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NEWS



OCTOBER

VOLUME 40 | ISSUE 8 | 2026

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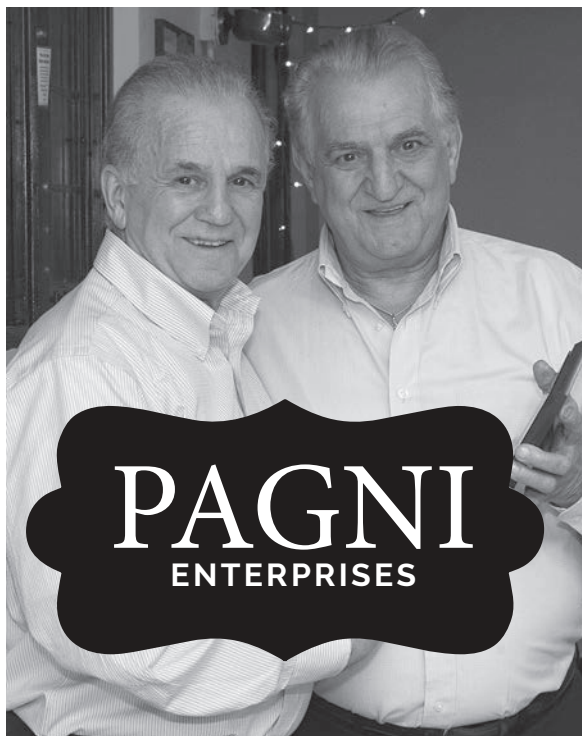
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OLD IRVING PARK NEWS | Volume 40 ☞ Issue 8 ☞ October 2026

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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Cover: Aster & Emily Plagman-Frank celebrate Halloween 2025.

Photo by Kathleen Kearns

© Old Irving Park Association



Because Good Neighborhoods Don't Just Happen

— Lynn Ankney, OIPA Treasurer

"Because Good Neighborhoods Don't Just Happen" has been our tagline long before any of us current Board members jumped in to serve this special community. And that idea is just as true today as it was in 1983.

Here's another way to look at it: Just because we have our \$@!& together doesn't mean we don't need you! We get it. Everyone has busy lives, and the idea of taking on another responsibility can feel daunting.

We've been thinking about how we can involve more of our members in the work that makes Old Irving Park such a great place to live. Our goal is simple: more neighbors sharing the work, the ideas and the fun.

We already know the "many hands, little work" approach works. Just look at what happens every month when neighbors come together to deliver this publication to more than 600 households, 10 months

a year. [Shout out to the neighbors listed on page 1!]
Now we'd like to bring that same spirit to other areas of OIPA. There are lots of ways to help—from an ongoing role to pitching in on a particular project, event or initiative. *You don't have to take on a big commitment to make a difference.*

- Expanding our team approach will help us:
1. Create an easy on-ramp for members who would like to get more involved and perhaps explore what it's like to serve on the Board.
 2. Share the load among more OIPA members and lighten the workload for current Board members.

Take a look at the opportunities below and see if something sparks your interest. Have a particular skill, interest or idea that isn't listed? We'd love to hear that, too.

Find Your Way to Get Involved

Interested in getting involved? Email us at hello@oldirvingpark.com and let us know what catches your eye!

AREA	WHAT YOU COULD HELP WITH
Communications & Outreach	Social media, e-blasts, website, neighborhood news
Membership	Welcome new members, data base, membership outreach, yard signs
Newsletter	Content coordination, advertising, newsletter delivery
Quarterly General Meetings	Speakers, logistics, refreshments
Special Events	Holiday Party, All-Star Party and other events
Parents Committee	Family events and parent communication
Beautification	Keep OIP Clean Cleanups, greenspaces, banners, trees, murals
Business & Economic Development	Welcome businesses and build partnerships with local businesses



MESSAGE FROM THE BOARD



Speaking of committees, here is an update from one of the original and best examples of the OIPA committee model: the OIPA Parents Committee!

OIPA Back to School Party Recap

— Cynthia Andrews

The Old Irving Park Association's Parents Committee hosted its annual Back to School Party on Friday, August 28, bringing neighborhood families together to celebrate the start of a new school year.

Held at the Disney II Elementary playground, the event featured an evening of family fun, including a bubble show, balloon animals, face painting from TwistiCity, snow cones from **Senator Rob Martwick**, tacos from **Los Rancheritos Tacos**, baked goods from **And She Bakes**, and complimentary ice cream for everyone from **Swirl Ice Cream Truck**.

The event was made possible by the generous support of 15 neighborhood sponsors and neighbor donations. The community also came together to support local families through a baby supplies drive collecting diapers, wipes, and formula.

It was a wonderful evening of neighbors, families, local businesses, and community leaders coming together to kick off the school year and celebrate Old Irving Park!



Photos by Justin Antony.

OIPA GENERAL MEETING REPORT



Summarized Minutes of the General Meeting on September 9 — Meredith O'Sullivan, Board Member



Photos by Kathleen Kearns

Board members Meredith O'Sullivan, Jake Berger and Adrienne Chan welcome OIPA members to the September meeting.

The "Back to Fall" OIPA General Meeting was held on Wednesday, September 9, 2026, in the garden of St. John's Episcopal Church, starting at 7 p.m. Board members in attendance included: **Jake Berger, Adrienne Chan, Nick Plagman-Frank, Meredith O'Sullivan, and Dave Ryan.**

Over 35 members gathered in the garden and enjoyed wine, water, and soft drinks, along with platters of meats, cheeses, and crackers. The first order of business was to welcome all new attendees. Two long-term members, **Amy Meadows** and **Sara Yoest,**

confessed this was actually their first time attending a general meeting. Several other families also introduced themselves as new neighbors and members, including **The Rev. Cindy Rigali Lund,** who recently took over as full-time pastor at St. John's.

Cameron Cook, who handles constituent affairs for Congressman Quigley's office, offered help with issues such as fast-tracking passports. **Aaron Gonzalez,** a staffer at Senator Martwick's office, introduced himself and shared details about an upcoming shredding event in the district.



OIPA members welcomed St. John's new pastor, Rev. Cindy Rigali Lund.



Sara Yoest, Anna Sobor and Amy Meadows share a laugh.



All ages were in attendance: Jesse Belew holds son Taylor.

OIPA GENERAL MEETING REPORT



Cameron Cook, from Congressman Quigley's office, provided an overview of constituent services.

Next up, Jake Berger introduced a vote to re-elect the Directors for another 2-year term. A motion was made to vote in the entire unopposed slate (**Justin Antony, Adrienne Chan, Colleen Kenny, Meredith O'Sullivan, and Dave Ryan**), which passed unanimously. After the vote, Meredith reiterated her hope of finding volunteers to take over or join the Membership and Newsletter committee.

A raffle was held for a chance to win a WPA-inspired poster featuring four historic homes in Old Irving Park by artist Steve Shanabruch. Sara Yoest was the lucky winner. That concluded the formal business of the meeting, and attendees resumed socializing until 8:30 p.m.



Sara Yoest was the happy winner of the poster raffle.



