

Sauk Village Hall

21801 Torrence Ave.

Sauk Village, IL 60411

708-758-3330

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Issue 72
Jan 2014
Volume
X

Mayor's Corner

Mayor David Hanks

State of the Village

December 2013

In 2013, we worked on restoring "Pride and Progress" and "Ending the Division". Sauk Village's accomplishments in 2013 completed mostly in part due to the hard work of many dedicated residents that love our community and believe in Sauk Village.

Volunteerism is on a rise and with the help of many eager volunteers we were able to host several informational workshops assisting residents in housing, health and utility bill assistance, establish a Neighborhood Watch and participated in National Night Out. In 2014, it's estimated that Sauk Village will have more events than our community has had in the last four years. This again will be possible because of our volunteers.

Events for village residents will continue, however, the residents need to know that finances are limited and volunteerism and donations are paramount to continue with these events and make them appealing to all. Those who have ideas that would appeal to more residents are welcome to join or attend committee meetings to promote those ideas.

In 2013, we focused on retention of current businesses and recruitment of new businesses with our economic development team, which is lead by the Mayor and consists of representatives from local, state and federal agencies, attorney's, engineers, financial team and others. This allows Sauk Village to now immediately provide the information requested by inquiring businesses or companies looking at Sauk Village.

News from the Village Clerk

Debbie Williams

Now that the municipal codebook has been updated and additional information is being released to the website there is still room to increase resident awareness. The village website is the best source of current information relating to events happening in your community. Check out www.saukvillage.org to view special events, the village calendar, meeting agendas, meeting minutes, a complete ordinance history, resident information booklet, sign up for free village email alerts, etc. There are several anticipated updates coming to the website in the near future. What would you

like to see on your village website? Send your suggestions to dwilliams@saukvillage.org. **A complete list of new laws for 2014** is listed on the village website. Did you know that a 17 year who will turn 18 before November 4th can now register to vote and vote in the March primary? Voter's registration is ongoing from now until February 18, 2014 for the March 18, 2014 Gubernatorial Primary election. **Please sign up for the Sauk Village email alerts.** Pass the word on to your friends and family. The email alerts are a great way to

find out about events and emergencies such as meeting cancellations, boil orders, traffic conditions, etc... This is a new service being offered by the clerk's office. The success of this project will depend on open communication between the Village Clerk and all village departments and residents.



Sauk Village

Mayor's Article Continued

This last year Sauk Village residents witnessed store fronts re-open to the following businesses:

Title Max
Boost Mobile
Just Phones
H&R Block

Let me reassure you, businesses are looking to Sauk Village again! This is something that hasn't happened in the last five to six years. Earlier in the year we announced a positive development for the village's industrial community and in October 2013 finalized a redevelopment agreement with VHE II-Sauk, LLC. The Village through its economic development team worked with the developer over six months in order to facilitate the almost \$17,000,000.00 purchase and development of a 496,260 square foot building. Recently, Trustees have been informed that additional businesses have contacted Sauk Village. In 2014, the economic development team will remain focused on continued growth.

Although we have seen positive growth this last year everyone is still feeling the effects of The Great Recession. The residents, the village, the state and the federal government are all struggling financially. Sometimes projected state and federal revenue sources are late because of the financial struggle.

There are times that the village finds we must borrow money from other accounts like the water fund to keep the village moving forward. By law, any monies borrowed from the water fund to make payment of bills or salaries must be returned upon receipt of the tax revenues. The need for these loans can be caused by state or county revenues coming to our village late or reduced because of the county or state financial issues.

The village is currently averaging three months behind in payment to our vendors; however, we have reduced that from the average of five months in the past. The village remains in debt but we are currently working on ways to reduce increased debt and searching for ways to address that which has already occurred.

