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NEWS



APRIL

VOLUME 38 | ISSUE 3 | 2024



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# OLD IRVING PARK NEWS | Volume 38 ✨ Issue 3 ✨ April 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.

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Emily Weseman

### Delivery Coordinators

Meredith O’Sullivan (Chair)  
[membership@ouldirvingpark.com](mailto:membership@ouldirvingpark.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](mailto:oipaadvertising@gmail.com)

### Editor / Design & Production

Kearns Design Group

[k.kearns@kearnsdesign.com](mailto:k.kearns@kearnsdesign.com)

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## MESSAGE FROM THE BOARD

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# Keep OIP Clean Spring Update

— Daniel William, OIPA Board Member

As we usher in the spring season, the Keep Old Irving Park (OIP) Clean initiative is excited to announce the kickoff of our annual cleansing efforts, starting with a thorough power washing of viaducts in the Old Irving Park neighborhood. Scheduled for late April, this operation serves as the starting point of our broader mission to ensure our community remains not just clean but also inviting and vibrant throughout the year.

In our commitment to enhancing the beauty and appeal of Old Irving Park, we are also thrilled to share plans for a fundraising event in the fall of 2024. This event is pivotal for us, as it aims to increase our budget, enabling a more comprehensive range of beautification projects within the community. Your support and contributions will play a crucial role in transforming these plans into reality, ensuring our neighborhood continues flourishing. More details on the fundraiser are forthcoming.

We believe in the power of community and understand that keeping our neighborhood pristine is a shared responsibility. To this end, we encourage all neighbors to take proactive steps to maintain our shared spaces' beauty. Simple actions such as maintaining your lawns and yards, cleaning the areas you frequent, and volunteering for Keep OIP Clean events can make a significant difference. Every effort counts, and your involvement is key to fostering a clean, safe, and welcoming environment for everyone.

Beyond the immediate aesthetic benefits, keeping our neighborhood clean has far-reaching positive impacts. It contributes to our environment's well-

being and invites business opportunities, enhancing economic vitality. Moreover, clean and well-maintained neighborhoods have been shown to reduce crime rates, creating a safer and more secure community for all residents. By working together to keep Old Irving Park clean, we're beautifying our surroundings and building a stronger, more resilient community.

As we move forward with these initiatives, let's remember the broader significance of our efforts. A clean neighborhood is a visible sign of our collective care and respect for the environment, our commitment to economic growth, and our dedication to ensuring a safe, vibrant community for current and future generations. Together, we can make Old Irving Park a shining example of what it means to live in a community that genuinely cares.



Photo provided by Dave Ryan



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## HISTORY IN & AROUND THE NEIGHBORHOOD

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# Six Corners Yesterday & Today

— Laura Marie Sanchez



The Sears store at the beginning of its heyday in 1940.

As the finishing touches are put on the new retail/residential building at the northwest corner of Irving Park Rd. at Cicero Avenue—formerly Sears Roebuck & Company's \$1 million store that opened in 1938—we take a look to see that corner's evolution.

During the days when the main settlement in the area was the little village of Jefferson, the Irving/Cicero corner had been the property of T. Fay before



James Smith farmhouse circa the 1870s-1880s.

and during the Civil War. Shortly after that, T. Fay sold the property to James Smith, an English immigrant by way of Canada, who built his farmhouse, barns, and eventually other family dwellings there during the late nineteenth century. The Smiths started a dairy and later opened the first small grocery store at that intersection. Sensing opportunity in real estate, the next generation built, among other things, the two-story brick Smith Block in the early 20th century, which still stands just to the east at the corner near today's Marketplace.

Business interests in the Six Corners formed by the three-way intersection of Irving Park Boulevard and Milwaukee and Cicero Avenues began in 1841.

In 1845, Chester Dickinson purchased Sutherland's Inn. Dickinson's Inn and Tavern (located at the current intersection of Milwaukee and Belle Plaine Avenues) was also home to the local post office and interim town hall. The tavern served as a central hub of activity for Jefferson Township after it was formally formed in 1873. The town hall for Jefferson Township





# Summarized Minutes of the Board of Directors Meeting on March 5, 2024– Nicholas Plagman-Frank, OIPA Secretary

**Meeting Scheduled** for 7:30 p.m. via Zoom

**Meeting Started:** 7:33 p.m.

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

### Treasurer’s Report

The February financial report presented by Treasurer **Lynn Ankney** showed healthy income from membership dues, newsletter advertising, and Keep OIP Clean with disbursements for newsletter publication and final membership database development.

Adrienne filed a motion to approve the February financials, seconded by Michael. The motion was approved by the Board.

