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The Village South Holland

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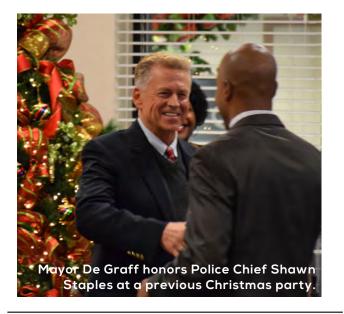
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FROM YOUR MAYOR



Dear South Holland Residents and Friends,

As we enter the Thanksgiving and Christmas season and approach a new year, I'm reminded about how eternally grateful I am for a God who cares for us more than we can ever imagine. This past year has indeed been challenging, and the holiday season will look a little different this year, but God remains on his throne, loving and providing for us all. This is a season where we humbly celebrate God's special gift to us, born as the baby Jesus, who humbled himself by taking on the form of a servant. With this example of humility, we are encouraged to also be servants to our neighbors and those around us.

I am grateful for South Holland, a place where we can exercise our faith, emphasize family values, celebrate our diversity, and enjoy a safe and vibrant community. As we approach 2021, it is my prayer that we will remain united and further promote our values of faith, family and future. May we move forward as a village that is set apart, depending upon God for all He has in store for us.

On behalf of the Village Board of Trustees and our Administration, allow me to extend our sincere desire that each of you will enjoy a Blessed Thanksgiving, a Joyous Christmas season and a very Happy 2021.

Don A. De Graff Mayor

VILLAGE BOARD

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WINTER WONDERLAND Friday, December 4, 2020

6:00-8:00pm

Veterans Memorial Park 520 E 160th Place

> Drive through a tunnel of lights and greet Santa with a wave at the end of the magical car ride! Every vehicle will be given hot chocolate, cookies and candy bags.

South Holland residents only.

Registration begins November 16 at the South Holland Community Center, 501 E 170th St.

southholland.org

VILLAGE NEWS

WHAT'S HAPPENING AROUND SOUTH HOLLAND



STATUE ON SOUTH PARK

The latest installation in our series of bronze statues around town is the new one in front of the South Holland Police Department, 16330 South Park Avenue. In this display, a boy and girl revere the American flag. The remaining statues, placed in fall of 2019, are located at South Park Hardware, the South Holland Public Library, South Holland Community Center, Paarlberg Park, and the gateway sign on 170th and Luella Avenue. Take a photo with the statues and post it with the hashtag #SouthHollandStatues!



FIRE DEPARTMENT TOY DRIVE

The South Holland Professional Firefighters Association Local 4109, in conjunction with the South Holland Fire Department and Village of South Holland, are spearheading an annual toy drive for those in need. All toys collected must be new and unwrapped. Everything collected is then donated to Restoration Ministries for their annual toy sale. Toys can be dropped off at Fire Station 1, 16230 Wausau Ave, any day of the week through December 7.



NEW WAY TO PAY

The Village is always looking for opportunities to provide our residents with more convenient—and this year, contactless—ways to pay water bills. In addition to the payment dropbox at the U-shaped drive in front of Village Hall, we have also added a dropbox at the door of the Customer Service Center, 16220 Wausau Avenue, Building A. Other contactless ways to make water bill payments is to pay online or via direct debit. Visit southholland.org, then click on Services, then Clerk & Collector to arrange for online or debit payments.

VILLAGE NEWS

WHAT'S HAPPENING AROUND SOUTH HOLLAND



YARD WASTE PICKUP

The South Holland Public Works department would like to remind residents that Republic Services will stop picking up yard waste from their totes on November 30 through the winter months. Pickup will resume April 1. From December through March, the yard waste totes can be used for regular garbage.



MAILBOX DRIVE RECONSTRUCTED

The mailbox drive located just south of the South Holland Post Office on 163rd Street has been reconstructed in order to provide an easier entry and exit for vehicles. We improved the geometry of the drive so that vehicles can have more room to access the mailbox, along with an easier way to get in and out of the drive safely.



