



Weekly News

Village Minutes

To view the most recent village board meeting minutes:

[CLICK HERE](#)

Did You Know...

The Story Behind That Little Boy Statue in City Park

Many don't realize that the statue is registered with the Smithsonian Institute.

For about 108 years, the Barefoot Boy statue has been quietly observing the village of Tremont as the time passes by and the village evolves. Some in Tremont know his story; many do not.

In the late 1800s and early 1900s, a young girl lived with her family in the handsome house that still stands today on the northeast corner of North Sampson and Tazewell Streets. Her father, A.G. Norman, sold and repaired shoes in his business on Sampson Street in Tremont for many years. Viola Norman, one of his 13 children, attended school here. And at an early age, she showed an unusual gift for drawing and painting.

A neighbor, Nettie Washburn*, noticed her gift, and became a mentor to her, eventually paying for her advanced schooling at the Chicago Art Institute, beginning in 1912. While a student there, for the first time ever, Viola worked with clay. Her instructors were amazed at her natural talent. The art of sculpting was an unusual one for a woman at that time, but Viola excelled.

Nettie Washburn commissioned her to sculpt a stone statue of a young boy to be placed directly across the street from the Washburn home. In fact, the streets weren't paved at that time, but Miss Washburn had a sidewalk laid from her front steps right across North Sampson Street to the statue. The steps from her residence still can be seen, though her home has been razed. Once it stood where the grassy area is, now owned by R.A. Cullinan and Sons.

The statue, which at the time was also a working water fountain, was dedicated in a ceremony on November 7, 1915. It is said that Viola's younger brother, Claire, or Clay, as he was known, was her model. The statue was named "The Barefoot Boy," inspired by the poem by the same name written by John Greenleaf Whittier, which begins:

Blessings on thee, little man,

Barefoot boy, with cheek of tan!

Nettie Washburn donated the statue to the town of Tremont.

After her graduation from the Chicago Art Institute, Viola became an instructor there. In 1923, she founded her own school, The Chicago School of Sculpture. She was held in high esteem by those in the art field, winning many prestigious awards. Prominent people asked to be sculpted. She was even commissioned by Grace Coolidge, wife of former President Coolidge, to immortalize their family Chow Chow in bronze.

Tragically, her career was cut short from cancer in 1935. At the young age of 45, Viola was laid to rest in the Mount Hope Cemetery, buried in the Washburn family plot. Nettie Washburn had died in 1918, never seeing the many accomplishments of her beneficiary. It was said that, "...in this (Tremont) community Viola was cherished and loved by everyone. Her sunny disposition made her a favorite among her acquaintances."

In 1991, the Save Outdoor Sculpture! campaign sent a letter stating that Tremont's Barefoot Boy had been registered with the Smithsonian Institute, along with information on Viola Norman. Viola's brother, Clay, donated 13 of her sculpture busts to the Tremont Museum, where several are currently on display.

*Nettie Washburn was the daughter of Esther Washburn. Both left lasting legacies in Tremont. Esther donated the first library building, and Nettie encouraged young Viola Norman and donated the Barefoot Boy statue to Tremont. As the years have gone by, the two women have been confused for each other, or even combined as one person!

~Tremont Museum and Historical Society
Lori Fuoss



The Barefoot Boy statue



Photo from part of the Tremont Museum's Viola Norman display

Tremont District Library News

Lego Afternoons (ages 6+)

Mondays, Feb. 20th, Mar. 20th, Apr. 17th, & May 15th, 3-4:30pm

Work together to build amazing creations! Try out new sets, stop motion videos, and other challenges. Ages 6+, no registration required.

Move & Do (ages 0-5)

Third Fridays, Feb. 17th, Mar. 17th, Apr. 21st, & May 19th, 10am-12pm

Join us in the meeting room for educational based free-play, designed specifically for littles.

Minecraft in the Meeting Room (ages 7+)

Saturdays, Feb. 18th, Mar. 25th, Apr. 15th, & May 20th, 10am-12:30pm

Hop on our library realm to create with friends!

S.T.E.A.M. Lab Plus (ages 7+)

Monday, Feb. 13th

3:30-4:30pm

S.T.E.A.M. Lab Plus is perfect for ages 7+ that want to learn about the world around them. Participate in group activities to learn about the Scientific Method, learn about Cause and Effect, make something to take home, and so much more! No registration required.

Mark your calendars! STEAM Lab (ages 7+) will be held: Feb. 13th, Mar. 13th, Apr. 10th, & May 8th

Looking for STEAM activities for younger kiddos?

We also offer a STEAM Lab for ages 4-6, which will be held on Mondays Feb. 27th, Mar. 27th, Apr. 24th, & May 22nd, 3:30-4:30pm

Baby & Me (ages 0-3)

Wednesdays, 10:30-11:30am

A support group for new & experienced parents.

Tremont High School

Industrial Technology Program Update

Now that the Roboteers have completed their building project and vacated the shop area at the high school, the revived industrial technology program has expanded into the larger space. The completion of the robotics building coincided with the start of the second semester and allowed Mr. Chandler to expand his classroom and shop space at an opportune time during the school year.

To keep reading, click the button below.

[CLICK HERE](#)

Community Calendar

Monday

MS Volleyball HOME vs Delavan - 4:15PM

MS Wrestling HOME JV Meet - 5:30PM

HS Girls Basketball @ Olympia Regional - 7:30PM

Tuesday

MS Volleyball @ Washington Middle - 4:15PM

HS Boys Basketball HOME vs Clinton - 5:30PM

MS Wrestling HOME vs Illini Bluffs, Rochester - 5:30PM

Thursday

HS Wrestling @ State - TBA

HS Girls Basketball @ Regional - TBA

MS Volleyball @ Dee-Mack Primary/Jr High - 4:30PM

Friday

HS Wrestling @ State - TBA

HS Boys Basketball @ Ridgeview - 5:30PM

Saturday

HS Wrestling @ State - TBA

V Boys Swimming @ Sectional - TBA

HS Track and Field @ IWU (Early Bird Invite - Girls Only) - 10:00AM

Around Town



Please send us your news stories and they will be included in upcoming emails. Deadline to include information is Friday, 6:00PM for the following Monday.

We accept information from official Tremont, IL businesses, organizations, and advertisers. We will also post Public Auctions and Open Houses.

Tremont Winning Communities | P.O. Box 76, Tremont, IL 61568

[Unsubscribe info@haasit.com](#)

[Update Profile](#) | [Constant Contact Data
Notice](#)

Sent by info@tremontil.com powered by



Try email marketing for free today!