

WINDOW TO WEST CHICAGO

March/April 2009 • volume 4, number 2



Spring signals fresh starts and new possibilities. It's that time of year when everything seems sunnier and warmer; and taking stock of our homes, gardens, and community provides us with hopeful anticipation. It promises to be a banner year for West Chicago gardening events. Starting in May, **Blooming Fest** returns to downtown West Chicago with countless opportunities to satisfy every level of gardener, from novice to master. The family-friendly event, which includes a plant and craft sale, free gardening advice from master green-thumbs, children's activities, live entertainment and more, will be held on Saturday, **May 16, 2009**, from 9:00 a.m. – 3:00 p.m. While there, learn more about an opportunity to enter the first-ever **Wonderful Gardens of West Chicago** contest. The project is being spearheaded by the West Chicago Garden Club as a way to showcase our "garden-rich" community. Gardens with a West Chicago postal address are eligible to enter and will be judged in the areas of small residential (1/2 acre or less), larger residential (more than 1/2 acre), special garden feature (i.e. pond garden, entryway garden, deck, etc.) and commercial property. Judging will take place in mid to late June, 2009. Residential and commercial entry forms with contest rules will be available at City Hall, the West Chicago Public Library, West Chicago Park District, and City Museum; or at www.westchicagogardenclub.org. Prizes will be awarded in each category in August. For more information, contact Carole Bates at (630) 293-4953. Also in August, tour a hidden horticultural gem located in West Chicago's east gateway. The historic Kruse House Museum, at 527 Main Street, which is lovingly tended by volunteers of the West Chicago

Garden Club, contains garden paths, rock walls and a charming lily pond. It is open to the public for a free, one day event. **The Secret Garden at the Kruse House**, scheduled for Sunday, **August 2, 2009**, will combine history and gardens that will surprise and delight. Mark your calendar, you won't want to miss it!

KID'S CORNER

Shaking Your Family Tree
March 14

Craft Saturdays
March 14 & April 18
City Museum – (630) 231-3376

Bennie Bunny Bundles April 11
Park District – (630) 231-9474

Shamrock Fun March 4
Spring Egg Roll April 4
Spring Puppet Show April 4
Public Library – (630) 231-1552

Egg Hunt April 11
American Legion – (630) 231-2112

Stay Connected!

The City of West Chicago now offers subscriber-based e-mails on topics that interest you. Visit www.westchicago.org and click on the E Button to select news that's relevant to you.



IMPORTANT DATES

Gallery 200 Opening Reception March 6
Late Night at the Museum March 6
Daylight Saving Time March 8
Coffee with the Mayor March 21

Gallery 200 Opening Reception April 3
Late Night at the Museum April 3
Consolidated General Election April 7
Annual Senior Fair April 9
Coffee with the Mayor April 18

For more community events, visit www.westchicago.org

From the Mayor

As Mayor of West Chicago, I am gratified to report that any lingering questions related to the residual thorium issues raised at some homes within our community should be satisfied this year. I established a joint team with the EPA, the State of Illinois and Tronox, to encourage and track responses to our concerns. That team has remained committed to the goal of ensuring that those 32 properties initially cleaned up in the 1980s when standards were less strict, be re-tested to meet new Agency guidelines. This is being accomplished by a procedure developed by the EPA.

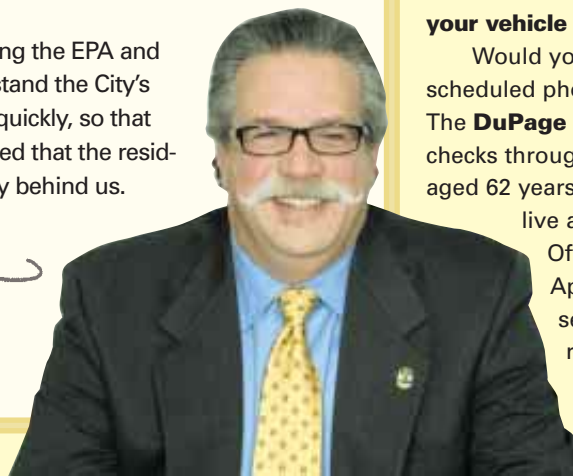
Since late in 2007 and 2008, 23 of the 32 properties have been tested through surface gamma scans, downhole gamma logging and soil sampling. The EPA has recently obtained access to four of the remaining nine identified properties, and testing at those properties will take place this spring. Efforts to obtain access to the last five properties continue. I have offered the City's assistance to the EPA with those efforts. Additionally, files from both the original clean-ups in the 1980s and the 1990s/2000 were reviewed to confirm that the correct areas were targeted for this additional testing.

