



Happy Holidays!

A Message From Mayor Ronald M. Serpico

Feliz Navidad, Buon Natale, Frohe Weihnachten, Wesolych Swiat, Merry Christmas ...

Dear Neighbors,

We recently engaged in a national presidential election which brought to the forefront the massive division that persists amongst our fellow citizens concerning the direction of our country's future. But as we approach the holiday season, I would like write about a subject that almost everyone can agree on ... our fondness for Christmas cinema.

Christmas films promote themes of love, kindness and togetherness. Many families have created traditions centered around watching their favorite holiday movies. This brings everyone together and creates lasting memories during this festive season. With this in mind, I've crafted a quiz to test your knowledge of some of our favorite Christmas movies. Match the lines of dialogue in the first column (numbered 1 through 10) with its correct film title listed in the second column, letters A through J.

Answers are revealed on Page 2.

1. "SANTA! Oh my God! Santa, here? I know him! I know him!"
2. "You'll shoot your eye out, kid."
3. "Keep the change, ya filthy animal."
4. "Save the neck for me, Clark!"
5. "Remember, George: No man is a failure who has friends."
6. "Faith is believing in things when common sense tells you not to."
7. "If you're worried and you can't sleep, count your blessings instead of sheep."
8. "I never thought it was such a bad little tree.
It's not bad at all, really. Maybe it just needs a little love."
9. "Maybe Christmas doesn't come from a store.
Maybe Christmas, perhaps, means a little bit more."
10. "I will honor Christmas in my heart and try to keep it all the year."

- A. *Home Alone*
- B. *How the Grinch Stole Christmas*
- C. *A Christmas Carol*
- D. *A Christmas Story*
- E. *Miracle on 34th Street*
- F. *White Christmas*
- G. *A Charlie Brown Christmas*
- H. *Christmas Vacation*
- I. *ELF*
- J. *It's a Wonderful Life*



Ronald M. Serpico
Mayor

As we begin to celebrate the "Season of Joy" with family and friends, it's important to remember that thousands of our fellow Americans are serving in the military far away from their loved ones. Let's bring a piece of home to our troops this December by donating to one of the nonprofit organizations listed here that send care packages around the globe, bringing smiles and happiness to our soldiers stationed everywhere.

- **Adopt a Platoon Soldier Support Effort** – www.adoptaplatoon.org.
- **Any Soldier Inc.** – www.anysoldier.com.
- **For the Troops** – www.forthetroops.org.
- **Forgotten Soldiers Outreach, Inc.** – www.forgottensoldiers.org.
- **Hugs Project** – www.thehugsproject.com.
- **Troopster** – www.troopster.com.

In closing, on behalf of the village clerk, village trustees, village employees, my wife Donna and myself, we wish you and your family a safe and enjoyable holiday season, and don't forget to make some wonderful holiday memories with your children and grandchildren. Finally, in the words of Tiny Tim, "God bless us, everyone!"

Sincerely,

Ron Serpico
Mayor Ron Serpico

**Check Out www.MelrosePark.org to
Learn More About Our Community!**



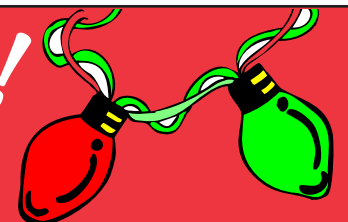
Follow us on Facebook.



Follow us on Instagram.

Join in the Seasonal Fun ... You Could be a Big Winner!

**Decorate Your Home for the Mayor Serpico/Melrose Park Youth Commission
2024 Holiday Decorating Contest. See Page 3 for Details.**





Village of Melrose Park

Ronald M. Serpico, Mayor

Mary Ann Paolantonio, Village Clerk

Trustees

Anthony J. Abruzzo • Jaime Anguiano

Arturo J. Mota • Sonny Nicotera

Mary Ramirez Taconi • Anthony "Tony" Williams



To Know

Village Hall.....(708) 343-4000

Hours – Monday-Friday, 9 a.m.-5 p.m.

Birth Certificates • First Copy – \$15, additional copies \$4 each.

Death Certificates • First Copy – \$17, additional copies \$6 each.

Water, Tickets, Etc.

Office of the Mayor(708) 343-4000, Ext. 4410

Police Emergency911

Non-Emergency(708) 344-8409

Animal Control.....(708) 344-8409

Fire Emergency911

Non-Emergency(708) 344-1210

Public Safety/Homeland Security(708) 649-8000

Library(708) 343-3391

Public Works(708) 343-5128

Building and Code(708) 343-4000

Civic Center(708) 450-0555

Hall and Field Rentals, Sports, Etc.

Community Service.....(708) 343-4000, Ext. 4448

Senior Services(708) 343-4000, Ext. 4448

Taste of Melrose Park

Dial A Ride(708) 343-7047

Proviso Township Assessor(708) 449-4304

Economic Development(708) 865-8809

Important Upcoming Dates

Village Board Meetings.....Dec. 23, Jan. 27, Feb. 24

**Village Hall Holiday ClosingsDec. 24 (1/2 Day), Dec. 25,
Dec. 31 (1/2 Day), Jan. 1 and Jan. 20**

Resident Response

Dear Director of Fire Department Rick Beltrame ...

On behalf of Mayor Harvey and the Bellwood Fire Department, I would like to thank you and the Melrose Park Fire Department for participating in the Village of Bellwood 2nd Annual Christmas Parade and Festival of Lights.

I appreciate the long-standing relationship that we have with the Melrose Park Fire Department and the village of Melrose Park.

• Sincerely,

John R. Reitz, Fire Chief
Bellwood Fire Department

Dear Melrose Park Resident Wayne Kesslering and Ms. Dawn Zuffante ...

On behalf of the residents of Melrose Park, we would like to take this opportunity to thank you for your generous donation and support of the Mayor Serpico/Melrose Park Youth Commission Avenue of Flags initiative. We're hoping our efforts continue throughout every street in Melrose Park in support of our veterans and the beautification efforts of Mayor Serpico.

• With grateful appreciation,

The Board and Staff of the Melrose Park Youth Commission

Answers to Christmas Film Quiz On Page 1

- "SANTA! Oh my God! Santa, here? I know him! I know him!"
I. *ELF*
- "You'll shoot your eye out, kid."
D. *A Christmas Story*
- "Keep the change, ya filthy animal."
A. *Home Alone*
- "Save the neck for me, Clark!"
H. *Christmas Vacation*
- "Remember, George: No man is a failure who has friends."
J. *It's a Wonderful Life*
- "Faith is believing in things when common sense tells you not to."
E. *Miracle on 34th Street*
- "If you're worried and you can't sleep, count your blessings instead of sheep."
F. *White Christmas*
- "I never thought it was such a bad little tree. It's not bad at all, really. Maybe it just needs a little love."
G. *A Charlie Brown Christmas*
- "Maybe Christmas doesn't come from a store. Maybe Christmas, perhaps, means a little bit more."
B. *How the Grinch Stole Christmas*
- I will honor Christmas in my heart and try to keep it all the year."
C. *A Christmas Carol*





Season's Greetings

from

Mayor

Ronald M. Serpico

Village Clerk

Mary Ann Paolantonio

Village Trustees

Anthony N. Abruzzo,

Jaime Anguiano,

Arturo J. Mota,

Sonny Nicotera,

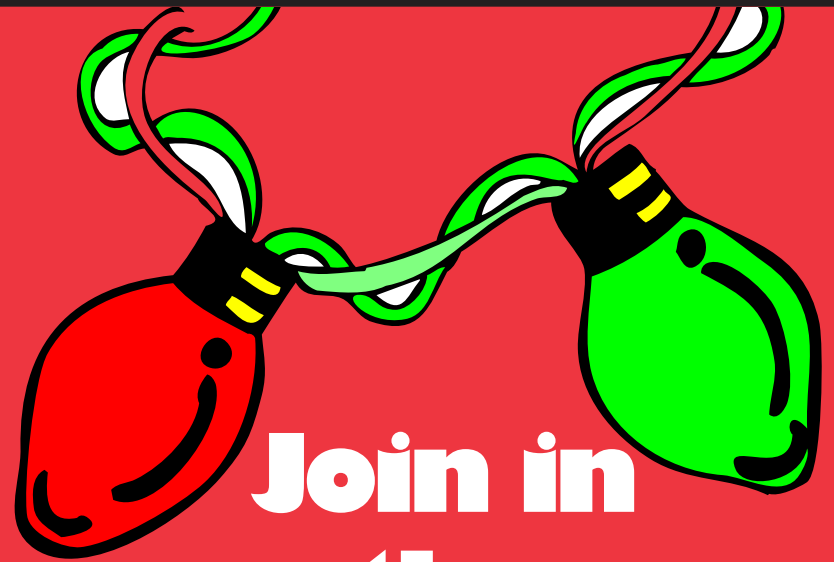
Mary Ramirez Taconi,

Anthony "Tony" Williams,

and the

Employees of the

Village of Melrose Park



Join in the Seasonal Fun!

Is your home decorated
for the holidays ...

Send us a photo for the
next issue of *The Rose*!

You could win a prize
on behalf of
**Mayor Serpico
and the Melrose Park
Youth Commission.**

Five top prizes (\$150 each) and
five runners-up prizes (\$50 each)
will be awarded for the best decorated!

Take a nighttime photo of your home all lit
and email it to therose@melrosepark.org
on or before Jan. 6, 2025.

Type Mayor Serpico/MPYC Holiday Decorations
in the subject line of your email and include your
name, address and a phone number
that's best to reach you at.

For more information,
please call the
MP Youth Commission at
(708) 343-4000.



Melrose Park Fire Department NEWS



*Rick Beltrame
Director of Fire Dept.*

A Message from Rick Beltrame, Director of Fire Department

The Melrose Park Fire Department and Director of Fire Department Rick Beltrame want to ensure the safety of our residents and their families by providing these portable space heater safety tips on behalf of the National Fire Protection Association. Please follow these tips to ensure your family's well-being!



When the weather turns cold, it can bring a chill into our homes. Portable space heaters have become a popular way to supplement central heating or heat one room. If you plan to use portable electric space heaters, make sure to follow these tips and recommendations:

HEATER CHECKLIST

- Purchase a heater with the seal of a qualified testing laboratory.
- Keep the heater at least 3 feet (1 metre) away from anything that can burn, including people.
- Choose a heater with a thermostat and overheat protection.
- Place the heater on a solid, flat surface.
- Make sure your heater has an auto shut-off to turn the heater off if it tips over.
- Keep space heaters out of the way of foot traffic. Never block an exit.
- Keep children away from the space heater.
- Plug the heater directly into the wall outlet. Never use an extension cord.
- Space heaters should be turned off and unplugged when you leave the room or go to bed.

Types of electric space heaters

Oil or water-filled radiator

Heated oil or water travels through the heater.

Fan-forced heater

A fan blows warm air over metal coils.

Ceramic heater

Air is warmed over a ceramic heating element.

Infrared heaters

Heat is created by infrared bulbs.

Fact

Two in five deaths in space heater fires involve portable electric space heaters.



NATIONAL FIRE PROTECTION ASSOCIATION
The leading information and knowledge resource on fire, electrical and related hazards



MELROSE PARK FIRE DEPARTMENT

3601 W LAKE ST, MELROSE PARK IL 60160 PH (708) 344-1315, FAX (708) 531-5304

A Gracious Thank You from the Melrose Park Fire Department and the Melrose Park Firemen's Association

On Friday, Nov. 15, the Melrose Park Firemen's Association held their Annual Fall Raffle Dinner to help raise funds for charitable contributions to organizations the association works with throughout the year. On behalf of the Melrose Park Fire Department, the association would like to graciously thank all those who helped make this year's dinner and commemorative ad book an incredible success, including the following supporters as well as current and retired MP firefighters ...

Ronald M. Serpico, Mayor, Village of Melrose Park
Norcomm/Superior Ambulance Service
Restore Disaster Restoration Experts
Cerami Construction Company, Ltd.
Cerniglia Co.
Macqueen Emergency Pierce
Paramedic Services of Illinois, Inc.
Elite Electric Co., Inc.
Veterans Park District
Suburban Sporting Goods
Joseph A. Casale/Richard D. Dalitto
C & O Window Cleaning LLC
Tom Olson, President, Triton College Foundation
Signco
Swaporama
Scores Chicago O'Hare
R.J.N. Supplies, Inc.
Kushner Medical
Air One Equipment
Spicer Construction, LLC
Above and Beyond Black Oxide
Construction Management Service Corp.

Fairway Custom Landscaping, Inc.
The Law Offices of Carlos H. Davalos
Chicago Metropolitan Fire Prevention Co.
CXI Trucking
Al Piemonte NISSAN
Moore Dermatology Associates
Royal Pipe & Supply Co.
Darley
Planet Group Inc.
Area Towing
Fox Outdoor Products
Carnicerias Jimenez
JB Food & Beverage
Alpha Omega Learning Center
MWI Property Group
Carmel Hall Raffle
Melrose Dental Center
Chicago Soccer Fields
Our Lady of Mt. Carmel Parish
Cafe Gaspar
Melrose Park Police Department
Mickinzie-Vertuno F.O.P. Lodge 19

Riley Heating & Cooling
Victory Centre of River Woods
Triton College Foundation
Republic Services
Commercial Tire Service
FRICOLD Heating and Cooling
Ella's Tavern
Mittera of Illinois
Duke of Oil
Carbit Liquid Coating Solutions
Cermak Fresh Market
Carnitas Don Alfredo
IHOP – International House of Pancakes
Aqua Fiori
Yukos
Chicago Grinding





Always Stepping Up ...

Melrose Park Firefighters Visit VPD Preschool



On Nov. 6-7, several Melrose Park Fire Department representatives went to Veterans Park District's Bulger Park Preschool to give the children a fire safety talk and a firefighter gear demonstration.

The preschoolers had a lot of fun interacting with our first responders.

MP Police Department Promotes "Safety First" ... Deploys Solar Cameras

The Police Department has acquired two Mobile Solar Surveillance Camera Towers, which will be deployed at various locations throughout the year to help deter crime, especially during the holiday shopping season. The purchase was funded by a grant from the Attorney General's Office, specifically allocated for a retail theft campaign. Additionally, support was received from the Melrose Park Department of Homeland Security in assembling the units.



MPPD Restored Patrol Car Spotted Throughout Chicagoland

The Melrose Park Police Department has added a new – old – vehicle to its fleet.

With generous support from donors, including Area Towing & Recovery (Frank and Rob); Elite Electric Company, Inc. (Ron Spata Sr.); SIGNCO (Sebastian Lorenzo); and Malkoc Builders, Inc. (the Malkoc family); MPPD has opened up the history books, took a look at the past and restored one of its squad cars to reintroduce a memory from yesteryears.

The reconditioned, special "set of wheels" has been showcased in local parades and car shows, including being front and center at this year's Columbus Day Parade held in Chicago and the MPPD F.O.P. Lodge 19 Annual Car Show held in July. Pictured with Car #717 on the downtown Columbus Day Parade route are Mayor Serpico and Director of Police Sam Pitassi.



A K9 Lupo Update

Born: March 15, 2023, Slovakia – German Shepherd
90 lbs – Language: Slovak, English, Italian



Over the summer, K9 Lupo commenced his training after arriving from Slovakia, having been handpicked by his handler, Ofc. Dominick Rovito, #45, in the spring of the previous year.

Chosen from a selection of six canines, Lupo's immediate connection with Ofc. Rovito sealed the decision. The duo then spent seven weeks at Excel K-9 Services in Ohio, where they engaged in intensive bonding and training sessions.

Specializing in narcotic detection, article search, tracking and patrol tasks, his skills are as impressive as his size.

A champion in the field, K9 Lupo is known for his love of tug games, and his immense drive and passion for his work. He is a great addition to the Melrose Park Police Department.

Melrose Park Police Department

A Message from Director of Police Sam C. Pitassi



*Sam C. Pitassi
Director of Police*



MPPD Activates Annual Holiday Detail

Dear Chamber of Commerce and Business Owners,
Director Sam C. Pitassi and the Melrose Park Police Department would like to wish everyone a happy and safe holiday season. As the busy holiday shopping season gets underway, we remain committed to safeguarding our community.

To ensure the safety of residents and visitors, the Melrose Park Police Department has activated its annual holiday detail across all business districts. This involves increased patrols with both marked and unmarked vehicles, operating seven days a week throughout December. The department is dedicated to maintaining a secure environment as we work together to make this holiday season safe and enjoyable for all.

Happy and safe holidays from the Melrose Park Police Department.

• Sincerely,
Sam C. Pitassi, Director
Melrose Park Police Department

IMPORTANT PARKING NOTICE A QUICK NOTE TO UPDATE WEEKEND PARKING RULES ...

As of Sunday, Dec. 1, 2024, parking is no longer permitted on both sides of the street on weekends.

Overnight parking restrictions remain the same in the West Melrose and Winston Park areas.

Parking is only allowed on designated sides of the street depending on the day of the week as indicated on notice signs posted throughout the community.

Remember, parking is never allowed on east and west streets – 2-6 a.m.

ALL VILLAGE OF MELROSE PARK PARKING RESTRICTIONS WILL BE STRICTLY ENFORCED AND TICKETS WILL BE WRITTEN.

Provide an Anonymous Crime Tip

The Melrose Park Police Department relies on individuals to help prevent and solve crimes in our community.

If you have information about criminal activity, please submit it.

However, if you would like to be contacted by a police officer, just include a telephone number or email address where you can be reached.

Submit to tips@melroseparkpd.com.

Visit the Melrose Park Police Department Website at www.melroseparkpd.com ...

• For Melrose Park Police Department General Information • To Pay Tickets • To Obtain Police Reports

The website can be translated to Spanish and Polish.

A Message from Director of Police Sam C. Pitassi



*Sam C. Pitassi
Director of Police*



Visit the
Melrose Park
Police Department
Website at
www.melroseparkpd.com

- For Melrose Park Police Department General Information
- To Pay Tickets
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The website can be translated to Spanish and Polish.

Winter Holiday Safety Tips

This holiday season, don't let the spirit of giving lull you into giving burglars, muggers and pickpockets a better chance to do their dirty work. Crooks love the holidays as much as everyone else, especially because it's an opportune time for crime. Homes jam packed with glittering gifts. Stores, malls and downtown streets teeming with unsuspecting shoppers. People rushing around, stressed out and careless, looking for last-minute gifts, trying to get everything done. It's enough to make a crook giddy with holiday joy.

Here are some tips on how to celebrate safely this holiday season.

If You are Traveling

- Get an automatic timer for your lights.
- Ask a neighbor to watch your home, shovel snow and park in the driveway from time to time.
- Don't forget to have mail and newspaper delivery stopped. If it piles up, it's a sure sign you're gone.

If You are Out for the Evening

- Turn on lights and a radio or TV so it looks like someone's home.
- Be extra cautious about locking doors and windows when you leave, even if it's just for a few minutes.
- Don't display gifts where they can be seen from outside.

If You are Shopping

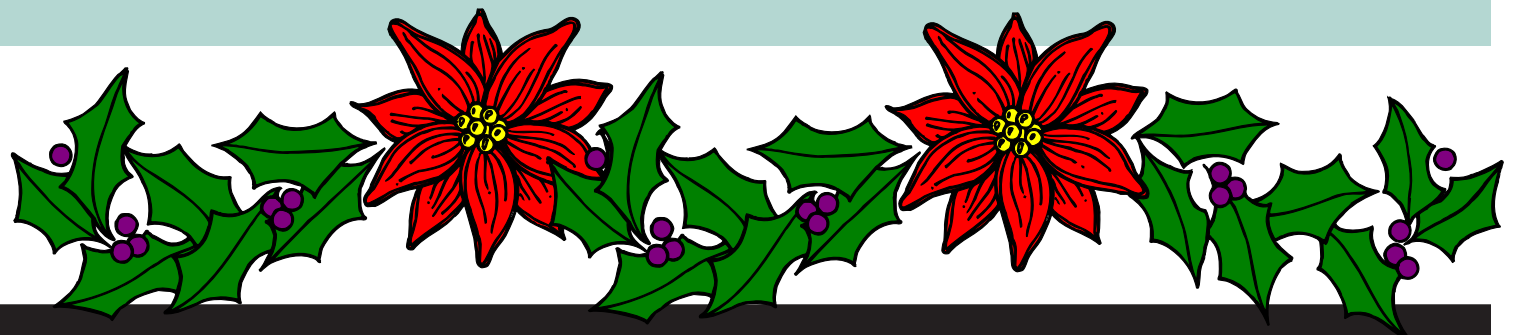
- Stay alert and be aware of what's going on around you.
- Park in a well-lit space and be sure to lock the car, close the windows, and hide shopping bags and gifts in the trunk.
- Avoid carrying large amounts of cash, pay with a check or credit card whenever possible.
- Deter pickpockets and purse-snatchers. Don't overburden yourself with packages. Be extra careful with purses and wallets. Carry a purse close to your body, not dangling by the straps. Put a wallet in an inside coat or front pants pocket.
- Shopping with kids? Teach them to go to a store clerk or security guard if you get separated.

Protect Your Vehicle

- Loading up on all those gifts is a sign of progress in the holiday shopping. But if those packages are left out in the open after they're in the car, your car has become a likely target for thieves. Remember the old cliché "Out of sight, out of mind?" The same idea applies to items in your car.
- Always lock your vehicle and store all items out of sight. Breaking into an empty car isn't worth a thief's time. However, anything left in plain view – from your holiday gifts to spare change, sunglasses, CDs, cell phones or briefcases – may tempt a thief.
- Help prevent your vehicle from being stolen by always locking your car and using anti-theft devices. And, although it's cold, never leave your vehicle running while you run inside your home or a store – even if it's for only a minute or two.

If a Stranger Comes to Your Door

- Criminals sometimes pose as couriers delivering gifts, so be cautious when accepting a package.
- It's not uncommon for people to try to take advantage of others' generosity during the holidays by going door-to-door for charitable donations when there's no charity involved. Ask for identification and find out how the funds will be used. If you aren't satisfied, don't give. Help a charitable organization you know and like instead.



After You've Opened the Gifts

- Burglars know that many households have new, and oftentimes expensive, items in their homes following the December holidays – especially items such as new computers and peripherals, stereo components, televisions, cameras and other electronic equipment. In too many cases, residents make it easy for burglars to figure out which homes to target by putting boxes that identify their new gifts in plain view with their other garbage. Avoid becoming an easy target for post-holiday burglars by not leaving boxes for new electronics and other items in the alley or other garbage pickup locations for several days at a time. Instead, break down any boxes you are throwing out, put them in garbage bags and place them inside a trash can. (In many cases, especially with computer equipment, you might consider keeping the boxes for safe storage, shipping or moving in the future.) Think about keeping broken-down boxes inside – in a garage, for example – until the evening before your regular garbage pickup. Some burglars actually look inside garbage cans for evidence of holiday gifts. And, of course, if you see someone suspicious casing your alley or if you see a burglary in progress, call the Melrose Park Police Department on 911.

