

The Official Newsletter for Berkeley, Illinois

MARCH – APRIL – MAY 2019

BERKELEY CONNECTS

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Michael Kuryla
Fire Chief

Joseph Wagner
Public Works Superintendent

FROM THE VILLAGE PRESIDENT'S DESK

Welcome to the Inaugural Edition of Berkeley Connects

Welcome Berkeley residents and businesses to the inaugural edition of “Berkeley Connects.” The new moniker and renamed quarterly newsletter reinforces the goals and objectives of the Board of Trustees and Berkeley employees to better *connect* our residents to services and opportunities available.

“Berkeley Connects” will also bring focus to our partners outside of our borders who *connect* with our 5,000 plus residents to enhance the quality of life by improving our schools, parks, roads, bridges, infrastructure and civic needs. The project planning and revenue stream required to achieve our collective goals are the main objective of our partners.

The continued efforts to improve our community began with the updated Strategic Plan for the Village of Berkeley, adopted for action in 2017. This plan was developed by the Board of Trustees, department leadership and staff to focus on collective efforts of all working toward the common goal to best serve the community through long-term planning.

The first priority and most effective way to serve is fiscal responsibility in Village finances. Village staff presented a balanced budget for fiscal year 2019-2020 at the February Budget Workshop to the Board of Trustees. Offering the same or improved services can be a difficult task to achieve when equating declining or flat revenues against the ever increasing costs of operations. Congratulations and thank you to Village Administrator Rudy Espiritu, Fire Chief Mike Kuryla, Police Chief Tim Larem, Public Works Superintendent Joe Wagner, Assistant Village Administrator Brandiss Martin and all who worked towards a balanced budget with the direction of the Board of Trustees. A total team effort year in and year out for the community.

While a working budget for fiscal year operations is a top priority, long-term planning requires Board and staff to better *connect* with our Berkeley partners locally, regionally as well as the state and federal levels. The Village has the

responsibility of coordinating efforts with our local Park Districts (Berkeley, Memorial and Elmhurst), the Berkeley Public Library, School Districts #87 and #209, in order to achieve our goals collectively. Grant and project funding is generally received more favorably at the State and Federal levels with local entities applying jointly.

A good example of a current collaborative effort is the Village of Berkeley, the Berkeley Park District and the Village of Hillside *connecting* to apply for a regional planning grant to improve the business district at Taft and Electric Avenues as well as the Illinois Prairie Path through Berkeley and Hillside. We wait anxiously for grant funding approval so that this critical section of our region can be potentially upgraded to better serve the area for the next 50 years.


The Village and the Illinois Tollway Authority co-hosted an open house on January 23rd to a full house of Berkeley residents regarding the 294 Tollway Expansion Project that is happening over the next six years. This project will have a big impact on Berkeley in a positive manner over the long term. Berkeley is losing six (6) single family homes and valuable park land (owned by the Toll Authority) to the expansion of 294 at our western border. These losses will affect the entire community. However, your Village Board and staff are working with the Toll Authority to compensate in other areas of town as well as our Police, Fire and Public Works Departments in order to better serve the community. This is a generational change to the Tollway which has not seen this type of upgrade since the original construction over 50 years ago. Change is inevitable, but change is also opportunity. The Village Board is fully committed to *connecting* with the Illinois Toll Authority to improve the regional transportation system while also improving the Berkeley community.

The spring of 2019 will provide the opportunity to complete the flood mitigation project at the northeast section of town. Once complete, the retention pond and pumping station will regulate rain water in our storm sewer system. Over 800 homes and businesses will benefit from the 53 acre feet of storm water storage capacity that the new pond will provide. Berkeley *connected* funding from the Metropolitan Water Reclamation District, Illinois Department of Transportation, Cook County Community Disaster Recovery Funds, as well as matching funds from the Village, to complete this vital project.

2019 will also bring an increased focus to much needed economic development planning throughout the community. The Village Board will consider recommendations of BDI, a firm hired to assess the needs of our community in order to develop a long term development plan. These needs were determined through interviews of business and community leaders, current demographics, physical assets in and around Berkeley, as well as other key elements to proper economic development planning. We look forward to sharing this plan with you in the coming months.

