



## UP Beat

Mayor Vivian E. Covington

### Celebrating Education and African American History (pt. 1)

While February has long been the month officially set-a-side letting African Americans know that it's okay to feel good about themselves, their families, and their achievements, the ups and downs of life... The real message is, that is how we should approach life throughout the year.

Take the educational excellence as demonstrated by **Coretta Scott King Magnet School**. They have showed a marked increase on their **ISAT** (Illinois Standards Achievement Test) three years straight, beginning in 2009. In **2011** their students reached **94 percent** of students **meeting or exceeding standards** in the state of **Illinois**.

That is an example of striving for excellence all year, not just in February. The entire **Coretta Scott King Magnet School** family including students, teachers, parents and administrators are to be commended. Their excellence brings honor to everyone in **the Village of University Park**; and that should be recognized and held high.

One good thing about **Black History Month** is that you get an opportunity to learn new information that you may not have known. It is also a good time to recall historic incidents that you may have forgotten.

Recently while watching a PBS documentary about the **Freedom Riders** in **1961**, it occurred to me that black history is full of black heroes, some

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## 2012 Annual Black History Theme

### Black Women in American History and Culture

Recognizing that African American women have made a unique contribution to the history of, not only black people, but the whole world; **The Association for the Study of African American Life and History**, "dedicates the **2012 Annual Black History Theme** to exploring African American women's roles in and contributions to the making of America.

From the American Revolution to the present, African American women have played a myriad of critical roles in the making of our nation. Their labor and leadership, their motherhood and patriotism, and their intellect and artistic expression have all enriched both the African American community and the nation at large. In slavery and freedom, their struggles have been at the heart of the human experience, and their triumphs over racism and sexism are a testimonial to our common human spirit.



Ida B. Wells

In American culture today, many know the accomplishments of a few prominent figures. From Phillis Wheatley, the unlikely American patriot during the Revolutionary War, to Harriet Tubman, the leader of the Underground Railroad, to Ida B. Wells, the unyielding opponent of lynching, to Rosa Parks, the mother of the modern Civil Rights Movement... Black women have been notable for standing against oppression. From Gwendolyn Brooks to Toni Morrison to Rita Dove, they have distinguished themselves in American letters, and in recent years they have been recognized as actors and recording artists with Academy Awards and Grammys.

The accomplishments of these exceptional women are the

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**CONGRATULATIONS  
CORETTA SCOTT KING  
MAGNET SCHOOL!**

**2011  
IN PICTURES**  
A LOOK BACK  
P. 14-15



that we know about, others that we don't. While Dr. King's name always comes up, we must remember that there were many people with whom he worked and relied on, who were important as well. People like **Diane Nash**, one of the student leaders in the **Freedom Riders** movement.

This documentary reminded me of the quiet discipline, sense of purpose, strategy and structure used by the students as they succeeded in breaking down the barriers; that segregated blacks from whites when they traveled between states on public transportation in the south. The same was true of what the **Tuskegee Airmen** went through in **World War II**, as evidenced by the movie "**Red Tails**," starring **Cuba Gooding, Jr.** and **Terrence Howard**.

Today, more than 50 years later that same discipline, sense of purpose, strategy and structure is needed in our communities across the country, even here in University Park.

I would ask residents of the Village to make renewed commitments to be better citizens, better parents, better sons and daughters, better officials, elected and appointed.

Take the lead from **Coretta Scott King Magnet School**. In **2009** when their score was **87.6 percent**, they determined that was good, but not good enough.

In **2010** when the score rose to **90.5**, they looked at it, they celebrated and when they were done they concluded, still not good enough.

Then **2011** rolled around. Some probably took the position, we're as good



Mayor Covington at Black in Government conference.

or better than **90.5** other students in the state of Illinois. Others said, we did well in **2010**, but we can do better. And they did, scoring **94 percent in 2011!**

In **2012** and going forward let's take the position that, while we're doing better than we were; we can still do better.

If we all approach the task of restoring the **Village of University Park** with that kind of positive mental attitude, I guarantee you that this will indeed be the best place to live and work, not only in the **Southland**, but the entire **Chicagoland** area.

