



May/June 2019

VILLAGE NEWS

As seen in the *Homewood-Flossmoor Chronicle*

Volunteers attack winter's detritus during annual Community Cleanup Day

Litter — the enemy of any clean community — has accumulated during winter months, but local residents fought back on Community Cleanup Day on Saturday, April 6.

On this sunny, warm spring day, eight organizations and dozens of volunteers fanned out across Homewood, Flossmoor and Olympia Fields to spruce up the area picking up the discarded bottles, cans, food containers and even used diapers that have piled up along roadways over the winter months.

Several crews of volunteers worked their way along streets in Olympia Fields. This is the first year the village has participated in the annual H-F event.

Susan Gowen, a member of the Olympia Fields Beautification Committee, and George Chandler, a member of the village's Economic Development Committee, de-littered Kedzie Avenue from



the train station to Vollmer Road.

"It's interesting what you find," Gowen said. She found a lawn ornament and a golf ball, in spite of the distance from Olympia Fields Country Club. "Most of it's just people not wanting to carry their trash, and they just toss it out," she said.

To read the rest of this article, visit hfchronicles.com.

When it rains ...

When it rains in an urban environment, the storm water needs a place to go. In a natural setting, rain water infiltrates into the ground. In a developed area, rain water cannot move as freely into the ground because of impervious surfaces like roads and buildings. This is why we have storm drainage systems such as pipes, roadside ditches, culverts and storm drains.

The storm drainage system is a series of conveyances, culverts and storm drains that channel storm water from an area, like your neighborhood, to nearby creeks and streams. The storm drainage system, when properly maintained, helps prevent flooding.

If the drainage system components are blocked, water cannot enter, resulting in ponding near the blockage. If the culvert or pipe that conveys the storm water

from the road is damaged, it will also cause flooding and water quality issues for the homeowner.

Finally, the outlet of the conveyance pipe or culvert must be maintained and cleared of blockages on a regular basis by the homeowner. A blocked outlet can also cause localized flooding to the homeowner and their neighbors.

Homeowners are responsible for maintaining the storm drainage system on their property. Clear out yard debris, brush and trash that accumulate in and around this area so that storm water can enter unobstructed. Placing debris in drainage areas can cause flooding.

Homeowners also need to watch for signs of deteriorating culverts like eroding or sinking areas in and around the culvert location, as they are also responsible for maintaining these drainage areas on their property.

Be Courteous: Parks and Common Areas are for Everyone

The Village of Olympia Fields has some of the most beautiful and pristine parks and common areas in the entire Southland.

So when walking your dog, please be courteous and remove any deposits made by your dog. Our parks are used by residents both young and old ... we don't want to leave anyone in a poopie situation.

Working together we create a GREAT COMMUNITY!



Buckthorn—A Weed by Another Name

In recent years more than 160 species of amphibians are reported to have gone extinct worldwide. Evidence from Chicago's Lincoln Park Zoo and Northern Illinois University points



to buckthorn as one of the problems. Invasive European Buckthorn emits a toxin called emodin from its leaves, bark, roots and fruit. Emodin is toxic to developing amphibian embryos. The highest level of emodin in the environment is during leaf-out,

which coincides with the peak early-breeding activity of Midwestern amphibians.

Maybe you're not a frog lover, but the importance of trees in our environment or a world without them, is hard to imagine. These hard-working plants clean our air and water, reduce flooding, improve property values, and better our residents' health. But not all trees are the same; what we grow and where we grow matters

The invasive buckthorn is the most abundant tree in the Chicago region, covering 30% of the area. Under the Exotic Weed Act, buckthorn cannot be sold or bought in Illinois. The buck-

thorn is a widespread weed throughout Olympia Fields. It may be found in natural areas – forest preserves & woodlands, in the bases of shrubs and along lot lines. Homeowners may be reluctant to remove the invasive buckthorn because it provides screening between properties, privacy from the road and/or blocks undesirable views. However, the dense thicket it tends to form crowd out other desirable trees, shrubs and perennials.

Buckthorn is a large shrub (more than 8 feet) or small tree (15 - 25 feet), with glossy oval leaves, easily recognized in fall, because it remains green after most other leaves have fallen.

Why is buckthorn such a problem?

- Out-competes native plants for nutrients, light and moisture
- Not a nutritional food source for birds
- A mild toxin, a laxative for birds and humans
- Contributes to soil erosion by shading out other plants
- Forms an impenetrable layer of vegetation
- Lacks natural controls like insects or disease that would curb its growth
- Dense thicket may promote the population of coyote

Methods to remove buckthorn will vary from site to site.

Learn more about removal tips at www.removebadplants.com

Follow these safety tips and enjoy a safe spring season

As temperatures increase over the next several weeks, the Olympia Fields Police Department would like to remind you to take the following precautions as you enjoy the spring season:

1. Always keep your home's doors and windows locked when you go to bed or leave your house, even if you are leaving for a short period.
2. Secure all lawn and gardening equipment in your garage or a storage shed, and keep your garage doors closed at all

times (even when you're doing work around the house).

3. Put all ladders and other tools back into a secure storage area after you use them.
4. Be aware of home improvement scams. If you did not solicit the contractor or salesman who shows up at your door unannounced, do not do business with that person.
5. Always remember to close your car

windows, take any valuables out of your car, and lock your doors every time you exit your vehicle, even if your vehicle is parked in your driveway.

6. Get to know your neighbors! Let a trusted neighbor know if you are planning to travel this spring.

Neighbors who know each other look out for each other!

Remember - If You See It, If You Hear It – REPORT IT!

Village named as Tree City for the 12th Year

The Arbor Day Foundation recently named the Village a Tree City for the 12th consecutive year.

The Olympia Fields Beautification Committee plants a tree annually to celebrate Arbor Day—which is just one of the many requirements of being a Tree City.

This year, a tree was planted at the

Graymoor subdivision's entry way on Vollmer Road and Joe Orr Road.

Pictured from left to right are Trustee Sandra Finley, Beautification Committee Member Belinda Lowry, Village Administrator Cynthia Saenz, Graymoor HOA Board Member Ted Hammons, Jennifer Beasley, and Graymoor HOA Board Member Matthew Levy.

