



UP Beat

**Mayor
Vivian E.
Covington**

Looking back on 2011, this has been an outstanding year. When I reflect on the past few months; I have to keep reminding myself that it was

just on May 10, that I was sworn in as the first female Mayor of the Village of University Park. Just over seven months ago. So much has happened.

Among the most important was bringing in new Village Manager Lafayette Linear. He has brought a new energy and vision to the Village; and shares with me a passion for making this a better place to live for all of the residents. Together, along with our elected and appointed officials, we as a team have begun to literally rebuild the village.

That has meant extensive relationship building, with individuals, institutions and organizations. Among others we have reached out to the **South Suburban Mayors & Managers Association; Diversity Inc.;** the **Chicago Southland Economic Development Commission,** and others.

Chief among those has been **Governors State University.** When I first came into office I realized that GSU was an untapped resource, right in the Village. On becoming Mayor, I reached out to **GSU President, Dr. Elaine Maimon.** Since that time we have developed an aggressive agenda that is a win-win for both the **University** and the **Village.**



L-R - NLC Instructor, Mayor Covington

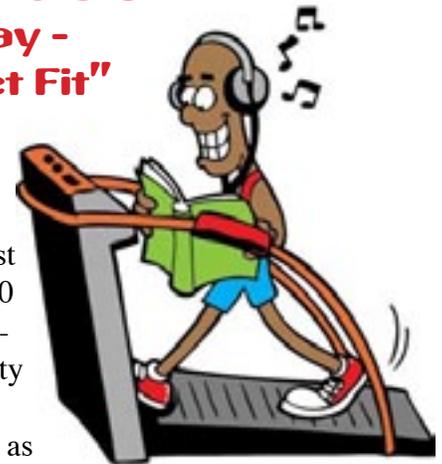
GSU is on the way to becoming a 4-year university complete with student dormitories. The **Village**

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Open House Family Fun Day - "Don't Sit - Get Fit"

Listen Up!

On January 16, 2012, University Park will host its Family Fun Day at 90 Town Center. "Don't Sit-Get Fit" is an opportunity for the whole family to have fun while moving, as well as visit the new **Kids Health Center of University Park.**



Following the Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. celebration at Governors State University, and a lunch buffet at PK's restaurant, come on over and take part in this free fun event from 1:00 p.m. – 4:00 p.m.

It's all about our young folks!

The purpose of this event is for our children to have fun while exercising and engaging in healthy eating while educating the entire family. Video games, television, fast foods, and sedentary lifestyles are robbing our kids of healthy and fulfilling lives. We've got to start moving around- "**Don't Sit-Get Fit**".

People who exercise regularly live longer

Not only that, they tend to be happier and more productive.

Exercise is a four letter word for many people. But it can take many different forms. We can dance. We can dunk a basketball. Well, maybe that's a stretch. Let's just say we can dribble a basketball. We can bowl, play tennis, run around a track, run around the block, the possibilities are

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of University Park is on the way to becoming a college town, with all of the resources and amenities that go with that reality. I will keep you updated on our progress in the pages of COMMUNICATE! and elsewhere.

Going forward the Village will also be engaged in extensive relationship-building with our Industrial Park.

Everyone is beginning to realize that our Village has unlimited potential. We are talking to banks, medical providers, food service companies and others who are interested in the many opportunities available should they locate here.

It is an exciting time.

The Village is coming together. In November we honored the nation's veterans, with a special emphasis on our very own. They received awards and will be permanently recognized on our new Military Wall of Honor.

We have signed an agreement with Pace and new ad shelters will be put up in 2012. This agreement will provide revenue as well as jobs for Village residents. We are also working on developing routes for the new buses that will begin running early in the year. You will soon begin receiving information on any new jobs, that will be created as part of this program.



We want to do more to both recognize our existing small businesses, and attract new businesses in the future. This creates both revenue and jobs for residents. Toward that end we need existing businesses to send in their contact information. We plan to create a new business directory, the Blue and Yellow pages. We need your information to make sure that you are represented. For your convenience, a form will be posted on our website at www-university-park-il.com for you to fill out and submit.

I also attended the National League of Cities annual conference, along with Village Manager Lafayette Linear, and Trustees Elizabeth Williams, Joseph Roudez, III and Oscar Brown, Jr. It is important that we stay on top of good government best practices, in order to continue moving the Village forward.

I want to invite you to participate in the Family Fun Day scheduled for King's Day, January 16 in the Towncenter, following the annual celebration of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.'s birthday. "Don't Sit - Get Fit", Prepare for an afternoon of healthy fun. See the lead article in this issue of COMMUNICATE! for more information.

Looking ahead to 2012, I see more purpose, progress and prosperity ahead for the Village of University Park. Happy Holidays to all.



endless. We can swim at the Hickock Aquatic Center or the Olympic-sized pool at Governors State University. Either way, the Village of University Park is here to help. We've just got to get started.

"Don't Sit-Get Fit"

And, quite frankly, the sooner we start the better!

While thinking about our health and how important our young

people are to the future of the Village of University Park, COMMUNICATE! caught up with Dr. Robin Washington, an assistant professor of Physical Therapy at Governors State University and Certified Rehabilitation Counselor, to get her thoughts.

Dr. Washington is also planning a research study that will gather information that will be used to make suggestions about how the youth of

University Park can become more fit while having fun. She also wants our youth to live longer, healthier and have happier lives.

This will ultimately tie into the program that will be implemented at the Kids Health Center, which will have an open house in its temporary location at 34 Town Center on January 16, 2012.

The following is an exclusive interview with Dr. Washington.

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Who will participate in your planned study?

Shortly following the Family Fun Day Event – "Don't Sit-Get Fit", I plan to begin a study called the Kids Health Club. This study is intended for elementary children who are residents of University Park, IL, within the age range of 10-13 years-old, and who attend either Crete-Monee Middle School or Coretta Scott King Magnet Schools.

What is the purpose?

The purpose of the study is to get kids moving and allow them to have fun while exercising. Incorporated in this program are phases that include education for the children and their parents on proper nutrition, exercise techniques and teaching the children how to monitor their own physical health.

Healthcare professionals involved in this study will include physical therapists, a physical therapist assistant and a dietitian. The idea for this study, stemmed from the community activities and business venture of the Kids Health Club in Lincoln Mall founded by Diane and Vernard Alsberry.