While good things are happening in and around Berkeley, our continued goal is to stay *connected* with you, the resident, in order to keep you better informed with all that is Berkeley.

Sincerely,



Robert E Lee Jr
Village President

Beautify Berkeley Program

May-October

Spring of 2019 marks the fourth year of our Beautify Berkeley Program! We are so proud of our neighborhood that we want to promote and show appreciation to our residents and businesses that have invested significant efforts into maintaining well-manicured lawns and curb appeal. May to October of each

month, Village of Berkeley personnel will be making recommendations to the Village Board for those properties that are well maintained. At one Board meeting a month, the Board will select the winner and award them with a prize. At the end of the program season, all of the winners from the previous

months will be entered into a drawing for a grand prize winning. If you're up for the challenge, all you have to do is keep your properties manicured and wait for us to make contact with you each month. For more information on the Beautify Berkeley Program, visit our website, www.berkeley.il.us.

Berkeley Police Department Pokémon Trading Card Game League for Kids!



Last year the Berkeley Police Department launched the Pokémon Trading Card Game league for kids in the community. The league was an instant hit and has proven to build positive relationships between kids & police officers within the community.

Due to the success of the league, we are going to host several more events in 2019! *We are encouraging kids and teenagers of all ages to attend* so they can interact with police officers in a fun and safe

environment. Our next event is on Sunday, March 31st 1:00-4:00 p.m. at the Berkeley Police Department. Contact Sergeant Blake Garcia with any questions regarding the league at bgarcia@berkeley.il.us or visit our Facebook page.

Berkeley Citizen's Police Association Save the Date!



The Berkeley Citizen's Police Association, in partnership with Jesse White's Secretary of State's Office, is excited to sponsor a Bike Rodeo on Saturday, April 20th. This event will offer a bike agility course, bike safety checks and prizes! Fun for the whole family! Details will be posted on our Facebook page in the coming weeks.

Berkeley Neighborhood Watch

Upcoming Meetings



Below is a recap of the Winter Berkeley Neighborhood Watch activities:

- A speaker from Trailside Museum of Natural History to lecture on the habits of local wildlife, warning against feeding invasive mammals, such as foxes, since they will attract larger animals, particularly coyotes.
- Officer Len Norek warned against “ruse” burglaries where one individual may distract a resident while a second individual enters the home for a burglary.

Future meetings will be as follows:

March 13th – Get to Know your Police Officers

April 10th – Smart Technology and Crime Prevention

May 8th – Child Safety

All meetings are held at the Village Hall at 6:30 p.m. Light refreshments will be available.

If you wish to apply for a block captain’s position, contact Officer Len Norek (708) 449-8226 or lnorek@berkeley.il.us and he will send you an application, a training guide and, after your approval, a credential badge.

Thank you to Officer Norek for his invaluable assistance to our organization. You may contact us at berkeleyneighborhoodwatch@outlook.com, Facebook or through Officer Norek or PO Box 769, Hillside, IL. 60162.

*The IRS has recently granted us (501)(3) status
so your donations are now tax-deductible.*

Please help promote our organization by displaying our decals which can be obtained at the Library, Village Hall and Police Station.

Berkeley Fire Department

Backyard Fun and Caution

As the days get longer and the snow starts to melt thoughts of being in our yards enjoying warmer evenings with family and friends are on our minds. Sounds fantastic! Now let us do it in a safe manner.

Grills:

The use of fire is unavoidable when preparing the perfect meal on the grill; therefore, there is inherent risk present whenever we have our grills lit and ready for action. Just under 9,000 home fires occur due to grilling each year. Below are tips to help avoid a fire from occurring at your home.

- Be sure to inspect all fittings on your propane grill. This should include the tank that may be from last grilling season to all connections back to the grill itself. Be sure to remove all debris to avoid flare-ups and fires that may take place while you are not nearby.
- Light charcoal grill by using approved methods and starter fluids only. The use of fossil fuels such as gasoline are not approved accelerants.
- Use the grill in an open, outdoor area only; do not relocate the grill to the garage because of inclement weather. It is not worth the risk of a potential garage fire which may spread to your home.

