



# THE FOREST VIEW

THE CITY OF LAKE FOREST

## IN THIS ISSUE:

FY2010 Budget

Employee News

Benefit Information

RTA Transit Benefit

New Benefits

Aflac NOW Card

Little Scouts Day Care

The Library's View

Vote Earth

## Views from the desk of ...

Dear Employees:

One year ago, the budget message for the City Council reflected on the great economic uncertainty that lay ahead. Today, the economy is declining and very volatile. The City, like all communities, faces significant challenges brought on by the worldwide recession. Fortunately, through historically prudent financial management, Lake Forest is well positioned to operate and continue providing quality services during these wearisome and economically stormy times.

The convergence of economic, operational and structural factors will require some sacrifice. Rising unemployment, business closings, home foreclosures and declining consumer confidence has resulted in a reduction in City revenues and increased pressure to scrutinize public expenditures. These pressures and challenges will necessitate change. The recession will have a long-term, profound effect on residents in ways that we cannot even imagine. It will also have an effect on the way the City does business – thus requiring a new way of thinking. Consequently, the proposed FY10 Budget focuses on completing major capital initiatives already underway; comprehensively evaluating and prioritizing all City services; examining opportunities to increase program efficiencies; and remaining positive and optimistic about future economic forecasts.

During FY10, the City Council, City staff and residents will systematically evaluate and prioritize all City services as either a Core City Service (“mission”-critical) or Elective City Service (enhances quality of life). This process will be comprehensive, inclusive and most importantly, enduring – thereby insuring that any future budget reductions or elimination of programs is properly aligned with resident expectations. The key will be to develop a sustainable list of community priorities absent any individual pet projects or staff biases. The time has come when the City Council and staff must examine the services offered to residents and the cost-benefit of providing such services. We are in the service-delivery business, and a periodic analysis of what services we currently offer and their associated costs is critical and wise financial planning.

During troubled or uncertain economic times, it is even more critical that the City take a proactive role in examining the ways it does business. We must focus on future challenges and opportunities that would otherwise not present themselves. "Business as usual" cannot handcuff creativity or blind us from potentially restructuring operations, forming partnerships or other strategies that control costs and maintain desired service levels.

On a regular basis, the City examines its operations to determine if there is a better or more cost-effective way of providing service to residents. In FY10, the City will focus on the following five programs:

1. Fire Service Consolidation or Shared Services
2. IT Service Consolidation or Shared Services
3. Fleet Efficiency Study
4. Green Industry Consolidation
5. Continued Participation in IRMA

With declining revenues, the proposed FY10 operating expenses had to be reduced in order to balance the budget and be in compliance with the City's Fiscal Policies. Some tough and unpopular decisions had to be made, and others potentially loom on the horizon.

As we move forward, I will continue to keep the employees informed of what is happening. Look for the schedule of City Manager Informational Meetings in April, when I will have more concrete information to share.

In the meantime, continue doing your usual good jobs, think creatively and share your ideas. Together we can emerge from these stormy times as a better, stronger organization.



Members of your Activity Committee sparkled at the Holiday Party: (l-r) Sally Swarthout, Mike Goy, Mary Webber, Nancy Watson, Madeline Palenica, Peter Gordon, Beth Marquez, Todd Nahigian, Joe Gabanski, Marilyn Smith; (front) Donna Kuffel, Shelley Walker, Carina Walters

## Happy Birthday

Cathy Japuntich	P&R - Admin	3/21
Ryan Olson	Police	3/24
Dave Cerer	Police	3/26
Zen Dykyj	PW - Water Plant	3/27
Billy Loyd	PW - Bldg Maint.	3/27
Sherry Miller	Senior Resources	4/1
Lou Decker	PW - Sanitation	4/1
Joanne Yorro	CROYA	4/1
Bernard Pondexter	PW - Engineering	4/2
Yoni Garcia	PW - Sanitation	4/3
Wendy Frasier	Finance	4/5
Chris Marszalek	P&R - Golf	4/5
Wendy McKiernan	P&R - Admin.	4/8
Jeff Pietrucha	IT	4/8
John Bardi	Fire	4/10
Dave DeMarco	PW - Fleet	4/13
Marty Blitstein	Police	4/17
Mike Gernenz	PW - Sanitation	4/17
Matt Wert	PW - Forestry	4/19
Carla Ward	Human Resources	4/20
Brian Verbeke	Police	4/20
John Baldwin	P&R - Parks	4/22
Rob January	P&R - Parks	4/23
Mary Goodman	Library	4/27
Kris Myscich	IT	4/28
Joe Mobile	P&R - Rec	4/29
Mike Glomski	Forestry/ComDev	5/1
Lou Bischoffer	PW - Water Plant	5/1
Karl Walldorf	Police	5/1
Matt Goodman	ComDev	5/5
Edward Gudas	P&R - Rec	5/5
Louise Breckan	Finance	5/8
Ken Pierini	P&R - Rec	5/8
Anthony Anaszewicz	P&R - Rec	5/8
Sandy Ragsdale	P&R - Rec	5/9
Kevin Issel	Fire	5/12
Paul Petersen	ComDev	5/12
Mary Van Arsdale	P&R - Admin.	5/14
Charles Flesch	Police	5/14
Mary Farwell	Library	5/16
Jian Tan	Library	5/17
Kate Parker	Library	5/19
Choosri Goebel	Library	5/20
Scott Irish	ComDev	5/21
Sara Hartnett	Finance	5/22

