



The Villager

July 2025

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- Getting Spectrum Internet Service to Underserved Areas
- Controlling Honeysuckle
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- Godfrey Business of the Month — Buck's Decorating
- ACT Presents Village of Godfrey With \$100,000 Check For Bike Path
- Godfrey Welcomes New Deputy Village Clerk, Kim Schetter
- Happy Birthday To A Godfrey Centurion

If you would like to receive the monthly issue of "The Villager" by email, please contact Jim Mager at: jmager@godfreyil.org

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Development**

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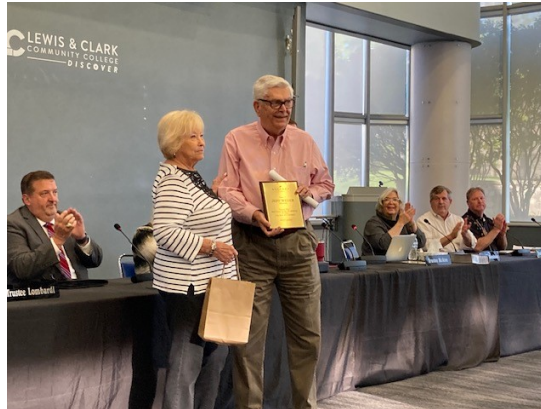
You can see your future from here.



Michael J. McCormick

Mayor

Board of Trustees Holds Special Meeting



Mayor Pro Tem, Karen McAtee, recognized Jeff Weber for his many years of service to the Village Of Godfrey

The Village Of Godfrey Trustees meeting was held May 20, 2025 at LCCC. The meeting highlight was the installation of the new board as the result of the April election. A special agenda item for the meeting was the honoring of retiring trustee, Jeff Weber.

Mr. Weber served four terms as a trustee. He first served two terms. "As I believe in term limits, I did two terms, left for two years and then came back and served another two," said Jeff. In his role, he was very instrumental in facilitating many initiatives undertaken by the Village.

Jeff's career focused around operating Marcal Asphalt and Marcal Rope and Rigging. While running those companies, he found time to serve on the Alton School Board, serve as the President of Southern Illinois Junior Achievement, work with the Boy Scouts, and gave one day per week volunteering for the USO.



At the same meeting, Gerard Fischer was sworn in as the newest member of the Village Board. Additionally, Rick Lauschke and Sarah Woodman were sworn in as returning members. All three trustees were affirmed by the Honorable Amy Scholar, Circuit Judge.

Village Clerk Jacki Clayton was also sworn in on May 20. She is no rookie to the operations of Godfrey. She came to Village Hall in 2016 when she worked in the office for the Godfrey Township. When the township was eliminated in May 2019, she transferred to the Village of Godfrey and began working for the Park and Recreation Department. However, in her duties of assisting the Park Director and Recreation Supervisor with park events, Jacki also continues to handle matters that deal with assessment services.

Ms. Clayton holds a Legal Secretary Certificate from Sanford Brown College and has also attended courses from Lewis and Clark Community College.

Getting Spectrum Internet Service to Underserved Areas

North Humbert Drive

Service to this area has been activated for service as of June 27. Meaning, the homeowners in this area are now able to call into customer service and have a tech come out to install services.

Fox Lake/Fox Run

Ameren is currently working to upgrade their poles so Spectrum can attach its facilities to those poles. Planning is for the fourth quarter to have service up and active.

A note of thanks to the following in preparing these newsletters (alphabetical order):

Mayor McCormick, Judy Peipert, Sharon O'Neal and Karen Sinks

Controlling Honeysuckle



In looking for ideas about content for this newsletter, it was suggested that a piece on bush honeysuckle would be helpful. My first impression was that I did not see the connection of this invasive plant as being related to Godfrey or

economic development. But then it occurred to me that a vast amount of Godfrey in undeveloped and the invasiveness of this plant is causing economic damage. You may own some acreage that might be struggling with bush honeysuckle. This “crap” is even growing in some of the green spaces between our neighborhoods. I hope you find the following information useful, or at least interesting.

What is bush honeysuckle and where did it come from?