What will be done with the research information once collected?

Over the course of 4-5 months, information will be collected related to the children's weight, body mass index (BMI) and percent body fat composition. In addition, progression in endurance, strength

and flexibility may also be recorded. One additional benefit that probably won't be measured in this study, but is extremely important is improvement in the children's overall grades and quality of life.

Information will be shared with the community, as appropriate, and possibly published in research journals and presented at professional conferences. In addition,



information gathered will be used to empower each child and their parents for the purpose of monitoring the child's health.

I really want to stress the word, "empower". My goal is to equip the kids with the tools, Knowledge, Education and Application, that will enhance their quality of life. Once the study ends, these children can continue on by owning what they have learned, maintaining healthy behaviors and teaching others empowerment.

What do you recommend as some easy ways that youth can begin a fitness program?

Of most importance is communication with the youths' doctors and education on the importance of staying fit, particularly as it relates to risk factors associated with unhealthy lifestyles. With the rise in chronic illnesses such as diabetes, asthma, hypertension and obesity, particularly among our children, education is essential in understanding how to prevent and manage these illnesses.

Such chronic illnesses were once thought to be diseases people got in their older years. That is no longer the case. There is significant evidence indicating an increase in occurrences among younger populations.

Physical Education (PE) is extremely important within our schools. Showing the connection between what is learned in PE and how to apply the information to everyday life is essential. A lot of times, courses like PE are simply thought of as another course that the child must take because it is a requirement. When the family sits down to work on homework, guess what, PE homework should be included.

This is a great opportunity for the entire family to learn concepts related to health as well as getting the entire family to move based on

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what's being learned in the PE classes.

Finally, it is also important to encourage the child to engage in sports activities at the school or programs within the community. Increased motivation may occur if the parents or family is involved even if it is volunteering.

Why is this important in your view?

This matter is important because we need to empower our children now, and teach them how to combat the onset of chronic illnesses, or minimize the effects of these diseases which will allow for healthier lifestyles leading into adulthood. Changing behaviors is extremely difficult. The difficulty increases as we get older. Therefore, providing an opportunity for children to change behaviors, now, through education, application and ownership is important.

In addition, it is extremely important for our children to play, laugh, be innovative, dream and envision their future. So, moving and learning about their bodies through moving increases awareness of self.

How does improved nutrition contribute to improving one's fitness?

Proper nutrition is essential because healthy foods provide fuel to every organ in your body. Exercise/activity allows proper breakdown and use of the nourishments. When proper nutrition is supplemented with exercise and spiritual growth, significant improvement occurs in the individual's self-esteem, self-concept, cognition, agility, temperament, relationships and overall quality of life.

What is the minimum time weekly that one needs to spend working

on becoming fit?

Upon review of the literature, one will find frequency related to exercise varies. In my opinion, it is important that we move and have fun. The amount of time depends on one's current level of fitness, current medical condition and passion for the activity.

The key is to move often, briskly and for at least 30 minutes (daily) challenge oneself physically. Challenge your heart and your mind.



We hear this over and over again, but the statement is accurate. Consult with your physician first before beginning a rigorous exercise program. Obviously, if a person's physical health limits his or her ability to engage in certain activities, then that person definitely should receive guidelines and restrictions from his or her primary physician.

What are some fun things that work that you can recommend?

Brisk walks, use a pedometer to measure the number of steps you take a day increasing the number of steps to greater than 10,000 steps a day. Challenge yourself by your walking speed or by incorporating inclines or stairs.

Jogging is not for everyone but it is also a good and fun thing to do for some people.

Other things like horseback riding, bowling, skating, skiing, snowball fights, dancing, stepping, Zumba, double dutch, basketball, swimming, softball, kickball, hula hoop, and hop scotch are all examples of family fun things to do.

The word exercise sounds like a chore for many of us. That is why I am encouraging people to have fun. Engage

in activities that are challenging and enjoyable.

How can the family best form a support structure to help their youths change to healthier behaviors?

It is my belief and my experience that it is really difficult for a child to change behaviors, without the support of family and changes in cooking habits of the primary cook within the household.

The "Don't Sit-Get Fit" event scheduled for January 16, 2012 is an opportunity for the entire family to get together and have fun while moving. Praising one another through use of positive words and attitudes that enhance self-esteem and encourage positive outlooks is another way to support the youth. Encouragement is powerful and pushes an individual to be and do their best.

What are some of the expected outcomes of your research?

Of course, I would like to see each participant progress towards an acceptable body weight, BMI, percent body fat, and a healthier lifestyle. Overall, my expected outcome is to empower through education. Once a person has the education, he or she is now equipped to combat or minimize the effects of chronic illnesses.

Once the individual is equipped, it is that person's choice as to whether or not he or she will use the knowledge and make a change that is appropriate for him or her. The goal of this study is to educate children and parents in the areas of nutrition and exercise techniques and to provide an opportunity for them to see results.

Don't Sit-Get Fit and let's have fun while doing it!



University Park Trustees Participate in Annual National League of Cities Conference in Phoenix, Arizona

What is The National League of Cities?

NLC is an organization dedicated to helping city leaders build better communities. Partnering with the 49 State Municipal Leagues, NLC is a resource to and an advocate for more than 19,000 cities, villages and towns.

This past October Trustees, Joseph Roudez, III, Elizabeth Williams and Oscar Brown, Jr., represented the Village of University Park at the annual NLC conference. Trustee Roudez filed the following report with COMMUNICATE!



1. What was your purpose for attending this conference?

As an elected official I felt that I would learn more about solutions to help address some of the challenges we face in local government. This included (looking at new ways) to build partnerships to strengthen our village and advocacy efforts.

Attending such conferences also helps one appreciate the value of public service, civility and mutual respect. It also helps to anticipate community needs and develop strategies to meet those needs and improve the quality of life. Commitment to the highest ethical standards among all public officials was emphasized. I also learned the importance of continued education in order to improve leadership.

2. Name and briefly describe the sessions you attended. Social Media, Networking and Communicating with New Media for Local Government

- Focused on learning how to utilize new and Social Media and examining the best ways for government leaders to reach out to constituents, develop innovative policy, to bring about effective community problem solving.

