



Fall 2009

# The Winnetka Report

Published by the Winnetka Village Council

## IN THIS ISSUE

Public Pensions  
page 2

Hubbard Woods PO to  
Close  
page 4

LPC Awards  
page 4

Fall Tree Planting  
Page 5

Fire/Police Open House  
page 6

Winnetka Community  
Calendar  
page 6

Leaf Pickup Schedule  
page 8

Village of Winnetka  
510 Green Bay Road  
www.villageofwinnetka.org

## Rep. Mark Kirk to Attend Groundbreaking for Elm Street Train Station Renovation September 28<sup>th</sup> at 10 AM

The Metra Board of Directors and Village President Jessica Tucker will welcome U.S. Rep. Mark Kirk to Winnetka for the groundbreaking ceremony for the reconstruction and rehabilitation of the Elm Street passenger station on Monday, September 28, at 10:00 AM. All Winnetkans are invited to attend!

The contract for the \$5 million project was awarded to Blinderman-Meccor Joint Venture, and funding is coming from Federal stimulus funds awarded to Metra.

The proposal includes reconstructing platforms, rehabilitating the depot and shelter,

replacing or rehabilitating the pedestrian bridge and stairs, and adding new elevators and elevator vestibules.

The Village anticipates that construction will start in the very near future, and Metra estimates it will take about a year to complete the entire project.

Periodic updates on the status of this project will be posted to the Village of Winnetka website, at [villageofwinnetka.org](http://villageofwinnetka.org)



## Veterans Day Ceremony and Cenotaph Rededication Scheduled for November 11<sup>th</sup> at 5:00 PM

The Village of Winnetka and New Trier VFW Post 4831 invite you to attend the Veterans Day ceremony and Cenotaph rededication for the newly restored memorial on November 11<sup>th</sup> at 5:00 p.m. at the Winnetka Woman's Club.

Originally constructed in 1927, the Cenotaph on the Village Green stands as a memorial to those Winnetkans who died serving their country in the Armed Services. To date, 192 Winnetkans have lost their lives protecting our freedoms.

Over the years the Cenotaph had fallen into a state of grave disrepair. Through the generous support of the Village and private individuals, the memorial was refurbished and rebuilt

over the summer, returning it to its original glory for future generations.

Everyone is invited to join in this special occasion to pay tribute to those men and women who have sacrificed their lives for our country, as well as to honor all those who serve, and have served, in our Armed Forces.



## Special October Study Session for Discussion of Public Pensions October 27<sup>th</sup> at 7:30pm

The Village Council has scheduled a Special Study Session for Tuesday, October 27<sup>th</sup> at 7:30 PM, to learn more about public pensions.

The Village's Finance Director, Ed McKee, will be on hand to answer questions, and the Village's actuary, Tim Sharpe, and investment consultant, Richard Potter of Becker Burke & Associates, Inc. will give presentations.

See Page 2 for information about the Village's pension liabilities.



## VILLAGE'S UNFUNDED PENSION OBLIGATIONS HAVE INCREASED 213% IN 10 YEARS

An unparalleled decline in pension fund reserves due to unprecedented losses in the capital markets and escalating costs due to pension sweeteners authorized by the Illinois General Assembly, have almost doubled the Village's contributions for employee pensions over the last decade. Public employees' contributions are capped by the General Assembly, so the fiscal burden falls upon the Village, which means local taxpayers and utility ratepayers, to keep pension funds financially solvent. Replenishing these funds due to these investment losses will start with the 2009 tax levy, which is collected on your 2010 property tax bill.

### What pensions are available to Village employees?

As required by State law, all municipal employees (police, fire, and all other personnel) are covered by three separate pension programs: Police pension, Fire Fighters pension, and the Illinois Municipal Retirement Fund (IMRF). Police officers and fire fighters do not receive social security benefits, but if hired after the mid-1980's, they are covered by Medicare. All other personnel are covered by both Social Security and Medicare.