### Director Transition Planning

OIPA Director **Merry Marwig** formally announced her resignation from the Board effective March 2024. Merry and the rest of the Board discussed the transition and who would pick up the responsibilities that Merry carried at OIPA.

Because of the very detailed documentation Merry produced, she is leaving the Board with a good roadmap to continue the work she championed. Merry’s farewell to OIPA membership is published on page 16 of this month’s newsletter and an article highlighting Merry’s accomplishments during her 4-year tenure are published in this month’s message from the Board.

### Membership

**Database update:** The new membership database is up and running! Membership director **Meredith O’Sullivan** shared that she used it successfully in February to generate route sheets for the newsletter delivery.

Now that the new database is fully live, Wufu forms have been decommissioned. Advertisers will use the new database to manage the ad space they take out in the monthly OIPA newsletter.

### Newsletter

The Board discussed and decided on content for the next two months (April and May), including the newsletter’s message from the Board and local business feature sections.

### Ward Updates

- 30th Ward Update – nothing was discussed
- 39th Ward Update – nothing was discussed
- 45th Ward Update – nothing was discussed

### Beautification Report

- Directors discussed the Adopt a Greenspace program and cleanup of trash along Irving Park Road. The Board brainstormed ideas about how to get local businesses involved in the beautification efforts.
- Formalized cleanings like those done in the past by Keep OIP Clean contractor Clean Slate were discussed as a method to conduct additional garden bed cleanings along Irving Park Road corridor.





# OIPA BOARD MEETING REPORT

## Community Engagement

- No updates discussed

## Parents Committee

- No updates discussed

## OIPA Director Position Opening

With the departure of Merry, the OIPA Board has an opening for a new director. The Board discussed what needed skills a new member could bring to OIPA leadership. Dan William made a nomination, and the Board decided to solicit interest from the OIP community for the open position.

## Upcoming OIPA Meetings & Events

- March 11 – OIPA General Meeting – Presentation on the City of Chicago’s new composting program. The Board discussed the final details.
- **April 1** – Board of Directors Meeting
- **April 8** – OIPA General Meeting – Elected officials to present updates. The Board discussed who would reach out and invite officials.
- **May 13** – OIPA General Meeting – Neighborhood history presentation. The Board discussed presenters.

Meeting ended: 8:25 p.m.

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## Summarized Minutes of the General Meeting on March 11, 2024, 7 p.m.

– Submitted by Merry Marwig, OIPA Board Member

### Meeting started at 7 p.m.

Just after 7 p.m., OIPA Board member **Adrienne Chan** dimmed the room lights for the upcoming presentation at the OIPA General Meeting and introduced tonight's speaker, **Susan Casey**, Program Director, Composting and Food Waste of the Recycling and Material Management program of Streets and Sanitation.

Susan came to speak with us about the City of Chicago's new Food Scrap Drop-Off program. Below is a summary of her presentation:

- The Department of Streets and Sanitation (DSS) manages garbage, recycling, and yard waste collection for Chicago residents in 1-4 unit buildings, which equates to 625,000 households.

- The Guiding documents for waste reduction and climate actions informing the Food Scrap Drop Off program include:

- 1.) The City of Chicago Waste Strategy Materials Management Strategies document and
- 2.) 2022 CAP ChicagoClimate Action Plan

- ~40% of all food purchased is wasted (nationwide, without composting programs).
- In 2023, DSS collected 877,666 tons of materials. ~ Twenty percent of household waste is food waste (175,533 tons).
- Composting keeps food scraps out of landfills, reduces harmful greenhouse gas emissions, and recycles nutrients that enrich soil.

*Continued on page 10*

Guest speaker, Susan Casey, Program Director and Food Waste of the Recycling and Material Management program of Streets and Sanitation gives an overview of the benefits of Chicago's new composting program.



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## Summarized Minutes of the General Meeting on March 11, 2024

