

Welcome to the Premiere Issue of COMMUNICATE!

The first thing you will notice about your new newsletter is that it comes in two formats, electronic and print. The idea is that there is so much going on in the village; we want to make it easy for everyone to be equally informed.

The plan is to publish first on the website. Shortly afterward the current issue will be delivered to your door.

The length will vary depending on what is happening at any given time. Eventually you will see new features, some permanent, others rotating. The editorial staff will make every effort to update news so that you always have the latest information available.

With this first issue we invite you to begin sending Letters To The Editor. Feel free to suggest topics that you would like to see covered in future issues. If there is something going on that COMMUNICATE! should know about, tell us. We'll do our best to write it up. If there is someone in the Village of University Park doing great things, let us know.

Send those letters to wp@informationpluspro.com. The shorter the better.

Looking ahead to November we'll begin introducing you to the village businesses and departments, as well as the Trustees and their new Liaison Assignments. Interviews with newly appointed Treasurer, Devon Dilworth and recently re-elected Village Clerk, Dorothy Jones, will also be included.

Also, since we have so many power outages in the Southland, there will be a feature on food safety. You know you shouldn't be eating that food after your power's been out all day, but hey it's a recession you tell yourself. We'll talk about guidelines that you should be following.

And, as always, COMMUNICATE! will keep you informed on what's happening in the beautiful Village of University Park!

See ya.



Retired Chief Judge Michael Stuttley, Cook County Circuit Court, 6th Municipal District, swears in Vivian E. Covington, the first female mayor of the Village of University Park, on Tuesday, May 10, 2011

A Few Minutes With the Newly Elected Officials of University Park

The April 2011 elections resulted in several electoral changes in the **Village of University Park**, including new **Mayor Vivian E. Covington**, a two-term trustee, and two newly elected **Trustees, Elizabeth Williams, and Milton C. Payton**, former president of the Crete-Monee District 201-U.

COMMUNICATE! thought it would be a good idea to introduce the residents to the newly elected officials, in this, the premiere issue. Since the village also has a newly installed **Village Manager, Lafayette Linear**, we are taking this time and space to introduce our readers to him as well. And let us not forget **Devon Dilworth**, the newly appointed treasurer of the **Village of University Park**. He will be profiled in the next issue along with recently re-elected **Village Clerk Dorothy Jones**.

(Continued next page)

INSIDE:
**NEWS
BRIEFS**

AND:
**THE
SENIOR
CENTER**



Mayor and Board of Trustees - L-R - Mayor Vivian E. Covington, Trustees Larry B. Brown, Joseph E. Roudez, III, Oscar H. Brown, Jr., Keith J. Griffin, Milton C. Payton, Elizabeth Williams. Photo credit: Super Star Shots/ Neil Martin

Continuing members of the **Board of Trustees** include, **Trustees Larry B. Brown, Joseph E. Roudez, III, Keith J. Griffin, and Oscar H. Brown, Jr.** re-elected to a four-year term. **Village Clerk Jones** was also re-elected to a four-year term.

We begin our lead feature with the first-ever Q & A interview of newly elected **Village of University Park Mayor, Vivian E. Covington.**

1. Briefly describe how you felt on realizing that you had been elected the first female mayor of the Village of University Park.

I was overwhelmed, honored and extremely blessed. I have the opportunity to share similar history with President Obama. He is the 44th U.S. president; and I'm the first female mayor during the celebration of the Village of University Park's 44th year. He is the first African American president, and I the first female mayor.

2. After two terms as village trustee, why did you want to become mayor?

There was a vision I wanted to share with University Park. Having acquired many years of training in leadership and municipal government experience; I was always striving to make a significant difference for our village. Rather than talk about it, I felt it was time to provide leadership in a more proactive and effective way working with the Board of Trustees, staff and community to improve the quality of life in University Park.

I have heard the voice of many. We have volunteered

and worked together for years supporting programs throughout the village. There is a strong need for development and governmental structure. Love for one another as neighbors, friends and family will unite our village.

3. What are three things you would like to accomplish during your first six months in office?

- Complete the Kids Health Club
- Have first Board Retreat
- Work on our landscaping projects

4. What have been your biggest accomplishments so far?

We have restored our municipal relationships and memberships with the South Suburban Mayors and Managers Association (SSMMA); Chicago Southland; Diversity Inc. and Cook County Suburban Economic Development Commission (CCSEDC). We are building positive relationships with our neighboring communities.

