

# OLD IRVING PARK



NEWS



# MARCH

VOLUME 38 | ISSUE 2 | 2024

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# OLD IRVING PARK NEWS | Volume 38 Issue 2 March 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.ouldirvingpark.com](http://www.ouldirvingpark.com)

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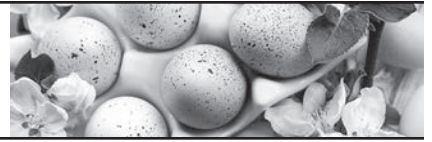
*Cover photo: Unsplash*

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## MESSAGE FROM THE OIPA PARENTS GROUP

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# The OIPA Parents Group Gets a Reboot

— Erin Sarris

In 2007, OIPA members **Renée Linnemeyer** and **Lynn Ankney** revived the Old Irving Park Association Parents Committee, planning kid-focused neighborhood events for families with young children.

Fast forward 15 years, and their children are now in high school or college! But instead of slowing down, they're calling on the community to help guide OIPA Parents into its next chapter.

More than a dozen parents have already joined the effort, and the re-energized committee has hit the ground running. They've hosted three events in just a few months, including a Back-to-School Bash, the annual Halloween Parade, and a brand-new Holiday Light Stroll.

With incredible enthusiasm from the community, there have been upwards of 300 attendees at the events, which feature family-friendly programming like face painters, bubble shows, balloon artists, seasonal crafts, and music. Each event also centers on a community organization in need, which in the past has included the Irving Park Food Pantry, the Community

Care Collective 33rd Ward, and Share Our Spare.

And we're just getting started! Mark your calendars now for 2024:

- **March 23:** Spring Egg Hunt at Belding Elementary Playground, 10 a.m., 4257 N. Tripp (Rain date: March 24)
- **May 4:** Parents' Night Out
- **June 7:** End-of-School-Year Movie Night
- **Late August:** Back to School Bash
- **October 26:** Halloween Parade
- **Early December:** Holiday Light Walk

---

## Ways to Support OIPA Parents Committee

**Businesses:** Partner with OIPA Parents to reach local families by sponsoring events. Contact [justin.antony@gmail.com](mailto:justin.antony@gmail.com) for more information.

**Parents:** Join the planning committee and help shape the future of OIPA Parents. Email [abclark509@gmail.com](mailto:abclark509@gmail.com) to join the Google group.

A great turnout of OIPA members gathered to start planning the next chapter of the OIPA Parents Committee.

*Photo provided by the OIPA Parents Committee*



25TH ANNIVERSARY!

# OIPA EGG HUNT

SATURDAY, MARCH 23RD  
10AM

Belding Elementary Playground  
4257 N Tripp



EGG HUNT FOR AGES 0-10

PICTURES WITH THE BUNNY

OTHER SPRING FUN

For sponsorship opportunities contact:  
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ASSOCIATION  
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## Summarized Minutes of the Board of Directors Meeting on February 5, 2024– Nicholas Plagman-Frank, OIPA Secretary

**Meeting Scheduled:** 7 p.m. via Zoom

**Meeting Started:** 7:10 p.m.

**Attendees:** Lynn Ankney, Michael Cannon, Adrienne Chan, Scott Leagan, Colleen Kenny, Merry Marwig, Meredith O’Sullivan, Nicholas Plagman-Frank, Anne Swingen, and Dan William.

### Treasurer’s Report

Lynn Ankney presented the January Treasurer Report. Receipts for Keep OIP Clean of \$1,979.04 and \$1,098.71 of advertising revenue led to a strong month for income. Checks cashed for OIPA’s charitable giving in January totaled \$1,100. The final disbursement for the membership database development rounded out the month’s expenses. A motion to approve the Treasurer’s report was made by Meredith, seconded by Michael, and approved by the Board.

### Membership

- **Database Project** – The new OIPA membership database is up and running. The Board is working on identifying and resolving a few small glitches, but even in its infancy, this new tool is already an amazing improvement to our member management processes.

### Newsletter

- **Message from the Board**  
The Board discussed the March’ Message from the Board’. Because an article highlighting the new OIPA database management tools was published in the February issue of the newsletter,

the Board decided to reach out to the leaders of the Parents Committee and ask them to write an article highlighting their upcoming events. You will find either this article or an article highlighting neighborhood Friday fish fries for Lent (the backup plan) in this issue of the newsletter on page 2.

### • Advertising

- The OIPA Board has been contacted by the community outreach person at Northwestern Medicine’s Cancer Center (NM) with a request to highlight their new Cancer Center in Old Irving Park. The Board decided to invite the NM rep to one of our meetings to gauge if it might be a good forum for them to present to OIPA neighbors. Separately, OIPA directors plan to meet with Northwestern to discuss advertising/sponsorship/partnership ideas.
- OIPA directors plan to connect with Clarendale Six Corners in February to discuss advertising in the OIPA newsletter.

### • Local Business Feature

The Board discussed April and May business features. In April, we will highlight a new veterinary clinic, Paws and Feathers, located on Elston just north of Montrose. In May, we are banking on one or two new businesses in the process of opening in OIP. Please continue patronizing our NW side businesses.

