marwig, Scott Legan, and Nicholas Plagman-Frank

Treasurer’s Report

Lynn Ankney started the meeting with the OIPA financial report. November saw strong income from membership renewals which we will use along with advertising income to carry our programming through 2024. Lynn reminded the Board that charitable donation checks to neighborhood organizations would be issued in December and that the annual AG990 filing with the Illinois Secretary of State’s office was due by 12/31. The largest expense in November was an expenditure for the first (of two) payments for the 2024 Good Neighbor/All-Star swag.

Lynn called for approval of the Treasurer’s report, seconded by Michael. The board approved the November Treasurer’s report.

Membership

• Database Project

- Lynn and Meredith have been a part of weekly calls with developers to finalize the project.
- Once the new database goes live in FileMaker Pro, a full reconciliation of OIPA membership can commence.

- The board decided to wait until after database go-live to send out reminders to neighbors with lapsed memberships.

• Member Swag

Directors reviewed three different art concepts for Good Neighbor/All-Star give aways in 2024. A beautiful Sycamore tree concept with homes in the background was chosen.

Newsletter

- **Message from the Board** – The board discussed topics for the February *Message from the Board* including an article providing updates about the current developments in progress in the neighborhood and at Six Corners.
- **Advertising** – No updates.
- **Good Neighbor Shout Outs** – No praise of fellow neighbors had been submitted by the community in the past few months. The board discussed and decided to continue the column and work on publishing a few shout outs to neighbors.
- **Local Business Feature** – The board discussed and directors volunteered to write features for *Celebrity Skin* in February, *Katherine Anne Confections* in March, and *Paws & Feathers Animal Hospital* in April or May.

Ward Reports

- **30th Ward Report:** No Updates
- **39th Ward Report:** Board members present gave a recap of the “Get to Know You” meeting with Alderperson Samantha Nugent on November 27:



OIPA BOARD MEETING REPORT

- Potential (not yet public) developments
- The Board's opposition to drive-through establishments and new curb cuts for future developments in Old Irving Park.
- Upcoming participatory budgeting timelines and updates shared by the Alderperson and her staff.
- **45th Ward Report:** Neighbors Night Out – Tentative date is December 13 at Gale Street Inn.

Beautification

No updates.

Community Engagement

- **OIPA holiday party recap:** The board discussed the venue and perhaps exploring either a different space at LaVilla or a different location and format entirely next year

- **Holiday lights competition:**

- Submission deadline 12/17
- Facebook voting ends 12/18
- Winner announced 12/21

- **Parents Committee:** Upcoming events

- December 10, 4:30–5:30 pm, Holiday Stroll

Upcoming OIPA Meetings:

- **January 9** – Board of Directors Meeting
- **February 5** – Board of Directors Meeting
- **February 12** – OIPA General Meeting: Potential subjects: Solar/Electrifying your home, directors will contact ComED.
- **March 11** – OIPA General Meeting: Ideas shared: neighborhood history with a local historian or and offsite gallery night.

Meeting Ended: 8:09 pm

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The OIPA News is distributed to approximately 600 households, in addition to surrounding neighborhood groups and elected city officials.

- **10 ISSUES PER YEAR** | We publish ten issues per calendar year (omitting January and July).
- **SPECIAL PERKS** | Also, if you are a newsletter advertiser, you will be prioritized on our email blasts and Facebook posts. We have over 8.2K online followers. Our monthly post can reach up to 24K, and our post engagement is usually 15K. That means consumers see and engage with our Facebook posts!
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Summarized Minutes of the Board of Directors Meeting on January 9, 2024 – Nicholas Plagman-Frank, OIPA Secretary

Meeting Scheduled for 7 pm via Zoom

Meeting Started: 7:06 pm

Attendees: Colleen Kenny, Lynn Ankney, Anne Swingen, Adrienne Chan, Meredith O’Sullivan, Michael Cannon, David Ryan, Merry Marwig, Scott Legan, and Nicholas Plagman-Frank

Treasurer’s Report

Lynn Ankney presented the December Treasurer Report, which accounted for \$1,300 in receipts, mostly membership renewals. Charitable donations of \$550 each to various neighborhood organizations totaled \$3,850 in related expenses for December. Also showing on the debit side of the expense sheet were the OIPA Holiday party (\$1920) and other recurring expenses related to our monthly newsletter and administrative costs (postage, envelopes, etc). Meredith made a motion to approve the December Treasurer’s report. All board members present unanimously approved the statement.

Membership

• Database Project

- New Pages: The OIPA website has been updated with new pages and forms. The Join Us, Membership Assistance, and Keep OIP Clean pages are currently showcasing the new database forms. Before we wrap up this project, the Advertising page will also be updated.
- Self-Service Options: The new OIPA database

and linked forms now showcase self-service options for members on the Membership Assistance page. Current and past members can now check their membership status and renewal date, update their names, addresses, and other basic information, and choose to include/exclude callouts of their birth month in the OIPA newsletter. Good Neighbor and All-Star members will have access to additional capabilities.

• Member Swag

The Board gave final approval to the woodcut print developed by OIPA member and neighborhood artist Mary Foster. This membership perk is for members at the Good Neighbor level and higher and will be produced by Mary as a 4-year series. We are so excited to deliver the first installment in the spring!

