‘Power to the People’
South Holland voters to decide aggregation referendum

By Bob Bong

South Holland voters will decide on March 20 whether the village should arrange an electricity supplier for residents and small businesses.

A referendum question on the March 20 ballot will ask voters if they want to approve municipal aggregation of their Commonwealth Edison accounts so that the village can pursue better pricing for electricity for residents and small businesses.

“The municipal aggregation process is similar to how the village arranges trash service for our residents,” Village Administrator Jason Huisman said. “The village would be able to bid collectively to attract the lowest rates possible for electricity, similar to the way we seek bids for waste collection.”

Questions Answered

As the March 20 referendum on municipal electricity aggregation for South Holland draws near, we have heard a lot of the same questions from village residents.

In an effort to get the answers, we sat down and talked with NIMEC Executive Director David Hoover.

Q: If I do not opt out at the beginning, can I change my mind and opt out later?
A: Residents are not obligated to participate in the aggregation and can stay with ComEd. Residents can opt out at the beginning and will receive two letters giving them the chance to opt out. One will be from the new supplier and the other will be from ComEd. If they decide later to opt out, they can do so at any time.

Q: Is there a termination fee should I decide to opt out later?
A: It depends on the agreement between South Holland and the new supplier. Fourteen of 15 communities that we advise that have gone to aggregation have no termination fees for residents. There would have to be a compelling reason for South Holland to reach an agreement with a supplier that includes a termination fee.

Q: What exactly is the process to participate?
A: Do nothing. Residents and small businesses will be automatically included if South Holland adopts aggregation. Only people opting out have to do anything.

Q: My neighbor is already purchasing electricity from a different supplier, but is seeing very little savings. How will this mean an average savings of $150-$175?
A: Aggregation typically results in savings roughly twice what an individual can get on his own. The village represents thousands of customers and can negotiate a better rate.

The neighboring village of Glenwood has adopted aggregation and its residents pay 5.9 kilowatt hour for electricity instead of ComEd’s rate of 7.7.

“That’s an average savings of $150 per person,” said David Hoover, executive director of the Northern Illinois Municipal Electric Collaborative (NIMEC).

Vision 2022: Help guide village’s future

By Cindy Cruz

Residents are being given the opportunity to help chart South Holland’s course for the future by providing their input for Vision 2022.

South Holland will enhance its legacy through Vision 2022, a comprehensive ten year plan that will allow the village to take ownership of the future while advancing its distinctive identity, officials said.

Specifically, Vision 2022 will address how the village can expand while ensuring a high quality of governance and infrastructure. It will have concrete ways to enhance and advance signature spaces and places, advance communication including social media, and foster economic diversity and prosperity to promote a united and remarkable blueprint for the village.

Mayor Don De Graff said Vision 2022 is very important to South Holland as a community.

“It focuses on the importance of dreaming, and determining our needs and vision for the future,” he said. “The process of developing the vision allows residents, businesses, service organizations and key community groups including schools and churches to provide input. The idea of ownership connects us as a community and helps to build the community.

“We want to build upon the identity we have, and strengthen the community. We will set goals and define the actions necessary to meet those goals and make us one,” the mayor added. “We are a community of faith, family, future, but we want to play upon that even more by brandishing the village as clean, bright and beautiful as well through Vision 2022.”

According to Village Administrator Jason Huisman, development of the plan is in the strategic planning and preparation stage. A key component of its development is a comprehensive village survey designed to assess the needs of the village for the next ten years. The survey will feature both multiple choice and open-ended questions, giving

(continued on page 2)
residents who wish to voice their opinions and suggestions the opportunity to do so. Surveys will be available at key locations in the village, including the village hall, library, community center and online through the village website, www.southholland.org in March.

Planners hope to have the surveys returned by mid-April and will also be seeking feedback from clubs and organizations during this time. Once surveys are returned, information will be processed. An initial presentation with survey feedback is scheduled for the July 31 Central Committee Meeting. In the meantime, more feedback will be encouraged.

Mayor De Graff said the village is looking at presenting a virtual reality program in the fall on Vision 2022, so residents can see what is being proposed based on the results of the survey and community input gathered throughout the process. The final draft of Vision 2022 is expected to be adopted by the village board in the fall.

“This will serve as our roadmap for the next ten years. Our goal is to ensure that the decisions being made during this time are in line with Vision 2022.” Huisman said. “We’re very excited about this plan and encourage all residents to participate. Everyone has valuable perspectives and something to bring to the table. This will give everyone an opportunity to shape our community.”

Mayor De Graff added that the village survey is an integral part of developing Vision 2022.