### Ward Reports

#### • 30th Ward Report:

- Alderwoman Ruth Cruz joined a portion of the



# OIPA BOARD MEETING REPORT

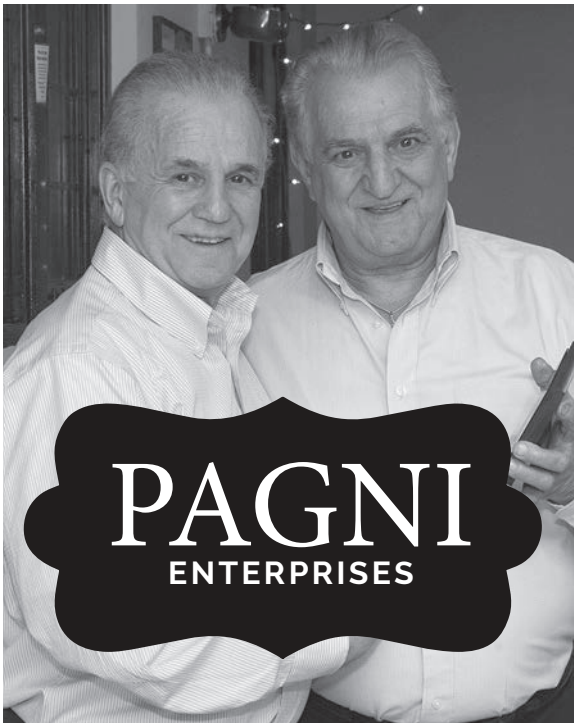
Board meeting to share exciting information about a new business coming to the neighborhood.

- **4229 W Irving Park** – The former Golden Nugget will be reopened as a new restaurant/diner. The new establishment plans to open in the spring, will serve breakfast and lunch, and will not have a liquor license. Additional details including the restaurant’s name will be released soon.
- Directors also asked the Alderwoman for help and updates with the following items.
- **4301 W Irving Park** – Convenient Food Mart: The

Board asked Alderwoman Cruz, who agreed to share the business’ Plan of Operations.

- **3800 N Milwaukee** – Sports Complex parking violations: The Board brought it to Alderwoman Cruz’s attention that this is still an ongoing problem. The Alderwoman shared that her office is working with the property owner, tenants and city departments to enforce parking restrictions and find solutions for the patrons of the sports complex to discourage parking in the bike lanes and other restricted parking areas on Milwaukee Ave.

*Continued on page 6*



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## Summarized Minutes of the Board of Directors Meeting on February 5, 2024 – *Continued from page 5*

- **4910 W Addison** – St. Bartholomew Catholic School: There is a plan to convert the convent and school into a shelter that will house around 350 migrants. Alderwoman Cruz shared that the city and archdioceses are working with their partners to ready the buildings for final approval and move-in.

### • **39th Ward Report:**

- **4342 N Elston - Happy Day Tavern:** OIPA issued a letter of support to temporarily lift the moratorium preventing applications for new liquor licenses in the area. Lifting the moratorium would enable the owners to move forward with the license application process and begin the rigorous vetting process for new taverns in the city.

### 45th Ward Report:

- The Board discussed plans to organize a tour of the new apartments at the location of the former Six Corners Sears store.

### Beautification Report

- **Cleaning & Beautification** - In support of OIPA's neighborhood beautification efforts, Director Dan William proposed hosting an Old Irving Park Association fundraising dinner at Community Tavern. Funds raised at this event could be used to expand Keep OIP Clean's work of regular cleanings to larger beautification efforts. Over the past couple of months, Dan has gathered information related to availability of space, cost,

and community interest, and presented his findings to the rest of the Board.

There was a lot of discussion among Directors about what this event could look like and how to organize and execute it successfully. Ultimately the Board decided to proceed with a fundraising event in Fall 2024. Over the next few months, we will plan and organize OIPA's first benefit at Community Tavern. More information to come!

- **Viaducts** – A spring cleaning of the viaducts will be scheduled in April or May and will be paid for from OIPA's Keep OIP Clean funds.
- **Tree Planting** – The Board is working to organize a 2024 tree planting with Openlands. Watch future newsletters, OIPA eBlasts, and your front porch for parkway tree planting volunteer opportunities.

### Community Engagement:

- **All Star Member Party Update:**
  - Scheduled Friday, May 17  
more information to come.
  - Theme: Flowers are the Stars of the Earth
- **Parents Committee** – See page 2 for a list of 2024 activities.

### Upcoming OIPA Meetings and Events:

- **February 12** – OIPA General Meeting: Greater Irving Park community member Jenny Kotz and the solar contractor she worked with to install solar panels on her home will give a presentation on solar energy at home.





# OIPA BOARD MEETING REPORT

- **March 11** – OIPA General Meeting – Presentation on the City of Chicago’s new composting program from the Recycling and Material Management Team from Chicago’s Department of Streets and Sanitation.
- **June 9** – Ice Cream Social

## Returned OIP Historical Society Materials from Sultzzer Library

Directors will work to find a location to retain materials for general meetings or specific homeowner giveaways. Directors will follow up with the community members involved in this process.

**Meeting Ended: 8:52 p.m.**

### Ideas for 2024

- Host a meeting or event at Rare Nest Gallery – Directors will follow up with the gallery owner.
- Neighborhood history presentation – The Board will delegate community members with relationships to reach out to presenters.