• Lapsed Memberships

Neighbors whose OIPA memberships have lapsed will be reminded to renew in January. If your membership renewal is upcoming, don’t miss out on the perks of OIPA membership. Set your membership to auto-renew today!

Newsletter

• Message from the Board

- The Board discussed the February Message from the Board on page 2 of this issue of the newsletter. Because of the holidays, we didn’t remember if someone had already submitted something, so Meredith graciously volunteered to follow up with publication.



OIPA BOARD MEETING REPORT

- For the March Message from the Board directors decided to showcase the investment OIPA made in our membership database tools this past year. I promise that the Filemaker Pro developers will do a much better job than I did in the Membership section of these minutes. [Editor's note: the February Message from the Board will highlight the FilemakerPro project and can be found on page 2]
- **Advertising** – Directors discussed and decided to reach out to some of our new business neighbors and ask them to advertise in the OIPA newsletter.

Directors volunteered to reach out to Clarendale Six Corners and the owners of the Sears redevelopment and invite them to support OIPA by advertising in our newsletter.

- **Local Business Feature** – The Board discussed and finalized a local business feature for February and preloaded a couple of additional features for March and April. Watch the newsletter for more details about exciting new businesses to patronize!

Continued on page 8



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OIPA BOARD MEETING REPORT



Summarized Minutes of the Board of Directors Meeting on January 9, 2024

Continued from page 7.

Ward Reports

- **30th Ward Report:** No Updates
- **39th Ward Report:**
 - 4342 N Elston - Happy Day Tavern: This new establishment is seeking a liquor license to replace a former tavern at the same address. The OIPA board discussed the plans and decided to request an onsite meeting with the business owners before making a decision to support or oppose lifting of a moratorium preventing applications for new liquor licenses in the area.
- **45th Ward Report:** No Updates

Beautification

- **Tree planting:** With numerous gaps still in our neighborhood's tree canopy, the Board discussed and decided to contact and engage Open Lands to request another tree planting in OIP in 2024. Watch your doorstep for fliers containing more information coming soon.

Community Engagement:

- **All-Star Party:** Date, location, budget and ideas for a theme were discussed. More to come. Watch the OIPA newsletter and eBlast.

If you are not yet a member at the All-Star Level, you still have time to upgrade your membership and get in on this exclusive cocktail party.

- **Parents Committee** – Upcoming events
 - February 3 - Parents night out
 - March 23 or 24 - Easter Egg Hunt
 - Late May/Early June - End of School Party
 - Late August - Back to School Party
 - Late October - Halloween Parade & Party
 - Early December - Christmas Activity

Upcoming OIPA Meetings:

- **February 5** – Board of Directors Meeting
- **February 12** – OIPA General Meeting: Greater Irving Park community member Jenny Kotz will give a presentation on solar energy at home.
- **March 11** – OIPA General Meeting – Presentation on the City of Chicago's new composting program

Meeting Ended: 8:23 pm

Join us for on February 12 for the OIPA General Meeting

7 pm | St. John's Episcopal Church, 3857 N. Kostner Ave.

Presentation: Solar Energy options for the home by Jenny Kotz





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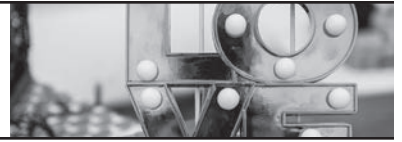
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Prepared by Tom Brandt

(C) = Court Approved (F) = Foreclosure Sale (S) = Short Sale



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4130 N. Kostner	\$590,000
4303 N. Kostner.....	\$625,000
4045 N. Kenneth	\$630,000
3728 N. Lowell	\$875,000



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3637 N. Pulaski.....	\$699,000
3635 N. Keeler	\$725,000



Attached Single Family

4136 N. Keystone, 2NE	\$ 92,500
4335 W. Irving Park, 111	\$132,500
4335 W. Irving Park, 112....	\$140,000
4335 W. Irving Park, 107....	\$160,000
4228 N. Keystone, 1B.....	\$162,500
4228 N. Keystone, 2B	\$169,000
4240 N. Keystone, 3D	\$198,000
4212 N. Keystone, 1A	\$225,000
3853 N. Kedvale, A3	\$245,000
4216 N. Kedvale, B	\$375,000
3947 N. Kostner, 1.....	\$379,900



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February Birthdays

Mike Abbott	Amy Meadows
Bradley Anderson	Ashley Menardo
Nicholas Arvanitakis	Amanda Miller
ERIS Brewery	María Montadas
Shirley Buss	Patrick Muench
Hannah Carter	Allison Novak
Kevin Cisner	Liliana O'Shea
Chris Craig	Randall Patke
Carling FitzSimmons	Sharon Perrine
Irene Flaherty	TJ Perrine
Michelle Foik	Emily Reagan
Sara Freeman	John Rooney
Denise Giszczynski	Meni Sarris
William Hanzel	Ted Simmons
Richard Hoffman	Will Staker
Kyle Holmer	Lee Swingen
Martha Howe	Antonio Tabacchi
Timothy Huizenga	Danielle Tetrault
Lauren Innocenzi	Richard Tetrault
Andrew Jukes	Alex Vazquez
Tom Keith	Christen Walczak
Jessica Kick	Casey Williams
Catherine Kozisek	Rodney Zech
Heather Legan	

Is your birthday or anniversary missing from this list? Not sure if you provided your info in your renewal form? If so, please contact Meredith O'Sullivan at membership@oldirvingpark.com or 773-551-4533, so she can add your name and dates to the list.

