



# VILLAGE NEWS

March/April 2020

As Seen in the Daily Southtown

## Lincoln Park's Batter & Berries to open in Olympia Fields

By Mike Nolan

The restaurant is ranked 18 out of nearly 8,600 Chicago-area restaurants by TripAdvisor, but online reviews also cite what some call "insane" wait times of an hour or more.

Lincoln Park has 70 seats and the Olympia Fields location will have 100, not including outdoor seating which could add another 30 seats, Richardson said.

He said the Lincoln Park location has a strong following in the south suburban area. Batter & Berries' executive chef, Ken Polk, lives in Olympia Fields.

"We have people drive up all the time from all throughout the south suburbs and Indiana," Richardson said. "This will make it a little more accessible for them."

While customers of the Lincoln Park restaurant are allowed to bring their own alcoholic beverages, Olympia Fields will have a selection of liquor, he said.

Plans also call for making the new restaurant available in the evening for private events.

Richardson said he first met with Olympia Fields officials about a year ago, including

Mayor Sterling Burke and Trinette Britt-Johnson, the village's economic development consultant.

He said the village, its amenities and area demographics "checked a lot of boxes" as far as being a desirable location. The shopping center, he said, has good local traffic but is also near Interstates 57 and 80.

Burke said that Olympia Field residents, in surveys, said they wanted more restaurants. Apart from Batter & Berries, Burke said officials are working to bring in other "boutique-type" restaurants.

Batter & Berries is known for twists on traditional breakfast and lunch favorites, with French toast flights and a new flavor of French toast that changes on a weekly basis.

"We try to provide some different, creative breakfast and brunch options and I think people appreciate that," Richardson said. "We are very much a 'wake up and enjoy your day' type of place."

Richardson said he worked for insurer State Farm for 22 years, and he and his wife had talked about opening a restaurant.



"I wasn't even taking it real serious and one day she brings a lease home" for the Lincoln Park location, he said.

"She found a space that had been a restaurant, had a kitchen and bathrooms already in place, so it required minimal build-out," he said.

The location is a little more than a mile from Wrigley Field, and Richardson said his wife played off both pancake batter and batters in baseball when coming up with the name. Richardson said he was focused on berries and "we just sort of merged the two ideas."

The couple are also considering opening a restaurant later this year in Chicago's Austin community on the city's far West Side, he said

### Someone You Should Know ...



## Local Business featured at the Grammy's Gift Lounge

Olympia Fields resident and Sweetie's Kake founder, Karen Bankhead-Smith recently had the opportunity to have her homemade Vanilla Bean Pound Kake featured inside the official Gift Lounge at the 62nd Grammy Awards.

The gift lounge was open to presenters and performers during three full days of rehearsals prior to the Grammy Awards on January 26, 2020. "I am so honored to have had Sweetie's Kake featured in the GRAMMY Gift Lounge," said Bankhead-Smith. "Not only was this an incredible opportunity to achieve global recognition for my brand, it's a heartfelt tribute to my mother and grandmother whose recipes and unconditional love inspire every Kake I bake. Knowing that some of the biggest celebrities in the music business are enjoying my Kake is a dream come true."

More information on her products are available at <https://www.sweetyskake.com>.

# Safety Tips from the Olympia Fields Police Department



Many people are victims of crime. Often times, there are steps that people can take to protect themselves and reduce the risk that they will become victimized. The

following are crime prevention tips the Olympia Fields Police Department encourages residents to adopt to protect themselves and their property from theft or damage.

## General Safety Tips

- ◆ If you hear or see something suspicious, call 911.
- ◆ Keep your possessions in sight at all times. Don't leave books or backpacks unattended anywhere — it only takes seconds for things to disappear.
- ◆ Lock your doors and windows at all times — even if you're home.
- ◆ Never leave a wallet or purse on top of your desk — take it with you or lock it in a drawer.
- ◆ Avoid taking wallets, money, and jewelry into athletic facilities and storing them in lockers.
- ◆ Be alert to potential danger. If it doesn't look or feel right, trust your instinct and leave.
- ◆ Don't leave objects plainly visible in your car; secure them in the trunk whenever possible.

## Internet Crime Prevention Tips

- ◆ Do not give sensitive or personal information to anyone unless you are sure they are who they claim to be.
- ◆ Do not download files sent to you by strangers or click on hyperlinks from people you do not know.
- ◆ Update your virus protection software regularly.
- ◆ Be cautious of the information you share on social media.
- ◆ Update passwords at least annually.
- ◆ Never give your password to anyone.