### How are pensions funded?

The funding for Village employee pensions comes from three sources – investment returns, Village contributions (primarily property taxes), and employee contributions. All three plans are mandated by State law which also sets the employee contribution rates. Thus, any funding shortfall must be covered with Village revenues and taxpayer contributions. One hundred percent of the cost of the Police and Fire Fighter Pensions are included in your property tax bill. The Village's share for the IMRF pension is paid by a combination of property taxes and utility fees.

As a percent of payroll, Winnetkans pay the following pension costs for their Village employees:

	Police Officers	Fire Fighters	All Other Employees
Pension	32.20%	44.90%	11.41%
Social Security / Medicare	1.45%	1.45%	7.65%
Village Total	33.65%	46.35%	19.06%

As required by law, the employee's pension payments as a percent of payroll are:

	Police Officers	Fire Fighters	All Other Employees
Pension	9.910 %	9.445 %	4.500 %
Social Security / Medicare	1.450 %	1.450 %	7.650 %
Employee Total	11.360 %	10.895 %	12.150 %

### Why don't the employees pay more?

Employee contributions are capped by the Illinois General Assembly. The Village Council has no authority to set employee contribution rates.

### Has the Village made its actuarially required pension payments?

Yes. For the last ten years, the Village has made its required pension payments. Despite making these pension payments, **the Village's unfunded pension liabilities have increased by 213% in ten years:**

	FY ending 2000	FY ending 2009	Increase (\$)	Increase (%)
Police Pension	\$ 419,519	\$ 6,861,866	\$ 6,442,347	1,536%
Firefighter Pension	1,973,203	8,909,785	6,936,582	352%
IMRF	5,478,635	8,879,643	3,401,008	62%
Total	\$ 7,871,357	\$ 24,651,294	\$ 16,779,937	<b>213%</b>

The above unfunded pension liabilities for the police and fire pensions do not reflect the recent losses in the stock markets as the data for fiscal year ending 2009 reflects the performance of the stock market through March 2008.

*Continued, top of next page*



## Pensions, *Continued*

The IMRF data is on a calendar year basis as of December 31, 2008 and therefore reflects some of the recent losses in the stock market.

### How has the recent downturn in the economy impacted public employee pensions?

The recent losses in the stock market have reduced the value of the assets in the three Village pension funds, thereby increasing the Village's unfunded liability even more! The Village, through the property tax levy and utility rates, must significantly increase its contributions to these pension funds to meet its required obligations. For 2010, the estimated cost increase is \$615,905, or 23.8%:

Winnetka	2009	2010	Increase (\$)	Increase (%)
Police	\$ 731,000	\$ 914,000	\$ 183,000	25.0%
Firefighter	835,000	1,002,000	167,000	20.0%
Other Employees	1,020,853	1,286,758	265,905	26.0%
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$2,586,853</b>	<b>\$ 3,202,758</b>	<b>\$ 615,905</b>	<b>23.8%</b>

On a per employee basis, the average pension costs to the Village are as follows:

	2009 (actual)	2010 (estimated)	Notes
Police Officer	\$ 26,107	\$ 32,643	Excludes Medicare
Fire Fighter	34,792	41,750	Excludes Medicare
Other Employees	14,068	16,442	Includes Social Security and excludes Medicare

### What are some of the pension benefits?

Municipal employees receive defined pension benefits that are earned by years of service and compensation. At age 50 and 20 years of service, police officers and fire fighters can retire and receive a pension of 50% of their final pay. At age 50 and 30 years of service, police and firefighters can retire and receive a full pension of 75% of their final pay. The pension payments are increased by 3% per year which is compounded annually. If a retiree predeces his/her spouse in death, the spouse receives 100% of the employee's pension benefits until the spouse passes away.

At age 60 and 20 years of service, all other Village personnel (IMRF) can retire and receive a pension of 35% of pay, based on the average salary for the last four years of employment. At age 60 and 40 years of service, IMRF employees can retire and receive a full pension of 75% of pay, based on the average salary for the last four years of employment. The pension payments are increased by 3% per year which is not compounded annually. If a retiree predeces his/her spouse in death, the spouse receives 50% of the employee's pension benefits until the spouse passes away.