February Anniversaries

Laura Baginski & Patrick Wasser
Jessica & Jim Covert
Cate Hall & Will Staker
Rachel & Pete Horvath
Gaye & Ken Klopak
Caitrin & Jonathan McElroy
Antonia & Wlodek Pieczonka
Kate & Mike Roche
Megan & Eric Stalder
Lyndon Taylor & Daphne Roscoe
Danielle & Randy West



FEBRUARY

KID BIRTHDAYS

Oliver Cernak
Nathan Coe
Liam Kick
Emmet Rood

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Buck Berger (pet)



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Filament Theatre Announces Classes, Clouds, and Camp!

—Julia Stemper
jstemper@filamenttheatre.org

Registration is now open for two unique class experiences:

On Top of Cloud Mountain, a class for students ages 5-8, begins February 6 and runs Tuesdays from 5–6 pm through March 19. Follow clues to the top of Cloud Mountain, where the views are always surprising! This winter, we'll create our own original characters inspired by Filament's spring production, *Cloud Man*. | <https://ci.ovationtix.com/35466/production/1187537>

Mystery at the Museum, a class for students ages 8-14, begins April 2 and runs Tuesdays from 5–6:30 pm through May 7. When a notorious art thief interrupts a class trip to the museum, it's up to us to stop the heist and unmask the thief! This spring, explore classic mystery stories, learn how escape rooms are built, and create an exhilarating, immersive performance for family and friends. | <https://ci.ovationtix.com/35466/production/1187538>

Camp at Filament Theatre

Filament Theatre will again host a flurry of CAMP programs in July and August for students ages 5-14. Filament Camps are different; participants build their dream worlds and work with our professional artists, exploring stories from Filament's season.

Registration opens on February 8.
www.filamenttheatre.org/camp



Cloud Man illustration by Ailie Cohen

Filament Theatre presents *Constellation Points' Cloud Man*, opening March 16; tickets are currently on sale.

<https://ci.ovationtix.com/35466/production/1185111>

Cloudia has always had her head in the clouds. She is a cloud expert and has dreamt of seeing a Cloud Man—an extremely rare creature who lives a quiet life high up in the sky. This cleverly staged show with puppets, storytelling, and lots of clouds explores how we try to make sense of the world and encourages the audience to notice the beauty and wonder found in everyday life. *Cloud Man* was developed by Ailie Cohen and Lewis Hetherington, is directed by Alasdair Satchel, and includes a soundtrack by Niroshini Thambar and Nik Paget-Tomlinson.

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Let's make it a Children's Dental Health Year!

Dentistry for Kids, Ltd. visited several schools in the area during the month of February, Children's Dental Health Month, to provide dental health education.

We hope you make it a Children's Dental Health Year and encourage your families to be health conscious every day of the year!

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Welcoming New OIP Businesses — Merry Marwig

Seeing new businesses opening up is always exciting, as they can benefit our community. They can create jobs, provide new services and products, and contribute to the local economy. Additionally, having a variety of businesses in the area can make it more convenient for residents to find what they need close to home.

In early 2022, OIPA surveyed our neighbors about the types of shops and services they'd love to see in our area. Since that survey, new businesses have opened in our community and nearby neighborhoods, and we will introduce them to you through the *OIPA News*.

It's essential to continue supporting our local businesses, whether they are new or established. By doing so, we can help ensure their success and contribute to the overall well-being of our community. So, next time you're out and about, consider checking out some of the new businesses in the area and see what they have to offer!

Welcome to Celebrity Skin

In July, OIP resident **Heather Rice** moved her business, Celebrity Skin, from Bucktown to her new location in Old Irving Park.

Celebrity Skin offers organic airbrush tanning, waxing, eyelash extensions, lifts, and tints. They also sell sunscreens, soaps, self-tanner, exfoliators, sunglasses, hats, jewelry, and more. Stop by Celebrity Tans for services, special offerings, goods, or their fine selections of gifts!

We wish our OIP neighbor Heather and her team at Celebrity Skin all the best! Visit the website for hours and more information www.celebrityskinchicago.com

or call 773-697-4833. Celebrity Tans, 3807 N Pulaski, Chicago, IL 60641 (Pulaski & Avondale)



Photos by Merry Marwig.

NEIGHBORHOOD NEWS | New to the Neighborhood




Welcoming Fit City to Old Irving Park!


Owner **Jose Sanchez** opened a new gym in the neighborhood, Fit City, located at 4504 W Irving Park Road at the corner of Kilbourn Avenue. This is the location of the former Snap Fitness. Fit City offers gym memberships starting at \$35/mo with no long-term contracts or cancellation fees. They also offer personal training packages.