The EPA has completed a thorough evaluation of each of the 23 properties tested so far to address the serious concerns I have raised on behalf of our community. To date, they have done more than 1,100 boreholes, and found only 11 with any elevated reading at all. While those readings may be due to residual thorium, they may also be due to substances like fertilizers, bricks or other common materials. Those 11 boreholes were located on 8 properties, two of which are owned by Tronox and which were unoccupied houses. The EPA collected at least one soil sample from each borehole with an elevated reading and found only 5 (less than one-half percent) that had a reading above 7.2 pCi/g, which is the current clean-up standard. Those five readings were located on four properties, again two of which are owned by Tronox.

It is important to note that every elevated reading, whether from a surface scan, or downhole logging, does not mean that thorium above the clean-up standard is present. Based on the work done by EPA to date, it is clear that very little residual thorium in excess of the clean-up standard is present on the tested properties, and then only on a very few properties.

The EPA will continue its testing program until all of the questioned properties are evaluated. For those few isolated spots found to have residual thorium, the EPA will provide that information to Tronox, who has already agreed to address the findings.

I am committed to pressing the EPA and Tronox to continue to understand the City's concerns and address them quickly, so that our community can be assured that the residual thorium question is finally behind us.



CITY SERVICES

The City of West Chicago offers a number of convenient options to help make paying the City water or sewer bill hassle-free. Residents may choose to: have payments automatically deducted from their checking or savings account; drop-off payments in person at City Hall between 8:00 a.m. – 4:30 p.m., Monday through Friday, or after hours in a drop-box located in the City Hall

parking lot next to the U.S. postal mailbox (check or money orders only); mail payments in the self-addressed envelope that is enclosed with your bill; or take advantage of E-Pay, a convenient and secure system administered through the State of Illinois which may be accessed on the homepage of the City's website at www.westchicago.org. (The State charges a convenience fee for use of this service.)

Melting snow and thawing groundcover are welcome reminders to "spring ahead." (*Daylight Saving Time, when we turn our clocks ahead by one hour, is on March 8, 2009.*) They're also a reminder to clear the way for the changing season by removing garbage, dead brush and animal waste from the yard. Doing so will not only enhance the look of your property, it will also provide a safe and healthy home and neighborhood. The following lists some important dates, with full details at www.westchicago.org in the Departments/Public Works section:

Citywide Collection Event: May 4 – 8, 2009

Spring Leaf Collection: Week of April 27 – May 1, 2009

Weekly Yard Waste Collection: April 1 – November 30, 2009

Monthly Brush Pick-up Program: May 4 – November 27, 2009

The Public Works Department will be hiring **temporary seasonal employees** for positions from May through August. Assignments include general labor and maintenance activities in all Public Works divisions, Monday - Friday, from 7:00 a.m. - 3:30 p.m. Applicants must be at least 18 years of age, have a valid Illinois driver's license, and pass a physical, drug and background check. Applications can be picked up at City Hall, 475 Main Street or via the web at www.westchicago.org.

POLICE NEWS

During the winter months, the City has experienced a series of stolen motor vehicle incidents from apartment complexes. Most of the stolen vehicles had been left running, or were unlocked with the keys in the ignition and were unattended. As a way to minimize the risk of this crime occurring, **never leave your vehicle running while unattended.**

Would you or a loved one benefit from scheduled phone calls that check well-being status? The **DuPage County Guardian Program**, provides routine well-being checks through a computerized telephone call system for senior citizens aged 62 years or older, or those with physical or mental disabilities who live alone. The program is offered by the DuPage County Sheriff's Office at no cost to those eligible residents of DuPage County. Applications may be downloaded from the Departments/Police section of www.westchicago.org. For more information, or to request a mailed application, call (630) 407-2400.



CULTURE

West Chicago City Museum, 132 Main Street
Tuesday - Friday 10:30 a.m. - 3:30 p.m. Saturday 11:00 a.m. - 3:00 p.m.