Take a Holiday Inventory

- The holidays are a good time to update – or create – your home inventory. Take photos or make videos of items, and list descriptions and serial numbers. If your home is burglarized, having a detailed inventory can help identify stolen items and make insurance claims easier to file.
- Make sure things like TVs, VCRs, stereo equipment, cameras, camcorders, sports equipment, jewelry, silver, computers, home office equipment and power tools are on the list. Remember to check it twice!

Celebrate Responsibly

- The holiday season is a time of celebration and revelry. Drinking and driving is a danger to everyone on the road. Anyone with a BAC of .08 or higher is in violation of Illinois law and may go to jail. Remember that the risk isn't worth it – if you choose to drink alcohol at a party, don't drive. Take a cab, use public transportation or a designated driver. Have fun, but remember to celebrate responsibly.

Holiday Package Theft

- Track deliveries online and confirm delivery has occurred. You can sign up for email notifications to track your packages from initial shipment to its arrival at your home or the recipient's address if you have the gift delivered directly.
- If you know a family member or neighbor will be home, ask them to pick up the packages as soon as they are delivered. Reward them with fresh baked cookies.
- Switch delivery location to work where it can be received by someone and not left on the porch.
- See if the post office or store the product is being shipped from can hold the package for pickup.
- The post office will allow your package to remain safe and secure for up to 30 days.

Enjoy the Season!

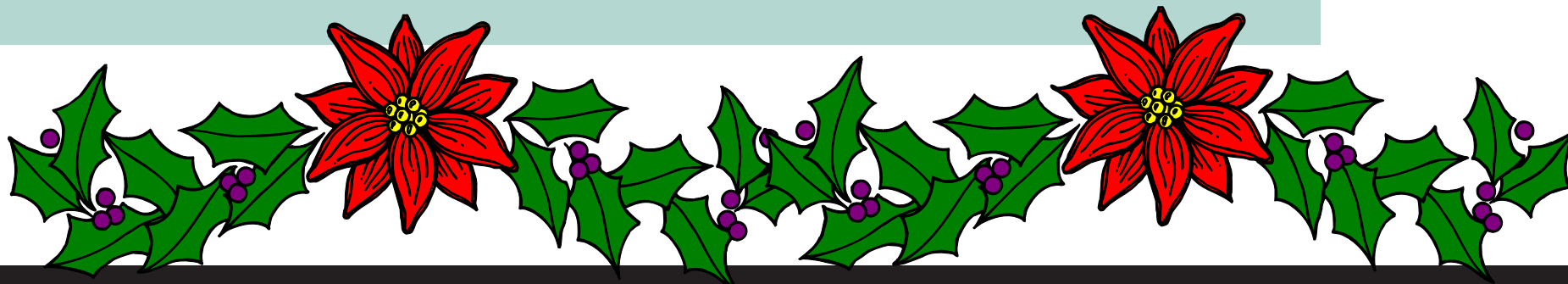
- Last but not least, don't let holiday stress get the best of your holiday spirit. Make time to get together with family, friends and neighbors. And think about reaching out in the spirit of the season and helping someone who's less fortunate or lonely.

Source: <https://mpdc.dc.gov/page/winter-holiday-safety-tips>.



**Melrose
Park
Police
Department**

*Connecting
You to
Community
Resources!*



Melrose Park to Unveil New Lighted Walkway Along North Avenue Business District

Mayor Ron Serpico and the village of Melrose Park are excited to announce the development of a new lighted walkway along North Avenue in the heart of one of the village's business and commercial districts. Construction is now underway for this state-funded project, supported by the state of Illinois and being led by The Will Group, a Wheaton-based company renowned for its innovative lighting and infrastructure solutions. The walkway promises to bring enhanced safety, accessibility and an aesthetic upgrade to the area, fostering a welcoming environment for residents, visitors and local businesses alike.

This project marks a significant step in Mayor Serpico's ongoing commitment to beautifying Melrose Park and enhancing its public spaces in alignment with eco-friendly and green initiatives. The installation of energy-efficient lighting along North Avenue will not only ensure a safe and accessible environment for pedestrians after dark, but also contribute to the village's sustainability goals. The lighting design has been carefully chosen to reduce energy consumption and minimize light pollution, aligning with Melrose Park's dedication to environmental responsibility.

"This new walkway is more than just a path – it's a statement of our commitment to the people of Melrose Park," said Mayor Ron Serpico. "We want our residents and visitors to feel proud of the spaces they walk through. By making these areas safer, more accessible and visually appealing, we are investing in the future of our community and supporting the growth of local businesses."

The walkway will foster a more vibrant community hub that draws residents and visitors alike. This initiative also reflects Mayor Serpico's vision of creating accessible, pedestrian-friendly spaces that encourage foot traffic and support local commerce. By offering a well-lit, safe route through the North Avenue business district, the project aims to attract more shoppers and patrons to local businesses, helping drive economic growth in Melrose Park.

The addition of the lighted walkway along North Avenue is expected to reach completion by the end of the year, with a formal ceremony scheduled to celebrate this new milestone for the village of Melrose Park.

Melrose Park Announces Decorative Roadway Lighting Streetscape Project on North Avenue

Mayor Ron Serpico and the village of Melrose Park are proud to announce an exciting streetscape project that will bring new decorative roadway lighting to the business and commercial district along North Avenue. This state-funded initiative, coordinated by The Will Group, will enhance visibility, safety and the overall aesthetics of the area, while simultaneously advancing the village's commitment to green energy and sustainable infrastructure improvements.

The project features state-of-the-art decorative LED lighting that will brighten North Avenue, providing a modern and inviting atmosphere for residents, visitors and local businesses. These energy-efficient fixtures align with the village's green infrastructure goals, offering improved illumination with reduced energy consumption. While much of the project's impact will be visible through the beautiful lighting above ground, significant upgrades are also being made below ground with new electrical infrastructure to support the system.

"This decorative lighting project is a shining example of our commitment to beautification, safety and sustainability in Melrose Park," said Mayor Ron Serpico. "North Avenue is a vital corridor for our village and this investment not only enhances its visual appeal, but also ensures a safer, more accessible environment for everyone. We're grateful for the state of Illinois' support and for The Will Group's expertise in bringing this transformative vision to life."

In addition to increasing safety through brighter, more reliable lighting, the project reflects Mayor Serpico's long-term vision of fostering economic growth by creating attractive, pedestrian-friendly spaces. Improved lighting and infrastructure will encourage more foot traffic and commerce, benefiting local businesses and enhancing the quality of life for residents.

The decorative lighting streetscape project is scheduled for completion in late spring 2025, at which time the village of Melrose Park will host a celebration to commemorate this significant milestone.



**Melrose Park
Mayor
Ronald M. Serpico
Congratulates**

**ILLINOIS SPEAKER OF THE HOUSE
Emanuel “Chris” Welch
State Representative • 7th District**

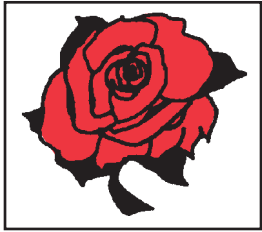
**Norma Hernandez
State Representative • 77th District**

and

**Camille Lilly
State Representative • 78th District**

**On Being Re-Elected
to the
Illinois House of Representatives**

Paid for by Citizens to Elect Ronald M. Serpico.



Village of Melrose Park Public Works Report

*From the Desk of
Gary Marine,
Director of Public Works*

Multi-Purpose Field

A new state-of-the-art, multi-purpose field has been set in place at the Ralph "Babe" Serpico Memorial Field on 25th Avenue. The new diverse field can be used for a football field, soccer field, unified lacrosse field and a new walking track. The field is now open to the public.



Feeding Wildlife

Attention Winston Park Area Residents – Please refrain from feeding wildlife, especially deer, around the Winston Park area. The food is attracting skunks and raccoons, and they are becoming a nuisance throughout this area.

Attention Residents Along Silver Creek Embankment



Please refrain from throwing grass clippings and any other yard waste into the creek.

25th Avenue Municipal Lot

Under Mayor Serpico's direction, the lot on 25th Avenue and Augusta has been paved and open for free parking to residents. The lot on the northeast corner of 25th and Augusta has been paved for additional free parking for residents. The Civic Center's east and west lots have been repaved as well.

Street Parking Restriction Signs

Please follow all street parking restriction signs posted throughout the village.

Street Sweeping

The street sweeper has been out sweeping roadways. Please follow all street sweeping signs located on village streets. Please remove your vehicle from the street to help expedite sweeping.

2025 – Fall Tree Planting Program

The list is now open for 2025 – Fall Tree Planting. To request a tree for 2025, please call the Public Works Department at (708) 343-5128.

2025 – 50/50 Sidewalk Program

If you would like to participate in the 2025 – 50/50 Sidewalk Program to request replacement of sidewalk squares, please call the Public Works Department at (708) 343-5128 for more information.

Melrose Park Dog Park

The village of Melrose Park Dog Park hours are 8 a.m.-8 p.m., seven days a week throughout the summer and fall. The fenced-in Dog Park is located at 13th and Main Street. Dog Park licenses are available at the Village Hall.

Please follow rules posted at the park.



Silver Creek Restoration Project

Under the direction of Mayor Ronald M. Serpico, the Village of Melrose Park Public Works employees constructed the Silver Creek Eagles Nest Park. This is a natural preserve that includes a walking path and a pavilion/gazebo, along with a canoe/kayak launch.

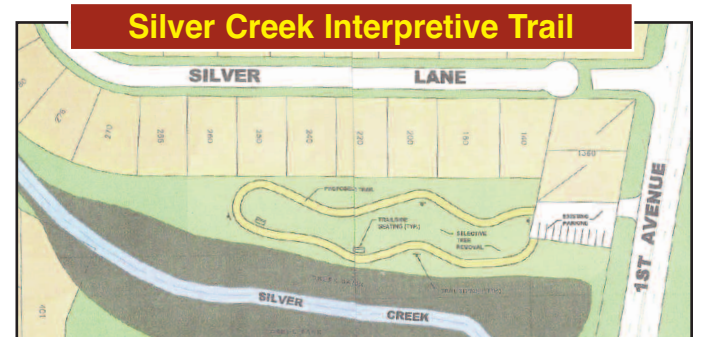
**Phase 5 and 6 of the
Silver Creek Stabilization Project have been completed.
Phase 7 is underway.**

This stabilization project restores the natural balance of the creek by restoring the embankment, and bringing back native landscape and shrubbery along with aquatic habitat. This is an invaluable stream system that provides storm water runoff, flood management and many other benefits for the residents of Melrose Park.



Silver Creek Trail Park

The Silver Creek Trail Park is located off of First Avenue. The trail is centered off the pond between Silver Creek and its tributary, the Des Plaines River. Native plants of this area were once lost to development and are now being reintroduced to the area. With the help of these native plants, more wildlife is returning to the area – from the Bald Eagle (sighted in the area), the Northern Pike, Red Foxes, Black-Crowned Night Herons and Cooper's Hawk, to name a few.



Do's and Don'ts While Visiting the Silver Creek Trail Park

1. No littering. Please clean up after any activities.
2. Pets must be leashed.
3. Smoking or fires are prohibited.
4. Please clean up pet waste and dispose of it.
5. Do not disturb any plants, trees or wildlife.
6. No loitering.
7. No hunting.
8. Fishermen must clean up any cut line, bail containers and all litter.
9. Park opens one hour after sunrise and closes one hour before sunset.
10. Enjoy the park.

The Public Works employees are always in full force, working to keep the village of Melrose Park clean and well-maintained. If you have a request, please feel free to call Gary M. Marine, director of Public Works at (708) 343-5128.

Apply Now for the 2025 Senior Painting Program!



Mayor Serpico announced the village of Melrose Park will once again offer the free Residential Painting Program for individuals 65 years of age and older who reside and own a single family home in Melrose Park. Those who qualify and need light paint work around their homes – fences, garage doors, railings, etc., (no interior painting, or no interior or exterior carpentry) – are encouraged to complete the MP Painting Program Request Form (right) and mail it to:

**The Village of Melrose Park Public Works
Attn.: Gary M. Marine, Director of Public Works
1000 N. 25th Ave.
Melrose Park, IL 60160**

The 2025 Senior Painting Program list will be closed July 31, 2025.
Only one item will be painted per year.
Get your request in early as the list fills fast.

Mayor Serpico's 2025 MP Painting Program Request Form

Please print clearly.

Name _____

Address _____

Phone _____

Age _____ Birthdate _____

One item to be painted (please circle one only):

Fence Garage Door Railings

Only one item will be painted per year. The 2025 list will be closed July 31, 2025.



Village of Melrose Park Senior News

From the Desks of Peggy DiFazio, Director of Senior Services, Special Events and Taste of Melrose Park, and Lorena Anguiano, Bi-Lingual Services

Senior Services

Need help with Medicare, veterans benefits, circuit breakers, etc.?

Need sources for home health care, equipment, etc.?

Have questions you need resources for? We can help. Call Peggy DiFazio at (708) 343-4000, Ext. 4448.

Donation of Mobility Need Items – Canes, Wheelchairs, Walkers, Etc.

The Melrose Park Senior Center is currently accepting donations of canes, wheelchairs, walkers, etc., that can be given to those in need.

If you have something you would like to donate, please call Peggy DiFazio at (708) 343-4000, Ext. 4448.

Benefit Access Program Benefits

Senior Ride Free Transit Benefit • Persons with Disabilities Free Transit Ride • Secretary of State License Plate Discount

Beneficio de Acceso para el Programa de Beneficios

**Beneficio de Transporte Gratuito para personas Mayores de 65 años • Transporte Gratuito para Personas con Incapacidades
Descuento para la Placa de su Carro en la Secretaria del Estado**

For more information, please call (708) 343-4000, Ext. 4448 or Ext. 4452.

Village of Melrose Park to Host Christmas Lights Parade with Santa on Tuesday, Dec. 17, 2024

Mayor Ron Serpico is excited to announce the village of Melrose Park's annual Christmas Lights Parade with Santa, is taking place on Tuesday, Dec. 17, 2024. The parade will begin at 6 p.m., from the Melrose Park Civic Center and will journey through the village, bringing holiday cheer to residents along the way.

This beloved community event is a cherished tradition for Melrose Park, celebrating the festive spirit of the season and bringing together neighbors, friends and families. The Christmas Lights Parade has become a special part of the holiday season, allowing residents to enjoy the twinkling lights, joyous music and, of course, a visit from Santa Claus himself.

Mayor Ron Serpico, shared his excitement for the event stating "Our Christmas Lights Parade has become a highlight of the holiday season here in Melrose Park. It's a time for us to come together as a community and celebrate the joy of the season. Seeing our residents' faces light up as Santa makes his way through the village is truly heartwarming and I invite everyone to join us in this festive tradition."

Spectators along the parade route are encouraged to make this event their own celebration. Residents can:

- Decorate their homes and light up the night with their own holiday lights, creating a glowing path for the parade.
- Bring chairs and blankets to enjoy the parade with family and friends, while sipping hot cocoa or cider.
- Cheer on Santa with handmade signs or by wearing holiday-themed attire.
- Host small gatherings or "watch parties" with neighbors to make the night even more special.

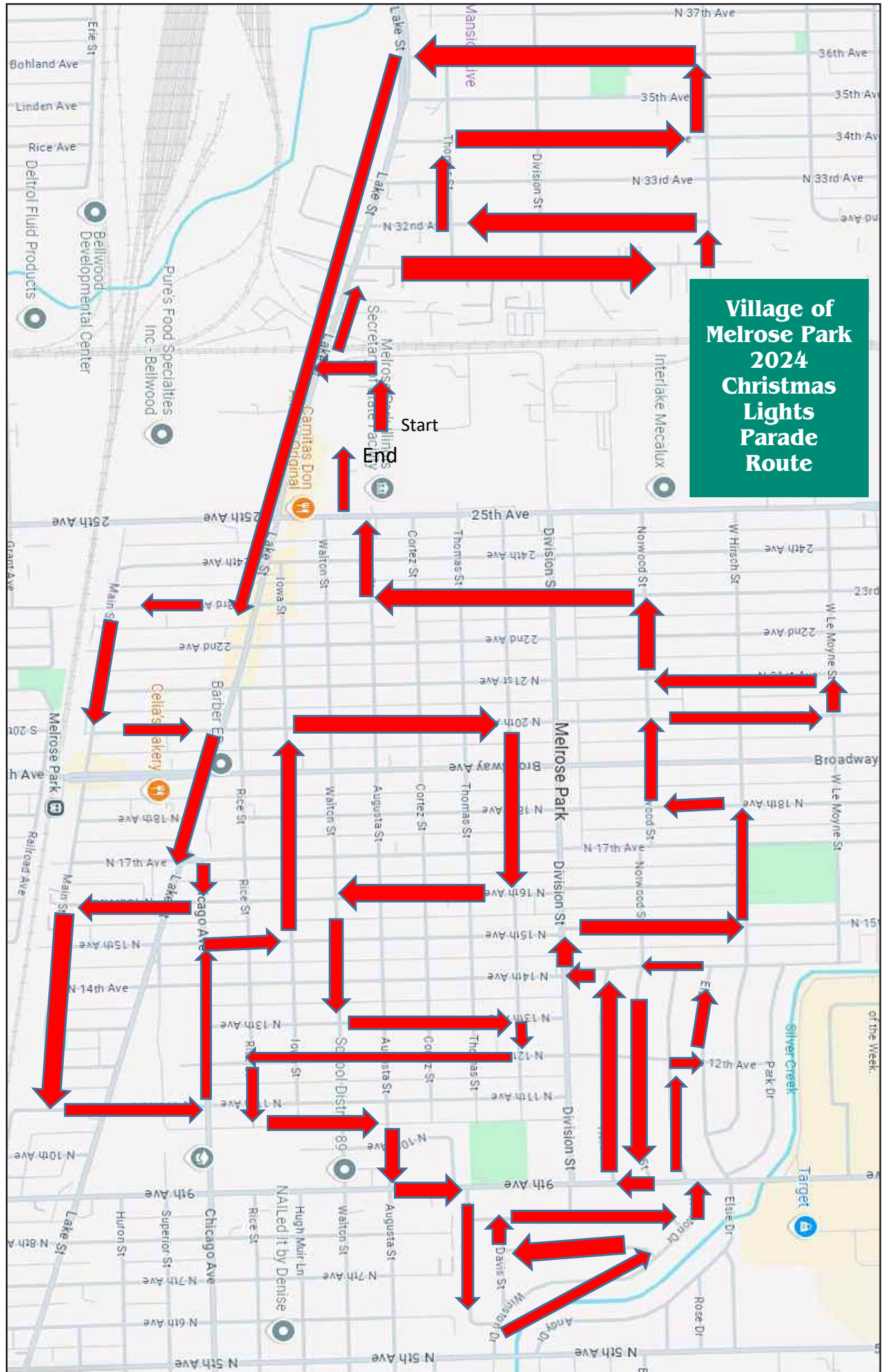
The Christmas Lights Parade will spread holiday cheer throughout the village, bringing families closer and creating lasting memories for the children who eagerly await Santa's arrival.

To stay up-to-date with the parade route and event details, follow the village of Melrose Park on Facebook and Instagram. Updates, route maps and any weather-related announcements will be posted to ensure the best parade experience for all.

Mark your calendars for Tuesday, Dec. 17, 2024, and join us in celebrating the magic of Christmas in Melrose Park!



**Here's
This
Year's
Christmas
Lights
Parade
Route ...
Check it
Out and
Find the
Best Spot
for You
to See
Santa!**



Al Piemonte

**AL PIEMONTE NOW OFFERS BUICK AND GMC
 SAME GREAT AL PIEMONTE SERVICE
 SAME GREAT AL PIEMONTE PRICES
 SAME GREAT AL PIEMONTE COMMITMENT
 TO CUSTOMER SATISFACTION**



Sammy Alfano
sammya@apnissan.com



The **ROSE** AD RESERVATION FORM

Save the Dates!
 Next Issue – February 2025
 (Deadline for material Jan. 25, 2025.)
 Schedule for 2025
 February, April, June, August, October and December

Dear Community Member,
 The Village of Melrose Park publishes *The Rose* (the official newsletter of the Village of Melrose Park) and mails the publication to all Melrose Park residents and businesses. We are offering advertising space and would greatly appreciate your participation.

Included is display ad pricing for your review.

If you are interested in advertising in one or more issues that will be delivered every other month, please complete this form and mail with completed ad to:

The Rose c/o Village of Melrose Park • 1000 N. 25th Ave. • Melrose Park, IL 60160
or Email to: therose@melrosepark.org w/pdf or jpeg file.

(Checks need to be made to the order of Village of Melrose Park.)



Rates – Full Color Ads

- Full Page
\$400 per issue (9 x 10 1/2)
- Half Page
\$200 per issue (9 x 5 1/4)
- 1/4 Page
\$100 per issue (4 1/2 x 5 1/4)
- 1/8 Page
\$50 per issue (4 1/2 x 2 5/8)

The ROSE

Date _____

Name of Business _____

Contact Name _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

E-mail _____

Phone _____ Fax _____

Ad Size (Please Circle): Full Page 1/2 Page 1/4 Page 1/8 Page



Heritage Celebration

Thursday, March 6, 2025 • 6 p.m.

Honoring

MELROSE PARK MAYOR RONALD M. SERPICO

William Paca Award Recipient

PATRICK SANTORO

Lifetime Achievement Award Recipient

JUDGE LISA MARINO

Public Service Leadership Award Recipient

Elmcrest Banquets • 7370 W. Grand Ave. • Elmwood Park

Tickets: \$125 Per Person • Table of 10: \$1,250

Ad Book and Major Sponsorship Options:

Gold Full Page Ad – \$1,000 • Silver Full Page Ad – \$500 • Back Cover Ad – \$1,500 • Inside Back Cover Ad – \$1,000

Red-Framed Full Page Ad – \$350 • Green-Framed Full Page Ad – \$250 • Full Page Ad – \$150

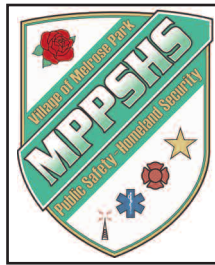
IAPC Heritage Celebration Red Sponsorship – \$1,500 • Includes a Table of 10 and a Red-Framed Ad

IAPC Heritage Celebration Green Sponsorship – \$1,400 • Includes a Table of 10 and a Green-Framed Ad

IAPC Heritage Celebration White Sponsorship – \$1,300 • Includes a Table of 10 and a Full Page Ad

For ticket, table and ad book reservations, Please contact Judy Corvo at judy.iapc@yahoo.com or (708) 369-2500.