### Have pension benefits been increased?

Pension benefits for police officers and fire fighters have been significantly enhanced three times in the last ten years. No significant pension enhancements have been authorized for IMRF employees for decades.

### Who determines the benefits for pension programs?

The General Assembly determines the benefits for pension programs, not your local elected officials.

### What can you do to help us control pension costs?

You can contact your State Senator and Representative and ask them to stop increasing pension benefits and to support efforts for meaningful pension reform as outlined in the Village Council Resolution, adopted on May 19, 2009 and posted on the Village website: [villageofwinnetka.org](http://villageofwinnetka.org).

### Below is the contact information for your state elected officials:

State Senator Jeffrey Schoenberg  
820 Davis St.  
Suite 102  
Evanston, IL 60201  
Phone: (847) 492-1200  
Email: [senator@jschoenberg.org](mailto:senator@jschoenberg.org)

State Representative Julie Hamos  
820 Davis St.  
Suite 103  
Evanston, IL 60201  
Phone: (847) 424-9898  
Email: [julie@juliehamos.org](mailto:julie@juliehamos.org)

State Representative Beth Coulson  
3801 West Lake Avenue  
Glenview, IL 60026  
(847) 724-3233  
Email: [coulson@earthlink.net](mailto:coulson@earthlink.net)



## Hubbard Woods Post Office Slated to Close November 28th

Despite requests from Winnetka businesses, residents and the Village Council to the Postal Service and our elected officials in Washington, the Winnetka Postmaster has announced that the Hubbard Woods retail post office will close on Saturday, November 28, 2009.

The Post Office would like to remind residents that they can purchase stamps, look up rates and ZIP codes by visiting [usps.gov](http://usps.gov).

## The Census is Coming

The Census is a count of everyone living in the U.S. It's conducted every ten years, and is mandated by the U.S. Constitution. Did you know that your participation is required by law? This year's Census will take less than ten minutes to complete, and your information is protected under federal law. Census data is used to distribute congressional seats, make decisions about what community services to provide, and to distribute federal funds to local, state and tribal governments.

The Census Bureau has begun printing the 2010 census questionnaires. The new questionnaire is designed to be one of the shortest since the first census was taken in 1790, with only ten questions. Beginning in mid-March, 2010, the questionnaires will be delivered to U.S. residents. In a sign of the times, the printing of the 2010 census questionnaires uses 30% less ink than in 2000, and will be printed on 30% recycled paper.

More information about the 2010 Census can be found at the Census Bureau's website: [2010.census.gov](http://2010.census.gov).

[www.villageofwinnetka.org](http://www.villageofwinnetka.org)

## What is a Unimog?

Last Fourth of July, Winnetka's Trustees greeted residents at the July 4<sup>th</sup> parade from the Public Works Department's Unimog truck – which was transformed temporarily into the Village Council's parade float!

While the Unimog was making its first appearance at the parade, it is not new to the Village... the purchase of the Unimog was authorized by the Village Council in 2005, and a portion of the cost was offset by the trade-in value of the Village's previous Unimog, which was used to serve the Village for 18 years.

You might be asking yourself what in the world is a Unimog? It's a versatile 4-wheel drive truck which features



interchangeable rear bodies and front attachments. The Unimog is central to the Village's snow removal operations, since it can be used as a dump/plow truck, and is also equipped with a snow blower for snow removal in the business districts. In addition, the Unimog performs a critical function powering the pumps at the Winnetka Avenue stormwater pumping facility in the event of a power outage. This valuable piece of equipment can be driven on and off the road, in all terrains and conditions.



## Winnetka Preservation Awards

At the June 16th Village Council meeting, the Winnetka Landmark Preservation commission awarded Preservation Awards to eight Winnetka properties.

The Preservation Awards program honors construction projects in the village that have helped to preserve the history and character of the village. The three awards categories are: Restoration, Rehabilitation, and New Construction.