“We value the opinions of all segments of the community. It goes back to the principle of ownership. The more people take ownership in the process, the more they will enjoy the result. “We want to know how we can make South Holland an even better community,” he said.

McKinley team finishes 24-1

Congratulations to South Holland School District 150 and the 7th Grade McKinley Basketball team on a great season!

Coached by Mr. Ingram, Mr. Childress and Mr. Anderson, the 7th grade Monarchs finished with 24 wins and 1 loss. The McKinley Monarchs also won Regionals and Sectionals. They took home the second place trophy in the Illinois State Championship game on Thursday, February 9th in Wenona, IL.

Players pictured are (standing, L-R) Marcus Taylor, James Pennington, Paul Godbold, T’Cori Lewis, George Harris, Brandon Orr, Dion Alexander, (seated, L-R) Ryan Edwards, Cameron Duke, Joey Buckley, Bruce Davis and Damone Garrison.

South Suburban College Head Baseball Coach Steve Ruzich recently received a 25-year award from the American Baseball Coaches Association for his “quarter century of leadership and devotion to baseball” at a ceremony in Los Angeles, California. He was one of five individuals to receive this prestigious award which takes into consideration all coaches from all levels of baseball throughout the country. Coach Ruzich was the only individual to coach all 25 years with the same institution.

The SSC Board of Trustees also recognized Coach Ruzich’s 25 years of service at their February Board Meeting. Chairman Frank M. Zuccarelli presented Ruzich with a plaque detailing his accomplishments. Frank M. Zuccarelli presented Ruzich with a plaque detailing his accomplishments.

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The SSC Board of Trustees also recognized Coach Ruzich’s 25 years of service at their February Board Meeting. Chairman Frank M. Zuccarelli presented Ruzich with a plaque detailing his accomplishments during his 25 year tenure. These include, four Sectional Titles, seven Regional Titles, and two JUCO World Series Appearances. Twenty players have been drafted by Major League Baseball organizations and four players have played in the Major Leagues.

South Suburban College’s Steven Smith recently received the Chicago Defender “Men of Excellence” award. The annual award recognizes “Chicago-area men who represent excellence in their professional and personal lives every day.” Smith, the Adult Education Instructor/Coordinator at SSC, was unknowingly nominated by his students until he was notified by the Defender that he had been chosen to receive the award and invited to the ceremony. Smith has also spent over 15 years working with young men as a mentor, baseball coach, and 12 step recovery assistance for drug and alcohol abuse.

Congratulations to the Thorwood High School Speech Team which won the Regional Championship for Speech Performance in the Round.

School District 150 recently honored its Monarch’s Cheer Team and the McKinley Junior High School Lady Monarchs Basketball Team for their outstanding accomplishments.


Eagle Scouts Michael Volek and Alex Besich celebrate receiving the highest rank in scouting at their recent Eagle Scout Court of Honor.

Local Scouts earn Eagle giving back to the community

By Deidra Somerville

South Holland Boy Scout Troop 409 is celebrating thirty years of scouting in the village as well as the elevation of two new Eagle Scouts. Michael Volek and Alexander Besich earned their Eagle ranks last fall. As part of their Eagle Scout projects, they built and installed habitats for bats in natural areas around the region.

Troop 409 will celebrate the achievements of three additional members earning the highest rank in scouting, Lerone Branch, Keith Cipich and Luke Cipich will join Eagle Scouts Michael Volek and Alexander Besich at their Eagle Court of Honor ceremony this month.
New village administrator: A team player

By Deidra Somerville

Jason Huisman has come a long way from his school age years growing up Thornton. After years of playing professional baseball, the Thornwood graduate returned as village administrator to give back to the community that greatly influenced him during his formative years.

“My family and I moved to Thornton when I was in second grade. During this time, I spent basically all of my years as a youth involved in many of the activities available by the Village of South Holland,” Jason recalls. “Whether it was little league, basketball or gymnastics camps at Thornwood, I was usually signed up and ready to go. It seems like only yesterday that I was a young boy taking advantage of such tremendous opportunities. Once I became a teenager, it was only natural that I attended Thornwood upon graduation of grade school.”

Jason was named the Illinois High School Baseball Player of the Year in 1994. The All-American had a successful baseball and basketball career, graduated as a member of the National Honor Society, and was subsequently drafted by the Los Angeles Dodgers in the 8th round of the 1994 MLB June Amateur Draft.

“My family and I decided to forgo the offer by the Dodgers and attend college at the University of Mississippi,” he says. “After four years there and the completion of a degree in business administration, I was once again drafted, however, this time it was by the Los Angeles Angels of Anaheim. I played a successful five years in their organization, seeing every corner of our great country, before retiring in 2003.”