– *Continued from page 8*

- To reduce food waste and the methane gas food decomposing in landfills, as a solution (composting) the City launched the Food Scrap Drop-off Program in October 2023.
- All Chicago residents are invited to participate. The service is for household food scraps only, not restaurants. There are 17 locations across the Chicago.
- **Get more information and sign up at ChicagoRecycles.org.**
  - The Food Scrap Drop-Off locations are open daily from 7 a.m. to 7 p.m.
  - Report any issues to [dsscomposting@cityofchicago.org](mailto:dsscomposting@cityofchicago.org) or call 312-744-2413.
- Results as of late Feb 2024
  - Over 4200 households have signed up for the program thus far.
  - 67 tons of food scraps were diverted for composting.
- 43.8 MTCO<sub>2</sub>e of greenhouse gas emissions prevented (equivalent to preventing the emissions from burning almost 5,000 gallons of gasoline).
- **Other DSS services, pilots, and exploratory programs:**
  - Free yard waste pickup - call 311 to schedule a pickup of your yard waste contained in brown paper waste bags.
  - Holiday tree recycling is offered for two weeks in January. Trees are chipped into mulch.
  - Pumpkin Smash [events] - Composting pumpkins the week after Halloween (reference: <https://www.chicago.gov/city/en/sites/chicago-recycles/home/pumpkin-smash.html>).
  - Blue Cart Recycling Updates: visit [Chicagorecycles.org](http://Chicagorecycles.org) to see the journey of recyclables from pickup to it's end state.
  - Stay tuned for information on a backyard compost bin giveaway, set to launch in Spring 2024 for fruit/vegetable composting in your backyard.
  - Community Garden Composting Pilot Program: Six community gardens across the city have a 3-bin compost system in place during the pilot.
  - DSS is exploring options for a residential collection of food scraps and yard waste.

### Q&A

**Q:** What happens to the food scraps?

**A:** The scraps are collected each day and moved to a large transfer facility before reaching the Harbor View Composting facility, managed by Whole Earth Compost in Chicago's South Side. The food scraps are mixed with yard waste, placed in long windrows, and processed over the course of about three months. The finished compost is sold as a soil amendment.

**Q:** How can the City accept things like meat that are usually unacceptable in a backyard compost bin?

**A:** The City's composting reaches higher temperatures, allowing for proper decomposition.



## When to Call 311 vs. 911

Call 911 while the incident you are reporting is in progress and the on-site presence of a police officer is necessary to help resolve the matter (e.g., burglary in progress, incident involving injuries, quieting loud neighbors, etc.). You should contact 311 if the incident you are reporting has occurred and the offender is gone from the scene.

Use 311 to find information, request non-emergency services, or report non-emergency issues. You can call 311 to find out what Police District and beat you live in, as well as the date, time and location of your next beat meeting. Contacting 311 gives you easy access to non-emergency police services, from filing police reports to talking to police personnel in your district.

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Prepared by Tom Brandt

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 3732 N. Keeler ..... \$900,000



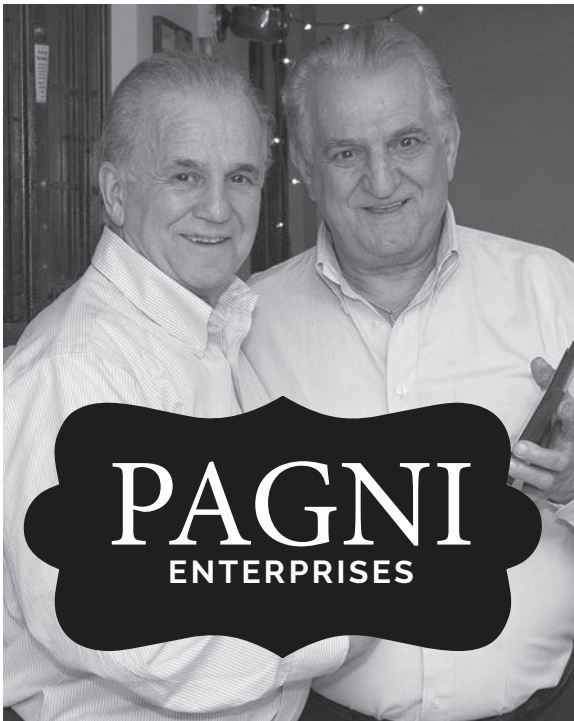
## 2-4 Units

4247 N. Keeler ..... \$745,000



## Attached Single Family

4124 N. Kedvale, 300 ..... \$150,000(F)  
 4337 N. Kedvale, 2E ..... \$157,000  
 4212 N. Keystone, 2A ..... \$229,000  
 4117 W. Berteau, 204 ..... \$230,000  
 4243 N. Keystone, GS ..... \$265,000  
 4304 N. Kedvale, A ..... \$630,000





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# A Message from Our Outgoing Board Member, Merry Marwig

**G**ood neighborhoods don't just happen—and the same goes for great neighborhoods, too. Old Irving Park is a great place to be because our engaged community makes it so. This includes the ongoing efforts of OIPA's Board, active OIPA members and involved neighbors, our local businesses, neighborhood schools, religious organizations, and dedicated civic organizations.

I am grateful for the opportunity to have served on the OIPA Board for the last 4 years. And now it is time for me to step down as a board member to focus on my family and career.



Merry Marwig, OIPA Board Member and Paul Chodziesner, relative of Gertrud Kolmar, at the rededication ceremony for Gertrud Kolmar Park on September 22, 2022.