Melrose Park Public Safety News



From the Desk of Philip C. Schwartz, Chief of Homeland Security – Public Safety

Winter Storms ... The Deceptive Killers

Winter storms can range from a moderate snow over a few hours to a blizzard with blinding, wind-driven snow that lasts for several days. Some winter storms are large enough to affect several states, while others affect only a single community. Many winter storms are accompanied by dangerously low temperatures and sometimes by strong winds, icing, sleet and freezing rain.

Regardless of the severity of a winter storm, you should be prepared in order to remain safe during these events.

Know the Difference

Winter Storm Outlook – Winter storm conditions are possible in the next two to five days.

Winter Weather Advisory – Winter weather conditions are expected to cause significant inconveniences and may be hazardous. When caution is used, these situations should not be life threatening.

Winter Storm Watch – Winter storm conditions are possible within the next 36 to 48 hours. People in a watch area should review their winter storm plans and stay informed about weather conditions.

Winter Storm Warning – Life-threatening, severe winter conditions have begun or will begin within 24 hours. People in a warning area should take precautions immediately.

How to Prepare for a Winter Storm

- Winterize your vehicle and keep the gas tank full. A full tank will keep the fuel line from freezing.
- Insulate your home by installing storm windows or covering windows with plastic from the inside to keep cold air out.
- Maintain heating equipment and chimneys by having them cleaned and inspected every year.
- If you will be going away during cold weather, leave the heat on in your home, set to a temperature no lower than 55° F.

Put Together a Supply Kit

- Water – at least a three-day supply; one gallon per person per day.
- Food – at least a three-day supply of non-perishable, easy-to-prepare food.
- Flashlight.
- Battery-powered or hand-crank radio (NOAA Weather Radio, if possible).
- Extra batteries.
- First aid kit.
- Medications (seven-day supply) and medical items (hearing aids with extra batteries, glasses, contact lenses, syringes, etc.).
- Multipurpose tool.
- Sanitation and personal hygiene items.
- Copies of personal documents (medication list and pertinent medical information, proof of address, deed/lease to home, passports, birth certificates, insurance policies).
- Cell phone with chargers.
- Family and emergency contact information.
- Extra cash.
- Baby supplies (bottles, formula, baby food, diapers).
- Pet supplies (collar, leash, ID, food, carrier, bowl).
- Tools/supplies for securing your home.
- Sand, rock salt or non-clumping kitty litter to make walkways and steps less slippery.
- Warm coats, gloves or mittens, hats, boots, and extra blankets and warm clothing for all household members.
- Ample alternate heating methods such as fireplaces or wood- or coal-burning stoves.

Winter's Impact

Storms with Strong Winds

Sometimes winter storms are accompanied by strong winds creating blizzard conditions with blinding wind-driven snow, severe drifting and dangerous wind chill. Strong winds with these intense storms and cold fronts can knock down trees, utility poles and power lines. Storms near the coast can cause coastal flooding and beach erosion as well as sink ships at sea. In the west and Alaska, winds descending off the mountains can gust to 100 mph or more damaging roofs and other structures.

Extreme Cold

Extreme cold often accompanies a winter storm or is left in its wake. Prolonged exposure to the cold can cause frostbite or hypothermia and become life-threatening. Infants and elderly people are most susceptible. What constitutes extreme cold and its effect varies across different areas of the United States. In areas unaccustomed to winter weather, near freezing temperatures are considered "extreme cold." Freezing temperatures can cause severe damage to citrus fruit crops and other vegetation. Pipes may freeze and burst in homes that are poorly insulated or without heat. In the north, below zero temperatures may be considered as "extreme cold." Long cold spells can cause rivers to freeze, disrupting shipping. Ice jams may form and lead to flooding.

Ice Storms

Heavy accumulations of ice can bring down trees, electrical wires, telephone poles and lines, and communication towers. Communications and power can be disrupted for days while utility companies work to repair the extensive damage. Even small accumulations of ice may cause extreme hazards to motorists and pedestrians.

Heavy Snow Storms

Heavy snow can immobilize a region and paralyze a city, stranding commuters, stopping the flow of supplies and disrupting emergency and medical services. Accumulations of snow can collapse buildings and knock down trees and power lines. In rural areas, homes and farms may be isolated for days, and unprotected livestock may be lost. In the mountains, heavy snow can lead to avalanches. The cost of snow removal, repairing damages and loss of business can have large economic impacts on cities and towns.

Winter Precipitation

Snow

- FLURRIES – Light snow falling for short durations. No accumulation or light dusting is all that is expected.
- SHOWERS – Snow falling at varying intensities for brief periods of time. Some accumulation is possible.
- SQUALLS – Brief, intense snow showers accompanied by strong, gusty winds. Accumulation may be significant. Snow squalls are best known in the Great Lakes region.
- BLOWING SNOW – Wind-driven snow that reduces visibility and causes significant drifting. Blowing snow may be snow that is falling and/or loose snow on the ground picked up by the wind.
- BLIZZARD – Winds over 35 mph with snow and blowing snow reducing visibility to near zero.

Sleet

Raindrops that freeze into ice pellets before reaching the ground. Sleet usually bounces when hitting a surface and does not stick to objects. However, it can accumulate like snow and cause a hazard to motorists.

Freezing Rain

Rain that falls onto a surface with a temperature below freezing. This causes it to freeze to surfaces, such as trees, cars, and roads, forming a coating or glaze of ice. Even small accumulations of ice can cause a significant hazard.

Winter Storm Facts: What Makes a Winter Storm?

Cold Air

Below freezing temperatures in the clouds and near the ground are necessary to make snow and/or ice.

Moisture

To form clouds and precipitation. Air blowing across a body of water, such as a large lake or the ocean, is an excellent source of moisture.

Lift

something to raise the moist air to form the clouds and cause precipitation. An example of lift is warm air colliding with cold air and being forced to rise over the cold dome. The boundary between the warm and cold air masses is called a front. Another example of lift is air flowing up a mountain side.

**For more information, please call
Melrose Park Homeland Security ~ Public Safety at (708) 649-8000.**



Village of Melrose Park

Mayor Serpico's Snow Removal Program for Senior and Special Needs Residents



**RESIDENTS
MUST
PRE-REGISTER
EVERY
SEASON.**

**This service is offered to seniors (65 and older),
disabled with special needs and
those who have no family or neighbors to help.**

**AT 4 INCHES OR MORE OF PREDICTED FALLING SNOW,
YOUR NAME WILL BE ADDED TO THE SNOW REMOVAL LIST.
WE WILL DO A PATH FROM YOUR FRONT DOOR TO THE STREET
AND A SWIPE OF YOUR DRIVEWAY.
SINGLE FAMILY HOMES ONLY (NO RENTALS) - NO ALLEYS
- NO ALLEY SKIRTS TO GARAGE - NO BACKYARDS.**

For more
information,
please call
(708) 649-4450.

TO RESERVE SERVICES FROM THE VILLAGE OF MELROSE PARK SNOW REMOVAL PROGRAM
FOR THE FULL WINTER SEASON, YOU MUST COMPLETE AND MAIL
THE MAYOR SERPICO AND THE VILLAGE OF MELROSE PARK SNOW REMOVAL RESERVATION FORM TO:
Village of Melrose Park, Snow Removal • 1000 N. 25th Ave., Melrose Park, IL 60160



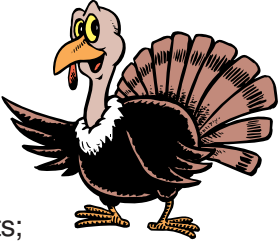
Mayor Serpico and the Village of Melrose Park Snow Removal Reservation Form

TO RESERVE SERVICES, YOU MUST COMPLETE AND MAIL THIS FORM. PLEASE PRINT CLEARLY.

Name _____
Address _____
Phone _____ Age _____

**MELROSE PARK RESIDENTS – PLEASE TRY TO HELP SENIOR AND
DISABLED NEIGHBORS IN THE EVENT OF INCLEMENT WEATHER – THANK YOU.**

Mayor Serpico Says Thank You to All Melrose Park Thanksgiving Day Volunteers!



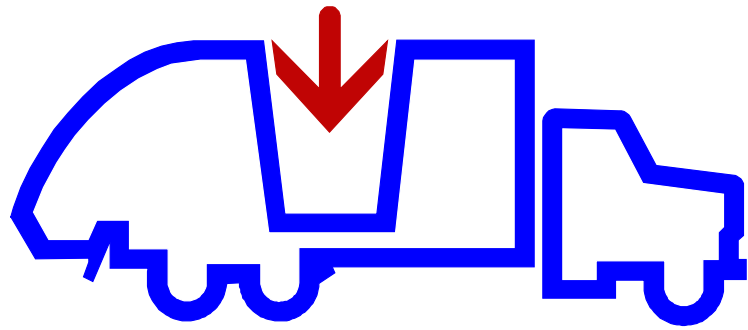
Thank you to all the community members who took some time out of their day on Thanksgiving to assist with Melrose Park's Meal Delivery Program.

More than 260 meals were delivered to Melrose Park's senior and disabled residents.

Representatives from Melrose Park's Homeland Security – Public Safety; Fire, Police and Public Works departments; the MP Senior Program; MP Youth Commission; and Veterans Park District helped deliver the holiday meals prepared by Cuomo Catering, Northlake.

Mayor Serpico thanks all the volunteers for making our community members' Thanksgiving Day extra special!





Village of Melrose Park Residential Garbage Pickup Information

Republic Services Garbage Schedule for Residential Bi-Weekly Pickup

24th Avenue to 11th Avenue – Tuesday and Friday

Winston Park Area – Tuesday and Friday

West Melrose – Tuesday and Friday

North of North Avenue – Tuesday and Friday

Republic Services is contracted to pick up your regular, everyday garbage and household items, such as couches, tables, mattresses, box springs, desks and chairs, etc.

Recycling and yard waste is collected on Tuesdays from April through November and must be placed in a 33-gallon refuse can or biodegradable paper bags. Plastic bags will not be accepted.

All items are to be put out the night before or morning of scheduled garbage pickup.

Winston Park Area and West Melrose – Once garbage has been picked up, garbage container is to be removed from curb line and placed back on resident's property.

The Village of Melrose Park Public Works Department Garbage Pickup Schedule

24th Avenue to 10th Avenue – North Side from Cortez to North Avenue – Monday

24th Avenue to 10th Avenue – South Side from Cortez to Main Street – Tuesday

Winston Park Area – Wednesday West Melrose – Thursday North of North Avenue – Thursday

The village of Melrose Park Public Works Department pickup items include all household remodeling items (homeowner/self – not contractor), such as kitchen and bathroom cabinets, drywall and cement.

All items are to be put out the night before or before 7 a.m. the morning of scheduled garbage pickup.

Once village trucks have passed and picked up items, the trucks will not pass again.

Any other garbage items are not to be left out and are to be put out for the next scheduled pickup.

This service is for Melrose Park residents in single and two-flat buildings only.

Commercial and apartment buildings must use a private scavenger company.

Village of Melrose Park Public Works regular hours are 7 a.m.-3 p.m.

This information is also available at www.melrosepark.org.

ATTENTION RESIDENTS – CALL TO REQUEST REPLACEMENT RESIDENT GARBAGE CANS

For a missing or damaged garbage can, please call the Melrose Park Public Works Department directly at (708) 343-5128 to request a replacement garbage can.

REPLACEMENT RESIDENT RECYCLING CANS

For the new larger recycling cans, please call the Melrose Park Public Works Department directly at (708) 343-5128 to request a recycling can. The smaller recycling can will no longer be available at the village Public Works Department or from Republic Services.

Free Exercise for Melrose Park Seniors

*Socially
Distanced
Activity*

*Face
Masks
Required*

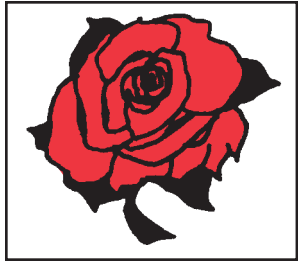


*Come Join in the Fun with
Instructor Barb Rubright
of Rube's Garage!*

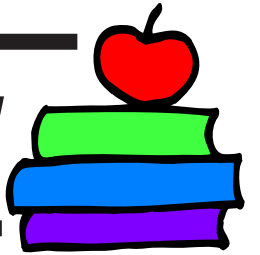
Monday-Friday • 9-10 a.m.

**Melrose Park Civic Center
1000 N. 25th Ave. • Melrose Park**

For more information, please call (708) 343-4000, Ext. 4448.



Melrose Park Public Library



MP Melrose Park PL Public Library

www.MPPLibrary.org

RYONDA FENTRY CHAIR YOGA CLASSES

CHAIR YOGA

ADULTS | SENIORS PROGRAM

Designed for all levels. The classes include breathing, meditation, stretching in the chair, some standing poses, & ends with relaxation. No equipment needed.


FRIDAYS:
10:30 AM - 11:30 AM


Registration Required
PHONE: (708) 649-7485
EMAIL: mpref@mpplibrary.org
ONLINE: mpplibrary.org

Register Now!
BEGIN YOUR JOURNEY...

2025 DATES

January 17th
February 14th
March 14th
April 11th
May 16th
June 20th
July 18th
August 15th
September 19th
October 17th
November 14th
December 19th





Adult | Senior Program

MEDITATION SOUNDBATH

Yoga instructor Rhonda Fentry leads a form of meditation using ambient overlapping sounds and vibrations from crystal and Tibetan singing bowls, tapping into your subconscious and awakening new energy.

Please bring your own yoga mat

Registration Required
PHONE: (708) 649-7485
EMAIL: mpref@mpplibrary.org
ONLINE: mpplibrary.org

Register Now!

Saturdays
12:00 PM - 1:00 PM

2025 Dates:
January 18th
May 17th
October 18th




Need assistance filling your taxes?

Triton College offers free tax assistance for seniors age 60+ from low- and moderate-income households through RSVP (Retired and Senior Volunteer Program).

Call to make an appointment:

(708) 456-0300, Ext. 3895.



Check the website or call for the most current information on hours and procedures.



Mon Wed Fri 9:00am - 5:00pm
 Tue Thu 9:00am - 7:00pm
 Sat 10:00am - 2:00pm
 Last Saturday of the month - Closed
 Sunday - Closed
 Memorial Day thru Labor Day - Closed on Saturdays

MPPLibrary.org
 801 N Broadway
 Melrose Park, IL 60160
mps@mpplibrary.org
 (708)649-7400



Melrose Park Public Library



M P Melrose Park
P L Public Library

Youth Services



Make It Mondays

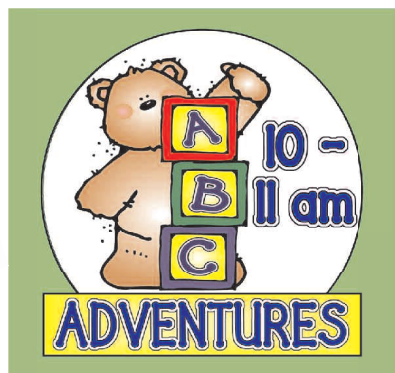
Weekly Crafts on YouTube

Make something special every week with us on the Melrose Park Library Official YouTube Channel! Contact us for information, and drop by the library to pick up the weekly craft supplies. Ages 3 & up.

Online Storytime

Bi-Monthly on our Website

We are posting virtual story times online the first and third Wednesdays of every month! We will also have available for pick up at the library an activity package and unique craft to celebrate the story time theme! You will find all our videos on our website.

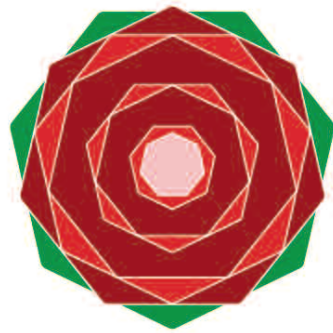


ABC Adventures

Join our interactive playtime for fun with stories, music, puzzles, toys, and more! Ages 1-5 with a caregiver.

Wednesdays - 10:00am - 11:00am

All dates and times are subject to change without prior notice. Please see the website, or call us for updated programming information. All programs at the library are free but registration is required. MPPL card holders have first priority. To register, or with any further questions, please call 708.649.7400



MELROSE PARK
CHAMBER OF COMMERCE
& COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

New Chamber Members and Renewals

The Melrose Park Chamber of Commerce and Community Development (MPCCCD) welcomed three new businesses as members in October and November, and has over 200 current members. Please help us welcome the Victory Center of Riverwoods, US Air Force and Wintrust Financial Corporation on their membership and partnership with the MPCCCD.

We also want to give special thanks to the six businesses that renewed memberships in October and November, and continue to participate in networking events, information sessions and provide feedback and surveys to help the chamber connect them with the resources and solutions needed to support and fuel economic growth in our community. Please join us in thanking and supporting these businesses, they are Melrose Park Currency Exchange, Playas Nayaritas, Proviso Community Bank (Wintrust), Sahara Asian Elderly Care, Thatcher Oaks Awning Co. and Winston Brands.

The Melrose Park Chamber of Commerce and Community Development now has over 200 members and the list continues to grow each month. If you are not currently a member of the MPCCCD, please reach out to Isaac Bazbaz, executive director, via email at ibazbaz@mpcccd.org or call (708) 343-9500 and he will schedule a time to meet with you to discuss the benefits of partnering and working with our chamber.

For information about membership, please visit the chamber website Membership page at <https://mpcccd.org/benefits-dues/>.

Shop Melrose Park this Holiday Season

The Melrose Park Chamber of Commerce and Community Development encourages you to shop and eat local this holiday season.

We all hear the messaging “Shop Local” and “Shop Small” every holiday season and those appeals are critical to support the businesses in Melrose Park that do so much every day to fuel our local economy and provide jobs to people that live in and around Melrose Park. We understand that online shopping and even ordering meals are transactions that are often done online, but we encourage you to visit and shop our local businesses whenever possible. Even doing an in-store pickup of an online order helps the local business to get the sales credit for your transaction.

Thank you in advance for shopping Melrose Park. Have a Merry Christmas and a safe and happy holiday season!

Learn More About the Melrose Park Chamber of Commerce and Community Development!

If you are not getting emails from the MPCCCD about events, training or technical assistance offered for certifications, grant applications, etc., sign up for our newsletters at <https://mpcccd.org>. You can also follow the chamber on Facebook or LinkedIn to stay current on chamber activities!

To schedule an appointment to learn more about the chamber or to get information on membership, please reach out to Isaac Bazbaz, executive director, via email at ibazbaz@mpcccd.org or call (708) 343-9500 and he will schedule a time to meet with you.

Our Businesses to Resources

On Oct. 24, the MPCCCD partnered with Hinsdale Community Bank, Wintrust Community Bank, Joseph Business School, the SBA and the SBDC to host an event to help connect entrepreneurs and small-business owners to resources and information to help fuel growth in their business.

The event included two panel discussions with the first focused on sustainability and long-term growth, and the second covered traditional and nontraditional ways to access capital to fuel growth.



Thank you to Wintrust Community Bank for hosting an outstanding event and for inviting the MPCCCD to partner and help promote this event, and for their efforts to connect businesses to resources to help them meet and exceed their business goals.

Strengthening Business Relationships through In-Person Networking Events!

On Nov. 21, the Melrose Park Chamber of Commerce and Community Development hosted its final quarterly Chamber After-Hours Networking Event for 2024, which was attended by over 40 local business owners, managers and community leaders.

Isaac Bazbaz, executive director of the Melrose Park Chamber of Commerce and Community Development, said "Our goal with these networking events is to create opportunities for local businesses to connect, share ideas and support each other. Tonight's turnout and the enthusiasm we've seen are testaments to the vibrant and collaborative spirit of our community." Chamber members continue to enjoy these networking opportunities for free as part of their annual membership dues.

The Melrose Park Chamber of Commerce and Community Development is committed to hosting events that promote networking, professional growth and community engagement. This After-Hours Business Networking Event was a significant step toward fostering deeper connections within the business community of Melrose Park.

Although dates for the 2025 After Hours Events have not been finalized, they will be announced and communicated on the website at <https://members.mpcccd.org/events/> or you can call (708) 343-9500 to learn more about future events and initiatives.



**Melrose Park Chamber of Commerce • 900 N. 25th Ave. • Melrose Park, IL 60160
(708) 343-9500 • www.mpcccd.org**



Celebrate Mayor Serpico's



27th Annual Toys for Tots Drive 2024

Once again the village of Melrose Park is asking members of our community to come together for this special cause and kindly donate a new, unwrapped toy for the holidays.

Collection bins are located in the Melrose Park Civic Center foyer (1000 N. 25th Ave.) and items can be dropped off now-Dec. 18.

For additional information, please email Village Clerk Mary Ann Paolantonio – maps@melrosepark.org.

2024 Melrose Park Little League All-Stars Juniors Team Makes History



The 2024 Melrose Park Little League All-Stars Juniors team has achieved an historic feat this season, capturing the District 10 championship title, clinching the Illinois state championship, and proudly representing the state at the Regionals in Pendleton, Indiana. Through exceptional teamwork, unwavering determination and unmatched skill, the team triumphed over fierce competition to secure their place among the best in Illinois. Their state championship victory is a testament to their dedication, hard work and relentless pursuit of excellence.

Under the guidance of head coach James Kateeb, assistant coach Danny Corral, and coach Michael Young, the 2024 MPLL All-Stars reached new heights. Congratulations to these talented athletes and their coaching staff for this monumental achievement!

The 2024 MPLL All-Stars Juniors team includes Jaida Cervantes (#7), Aricel Chavez (#14), Gisella Corra (#8), Sophia Deoudes (#24), Estela Garcia (#30), Leilany Gomez (#21), Sophia Hernandez (#12), Sophia Kateeb (#13), Alyson Lopez (#1), Isabella Marinaro (#11), Andrea Medina (#42), Hailey Smith-Young (#90) and Ariani Zito (#99).

This accomplishment marks a proud moment in Melrose Park Little League's history and the entire community celebrates their success!

Santa Claus Makes an Early Stop at Winston Plaza

Crowd Excitedly Seeks His Arrival by Helicopter



On Saturday, Nov. 16, a large crowd gathered in the Winston Plaza parking lot to experience the annual helicopter arrival of Santa Claus. Families came together and really enjoyed speaking with Santa, and taking photos with the jolly old man in the big red suit to launch the start of the holiday season.