Rapid Innovation - Discussed the best ways to convert ideas

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into results. Participants learned to identify various innovative methods that help to immediately improve village services and programs. We learned best practices in terms of crafting robust and practical action plans that incorporate innovation.

Advocacy Skills - A seminar on how to champion ideas and influence others. We learned how to build and leverage (personal) credibility to get people to listen. Also, the importance of clarifying your message, and making sure there is agreement about what the problem is.

3. What did you learn that will help you in executing your duties as a Trustee?

I learned how to effectively use dialogue and engaged listening skills to better collaborate and reach successful decisions. I also learned how to reaffirm professional strengths and identify areas of weakness that will help me redefine our village mission, in light of current difficulties that we face.



L-R - NLC President James E. Mitchell, Trustee Roudez, Harvard Economics Professor Edward L. Glaeser

4. How would you assess the training experience?

On a scale of 1-10 this conference rates a 10. This is the largest conference in the nation (that offers training) for public officials. It brings small towns, big cities and villages together to network and deal with current challenges that our nation faces at the federal, state and local levels.

5. What did you learn from other elected officials that will help you in University Park?

That we are not the only local government going through trying times. It's going on in big cities, small towns, and villages alike. But through innovation, transparency and the willingness to work outside the box; we can solve common issues and problems in today's challenging environment.

6. Did you learn about any model projects that you would like to see implemented in University Park?

Statistics show when local government sets the trend

80 percent of its community will support then adopt them. Here in University Park we should put energy and sustainable policies in place for us and future developers; requiring a certain amount of solar and green technology. That will effectively reduce the cost of energy and fuel used by our local government.

For instance, install solar panels on the roof tops of our facilities. Use solar energy to heat our Aquatic pool. Use LED lighting on our streets and motion sensors and energy efficient (CFL) light bulbs in our buildings. Implement the use of hybrid vehicles.

We must become innovative and creative thinkers. We must lead the way for our community and region by opening our own University Park Technical Resource Center.

This will allow us to be forerunners along with other communities, that are establishing such facilities.

They are seeing lower dropout rates, decreased crime, and their veterans return to work. All because they have an establishment that provides them the skill sets they need to improve the quality of their lives.

7. Is there anything else you would like to share about your experience?

After my fourth year attending the National League of Cities conference, I'm close to receiving my national gold certificate at the leadership training institute. I also attended several other meetings regarding the 2012 presidential election. I serve as the state chair for the national organization (DMO) Democratic Municipal Officials, representing the state of Illinois and the Village of University Park.

Yes, it was quite busy at the National League of Cities Conference. Lots of work ahead. My last comment is to thank all of the residents for their support. Merry Christmas and Happy New Year to all.

For more information about the DMO get involved at nationaldmo.org.



COMMUNICATE! WHAT'S HAPPENING?

Village Manager
Lafayette Linear
& Village of University
Park Departments

VILLAGE MANAGER REPORT

The end of 2011 marks my first six months on the job, as Village Manager of the Village of University Park. It has been an exciting, although sometimes frustrating challenge, doing my part to help move the Village forward. As I reflect, I believe that the positives outweigh the negatives.

What always keeps me going is the fact that I am in a unique position, to help residents improve the quality of their lives, on a daily basis. The fact that we continue to experience the worst economic times since the "Great Depression", makes this an even greater challenge.

It means that we have to get used to getting more done with fewer resources. That means fewer financial resources, which might translate into fewer human resources as well. But it's all for the good of our residents.

As part of my ongoing efforts to improve the delivery of professional services to you, I attended the **National League of Cities** conference in November. I participated in various **seminars** and **discussions** related to **government** and **private partnerships** and **economic development** issues.



Village Manager Linear networks with NLC colleagues

I am currently in search of someone to direct our **economic development** and **code enforcement** office.

Also, Dr. Mary Bruce who facilitated our October retreat has issued a preliminary report. After **Mayor Covington** and I review the findings, she will finalize report for distribution and discussion with Village officials and department heads. This important document will help us in the development of a new strategic plan.

The following are some of the highlights of my tenure:

- Hiring of a new Chief of Police
- Hiring of a new Finance Director
- Hiring of Village Collector
- Regular review of existing TIFS
- Purchase of 2 new police vehicles
- Purchase of 1 Aerial Ladder Truck

- Installation of all new hoses, nozzles and other fire equipment
- Grant of almost \$11,000 for radio & tornado siren upgrades
- Undertaking of Phase II engineering for I-57 project

My staff and I plan to work even harder on your behalf during the coming year. Meanwhile, I would like to wish Happy Holidays to everyone in the Village of University Park.



PARKS AND RECREATION DEPARTMENT

From Keely Childress - Parks and Recreation Department

GET READY TO DANCE & PLAY THIS WINTER!

LINE DANCING - Come learn



the latest slides. Wear Comfortable shoes and clothes.

Dates: Fridays January 6 - February 24, 2012

Time: 6:30 p.m. - 8:00 p.m.

Place: 90 Towncenter

Cost: \$5.00 per session

Minimum 5/ No Maximum

VILLAGEWIDE SNOWBALL FIGHT

Don't let the cold keep you inside. Come out and have some fun. Dress right. Aim straight. Then come on inside and warm up with hot chocolate and marshmallows.

Date: Saturday, January 14, 2012

Time: 2:00 p.m. - 4:00 p.m.

Place: Riegel Farm Complex

Cost: Free

Registration Deadline: Wednesday, January 11, 2012

LET'S BUILD A SNOWMAN

It'll be cold, but come on out anyway. Bring waterproof warm gloves, hat and coat. Hot chocolate served after snowman is completed.

Date: Saturday, January 21, 2012

Time: 2:00 p.m. - 3:00 p.m.

Place: Riegel Farm Complex

Cost: Free

Minimum 8/Maximum 25

Registration Deadline: Friday, January 13, 2012

For more information on our programs call (708) 534-6456, or email vparksandrecreationdepartment@yahoo.com.

POLICE DEPARTMENT

From Chief Mel Davis - University Park Police Department.