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## Summarized Minutes of the General Meeting on February 12, 2024, 7 p.m.

– Submitted by Nicholas Plagman-Frank, OIPA Secretary

### Meeting started at 7:10 p.m.

The February OIPA General Members Meeting was called to order by OIPA President **Michael Cannon**. The roughly 30 attendees mingling with friends and neighbors quieted and took their seats. Michael introduced himself and then yielded the floor to **Dana Fritz**, a representative from Congressman Mike Quigley's office. Dana introduced himself and shared a couple of updates from the Congressman, which included news that funds had been secured to install an elevator at Irving Park YMCA! Dana reminded attendees about constituent services that the Congressional Office provides and thanked everyone for the opportunity to share.

President Cannon thanked Dana and the Congressman's office for attending and introduced the presenters for the evening, **Jenny Kotz** and **Sally Weigel**. Jenny, a neighbor in adjacent Independence Park, volunteered to attend the February meeting and share her experience adding a solar energy system to her home. Sally, a representative from Certasun, a solar panel vendor/installer located in Buffalo Grove, Illinois, joined us to present additional details about solar energy and what to expect when installing solar panels on your roof to generate electricity. For the next 45 minutes, Sally shared some of the benefits of solar energy. Jenny and a few other neighbors in attendance shared their experiences with installed solar energy systems.

*Continued on page 10*



Attendees at the February General Meeting listen as Sally Weigel, a representative from Certasun, a solar company, goes through from financial savings and environmental impact to increased home value, price stability, and an array of available incentives.

*Photo by Lynn Ankney.*

# COMPASS

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# OIPA GENERAL MEETING REPORT

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## Summarized Minutes of the General Meeting on February 12, 2024

– Continued from page 9

A few of the benefits of adding solar to your home that were shared were:

- Achieving a 100% offset of your electric bill (but for taxes; no avoiding those)
- A quick return on investment, roughly 7.5 years, with an expected 45-year system lifespan
- There are no caps on the amount of energy you can produce, with ComEd crediting you for energy produced in excess of consumption and sent back to the grid (net metering)
- Generous federal and state of Illinois incentives through 2024 for installing a solar system (30% federal tax credit and 25-45% state rebate based on expected energy production)



Picture above are Jenny Kotz and her daughter (left), neighbors from the Independence Park area, and Sally Weigel, a representative from Certasun, a solar panel installation company. Jenny shared her personal experience of having solar panels installed in her home. *Photo by Lynn Ankney.*

During the presentation, Sally and Jenny welcomed questions from attendees. A few of the questions included:

**Q: How long does the process to install a solar system take from start to completion?**

**A:** Roughly 90 days

**Q: Can a solar system be installed in a multi-unit building?**

**A:** Yes, but there are additional considerations for buildings larger than two units.

**Q: Can solar energy be generated year-round on cold days?**

**A:** Yes, as long as the sun is out, you can produce solar energy.

**Q: Can solar panels be installed on flat roofs and garages?**

**A:** Yes

**Q: Is there a fee for Certasun to provide a solar consultation for your home**

**A:** No, Certasun can virtually assess your home solar potential and will virtually meet with you to review findings and make recommendations.

Sally from Certasun wrapped up her presentation and invited additional questions following the meeting.

Before Michael Cannon wrapped up the meeting, he asked if there were any first-time attendees. There were two new households represented.

The meeting concluded at 8 p.m.



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# OIP REAL ESTATE ACTIVITY



Prepared by Tom Brandt

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



## Single Family

4045 W. Kilbourn..... \$285,000  
 4309 N. Kedvale ..... \$720,000



## 2-4 Units

None



## Attached Single Family

4335 W. Irving Park, 202... \$140,000  
 4215 N. Kedvale, 2K ..... \$175,000  
 4237 N. Keeler, 1F ..... \$189,900  
 3851 N. Kedvale, 1C ..... \$291,000  
 4535 W. Irving Park..... \$519,900

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# GARDENERS RESIST THE URGE

*to start Early*

—Maureen Taylor, Master Gardener  
[www.TaylorMld.com](http://www.TaylorMld.com)



**A**fter a relatively mild winter like we've just had in Chicago, we gardeners are more than eager to get out in the garden and get to work clearing and cleaning, but I urge you to hold off a bit—for now, anyway. Winter and early spring in the garden are basically a series of freeze-and-thaw cycles. These cycles create tiny air spaces called “pores” in the soil, essential for healthy plants. Soil is a living organism and, as such, needs oxygen to exist. Without adequate oxygen, plants become waterlogged, and the roots of plants will rot.

If you dig or even walk on your beds too early when the soil is wet, you will damage your soil by eliminating these air spaces. If you must walk in your garden, lay down a wood plank and walk on that instead.

Resisting the urge to clean up your beds too early

would be best. Even though we all are anxious to see what is starting to grow, it is better to wait.

Hopefully, you left the leaves on your flower beds last fall. These leaves help to regulate the temperature of the soil. Removing this organic cover will expose tender shoots to our unpredictable spring weather. We have had snow as late as May in years past. The leaves will decompose independently and give essential nutrients back into the soil.