Bush honeysuckle describes a family of shrub-like honeysuckles. The most common invasive honeysuckles in Illinois are Tartarian (*Lonicera tatarica*), Amur (*L. maackii*), and Morrow (*L. morrow*). These plants hail from Europe and Asia and were once recommended for planting as ornamentals, for wildlife cover and food, and erosion control.

“Yet, landowners and researchers have now discovered, these non-native bush honeysuckles are a poorer quality wildlife food source than previously thought. Today, bush honeysuckle is considered one of the biggest threats to our native Illinois ecosystems.”

How to identify bush honeysuckle and where to find it

Bush honeysuckle can be identified due to their opposite leaf arrangement, white spring flowers along the stem, and pairs of typically red fruit in the fall. The center of the stem is hollow, whereas Illinois' single native honeysuckle species has a solid stem.

The best way to find bush honeysuckle is to look into the woods in the late fall or early spring where it can form dense thickets. Honeysuckle can survive in full sun or the shade of a woodland understory and it is the first to leaf out in the spring and last to drop its leaves in the fall.

Why Do We Need to Control Bush Honeysuckle?

Away from their native range without any pressure from insects, disease, or herbivores, these shrubs spread through a forest, choking out native species, and reducing species diversity. The less diverse the plant community, the fewer animals that can be supported, leading to a decline in wildlife populations.

The shrub and herbaceous understory of woodlands vanishes under the blanket of honeysuckle leaves. Leaving behind bare soil that washes into streams and rivers, choking out aquatic life. Overstory trees are not immune to the effects of bush honeysuckle. Research has shown that large trees in forests invaded by bush honeysuckle are stunted by as much as 40 percent!

Controlling bush honeysuckle

Mechanical

Depending on the situation, there are different methods to control honeysuckle. Mechanical control using a saw or loppers to remove stems triggers vigorous growth and is often unsuccessful unless repeated multiple times a year, for many years.

Young bush honeysuckle is surprisingly shallow-rooted and pulls up easily. Simply pull up the young woody shrub, shake off the soil, and suspend the roots in the air so they dry out and the plant dies.

Pulled honeysuckle can be piled up, or hung on a nearby tree branch. It is a quick and effective method that doesn't require heavy equipment or herbicides.

The larger, more established honeysuckle does not pull up so easily. Tug at the plants, and if they don't budge, just move on. Don't throw out your back or fly backward on your rear end trying to pull honeysuckle. Most medium-sized plants can be pulled with the assistance of a lever. You can find companies that sell levers designed for pulling honeysuckle or even make one at home. Honeysuckle pullers or poppers come in various forms, but they all operate using the power of leverage.

As for the large, established honeysuckle, you would need a tractor or skid steer to pull it out of the ground, and it would disturb quite a bit of soil in doing so. That's when we often need to turn to herbicides which is described below. Yet, for those smaller honeysuckle plants you can make a good dent in their population by pulling them like a weed in a garden.

Some woodlands are so overgrown with bush honeysuckle, that a person cannot even walk through the forest. In this case, most landowners use a skid steer or tractor with a brush-clearing attachment. They then wait for the flush of new growth and can then walk through and spray the new growth with an herbicide as the top growth may be small, but the root system is mighty and can't be pulled by hand.

Fire is another option, but it is not usually well-suited for controlling honeysuckle by itself. It will remove the above-ground growth, but plants will often resprout from the root system. A hot slow-burning fire may be more effective at killing honeysuckle, however, it will also cause more damage to desirable trees, shrubs, and herbaceous plants.

Chemical

In most situations, a landowner will turn to herbicides to control bush honeysuckle. Many use the cut-stump technique, where one person cuts the honeysuckle six inches from the ground and a second paints the stump with a 25 to 50 percent concentration of glyphosate herbicide mixed in water or triclopyr amine in water or ester in oil at a 20 to 25 percent within 10 minutes of cutting. The second option is a foliar spray with a 2 to 4 percent concentration glyphosate in water. Either technique is best performed in the fall when the plant is sending energy to the root system and bush honeysuckle is one of the only shrubs with leaves making it easy to identify. Unfortunately, once you learn this plant you'll start seeing it everywhere. There is a lot more when it comes to controlling bush honeysuckle and promoting native understory plants. Contact your local Extension office for more information on invasive plant species.

