

The Villager

The Village Of Hazel Crest Community Newsletter

July & August, 2015

A Message From The Village President

I would like to thank the hundreds of residents who turned out on June 13th to honor Hazel Crest's veterans and south suburban military families at the Vietnam War Veteran Commemorative Ceremony held at the Village Hall and the VFW Hall. It was a moving ceremony at which certificates of appreciation were given to veterans or their surviving family members, and all the attendees enjoyed the remarks of our speakers State Senator Mike Hastings, State Representative Al Riley, American Legion Post 398 Commander William Philpot, and the fellowship picnic that followed.

As an Air Force Veteran who has many friends and relatives who are Vietnam War veterans, I am glad that we showed them that their service to their country was both appreciated and honorable. When you are a soldier serving in the field of battle, the origin or popularity or geopolitical ramifications of a war are beyond your control. As a member of the United States military your duty is to your country, your troops and your family — and the hope that you are helping preserve and promote freedom. We honored the brave men and women who risked and sacrificed both life



President
Vernard Alsberry, Jr.

and limb and mental and emotional health to perform their sworn duty on behalf of America, its allies and innocent people whose freedom was in jeopardy.

I would also like to thank the organizers of the event from the veterans community as well as the representatives of the U.S. Department of Defense who worked with our village officials to become an official partner of the U.S. Vietnam War Veteran Commemorative program this year.

Sincerely,

Vernard Alsberry, Jr.

Vernard Alsberry Jr.
Village President of Hazel Crest

Vernard Alsberry, Jr.
President

Marlon D. Rias
Village Clerk

Village Trustees

Ben Ramsey

Mary Grant

Pat Jackson

Sandra Slayton

Kevin Moore

Susan Pate

Village of Hazel Crest

Phone:
(708) 335-9600

Fax:
(708) 335-9622

3000 W. 170th Place
Hazel Crest, Illinois
60429

Local News & Events

Local Girl Scout Rachel Bennett Receives Highest Award



The Girl Scouts and Boy Scouts are still active in the south suburbs and one of our young ladies in Hazel Crest was recently recognized at a ceremony at which she received the Girl Scout Gold Award. Extraordinary girls and young women who have made outstanding achievements are honored with the Girl Scout Gold Award — which is the highest award a Girl Scout can achieve.

One of this year's recipients was Hazel Crest resident Rachel Bennett, who will be a sophomore at Culver Stockton College this fall where she is a choir member. Rachel was

recognized for taking positive community action with her Turn Down The Volume project. Rachel sponsored two music workshops at a local junior high and high school to introduce children to classical music and presented them with information about engaging in music education in high school and as a career. Her proud parents, Twylia and Frederick Bennett, as well as her grandmother Dr. Becky Adams (pictured at left) were in attendance to see Rachel honored for her vision, community spirit, dedication and hard work. The Gold Award is achieved by less than 5% of girl scouts.

Patronize Our Local Businesses

Sabrina's Restaurant hosted a Grand Re-Opening following the remodeling of the facility at 17553 S. Kedzie Avenue. Village officials were on hand to assist Sabrina in cutting the ribbon to mark the availability of some of the best soul food in the south suburbs, which was also broadcast by gospel radio station 1590 AM. Please take the time to revisit Sabrina and please patronize all of our Hazel Crest businesses as often as possible. A strong business community not only keeps our village attractive to new businesses and young families seeking to locate here, but provides much need revenue to help fund local government services.



Congressman Kelly Visits Residents At Village Hall

On May 9th, Congresswoman Robin Kelly gave Hazel Crest residents an update of the legislation proposals and administrative actions of the Federal government at the **Coffee With The President** forum hosted monthly by Village President Vernard Alsberry Jr. U.S. Representative Kelly spoke with over 100 residents who gathered to listen to her remarks and answers to questions from the audience. Officials and residents from surrounding communities also made an effort to attend and voice their concerns and opinions. Kelly emphasized the efforts she and her staff are making to increase employment and economic development to the 2nd Congressional District and Illinois.