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Summarized Minutes of the Board of Directors Meeting

on August 24, 2026 — Nicholas Plagman-Frank, OIPA Secretary

Meeting Scheduled for 7 p.m. via Zoom

Meeting Started: 7:06 p.m.

Attendees: Lynn Ankney, Jacob Berger, Adrienne Chan, Meredith O'Sullivan, Nicholas Plagman-Frank, David Ryan, Dan William

Communication

- **Website Redesign**

Jake Berger reported that he does not have a substantive update on the website redesign at this time. Jake plans to reach out to Lisa, the web developer, to get assistance with searchability and site mapping, and will follow up with Michael, an OIPA member and community volunteer assisting with design elements. Jake committed to providing a more detailed update at the next Board meeting, with the goal of completing the redesign well in advance of the extended DCEO grant deadline.

Ambassador / Zoning

- **Aldermanic Elections – February 2027**

The Board discussed the status of the upcoming February 2027 aldermanic elections. In the 39th Ward, Alderperson Sam Nugent is running unopposed. In the 30th Ward, the candidate signature deadline has not yet passed, and the Board is awaiting final declarations. In the 45th Ward, two challengers have already been announced. Adrienne Chan reported that she

reached out to civic organizations in the 45th Ward to gauge interest in taking the lead on a candidate forum, with OIPA offering to provide support.

The Board will continue monitoring candidate declarations and signatures across all three wards.

- **Kilbourn Pedestrian Island**

Dan William provided an update on the Kilbourn pedestrian island along Irving Park Road. Dan has been in contact with IDOT and CDOT regarding the possibility of OIPA engaging Christy Webber Landscapes to landscape and maintain the space. The agencies are reviewing whether OIPA already has permission to maintain and beautify the area; if not, they indicated they would work on granting the necessary permissions. Dan noted that the work would likely begin in spring 2027 given the current timeline. Lynn Ankney noted that remaining DCEO grant funds in the in-ground planting budget category could potentially be used for this project.

- **Meeting with Jahmal Cole – My Block, My Hood, My City**

Meredith O'Sullivan provided an update on the *My Block, My Hood, My City* "Live 77" initiative. Following the initial meeting with founder Jahmal Cole, his team has asked Meredith and OIPA member Anna Sobor to participate in a recorded video Q&A for the Live 77 webpage. Meredith and Anna agreed to meet with Jahmal at his Airbnb to record the interview.

Continued on page 8



OIPA HALLOWEEN PARADE AND PARTY

**October 24, 2025
10am to 12pm**

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Corner of Grace and Keystone**

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Parents Committee for a
Halloween Parade and
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Summarized Minutes of the Board of Directors Meeting on August 24, 2026 — Nicholas Plagman-Frank, OIPA Secretary, *continued from page 6*

Community Engagement

• Alley Mirrors

Lynn Ankney shared that she contacted an Old Irving Park neighbor who has an alley mirror installed on their property and obtained the make/model, which is available from Amazon. The Board discussed mirror sizing options and agreed to order a sample set to test at one of the identified locations before committing to a larger order. Lynn and Meredith O'Sullivan committed to visiting the neighbor's existing mirror installation to evaluate the product in person and will jointly determine the appropriate size to order. Dan William offered his handyman for installation services. Adrienne Chan committed to completing the previously assigned indemnification letter absolving OIPA of ongoing liability and maintenance responsibilities for the mirrors.

• Mary Foster Coasters Distribution

Meredith O'Sullivan reported that she will coordinate with Colleen Kenny to finalize the distribution list for remaining Mary Foster coasters. Once the list is confirmed, OIPA member and volunteer JoAnn Coli will distribute coasters to members subscribed at the Good Neighbor and Neighborhood All-Star levels who have not yet received them. Meredith will also determine how many coaster sets are available for sale at the September General Meeting.

Membership

• Membership Database Update

Meredith O'Sullivan reported that she met with Jeff

London, who made updates to the OIPA membership database to correct a recurring issue where members were unable to complete online payments due to pop-up blockers.

• Business Membership Concept

Adrienne Chan proposed the idea of creating a business membership tier that would include an advertising package and a higher membership fee than the current All-Star level. The Board discussed what benefits could be bundled (such as newsletter advertising, event sponsorship recognition, and website presence), and how this could complement the Parents Committee's successful sponsorship efforts. Jake Berger suggested exploring whether a portion of the business membership could be structured as a tax-deductible donation to make it more appealing. The Board decided to share the concept with Colleen Kenny for additional input and ideas before moving forward.

Upcoming Meetings and Events

• September General Meeting and Social Hour – Wednesday, September 9

The Board discussed planning and logistics for the September General Meeting, themed as a "September General Meeting and Social Hour" with an emphasis on the social component. The meeting agenda will include Board Director elections, DCEO grant updates, and a call for additional Keep OIP Clean Block Ambassadors. Dan William will speak briefly about the Block Ambassador program and current needs at the meeting.

The Board confirmed the following logistics and



OIPA BOARD MEETING REPORT

volunteer assignments:

- **Raffle:** An “Old Irving Park” poster (courtesy of the Cloud family) will be raffled. Attendees will place their names in a basket, and a winner will be drawn.
- **Mary Foster Art Prints:** Nicholas Plagman-Frank will bring prints, available for sale at \$30 for a set of four or \$10 each.
- **Mary Foster Coasters:** Meredith O’Sullivan will bring coasters, available for sale at \$30 for a set of four.
- **Payment QR Codes:** Lynn Ankney will create and bring QR codes for on-site sales.
- **Wine:** Meredith will check with Colleen Kenny regarding leftover wine from the All-Star Party. Jake Berger volunteered as backup to provide wine if needed.
- **Food:** Jake Berger and Adrienne Chan will purchase cheese, crackers, and charcuterie items from Aldi.
- **Glassware:** Lynn Ankney will bring plastic glasses from previous events.
- **Bug Spray:** David Ryan will purchase bug spray for the event; Lynn will reimburse and store the remainder in the OIPA supply bin.
- **Church Access & Payment:** Lynn Ankney has the church key and will bring it, along with a check

Continued on page 10



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OIPA BOARD MEETING REPORT



Summarized Minutes of the Board of Directors Meeting on August 24, 2026

— Nicholas Plagman-Frank, OIPA Secretary, *continued from page 9*

for the use of the church's space.

- **Yard Signs:** Both new OIPA yard signs and remaining “We ♥ OIP” signs will be available at the meeting for new and existing members.

Lynn Ankney will promote the event through email blasts, featuring photos of the poster, art prints, and coasters as enticements, and emphasizing the evening's social nature.

• November General Meeting – Wednesday, November 4

The Board discussed ideas for the November meeting, including the possibility of inviting current elected officials for general updates or hosting a candidate forum. The Board noted that candidate forums would be more appropriate in January, closer to the February 2027 election. The Board decided to brainstorm ideas at the next meeting, with elected official updates as a fallback option.

• Board of Directors Meeting Schedule

The Board confirmed the remaining 2026 Board meeting dates: September 28, October 26, and December 14. The Board will skip the November meeting.

Newsletter

• September Newsletter Distribution

Meredith O'Sullivan reported that the September newsletter is expected to be received on Wednesday, August 26, and will be distributed to members the following weekend.

