

The City Newsletter

Elmhurst

August 2003

Issue 3

“CHARACTER COUNTS!”

Early last spring a group of more than 50 community members met to discuss initiating a community-wide CHARACTER COUNTS! program in Elmhurst. CHARACTER COUNTS!, a project of the nonprofit Josephson Institute of Ethics, is the nation's most widely used character development framework based on values and beliefs that transcend the divisions of gender, race, creed, politics and wealth. The “Six Pillars of Character” defined by the program are trustworthiness, respect, responsibility, fairness, caring and citizenship. The program maintains that “good character doesn't just happen.” Young people need to be taught right from wrong, and adults need to be models of good character. A community-wide coalition representing members of Elmhurst's educational and religious institutions, service and not-for-profit organizations, and governmental bodies is necessary because “character development is most effective when it begins at home, is reinforced in the schools and supported throughout the community.”

The coalition will be working closely with the Chamber of Commerce to increase understanding and gain support within the business community. During the summer months, the coalition focused on raising money to send 40 representatives of the schools and the community to a two-day training seminar to prepare for the program's kickoff in the schools this fall. Mayor Thomas Marcucci has proclaimed October as “Character Counts” month in the City of Elmhurst and urges residents to “embrace and support the Character Counts program for the development and demonstration of ethical behavior among all citizens of the Elmhurst community.”

City Celebrates 50 Years of Mayor/Manager Government

The city, along with the Historical Museum and the Elmhurst Jaycees, recently hosted a reception to celebrate the 50th anniversary of the establishment of mayor/manager government in Elmhurst. The Jaycees, a local civic organization, was instrumental in passing a citywide referendum in 1953 to change Elmhurst's form of government from mayor/city council to mayor/manager. Back in 1953, the Jaycees felt that a modern suburb like Elmhurst needed a modern form of government – one that provided fair representation and services to every citizen in the community. The mayor/manager form of government, which had become common throughout the country by the 1930's, provided an opportunity to address those goals.

The Jaycees, a local civic organization, was instrumental in passing a citywide referendum in 1953 to change Elmhurst's form of government from mayor/city council to mayor/manager.

According to the ICMA, there are currently 3,003 ICMA-recognized local governments operating under the mayor/manager form of government in the U.S.

Under the mayor/manager form of government, the public elects a governing body, which then hires a manager to carry out the policies established by the governing body. In Elmhurst, two aldermen are elected from each of the city's seven wards to

serve on the City Council and provide legislative direction to the city manager. The city manager then translates the City Council's vision into action, overseeing the day-to-day administrative operations of the community, preparing the budget, making personnel decisions and serving as the chief advisor to the City Council. The mayor, clerk and treasurer are elected at-large by the voters of all seven wards. The mayor/manager form of government has served the community well for the past five decades.



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Tree City/Sterling Growth Award

One of the most attractive characteristics of the Elmhurst community is the wide variety of trees that line our streets, shade our yards, beautify our parks and protect our environment. The National Arbor Day Foundation, a nonprofit educational organization dedicated to tree planting and environmental stewardship, recently recognized Elmhurst for the 23rd year as a "Tree City USA" for its outstanding tree planting and maintenance program. Elmhurst was also named a "Sterling Tree City USA" in recognition of ten years of participation in the organization's Tree City Growth Award program. The city's participation has resulted in improvements in the areas of community forestry education and public relations, planning and management, partnerships, and tree planting and maintenance. Congratulations to the Forestry Division!



New Library to Open October 4th

Construction on the new Elmhurst Public Library is scheduled for completion on time and on budget by Friday, September 5th. The current library, located in the Wilder Mansion, will be permanently closed to the public at 5:00 p.m. on Sunday, September 7th. During the weeks that follow, professional movers will transfer the library's books and collections, along with selected furniture and equipment, to the new building. The time between the closing of the old library and the opening of the new building on October 4th will also be used for staff training, computer installation and preparations to open the new library to the public on October 4th. The new library's meeting rooms and computer training lab will be available to Elmhurst Public Library cardholders for meetings beginning January 2, 2004. For more information or to view photos of the new library, visit the library's website at www.elmhurstpubliclibrary.org.



