

Posted on: September 2, 2015

Registration Open for 37th Annual Orland Park Open Spelling Bee



An Orland Park tradition returns on Sunday, October 18, 2015 when the Village of Orland Park and the Presbyterian Church of Orland Park co-host the 37th annual Orland Park Open Spelling Bee.

"This is a neat event for all ages," said Orland Park Mayor Dan McLaughlin. "The Orland Park community is grateful to Dr. Bill Smith for creating this contest that brings back the small town feel from the village's early

days," the mayor added.

"'Little House on the Prairie,' by Laura Ingalls Wilder, is what triggered the idea of a community wide spelling bee," said Smith, who served as superintendent of Alsip School District 126 for 31 years.

"In the story, they had an all town spelling bee in 1882 in the Dakota Territories. I held my first spelling bee during our nation's bi-centennial in Oak Lawn in 1976 and have held over one hundred since then," Smith said.

The spelling bee is open to residents throughout the region and welcomes spellers age eight through seniors. Participants age eight to 10 compete at 2 p.m. while those age 11 through high school compete at 2:45 p.m. Adults take the stage at 3:30 p.m. with the contest conclusion scheduled for 4:30 p.m.

The 2:00 p.m. bee will be held at the Presbyterian Church of Orland Park, 13401 South Wolf Road. There is no cost to participate and pre-registration is available by emailing PCorland@gmail.com or calling 708/448-8142. Include the name, address, phone number, e-mail address, age and school of the speller, if a student. Day of registration will also be available.

Twelve trophies and 24 ribbons will be awarded.

"The Orland Park Open Spelling Bee affords an opportunity for intergenerational competition," Smith said, "You don't find many things that do that anymore."