Connection, belonging and joy—are the feelings I associate with OIPA.

I joined the Board in November 2019 and within a few months, our lives turned upside down from the Covid-19 pandemic. Feeling connected during that time was difficult. But we found a way in Old Irving Park. We introduced the “We heart OIP” yard signs in spring 2020 to show our unity. We promoted outdoor home decorating contests for Halloween and winter holidays as a fun way to get outside when we couldn't gather inside. We started coloring pages in the OIPA newsletter and encouraged folks to display their colorful artwork in their windows for others to see during their neighborhood walks. And to add some levity during a difficult time, I started a corny jokes column in the OIPA newsletter.

As the Covid-19 restrictions lifted, we were able to start gathering in person again. One of my fondest in-person memories of my tenure on the OIPA Board was rededicating Kolmar Park in honor of poet Gertrud Kolmar, whose life was cut short when she was murdered in the Holocaust. Rededicating the park in Gertrud's honor brought so many of us together across Chicago and beyond. One of Gertrud Kolmar's only living relatives, Paul Chodziesner, her great nephew, reached out to us after reading a news article written by Ariel Parrella-Aureli of Block Club Chicago. Paul joined us for the park rededication ceremony all the way from Australia. Though Gertrud Kolmar did not visit Chicago during her lifetime, she, her family, and anyone who has faced bigotry or injustice will always have a place to belong—in our neighborhood.





## MESSAGE FROM THE BOARD

It's easy to remember events that drew attendees and the press, but the day to day work of OIPA is something to write about, too. I have a lot of gratitude for my fellow board members who do work that keeps OIPA and our neighborhood humming. A lot goes into making OIPA run smoothly—from ensuring our finances and tax papers are in order, managing our membership, printing and delivering the newsletter, corresponding with local elected officials, managing meetings, taking calls, replying to emails, managing the key to get access to our meeting venue at St. John's Church, coordinating speakers, technology, and wine(!) for meetings, writing meeting minutes,

coordinating with our advertisers, planning fun parties and events, organizing cleaning and beautification efforts, liaising with local law enforcement on issues of public safety, and much, much more. Thank you to Lynn, Adrienne, Michael, Meredith, Scott, Annie, Nick, Colleen, Dan, Dave, Anna, and Bart for a great run on the OIPA Board. It has been a joy to work with you.

Thank you to everyone who contributes to making Old Irving Park the great neighborhood it is. It has been an honor and pleasure to serve you on the OIPA Board.

Kindly,  
Merry



## 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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## April Birthdays

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James Barrett	Katie Jackson
Carol Berger	Justin Johanson
Mike Blaha	Rhys Jones
Chris Boran	Rochelle Jones
Meridith Cannon	Tracy Kennedy
Virginia Cernak	Mary Kuhn
Thomas Clohisy	Nicholas Lilovich
Jo Ann Coli	Kristen Lynch
Michelle Daily	Anthony Mallerdino
Elaine Euler	Marjorie Monaghan
Carly Forsthoefel	Paul Moran
Mary Foster	Jaime Murray
Elizabeth Fox	Sheryl Nichin-Keith
Kate Geisler	Dan O'Donohue
Illeana Gomez	Erin O'Donohue
Jorge Gomez	Peter O'Mara

## April Anniversaries

Kristin & Mario Arevalo  
Sruti Balakrishnan & Nicholas Lilovich  
Cheryl Flores & Jason Sitko  
Elizabeth & Robert Fox  
Valerie & Patrick Ginnan  
Yasmine Goelzer & Daniel Alter  
Joe & Christine Jamrosz  
Robert & Kathryn Kleisch  
Jessica & William Navin  
Meredith & Tim O'Sullivan  
Ewelina & Jan Pietraszek  
Sheila & Shaun Quinn  
Susan Strong-Dowd & John Dowd  
Hollie & Steve Himmelman

**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.






# APRIL

**KID BIRTHDAYS** | **PET BIRTHDAYS**

Helena Cannon  
Sophie Horvath  
Ellie Lynch  
Imogen Sadlier  
Rohan Sanders

Saluki  
The Ankney Flock of Hens  
Lulu Boran  
Otis Nguyen  
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# WHAT'S BUGGING YOU?

— Claudia Hine

The cicadas are coming. Irving Park Garden Club members will learn more about beneficial and invasive insects in April. *Photo by Parlansky.*

Chicago will see an influx of cicadas later this spring in what is being described as a rare double-brood event. The last time two broods of cicadas emerged in the same year was 1803, according to *NBC News Science*.

