

**ECONOMIC  
DEVELOPMENT  
& PLANNING  
DEPARTMENT**

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# Business News



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Spring 2016

## Mayor's Message

**A**ttracting new business is not an easy task. The Park Forest economic development staff work on this endeavor every day. Assisting them are volunteers who serve on the Park Forest Economic Development Advisory Group (EDAG).

A positive result of their hard work was shown recently when representatives of Steak 'N Shake came to our community and presented an excellent program on the "ins" and "outs" of franchising. About 30 people were on hand to hear the presentation, including a few folks who may be interested in establishing a Steak 'N Shake business in Park Forest.

In part, the Steak 'N Shake representatives were attracted to our town because so many citizens have expressed their support for having the business in Park Forest. Petitions and a Facebook page devoted to the topic gained the support of large numbers of our residents. One of the firm's representatives told me that he was greatly impressed by the level of community support, and also by the large

number of people who came out for the meeting that discussed franchising options.



Of course, these are just the first steps in the process, and nothing is guaranteed. But, it's good to know that citizen efforts can move a major business to give us some consideration. After hearing from so many Park Forest residents, the company officials began to look at our community more closely and soon came to the conclusion that it's potentially a great location for one of their stores. The closest Steak 'N Shake facilities are about 11 miles away – one in Indiana, one in the Frankfort area, and one in Tinley Park. Our town falls right in the middle of what the company considers to be a good marketing territory. So now all that's needed is someone who will become a franchise holder.

At the meeting, I read an email from Mike Jordan, a Park Forest businessman and member of EDAG, that explained how he had grown up in Bloomington – where Steak 'N Shake was founded – and how his youth was filled with wonderful experiences at the restaurant. Of course, I grew up in Springfield – just an hour south of Bloomington and the location for the first Steak 'N Shake franchise – and enjoyed the same youthful experiences as had Mike. After the meeting, Alfreda Keller, the chairperson for the Park Forest Human Relations Commission and also a Springfield native, told the company's representatives how she also had a youth marked with great memories of dining experiences at the restaurant. All those testimonials also seemed to impress the company figures.

I've said it before, and I'll repeat it here: attracting new businesses to a town is no easy task. However, I can say with similar certainty that it's made easier when local citizens are willing to show their support! ■

*Mayor John A. Ostenburg*

## IRS Announces Mileage Rates for 2016

BEGINNING JANUARY 1, 2016, the standard mileage rate for use of a car for business, charitable, medical or moving purposes is:

- ▶ 54 cents per mile for business miles driven, down from 57.5 cents in 2015.
- ▶ 19 cents per mile driven for medical or moving purposes, down from 23 cents in 2015.
- ▶ 14 cents per mile driven in service of charitable organizations.

## Jones Named 2015 Sam Montella Business Person of the Year



Yvette Jones, Phil Perkins, EDAG Chair, Bettie McReynolds, Shelia Friday, Sandra Zoellner, staff liaison, and Mike Jordan, EDAG members. Inset is of Sam Montella.

Yvette M. Jones moved to Park Forest in 2000. She obtained her Real Estate sales license in 1996, and in 2001, she registered as a home based business owner in Park Forest. In addition to being a Realtor, Ms. Jones operates a mobile notary business.

Since moving to Park Forest, Ms. Jones has been involved in a myriad of charitable activities and organizations. Ms. Jones is a parent volunteer at Rich East High School, is a Band Booster and regularly bakes cookies and pies for parents and school staff. She is an active member of the Parent Teacher Organization at Rich East High School and at Barack Obama School of Leadership and STEM.

One of her neighbors said she has been a good neighbor for 15 ½ years. Over the summer, in her

free time, she organizes group outings for the neighborhood kids. Two of the outings were horseback riding and Blues Camp. She is also an usher at her church, Family Christian Center in Munster, Indiana.

This past year the Village of Park Forest established a Veteran's Commission. Ms. Jones is Vice Chairperson of the Commission. In that capacity, she co-organized a clothing, furniture, and household appliance drive to benefit Veterans that took surplus, yet usable items from the Village Wide Garage Sale. She has organized job and housing fairs in the Village for Veterans. She is also working to enhance the lives of female Veterans by honoring them in various events.

As an Army Veteran herself and Certified Military Relocation Specialist, she is committed to ending Veteran's homelessness. Two previously homeless Veterans commended Ms. Jones for quickly finding them quality housing.

Ms. Jones is a heavy contributor to two Facebook pages: "Veteran2Veteran info" and "Park Forest, IL Residents and Stakeholders."