Train Whistles in a "Quiet Zone"

The sound of train whistles in a "quiet zone" is understandably annoying, especially to residents who live close enough to the tracks to hear the sound of train horns several times each day. It is important to realize that the term "quiet zone" does not mean train engineers are not allowed to sound their whistles. Trains on rail lines in the Chicago area do not routinely whistle at crossings on commuter lines, such as the Metra/Union Pacific line that crosses through the center of Elmhurst. This practice of not routinely blowing the horns at all grade crossings on commuter lines is referred to as a "quiet zone," and Elmhurst has long been designated as a "quiet zone" on the Metra/Union Pacific line. However, there are no commuter trains on the Elmhurst section of the Canadian National & Illinois Central line, which passes through Elmhurst on an angle from Madison Street on the east to Alexander on the west. Freight trains on that and other non-commuter lines throughout the country are required by federal law to whistle at each crossing – normally a series of two long, one short and another long whistle as the engine passes over the crossing. Engineers on non-commuter lines have no option but to sound their horns at every crossing, day and night.

According to a Union Pacific representative, there are a number of situations in which an engineer is required to sound the horn, whether in a "quiet zone" or not. In addition, engineers must often use their own judgment in evaluating a potentially dangerous situation. The Union Pacific Railroad whistle rules, which are similar to those of other railroads, are as follows:

Union Pacific rules require engineers to whistle:

1. One-quarter (1/4) mile before all grade crossings, except at crossings in commuter territory.
2. At any time when whistling may save a life or property.
3. When a situation of danger arises which may be lessened or eliminated by whistling.
4. When persons are seen crossing the track, walking on the tracks or trespassing on Union Pacific property.
5. When visibility is impaired by track configuration, equipment or weather.
6. When Union Pacific employees or contractor employees are working on Union Pacific property (FRA requirement).
7. When a train is stopped and begins to move again.

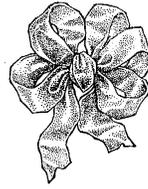
Finance Department Receives Award

For the 13th consecutive year, the City's Finance Department has been awarded the Certificate of Achievement for Excellence in Financial Reporting for its annual comprehensive financial report. The certificate is presented by the Government Finance Officers Association and is the highest form of recognition in government accounting and financial reporting. The award is based on the readability and clarity of the annual report and its adherence to all standard accounting guidelines.

Red Ribbon Week – We Can Make a Difference

Substance abuse is a tragedy that touches individuals and families from all segments of our society. The use of drugs and alcohol by young people can lead to wasted potential and, all too often, tragic injury or loss of life. Substance abuse is often responsible for health problems and traffic accidents, employment and legal difficulties, and a myriad of other societal problems.

In an effort to raise awareness and promote a drug-free environment, a coalition of community organizations and agencies called Elmhurst Community Effort (ECE) was

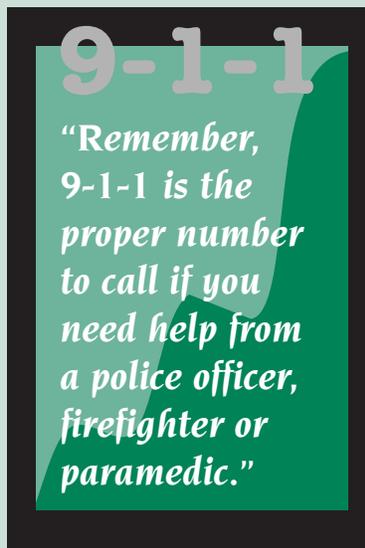


formed in 1990 to coordinate prevention activities during Red Ribbon Week and throughout the year. Red Ribbon Week will be held in Elmhurst from October 23rd through the 30th but the effort should not end there. Residents are encouraged to wear a red ribbon to work or school during Red Ribbon Week, or tie a red ribbon around your car antenna or parkway tree. Parents are encouraged to talk to their children early and often about the dangers of drugs and alcohol. Young people are urged to take a stand against the use of these dangerous substances. For more information, please call Paul DeMichele at (630) 279-6528.

