

The sun was out, the temperature perfect and a group of out-of-town college friends picked me up in a convertible en route to a summer day of fun at Lake Michigan and Chicago. Being a good host, I directed the driver to start at the town's southern tip, the Morton Arboretum and work the carload north through much of what Glen Ellyn has to offer. With pride, I nonchalantly pointed out Glenbards South and West, Bonaparte Theatre, College of DuPage, Willowbrook Wildlife Haven, the Village Links, Panfish and Newton Parks, the Prairie Path, Glen Ellyn's Historic Downtown and Stacey's Tavern, Lake Ellyn, Churchill Forest Preserve, Ackerman, the Great Western Trail, and all the remarkable and diverse residential and commercial architecture and landscaping that our village offers. "It is an urban planner's dream," I added.

As we sped east toward the city, one of the passengers taunted "Oh come on, it's just like every other town." For some reason, the comment hit me like a low blow, although I remained silent. Two conclusions were drawn immediately:

- First, Glen Ellyn is the best kept secret in the Chicago area.
- Second, as much as it was tough for a young person to admit at the time: I loved this place!

Much more than extraordinary infrastructure makes Glen Ellyn special. Primarily, it is the people. From neighbors to coaches to schools to organizations as large as congregations to as small as those gathered at the barber shop or hair salon, Glen Ellyn houses some of the finest, most caring and most intelligent people in the country. Some say it takes a village. There is one here. It is difficult to go far without a friendly wave or a warm nod. I remember walking hand in hand with my future wife down Main Street one evening. A lady approached. "Nice evening" I said. She looked at us and beamed back "You two make it a beautiful evening." Wow.

Years and two kids later, our grade-schoolers seem to agree with that stranger. What do they like best about Glen Ellyn? "Friends!"

Glen Ellyn's variety of housing stock and retail make it possible for a wide range of people to live locally. Education and culture are important. Fitness, sports and gardening are close behind. Glen Ellynites love to shop, eat and have a good time. All that is easy in the village – and much of it is now walk-able.

This truly exceptional place is 162 years old and yet, in many ways, is just recently coming of age. To maintain that which it has and reach its full potential, Glen Ellyn cannot sit on its considerable laurels. Proactive actions all over the community are solidifying foundations for a successful future of economic growth, inter-governmental cooperation, educational and recreational excellence, aesthetic beauty, safety and civic pride. This is a collective effort with residents, businesses, volunteers and employees of Glen Ellyn's fine institutions.

One more time kids, why do you like Glen Ellyn? "It's a secret." Exactly!