• October Newsletter – Message from the Board

The Board discussed content ideas for the October Message from the Board, including:

- A DCEO grant spending update summarizing how the \$250,000 has been utilized thus far.
- Fun Halloween activities on the Northwest Side.
- Green space adopter recognition and shout-outs.
- Inviting the Parents Committee to write the October message, highlighting their back-to-school event recap and upcoming Halloween parade.
- A September 9 General Meeting recap with photos, reserving a two-page spread.

• Future Newsletter Planning

The Board reviewed the upcoming newsletter schedule:

- November: Deadline Thursday, October 1
- December: Deadline Thursday, November 5. Content will include a listing of charitable organizations OIPA supports.
- January: No newsletter published
- TBD: A full accounting of DCEO grant expenditures will be published once all spending is finalized.

Economic Development

(No updates were provided.)

Continued on page 12

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OIPA BOARD MEETING REPORT



Summarized Minutes of the Board of Directors Meeting on August 24, 2026

— Nicholas Plagman-Frank, OIPA Secretary, *continued from page 10*

Beautification

• Parkway Tree Boxes and Brick Pavers

The Board discussed the condition of the brick paver streetscaping along Irving Park Road, noting that maintenance such as weed removal, re-sanding, and resealing may be needed in some areas. Dan William committed to stopping by a couple of neighborhood businesses to ask about maintenance and upkeep of the public space in front of their establishments.

• Lighthouse

Adrienne Chan reported that she has not yet heard back from Iron & Easel, the fabricator of the metal “Old Irving Park” lettering for the lighthouse sign. Adrienne will call them to follow up and determine the status of fabrication and next steps for completing and paying for the sign.

• Murals

The Board discussed several mural-related items:

- **Kolmar/Irving Park Mural:** The Board noted that the mural located between the two railroad lines at Irving Park Road and Kolmar Avenue is deteriorating, with chunks of concrete falling from the wall. The Board acknowledged that this is a structural and railroad infrastructure issue outside OIPA’s purview regarding mural maintenance.
- **Jumbo Jet Mural:** David Ryan reported that he has contacted artist T. Passero regarding repair materials but has not yet received a response. David will continue to follow up.
- **Pulaski West Side Mural (NEIU):** David Ryan

is following up with Northeastern Illinois University regarding relinquishment of rights to the mural on the west side of the Pulaski viaduct.

- **Railroad Graffiti Contact:** Dan William shared that through a KOIPC Ambassador, he has obtained a contact at the railroad company who will paint over graffiti on rail crossing spans when tagging occurs. This contact will serve as a resource for future graffiti remediation efforts.

• Neighborhood Sign Design

The Board discussed the status of the neighborhood identifier sign design. Adrienne Chan reported that she has followed up with the commissioned artists regarding the next design iteration but has not yet received updated concepts. The Board discussed the extended timeline and agreed it would help to reconnect with the artists to confirm their continued interest and availability, and to communicate that OIPA is working to finalize design and budget plans. If a mutually agreeable design and timeline cannot be established, the Board may explore alternative options. Adrienne will reach out again to discuss next steps.

• Purple Neighborhood Signage

Two additional signs are being fabricated,, and the Board discussed installing one on a light pole at the southeast corner of the Keeler and Irving Park Road intersection as an additional option for neighborhood identification at that location.

• Parents Committee

Board member Justin Antony provided updates on



OIPA BOARD MEETING REPORT

Parents Committee activities before the meeting. The upcoming Back to School event is scheduled for Friday, August 28, from 5:30 to 7:30 pm at Disney II Magnet School. It was noted that volunteer sign-ups for the day of the event have been slow.

Administration

• Treasurer's Report

Lynn Ankney presented the July Treasurer's report, covering the first month of the new fiscal year. Lynn highlighted modest membership dues income, Keep OIP Clean and appearance committee receipts, minor postage and office supply expenses, a small reimbursement from the Northwestern Medicine

grant, and Parents Committee expenses related to the back-to-school event. The savings account has been closed, and all funds have been consolidated into the checking account. The Board reviewed the Keep OIP Clean and Parents Committee cumulative balances.

Adrienne Chan motioned to approve the July Treasurer's report. Meredith O'Sullivan seconded the motion, and the Board approved.

• DCEO Grant Spending Update

Lynn Ankney presented a detailed review of the DCEO grant budget, comparing actual expenditures against planned allocations across all budget

Continued on page 14

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OIPA BOARD MEETING REPORT



Summarized Minutes of the Board of Directors Meeting on August 24, 2026

— Nicholas Plagman-Frank, OIPA Secretary, *continued from page 13*

categories. OIPA has been fully reimbursed for all \$250,000 in grant funds, with approximately \$51,000 still requiring final expenditure and reporting. Lynn noted that after accounting for all planned expenditures, additional funds remain available within the contractual services budget category that the Board may allocate toward eligible beautification projects or other uses, such as landscaping the Kilbourn pedestrian island or additional spring plantings.

Lynn emphasized that while individual line items within a budget category may exceed or fall short of their original estimates, the grant requirements only require that spending remain within each major budget category total. The Board discussed options for utilizing the remaining funds but made no funding decisions at this time.

• Google Drive File Transfer

Lynn Ankney thanked Board members for transferring their files to the new OIPA Google Drive, which is now owned by the organization's primary email address (hello@oldirvingpark.com). Lynn noted that she is working with former Board member Merry to transfer a few remaining items, after which the transition will be complete.

• Committee Expansion Discussion

The Board held a substantive discussion about expanding volunteer involvement in OIPA through a more formalized committee structure. The conversation was prompted in part by interest expressed by Michael, an OIPA member and community volunteer, in having a more meaningful role in the organization.

Lynn Ankney noted that while OIPA already operates with committee-like structures — including Keep OIP Clean, the Parents Committee, and the newsletter delivery team — there is an opportunity to create additional pathways for members to participate in a lighter capacity. Lynn and Meredith O'Sullivan, both of whom have served on the Board for over ten years, emphasized that broader member involvement would help with succession planning and allow prospective Board members to ease into organizational work rather than going “from zero to one hundred.”

The Board discussed areas where additional volunteer support would be most beneficial, including membership outreach and recruitment, fundraising and sponsorship development, and the Block Ambassador program. Dan William noted that he still needs volunteers to fill several ambassador zones and will discuss the program and its needs at the September General Meeting. David Ryan emphasized the importance of personal outreach when recruiting volunteers.

Board members agreed to individually identify areas within their responsibilities where they could benefit from additional help and bring those ideas to a future meeting. The Board plans to continue this conversation at the September and November meetings to define volunteer needs and communicate them to the membership. Adrienne Chan noted that a Board member would need to oversee any committee to ensure alignment with the organization's goals.

The Board of Directors meeting ended at 8:16 pm.