## Tips for Avoiding Credit Card Fraud

- ◆ Shred anything with your card number on it.

- ◆ Report lost or stolen cards immediately.
- ◆ Check gas stations and ATMs for credit card skimmers.
- ◆ Do not give out your credit card number online unless you are sure the site is secure and reputable.
- ◆ Be cautious when dealing with individuals/companies outside the United States.
- ◆ Keep a list of all your credit card account information in a secured location.
- ◆ Check your credit card statements carefully for illegal charges.

## Safety Tips for In Your Residence

- ◆ Be alert when returning home by having your key ready as you approach the door; in addition, if you think someone is inside, don't go in! Call the police from a nearby phone.
- ◆ If possible, equip your house or apartment door with a peephole and dead bolt lock with a one-inch bolt.
- ◆ Never open your door to strangers.

# OSFM Stresses Importance of Fire Safety for Older Illinoisans

The Office of the Illinois State Fire Marshal (OSFM) encourages older Illinoisans to think about fire safety, while keeping their limitations in mind when creating a fire escape plan. According to the United States Fire Administration (USFA) on average, over 1,000 Americans 65 and older die in home fires and 2,000 are injured in fire-related incidences yearly. The leading cause of residential fire deaths among older adults is careless smoking.

"Decreased mobility, health, sight and hearing may limit a person's ability to take quick action needed to escape during a fire," says Illinois State Fire Marshal Matt Perez. "Create an escape plan that considers your limitations. Don't isolate yourself, speak to your caregiver, building manager or family members to make sure your smoke alarms are working, and they understand your fire escape plan. Finally, if possible, live near an exit or plan to sleep on the ground floor if your home has multiple levels."

"In addition to discussing and creating an escape plan with your loved ones is important, the Illinois Department of Aging offers an

Emergency Home Response Service - available to individuals over the age of 60 - that provides an extra level of protection and peace of mind," said Paula Basta, Director of IDoA.

"Our Emergency Home Response Service is a 24-hour, two-way voice communication system that, when activated, links to assistance outside the home. Once you press the button, help will be on its way in any home emergency." For more information on the Emergency Home Response Service, call at 1-800-252-8966.

Keep these tips in mind to create a fire safe home:

- Know two ways out of every room. Practice using both ways.
- Remove any items that may block your way out of the room or your home.
- Discuss your fire escape plan with family and neighbors.
- Keep eyeglasses, keys, hearing aids and a phone within reach next to your bed.

## Educational Commission Hosts Rich Central Principal



On January 7, 2020, the Olympia Fields Educational Commission hosted Rich Central High School Principal Dr. LeViis Haney to a Special Meeting of the Commission. The meeting was held at Village Hall.

The meeting was arranged to introduce Dr. Haney to the Olympia Fields community and to allow our citizens an intimate opportunity to get to know Dr. Haney and his vision, hopes and expectations for Rich Central.

Judging from the open and passionate discussion that permeated Dr. Haney's presentation, as well as the extended question and answer period that followed, the meeting was considered a great success by all who attended. Dr. Haney gave a presentation focused on the current state of affairs at Rich Central, while addressing several specific questions and issues forwarded in advance by the Commission.

A wide range of topics were discussed, including academic performance, condition of the school building, school culture/climate, student safety and the upcoming inclusion of new students to the campus as a result of the upcoming closing of Rich East High School.

The meeting concluded with a list of "next steps" that the Commission will focus on both separately and in conjunction with Dr. Haney and his staff.

This meeting was the latest in a series of informational meetings the Educational Commission has held in an effort to bring our local educational leaders face-to-face with our residents.

For information on future meetings of the Educational Commission, view the schedule of public meetings on the Village's website at [www.olympia-fields.com](http://www.olympia-fields.com).

## Beautification Committee Updates

Shortly after Halloween, members of the Olympia Fields Beautification Committee participated in the Chicago Southland Pumpkin Smashing Event.

The smashing event created 3,000 lbs. of good composting material to be used by a local nature nursery. This is an annual event each year in the Fall. Mark your calendars this year for October and be ready to join in the fun.



It's time to start planning your garden!

Irons Oaks will host their annual Native Plant Sale on May 9th from 9:00 a.m. to noon at the Vollmer Road Parking Lot.

This annual plant sale will offer plants that will require less fertilizer, pesticides and watering than non-native species.

## Rich Central Students Needed to Participate in a Focus Group

The Olympia Fields Educational Commission is looking to form a focus group consisting of Rich Central High School students for the purpose of better understanding the culture, climate and academic performance of the school from the perspective of currently enrolled students.