What does that mean? Across the Midwest, beginning in late April through June, billions of these winged insects will surface from underground looking for a mate. And they won't be quiet about it. Decibel levels are said to be about the same as a lawn mower or chainsaw.

The good news is that they are basically harmless, according to the EPA. They're not looking to bite or sting you. They won't hurt your flowers or plants, and if your pet eats a small number, there is no need to worry.

Our local chickadees, bluebirds, cardinals, bats, spiders, and squirrels will be enjoying the feast. Added bonus: Cicadas can aerate lawns when they emerge and then add nutrients to the soil as they decompose.

But if you have a small tree in your yard, the EPA recommends you protect it by wrapping it in mesh or netting with 1/4-in. or smaller openings. This will prevent the cicadas from depositing their eggs in small tree branches. They cannot harm larger, more established trees.

### A Deeper Dive into Insects

Debbie Maher, president of the Irving Park Garden Club, has invited James P. Rowan, naturalist and photographer, to present "Don't Squash That Bug!" at our April general meeting. As we work to restore



## IRVING PARK GARDEN CLUB

habitat and regenerate biodiversity by adding native plants to our own backyards, we will encourage and encounter more insects so important to our ecosystems.

This program will provide a visual survey of some of the beneficial as well as invasive insects and spiders found in our homes, gardens, and natural areas. We'll learn about a few exotic species as well.

This meeting takes place Thursday, April 18, at 7:00 p.m. at St. John's Episcopal Church, 3857 N. Kostner Ave. Meetings are for members only, but you can join at the door for our annual dues of \$25.00 per household.



### 2024 Meeting Dates

- Thursday, April 18
- Saturday, May 4
- Saturday, May 18
- Saturday, June 22
- Thursday, July 18
- Saturday, August 17
- Thursday, September 19
- Saturday, October 19
- Thursday, November 21



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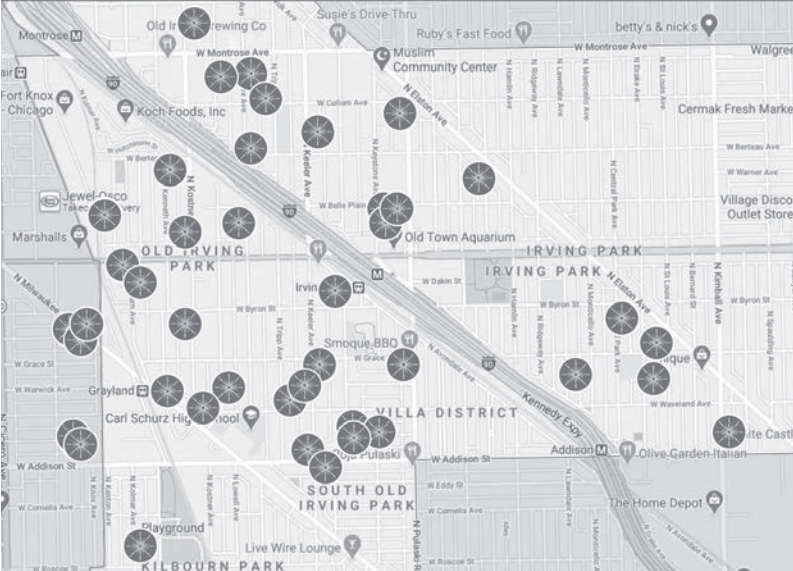
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# Time to Sing it is Spring!

# APRIL



Ken kenklopackart.com



# Performances, Summer Camps and More at Filament Theatre

Julia Stemper  
jstemper@filamenttheatre.org  
www.filamenttheatre.org

## Filament Theatre presents Constellation Points' Cloud Man!

Filament invites you to get your head in the clouds now through April 14.

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

Tickets are on sale at <https://ci.ovationtix.com/35466/production/1185111>

## Summer Camp at Filament Theatre

Have you started thinking about fun experiences for you or your kids this summer? Filament has a variety of camps for all ages and interests that run from July to August. Filament Camps are different. Participants build their own dream worlds and work with our professional artists to explore stories from Filament's season.

### Registration is open for four unique summer experiences.

- Our first two camps are two-week, half-day camps for ages 5-8: The Brilliant Deep Blue Sea (July 8-19) and Wonders in Windyland (July 22-August 2).
- Our second two camps are one-week, full-day programs for slightly older students: Museum de lo Nuevo (August 5-9; ages 7-14) and Sounds of Summer (August 12-16; ages 8-14).

Find out more and enroll today at [www.filamenttheatre.org/camp](http://www.filamenttheatre.org/camp). Bonus: sign up by April 30 to lock in last summer's camp pricing.