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October Birthdays

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Jonathan Ankney
Dorothy Barrett
Bridget Bauman
Leslie Becksted
Megan Beseth
Sara Bishop
Heather Boran
Nesrine Bouqartacha
Connor Braatz
Katie Brandt
Kate Cain
Charles Calloway
Gayle Christensen
Brittany Churukanti
Mary Czarnowski
Maire Dempsey
Patrick Driscoll
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Langston O'Donnell
Anna Pietraszek
Aster Plagman-Frank

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Ruby Bustamante
Cat Gomez

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OIPA | ANNIVERSARIES & BIRTHDAYS

October Anniversaries

Michael & Elizabeth Basile
Leslie & Blake Batterson
Robert Berner & Christine Lofton
Shalini & Joe Campbell
Meridith & Michael Cannon
Adrienne & Chris Chan
Barbara & Stephan Cohn
Phoebe & Chris Craig
Alisun DeKock & Richard Liu
Jarod Dixon & Christina Fuhrman
Dan & Courtney Funkhouser
Tiffany & Steve Goetzinger
Jorge & Illeana Gomez

Amy Hennessy & Mark Stiglitz
Claudia & T. J. Hine
Jill Hopke & Peter Eckels
Katie Johannigman & Nathan Musgrove
Pete Jurgeleit & Carolyn Morehouse
Tonnaia & Mike Koehler
Dawn & Shawn LaFleur
Kathryn & Burke Leshner
Lauren & Felix Lopez
Amanda & Daniel McKasson
Mollie McSherry & Alex Vazquez
Jaime & Mark Murray
Margaret & Vernon O'Donnell

Margaret O'Donoghue & Frank Smith
Laura & John Ozog
Robert & Victoria Ross
Beth & John Ruark
Amelia Russo Hickey & Eric Hickey
Kiki & Brad Schotanus
Midge Stocker & Diana Clegg
Marc & Mary Sussman
Phil Timberman & Susan Gidley
Stephanie Zaleski-Braatz & Connor Braatz

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Indoor Gardens Get Attention — Claudia Hine

The Irving Park Garden Club will welcome **Lynn Fosbender**, owner of Rooted Living, as our guest speaker in October. Located at 2918 N. Milwaukee Ave., Rooting Living's mission is to support intentional living with products and events that encourage sustainability, mindfulness, and self-care.

Lynn will present Houseplant Care 101, which covers the essentials of plant care, including watering, light needs, soil, and troubleshooting common issues like overwatering and pests. She will provide us with expert tips to help our indoor plants thrive.

Also on the agenda for October is our biennial election of officers who will serve a two-year term. Currently running unopposed are Janet Middleton, president; Debbie Maher, vice-president; and Kate Roche, treasurer.

This meeting will be held Saturday, October 17, at 10 a.m. at St. John's Episcopal Church, 3857 N. Kostner Ave. IPGC meetings are for members only, but it's not too late to join. We will credit the \$30 annual dues to your 2027 membership.



Rooted Living's owner, Lynn Fosbender, will speak to the Irving Park Garden Club in October on Houseplant Care 101. *Photo courtesy Lynn Fosbender.*



Volunteers Elizabeth and Mike Basile, Kathleen Kearns, Mary Jo Pesut, and Laird Larsen attend a cleanup at the Tripp Garden in August. *Photo by Debbie Maher.*



IRVING PARK GARDEN CLUB

Tripp Garden Under the Spotlight

Just as OIPA reported in the September issue of Old Irving Park News, the Irving Park Garden Club also met with **Jahmal Cole**, CEO of My Block, My Hood, My City, as he lives in and explores all 77 Chicago communities. Jahmal requested a visit with IPGC, and several members met him and intern **Maddie Morelli** at the Tripp Garden on August 7.

President **Debbie Maher** and others shared the club's mission to promote eco-friendly gardening/agricultural practices and green space beautification in our urban environment. It was also an opportunity to introduce Jahmal to the Homegrown National Park movement that IPGC has embraced. The Tripp Garden is tended by volunteers under the watchful eye of **Mike Basile**, and Jahmal said he could help rustle up volunteers to help if needed.

We ended our time with Jahmal and Maddie over lunch at CTA Tacos to introduce them to another great reason to love living in OIP.



Jahmal Cole (center), founder of My Block, My Hood, My City, meets with garden club members Kate Roche, Laura Marie Sanchez, Claudia Hine, Mike Basile, and Debbie Maher in August. *Photo by Maddie Morelli.*

Gardening on a Small Scale

The basics of houseplant care comes just in time. Our members participated in a hands-on event in August to create a succulent dish garden under the watchful eye of member **Angie Yorath**, Angilily Floral Studio.

Angie brought in all the necessary plants and products needed to produce the mini gardens, and our club members went to work in the most creative ways. What a delight it was to see what each attendee designed for their little garden.

A sweet white kitty and a meandering path are just two of the clever elements members incorporated into their dish gardens. *Photos by Claudia Hine.*



IPGC members begin building their succulent dish gardens at the August Hands-On event. *Photo by Claudia Hine.*

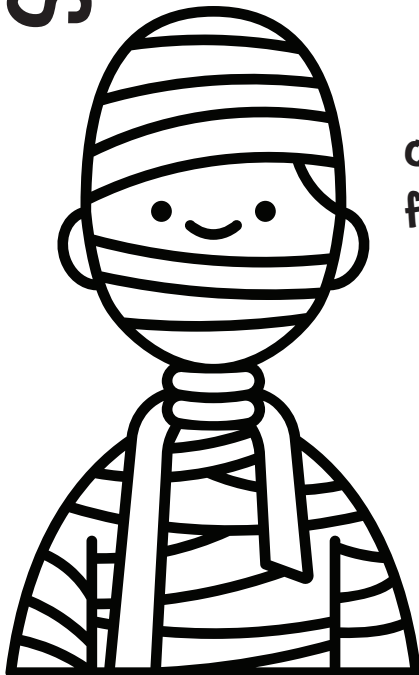


KIDS CORNER

CORNY JOKES

Q: Why did the skeleton show up to the party by himself?

A: He had no body to go with.