Free fun for everyone included carolling, a magic show, face painting, balloon art, kids crafts and more!

Mayor Serpico was on hand and thanks Winston Plaza on behalf of the village of Melrose Park for hosting another fun and crowd-pleasing community event.



Village Hall Announces Holiday Closings

The Melrose Park Village Hall will be closed for the following holidays: Christmas Eve (1/2 Day) – Tuesday, Dec. 24, 2024; Christmas Day – Wednesday, Dec. 25, 2024; New Year’s Eve (1/2 Day) – Tuesday, Dec. 31, 2024; New Year’s Day – Wednesday, Jan. 1, 2025; Martin Luther King, Jr. Day – Monday, Jan. 20, 2025; Presidents Day – Monday, Feb. 17, 2025; Good Friday – Friday, April 18, 2025; Memorial Day – Monday, May 26, 2025; Juneteenth – Thursday, June 19, 2025; Independence Day – Friday, July 4, 2025; Labor Day – Monday, Sept. 1, 2025; Columbus Day – Monday, Oct. 13, 2025; Veterans Day – Tuesday, Nov. 11, 2025; Thanksgiving Day – Thursday, Nov. 27, 2025; Day After Thanksgiving – Friday, Nov. 28, 2025; Christmas Eve (1/2 Day) – Wednesday, Dec. 24, 2025; Christmas Day – Thursday, Dec. 25, 2025; New Year’s Eve (1/2 Day) – Wednesday, Dec. 31, 2025; and New Year’s Day – Thursday, Jan. 1, 2026.

Residents are asked to make note of the dates listed.
For more information, call the Village Hall at (708) 343-4000.

Public Notice Regarding Scheduled Board Meetings

Take notice that the village of Melrose Park, Cook County, Ill., will conduct the regular scheduled meetings of the president and the board of trustees on the second and fourth Mondays of each calendar month, unless otherwise noted, at 6 p.m. at the Village Board Meeting Room located on the first floor of the Melrose Park Police Department, 1 N. Broadway Ave., Melrose Park.

The remaining schedule for calendar year 2024 is: Dec. 23.
The schedule for calendar year 2025 is: Jan. 27; Feb. 24; March 24; April 28; Tuesday, May 27; June 23; July 28; Aug. 25; Sept. 22; Oct. 27; Nov. 24; and Dec. 22.

For more information, call (708) 343-4000.

Franciscan Resource Center Offers Local Assistance

Melrose Park-based Franciscan Resource Center is a nonprofit center for persons seeking help in their human needs, such as health, depression, domestic problems, hunger, medical aid, addictions, anger management, substance abuse, clothing and basic human needs.

The resource center refers persons to area agencies and follows up on each person’s needs.

For an appointment or further information, please call Sr. Nila or Sr. Jan at (708) 567-5083, Monday-Friday, 8:30 a.m.-3:30 p.m.

Centro De Recursos Franciscanos

El Centro de Recursos Franciscanos es un centro sin fines de lucro para personas que buscan ayuda en sus necesidades humanas, como la salud mental depresión inmigración, problemas internos, hambre, ayuda, medica, adicciones, control de la ira, abuso de sustancias, ropa y necesidades humanas basicas.

Este centro de recursos ayuda a referir a personas, a las agencias adecuadas y hacen el seguimiento para que las personas reciban la ayuda necesaria.

Por favor llame a la hermana. Nila o hermana. Jan al (708) 567-5083 para hacer una cita ... Lunes-Viernes 8:30 a.m.-3:30 p.m. ubicacion en Melrose Park.

Show Your Support for Our Veterans and Those Currently Serving Our Country!

Call the Village Hall Today to Reserve a Flag in Their Honor



In 2014, Mayor Serpico and the Melrose Park Youth Commission launched Melrose Park's Avenue of Flags campaign and we're continuing our efforts.

Flags representing the United States of America, the state of Illinois, the village of Melrose Park, the United States Army, United States Navy, United States Air Force, United States Marines, United States Coast Guard, United States Space Force and POW/MIA are being displayed on lightpoles within the village.

If you know of a veteran or someone currently serving from the community and would like to have a flag displayed on a lightpole near their home, please call the Melrose Park Village Hall at (708) 343-4000 with details on their U.S. military branch.

Melrose Park is Looking for Residents Currently Serving in the Military



Attention Residents

The village of Melrose Park would like to know of any residents who are currently serving in the military. If you have a family member or know of a resident who is, please contact Jasmine Mendez via email – jmendez@melrosepark.org or by phone – (708) 343-4000, Ext. 4414.

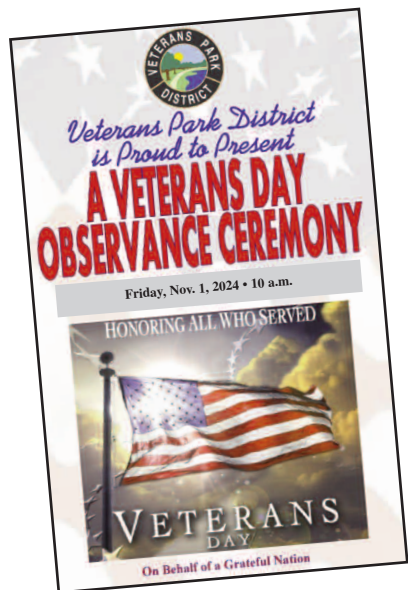
Donations of any amount to support Melrose Park's Avenue of Flags initiative are appreciated and can be sent to: Village of Melrose Park/Avenue of Flags, 1000 N. 25th Ave., Melrose Park, Ill. 60160. Please make checks payable to the Melrose Park Youth Commission or Melrose Park Sports & Family Benefit Fund.



Veterans Park District Proudly Salutes the Courageous Men and Women Who Have Served Our Nation

A Salute to Our Veterans ...

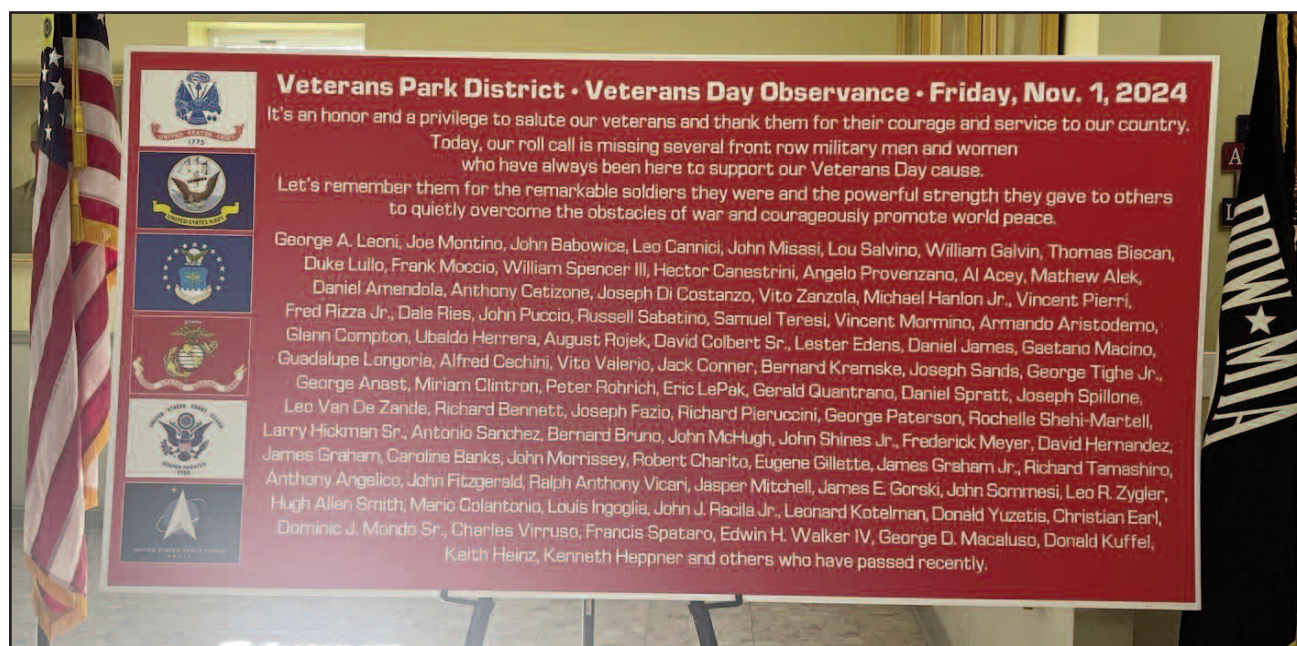
We are grateful for your service to our country and will always embrace you as true and trusted friends, who proudly stood, and still stand, side by side with your colleagues to keep the United States of America strong and the greatest country in the world to live and raise a family.



On Friday, Nov. 1, Veterans Park District held its annual Veterans Day Observance in honor of those who have courageously served our great country.

Community members came together to respectfully show their appreciation for veterans of the U.S. Armed Forces – Army, Navy, Air Force, Marines, Coast Guard and Space Force, and those currently serving.

Observance ceremony speakers and participants included American Legion Franklin Park Post #974, Fr. Francisco Ortega, VPD Executive Director Bill Otte, Vocalist Gianna Capra Uroni, Korean War veteran Eugene Piltaver, State of Illinois Veteran of the Year Dan Bogojevich (Evanston American Legion Post #42), Vietnam War veteran Angelo Egizio, Melrose Park Mayor Ron Serpico, Honor Flight representative Denise Iosco, and Veterans Park District commissioners Ron Boscaccy and Tom Olson.



Thank you to all attendees who came out to help recognize our veterans and those who are remembered, but no longer with us.



**A Holiday Note from
Your Christmas Tree Guy ...**

*Ken's Christmas Trees
has relocated to Winston Plaza,
between Best Buy and Chick-Fil-A.*

*We have provided trees, wreaths
and garland to Melrose Park and the
surrounding area for the past 50 years
(30 years at Kiddieland).*

*We will be open now through Dec. 22,
8 a.m.-10 p.m., every day to meet your needs.*

*See you soon,
Your Tree Guy - Dave Guenther*



Melrose Park

Village Hall News

Village Hall Hours – 9 a.m.-5 p.m., Monday through Friday
(May be subject to change.)

Birth Certificates

Birth Certificates – \$15 each,
\$4 per additional certification or copy requested.

We only provide birth certificates if the individual was born in Melrose Park.
Birth certificates can be only be obtained by the individual themselves,
a parent, or legal guardian.

A valid ID is required or in a legal guardian case,
the proper documentation is required along with the valid ID.

Death Certificates

Death Certificates (Including Fetal Death) – \$17 each, \$6 per additional certification or copy requested.

Vehicle Sticker Information

New stickers can be purchased at the Village Hall. Pricing varies based on type of vehicle.

For additional information, please call the Village Hall at (708) 343-4000.



Community Nutrition Network
and Senior Services Association *A non-profit organization*



You Can Change a Life!

**VOLUNTEERS
NEEDED!**

Monday thru Friday mornings
Volunteer 1 day a week or more!
Mileage reimbursement available!



**Contact Us at (312) 207-5290 or
Email Volunteer@cnnssa.org.**

Funds, in whole or in part, for this publication were provided through AgeOptions under Title III of the Older American Act as administered through the Illinois Department on Aging and the Federal Administration on Aging.



Happy Holidays!

RON FABIANI
YOUR "MELROSE PARK"
REAL ESTATE SPECIALIST

**MID-AMERICA
REALTY & MORTGAGE**
1805 N. BROADWAY • MELROSE PARK
(708) 415-2484

Season's Greetings!



**AREA TOWING
AND RECOVERY**
Frank Varchetto Jr.

**1401 N. First Ave. • Melrose Park
(708) 345-4665**



Season's Greetings



Beth Black Ins and Fin Svcs
Beth Bizzarri Black, Agent

501 W. North Avenue, Suite 101
Melrose Park, IL 60160
Bus 708-344-7474 Fax 708-344-7476
beth@bethblack1.com
www.bethblack1.com



Providing Insurance and Financial Services



*Merry Christmas
and
Happy New Year!*



HALLOWEEN

Boo-tiful, Scary, Fun and Frightful!

The DeRose family was very excited about showcasing their outdoor setup during this year's Halloween season!

Their home was decorated early and featured some boo-tiful items, including witches, skeletons, pumpkins and more. A friendly character waiting to greet trick-or-treaters was also part of the arrangement!

Great job ... Everything looked fang-tastic!

**Merry Christmas
and
Happy New Year**



From the
**MELROSE PARK
POLICE DEPARTMENT**
SAM C. PITASSI
DIRECTOR OF POLICE
ANTHONY G. GRECO
DEPUTY CHIEF OF POLICE

**Season's
Greetings!**



From the
**MELROSE PARK
FIRE DEPARTMENT**
RICK BELTRAME
DIRECTOR OF FIRE DEPARTMENT
JAMES WROSCH **STEVE MORELLA**
ASST. FIRE CHIEF ASST. FIRE CHIEF



**Merry Christmas
and
Happy New Year!**

*On behalf of the
Melrose Park Free Methodist Church,
we wish you and yours a
very Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year!
All are welcome to join us on Sundays at 11:15 a.m.,
for our weekly worship service.
We are located at 841 Elsie Dr., Melrose Park.
For additional info, call
Rev. Jim Pagani at (708) 343-2386.*

**Season's
Greetings!**



**ELLA'S
TAVERN**
MELROSE PARK

Season's Greetings!



**Your Success is
Our Business!**

*Customized Training Designed for
Your Business Needs*

Contact me today!

Laura Fisher • laurafisher@triton.edu • (708) 456-0300, Ext. 3768



Triton College
Center for Business and
Professional Development

**Merry Christmas
and
Happy New Year!**

From the
**Savaglio
Family**





Merry Christmas
and
Happy New Year!



**Veterans
Park District**

(708) 343-5270 • www.vpdpark.org

Season's
Greetings!



Triton College

(708) 456-0300

www.triton.edu

Season's
Greetings!



DISTRICT 89

MAYWOOD | MELROSE PARK | BROADVIEW

(708) 450-2460 • www.maywood89.org

Merry Christmas
and
Happy New Year!

**MELROSE PARK
BOY SCOUT
TROOP
4112**



**MERRY CHRISTMAS
AND
HAPPY NEW YEAR!**



(708) 279-0519

www.mapofhopefoundation.org

Merry Christmas
and
Happy New Year!



**MELROSE
YARD SERVICES**



**MICHAEL
KESLING**

Over 35 Years
Experience

(708) 280-4448



**Happy
Holidays!**

**Melrose Park
Departments of
Homeland Security ~
Public Safety**



**MERRY CHRISTMAS
AND
HAPPY NEW YEAR!**

**Village of
Melrose Park
Public Works
Department**



**Season's
Greetings!**

**Melrose Park
Public Library
801 Broadway • Melrose Park
(708) 649-7400
MPPLibrary.org**



**Merry Christmas
and
Happy New Year!**

**MELROSE PARK
SENIOR SERVICES
DEPARTMENT**



***Happy
Holidays!***

**Village of
Melrose Park
Building Department**



**Happy
Holidays!**

**MELROSE
PARK
YOUTH
COMMISSION**

1000 N. 25th Ave. • Melrose Park
(708) 343-2015



Village of Melrose Park

**Mayor Serpico
and the
Village of Melrose Park
are Seeking
Snow Removal and
Landscaping Professionals to
Provide Affordably Priced
Assistance to Our Residents
When Needed ...**



Interested parties will be listed on a special property maintenance services page in upcoming issues of *The Rose*.

To be considered, please send a copy of your business card to Director of Senior Services Peggy DiFazio (peg@melrosepark.org) or you can call (708) 343-4000, Ext. 4448, for more information.

Important Melrose Park Village Notice ...

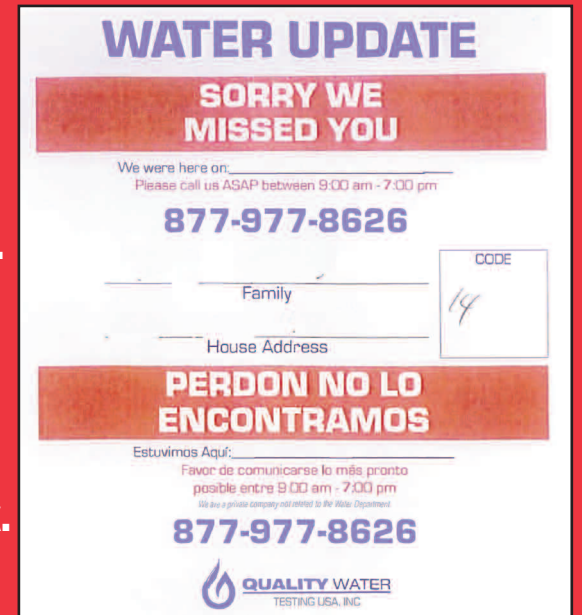
**Alert, Alert, Alert!
Water Update Flyer Being Circulated is
Not from the Village of Melrose Park.
Do NOT Contact This Company!**

Dear Residents,
Please be advised, the pictured flyer is being distributed in the village from Quality Water Testing USA, Inc. regarding a water update.

Please do not call this company as they are not affiliated with the village of Melrose Park.

Should you have additional questions, please do not hesitate to contact Rose in the Melrose Park Water Department by calling (708) 343-4000, Ext. 4435.

Thank you.



Manage Your Water Bill Online ... It's Easy!

The village of Melrose Park provides residents with an option to manage their water bill online. Residents can visit www.melrosepark.org and by clicking on images as directed, you'll be linked to the online Water Account page. You will need your account number and the full name of the person listed on the water bill to log in and utilize this feature.



If you do not know your account number, please send an email to RV@melrosepark.org and your account number will be sent to you.

By using this online platform, you'll be able to view and pay your water bill; review all your present and past bills as far back as 2012; run a water use consumption analysis; view your account history for bills paid and any bill adjustments; and enroll for an eBill statement which will notify you by email that your bill can be viewed online, which avoids any direct mail delays.

For more information, please call the Village Hall at (708) 343-4000.

Celebrate 70 Years of the Melrose Park Little League with \$70 Registration and Free Tee-Ball!

The Melrose Park Little League is celebrating 70 incredible years of community, teamwork and baseball/softball!

Join the fun with a special \$70 registration fee now through Dec. 31.

Plus, we're offering free Tee-Ball registration in honor of this milestone anniversary!

Don't miss this chance to be part of the legacy.

Register today and help us make this season one to remember.

Act fast! Special offers end Dec. 31.

Visit melroseparklittleleague.org for more details.

MELROSE PARK
LITTLE LEAGUE

70
ANNIVERSARY

Melrose Park
Little League

**REGISTRATION
NOW OPEN**

- T-BALL (4-6 yrs. old) FREE (70 PLAYER CAP)
- COACH PITCH (7-8 yrs. old) \$70.00
- MINORS (7-10 yrs. old) \$70.00
- MAJORS (9-12 yrs. old) \$70.00
- JUNIORS (12-14 yrs. old) \$70.00
- SENIORS (13-16 yrs. old) \$70.00

PROMOTION ENDS 12/31/24

Register Now

MORE INFO

melroseparklittleleague@gmail.com

MELROSE PARK
LITTLE LEAGUE

70
ANNIVERSARY

Melrose Park
Little League

**REGISTRO
AHORA ABIERTO**

- T-BALL (4-6 yrs. old) GRATIS (MAXIMO 70 JUGADORES)
- COACH PITCH (7-8 yrs. old) \$70.00
- MINORS (7-10 yrs. old) \$70.00
- MAJORS (9-12 yrs. old) \$70.00
- JUNIORS (12-14 yrs. old) \$70.00
- SENIORS (13-16 yrs. old) \$70.00

FIN DE PROMOCIÓN 12/31/24

REGISTRESE AHORA

MÁS INFORMACIÓN

melroseparklittleleague@gmail.com

Support the Melrose Park Little League's 70th Anniversary Season ...



Melrose Park Little League Sponsorship Form

Celebrating 70 Years of Little League Excellence!

For 70 years, Melrose Park Little League has been a cornerstone of our community, bringing families together and teaching players the values of teamwork, sportsmanship, and perseverance. Once a proud Little Leaguer himself, MAYOR RONALD M. SERPICO continues to support Melrose Park Little League.

In honor of our **70th Anniversary**, we are excited to offer **50% off registration fees** to make Little League accessible to more families. Your sponsorship helps us continue this legacy by supporting our youth. Be part of this milestone season and help shape the future of Melrose Park Little League!

Sponsorship Levels

🏆 Exclusive 70th Anniversary Sponsor – \$5,000 (Only 1 Available!)

- Be the **exclusive sponsor** of our 70th Anniversary Season.
- **Dedicated logo placement** on all team photos distributed to every family.
- **Featured ad placement** on the Melrose Park Little League website.
- **Custom social media campaign** spotlighting your business.
- **Sponsorship plaque** with team photo
- **Special recognition** during opening and closing ceremonies.
- Opportunity to **address families** at a league event or ceremony.

🏆 League MVP Sponsor – \$2,500

- **Logo placement** on team photos distributed to all players and families.
- **Priority ad placement** on the website.
- **Social media highlights** during the season.
- **Sponsorship plaque** with team photo
- **Recognition** during opening or closing ceremonies.

🏆 Grand Slam Sponsor – \$1,500

- **Logo placement** on team photos distributed to players and families.
- **Ad placement** on the Melrose Park Little League website.
- **Social media highlights** throughout the season.
- **Sponsorship plaque** with team photo

The Melrose Park Little League (MPLL) is celebrating its 70th anniversary this season, and we're inviting local businesses and community members to be part of this milestone! As we mark seven decades of fostering sportsmanship, teamwork and community spirit, we're seeking sponsors to help make this historic season a success. Your support will provide essential funding for equipment, team uniforms and community outreach programs that continue to make MPLL a vital part of Melrose Park. Sponsorship opportunities are available at various levels with benefits including brand visibility, recognition at events and a chance to make a positive impact on the lives of local youth. Join us in celebrating 70 years of Little League and help us continue to build the future of our community.

For more information on how to become a sponsor, please contact melroseparklittleleague@gmail.com. We look forward to partnering with you in this special year for MPLL!

Home Run Sponsor – \$1,000

- Logo placement on team photos.
- Ad placement on the website.
- Social media mentions during the season.
- Sponsorship plaque with team photo

Base Hit Sponsor – \$500

- Acknowledgment on the website and social media.

Custom Sponsorship Options

- Have a unique idea for sponsoring? Let's work together to create a custom sponsorship that fits your goals and supports the league!