Shortly after accepting the position of Mayor, I began to look into why financial audits were not available. It was no surprise to find that the audits were held up due to the turmoil of the last administration and miscommunications which has since ended. While audits take time, this administration and the auditors are on track to have them completed in a timely fashion, but as you can imagine a village audit takes more time than a personal audit or that of a small business. In 2013, we completed two village audits (FY2009 – 2010 and FY2010 – 2011) and have started the third audit (FY2011 – 2012).

Once the audits are completed the auditors will need to be paid. Normally, audits are performed once a year and the auditors are paid within each calendar year. We now face billing for two or three audits in one year however, once done we will be back on track. Audits will be presented to the State with or without the police pension portion that we have no control of obtaining and so the state does not fine us for noncompliance. We will continue to give the State all reports required on a timely manner along with an explanation of why any information might be missing so the village does not incur any further penalties.

Other issues that we started to address in 2013 and will roll into 2014.

Union contracts, as with many other functions, were on standstill for years. We are working diligently to negotiate professionally with our staff to come to a financial and responsible conclusion for all.

As for pension deficits, it appears all governmental bodies are in arrears and we are no different. There is much work to be done to find ways to solve this issue. Just as this is priority in our state capital we are committed to finding a solution in Sauk Village

Mayor's Article Continued

Litigation was ended between the Village of Sauk Village and the IEPA and Attorney General avoiding millions dollars in fines by maintaining the temporary air strippers and preparing to install permanent air strippers and conduct water treatment plant improvements. In 2014, work should begin on the pump stations improvements.

Earlier this year the village board passed an ordinance to reinstate the position of police chief. This allowed the village to restore the chain of command by reinstating a Police Chief position and filling the position with a qualified individual from within the ranks that is focused on bringing law and order back to our streets.

Our new Police Chief has implemented a plan to reduce crime, is working on a presentation for the public to show both how our officer training and demeanor will be addressed and how our public can assist the police in reducing crime as this must be a partnership to succeed.

The village has filled vacancies placing additional police officers on the streets and providing them with the equipment and support needed to perform their jobs. The village has just recently added several new squad cars to the Police Department fleet and updated the municipal code book.

In 2014, the police department will continue to work on implementing and enforcing the Crime Free Housing and Vacant Property ordinances.

Just recently it was announced that Sauk Village home values have gone up 6.4% over the past year and Zillow predicts they will rise 0.7% within the next year.

This is why you may notice the village administration, committee, commission, police, fire, and public works moving throughout your neighborhood. It will take all of us in a joint effort to make your block, your section of town, your street better, safer and more beautiful so that as the economy recovers our town recovers and our home values recover as well. This is another reason why in 2014 our Code Department will focus more on enforcing local property maintenance ordinances.

In 2013, we opened a line of communication with our state and federal representatives. This last year residents had the opportunity to meet State and Federal officials at events such as town hall meetings and "meet your Congresswoman". The village also opened the village hall and encouraged representatives to have satellite offices within the village so they could meet with residents.

In 2014, I look forward to continue working with our state and federal representatives as we strive to get Sauk Village back on its feet financially and grow through economic development.

As we approach 2014, we will continue to build on the forward momentum that was started in 2013. As a community we must continue to make tough decisions as we look for ways to address the financial deficit the village faces, continue to take a firm stance on crime and focus on economic development, both retention and new.

Thank you and God Bless,
David A. Hanks
Mayor of Sauk Village

A community of "Pride and Progress"



Public Relations

Trustee Rosie Williams

Congratulations to the winners of the “Design the 2014 Sauk Village village sticker contest. The top five picks were presented by:

Ethan
 Aliesha Cullick
 Angel Le
 Jomiyah Stokes
 Kaylea Thomas

Please join us at the Sauk Village Board meeting on Tuesday, January 14th when the new Sauk Village sticker is revealed and prizes are awarded to the top five!

We appreciate all students that participated in the contest! It was very hard to choose from so many unique and diverse drawings.

The Public Relations Committee looks forward to doing this again next year as a community project welcoming everyone of any age to participate.

