



# UPDATE

## MESSAGE From Mayor André F. Harvey

If you attended this year's Taste of Bellwood – or heard about the three days of free, family fun and entertainment – you know that the village came together to bounce back with a successful three-day extravaganza that made us all proud to come together on Aug. 13-15 in front of the Village Hall.

Personally, and on behalf of my entire administration, I want to send a heartfelt thank you to each of our sponsors; all of the hard-working volunteers from inside and outside of the village; our delicious food and non-food vendors; and the entertaining entertainers. Together we presented a successful event for our residents and guests who came from near and far to enjoy the Taste and each other after a year away because of the pandemic.



(Continued on next page)

## Summer Youth Work Program Teaches Important Skills



Seventeen youth workers participated in Phase II of the Summer Youth Work Program and gained skills and informative experiences.

The youth learned the importance of being punctual, wearing the required safety gear, and adhering to rules, among other lessons. Twenty-eight youth workers were hired for three weeks each and divided into two groups. Actively directing and supporting the youths' experience were Marty Walker, director of Public Works; Arnie Brown, assistant superintendent of Public Works; Group Drivers and Assistants Glen Allen, James Hicks and Tyran Robinson; Lead Supervisor Robert Jones; and Group Supervisors Darlene Mullen, Frances Shaw, Angenturina Young and Deiots James.



(More images on the back)

### IMPORTANT BELLWOOD NUMBERS

- Village Hall (708) 547-3500
- Police/Fire/Ambulance Emergency 911
- Police (non emergency) (708) 547-3528
- Police Anonymous Hotline (708) 547-3500 Ext 1301
- Fire (non emergency) (708) 547-3525
- Water Bill (Billing Questions) (708) 547-3520
- Building Department (708) 547-3545
- Public Works Department (708) 547-3540
- Community Service (708) 649-3060
- Human Resources (708) 547-3500
- TDD (hearing impaired) (708) 547-0011

**(Mayor's Message continued)**

My gratitude also goes to our hardworking law enforcement personnel and staff from every Bellwood department who worked together and with their peers from other local towns that supported our efforts to host a safe event. The October issue of the *Update* newsletter will feature a picture-filled recap of this year's event. We look forward to continuing the Taste in 2022 with even greater success.

On an important matter to our residents is the fact that **despite Bellwood not raising its tax levy or the village's portion of your tax bill**, many residents have been notified of a tax increase. I share your anger and believe this is an unacceptable increase. The Cook County treasurer's report indicates that Bellwood was hardest hit, with the average property owner expected to see a nearly \$1,869 increase in median taxes owed. As mayor and a homeowner myself, I will do absolutely everything in my power to reach a fair and equitable resolution to this tax increase. I encourage our residents to



attend the Property Tax Appeal Forum we have arranged for Sept. 30 at 6:30 p.m. in the Community Room at the Bellwood Village Hall.

With the summer coming to a close, our youth have returned to school, and as always I wish them the best in their studies and extracurricular activities. As they return to school, it is always important for motorists to exercise great care and caution in our school zones. Please stay alert and watchful for our students.

Finally, as we all face the continued and unfortunate spread of the COVID-19 virus – namely because of the Delta variant – it is never too late for the unvaccinated residents in our community to get vaccinated to protect themselves and their family, friends and neighbors. Remember: it is never too late to get vaccinated. Until it is too late.



## **An Important Message About Taxes in Bellwood**

As a 50-year Bellwood resident himself, Mayor André F. Harvey fully understands the dismay of residents who have received an increased property tax bill. While **Bellwood has not raised its tax levy or the Village's portion of taxes**, many residents have been notified of a tax increase, which the mayor also agrees is unacceptable. The Cook County treasurer's report indicates that Bellwood was hardest hit, with the average property owner expected to see a nearly \$1,869 increase in median taxes owed (from \$4,164 in tax year 2019 to \$6,033 in tax year 2020).

**While Bellwood has not raised its portion of the tax bill**, it appears that a majority of the other 16 taxing bodies raised their levies a combined 30%. Therefore, many Bellwood residents will see a larger tax bill this year, and some will actually see a decrease.

**Another reason for increased taxes for many is because your assessed property value also increased.** In 2020, the Assessor's office reassessed all properties in the village and in Proviso Township. The large increase in home values and sales prices are now reflected on many residents' tax bills. In fact, out of all the municipalities in Cook County, Bellwood experienced the largest increase in total assessed property values at 32.4%. **In other words, when the value of your home increases, your property taxes also increase.**

"I understand that this explanation isn't comforting if you can't make your payment," said the mayor, who recently met with Cook County Assessor Fritz Kaegi to find out all of the reasons why Bellwood homeowners are seeing a tax increase of approximately 28% while some neighboring towns are seeing smaller increases.

"I am also reaching out to our state legislators for assistance in this matter and we developing a plan to address this tax issue. We will need the support of all of our residents as we battle to address what appears to be a discriminatory taxing formula that adversely affects minority communities. Please know that my gloves are off and I am poised to take this fight to Springfield," added the mayor.