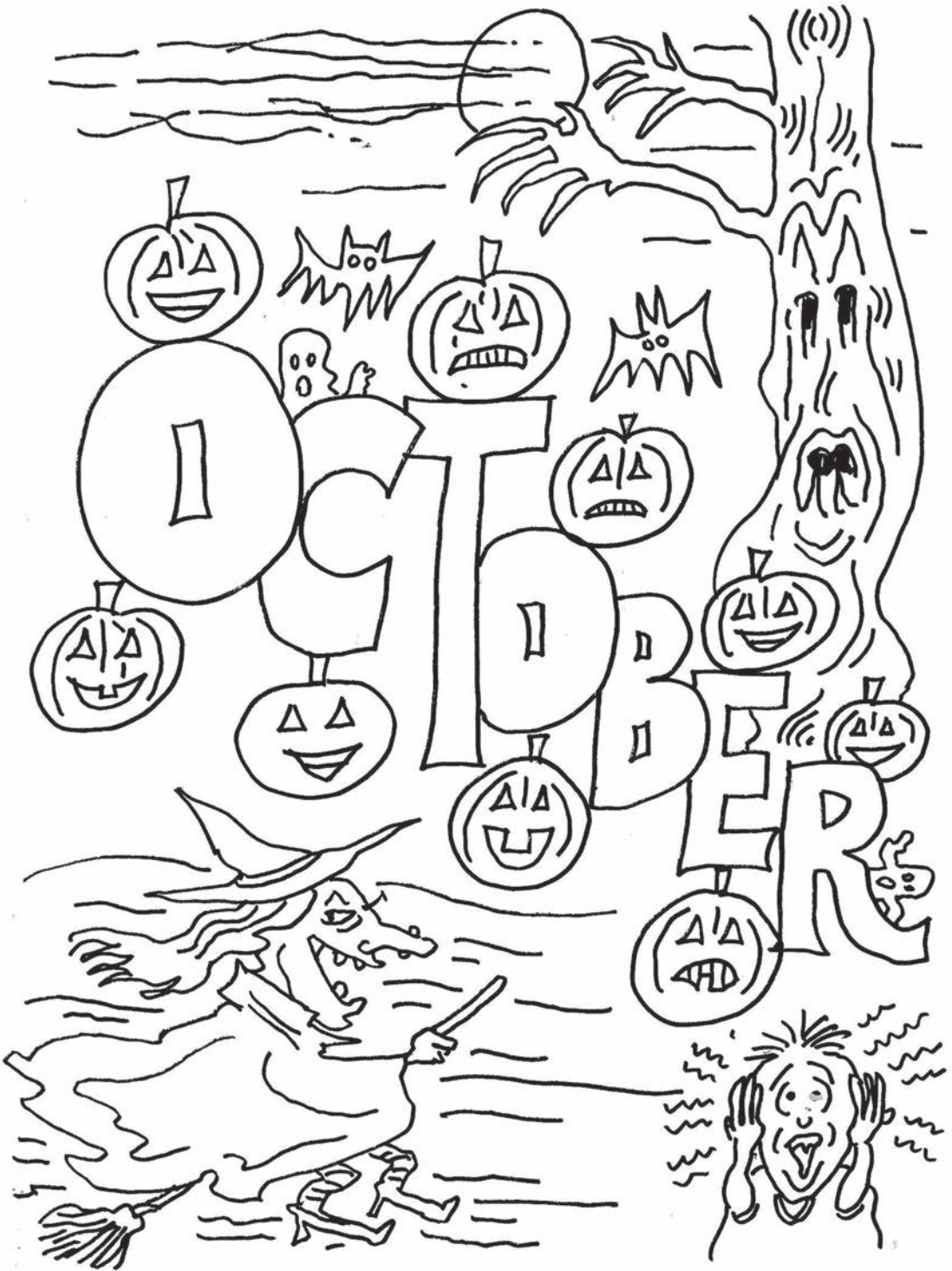
Q: What is a mummy's favorite music genre?

A: Wrap.

Q: Which Halloween candy is never on time for the party?

A: Choco-LATE!





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Prepared by Tom Brandt

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Report as of September 3, 2026

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Neighbors in Bloom: How Community Care Keeps Our Garden Beds Beautiful

— Adrienne Chan, OIPA Director

Old Irving Park has 16 in-ground planting beds along Irving Park Road that need a little love throughout the warmer months. For the past several years, neighborhood residents and businesses have stepped up to “adopt” one or more of these beds, keeping them weeded, tidy and looking their best.

This year, thanks to grant funding, OIPA was also able to mulch and replenish plantings in several of the beds. We hope you’ve noticed the difference—and we’re especially grateful to the neighbors and businesses who continued to care for them throughout the season.

Thank you to all of our in-ground garden bed sponsors for the 2026 Season:

- Chicago’s Pizza
- Kelly Construction & Design
- Billy & Jess Navin
- Dave Ryan
- Michelle Skoropistsev
- Jennifer Schmoll
- Residences of OIP

From pulling weeds and picking up litter to tending the plantings, these neighbors gave their time and attention to help keep their adopted beds looking beautiful all season long. Thank you for helping make Irving Park Road a little greener, cleaner and more welcoming for all of us—even without a contest!

Photos by Michelle Skoropistsev





MOVING



PACKING

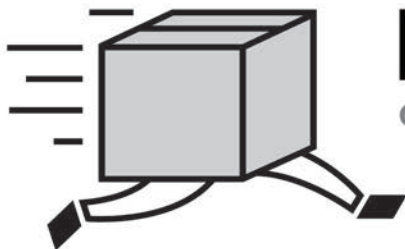


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St. John's Episcopal Church Welcomes New Pastor

— Mark McKelvey



Reverend Cindy Rigali Lund

Photo courtesy of St. John's Episcopal Church

St. John's Episcopal Church, which has served the Old Irving Park community since 1883, is pleased to announce that the **Reverend Cindy Rigali Lund** has joined the church as its new Rector. Rev. Cindy is a native of Chicagoland and has lived in a variety of neighborhoods in both the city and the suburbs. Prior to St. John's, she served at Christ Church Winnetka,

St. Lawrence, and St. James the Less. Before ordination, she served in non-ordained ministries, nonprofit administration and fundraising, teaching/guest lecturing, and counseling.

St. John's is an active community gathering place in Old Irving Park that welcomes people of all cultural or ethnic backgrounds, political or religious affiliations, gender identity or sexual orientation, age, ability, or lived experience. The parish celebrates God's gifts—opens hearts, minds and hands—and transforms individuals and the community. Immigrant support, antiracism efforts, feeding area residents in need, and a concert music series are among its active ministries that improve Old Irving Park and Chicago's northwest side.

October Events at St. John's

Pet Blessing, Sunday, October 4

Once a year in early October, St. John's joins Christians around-the-world in celebrating the feast day of St. Francis of Assisi, the patron saint of the environment and animals. On Sunday, October 4th at both 8 a.m. and 10 a.m., we will enjoy an outdoor worship service with a Pet Blessing in our garden (and if it's raining, we will do it inside!) Your pet is a blessing in your life, so bring them to get blessed at this service designed for animals and their humans.

Family Formation Night, Sunday, October 4

On October 4, families with children of all ages are invited to gather for pizza, dinner, and activities. Past family formations have included outdoor play, a scavenger hunt, and family game night. Attendance is free; all are welcome! The event will run from 5:00-6:30 p.m.

Bishop Paula Clark Visit, Sunday, October 18

We are excited to host Bishop Paula Clark at our services on Sunday, October 18. Every two to three years, the Bishop is required to visit each church in the diocese to build connection and inspire our faith. Bishop Paula will also be available to bless and receive people. We look forward to sharing a special day as we give her a warm St. John's welcome, with a reception afterward at coffee hour.



NEIGHBORHOOD NEWS | St. John's Episcopal Church

Children's Mass, Sunday, October 24

While children and their noise are welcome at any St. John's Mass, our October 25, 10:00 a.m. Mass will be especially geared towards young children and will feature a sermon meant to engage our youngest members. All are welcome to join!

All Souls Taizé Service, Friday, October 30

Join us on Friday, October 30 at 7:00 p.m. as we celebrate the Feast of All Souls. This service is in the spirit of Taizé. Taizé-style worship is defined by its contemplative rhythm. Through candlelight, simple

songs, and silence, Taizé invites participants to enter a "common prayer" that requires no hymnal or sermon to understand, only a willingness to join one's voice with others in a chant that becomes, over time, a resting place for the presence of God. St. John's necrology will be read during this service. All are welcome.