The following properties were presented with 2009 awards:

### Christ Church Dovecot Chapel (Restoration)

Owner: Christ Church  
Contractor: NCS Construction Management

### 507 Cedar (Rehabilitation)

Owners: Michael Levitin & Meredith Mendes; Architect: David Roberts

### 564 Meadow (Rehabilitation)

Owners: Richard & Merrilee Redmond  
Architect: R. Scott Javore & Associates

### 175 Sheridan (Rehabilitation)

Owners: Pat & Lorill Haynes  
Architect: Charles Cook

### 1089 Spruce (Rehabilitation)

Owners: Colin & Robyn Hall  
Architect: R. Scott Javore & Associates

### 790 Bryant (Rehabilitation)

Owners: Peter & Lisa Beebe  
Architect: Healy Rice

### 500 Maple (Rehabilitation)

Owners: Nan & Wally Greenough  
Architect: Behles & Behles

### 785 Walden (New Construction)

Owners: Chris & Laura Janssen  
Architect: Reynolds Group

Congratulations to all award recipients!

The Winnetka Landmark Preservation Commission will be accepting applications for next year's program beginning in January 2010.



## Evidence of EAB Infestation Increasing

The Village of Winnetka recently continues to inspect and find increasing evidence of Emerald Ash Borer (EAB) in ash trees.

In 2006, EAB was discovered within the Village limits. EAB is a destructible insect that causes decline and eventual death by attacking the cambium layer underneath the bark of Ash trees.



EAB evidence includes woodpecker damage, canopy dieback, basal and trunk suckering and feeding galleries underneath bark areas. The Village recommends careful inspection of private Ash trees.

The Village is removing public Ash trees that have evidence of EAB. Treatment options are available but do not guarantee control.

Residents can call the Village Forester at 847-716-3535 if they have questions or concerns.

## 2009 Fall Tree Planting

The Village is currently taking requests for the Fall Parkway and Private Tree-Planting Program. Deadline for planting requests is September 28, 2009. Various tree species are available. The 2 ½" trunk diameter parkway trees are planted at no cost to residents. Larger diameter sizes are available but residents are responsible for the cost difference. For more information call the Village Forester at 847-716-3535.

## Trees and Watering

Since late summer, the Winnetka area has received little rainfall. Drought conditions can be fatal to trees, shrubs and other plants, as it causes roots to die. Trees of all sizes are severely stressed by drought conditions, and are much more susceptible to insect and disease attacks. Watering all plants in the fall, especially evergreens, is very important as it will reduce winter damage.

Watering is the most important care that residents can provide for their plants during droughts. During the growing season, trees and shrubs thrive with weekly watering or rains measuring one-half to one inch. Watering with a sprinkler provides a slow release of moisture, and watering amounts can be measured using a coffee can in the area of sprinkling. It is most important to water the area directly beneath the reach of branches, or dripline, of each plant.

Mulching trees and shrubs helps reduce drought stress and improves plant health and vigor, as it conserves soil moisture and protects roots from extreme soil temperatures. Use a two to four-inch layer of mulch and spread it evenly over the area around the plant, but leave a small gap between the plant base and the mulch.

If you have questions about outdoor plant care, call the Village Forester at 716-3535.



## PRIVATE PLANTINGS AT STREET INTERSECTIONS

Each year, trees and shrubs located at street intersections grow in such a manner as to obstruct sight distances for vehicles and pedestrians



approaching the intersections. Tall shrubs near street corners should be trimmed so as not exceed 24-inches in height, and low hanging tree branches should be thinned to a height of seven feet above ground. The Village has guidelines for private plant maintenance near intersections at the Public Works Department, 1390 Willow Road or call the Village Forester 847-716-3535 if you have questions.

## Village Licenses and Commuter Parking Permits Expire December 31st

Renewal applications for Village stickers and dog licenses will be mailed to residents the first week of October. Using the renewal form makes purchasing the 2010 vehicle sticker easy and convenient. To renew your dog's license, fill in the current information on the form and enclose a copy of the dog's rabies certificate along with the additional fee.

Zone C six month parking permit renewal applications for January 1 through June 30, 2010 will be mailed the first week of December.



## Fire & Police Open House Saturday, October 10<sup>th</sup> 10AM -- 2PM

Winnetka Fire & Police Departments invite Winnetka and Kenilworth residents to their 2009 Open House.