Student Government Day is fast approaching. This is the favorite time of year for our committee. Sauk Village eight grade students will participate in an essay contest that will determine which students will take the place of an elected official, department head or vendor at the March 25th Board meeting.

This year’s topic- Who do you see as the most influential person in your life?

The Website Committee is working on some great new ideas for 2014. Stay tuned!

Happy New Year!

McConathy Public Library News

Colleen Baughman

The library now has a way for you to check out eBooks. There are plenty of great titles to choose from. You can visit <http://svpld.axis360.baker-taylor.com>. You must have a valid McConathy Public Library card to access the website. For more information you can come visit our library and we will be happy to help.

Aunt Martha’s is sponsoring an **AFFORDABLE CARE ACT** Assistance Program at **MCCONATHY LIBRARY** on Saturday February 1st and February 8th from 10:30am to 12:30 pm. This is open to all residents. This is your opportunity to learn and sign up.

We are looking forward to spring in the community garden. Some of the seeds will soon be planted and set in the greenhouse to sprout. We are looking forward to another successful year with all the Sauk Village residents.

Parks and Recreation

Trustee John Poskin

Basketball games begin Saturday, January 11, 2014. If interested in referring games contact Trustee John Poskin at 708/753-5125. The Parks and Recreation Committee is looking for anyone interested in helping to form a Baseball league for the Spring. Other upcoming events include the Annual Easter Egg Hunt and the Independence parade. Candy sales are ongoing for basketball and fundraising will continue for upcoming programs. As always, volunteers are greatly appreciated!



Sauk Village Neighborhood Watch

Trustee Lynda Washington



*Lynda Washington-House
Trustee*



POST!

SAUK VILLAGE NEIGHBORHOOD WATCH PROGRAM

NEWSLETTER JANUARY 2014

Dear Residents/Business Owners:

Greetings and Happy New Year! I would like to take this opportunity to invite you to our Dedication of Sauk Village **Neighborhood Watch Signs!** They will be posted at the entrances into the Village. Also, we have 26 signs that will be posted throughout the Village. There are several blocks that want to purchase a sign for their block, if their block is not on the list to receive one. We have the listing of where these signs will be.

The **Neighborhood Watch Program** will be having our Dedication/Proclamation Program at the Village Hall on: **Tuesday, January 14, 2014 at 7:00 p.m.** We are a Village wide **Neighborhood Watch Program.** We are encouraging the entire Village, block by block and all sub-divisions to come, and help send a message loud and clear "WE WILL CALL THE POLICE"! Don't miss this awesome event.

If you are interested in becoming active with protecting your block, contact me or bring all interested parties to our next meeting: Thursday, January 2, 2014! Start the New Year off working in your community. We only meet once a month on the first Thursday of each month at 7:00 p.m. at the Fire Station, 1804 222nd Street, Sauk Village, IL. 60411.

Finally, I sincerely hope that you will "get on board" with making our community safer. Public safety means working with our police department. Together we have seen a drastic turn around. We can accomplishment much more with your participation! Call today and get involved (708) 753-5130. Come partake in the posting of our Neighborhood Watch Program Signs. NOW is the time Remember~Together we will win...but we need YOU!

Sauk Talk is Produced by volunteers of the Public Relations Committee of Sauk Village, Rosie Williams Trustee/Composer and Staff Members Nanette Wargo and Debbie Williams. With special appreciation for technical support provided by Colleen Baughman. Suggestions should be directed to the Village Hall at 708-758-3330 or emailed to sauktalk@saukvillage.org.

Housing Commission

Gary Holcomb

2013 In Review

The following is just a portion of what has taken place within 2013:

Became full active members in the South Suburban Mayors and Managers Association Housing Consortium (SSMMA)

Mayor Hanks became a Board Member of the South Suburban Mayors and Managers Association Land Bank and is represented by the Housing Commission at the monthly meetings along with the Mayor connecting via telephone.