**St. John's Episcopal Church is located at
3857 N. Kostner Ave., Chicago.**

For more information, call 773-725-9026 or visit stjohnschicago.com.



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Building Our Future, Feeding Our Community

— Craig Shutt



The Irving Park Food Pantry has launched its Building Our Future, Feeding Our Community program, a capital campaign dedicated to constructing a permanent home on property owned by Irving Park Lutheran Church at 4111 North Pulaski Road.

Pantry volunteers have been serving our neighbors in the 60641 and 60618 ZIP codes for more than 40 years. The new location will ensure we can improve and expand our mission by allowing us to accommodate more clients and provide more opportunities for food distributions as well as add more services on more days than our current location allows.

The building will put our clients first: ground-level, ADA-compliant access; expanded storage and

distribution space; more waiting room; and a dedicated space for our social worker to meet one-on-one with clients. As the sole occupant, we can provide services throughout the week to an expanded client base. We hope to open our doors at the new location in summer 2027.

We have received several generous grants and are well on our way to meeting our goal of raising \$1.8 million from supporters. To donate and get a glimpse of our exciting future, use the QR code to visit our campaign website.



Our success will be possible only with help from supporters like you, donating whatever you can. Every dollar brings us closer to a space our community deserves and helps us better meet our mission of being "Neighbors Helping Neighbors."

Hat, Scarf, Glove Drive Underway



The Pantry is giving out new hats, scarves and gloves to our registered clients in the 60641 and 60618 ZIP codes this month to keep them and their families warmer this winter. The program will run through October.

If you would like to make a monetary donation so we can purchase the specific items we need, please donate on our website, www.irvingparkfoodpantry.org, via PayPal, Venmo, credit cards, or Google Pay. You can also mail a check to Irving Park Food Pantry, 4256 N. Ridgeway Ave, Chicago, IL 60618, and mark it for "special programs."

To donate through our Amazon registry, use the QR code here. You can drop off local donations at the Big Helpers store at 4184 N. Elston Ave. from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m., Monday through Friday, or on the front porch at 4242 N. Hamlin Ave. any time.





NEIGHBORHOOD NEWS | Irving Park Community Food Pantry

*Thanks for
the Support*

Thank you to everyone who donated to our school-supply drive in August! We gave out more than 420 packs, our biggest total yet. We appreciate everyone helping our neighborhood kids start the school year strong!



Jack Olech from Three Brothers Garden dropped off one of the garden's weekly harvests with Bill Winman, which was given out to clients shortly after. *Photo by Craig Shutt*



Community Engagement Manager Lynne Anderson and Client Services Manager Elvia Esparza represented the Pantry at the Irving Park YMCA's Back to School event in August. *Photo courtesy of Lynne Anderson*



Mae and Sara Yoest greeted visitors to the Pantry's booth at the GIPNA Farmers Market and told them about our capital campaign now underway. *Photo by Liz Mills*

Article submitted by Craig Shutt, craigshutt@ameritech.net.

John Psiharis, Executive Director, Irving Park Community Food Pantry, 4256 N. Ridgeway Ave.,
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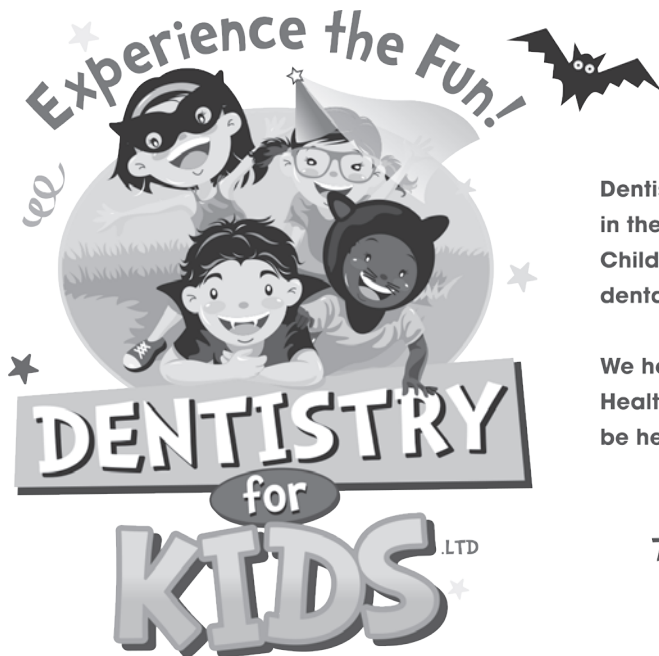
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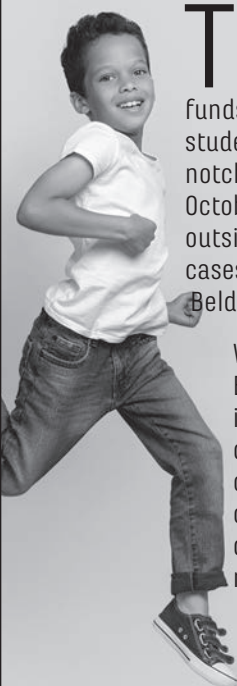
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Belding Walk-a-Thon Kick-Off — Michele Stefl, IB Coordinator



Walk-a-Thon



This month, Belding Parent Group will kick off our annual Walk-a-Thon to raise funds that provide every Belding student with ten weeks of top-notch, in-school art classes. On October 16, students will head outside to walk (or, in many cases, RUN) laps around Belding’s track.

Want to support Belding’s Bulldogs as they walk for art in all classrooms? Donate directly using the QR Code or sponsor a Belding Bulldog on your block when their donor pages are up and running this month!



Become a Belding Booster
Support Belding. Connect with Your Community.

The Belding Parent Group is inviting local businesses to become Belding Boosters and help make a difference for Belding students and families.

Your sponsorship helps fund opportunities and improvements that directly benefit our school community—from bringing visual arts into classrooms to supporting special events, enrichment opportunities, and improvements to our school spaces.

And it’s a win-win. As a Belding Booster, your business gains visibility within the Belding community and opportunities to promote your business to local families while showing your commitment to supporting our students and neighborhood.

Whether you contribute financial support, donate products or services, or share your time and expertise, your partnership makes a difference.

Interested in becoming a Belding Booster—or know a local business that might be interested? Visit www.beldingparentgroup.com to learn more and get involved.

Invest in Belding. Support our students. Grow with our community.



NEIGHBORHOOD NEWS | Belding School



October Fundraiser

On October 6th, dine in or order out at **Irving Park Pizza and Patio** (2922 W Irving Park Road) to support Belding's Kindergarten classes. Be sure to mention Belding, and a portion of the earnings will be donated to the school.

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

Principal Durkin sets aside one morning each month to give tours for interested parents. Tours are geared toward adults, so if children are present, please ensure they can attend safely and quietly.

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 October 13 and November 10. This is a great opportunity to learn more about the school and Belding community! You can also visit the Belding website at www.beldingelementary.com for more information.