Hours are Monday–Friday from 4 am to 10 pm and Saturday and Sunday from 5 am to 7 pm. Stop by the gym or contact them on Instagram at Fit_City_Nerdz. Welcome to OIP, and best wishes to the Fit City team!

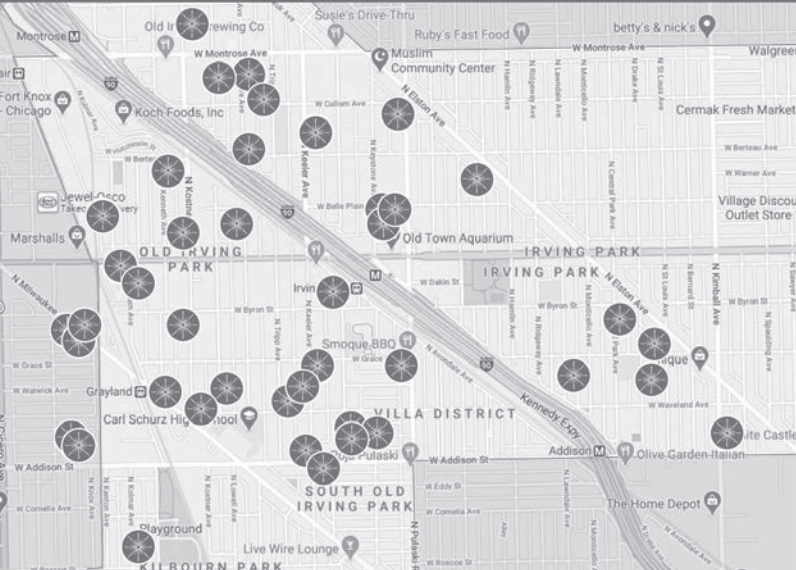


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COLDWELL BANKER REALTY

Stephanie Cutter Group
312-965-9600
stephanie@stephaniecutter.com



Stephanie's Irving Park Sales

I am grateful to have so many opportunities to help people buy and sell homes in Old Irving Park!

I am also a Senior Real Estate Specialist (SRES®) trained to help people who are downsizing.

Call me if you are considering a move, I will be happy to share tips and resources about how to get started.

Visit stephaniecutter.com for more information and resources for sellers and buyers.



Chicago Starts Citywide Food Scrap Program

Resource: www.chicago.gov

The City of Chicago is launching its first-ever citywide Food Scrap Drop-Off Program, and all Chicago residents are welcome to drop off their household food scraps for composting at one of 15 locations across the city for FREE!

HOW TO GET STARTED

Visit www.chicago.gov/city/en/sites/chicago-recycles/home/food-scrap-drop-off or use the QR code on page 23.

1. Find a drop off location on the interactive map.
2. Sign up for one of the drop-off sites using the online form.
3. Collect food scraps in your own container following the guidelines. Make sure to review what is and what is not accepted.
4. Bring food scraps to your drop-off site; all sites are open daily 7 am – 7 pm.



Benefits of Composting

Composting is the process of breaking down organic materials, such as food scraps and yard waste, into a nutrient-rich soil amendment that can be used to fertilize plants and gardens. Participating in a composting program in the city has numerous benefits for both individuals and communities.

First and foremost, composting reduces the amount of waste that ends up in landfills. When organic materials are sent to the landfill, they break down slowly and release methane, a potent greenhouse gas, into the atmosphere. By composting instead, we can divert these materials from the landfills and turn them into a useful product.

Composting also helps to improve soil health and reduce the need for chemical fertilizers. The nutrient-rich compost can be used to enrich soil, improve water retention, and promote healthy plant growth. This can be especially beneficial in urban areas where soil quality may be poor due to pollution and other factors.

Participating in a city composting program can also foster a sense of community and shared responsibility for the environment. By working together to compost, residents can reduce their environmental impact and create a more sustainable future for themselves and future generations.

Overall, composting has numerous benefits for individuals and communities alike. By participating in a composting program in the city, individuals can reduce waste, improve soil health, and promote a more sustainable future.

CHICAGO INTRODUCES NEW FOOD SCRAP DROP-OFF PROGRAM



Hey Chicago, let's compost! The City of Chicago is launching its first-ever citywide **Food Scrap Drop-Off Program**. All Chicago residents are welcome to drop off their household food scraps for composting at one of 15 locations across the city - for **FREE!**

Composting is one of the easiest ways to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and address the climate crisis. Composting keeps food scraps out of landfills and recycles nutrients to build healthy soils.



Scan the QR code or visit www.ChicagoRecycles.org to register for the program and learn how it works.



CHICAGO INTRODUCE UN NUEVO PROGRAMA DE ENTREGA DE DESECHOS DE ALIMENTOS



¡Hola Chicago, vamos a reciclar la composta juntos! La Ciudad de Chicago va a lanzar su primer **programa de entrega de desechos de alimentos**. Todos los residentes pueden dejar los desechos de alimentos del hogar, para generar un abono lleno de nutrientes, llamado la composta, en una de las 15 ubicaciones dentro los límites de la ciudad - **¡GRATIS!**

El compostaje es una de las maneras más fáciles de reducir los gases de efecto invernadero y combatir la crisis climática. El compostaje mantiene los desechos de alimentos fuera de los vertederos y no solo recicla pero aporta nutrientes al suelo y favorece el desarrollo y crecimiento de plantas.