Working with mortgage holders and the Cook County Land Banks 91 vacant homes were placed in the program and have subsequently been rehabbed and are now occupied by first time home owners and are back on the village tax rolls.

Working with the Banks and SSMMA Land Bank the village is aggressively removing derelict properties and providing these properties to investors. As of December 31st 421 homes have been purchased or brought up to code by investors.

The housing commission was able to get a grant for the GIS mapping and tracking system for the village, providing a means to track housing trends, access ownership information of county and state records, and a way to track the village's infrastructure.

In conjunction with state and county agencies have addressed training seminars both in foreclosure prevention, and job training programs. (To date 304 people have participated in and taken advantage of these programs).

The housing commission mapped the entire village as to unkempt properties and vacant homes, and established a plan of action as to the direction needed to be taken to addressing these issues.

The housing commission has attended fifteen training secessions, eleven promotional events, and put on two presentations promoting the village at economic development conferences.

Working with area banks, mortgage companies, Habitat for Humanities, SSMMA, Metropolitan Planning Council, Enterprise Community Partners, Community Investment Corporation, and Illinois Association of Community Action Agencies 371 vacant homes have been returned to the village tax rolls.

The Commission has applied for a \$75,000.00 Grant to maintain the 372 vacant and unkempt properties remaining that the county and state are tracking ownership for the spring and summer of 2014.

Working with the Mayor and Board the village adapted the Cook County Vacant Building Ordinance so as the full resources of the County can be utilized by the village to acquire and force banks and other organizations to maintain their properties following all village and county codes. (Long overdue as prior to the county and state adapting this ordinances villages like Sauk Village had no recourse or leverage to force banks and mortgage to follow code.

The commission is aggressively seeking other grants to improve the housing conditions in Sauk Village for everyone owners and renters alike.

Through the Neighborhood Watch program disseminating housing contact information and helping by providing a way for residents to address issues in their area without fear and anonymity we have been able to remove 37 squatters from occupied vacant homes. Residents need to understand that there are still many issues that need to be addressed and that a lot of what is being done is not openly apparent to the observer. For residents to understand the direction the housing commission is taking, look back 3 years. In July of 2011 there were 798 vacant Properties, in August 2012 it was down to 630 due to investors grabbing up properties at tax auctions for as little as \$1,500.00.

Over the next several months the Housing Commission hopes to reduce the number of properties being bought by scavenger investors and through the use of the village's Fair Housing and Crime Free Housing ordinances, our intent is to keep the existing housing stock at fair market value and therefore not reduce existing homeowner's property values.

Senior News

Rose Langston

FREE senior citizen monthly movie days co-sponsored with McConathy Public Library at the library. Mondays at 12:30 p.m. blood pressure screening precedes the movie: January 13th 'Sleepless In Seattle'; February 10th 'Parental Guidance'; March 10th 'Heat' (plus 11:30a.m. lunch, requires reservation 708-757-4771); April 14th 'GI Joe Retaliation'; May 12th 'You Me and Dupree'; June 9th 'Breakfast at Tiffany'; July 14th 'Almost Famous'; August 11th 'Rat Race'; September 8th 'Chicago'; October 6th 'Wild Hogs'; November 10th 'Waterboy'; and December 8th 'Christmas with the Kranks.'

Zumba Gold classes temporarily suspended due to lack of participants.

Monthly blood pressure screening on Mondays at the Senior Center office from 1:00 – 2:00 p.m.- January 1st, February 3rd, March 3rd, April 7th, May 5th, June 2nd, July 7th, August 4th, October 6th, November 3rd, and December 1st.

In November 2013, another program began with a Senior Committee member (Larry Stewart) volunteering to oversee a couple of Fridays monthly (check posted monthly calendar for actual scheduled dates). This program mirrors our summer program of various activities for village seniors.

