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Romeoville Recognizes Black History Month
Community Continues to Celebrate Diversity

This upcoming month of February is Black History Month. Cultural history months have been celebrated for years in the United States and have also been recognized by institutions right here in Romeoville, like the White Oak Library and our schools. The Village of Romeoville has issued proclamations for both Black History and Hispanic Heritage in just the past few months in recognition of these cultural history celebrations.

Black History Month can be traced back to Dr. Carter G. Woodson, founder of the Association of the Study of African American Life and History. He presented the first celebration of Black History Week in February 1926. President Gerald Ford later issued a proclamation in 1976 to extend it to Black History Month.

“The village feels it is important to celebrate the cultures that make up our community and to recognize their contributions to history and to our nation,” stated Mayor John Noak. “We encourage everyone to explore the programs that are offered at the White Oak Library, Lewis University, Joliet Junior College, and all other community organizations that shine a light on the figures and traditions of these heritages.”

When you learn about a culture that is different than your own, you don’t just learn about the differences. You also learn about the similarities. Romeoville is fortunate to be a diverse community where everyone is enriched by its cultures.

This past September 15 - October 15 the community recognized Hispanic Heritage Month. Hispanic Heritage Week got its start in 1968 when President Lyndon Johnson issued a proclamation recognizing it. President Ronald Regan then expanded the celebration to Hispanic Heritage Month in 1988.

In addition to issuing a proclamation, the Village of Romeoville partnered with the Romeoville Art Society and the White Oak Library to showcase literature and art that coincides with each culture being celebrated. Selected by the Romeoville Art Society, a gallery of 24 pieces by Hispanic artists were

uploaded to the village's Facebook page in September and a video with White Oak Library staff discussing their Hispanic Heritage display was posted that same month. Similar features are planned for February.

Below are some of the many local events planned for Black History Month.

Lewis University

February 18 - Anti-Racism, Allyship and Action with Rev. Dr. William J. Barber, II (Virtual)

For more information: www.lewisu.edu/Anti-Racism-Allyship-Action/

Joliet Junior College

Virtual Black History Month Events:

February 4 - "Just Mercy" Film Screening and Discussion

February 10 - Black Culture Open Mic Celebration

February 11 - Where Do We Go from Here?

February 18 - Combating the Stigma of Mental Health with speaker Abraham Sculley

February 25 - Victims No More

February 24 - EDU Africa Virtual Exchange

February 26 - Panel of Excellence: Our Story!

For more information and registration: go.jjc.edu/blackhistorymonth

White Oak Library

Virtual Black History Month Book Talks:

February 5 - Black History Month Book Talks: LGBTQ-Reads

February 12 - Black History Month Book Talks: Romance Reads

February 19 - Black History Month Book Talks: Contemporary Reads

February 26 - Black History Month Book Talks: Science Fiction and Fantasy

For more information: www.whiteoaklibrary.org

Plainfield Public Library

February 1 to 6 - Virtual African American Heroes and Sheroes Series

For more information: www.plainfieldpubliclibrary.org

Lockport Township Park District

February 6 - Black History Month Celebration (Drive-thru)

For more information: www.lockportpark.org/mc-events/black-history-month-celebration-2/?mc_id=385