One recently renewed relationship has resulted in plans with Pace to offer public transportation throughout the community, especially for our Hickory Creek residents on Cicero avenue. This will also generate a few transportation jobs for residents.

We have moved the starting time of our bi-monthly board meetings from 8:00 p.m. to 7:00 p.m., making it more convenient for residents to attend. I inform the public about my weekly meetings which often include one board trustee, one staff member, the executive liaison, village attorney and village manager.



sity Park, what would you say?

Continue to join committees. Pray for the village to prosper and reach its highest potential.

What would you say specifically to the youth of the village?

Please young people wake up and understand that there is so much out there for you. So many have paved the way for you to succeed. Please don't throw it away. Think for yourselves! Sign up to volunteer on a village committee. We are creating a new committee for young people to understand how, what is referred to as, "the system" works.

I want to give you a chance to experience the political process under my tutelage. You can be a success by knowing that you are investing in yourself. Perseverance really pays off. You never know who is out there giving you support. Our young people should have Faith, Love and Hope for their future.

7. What advice would you give to anyone wanting to run for office during these trying times?

Please have a sincere love for where you live. Be part of a team that wants to make a difference. Offer open and honest input for the best interests of your residents. Never forget that you are a civil servant. Understand that people will make selfish attacks against

There is also a wonderful agreement between Governors State University President, Dr. Elaine Maimon and myself to promote University Park as a College Town! I told Dr. Maimon that our village is a diamond in the rough, a hidden secret that needs to be promoted as a College Town.

We have had several important meetings with state representatives and others, to ensure that our vision comes to fruition. There is much more that you will hear about soon.

5. What has been your biggest surprise or disappointment so far?

To see that there are some who refuse to promote our village positively. Organizational structure has been lacking for quite some time, resulting in a lack of accountability. We lack updated policies and procedures to efficiently run our village departments. Many of our Village Ordinances need to be updated to accommodate current conditions.

6. If you could say one thing to the citizens of the Village of Univer-

your decisions, whether they (the people) are right or wrong. Know that you will be continually threatened politically and personally without valid reasons.

There will be times when political groups and some residents will attempt to divide you and your Board of Trustees. There was a promise given to those who serve with a humble godly spirit. "Well done, thou good and faithful servant; thou hast been faithful over few things; I will make you rule over many things."

8. You have overcome quite a bit of personal tragedy the past year. From where did you draw your strength?

I serve a God who takes care of my every need. Also, I get my strength from my living families (spiritual and natural), and true friends who have been placed in my life. My wonderful relationship with my Pastor, Bishop Horace E. Smith, has continued to strengthen me spiritually.

Losing my only natural daughter, and seven months later my Mother was very devastating. I'm blessed to have been given two additional daughters through marriage, and an outstanding granddaughter. Where one was taken, God has multiplied. I'm happy that my mother was there for my swearing-in ceremony. My daughter's support was always present. The love we shared was like none other.



9. How has being mayor affected your family life?

To start off, they (family) are receiving fewer home-cooked meals. As a mother I have always strived to be a positive role model, by supporting them in their school activities, sports, girl scouts, etc. They would make jokes and say “what award did you receive now?” However, quality time with my family has been replaced with numerous meetings.

They are growing accustomed to my increased duties as mayor. I have always done volunteer work, and been part of various organizations all of their lives. However, we have had to restructure our schedules to ensure family togetherness.

Sundays are reserved for us to spend time together. My family is so supportive and loving. They believe in me. When needed they build me up, give me love, tender words, flowers, and surprises to further lift me up. It’s a great joy to have such a supportive family that I love and cherish.

(economic) overflow (will spread) to surrounding vil-lages, towns, and regions.

2. Now that you are in the seat, what are your three top priorities?

The Overpass needs to be started, in order to be completed by at least 2030. Remember, proper preparation prevents poor performance. We must learn to stick together and demand what we need without compromise for our people.

To support the board by working together. Showing by example that it is ok to agree to disagree agree-ably. It doesn’t have to be so bitter. Our village has needs and we need to focus our energy on that.

Continue to foster relationships to facilitate projects coming to University Park. We must ensure that we get the best available, so we are in a winning posi-tion over the next 30 years in University Park. We are setting up success (models) for our children and grandchildren for years to come.