The graphic features a horizontal timeline with four circular markers. Below each marker is a camp title and icon. From left to right: 1. 'July 8 - 19' with a sun icon and 'THE BRILLIANT DEEP BLUE SEA' with a coral icon. 2. 'July 22 - Aug 2' with a city skyline icon and 'WONDERS IN WINDYLAND'. 3. 'August 5 - 9' with a magnifying glass and paintbrush icon and 'MUSEUM DE LO NUEVO'. 4. 'Aug 12 - 16' with a speaker icon and 'SOUNDS OF SUMMER' with an open book icon. A 'FILAMENT CAMP' logo is in the top left.



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**Heather Ditlevsen**

Broker

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## April Offerings at the Y

— Ron Anderson,  
Executive Director

### Free Senior Health and Resource Fair

Join us at the Irving Park Y on Thursday, April 11, from 9 a.m. to noon for a community event that gives adults ages 50+ an opportunity to gather information that will enhance and support their health, interests, and daily living. Plus, fun games, giveaways, coffee, and light snacks will be provided. Registration is not required. Questions can be directed to Ron Anderson at [randerson@ymcachicago.org](mailto:randerson@ymcachicago.org)

### Healthy Kids Day

From healthy bodies to healthy minds to healthy lives, everything starts with the Power of Play! Join us on Saturday, April 20, at the Irving Park YMCA, where the whole family can indulge in a FREE DAY OF PLAY and have a blast learning and building skills that will keep them active through the summer months and beyond! Most activities will take place between 8 a.m. and 3 p.m. Follow us on Facebook or Instagram to see the complete list of family fun activities.

### Connectivity That's Growing

To help community members gain access to technology and digital literacy resources, the Irving Park Y now offers an in-person computer lab known as Tech Hub! Community members can use these free resources to complete important tasks such as job searching, answering emails, grocery shopping, and much more! Need help? Don't worry—our digital navigators are on-site to support your needs and answer any questions you might have.

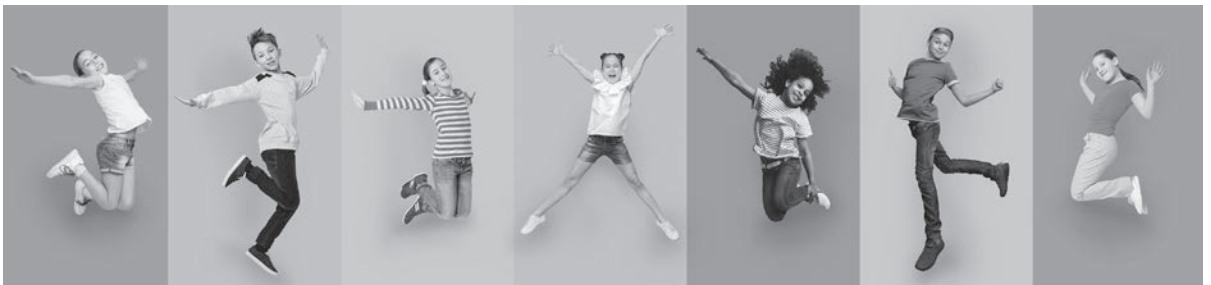
#### Current Irving Park Tech Hub Hours:

Monday & Friday from 9 a.m. – 2 p.m.

Tuesday & Wednesday from 12 – 4:30 p.m.



Irving Park YMCA  
4251 W. Irving Park Road  
Chicago, IL 60641  
773.326.2624 | [irvingparkymca.org](http://irvingparkymca.org)



# 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.



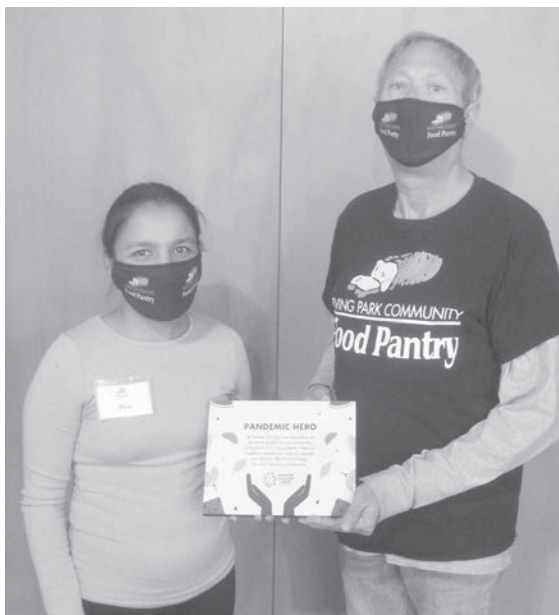


# Pantry Celebrates 40th Anniversary

— Craig Shutt, Publicity & Special Events Coordinator

This month marks the 40th Anniversary of the Irving Park Community Food Pantry, and we appreciate all the support we have received through the years. Special celebrations for volunteers, supporters, and the entire community will be announced later (as the weather warms).