I am adopting TSA's "See Something, Say Something" campaign. Due to these difficult economic times, crime is rising rapidly everywhere. It's important that we work together to keep our Village safe. The message, **FROM THE DESK OF THE CHIEF; "If you see something please say something."**

No matter how insignificant it may seem. A license plate number, clothing description; people walking with a large item. Anything that looks out of place, should be reported to the police immediately.

We are our brother's keeper. If someone rings your bell or knocks on your door, and then leaves before you answer, **CALL THE POLICE. "See something, say something."**

In order to increase your personal safety; I'm asking that home owners invest in a wireless alarm system and hidden camera systems. These items can be purchased at reasonable rates. Check with your insurance company to see if you can be reimbursed, or qualify to

have your rates lowered.

University Park Officer Honored With Medal of Valor Award

On Sunday, November 20, the Village of Park Forest held their annual ceremony awards honoring local officers for going above and beyond the call of duty, to keep their communities safe.

University Park Officer Michael Gebert was given the **Medal of Valor** award for the capture and arrest of a robbery suspect. **Police Chief Mel Davis** said, "Officer Gebert's quick thinking and heroic actions in assisting Park Forest Police, helped to make our streets a lot safer."



Pictured L-R: University Park Sgt. Darryl Stroud, Park Forest Police Chief Clifford R. Butz, University Park Police Officer Michael Gebert, University Park Police Chief Mel Davis and Deputy Chief Greg Box

PUBLIC WORKS DEPARTMENT

From Jerry Townsend University Park Public Works Department



SNOW & ICE REMOVAL PROCEDURES

Mission Statement

The Public Works Department will apply every resource available to provide for the safe reasonable accommodations for roadway traffic, during and after a winter storm on all Village-owned streets, cul-de-sacs and parking lots.

Procedures

Department of Public Works crews will begin applying salt to the roadways when precipitation, either snow and/or ice begins and causes unsafe traveling conditions. Crews will begin plowing and salting operations whenever two inches of snow have accumulated on paved surfaces.

Whenever two inches of snow has accumulation and snow continues falling, crews will begin an all-out plowing effort. We've established a priority plowing system so that main traffic routes are plowed first. Our goal is to clear all streets. But heavier snows often take longer to clear.

Residents are reminded that there is **no parking on the street after a "2" snowfall.** This delays the cleaning of the street. Vehicles that are parked on the street after a "2" snowfall are subject to a citation and towing.

Arterial, main streets and any routes required for emergencies are plowed in the first phase of snow removal to ensure accessibility for emergency vehicles. Residential side streets,

cul-de-sacs, and deadends are cleared in the second phase. Cul-de-sacs are more difficult to clear than through streets as there is less space in parkways to dump snow without burying driveways, mailboxes, streetlights or fire hydrants.

When we plow streets under ideal conditions, 4 passes of the plow truck is required to clear the street. If the snow is falling heavily and the forecast is for excessive amounts of snow; we will only make two passes down the center of the street to keep streets open. Once the storm subsides; streets will then be cleaned from curb-to-curb.

In order to make everyone's winter safe, enjoyable and free from unnecessary back pain, The public Works Department would like to offer these suggestions.

- * If possible, shovel driveway aprons only after roadways are completely cleared. This eliminates the need to shovel more than once.
- * Pile all snow away from the edge of the road on the left side of the driveway as you face the house. Should the snowplow make an additional pass after you have shoveled; it will not push the same snow back into your driveway.
- * Do not push snow into or across the street. This not only creates an additional hazard; but may result in the same snow being deposited in your neighbor's driveway; should the snowplow make

an additional pass.

- * To make pedestrian travel safer and easier for everyone, clear snow and ice from the walks in front of your property.
- * Clear snow away from fire hydrants to permit easy access in case of an emergency.

The Village of University Park plows most streets within the city limits. However, there are a number of roads that are the responsibility of other local government agencies. For example, IDOT plows Cicero Ave. and Governors Highway. Will County plows Western Ave. and University Parkway from Western Ave to Steger-Monee Rd.

For more information on snow and ice removal call the Public Works Department at (708) 534-4823.

Be careful out there.



UNIVERSITY GOLF CLUB AND CONFERENCE CENTER

From Paul Blockoms - University Park Golf Club & Conference Center

The Village of University Park proudly welcomes you to the **University Golf Club And Conference Center.** We are confident that you will find our dedication and hard work have resulted in the highest level of golf and dining experience.



COMMUNICATE! NEWS BRIEFS

BOARD NEWS

VETERANS PROCLAMATION INTRODUCED BY MAYOR, UNANIMOUSLY PASSED BY BOARD

University Park's Veterans Day commemoration on November 4, one week before the November 11 day of national recognition; the Board of Trustees unanimously adopted a resolution honoring all Veterans at the November 22 board meeting. The village's Military Wall of Honor was also unveiled on November 4, honoring all local service families.

PRESENTATION BY PEMBROKE HOPKINS PARK CONSTRUCTION OUTREACH PROGRAM

Resident Drueada Henry introduced two representatives from this community-based program at the September 27th meeting. The pre-apprenticeship program can train and place eligible workers for free.

Contact Director of Supportive Services, B. Keith Bobo at bbobo@phpcop.net for more information. Also, visit <http://www.phpcop.net>.

(Golf Events continued)

Please note updates in our December 2011 Calendar.

Thursday Night Jazz has ended.

Stepping Classes have been removed until we confirm times.

Breakfast Brunch hours are as follows:

Saturday 9 a.m. - 1:00 p.m.
Sunday 9 a.m. - 2:00 p.m.



GSU RESOLUTION PASSED

At the same meeting Trustees voted unanimously in support of a resolution for Governors State University to become a four-year institution, which includes a plan to build campus housing.

POLICE CHIEF AND FINANCE DIRECTOR JOIN VILLAGE STAFF

Exhaustive searches to fill two of University Park's key positions has ended with the hiring of Police Chief, Mel Davis and Finance Director, Gloria Gibson. Chief Davis was sworn in at the October 25th meeting, accompanied by his wife, mother and other members of his family.

Both bring impressive credentials to their new positions.

Mel Davis - A 17-year law enforcement veteran, Chief Davis has served as Chief of Police for the Village of Phoenix since October 2002. In addition, he was Police Commander of Calumet Park from 2004-2008, working in a dual capacity during those four years.