As consistently warm weather arrives, you can expose the crowns of the plants but do not put the leaves in the trash. Leave the material around the roots of your plants instead. If you can live with the look of the decomposing leaves for a few extra weeks until the plants leaf out, your garden will thank you for being more productive.

*Photos provided by Maureen Taylor.*



# Start your spring adventure with color!



# Irving Park Garden Club Announces its 2024 Season

## Join Us!

We've planned a full schedule of educational programs and fun-filled events for our members plus monthly newsletters to stay connected and informed.

**March 23** | “Designing Gardens with Native Plant Communities” by Angela Bowman. Learn how to incorporate native plants into your own garden scheme.

**April 18** | “Don’t Squash that Bug!” by Jim Rowan. Discover the beneficial as well as invasive insects and spiders found in our homes, gardens, and natural areas.

**May 4** | Car pool to Sunrise Greenhouse in Grant Park, IL, for a fun shopping excursion.

**May 18** | Annual Plant Exchange. Share your divided perennials and take home free plants.

**June 22** | Art and the Garden Walk. Tour several beautiful gardens that will be open to the public while enjoying the work of our talented artist-members.

**July 18** | Midsummer Night’s Stroll. Mix and mingle at our annual wine and cheese social that takes place in two neighboring gardens.

**August 17** | Hands-On Class. Indulge your inner artist during our annual Do-It-Yourself creative project.

**September 19** | “Homegrown National Park” by Doug Tallamy (video). Gain an understanding of grassroots efforts to restore habitat and regenerate biodiversity in our own yards.

**October 19** | “Tackling Garden Weeds” by Nicki Achor. Identify those pesky invaders and learn techniques to cope with them.

**November 21** | Holiday Potluck Dinner. Eat, drink, and be merry as we celebrate another successful year of keeping OIP beautiful.

Interested in joining us? IPGC welcomes new members all season long. Annual dues are just \$25/household. For more information, send an email to [irvingparkgardenclub@gmail.com](mailto:irvingparkgardenclub@gmail.com). Put “New Member” in the subject line and give us your home address and phone number. We will send you details on how to join. Follow us at [Facebook.com/IrvingParkGardenClub](https://www.facebook.com/IrvingParkGardenClub).



Irving Park Garden Club serves its members — residents of the Old Irving Park neighborhood and beyond — with educational and social events that support a mission to promote eco-friendly gardening/agricultural practices and green space beautification. Our goal is to build a community of fun-loving urban gardeners, concerned for the well being of the environment, who want to make a change, one patch of dirt at a time. IPGC is an Illinois not-for-profit.

# 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](http://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](http://www.ChicagoRecycles.org) para registrarse en la programa y aprender cómo funciona.





## March Birthdays

Charlene Adamski	Katie Johanningman
Vilmar Arias	Mai Phuong Johnston
Barry Bebart	Matt Knutson
Emily Bulger	Tonnia Koehler
Felix Chan	Janine Kostelny
Shashank Churukanti	Olivier Lopez
Steven Clay	Robert Lopez
James Coakley	Amanda McKasson
Phoebe Craig	Kat Makielski
Bruce Dean	Susan McCallan
Alisun DeKock	David Mielcarek
Thomas Denio	Samantha Mortensen
Jayne Deno	John Mueller
Cheryl Flores	Nathan Musgrove
Valerie Ginnan	Frank W Nagorka
Dipeshwar Grewal	Zachary Osner
Steve Himmelman	Ryan Perkins Mata
Rachel Horvath	Geoff Reu
Damian Jackson	Vanessa Reu
Dan Jacobs	Paul Rutstein

## March Anniversaries

Charles & Rebecca Calloway  
Denise & Curtis Giszczynski  
Patricia & Scott Gustafson  
Eve Jennings & Taylor Klassman  
Christy & Jonathan Levy  
Tracy & Markisan Naso  
Monica & Matt Schultz  
Kim & Rob Starmann  
George Unzueta & Michelle Sekiya  
Nicholas Frank & Emily Plagman  
Jen & Shane Knox  
Casey & Kelly Williams

**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](mailto:membership@oldirvingpark.com) or 773-551-4533, so she can add your name and dates to the list.**





# MARCH



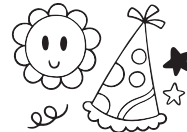
## KID BIRTHDAYS

- Violette Cernak
- Eloise Kick
- Ben O'Mara
- Adam Pietraszek
- Miles McKasson
- Scout Ryan
- Margo Schultz
- Daphne Simmons
- Blake Toth



## PET BIRTHDAYS

- Scout Cannon
- Taco Cernak
- Dunkin Jones
- Beau Klich
- Digit Koehler
- Aegamemnon Nguyen



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gayeklopack@gmail.com

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# IRVING PARK GARDEN CLUB



Here's the Real  
Sign of Spring

— Claudia Hine



**A**s robins seem to spend their winters in Chicago these days, I guess the true harbinger of spring must be the Irving Park Garden Club's first meeting of the year. That takes place at 10:00 a.m. on Saturday, March 23, at St. John's Episcopal Church, 3857 N. Kostner Ave.

IPGC President **Debbie Maher** has met several times over the long winter with the advisory group and board members to brainstorm and plan for the upcoming season. The goal: To develop programming with an eco-friendly vision that will educate, inspire, and delight our members.