Sponsor Information

Business Name: _____
 Contact Name: _____
 Email: _____
 Phone: _____
 Sponsorship Level (circle one):
 Exclusive Anniversary / League MVP / Grand Slam / Home Run / Base Hit
 Custom Sponsorship Details: _____

Payment Information

Check Payable To: Melrose Park Little League
 Mailing Address: 1748 N 20th Ave Melrose Park, IL 60160
 Online Payments: Zelle melroseparklittleleague@gmail.com
 Questions? Contact Josie Corral or Rocio Zuno at melroseparklittleleague@gmail.com or 708-927-4905/(708) 240-0695.

Thank You for Supporting Melrose Park Little League!

Your sponsorship makes a lasting impact on our players and their families. Melrose Park Little League is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization. Sponsorships are tax-deductible. Together, let's make our 70th season unforgettable!



Celebrating 70 Years of Building Champions – On and Off the Field!

Veterans Park District

Programs & Happenings

Swim Lessons

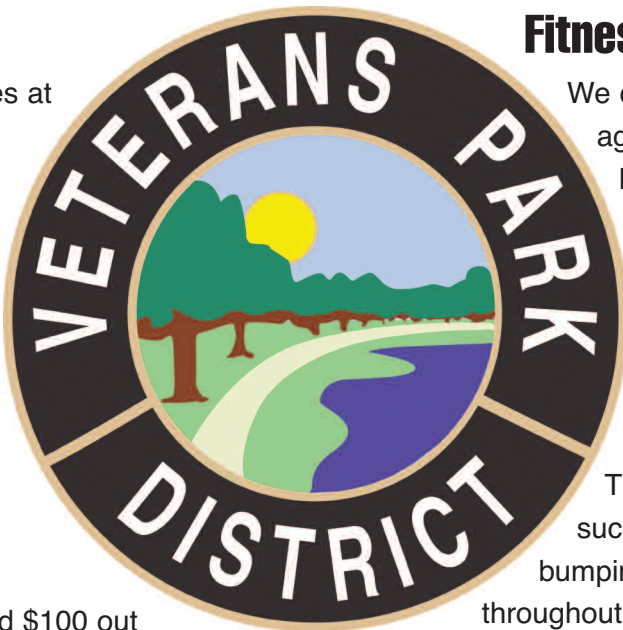
Veterans Park District offers swim lessons for all ages at the West Leyden High School indoor pool.

Whether you're just starting out or looking to improve your technique, our classes provide quality instruction in a supportive environment.

Classes are offered Monday-Thursday, fees are \$85 in district and \$100 out of district (session fee will be adjusted according to holiday closures).

For more details or to register, please contact us at (708) 343-5270 or visit vpdpark.org.

Get ready to make a splash and build your swimming skills with us!



Fitness Classes

We offer a variety of fun, exciting fitness classes for all ages and fitness levels. Our classes include Zumba, Pump & Sculpt, Strong Nation, Middle Eastern Belly Dancing, Chair Yoga, CIRCL Mobility, Youth Fitness, Youth Boxing and Youth Speed & Agility.

Call Cimbalo Fitness Center at (708) 343-5151 for more information.

Volleyball • Ages 8-12

This fun and instructional program prepares players to succeed in volleyball. Players will improve their serving, bumping, setting and spiking skills. Games will be played throughout the program. Teamwork and good sportsmanship are stressed.

- Mondays, Jan. 6-Feb. 3, 4-5 p.m.
Fee is R\$55/NR\$70.

Classes are held at Grant Park, 44 W Golfview Dr., Northlake.

Flag Football • Ages 8-12

In this noncompetitive, slow-paced class. Players will learn sound fundamental offensive and defensive football skills like passing, catching, defensive positioning and football formations.

- Thursdays, Jan.9-30, 5-6 p.m. Fee is R\$55/NR\$70. Classes are held at George Leoni Complex, 800 N. 17th Ave., Melrose Park.



Golf Simulator

Come experience Cimbalo Fitness Center's Golf Suite! Featuring a state-of-the-art Full Swing® golf simulator.

Our golf suite allows you to have a fun, realistic golf experience year-round and offers something for everyone of all ages and experience levels, from the super competitive golfer to the super casual.

With over 85 courses, multiple skill challenge courses, a driving range and a variety of challenge games/modes of play, we can provide users with a great experience customized to their goals, whether that be improving their golf game or just having fun.

Pricing is \$40 for one hour and \$20 for a half-hour rental, please call ahead to reserve a time slot.

Cimbalo Fitness Center is located at 1203 N. 24 Ave., Melrose Park.

Call (708) 343-5151 to reserve a time.



Baseball • Ages 8-12

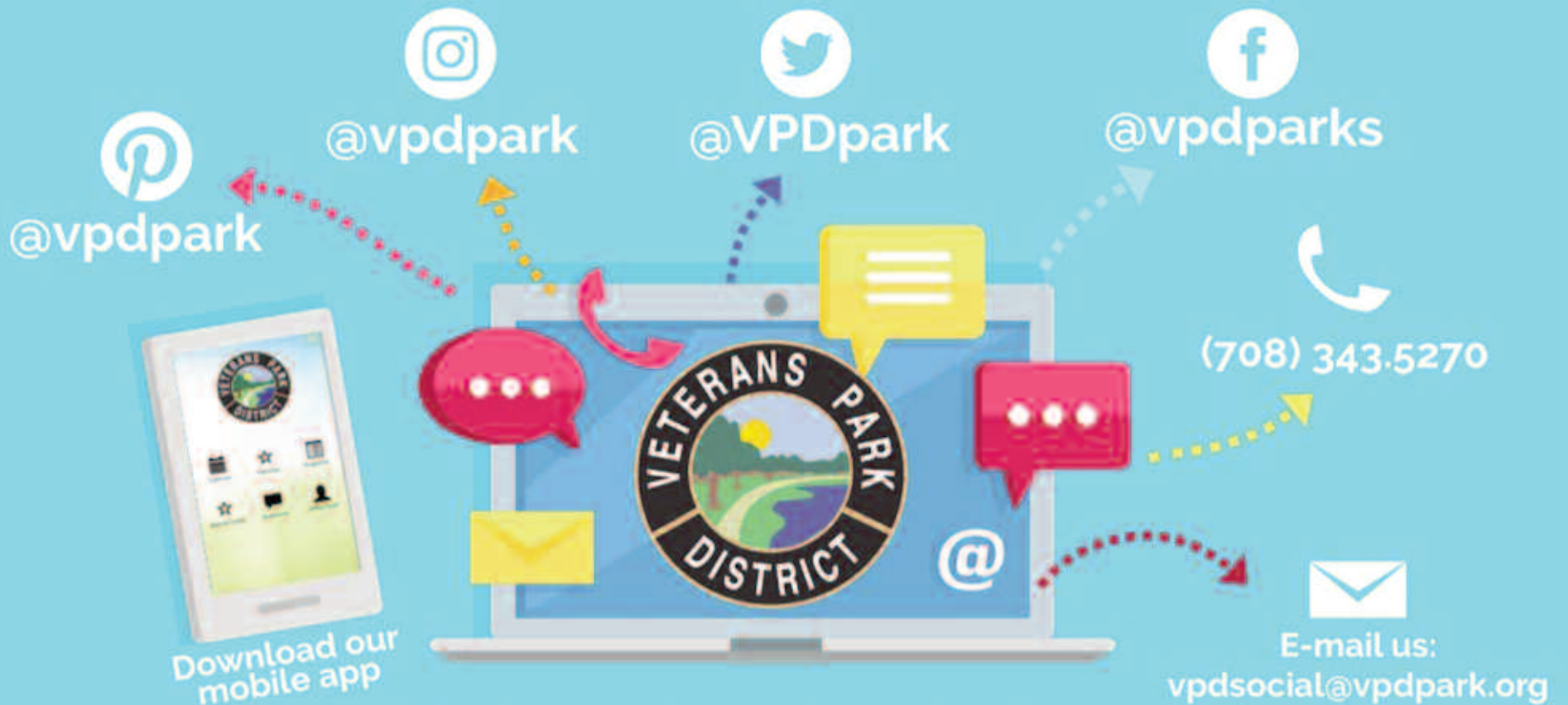
This slow-paced class covers the basic skills/drills of baseball, including throwing, catching, fielding and hitting. Please bring a baseball bat and glove.

- Wednesdays, Jan. 8-29, 5-6 p.m.
Fee is R\$55/NR\$70. Classes are held at George Leoni Complex, 800 N. 17th Ave., Melrose Park.



Call us for more information on our upcoming programs, (708) 343-5270, or check our website at www.vpdpark.org or our Facebook Page for updates.

CONNECT WITH US!



A central graphic featuring a laptop with the Veterans Park District logo on its screen. Surrounding the laptop are various social media icons and contact information. A smartphone on the left displays the mobile app interface with the text "Download our mobile app". Above the laptop are icons for Instagram (@vpdpark), Twitter (@VPDpark), and Facebook (@vpdparks). To the right is a telephone icon with the number (708) 343.5270 and an email icon with the address vpdsocial@vpdpark.org. Dotted lines and arrows connect these elements to the central laptop.

@vpdpark @vpdpark @VPDpark @vpdparks

(708) 343.5270

E-mail us:
vpdsocial@vpdpark.org

Visit us online at: vpdpark.org



Cuomo To Go
25 E. North Ave. • Northlake Ill.
**Chef-prepared daily meals, salads,
sandwiches, desserts and much more!**
Take home HOT or COLD!
Visit our website -CuomoToGo.com.
Delivery available through GrubHub and DoorDash.



**Veterans
Park
District**

*Programs
&
Happenings*

Swim Lessons

at West Leyden High School

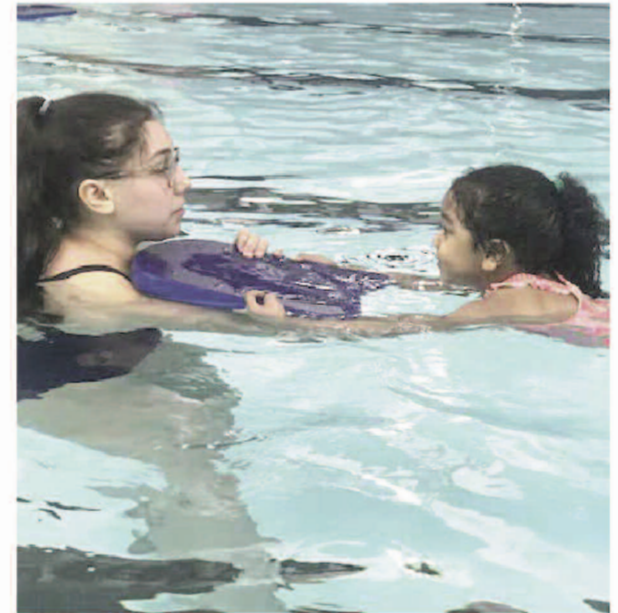
taught by VPD Staff

Learn to Swim

Level 1: Basic Water Skills

Level 2: Advanced Water Skills

Level 3: Introduction to Strokes



Tot Swim

Have fun while learning to kick, float, bob and glide in the water. This is a great way for your child to learn to be safe and comfortable in the water.

**6:50-7:30 p.m. or
7:40-8:20 p.m.**

Mondays & Wednesdays

Jan. 6-29

Feb. 3-26

March 3-26

March 31-April 23

or

Tuesdays & Thursdays

Jan. 7-30

Feb. 4-27

March 4-27

April 1-24

\$85/\$100 Per Session



6-6:40 p.m.

Tuesdays & Thursdays

Jan. 7-30

Feb. 4-27

March 4-27

April 1-24

\$85/\$100 Per Session



(708) 343-5270 | VPD.PARK.ORG | FOLLOW US ON





**Veterans
Park
District**

*Programs
&
Happenings*



CIMBALO FITNESS CENTER



***NEW YEAR'S RESOLUTION
SAVING SPECIAL !***



***JANUARY
6-10***

- Week long trail to explore our work out facility and group fitness classes.
- No Joining fees !
- Sign up during this week and receive 10% off membership.

www.vpdpark.org 1203 N. 24th, Melrose Park 708-343-5151



(708) 343-5270 | VPDPARK.ORG | FOLLOW US ON





Veterans Park District Programs & Happenings

CIMBALO FITNESS CENTER

**FEE: R \$40/NR \$55
*PER SESSION***

Adult Fitness Classes 16+

ZUMBA®

This dance-inspired total body workout combines all elements of fitness: cardio, muscle conditioning, balance, and flexibility. Latin music and easy to follow moves provide a fun, energetic class that will make you forget you're even exercising

Mondays 6:30PM

Session 1: Jan 6–Feb 10*(No class Jan 20)
Session 2: Feb 24–Mar 24
Session 3: Apr 7–May 5

STRONG Nation™

This class combines body weight, muscle conditioning, cardio and plyometric training moves synced to original music that has been specifically designed to match every single move.

Saturdays 9:30AM

Session 1: Jan 11–Feb 8
Session 2: Feb 22–Mar 22
Session 3: Apr 5–May 10 (No class 4/19)

PUMP and SCULPT

Offering the challenge of adding resistance by using light weights, this class helps you focus on specific muscle groups so you can stay engaged and firm up.

Wednesdays 6:30PM

Session 1: Jan 15–Feb 12
Session 2: Feb 26–Mar 26
Session 3: Apr 9–May 7

Middle Eastern Belly Dancing

This dance form has been used for centuries for exercise, fun, and fitness. This class will strengthen your inner core muscles and improve flexibility. Please bring a hip scarf if you have one

Tuesdays 6:45PM

Session 1: Feb 4–Mar 11
Session 2: Mar 25–Apr 29

FEE: R \$45/NR \$60

CIRCL Mobility™

Based on the science of functional movement, CIRCL Mobility™ focuses on flexibility, breathwork, and mobility exercises to help you move better, longer. Set to a soundtrack of healing tones+ sound frequencies to help your mind focus and release stress.

Thursdays 6:30PM

Session 1: Jan 16–Feb 13
Session 2: Feb 27–Mar 27
Session 3: Apr 10–May 8



Youth Fitness Classes 8-15

YOUTH BOXING(12-18)

Learn the basics of boxing. Participants will learn how to throw a variety of punches, footwork, timing, and the strategy involved with the sport of boxing.

Tuesdays 6:00PM

Session 1: Jan 14 – Feb 11
Session 2: Feb 25 – Mar 25
Session 3: Apr 8 – May 6

YOUTH FITNESS(8-15)

Start them on a healthy path as early as possible! Basic exercise techniques will be taught, and obstacle courses and other activities will create a healthy, competitive atmosphere.

Wednesdays 6:00PM

Session 1: Jan 15 – Feb 12
Session 2: Feb 26 – Mar 26
Session 3: Apr 9 – May 7

YOUTH SPEED TRAINING(8-15)

This new and exciting class is taught by a Certified Strength and Conditioning Coach and is designed for youth athletes wishing to prepare for their upcoming athletic season. This class, which will focus on speed, agility, coordination, and conditioning, will help build a strong foundation for future success.

Wednesdays 5:00PM

Session 1: Jan 15 – Feb 7
Session 2: Feb 26 – Mar 26
Session 3: Apr 9 – May 7

NEW YEAR'S SPECIAL

January 6th-10th

Our Fitness Center is excited to offer a New Year Special for new members! Come try out our workout facilities and group fitness classes. Sign up during this week and receive 10% off your membership.

PLEASE REGISTER IN ADVANCE!

Call 708-343-5151 or visit vpdpark.org to register online

Follow us at:
f @vpdfitness

ig @vpdpark



(708) 343-5270 | VPDPARK.ORG | FOLLOW US ON





**Veterans
Park
District**

*Programs
&
Happenings*



January 27-February 22

CALL FOR MORE INFORMATION REGARDING;
TOURNAMENT RULES, TIME SLOTS INFO AND
HOW TO REGISTER.
PRIZES FOR 1ST & 2ND PLACE.

REGISTER NOW!

\$100.00 / Person

708-343-5151

Cimbalo Fitness Center
1220 N. 24th, Melrose Park

 www.vpdpark.org 



ABOUT OUR SIMULATOR:

FULL SWING Sport Series Widescreen Simulator • Official Simulator Partner of the PGA Tour and Golf Channel. • The only camera-based simulator to feature dual-tracking technology, taking overhead measurement of your club at impact, and measuring your ball in-flight. • Creates images and video to analyze after each swing next to your club and ball data.



(708) 343-5270 | VPDPARK.ORG | FOLLOW US ON





A New You Resolution!

Here's why you should register at Triton College this spring — We offer more than 120 degree and certificate programs that feature practical courses and flexible scheduling options. Our award-winning faculty combine distinguished academic credentials with valuable real-world experience.

Tuition is affordable, and financial assistance and scholarships are available. All this and we're right in your neighborhood.

Register now for spring!
triton.edu/spring



Triton College



To get the latest spring course listings, scan the QR code on the left.

To learn more about spring registration, scan the QR code on the right.





Triton College NEWS

Register Now for the Spring Semester!

A new semester means a fresh start.

Spring to it with a high-quality Triton College education that's close to home. We can help you get on track and stay on track and help you achieve your goals!

The spring semester begins Tuesday, Jan. 21.

Call (708) 456-0300, Ext. 3130, or visit triton.edu/spring for more information.

Human Resource Management Online, Noncredit Course Offered this Spring

Triton College's School of Continuing Education will be offering a human resource (HR) online, noncredit course this spring. The course is ideal for individuals who are pursuing new careers in HR, as well as individuals looking to improve or upskill in their current roles.

• **HRM E02: Human Resource Management – Jan. 20-March 14, 2025**
Students will explore essential principles and practices of HR management and develop skills to drive organizational success through effective people skills. There will be an additional cohort starting in June for the summer session.

For more information, contact the School of Continuing Education at askCE@triton.edu.



Triton College FOUNDATION

A 501(c)(3) organization.

Gifts to the Foundation are tax deductible as allowed by law.

During This Season of Giving, Please Consider the Triton College Foundation for Your Year-End Plans ...

Your helping hand means a lot and together we can do some amazing things for our students!

The Foundation works to provide funding for scholarships, new programs and services, equipment and books, and helps maintain and operate Triton College facilities – benefitting the thousands of students and community members who visit the campus every day.

Visit www.triton.edu/foundation/pledge and make a contribution to the fund of your choice.

For more information, please call (708) 456-0300, Ext. 3758, or send an email to tcfoundation@triton.edu.

Triton's Cernan Center Welcomes Guests for Holiday Cheer

The Triton College Cernan Earth and Space Center is hosting several seasonal shows in the Planetarium to celebrate the holidays this winter. Plus, *Laser Taylor Swift* is coming back to the Planetarium this January and February.



PLANETARIUM SHOWS DURING TRITON COLLEGE'S WINTER BREAK

Monday, Dec. 23

• *Áróra* is a new program exploring the science, stories and spectacle of the aurora; also known as the northern and southern lights – 1:30 p.m.

• *Trans-Siberian Christmas Laser Light Show* – 3 p.m.

Tuesday, Dec. 24-Wednesday, Dec. 25

• Cernan Center closed.

Thursday, Dec. 26

• *Áróra* – 1:30 p.m.

• *Trans-Siberian Christmas Laser Light Show* – 3 p.m.

Friday, Dec. 27

• *Áróra* – 1:30 p.m.

• *Trans-Siberian Christmas Laser Light Show* – 3 p.m.

Saturday, Dec. 28

• *One Sky: Many Cultures* – 7 p.m.

• *Trans-Siberian Christmas Laser Light Show* – 8:30 p.m.

Monday, Dec. 30

• *Áróra* – 1:30 p.m.

• *Trans-Siberian Christmas Laser Light Show* – 3 p.m.

Tuesday, Dec. 31-Wednesday, Jan. 1

• Cernan Center closed.

Are you ready for it? *Laser Taylor Swift* will be in the Planetarium on Thursday, Jan. 2 and Friday, Jan. 3, 3 p.m. Make the friendship bracelets, bust out your best dress and get ready to experience your favorite songs in a whole new way. Come back in February to enjoy the show every Saturday at 8:30 p.m.!

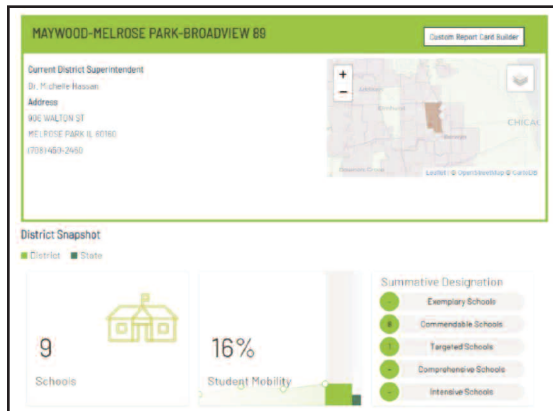
Tickets are \$10 for adults, \$5 for seniors (55 and over) and \$5 for children (2-17). Note: Tickets can only be purchased in our Star Store the day of the show beginning at 1 p.m. on weekdays or 6:30 p.m. on weekends. There are no advance or online ticket sales. Triton students, faculty and staff are admitted free with a valid ID.

The Triton College Cernan Earth and Space Center hours are Monday-Thursday, 9:30 a.m.-5 p.m.; Friday, 9:30 a.m.-4 p.m.; and Saturday, 6:30-9:30 p.m. The Cernan Center is closed on Sundays.

For more information, visit triton.edu/Cernan or contact cernan@triton.edu.

To follow the Cernan Earth and Space Center on Facebook, visit <http://facebook.com/cernancenter/>.

District 89 Celebrated Academic Growth in Illinois Report Card



The Illinois State Board of Education released its 2024 Illinois Report Card, highlighting progress across the state. District 89 proudly celebrated significant academic growth during the 2023-24 school year:

- 12% increase in English Language Arts proficiency.
- 4% increase in math proficiency.
- 5% increase in science proficiency.

These achievements reflected the district's focus on quality instruction, after-school programs, technology upgrades and mental health support.

"We were proud of this year's successes, and we remained committed to continuous improvement," said Superintendent Hassan.

District 89 encourages families to stay actively engaged with teachers and principals to build on this momentum and ensure continued success for every student by having students attend school every day and read for 30 minutes daily.

District Parent Advisory Committee Holds First Meeting of the School Year

On Oct. 15, our Board Vice President Shakeesta Williams was thrilled as parents and administrators gathered for the school year's first Parent Advisory Committee (PAC) meeting. The PAC serves as a vital platform for fostering collaboration and enhancing the educational experience for all students in the district.



Led by VP Williams, the meeting brought together two parent representatives from each school accompanied by their respective principals. This diverse group of stakeholders shared insights, celebrated successes and discussed ways to address challenges across the district.