The longest serving chief in the history of Phoenix, Davis has been a mentor to more than 200 police officers during his career. He pledges to serve the Village of University with, "pride, dignity and professionalism." Chief Davis is the holder of bachelor's and master's degrees in criminal justice administration.

He is a member of the Illinois Police Chiefs Association and the South Suburban Police Chiefs Association.

Gloria Gibson - An expert in municipal finance, Gibson has more than 20 years of financial management experience, with more than 13 of those spent in municipal government.

Experience includes, supervisor accounting for the City of Chicago, and finance director for the Village of Oak Park. She has also worked as an independent contractor for the City of Highwood and the Village of Franklin Park. She holds a b.s. degree from DeVry University, and an MBA from DeVry's Keller Graduate School of Business.

Gibson has been active in the Illinois Government Finance Officers Association, the National Forum for Black Public Administrators (Financial Secretary), and Women in Public Finance.

TRAINING OPPORTUNITY

Trustee Keith J. Griffin introduced a representative from the Dawson Technical Institute, which is affiliated with Kennedy-King College, to discuss career training opportunities, at the October 25th meeting. The IDOT-sponsored program is paying for 30 students to participate in the program.

Participants must be 18 or older with a high school diploma or GED. They must also have a valid Illinois Driver's license, and be interested in working in the construction industry. Careers include laborers, carpenters, cement masons, pipe fitters, plumbers, ironworkers, equipment operators and electricians. For information email dti@ccc.edu.

VILLAGE'S HEALTH INSURANCE PLAN RENEWED

BlueCross BlueShield of Illinois insurance agreement with the Village of University Park was renewed effective November 1, 2011 to October 21, 2012, with a slightly lower premium.

COMMITTEE/COMMISSION MEMBERS APPROVED

Also at the October 25th meeting,



the **Police & Fire Commission** welcomed new members, Gloria Barnett-Brookins and Deborah Young, who were sworn in by Village Clerk Dorothy Jones. This expands the commission from five to seven members. Both terms expire on December 31, 2014.

Other appointments included the **Golf Club Advisory Committee** with Trustee Elizabeth Williams the newly announced liaison. Other appointments included:

Robert Travis, Pete Gordon and Dorothy Jones, terms all expiring on December 31, 2014. Retired Judge Michael Stuttley and Al Christian were also appointed. Their terms expire on December 31, 2013.

Art King was reappointed to the Finance Committee. His term expires December 31, 2014. He will serve as Chairman.

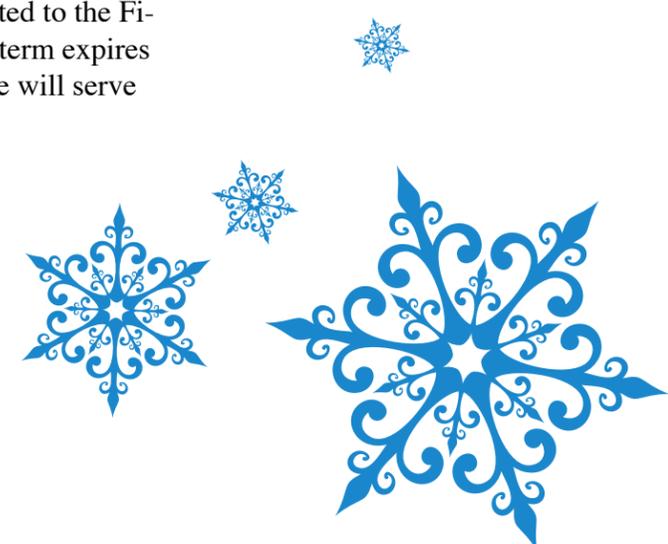
OTHER NEWS

From the **Will County Clerk's Office**

It's not your imagination if it seems that we are always in the election season, as the **March 20, 2012** primaries are just ahead.

The **Will County Board** has redistricted all precincts in Will County, resulting in a reduction from **445** to **303**. This is in compliance with the **Illinois State Statutes**. The reduction in precincts means an increase in **registered voters per precinct**. It also means that it is more important than ever that the **assigned 5 Election Judges** show up and work their assigned precincts.

Any judge who cannot work the **March 20, 2012** primary should immediately contact the **Will County Clerk's office** at election-judge@willcountyillinois.com. Or call **Joanne** at (815) 740-4617 or **Robin** at (815) 740-4616.





A Few Minutes With the New Treasurer of the Village of University Park

Devon Dilworth is the newly appointed treasurer of the Village of University Park, replacing Jim Ellis who served several years in that position. Dilworth has a Bachelor's of Science degree in Accounting/Marketing and a Master's of Arts degree, the latter from Governors State University. He is married to Donna and they have two daughters, Devonna and Shanelle.

Why does public service interest you?

I can see the many changes that University Park is capable of achieving with the help of the community. In order to help facilitate those changes, I realized that it was time for me to contribute my talents and experience in accounting and financial services. Being Treasurer will help me understand the political positions and process that will help guide me in my journey.

I also want to be an example to the young people in my community, so they can see me making a difference. Using my gifts, experiences and skills can and will help uplift my community.

What are your primary duties?

To conduct monthly financial meetings with committee members and the community. I also act as a liaison to our community on issues concerning the village's financial position.

What are your main priorities?

As Treasurer, I must communicate and listen to the community. I make sure through careful research that the information I report is factual, in order to realize the best results from the monthly financial meetings.

Personally, my priorities are the Lord, my family and my integrity.



Anything else you would like to say to the youth in the village?

There are many things I could say...First keep God first. Pray everyday. Never give up, and you are our future. What you do, what you say, and your appearance continues to shape who you are and what you represent.

Do you have a favorite quote, spiritual or otherwise?

"Faith Without Work is Dead". You can have all the faith in the world, but without action, your work is dead. I have faith in this community. By my action in stepping up to be Treasurer of the Village of University Park, I know my work will not be in vain.

What would you like those outside of University Park to know about the village?

We have great neighbors, a supportive community...we are rich in resources, a great educational system, and a great first African American female Mayor in University Park's history.

Anything else you would like to say?

I am honored and excited to be your Treasurer. Feel free to participate in any of the monthly financial meetings. Your skills and talents are greatly appreciated and welcomed. When you see me on the streets, feel free to wave and say hello.