## Staying Sharp

Also on the March agenda is **Sharpening By Dave**. Dave will have his van parked outside the church and will sharpen garden tools, shovels, knives, scissors, and more to ensure members will be ready to tackle their gardening chores just as soon as weather permits. Charges apply.



## MARCH PROGRAM ✨ Incorporating Native Plants

To kick off our 2024 season, we have invited **Angela Bowman** to present "Designing Gardens with Native Plant Communities" ([bowman-gardens.com](http://bowman-gardens.com)). Angela is the owner of Bowman Gardens, an ecological garden design business in Chicago. This is a follow-up to Angela's presentation last September on "Gardening with Native Plants."

In that presentation, Angela introduced us to the benefits of gardening with natives and supplied information on prairie and woodland plants that grow well in smaller urban sites. This month, she will provide an introduction to matrix-style planting, which is modeled on the layers of natural plant communities. She will present some plant lists and sample designs demonstrating these layers.



Angela Bowman, Bowman Gardens, will present at the Irving Park Garden Club's March meeting. *Photo courtesy Angela Bowman.*

# IRVING PARK GARDEN CLUB

## Time to Renew & Time to Join

All IPGC memberships renew in March for the new season. All active members will receive a March newsletter with a form to renew. Not a member? Want to join us? Simply come to the March meeting to sign up; it's just \$25/household for the 2024 season.

Can't make March? Send an email to [irvingparkgardenclub@gmail.com](mailto:irvingparkgardenclub@gmail.com) and put "New Member" in the subject line. Give us your home address and phone number, and we will send you details on how to join the Irving Park Garden Club. We can't wait to meet you!

## Tending Tripp Garden


IPGC has scheduled three workdays for members to tend our community garden at Irving Park Rd. and Tripp Ave. (across from Eris Brewery). Cleanups will be led by our resident guru, **Mike Basile**. Dates are as follows:

- Saturday, April 27, 9 a.m.
- Saturday, June 1, 9 a.m.
- Saturday, August 10, 9 a.m.


Be sure to bring tools, gloves, and garbage bags — the litter is never-ending.

Photo above right: Mike Basile will oversee three Tripp Garden cleanups this summer. *Photo by Debbie Maher.*





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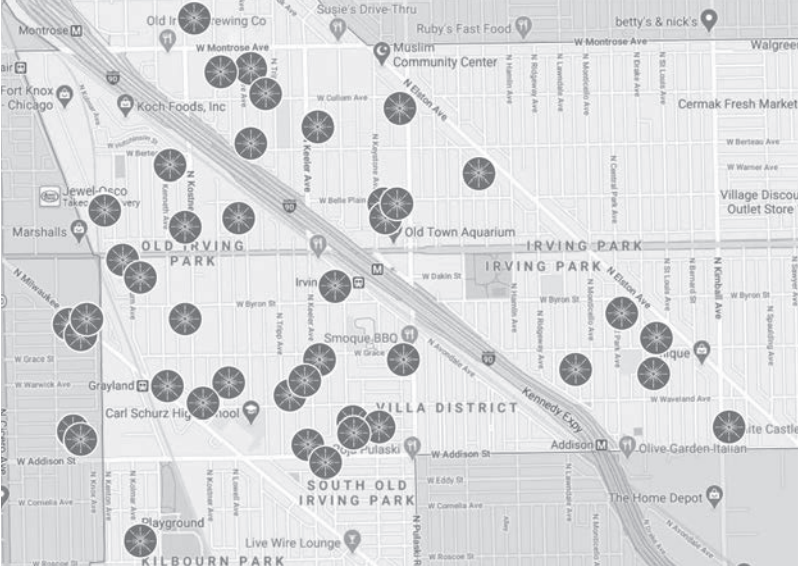



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Call me if you are considering a move, I will be happy to share tips and resources about how to get started.

Visit [stephaniecutter.com](http://stephaniecutter.com) for more information and resources for sellers and buyers.

## BOARD UPDATE | 6 Corners Lofts



# OIPA Board Members Tour the New 6 Corners Lofts

— Lynn Ankney | Photos by Merry Marwig

**O**n Friday, February 9, OIPA Board of Directors members had the opportunity to tour 6 Corners Lofts, the new Novak development (aka “former Sears”) at Six Corners. **Jake Paschen**, Executive Vice President of Novak Development Company, guided us through a 90-minute tour that spanned the entirety of the six-story building.

We started our tour on the building’s rooftop to take in the skyline and surrounding neighborhood views. The residents will enjoy outdoor amenities, including a pool, firepits, built-in BBQ grills, and a dog walk park. Inside the penthouse floor are two party rooms, a fitness center, and a co-working space.







## BOARD UPDATE | 6 Corner Lofts



Novak outfitted the building with unique artwork as well as relics from the original building.

We toured over a dozen apartment layouts on floors 2–5. The apartments have similar finishes but come in various sizes and configurations, from studios and convertibles to two-bedroom, two-bath layouts. All dwellings have in-unit washer/dryer units, closets, and full kitchens. Some units have loft areas, and some have decks or patios. In addition to rent, tenants will pay an extra fee (based on unit square footage), including heating and cooling, and high-speed Internet. Tenants can also opt to rent either an outdoor or indoor car space for an added fee.



