



SPARK'S SNOW DAY – DECEMBER 18

Snow came early in Firefly Grove this year so Spark the Firefly gets to experience her first snow day! Join Spark as she learns all about snow, hibernation, and exciting winter activities like sledding and ice skating. Spark's Snow Day includes puppets, original music, interactive movement, and lots of winter fun for families! The fun event will be held on Wednesday, December 18 from 5 until 6 PM and is for children aged 2 through 7-years-old and their caregivers.

TEEN LOCK-IN – DECEMBER 27

Have you ever wondered what the Library is like after hours? Do you love playing games and eating pizza? Attend the Teen Lock-in On Friday, December 27 from 6 until 8 PM! Snacks, pizza, drinks, and games will all be provided. Don't forget to bring a friend or two! Open to kids in grades 6-8.

NOON YEAR'S EVE PARTY – DECEMBER 30

Do you and your kids struggle to make it to midnight on New Year's Eve? Join us to celebrate at an early Noon Years Eve party On Monday, December 30 from 11:30 AM until 12:30 PM! You will enjoy all your party favorites--music, noise makers, hats, balloons, and more! For children of all ages.

Donate Blood - You May Be Saving a Life - December 13

The last Blood Drive for 2024 will be held on Friday, December 13 from 3 until 7 PM at the Franklin Park Police Station, located at 9451 Belmont Avenue. Walk-ins are welcome but you can also make an appointment by calling Vitalant at (877) 258-4825 or visit vitalant.org and use group code: ORD0FR98.

In appreciation for helping patients this holiday season, donors will get a \$10 Rewards gift card. PLUS, you'll be automatically entered for a chance to win one of five \$5,000 gift cards! Donors must have an online donor account and be opted into the Donor Rewards program to qualify for this drawing and to receive the \$10 gift card.



Congratulations to the 2024 winners of the Best Decorated Home for Halloween!

1ST PLACE
2921 ROSE STREET

2ND PLACE
2801 ELDER LANE

3RD PLACE
3224 ERNST STREET

Village News



Mayor's Desk



New Plaza Supports Downtown Beautification

I am pleased to announce another exciting project as part of our Downtown Beautification Initiative. The parking lot adjacent to Corporate Business Cards on Franklin Avenue and 25th is being transformed into a beautiful public Plaza. This project is part of the Village's effort to remove eyesores from the community and repurpose them with attractive and usable space.

This revitalized space will add to the options for residents to gather, socialize, and host Village sponsored community events. The Plaza will be available for Farmers Markets, concerts, and additional space for our annual Franklin Park Fest.

The Plaza will be lush with new trees, seasonal flowers, attractive streetscaping, festive lighting, and a fountain. In the spring of 2025, we will unveil a vibrant original, commissioned mural which will commemorate Franklin Park's rich history & heritage.

The Plaza Adds to the Growing Downtown Corridor

The Plaza will match the aesthetics of recent Franklin Avenue improvements, adding to a growing, robust commercial corridor. Having another attractive

open space will bring more residents, commuters, and visitors downtown. This Plaza will help to foster a warm and welcoming environment and will support our effort to attract more businesses to the downtown area and new customers to support our restaurants and stores.

We will be announcing more new retail establishments opening on Franklin Avenue in the coming months. Construction on the Plaza is underway and we look forward to its completion in the spring.

Sharing the Spirit of Christmas



We are all looking forward to a happy, healthy holiday season filled with joy, laughter, and a little relaxation. But some in our community may be struggling to put presents under the tree or have a feast on the table. I ask if you are able, please consider donating to the Leyden Community Food Pantry. Our Village Hall will have donation bins available for your generous donations of non-perishable foods through the end of the year. The American Legion post is also collecting clothing, toiletries, and blankets for their annual Stand Down event for veterans in January. Please see the