After retiring as a player, he served as an assistant coach, and most recently a head coach, both at the college level.

“Post athletic career, I settled back in the Midwest to a career in the banking and financial industry,” he says. “Despite that newfound passion for administration, the financial industry and the business environment, I continued to give back through sports to young men who desire to have the same experiences I was blessed to have.”

Jason is now settled into his new role as South Holland’s village administrator and sees his life now as a full circle moment. He is now back in the place where he earned his stripes as an exceptional high school student-athlete destined for success both on and off the field.

“Now, as the administrator here in South Holland, I can’t help but laugh at how humorous, yet intentional our God is,” says Jason. “Having spent a large portion of my life seeing the world, I return to the place where it all started for me. Those years spent in the development of who I am today were invaluable, engraining the core values of integrity and trust at the forefront of who I am.”

Jason continues to give back through baseball, and he plans to assist with Little League programs here in South Holland.

As village administrator, his goals for the village are simple: to build upon the strong foundation already in place to ensure an even better future. “I am grateful to former administrator J. Wynsma and deputy administrator Pat Mahon for establishing a culture of professionalism and integrity and I am blessed for this opportunity to work with a dynamic team of department leaders.”

“Going forward, we will continue to actively look for ways to serve our residents and businesses. A primary focus for the village administration in 2012 will be the development of the Vision 2022 plan which will chart the course for our village’s immediate future. Despite the current sluggish economy, economic development will continue to be at the forefront of our efforts as we anticipate seeing increased activity in the near future.”

“The fact that South Holland is a leader in the south suburbs and has a well-known reputation of ethical leadership, I was thrilled to be considered for the position of village administrator. I’m grateful to be in a position to give back to a community that has always been very near to my heart.”

Chicago water rate hikes force village to increase water rate

By Bob Bong

A series of water rate increases imposed by the City of Chicago will mean higher water bills for South Holland residents and businesses starting with the bills arriving on March 1.

“Minimize the impact for our residents and businesses, the exact dollar increase the village pays for water will be added to our current rates for water,” said Village Administrator Jason Huisman.

The first increase of 50 cents per 1,000 gallons of water will show up on the March 1 bills as the result of a 25 percent increase from the City of Chicago that went into effect on Jan. 1.

“The average residential customer uses about 5,000 gallons per month, and would see an actual monthly increase in their water bill of $2.50 for the remainder of the year,” said Huisman.

The City of Chicago will increase its water rates by 15 percent a year for the next three years, which will mean future

Crime rate second lowest on record

By Bob Bong

While South Holland’s crime rate last year didn’t break 2010’s record lows, it came close, offering proof of the village’s stability and excellent record of fighting crime.

In 2011, crime in South Holland was still the second lowest since the FBI began tracking crime statistics in the 1980s.

The village had its lowest crime statistics ever in 2010 with 544 crimes. There were 580 last year.

“There were only 36 more crimes in South Holland last year compared with 2010,” said Police Chief Warren Millsaps. “And 26 of them were theft or motor vehicle thefts.”

As always, Millsaps credits his officers with keeping the village safe.

“I have to give credit to the officers on the street,” said Millsaps. “They are proactive team and they share information at roll call. They are very aware of what is going on in the village.”

One of the ways the police share information, Millsaps said, is a simple but effective email alert system.

“All police department employees get an alert when a crime occurs,” he said. “That way they know immediately what is happening and where.”

Millsaps also praised the Community Strategic Plan with helping keep the crime rate down.

“We identify problems and then come up with specific plans to address those problems,” he said. “Then, when we meet the next month, we find out if the problem has been addressed.”

Millsaps also credits residents with sharing their concerns with police at the monthly Community Policing Meetings.

“We put on three Community Policing Meetings a month,” he said. “We tell our residents to give us a call when they see something suspicious. Let us decide if it’s nothing.”

“Our residents are alert,” he added. “If they see something, they give us a call.”

Crimes Statistics for 2011

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Nancy Lopez, special teacher.

A special teacher returns to the classroom

By Cindy Cruz

Nancy Lopez didn’t initially plan to pursue a career in special education, but once she started substitute teaching in a special education classroom in District 205, she was hooked. Lopez knew this was her calling and has never looked back during her 28-year career in the district.

Lopez returned to the classroom this year after working in administration as assistant and department chair of special programs for the last seven years. Although she has taught at all three schools in the district, the majority of her career has been as a special education teacher at Thornwood.

Eleven years ago, Lopez and fellow special education teacher Ann Mazuir brought the Wilson Reading Program to the district. The purpose was to address the needs of students who struggle with dyslexia and other reading difficulties.