Andrew Thickpenny	PW - Streets	5/22
Dan Reeves	P&R - Admin.	5/23
Caroline Hermes	CROYA	5/25
Dave Field	Police	5/27
Eric Montellano	Fire	5/28

## Employee News

Congratulations to Lupe and **Yoni Garcia** (Sanitation) on the birth of their third son, Mike, on February 19.

**Dave Andersen** (Fire) recently completed his Bachelor of Arts degree from Western Illinois University. Well done!

## Parks and Rec News of Note

What one simple thing can you do to increase your energy levels and reduce stress in the workplace? EXERCISE!! As a full-time City employee, you can take advantage of an additional \$100 savings on Resident Membership Rates & Enrollment Fees. Located in the Parks & Recreation Building, it's not only convenient, but affordable *and* state-of-the-art. Don't waste time thinking about exercising. Get moving! Each new member receives two free training sessions with a certified personal trainer to help get started. For membership information, contact Moira at 847-615-3187.



The Annual Friends Golf Classic will be held Friday, June 5. Mark your calendars and sign up now. If you want to play, volunteer to help or need help getting a foursome together, contact golf committee chair Fred Jackson, 847-702-6050 or at [fjackson585@comcast.net](mailto:fjackson585@comcast.net) to learn more.

To learn more about Friends of LF Parks and Recreation or to help with our annual Festival and Fireworks in July, please contact Cathy Japuntich, ext. 4350; Laura Brown, [ldblf@comcast.net](mailto:ldblf@comcast.net) and 847-482-1383; or Steve Hill at 847-283-9161.

# *Benefit Briefing*

## **ICMA-RC Goes Paperless**

ICMA-RC, the vendor for our deferred compensation and Retirement Health Savings (RHS) programs, is developing a "Go Paperless" campaign to encourage participants to join in reducing paper usage. Their Go Paperless campaign will launch in the coming weeks and is designed to encourage participants to access their financial communications online rather than receive them in the mail.

You can choose to access your quarterly statements and transaction confirmations from ICMA-RC online when you log into Account Access. Online access offers a secure way for participants to view these and other documents, and it helps to reduce opportunities for identity theft.

## **RHS Beneficiary Fix**

Legislation that would remedy the RHS beneficiary issue that went into effect January 1, 2009, is expected to be reintroduced in the House and Senate in the next few months. There is a provision of this legislation that would fix current beneficiary regulations that prohibit anyone who is not a spouse or dependent from receiving assets. This would cover ICMA-RC's RHS program. Employees currently contribute 1% of salary to the RHS program. Congressional support through new cosponsors for this bill continues to grow, thereby increasing its prospects for inclusion in a larger tax or health bill in this Congress.

For those interested in following future legislative developments, you may visit the Legislative Report section of the ICMA-RC web site for updates.

## **RTA/CTA Transit Benefit Raised**

As part of The American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009, the RTA/CTA Transit Benefit Fare Program pre-tax limit has been raised from \$115 per month to \$230 per month. Employees participating in this program may now claim the higher amount on a pre-tax basis. Contact Wendy Frasier in Finance with questions.



## **New Benefit!**



## **Waukegan Tire Offers Employee Group Purchase Program**

We are very happy to announce that Waukegan Tire is now offering City employees wholesale pricing and savings on tires and merchandise, and a 10% savings on automotive services, labor and parts.

To participate in this program, you must first obtain a discount card from the Human Resources Department. When you present the card for use at one of the four Waukegan Tire locations, the store will keep the card. But that doesn't mean you can only use this benefit one time. You just need to get a new card from Human Resources each time you need one. The employee doesn't need to be present to use the card; spouses may use it as well. The only stipulation is that the employee must request the card from Human Resources. Happy driving!



# News You Can Use

## Aflac NOW Card Update

The Aflac NOW card is a new benefit this year for employees participating in the Section 125 Flexible Spending Account (FSA). Some employees have begun receiving letters from AFLAC requesting copies of receipts. Here is clarification on those receipt requests. As stated during open enrollment, you may be required to submit your receipts for unreimbursed medical FSA expenses when you use this card. However, this will be necessary **only if requested in writing by Aflac**. This will occur if your expense is for an unusual amount and not for a standard copay amount. If a pharmacy or mail-in service does not keep an "inventory ID approval system", that might generate a letter requesting a receipt. This is a way of verifying that your purchases for medical, dental and vision care expenses are validated and reimbursed appropriately. **Always keep your receipts!**

If you receive a letter requesting that you submit a receipt, you should respond by faxing in the receipt(s) for the particular expense in question along with the letter you received. The fax number is 877-353-9256. Please note that the letter's language may sound a little strong. This is a government-regulated form letter, so do not be alarmed. Aflac is following the federal guidelines, making sure all purchases and expenses are valid for the employee and to protect the City in providing the FSA benefit plans.

