

SOUTH HOLLAND

Living

July | August 2026



South Holland Celebrates
America's 250th Anniversary!

**SOLO
EXPRESS**



SOUTH
HOLLAND

4TH OF JULY

Celebration

SATURDAY, JULY 4

Veterans Memorial Park | 500 E 160th Pl



FAMILY FUN FESTIVAL - NOON-4PM

Games • Inflatables • Roller Skating Rink

Food Vendors • Live Music • And More!

Tents and grills are not permitted. The park will close at 5pm to prepare for the fireworks show, and will reopen at 6pm.

FIREWORKS SHOW/AMERICA'S 250TH

Food Trucks / Live Music / America 250 Displays

Gates Open: 6pm | Gates Close: 9pm

Non-resident fee for fireworks show



View all event details at southholland.org.

FROM YOUR MAYOR



Mayor De Graff and the Village Board at South Holland Memorial Day Parade

Dear South Holland Residents and Friends,

It's been quite a year! Our 2025/26 fiscal year is now complete, and I am pleased to share that the State of the Village of South Holland is excellent! We have never been in a stronger position to flourish strategically, operationally, and fiscally, as we approach the 180th anniversary of our beloved community.

Thanks to careful stewardship and the dedication of our Village Board, administration, staff, community stakeholders, and residents, we continue to maintain a balanced budget while enjoying continually decreasing crime rates—the lowest in the Chicago Southland. Beyond our strong fiscal health and public safety priorities, South Holland continues to thrive through the connections we build as a community.

As a community built on Faith and Family, we continue to make progress through our “Coming Together 2030” strategic plan by developing new venues that create more opportunities to gather and build community. This spring, we welcomed a variety of new businesses to Town Center, including Shawn Michelle's, offering outstanding homemade ice cream, coffee, and sandwiches. We also welcomed a unique group of entrepreneurs to The SoHo Shops at Town Center. In a single day, we celebrated a record-setting 12 ribbon cuttings, welcoming these new businesses to South Holland.

Looking ahead, we are excited to celebrate America's 250th birthday with a memorable Fourth of July event at Veterans Memorial Park. It will feature the greatest fireworks display you've ever seen! We are thankful for the USA and look forward to honoring this historic national milestone together.

I hope you will enjoy this fun-filled issue of South Holland Living as we celebrate our history and our progress. We look forward with thankfulness, optimism, and anticipation for our future together.

Don A. De Graff
Mayor

VILLAGE BOARD

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Don A. De Graff

Clerk

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WHAT'S HAPPENING AROUND SOUTH HOLLAND



NEW TOLER ORDINANCE

To help keep our neighborhoods clean and attractive, the Village has updated its regulations for storing garbage and recycling containers. Containers must be stored in a side or rear yard, placed directly against a house, garage, or other accessory structure, and kept behind the projected building line. Containers may not be stored between the front of a home and the street or in front of garage doors. They should also be placed to minimize odor impacts on neighboring properties. Residents with corner lots may store containers on the secondary street side if specific requirements are met.



TOOL LENDING CENTER

Are you part of a neighborhood group, church, organization or business looking to give back to the community? As part of the Coming Together 2030 plan, the Village has put together a Tool Lending Center. This is a mobile trailer filled with tools for yard work such as lawnmowers, trimmers, chainsaws, rakes, etc. We encourage groups to use these tools for a group cleanup day or to help individuals in need of yard work. For more information and to register for the trailer, visit southholland.org.



CENTRAL BARK DOG PARK

Looking for a fun place where your dog can run, play, and socialize? Central Bark is a members-only dog park designed with both pets and their owners in mind. Amenities include secure key card entry, evening lighting, separate play areas for small and large dogs, complimentary waste bags, water fountains for dogs and people, and plenty of shaded areas. Membership is available to residents and non-residents with proof of vaccinations, a current animal license, and the required fee. Visit southholland.org for membership details and registration information.