VIRTUAL COMMUNITY POLICING MEETINGS

Every month, in lieu of in-person Community Policing Meetings, the South Holland Police Department is providing a video where Officer Megan Norris will share news, updates and safety tips for residents. The video will be posted on the fourth week of every month at the Village of South Holland Facebook page and at southholland.org.

CALENDAR OF EVENTS

The Village has adjusted many of our annual events for COVID-19 regulations. Please note that the following events are subject to be changed or cancelled due to COVID-19.



November 16 VIRTUAL ARTISTS' GALLERY

This year we are featuring the art of South Holland artists in a virtual gallery. A slideshow of the artists' work will be posted at southholland.org on November 16, and art demonstrations will be posted via Facebook Live that week as well.

December 4 WINTER WONDERLAND

6-8pm, Veterans Memorial Park, 520 E 160th Pl This year's Winter Wonderland will be a drive-thru event, where vehicles will drive

through a path of lights and decorations, to meet Santa with a wave at the end. Elves will hand out hot chocolate, cookies and candy bags to each vehicle. This is for South Holland residents only and preregistration is required. Register at the South Holland Community Center.

December 5-6 and 12-13 WINTER SPORTS SHOWCASE

South Holland Community Center, 501 E 170th St Kids ages 3-13 are invited to be a part of the sports showcase, which this year is a multi-day event. The showcase is a wide-ranging, fast-paced instructional sports clinic where kids can learn the fundamentals in baseball/softball, basketball, cheer, football, soccer swimming, and volleyball. View the schedule and register at southholland.org.

HOLIDAY CLOSINGS

Most South Holland municipal buildings and administrative offices will be closed for the following holidays: November 11 for Veteran's Day, November 26 for Thanksgiving Day, December 25 for Christmas Day and January 1 for New Year's Day.

OUT AND ABOUT

FACES FROM EVENTS AROUND THE VILLAGE

FUN RUN 5K

Photos by Michelle Hamstra

In September, the Village of South Holland held a Fun Run 5K, with staggered start times to keep it safe, but also with an emphasis on fun! Runners came donned in tutus, costumes, and brightly colored socks. Fun surprises showed up on the course, such as live music, bubbles, and signs encouraging runners on. A portion of the registration fees benefited the Greater Chicago Food Depository, which provided food for many families during the COVID-19 crisis and the August power outages.











OUT AND ABOUT

FACES FROM EVENTS AROUND THE VILLAGE

DRIVE-IN MOVIE

Photos by Lawrence Bickerstaff

This summer, the Village of South Holland had three drive-in movies, as a way of offering families a safe, fun night out. The movies shown were *Trolls World Tour, Overcomer*, and *Sonic the Hedgehog*. The tickets were free to South Holland residents, and each car received a complimentary candy bag. Attendees also enjoyed drinks and popcorn from local vendors. The movies took place in the parking lot of First Reformed Church.









OUT AND ABOUT

FACES FROM EVENTS AROUND THE VILLAGE

BREAST CANCER WALK/DRIVE

Photos by Karla Webb

For the 3rd Annual Breast Cancer Walk, this year participants formed a caravan through South Holland in their vehicles, showing support for the men and women who have survived breast cancer. The goal of this event was to increase awareness of breast cancer in our community, and to raise money to help fund research for curing the disease. A portion of the proceeds benefited University of Chicago Medicine/Ingalls Memorial Hospital.





ECHO SCHOOL GROUNDBREAKING

ECHO is a special education joint agreement serving students in districts all over the south suburbs. In September, ECHO celebrated a groundbreaking ceremony for the construction of their new educational facility in South Holland. The organization operates programs for students with disabilities and those who are at risk or require an alternative educational environment. The South Holland location will be a premium facility with cutting-edge technology and optimal space for the students being served.