Escanea el código QR o visite www.ChicagoRecycles.org para registrarse en la programa y aprender cómo funciona.





This Easter, Consider Donating Easter Basket Items to Make Someone's Day a Little Brighter

— Craig Shutt, Publicity & Special Events Coordinator

The Irving Park Food Pantry will run its annual spring program in March, providing clients' children 12 years and younger with baskets of toys and goodies (before Easter on March 31st). We are collecting donations now for the program, which continues all month.

To do so, we're asking for **donations of dollar-store plastic bucket-style Easter baskets (please don't donate other types of baskets to aid consistency)**. We also need wrapped candies filled (with candy or toys), plastic eggs, small toys, plush animals, and other small wrapped treats.

Contactless donations of items can be made using our Amazon registry at <https://bit.ly/PantryEaster24>. Or use the QR code at right. The Amazon list also can be used to buy similar items locally (they don't need to be exact matches).



If you purchase items locally, you can deliver your donations to the Big Helpers store at 4184 N. Elston Ave. from 10 am to 4 pm on Monday through Friday or the enclosed front porch at 3833 N. Tripp Ave. at any time.





NEIGHBORHOOD NEWS | Irving Park Community Food Pantry

Candid Silver Seal of Transparency

We are pleased to announce that the Pantry has achieved a Candid Silver Seal of Transparency from GuideStar. The service offers a database of IRS-recognized tax-exempt organizations and validates the organizations based on supplied documentation. The information is used by foundations and organizations when offering grants and other financial support. We hope to use this status to make the Pantry more transparent and gain more support to help us feed our neighbors in need.



Left: Donations of Halloween candy were bagged by volunteers (including I-r **Sandee Drake, Mary Ann Ballard, Judy Falso and Robin DeCoudres**) and given to larger families during our December distributions.

Below: **Pantry Office Manager Gayle Christensen** shows off some of the toiletries donated by the **Irving Park Garden Club**, of which she is a member, in a late-2023 drive. *Photos by Craig Shutt.*



Disney II Magnet High School's Ceramics class teamed up with **J.T. Genuine Sandwich Shop** to create a fundraiser for the Pantry, in which customers purchased a ceramic bowl and filled it with soup at the restaurant. *Photo by Kathy O'Neill.*

See more of our supporters on page 26.



Article submitted by *Craig Shutt (773-282-3627; craigshutt@ameritech.net)*. John Psiharis, Executive Director, Irving Park Community Food Pantry. Email: info@irvingparkfoodpantry.org, | www.irvingparkfoodpantry.org.



A Huge Thanks to Our Community for Their Continued Support!

- Thank you to **Vin Chicago**, a family-run wine retailer, for hosting an “Uncorking for a Cause” charity weekend in November. The group donated nearly \$8,000 to Chicago nonprofits and \$1,418.96 to the Pantry!
- **Jet’s Pizza** co-owners **Dan O’Donohue** and **Bryan Gilbert** helped our hard-working volunteers finish 2023 with free pizza after we closed for our final Tuesday night and Wednesday morning distributions in December.
- **Thank you to everyone who helped the Pantry during the holiday season** through a monetary or gift donation, food or toiletry/sock drive, or supporting a group who donated proceeds. We appreciate everyone’s support in every way to help us help our neighbors in need!

All photo by Craig Shutt unless otherwise noted.



Kimberly Brady from Katherine Anne Confections dropped off a container of hot chocolate for volunteers to enjoy during the final distribution of 2023.



Above: Holiday Gift Coordinator **Jay Wade** shows off some of the stockings given to clients’ children 12 years old and younger during the Pantry’s Holiday program.



Left: **Members of Girl Scout Brownie Troop #25375** at Belding Elementary School raised money for the Pantry with a Maker Fair in late November. *Photo courtesy Corey Friedman.*

EXPRESS YOURSELF WITH COLOR!





The Buzz at Belding — Michele Stefl, IB Coordinator



Thank You to OIPA

Everyone at Belding would like to thank The Old Irving Park Association for their donation. Principal Mandi Durkin stated, "We will be using the funds to put towards the purchase of assistive technology devices to help with translation for the influx of new migrants at Belding."

February Fundraiser

Mark your calendars for February 7 to dine in or order out at Easy Street Pizza on Irving Park Road to support Belding's kindergarten class. Make sure you mention Belding, as a portion of the earnings will be donated to the school.

Are you curious to see what Belding Elementary has to offer your child?

Principal Durkin or Assistant Principal Cortes set aside one morning each month to give tours to interested parents. Tours are tailored for adults, so if children are present, please ensure they can safely and quietly attend the tour. Tours begin at 8:00 am in the main office. There is no need to RSVP. Please arrive by 7:55 am and check in with security.

Upcoming tour dates include February 13 and March 12. Tours are an excellent opportunity to learn more about the school and the Belding community! You can also check out the Belding website www.beldingelementary.com, for more information.

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Stay Connected, Be Informed

There are a variety ways for you to connect with OIPA and your neighbors.