SMART911

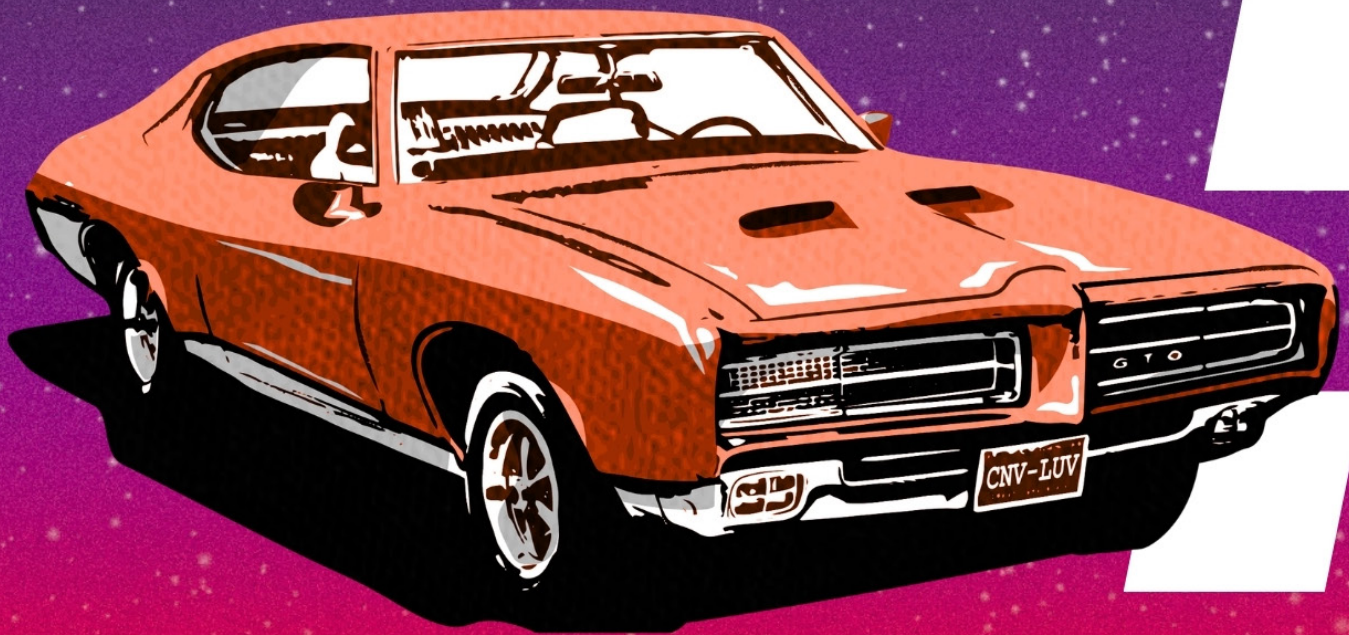
Are you signed up to receive emergency alerts from the Village? We encourage all South Holland residents and business owners/managers to sign up for Smart911 Emergency Alerts. With it, we have the ability to place thousands of phone calls per minute (to both landlines and mobile phones), and to send out texts immediately. You can also fill out a profile on your household so that first responders can help you faster in an emergency. Visit southholland.org for more information and to sign up.

VILLAGE OF SOUTH HOLLAND



CRUISE NIGHT

TWO Summer Nights of Cars, Food & Fun!



July 25 & August 22 | 4-8pm
16056 South Park Ave

Stroll South Park Avenue and explore more than 100 classic, antique, custom, muscle, and exotic vehicles on display!

- Food Trucks
- Music
- Yard Games
- Gas Card Giveaways

Learn more at southholland.org

Event is weather dependent. Follow the Village of South Holland on social media for weather-related updates.

OUT AND ABOUT

FACES FROM EVENTS AROUND THE VILLAGE

LITTLE LEAGUE OPENING DAY

The South Holland Little League kicked off its 70th season with Opening Day festivities and games at Veterans Memorial Park. Each team was introduced on the field, and Mayor De Graff threw the ceremonial first pitch.