Once again, congratulations to **Coretta Scott King Magnet School**, you have made us all proud.



expressions of a vibrant culture in which African American women play a singular role. The labors, struggles, organization, and sacrifices of common women have made possible the prominence of heralded individuals. In churches, community groups, literary societies, sororities, and advocacy organizations, African American women have been the core of organized black life. But here their strivings have often escaped the gaze of the public and hence their history is too little known.

Their story is unique in the annals of American history. Black women were held as slaves and middle-class black women labored while their counterparts were housewives. Subjected to a long history of stereotypes about their sexuality, morality, spirituality, and intellect, African American women have never succumbed to victimhood and have pressed forward to uplift themselves, their families, and their communities.

To gain an understanding of the history of African American women is to broaden our understanding of a people and the American nation.



Source - The Association for the Study of African American Life and History



## Editor's Notes



### Let's All Salute Coretta Scott King Magnet School

*"In the long run, there is not much discrimination against superior talent."*

Carter G. Woodson  
Father: Black History Month  
Author: "Miseducation of the Negro"

In the midst of a lot of bad news...the economy, crime, foreclosures and the like; the students, faculty, administration and parents of **Coretta Scott King Magnet School**, have done something noteworthy, and of which everyone should be proud.

While the media continues to demonize our children; while public education remains under attack across the country; while even in 2012 people still ask "Why can't Johnny read?"... **Coretta Scott King Magnet School** in the **Village of University Park**, needs to be held up and recognized.

Why?



Well, for the third straight year this great school, this testament to educational excellence, is celebrating achievements that some thought were far beyond the capabilities of students in a mostly African American school.

**Coretta Scott King Magnet School** has been recognized by the **Illinois Honor Roll** as a **Spotlight School** based on 2011 School Data, comparing Illinois schools statewide and their performance on the **2011 Illinois Standards Achievement Test (ISAT)**.

The test measures student achievement in terms of how well they are **meeting or exceeding (statewide) standards**.

Beginning in 2009 through 2011 **Coretta Scott King** has achieved the following:

Percent of Students Meeting or Exceeding Standards			
	2009	2010	2011
	87.6	90.5	94

And this in a school where almost 55 percent of the students, are classified as being from low-income families.

This school's performance makes a number of profound statements, not the least of which is the fact that our children can and do learn, when adults give them the tools to do so. Those tools include imparting expectations of success by educators and parents to our students.

This achievement demonstrates how important education is to life's success, not just in a financial sense,

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but in helping to shape students' character, strengthening confidence, and in increasing the ability to analyze, make good decisions, and solve problems.

What **Coretta Scott School Magnet School** has achieved does not happen accidentally. A quick glance at their **Mission Statement** and **Vision Statement** gives some insight into why they are a successful educational institution.

**MISSION STATEMENT**

To ensure that every child is challenged to reach his/her full potential academically, socially, and emotionally in partnership with our learning community.

*"The mere imparting of information is not education."*

Carter G. Woodson

**VISION STATEMENT**

To be recognized as a school district who addresses each learner's unique strengths, and needs to maximize future success in education, the workplace, and civic participation by preparing students to:

- Lead healthy, happy lives
- Be ethical and caring citizens of a diverse world
- Be self-directed, motivated, life-long learners
- Identify & solve complex and meaningful problems
- Discover their passions, strengths and challenges

- Communicate and work well with others
- Think creatively

*"In fact the confidence of the people is worth more than money."*

Carter G. Woodson

And nothing does more for the confidence of students than a quality, 21st century education.

Note - Coretta Scott King Magnet School a K-6th grade institution, located at 1009 Blackhawk Dr. in University Park, is part of the Crete-Monee School District (201 U). In 2011 school enrollment was 342 students. The School Administrator is Mrs. Erin DeBartolo.

**Before Michelle Obama, There Was Coretta Scott King**



*"I'm fulfilled in what I do...I never thought that a lot of money or fine clothes -- the finer things in life -- would make you happy. My concept of happiness is to be filled in a spiritual sense."*

Coretta Scott King Scholar, Civil Rights & Peace Activist

Coretta Scott King would have been proud of the recent scholastic achievements of Coretta Scott King Magnet School. A giant of a woman, she didn't walk behind her husband but beside him.

A beautiful black woman whose smile remind some of the famous Mona Lisa, and a first rate scholar, it was King's calmness under fire that is recalled by journalists and historians.

