

Posted on: September 26, 2016

Village & Presbyterian Church Co-Sponsor 38th Annual Spelling Bee



An Orland Park tradition returns on Sunday, October 16, 2016 when the Village of Orland Park and the Presbyterian Church of Orland Park co-host the 38th annual Orland Park Open Spelling Bee.

"This is a wonderful event for all ages. We've had families bring generations to participate," 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."

"'Little House on the Prairie,' by Laura Ingalls Wilder, is what triggered the idea of a community wide spelling bee," said Dr. Bill 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.

Those ages 8-10 compete at 2 p.m., followed by age 11 through high school at 2:45 p.m. Adults compete at 3:30 p.m. with the awards presentation at 4:30 p.m. The competition is held at the Presbyterian Church at 13401 Wolf Road in Orland Park.

There is no charge to participate however pre-registration is strongly encouraged. The competition is open to everyone age eight through seniors.

Send an email to pcorland@gmail.com and include the name of the speller, home address, phone number, age and school attending. Or participants may register by phone by calling the church at 708/448-8142.

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