OUT AND ABOUT

FACES FROM EVENTS AROUND THE VILLAGE

SOHO SHOPS GRAND OPENING

The highly anticipated SoHo Shops at Town Center opened in May, with great fanfare at both a soft launch/ribbon cutting and the grand opening the week after. The SoHo Shops is a new shopping center in South Holland that features 10 entrepreneurs selling a wide range of unique products. The vendors also receive programming that helps further advance their business. The Shops, located at 16114 South Park Ave, are open on weekends from now through December.

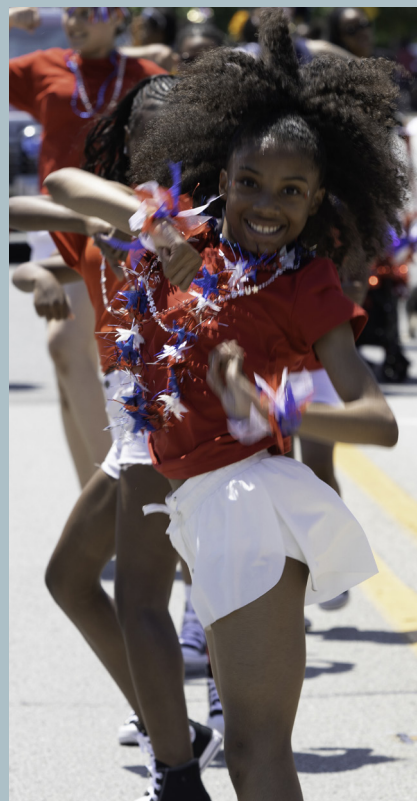


OUT AND ABOUT

FACES FROM EVENTS AROUND THE VILLAGE

MEMORIAL DAY PARADE

At the annual South Holland Memorial Day Parade, we celebrated and remembered those who gave their lives while serving in the United States Armed Forces. Local businesses, organizations, schools and churches participated in the parade. Following the parade, a moving Remembrance Ceremony was held at Veterans Memorial Park.



OUT AND ABOUT

FACES FROM EVENTS AROUND THE VILLAGE

AMAZING RACE SCAVENGER HUNT

Teams of two to five were invited to compete in the South Holland Amazing Race, an interactive scavenger hunt where teams competed to solve clues, complete fun challenges, and visit community organizations along South Park Avenue. Presented as part of the Coming Together 2030 initiative, the event was designed to showcase the people and organizations helping strengthen the South Holland community.



OUT AND ABOUT

FACES FROM EVENTS AROUND THE VILLAGE

COP ON ROOFTOP

The South Holland Police Department participated once again in the annual Cop on Rooftop fundraiser at Dunkin, where officers greeted customers inside the restaurant, in the drive-thru, and from atop the roof. The event raised funds for Special Olympics Illinois, helping provide training and programs for athletes with intellectual disabilities.



MAYOR'S PRAYER BREAKFAST

The South Holland Ministerial Association hosted the annual Mayor's Prayer Breakfast at Spirit of God Fellowship in observance of the National Day of Prayer. Mayor De Graff and several South Holland pastors prayed for our Village, State, and Nation. Pastor Darryl Dozier, of Power & Light Church, was the keynote speaker. Pastor James McKinney III, of Kingdom Ministries, was the recipient of the Mel De Vries Award.



CALENDAR OF EVENTS



Concert In The Park

Through July 31 CHRISTMAS IN JULY

Fire Station 1, 16230 Wausau Ave

The South Holland Fire Department is sponsoring its annual Christmas in July food drive. The Village collects nonperishable food items during the entire month of July. Donations can be made from 8am to 9pm any day at Fire Station 1.

July 4

4TH OF JULY CELEBRATION

Family Fun Fest: Noon-4pm

Fireworks Show: Gates open 6pm;

Gates close 9pm

Veterans Memorial Park, 500 E 160th Pl

Celebrate America's 250th birthday in South Holland this Independence Day! Enjoy food, live music, and a host of fun activities, culminating with an extra special fireworks show in the evening. South Holland residents can enter the fireworks show for free; non-residents will be charged \$10 (\$8 in advance). Daytime festivities (noon-4pm) are free to all. Visit southholland.org for more information.