Though a large percentage of the students are in co-taught classes, some remain in special education classes and some participate in both co-taught and special education classes, based on their needs.

Returning to the classroom was a choice Lopez made because she missed the contact with the students. She also coaches girls’ volleyball.

“It’s been thoroughly enjoyable because I have the opportunity to work with the general education students as well,” she said.

Lopez said her biggest challenge is dealing with the changes in technology that occurred while she was in administration.

“There is so much more technology that can benefit students with special needs. My goal is to familiarize the students with that technology so that when they go on to college they will be aware of what is available to help them. I want them to be more independent,” she said.

For Lopez the most rewarding aspect of teaching is working with the students. “Until you’re in the classroom and you experience certain things you have no idea of how rewarding teaching can be,” she said.

“Being a good teacher is knowing your students, establishing relationships and meeting their needs.

“You need to set the bar high so they can meet it, raise it when you need to, and lower it a little for the students who just struggle.”

The School Scene...

Coolidge Jazz Band entertains

Coolidge Middle School Sounds of Soul Jazz Band participated in South Suburban College’s Fourteenth Annual Jazz Festival on Friday, February 10 under the direction of Mario Moody. After the SOS Jazz Band performance they received suggestions from two fine jazz artists, Chris Vadala and Larry Bowen. These artists are known best for their dedication to music education. They have performed with Dizzy Gillespie, Quincy Jones, B.B. King, Aretha Franklin, The Temptations and more. On Feb. 17, the SOS Jazz Band performed at Prairie State College.

An Evening of Seton Stars

Forever Seton – An Evening of Seton Stars will be held at Seton Academy on Friday, April 20, beginning at 5:30 p.m. This year’s honorees are: Roberta Felker, first lay principal of Seton; Paula Etheridge, 25 year Seton Academy teacher; Mayor Don De Graff; and Kathryn Worthen, friend and board member. A Special Distinguished Service Award will be presented to Barb Preslin, former assistant principal and dean of students. The Founders’ Award will be presented to the Sisters of Charity of Cincinnati, founding order of Elizabeth Seton High School.

Enjoy concerts and theatre at SSC

South Suburban College invites the community to attend upcoming concerts and performances. Concerts are free of charge and will be presented in the Albert Kindig Performing Arts Center.

SOUTH HOLLAND JETS FOOTBALL & CHEERLEADING REGISTRATION 2012

Wednesday, March 14, 2012: Returning Families ONLY, 6 pm – 9 pm

Saturday, March 17, 2012: New Families, 9 am – 12 pm

South Holland Community Center
501 East 170th Street, South Holland
Visit the website for complete details.
www.eteamz.com/southhollandjets

St. Baldrick’s event March 24

By Bob Bong

The South Holland Firefighters Association’s annual St. Baldrick’s head shaving for charity will take place Saturday, March 24, says organizer Tom Farr.

“New this year will be a silent auction of high-end autographed Chicago sports memorabilia,” said Farr. “Cash and checks only.”

The annual event is open to the public and takes place from 5 p.m. to 1 a.m. at the Thornton American Legion Hall, 109 N. Williams St.

“There will be raffles, food and a cash bar,” said Farr, who has been organizing the event for the past five years.

“Last year, we had more than 300 people including police and firefighters from Calumet City, Lansing and Glenwood.”

Farr also said this year’s event will push the event past the $100,000 mark since he’s been organizing it.

“We’ve raised $96,331 in the first four years at the Thornton American Legion,” said Farr. “We’re definitely going to break $100,000 this year.”

For information, call Farr at 708-915-0688 or visit www.stbaldricks.org and search for Thornton American Legion.

The School Scene...
Police acquire multi-purpose transport vehicle

By Bob Bong

The South Holland Police Department took ownership in February of a multi-purpose transport vehicle that didn’t cost the village a dime.

“The cost of the vehicle was paid for from drug asset forfeiture funds,” said Police Chief Warren Millsaps. "And because the one we got was the one that was used as a demo at trade shows, we got an $8,000 discount.”

Millsaps said the vehicle was purchased primarily to transport prisoners from South Holland to the Cook County Courthouse at 26th Street and California Avenue in Chicago. That would take too many squad cars out of South Holland, so we decided to buy the vehicle.”

Millsaps said the police had a similar vehicle years ago but had sold it off.

“We can also use the vehicle to transport officers to the scene of a catastrophe,” said Millsaps. “I can put 15 officers in the vehicle to help in case we need to cordon off an area because of a chemical spill or other emergency.