Robert Johnson, writing in Jet magazine in 1991 recalled an incident that Dr. King once related about his wife. According to Johnson, a sleepy Coretta picked up the phone to hear an angry voice on the other end say, *I want to speak to that n--- who's running the bus boycott.* Calmly she replied, *"My husband is asleep and does not wish to be disturbed. He told me to write the name and number of anyone who called to threaten his life so that he could return the call in the morning when he wakes up fresh."*

Today, black America can proudly lay claim to the official "First Family" that is currently occupying the White House, President and First Lady Barack and Michelle Obama and their two daughters. In the 1950s and 1960s the unofficial "First Family" of black America was the King family.

We hear so much about the life of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., particularly this time of year; that it might seem to some that he was the only one out there fighting for civil and

human rights in the 50s and 60s.

Not only is that not true and a disservice to the hundreds, even thousands of other civil rights warriors active in the struggle... It might be said that were it not for Coretta Scott King and the leadership and support that she provided to her husband, that Dr. King might not have done as much as he did during the short 39 years that he lived.

Many don't know that Coretta Scott King was on her way to becoming a professional singer when she married in June of 1953. That was abandoned when Dr. King became the pastor at Dexter Avenue Baptist Church in Montgomery, Alabama in 1954.

From then until his assassination on April 4, 1968, Coretta King supported her husband in every way possible, including standing in for him at various appearances, when his schedule either didn't permit, or he was too tired to speak. This while also taking care of the household which came to include four children.

She did all of this while living in the shadow of fear. Her autobiography spoke directly to this saying, *"I lived without fear but held onto the knowledge that death could come to any one of them (her family), because of their work to end racial injustice."*

Her grace in the immediate aftermath of her husband's death and beyond, sealed her legacy

of greatness. After mourning his death and getting her family back on track, she picked up where he had left off, becoming effectively the *"Mother of the Civil Rights Movement."*

Many don't realize that Coretta Scott King became an international spokesperson for the Peace Movement and the Anti-Apartheid Movement, in addition to her work in the Civil Rights Movement.

In addition, Coretta Scott King received more than 40 honorary degrees, wrote three books and a nationally syndicated column, and received numerous other local, national and international awards for her selfless public service.

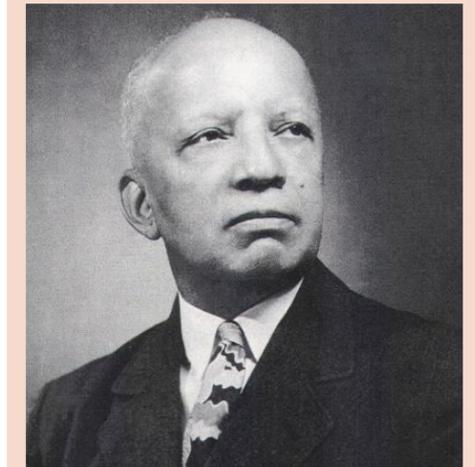
All this while continuing to raise her four children.

On June 30, 2006 she passed away in her sleep at the age of 78. In her honor, among many others, the **American Library Association's Social Responsibilities Round Table**, each year recognizes distinguished contributions to children's literature by awarding its **Coretta Scott King Award** to deserving African Americans.

And, of course, her name and legacy also survives in the name of institutions like the **Coretta Scott King Magnet School of the Village of University Park.**



**Carter G. Woodson - "The Man" - Not Just in February - But All Year**



*"The large majority of the Negroes who have put on the finishing touches of our best colleges, are all but worthless in the development of their people."*

Carter G. Woodson Renaissance Man

Even the most ill-informed person can usually recite that Carter G. Woodson is the *"Father of Black History Month,"* originally Black History Week. A few more people can identify him as the author of the book that everybody quotes, but few people have read, the highly acclaimed, *"Miseducation of the Negro."*

Still fewer people know that Dr. Carter G. Woodson was the second African American to receive a Ph.D. from Harvard University, having earned his in 1912. It is widely

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known that Dr. W.E.B. DuBois was the first.

Born in 1875 until his death in 1950, Carter G. Woodson was a man who made many people uncomfortable. As a historian, educator, author and publisher, he was generous with his well-thought out ideas and opinions, even if some disagreed.

Take 1926 for example, the year that "Negro History Week" was first observed. The audacity of a man who would call for a national observance of black history and culture, during a time when blacks were still being lynched in the south.