July 4, July 30, August 20, September 7

SOUTH HOLLAND MUNICIPAL BAND CONCERTS

The South Holland Municipal Band performs a series of free concerts over the summer. Each concert is held at Veterans Memorial Park except for the September 1 concert, which is at Paarlberg Park for the Heritage Fest. Visit southholland.org for more details.

July 14, August 11

COMMUNITY POLICING MEETING

July 14: 7pm; Aug 11: 10am

*South Holland Community Center
501 E 170th St*

The South Holland Police Department hosts a Community Policing Meeting on the second Tuesday of every month, alternating mornings and evenings. This is an opportunity to address any questions or concerns for the Police Department.

July 17

CONCERT IN THE PARK
FEATURING CHICAGO BLUES LIFTERS
7-9pm, Veterans Memorial Park
500 E 160th Pl

The July Concert in the Park features the blues band Chicago Blues Lifters. Attendees are welcome to bring food and drinks, in the style of Ravinia. Tickets are \$10 and can be purchased at southholland.org or at the gate.

July 18

25th ANNUAL GARDEN WALK
10am-2pm, starts at Veterans Memorial
Park 500 E 160th Pl

Take part in a walk through creative and decorative local gardens at this year's Garden Walk, hosted by the South Holland Garden Club. In honor of the Garden Walk's 25th anniversary, tickets are free and available at the Veterans Park main entrance on the day of the event. From there, you will receive a map of the Garden Walk locations.

July 25

PITCH, HIT & RUN
10am, Veterans Memorial Park
500 E 160th Pl

The Village is hosting the Major League Baseball Pitch, Hit & Run! At this competition, boys and girls ages 7-14 can show their skills in baseball and softball. Champions will move on to the finals during the MLB World Series! Registration is free. Register at southholland.org.

July 25, August 22

CRUISE NIGHT
4-8pm, South Park Ave and 161st St
Stroll South Park Avenue to view classic, custom, antique and exotic cars, trucks and motorcycles. There will also be music, food trucks, and gas card giveaways! Free to all vehicle owners and spectators.

August 1

COFFEE WITH FIREFIGHTERS
9am, Fire Station 1, 16230 Wausau Ave
Residents can meet and talk with members of the South Holland Fire Department on the first Saturday of every month.

August 1

SOUTH HOLLAND EDUCATION FAIR
10am-2pm
South Holland Community Center
501 E 170th St

The Education Fair, celebrating its 10th year, helps students and their families get ready for the 2026-27 school year, featuring educational resources, youth programs, career pathways, family support services, and financial literacy. Food will be provided, as well as giveaways and interactive activities for the kids.

August 8

STEPPIN' & LINE DANCING
12-7pm, Veterans Memorial Park
500 E 160th Place

Put your dancing shoes on and head to the park for Steppin' & Line Dancing! Instructors will lead everyone, so even if you're new to these dance moves, you will learn all the right steps. Various Chicago area DJs will be there to provide the music.

August 14

CONCERT IN THE PARK FEATURING HOUSE MUSIC
7-10pm, Veterans Memorial Park
500 E 160th Pl

The August Concert in the Park features house music by Grammy-Award winning DJs Hula Mahone and Maurice Joshua. Attendees are welcome to bring food and drinks, in the style of Ravinia. Tickets are \$10 and can be purchased at southholland.org or at the gate.

September 7

HERITAGE FEST
10am-4pm, Paarlberg Park
17234 Paxton Ave
The South Holland Historical Society is hosting its annual Heritage Fest on Labor Day. The event celebrates local history and heritage, with crafters, wood carvers, traditional Dutch food, and performances by the South Holland Municipal Band and Master Chorale.