Source: <https://extension.illinois.edu/blogs/good-growing/2024-11-29-identify-and-manage-invasive-bush-honeysuckle>

Honeysuckle can be replaced with native species providing food and habitat for birds and pollinators. Potential alternates include hazelnut, elderberry, black chokeberry, currants, and red osier dogwoods, and sumacs on our property. There are Facebook groups where people trade and give away such things. The Illinois State nursery also sells bare root stock shrubs and trees at extremely affordable prices, which are mailed in the early spring. <https://dnr.illinois.gov/conservation/forestry/tree-nurseries.html>

Godfrey Good Neighbors Chrissie Chapman and Jim Rubenstein



We've all seen those cute, nook-style book libraries that pop up throughout neighborhoods. They typically work off the concept "take a book, leave a book" and that motto seems to be sufficient to keep the cubby well-stocked with paperbacks and other reading material. All of this is designed to make it super simple for readers to pick up and enjoy a good book from time to time.

Well, a stick library operates around the same concept. But it's for dogs. And it's sticks. And it's happening at dog parks throughout North America. [PetGuide.com]

Godfrey Good Neighbors Chrissie Chapman and Jim Rubenstein have made sure that our community is not being left behind in the canine cultural trend. The dog stick library pictured above can be found at LaVista Park. The unit

was constructed by Jim and painted by Chrissie.



Of course taking care of the entertainment needs of our four-legged friends is just one part of the how these two give back to the community. As an amateur photographer and painter, Chrissie uses her talents to support the community. During the COVID period she painted pictures of various sights in the area. The painting were sold and proceeds were donated to Alton Main Street. The funds were used to provide advertising and promotions of areas business during that difficult economic period. The paintings are viewed at the Brown Bag Bistro.

Resulting from the endeavor with Alton Main Street, Chrissie was approached by the Alton Memorial Hospital's Health Services Foundation and commissioned to render paintings for their Christmas Card campaign.

Jim supports the work of the St. Louis Audubon's Bring Conservation Home program and Wild Ones. The St. Louis



Audubon's Bring Conservation Home program is an ecological landscaping inspiration and consultation service. Trained Habitat Advisors provide tailored advice and resource connections to help people create high-quality natural spaces where they live. He is also doing this work as a way of supporting native pollinators and birds.

Wild Ones promote environmentally friendly, sound landscaping to preserve biodiversity through the preservation, restoration, and establishment of native plant communities across the United States. Wild Ones chapters are a space where like-minded people gather to support each other in learning about landscaping with native plants and to share with others in their communities and networks about why it's important to reintroduce native plants into public and private gardens and how to go about doing it. Chapters are where change happens. We are excited to offer local residents the opportunity to expand their impact in the natural landscaping movement and help promote native plants!

Both Chrissie and Jim are educators in their professions. Chrissie is a

coordinator/professor at Lewis and Clark Community College where she has taught for twenty-five years. Chrissie teaches developmental reading and writing classes, but her main course is the Science of Happiness. In this course, her students examine the science behind what people believe makes them happy. Students read original research and other articles and complete practices of gratitude, mindfulness, self-compassion, and kindness. Prior to her tenure at LCCC, she taught five years in Lexington, KY. Jim's teaching career involved thirty-one years teaching social studies at the middle school level.

Jim's past time involves clearing invasive plants, such as bush honeysuckle from his property and restoring the space with native plants. He has been experimenting with various native plants to place a check on the honeysuckle from redeveloping in the areas that he has cleared.

Chrissie considers kindness to be one of the greatest virtues. She says, "Often times when you're feeling down, a cure is rendering an act of kindness to others."

Ms. Chapman's artistic works can be found and purchased at Mississippi Mud Pottery, Bluff City Bazaar and Jacoby Art Center.