Visitors to the Fire House will learn about this year's Fire Prevention Week theme, "*Stay Fire Smart! Don't Get Burned.*" Fire apparatus and equipment will be on display, and firefighters will show youngsters how to have fun while learning about home fire safety.



Activities at the Police Department will include tours of the Police Communications Center, Lockup, Firearms Range, and Fitness Center, as well as a display of various vehicles and equipment. This will be a great opportunity for children to meet and talk with a police officer and to take home some gifts to remember the day, including Child Identification Kits.

There will be balloons, buttons, and refreshments for all.

## Keep Away From Downed Power Lines

During storms with high winds, power lines may come down onto the ground. It is best to assume that all lines are live. Always maintain a safe distance of 10 feet or more from power lines. Many of the lines are not insulated, and any contact with them, direct or indirect, can cause harm. Keep away from any fallen lines -- wires touching the ground may still be energized.

Never let children climb trees near power lines. Hire a qualified contractor to perform any tree trimming near power lines. If you have questions about removing limbs near power lines, call the Water & Electric Department at 716-3558.



To report a downed power line, power outage, or electric emergency, contact the Water & Electric Department's emergency number at 501-2531.

### TRICK OR TREAT HOURS

On Halloween, children should "trick or treat" only from 3 to 7 p.m.

#### Homeowners:

Please leave a front light on so that children will know that they are welcome to visit.

#### Motorists:

Watch for children out "trick or treating."

## Winnetka Community Calendar is Back!

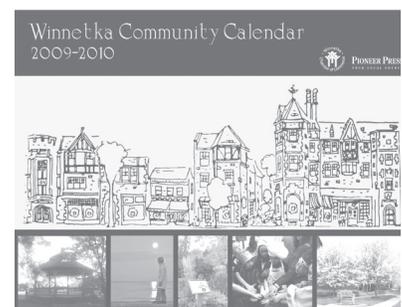
Between 1995 and 2005, former Winnetka resident Jody Smith distributed the Winnetka Community Calendar to residents every August. It was a welcome tool in preparing for the challenge of "back to school" days because it detailed important calendar dates of all the local schools, in addition to community dates for the Village, Park District, area organizations and businesses.

The inspiration for this thirteen-month calendar came about because Smith had her children in three different schools, and needed to know how to plan family activities around their school commitments. However, when Smith moved out of Winnetka several years ago, the calendar project was derailed.

During the last several years, the Winnetka Chamber of Commerce has been working with Pioneer Press to provide a community calendar modeled after Smith's. On August 6, the 2009-2010 Winnetka Community Calendar was inserted and distributed in the *Winnetka Talk*. Additional copies are now available for \$3 at the Winnetka Chamber of Commerce office at 841 Spruce Street.

The community calendar also lists important phone numbers, information about Winnetka "at a glance" and a small calendar space for the additional months from August 2010 through January 2011.

If you have any questions, contact the Winnetka Chamber of Commerce at [winnetkachamber.com](http://winnetkachamber.com), email [wcc@winnetkachamber.com](mailto:wcc@winnetkachamber.com) or call 446-4451.





The many elected and appointed volunteers who donate their time and energy to making Winnetka a great place to live and work deserve a special

## “THANK YOU!”

By serving on Village boards, commissions and committees, your fellow Winnetkans do their best to insure that our community’s charm and beauty are preserved.

The residents of Winnetka owe the Village’s appointees a debt of gratitude for their willingness to give so generously of their time and energy.

# Winnetka Boards & Committees

### Village President

Jessica B. Tucker

### Board of Trustees

Gene Greable  
Bill Johnson  
Linda Pedian  
King Poor  
Jennifer Spinney  
Chris Rintz

### Business Community Development Commission

Bill Johnson, Chair  
Arthur Braun  
Paul Dunn  
Dean Egerter  
Louise Holland, PC Rep.  
Cicely Michalak  
Betty Skalski  
Peggy Swartchild  
Terry Dason, Chamber Rep.