A Few Minutes with the Two New Trustees of the Village of University Park

Elizabeth Williams

1. Why did you want to become a trustee?

To show that I am dedicated to enhanc-ing the quality of life for University Park residents as a whole. I want to make Univer-sity Park an oasis for growth for residents and college students, and help bring shop-ping outlets and the airport. This will enhance University Park’s prosperity. The



3. What has been your main accomplishment so far?

COMMUNICATION is lacking. Since taking the seat, I have on a regular basis been speaking with residents and getting their concerns heard inside of board meetings, and outside of board meetings by voicing my demands to the board.

The key here is that I alone have no demands. When I speak it is for the people. Also, I have supported the necessary workshops to inform the public and receive feedback, prior to the passing of new ordinances.

4. What is it that makes you want to serve the public?

There is no greater honor than to serve the public. You can do something for yourself and forget about it. But when you serve others you give of yourself the talents and gifts that you possess, so that others may benefit for generations to come.

I have always had a desire to help people. I have been doing so for all my friends and family. All of my life I have advocated. To be honest, it just feels good to help others, and to see smiles on their faces when they are satisfied. I do understand that all



won't be satisfied, however, I know if they are not I have done my very best to support them in their situation, and I can rest with that knowledge.

5. What do you want people outside of the village to know about University Park?

University Park is an up-and-coming frontier. There is room for development, growth, retail shopping and an airport. University Park is far from being landlocked. We have the potential to be an award-winning city. You may want to become involved.

6. What advice do you have for the youth of University Park?

The best thing for you is to get involved in what you love early, and learn as you grow. Learn to teach it. Get to the foundation of the thing, up under the thing, understand the thing fully, and then apply its principles to your life daily. Practice makes you more efficient, as no one is nor ever will be perfect.

7. What is your favorite quotation, spiritual or otherwise?

“There is no such thing as a stupid question. The only stupid question is the one that is not asked.” Liz Williams

8. Is there anything else you would like to say to the people of University Park?

“Whenever the people are well informed they can be trusted with their own government.” Thomas Jefferson

I would like to sincerely thank you all for voting for me, and trusting me to speak up for you with the common sense that we use every day. Know that I am not and will not get so important that I don't have time for you, the people of University Park and what you want! It matters to me. I am always available and willing to listen, help (bring) resources, and get to the bottom of any issue. I look forward to serving University Park with all my heart.

My vision of University Park is a thriving place to live, shop and grow!

Milton C. Payton

1. As former president of the Crete-Monee School District; how do you compare that campaign with running for a seat on the University Park Board of Trustees?

I ran unopposed for the school board. In my campaign for trustee I ran against multiple candidates. I also ran as part of the We Care Team along with Mayor Vivian E. Covington, Curtis McMullan II and Ms. Rosemary Nettles, trustee candidates.

The excitement of working with the WE Care Team, helped us to develop our Blueprint for Progress, our “white paper” on moving our community in a different direction. Anyone interested can go to wecare4up.com and read our Blueprint.



2. Why did you want to become a Trustee?

I ran for Trustee for the same reasons that I participated in the many commissions and committees over the last 20+ years ... “To do some good in the hood.” I believe that our future is up to us and not someone else. For those that much is given, much is expected.

3. Now that you are in the seat what are your three top priorities?

- Developing an environment that engages, supports, nurtures and provides opportunities for our children, senior citizens and impaired community members.
- Getting the Village's financial health in order so that we can lower the tax burden on our community members, while providing them with first class services and job opportunities.
- Develop a community culture that expects, supports and demands, world class excellence in our school system.



4. What has been your main accomplishment so far?

First of all, it's never about "me," its always about "we." During the first 2 months as Trustee I was able to work along with Mayor Vivian Covington and Trustees Keith Griffin, Larry Brown and our new Village manager, Lafayette Linear to bring the Kids Health Club to University Park.

5. What is it that makes you want to serve the public?

By serving the public I am actually serving myself, because I am also part of the public body. I have worked part of my teenage years and all of my adult life in fighting for civil rights and fairness. Over the years, many injustices have been imposed on people of color. I have personally experienced discrimination and injustice in the schools, business and communities that I have been a part of. And, as best I can, I do not want to see anyone endure the indignities and pain that I have endured.

The African proverb that "It takes a Village to raise a child" to me means that it takes everyone to now help correct the problems of the past.

It starts with us, we must take the responsibility and put forth the time and effort to clean up our own house ... The Calvary is not going to ride in and save us at the end of the TV hour. That is why I have chosen to serve the public.

6. What do you want people outside of the village to know about University Park?

First of all, I believe that the people who live in University Park need to know about what our community has to offer and the tremendous potential that it has to become a model community.

