Northwestern | STUDENT AFFAIRS
Off - Campus Life

Off-Campus Newsletter, October 2026

Hello, Wildcats! Happy October!

The Off-Campus Life office (OCL) is your first point of contact for moving and living off-campus in Evanston and Chicago. OCL looks forward to serving as your guide through the challenges and opportunities that off-campus living can bring! Each month, this newsletter will share events, resources, and tips to help you succeed in making the most out of everything this community has to offer you.

Avoid the Halloween Tricks!



Everyone loves a Halloween fright, but you should avoid scaring your neighbors with your gatherings! Here are a few tips from OCL' s Good Neighbor guide:

- Discuss plans with neighbors ahead of time, including how to communicate about concerns that may arise;
- Keep music and voices within the bounds of Evanston's noise ordinances;
- Remind your guests to come and go quietly so as not to disturb neighbors;
- Take good care with alcohol! This includes managing your responsibility as a social host, and making the right call for help under Northwestern's Amnesty through Responsible Action when someone overconsumes;
- Clean up any litter or decorations left behind before 10 AM on the following day.

Have questions about hosting a gathering successfully? Reach out to OCL for consultation. We're happy to help.

Bike Safety and Registration

Bike theft is a common problem for Northwestern students, both on- and off-campus. One thing that can help is bike registration. Both Evanston and Northwestern have easy programs to use to register your bike – and Northwestern's program qualifies you to receive a free helmet and light, as well! Take a minute to protect your means of getting to campus quickly and easily! Also remember to always lock up your bike while unattended, and if you do not own a bike lock, consider purchasing one!

The Leaves are Leaving



Fall colors are finally starting to show in the Chicago area, which is beautiful! Those leaves are also starting to fall off the trees, which is…less beautiful.

If you live in a rented house, check your lease for any responsibility you have to dispose of leaves that have fallen into your space. Not sure what to do with all those leaves? Evanston has information for you! Find it here: https://www.cityofevanston.org/news_detail_T10_R191.php.

Staying Warm with Falling Temperatures



Did you know that in Evanston and Chicago, housing providers are required to ensure that temperatures remain at or above 68 degrees? As temperatures drop, stay attuned to the temperature in your space. If it falls below 68 degrees (and you haven't, you know, just left a window open), let your housing provider know in writing of the concern. If that doesn't help, contact Evanston or Chicago 311 for assistance.

Even if your place is heated adequately, you can still take steps to keep your space a little warmer, and save on heating costs:

- Seal up drafts from windows. Inexpensive kits are available to insulate windows with clear plastic and keep out the chills. Just be sure to get a kit designed to avoid damaging the walls or paint so that you don't have damages to pay for later.
- Seal up drafts from doors. A door draft stopper can keep the cold air from sneaking through the bottom of your door!
- Many student apartments have hardwood or tiled floors. Those can be very cold on feet, making your place feel much cooler! Look for inexpensive rugs to put down on those surfaces.

Using 311

The Cities of Evanston and Chicago offer many resources for residents. You might not know all or even some of them, but whichever city you live in, 311 is the answer! Just be sure you're within the appropriate city boundary, and call *311! You can also text, or visit the Chicago or Evanston webpage instead. Learn about hidden city resources, get knowledge about rules and regulations, and be a better-informed city resident! You'll be surprised at what you find.

Off-Campus Life Office Events

OCL hosts many social and educational events each year. Here's what coming up! Want to see what else is in store? See OCL's Events page!

Fall Housing Fair

Each Fall, OCL hosts a Housing Fair, featuring local housing providers, as well as many different campus and community resources to assist you in having the best off-campus living experience. This year, there are two ways to participate!



On November 5, join OCL in Norris' Louis Room for the in-person edition. There is no advance sign-up required, and the event will feature a raffle, plenty of good snacks, and the opportunity to speak directly with housing providers as well as campus and community resources. On November 11, sign into the virtual version! For this one, you ***must*** sign up beforehand, and you can do so with the QR code above, or here.

Evanston Bingo!



If you read last month's newsletter, you know that OCL intended to host an ice cream social. Unfortunately, rain got in the way of both our original date *and* the rain date. But we are recycling the activity: Evanston Bingo! Drafted by long-term Evanston residents, The Bingo Card will ask you to meet neighbors, check out local shops, and answer fun quiz questions. Complete a row down, across, or diagonally before December 1, 2026, and we'll have a prize for you! Click the picture to get your Bingo card, and get started! You can also visit our table at Foster and Maple after 2 PM on Friday, October 23.

Campus and Community Events

Northwestern, Evanston and Chicago play host to a huge number of events throughout the year. Read on to learn about a few of the offerings for September.

Dittmar Gallery Art Exhibit



Throughout October and November, check out the Dittmar Gallery in Norris, with their special exhibit, "The Names We Give to Home." The exhibit displays paintings created by artist Lelia Byron based on conversations with 40 residents of Springfield, Ohio. Even though Springfield is not Evanston, the exhibit might spur your thoughts about your current off-campus home! The exhibit is open daily from 10 AM-10 PM, so stop by!

Norris Halloween Bash



Looking for spooky fun? Look no further! Norris' Halloween Bash will take place on October 29, and will feature a pumpkin carving contest, a hypnotist, a trivia night in Luna's pub, and more! Free candy will be available in each program area as well.

Let's Build a Playground



Use your talents to bring something new to Evanston – a playground! On October 27, 28, and 29, Evanston is working to build a new playground at Clyde-Brummel Park. October 29 is the official build day, while October 27 and 28 will be days for preparing the site. The work will be physical, but the reward will be forever: a place for Evanston's kids to play, find friends, and use their imaginations. Sign up here to help build the new playground!

Other Halloween-Themed Events



Evanston has a number of Halloween-themed events. On October 24, head down to the Main Street and Dempster Street corridors for the Main-Dempster Mile's Spooky Saturday for a block party that includes a pet costume contest..

Lincoln Park Zoo's Fall Fest

The Lincoln Park Zoo is one of Chicago's best attractions! Open year-round, it also hosts many fun events, a number of which are free. Throughout October, head down to see Fall

Fest, which has a bunch of extra things to do and see, even beyond the animals you can visit anytime. Find more details here.

Off-Campus Housing Website

Some of you may be looking for a new place, or hoping to sublet your current place. OCL works with Off-Campus Partners, powered by Apartments.com, to host a housing listing website. Students can use it to search for a new apartment, list or find a sublet, and seek out a roommate. It is the only listing service that Off Campus Life recommends to landlords or rental companies who would like to rent to the Northwestern Community, as well as Northwestern Students, Faculty or Staff looking to rent.

All services on the off-campus housing listing website are ***FREE*** to students! Need a hand figuring out how best to use the site? Go here for video and PDF tutorials!

Want to Discuss Your Off-Campus Life Experience?

Whether you have a leasing, sub-leasing, landlord, roommate, or community question, we are happy to connect.

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