FLAVOR AND FAMILY

SOUTH HOLLAND FAMILY BUSINESS CREATES MULTITUDE OF GOURMET POPCORN FLAVORS

By Carrie Steinweg Photos by Michelle Hamstra



Corey and Felicia Johnson opened the Flavor Addicts store in 2019.

Popcorn is one of those very American snacks that everyone seems to love. And while many enjoy it in its simple form with a little butter and salt, there's no limit to the ways you can dress it up and spice it up. No one knows that better than Corey Johnson.

In 2017, Johnson started an online popcorn store, Flavor Addicts Gourmet Popcorn, and last December he opened a storefront in South Holland at 641 E. 162nd Street. He runs the business with his wife, Felicia, with help from sons, Corey and Kaleb. The business specializes in gourmet popcorn and desserts.

"I worked in inventory control for 22 years, had a few injuries and knew I wouldn't survive physically in the profession I was in," Johnson says. "We were faced with a tough decision, so we decided to bet on ourselves and expand our business from an online store to an actual storefront."

Johnson grew up on the west side of Chicago with a goal of one day being a business owner. "The dream of owning a business and our love for gourmet popcorn inspired it all. The reaction from our customers inspired our name, Flavor Addicts Gourmet Popcorn," he says. "We started experimenting and got a great response from our customers, our fanbase, and social media reactions grew rapidly. The demand became so great we decided to open a store to satisfy our demands and have Flavor Addicts Gourmet Popcorn available to our loyal customers."



Those experiments resulted in such flavors as Honey BBQ, Sizzling Salt and Vinegar and Flamin' Heat, which are among their biggest sellers.

"Flavor Addicts Gourmet Popcorn has an extremely unique line-up of popcorn flavors, and our recipes make us stand out from other popcorn stores. From our signature Honey BBQ to Spicy Buffalo, Ranch and Lemon Poundcake, etc., our flavors definitely match the profiles and the options are endless," Johnson says. "We also have Cheddar and our original homemade recipe of Caramel, which are a guaranteed hit for the more traditional popcorn lovers."

Opening the storefront seemed to be happening at a good time in the midst of the holiday season, but since then the pandemic has caused a myriad of challenges and uncertainties, as it has for all small businesses. "We closed our store for a few months to redesign a safe atmosphere for our customers," Johnson says.

Even though he's faced a tough business climate this year, Johnson says he and his family continue educating themselves as business owners and are grateful for the freedom and flexibility that has come with running their own business. "The best part is that it's allowed more time with family and made it possible to provide an education in entrepreneurship for our two boys. I believe it will be very valuable for them to obtain such an experience," he says. "I also love the fact that we get an opportunity to be involved in charitable causes and give to our community. I find this to be one of the most rewarding benefits of having a business."



THE GATHERING PLACE

SOUTH HOLLAND COMMUNITY CENTER CELEBRATES 20 YEARS

BY BOB BONG



Under normal circumstances, South Holland would have had a big celebration in honor of the 20th anniversary of the village's popular Community Center.

This year has been anything but normal, so it's business as usual. At least as usual as it can be during these trying times.

"The first 20 years have gone great," says Ed Stewart, director of Recreational Services, which oversees the Community Center. He joined the staff in 2004. "We are offering more programs than ever. We have more participants than ever. We are bringing in more revenue than ever. It's good."

Stewart is only the third director to oversee the Community Center since it opened in July of 2000. Paul Pearson was the director for the first year. He was followed by Wally Widelski, who ran the department from 2001 to 2011, when Stewart moved up from deputy director.

Normally, the Community Center, 501 E. 170th St., is open seven days a week and provides a wide variety of recreational and fitness classes. The 50,000-square-foot facility houses a fitness center, gymnasium, walking track, swimming pool, whirlpool, sauna, and locker rooms.

The facility has also become a focal point for community events over the past two decades. There are



meeting/banquet rooms, and a full kitchen. There is a café and a preschool, as well.