Barrett F. Pedersen
Mayor

April Arellano
Village Clerk

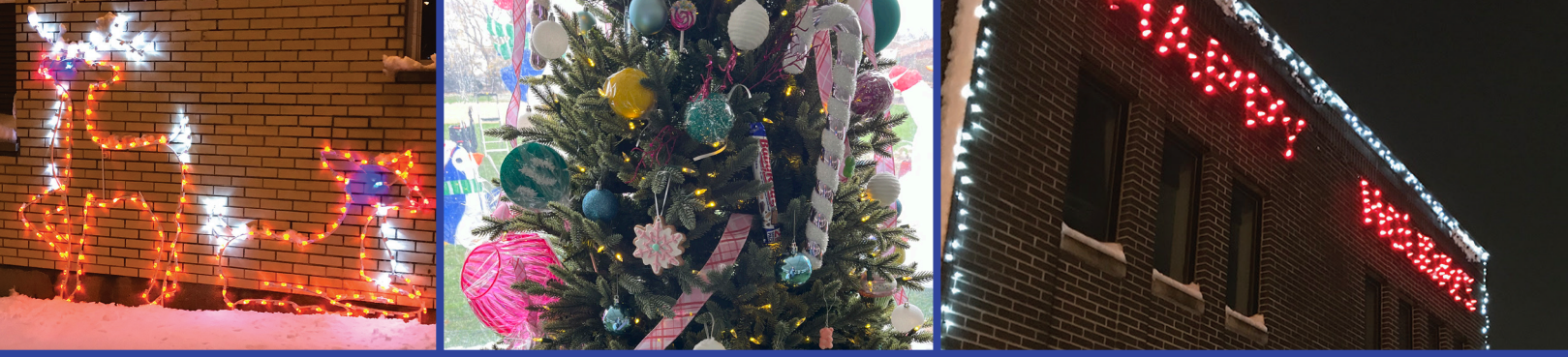
Village Trustees:
Irene Avitia
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John Johnson
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Andy Ybarra

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◀ **Mayor's Desk Continued from Page 1.**

details about how you can donate on page 3.

This season let us demonstrate the love, peace, and tolerance that this holy season embodies.

On behalf of the Village board and staff, I wish you a very Merry Christmas!

Mayor Barrett F. Pedersen



▲ **Artist's rendering of the new plaza currently being constructed in downtown Franklin Park. The mural depicted is not the actual mural that will appear onsite when the plaza is completed in the spring of 2025.**



▲ **Our good friends at Ex-Cell Kaiser and Leyden Family Services visited Village Hall to kick off our community's holiday food donation effort with Mayor Barrett Pedersen. If you are able, please share your blessings with others by donating non-perishable items to the Leyden Community Food Pantry. A donation bin is available in the lobby of Village Hall until the end of the year.**



Donations and Volunteers Needed to Support Veterans Event

The Franklin Park American Legion Post 974 is hosting the annual Stand Down to help homeless veterans and those in need on Sunday, January 26 from 11 AM until 3 PM at the Post located at 9757 Pacific Avenue. The event will provide hot meals, clothing, toiletries, blankets, and haircuts for those in need. Veteran Service Officers and representatives from other agencies will also be present to provide information about VA benefits, housing, transportation, Honor Flight Chicago, and more.

If you would like to make a monetary donation or donate gently used or new clothing items (especially hats, gloves, scarves, coats) and blankets, please bring the items to the Legion after 4 PM until January 25. Volunteers are also needed before, during, and after the event to sort out donations, serve food, etc. If you would like more information or to volunteer, call (847) 560-0459.

Seniors Must Reapply Annually for Free Garbage Removal Services

Qualified senior citizens and disabled low-income homeowners are required to reapply each year to avoid receiving a bill for garbage removal service. Senior citizens aged 65 years or older who own a single residence must provide a copy of their most recent Cook County Property Tax Bill which indicates they are receiving the Senior Citizen Property Tax Exemption to receive free garbage removal services. A copy of the tax bill can be mailed, emailed, or brought to Village Hall by December 30 to guarantee you will receive free garbage removal for 2025.



Disabled and low-income property owners must provide proof of qualifications for the Low-Income Home Energy Assistance Program (LIHEAP) to be eligible to receive the reduced garbage collection fee of 50 percent. Please email, mail, or bring your LIHEAP award letter to Village Hall to qualify for the reduced fee by December 30. Emailed documents can be sent to prodriguez@vofp.com or mailed to Village of Franklin Park, 9500 Belmont Avenue, Franklin Park, IL 60131. For more information, call (847) 671-8258.

Need Help Applying for Government Programs?

Leyden Family Services will be at Village Hall on Wednesday, December 18 from 9 AM until Noon to help residents who have questions or need help applying for government programs including Medicare, Medicaid, and LIHEAP. Staff can also help with understanding medical bills, prescription assistance, and more. Bring your Social Security award letter and paycheck stubs that show the amount of income you receive. No appointment is necessary.



▲ **Students from the Leyden High School Science Club planted 19 donated trees from the Morton Arboretum on the 9600 block of Addison.**



▲ **Village officials and staff had the opportunity to tour the Ferrero facility in Franklin Park and to get a glimpse into how the iconic Butterfinger candy bar is made!**

Village Hall will close at 3 PM on December 23 and will be closed on December 24 and 25 for Christmas.

Village Hall will close at 3 PM on January 31 and will be closed on January 1 for New Year.