Secondly, those outside of University Park need to realize what a progressive community we have. It is a great place to raise a family, get an education and

A Few Minutes with the New Village Manager of the Village of University Park

Lafayette Linear, former village manager of Matteson, IL and most recently finance director of Hanover Park, IL, assumed his new duties in July of this year, joining new **Mayor Vivian E. Covington**, and a village board with a third of the members new to the job.

1. Village manager would almost seem to be a 24/7 job. What do you like about the position?

One of the most enjoyable aspects of the village manager's

job is helping elected officials provide services to enhance the quality of life for the village residents. These services include public infrastructures; public safety and recreational opportunities. It should be noted that the efficient delivery of these services are somewhat dependent on the elected body and the village's management team achieving a mutual meeting of the minds.

2. What are some of the qualities one needs to be an effective village manager?

An effective village manager must have a desire to provide public services. To do so a village manager needs to be formally trained in public administration, hardworking, and able to commu-

nicate with elected officials and professional managers of various disciplines.

3. For the youth out there; what is the best educational and experiential training for such a position?

Students considering a career as a city manager may consider focusing on government, history, math and business management at the undergrad level. At the graduate level, I would suggest they look for intern opportunities with government agencies and study public administration.

4. What are the three most difficult challenges you face on a daily basis?

Managing my time to accomplish



have a business large or small. We are strategically located for growth. We have one of the largest industrial parks in the state of Illinois, award winning schools, Governors State University; two (2) golf courses (one that we own along with a conference center and restaurant). We have our own cable access studio and cable channel, and a Young Broadcasters program. We are home to beautiful Pine Lake, a petting zoo at Riegel Farm and a fabulous Aqua Center for our children.

We have a world class Information Technology committee that has worked with the village, to enable our community to be a leader in the integration of information technology. Our crime rate is one of the lowest in the south suburbs. We are located next to some of the finest nature preserves in the southland. We have walking & bike trails and a convenient commuter train station. We also

have some of the most affordable housing around ... and we now have great leadership throughout our community.

7. What advice do you have for the youth of University Park?

You are very important to us and to the future of our community. We plan to provide activities that interest almost every young person in our community, regardless of family income level. So, find out what's available that interests you and get involved. Let us know what needs to be done to improve things, and we will work with you to make things better. It's your responsibility to yourself!

8. What is your favorite quotation, spiritual or otherwise?

An old African proverb "It takes a Village to raise a child."



the goals I have set for myself. I also have to provide assistance or support to top level staff on a daily basis, and respond effectively to unanticipated events.

5. How would you describe your management style?

Organized, methodical and involved.

6. How can residents of University Park best assist you in being successful at doing your job?

They can best assist me by continuing to communicate with their elected officials and I about what is important to them.

7. What should people who don't know you, know about Lafayette Linear?

It is my pleasure to serve the Village of University Park. I began my professional career as an accountant. Being a CPA I have been trained to dissect and analyze problems, think critically and add value to organizations. These are some of my skills, in addition to management and experience that I utilize daily for the benefit of the village.

8. What would you like your legacy to be as village manager of University Park?

In my opinion, the village manager works in the background to manage and improve the public

services of the municipality. I would like my legacy to be that the elected officials I worked for during my tenure, achieved the things they set out to do.

9. Is there anything else you would like to say to the people of University Park?

I would like to thank the residents for the opportunity to be a part of them. I would also like to extend to them the same open door policy I have extended to my staff.





COMMUNICATE! NEWS BRIEFS



MAYORAL ANNOUNCE- MENTS

“No one in the Village of University Park should be unemployed

with all of those companies located in the Industrial Park,” Mayor Vivian E. Covington said at the August 23 Board meeting.

She was specifically referencing the finding by the village that Clorox’s agreement with the village calls for twenty percent of their 165 jobs to be reserved for University Park residents. That is approximately 33 jobs total. Clorox has hired Excel, an employment agency, to facilitate hiring.

Continuing the mayor said, “We need to talk (negotiate) with companies before they come in. We’re going to take another look at those agreements as they relate to employment of University Park residents.”

“We also need to revisit our Comprehensive Plan. Several companies including two banks and a grocery store are taking a look at the Village of University Park,” she said.

On another note Mayor Covington reports that, “I have been participating in monthly meetings with representatives of Governors State University. We intend to promote

the Village of University Park as a college town.”

In an effort to promote participatory democracy and citizenship Mayor Covington says, “I want everyone in Village Hall to become a Deputy Registrar and Notary Public.”