But that was Carter G. Woodson. In fact, he would later find himself ostracized by some because of his insistence on studying black history and culture, as a separate and defined category of history.

In fact, the second week in February was originally designated as "Negro History Week" to coincide with the birthdays of Abraham Lincoln and black activist Frederick Douglas. It wasn't until 1976 that the whole month of February was set aside as "Black History Month." It is also celebrated in February in Canada, and in October in the United Kingdom.

Even today, "Black History Month" has its critics, among them actor Morgan Freeman who asks, "Why would you relegate my history to a single month?" Other groups that have a month set-a-side to celebrate their history and heritage include:

- Filipino American History Month
- Women's History Month
- Irish-American Heritage Month
- National Hispanic Heritage Month
- Puerto Rican Heritage Month
- National Tibetan American Heritage Month
- Gay and Lesbian Pride Month

Whether you decide to celebrate "Black History Month" in February is your decision. However, you should celebrate Dr. Carter G. Woodson during every month of the year. He made immeasurable contribu-

tions to the development of black people, and can best be understood and appreciated **in his own words**. Following are a few direct quotes from Dr. Woodson.

### RACE

- The differences of races, moreover, is no evidence of superiority or of inferiority. This merely indicates that each race has certain gifts which the others do not possess.
- We do not show the Negro how to overcome segregation, but we teach him how to accept it as final and just.
- If a race has no history, if it has no worthwhile tradition, it becomes a negligible factor in the thought of the world, and it stands in danger of being exterminated.

### EDUCATION

- The so-called modern education, with all its defects, however, does others so much more good than it does the Negro, because it has been worked out in conformity to the needs of those who have enslaved and oppressed weaker peoples.
- This crusade is much more important than the anti-lynching movement, because there would be no lynching if it did not start in the schoolroom.
- Even schools for Negroes, then, are places where they must be convinced of their inferiority.

And my favorite.

### ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

- If the Negro in the ghetto must eternally be fed by the hand that pushes him into the ghetto, he will never become strong enough to get out of the ghetto.

**Dr. Carter G. Woodson, Renaissance Man.**



# COMMUNICATE! WHAT'S HAPPENING?

## VILLAGE MANAGER REPORT

*Lafayette Linear*

This year the **Village of University Park** has already received about **\$1 million** in funds from various sources, including almost **\$250,000** from the **Illinois Safe Routes To Schools Grant**.

During the fall of 2010 Village staff including Parks and Recreation Director Keely Childress, and Public Works Director Jerry Townsend, partnering with Coretta Scott King Magnet School staff, Crete-Monee Middle School staff, and the South Suburban Mayors and Managers Association, completed and submitted the grant.

The funds will cover the total reconstruction of the Hicock Pedestrian Bridge, sidewalks, and the installation of updated school zone signage.

On January 24 **Governor Pat Quinn** announced the **\$21.7 million** in Illinois Safe Routes to School Grant. Included for **University Park** was \$202,000 for the bridge; \$23,750.00 for sidewalks; and \$24,000 for signage.

The federally funded program is designed to enable and encourage safe walking and biking to school.

I would like to commend both

our **Police Department** and **Fire Department** for recently being recognized for a job well done.

Some of you might have seen the notice in the **February 5 Southtown Star - Southland News** section about the **UP Police Department**, headed by **Chief Mel Davis**. I quote from that item.

*"I want to thank the University Park Police Department for being so kind to my husband. He has the onset of **Alzheimer's** disease and was confused. They called and sent him to the hospital. I thank them so much for their kindness."*

Cotton

So often the public takes our public servants for granted. While some might say the police were just doing their jobs. The officers involved must have done something beyond the ordinary, to receive a public thank you from the resident.

I also want to acknowledge the **UP Fire Department**, led by **Chief Charles Exner**, recently elected **President** of the **south Suburban Fire Investigation Task Force (SSFITF)**, which serves **107 municipalities and fire districts**.

The (SSFITF) works closely with the **ATF, FBI, State Fire Marshall**, and both the **Will and Cook County States Attorneys** offices.