The Community Center is a gathering place for concerts, military events, birthday parties, wedding receptions, and coffees," says Wally Widelski Jr., deputy director of Recreational Services and the son of the previous director. "I have his old office."

The center underwent a major face-lift over the past few months. "When the building was closed this spring for the pandemic, we wanted to use that time well to make some enhancements," says Stewart. "These are improvements we were planning to make but it would have disrupted our members' experience if they were in the building at the time of renovation. We're grateful that we could offer nicer amenities when the Community Center reopened."

Renovations include a brand-new front desk that has moved to the central part of the lobby so staff can greet members as soon as they walk in the door. There is also now a glass-walled conference room where the former front desk was located, plus new signage and aesthetic improvements to the locker rooms and banquet rooms. South Holland company Sambor Stone graciously donated granite countertops for the front desk and locker rooms, adding an elegant, polished look to the building's spaces.

Widelski says the Community Center is popular among residents of all ages. "It's a space for young and old alike to gather. So much that defines this place is the people that work here and come here." The pandemic has unfortunately changed the Community Center's ability to continue that way, for now. "We have learned a lot since the pandemic started," says Stewart. "You have to when you're required to adapt to the changes the pandemic has brought. It has certainly been a learning curve."

"Our efforts and work haven't stopped even with the restrictions placed upon us," says Widelski. "We have had to think outside the box."

Pandemic changes include fewer hours. The center is currently open Monday to Friday from 7 a.m. to 9 p.m. There is a limit of nine people in each area. Because of the changes and restrictions, the pricing system for the center has also changed. "Instead of monthly fees, we have moved to an ala carte system," says Widelski. "Members pay \$2 and can use any part of the recreation wing for one hour. Non-members pay \$5 for the hour of use."

Because people are leery of visiting the center during the pandemic, Stewart says remote programs are planned. "We don't want to just give up. We have a good staff. We are coming up with new ways to offer our programs," he says. "We are offering free Zoom classes so members can learn to stay connected while staying at home."

As challenging as things have been, both Stewart and Widelski have high hopes once the pandemic ebbs. "We just have to find ways to be better and to stay better," says Widelski.

"We have to get used to doing things in the new normal," says Stewart. (

IN MEMORY OF

SOUTH HOLLAND FIREFIGHTER/PARAMEDIC

DYLAN CUNNINGHAM

Photos by Tim Olk

On Wednesday, September 30, 2020, South Holland Firefighter/Paramedic Dylan Cunningham tragically passed away following an underwater dive. Just 29 years old, Dylan was known in the South Holland Fire Station for his commitment, hard work, and dynamic personality.

"Dylan was a beloved member of our fire department family," says South Holland Fire Chief Brian Kolosh. "He was dedicated, loyal, hard-working, and embodied all the qualities of a professional firefighter. We are devastated by this loss and are grieving with Dylan's family."

Dylan and his fiancée, Laura Nye, put wedding plans on hold during the pandemic, but she chose to





add Cunningham as her surname. At the time of Dylan's passing, Laura was 7 months pregnant with their first child, due in December 2020.

"Dylan cried when he found out it was a baby boy," says Laura. "And then he just started screaming out loud, 'it's a boy!"

"Hero," says Dylan's brother, Cody. "Always the hero."

Chief Kolosh echoes the same sentiment. His own son Garrett is best friends with the younger Cody. During their preteen and teen years, when Kolosh worried about their whereabouts, he was routinely comforted by the words, "Don't worry Dad, we're with Dylan," recalls Kolosh from his desk at the firehouse. "And that was all I needed to hear. They were all like sons to me."

Dylan began working for the South Holland Fire Department part time in 2011 and was sworn in full time in 2018. He also joined the Illinois Army National Guard in 2012. By the end of his service in 2020, he had earned the rank of Sergeant and had served in both a Chemical Operations and Infantry unit. Simultaneously, he studied fire science at Prairie State College.