All the while, Ms. Jones dealt with a seriously ill child and wrote a book titled "I Know I Love You".

For these reasons and others, the Economic Development Advisory Group is proud to recognize and honor Ms. Yvette M. Jones with the 2015 Sam Montella Business Person of the Year Award. Yvette is making a difference for the people in the community. This is the first time that a home-based business is being recognized for the Business Person of the Year.

The EDAG Business Person of the Year Award is an annual award to recognize a Park Forest business owner for enhancing the quality of life for residents and other business owners through charitable work and service. Business owners are nominated by members of the public. Past winners of the award include **Janet Fiorenzo** of *Tower Cleaners* (2009), **Alan Franklin** of *Muzicnet Performing Arts Center* (2010), **James McDannel** of *Lifetime Automotive Repair* (2011), **Mike Jordan** of *State Farm Insurance* (2012), **Earl & Alia Davis** of *Quality Classic Health & Fitness Center* (2013), and **Bree Breedlove** of *State Farm Insurance* (2014). The Business Person of the Year Award was established in 2009.

EDAG committee members are: Phil Perkins, Chair; Sheila Friday, Vice Chair, Georgia O'Neill, Trustee Liaison, Andre Ahouissousi, Bree Breedlove, Erik Coleman, Mike Jordan, Bettie McReynolds, Zerex Veal, and Sandra Zoellner, Staff Liaison. ■

## State Senator Hastings...The State of Minority Business

State Senator Mike Hastings invites you to an informational presentation on *The State of Minority Business: How Can We Expand Minority Businesses* on Monday, February 29 from 6:00 p.m. to 8:00 p.m.

This summit will help minority business owners connect with valuable state agencies and resources. The event will be held at Rich South High School Auditorium located at 5000 Sauk Trail in Richton Park. All are welcome.

If you have any questions and/or would like to register, please call Senator Hastings' district office at (708) 283-4125. ■

STATE SENATOR MIKE HASTINGS INVITES YOU TO  
**THE STATE OF MINORITY BUSINESS:**  
 HOW CAN WE EXPAND MINORITY BUSINESSES?

**February 29th • 6-8:00 p.m.**  
 Rich South High School Auditorium • 5000 Sauk Trail •  
 Richton Park 60471

To register visit  
[www.SenatorHastings.com](http://www.SenatorHastings.com)



**Park Forest**  
Live Grow Discover

**Friday, March 4**

**Hot Chocolate Bar**



Friday, March 4, 9am-5pm. Village Hall Lobby. Join us for a warm welcoming cup of Hot Chocolate. While you are at it, get creative with your toppings. Come for your Treat. Depending on weather, smoothies will be served in lieu. FREE.

*Cinco De Mayo* **Brunch** **Saturday, March 5**  
 Saturday, March 5, 10a-12noon, LUX223, 22315 Central Park. Join us for a morning of food, raffles and chatting with your neighbor. This location has limited seating, so get your RSVP in as soon as possible. FREE.

Village of Park Forest presents...

**RESIDENT APPRECIATION MONTH**

March 2016

**Resident Dessert Bake-off** **Saturday, March 12**

Saturday, March 12, 11a-1pm. Village Hall Lobby. Are you known for your best desserts or interested in being a Judge? Call us today! Be crowned the best Dessert Baker in Park Forest. Grand Prize to be announced at the event. Deadline for entry will be March 4th. Call 708.283.5621 or email: esterling@vopf.com. Feel free to join us to be a Taste Tester! FREE!



**SMOOTHIES** *YOGA* **De-Stress Day!**

**Saturday, March 19**

Saturday, March 19, 11am-1pm. Dining on the Green, 349 Main Street. Save the best for last. If you are ready to unwind from the Holidays or just need a day out with some friends. Join us for a morning of chair massages, Yoga, Smoothies and take home a candle. We will have one of our very own residents who will show you how to make your own candle. Reservations must be made for massages and candle making class. Limited sessions! Call today to reserve your spot! 708.283.5621 FREE!



**Any questions? Call Evelyn at 708.283.5621 or email esterling@vopf.com**

## Creative Marketing Covered at September Breakfast

SEPTEMBER'S BUSINESS BREAKFAST took place on Wednesday, September 23 at Dining on the Green Banquet Hall located at 349 Main Street in DownTown Park Forest with over 60 in attendance.

**Jennifer M. Murray**, president of J. Murray & Associates, Inc., gave a presentation packed with information on how to creatively market your business.