9-1-1: Not Just for Emergencies

Residents are reminded to call 9-1-1 any time they need police, fire or paramedic services. 9-1-1 is not just for emergencies. All calls to 9-1-1 are answered by DuComm (DuPage Public Safety Communications). The agency provides professional dispatch services for the Elmhurst Police and Fire Departments. The DuComm operator will ask a number of questions before dispatching police, fire or paramedic units:

- **Location** - It is the 9-1-1 operator's responsibility to make sure that assistance is sent to the right location. Land-based telephones automatically report the location where the call originates but the operator will verify the address or location you are calling about. You may be calling to report a problem across the street or down the block. Be prepared to give the complete address.
- **Cell phone calls to 9-1-1** - Unlike land-based telephones that report the location where the call originates to the 9-1-1 operator, cellular phones do not yet have this capability. All cell phone calls to 9-1-1 made in DuPage County are first routed to the DuPage County Sheriff's office. Knowing and giving the operator your precise location is crucial to enable help to reach you quickly. As soon as the sheriff's operator has your location, your call is transferred to the 9-1-1 center that handles calls for that area. The 9-1-1 operator will ask you some of the same questions. Do not hang up until told to do so.



- **Nature of the problem** - Tell the operator what the problem is. "I want to report a ... i.e. traffic accident, house fire, prowler, person having trouble breathing, etc." Each of these possible scenarios requires a different response from the city's emergency personnel. The operator will ask a series of short questions to determine what kind of assistance to send. This usually takes one minute or less.

There are a number of ways in which you can assist the 9-1-1 operator.

- Remain calm and speak in a clear, even tone. The operator must be able to understand what you are saying.
- Give short, concise answers to the operator's questions. In many cases, a second operator is dispatching help while the first operator talks to you.
- Carefully follow any instructions the operator gives you.

Remember, 9-1-1 is the proper number to call if you need help from a police officer, firefighter or paramedic. Calling the police station number when you need help will actually slow down the process because either your call will be transferred to DuComm or you will be asked to hang up and dial 9-1-1. You should only call the police station number for administrative questions or requests that do not require that a police, fire or paramedic unit be dispatched.



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Meet a Member of the Elmhurst Police Dept.



One of the Elmhurst Police Department's most loyal and devoted employees has worked diligently for the last seven years and never collected a paycheck. Tommy and his partner, Officer Jim Daffara, are highly respected and in great demand throughout DuPage County. Their special talents are in tracking suspects and sniffing out drugs. They have close to 30 successful tracks, which is virtually unheard of in this area. Tommy, a Belgian Malinois, is part of the department's canine team. With Officer Daffara and Tommy preparing to retire within the next two to three years, the city is making plans to select a new handler and purchase another dog, preferably another Belgian Malinois, to allow time for the new handler to benefit from Officer Daffara's wealth of experience and knowledge. The new canine handler will attend a four-week training school in Michigan this fall and, together with his four-legged partner, will work with Officer Daffara and Tommy until they retire. Tommy's replacement will be trained in narcotic detection, article searches, tracking, handler protection and obedience. Officer Daffara has dedicated a great deal of personal time to training Tommy who will continue to be part of Daffara's family upon retirement.

Senior Home Away from Home

Four years ago, a charming and comfortable home at 375 S. West Avenue in Elmhurst opened its doors to seniors from Elmhurst and the surrounding communities. The Suzanne Knuepfer Guest House provides companionship, home-cooked meals, activities and supervision for seniors in a cheerful, home-like setting. The Guest House, a part of Metropolitan Family Services DuPage, also provides welcome respite and peace of mind for caregivers. Guests are welcome to stay for a day or two, or for as long as 30 days. The rates are flexible and affordable. For more information on the Knuepfer Guest House or to volunteer to help with activities and field trips, please call (630) 653-2397.

Mayor's Message



The City of Elmhurst is celebrating an important milestone this year – 50 years of the Mayor/Manager form of government. I'd like to congratulate the Elmhurst Jaycees, a local civic organization, on this important event. The Jaycees organization was instrumental in passing a citywide referendum in 1953 to change the City's form of government and Elmhurst has thrived on this system which is designed to separate politics from the daily operation of city government. I would particularly like to congratulate Tom Borchert who has been City Manager since 1984 for the professionalism and integrity that he shows each day on the job.

I'd also like to direct your attention to our article on the front page: "Character Counts." This exciting new program, which was kicked off in June of this year, emphasizes the six pillars of character – trustworthiness, respect, responsibility, fairness, caring and citizenship. As this new program develops in your neighborhood and schools, I invite interested citizens to get involved in this effort which will benefit everyone in the community – especially our children as they mature to adulthood.

Please mark your calendar to join me for the opening of our new library in Wilder Park on October 4. The new library is a spectacular addition to our community and will offer young and old alike access to state-of-the-art equipment, technology and materials.