“In fact,” he said. “It can also be used to evacuate people if we need to instead of waiting for a bus to arrive.”

The vehicle was manufactured by a company called Turtle Top Inc. in New Paris, Ind., that specializes in such vehicles.

Cook County to rebuild 170th Street

By Bob Bong

A long overdue project to rebuild an aging section of 170th Street has gone out to bid and should be complete by late summer.

The best part is South Holland has to pay only $250,000 of the estimated $6 million price tag for a complete reconstruction of 170th from South Park Avenue to the Bishop Ford Freeway.

Most of the money needed for the project will come from Cook County, the State of Illinois and federal funds.

“We’re very excited,” said Village Administrator Jason Huisman. “The street is certainly in dire need of repair.”

Huisman said the village’s contribution will pay for street lights and water mains, which are village property.

Bids for the project were let in mid-February, Work is expected to begin in the spring and be completed by late summer.

Fire Department adds CPR classes

By Bob Bong

The South Holland Fire Department has increased the number of CPR classes it offers to the public.

Instructor Tom Farr said one of the reasons for the increase was the decision to offer two kinds of CPR classes.

“One Heart Saver class is for new students and the other is for people looking to recertify,” Farr said. “We also provide new and recertify classes for Health Care Providers. Our third class is Pediatric First Aid.”

Don’t miss your next COMMUNITY POLICING MEETING!

The Community Policing Initiative for our Village allows the community and Police Department to work together to keep our crime rate low and to improve the quality of life for our customers. This interaction of information sharing benefits our entire community. These monthly meetings are from 7-8:30pm.

The areas are:

Village North - If you are north of Rt. 6 your group will meet on the 2nd Wednesday of every month at the South Holland Library (16250 Wausau Avenue) at 7:00pm.

Village South - If you are east of the Bishop Ford Expressway and south of Rt. 6 or if you are south of Rt. 6 and west of the railroad tracks, you will meet on the 4th Monday of every month at the Community Center (501 E 170th Street) at 7:00pm.

Village Central - If you are south of Rt. 6, west of the Bishop Ford Expressway and east of the railroad tracks, you will meet on the 1st Monday of every month at the Community Center (501 E 170th Street) at 7:00pm.

We look forward to seeing you at these meetings. If you have any questions, please call the administration at the South Holland Police Department at 708-331-3131.

CRIME TIP HOTLINE! - Tell us what you see!
Call 708-596-2255 to give anonymous information of criminal activity.
The South Holland Ministerial Association, in support of South Holland’s Village theme of “Faith...Family...Future” endorses this monthly column. The viewpoints expressed herein are those of the writer and do not constitute official endorsement by South Holland Today or the South Holland Village administration.

Time is moving so rapidly that it is becoming difficult to keep up with things and situations that have recently occurred. When questioned as to when I last saw a particular member in church, I really had to stop and think. Was it two weeks ago? Two months ago? To my amazement, I discovered three months had passed since the member had been present at church. However, it seems like it was just yesterday that I saw that person.

God’s amazing grace is what’s keeping us from day to day and moment to moment in this rapid passing of time. We have experienced His grace during this winter season because of the warm weather, little snowfall, and the brightness of His magnificent sun. God’s love for us is a love beyond our comprehension. His love continues to crown us with His unmerited favor, which is His amazing grace.

Many years ago, gospel singer and writer Andrae Crouch penned these words: “I don’t know why Jesus loves me; I don’t know why He cares; I don’t know why He sacrificed His life; Oh but I’m glad, I’m glad He did.” Another gospel great, John Newton, penned these words: “Amazing grace! How sweet the sound, that saved a wretch like me! Once was lost, but now am found, was blind, but now I see.” They were two very different artists, but both focused on the love and grace of God.

Have you acknowledged God’s amazing grace in your life today? Have you been in a complicated situation where you felt there was no hope? Thank God for His amazing grace and receive Titus 2:11, which states, “For the grace of God that brings salvation has appeared to all men.” Isn’t that marvelous? God has a purpose, plan, and much grace for us all. Let’s take a second look at His amazing grace and be thankful.

“May the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Spirit be with you all.” (2 Corinthians 13:14). Be encouraged today in Jesus Name!

– Evangelist Betty Wilson
Ministry, Inc.
Breaking of Bread Fellowship

Summer Day Camp announced

By Micah Christiansen
Intern, Thorn Creek Reformed Church

Thorn Creek Summer Day Camp, located at the First Baptist Church in South Holland, provides an opportunity for parents who are seeking something that is both helpful and fun for their children this summer. The camp will offer children weekly classes in practical, hands-on skills, as well as traditional subjects like math, reading, English, and more. The campers will go on a field trip every week to places such as museums, zoos, and many other major attractions in the area. Every week they will also be involved in sports, with an emphasis on building skills rather than on winning. In August, the campers will go on a one-week mega-trip to Orlando, Florida!