Dr. Hassan opened the session by emphasizing the importance of community involvement in shaping the district's vision. "District 89 will be the school system of choice and community pride," she said. "This committee exemplifies our commitment to working together to provide the best for our students."

The meeting agenda included updates on district initiatives, opportunities for parent voice and open discussions on topics impacting students, teachers and families.

The Parent Advisory Committee will meet quarterly and focus on actionable steps to improve the educational experience at every school.

Please contact your school principal for updates on PAC initiatives or to get involved.

A Welcoming Start to BPAC: Empowering Families Together



The first Bilingual Parent Advisory Committee (BPAC) meeting was a warm and inspiring event! Bilingual Director Melissa Sepulveda welcomed parents to our collaborative and inclusive atmosphere. Parents from Washington Dual Language Academy and Emerson shared their experiences with BPAC, which emphasized the importance of community involvement.

The meeting included an overview of BPAC's purpose, explaining its roles, functions and membership. Families learned about BPAC's dedication to supporting bilingual students and how they could contribute. Rebeca Palacios conducted an engaging workshop on "Engaging with Your Child at an Early Age" and gifted participants a book to continue their learning journey at home.

Garfield Elementary Hosted Literacy Night: Celebrating Literacy Through Community Engagement



On Oct. 30, Garfield Elementary welcomed students, families and staff to Literacy Night: Level Up Your Reading Game! This academically-focused event highlighted the importance of literacy as the foundation for student success and encouraged a shared love of reading across our school community.

Each school promoted a featured book that aligned with grade-level themes and academic goals with staff dressed as characters to bring these stories to life. These creative presentations captivated students by sparking curiosity and reinforcing connections between reading and imagination.

A highlight of the evening was the participation of guest authors Victoria Watkins and Akeisha Levy, who shared their expertise on writing, storytelling and the creative process. Students had the unique opportunity to ask thoughtful questions to foster deeper engagement with the world of literature and the craft of writing.

The event had an incredible turnout. Families, Board VP Williams and Board Member Sandy Ciancio joined in the activities, demonstrating their support for literacy as a cornerstone of academic achievement.

District 89 Partners with Proviso Public Partnership to Enhance Behavioral Health Support for Students and Families



District 89 is excited to announce a new partnership with Proviso Public Partnership (PPP) to provide comprehensive behavioral health support, services, and training for students and parents in the Maywood, Melrose Park and Broadview communities. This initiative underscores District 89's commitment to fostering a safe and supportive environment for all students.

"We're very proud of this partnership with District 89, and we're excited for our community to experience this support and its benefits," said PPP President Mike Corrigan.

Under this agreement, PPP will offer mental health services, including therapy and counseling, to students in District 89 at no charge. These services are designed to help students navigate challenges and promote overall well-being. In addition, PPP will provide training sessions to students, parents/guardians, and community stakeholders on critical topics, such as vaping, recognizing signs and symptoms of behavioral health concerns, and Youth Mental Health First Aid (YMHFA).

For more information on additional services available in Proviso Township, please visit the Proviso Township Mental Health Commission website at www.pppnfp.org or call (708) 234-TALK (8255).

Melrose Park's First Walkathon: A Day of Fitness, Fun and Community Support!



The first Walkathon, held on Oct. 8, was a huge success! Students in grades K-2 enthusiastically walked around the playground, while students in grades 3-5 took to the George A. Leoni Complex. Parents showed up to support and cheer for their kiddos, creating an energetic and encouraging atmosphere.

The event, held from 1-2 p.m., aimed to raise \$5,000 and thanks to incredible support, they exceeded that goal!

Our Mighty Mustangs also showcased their creativity by designing Positive Behavior Intervention System (PBIS) banners, highlighting how they will demonstrate respect, responsibility and readiness. The Walkathon

brought the school community together for a fun and joyous day of fitness and learning!

www.maywood89.org • Follow Us on Twitter "@maywood89"

NEWS89 School District89 BRIEFS

Lincoln Elementary Celebrates Attendance and Academic Success



Lincoln Elementary launched its new attendance initiative with an engaging and inspiring attendance assembly. During the event, staff shared clear expectations and practical strategies to help students and families prioritize attendance. The assembly was met with enthusiasm, as students committed to prioritizing punctuality and consistent attendance. The school community thanks families for their support in ensuring every student can succeed.

In addition, Lincoln Elementary has been buzzing with excitement over its school-wide Math Fact Competitions. The friendly contests have sparked incredible enthusiasm among students who are showcasing remarkable growth in their math fluency. The environment is filled with determination and pride as students work hard to sharpen their skills. Their energy and excitement are contagious which make math a highlight of the school day for all involved.

Lincoln Elementary is proud of its students' strides and grateful for the ongoing partnership with families.

Washington Dual Language Academy Hosts Second Annual High School and Career Expo



On Nov. 13, Washington Dual Language Academy (WDLA) proudly hosted its second annual High School and Career Expo, connecting middle school students and their families with high school options and career pathways.

High schools, such as Proviso East, Proviso Math and Science Academy (PMSA), Fenwick, Trinity and Walter Christian Academy, and various local organizations offered valuable insights to students and families about educational and career opportunities – Washington Dual Language Academy's commitment to empowering students for bright futures..

Preschool For All (PFA) Visits DuPage Children's Museum: A Week of Learning and Fun



During the week of Nov. 11-15, Preschool For All (PFA) delighted students and their families with a memorable visit to the DuPage Children's Museum. This enriching experience was designed to foster curiosity, creativity and hands-on learning for the youngest members of our school community.

The children immersed themselves in various interactive exhibits, from exploring STEM concepts in the Tinker Lab to experimenting with water play in the museum's splash zones. Parents joined in on the fun and participated in activities that strengthened their bonds with their little ones while witnessing firsthand the power of learning through play.

This field trip exemplified the Preschool For All Program's commitment to fostering a love of learning and aligns with our district's mission: "District 89 empowers, educates, and inspires students to achieve personal excellence in a multicultural society."

A special thank you to the parents, teachers and staff who made this event successful! Together, we are building a strong foundation for our children's future.

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Irving Middle School Hosts Its Daddy-Daughter Dance



On Nov. 15, Irving Middle School's gymnasium transformed into a dazzling wonderland for the annual Daddy-Daughter Dance. Fathers and daughters, dressed to impress, filled the evening with joy, laughter and unforgettable moments.

The gym sparkled with twinkling lights and elegant drapery. A lively DJ kept the dance floor buzzing with upbeat tunes and nostalgic hits as fathers and daughters showcased their best moves.

This cherished tradition brought families closer and strengthened the Irving Middle School community. Fathers and daughters left with smiles and memories to treasure.

D89 Students Shine at PMSA Math Competition

On Tuesday, Nov. 12, a team of 12 talented sixth, seventh and eighth grade students from Irving Middle School, Stevenson Middle School and Washington Dual Language Academy proudly represented District 89 at the 12th annual Proviso Math and Science Academy (PMSA) Math Competition. This event brought together young scholars from approximately 10 different schools across Proviso Township to compete in individual, team and joint events. Led by Jennifer Kissane (Irving), Steven Jarvis (WDLA), and Andrew Bedolla (Stevenson), the D89 team demonstrated remarkable skill, perseverance and collaboration, exemplifying D89's mission to "empower, educate, and inspire each student to achieve personal excellence in a multicultural society."

The District 89 scholars took home a variety of awards in multiple categories:

Irving Award Recipients

- Christian – Joint Competition, Second Place.
- Chelsea – Joint Competition, First Place.

Stevenson Award Recipients

- Joseph – Joint Competition, Third Place.
- Cassandra – Joint Competition, Third Place.
- Diego – Individual Competition, Second Place.

WDLA Award Recipients

- Dominic – Team Competition, Second Place
- Lamar – Individual Competition, Third Place
- Nicholas – Joint Competition, First Place

- Brandon – Joint Competition, First Place; Individual Competition, First Place; Team Competition, Second Place.

The D89 team's achievements are a testament to their hard work, dedication and support from their teachers and families. Their outstanding performances in individual and team categories showcased their problem-solving abilities, teamwork and passion for mathematics. Congratulations to our scholars for their hard-earned success and for representing D89 with pride and excellence.



NEWS89 School District89 BRIEFS

District 89 Fall Sports Teams Achieve Remarkable Success

As the year swiftly progressed, the fall sports season concluded with outstanding achievements from our district's athletic teams. Over the past four months, students demonstrated exceptional skill, teamwork and determination while setting new milestones for District 89 athletics.

Middle School Athletics Highlights

- Cross-Country – Stevenson's boys JV cross-country team secured second place at the West Suburban Middle School Conference (WSMSC) meet. Notable performances included Xavier, a seventh grader who placed second overall for boys' JV, and Damien, a sixth grader from Irving, who finished third overall. Participants included Tony (WDLA, sixth), Leo (seventh), Justin (seventh), Christian (sixth), Alan (sixth), and Timotheus (seventh).
- Boys Soccer – Stevenson boys varsity soccer team earned second place in conference play, showcasing their competitive edge throughout the season.
- Girls Basketball – Stevenson JV girls basketball team achieved their best finish in history by placing third in WSMSC regular season play. Additionally, Irving varsity claimed second place at the 8th Annual Thanksgiving Tournament at Trinity High School.

Elementary School Athletics Highlights

- Cross-Country
 - Boys Team Champion: Jane Addams Elementary.
 - Individual Champion: Patrick (Jane Addams).
 - Girls Team Champion: Melrose Park Elementary.
 - Individual Champion: Jacqueline (Jane Addams).
- Boys Futsal
 - Champion: Melrose Park Elementary.
 - Runner-Up: WDLA.
- Girls Basketball
 - Champion: WDLA.
 - Runner-Up: Jane Addams Elementary.

Congratulations to all the talented student-athletes, dedicated coaches, and enthusiastic supporters who contributed to a remarkable fall sports season. Your hard work and commitment continue to make District 89 proud!



www.maywood89.org • Follow Us on Twitter “@maywood89”

Greetings from Rev. Leandro Fossá, C.S., Pastor The Parish of Our Lady of Mt. Carmel

This Christmas is special for our Lady of Mt. Carmel. It is so good to hear the words of Pope Francis in the encyclical letter pilgrims of hope: "Hope does not disappoint" (Rom 5:5). In the spirit of hope, the Apostle Paul addressed these words of encouragement to the Christian community of Rome. Hope is also the central message of the coming Jubilee that, in accordance with an ancient tradition, the Pope proclaims every 25 years. My thoughts turn to all those pilgrims of hope who will travel to Rome to experience the Holy Year and to all those others who, though unable to visit the City of the Apostles Peter and Paul, will celebrate it in their local churches. For everyone, may the Jubilee be a moment of genuine, personal encounter with the Lord Jesus, the "door" (cf. Jn 10:7.9) of our salvation, whom the church is charged to proclaim always, everywhere and to all as "our hope" (1 Tim 1:1).



Today, the Savior has been born. With hope we welcome HIM. This is the good news of this Christmas Eve. Like every Christmas, Jesus is born again in the world, in each home, in our heart. But unlike what our consumerist society celebrates, Jesus is not born in an environment of waste, purchases, comfort, whim and meals. Jesus is born in the humility of the Nativity scene.

"For today in the city of David a savior has been born for you who is Messiah and Lord"

Jesus wants to be born for those who have lost family, property, and friends in the war in Ukraine and Gaza. Jesus wants to be born in the hearts of those who have lost dear ones in the violent streets of Chicago. Jesus wants to be born in the hearts of those marginalized, the poor, aliens or simply different from us, because in Christmas we celebrate peace, solidarity and love.

I wish a merry Christmas to all the families of Melrose Park. I know that your home will be open to welcome those you love and please save a space for those who might show up unexpectedly and have nowhere to go nor no one to welcome them.

Merry Christmas! Buon Natale! ¡Feliz Navidad! Christ has born! Yes, amid so much unexpected diseases, masks, violence, COVID and desperation ... Christ has born again. HE is our hope and the best gift for Christmas!



*May the light of the season glow and fill your soul
with peace, joy and love.*

*Wishing you and your family,
all of God's blessings this Christmas
and throughout the new year.*

Our Lady of Mt. Carmel Parish & Shrine

Fr. Leandro Fossá, cs

Fr. Marwin Leonel Ajic Arana, cs • Fr. Richard Bezzegato, cs



MISSIONARIES OF ST. CHARLES
SCALABRINIANS



Upcoming Events at Our Lady of Mount Carmel Parish and Shrine

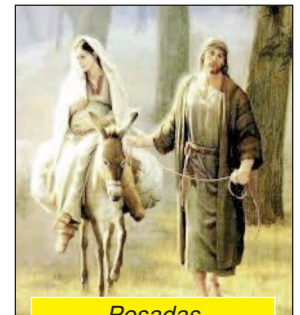
December 2024 Events

Holiday Mass/Event Schedule

Posadas Navideñas

Monday, Dec. 16 and Monday, Dec. 23

7 p.m. • Drinks and Pinatas in the Gym



Posadas
Navideñas

Christmas Eve Masses • Tuesday, Dec. 24

English/Italian – 5 p.m. • Spanish – 7 p.m. (Followed by Pot Luck Dinner)

11:30 p.m. – Choir Concert • Midnight Mass (Trilingual)

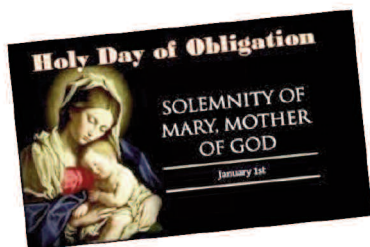
Christmas Day Masses • Wednesday, Dec. 25

Italian – 10:30 a.m. • English – Noon • Spanish – 1:30 p.m.

New Year's Eve Masses • Tuesday, Dec. 31

English/Italian – 5 p.m. • Spanish – 7 p.m. (Followed by Pot Luck Dinner and Drinks)

January 2025 Events



New Year's Day Masses Solemnity of Mary, Mother of God

Holy Day of Obligation

Wednesday, Jan. 1

Italian – 10:30 a.m. • English – Noon • Spanish – 1:30 p.m.

Epiphany • Sunday, Jan. 5

Regular Sunday Mass Schedule

Baptism of the Lord • Sunday, Jan. 12

Regular Sunday Mass Schedule

February 2025 Events



Presentation of the Lord

Presentation of the Lord • Sunday, Feb. 2

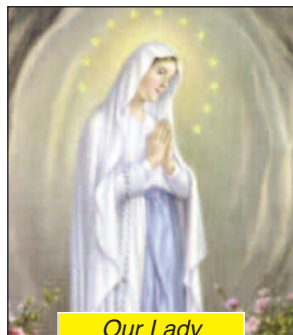
Candelaria – Mass Followed by the Blessing of Candles and the Infant Jesus
English/Italian – Noon • Spanish – 1:30 p.m.

Feast of St. Blaise • Monday, Feb. 3

Mass Followed by the Blessing of the Throat
English/Italian – 6 p.m. • Spanish – 7:30 p.m.



Feast of St. Blaise



Our Lady of Lourdes

Our Lady of Lourdes and World Day of the Sick Tuesday, Feb. 11

Trilingual Mass Followed by Anointing of the Sick – 6:30 p.m.

Valentine's Day Dinner Dance • Saturday, Feb. 15

6:30 p.m. at Carmel Hall



Feast of St. Toribio

Feast of St. Toribio • Saturday, Feb. 22

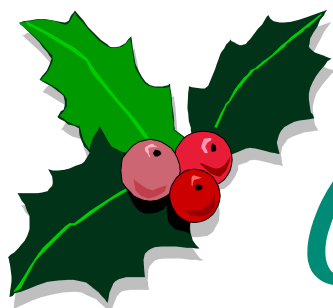
Spanish Mass and Indoor Procession – 3 p.m.

Italian Community Mass • Sunday, Feb. 23

Banner Presentation/Mass/Reception – 10:30 a.m.



Italian Community Mass



Merry
Christmas

Buon Natale

Feliz Navidad



Season's
Greetings

Our Lady of
Mt. Carmel
Parish and Shrine

(708) 344-4140
www.olmcp parish.org

For more information, please call the Rectory at (708) 344-4140.

SACRED HEART & ST. EULALIA PARISH

**A Savior is Born
Unto us This Day**



Sacred Heart Church
819 N. 16th Ave. Melrose Park, IL



St. Eulalia Church
1825 S. 9th Ave. Maywood, IL

*Please join us for our Christmas
& New Year's Services!*

Christmas Eve—DEC. 24

5:00pm Bilingual Mass at **Sacred Heart**

Christmas—DEC. 25

8:30am English Mass at **Sacred Heart**

10:30am Spanish Mass at **Sacred Heart**

10:30am English Mass at **St. Eulalia**

12:30pm Spanish Mass at **St. Eulalia**

—The Solemnity of Mary—

New Year's Eve—DEC. 31

5:00pm Bilingual Mass at **Sacred Heart**

New Year's Day—JAN. 1

8:30am English Mass at **Sacred Heart**

10:30am Spanish Mass at **Sacred Heart**

10:30am English Mass at **St. Eulalia**

12:30pm Spanish Mass at **St. Eulalia**

*Christmas Blessings to You
and Your Loved Ones*

Parish Phone
708-344-0757

Parish Website
shsparish.org



SACRED HEART & ST. EULALIA PARISH



WEBSITE: shsparish.org

PHONE: 708-344-0757

EMAIL: shseparish@archchicago.org

UPCOMING EVENTS



First Friday Devotion to the Most Sacred Heart of Jesus

Every First Friday of the month **7:00pm** at **Sacred Heart**.

Upcoming dates: **January 3**, **February 7**

Second & Third Saturday Chaplet of Divine Mercy

Every **Second Saturday** of the month in **English** and every **Third Saturday** of the month in **Spanish** at **3:00pm** in **St. Eulalia**.



Thursday Adoration and Confession at 7:00pm

Jan. 16 & **Jan. 30** and **Feb. 20** at **Sacred Heart**.

Jan. 9, **Jan. 23** and **Feb. 13** & **27** at **St. Eulalia**.

Posadas at Sacred Heart & St. Eulalia Parish

Dec. 16—Dec. 20 at **7:00pm** in **St. Eulalia**.

Dec. 21 at **7pm**, **Dec. 22** at **11:30am**, **Dec. 23** at **7pm** in **Sacred Heart**.



Burrito Breakfast

January 12 from **11:00am—3:00pm** at **St Eulalia**.

Adoration & Anointing of the Sick

Thursday, January 23 at **St. Eulalia**.



The Feast of St. Eulalia

Feb. 16 in **St. Eulalia's Parish Hall** after **10:30am** & **12:30pm** Mass.

Mardi Gras Celebration

February 22 at **7:00pm** in **Sacred Heart's Marian Hall**.



Men's Corned Beef & Cabbage Dinner

Feb. 28 in **Sacred Heart's Marian Hall**.

Doors open at 6:00pm. \$55 per ticket.

Includes dinner dessert & unlimited beer.

Call **708-344-0757** for tickets.

ASH WEDNESDAY - Mar. 5

8am English Mass at **Sacred Heart** and **7pm**

Bilingual Mass at both **Sacred Heart** and **St.**

Eulalia. Ashes distributed from **11am-1pm** at

Sacred Heart & **4pm-6:30pm** at both **Sacred**

Heart & **St. Eulalia**.



A Message from Tim Bouman, Head of School 'Tis the Season

The holiday season is upon us and at Walther that means a lot of annual traditions are here or right around the corner: our annual food drive for the Proviso Food Pantry, our Toy and Coat Drive for HOPE, Inc. with Mrs. Abel, the giant Christmas tree in our entryway, the Hoger-Tuomi Wrestling Tournament, the Christmas Concert, etc. And let's not forget the revival of the Madrigal Dinner! It's a season in which we celebrate the birth of our Savior – and focus on giving. It's a new sports season. It's a time when students race to complete all of their assignments and study for final exams. It's a busy time with a lot going on. Your life may also be busier this time of year as well, so we appreciate you taking the time to read this and staying connected to Walther.

In this season of Thanksgiving and Christmas, we are thankful for the wonderful ministry we have here at Walther and excited to celebrate Jesus, the ultimate gift to all of humanity. May your holidays be filled with joy and with the love of God.

- Merry Christmas,
Tim Bouman, Head of School/Principal

From Our Advancement Director A Time of Giving

The Christmas season is a time of giving. We not only give to those we love, we give to others in thanks for the greatest gift we have received, our Savior, Jesus Christ. As mentioned, our students are giving to others in several ways.

I ask you to consider giving a gift to Walther this Christmas season. With less than 70% of our expenses paid through tuition, donations from alumni and friends play a crucial role in keeping our school strong. Thank you to all who have given in the past. Your gift this Christmas season will enable this ministry to thrive.

For those who participate in giving each year, please consider Walther Christian Academy as a nonprofit to support! Go to Walther.com > Donate to give a gift.

Save the Date – Make plans to join Walther supporters of all generations for the Bronco Benefit on Saturday, Feb. 22, 2025, at the Nineteenth Century Club in Oak Park. This dinner/auction is Walther's largest fundraising event of the year. Contact classmates and get a table together. The event is always more fun with friends! Tickets go on sale Jan. 7, at BroncoBenefit25.givesmart.com.

- Bill Koehne '87, Director of Advancement, Walther Christian Academy

Alumni Spotlight: Maurice Wilson

Maurice Wilson, Walther Class of 2012, is an astrophysicist at the High Altitude Observatory, a National-Science-Foundation-(NSF)-funded research center in Boulder, Colorado.

Following high school, Maurice attended Embry Riddle Aeronautical University in Daytona Beach, Florida, where he received a B.S. in space physics. During his sophomore year, he joined a professor's astronomy lab where he wrote code to analyze data. "My experience in Web Design class at Walther learning html really helped," explained Maurice. That led to an internship opportunity through an NSF REU (research experience for undergrads) after his sophomore year. He was accepted at Harvard that summer and researched solar physics and stellar astrophysics.

In January of his junior year, Maurice presented on that summer research at an American Astronomical Society (AAS) conference. A Harvard professor was impressed enough with his work and presentation to invite Maurice for a second summer internship. That next summer he researched ways to detect small Earth-like exoplanets.

After graduating from Embry Riddle, Maurice received an NSF graduate research fellowship and spent two years earning an M.A. from Harvard followed by four years in the PhD program there. In 2022, he received his PhD in astrophysics from Harvard and won a postdoctoral fellowship from the NSF. For the last two years, this fellowship was conducted at the High Altitude Observatory where Maurice studied solar flares and coronal mass ejections. "It is good to now finally be a full employee at HAO," commented Maurice.