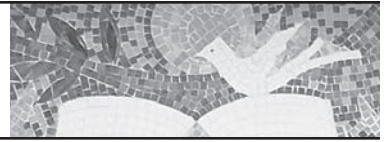
OIPA Enews | Stay up to date with local neighborhood news and happenings. Request to join OIPA's news eblast email distribution group by emailing us at hello@oldirvingpark.com

Google Parent Group (not just for parents) | To join our interactive community google group visit: <https://groups.google.com/forum/#!forum/oipa-parents-discuss>

Facebook | Our Facebook page is a great way to learn about neighborhood events and issues <https://www.facebook.com/oldirvingparkassoc>.

Visit our website | www.oldirvingpark.com

Questions? Contact us | Hello@oldirvingpark.com



Viator Vibrations — Sara Yoest



Wiggles & Giggles Playgroup is Back

Just in time for the colder weather, we are happy to return our popular Wiggles and Giggles playgroup to the community! Parents and caregivers are welcome to attend this fun playtime with their children (newborn through 4 years) hosted in the St. Viator Rec Center/Gym at 3644 N. Kedvale Avenue. Winter dates are February 1 & 15. This complimentary program is a great way to connect with other young families in the neighborhood.

Watch our Facebook page for additional Spring dates. www.stviatorchicago.org

Trivia Night

St. Viator will host its popular Trivia Night as a fundraiser for the 8th-grade class on February 10, 2024, at the St. Viator Rec Center. Watch the St. Viator Facebook page for details, or contact the St. Viator school office for a team registration and payment form. The cost is \$25 per person, eight people max per table. All adults are welcome!



Catholic Schools Week

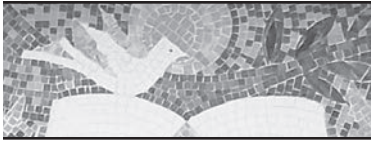
St. Viator enjoyed celebrating Catholic Schools Week during the last week in January. This annual nationwide celebration of Catholic education had the St. Viator community honoring our students, teachers, and families. We hosted an Open House on January 27 and welcomed dozens of current and prospective families. We united to help our neighbors through a service project to benefit the Irving Park Community Food Pantry, and we joined together with our parish at mass.



Interested in learning more about St. Viator? Please get in touch with the school office at

office1@stviatorchicago.org or call 773-545-2173 with questions regarding rolling admissions for the 2024-25 school year and when to apply for the 2024-25 school year. www.stviatorchicago.org

Follow us on Facebook: St. Viator Elementary School and Parish, Chicago and Instagram: @stvschoolchi



Hoop Success

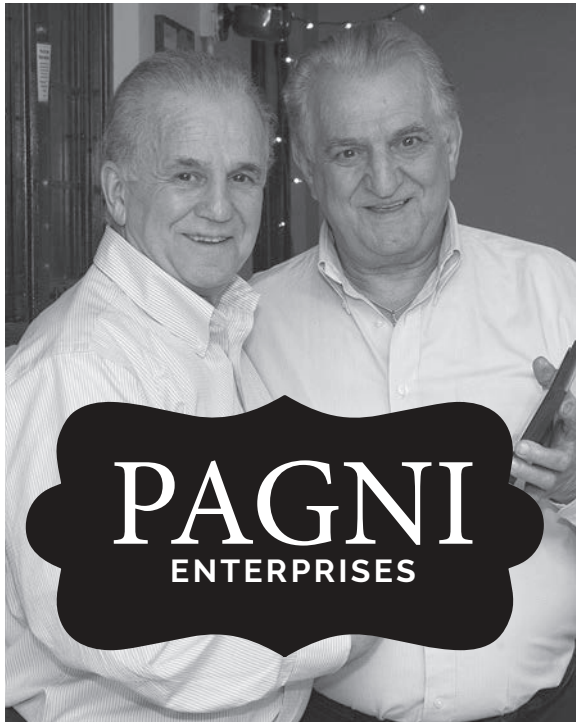
The St. Viator Eagles' basketball teams are finding success on the court this season! With only a few weeks before the Chicago Catholic Youth League (CCYL) tournament, our teams are practicing hard to finish the season strong!



School photos by Sara Yoest

Open House

Join us at our upcoming open houses: Wednesday, February 14, and Wednesday, March 13, 2024. Check our school's Facebook page for details. Call the school office at 773-545-2173 with questions regarding applications for the 2024-25 school year or to schedule a private in-person tour. Admission for the current school year is rolling based on classroom availability.



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IRVING PARK FINE ARTS COMMITTEE PRESENTS
Soprano Alicia Berneche

— Liz Mills, Executive Director, Carlson Community Services

The Irving Park Fine Arts Committee will present noted soprano Alicia Berneche in a solo recital on Sunday, February 4, 2024. The concert will be held at 2 p.m. at Irving Park Lutheran Church, 4100 N. Harding Ave. In a *Jolly Old England* program, Ms. Berneche will perform compositions by Robert Schumann, Libby Larsen, and Paul Abraham.

Soprano Alicia Berneche will perform in a solo recital on Sunday, February 4, 2024, at 2 p.m. as part of Carlson's Fine Arts Series' 30th season.