Three senior organizations (2nd and 4th Sunday 3:00 p.m. SV Fun Club, 1st and 3rd Monday 7:00 p.m. Sunshiners, and 2nd and 4th Wednesday 5:00 p.m. Leisure Timers) meet in the Senior Center. Other groups meeting in the Senior Center are: the Sauk Village Blue Grass on Sundays from 6 until 10 p.m.; Sauk Village VFW Post 2690 on the 2nd and 4th Tuesday at 8 p.m.; BMW Crossroads No. 55 every 3rd Tuesday at 7:30 p.m.; and the Ceramics Group on Wednesdays from 8:00 to 11:00 a.m. All of these groups welcome new members.

The Bloom Township Community Lunch program continues monthly through April. Tickets (township seniors \$4.00, non-township seniors \$8.00) are available from the township office. Flyers are available in the literature rack for detailed township events. Call the township senior department 708-754-9400 x244 for additional information and services. Call Senior Wheels 708-754-8200 one (1) business day in advance for transportation (at a nominal cost) within the township.

The Senior Committee meets every second Thursday at 5:00 p.m. in the Senior Center. For concerns and/or questions, call (708) 758-3330 and leave a brief message for a call back as time permits. Committee members are Gary Holcomb, Bob Ketcham, Rose Langston, Floyd Morgan, Delores Randall, Beverly Sterrett, Larry Stewart and Frank Williams.

Blossoms

If you have a child under five years old, then BLOSSOMS is for you!

School District 168 offers many early childhood programs. BLOSSOMS is a FREE program that is available to families with children ages 0-5 who live in our area. We offer parent/child playgroups, a pre-kindergarten program, parent workshops, family nights, field trips, personal visits, a lending library and more throughout the year. Events and playgroups are held at Wagoner School. Personal visits can be held right in your own home or at school. The program also offers developmental screenings for children from ages birth to five.

We also meet once a month at McConathy Public Library.

Call the Blossoms Family Center at (708) 758-0319 to register or for more information.



Fire Department News

Deputy Fire Chief Rich Atwood



The Sauk Village Fire Department hopes you had a safe and happy holiday season and we wish you a healthy and happy new year!

As we go into the new year, lets start by reflecting on 2013. This was one of our busiest years in a long while regarding incident responses. Keep in mind, I'm writing this article on December 26th, so we still have a few days to go, but we're already at 595 calls for 2013. For the last several years, we've averaged around 550-560. This increase can be attributed to a couple things. We have been responding more and more to assist Bud's Ambulance with medical calls, not just for lift assists and manpower, but also on cardiac related incidents where timing and fast response mean everything. Historically, the bulk of our calls are false alarms- fire alarms triggered accidentally or malfunctions. We do still respond to a large amount of vehicle incidents and we've seen a slight increase in fires.

Speaking of fires, over this past Christmas season, the Sauk Village Fire Department participated in the "Keep the Wreath Red" program. There is a large wreath hanging on the front of the fire station decorated with red lights. This program is a fire safety effort aimed at Christmas decoration safety. If we have a decoration related fire, we remove one red light. I'm happy to say that we were able

to keep our wreath 100% red. We did have a few fires over the holidays, but none were Christmas related.

Also over 2013, we saw one of our largest recruitment drives ever. New applicants started coming in May and didn't stop until November. On December 12, six of these new recruits and one not so new recruit graduated from the Prairie State College Fire Academy. This grueling 16 week program prepares the recruit to become certified firefighter through the IL Office of the State Fire Marshal, and makes them fully functional to better serve our community. The pictured graduates are (from left to right): Kandy Watkins (kneeling), DeAndre Dickerson, Darnell Talbert, Robert Butterfield, Kevin Luther, Quinnest Daniels, and Christian Christmas.

Congratulations to our Academy graduates!



NEWS YOU CAN USE



Subscribe Now to Receive

SAUK VILLAGE E-MAIL ALERTS

SIGN UP FOR
EMAIL ALERTS



Log onto www.saukvillage.org

Click on Get Access Today to subscribe
E-mail alerts will begin on Monday, December 16, 2013.