Governors State to Admit First Freshman Class

The Illinois Board of Higher Education (IBHE) has voted to approve the proposal by Governors State University's Board of Trustees to add lower division programming to the university's upper division and graduate offerings. GSU will enroll its first freshman class in August 2014.

"GSU's decision to admit freshmen beginning in 2014 is historic and transformative. By designing a state-of-the-art freshman program, GSU will increase its already significant commitment to the Illinois Public Agenda. For the first time in our 42-year history, we are now poised to serve Illinois as a full, comprehensive, regional university," said Dr. Elaine P. Maimon, President of Governors State University.

Mayor of University Park, Vivian E. Covington said, "We are pleased that the Illinois Board of Education approved GSU's proposal. This is a significant step toward the Village of University Park becoming a college town. I have been engaged in regular meetings with Dr. Maimon, and we both are committed to making this happen." At the September 27 board meeting, the University Park Board of Trustees unanimously approved a resolution in support of Governors State University becoming a 4-year institution.

GSU is currently the only exclusively upper-division and graduate public university in the Midwest, with coursework beginning at the junior level. While the establishment of upper-division universities was a national trend in the 1960s, most of these institutions are now full-service institutions. GSU's decision to

become a full four-year university is an active response to the region's need for new options for quality, affordable public higher education. "Illinois will increase the percentage of its citizens with bachelor's degrees only if we create new, high quality pathways to degree completion," said Maimon.

The university will develop a cohort of 270 full-time, day-time freshman students to be admitted in Fall 2014. GSU projects the eventual enrollment of as many as 625 freshman students each year.

Admission of freshmen is consistent with GSU's mission, values, and strategic plan for growth. Recently released statewide data on high school student admission to four-year public universities and community colleges have shown clear demand for public higher education in Chicago's south suburban region as well as throughout the rest of the state, and GSU is well-positioned to meet this demand.

The university has the infrastructure to support a freshman class. A majority of the university's courses are held during the evening to accommodate its large constituency of non-traditional students. Even with GSU's growing population of full-time undergraduate, daytime students, classroom space is still widely available in the morning and early afternoon.

GSU's recruitment of freshmen will encourage two pathways to degree completion: direct admission to GSU as a freshman under the program approved by IBHE on December 6; or admission to a community college with a plan to complete the associate degree before transfer to GSU or to another university under GSU's existing Dual Degree Program (DDP). "We





are gaining national recognition for our Dual Degree Program with eight local community colleges. Community college students enrolled in the DDP are guaranteed admission to GSU. They also receive dedicated transfer advising, a tuition lock-in, and access to the GSU Promise and other scholarships," said Maimon.

Maimon emphasized GSU's opportunity to be a model 21st century university: serving students of all ages, non-traditional and traditional, working adults and recent high school graduates; offering quality programs at all times of the day; and providing strong incentives to community college students to follow a seamless pathway from a community college associate degree to a GSU bachelor's degree.

Governors State has one of the most diverse student bodies in the nation, with 47 percent minority students and a large proportion of first-generation college students. "The addition of underclassmen will increase the diversity in the age of our students," noted Maimon. "Freshmen will learn valuable lessons from our non-traditional and returning students, and vice versa."

The university is involved in several other major developments that will add to its ability to serve the educational needs of the region. GSU has made initial

plans to open student housing for undergraduate and graduate students in the fall of 2014, when the first freshmen arrive. In October 2011, the university began the \$22.6 million, three-year renovation of its science facilities. The project will create state-of-the-art laboratories, enabling GSU to improve its preparation of students for careers in healthcare, computer science, scientific and mathematics research, and science and math education.

The expansion of GSU's academic programs has strong support from within and without the university. The admission of freshmen has been endorsed by the GSU Faculty Senate, Student Senate, Civil Service Senate, and the Alumni Board, the Student Advisory Council of the Illinois Board of Higher Education, and the Village of University Park. In addition several of GSU's regional community college and university partners wrote letters of support to the Illinois Board of Higher Education.

GSU has also announced the receipt of an \$875,000 grant from the Kresge Foundation, which will be used to enhance their innovative Dual Degree Program. The three-year grant will be used to strengthen the program, already recognized as a national model for degree completion.



Governor Pat Quinn Conference at South Suburban College on October 28, 2011

Governor Pat Quinn headlined a conference at South Suburban College on Friday, October 28, 2011, sponsored by Cook County Board President Toni Preckwinkle. A \$16 million state-county commitment was announced that would improve the infrastructure in South Suburban Cook County, with funds from the Illinois Jobs Now! program initiative.

"This partnership is critical in growing new jobs in our communities most in need. Southern Cook County has higher unemployment rates than other areas in the region and there are some of the highest concentrations of poverty and the lowest levels of technology adoption and access. Broadband will be critical to reversing these trends," said Cook County Board President Toni Preckwinkle.

Illinois Jobs Now!, capital construction program, is a \$6.1 million investment that works in tandem with a \$10 million pledge from Cook County. The important



focus of the program is to construct new, underground fiber optic cable that brings world-class high-speed network connections to dozens of community anchor institutions, including hospitals, libraries and schools in Harvey, Calumet Park, Robbins, Dixmoor, Riverdale and Markham. The Fiber Optic cables will run down the middle of I 57.

According to Governor Quinn: "This project will strengthen the Southland by bolstering the core information networks that directly impact public safety, health care, education and employment opportunities in our communities." Furthermore, this effort creates jobs, addresses a critical need in underserved communi-

(Continued next page)

Stay in the Loop with Family Access this School Year!

Crete-Monee School District 201-U parents with children in grades 3-5 can now do more than ever with Family Access! All parents (3-12) may view:

Student Grades, Assignments, Attendance, Discipline Reports, Class Schedules, and more!

Skyward Family Access is a web-based program that can be used from any computer connected to the internet, 24 hours a day! Through this system you can have instant email access to your child's teacher. Also sign up to receive email notifications when your child has a missing assignment, class grade falls below a designated threshold, and when your child is marked absent or tardy for class!

Skyward Family Access login information was mailed to all district families on September 21, 2011. If



you did not receive this information or have misplaced it, you may contact your child's school or the district's Technology HelpDesk at (708) 367-2930.