AT THE LIBRARY

The following programs are held at the South Holland Public Library,
16250 Wausau Ave, unless otherwise indicated.

July 2, 9, 16, 23, 30

**ZUMBINI:
MUSIC & MOVEMENT FOR LITTLES**

11am

Join us for Zumbini, a fun and energetic music-and-movement class for children and their caregivers. Led by Dr. Yvette Roberts, a certified Zumba instructor, this engaging program combines dance, rhythm, and play to support bonding, coordination, and early learning. Come ready to move and connect in a joyful, interactive environment. Spaces are very limited. For ages 0-5.

July 10

**SENIOR SOCIAL:
SENIOR CITIZEN SAFETY**

2pm

This presentation shares simple crime prevention tips for at home, in your car, and while traveling. Learn easy ways to protect yourself, your family, and your belongings.

July 22

WELLNESS WAHALA

5pm

Join Dr. Oluwatomiloba (Tomi) Ademokun, author of *Wellness Wahala*, for an immersive celebration of Nigerian culture through traditional fashion, music, games, and snacks, highlighting the rich heritage of different tribes.

August 4

**HATCH A STORY!
A CHICKEN MEET & GREET**

11am

Join us for a fun literary adventure with author Jarrett Dapier's hilarious book *Mr. Watson's Chickens*! Kids will also meet real chickens with Natasha Nicholes of *We Sow We Grow* as they learn, explore, and grow their curiosity.

August 4

CAREER SEARCH SKILLS

12pm

Learn the tips and tricks to finding gainful employment in the digital age. Registration required.

August 10

**PAWS FOR COMFORT:
BACK-TO-SCHOOL DOG VISIT**

5pm

Starting school can feel big—but a furry friend can help! Therapy dogs from Love on a Leash will visit for a calming, confidence-building experience. Children can relax, read, and spend time with gentle dogs to ease first-day jitters. For everyone's comfort and safety, please be mindful of allergies and follow all handler guidelines when interacting with the dogs. Open to all ages. Registration required.

FAITH IN

Motion

FEAR NOT RELYING ON GOD IN UNCERTAIN TIMES

By Elder Phyllis Neuman Brown of Free Spirit Ministerial Worship Center

There are many thoughts and opinions about what is happening in our world, nation, communities, churches and schools. We see, hear and discuss news, social media content and religious theologies. We could allow ourselves to be inundated with what is happening around us. Questions may arise regarding our personal safety, our survival and even our Christian walk. These things can and sometimes will make us fear. The fear of uncertainty, fear of rejection, fear of failure, and even fear of insecurity/self-doubt can manifest as procrastination, people-pleasing, perfectionism or excessive risk avoidance. How do we handle everything that is happening? How will we be able to provide for our family? Is all of what we see, read and hear true? These questions, speculations and theories could feed into the spirit of fear that could hinder our peace.

2 Corinthians 5:7 states that we walk by faith and not by sight. As a believer in Jesus Christ, we understand that we are repeatedly encouraged to overcome anxiety through our faith. "Fear not! Do not be afraid!" The Word of God clearly guides us through every situation and circumstance that we may encounter, highlighting that God provides us with power, love and self-control rather than fear.

A quote from the American author Robert Ludlum states, "Hope is the only thing stronger than fear." This parallels with Romans 15:13: "May the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace as you trust in him, so that you may overflow with hope

by the power of the Holy Spirit."

We can be encouraged that as issues of life come our way, we have a loving Savior who loves and cares for us. Let me challenge you to lean

on the Word of God. Trust Him, pray and believe that all will be well, not by what you see or hear, but by what you believe is written in the Bible, the Word of God.

Here are a few reminders from The Passion Translation Bible:

Isaiah 41:9b-10: "'You are my servant; I have chosen you. I have not rejected you!' Do not yield to fear, for I am always near. Never turn your gaze from me, for I am your faithful God. I will infuse you with my strength and help you in every situation. I will hold you firmly with my victorious right hand."