Thorn Creek Camp starts June 4, 2012, and ends August 10, 2012. Children can be enrolled for any portion of this time for just $99 a week, or $25 a day. There are multiple-child discounts. Camp starts at 8:30 a.m. and ends 4:00 p.m., Monday through Friday. Extended hours are available. Early registration is in progress and is just $35. The cost of registration includes a t-shirt, water bottle, and bag, each of which carries our camp logo. Late registration will begin May 4, 2012 and will cost $75.

To register, or for more information, visit www.thorncreekcamp.com, or call (708)782-5055.
Business Association to Reward Excellence

By Bob Bong

The South Holland Business Association (SHBA) is inaugurating its Par Excellence Program in March to reward businesses and employees who provide exceptional customer service.

President Don Grimwood said SHBA ambassadors will be roaming throughout South Holland looking for businesses and employees who provide exceptional service to their customers and clients.

“These employees and businesses will be recognized and receive Reward Cards at the monthly SHBA luncheons,” Grimwood said.

Property owners: Register early and save

Early registration for the Good Neighbor Rental Housing Initiative ends March 31.

Owners of rental properties in South Holland who register their properties before March 31 will save a total of $75 in fees. All rental properties in South Holland must be registered with the village before June 30. Those registering after March 31 will have to pay an additional $50 registration fee and $25 inspection fee. Those who fail to register their properties before June 30 will face fines.

More information on the Good Neighbor Rental Housing Initiative and how to register is on the village website at www.southholland.org.

Kustokkeynoteswomen’sconference

2012 Chicago Women’s Conference & Expo coming to South Suburban College March 9th

Sarah Kustok

South Suburban College (SSC) proudly announces Sarah Kustok, of Comcast SportsNet, as the Keynote Speaker for the 2012 Chicago Women’s Conference on Friday, March 9 located at the college’s Main Campus in South Holland.

This marks the 4th annual event that the college’s Business and Career Institute is planning for women of all backgrounds ages 18 and up to come together for one day dedicated exclusively to women. The positive feedback and participation has grown tremendously since the event’s inception, and last year over 300 participants and 60 vendors participated in this truly unique opportunity.

SSC invites all women to join in the experience and connect with hundreds of other women this March. In addition to an exciting Keynote from Kustok, this year’s event will again include networking, shopping, and will feature over 20 speakers on topics including Personal Empowerment, Health & Wellness, and Business & Finance, along with a panel discussion of local experts on women and image.

The cost of admission is $15 per person with advance registration by March 8th, or $25 at the door. The conference fee includes a continental breakfast, lunch, and admission to all of the break-out sessions. There will also be over 50 vendors providing shopping opportunities with a wide range of products and services.

For more information, or to register for the 2012 Chicago Women’s Conference, please call 596-2000, ext. 2455 or visit www.shba.org.

Businesses open, expand

GTF Wireless, 1056 E. 162nd St.
Insurance Pro Agencies, 16232 Prince Dr.
KVT Instant Tax Service, 837 E. 162nd St., Suite 6
Paulsen Pipe, 511 W. Armory Dr. Unit A
Skyline Furniture, 333 W. Taft
River Oaks Community Education & Development, 16931 South Park Ave.

AGGREGATIONREFERENDUM

MARK YOUR CALENDAR
TUESDAY, MARCH 20, 2012
VOTE

Flood-proofing pays off for homeowners

With springtime rains just around the corner, Fred Block, flood assistance coordinator, reminds residents that a Flood Assistance Rebate program is available to qualified applicants for pre-approved flood-proofing projects. For example, residents planning to install overhead sewers in their homes to alleviate flooding problems may be eligible for a grant to cover a portion of the project costs.

According to Block, the grant offers residents a 25 percent rebate, to a maximum of $2,500, for the following flood-control projects:

SURFACE WATER PROJECTS
- Diversion of downspout water
- Flood walls

SEWER BACKUP PROJECTS
- Overhead sewers (repairs and installation)
- Removal of sump pump and down spout connections from sanitary sewers
- Back flow valves

SUBSURFACE PROJECTS
- Interior and/or exterior drain tile
- Crack repair and/or waterproofing foundation walls

It is imperative that those planning to apply for a rebate contact the P.D. & C.E. Department at 16240 Wauau, or call 210-2915, before beginning any flood-control project.

