



# THE SPIRIT

Preserving the life of America's unique community

A publication of  
the  
Park Forest  
Historical  
Society

## Celebrate with us! 40th Anniversary of the Society, 27th Anniversary of the Museum!

Museum Tour

Annual Meeting & Election

**Sunday, September 28, 2025**

Celebrate with us,  
Sunday, September 28  
2:30 p.m. in Ryan Hall,  
St. Mary's, 227 Monee  
Road.

40 Years of the Society  
and 27 Years of the  
Museum.

We will hold a brief  
annual meeting with  
election.

Then cake and tours of,  
"It's Halloween at the  
Museum."



We have worked hard to reach these anniversaries, and we want  
to have you with us to celebrate them.

**Save the date for our November 9, 2025 Program**

The program is still pending.

## Hall of Fame

Hall of Fame will be held March 29, 2026 at Freedom Hall. Nominations open  
October 1, 2025. Nomination Forms and Guidelines, which must be used  
will be on our website soon. Sometime in October they will be in Village Hall Lobby  
and at the Park Forest Public Library and the Museum.  
Nominate someone you know who has made significant, long-term, beneficial,  
contributions to make Park Forest a Special Place to Live!

## September is Membership Recruitment and Renewal Month!

This year marks the 77th Anniversary of Park Forest residents moving in, the 76th Anniversary of Park Forest as an incorporated village, and the 27th Anniversary of the Museum. **We need new members NOW.** If YOUR history in Park Forest means something to YOU, please help us with a membership.

Look for the **membership brochure with form** in this newsletter. Use this form or, you can opt to join via the website, <https://parkforesthistory.app.neoncrm.com/forms/pfhs-membership-form> or print out and mail in your form. Just Join!!

Several we have lost were good financial supporters. Please join in honor of them or in memory of someone you considered a Park Forest pioneer or leading citizen.

Thanks to all of you who have been supporting us! We did meet our Village of Park Forest \$5000 Matching Challenge grant for last year.

**In order to remain in operation as a Society, we must have more Active Volunteers and more Members.**

**Part of helping to Save YOUR history is to lend a hand doing it!**

**Thanks to all those who do pitch in and docent or serve on the board, help with mailings, empty dehumidifiers, clean air conditioners, man tables and more.**

**Join THIS YEAR to Save YOUR History!**

## What IS Happening with the Museum and Archive/Office Getting a New Home?

**Hopefully by the time of our Annual Meeting, Sunday, September 28, we will have something to announce.**

**What we can announce is that three weeks before we were to be moved out of St. Mary's the Joliet Diocese offered us a twelve-month extension on our lease, BUT, they want a 60-day out-clause, so we still plan to move.**

**We are extremely grateful for the extension.**

**Since we have a tentative agreement with a new space, we also have a 60-day out clause in this lease.**

**Why won't we just announce the location? Because we do not have a signed agreement. About a month ago we met with representatives and agreed on terms, but we still have not seen the final agreement so we can all sign it.**

**We won't consider it our new home until we see it in writing, signed by both parties. This summer we decided that by closing to pack we were losing out on visitors we get in the summer and fall who are traveling through town and either discover us while here or have made plans to visit. We are short on docents so we have not been able to man every shift. Several visitors have come though and appreciate that they have seen the museum as it appears in St. Mary's.**

**We now will likely not move until early spring. So come for that visit!**

**We apologize for no real snail mail newsletter. We were waiting to have signed the agreement so we could announce our plans.**