SUMMER



Local News & Events

New Police Chief Anthony Gray Sworn In

Anthony Gray was sworn in as Hazel Crest's newest Police Chief after being nominated by Mayor Alsberry and approved by the Village Board of Trustees. Chief Gray has worked his way up the ranks in the HCPD having been hired as a patrol officer in 1992 and rising to Detective Sergeant serving in supervisory position. Chief Gray also previously served as Hazel Crest's representative with the South

Suburban Major Crimes Task Force. In addition to his experience on the streets, our new police chief is a veteran of the United States Marine Corps Reserve, attended Western Illinois University and is a graduate of the Northwestern University Police Management Staff & Command program, which specializes in police executive management training and procedures.



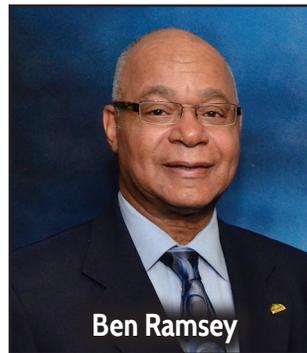
Village Board Of Trustees Welcomes Three New Progressive Members



Mary Grant

Following the April, 2015 municipal election, new Village Trustees Sandra Slayton, Ben Ramsey and Mary Grant were sworn into office. All the new trustees made clear their objectives to serve as nonpartisan representatives for all residents with an agenda to provide effective leadership to help implement progressive and efficient reforms in our village government.

Mary Grant was familiar to many residents as the Village Clerk and longtime community volunteer. A village resident since 1968, Mary was the recipient of the Good Neighbor



Ben Ramsey

Award in 2001. Mary is a parishioner and volunteer at St. John's Catholic Church and serves as member of SD 152 ½ School Finance Authority.

Ben Ramsey is returning for his second term as a Village Trustee, having previously served on the Board from 2009 through 2013 and as a Planning & Zoning Board Member. Ben spent his career as a software engineer, most recently at CNA Insurance and Coventry Health Care. Ben also serves as an Elder at St. John's Lutheran Church and is a Past President of the Stone Creek



Sandra Slayton

Homeowner's Association.

Sandra Slayton recently retired as a Deputy Regional Administrator of the United States Department of Agriculture. Sandra served as a Member of the Hazel Crest Human Relations Commission as well as a past officer of the Stonebridge Civic Association. Sandra is a volunteer for the Illinois Department of Aging, a member of the League of Women Voters, a Chicago Catholic Charities Advisory Board Member and a parishioner of St. John's Catholic Church.

Local News & Events

Drivin' The Dixie Is A Great Success



The Dixie Highway may not seem like a super highway, but in 1915 it was the only roadway that served as a continuous route from Chicago to Miami. Conceived, organized and built by various private and public interests, the Dixie Highway became operational in 1915 as a North-South route similar the Lincoln Highway, which served as the earliest East-West route at the beginning of the automobile age. Sections of the Dixie Highway were later incorporated into the state and federal highway system, which is why Dixie Highway is now designated as Illinois Route 1 in the south suburbs.

On June 20, 2015, Hazel Crest residents turned out for a celebration of the Dixie Highway with a display of antique cars at the Mi-Jack Company property on 167th Street just east of Dixie Highway. Events throughout the south suburbs from Blue Island to Kankakee County were held simultaneously as part of a historical remembrance and tourism exposition sponsored by the Illinois State Historical Society, the Model "A" Ford Club of America and the Drivin' The Dixie association.

New Village Clerk Marlon Rias Begins His Tenure

Marlon Rias was nominated by President Alsberry to fill the vacancy in the Village Clerk's Office resulting from the election of Mary Grant as one of our new Trustees. New Village Clerk Marlon Rias was approved by the Board of Trustees and has begun fulfilling the duties and responsibilities of the Village Clerk, who serves as the official record keeper of the Village.