"I know that some of us are struggling and that a tax increase of this kind may result in some of us fighting to keep our homes. As your mayor, I vow to do everything in my power to reach a fair and equitable resolution to this tax increase. I also promise to continue my record of not increasing the village's portion of your tax bill."

Residents should remember to review your tax bills and make sure the county has applied all the exemptions for which you qualify. Also look at the assessed value of your property, and if you feel it is incorrect, you can appeal.

**Residents are encouraged to attend a Property Tax Appeal Forum on Sept. 30 at 6:30 p.m. in the Community Room at the Bellwood Village Hall.**

## Brunch Provides Students With Career Advice



On July 20, Bellwood Mayor André F. Harvey was among the presenters before summer youth workers and interns at a “Rise & Shine...It’s Career Brunch Time.” Speakers representing various jobs and industries addressed the importance of a quality education, career choices, the value of trade programs, resume writing, entrepreneurship, saving for college, careers in the legal profession, and interactions with law enforcement. The students received giveaways and school supplies for the upcoming school year.



A special thanks to program presenters Tonita Leshore, Bellwood director of Human Resources; Gay Chase, retired federal judge and Bellwood Police and Fire commissioner; Shonta Muhammad of George Leland STEM School; Rodney Alexander, president of Proviso Township High School District 209; Jazzmyn Harvey, former summer youth worker and intern; Brian Sims, member service representative, Central Credit Union of Illinois; Bellwood Police Chief Jimenez Allen; Bellwood Commander William Goodrum; Mark Holder, superintendent of Bellwood School District 88; and Vernard Lockhart Jr., associate director of Employment Services at PLCCA.



## Village Internships Give Students Insights and Opportunities



On June 1 eight interns began internships throughout the Village of Bellwood that exposed them to the inner operations of the Finance, Human Resources, Police and Public Works departments.

Interns Chevelle Crayton, Kamil Dill, Kalvina Eubanks, Robert Hatch IV, Ivoryana Neal, Jahazz Roberts and Jordan Williams were provided career development opportunities, including career exploration activities, career interest assessments, job shadowing, etc.

The program was funded by the Illinois Youth Investment Program. PLCCA, an IYIP grantee, provided training and career advice to the youth for the summer and long-term employment.

(More images from the Village Internship Program)



Bellwood Residents ...  
Mark Your Calendar!



**BELLWOOD COMMUNITY POLICE  
NEIGHBORHOOD  
WATCH GROUP**

In collaboration with Cong. Danny K. Davis  
7th District of Illinois



**THURSDAY  
SEPTEMBER 16, 7 P.M.**

**WE WILL DISCUSS...**

\* **Presentation on Breast Cancer Awareness  
by Surviving Warriors**

**The Anonymous Tip hotline is (708) 547-3500 Ext. 1031.**

For more information, call Police Commander,  
William Goodrum at (708) 547-3500 Ext. 1330.

Great opportunity to meet, greet and show support for  
Bellwood's police officers! Comments, feedback and  
suggestions are welcome. Hope to see you there!

Face coverings and social distancing will be required.

[www.vil.bellwood.il.us](http://www.vil.bellwood.il.us)

**Breast Cancer Awareness Month**

**Surviving**

In Partnership with the  
 **Village of BELLWOOD**  
 **MEMORIAL PARK DISTRICT**

**Presents the 3<sup>rd</sup> Annual**  
**Balloon Release & Candlelight Vigil**

**FRIDAY, OCTOBER 1, 2021**  
**STEVENSON CENTER PARK PAVILION**  
**3105 WASHINGTON BLVD. BELLWOOD, IL 60104**  
**CANDLE LIGHTING 6:30 PM**  
**BALLOON RELEASE 7:00 PM**

**PURCHASE LIGHTED COMMEMORATIVE BAG & BALLOON SET FOR \$5 EACH**  
**HONORING THOSE WHO EARNED THEIR WINGS DURING THEIR FIGHT AGAINST BREAST CANCER**

**FOR MORE INFORMATION CONTACT**  
**TONI WILLIAMS (224) 513-9265**  
**[SURVIVINGWARRIORS.BCSG@GMAIL.COM](mailto:SURVIVINGWARRIORS.BCSG@GMAIL.COM)**

**SEPTEMBER CALENDAR**

- |    |   |       |   |
|----|---|-------|---|
| 5  | Labor Day   | 16    | Neighborhood Watch Meeting, 7 p.m.                    |
| 6* | Labor Day Observed                                | 20-24 | Cleanup Week  |
| 13 | Committee of the Whole, 3:30 p.m.<br>Cleanup Week | 22    | Fall Begins   |
| 15 | Village Board Meeting, 6 p.m.                     | 30    | Property Tax Appeal Forum,<br>Village Hall, 6:30 p.m. |

\*Village Hall will be closed.



**PLEASE  
RECYCLE!**