Lastly, I would like to remind everyone that school will soon be back in session, so please drive carefully. Remember, too, that the speed limit in all posted school zones is 20 mph. The general speed limit on Elmhurst streets is 25 mph, unless otherwise posted. Remember: "It's Our Town, Let's Slow Down."

Mayor Thomas D. Marcucci



Holiday Hours

Residents are reminded that City Hall will be closed on Monday, September 1st for the Labor Day holiday. The City Council meeting normally held on the first Monday will be postponed until Tuesday, September 2nd.

Refuse Collection Reminders



Refuse collection will be delayed by one day during the week following Labor Day. Residents are reminded that it is illegal to place garbage cans in the street. This practice creates a hazardous situation for motorists and also causes problems for street sweepers.

Veterans Day Ceremony

The City of Elmhurst and the veterans' organizations will hold a special ceremony on Veterans Day, Tuesday, November 11th at 10:30 a.m. to honor all current or past members of the U. S. military. The ceremony will take place at the Veterans Memorial in Wilder Park. Residents and friends are invited to attend the ceremony as an expression of appreciation for the service of our American veterans.

Trick-or-Treat

Be on the lookout for little ghosts and goblins on Halloween evening. Official hours for trick-or-treating will be from 3:30 to 7:30 p.m. on Friday, October 31st. A parent or other adult is encouraged to accompany children and instruct them to cross streets only at intersections, approach only well lit homes and inspect all treats at home. Have a safe and happy Halloween!



Senior Chore Days

Senior Chore Days will be held in early November. Volunteers will be available during Chore Days to help Elmhurst seniors with limited income who need assistance with fall yard work and/or storm window installation. Call the DuPage Senior Citizens Council at (630) 620-9794 if you need assistance or if you can volunteer to help a senior during Senior Chore Days.



Building Numbers



In an emergency situation, time can be a critical element, but before emergency personnel can begin to provide assistance, they must find the right home or business.

The Elmhurst Municipal Code requires that numbers be attached to every building in the community "in a conspicuous place at the side of or above the front door of the building to which the same are attached." Although the code requires that the numbers be at least three inches in height, the Police and Fire Departments strongly encourage residents to number their homes with four- to six-inch-high numbers in a contrasting color. Numbers spelled out in cursive are much more difficult to read, especially at night and during bad weather. House numbers painted on the curb do not meet Municipal Code requirements for house numbering. They are very hard to see from a fire truck in the best of circumstances and may be impossible to see when there is snow on the ground or cars parked along the curb. Remember: every second counts in an emergency situation.

Free Leaf Pick-Up

Free leaf pick-up will be provided twice this fall on your regularly scheduled collection day - November 5th, 6th or 7th and again on December 3rd, 4th or 5th. During these two one-week periods, leaves will be picked up free of charge (without yard waste stickers). Leaves must be placed in clearly marked garbage cans, cardboard boxes or Kraft paper bags, and placed at the curb on collection day. Leaves may not be mixed with other yard waste. Plastic bags are not allowed. Containers, other than Kraft bags, will be left on the parkway after the pick-up. Raking leaves, grass clippings or other debris into the street is forbidden by city ordinance. This illegal practice creates a hazardous condition for motorists and impedes the flow of stormwater into the city's storm sewer system.

Street Flooding

There are a total of 4,000 storm drain inlets within the Elmhurst community. During the fall those inlets are often covered with leaves and debris that impede the flow of water into the city's storm sewer system. To prevent street flooding in your neighborhood during periods of heavy rainfall, residents are asked to do their part by raking debris away from the inlets.





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The City's Fire Training Tower

If you have never been inside a burning building, it is probably impossible to imagine how you would react in such a situation. The potentially deadly heat, gases, smoke and flames generated by modern building materials can disorient even the most experienced firefighter. Now imagine being a rookie firefighter when the alarm sounds and the trucks roll out of the firehouse with sirens blaring. There is a much better way for new firefighters to gain experience and for veteran firefighters to practice the skills that may one day save a life or prevent a building from being destroyed by fire.



Fire-training towers are engineered to provide firefighting experience under safe, controlled conditions. Such training can mean the difference between life and death for a firefighter or a civilian. The Elmhurst Fire Department is one of the few departments in the area to have a fire-training tower in which firefighters can learn and practice search and rescue operations, ventilation of smoke and gases, hose advancement and hose streams, technical rescues and laddering buildings.