NEW VOTING MACHINES, PROCEDURES FOR EARLY & ABSENTEE VOTING COMING

Village Clerk, Dorothy “Dee” Jones has announced that new voting machine equipment including modems, computers and scanners are scheduled for installation in November. Early voting and absentee voting procedures will also be changed.

FOUR NEW POLICEMEN JOIN UP FORCE

The Village of University Park Police Force welcomed three new officers to their ranks at the Village Board meeting on Tuesday, July 26, when they were sworn in. They are Officers Charles Wynn, Steven Sockwell and Julio Garcia. David Gentile was sworn in earlier on April 12. The force now stands at 23 officers, including 1 deputy chief, 4 sergeants, 15 full-time officers and 3 part-time.

REP. ANTHONY DELUCA GREETES MAYOR & BOARD

On Tuesday, July 26, Mayor Vivian E. Covington and the Board of

Trustees were joined by State Rep. Anthony DeLuca, the village’s House legislative representative for the Will County portion of the Vil-



Photo Credit: Star Lawson

lage of University Park.

Rep. DeLuca indicated that he is looking forward to working to help move the village forward, noting that local governmental issues and public safety are of special interest. The state legislator, also former mayor of Chicago Heights, said that the 3rd airport, Iliana and gaming interests also have his legislative attention.

BOARD NEWS

NEW ATTORNEYS BROUGHT ON BOARD

The Village Board authorized the retention of Ivan Tomic, Tomic Law Group, Ltd. as the new Village Attorney at the August 9 meeting. Bruce E. Adelman has also been retained as Village Prosecutor.

NEW STARTING TIME FOR BI-MONTHLY BOARD MEETINGS

Effective Tuesday, August 23 the Village of University Park Board of Trustees approved a new starting time for their bi-monthly meeting, moving from 8:00 p.m. to 7:00 p.m.



ENGINEERING FIRM COMING TO VILLAGE

Robinson Engineering has been hired by the Village of University Park.

DIVERSITY INC. CONTINUES FIGHTING ECONOMIC REDLINING IN SOUTHLAND

On Tuesday, August 9, Joe Martin, executive director of Diversity, Inc. made a presentation at the Village of University Park's Board of Trustees meeting. He discussed in detail the organization's ongoing effort to bring major national retailers to the South Suburbs, including attempts to upgrade the retail offerings at Lincoln Mall, located in Matteson.

Martin discussed the unfortunate fact that many national retailers equate black or African American with being poor, uneducated and criminal, and referred to the need to develop a "tool box" to fight economic redlining.

"I have asked Cook County Board President Toni Preckwinkle to convene a countywide task force to develop ideas to help diverse communities better market themselves," he said.

Martin closed warning that, "this problem is occurring in economically mobile, diverse communities nationwide."

Meanwhile, Martin's message resonated locally as Jewel-Osco, a longtime Olympia Fields retail resident, announced that it would be closing its' doors on August 31, part of a nationwide closing of 20 stores in the Jewel-Osco chain.

TARP FUNDS AVAILABLE FOR DISTRESSED HOMEOWNERS

Also at the August 9 Board of Trustees meeting, Olympia Fields Village Administrator David Markarski announced that millions in TARP money has recently become available to homeowners behind in their mortgages, who can receive up to \$25 thousand in relief if eligible.

Known by the somewhat long title of Illinois Hardest Hit Fund Homeowner Emergency Loan Program; these funds are earmarked as a short term fix to help people pay their mortgage while they seek

new employment, or try to restore their income to previous levels.

There are several eligibility criteria. The Illinois Housing Development Authority can give you more information. Call them at (312) 836-5200 to see if you qualify for the Homeowner Emergency Loan Program.



KIDS HEALTH CLUB COMING TO UNIVERSITY PARK

"Where Fitness is Fun"

University Park will soon become the first licensed community-based health club especially designed for kids, a great way for kids to get healthy. The Kids Health Club will provide children the opportunity to improve their health through nutrition education, entertaining physical activity and exercise, all in a safe environment.

"The Club is ideal for youth who don't get enough physical activity in school; who are training for a sport; or who just want to improve their athletic abilities, or slim down while having fun," Trustee Milton Payton said.

Membership is open for ages 6-18 and will be affordable for all. The specifically engineered circuit equipment, fun sports wall and video exercise games have already been purchased. The remodeling process has begun with a **targeted grand opening in late December 2011.**

This unique program includes a partnership with **Governors State University** to research childhood obesity and how to combat it.