Clerk Rias is no stranger to public service and administrative responsibility, having previously served as the Vice-Chairman of

the Economic Development Commission and as the 1st Vice- President of the Highland Civic Association. Marlon has also contributed to our community by serving as a coach with the Hazel Crest Little League, with the Hazel Crest Thunder Basketball Team and with the Hillcrest High School football, basketball and baseball teams. Marlon has been married to Chenise for 15 years and they have three children — Kiara, Marlon and Monique. The Rias family are members of the Victory Apostolic Church.



Marlon Rias

Hazelnut Fest Scheduled For August 15th

The 2015 Hazelnut Festival is scheduled for Saturday, August 15 on the village grounds located directly across from the Village Hall. Our largest annual festival is a family oriented event with food, fun, arts and crafts, music and entertainment appropriate for residents of all ages.

The Hazelnut Festival will begin around 12:00 PM with entertainment that

includes the Hazelnut Star Search Talent Contest, D Low-National Hip Hop Artist, BLT & Friends Clean Comedy Show, Delivery Point R&B Band, Tony Normand's Jazz Quartet, Casper/ Radio & Slide Personality and special activities for the children.

The Hazelnut Committee is seeking talented groups and individuals to

perform at the 2015 Hazelnut Star Search Talent Show on Saturday, August 15. We are seeking young and senior performers as well as a magician, so come early and bring your talent. For more information please call 335-9600, ext. 106 and leave a message with your name and phone number. We will get back to you as soon as possible!

July 4th Safety

Fourth Of July Safety Tips From President Alsberry

Independence Day is coming soon and fireworks are a traditional part of the festivities, but also a dangerous activity in the hands of inexperienced or reckless youngsters (and adults !). Although fireworks are illegal in Illinois, the proximity of Hazel Crest to the Indiana border via I-80 — where fireworks are legal — means that the south suburbs are flooded with prohibited fireworks.

The Hazel Crest Police Department does not have the manpower to confiscate every firecracker, but it will be cracking down on blatant, excessive or dangerous use of fireworks and other explosive devices which result in the permanent injury and hospitalization of hundreds of people each year throughout our region.

While the best way to enjoy fireworks is to visit a local festival and enjoy the show from afar, if you do come into contact with fireworks displays as a either a participant or a viewer, please take care to protect your safety and that of others by heeding the advice below:

- 1) Don't do it.
- 2) Keep all children 30 feet from any lit or unlit fireworks and the site of their detonation.
- 3) Do not hold or throw fireworks. They should be stationary when lit (then run away).
- 4) Do not aim airborne fireworks toward any people or residences.
- 5) It's not just stupid people who get hurt – it's the people close to them.
- 6) Make sure your health insurance is paid up. Reattaching fingers is expensive.
- 7) If anyone else gets hurt by your actions, you are criminally and civilly liable.
- 8) Make sure you have your bail money before you starting lighting illegal fireworks.



Public Works Director Tim Fassnacht Retires

After 41 years of loyal and productive service to the Village of Hazel Crest, Public Works Department Director Tim Fassnacht has earned some quiet time. We all wish Tim the best in his future endeavors and we are grateful for his dedication and hard work over the years.



Village of Hazel Crest
3000 W. 170th Place
Hazel Crest, Illinois 60429

POSTAL CUSTOMER

HAZEL CREST, ILLINOIS 60429

Village Beautification Efforts Move Forward

One asset to help attract new business to our community, as well as helping eliminate petty crime in the neighborhoods, is to ensure the basic cleanliness of the streets, sidewalks, open spaces and the business district. Community development and community policing strategists all agree that a well-kept community helps create and maintain a sense of community pride while attracting new residents and new businesses who recognize and appreciate the environment.

Toward that end, Hazel Crest activists and officials joined together this May to erect and dedicate a new fence along Kedzie Avenue near 177th Street. Advocate South Suburban Hospital generously donated seed money for the project along with local businesses and residents. The fence replaces an old unsightly fence which had been in disrepair for several years and was an unattractive sight to travelers on Kedzie.