The Pantry was opened in 1984 through the efforts of **Laila Duncan**, an Irving Park United Methodist Church (IPUMC) member at 3801 N. Keeler, working out of a closet in the church's basement utility room. It expanded into the entire space, adding refrigerators, freezers, offices, and a large delivery area.



Our executive director, **John Psiharis**, joined in 2008 and helped the Pantry expand its service area, operating hours, and food suppliers. We moved to the Emanuel United Methodist Church at 4256 N. Ridgeway Ave. in September 2019 after IPUMC was sold.

We remained open throughout the worst COVID pandemic in 2020, providing food to as many as 200 families a week as other nearby pantries could not remain open. The Greater Chicago Food Depository named the Pantry a "Pandemic Hero" in September 2021 for our volunteers' relentless work to overcome every challenge thrown at us.

Our numbers returned to normal levels by 2022, only to rise again late last year as migrants and other people in need moved into our service area of the 60618 and 60641 ZIP codes. These days, we're providing food to about 130 families per week compared to about 80 per week in 2022.

We are proud of our service to everyone in need of food to help their families, as well as our programs to provide pet food, spring baskets, school supplies, coats, holiday food, and children's gifts throughout the year. And we appreciate everyone who has supported our efforts for the past 40 years!

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Client Services Coordinator Elvia Esparza and Executive Director John Psiharis display the Pandemic Hero award presented to the Pantry in 2021 for our efforts to serve the Northwest community during the pandemic. *Photo by Craig Shutt*>

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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



Justin Tebbe, program coordinator, shows off some of the baskets given out in March to clients' children 12 years and younger. *Photo by Craig Shutt.*



Director Donna Adams of Clean Up – Green Up delivered 1,500 reusable bags to the Pantry in March so we could provide two to each client to minimize our use of one-use plastic bags. The company uses plastic bags, milk jugs, and other plastics to make the bags. *Photo by John Psiharis.*



Office Manager Gayle Christensen shows off the Smile Guardian Resource Kits donated by the Delta Dental of Illinois Foundation. The kits included a bamboo toothbrush, toothpaste, a brochure on proper brushing, an activity book, and stickers. *Photo by Craig Shutt.*



Pantry Board member Liz Mills (left) stopped at the McFetridge Sports Center in early March to pick up donations from the group's toiletries drive. Manager Sara Hilby helped her load her car with one of several loads of donations. *Photo courtesy Liz Mills.*



Board President Mike Mette and Executive Director John Psiharis load up one of the insulated reusable bags donated to the Pantry by Wintrust's Mayfair branch, a long-time supporter. *Photo by Craig Shutt.*



Don Slawik, media studies teacher at St. Viator Elementary School, brought in a carload of toiletry donations in February, from one of the school's initiatives during Catholic Schools Week. *Photo by Craig Shutt.*



## The Buzz at Belding — Michele Stefl, IB Coordinator

### Someone Special Dance

Last month, Belding families and students in grades Pre-K through 5th danced the night away at the Someone Special dance. Everyone had a great time as they enjoyed pizza, some fun music, and even a photo booth to capture memories to last a lifetime.

---

### STEAM Night

Belding families came out for an evening of science fun. Kids of all ages participated in labs and various hands-on activities related to science, technology, engineering, arts, and math.

This year's STEAM night featured a variety of new labs that included extracting DNA from strawberries, bubble painting, catapults, galaxy-calming jars, and many more.



### Summer Camps

Junior AcadeME is a new summer program that creates day-off programming for students from June 24 through August 2. Kids can choose their programs and come in for one class, week, or summer. The concept is to find out what kids like and build any educational program around it so they can learn through activities they enjoy. Registration will start with Belding students and then open to all CPS students. Programs run between 7:30 a.m. and 6 p.m., and before and after care will be offered to help with parents' busy schedules.

For more information, go to [JuniorAcadeME.com](http://JuniorAcadeME.com).

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### 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 geared toward adults, so if children are present, please ensure they can safely and quietly attend the tour. Tours 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.

Upcoming tour dates include April 9 and May 21. Tours are an excellent opportunity to learn more about the school and the Belding community! For more information, you can also check out the Belding website, [www.beldingelementary.com](http://www.beldingelementary.com).