After more than 20 years of use in live fire training, the Elmhurst fire-training tower is being updated, repaired and renovated. An addition with natural gas-fired burn props is being constructed, as well as a fire simulator in the new burn rooms to train firefighters in simulated residential and commercial settings. The training tower gives the Elmhurst Fire Department credit towards its ISO 2 fire rating.

The city and its residents are very fortunate to have well-trained and dedicated firefighters working to keep our community safe.

Keeping Hydrants Accessible

There are 3,000 fire hydrants located throughout Elmhurst to provide water for firefighting purposes. It is crucial that these hydrants remain clearly visible and accessible at all times. The Elmhurst Municipal Code prohibits parking a vehicle within 15 feet of a fire hydrant or placing any other object or materials of any kind in such a way that it obstructs or prevents free access to a fire hydrant. Vehicles parked within 15 feet of a hydrant can be towed and individuals who violate these regulations are subject to fines. Residents are reminded not to place garbage or recycling cans, bundles of brush or any other object near a fire hydrant.



Prevent Candle Fires

Candles continue to be a popular way to decorate homes, create special ambiance and reduce stress, but they can also be extremely dangerous. Statistics have shown a 300% increase in candle fires over the past ten years. There were five fires in Elmhurst between July 1, 2002 and June 30, 2003 caused by candles, three in homes and two in businesses. The Fire Department provides the following simple tips to help keep your family safe and your home or business intact.



- Keep candles away from combustible materials.
- Put candles in sturdy, non-combustible holders that won't tip over and are big enough to collect dripping wax.
- Extinguish all candles before leaving a room or going to sleep.
- Never place candles near windows where blinds or curtains can accidentally close over them.
- Never use candles where children or pets can knock them over.
- Never leave a child unattended in a room with a lit candle.
- During a power outage, use a safer light source, such as a flashlight or other battery-powered light.

For more information, contact the Elmhurst Fire Department at 530-3090.

Traffic Safety: Radar Loan Program

The Elmhurst Police Department has initiated a program that allows concerned residents to use a police radar unit to verify possible neighborhood speed problems and traffic patterns on a given street in correlation to day and time. Before receiving the radar unit, the resident will receive some brief hands-on operating instructions. The department will also provide a radar log on which participants can document road conditions and speeds. The program will not result in speeding tickets being issued,

but the registered owners of vehicles exceeding the limit by a notable amount will be sent a warning letter. If a speed problem is revealed as a result of the resident's participation, the Police and Public Works Engineering staff will conduct a formal speed study to determine an appropriate course of action. If you are interested in participating in the program, please call the Police Department at (630) 530-3050 and ask for the Traffic Unit Supervisor, Sergeant Dan Buenz.

CO - A Matter of Public Safety

Results of the most recent citizen survey (2002) revealed a serious public safety concern – the fact that 32% of residents surveyed do not have a carbon monoxide (CO) detector installed in their homes. This alarming statistic has led the Elmhurst Fire Department to initiate a multi-faceted campaign to alert residents to the dangers of carbon monoxide poisoning and the need to install at least one CO detector in every residential dwelling.

CO is a colorless, odorless, tasteless and non-irritating gas produced by fossil fuel-burning appliances. If undetected, CO can cause serious illness or even death. The Fire Department plans to add CO awareness to the 1st and 4th grade fire safety curriculum in Elmhurst schools and send informational flyers on carbon monoxide with city utility bills. The Fire Department will also hold drawings for free CO detectors during their open house on Sunday, October 5th (see article at right). Fill out and return the form below for a chance to win a free carbon monoxide detector.



Win a Free CO Detector

**Elmhurst Fire Department/
Fire Prevention Bureau**

Carbon Monoxide Detector Entry Form

Forms must be returned to:

1. City Hall Fire Department Counter
2. City Hall Utility Bill Drop Box (in parking lot)

By September 30, 2003

Name: _____

Address: _____

Phone: _____

Drawing will be held at the Fire Prevention Week Open House being held at Fire Station #2 on 10-5-03 from noon to 4:00 p.m. Winner need not be present and will be contacted after 10-9-03

Fire Prevention Week – Open House

Elmhurst Fire Station #2 (605 S. York Street) will host an open house on Sunday, October 5th, from noon until 4:00 p.m. to kick off Fire Prevention Week. The open house will include demonstrations on specialty rescue techniques and proper use of a fire extinguisher. Police officers will also be on hand with D.A.R.E. information, and safety and crime prevention materials. There will also be Kids Pix (child ID program) by the Kiwanis, station tours, refreshments and rides in the basket of the city's 95-foot ladder/tower truck.