If you have questions or concerns about the use of the Aflac NOW card, call Margie Winters' office at 815-455-4734. You will receive a response within 24 hours.



## Little Scouts Day Care Program

Last year we were able to offer City employees day care options at the Little Scouts Program run for School Districts 67 and 115. City employees have been offered very favorable rates that are substantially reduced from those offered to the general public.

The rates below are per week and for a 4 week period - except half-day program:

# Days /Week	Full-Day Infant	Full-Day Toddler	Full-Day 2-Yr.	Full-Day 3-5 yr.	Half-Day 3-5 Yr*
5 Days	\$342/ \$1368	\$290/ \$1160	\$273/ \$1092	\$251/ \$1004	\$610
4 Days	\$280/ \$1120	\$240/ \$960	\$228/ \$912	\$210/ \$840	\$506
3 Days	\$216/ \$864	\$186/ \$744	\$177/ \$708	\$164/ \$656	\$390
2 Days	\$148/ \$592	\$128/ \$512	\$123/ \$492	\$114/ \$456	\$270
1 Day	\$76/ \$304	\$66/ \$264	\$63/ \$252	\$59/ \$236	\$140

\* 1/2 Day Morning Program: 8:30 a.m. to 12:00 p.m. for 3 and 4 year olds; Lunch Bunch option 12:00-12:45 p.m.

Throughout the past twelve years Little Scouts has evolved according to the needs of the population it serves. Little Scouts offers full-day and half-day programs. Currently, Little Scouts operates from 6:45 a.m. to 5:15 p.m., Monday through Friday. Flexible scheduling options include year round and flexible summer options.

Informational brochures are available from the Human Resources Department or on the HR website at [www.citylf.org](http://www.citylf.org).

## The Library's View

Watch for the reopening of the updated Children's Library by April 1<sup>st</sup>!

### LEAD Program Partnership

The Library will co-sponsor a program on Thursday, April 23, featuring guest speaker Hal Urban. The topic will be *Positive Words, Positive Results*, from Dr. Urban's book, *Life's Greatest Lessons: 20 Things That Matter*. Details on time and place of the program will be posted at [www.leadweb.org](http://www.leadweb.org).

### Student Art on Display

Woodland Academy of the Sacred Heart exhibit continues through April 14. Lake Forest High School student art show begins May 4. Enjoy the efforts of our talented youth in the Fine Arts Room.

### Friends of the Library Present Barbara Rinella

Barbara Rinella will interpret "The Commoner" by John Burnham Schwartz at the Gorton Community Center, Wednesday, April 22, at 1:00 pm. This annual meeting of the Friends is free and open to the public, no reservations are required.

### Staff News

Congratulations to **Tori Sergel**, who is the new Head of Circulation. Tori has been with the Library since 2005, following in the footsteps of her mom Nancy, who retired from the Library in 2004 after 20 years of service.

Tori will be joined by **Choosri Goebel** as the Assistant Head of Circulation. Choosri has been a part-time staffer in the Children's Library since 2005.

### Library Closings

Sunday, April 12, Easter

Monday, May 25, Memorial Day

Sundays beginning Memorial Day weekend, reopening Sunday September 13.

## The Green Team

Ken Leone, Phil Alderks, Colin Barr, Bob Ells, Jim Held, Caroline Hermes, Diane Horn, Beth Marquez, Megan O'Neill, Susan Suhling, Mary VanArsdale

### VOTE EARTH

#### Switch Off Your Lights for Earth Hour

Join a billion people around the globe at 8:30 p.m. on Saturday, March 28, 2009 for **Earth Hour**; turn off your lights for one hour to take action on global warming! This climate change initiative originated in Sydney Australia in 2007 with over 2 million homes and businesses switching off their lights for one hour. Already, for 2009, 538 cities in 75 nations have committed to participate in this event. Visit [earthhour.org](http://earthhour.org) and vote Earth to show your commitment to reduce your energy consumption.

Last year, in the Chicago area alone, with North Michigan Avenue, Navy Pier, the Museum Campus, Millennium Park and 2.7 million residences and businesses participating, there was a 7% savings in electricity. This equates to removing one million cars from the roads for one hour or planting 158 acres of trees.

**Turning off your lights for one hour at 8:30 p.m. on Saturday, March 28, is your vote for planet Earth**; it is an affirmation that each of us can make an environmental difference and will send a message to our leaders that we favor official government policies to take action against global warming!

