

# WINDOW TO WEST CHICAGO

July/August 2011 • volume 6, number 4

**W**est Chicago salutes the brave men and women who have valiantly served our country and secured the freedom and independence that we celebrate this month. *Honor and Sacrifice* has been chosen as the theme for the **2011 Railroad Days Parade**, which is scheduled for **Sunday July 10, 2011 at 1:00 p.m.** (A complete schedule of Railroad Days activities and entertainment may be found in this newsletter).

West Chicago resident and World War II veteran **Chuck Scheckel**, will be the parade's **Grand Marshall**. Mr. Scheckel served on an aircraft carrier in the Pacific during World War II under Adm. William Halsey. He is currently the chaplain for both the American Legion Post 300 and the Veterans of Foreign Wars Post 6791. He is also an active member of a new organization which has been formed by Mayor Mike Kwasman and other DuPage County leaders to help fly DuPage WWII veterans to Washington, D.C. free of charge to view the memorial created in their honor.

**DuPage 4 Honor Flight Chicago** will be holding its first event on **Saturday, October 1, 2011** at the **DuPage Airport**. Any West Chicago WWII veteran is invited to attend free of charge, and enjoy the activities being planned. They include a display of incredible vintage war planes and other WWII era vehicles, lunch, a rousing patriotic program that includes bagpipers, presentation of colors and mail call, plus a headline performance by the Legacy Girls. More information, and a page to register a WWII veteran for the event, is available at [www.dupage4honorflight.org](http://www.dupage4honorflight.org), or by calling (630) 668-2050.

Community volunteers appointed by Mayor Kwasman are working on a meaningful program entitled **"Remembering 9/11: A West Chicago Observance"**. The Observance will take place at **Reed-Keppler Park** where a new memorial garden will be dedicated, on **Sunday, September 11, 2011** from 6:00 p.m. until dusk. Designed for children and adults, the Observance aims to educate, inspire and commemorate the events of that fateful day, while paying homage to the fallen. The committee is asking children to write an open letter to a current serviceman/woman or a first responder who courageously risked their life at Ground Zero, and for adults to share their memories of 9/11. Members of the West Chicago Police Department and West Chicago Fire Protection District will read some of them during the ceremony. Please send letters or memories to [rmackey@westchicago.org](mailto:rmackey@westchicago.org), and plan to be a part of this profoundly stirring observance.

## Kid's CORNER

### Through Labor Day Passport to Adventure

City Museum – (630) 231-3376

### July 8 & 9 Lego Mania

### Through July 29 Summer Reading Program

### August 18 Getting Ready for Kindergarten

Public Library – (630) 231-1552

### July 8 Tortuga's Birthday Bash

### July 16 & 30 Inflatables in the Park

### August 5 Boxcar Drive-in Event

Park District – (630) 231-9474



### IMPORTANT DATES

July 1 . . . . . Gallery 200 Opening Reception  
July 4 . . . . . City Hall Closed  
July 7 – 10 . Railroad Days  
July 12 . . . . Heartland Blood Centers Blood Drive  
July 16 . . . . Coffee with the Mayor

July 22 . . . . Local Music Night  
August 2 . . . . National Night Out  
August 5 . . . . Gallery 200 Opening Reception  
August 13 . . . . Museum Program  
August 19 . . . . Local Music Night  
August 20 . . . . Coffee with the Mayor

For more community events, visit [www.westchicago.org](http://www.westchicago.org)

# FROM THE mayor

**Topping the list of noteworthy successes** included in the 2011 State of the City Address, which was delivered at the May 16, 2011 City Council meeting, were: a 27% drop in the overall crime rate from 2007 – 2010, with a 17% decrease in violent crime and a 20% decrease in the rate of property crime since 2009; and the City's strategy to retire the debt originally issued to fund the construction of the Water Treatment Plant, which saved its customers over \$4.3 million. Additional notable highlights follow:

## **Community Development**

- Identification of over-occupancy violations have nearly doubled.
- Higher compliance rate for property maintenance through in-house adjudication system.
- Annexation of approximately 45 areas of town led to improved service delivery and maintained equity amongst non-residents who were gaining the benefit of municipal services without paying for them.

## **Administrative Services**

- 2011 Annual Budget totals approximately \$54.4 million, which is a decrease of 6.85% from the previous year.
- City Council has decreased the General Fund Budget for five straight years.
- The Budget included no utility rate increases, no layoffs and no service reductions.
- Sales and income tax revenues are starting to increase for the first time in three years.

## **Public Works**

- The City received over \$1 million in grants which were spent on road improvements throughout the community; the City is continuing its aggressive street maintenance/resurfacing program.
- The City is working towards attaining a Quiet Zone along the EJ&E railway.

