Longtime Village Clerk Sandra Sokol, along with her husband David, will receive the “Heart of Our Villages” Award at the Oak Park River Forest Museum Gala on Thursday, March 12, at the Nineteenth Century Club in Oak Park.

Sandra started working at Oak Park Village Hall in March 1985 as a community relations representative, and was named Village Hall Employee of the Year in 1991. While working for the Community Relations Department, Sandra worked with the Oak Park Housing Center on organizing the Oak Park Exchange Congress, bringing together leaders from communities nationwide working on racial integration.
She was elected village clerk in April 1993, a position she held for 16 years before deciding to retire rather than seek re-election. During her tenure as village clerk, Sokol saw the transition to the digital age, introduced a program to host first-time juvenile offenders while they performed community service work and instituted Oak Park’s domestic partner registry.

David was also involved in village government, elected as a village trustee in April 1977, just five years after moving to the village with Sandra and their two children. He has twice served as chair of the Oak Park Historic Preservation Commission. He has served on the Oak Park Temple School Board, the Frank Lloyd Wright Home and Studio Foundation board and was involved in the Hawthorne School (now Julian) community. He was chair of the art and architecture department at University of Illinois-Chicago and has written numerous books.

In addition to the Sokols being honored, Laurel and Dennis McMahon, longtime River Forest residents and volunteers, will receive the “Heart of Our Villages” Award.