Drawings will be held throughout the open house for free carbon monoxide detectors. (See entry form bottom left.) This effort is in response to 2002 survey results indicating that 32% of those surveyed do not have even one carbon monoxide detector installed in their homes. The Elmhurst Fire Department urges residents to install a CO detector on every floor, especially near sleeping areas.

Bring the family and join the Elmhurst Fire Department for an interesting afternoon and some potentially lifesaving information.

August 2003

City of Elmhurst

209 N. York St., Elmhurst, IL 60126
(630) 530-3000

Website homepage: <http://www.elmhurst.org>
Email: webmaster@elmhurst.org

City Hall Hours:
Monday - Friday, 8:30 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.
(Finance Department counter open
1st & 3rd Mondays until 7:00 p.m.)

Thomas D. Marcucci, Mayor
Janet S. Edgley, City Clerk
David Dyer, City Treasurer

Aldermen

1st Ward - Michael J. Regan, Paul Fichtner
2nd Ward - David S. Noffs, Janice A. Vanek
3rd Ward - Michael Bram, Susan J. Rose
4th Ward - John E. Gow, Brad Walsh
5th Ward - James J. Parker, Phillip D. Jordan
6th Ward - George Szczepaniak, Stephen G. Hillsman
7th Ward - Charles R. Mueller, Mark A. Mulliner





The City Newsletter

The Historical Museum Bringing History to Life



Exhibit Of Historic Quilts

Stitches, Symbols and Stories, an exhibition of quilts and quilted accessories in the collection of the Elmhurst Historical Museum will be open September 20, 2003 through January 5, 2004. The quilted and hand-stitched items in the exhibit include bed covers, tablecloths, pillows, baby and crib quilts, unfinished quilt tops and commemorative quilts. Of special note is an autograph quilt created in 2001 by visitors to the museum. Public exhibit galleries at the museum are open Tuesday through Sunday from 1:00 p.m. to 5:00 p.m.

Programs for Kids, Families and Adults

Second Sunday is a monthly drop-in program for children held every second Sunday from 1:00 p.m. to 3:00 p.m. Visitors on September 14th can make a patchwork pillow. Quilted potholders will be made on October 12th, and a special quilt-shaped game is planned for November 9th.

Tea Time Tour is an adult program held every third Thursday from 1:00 p.m. to 2:00 p.m. Programs this fall will explore a variety of quilting topics in support of *Stitches, Symbols and Stories*, a temporary exhibit of historic quilted material in the museum's collection. Refreshments are provided.

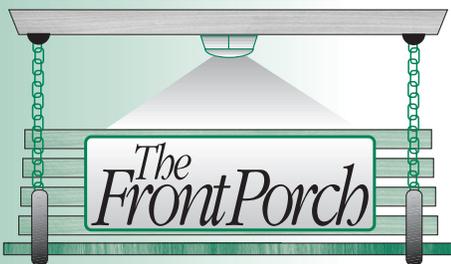
Cemetery Tour Planned

On Saturday, October 11th, residents and visitors will have an opportunity to learn about two special places in Elmhurst. Tours of Elmhurst's oldest cemeteries, St. Peter's and St. Mary's, are planned between 4:00 p.m. and 8:00 p.m. Local actors and actresses in costume will tell stories about some of the people and places from Elmhurst's past. For ticket information, please call the Elmhurst Historical Museum at (630) 833-1457.



College Scholarships for Local Students

The museum, along with the Elmhurst Historical Museum Foundation, sponsors the Ruth Strand Scholarship Essay Contest each year. It is open to high school juniors and seniors who live in Elmhurst or attend Elmhurst schools. The winning entrant receives a \$1,000 scholarship, and an award of \$500 goes to the second place finisher. Applicants are required to write an original essay using local history resources in the collections of the museum. The selection of winners is based on depth of research, originality and organization. Please call the museum at (630) 833-1457 for more information or contact your high school guidance counselor.



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