Parents of current Rich Central students may also participate.

By engaging the focus group, the commission hopes to better understand how students and their parents feel about Rich Central in a wide range of areas including student safety, cell phone policy, academic rigor and more. By listening to those actually enrolled in the school, the EC hopes to work with District 227 and Rich Central administrators to improve overall school performance, resulting in better outcomes for Village property owners.

If you are a student or parent of a currently enrolled Rich Central student, and are willing to participate, please contact the Olympia Fields Educational Commission at (708) 503-8000, extension 4000.



# Coronavirus and COVID-19 Frequently Asked Questions

## **A Message from Village President Sterling Burke:**

*Like so many of you, we have spent the last several days and weeks learning about the coronavirus (COVID-19) and how it is impacting the world. As we all follow the impact, we want you to know that your safety is our top priority. We at The Village of Olympia Fields take all developments concerning the coronavirus (COVID-19) very seriously and will continue to closely monitor the situation. For Olympia Fields, that means understanding how it affects our employees, our residents and our community. We have one simple objective that guides us, keeping you and our employees safe. With that in mind, we are closely following the Centers for Disease Control's (CDC) guidelines and recommendations on the steps we can take to help prevent the spread of the virus. Here's what you need to know about what it is and how you can protect yourself and the people you care about.*

## **What is coronavirus and COVID-19?**

- Coronavirus is a type of virus that causes respiratory illness — an infection of the airways and lungs. COVID-19 is a new strain of coronavirus. It's part of the same family of coronaviruses that includes the common cold.

## **How does the virus spread?**

- Right now, medical experts think that COVID-19 spreads from person-to-person through a cough, sneeze or kiss. However, since COVID-19 is a new disease, scientists around the globe are racing to learn more about it.

## **What are the symptoms?**

- The most common early symptoms appear between 2 and 14 days after being infected. Symptoms can be mild to severe. They include fever, cough, and shortness of breath.

## **How can I help protect myself?**

- The best way to prevent infection is to avoid being exposed to the virus that causes COVID-19. Check the CDC website for up-to-date information. If you're traveling, you'll want to visit the CDC travel page for their most current travel guidelines.
- Good health habits can also help prevent and fight COVID-19.
- Wash your hands often with soap and water for at least 20 seconds. Especially after going to the bathroom, before eating, and after blowing your nose, coughing, or sneezing.
- If soap and water aren't available, use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer with at least 60% alcohol.
- Avoid touching your eyes, nose, and mouth.
- Avoid close contact with people who are sick.
- Stay home when sick. This includes staying home from work, school, and errands for at least 24 hours after a fever is gone.
- Cover a cough or sneeze with a tissue, throw the tissue in the trash and wash your hands.
- Clean and disinfect frequently touched objects and surfaces

like phones, keyboards, and doorknobs.

- Get plenty of sleep, be physically active, drink lots of fluids, and eat nutritious food. Do I need to wear a facemask? It's best to follow the CDC's recommendations for using a facemask.
- If you're not sick, the CDC does not recommend wearing a facemask to protect yourself from respiratory diseases.
- If you have symptoms of COVID-19, you should wear a facemask to help prevent spreading the disease to others.

## **What if I have symptoms?**

- Call your doctor if you develop a fever, have a cough, or have difficulty breathing. And let them know if you've been in close contact with a person known to have COVID-19, or if you live in or have recently traveled to an area where the virus has spread.

## **Paying Your Water Bills**

The Village offers multiple ways to pay your water bills for our residents' convenience: online through the Village's website, in person or by mail.

You can create an account on our website to pay your bills. The self-service portal will allow you to view and pay your bills 24-hours a day. Once the account is set up online, you will have access to billing and payment history.

You can pay your water bill in person at Village Hall at 20040 Governors Highway during regular business hours or by dropping off your payment in the drop box on the southside of the front entrance. Please note that residents opting to use the outside drop box should only include checks or money orders. Regular business hours at Village Hall are from 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday and Friday; and from 8:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m. on Thursday.

You can mail in your payment—checks or money orders only—via regular mail to 20040 Governors Highway, Olympia Fields, IL 60461. Please include your account number on your check or money order.

The Village will offer an ACH bill pay option soon. We expect to have the bill pay consolidation service available by April 2020. This enhancement will allow for resident-initiated water bill payments to be promptly posted to their water accounts. Currently, if you pay through your bank, the bank is sending the Village paper checks which can take up to 10 days to be received by the Village. When the ACH bill pay option is offered, your payments will be electronically credited to your account.