In October 2018, he received a Gold Seal from the South Cook County EMS medical director for his work in saving a patient on an EMS call. "Dylan was a focused and mature young man who was a great village employee," says South Holland Mayor Don De Graff. "Our village board and administration recognize the quality of his character and the special person he was. He represented so well who we are as a village. We will significantly miss his contributions going forward."

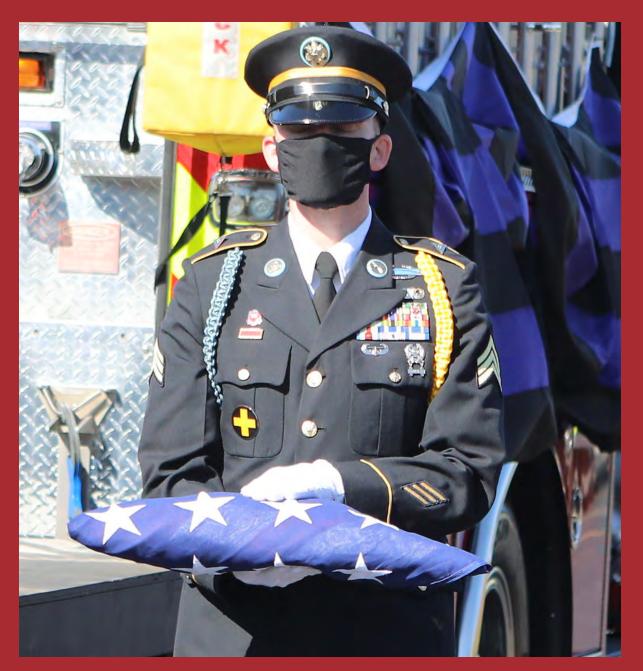
Dylan's family and friends shared many stories about his heroism. There was the time Dylan was on a call when he retrieved a warm diaper from an alleyway. Following his sixth sense, he circled back minutes later to save the life of a newborn abandoned in a dumpster.

"Instinct," says Dylan's sister, Courtney. "Dylan was one who never hesitated."

Dylan's love for his family was well known. Stories were shared of how protective he was over his older sister, was a role model for his younger brother, and how close he was with his mom Rosemary. Cody and Courtney called Dylan their best friend, and the three shared many friends in their circle.

Dylan was a multi-sport athlete at local Thornwood High School and especially enjoyed having younger brother Cody as a teammate.

"I was his shadow," Cody says. "Whatever he did, I wanted to do. Some friendly brotherly competition



was there, too." The two competed in wrestling, swimming, pole vaulting for track and field, as well as cross country.

Come the first weeks of December, Dylan's son will be born into this world. Laura and Dylan have named him William Thomas Cunningham.

Dylan's memory was honored with a meaningful memorial service on October 6. The visitation on October 5 featured a fire department walkthrough, where approximately 700 firefighters from all over the region walked past the casket with a salute. The memorial service on October 6 contained many ceremonial traditions, including a multi-vehicle procession that traveled from the funeral home in Dyer to the South Holland Fire Department, then to a church in Glenwood for a final service for the family. Hundreds of people lined the procession route to pay their respects to the young firefighter gone too soon.



HOPE IN THE WAITING By Pastor Jim Oord of First Reformed Church

I volunteered to write this reflection back in January. I figured the November/ December issue would be an easy assignment-just write about the holiday season, glad tidings of great joy, no place like home for the holidays. Just spread the warm fuzzies all around.

Back in January, who of us could see what 2020 would become? The Illinois lockdown order felt like a novelty at first. I remember sitting in my car listening to the announcement from the Governor, feeling even a little excited to be witnessing something historic. Some even viewed it as a free little vacation, a time to finish up some projects at home, an opportunity to reconnect with family. It couldn't last more than a few weeks, right? I remember how frequently I started sentences with the phrase "When this is all over...", assuming that we'd be back in the swing of things within a matter of a month or two.