This is a free service to help ensure better communication for the residents we serve.



Police Department

Tim Holevis

December is just about gone and shortly we will be ringing in a New Year! Please remember it is still the right time of the year for the criminals to be on the prowl. They especially look for what you may have discarded in the trash or left outside your door. Place as much of your leftover Christmas boxes and other holiday trash in a black bag and if possible, do not discard it until garbage day. Let's be sensible during the holiday season and keep our family's safe.

I would like to report our new Recruit, Officer Andrew Vaughan, graduated from the Police Training Institute, on December 19, 2013, in Champaign, Illinois. Both Chief Holevis and Sgt. Mieszczak attended the ceremony. Also, December was also a time to honor our Administrative Assistants and a luncheon was provided for the Administrative Assistants by the South Suburban Chiefs of Police and they also received a small Christmas gift for the outstanding work they do throughout the year. Both Sgt. Sailsbery and my Administrative Assistant, Lisa Gibbons attended the luncheon. Thank you Lisa for a Job Well Done!

One last reminder, the Sauk Village Police Department will be conducting Roadside Safety Checks throughout the Holidays in conjunction with the Illinois Department of Transportation, as well as Law Enforcement across the entire Nation. Remember, "Don't Drink and Drive" RSCs are designed to keep our roads safe by taking dangerous DUI offenders off the road. This project is funded entirely through the Illinois Department of Transportation, Division of Traffic Safety and the village will incur no costs for this mission.

A LITTLE POLICE HUMOR

Police Officer pulls over a man for speeding and asks him, "Sir do you know how fast you were going and the man answers, "no Officer I don't". The Officer then says to the driver, "so you don't know how fast you were going? I guess that means I can write anything I want on the ticket, huh?"

Human Relations Commission

Please see the back page of this Sauk Talk for an opportunity to join us for the 1st Annual Diversity Dinner to be held on Friday, January 24, 2014 from 6:30—9:30 pm in the Senior Center . The Diversity Dinner is open to anyone 16 years of age or older— limit two per household. Come and join us for an evening of great insightful conversation! The dinner is potluck.

When completing the application please include what dish you will be sharing.

The deadline to return the application is Monday, January 10, 2014.

For more information please email SVHRC@saukvillage.org or call 708/753-5121.



IMPORTANT NUMBERS

EMERGENCY	911	SAUK VILLAGE HALL	758-3330
POLICE & FIRE NON-EMERGENCY	758-1331		
COMMUNITY CENTER	758-4115	SENIOR CENTER	753-5141
BLOOM TOWNSHIP	754-9400	COOK COUNTY HEALTH DEPT.	210-4500
RESPOND NOW EMERGENCY ASSISTANCE	755-4357	McCONATHY LIBRARY	757-4771
COMMONWEALTH EDISON	1-800-334-7661	NICOR	1-888-642-6748
ALLIED DISPOSAL	754-5460		

**VISIT US ON THE WEB:
WWW.SAUKVILLAGE.ORG**

The Human Relations Commission Presents



1st Annual Diversity Dinner

Come join us for an evening of great insightful conversation !!!!

On this evening, Sauk Village residents will engage in a potluck dinner and share in intriguing conversation on a variety of topics. We are hosting this event to invite diverse members of the community to interact with one another with acceptance and respect. This dinner will explore differences of diversity in the community, in a safe, positive and nurturing environment. We need a diverse group of male and females over the age of sixteen. Please return completed form to Village Hall or sign up by email as soon as possible.

Friday, January 24 2014
6:30 - 9:30 pm (Senior Center)
21801 S. Torrence Ave (Sauk Village)
For more info Email: SVHRC@saukvillage.org

Register by January, 10th (Seats won't last!)
Registration (Limited Seating) ACT NOW!!!

Name(s) _____ (Limit 2 per family)	Age(s) _____
Ethnicity _____	
Contact Number _____ - _____ - _____	
Email _____	Potluck Dish _____