They share their home with their dogs Duncan and Olive, their cat, Kitty Kitty, and in the yard, Jim raises chickens and bees. Both Jim and Chrissie have made a home in Godfrey. They value the beautiful parks, the well-kept trails, and most of all, the steady kindness of the people around them.

Information about programs described can be found at

<https://stlouisaudubon.org/bch/>.

southwestillinois.wildones.org

Godfrey Sales Tax Rate:

Godfrey in general is 6.85%

Inside the Godfrey Business District is 7.85%

Below is a break down of sales tax dollars that are collected in the Godfrey Business District:

5% goes to the State of Illinois

1% goes to the Godfrey Business District fund

1% goes to the Godfrey general fund

.25% goes to Madison County

.25% goes to the Flood District

.25% goes to the Transit District

.10% goes to Metro East Parks

Godfrey Business of the Month — Buck's Decorating



Buck's Decorating is now a third generation family business. Three sons, Andy, Patrick and Rob are fully active in the operation. Andy, who handles installations, also has his sons working along side. It is not uncommon to also see their mom, Mary at the store. All three have been involved in every

they have improved buying power with the carpet mills, can provide an enhanced warranty and customers have use of an online "room visualizer."

Buck's Decorating enjoys a strong word-of-mouth reputation. They have strong associations with local builders that keeps them busy. They also possess relationship with individuals who are upgrading their homes. "We have found that when it comes to supplying product and installation, the big box stores can't touch our quality and service," said Rob.

The company's market include areas as far as Jacksonville to the north, Belleville to the south and across the river to the northern St. Louis area. Because of the strong level of business, on any given day the company has 10 to 15 employees meeting the needs of customers.

There are many changes occurring in the flooring industry. For example, the ratio of carpet to hard surface flooring has shifted. Today, approximately 80% of new flooring is hard-surface. Advancements in technology for the flooring industry is ever changing with new designs and styles.

For over fifty years, Buck's Decorating is still leaving customers floored with quality, service and value. And at the same time, keeping it all in the family.

Buck's Decorating has been around since the 1940's. The company originally was in Alton down on Broadway. At the time it was owned and operated by Charles Buck. Back in the day, the company did flooring, painting, wallpaper and so on. In June of 1975, a young man named Patrick Parker bought the establishment and continued to operate the business under its established name. Under Patrick's ownership, the focus was placed on providing flooring.

In the early 80's the building was destroyed by fire and the company moved to a facility on Ridge Street for a short time. In the mid 80's, they moved to Godfrey and operated at 5407 Godfrey Road. As the business continued to need additional showroom space the company purchased the building and moved to its current location (5411 Godfrey Road) in 1987. Since that time, additional warehousing has been constructed in the back of the property.

aspect of the flooring business throughout the history of the company. Rob did serve in the Army from '87 to '92. Because of their experiences, they have full knowledge of all facets of providing quality products and professional installation.

To provide the best quality, price and service to customers, Buck's Decorating is affiliated with the buying group, Abbey Carpet.

As an affiliate since 1988, Buck's has the shared mission of:

"Our mission has always been to provide our customers with quality flooring and craftsmanship. We offer products from the industries' leading brands while delivering an installation service that is top-notch. Unlike the big box stores, we care about this community, because we're your neighbors. That's why we make customer service a top priority. At every one of Abbey's locally owned flooring stores you get one-on-one expert advice on the latest trends, styles, and technologies."

Because of Buck's connection with Abbey,

5411 Godfrey Road
618-466-2581

www.godfrey.abbeycarpet.com



A Couple Project Updates



Utility work continues at the intersection of West Delmar and Pierce Lane. Current work is to reconfigure the water lines. Actual construction by IDOT of the roundabouts is not scheduled until the summer of 2026.

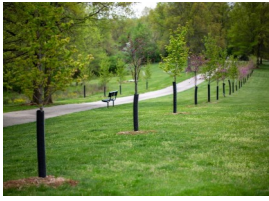
Illinois American Water is working on a land stabilization project of their property on west side of Pierce Lane just across from Seasons Drive.