Ms. Berneche is a renowned American lyric coloratura soprano who has sung leading roles in opera houses throughout the United States and around the globe. She appeared on the Lyric Opera of Chicago stages as Daisy Buchanan in *The Great Gatsby* and Helen Niles in the new edition of *Mourning Becomes Electra*. She also appeared at The Goodman Theatre, The Barbican in London, and the Brooklyn Academy of Music in New York in the world premiere of Philip Glass and Mary Zimmerman's *Galileo Galilei*. In addition to performing, Alicia teaches voice at Glenbrook North High School and privately. Fine Arts audiences will remember her February 2020 performance in Broadway's Best.

Fine Arts concerts are free, although donations are appreciated. This season is supported by a generous bequest from the late Doris Peterson, a long-time Fine



Photo provided by Liz Mills.

Mariachi Monumental de Mexico performed A Mariachi Christmas for Carlson's free holiday concert on Dec.10th. Over 135 people enjoyed the joyful sounds of traditional mariachi music and Christmas carols.

Arts Series patron. The final concert in the season is Matthew Beck, performing Clarinet Trios of Brahms and Beethoven on May 5.

The Irving Park Fine Arts Concert Series, now in its 30th season, was founded in 1994 by Roger Bingaman, Director of Music at Irving Park Lutheran Church. The concert series brings high-quality, professional music to the northwest side of Chicago, free of charge.

Enriching Lives | Carlson Community Services connects the Irving Park community with programs that enrich lives through education, culture, and service. For more information, visit carlsoncommunityservices.org or contact Liz Mills, Executive Director, at 773.398.6766 or lizmills@carlsoncommunityservices.org. Follow us on Facebook or sign up for our newsletters at carlsoncommunityservices.org.



NEIGHBORHOOD NEWS | Carlson Community Services



After-School Program Openings

Carlson Community Services' after-school program, the **Magic After-School Place** (MAP), has a few openings for kindergarten through 8th grade children who attend Belding school. Our fun and enriching program features pick-up at school, a healthy snack, homework help, group games, and free time. Monthly enrichments feature art instruction, science experiments, cooking classes, and crafts. The program is in session five days a week, which follows the CPS calendar. Pick-up is at the Irving Park Lutheran Church gym (Harding and Belle Plaine) at 6 p.m. With a sliding scale tuition structure based on income, MAP is a valuable partner for working families of all income levels who need a safe place for their children to go after school. For more information contact Rebecca at mapdirector@carlsoncommunityservices.org.

The Magic After-School Place monthly art instruction by Darcie Wadycki introduced students to ancient art forms, followed by hands-on projects.

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CALENDAR *of* EVENTS

OIPA NEWS SUBMISSION DEADLINES

Advertising:
First Tuesday
of the month

**General Editorial
Submissions:**
First Thursday
of the month

February

- 4 **Irving Park Fine Arts Concert Series** featuring Alicia Berneche, soprano, solo recital
Irving Park Lutheran Church, 4100 N. Harding Ave. | Free
- 10 **St. Viator Trivia Night** | Watch the St. Viator Facebook page for details, or contact the St. Viator school office (773-545-2173) for a team registration and payment form (cost is \$25 per person, eight people max per table). All adults are welcome!
- 12 **OIPA February General Meeting** | 7 pm | St. John's Episcopal Church, 3857 N. Kostner Ave.
Greater Irving Park community member Jenny Kotz will give a presentation on solar energy at home.

March

- 11 **OIPA October General Meeting** | 7 pm | St. John's Episcopal Church, 3857 N. Kostner Ave.
Presentation on the City of Chicago's new composting program



Contribute to the *OIPA News*

We welcome individual article submissions for the OIPA newsletter!

Here are a few ideas:

- Give a shout-out to a kind neighbor.
- Did you recently visit a local business or restaurant? Then share your experience.
- Write a fun story about our neighborhood or a fond memory.
- Share your knowledge on a topic.
- Attend an event? Share a photo (please include photo credit).

Guidelines: For editorial submission guidelines see page 36 for full details.

2024–2025 OIPA MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION / RENEWAL FORM

Joining or renewing your membership is easy with our online membership form at www.oldirvingpark.com/join-us. If you don't have access to our online membership form, please complete the form below.

We like to celebrate our members in our newsletter. Birthday and anniversary information is optional. If you wish to be included on the birthday and anniversary page in the newsletter, **you must provide the information annually** to be included (adults members and spouses/partners only).

This is a: New Membership Renewal Gift Membership

NAME (FIRST/LAST) BIRTH MONTH

SPOUSE/PARTNER NAME (FIRST/LAST) BIRTH MONTH

ANNIVERSARY MONTH

CHILD OR PET NAME (FIRST), BIRTHDAY MONTH (LAST NAME OPTIONAL)

CHILD OR PET NAME (FIRST), BIRTHDAY MONTH (LAST NAME OPTIONAL)

ADDRESS CITY STATE ZIP

TELEPHONE

E-MAIL E-MAIL 2

ANNUAL MEMBERSHIP RENEWALS expire August 31 and are due by September 1.

Membership dues received after August 1 will be applied to the following year membership.