Make sure to attend a hands-on training session or participate in a LIVE webinar from the comfort of your own home! Either way you won't want to miss it! In the meantime, visit www.cm201u.org and click on the 'Parent Services' tab for more information!

Crete-Monee School District in conjunction with the Prairie State College Adult Education Department is hosting Off-Campus GED Preparation Classes

REGISTRATION

Thursday, February 16, 2012 5:00 p.m.

Crete-Monee High School
1515 W. Exchange Street
Crete, Illinois

- Classes begin on February 21, 2012
- Tuesdays & Thursdays 5 p.m. - 8:45 p.m.
- Located at Crete-Monee High School

Registration will be held on a first-come, first-served basis. Please bring an ID and proof of medical card, if applicable. Registration is for new students and students who have successfully completed a semester within the past 12 months. Due to limited resources if you do not show up for class after completing the assessment/registration process, you will not be able to register for next semester. Please call 708.709.7931 or 708.367.8315 for more information.





Governor's Broadband Expert Meets With Mayor, UP and GSU Officials and Staff



“The point of this is to improve peoples’ lives. It’s about jobs, health care and (other quality of life issues, said Bruce Montgomery, a board member of Governor Quinn’s Illinois Broadband Deployment Council and The Partnership for a Connected Illinois, in a meeting Friday, November 18 with Mayor Vivian E. Covington, Trustee Milton Payton, Village

Manager Lafayette Linear, and other stakeholders at the University Park Golf Club & Conference Center.

Montgomery was referring to the necessity of the Village of University Park to develop a plan to infuse 21st century Broadband Infrastructure as part of a comprehensive economic development initiative.

“This is a very viable community with assets and potential. Communities must be wired to accommodate anchor communities like universities and businesses. Many businesses considering relocation, want to know what fiber optics options are available.” Montgomery said.

Continuing he noted, “Even if you have ATT or Comcast, it’s to your advantage to be able to offer options. Current funding creates (the opportunity to develop) raw fiber foundations. This whole process can be driven by the community.”

Currently plans are in place to build core infrastructure around I-57 that surrounding communities can access. Currently Illinois is second only to California in terms of federal stimulus dollars allocated for Broadband infrastructure development.

BroadbandIllinois.org is the oversight committee created to manage Illinois’ dollars from the federal government, according to Montgomery.

Mayor Covington said, “The next step is to convene a meeting with primary University Park stakeholders and develop a plan to move forward.”

ties, and enhances the state’s global competitiveness. It will strengthen our economy and create jobs while accelerating investment that will expand the broadband infrastructure throughout Illinois.

Governor Quinn, a longtime advocate of improving the state’s technology infrastructure, has taken many steps to encourage broadband deployment in all areas of Illinois. As part of the Illinois Jobs Now! capital construction program, the state has leveraged more than \$350 million of private and federal investment with \$50 million in state matching funds managed by Illinois’ Departments of Commerce and Economic Opportunity.

The project is expected to create at least 150 new permanent and temporary jobs for engineers, electricians, laborers, construction workers and network technicians.

“This project provides another critical step forward in the southern suburbs’ efforts to strengthen our economy, and create jobs through infrastructure investments in partnership with the state of Illinois and Cook County,” said SSMMA President Rich Hofeld, Mayor of Homewood.

HOLIDAY SEASON SAFETY CONCERNS

By Evan Dozier/Contributing Writer

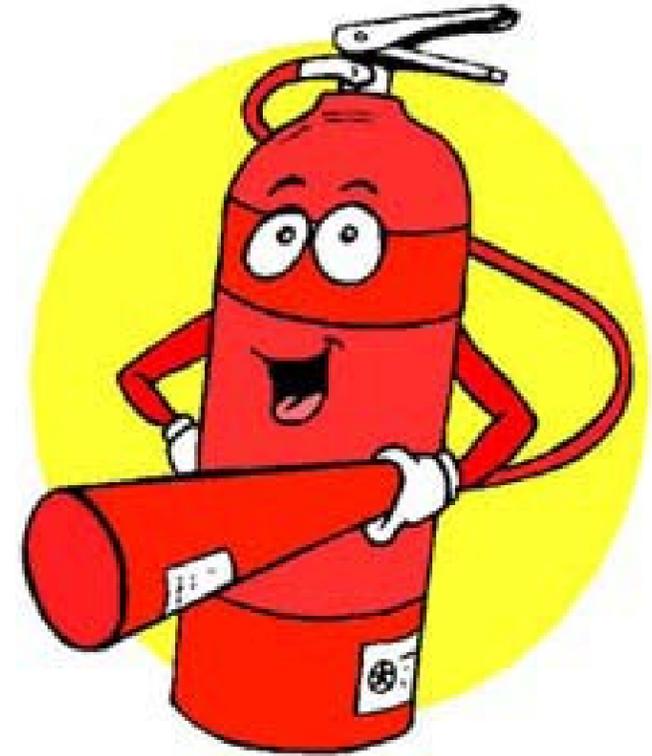
It’s cold outside. Streets everywhere are filled with the hustle and bustle of holiday shoppers. From Christmas tree safety, to shopping and security, there are a few important things to always consider.

When decorating Christmas trees, it is very important to keep safety in mind. When choosing a tree, make sure that it has fresh green needles that don’t fall off when touched. Make sure that all artificial trees are labeled and certified. Be sure that the manufacturer identifies them as fire retardant.

After finally getting a tree home, cut one to two inches from the base of the trunk before putting it in the stand. The tree must be at least three feet away from heat sources such as fireplaces, radiators and heating vents. Make sure that the tree is not blocking any exits. Always be careful to add water to the tree stand often, in order to keep the pine needles fresh. Dried needles are unsafe and can be painful.

Be careful when it comes to lighting. Some holiday lights are made for indoor or outdoor use, but not both. Damaged lighting needs to be replaced. These include any string of lights with loose bulb connections, and worn or broken cords. Make sure that no more than three strands of mini string sets are connected. Screw in bulbs must total no more than 50. Even though it may be tempting to gaze at the beauty of a decorated Christmas tree, it is important to turn off the lights before leaving home or going to bed. Unattended, it’s a possible fire hazard. Also, never use lit candles to decorate a tree. This too can cause a fire. After the holidays, remember to bring in all outdoor lighting. This makes them last longer while preventing hazards.