**Village Manager  
Lafayette Linear  
& Village of University  
Park Departments**

On making the announcement, **SSFITF Deputy Commander Michael Bacon** said, "*Chief Exner will serve as an extremely valuable asset to the organization because (he is) not only a Fire Chief, but a certified Arson Investigator. I anticipate working closely with Chief Exner over the next two years, to insure a professional transition into his new role.*"

On behalf of both departments, let both chiefs hear from you about the fine job they are doing.



## LOOKING FOR QUALIFIED APPLICANTS

We currently are seeking an individual to manage our Economic Development and Code Enforcement Department. We also have two openings in our Finance Department. The Village is also looking for a foreman in the Public Works Department.



**FINANCE DEPARTMENT**

Director Gloria Gibson

Findings from the **internal audits** have been received, and those documents and suggestions are being reviewed for corrective action. Director Gibson has retained the services of **American Appraisals** to bring current the **Village's capital assets**, which has not been updated since 2007. Also, **Auditors McGladery & Pullen** are currently working on the **2009 audit**. The Finance Director and Village Manager are working on the **2012/13 budget**.

**POLICE DEPARTMENT**

Chief Mel Davis

On **Saturday, February 18th the University Park Police Department** had a **"Top Gun Award"** contest. In efforts to break the everyday stress of our jobs, police personnel engaged in friendly competition on our firing range. Prizes included: First Place - new Glock 40; Second Place - Top Gun Trophy, Third & Fourth Place - Wall Plaque. Several other awards were given.

**Master Firearm Instructors, Sergeants Darryl Stroud and Deborah Wilson** hosted the award contest.

The police department is also preparing to host our **First Annual Citizen's Police Academy**. Starting this spring, **University Park** will offer a basic academy to our

residents, consisting of a **12-week program** that covers a variety of topics. **Included are:** Community Policing, Motor Vehicle Laws, Criminal Law, Juvenile Law, Case Law, Use of Force, and much more. The theme is **"Building Today for Tomorrow."** Applications will be available at Village Hall and the police department. Classes will meet every Tuesday 6:30 p.m. - 9:30 p.m. We are working on being able to provide **CEU college credits** for those who take the course.

The **Public Safety Committee is working diligently** to create, support and maintain a safer environment for University Park and its residents. This dedicated committee has met with camera vendors seeking new equipment for our parks and other areas. The committee is looking at grant opportunities that will support safety programs, block club and neighborhood watch programs, police academy participants and more.

It really does take a village to raise a child. This committee is our brother's keeper.

**Roll Call for above and beyond the call of duty:**

- Sergeant Deborah Wilson - Response time during alarm call
- Officer Geneka Whitaker - Recognizing a medical emergency and possibly saving a life
- Officer Donald Piwowarski - Alerted patrol and discovered stolen ashes from a burglary
- Sergeant Dan Murphy - 2011 homicide case "atta boy"

- Sergeant Darryl Stroud - 2012 graduate of School of Police Staff & Command

Congratulations to these top cops. I am so proud of all of my police personnel who go out to serve and protect. They are true peace makers.

**COMMITTEE/COMMISSION NEWS**

**Trustee/Liaison Larry Brown** of the **Fire & Police Commission** has announced that there are new state laws related to the hiring process for fire department personnel that the Board needs to adopt. He requested that a workshop be done soon.

**Trustee Joe Roudez** asked if there are policies in place to allow future **Paid-On-Call firefighters** to include training for minorities. Trustee Brown said there is an existing process, that allows persons once trained to go to the **Paid-On-Call** status.

**Trustee Larry Brown, also Liaison** of the **Public Safety Commission**, reported that the committee had an in-depth discussion about Village safety concerns, that included a presentation on new (types of) camera equipment that is available. **Roosevelt Martin**, chair of the committee is reviewing vendors. Trustee Brown also asked that residents be vigilant in reporting suspicious activities in the village. He noted that an official **Neighborhood Watch** program is in the works.



**FROM THE DESK OF VILLAGE CLERK DOROTHY "DEE" JONES**

For some of us during Black History Month, we will celebrate our pride and heritage on a national level. We will focus on the accomplishments of many notable trailblazers for freedom and equality. It is my hope that we will keep the spirit of that pride alive all year and remember the struggles and lost lives that made it possible for some of us to have the right to vote. Through those struggles we now have "Our Right, The Opportunity, Privilege, and Obligation to Register and Vote."