Maurice gives a lot of credit to Walther in setting him up for this success. "My chemistry class with Mr. Tuomi and two physics classes with Mr. Murphy, really got me excited about science. My AP Calc class prepared me for the mathematical challenges in my undergrad program and the perseverance I learned in AP US History helped me get through some tough undergrad classes."

"Wrestling really changed my life. Through the hardships I grew in perseverance and gained fearlessness. It can be really intimidating to talk to Harvard professors, but through wrestling I learned how to remain calm and collected in any situation."



Maurice Wilson

Maurice has already been involved in some worldwide collaborations regarding astrophysics research. He plans to continue doing research, maybe some day at a research university. We look forward to following what Maurice accomplishes throughout his career.

Upcoming Walther Events

Madrigal Dinner

Friday, Dec. 20 • 6 p.m.

Tickets available at <https://gofan.co/event/2341716>.

Bronco Benefit 2025

Saturday, Feb. 22

Nineteenth Century Club, Oak Park

For more information on Walther events, please call (708) 344-0404.

Purchase a Walther Paver!

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The time is now to become a permanent part of Walther by purchasing an engraved paver. You can purchase one on our website by choosing the paver purchase option to honor your time at Walther, thank a parent for sending you here, thank a teacher, honor a memory or give recognition to your business! The pavers are \$200 each.

Visit Walther.com and click on "Donate" for more information.

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The Rose

c/o The Village of Melrose Park

1000 N. 25th Ave.

Melrose Park, IL 60160

Or you can send an email to TheRose@melrosepark.org.

Please include your name and a phone number that's best to reach you at.

Dominican Literacy Center Continues to Provide English Instruction and More ...

The Dominican Literacy Center originally began in Chicago, at the request of the pastor of Our Lady of Grace Parish in 1996. In 2008, the building housing the center was deemed to need extensive repairs and could not be used. In June of 2008, the center was graciously welcomed to rent a part of Sacred Heart Convent in Melrose Park, where it has continued to provide English instruction for the past 14 years.

The goal of the Dominican Literacy Center is the empowerment of persons who experience personal and economic limitations within our English-speaking society. Through literacy education and personal relationships, we strive to provide a small step toward eliminating racial and cultural prejudice and stereotypes, as well as a step up for persons seeking improvement in their personal, familial and economic abilities.

The Dominican Literacy Center provides weekly one and half hour tutored sessions in which one student meets with one tutor. The center provides tutoring in speaking, reading and writing English, as well as tutoring in preparation for the Citizenship interview and exam. This individualized instruction is provided for immigrant women and men (ages 17+) who are – endeavoring to reduce literacy and its consequential effects of isolation (due to their inability to communicate in English with health care providers, children’s teachers, neighbors, co-workers, community leaders and/or first responders); in low-level jobs (due to lack of training or skills, or an inability to demonstrate their already achieved skills and knowledge); powerless to supervise their adolescent children or to influence systemic change; lacking confidence to enroll in traditional classes and or fear of requesting help when needed.

English Classes

English classes are provided for those who want to learn to speak, read or write in English. One student meets with one tutor, once a week.

These classes are offered at the Dominican Literacy Center, 1503 Rice Street, in Melrose Park (near Sacred Heart/St. Eulalia Parish).

Our program also assists persons studying for their Citizenship interview/exam.

We presently offer classes on Monday through Thursday, in the mornings and afternoons.

Please call Sr. Judith Curran at (708) 338-0659.

Dominican Literacy Center
1503 Rice Street • Melrose Park, IL 60160

English Classes for Women

Clases de Inglés para mujeres

Clases de Inglés para aprender como hablar, leer y escribir.

Clases para mujeres que quieren aprender a leer, escribir y hablar en Inglés serán ofrecidas en el Centro Dominicano de Alfabetización, 1503 Rice St.

Nuestro programa tambien ayuda a hombres y mujeres que están estudiando para pasar el examen de ciudadanía.

En este momento, tenemos maestras disponibles para clases por las mañanas.

Si a usted le gustaria aprender Inglés mejor, por favor llamar a Hermana Judith Curran – (708) 338-0659.

Centro Dominicano de Alfabetización
Calle Arroz 1503 • Parque Melrose, IL 60160

Everyone Has the Right to Live Where They Choose

In the exercise of its power to regulate for the protection of the public health, safety, morals and welfare, it is declared to be the public policy of the village to assure fair housing and freedom from discrimination throughout the community, to protect the community from the effects of residential segregation by race, color, religion, sex, physical or mental handicap, familial status or national origin, and to secure to its citizens the economic, social, and professional benefits of living in an integrated and stable society.

The Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) Administers The Federal Fair Housing Act

Every first Monday of the month the Fair Housing Review Board meets at 6 p.m. in the Village of Melrose Park (1000 N. 25th Ave.). If you feel you have been discriminated in any way while renting, purchasing or selling a home you are welcome to attend our meetings to present your case.

Village of Melrose Park
Brian Miller, Office of the Village Attorney
(708) 343-4000, Ext. 4487



Village of Melrose Park



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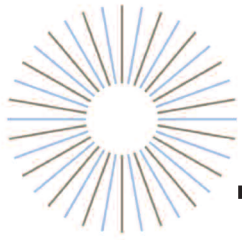
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Connecting Proviso Residents to Free Behavioral Health Resources

Representatives from Proviso Township’s 14 municipalities, and local police and fire departments gathered recently to learn more about behavioral health resources that are available to their residents and how to help residents take advantage of those resources during a seminar hosted by the Proviso Township Mental Health Commission (PTMHC.)

“For nearly 60 years, the Proviso Township Mental Health Commission has provided funding for behavioral health services available to every resident in our township,” said PTMHC President Mike Corrigan. “Ensuring that all the local governments and their residents under our umbrella have equal access



PTMHC President Mike Corrigan addresses representatives from Proviso communities.

to these resources is vital to the health and well-being of our communities. Many residents will reach out to their local government for help and it’s critical that those local governments can easily connect them to the services that they need. Best of all, these services are completely free for our residents.”

The Proviso Township Mental Health Commission provides grants to 22 behavioral health agencies that deliver services to Proviso residents. Services cover senior care, mental health, homelessness and food insecurity, domestic violence, developmental disabilities, substance abuse and more.

Attendees at the seminar got a refresher on the wide range of services available to their residents, as well as tips on engaging communities about mental health topics and disseminating information about those services to their residents. A variety of media was curated and provided to attendees to utilize in the dissemination of information through their communication channels including, print newsletters, social media, websites, papers, digital flyers and more. These resources will make it easy for community leaders to communicate and connect residents to the mental health and other needed services right here in the township.

“When our neighbors don’t get the help that they need, they often end up in crisis,” said Corrigan. “They may end up in the emergency room or they may lose their home. That has negative external impacts that affect all of us. It’s better for everyone if people can stay healthy, housed and productive in their communities.”

The 58-year-old Proviso Township Mental Health Commission is one of the oldest 708 boards in Illinois and serves behavioral health needs of the 155,000 residents of Proviso Township. The township covers 14 municipalities, including Bellwood, Berkeley, Broadview, Brookfield, Forest Park, Hillside, La Grange Park, Melrose Park, Maywood, North Riverside, Northlake, Stone Park, Westchester and Western Springs.

First Responders are Key to Stopping and Preventing Child Abuse Training Held in Proviso Township

Over 30 first responders from the western Cook County suburbs gathered at the Proviso Township Municipal Building to learn how to best investigate, stop and prevent child abuse. The training was held by the Proviso Children’s Advocacy Center (PCAC) which has been a recipient of Proviso Township Mental Health Commission grant dollars for 32 years.

“We are so grateful to have the PCAC in our community making sure that our most vulnerable children do not fall through the cracks, but instead can receive the counseling, treatment and healing that they deserve and need after experiencing traumatic abuse,” said Proviso Township Mental Health Commission President Mike Corrigan.

Attendees came from police and fire departments throughout the Cook County Fourth Municipal District and received training on a variety of topics, including the child physical abuse specialized medical exam, digital safety for kids, vicarious trauma and self-care for the helping professional and more. The training was presented by the Illinois Department of Child and Family Services (DCFS) and the Cook County State’s Attorney’s Office.

“Our first responders are critical for helping to identify and stop child abuse,” said Corrigan. “We’re proud to host this workshop to make sure that everyone involved knows the latest protocol and what kind of supports are available to the community and to officers.”

If you or someone you know is experiencing abuse, reach out to the Proviso Township Mental Health Commission at (708) 234-TALK (8255) for more information.



PTMHC President Mike Corrigan speaks to first responders during a training held by the Proviso Children’s Advocacy Center.





Proviso Township Handyman Program

December 2024 – Proviso Township Handyman News

Over the river and through the woods to grandmother's house we go. Are you ready for the holidays? Give us a call and we will help bring out your boxes of decorations! It is also a good time to change the batteries in your smoke and carbon monoxide alarms.

The Proviso Township Handyman Program serves homeowners over the age of 60 and disabled homeowners who are residents of Proviso Township.

Call us at (708) 547-4001 to schedule an appointment and register for our program.



Bellwood · Berkeley · Broadview · Brookfield · Forest Park · Hillside ·
LaGrange Park · Maywood · Melrose Park · North Riverside · Northlake
· Stone Park · Westchester · Western Springs

+ Only Homeowners within the boundaries of the Proviso Township +

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Supervisor

Anthony "Tony" Williams
Clerk

Steven J. Zawaski
Assessor

Gay F. Chase • Evelyn Chavez • Joseph Christopher • Clarence E. Thomas
Trustees

Proviso Township Handyman Program



Handyman Program for homeowners over the age of 60 and/or disabled residents of Proviso Township.

- Minor repairs only.
- \$5 per visit plus cost of parts, if needed.
- Provide referrals on a variety of home maintenance issues.
- Appointments are 45 minutes or less.

The Proviso Township Handyman Program Only Serves Homeowners Within the Boundaries of Proviso Township.
 Bellwood • Berkeley • Broadview • Brookfield • Forest Park • Hillside • LaGrange Park
 Maywood • Melrose Park • Northlake • North Riverside • Stone Park • Westchester • Western Springs

Please call us at (708) 547-4001 if you have any questions and to schedule your appointment



WE DO	WE DO
Blinds/Curtain Rods - Install/Repair	Mailboxes - Install/Repair/Replace
Boxes Stored (50 lbs. limit)	Outdoor Furniture - Put Away/Take Out
Carpentry-Minor repairs i.e.: Replace loose/rotten boards	Outdoor Lighting - Repair or Replace (Height Limit of 6 feet)
Caulking - Minor interior only - No removal of existing caulk	Outdoor Water Spigot - Shut Off/Turn On
Ceiling Fans - Repair Switches Only	Picture - Hang Only
Decks - Minor Repairs Only	Referrals for Tradesperson - Referrals Only Not Recommendations
Doorbells - Repair/Replace Buttons	Screens - Put In/Take Out (Limit 6 feet)
Door Locks - Repair/Replace	Shower Heads - Repair/Replace/Install
Door Sweeps - Repair/Replace/Install	Shower Wands - Repair/Replace/Install
Doors - Plane, Repair/Replace Hinges	Sink Drains Pipes & Stoppers - Repair or Replace
Electrical Outlets & Switches - Replace	Smoke Detectors/CO Detectors - Install or Replace Batteries
Electrical GFCI Outlets - Replace & Install	Storm Doors - Repair (No Installations)
Faucets - Repair or Replace	Storm Windows - Put In/Take Out (Limit 6 feet)
Furniture Assembly (Small pieces only) (no IKEA)	Supply Valves - Replace, Kitchen & Bath Only
Furniture Moving - 50 lbs. limit	Threshold - Repairs & Replacement
Furniture Repair - Minor Only	Toilets - Minor Repairs - No Rodding
Grab Bars - Install or Replace	TV/TV Converter Box - Install & Program (NO Comcast)
Handrails - Install or Replace	Weather Stripping - Doors & Windows
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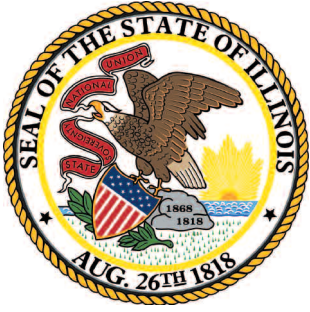
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Illinois State Representative NORMA HERNANDEZ

77th District



Illinois State Representative
Norma Hernandez

Rep. Norma Hernandez Launches a Series of FAFSA Info Sessions and Workshops

On Wednesday, Nov. 20, the Office of State Rep. Norma Hernandez in conjunction with the Office of Congressman Jesús Chuy García, UIC, LARES and ISAC (the Illinois Student Assistance Commission) launched the first in a series of joint FAFSA resource events.



During the recent U of I Systems state tour, in which the 77th District was selected as a key stop, data was shared with Rep. Norma Hernandez about the decrease in enrollment at state universities like UIC due to complications partially due to the previous FAFSA Application cycle. As a response the Office of State Rep. Hernandez has partnered with various institutional partners to address the need of incoming college students and their families to help assist with the FAFSA application process.



Our first event was a success with students and parents, as they received information on how to best prepare for the application process this cycle which opened in this month. Students and parents can look forward to the upcoming workshops in January for help from institutional partners. Our next workshop will be on Saturday, Jan. 25, at our district office. Follow us online or reach out to our office if you have any questions.

Illinois 77th Student Advisory Assembly



As a continuation of our year-round youth engagement programming the Office of State Rep. Norma Hernandez launched the newest iteration. Our Student Advisory Assembly is making strides, with students leading discussions on school issues and attending monthly school board meetings. This year, we've welcomed both high school and college students from across the 77th District.



Rep. Norma Hernandez, Co-Chair of the ILLCF, Awards Students with Scholarships at the Third Annual ILLCF Gala



On Friday, Nov. 22, Rep. Hernandez, co-chair of the Illinois Legislative Latino Caucus Foundation, joined many of her colleagues from the General Assembly for this special event at Navy Pier and honored 20 scholarship recipients. The foundation has programming throughout the year to help foster the next generation of future leaders. This year's theme was "Our Heroes, Our Stories" in which Rep. Hernandez selected local business owner Jeanette Chavarria Torres as "Hero of the 77th District". It was an unforgettable night in honor of celebrating young bright minds.



Christmas Toy Drive for Children Battling Cancer

In honor of children courageously fighting childhood cancer, the Office of State Rep. Norma Hernandez is hosting a Christmas Toy Drive this holiday season. The office is accepting toy donations for the young patients at Loyola Hospital. Those wishing to participate can donate new, unwrapped toys suitable for children of all ages during regular office hours, weekdays, 9 a.m.-5 p.m. The toy drive ends on Thursday, Dec. 19, at noon.

For more information, contact our district office at (708) 365-8498.



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A Message From Your Congressman Jesús "Chuy" García

Dear Friend,

2024 has been a busy year both in our district and in Washington D.C. As a senior member of the House Transportation Committee, I worked hard to ensure funding from the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law flowed to our state, while also advocating for a safe, green and accessible transportation system. I successfully secured more than \$12.2 million in Community Project Funding for projects all throughout our district, including \$490,000 for the village of Melrose Park to reconstruct the newer parallel water main replacements along 25th Avenue.

Additionally, I'm excited to share that I have joined the House Judiciary Committee, where I will continue to work on behalf of you and your families.



In this past year alone, my team and I closed 329 constituent cases ranging from passport requests, help with SBA loans, immigration case inquiries and much more. If you or your family need assistance with a federal agency, please contact my office.

As we enter the 119th Congress, I will continue fighting to defend our freedoms, advance economic opportunities, modernize our infrastructure and ensure access to affordable housing and health care. It is an honor to serve as your congressman and don't hesitate to reach out if needed. My Western Suburbs office is located at 125 N. 19th Ave., Suite A, in Melrose Park. You can also reach us by phone at (773) 342-0774.

I wish you and your family a wonderful holiday season!

Join Melrose Park Boy Scout Troop 4112 Today!



The Melrose Park Boy Scouts Program is Looking for New Members.

Any boys interested in joining the troop are encouraged to call Fred Crancich at (708) 609-5539.

To learn more about the Boy Scouts of America, including information on exploring, activities, membership details and more, visit www.scouting.org.

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Commissioner Frank J. Aguilar Hosts Veterans Breakfast

On Friday, Nov. 8, Cook County Commissioner Frank J. Aguilar hosted a breakfast for Cook County veterans. The event, which attracted veterans throughout Cook County's 16th District, honored the services and sacrifices of veterans and gave them access to organizations that support veterans.

The breakfast was held at the McDonalds at 5500 W. Cermak, which is owned and operated by Phil Fuentes and his daughter Katie Fuentes. Veterans in attendance received a complimentary breakfast sandwich, hash browns and coffee, and spoke with fellow veterans, veteran organizations, and local officials.



Cook County Commissioner
Frank J. Aguilar

"In America, veterans volunteer to protect this country. They show courage and embrace all challenges when serving both overseas and at home. When their tours are over, we must be there to support them and give them the tools they need to succeed in life," said Commissioner Aguilar. "I'd like to thank everyone who came out and a special thanks to Phil and Katie Fuentes for hosting us."

Partnering with Commissioner Aguilar was the Veterans Assistance Commission of Cook County, the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs, Help Heal Veterans and The Oral Health Forum. Also in attendance were Appellate Court Judge Jesse Reyes, Cook County's DEI and Outreach Manager Vilma Colom, Cicero Trustee Blanca Vargas, Berwyn Alder Scott Lennon and Riverside Township Assessor Frances Sitkiewicz.

This combination of various levels of government and community organizations allowed for a diverse array of resources and services being offered, and allowed for veterans to learn more about opportunities for assistance that are available.

"We at the Veterans Assistance Commission of Cook County are honored to join Commissioner Frank Aguilar's office at this event, as we work together to provide essential resources and support for our veteran community," said VAC Superintendent Elizabeth Soto. "We eagerly look forward to connecting with attendees and building an even stronger network of support for those who have served."

Veterans were able to speak with these officials and organizations to find more information on resources and support services for veterans throughout Cook County and Illinois. Commissioner Aguilar has made supporting veterans and increasing their access to services a priority, and is thrilled to see the partnerships between individuals, government and community organizations to ensure veterans and their families get the tools they need to be successful.



Commissioner Frank J. Aguilar Hosts Fourth Annual Dia de los Muertos Family Resource Fair

On Saturday, Oct. 26, Cook County Commissioner Frank J. Aguilar hosted the Fourth Annual 16th District Dia de los Muertos Resource Fair. Partnering with Commissioner Aguilar and his office were the village of Lyons, Teamsters Local 777 and Rincon Family Services. Also in attendance to provide resources and services to constituents were Alivio Medical Center, Corazon Community Services, Walgreens, Mobile Care Chicago Dental and other local organizations. Residents received glucose screenings, HIV tests, flu vaccines and more services. Also available was a face painting station for children.

"I'd like to thank all of our partners for bringing these services to our district and I'd like to thank everyone who attended this very successful family resource fair," said Commissioner Frank J. Aguilar. "I am thrilled that we were able to bring such a wide range of services, supporting our resident's health and their pocketbooks at the same time. There is always work to do, and I am so grateful that the 16th District is filled with organizations and residents willing to put in the time to make the 16th District as strong as it can be."

Over the last four years, this resource fair has become a staple of the 16th District. By keeping the location the same, residents know where to access resources without the red tape and obstacles that they often face. By tailoring to the needs of the community, residents are able to obtain the services and resources they need in order to keep themselves and their families healthy, while also building relationships with local elected officials and community organizations that can provide continued support, both now and in the future.

"This event reflects our commitment to serving the community holistically. By collaborating with the office of Commissioner Aguilar, the village of Lyons Mayor Chris Getty and local organizations, we can ensure that health and wellness resources are accessible to everyone, particularly during a time of remembrance and celebration," said Rincon Family Services Director of Communications and Marketing Raul Tinoco.



“Rincon Family Services is dedicated to supporting our diverse community through various programs aimed at promoting health, well-being and cultural connection.”

Building trust between residents and community organizations was a critical part of this family resource fair. Commissioner Aguilar and his office continue to connect 16th District residents with the many community organizations and local elected officials who have been doing the work on the ground to provide support and resources to the communities they serve.



Cook County Officials Celebrate Hispanic and Latine Heritage Month

On Tuesday, Oct. 15, Cook County commissioners and the Office of Cook County Board President Toni Preckwinkle celebrated Hispanic and Latine Heritage Month in the lobby of the Cook County Building. This event was held to celebrate not only Sept. 15-Oct. 15 as National Hispanic Heritage Month, but to also highlight the passage of Resolution 24-5259. The resolution, adopted during the September Cook County board meetings, was cosponsored by commissioners Frank J. Aguilar, Alma Anaya and Anthony Quezada, and was passed unanimously by the Cook County Board of Commissioners.

“Hispanic and Latine individuals of every generation have made immense contributions through their courageous service in government, the arts, education, mathematics, science, literature, technology and philanthropy – both in Cook County and around the globe,” said President Toni Preckwinkle. “We’re proud to celebrate that legacy all month long.”

The event began with remarks from President Preckwinkle and commissioners Aguilar, Anaya and Quezada, before Mariachi Los Jinetes of Morton East High School from Cook County’s 16th District gave a special musical performance.

After the musical performance, President Preckwinkle honored Edgar I. Lopez and Linda Xochitl Tortolero for their contributions to the people and communities of Cook County.

Edgar Lopez has dedicated his life to community service, with a particular focus on empowering underserved youth. He has worked tirelessly to ensure young people – especially those without strong parental support or access to opportunities – are served. Linda Xochitl Tortolero is the president and CEO of Mujeres Latinas en Accion, the nation’s longest standing Latina-serving organization. In her leadership roles, Linda has developed and led Mujeres’ impactful initiatives, such as strategic programming and advocacy work.

“Latine and Hispanic Americans have made contributions throughout every corner of Cook County. We are proud of our heritage, of our culture, and the communities we have built and sustained in America,” said Commissioner Frank J. Aguilar. “This is an opportunity to celebrate our shared history. It is a celebration of our lives and culture in the present. It is a promise to continue honoring our culture and contributions in the future. This was also an opportunity to celebrate, to listen to the music of our communities and honor two Hispanic and Latine Americans who have contributed so much to our county.”

National Hispanic Heritage Month was founded to celebrate the heritage and culture of Hispanic and Latine communities, and was first recognized by Cook County on Sept. 15, 2014. Hispanic and Latine individuals have long been part of the fabric of Cook County, first being reported on the Illinois census in 1850 and reaching a reported population of 25,211 by 1930. Cook County is proud to celebrate the diversity of its residents and the richness of culture – the Hispanic and Latine population has now increased to 1,382,778 and represents the largest minority group in Cook County.