Since Christmas trees are live plants, they will eventually wither. When the tree begins to drop dried needles, it must be disposed of. They should not be left anywhere in the home or garage, or even against the



home outside. Old trees pose a serious fire hazard. For the environmentally concerned, check with your local community for recycling services.

People often become careless in all the commotion of holiday season shopping, increasing vulnerability to theft and other forms of crime. Some common holiday crime occurrences can possibly be avoided by taking necessary safety measures. The Privacy Rights Clearinghouse provides important information making holiday shopping as joyous and safe as possible.

In order to keep your identity from being compromised, do not carry unnecessary documents. Make sure to leave your Social Security Card at home, along with unnecessary credit and debit cards.

It is possible to discourage pickpockets. Front pockets are less susceptible to pick pocketing, so wallets should be carried in the front as opposed to the back. Purse straps can be placed over the head and around the neck, making them harder to snatch.



Muggers often target people arriving and leaving a shopping mall. Beware of your surroundings when getting in and out of a vehicle. It is best to shop during daylight hours, when there are more people around. Be sure to park in a well-lit area if you must shop at night. Always remember to lock all doors whether in or away from your vehicle.

When purchasing a gift card, know about expiration dates, fees and what will happen if the card is lost or stolen. Purchases using debit or check cards often put consumers at much more risk than credit cards, since there are fewer consumer protections if lost. This is why it's safer to shop online. Also, be sure to know existing privacy policies, to learn what kind of information is gathered on the sites. This includes knowing how information is and is not shared.

Although the holidays are meant to be positive, there are definitely negatives to consider. They are unfortunately a part of reality, but can be avoided by being careful.

Be informed. Be careful. Be merry this holiday season.



Happy Holiday's



NOW YOU KNOW!

New
COMMUNICATE!
Feature

UP Resident Artist Profile - Ronnie Mosley

Back in the day...actually not that long ago, we knew everybody on the block... everybody, usually on a first name basis.

Now, things have changed. Often we don't even know who is living next door to us, let alone across the street, or on the next block.

Somewhere in the Village of University Park, somebody is living next door, across the street or down the street from artist Ronnie Mosley, a 14-year University Park resident.

COMMUNICATE! recently had the unique opportunity to sit down with the veteran artist and learn a little about him and his craft. This is the first in a series of periodic features, NOW YOU KNOW!.

There are people doing things in University Park whom you don't know about. You should, but you don't. When they come to our attention, we will let you know.

The 58-year-old Mosley has been painting for a long time. He says, "I've sketched pictures since I was a child. I taught myself to paint with guidance from other artists."

Asked to describe his work he said; "I would describe my paintings as realistic and representing what I see. I prefer using the medium of oil paints, because that enables me to capture the subjects on canvas and brings them to life."

Any role models? Who has influenced your work? "I



don't have a contemporary artist as a role model. The man I call my role model is someone named Steve, who recognized my talent. I met him in 1990. He encouraged and coached me as I began using oil paints. Before that, I used water colors or colored pencils."



Artist Mosley came to the attention of COMMUNICATE! when he made a surprise presentation of a portrait of University Park Mayor Vivian E. Covington, to the mayor at a recent event at the University Golf Club and Conference Center.

What kinds of paintings are you known for besides portraits? "Portraits are my favorite. However, I've painted abstracts, animals, flowers, landscapes, water, and pictures with spiritual or Afro-centric themes."

If you view his collection you will find that over the years Mosley has painted Michael Jordan; Lovie Smith and several Bears players. He adds, "I've painted Ozzie

Guillen, several White Sox players; Arsenio Hall, Magic Johnson, and Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. I've also painted a portrait of President Barack Obama."

How long does it take to do a typical portrait? "Normally, if there are one or two people, it will take about a week. More people require more time."

Where has your work been presented? New International Art Gallery (Forest Park), Reed Gallery (Hazel Crest), The Wood Shop Art Gallery (Chicago), and Rain Gallery (University Park).

What advice would you give to a young person wanting to become an artist? What should they do first? "The aspiring artist should be patient. It takes time to develop your style and to discover your favorite medium. The first thing a young artist should do is find a picture that they like and begin to sketch it. Use a variety of media to determine which one he or she prefers."

What would you describe as your greatest challenge as an artist? "Aiming for perfection when I'm painting. I want other people to see a perfect picture. So, I sometimes spend quite a bit of time on the details of the picture."

What would you describe as your greatest success? "Besides being blessed to be married to my wife for 18 years; I enjoy seeing satisfied customers. When I see smiles on their faces and hear compliments about my work, I know that I've succeeded in pleasing my customers."

What about children? Do any of them want to become an artist? "We have five grown children. None of them are interested in becoming an artist, although one of them is a musical artist."

What is your favorite quote, spiritual or otherwise? "My favorite Biblical quote is Philippians 4:13. 'I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me.'"

Anything else you would like to say about being an artist? "This talent is a gift from God. There is no age limit to becoming an artist. Your work will speak for you."

The holidays are near. Anyone interested in contacting artist Ronnie Mosley can reach him at 708-534-5381 or at Ronley93@aol.com.





Here's hoping that everyone
in the Village of University Park
has a happy, prosperous,
positive and safe 2012!

COMMUNICATE! Staff



THE VILLAGE OF UNIVERSITY PARK

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JOIN US FOR FAMILY FUN DAY

“DON’T SIT - GET FIT”

On Monday, January 16, 2012, University Park hosts Family Fun Day at 90 Town Center.

What Time Is It? - 1:00 p.m. - 4:00 p.m. after the Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. celebration at the Governors State University Performing Arts Center. PK’s Catering will host a lunch buffet right afterward.

FAMILY FUN DAY HIGHLIGHTS

- Fun & Healthy Activities for Children & Parents
- Healthy Refreshments
- Free Health Screenings
- Innovative Learning Activities
- Exciting Health-Related Games & Activities

Participants also get a preview of the Kids Health Club of University Park. Work out on specially designed equipment; experience video games and other equipment, including the electronic sports wall. All designed to make fitness fun.

BE THERE! “DON’T SIT - GET FIT”

Youth under 18 must be accompanied by an adult.

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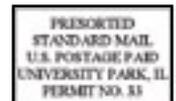
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