We had a quick peek at the forthcoming 45,000-square-foot Target store on the ground floor of the 6-story building, which looks very close to opening. A remaining 5,000 square foot retail space along Cicero Avenue is yet to be occupied.

We are pleased to welcome this addition to our neighborhood and look forward to seeing it occupied by new neighbors at Six Corners!

Floor plans and photo gallery of apartments can be viewed at [6cornerslofts.com](http://6cornerslofts.com).



Members of the OIPA Board of Directors, including some of their children; we'll call them junior/future board members" *Photo by Jake Paschen.*



## From the Office of State Representative Lindsey LaPointe

### 19th District

In 2023, State Representative Lindsey LaPointe brought \$335,000 in state funding to the far Northwest Side for direct support to our homeless community members. This money went to forming a Homeless Outreach Team at Lutheran Social Services of Illinois (Portage-Cragin Location), whose team has been actively engaging with our unhoused neighbors since the start of the new year.

Julia Mkrtychian, Outreach Director  
Office of State Representative  
LaPointe, 19th House District  
Springfield Office: (217) 782-8400  
District Office: (773) 647-1174  
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Chicago, IL 60641



# H.O.M.E. can help

**What kind of resources can the homeless outreach team  
connect clients to?**

**Shelters | Housing | Benefits | Addiction Treatment  
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Lutheran Social Services of Illinois' Homeless Outreach and Meaningful Engagement (H.O.M.E.) team meets clients who are unhoused or facing housing instability where they are at to connect them to resources.

The team works in neighborhoods on Chicago's Northwest side.

**If someone you know is unhoused or facing housing  
instability and in our service area you can reach our  
team by calling LSSI Connect at 833.610.5774 and  
selecting Option 3 or email us at [hometeam@lssi.org](mailto:hometeam@lssi.org)**

---

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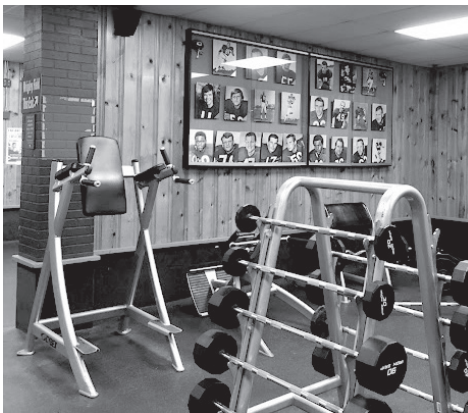
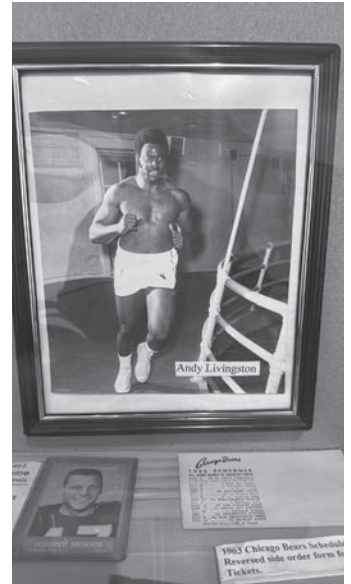
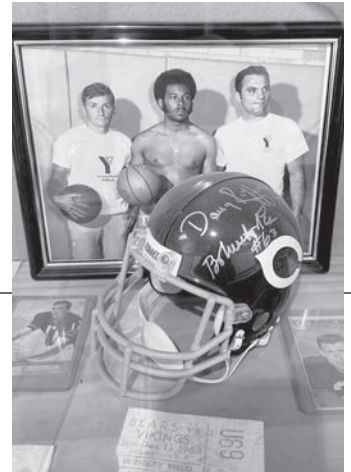


## “The Power of Play” — Ron Anderson, Executive Director

Over the past two years, we have been hard at work redefining our mission statement and brand to align with the community work the YMCA has been able to deliver throughout Chicagoland’s communities for the past century. We are excited to share our revised mission statement: To strengthen community by connecting all people to their purpose, potential and each other! Our new brand: “The Power of Play” is all about the ability of fun and joyful actions that bring us together, inspire hope and opportunity, and move our community forward. We hope everyone will join us on this journey.

### Chicago Bears Den

Did you know the Irving Park YMCA is home to the Chicago Bears Den? In the late '60s and early '70s, the “Y” was the home for the player’s off-season strength and conditioning workouts. The space is still filled with Bears memorabilia and photos from this incredible time in history. Visit us to see and learn more about our iconic past.



All photos provided by Ron Anderson.



# NEIGHBORHOOD NEWS | Irving Park YMCA

## Upcoming Programs at the Y

- **Spring Medicare Seminar:** Turning 65? Are you confused about Medicare? Join us at the Irving Park YMCA on Thursday, March 26, from 7–8 p.m. to learn the ABCs of Medicare. The seminar is professionally led and FREE, but registration is required. Call 773-777-7500 to secure your spot.
- **Healthy Kids Day:** Save the Date! Saturday, April 20, 2024. Healthy Kids Day is a YMCA national initiative to improve the health and well-being of kids and families. As part of this free community event, IPY will have activities and programs to inspire kids and families to keep their minds and bodies active throughout the summer months—event details and time will be shared in the April newsletter.