But the pandemic, the lockdowns, the restrictions all lasted on and on and on, feeding our anxiety, our stress, our uncertainty. It caused financial distress to so many families, communities, neighborhoods, and businesses. It changed the way we educate our children, the way we interact with our neighbors, the way we worship together.

2020 also opened our eyes to the racial injustice that exists not just in dark corners far away, but all over our nation, all through our systems, and all around our world. Frustrations and



Pastor Jim Oord

anger, protests and violence have filled our hearts and our communities. For the privileged and powerful, 2020 has forced us to grapple with truths we'd rather ignore. For the oppressed and marginalized, 2020 has highlighted just how dangerous the world is for us.

In February, the Village of South Holland held an absolutely beautiful celebration of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Our church was honored to host this event, one that brought together people from various denominations, organizations, faith communities, racial groups, and social classes. The theme of this event was "A Love that Unites." Sadly, 2020 has in many ways put that uniting love to the test. We celebrate the strides the Civil Rights movement made under Dr. King. But this year has shown us just how far we still have to go. Our current political climate has fractured our society. Every issue becomes polarizing, tearing families, churches, and communities apart.

As I write this on a sunny day in September, I have no earthly clue what will happen in the November election. But I suspect that whatever happens, it will prove a powder keg for the tension and resentment that we have been feeding into.

As I write this, I have no idea what 2021 will hold, how long this pandemic will continue to dominate the news cycle, our children's education, our businesses, and our community interactions.

As I write this, I have no idea how racial injustice will continue to mar our nation and our world, how long Black mothers and fathers will have to fear for their precious children.

As I write this, I think back to our celebration back in February and the idea of a "Love that Unites." That dream seems so hard to grasp onto now. Perhaps 2020 has convinced us that that dream is a naive fantasy.

But as I write this, I think about when this article will be published: during what the Christian Church calls the season of Advent. Advent is all about waiting. Waiting in the darkness for the light to shine. Waiting in exile for a chance to return home. Waiting in loneliness for a community to belong to. Waiting in despair for hope to come.

Advent is the season when the Church waits for Christmas, the coming of Jesus. The revelation of the Love of the Father, the Love that saves us, the Love that unites us.

So let's wrap up this year with gratitude. Gratitude for neighbors that helped us after a storm. Gratitude for public servants who led us through tough times. Gratitude for medical professionals who gave their all. Gratitude for educators who showed their creativity and dedication. And above all, gratitude for a God who led us through, a God who provides strength for today and bright hope for tomorrow.

And let's wrap up this year with hope. We have no idea what 2021 will bring. I have no doubt that it will bring challenges. But I also believe it will bring many opportunities. Opportunities to cling to hope. Opportunities to create community. Opportunities to work together in our neighborhoods, in our Village. Opportunities to celebrate the Love that Unites us. Opportunities to look to Jesus to lead us through whatever we might face.

Fiving

We asked South Holland residents:

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"AS WE LOOK FORWARD TO THE UPCOMING HOLIDAY SEASON, PLEASE SHARE WITH US... WHAT ARE YOU THANKFUL FOR?"

Their responses were shared on Facebook and Instagram

"Thankful for a purpose filled life, good health, work and perseverance in these challenging times. Grateful for caring neighbors, village administrators and peace of mind." -Stacie P.

"To live in a community that looks out for one another. A town where I am proud to call home." -Heather G.

"Thankful for health and my family." -Betsy N.

> "So very thankful, for my health is absolutely wealth." -Debbie V.

"I am grateful for a supportive family, friends and church, technology through which to stay connected, and teachers and day care providers who are going above and beyond to care for and educate our kids." -Brenna W.

hank

SOUTH HOLLAND SPORTS



WINTER SPORTS SHOWCASE

December 5-6 and 12-13 South Holland Community Center 501 E 170th St

Kids ages 3-13 are invited to be a part of South Holland's 2nd Annual Winter Sports Showcase! While scheduling adjustments have been made to accommodate for the pandemic, we are excited to once again offer this wideranging, fast-paced instructional sports clinic. Pre-registration is required at southholland.org or at the Community Center.