<p><b>Park Forest Historical Society Projects</b></p> <p><b>1950s Park Forest House Museum</b> In St. Mary's Catholic Church 227 Main Street Open Wednesday &amp; Saturday 1-3:30 p.m. or by appointment Donations: Adults \$5 12 &amp; under free, with adult. School and group tours available.</p> <p><b>Park Forest Local History Collection and Archive</b> 227 Main Street Archive Open Friday 10:30-12:30 Oral History Transcripts Photographs, Slides Videos, VHS, DVD's Audiotapes, CD's Manuscript Collections Select Village Government Documents Scrapbooks Architectural History Biography File Maps Shopping Center History</p> <p><b>Your membership preserves history.</b></p>	<p><b>Programs</b> We hold programs &amp; 50 hours a year on Park Forest and regional history, with occasional speakers on topics of general historical interest or on preserving family photographs and resources. Each spring we hold the Park Forest Hall of Fame induction, recognizing people nominated by the public for consistent, beneficial service to the community over a long span of time. Nominations form, sent to members each fall and winter, are open to anyone, are submitted between October 1 and December 30 each year.</p> <p><b>Speakers available</b> We can talk to schools or groups, including to scouts working on local history.</p> <p><b>Volunteer Opportunities</b> Museum Tour guides during regular hours; and for arranged tours Assisting on programs and public events Social Media Fundraising Conserving, describing, numbering collections Researching and photographing architecture Transcribing veterans' oral histories *More info at <a href="http://parkforesthistory.org">parkforesthistory.org</a>*</p> <p><b>**Take our Time and Talent Survey**</b> <b>**Help us record and preserve our history**</b> <b>"If not you, who? If not now, when?"</b></p>	<p><b>Yes I want to be a member!</b> Members receive four newsletters, event invites, and one free museum visit.</p> <p><b>**Please visit <a href="http://www.parkforesthistory.org">www.parkforesthistory.org</a> and click "Become A Member" to join online!**</b></p> <p>Name: _____ Address: _____ City, State, Zip: _____ Telephone: _____ E-Mail: _____ <input type="checkbox"/> Don't send newsletters, etc. via email</p> <table border="1"><tr><td><b>Membership Category</b></td></tr><tr><td>Student, wth I.D. \$ 10.00</td></tr><tr><td>Individual \$ 20.00</td></tr><tr><td>Family \$ 40.00</td></tr><tr><td>Contributor \$ 75.00</td></tr><tr><td>Benefactor 1 \$ 200.00</td></tr><tr><td>Benefactor 2 \$ 250.00</td></tr><tr><td>Corporate (Ask about sponsorship) \$ 50.00</td></tr><tr><td>Other _____</td></tr></table> <p>For Endowment/Memorial options contact us.</p> <p><b>Our membership year begins in September.</b></p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> I enclose a check made payable to "Park Forest Historical Society" 227 Main Street, Park Forest, IL 60466</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Please contact me about volunteer opportunities.</p> <p><small>Park Forest Historical Society is an independent 501 (c) (3) organization. Your donation is tax deductible to the extent allowed by law.</small></p> <p><small>Printed on request</small></p>	<b>Membership Category</b>	Student, wth I.D. \$ 10.00	Individual \$ 20.00	Family \$ 40.00	Contributor \$ 75.00	Benefactor 1 \$ 200.00	Benefactor 2 \$ 250.00	Corporate (Ask about sponsorship) \$ 50.00	Other _____
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## 1950s Park Forest House Museum 27 Years and Counting!

"It's Halloween at the Museum" Exhibit will be on display September 20, 2025 to November 5, 2025.

The museum, located at 227 Monee Road (inside St. Mary's) is open Wednesday and Saturday 1-3:30 p.m.; or by appointment at other times.

Our docents are excited to show off the museum in its 27th year and tell the story of how Park Forest came to be. Please come out and support us! [Read the flier here](#).

The exhibit shows Vintage Halloween decorations including die-cuts and Halloween Gurley Candles.

Contact Jane via email on our website, or call at 708-481-4252.



### "Revisiting Utopia" World Premier

Park Forest Historical Society has now been invited to co-sponsor the World Premier of "Revisiting Utopia" the documentary film about integration in Park Forest.

We are proud to have supplied a great deal of resource material, video footage and photographs.

The premier will be held Saturday, January 31, 2026 at 7 p.m. in Freedom Hall's Nathan Manilow Theater.

There were still a small number of tickets available last we heard. Those are being handled by the Revisiting Utopia production group.

Thanks so much to all of you who donated to Phil Rockrohr's Facebook Birthday Fundraiser in our name. Coincidentally, January 31 will be the Society's 41st Anniversary. We can't think of a better way to celebrate it than with documentary evidence of how much history we have preserved and made available to the public and to researchers with this collection it has taken so much money and hard work to save, protect, and house.

Do not for one minute think that the Archive Collection did not actually have to be SAVED.

Thank you to the current Park Forest Library Board and administration which enthusiastically support us in housing it at St. Mary's.

[Text Link](#)

Park Forest Historical Society| 708-481-4252 | [www.parkforesthistory.org](http://www.parkforesthistory.org)

**STAY CONNECTED**



Park Forest Historical Society | 227 Monee Road | Park Forest, IL 60466 US

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