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## Contribute to the *OIPA News*

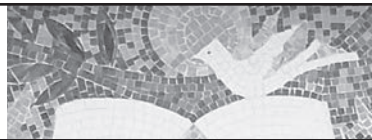


**We welcome individual article submissions for the OIPA newsletter!**

**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

## St. Viator Launches a Podcast

St. Viator was excited to launch a Podcast Club this school year with the help of dedicated parents and led internally by Curriculum Director **Mr. Paul Bangiola** and **Mr. Don Slawik**, head of Media Studies. St. Viator students meet weekly to discuss topics for each episode. While initial episodes were recorded on iPads, the Podcast club recently secured a three-person recording unit to produce better soundbites. The club aims to have members brainstorm ideas, develop a piece, and produce it from recording to editing. The Podcast Club has been an excellent opportunity for St. Viator students interested in technology and sound production!



*Photos by Will Teeple.*



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### 2024 Illinois Science Olympiad

On March 9, St. Viator had 31 students from grades 6, 7, and 8 compete against other middle schools across Chicagoland in the 2024 Illinois Science Olympiad at the Oakton Community College in Des Plaines. St. Viator students worked together in teams, competing in 23 events that tested their knowledge on a variety of topics from anatomy to engineering. Congratulations to our Science Olympiad Team for a great showing!

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### Visit Us!

- Are you looking for a preschool or elementary school for the 2024-2025 school year? Look no further than your own Old Irving Park neighborhood.
- St. Viator will be hosting two OPEN HOUSES in April. Join us on Wednesday, April 10, from 9–10:30 a.m. while school is in session and on Sunday, April 28, for the annual Spring Art Zone show & open house from 11 a.m. – 1 p.m. See our Facebook page for details.

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### 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 admissions for the 2024-25 school year. Classrooms are filling quickly, especially preschool & kindergarten. Avoid a wait list! Submit your application now. [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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Last date in series: **May 5, 2024**

## 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](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)

**Questions? Contact us** | [Hello@oldirvingpark.com](mailto:Hello@oldirvingpark.com)

Calling all seniors in need of assistance at the city, state or federal level.

# SENIOR RESOURCE FAIR

Participants will get connected to cost-saving programs, public benefits and assistance, information on long-term care access, food distribution services, and more.

## Programming will feature three FREE sessions:

- *Rules of the Road* | 10 AM:  
*Elder Law* | 11:30 AM  
Learn how to draft a power of attorney and a living will
- *Tenant Rights* | 12:30 PM  
Know your rights when it comes to housing concerns

## Connect with representatives:

Commissioner Bridget Degnen •  
Congressman Quigley's Office • CEDA  
IL Secretary of State • IL Department of  
Aging • IL Long Term Care Ombudsman •  
City of Chicago Senior Services Division •  
IL Treasurer's Office (ICASH) • Law Center  
on Better Housing • Greater Chicago Food  
Depository • Legal Aid Chicago •  
Catholic Charities **and more!**

Friday, April 5th, 2024  
10 AM - 2 PM  
Copernicus Center  
(5216 W Lawrence Ave)



Lindsey  
**LaPointe**  
19<sup>th</sup> District Illinois State Representative

Senator  
**Rob Martwick**  
10<sup>th</sup> DISTRICT  
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RSVP by phone or email:



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info@replapointe.com

# CALENDAR *of* EVENTS

## OIPA NEWS SUBMISSION DEADLINES

**Advertising:**  
First Tuesday  
of the month

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

## April

- 5 **Senior Resource Fair** | 10 a.m. – 2 p.m. | Copernicus Center 5216 W. Lawrence  
10am: Rules of the Road; 11:30 am: Elder Law; 12:30 pm: Tenant Rights;  
RSVP: (773)647-1174 -or- info@replapoint.com
- 8 **OIPA April General Meeting** | 7 p.m. | St. John's Episcopal Church | 3857 N. Kostner Ave.
- 11 **Free Senior Health and Resource Fair** | 9 a.m. to noon | Registration is not required.  
Contact Ron Anderson at randerson@ymcachicago.org for more information.
- 20 **Healthy Kids Day at the Irving Park YMCA** | 8 a.m. and 3 p.m. | FREE EVENT: Healthy Kids Day  
is a YMCA national initiative to improve the health and well-being of kids and families.  
Irving Park YMCA, 4251 W. Irving Park Road, 773.326.2624, irvingparkymca.org
- 18 **Irving Park Garden Club** | Don't Squash That Bug! | St. John's Episcopal Church, 3857 N.  
Kostner Ave. | 7:00 p.m. | Members Only; \$25 to join

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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)

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](http://oldirvingpark.com/join-us)

# Contribute to the OIPA News | SUBMISSION GUIDELINES for Advertising and Content

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
NO JANUARY OR JULY ISSUES.		
Publication Month	Advertising	General
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.



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4313 North Keeler Ave

Chicago IL 60641