“We will meet with the resident, inspect their property and assist in completion of the necessary rebate application,” he said. “We also can provide a list of contractors who are licensed to do business in South Holland, if requested.”

Block advises homeowners not to wait until the last minute, but to allow plenty of time to secure the required pre-approval and minimum of two bid proposals from contractors.

“I think that it’s a great program and I think that a lot of people have been really thankful that the Village has had this program,” he said.
What’s Happening in South Holland?

By Bob Bong

South Holland Garden Club will present “Natural Communities of Planet Earth” by James Rowan on Wednesday, March 14, at 6 p.m. at the American Legion Hall, 443 E. 157th St. During the program, you will meet animals and plants of the world’s forests, grasslands, deserts, mountains, freshwater and oceans. Guests are asked for a $5 donation. For information, call 913-7550. Refreshments are served after presentations.

Sand Ridge Nature Center, 15890 Paxton Ave. began extended hours March 1. The Center is open daily from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. Exhibit buildings open at 9 a.m. For information, call (708) 868-6060. March events include:

• St. Patrick and the Snakes Saturday, March 17, from 1:30-2:30 p.m. The old story goes that St. Patrick banished all the snakes from Ireland… but this isn’t Ireland! Come learn about native snakes and meet some.

South Suburban College is taking applications for its Foundation 2012 Scholarship. The primary deadline for applications is March 22, while graduating high school seniors can continue to apply for Foundation High School and SSC Board of Trustees Scholarships throughout the spring and summer.

The application process is a simple one that only requires a completed scholarship application, one letter of recommendation, and a copy the applicant’s high school or college transcripts. A wide range of scholarships are offered for incoming high school students, current SSC students, and returning adults.

The majority of scholarships are awarded annually in April for the following summer, fall, and spring semesters. Last year, the SSC Foundation awarded more than $120,000 in scholarships and has now awarded more than $1.2 million since 1989. For information, call (708) 596-2000 ext. 2463, or email prshu@ssc.edu.

South Suburban College will start its second 8-week class schedule on Monday, March 12. Students are encouraged to register now to ensure a seat in classes. New students can visit the Admissions Office in Room 2348 to complete an Application, or download one from www.ssc.edu and fax it to (708) 225-5823 along with a current state issued ID to begin the enrollment process.

South Suburban College’s Art & Design Department will be showcasing two new art exhibitions in March and April on the college’s Main Campus in South Holland. First, a solo exhibition of sculptures by artist Colleen Toledano will be on display in the Lee D. Dulgar Gallery from March 13 – April 13, with an artist reception scheduled for Wednesday, March 21, at 2 p.m.

A second solo exhibition of paintings by artist B.S. Farris will be on display in the Dorothea Thiell Gallery from March 12 – April 10, with an artist reception on Thursday, March 22, at noon.

The public is welcome to visit art exhibitions and receptions at no charge. The Dorothea Thiell Gallery is located on the fourth floor and is open Monday through Friday from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. The Dulgar Gallery is on the first floor near the Atrium and is open Monday through Thursday from 9 a.m. to 8 p.m., and Fridays from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m.

Save the date for St. Baldrick’s 2nd Annual Poker Run on May 19. For information, call South Holland firefighter/paramedic Tom Farr at 708-915-0688.

The Illinois Department of Transportation is rebuilding the Halsted Street bridge over Interstate 294. The $2.8 million project will require reducing Halsted to one lane so be prepared for delays if you use the bridge. The bridge will be demolished and rebuilt, with a completion date sometime this fall. There may be occasional overnight lane closures on the Tri-State Tollway beneath the bridge during construction.

South Holland Business Association will meet from 11:30 a.m. to 1 p.m. March 22 at the South Holland Community Center. Guest speaker will be Larretta Lofton, president of L3 Eventeurs, a lifestyle marketing and trendsetting special events agency. Her topic will be “How to Build a Lucrative Brand Name for Your Business.”

The South Holland Public Library, 16250 Wausau Ave., holds the following events in March:

• “Musical Story Go-Round” 2 p.m. Saturday, March 10. Catch a ride on the Musical Story Go-Round with songs, stories, rhythm instruments and FUN! This program is part of the Library’s continuing effort to promote early literacy. For ages 5 to 7. Registration is required.

• “Regatta Racers,” 7 p.m. Monday, March 19, for grades 2-6. Build your own boat and see it float. Set sail and race to victory. Pre-registration required.

To register for library programs, call (708) 331-5262.

Starbuck’s Job Fair, Thursday, March 22, 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. at River Oaks Community Church. This event is invitation only; you must apply online at Starbucks.com by March 19. Positions available include shift supervisors and assistant manager for the southeast suburbs.