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News from Carlson Community Services

—Liz Drew, Executive Director



As part of the MAP program, students enjoy arts and crafts and get a jump on homework.

Photos provided by Carlson Community Services

We are off to a great start at Carlson Community Services' **Magic After-school Place (MAP)**! This year we have 45 students enrolled, up from 41 last year, and our entire teaching team returned after summer break. Students and staff were happy to be reunited on August 24th, the first day of school for CPS students. Fresh faces are already creating new connections and making memories.

The MAP is an affordable, fun place for after-school care and tutoring for children in Kindergarten through 8th grade. Currently, the program serves children from Belding Chicago Public School, who are walked to the program by MAP staff. The program operates Monday through Friday from 3 to 6 p.m. and follows the CPS calendar.

SAVE THE DATES

Carlson's Fine Arts Concert Series

Enjoy a vibrant mix of music at our concerts, from opera and classical guitar to jazz, gospel, and a cappella groups.

Upcoming concerts:

- **November 8:** Susan Platts, Mezzo Soprano
- **December 13:** A Holiday Celebration with Muzette Strings
- **February 7, 2027:** John Goodwin, Pianist

These concerts are free, open to the public, and held at the Irving Park Lutheran Church.



NEIGHBORHOOD NEWS | Carlson Community Services



Mark Your Calendars for Carlson's Trivia Night – October 24!

Start recruiting your trivia team! Carlson's Annual Trivia Night fundraiser will be held on October 24, 2026. As Carlson's largest fundraiser of the year, Trivia Night has become a beloved community event supporting Carlson's Magic After-School Place, Three Brothers Garden, and free concert series.

For more information and to purchase tickets, visit the events page on our website at www.carlsoncommunityservices.org.



Thank you to our summer garden coordinator, Jack Olech

Jack, with thumbs up, surrounded by Three Brothers Garden volunteers. Thank you, Jack, for all the heart and energy you brought to the garden this summer. Your dedication made a lasting difference, and our community will truly miss your warmth and enthusiasm this fall. Wishing you all the best in your next adventure.

Photo provided by Carlson Community Services

Three Brothers Garden

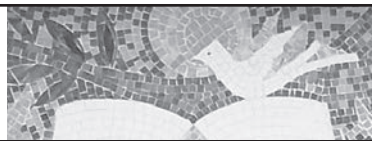
Harvest season is still going strong at Three Brothers Garden, and you're warmly invited to join us every Tuesday from 6–7 p.m.

Come check out our beautiful new garden deck—thanks to **Everett Sporrng**, our Eagle Scout leader, and volunteers from Irving Park Lutheran Church! Have extra veggies at home? Share the bounty with Carlson

Community Harvest by dropping off your produce at the garden on Tuesday evenings, or let us know if you'd like a porch pickup.

You'll find us at 4107 N. Pulaski Road (Pulaski & Belle Plaine), right next to the IPLC parking lot. Questions or ideas? Reach out to Liz Drew, our Executive Director, at lizdrew@carlsoncommunityservices.org.

Carlson Community Services connects the Irving Park community with programs that enrich lives through education, culture, and service. For more information, visit www.carlsoncommunityservices.org or call 312-810-3230.



Viator Voice — William Teeple, Admissions Director

Leaves are falling as on-campus activity ramps up at St. Viator Elementary School. A variety of events are happening for students and families. No tricks, though, all treats over here!



Runnin' Onward...

The Cross County Eagles are wrapping up their season. Runners have found their rhythms, and more are posting personal records with each meet!

The final races are :

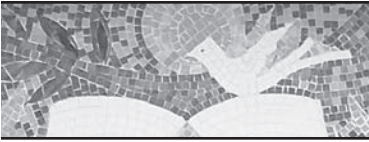
- October 6: Notre Dame Cross Country Invitational
- October 8: Lane Tech Rising Runners Invitational.
- October 10: Select runners will represent St. Viator at Sectionals!

We've loved watching this program flourish!

*St. Viator Photos
by Will Teeple*

St. Viator Online| Our school website is: www.stviatorchicago.org. You can also find us on Facebook: St. Viator Elementary School and Parish, Chicago; Instagram: stvschoolchi; and X (formerly Twitter): @ChiViator.

Check out our Tour Calendar at <https://calendar.app.google/sauGs2C4NAzrVhhF9> for available days and times to visit St. Viator Elementary School.



NEIGHBORHOOD NEWS | St. Viator Elementary



Boys Intramural Basketball

St. Viator Elementary School enjoys a strong intramural sports tradition. This month, our boys are hoopin' it up on the basketball court, while our girls bring the school spirit. School families gather in the Rec Center Gym to cheer on the teams over two days of play. Reach out to the Main Office at (773) 545-2173 to learn more about the intramural tournament. With intramurals, Eagles always win!



New Time, Same Opportunity for Fun!

Wiggles & Giggles starts this month with a new, earlier start time. We invite all neighbors to our Rec Center Gym for this complimentary play time. Bring your child(ren), ages newborn through 4, to play in our gym space (adults must stay with the child). Wiggles & Giggles will meet October 8 and 22, from 8:30 a.m. to 10 a.m. Join us!



SPOOKY HAPPENINGS

Halloween is coming!

Join us for a spooky Sunset Cinema on Friday, October 9th, from 7 p.m. to 9 p.m. We'll

enjoy a family-friendly Halloween movie in the Parish parking lot.

Be sure you have something to sit on.

Bring your favorite movie snacks, or purchase from our concession stand.

Wear your favorite costume for an added treat!

Suggested donation of \$10 per family.





St. Edward Color Dash Walk — Sara Lasica, Principal

St. Edward students will be getting outside and moving for a good cause during this year's **Color Dash Walk on Friday, October 16**. Students will walk with their homerooms and teachers around the St. Edward campus and surrounding neighborhood while raising funds to support their school.

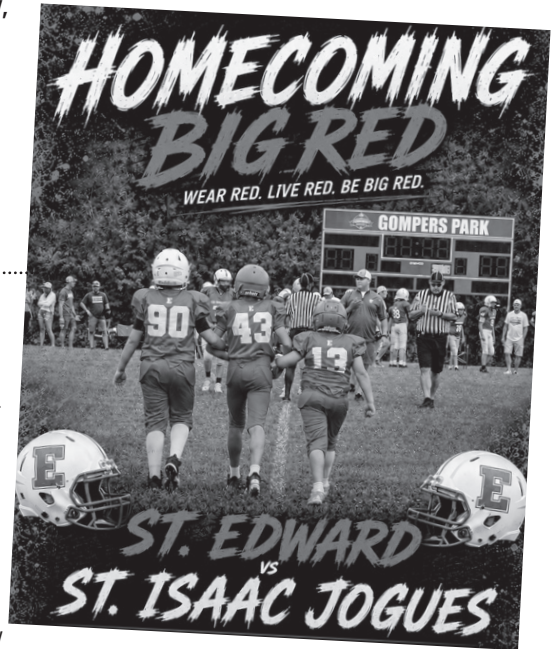
It's a fun fall tradition that brings students and teachers together while adding a little color—and plenty of school spirit—to the neighborhood.