### Design Review Board

John McLinden, Chair  
Joan Evanich  
Gary Frank  
Scott Freres  
Thomas Kerwin

Charles Page  
Janet Shen

### Environmental & Forestry Commission

David Abell, Chair  
Jan Bawden  
Chuck Dowding  
Ed Harney  
King Poor, Council Rep.  
Debbie Ross  
Katie Stevens  
Lawson Whitesides

### Landmark Preservation Commission

Louise Holland, Chair  
Hugh Brower  
Susan Curry  
Laura Good  
Anne Grubb  
George Pappas  
Julie Windsor

### Plan Commission

Becky Hurley, Chair  
John Iberle  
Mark Kurensky  
Midge Powell  
Jan Bawden, WEFC Rep.  
Chris Rintz, Village Council Rep.

Louise Holland, LPC Rep.  
Scott Freres, DRB Rep.  
Susan Whitcomb, School Board Rep.  
John Jansson, Library Board Rep.  
Joni Johnson, ZBA Rep.  
John DiCola, Park Board Rep.

### Zoning Board of Appeals

Joe Adams, Chair  
Litt Clark  
Tom Hermanson  
Hal Francke  
Joni Johnson  
Carl Lane  
Scott Myers

### Board of Fire and Police Commissioners

Stephen Presser, Chair  
Michael Duhl  
Mark Crane

### Police Pension Board

Richard Glenn  
John O'Malley

### Fire Pension Board

David Bender  
Mark Fuller



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## Published by the Winnetka Village Council

Village of Winnetka  
510 Green Bay Road  
Winnetka, Illinois 60093

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### Village Telephone Numbers

<b>Police/Fire/Paramedics Emergency</b>	<b>911</b>
Police (Non-Emergency)	847.501.6034
Fire (Non-Emergency)	847.501.6029
Electric or Water Outages	847.501.2531
Refuse and Recycling Collection	847.716.3568
Manager/Finance Offices	847.501.6000
Public Works Office	847.716.3568
Water & Electric Office	847.716.3558
Water & Electric Billing Services	847.446.9550
Community Development Department	847.716.3576

### Winnetka Village Council

<b>Village President</b>	
Jessica Tucker	847.441.9561
<b>Village Trustees</b>	
Gene Greable	847.446.6356
Bill Johnson	847.784.9177
Linda Pedian	847.446.2291
King Poor	847.441.4011
Chris Rintz	847.441.5718
Jennifer Spinney	847.446.7945

## Annual leaf collection program begins October 19 -- the last day to place leaves on the parkway for pick up is November 30.

Winnetka's annual leaf collection program will begin on October 19 and continue through November 30. To be assured that they will be picked up, leaves need to be on the parkway by 7 a.m.

***There will be no callbacks if leaves are not on the parkway when collection crews pass through.***

Collections begin on Scott Avenue west of Green Bay Road and continue south in a counterclockwise direction, ending at Whitebridge Hill Road east of Green Bay Road. Depending on the weather, it takes up to seven working days to complete one leaf collection trip through the Village.



To avoid creating a hazard, rake leaves one foot back from the curb. Leaves piled on the street are a danger to small children who may be tempted to play in them and may not be seen by motorists; cars that park on them can catch fire due to heat

from exhaust pipes, and vehicles driving over them may lose traction due to the slippery condition that leaves create. (Drivers: be alert to these concerns during the autumn leaf collection period.) Also, leaves raked one foot onto the parkway will not clog sewer drains or reduce the width of traffic lanes.

The Public Works Department asks that you:

**DON'T** put branches, plants or any material other than leaves in the piles;

**DON'T** pile leaves around boulders, mailbox posts, trees, and any other objects;

**DON'T** park on top of or adjacent to piles of leaves. Vehicles can ignite dry leaves.

***As of December 1, leaves need to be bagged in Village yardwaste bags or in bags with Village stickers attached to them in order to be picked up by Public Works Department crews. Yardwaste bags can be purchased at the Cashier's Counter at Village Hall for \$2 each. Stickers to use on non-Village bags can also be purchased at the Cashier's Counter at the same price.***

Call the Public Works Department at 847-716-3568 for more information about the Leaf Collection Program.