Outdoor Fire Pits:

The use of fire pits bring their own concerns when not handled properly. Never have a fire pit close to the house or garage. Never sit so close to the fire pit that if one slips forward they may fall into fire.

- Never allow children to be around a fire pit without responsible supervision.
- Do not throw lawn waste or paper into the fire pit, embers may float away and ignite fires elsewhere.
- Never throw buckets of waters on fires unless there is an emergency. Instead, spread out glowing embers and allow to cool. This will prevent thick clouds of smoke that may cause respiratory issues for you and others that are nearby.

Smoke Detectors:

As we change our clocks to day light savings, remember to change batteries in Smoke and Carbon Monoxide Detectors.

If there are ever questions or concerns please contact the Berkeley Fire Prevention 708.234.2645.

American Legion Post #1016 Fundraising and Memorial Day Parade

The months of March, April and May are some of our busiest months and the American Legion Post #1016 is helping with District and Division Fund Raisers, that will allow us to do more to help our Veterans in need.

Fisher House is located at Hines and helps families of veterans in the hospital with a place to stay while their loved ones are in the hospital.

As our annual contribution to Fisher House the Post will be involved this year.

Our Americanism essays are coming in and poppy posters. Letters will be going out to all our members so we can have a successful Poppy Campaign. The money collected goes to helping our hospitalized veterans. We will be distributing poppies May 23rd, 24th, and 25th. Look for us throughout Berkeley. Our Little

Miss Poppy will be meeting with Village President Lee to give him the first poppy on May 10th. Hoping residents of Berkeley will join us for the annual Memorial Day Parade, Monday,

May 27th at 9 a.m. either as participant or spectator.

Be part of your community, good citizenship counts!

Berkeley Community Garden Club New Growing Season



The Berkeley Community Garden Club is gearing up for another productive season of togetherness and growth. If you are interested in making great friends, eating healthy, and building community, come out and join us. Our organization has so much to offer.

To promote education and awareness of the environment for the health and well-being of the community

Participate in our various festivals; reserve a gardening plot, come to a workshop; share your skills. Join the fun! Mark your calendar for our official 2019 Season Kickoff Seed Exchange and Social at Berkeley Public Library on Tuesday, April 2nd, at 6:30 p.m. It is municipal Election Day; cast your vote and then join us for refreshments and celebration. Don't forget to look for Spring Fest in early June!

Join us in growing health and strength in our community!

If you are interested in plot rentals, now is the time to make

your reservations. For more information contact us via email BerkeleyCommunityGardenClub@comcast.net or via phone 630-481-6442.

Berkeley Public Library



Fostering the Spirit of Exploration, Learning, and Reading

1637 Taft Avenue

708-544-6017 | www.berkeleypl.org

Mon. – Thurs. 10:00 a.m. – 9:00 p.m.; Fri. 10:00 a.m. – 6:00 p.m.; and Sat. 10:00 a.m. – 5:00 p.m.

Election Day: Tuesday, April 2nd

Holiday Closures: Memorial Day, Mon., May 27th

Friends of the Berkeley Library Spring Sale, Saturday, April 6th, 11am-4pm. Our Friends Group is hosting a spring book sale! Everything is priced to sell and all proceeds go to benefit the library, so mark your calendars.

It's Showtime! Summer Reading registration opens Saturday, May 25. Starts Monday, June 3. Action!

Drop by the library in March to vote for your favorite 2018 book or DVD during March Madness as the library hosts its own tournament of favorites.

Mardi Gras Bingo. March 5, 6:30 p.m. Come on out and enjoy a family bingo night. We'll play BINGO, eat some treats, and win some beads to wear.

Tween/Teen Snack Craft, Registration required - Ages 8-13

Join us March 9 at 1 p.m. for some farm themed snack crafts! So good, you'll want to eat them up!

Ukulele Club, March 19, April 16 & 30, May 14, 6:30 p.m. want to learn the uke and play songs with others? Group uke lessons for very beginners. Register to borrow a uke or you can bring your own! *Limit 10.*

Tween after Hours at the Library, Registration required- Ages 8-13

March 29 from 4:00-8:30 p.m. join us for movies, activities, and food.