Membership Level (per household)	In area DUES	Out of area DUES*	Benefits
Standard	\$35	\$60	Monthly meetings, newsletter delivery, member/spouse and anniversary published in newsletter, ice cream social event, holiday event
Senior (Age 65+)	\$20	\$45	Same as Standard membership
Good Neighbor	\$95	\$120	Standard + kid/pet birthdays in newsletter and OIPA tote bag
Neighborhood All-Star	\$195	\$220	Good Neighbor + admission for two to an exclusive OIPA cocktail party

* Dues + postage for mailed newsletter

GIFT MEMBERSHIP: Simply complete the form above or the online form with your neighbor's name(s) and address. You may not know their birthday/anniversary info. That's okay—we'll follow up with them. **If purchasing a gift membership online:** Please indicate "this is a gift subscription" in the final box titled, "Special Instructions."

SEND FORM & PAYMENT TO: Old Irving Park Association, c/o Lynn Ankney, OIPA Treasurer, 4313 N Keeler Ave, Chicago, IL 60641.

MAKE CHECKS PAYABLE: Old Irving Park Association **OR** join/renew online: oldirvingpark.com/join-us

Contribute to the OIPA News | SUBMISSION GUIDELINES

All members are welcome to submit letters, photos, and articles for publication. Ten newsletters are produced annually (newsletters are not published in the months of January and July. We extend a heartfelt thanks to everyone who continue to submit articles, photos and purchases ad space for the newsletter. We look forward to hearing from you, send submissions to hello@oldirvingpark.com.

General Submissions

Community Calendar, Articles & Photos

- Please send articles and calendar items as a Word document or in an email or Google doc. Include the author's name, company or organization (if applicable), and contact information in the document. If you have an event for inclusion in the calendar (regardless of whether or not you mention it in your article submission), please specifically note it when submitting your article. If submitting images, please include photo captions and photographer credit.
- 400 words maximum without photos, 300/325 with photos and captions.
- Submissions as Links to websites or Facebook are NOT accepted.
- Articles should be information-based and should not contain advertorial content. Bylined articles should be written in third-person, unless the submission is an opinion piece or a personal story. Byline includes the author's name, business name and contact info. **PLEASE INCLUDE YOUR NAME IN THE DOCUMENT.**
- **Photos and images should be provided as separate files. We cannot use photos or images that are embedded or placed in a Word document. We need the original image file.**
- Photos should be accompanied with photographer credit and a caption(s). If submitting photos for an article, please include captions and photo credits in the same document as your article.
- If your files are too large to email, please use <https://wettransfer.com> or Dropbox Transfer. You can send several files at a time using either platform.
- The editor reserves the right to edit all submissions. Information printed in the newsletter may be reproduced with Old Irving Park Association cited as the source. Opinions in this publication do not necessary reflect the official position of the Old Irving Park Association.

2024 SUBMISSION DATES	*Due to holidays	
Publication Month	Advertising	General
March*	2/6	2/8
April*	3/5*	3/7
May	4/2	4/4
June	5/7	5/9
August	7/2	F-7/5*
September	8/6	8/8
October	9/3	9/5
November	10/1	10/3
December*	11/5	11/7

Advertising Submissions

- **Purchase ad space and upload your ad at:**
www.oldirvingpark.com/buy-a-newsletter-ad
- **AD SIZES:** Full Page: 6.25" X 7.5"
Half Page: 6.25" X 3.75"
Quarter Page: 3" X 3.75"
- **ACCEPTABLE AD FILES:** High Resolution (minimum 300 dpi) gray scale; jpg, PDF, or eps.
Microsoft Word files are NOT acceptable.

Submission Deadlines

- **Advertising:** First Tuesday of the month by 5 p.m.
- **General Submissions:** First Thursday of the month by 5 p.m.
- **Materials SUBMITTED AFTER** the deadline date will be held over to the next month's issue.
- **Send your contributions to:** Kathleen Kearns at k.kearns@kearnsdesign.com. If sending a large file(s), please use a file transfer method such as WeTransfer. Please include "**OIPA submission**" in the subject line of the email. Also include the category of the item you are submitting—advertisement, article or community calendar.

FEBRUARY FOLLY

Enjoy these jokes from connoisseur of funny—OIPA Board Member Merry Marwig.

Q: What did the pickle say to the other pickle on Valentine's Day?

A: You mean a great dill to me.

Q: What do you call a very small Valentine?

A: A valentiny.

Q: Did you hear about the rude snowman?

A: He didn't carrot all.

Q: Why did the man get fired from the calendar factory?

A: He took a few days off in February thinking nobody would notice.

Q: What did cavemen give their wives on Valentine's Day?

A: A: Lots of ughs and kisses.

Q: What do you call a frog born on February 29th?

A: Leap frog.

Send us your best corny jokes! OIPA members, how about sharing some of your best wholesome jokes? Please send in your funniest, clean and corny jokes (plus the name of who we should credit for the zinger if you're submitting the joke on behalf of a child) to us at hello@oldirvingpark.com. Use the email subject line, "Corny Jokes Submission." We will print a selection of jokes in our upcoming newsletters.



Because Good Neighborhoods Don't Just Happen

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FB: [oldirvingparkassoc](https://www.facebook.com/oldirvingparkassoc)

OLD IRVING PARK NEWS

Old Irving Park Association

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