St. Edward Football Homecoming

The St. Edward community will celebrate **Homecoming on Saturday, October 17**, with a morning of festivities and football.

The Homecoming Parade begins at the school at 9:30 a.m., followed by the varsity football game at 11 a.m. at Gompers Park. The final game of the season will include concessions and special recognition of St. Edward's 8th-grade football players and cheerleaders.

Neighbors are welcome to join the St. Edward community, enjoy the festivities, and cheer on the team as they wrap up the season.



Reminder: St. Edward Parish's Harvest Bash | Saturday, October 3!

Kids Bash: 3:30–6 p.m. (carnival games & prizes, a petting zoo & more). Dinner & live entertainment at 5:30 p.m. Pre-sale tickets: \$20 for adults, \$10 for kids. Community hero discount (firefighter, police, EMT): \$15 for adults (up to two tickets per hero), \$7 for kids (up to three tickets per hero). Tickets: Purchase online or in person after all Masses.

School Tours: Come tour our award-winning school and discover how we build a strong foundation for your child. Learn about our thriving community, outstanding academic programs, service work, and extended before and after-school care. Join us on our next **Find Out Friday** on November 13. To schedule, email cweyers@stedwardschool.com. For more information, visit www.stedwardschool.com or call the office at 773-736-9133.

Did you know mid-year enrollments are available? Contact the school to learn more and ask about financial aid availability. For information, call the office at 773-736-9133.

2026 OIPA MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION / RENEWAL FORM

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

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

This is a: ☐ New Membership ☐ Renewal ☐ Gift Membership

NAME (FIRST/LAST)		BIRTH MONTH	
SPOUSE/PARTNER NAME (FIRST/LAST)		BIRTH MONTH	
ANNIVERSARY MONTH			
CHILD OR PET NAME (FIRST), BIRTHDAY MONTH (LAST NAME OPTIONAL)			
CHILD OR PET NAME (FIRST), BIRTHDAY MONTH (LAST NAME OPTIONAL)			
ADDRESS	CITY	STATE	ZIP
TELEPHONE			
E-MAIL		E-MAIL 2	

**NEW!
ANNUAL
MEMBERSHIP
RENEWALS**
Your membership
is up for
renewal on your
anniversary date

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

* Dues + postage for mailed newsletter

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

SEND FORM & PAYMENT TO: Old Irving Park Association, c/o Lynn Ankney, OIPA Treasurer, 4313 N Keeler Ave, Chicago, IL 60641.
MAKE CHECKS PAYABLE: Old Irving Park Association **OR** join/renew online: oldirvingpark.com/join-us

Contribute to the OIPA News

SUBMISSION GUIDELINES

for Advertising and Content

All Old Irving Park Association members are invited to submit letters, photos, and articles for publication. We publish ten newsletters each year—please note that no issues are released in January or July. Thank you to everyone who contributes content or purchases ad space. Your support keeps our community connected and informed. **We look forward to hearing from you!**

General Submission Guidelines

Community Calendar, Articles & Photos

- Please send articles and calendar items as a Word document, Google Doc, or in the body of an email.
- Include the author’s name, company or organization (if applicable), and contact information within the document.
- If your article includes an event that should appear in the Community Calendar, please clearly note it, even if the event is already mentioned in the article.

Word Count

- Up to 400 words without photos
- 300–325 words with photos and captions

Content Standards

- Articles should be informational, not advertorial.
- Bylined articles are written in third person, unless they are opinion pieces or personal stories.
- A byline includes the author’s name, business name, and contact information.
- **Please include your name in the document file.**
- Links to websites or Facebook posts will not be accepted as full submissions.

Editorial Notes

- The editor reserves the right to edit all submissions.
- Content may be reproduced with the Old Irving Park Association cited as the source.
- Opinions expressed do not necessarily reflect the official stance of the Association.

Images

- Submit photos or images as separate original files—not embedded in Word documents.
- Include photo captions and photographer credit in the same document as your article.

- If your files are too large to email, please use WeTransfer or Dropbox Transfer.
- The newsletter is printed in black and white, and all images will be converted to grayscale. Please keep this in mind when selecting and submitting photos.

Submission Deadlines

- **Advertising:** First Tuesday of the month by 5 p.m. See calendar below for due date exceptions.
- **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.

Where to Send Your Submission

- Email contributions to Kathleen Kearns at k.kearns@kearnsdesign.com. Include “OIPA Submission” in the subject line and specify the category (advertisement, article, or community calendar).
- For large files, please use WeTransfer or another file-transfer method.

2026 SUBMISSION DATES

***Due date later or early due to holiday**

Publication Month	Advertising	Content/Articles
January No issue		
July No issue		
November	Tuesday, 9/29	Thursday, 10/1
December	Tuesday, 11/3	Thursday, 11/5



Advertise with Us!

Share your business with neighbors! *OIPA News* reaches more than 630 local households, elected city officials and community groups—join us and connect with your neighborhood!

- **10 ISSUES PER YEAR** | We publish ten issues per calendar year (omitting January and July).
- **SPECIAL PERKS** | Also, if you are a newsletter advertiser, you will be prioritized on our email blasts and Facebook and Instagram posts. We have over 8.2K online followers. Our monthly post can reach up to 24K, and our post engagement is usually 15K. That means consumers see and engage with our Facebook posts!
- **THE ADVERTISING RATES ARE AMAZINGLY REASONABLE.**
To place an ad visit www.olderirvingpark.com/buy-a-newsletter-ad.

Advertising Specifications

- **Purchase ad space and upload your ad at:**
www.olderirvingpark.com/buy-a-newsletter-ad
- **AD SIZES:** Full Page: 6.25" w X 7.5" h
Half Page: 6.25" w X 3.75" h
Quarter Page: 3" w X 3.75" h
- **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., with exceptions when holidays conflict with dates. Please see the submission dates calendar on page 40.
- **Materials SUBMITTED AFTER** the deadline date will be held over to the next month's issue.

OIPA & COMMUNITY CALENDAR *of* EVENTS



www.oldirvingpark.com
hello@oldirvingpark.com
FB: oldirvingparkassoc

Submit your event for our calendar.

Submissions are due the first Thursday of the month.

Send your contributions to: Kathleen Kearns at k.kearns@kearnsdesign.com. Please include "OIPA submission" in the subject line of the email.

October

- 17 Irving Park Garden Club** | Speaker: Lynn Fosbender, Rooted Living | Houseplants: Basics of Caring for Your Indoor Plants | 10 a.m. – Noon | St. John's Episcopal Church, 3857 N. Kostner Ave. | Members Only | \$30/year per household to join

- 24 OIPA Halloween Parade & Party hosted by the Parents Committee** | 10 a.m. to Noon | Disney II Elementary School Playground, corner of Grace and Keystone.

November

- 4 OIPA Quarterly Meeting** | 7 p.m. | St. John's Episcopal Church, 3857 N. Kostner Avenue

December

- 13 OIPA Holiday Lights Stroll, Festivities & Dinner**

Stay Connected, Be Informed

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

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

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

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

Visit our website www.oldirvingpark.com
Questions? Contact us Hello@oldirvingpark.com