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### WELCOMING NEW OIP BUSINESS

## Katherine Anne Confections — Adrienne Chan

**K**atherine Anne Confections, founded in 2006, opened its second location last summer just east of Old Irving Park. The Irving Park Confectionerie and Workshop offers Katherine Anne's handmade truffles, caramels, and marshmallows in a selection of classic and rotating seasonal flavors (such as pumpkin spice, buttered rum, and blood orange—a few of my favorites). You can create custom boxes of 2 or 4 truffles or select from a variety of pre-boxed chocolates, marshmallows, and other treats.

There are also vegan and dairy-free options. In addition to confections, they have a menu of house-made pastries, open-face sandwiches, salads, and rotating soups for a light meal. The Irving Park location also has a full espresso bar and twelve varieties of "drinking chocolate," the incredibly rich, creamy cousin of traditional hot chocolate. This local storefront became my "go-to" over the holidays for hostess gifts, stocking stuffers, and just a quick reprieve from the day-to-day. I've run into several neighbors enjoying the serene sitting area with a warm beverage and something to read.

You can visit seven days a week at 3653 West Irving Park Road. Hours: 8 a.m.–7 p.m., Monday–Saturday and 9 a.m. – 5 p.m. on Sunday. Website: [katherine-anne.com](http://katherine-anne.com)



*Photo by Adrienne Chan.*



## It's time for spring cleaning!

Don't forget to brush twice a day,  
floss every day and visit your dentist!

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# Basket Program Underway!

— Craig Shutt, Publicity & Special Events Coordinator

The Irving Park Food Pantry has begun its annual spring basket program, in which we will give baskets of toys and goodies to our clients' children 12 years and younger. The program runs through March (before Easter on March 31), and we are still collecting donations.

We request donations of dollar-store plastic bucket-style Easter baskets (please don't donate other basket types to aid consistency), along with plush animals filled (with candy or toys), plastic eggs, small toys, and wrapped candies. Donations items can purchased using our Amazon registry at <https://bit.ly/PantryEaster24>. That list also can be used to buy similar items locally (they don't need to be exact matches).



You can deliver your locally purchased donations to the Big Helpers store at 4184 N. Elston Ave. from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. on Monday through Friday or the enclosed front porch at 3833 N. Tripp Ave. at any time.

We encourage organizations to do their collections or create assembled baskets from the list of items we can supply. Please get in touch with program coordinator **Jason Tebbe** at [tebbe.g@gmail.com](mailto:tebbe.g@gmail.com) for details of what's included in the baskets or arrange a special delivery of donations.



Pastor Erin Bouman blessed baskets donated by the Irving Park Lutheran Church before being delivered to the Pantry for last year's program. *Photo courtesy IPLC*

## Reusable Bags Policy

Beginning this month, the Pantry requires clients to bring their reusable bags for most food (except where required, such as with meat options). Each client will be given several reusable bags during their first visit in March or later, but after that, they will have to either bring reusable bags or use emptied boxes to take away their groceries. No one-use plastic bags will be available to bag regular groceries.

Our goal is to aid the environment while reducing costs and making use of the reusable bags that most families own already. Please note that we are not asking for donations of reusable bags.

---

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





# NEIGHBORHOOD NEWS | Irving Park Community Food Pantry

## Pantry News

- The Pantry is thrilled to have received a \$10,000 grant (the maximum provided) from the Grubhub Community Fund's Full Plate Program. We are one of several nonprofit organizations in the Chicagoland area providing food to those suffering from food insecurity that were selected for the grants.
- We are pleased to work with the Sage Brigade, a group of senior volunteers organized by 33rd Ward Alderwoman Rossana Rodriguez's office to help other seniors find and apply for benefits that meet their specific needs. The Pantry provides the Brigade with a range of food items for up to 20 seniors each month. The volunteers come to the Pantry to pack up our allocated food and deliver it where needed.



Pantry volunteers Greg Shea and Lourdes Ryczek show off some of the Kettle Heroes popcorn from cases donated by the Pat Tillman Foundation. Kettle Heroes is a Tempe, Ariz.-based company that shares the story of everyday heroes, on its packages. *Photo by Kathy O'Neill*

---

## Grateful for the Support

- Thank you to everyone who shopped at Whole Foods Market during the company's Give Local program that ran from December 6th to 26th. The campaign's funds were evenly divided among more than 600 local food-redistribution nonprofits and resulted in a donation of \$2,799.12 to the Pantry.
- Thank you to our new neighbors at the Northwestern Medical Center in Old Irving Park (4445 W. Irving Park Rd.) for adding us to the volunteer opportunities available to employees throughout the hospital network. We've had several employees help at our distributions already.

Thank you to everyone who supports our mission to be "Neighbors Helping Neighbors!"



Assistant Operations Manager Laura Barnes and Client Services Coordinator Elvia Esparza talked with State Senator Natalie Toro during the Senator's first annual community baby shower in late January at Concordia Place. *Photo courtesy Senator Toro*



Kerry Brown Hasbrook of Radical Generosity shows off the birthday kits they donated to our clients in early February. The kits are very popular and include cake mix, frosting, candles, napkins and plates, cupcake tins, and various additional goodies. *Photo by Craig Shutt*



# The Buzz at Belding — Michele Stefl, IB Coordinator

## We've Got Spirit, Yes We Do!

Cheer, led by coaches Ms. Hayes and Ms. Krystal, has come to Belding! Students participated in their first competition and were very excited! They continue to grow and learn new routines along with some gymnastics.