COMMUNICATE! will keep you informed.



More News

BUSINESS AFTER HOURS A GREAT SUCCESS

On Wednesday, August 31 Mayor Covington, the Board of Trustees, Village Clerk and Treasurer were on hand to meet, greet and mingle and discuss business with representatives from the Village of University Park business community, including several businesses from the Industrial Park.

In welcoming remarks Mayor Covington said, "In these continuing tough economic times, it is important that we all get to know each other. That is the best way we can all come together to help each other, and work toward becoming one community...the great Village of University Park."

Guests were treated to a variety of delicacies prepared by Chef Steven Davis, the Golf Club & Conference Center's new Executive Chef.

Businesses represented included Aqua Illinois, PK's Christian Restaurant & Catering, Hydrite Chemical, Applied Systems, Solo Cup, Bimba, Kai's Beauty Salon, Environmental Design International, M&M Automotive, Reinhart Foods, Elco Laboratories, Avatar Corporation, among others. GSU President, Dr. Elaine P. Maimon, was also among the distinguished attendees.



Above - L-R - Mayor Covington, Trustees Roudez, Larry Brown, Griffin, Williams, Payton and Village Clerk Jones



Left - L-R - Governors State President, Elaine P. Maimon and Village of University Park Mayor, Vivian E. Covington



Mayor Covington and Village Clerk Jones (in hat), Trustees Larry Brown, Griffin, Village Manager Linear and Trustee Payton

44TH ANNUAL FAMILY FLING WASHED OUT, NOT ONCE BUT TWICE

It's hard to believe that after several months of careful planning by the Human Services and Special Events Committee (HSSEC), the 44th Annual Back To School Family Fling was the victim of torrential rains on both the original date, Saturday, August 20 and the replacement date, Saturday, September 3.

Not to worry the August 20 parade went off as planned. And attendees were able to enjoy the music of DJ Meade, and offerings of several vendors, face paintings by "Dimples" the Clown, and a back pack distribution before rain, thunder and lightning sent everyone home.

Back again on September 3, attendees were greeted by early sunshine, before having to pack it in again. But not before more back packs were distributed by Mayor Vivian Covington and trustees Keith Griffin and Milton Payton.



Blues Hall of Famer, "Killer" Ray Allison and group wows Fling crowd



Kids enjoy Kids Zone before torrential rains set in



Above - Seniors enjoy an intense bingo game



Left - L-R - Trustees Oscar Brown, Jr., Elizabeth Williams and Larry Brown



Trustee Payton dancing with senior

SENIORS HAVE BIG FUN ON SENIOR FUN DAY

About 100 enjoyed themselves, engaging in a variety of activities, at the recent Senior Fun Day. Chairman Debbie J. Stroud of the University Park Senior Citizens Commission said of the event, "Fantastic!!! A verrry good time was had by all."

She thanked the Mayor, Board of Trustees, and the Parks and Recreation Department, who hosted the event.

"I would also like to thank all commission members who displayed their wonderful cooking talents." Sr. Fun Day has been an annual event in the village almost 25 years.

Chairman Stroud also invites all village seniors (55 and older) to come to the commission's meeting the 2nd Wednesday of each month at the University Park Library.



FOOD DESERT DAYS TO END IN VILLAGE

Effective Tuesday September 6, Schmidt Garden Center is bringing fresh produce to the Village of University Park. Look for them Tuesday through Saturday from 9:30 a.m. to 5:00 p.m., on University Parkway across from Brittany Woods Apartments.

Come get your veggies on and start living a healthier lifestyle.

BASEBALL ASSOCIATION BANQUET HONORS PARTICIPANTS

On July 23 about 75 people gathered to honor the players, parents and coaches associated with the Village of University

Park's Baseball Association. The event was held at 90 Towncenter. About 88 players are represented by the Association. "The banquet was our season-ending event. Competition resumes in April 2012," said Baseball Commissioner, Eugene Lawson, Jr.



REV. JEREMIAH WRIGHT COMES TO UNIVERSITY PARK

On Sunday, September 4 the renowned Rev. Jeremiah Wright was the guest speaker at First Baptist Church of University Park, in honor of the 3rd Anniversary of Pastor Reginald W. Williams, Jr.

The evening was capped off by a blistering performance by Blues Hall of Famer, "Killer" Ray Allison and his band. Thanks to the Human Services Special Events Committee and Chair Donna Gaston.