February 27, 2012 is the last day to register to vote and participate in the General Primary Election of March 20, 2012.

Early voting will be available beginning Monday, February 27th through Thursday, March 15th from 9:00 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. to any registered voter in the Village of University Park, (Will County) in the Office of Village Clerk Dee Jones at 698 Burnham Drive. Early voting is available for registered voters in the Village of University Park, (Cook County) at Matteson Village Hall.

According to Will County Clerk Nancy Schultz-Voots, State law requires that a registered voter show valid photo identification before voting early. Voters casting an early ballot must display a current driver's license, a state-issued ID card or another government-issued ID with a photograph.

For detailed information regarding your early voting options, or to request an absentee ballot by mail, visit the Will County Clerk's website at [www.thewillcountyclerk.com](http://www.thewillcountyclerk.com) or call either (815) 740-4632 or (815) 774-6367.

Beginning with this General Primary Election, Will County Clerk has provided us with new voting equipment that is designed to make early voting faster and easier for residents, with a direct connection with the Will County Clerk's Office.

During the past month new voter registration cards were mailed to all registered voters in the Village of University Park from the Will County Clerk's Office, and due to the re-districting within Will County several voting precincts were eliminated or merged with other voting precincts, resulting in fewer voting places. Therefore, I urge you to look at your new voter's registration card so you properly locate your voting precinct. If you have not received a new voter's registration card, PLEASE contact the Office of the Will County Clerk.

REMEMBER, you can register to vote if:

- You are 18 years old, or will turn 18 before March 20, 2012
- If you moved since your last voter's registration.
- If your name has changed, you must re-register.

There are some very important races in this next election with candidates on the Federal, State, County, and Local levels that will have a direct impact on this Village and surrounding region. The decision of who will best represent us is a decision that only registered voter can make at the next General Primary Election. Currently less than 25% of registered voters in this Village exercise their right to vote, and we know that if every resident in University Park 18 years and older, registers and votes we would have the power to demand our portion of the economic pie from our legislators.

Great turnout at the polls would make University Park a force to be recognized, and would hold those elected officials accountable to the needs of this community.

Voter registration is available daily at many locations throughout the Village, with four newly trained and appointed deputy Registrars at both Village Hall and the Parks & Recreation Department. These deputy registrars will help assure that everyone has the opportunity to register and vote.

Remember, it matters not what your station in life may be, registering, and exercising that right to vote em-

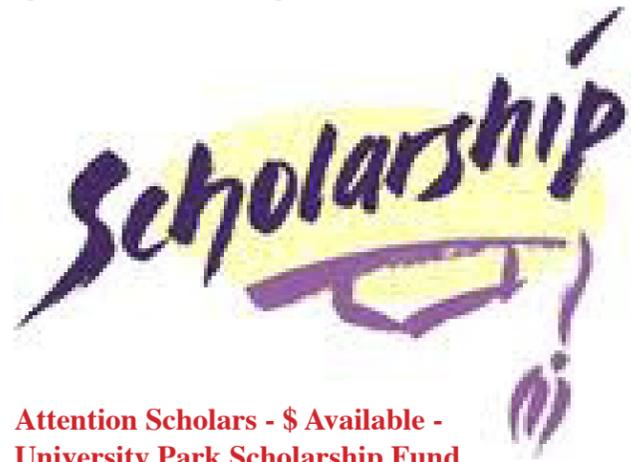


powers everyone equally, (One person, One Vote).

Please feel free to contact me at Village Hall, by e-mail [djones@university-park-il.com](mailto:djones@university-park-il.com), or phone @ (708) 473-6201 if you have any questions or concerns.

**Your Vote Is Your Voice, Let it be heard!!! REGISTER AND VOTE!!!**

**OTHER NEWS**



**Attention Scholars - \$ Available - University Park Scholarship Fund**

Graduating high school seniors who live in **University Park** are eligible to receive \$500 scholarships, if they meet certain criteria.

The scholarship is **renewable annually** as long as the student's family lives in University Park, the student attains a minimum 2.5 GPA, and the family can demonstrate the necessary financial need.