## **Economic Development**

- The downtown TIF district continues to boom, with assessed valuations growing at a record pace as compared to back in the early 2000s.
- Significant new development projects included: McCollister Trucking, the new Ball Horticultural building, US Plywood and Tampico Market.
- Many other existing businesses, including Jel Sert, Aspen Marketing and Clariant, are expanding, thereby maintaining and increasing the number of jobs in our community.

*Editor's Note: For a complete transcript of the 2011 State of the City Address, visit the Mayor's page at [www.westchicago.org](http://www.westchicago.org).*



# CITY Services

The DuPage Emergency Telephone Service Board (ETSB) 9-1-1 has announced the launch of **Smart 911** for use in DuPage County. Smart 911 allows citizens to enter information online through a secure web site at [www.Smart911.com](http://www.Smart911.com) which is delivered automatically to the 9-1-1 dispatchers in the event any participant dials 9-1-1. The additional data provided is far more extensive than what is typically available to 9-1-1 dispatchers and helps to improve results when rendering aid to 9-1-1 callers.

The Environmental Commission is sponsoring a **City-wide Recycling Event on October 1, 2011 from 9:00 a.m. – 2:00 p.m. (location to be announced)**. A list of items that will be collected at the event may be found at [www.westchicago.org](http://www.westchicago.org). Plus, the event will include paper document collection and shredding to securely recycle your confidential records. If you are interested in more information or in volunteering for the event, please contact Tim Wilcox at [twilcox@westchicago.org](mailto:twilcox@westchicago.org).

The City has taken a lead role in dealing with the **Emerald Ash Borer problem**. All City properties and rights-of-way have been inventoried, and an arborist has created an action plan that will minimize the environmental and financial impact of this threat to West Chicago's urban forest. The plan includes not only removing the worst infected trees, but also treating those larger, mature trees that can still be saved. For more information, call the Public Works Department at (630) 293-2255.

## **Police News**

At the May 2, 2011 City Council meeting, **Lazaro (Laz) Perez** was sworn in as **West Chicago's new Chief of Police**. Since 1987, when he began his law enforcement career as a police cadet in West Chicago, Chief Perez has been committed to the safety of residents; and his desire to improve the quality of life through the enforcement of laws and partnerships has remained at the core of his strong service orientation.



**It's official, the city flower for West Chicago is the purple coneflower!**

**Train Safety Awareness Week** is July 4 – 10, 2011. Police officers will be conducting enforcement at railroad grade crossings and distributing Operation Lifesaver literature to help educate motorists and pedestrians about railroad safety. Visit an informational **traffic safety booth** exhibit hosted by the CN Railroad Police and the West Chicago Police Department at **Railroad Days on Friday, July 8, 2011 from 5:00 to 11:00 p.m. at Reed-Keppeler Park**.



**CN officers and West Chicago Police collaborate on a train safety program.**

The West Chicago Police Department is making plans for this year's **National Night Out**, scheduled for **Tuesday, August 2, 2011 from 6:00 – 8:30 p.m. at Reed-Keppeler Park**. This free annual event generates support and participation in crime, drug and violence prevention, and helps to promote police-community relationships, as well as strengthen neighborhood unity.



**[www.westchicago.org](http://www.westchicago.org)**

- ➔ SUMP PUMPS 101. LEARN IMPORTANT INFORMATION
- ➔ 2011 TOUCH-A-TRUCK SLIDE SHOW
- ➔ 2010 WATER QUALITY REPORT
- ➔ 2011 PRESERVATION AWARD WINNERS



# IN FOCUS | *Business*



**Businesses need your support to survive.** While infrastructure improvements like the Washington Street and Galena Street construction projects benefit the community in the long run, they put a tremendous strain on the businesses in the area that often experience a significant drop in sales. Some find it impossible to hold on without the support of the community.

You can help by making a special effort to find your way to their door. As added incentive, many of your favorite businesses are offering special discounts or promotions to make the added navigation worth your while. Visit [www.westchicago.org](http://www.westchicago.org) in the Business section to learn more!

**It's time to stand up and cheer for your favorite West Chicago business.** The City is seeking nominations for its Brilliance in Business Awards. The program was created to acknowledge the

efforts businesses are making on behalf of their objectives and those of greater benefit to the community. One winner will be chosen in each of the following six categories:

- Small Business of the Year
- Community Service Award
- Economic Development Award
- Community Image Award
- Green Initiatives Award
- Outstanding Not-for-Profit Award

Residents, businesses, government agencies, civic/service organizations or City of West Chicago staff may nominate businesses for one or more awards. An information packet, which includes a description of the criteria and eligibility requirements for each award, is available through download from [www.westchicago.org](http://www.westchicago.org) (under Business), at City Hall, or by request. Businesses may nominate themselves. The deadline for nominations is September 2, 2011.