The **West Chicago City Museum** will host a traveling exhibit from **Changing Worlds**, a Chicago-based educational arts non-profit, on Monday, March 2, 2009 through Saturday, March 14, 2009. The exhibit traces the lives of 10 families whose stories of change, loss and cultural traditions take the viewer on an exploration of new beginnings, courageous triumphs and dreams for the future. The exhibit features stories of families from Cambodia, Iraq, Mexico, Somalia, Pakistan, Poland, Nicaragua, Palestine, Bosnia and Puerto Rico. It is open to the general public during normal Museum hours. Tours are also available for schools, youth organizations, senior groups, home educators, and others. Please contact the City Museum at (630) 231-3376 or museum@westchicago.org for more information.



History through textiles continues to intrigue at the West Chicago City Museum. The first installment of **Stories in Stitches**, a small yet significant quilt exhibit, has been well-received and continues through March 29, 2009. The featured quilts tell a story or evoke the times in which they were made. Beginning April 3, 2009, at Late Night at the Museum, a new group of quilts will be exhibited through June, 2009. Included in this second installment will be the 1955 quilt signed by eighteen "Pickle-Packers of West Chicago" who worked at Columbia Foods. Continuing the theme on May 12, 2009 at 7:00 p.m., certified quilted textile appraiser and quilt historian Chris Moline will present Collector's Diary; a showcase of her personal collection, accompanied by engaging stories of their origins and advice on building and documenting ones own collection.

The **Burlington Route Historical Society** will hold its Spring Meet which includes a swap meet open to the public, at the West Chicago American Legion Hall on Saturday, April 18, 2009. The organization, which will celebrate its 30th year, seeks to promote interest in the Chicago Burlington & Quincy Railroad. As an adjunct to the Spring Meet, the West Chicago City Museum will have a small related exhibit during the month of April. Additionally, the Burlington depot, located behind the City Museum on Turner Court, will be open on Saturday, April 18, 2009.

A new preschool story-time which features historical themes geared for 3 – 5 year olds accompanied by a parent or caregiver, will begin in March. **hiSTORY** will include crafts, songs, or games. Class size is limited, so advance registration is required. The Thursday afternoon classes are scheduled from 1:00 – 2:00 p.m. on March 12, 19, and 26, 2009, and April 9, 16, and 23, 2009. Topics include trains, quilts, Spring, and the American Presidents.

Craft Saturdays at the City Museum continue to delight youngsters in the community. Bring the kids in to celebrate an early St. Patrick's Day on Saturday, March 14, 2009 from 1:00 – 2:00 p.m. They'll learn about the Irish immigrants who helped to build West Chicago and the railroad that runs through it, as they paint "blarney stones" as the featured craft. An early Earth Day celebration on Saturday, April 18, 2009 teaches the importance of taking care of the planet through a nature craft.

Family history is at the root of **Shaking Your Family Tree**, an interactive genealogy class for children ages eight and older. Find out where to go for sources of family history information, many of which are free, and how to make your own family tree on Saturday, March 14, 2009 from 9:30 - 11:00 a.m. For more information, contact the Museum at (630) 231-3376 or museum@westchicago.org.

GALLERY 200, 200 Main Street

Thursday 12:00 p.m. - 4:00 p.m. Friday 4:00 p.m. - 8:00 p.m. Saturday and Sunday 12:00 p.m. - 4:00 p.m.

Meet artists **John, Mandy, Christine** and **James Rakow** for an exciting evening of exploration into their varied art forms at two free Opening Receptions on Friday and Saturday, March 6 - 7, 2009 from 6:00 - 9:00 p.m. Enjoy live music and light refreshments which accompany works in photography, mixed media, acrylic and pastels that reveal four distinct styles as unique as the individual artists themselves. The exhibit will remain at the Gallery through March.

"Unbound," a mixed media exhibit of paper and artist books by **Cheryl Mahowald** will be featured at the gallery during the month of April. The Warrenville artist, who is a member of Gallery 200, manipulates hand-made paper using fabric techniques such as dying and machine and hand-stitching, to create depth and texture. Her artist books push the traditional definition of "book" and become sculptural works in and of themselves. Meet Mahowald at a free Opening Reception for "Unbound" on Friday, April 3, 2009 from 6:00 – 9:00 p.m.



Back Cover by Cheryl Mahowald

The class is open to eight participants ages 9 and older for a \$20 fee. A second class will be added if needed. Call Gallery 200 at (630) 293-9550 for additional information or to register for the class.

