



Press Release

Date: October 27, 2011

To: Local newspapers and media outlets; Village website

Re: Willowbrook Named 2011 Governor's Home Town Award Winner

A reception was held at the Governor's Mansion in Springfield on Wednesday, October 26, 2011 to honor the Village of Willowbrook as a recipient of the 2011 Governor's Home Town Award for History and Historic Preservation in their population division! The Governor's Home Town Awards are given to recognize the contributions of thousands of Illinois volunteers for their hard work and dedication towards improving their communities. Willowbrook's yearlong 50th Anniversary celebration was the project the Village submitted for consideration. On September 8, 2011, Mayor Napoli along with members of the 50th Anniversary Committee and Village staff presented Willowbrook's project to a panel of judges in Springfield.

In June 2009, Village staff and community volunteers began planning a yearlong celebration to honor the 50th anniversary of the Village of Willowbrook's official incorporation, which was January 18, 1960. A 50th Anniversary Committee was formed and their mission was to commemorate the anniversary with historical pictures and celebrate by planning community-wide events. Over the course of a year and a half, the Committee conducted 28 planning meetings. The Committee agreed that the perfect anniversary theme should be "Commemorate and Celebrate". Twenty-five banners were purchased announcing the Village of Willowbrook's 50th Anniversary. These banners were displayed at strategic locations within the Village during the entire year of 2010. In total, the 50th Anniversary Celebration had over 125 volunteers who donated more than 2,500 hours.

The 50th Anniversary Committee organized three celebratory events, which included:

- A "Birthday Bash" reception during the anniversary month of January.

- A “Family Fun Day” in June, where guests could bring their family and friends to enjoy a day filled with free food, fun activities for all ages and observe the historic burial of Willowbrook’s 1st time capsule.
- And to end the yearlong celebration in the month of December with “A Dickens of a Holiday” event for the entire family. The festivities included strolling carolers, horse-drawn carriage rides, visits with Santa, and a tree lighting ceremony.

The Governor’s Home Town Award recognizes the very best in Illinois volunteerism. Mayor Napoli and the Board of Trustees are extremely proud of the all the individuals who volunteered their time to make Willowbrook’s 50th Anniversary celebration a success. The 50th Anniversary Committee combined the efforts and talents of Willowbrook citizens, business owners, elected officials and Village staff to develop an outstanding celebration worthy of recognition by the State of Illinois. Our community greatly appreciates our volunteers and through community involvement, hard work and dedication is rewarded and recognized. Please join Mayor Napoli and the Board of Trustees in congratulating a fine group of devoted volunteers, citizens and staff!