COVID-19 protocols will be in place and will be provided upon registration.

BASEBALL/SOFTBALL

Ages 4-8: Sat, Dec 5 | 9-10:30am Ages 9-13: Sat, Dec 5 | 10:45am-12:15pm

BASKETBALL

Ages 3-7: Sat, Dec 12 | 9-10:30am Ages 8-13: Sat, Dec 12 | 10:45am-12:15pm

CHEER

Ages 5-9: Sun, Dec 6 | 12:30-2pm Ages 10-13: Sun, Dec 6 | 2:15-3:45pm

FOOTBALL

Ages 5-9: Sun, Dec 6 | 12:30-2pm Ages 10-13: Sun, Dec 6 | 2:15-3:45pm

SOCCER

Ages 3-6: Sun, Dec 13 | 12:30-2pm

SWIM

Ages 5-9: Sat, Dec 5 | 10:45am-12:15pm Sun, Dec 6 | 2:15-3:45pm Sat, Dec 12 | 10:45am-12:15pm Sun, Dec 13 | 2:15-3:45pm

> Ages 10-13: Sat, Dec 5 | 9-10:30am Sun, Dec 6 | 12:30-2pm Sat, Dec 12 | 9-10:45am Sun, Dec 13 | 12:30-2pm

VOLLEYBALL

Ages 8-13: Sun, Dec 13 | 2:15-3:45pm

2nd Annual WINTER SPORTS SHOWCASE

December 5-6 and 12-13

Learn skills in each of the following sports:

BASEBALL/SOFTBALL • FOOTBALL • BASKETBALL • SOCCER • SWIMMING • VOLLEYBALL

For boys and girls ages 3-13.

Pre-registration is required at southholland.org or at the Community Center. COVID-19 protocols will be in place and will be provided upon registration.

REGISTRATION FEE: \$10 THROUGH NOVEMBER 22, \$15 AFTER NOVEMBER 22

With scheduling adjustments made to accommodate for the pandemic, we are excited to once again offer this wide-ranging, fast-paced instructional sports clinic.

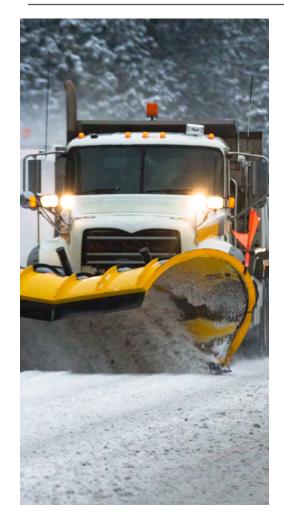


South Holland Community Center 501 E 170th Street • South Holland, IL 60473 www.southholland.org • 708 331-2940



DID YOU KNOW?

LEARN ABOUT THE VILLAGE ORDINANCES THAT HELP KEEP SOUTH HOLLAND A CLEAN, BRIGHT AND BEAUTIFUL COMMUNITY.



With winter upon us, please remember the following guidelines in order to ensure safety on the streets.

Did you know...

... When you see larger plows, please leave ample distance behind the trucks. They may slow down at a moment's notice or make wide turns to the right or left, maneuvering into side streets.

... Be aware of Public Works' pickup trucks whose job it is to clear alleys, courts, and public spaces throughout the village.

... Please be aware of the village's snow ordinance, which states that vehicles shall not be parked on any street if snow exceeds two inches or more.

... Residents shoveling snow should deposit it to the right side of the driveway (when facing the street) to minimize plows from blocking you in.

... If a fire hydrant is located on your property, we are requesting you please assume the responsibility of keeping the snow removed from around it, in order for our Fire Department to be able to readily locate it in the case of a fire. It could be your home they're saving.



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