If you have news or an event you want publicized in What’s Happening in South Holland, send it to Bob Bong at bobbong@hotmail.com.

**WINDY CITY LIVE** LEADS DISCUSSION

Saturday, March 3, at Spirit of God Fellowship, the Village of South Holland held its annual COMMUNITY Dinners Follow-Up event, featuring an engaging panel discussion exploring the challenges and benefits of diverse relationships in media, government, marriage and church. Leading the panel discussion were Windy City Live hosts Valerie Warner and Ryan Chiaverini.

Since 2001, the annual COMMUNITY Dinners program has brought together residents of different genders, ages, ethnicities, races, religions and educational backgrounds. This initiative is designed to break down barriers that can divide a community and to help South Holland continue on its path to become a model community that celebrates diversity and engages in fellowship.

The panelists included (from l-r): Mayor Don A. De Graff, Deputy Village Administrator Part Aasen, Senior Pastor of River Oaks Community Church Troy O’Quin and his wife Camille, Communications Chairman Mike Nylen and First Reformed Church Director of Mercy & Justice Ministries Corey Buchanan, co-instructors of the adult Sunday school session, “Love Thy Neighbor: A CRASH Course on Racial Harmony in the New Millennium.” At right are Windy City Live co-hosts Ryan Chiaverini and Valerie Warner.

Pictured with Ryan Chiaverini and Valerie Warner are Mayor Don De Graff and Trustee Cindy Doorn who served as this year’s master of ceremonies.

VILLAGE OF SOUTH HOLLAND

**PHONE**: 708-210-2900

http://www.southholland.org

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ANDREW JOHNSON, Jr., Trustee

JOHN SULLIVAN, Trustee

BETH HERMAN, Treasurer

Village Board Meetings

Municipal Building • 16226 Wausau Ave.
First and Third Mondays of each month, 8:00 am

VILLAGE ADMINISTRATOR

Melinda L. Hilsen • 708-331-9144

DEPUTY VILLAGE ADMINISTRATOR

Patricia R. Mahon • 708-210-1904

COMMUNICATIONS MANAGER

Mary Ann Thornton • 708-210-1918

DIR. ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

John Watson • 708-210-2903

FLOOD ASSISTANCE COORDINATOR

Fred Erick • 708-210-9205

DIR. RECREATIONAL SERVICES

Edward Stewart • 331-2940

DIR. PLANNING, DEVELOPMENT & CODE

Frank E. Knott • 708-331-9191

DIR. PUBLIC WORKS

Jeff Ross • 339-2323

Parks

Warren Millsaps • 331-3131

FIRE CHIEF

Don Bettenhausen • 331-3123

DIR. EMERGENCY SERVICES & MENTAL AGENCY

John J. Thomas, Jr. • 708-219-2919

VILLAGE ENGINEERS

Robinson Engineering • 331-6700

VILLAGE ATTORNEY / PROSECUTOR

Hiskes & Dillner • 333-1234

PUBLIC MEDIA COORDINATOR

Troy O’Quin • 708-219-2744

LIBRARIAN

Meg Klinkow Hartmann • 331-5626

**REGULARLY SCHEDULED MEETINGS**

Regularly Scheduled Meetings

Village Board Committees — 1st & 3rd Mon., 7 am

Cable Commission — Call for information

Parking Hearing — 2nd Tues., 5:15 pm

Local Ordinance Hearings — 2nd Tues., 6:00 pm

Housing Hearings — 3rd Tues., 5:00 pm

Economic Development Commission — 2nd Tues., 7:00 pm

Planning & Development Commission — 1st Wed., 7:00 pm

Flood Control Liaison Committee — Call for information

Communications Commission — 4th Thurs., 7:00 pm

Community Development Commission — 3rd Mon., 7:00 pm

Neighborhood Groups Committee — 4th Sat., 8:30 am

Mediation & Reconciliation

Committee — Call for information

Because special meetings are sometimes scheduled and cancellations and changes frequently occur, it is always wise to call 708/210-2900 ahead of time to confirm individual meetings.

SOUTH HOLLAND TODAY is published ten times each year by the Communications Department of the Village of South Holland and distributed by bulk mailing to all postal customers in South Holland Zip Code 60473. Additional copies are available free of charge at the Communications Department located at the municipal complex at 16226 Wausau Ave. South Holland Today Today does accept paid advertising.

SOUTH HOLLAND TODAY aims to provide beneficial information to present and potential residents, businesses, and municipal employees so that community pride is enhanced, investment and reinvestment in the community are encouraged, participation in community events is stimulated, and public dialogue about issues affecting South Holland takes place.