**Application Deadline is Monday, April 2, 2012.** Applications are available from the guidance departments of **Crete-Monee High School, Rich South High School and Marian Catholic High School.**

All applications must be turned in at the **University Park Village Hall (698 Burnham Dr.)** by **Monday,**

**April 2** to be eligible. See application for other requirements.

**GSU to Host Graduate Business and Public Administration Program Open House**

The **College of Business and Public Administration at Governors State University** is hosting a graduate program open house on March 3, from 9:30 a.m. to 11 a.m., in the Cafeteria Annex.

Information on the Master in Business Administration, Master in Public Administration, Master of Science in Management Information Systems, and Master of Science in Accounting will be provided. Attendees will have the opportunity to speak with academic and admission counselors, faculty members, and current students. Attendees are encouraged to bring official or unofficial transcripts for review. Applications will be accepted and a complete breakfast will be served.

*Governors State University is located at 1 University Parkway, University Park, Illinois. For more information or to RSVP by February 29, call (708) 543-4391, or e-mail [bpainfo@govst.edu](mailto:bpainfo@govst.edu).*



**University Park Baseball League Seeks Future Stars**

**University Park 2012 Baseball Registration**

**Ages: 4-14 years-old**

**When: Now through April 15th**

Contact: Parks and Recreation Department - (708) 534-6456 or Eugene Lawson, Jr. (708) 534-5894 [lawsonjr.eugene@yahoo.com](mailto:lawsonjr.eugene@yahoo.com)



**COMMUNICATE!** caught up with longtime **University Park resident** and **elected official Jim Harris** to get his current take on **local politics.**

**A Few Minutes With JIM HARRIS 6th Precinct Committeeman and Chairman, University Park Educational Advisory Committee**

My wife and I have lived in University Park since 1976. We are the parents of three adult daughters and five grandchildren. We are both retired educators. I was elected as the Monee Township Assessor and served for 16 years as Chairman of the Board of Review. I was the first black to serve on the Will County Board of Review.

I have served as Chairman of the University Park Educational Advisory Committee, since its inception and the 6th Precinct Committeeman for more than 20 years.

Monee Township lies with Western Ave. on the east and Harlem Ave. on the west, Offner Road on the south and Nauvoo Street on the north. There are approximately 13,000 registered voters and three municipalities.

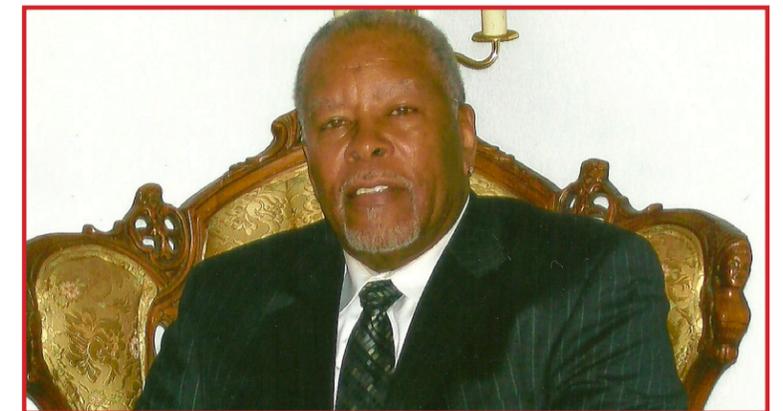
Monee Township was recently reduced from 12 precincts to eight that are located in the southern part of Park Forest and University Park with the exception of the Hickory Creek Subdivision, located east of Cicero and Monee. Also, Will County commissioners have been reduced from three commissioners per district to two. Monee township is located in District One. Therefore, we will have two county commissioners elected in the November election.

**What is the most compelling reason(s) that African Americans in particular need to get out and vote in the upcoming March primary and later in the November national elections?**

*The most compelling reasons for African Americans to vote in the March 20th Primary and the General Elec-*

*tion in November are many. Many Americans, more blacks than white made the ultimate sacrifice for blacks to be able to vote. For no other reason, blacks can show their appreciation and respect to those who fought and died so that black Americans could freely exercise their right to vote. Black Americans can accomplish some very important objectives by voting, not only is it a cherished right and a sacred duty, voting can ensure that black America gets its fair share of benefits and services.*

*Also, black Americans need to vote because politics in America is driven by the same market forces of supply and demand. Just as businesses expand their services when there is a profit to be made; politicians will develop strategies to capitalize on the expanded black vote.*



**Are the necessary messages being delivered to encourage people to exercise their right to vote? If not, what needs to be done that is not being done?**

*Monee Township Democrats have opened an office in the University Park Towncenter. It will be staffed by volunteers to provide information on various candidates, running for office from the president down to precinct committeeman. Literature will be available for the Primary and General election. Our website will also have*

**SAVE THE DATE** **The Annual High Tea for Mayor Covington** **SATURDAY, APRIL 21, 2012**



candidate information. Our website address is www.moneetownshipdemocrats.com. Call us at 630-430-1818.