## *Welcome new businesses*

**Please stop in and say hello! They have made a large investment in our community.**

**El Rancho Restaurant**

956 N. Neltnor Blvd #312  
(630) 231-6556  
Restaurant – Mexican Cuisine

**Hightails Hideaway, Inc.**

560 W. Roosevelt Road  
(630) 302-8780  
Dog Daycare, Training, Boarding

**Pallet Depot, Inc.**

1099 Atlantic Drive Unit 4  
(630) 221-0841  
Pallet Manufacturer and Recycler

**United Latin-Americana  
Pentecostal Church**

157/159 W. Roosevelt Road  
(630) 456-3262  
Church

**Gap Solutions, Inc.**

245 W. Roosevelt Road #11-76  
(630) 520-0323  
Advertising & Digital Printing

**Meadow Well & Pump**

1151 Atlantic Drive #4  
(630) 231-6250  
Well & Pump Systems

**RJN Group**

391 Wegner Drive Unit D  
(630) 682-4700  
Engineering Consulting

## Where do your property taxes go?



# Culture

**West Chicago City Museum, 132 Main Street  
(630) 231-3376 • www.westchicago.org/museum**

**Tues.- Fri. 10:30 a.m. - 3:30 p.m. Sat. 12:00 - 3:00 p.m.**



A special program on **Saturday, August 13, 2011 from 12:00 – 3:00 p.m.**, in conjunction with the *All Aboard!* exhibit which runs through November at the City Museum, explores **communication on the railroad**. What came before radios and cell phones? Learn about the various types of communication devices that have been used by railroads, including lantern signals, telegraph, message hoops and semaphores.

**Art Banners Are Back** on Main Street! As has become a tradition with this program, a People's Choice Award winner will be selected at the end of the summer through ballots available at the City Museum, City Hall and Gallery 200.

The West Chicago Cultural Arts Commission has announced that **Megan Swiertz**, a graduating senior at Community High School has been selected as the **2011 West Chicago Cultural Commission/Gallery 200 Fine Arts Grant scholarship winner**.

The **call for art** for the **Fine Arts Fiesta** to be held during Railroad Days, July 8-10, 2011 is going out to all local artists. The drop-off date for artwork is Thursday, July 7, 2011 from 2:00 - 4:00 p.m. or from 6:00 – 8:00 p.m. at the Scout Cabin at Reed-Keppler Park. Visit the City website to print a copy of the registration form. This year's People's Choice winners will be invited to display their winning art in the public hallway at City Hall from July through September.

The City Museum has announced the launch of **Blue Star Museums**, a partnership with the National Endowment for the Arts, Blue Star Families, and more than 1,300 museums. Participating museums are offering free admission to all active duty military personnel and their families from Memorial Day through Labor Day 2011. Since the City Museum has no admission charge, it is offering a free commemorative City pin to any active duty military personnel or family member that visits.

## GALLERY 200

200 Main Street • (630) 293-9550  
www.gallery200.org

**Thurs. & Fri. 12:00 - 8:00 p.m.**  
**Sat. & Sun. 12:00 - 4:00 p.m.**

The multi-talented **Rakow Family** - John, Mandy, Jim and Christine – present **"Rakow Arts: Works from the Family Room"**, a diverse, mixed-media exhibit on display throughout the month of July. Meet the artists at a free **Opening Reception** of art, including live music and refreshments, on **Friday, July 1, 2011 from 6:00 - 9:00 p.m.** Mandy Rakow has been the

inspiration behind Local Music Night, which is held monthly at Gallery 200/STUDIO, 203 Turner Court. Visit www.gallery200.org for the upcoming schedule of dates and performers.

Watercolors, oils and acrylics will all be part of **"An August Art Frolic"** by Gallery 200 member artist **Lois Easley**. The exhibit, with floral and leafy themes throughout, will be on display during the month of August. A free **Opening Reception on Friday, August 5, 2011, from 6:00 – 9:00 p.m.** at the Gallery will include light refreshments and an opportunity to meet the artist, who has become quite popular at the Gallery through her wonderful series of art classes.



*"Without an Answer"*  
by John Rakow



*"Four Roses"*  
by Lois Easley

## 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](http://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

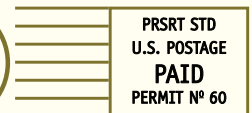
Kurt Meissner . . . . . (630) 231-9302  
John C. Smith, Jr. . . . . (630) 293-3802

#### 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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