Philippians 4:6-7 says, "Don't be pulled in different directions or worried about a thing. Be saturated in prayer throughout the day, offering your faith-filled requests before God with overflowing gratitude. Tell him every detail of your life, then God's wonderful peace that transcends human understanding will guard your heart and mind through Jesus Christ."



Elder Phyllis Neuman Brown

We can trust God. He is our Savior and the One who will never fail. Seek the Lord, for He will hear and answer your prayers. The only fear we should have is the reverential awe for an omnipotent, omnipresent and omniscient God who sent His only Begotten Son to save us and then sent the Holy Spirit to teach, guide and empower us. Just remember, whatever comes our way, we will overcome because we are more than conquerors and we are victorious in Jesus Christ.

The South Holland Garden Club Presents:

25th Annual Garden Walk

**Saturday, July 18 | 10am-2pm
(rain or shine)**

Starting at Veterans Memorial Park

Enjoy FREE admission as we celebrate the Garden Walk's
25th Anniversary and America's 250th Anniversary!

Visit southholland.org for more information.

The Village of South Holland is hosting a
FREE COMPETITION
presented by Major League Baseball!

PITCH. HIT. RUN. HAVE FUN!



AGES 7-14
BASEBALL & SOFTBALL
EVERY SKILL LEVEL

Saturday, July 25 | 10am-2pm
Veterans Memorial Park
500 East 160th Place

Pitch Hit & Run provides kids with an opportunity to participate in a competition that recognizes individual excellence in core baseball/softball skills.

Register at
southholland.org



AMERICA

250

CELEBRATING MILESTONES FOR OUR COUNTRY AND VILLAGE
By Carrie Steinweg



On July 4, 1776, the Declaration of Independence was adopted by the Second Continental Congress, indicating the separation of 13 colonies from Great Britain. It's an anniversary that we've commemorated every year since, and this year, celebrations are taking place across the nation for the semiquincentennial of the United States of America. Happy 250th birthday to the U.S. of A!

It was only seven decades later when South Holland was settled by Dutch immigrants. Originally De Laage Prairie (which translates to "The Low Prairie,") the name was changed to South Holland in 1870.



Paarlberg Homestead



Onion farming in early South Holland years

It distinguished the area from Hooge (High) Prairie, which was another Dutch settlement that later became Chicago's Roseland area.

Hendrik de Jong purchased 300 acres of land in Thornton Township in 1847, and he, his wife Geertje (de Vries) and 12 children became the first settlers in what is now South Holland. Another early settler was Ajtje Paarlberg, who left the Netherlands in 1847 with her husband, Klaas, and seven children. Klaas died along the way, as did her infant child after her arrival in her new country. The homestead and house built by their son in 1870 still stands and can be explored during the Paarlberg Farm Heritage Festival on Labor Day.

"It is the 250th year of our nation, and we approach the 180th year of our Village's settlement," South Holland Mayor Don De Graff says. "These two milestones converge



and invite us, not only to reflect on our nation's remarkable journey, but also to come together in unique ways as a community."

Don't miss the big celebration on July 4 at Veterans Memorial Park—a party 250 years in the making. The Family Fun Festival takes place from noon to 4pm with games, inflatables, roller skating, a petting zoo, food vendors, live music and more. The park then closes at 5 to prepare for fireworks and re-opens at 6pm.

A grand fireworks show on Independence Day will mark the special occasion. You'll find food trucks, live music, strolling entertainers throughout the park, and America 250 displays before the fireworks, which begin shortly after dusk. There is an entry fee for non-residents for the fireworks show—\$8 in advance and \$10 at the door. Tickets can be purchased at southholland.org.

South Holland is a partnering community with America 250 Illinois. To learn about more events centered around the country's 250th birthday, visit il250.org and america250.org. 🎆



SHAWN MICHELLE'S

Ice Cream

SOMETHING SWEET HAS ARRIVED IN SOHO

By Carrie Steinweg

Photos courtesy of Shawn Michelle's

The Village of South Holland recently welcomed Shawn Michelle's Homemade Ice Cream to the former SoHo Cafe space. An award-winning and nationally recognized brand, the business has expanded from its location in Chicago's historic Bronzeville neighborhood into the south suburbs.