See you next year when hopefully the rain will give everyone a break.



Mayor Covington and Trustee Griffin participate in book bag giveaway

(Continued next page)



Pace Suburban Bus and the Village of University Park

Employees of Pace Suburban Bus recently met with Mayor Vivian E. Covington and village staff to discuss bringing two exciting Pace programs to University Park: The Pace Ad Shelter Program and the Community Vehicle Program.

The Pace Ad Shelter Program, provides bus shelters within the community, while advertising placed in the shelters generates revenue shared by Pace and the Village. Not only does the Ad Shelter Program generate extra revenue for the Village, it does so without raising taxes or fees and the shelters come at no cost to the community.

Becoming a Pace Ad Shelter community requires little effort by the Village itself. All ads are sold and posted by Pace-contracted agents, and regular maintenance, cleaning and prompt service in the event of damage is also provided. Advertising content is strictly regulated too, and subject to Pace's stringent guidelines which prevent messaging of any unsuitable or questionable nature.

Pace also assumes financial responsibility for construction, including excavations and cement work where needed. Reasonable runs of connecting sidewalks, complete with all mandated accommodations for people with disabilities are also included. Pace has assessed all 11 current Pace Non-Ad shelter locations within University Park, and residents should begin seeing new Pace Ad Shelters being installed in either Fall 2011 or Spring 2012.

(Continued from previous page)

Author of four books, Rev. Wright retired as senior pastor of Trinity United Church of Christ in May 2008. He has since traveled and lectured across the country with his message of black liberation theology.

NOT TO FORGET 911

And on Sunday, September 11 the nation collectively commemorated the 10th anniversary of 911. Everyone in the country was touched in some way by the thousands of lives lost, not to mention the fear and economic uncertainty that has gripped the nation ever since.



Pace has also been working with the Village to implement the Pace Community Vehicle Program. This program offers a cost-effective transportation option appropriate to the Village's service area, and allows the Village the flexibility to meet transportation needs of the residents.

The Pace Community Vehicle Program allows the Village to determine the type of transportation service to be provided, the hours of operation, as well as the fare for the service. The Village can use the Pace vehicle to operate as either a local circulator service, to provide transportation to and from a local transit center, or as a dial-a-ride service. The program is tentatively scheduled to begin in University Park in 2011.

Besides these innovative programs, Pace also offers traditional transit service via Route 367, operating between the University Park Metra Station and downtown Park Forest. The route serves Governors State University and Orchard Park Plaza in Park Forest. Saturday service operates between downtown Park Forest and Thornwood House in University Park.

Please look to future newsletters for updated information regarding both the Pace Ad Shelter Program and the Pace Community Vehicle Program, as both Pace programs are still in the preliminary stages of development with the Village.

For further information regarding Pace Route 367, please visit the Pace website at www.pacebus.com or call Pace Customer Relations at (847) 364-7223, Monday – Friday, 8:00 a.m. – 5:00 p.m.





The Senior Center

News You Can Use From the Village of University Park

U.S. Population Ages



If you have lost a little pep in your step, or glide in your stride, you're not alone. The 2010 Census reveals that the senior population is increasing at a faster rate than the youngsters. Those of you between the ages of 45 and 64 grew 31.5 percent between 2000 and 2010 to 81.5 million.

Not to be left behind, those 65 and older grew at a rate of 15.1 percent to 40.3 million.

By comparison those 18 and under grew only 2.6 percent to 74.2 million. And those 18 to 44? They limped way behind with a growth rate of 0.6 percent, bringing them to 112.8 million, or 36.5 percent of the nation's population.

There's power in those numbers both as voters and consumers.

How Do I Make My Money Last?

A good question. With seniors living longer, there is a huge risk that the retirement plan put in place 30, 40 or 50 years ago, might need a little fine tuning today. That will be explored in future issues of COMMUNICATE!

Meanwhile, what can you do today to stash a little cash? As a special feature for COMMUNICATE! Seniors, editors will periodically run a list of places that offer discounts to seniors. Remember, the term senior does not have a universal definition.

For many years 65 was the age used to separate the



middle-aged from the elderly. But now, AARP defines senior as anyone 50 and over. Some stores use 55 as the magic number, others 62.

So don't go in demanding a senior discount at Hard-ee's when you hit 55. They're going to tell you to come back in another 10 years when you're 65. Then, and only then, can you kick back on \$0.33 soft drinks, each and every day.