Topics covered included:

- How to develop a weekly digital marketing plan.
  - ▶ Build a campaign on your website, content marketing, video marketing and other.
- A digital marketing check list noted a target audience, channel and budget.
  - ▶ Use of blogs, press releases, social media marketing and more.
  - ▶ Explore additional digital marketing platforms like mobile apps, pay per click (PPC), podcasts, search engine marketing (SEM), text messaging and more.
- Jennifer also provided an excellent digital marketing resource list.
  - ▶ Links to websites to help create keywords, mobile-friendly websites, SEO, blogs and press releases, social media and email marketing.

If you'd like a copy of the hand-outs given at the meeting, please email Monica DeLord at [mdelord@vopf.com](mailto:mdelord@vopf.com).

J. Murray & Associates is a full service marketing agency experienced in all facets of design and marketing, advertising, web design and more. You can reach them at (630) 964-4401 or via their website at [www.jmurrayassoc.com](http://www.jmurrayassoc.com). ■



## Looking for Extra Exposure in Annual Shopping & Services Guide?

THINKING OF HOW to market to your Park Forest customer? Direct your advertising dollars to the upcoming 2016/2017 Park Forest Shopping & Services Guide. This Guide is distributed to **8,400+** residences in the Village of Park Forest and used in a variety of Village marketing material. It's also published online with *active links* to your website!

Advertising is limited to registered Park Forest businesses. Contact Monica DeLord for an application via email at [mdelord@vopf.com](mailto:mdelord@vopf.com) or call (708) 283-5617. Submission deadline is March 11. Publication date is late June. ■

## Bookkeeping Solutions Offered During January Session



**NADONYA JACKSON** FROM AccurateOne Tax & Accounting Services, Inc., a Park Forest-based business, presented during January's business breakfast on Wednesday, January 20 at Dining on the Green Banquet Hall in Down Town Park Forest.

Her presentation covered financial basics as well as several problem scenarios with various solutions to each. Some of her recommendations included creating a simple system that works for you, reconcile your books monthly, keep all receipts in a safe file, and use a simple chart of accounts similar to Schedule C or Forms 1120 or 1120S.

With over 40 in attendance, Yvette Jones, Realtor, won a \$50 VISA card for bringing the most guests to the meeting.

AccurateOne Tax & Accounting Services, Inc. offers a variety of services including accounting/bookkeeping, individual and corporate tax prep, tax and estate planning, payroll and 1099 processing as well as Quicken training and setup. You can reach NaDonya at (630) 460-1681 or via email at [njackson1040tax@accurateone.com](mailto:njackson1040tax@accurateone.com). ■



## Economic Development & Planning *Update*

FOLLOWING AN 18 MONTH grass roots effort to attract **Steak 'N Shake** to Park Forest, on January 12 corporate representatives of the restaurant participated in a presentation about the franchise opportunities available with the company. With 29 individuals in attendance, at least four of whom had a real interest and potential to become franchisees, the Steak 'N Shake representatives indicated that the event was very productive.

The Village of Park Forest is now officially a member of the **Will/Cook Enterprise Zone** along with the communities of Richton Park, Matteson, Monee, and University Park. Commercial and industrial development in an Enterprise Zone is eligible for a variety of economic incentives from the State and local governments, including exemption from sales taxes for any construction materials purchased as part of a new construction or major expansion/rehabilitation project. For more information about how your business could benefit from the Enterprise Zone designation, contact Sandra Zoellner at (708) 283-5623.

Staff continues to take an active role in **Select Chicago Southland (SCS)**, a working group of Southland communities that first came together in 2013 to promote retail retention, expansion, attraction and development. Currently, the SCS group is preparing for RECon 2016, the major shopping center convention held in Las Vegas every May, by hiring an appointment setter. This consultant has completed site visits to each participating municipality and is working on setting appointments, some of which may take place before RECon.



The Park Forest Plan Commission and Village Staff are hard at work on reviewing the draft new **Unified Development Ordinance (UDO)**. This is a completely revised set of zoning and subdivision ordinances to guide land development in the Village. The new ordinance will allow for development consistent with the Village's comprehensive plan, including the Sustainability Plan adopted in 2012. Within the next few months, the Village will start to have a series of public workshops to introduce the UDO to residents, property owners and business owners. Formal public hearings will take place after the workshops. Businesses with questions about the UDO can contact Hildy Kingma at any time at (708) 283-5622.