*Cheer and dance Photos provided by Belding School.*

---

### Family Reading Night

Kids and adults of all ages enjoyed another Belding family reading night! Kids came in comfortable pajamas or dressed as their favorite book characters as Belding teachers and staff read and performed some of their favorite books. In between reading sessions, families could also select and color a bookmark that they could bring home.

---

### 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 for adults, so if children are present, please ensure they can safely and quietly attend the tour. Upcoming tour dates are March 12 and April 9 and begin at 8 a.m. in the main office. There is no need to RSVP. Please arrive by 7:55 a.m. and check in with security. For more information visit the Belding website [www.beldingelementary.com](http://www.beldingelementary.com).

### The Belding Dance Showcase Returns!

Belding was happy to see the return of the dance showcase! Students spent the first ten weeks learning about their dance style/concept, and then it took about nine weeks to learn and practice their dance for the performance. Students from kindergarten through 8th grade performed dances that ranged from ballet and musical theater to hip-hop, tap, and stepping.



"I was so happy to finally have a live student dance performance again after four years! All the students worked so hard, and it really showed. It filled my heart to see all the grades K-8 perform together in one show to see the progression of dance skills from the youngest kinder kiddos to the soon-to-graduate 8th graders." — Dance teacher Mrs. Kelly McCann.



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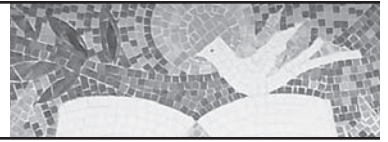
## Contribute to the *OIPA News*

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 40 for full details.



## Viator Vibrations — Sara Yoest



The St. Viator Elementary School chapter of the National Junior Honor Society (NJHS) proudly welcomed twelve new inductees from grades 6–8 this winter. To be considered for membership in NJHS, students must achieve and maintain a minimum 3.5 GPA and meet the criteria outlined in the five pillars of membership—scholarship, service, leadership, character, and citizenship. Congratulations to our students!

### Save the Date! Saturday, March 9

**Blue & Gold Gala – Casino Night.** The Blue & Gold Gala is St. Viator’s largest annual fundraiser. Funds raised will be used to complete the new STEM lab, including purchasing 3D printers, LEGO Education WeDo Robotics program, flexible seating, and a mobile maker space. Enjoy casino games, hors d’oeuvres, cocktails, karaoke, a silent auction, and raffles. Current parents,

parishioners, and alums are invited. Please visit our Facebook page for details and information regarding ticket sales.

### Wednesday Open House Options

Are you exploring preschool and elementary school options in Old Irving Park? Please join us at our Spring open houses on Wednesday, March 13, and Wednesday, April 10.

### Spring Art Show & Open House

Current & prospective families, alums, and neighborhood residents are invited to our Spring Art Show & Open House on Sunday, April 28. See the halls of St. Viator transformed into an art gallery showcasing student artwork created throughout the year in our unique and beloved Art Zone program.

**Interested in learning more about St. Viator?** Please get in touch with the school office at [office1@stviatorchicago.org](mailto: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](http://www.stviatorchicago.org)

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



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Be Informed**

There are a variety of 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](mailto: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](http://www.oldirvingpark.com)

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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

## March

- 
- 8 **Women in Business Luncheon by Pulaski Elston Business Association**  
11:30 a.m. – 1 p.m. | Gracie O'Malley's Portage Park, North Milwaukee Avenue
- 
- 11 **OIPA March General Meeting** | Chicago's new composting program | 7 p.m. | St. John's Episcopal Church, 3857 N. Kostner Avenue.
- 
- 23 **Irving Park Garden Club** | Designing Gardens with Native Plant Communities | St. John's Episcopal Church, 3857 N. Kostner Avenue | 10 a.m. | Members Only; \$25 to join
- 
- 23 **OIPA Parents Committee Spring Egg Hunt** | Belding Elementary Playground  
10 a.m. | 4257 N. Tripp (Rain date: March 24)



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# 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](http://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)

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STATE

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## 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](http://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](mailto: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
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 Specifications


- **Purchase ad space and upload your ad at:**  
[www.oldirvingpark.com/buy-a-newsletter-ad](http://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](mailto: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.

# March Madness

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



**Q: What do you get when you cross poison ivy with a four leaf clover?**

**A: A rash of good luck**

**Q: Why can't Irish golfers ever end a game?**

**A: They refuse to leave the green.**



**Q: Where can you always find gold on St. Patrick's Day?**

**A: In the dictionary.**


**Q: What should you say to a runner in the St. Patrick's Day marathon?**

**A: Irish you luck**



**Q: Why is March the most popular month to use a trampoline?**

**A: It's spring-time.**



**Q: Why should you never iron a 4-leaf clover?**

**A: You don't want to press your luck.**

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](mailto: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

[www.oldirvingpark.com](http://www.oldirvingpark.com)

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

**OLD IRVING PARK NEWS**

Old Irving Park Association

4313 North Keeler Ave

Chicago IL 60641