Anticipating the gentle breezes of spring and summer, local artist **Heide Morris** and class participants create a ceramic wind chime based on a theme of their choice. Sculpted with white clay, the design will be created on Saturday, March 7, 2009, and color glazing will be applied on Saturday, March 21, 2009. Both classes will be held from 10:00 a.m. until noon.



Top to bottom: *Revival* by John Rakow, *Checked Face* by Mandy Rakow, *Storm over the Sound* by Christine Rakow, *Bead Girl* by James Rakow.

FOOD DRIVE



Whether you can give, or find yourself in need of receiving, a special food drive has been organized by 4 the People in response to current economic challenges. The local organization has contacted the following governmental offices and arranged for large cardboard boxes, provided by Groot, Inc., to accept all non-perishable food items the community wishes to donate.

*City of West Chicago - City Hall
475 Main Street*

*West Chicago Fire Protection District
200 Fremont Street*

*West Chicago Park District Office
157 West Washington Street*

*City of West Chicago - Police Dept.
325 Spencer Street*

*West Chicago Public Library
118 West Washington Street*

*The Fitness Station
103 West Washington Street*

*Winfield Township
130 Arbor Avenue*

The food will be delivered to the three local food pantries listed below, and those in need may visit them for assistance.

*Northwestern DuPage Walk-In Ministry
at St. Mary's Church, 163 Garden Street*

*New Life Bilingual Church, 464 Ann Street
Wayne Township, 27W031 North Avenue*

Call for Crafters

Organizers of **West Chicago Blooming Fest** are gearing up for another blockbuster downtown event which will take place on Saturday, May 16, 2009 from 9:00 a.m. - 3:00 p.m. Currently, the focus is on attracting crafters, artists and garden-related vendors for the 80+ booth spaces that will occupy Main Street, along with downtown businesses, live entertainment and children's activities.

Blooming Fest is a signature event for West Chicago and draws thousands of people from many surrounding suburbs. It is presented by the City of West Chicago, in cooperation with the West Chicago Park District and various community groups and individuals. The 2009 Vendor Registration form is available at www.westchicago.org in the Community Events section, or by calling Krista Coltrin at (630) 293-2200 ext. 135. A musical slide-show of last year's West Chicago Blooming Fest may also be found on the website.



Two young visitors at last year's Blooming Fest take a break to admire their purchases. Garden crafts are being sought for this year's event.

The West Chicago Citizen Corps is offering another **Community Emergency Response Training (CERT)** course. The seven week course will begin on March 11, 2009, from 7:00 - 10:00 p.m. Participants must be at least 18 years old or older, and either live or work in the West Chicago Fire Protection District. Training will focus on first aid, light search and rescue, fire suppression, and weather safety. The course will be conducted at the Fire Protection District Headquarters, located at 200 Fremont Street. The full schedule may be found at www.westchicago.org under Departments/Police. To enroll, residents should contact Fire Deputy Chief Hodge at (630) 231-2123.

Numbers to Know

Fire Administration (630) 231-2123
Fire Emergency 911
Police Administration . . . (630) 293-2222
Police Response 911

City Administration

City Hall (630) 293-2200
 Michael B. Kwasman, *Mayor*
 Nancy Smith, *City Clerk*
 Don Earley, *City Treasurer*
 Michael Guttman, *City Administrator*



Window to West Chicago is published six times a year by the City of West Chicago. It is designed to keep our residents informed about city government, services and events. Check out www.westchicago.org for more information.

CITY COUNCIL

Ward 1

Lori Chassee (630) 231-8709
 James Beifuss (630) 231-0584

Ward 2

Ronald Monroe (630) 231-6967
 James Smith (630) 231-1524

Ward 3

Ruben Pineda (630) 231-3181
 Russell Radkiewicz (630) 231-5679

Ward 4

Al Murphy (630) 231-4624
 Sandy Dimas (630) 293-5170

Ward 5

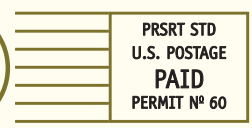
Joseph Gianforte (630) 293-8990
 Gregory Bunch (630) 562-1216

Ward 6

Rebecca Stout (630) 293-7335
 Nanette Connelly (630) 231-2482

Ward 7

Nicholas Dzierzanowski . . . (630) 587-9608
 Matt Fuesting (630) 762-1996



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