**Godfrey 311
Smartphone App**

- Easily report potholes, broken street lights and other problems.
- Call or email local officials, the police department, city offices and others.
- Access activity calendars, receive village alerts and more.

ACT Presents Village of Godfrey With \$100,000 Check For Bike Path (From Riverbender.com)



On Friday, June 27, 2025, the Village of Godfrey was presented with a check from the Agency for Community Transit (ACT) to help with the initial phase of the FE Widman Trail. The 'ACT Community Action Grants Program,' launched in November of 2021, was designed to grant funds to eligible entities for transportation and accessibility-related projects in Madison County. Specifically, this program aims to enhance transportation, bike and pedestrian infrastructure safety, ADA Accessibility, and a series of other related projects, programs, and activities.

Godfrey Mayor Mike McCormick stated that he would like to thank SJ Morrison and the ACT Board of Directors.

"This grant was a big boost in creating the beautiful FE Widman Trail. We're thrilled to be included among the numerous bike paths that ACT is involved in throughout Madison County." He went on to say that he would like to thank Richard Beran, Village Engineer, and Chris Logan, Director of Parks and Recreation, for their efforts in submitting a successful application and their work in obtaining this grant.

Godfrey Welcomes New Deputy Village Clerk, Kim Schetter

Before working for the Village of Godfrey, Kim worked for Schnucks for 19 years. She enjoyed getting to know a lot of customers on a personal level by seeing them every day and calling them by name. As her kids are getting older, she decided it was time to find a career with a more stable schedule that allows having holidays and weekends free to spend with family and friends.



Ms. Schetter graduated from LCCC with an associate's degree and then graduated from Blackburn College with a bachelor's degree in Criminal Justice/Psychology.

Born and raised in the Godfrey area she moved away for a short time. She and her husband moved back to Godfrey and have lived here for 17 years. They have two children, Aly and Luke.

Kim enjoys coaching her daughter's team, spending time with family and look forward to yearly trips to the Lake of the Ozarks with families.

"I am proud to be a Godfrey resident. I find it rewarding to be a part of the day to day here at the Clerk's office and be able to serve our residents. I am passionate about helping our community with any comments questions or concerns they may have" said Kim.

Happy Birthday To A Godfrey Centurion

Longtime Godfrey resident, Ed Gallagher turned one hundred years old July 12, 2025. Ed is in good health, still drives (short distances) and is the most prolific writer for the USS Diablo Submarine Newsletter. His humorous sea stories have provided members with laughs and information on sea life. Ed writes under the title "The Old Stew Burner."



Ed served in the Pacific during WW2 and was on the USS Pomfret SS391 in 1945 when the bomb was dropped. In 1946, he was serving as prize crew on the new Japanese submarine I-400. The I-400 carried three airplanes in a hanger on the deck. It was intended that the planes would bomb the Panama Canal. I-400 was brought to Hawaii to be examined. Ed relayed they did not learn much that was useful to the Navy. Ed met John Wayne and his wife when they toured the Japanese sub.

Ed served on the Diablo from 1947 to 1951 as a CS2. He earned the nickname "Champ" while onboard. The longest period of time served on any sub was on the Diablo and the service hat that he wears bears that name. On leaving the Diablo he went to the Baimbridge Recruiting school and then on to the recruiting station in Wichita, Kansas. Ed served on many subs, the last as a CPO on the Redfin, which once served as a reserve training boat in Baltimore.

Ed married Nyla the love of his life in 1962. Ed says he married late in life but considering he was born in 1925 and with his number of years, maybe not that late.

Ed has one son, one daughter and son in law, and twin granddaughters who are now twenty-five and well educated, and one son and daughter in law and also has a grandson who is a college student in Illinois. Ed is immensely proud of his terrific family. Nyla, his wife, passed twelve years ago.

Ed has lived in Godfrey for more than 60 years and both he and his wife raised their two children in the same home.

When contemplating purchasing of property in Godfrey with the intent of commercial or business use, be sure to check the zoning of the property. It is also advisable to determine if the property is in one of the business incentive districts:

Business District

TIF District

Enterprise Zone

The time to make those determinations is prior to purchase.