

## ***John A. Ostenburg*** ***Mayor, Village of Park Forest***

John A. Ostenburg was elected as Mayor of the Village of Park Forest, Illinois, in 1999 and was re-elected without opposition in 2003. He was elected to an unprecedented third four-year term in 2007 and to a record fourth four-year term in 2011. He previously served as a Village Trustee from 1985 to 1990 and from 1997 to 1999. He was elected to the Illinois House of Representatives from the 80th House District in 1992 and served until 1995. While a Representative in the Illinois General Assembly, he served on the Cities & Villages Committee, the Education Appropriations Committee, the Elementary-Secondary Education Committee, the Higher Education Committee, and the Housing/Economic & Urban Development Committee, and was chairperson for the Speaker's Task Force on Children.

Mr. Ostenburg retired from the staff of the 40,000-member Chicago Teachers Union (CTU) in July 2010 after serving under three different presidents. He had served as the Chief of Staff since 2007. He previously served several years as Editor for the award-winning Chicago Union Teacher, official publication of the Chicago Teachers Union, of which he subsequently became Editor Emeritus. He also served as chairperson for the CTU Communications Department. He served as the Union's interim Legislative Director during the 2003-04 legislative session and continued until his retirement as one of the Union's registered lobbyists in Springfield. He also is the author of several published segments of the official history of the Chicago Teachers Union.

Mr. Ostenburg was Director of University Relations at Governors State University from 1984 to 1993, Director of Communications and Executive Director of the College Foundation at Prairie State College from 1978 to 1984, and Director of Alumni Affairs and Sports Information Director at Lewis University from 1973 to 1978. He also taught journalism and communications at all three institutions. He earlier taught English and Latin at Providence High School in New Lenox, and previously had taught at two elementary parochial schools in Springfield.

Mr. Ostenburg also has enjoyed a career as a journalist. He served as a reporter and copy editor for the former Illinois State Journal (now State Journal-Register) in Springfield and for the Joliet Herald-News. He also was a reporter for the Illinois edition of The Times of Hammond, Ind. He served as a reporter and sports editor for the Crescent Newspaper chain in south suburban Chicagoland, and was managing editor for the Lockport Free Press, which he established along with three colleagues on the journalism staff at Lewis University. He also was an editor for the Herald-News Community Newspapers in central Illinois.

Currently, he is available as a communications and policy advisor in areas of labor-management, government relations, and education.

He has served on the Board of Directors of the Birch Street Townhomes Cooperative in Park Forest since 1983 and has been a presenter on housing-related issues at several national meetings of the National Association of Housing Cooperatives (NAHC), and has contributed articles to the Cooperative Housing Bulletin. He is a member of the Executive Committee and serves on the Legislative Committee of the South Suburban Mayors & Managers Association (SSMMA), and serves as the SSMMA representative to the Chicago Southland Housing & Community Development Collaborative. He also serves on the Housing & Community Development Committee of the Metropolitan Mayors Caucus (MMC). He has served on the Community & Economic Development Policy Committee of the National League of Cities (NLC) since 2003, and also serves on the NLC Community & Economic Development Steering Committee. He was selected as vice chairperson of the Abraham Lincoln National Airport Commission (ALNAC) in 2003 and continued in that role until the dissolution of ALNAC, also serving as chairperson for the authority's Infrastructure Committee. In 2012, he was appointed by Cook County President Toni Preckwinkle to serve on the Southland Health Advisory Council, and recently was selected is a non-voting member of the Cook County Department of Public Health's Community Health Care Advisory Council representing the SSMMA. Most recently, President Preckwinkle appointed him as one of fifteen directors of the newly created Cook County Land Bank Authority, on which his fellow directors have selected him to serve as secretary.

Mr. Ostenburg formerly was Chapter President and served on the Board of Directors of the Northeastern Illinois Chapter of the Americans for Democratic Action (ADA) and on the ADA's national Board of Directors. He is a member of several other organizations, including the Park Forest Rotary Club, and Park Forest FOCUS, the Independent Voters of Illinois/Independent Precinct Organization (IVI/IPO), the American Civil Liberties Union (ACLU), and the Park Forest Area League of Women Voters. He is a Life Member of the NAACP. He has served as the labor representative on the Board of Directors of the South/Southwest Regional Research Institute, on the Advisory Board of South Star Services, on the board of the South Suburban Housing Center, and on the board for the Family Services & Mental Health Center of South Cook County. Until his retirement, he also was a member of the Chicago Teachers Union, the Illinois Federation of Teachers (IFT), the American Federation of Teachers (AFT), and the AFL-CIO. He currently serves on the Board of Directors for the Gavin Foundation.

In 2009, he received the Diversity 2009 Award from Diversity, Inc., "In Recognition of Exceptional Leadership on Issues of Diversity, Unity, and Equality in the Chicago Southland."

As an avocation, Mr. Ostenburg has been a longtime student of the writings of Thomas Merton, the Trappist monk who was perhaps the most proficient spiritual writer of the 20th Century; he also has spent more than 20 years studying the relationship between Christianity and Eastern Religions. He presented a paper on applications of some of Merton's philosophy to public life at an international

conference in 1993 that marked the 25th Anniversary of Merton's death. More recently, Mr. Ostenburg has contributed a paper titled "Spiritual Connectedness: Thomas

Merton's Path to World Peace" that appeared in the Winter 2005 issue of The Merton Seasonal, the official publication of the International Thomas Merton Society. He also is the author of "Encountering God Where We Find Him," a treatise on how certain Eastern spiritual principles may be applied to Christian belief, that was published in the Spring 2003 edition of the quarterly journal Spirituality Today.

He and wife Jacqueline are parents of four children (one of whom is deceased) and grandparents of nine. They attend St. Irenaeus Church in Park Forest. Mr. and Mrs. Ostenburg owned and operated Changes Coffeehouse, Bookstore & Tea Room in Park Forest from 1992 until Mrs. Ostenburg's retirement in May of 2006.

Mr. Ostenburg enjoys the hobbies of painting in both oil and acrylic, reading, and writing.