

Block Club Chicago

EDGEBROOK, EDISON PARK, SAUGANASH

New Farmers Market Wants To Bring More Local Business To The Far Northwest Side

The newly created North Branch market is holding a summer kickoff street fest Saturday at Devon Street and Kinzua Avenue.



By Molly DeVore

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Lisa Hinrichs, left, Jennifer Bassik, middle, and Meghan Dwyer, right, are part of the volunteer crew behind the North Branch Market. Credit: Molly DeVore/ Block Club Chicago

EDGE BROOK — A new farmers market wants to bring fresh food and more local business to the Far Northwest Side.

Launched in February, the North Branch Market aims to serve the Edgebrook, Sauganash, Wildwood and Forest Glen neighborhoods.

To introduce themselves to the neighborhood, North Branch is holding a summer kickoff street fest 3-8 p.m. Saturday at Devon and Kinzua avenues. There will be live music, food, drinks, kids activities like faceprinting and more.

The North Branch Market grew out of the Everyday Edgebrook Farmers Market, which was **almost canceled last summer.**

When the former manager **announced the market would be canceled** because she could no longer run it, Edgebrook resident Meghan Dwyer posted in some of the area's community Facebook pages and organized a Zoom call with other neighbors who wanted to see the market continue.

“We were all just pretty devastated that it was ending,” said Dwyer, who moved to Edgebrook from Logan Square in 2014. “I lived right by the Logan Square Farmer’s Market so I was glad Edgebrook had one, too. It’s just nice to have a market that you can walk to.”

Pretty soon, a team of volunteers, largely made up of local moms, came together to restart and revamp the market.



Last summer, a team of volunteers was able to increase the number of vendors at the Edgebrook Market. This year those same volunteers have launched the North Branch Market. Credit: Provided

Last summer, the Everyday Edgebrook Market went from 10 vendors to around 50 across seven markets, Dwyer said. Jennifer Bassik, a market volunteer and Wildwood resident, said the final market of 2023 drew about 900 people.

The volunteers decided to branch off and form their own organization this winter to serve Sauganash, Wildwood and Forest Glen, as well, Dwyer said.

The Edgebrook Sauganash Chamber of Commerce is the permit holder for the North Branch Market. Dwyer said the market will have about 80 vendors this summer.

The market will still be held 9 a.m.-1 p.m. every other Saturday at Hiawatha and Central Avenues in the parking lot of Edgebrook School, and the season has been extended into the fall. The market will go from July 6 to Oct. 26.

North Branch will also host a winter market Nov. 16.

Bringing Business To Edgebrook And Beyond

The women behind the North Branch Market all bring unique professional experiences to the table, including a former corporate litigator, a dentist, a marketing professional, an advertising producer and a math teacher.

Bassik, who works as a chief marketing officer, helped establish the new branding: fresh, fun, local. Over the winter, North Branch rolled out a [new website](#), [Facebook page](#) and [Instagram](#).

“We truly ran it like a business,” Bassik said.

North Branch’s volunteers say the market could help awaken the sleepy area.

A lot of young families moved to Edgebrook, Sauganash, Wildwood and Forest Glen during the pandemic because of the neighborhood’s spacious lots, Dwyer said. What the neighborhoods lack, however, is public places for these families to gather, Dwyer said.

Instead, neighbors often shop, get coffee and go out to eat in nearby suburbs like Niles, Skokie and Park Ridge, Bassik said.

“Downtown Edgebrook is so walkable, but there’s nothing to walk to,” Dwyer said.

North Branch volunteers hope the farmers market will attract businesses that want to set-up brick-and-mortar shops in the area.

“We’re marketing our residents as the draw,” Bassik said. “We want businesses see that people show up for Edgebrook, that we’re a good market to invest in and we have money to spend.”



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 A Flourish chart

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