Gary Kantor Magic Show. March 30th at 1:15 p.m. Family Magic Show.

Earth Day Drop-in Craft and Movie. April 13 at 11:30. Come celebrate the Earth Day with crafts! We will be watching The Lorax.

Avengers Marathon and Craft. April 20, 10:30. Are you prepared for *Avengers: Endgame*? Join us to watch *Avengers: Age of Ultron* AND *Avengers: Infinity War* and a fun *Avengers* craft.

Mother's Day Drop in Craft and Movie. May 11 at 11:30. Looking to make something for mom or another loved one on Mother's Day? Join us for crafts you can use as gifts; we'll be watching Brave after!

Scholarship Opportunity

High School Graduating Students

The Village of Berkeley offers two \$500 scholarships to two graduating high school students residing in Berkeley and entering college in the fall. Applications at Village Hall and Village website, www.berkeley.il.us. **Applications are being accepted until 4:30 p.m. on Friday, July 12, 2019.**

Save the Date

Berkeley Annual Golf Outing

The Golf Outing will be held on Friday, June 14th at Sugar Creek Golf Course in Villa Park, Illinois. Registration forms and additional information will be included in the next issue of the Berkeley Connects and will be detailed on our website and other social media sites.



MARCH 2019

- March 05 Board Meeting – 6:30 p.m.
- March 07 Recycling West of Taft Ave
- March 14 Recycling east of Taft Ave
- March 19 Board Meeting – 6:30 p.m.
- March 21 Recycling West of Taft Ave
- March 25 Administrative Hearing - 2:00 p.m.
- March 28 Recycling East of Taft Ave

APRIL 2019

- April 01 **Brush pick up returns, entire town**
- April 02 Board Meeting – 6:30 p.m.
- April 04 Recycling West of Taft Ave
- April 08 Brush East of Taft Ave
- April 11 Recycling East of Taft Ave
- April 15 **Animal Registration Due Date**
Brush West of Taft Ave
- April 16 Board Meeting – 6:30 p.m.
- April 18 Recycling West of Taft Ave
- April 19 **Village Hall Closed Good Friday**
- April 22 Brush East of Taft Ave
- April 25 Recycling East of Taft Ave
- April 28 **BYBA Parade – 11:00 a.m.**
- April 29 Brush West of Taft Ave
Administrative Hearing – 2:00 p.m.

MAY 2019

- May 02 Recycling West of Taft Ave
- May 06 Brush East of Taft Ave
- May 07 Board Meeting – 6:30 p.m.
- May 09 Recycling East of Taft Ave
- May 13 Brush West of Taft Ave
- May 16 Recycling West of Taft Ave
- May 20 Brush East of Taft Ave
- May 21 Board Meeting – 6:30 p.m.
- May 23 Recycling East of Taft Ave
- May 27 **Village Hall Closed Memorial Day**
- May 28 Brush West of Taft Ave
Administrative Hearing – 2:00 p.m.
- May 31 **Garbage delayed**
Recycling West of Taft Ave

Stormwater Education

How you can help with Lawn & Garden

Lawn and garden activities can produce a number of instances where the runoff of fertilizers, pesticides and yard waste can enter into the storm water system. While maintaining a beautiful property do not damage to the environment. Adjusting some of your practices for better results without the curbside impact:

Use pesticides and fertilizers sparingly only in recommended amounts. Use less toxic and environmentally friendly options. Mulches are usually wood bark chips, Wood grindings, pine straws, nut shells, small gravel, or shredded landscape clippings. Currently, wood chips are available for FREE at our community garden club.

Sweep up after cutting your lawn or blown grass clippings back into the yard otherwise these clippings will eventually enter a storm drain and either clog the drain or degrade over time within the system. It also a violation of village ordinance to blow debris into the street. Do not water your lawn on a fixed schedule. Water your lawn when it needs it, but even then don't overwater it as such a practice can easily carry pollution to the storm system. For more ways that you can help, visit: www.berkeley.il.us.

Village of Berkeley
5819 Electric Avenue
Berkeley, Illinois 60163
708-449-8840

Website: www.berkeley.il.us | Facebook: OfficialBerkeleyIL