Founded by Chef Yahya Muhammad, Shawn Michelle's has been built on a foundation of craftsmanship, culture and community.

"Shawn Michelle's has its humble beginnings in a dorm room at Western Illinois University. From there, Chef Yahya returned to Chicago, and the ice cream-making journey continued," says Nataki Muhammad, co-owner and Yahya's wife. "Yahya, as a young child, tasted some authentic vanilla ice cream after baseball practice at Avalon Park in Chicago, and it was a flavor he would never ever forget. That flavor is what inspires the homemade taste you experience every time you enjoy a scoop of our ice cream."





Chef Yahya Muhammad, Nataki Muhammad and Mayor Don De Graff (center) celebrate the ribbon cutting of Shawn Michelle's with the Village Board and staff.

When they looked at expanding, Nataki says they chose South Holland because “it is the perfect blend of community and strong family values, which reflects how Shawn Michelle’s does business on a daily basis.” Yahya and Nataki were high school sweethearts, and they will celebrate 20 years of marriage and ice cream this July.

The shop is named to honor Yahya’s older sister, Shawn Michelle, who died in a car accident in 1999. “She was a beacon of inspiration for him to open his first location in the Chatham neighborhood in Chicago,” says Nataki.

Customers can enjoy delicious homemade ice cream. Some of their most popular flavors are Old-Fashioned Vanilla, Bourbon Butter Pecan and Black Walnut. “We also have a non-dairy Banana Pudding and Raspberry Cookies and Cream for our vegans,” says Nataki. “Our desserts include a homemade butter cake and homemade Biscoff banana pudding.”

If you prefer something on the savory side, you’ll be wowed by the beef pastrami and corned beef sandwich with hand-cut French fries. The South Holland location also is now serving coffee.

Shawn Michelle’s Homemade Ice Cream has been featured on the Food Network’s *Best Thing I Ever Ate* and Netflix’s *Somebody Feed Phil*. They’ve also attracted some famous customers, including R & B singer and wrapper, Ronnie DeVoe, who paid a recent visit to the new location.

“Ronnie is a fan of our ice cream. He’d had our ice cream on two other occasions. His visit was an opportunity to promote our business and to meet with his fans. It was an amazing day. Some fans had been lined up since 7:45am just to see him and to taste the ice cream,” says Nataki.

“The grand opening was all that we wanted and more. We had a line down the block for most of the day,” she says. “Our team was incredible. They handled the customers with care and professionalism. We were really excited to share our delicious ice cream with our South Holland families. We have so much in store for South Holland, and we can’t wait to build community with the village residents and south suburban neighbors.” 🍦

SHAWN MICHELLE’S
16129 SOUTH PARK AVE
SOUTH HOLLAND

HOURS:
12-8PM TUES-THURS
12-9PM FRI-SAT
1-6PM SUN

CONCERT IN THE PARK

Enjoy a Ravinia-style concert in our beautiful premier park!



July 17 | 7-9pm

Blues Concert

Featuring Chicago Blues Lifters



August 14 | 7-10pm

House Concert

*Featuring DJs Hula Mahone
and Maurice Joshua*



Veterans Memorial Park
Tickets: \$10 per person

Learn more and get your tickets at southholland.org.

The South Holland Education Committee presents



PATH TO SUCCESS
EDUCATION
Fair **2026**

Celebrating 10 Years!

August
1st

10AM - 2PM

South Holland
Community Center
501 E 170th St



View event
details

QUESTIONS?

Call South Holland Village Hall
at 708.210.2904.

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Save the Date!

2026 SOUTH HOLLAND

FUN RUN 5K

Saturday, September 19 | 7:30am
Veterans Memorial Park
500 E 160th Place

A fun and entertaining
run/walk through the streets
of South Holland!



southholland.org