**How does voter participation in University Park compare with surrounding villages and municipalities?**

Surrounding communities usually have a slightly higher turnout than University Park. Therefore, it is critical for the Democratic voters to get out and vote. Because of the Democratic votes, Monee Township Government has been under Democratic control since 1985, with only one exception.

The last Township election, Democrats won eight of the nine positions, and regained control of the Township board. Until recently, and only after the County Clerk changed the number of precincts, Precinct 6 had the largest number of Democratic votes in Will County.

**What is being done to increase voter participation for the upcoming primary and elections?**

We are currently registering new voters. Our focus is to get as many of those who are 18-years-old, those who moved into the Township, and those who moved within the township. Our headquarters opened February 11th and will be opened from 9:00 a.m.-1:00 p.m., and the following week from 4:00 p.m. - 8:00 p.m.; to register voters. **The cutoff date for registration to vote in the March 20th Primary is Monday, February 27th.** Anyone who would like to register should call me at (708) 828-8100, and I will make sure that you get registered.

**How can people better educate themselves about the process?**

There are so many sources for information on various candidates. Our voters will be inundated with materials deposited on their doorsteps about candidates before the March 20th Primary and the General Election November 6th.

**Illinois, politically, is considered one of the more corrupt states; does this contribute to voter cynicism and/or apathy?**

The corruption in Illinois may cause some citizens to become cynical or contribute to a certain amount of apathy. While I can understand their concerns, the problem lies within those corrupt individuals. We have too much at stake to allow those persons to dictate and compromise our cherished right to vote, a right that was accomplished with an agonizing struggle...a vote that many died for.

**Are you optimistic or pessimistic about the upcoming primary and elections?**

We are always optimistic about the upcoming Primary and General Election. We have had a few times when there has been outstanding voter participation. Therefore, we will do all we can to inform voters and provide assistance, to ensure that those who want to vote will have that opportunity. We had our largest turnout in 2008 for President Barack Obama. We can do it again in 2012.

**Is there anything else you would like to share with readers about this topic?**

I encourage all voters to get involved in the political process, by becoming better informed about the issues that are affecting their lives. While black Americans are less than 15 percent of the total U.S. population; we can make a difference by increasing the numbers who actually vote. My re-election for Monee township 6th Precinct Committeeman is March 20th. Please vote.



**HUMAN SERVICES AND COMMUNITY EVENTS  
2012 CALENDER**

EVENTS	DATES 2012
Family Fun Day	January/Martin Luther King's Birthday
Black History Month Celebrations	February
Community Sponsored Job Fair	April 20th and (Tentative) October (TBD)
Community Garage Sale and Homeowners Associations and Neighborhood Block Parties	June 9th and 10th
Pine Lake Jazz, Blues & Gospel Concerts:	
• Jazz & Blues Concerts	July 14th (Saturday)
• Gospel Concerts	July 15th (Sunday)
Farmers Market	July 16th to September 1st
Back to School Family Festival & Carnival:	
• Carnival	August 16th-19th
• Family Festival	August 18th
Police and Firefighter Recognition and Appreciation Day	September 11th
Community Golf Outing	September/October (TBD)
Coordinated Women's Month and Health Awareness Month: Community Health Fair, Men's and Women's Health Fair, Breast Cancer, Diabetes and Aids Awareness	October (TBD)
Senior and Impaired Citizens Awareness	October (TBD)
Fire Prevention and Emergency Preparedness	October 22nd to November 3rd
Community Coat & Food Drive	November 3rd to December 22nd
Military Veterans Recognition and Appreciation	November 9th
Annual Holiday Tree Lighting and Winter Festival:	
• Tree Lighting	Dec.1st
• Winter Festival	Dec 1st to Dec 22nd



...And More Recent History From 2011





**THE VILLAGE OF UNIVERSITY PARK**

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