After receiving a second Growth Accelerator Fund grant from the US Small Business Administration, the **SouthWorks MakerLab in Park Forest** was able to hire a part-time Manager and purchase additional equipment. The new equipment includes a mini-CNC mill, a third 3D printer, a vinyl cutter and soldering stations. The MakerLab also has a laser cutter and electronics station. With the new equipment and staffing, the MakerLab has been able to expand its outreach and offerings. Two of the entrepreneurs who took the MakerLab's Top Maker Professional course in 2015 are still working actively on their businesses. For more information about the MakerLab, or to sign up for a class, go to [www.meetup.com/SouthWorks-Park-Forest-MakerLab-Meetup](http://www.meetup.com/SouthWorks-Park-Forest-MakerLab-Meetup). ■ **Hildy Kingma, Director**

## Annual Business Networking Mix is April 28

PARK FOREST'S ANNUAL Business Networking Mix will take place this year on **Thursday, April 28** at Dining on the Green Banquet Hall located at 349 Main Street in DownTown Park Forest.

This FREE event will include several interactive activities including speed networking to help you connect with as many people as possible at the event. Be sure to bring plenty of business cards!

The Networking Mix will be conducted from 8:00 a.m. to 9:30 a.m. and includes a complementary breakfast buffet.

Small give-aways will be handed out to activity winners during the event including a \$50 VISA Card for the person who brings the most guests.

You can register for the event online at [pfaprilbusinessmix.eventbrite.com](http://pfaprilbusinessmix.eventbrite.com) or send an email to [mdelord@vopf.com](mailto:mdelord@vopf.com).

Come and join the fun while expanding your networking circle. Tell your business associates about this one. And did we say...bring plenty of business cards! ■





## VILLAGE OF PARK FOREST

Economic Development & Planning Department

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Phone: 708.283.5617  
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Visit us on the web!  
[www.villageofparkforest.com](http://www.villageofparkforest.com)

### Village of Park Forest Economic Development Advisory Group

Phillip Perkins  
*Chair*  
Sheila Friday  
*Vice Chair*

Andre Ahouissousi  
Bree Breedlove  
Mike Jordan  
Bettie McReynolds  
Zerex Veal

Trustee Georgia O'Neill  
*Board Liaison*

Sandra Zoellner  
*Staff Liaison*

Discusses economic  
development issues in  
the Village.

Meets on the 2nd Wednesday  
of the month at 6:00 p.m. in  
Village Board Conference Room.  
The public is welcome!

**Want to be Included in the  
Bi-Weekly Business eBlast?**

Send Us Your Business Promotion  
Notices, Events, Launching New  
Website, Celebrating an  
Anniversary, etc.

Our eBlast Reaches Over 900

Send a PDF or jpg to:  
[mdelord@vopf.com](mailto:mdelord@vopf.com)

**Cost? It's FREE!**

## Welcome New Businesses!

**Green Evans  
Management, LLC**  
*General Contractor &  
Carpentry*  
(708) 971-5095

**Abra Auto Body &  
Glass LP**  
*Under New Ownership*  
20 North Street  
(708) 748-7600  
[www.abraauto.com](http://www.abraauto.com)

**SBS Aids Foundation  
Research Corporation**  
*Provide Quality Treatment,  
Service & Advocacy for Aids*  
(708) 747-5680  
[www.sbsaidsfoundation.com](http://www.sbsaidsfoundation.com)  
[research.com](http://research.com)

**Ann LaCorte Hair and  
Makeup Design**  
*Traveling cosmetologist*  
(312) 971-7276  
[www.annlacortehairandmakeup.com](http://www.annlacortehairandmakeup.com)

**Tracy Foster Tax Service**  
*Tax Service within Foster's  
Kennel*  
2348 S. Western Avenue  
(773) 490-0237

### Remember to Shop Local First!

#### DID YOU HEAR...

The Park Forest 7-Eleven sold one of the \$50,000 winning tickets in the \$1.5 billion Powerball Jackpot!



## MidSummer Madness Takes Place July 20

Start preparing your advertising material now for this popular event with Park Forest residents and surrounding communities.

You can participate in one or more ways. You can take part as a Co-Host location or have a business table, donate to the Grand Raffle, supply your advertising material to be included in the goodie bag distributed to attendees, and/or attend the event and join the fun.

Vendor tables are free of charge for registered commercial and home based Park Forest businesses. A limited amount of tables will be available at Dining on the Green Banquet Hall and 298 Main Street. Look for event details in early June. Call Monica DeLord at (708) 283-5617 or email [mdelord@vopf.com](mailto:mdelord@vopf.com) to reserve your space TODAY! ■