Meanwhile, here is the COMMUNICATE! list for this month.

1. Arby's 10% (55+)
2. Boston Market 10% (65+)
3. Chili's 10% (55+)
4. IHOP 10% (55%+)
5. Subway 10% (60+)
6. Kmart 20% (50+)
7. Kohl's 15% (60+)
8. Alamo Up to 25% off for AARP members
9. Amtrak 15% (62+)
10. Avis Up to 25% off for AARP members

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Editor's Note - Please note that these businesses reserve the right to end or change these offers at any time. If you find that any of these discounts are no longer offered, please contact the editor at wp@informationpluspro.com.

How Secure Is Your Social Security?

Good question. In light of the recent political bruhaha over the debt ceiling, and conservatives willingness to throw seniors under the bus, the answer is still unknown.

COMMUNICATE! will stay on top of this situation and also let seniors know what position their legislators are taking. Until then here are a few things to consider as we begin the conversation about your benefits.

You're just about to turn 62, the minimum age for Social Security benefits. What do you do and when?

Put in your application at least 90 days before you want checks to start. You can sign up online at www.ssa.gov, or call 1 (800) 772-1213. You will need the following documents: Social Security card, or record of your number.

You will also need your birth certificate (proof of U.S. citizenship or lawful alien status). Prepare to produce your military discharge papers if service occurred before 1968. In any case, have them ready, just in case. Also present last year's W-2 tax form or tax return if self-employed.

I'm already receiving Social Security benefits. How come I'm not getting a cost-of-living (COLA) increase this year? I need my money.

COLAs are tied to the consumer price index. Because inflation has been low, there will be no increase in 2011. But, keep an eye on the Federal Reserve Bank. If they decide to boost the economy by printing more money, the value of the dollar will decline, but you

might get more of them going forward.

How come the U.S. government hasn't been keeping up with payments due to the Social Security Trust Fund? Don't they know that I need my money?

Because a record number of Baby Boomers are retiring and preparing to retire; the U.S. government has been collecting more in taxes than it pays in benefits. Surplus funds go into the Trust fund and are invested in U.S.-guaranteed Treasury bonds.

In reality it's up to you to keep pressure on your legislators to make sure that in future years, you get the money you are entitled to.

Look for the conservatives to try to put Social Security and Medicare cuts back on the table, as soon as they return from vacation this fall.

I'm considering filing for Chapter 13 bankruptcy. Do Social Security benefits count as income in bankruptcy, or are they protected?

Protected. Social Security is not included as disposable income, when setting up a debtor repayment plan.

Source - AARP Bulletin





Maybe It's Time To Give Up The Keys To That Jag

Drivers aged 65 and older are the fastest growing segment of drivers, according to a new study by the University of Michigan.

You might feel good, but let's face it the years have taken their toll. It might be good for you and those you love, as well as strangers trying to navigate to the other side of the street...It might be time to do what you might have once considered unthinkable...It might be time to give up the keys to that Jag.

But wait a minute. It's not that simple. Experts on the aging process say there are consequences to this decision.

Consider Dr. David C. Musch, of the Kellogg Eye Center at the University of Michigan. He says "When seniors lose their ability to drive, there are consequences. These individuals have higher rates of depression and social isolation, more limited access to health care services and are more likely to need long-term care."

Yet, we can't escape the fact as noted by Dr. Orly Avitzur, in Consumer Reports Health, "Vision, response time and neuromuscular control, worsen with age. Memory, language, perception, reasoning and thinking also decline," the board-certified neurologist says.

So what is a concerned family to do?

Dr. Avitzur says, "I recommend to my patients that they use holiday reunions as a time to get the family together to discuss a senior's driving ability and agree on the next steps."

Continuing she says, "The challenge for families and medical experts is to identify unsafe drivers without restricting those who drive safely."



More tips from Consumer Health Reports. to help families help seniors with what is often a sensitive issue.

1. Gather the family. The more cohesive the message, the better.
2. Check with the senior's doctor.
3. Check state laws.
Go to www.iihs.org/laws/olderdrivers.aspx.
4. Consult a driving rehabilitation expert for an off-road evaluation and an on-road assessment.
Find a certified specialist in your state at www.driver-January.com.
5. Arrange alternate transportation.
6. If necessary, consult an attorney for legal and financial issues.

If none of this works, take the keys.

Better mad than dead.

See you next month.

WE WANT TO HEAR FROM YOU!
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THE VILLAGE OF UNIVERSITY PARK

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