“The Hispanic and Latino community is a strong pillar of our county, contributing to the social and economic growth in the last decades. I am proud to represent one of the largest Latino communities in Illinois, ensuring our voices and life experiences are considered at the county level. We celebrate the resiliency of our people not just this month, but every day,” said Commissioner Alma Anaya.

There are more than 50,000 Hispanic and Latine-owned businesses across Cook County and this entrepreneurial vibrancy has helped revitalize numerous communities in Chicago and suburban communities. Cook County’s economy has always been a magnet for immigrant laborers from all over the world and immigrants from Mexico, the Caribbean, Central America and South America in particular, and Cook County continues to welcome and value the contributions of immigrants. In addition to their economic impact, Hispanic and Latine individuals of every generation have made immense contributions through their courageous service in the United States Military, the arts, education, mathematics, science, literature, technology and philanthropy in this county and the world.

“I am proud to celebrate this year’s Hispanic Heritage Month as a first-generation American and as the first Costa Rican elected to the board of commissioners and in the state of Illinois. Cook County is home to a diverse tapestry of Central and South American communities that make us a beautiful and vibrant county. I encourage everyone to celebrate and enjoy the rich contributions to history, art, music, food and culture that Latine and Hispanic communities have brought to our neighborhoods,” said Commissioner Anthony Quezada.





News from Illinois Secretary of State Alexi Giannoulias

Giannoulias Launches DMV Kiosk Pilot Program

'Fast-Lane' DMVs at Illinois Retailers Offer Renewals Within Minutes

DMV kiosks located inside retail stores across the state will provide Illinoisans with a new option when it comes to renewing their driver's license or obtaining vehicle stickers, Secretary Alexi Giannoulias announced recently.

The Secretary of State's Office began rolling out "Fast-Lane" DMV kiosks as part of a pilot program this fall, deploying 15 kiosks located in Chicago, the suburbs and downstate in Mariano's, Jewel-Osco, Kroger and Meijer grocery stores.

"Fast-Lane kiosks offer added convenience for Illinois drivers who now have the ability to renew their driver's license or purchase a vehicle sticker while they're running errands or buying their groceries," said Giannoulias, who announced the program at the Mariano's in the West Loop. "This is a big step in our ongoing effort to modernize the office and enable Illinoisans to obtain more services online and remotely without having to visit a DMV."

"At Mariano's we are always looking for innovative ways to serve our customers and these kiosks offer incredible convenience. We are excited to launch this initiative with the Secretary of State's Office at our stores, which will create excitement for our shoppers," said Michael Marx, division president, Roundy's and Mariano's.

With an average transaction time of about two minutes, Illinoisans can renew their driver's licenses, state IDs and purchase vehicle stickers using the kiosks. Once the pilot is expanded, the Secretary of State's Office will look to add more services.

The kiosks serve as an alternative resource for those without online access or those with restrictive schedules, which make a trip to the DMV more difficult. Renewals conducted at a kiosk are more convenient and less expensive than at most currency exchanges or emission testing sites.

During the pilot phase, the kiosks will also offer services in English and Spanish, but Giannoulias plans to increase the number of languages available as the program expands.

Most Illinois drivers must renew their driver's license every four years and motorists must renew their vehicle registrations and obtain license plate stickers annually. Illinois drivers and motorists receive a renewal notice in the mail that includes a unique bar code for their account and an access PIN, which they will enter when using a kiosk.

The kiosks will print vehicle registration stickers for customers immediately on site. Customers seeking a driver's license or state ID card renewal will receive a temporary document at the kiosk to use while their new card is mailed to them within 15 business days.

New applicants for driver or vehicle services – including those applying for a REAL ID – will still be required to make an in-person DMV visit to ensure proper identity verification is conducted.

The kiosk technology was designed by Intellectual Technology Inc. (ITI), which was chosen as part of a competitive bid process. ITI operates self-service kiosks located in 17 states, including California, Florida, Georgia, Indiana, Michigan, Minnesota, New Mexico, Nevada, North Carolina and West Virginia.

The kiosk program does not include any state funding or any additional costs to taxpayers. ITI will charge \$4.95 per transaction and a credit card processing fee if applicable.

For more information, Illinoisans are encouraged to visit www.ilsos.gov/kiosks or visit one of the participating pilot locations.

Giannoulias Launches Distracted Driver Effort

Multifaceted Approach Aims to Combat Distracted Driving Among Teens

Kicking off national Teen Driver Safety Week, Illinois Secretary of State Alexi Giannoulias announced his office is spearheading a multi-faceted campaign to raise awareness about the dangers of distracted driving.

The office's "One Road. One Focus" campaign – specifically geared toward educating teen drivers about the consequences of distracted driving – includes a new requirement for teens to watch a video that details the consequences of dangerous driving behaviors during their learner's permit phase before they receive their driver's license.

The office is also partnering with Illinois State Police (ISP) and Illinois Department of Transportation (IDOT) to identify areas prone to crashes and designate them as Distracted Driver Corridors throughout the state.

Launched by the National Highway Traffic Safety Authority (NHTSA), Teen Driver Safety Week reinforces young drivers' understanding of the impact of their behind-the-wheel decisions. According to NHTSA data, drivers 15-34 are most likely to be distracted at the time of fatal crashes.

"Decisions made behind the wheel impact all road users, whether that's other drivers, passengers, pedestrians, bicyclists or the families waiting at home for their loved one's safe arrival," Giannoulias said. "The mentality of valuing a text message over lives is completely unacceptable. We're committed to changing behaviors to make Illinois roads safer and to save lives."

Giannoulias is partnering with Brenda Protz, a Springfield woman who lost her 14-year-old daughter Jenna in a distracted driving incident that also took the lives of three others, including her daughter's best friend and her paternal grandparents. A young driver, charged with aggravated use of an electronic communications device and improper lane usage, crossed a median causing the crash.

"Distracted driving is a nationwide epidemic. My daughter Jenna and her friend Holly were only 14 when their lives ended," Protz said. "I have made it my mission to try and save the lives of others by spreading awareness about the different types of distracted driving and what those actions can do to a family."

The office is also working with stakeholders, including IDOT, ISP and road safety advocates like Chicago-based Bike Lane Uprising.

“Every year, ISP troopers issue thousands of citations and warnings for distracted driving. Despite this, our troopers still respond to hundreds of crashes, many the result of distracted driving,” said ISP Director Brendan F. Kelly. “ISP will continue to work with Illinois Secretary of State Giannoulias and the campaign to combat distracted driving.”

“Improving safety, eliminating crashes and saving lives requires a team effort,” said Stephane B. Seck-Birhame, IDOT’s bureau chief of Safety Programs and Engineering. “We know distracted driving is a problem across all age groups, but with teens in particular. We look forward to working with all stakeholders on potential solutions as we strive to drive down the number of fatalities on Illinois roads to zero, the only acceptable number.”

“Vulnerable road users like bicyclists and pedestrians are being killed and injured at disproportionately high rates as a result of distracted driving, rising to the level of a public health crisis,” said Christina Whitehouse, founder of Bike Lane Uprising. “We welcome the Illinois secretary of state’s initiatives to address this issue and we urge other governmental agencies to explore additional opportunities to make our roadways safer.”

Along with the video that teens will be required to view while in their learner’s permit phase, other initiatives include:

- Partnering with IDOT and the Illinois General Assembly to declare new safety corridors in areas that have experienced a spike in crashes related to dangerous driving behaviors, including distracted driving. Signage in the corridors would alert drivers of the increased risk. Ohio introduced a similar measure, resulting in 30% fewer traffic crashes and 31% fewer injury crashes since the corridors were created in 2018.
- Collaborating with ISP to identify and coordinate Illinois Secretary of State Police patrols to enforce distracted driving laws in high-volume crash areas. The office will build on existing partnerships with law enforcement related to Scott’s Law and DUI enforcement.
- Working with members of the General Assembly to create a grant program for law enforcement agencies to combat distracted driving and target initiatives geared toward their own community needs.
- Partnering with state’s attorneys to boost the revocation of driving privileges of individuals who have caused great bodily harm while charges are processed.

Nearly 5,000 Entries Received in Flag Redesign Contest

Giannoulias Announces Flag Contest Next-Steps

Illinois Secretary of State Alexi Giannoulias announced the Illinois Flag Commission received 4,844 entries during the six-week submission period that closed Oct. 18.

“I’m thrilled by the number of submissions the commission has received, as well as the excitement that this project has generated. I can’t wait to see which designs the commission selects for public voting,” Giannoulias said. “The contest has encouraged us all to reflect on what makes us proud to be Illinoisans, resulting in some great stories and unique designs reflecting what our state represents.”

Now that the submission period is closed, the Illinois Flag Commission will meet before the end of the year to select the top 10 designs. Beginning in January, the public will have the opportunity to vote online for one of 10 new designs or one of the three former flag designs, including the current state flag, the 1918 Centennial Flag and the 1968 Sesquicentennial Flag.

After a public feedback period, the commission will report its findings to the Illinois General Assembly by April 1, 2025, whose members will vote on whether to adopt a new flag, return to a previous iteration of the flag or retain the current flag.

Senate Bill 1818, sponsored by state Sen. Doris Turner (48th District – Springfield) and state Rep. Kam Buckner (26th District – Chicago), was signed into law in 2023, creating the commission with the goals to gauge public sentiment on a new flag and to bolster civic pride. The Secretary of State’s Office chairs the commission.

The commission will evaluate if a new state flag would better represent the state. The state flag has not had a major redesign since 1915.

Illinois Library Association Honors Giannoulias

Illinois Secretary of State and State Librarian Receives Award for Library Legislation that Protects the “Right-to-Read”

Illinois Secretary of State and State Librarian Alexi Giannoulias received the Illinois Library Association’s (ILA) Robert R. McClarren Legislative Development Award at the association’s 2024 awards program during its annual conference in Peoria following his administration’s work to protect the “Right-to-Read.”

“While I am absolutely honored to be the recipient of the Robert R. McClarren Award, this award is a reflection of the lifechanging work of our librarians and library community. Their dedication and devotion are reflections of true public service,” said Giannoulias. “Here in Illinois, we protect the “Right-to-Read” and are grateful for the folks who make it possible.”

“The Illinois Library Association’s Public Policy Committee was honored to present this year’s Robert R. McClarren Legislative Development Award to Illinois Secretary of State Alexi Giannoulias,” said Cynthia Robinson, executive director of ILA. “Secretary Giannoulias’ dedication and impactful contributions to legislative development make him an outstanding recipient. The Illinois Library Association commends him for his commitment to the advancement of libraries and the broader community throughout the state of Illinois.”

The Robert R. McClarren Award was established by the ILA in 1989 to honor an Illinois librarian, trustee, library or legislator who has contributed significantly to legislative development related to libraries in the state of Illinois.

Since taking office, Giannoulias’ administration championed first-in-the-nation legislation designed to support public libraries by withholding state grants from libraries that remove books due to doctrinal or partisan disapproval. Other states, such as Maryland and Minnesota, have since enacted similar legislation.

The office has also distributed more than \$104 million in grant funds to expand library services and collections, including grant funding to help eliminate the digital divide. The funding helps ensure geographic location and socioeconomic status are not barriers to accessing information.

Giannoulias’ office is also pursuing legislation to provide libraries and librarians the same protections teachers and elected officials receive from threats and intimidation after at least 22 bomb threats were received by libraries throughout the state.



From the Office of Michael W. Frerichs, Illinois State Treasurer

State Treasurer Frerichs, Illinois Department of Labor Team Up To Return Unpaid Wages and Penalties to Illinois Workers

Check I-CASH Site to See If You Have a Claim

Illinois workers can now search State Treasurer Michael Frerichs' I-CASH website (<https://icash.illinoistreasurer.gov/>) to see if unpaid wages and penalties pursued and collected by the Illinois Department of Labor are waiting for them to claim.

The addition of recovered wages to Treasurer Frerichs' missing money site is the result of a change in the law that state Sen. Robert Peters and state Rep. Marcus C. Evans Jr. shepherded through the General Assembly last year.

The Illinois Department of Labor (IDOL) investigates wage theft and recovers back wages when it finds that an employer has underpaid workers in violation of state law. Workers don't always know they have money coming their way however.

Wage theft investigations take time and sometimes a worker may move or change phone numbers by the time back wages have been collected, making them hard to locate. In other instances, IDOL may have conducted a worksite-wide audit and uncovered wage underpayments for workers who were not aware of the investigation at all.

The change in state law extended the time for wage recovery to three years to give the Illinois Department of Labor more time to search for and locate employees who are owed back wages. The law also ensured that after three years, IDOL can send unclaimed wages to Treasurer Frerichs' Unclaimed Property Trust Fund so that workers can still claim their money.

In recent months, the Illinois Department of Labor has started to send recovered unpaid wages to the State Treasurer's Office, which has added the names to the I-CASH site. So far, unpaid wages for 25 people have been added to the unclaimed property database. Workers can go to icash.illinoistreasurer.gov in the coming months to see if back wages are waiting for them to claim.

In addition, the change in state law sets aside some funding for the Illinois Department of Labor to support worker outreach and education regarding the recovery of unpaid wages.

"Hardworking people in Illinois deserve to be paid for their labor," Treasurer Frerichs said. "We are thankful to team up with the Illinois Department of Labor, Sen. Peters, and Rep. Evans on a common-sense solution."

"Ensuring workers are paid what they're owed is at the core of the Illinois Department of Labor's mission," said Illinois Department of Labor Director Jane Flanagan. "These updates to the law not only extend the timeframe during which the department can try to locate a worker who is owed unpaid wages, they also provide workers with a new tool to track down money that may be owed to them. We truly appreciate the partnership of the General Assembly and Treasurer Frerichs as we all strive to better serve Illinois workers."

Sen. Peters and Rep. Evans applauded the law's changes.

"Let's be clear: Wage theft is theft. It's in fact the leading form of theft," said Peters (D-Chicago). "People deserve as much time as possible to recover their unpaid wages."

"People who work and have wages unfairly withheld from them now have better recourse," said Evans (D-Chicago), the assistant House majority leader. "Working together to help people is what drives us in Springfield."

Illinois Treasurer Michael Frerichs Reminds 140,000 Residents Getting Missing Money to Cash the Check \$13.2 Million Returned Through Enhanced Money Match

Illinois State Treasurer Michael Frerichs is encouraging nearly 140,000 residents to cash the unclaimed property checks that may have arrived in the mail. The checks went out as part of the latest round of the Enhanced Money Match program, which allows the Treasurer's Office to automatically return missing money to people without the need to file a claim. The office leverages data the state already collects and crossmatches it with the state treasurer's unclaimed property database. Recently, the Treasurer's Office sent letters to unclaimed property owners that described the amount and source of the money.

"We put technology to work to return more money to people in our state. After all, the money belongs to them," Frerichs said. "But some people see the check in the mail and don't think it's real. Please don't forget to deposit or cash the check, or it ends up back with us as unclaimed property."

Since 2018, the Illinois Treasurer's Office has returned more than \$102 million to nearly 422,000 people through the Enhanced Money Match Program. The nearly 140,000 letters sent in this round makes it the largest Money Match ever performed in the nation.

State lawmakers approved legislation in recent years to allow the State Treasurer's Office to return even more money through the I-Cash Program. A law sponsored by state Sen. Sara Feigenholtz of Chicago and state Rep. Stephanie Kifowit of Oswego raised the limit on the amount that can be returned through Money Match from \$2,000 to \$5,000.

"It's a win-win when we can eliminate unnecessary steps and hurdles so that unclaimed property gets into the hands of its rightful owners as quickly as possible," Sen. Feigenholtz said.

"Many families are living paycheck to paycheck to pay their bills," Rep. Kifowit said. "With the holidays quickly approaching, families receiving their money from I-Cash can make a difference, whether it is a fabulous meal, a special gift for their child or a little extra holiday cheer. It's the least we can do to help our Illinois' families."

Enhanced Money Match focuses on simple claims: Cash owed to a single person. Not included is cash owned by multiple parties, including a joint holding of a parent and minor child, as well as shares of stocks and bonds, escrow accounts and the contents of bank safe deposit boxes.

Enhanced Money Match is part of the office's Unclaimed Property Program, also known as I-CASH. It is one of the state's oldest consumer protection initiatives. In Illinois, the state treasurer is tasked with safeguarding unclaimed property, such as the contents of overlooked safe deposit boxes, unpaid life insurance benefits, forgotten bank accounts and unused rebate cards. Illinois holds more than \$5 billion in unclaimed property. More than \$2 billion has been returned since Frerichs took office, the most in state history. The state treasurer is legally required to return unclaimed property to its owners or heirs, no matter how long it takes.

To see if you have unclaimed property, check the online database at www.illinoistreasurer.gov/ICASH.

The Mission to Return Purple Heart Medals to Their Rightful Owners

Illinois Treasurer Frerichs launched Operation Purple Heart in November 2021. He is seeking the public's help to return Purple Heart medals that have been especially difficult to return.

Each of the Purple Heart medals was inside a bank safe deposit box. Each bank determined the safe deposit box as abandoned because the owner(s) of the box had not touched it in several years. As a result, the contents of each safe deposit box were turned over to the Illinois State Treasurer's Office.

Military medals are among the most difficult items to return because neither the Armed Forces nor the federal government maintain a comprehensive list of awardees.

Purple Hearts Awaiting Return to Their Proper Owners (As of Nov. 8, 2024)

- Robert Cawthon, submitted to the Illinois State Treasurer's Office Nov. 1, 1992, from 5/3rd Bank in Oak Park. There is conflicting information where Robert lived. Information suggests the awardee was in the infantry.
- Raymond Wilson, submitted to the Illinois State Treasurer's Office Nov. 13, 1995. Raymond lived in Chicago and banked with Chicago Community Bank, which subsequently was sold.
- Lawrence M. Burns, submitted to the Illinois State Treasurer's Office Nov. 5, 1997. Lawrence lived in Homewood and banked with Advanced Bank in Homewood. Information also suggests a financial relationship with Homewood Federal Savings and Loan. Today, there is information to suggest Mr. Burns chooses to live in a remote area in California.
- Linda K. Moore, submitted to the Illinois State Treasurer's Office Oct. 17, 2001. Linda lived in Peoria and banked with National City Bank in Peoria, which subsequently was sold. Information suggests a relationship with John L. Moore.
- Bernice Smith, submitted to the Illinois State Treasurer's Office Nov. 18, 2002. Bernice lived in Oak Park and banked with MB Financial Bank in Oak Park. The bank subsequently was sold.
- David Gorski, submitted to the Illinois State Treasurer's Office Oct. 30, 2003. David lived in Darien and banked with Hinsbrook Bank & Trust. Contents suggesting a relationship with WWII also were present, although it is difficult to determine if that is when the Purple Heart was earned.
- John Ustaszewski, submitted to the Illinois State Treasurer's Office in 2010. In addition to the Purple Heart, there also is a Bronze Star and a World War II campaign ribbon. John lived in Chicago and banked at TCF National Bank in Chicago.
- Michelle Steward or Patricia VanHasselaere, submitted to the Illinois State Treasurer's Office Oct. 31, 2018. It is believed they lived in Round Lake. A will for Patricia also was in the safe deposit box.
- Nancy Johnston, submitted to the Illinois State Treasurer's Office in 2021. There also was a Good Conduct Medal and an Air Force Medal. Nancy apparently lived in Frankfort and likely banked at Old Plank Trail Community Bank in Frankfort.
- James R. Bennett, submitted to the Illinois State Treasurer's Office in 2022. It was in a safe deposit box in the name of Ann Bennett who lived in Oak Lawn and banked with 5/3rd Bank. Also included in the safe deposit box are references to a Susan Bennett.

The names above are the names associated with the bank safe deposit box and might not be the name of the Purple Heart awardee.

Please contact us if you have information regarding a Purple Heart return by sending an email to Claimantconnect@illinoistreasurer.gov.





Check Out These Seasonal Events and Activities at the Cook County Forest Preserves

***Join Our Programming
Teams and Naturalists
for Some Upcoming
Fun, Educational
In-Person and
Virtual Offerings***

Wildlife Connections – Tuesday, Dec. 17 • 10:30 a.m.

River Trail Nature Center (3120 Milwaukee Ave., Northbrook)

Stop by the visitor center to learn about reptiles, mammals and birds from the residents of Misericordia – Heart of Mercy.

Cost – Free. Contact – (847) 824-8360/rivertrail.naturecenter@cookcountyil.gov.

Be a Better Birder: Birding Ethics – Thursday, Dec. 19 • 6 p.m.

Virtual Event – Learn about ABA birding ethics and how to ensure other people and, most importantly, birds are minimally impacted during your trip.

Cost – Free. Registration required (online only) at <https://fpdcc.com/event/be-a-better-birder-birding-ethics/>.

Contact – Jessica.becker@cookcountyil.gov.

Winter Workshop-Pottery – Saturday, Dec. 21 • 1 p.m.

Camp Reinberg (1801 N. Quentin Rd., Palatine)

Calling all creatives! Join us for our themed sessions as we explore pottery.

Cost – Free. Registration required – Call CEP (Northwest Zone) at (773) 758-8899.

Contact – (773) 758-8899/experience.nature@cookcountyil.gov.

Fitness Hike – Sunday, Dec. 22 • 10 a.m.

Eggers Grove (112th Street and S Avenue, Chicago)

Fitness Hikes are for those looking to get some exercise outdoors. These hikes will be faster paced with little to no stopping or interpretation. Five miles.

Cost – Free. Contact – (312) 415-2970/experience.nature@cookcountyil.gov.

Winter Play Date – Sunday, Dec. 22 • 1 p.m.

Crabtree Nature Center (3 Stover Rd., Barrington)

Drop in for this outdoor/indoor family fun. Self-guided activity stations and learn through play.

Cost – Free. Contact – (847) 381-6592/Crabtree.NatureCenter@cookcountyil.gov.

Junior Naturalist Walk – Saturday, Dec. 28 • 1 p.m.

Crabtree Nature Center (3 Stover Rd., Barrington)

Earn a Junior Naturalist Badge by taking a short walk outside and doing an indoor activity book.

Cost – Free. Contact – (847) 381-6592/Crabtree.NatureCenter@cookcountyil.gov.

Winter Camp – Thursday, Jan. 2-Saturday, Jan. 4, 2025

Rolling Knolls (11N260 Rohrssen Rd., Elgin)

Learn the significance of the winter season in Native-American culture while participating in various activities. Activities, hosted 10 a.m.-2 p.m. and presented by Trickster Cultural Center, are open to all ages.

Cost – Free. Registration required – Online only.

Website – <https://www.tricksterculturalcenter.org/>.

Clearing the Way: Forest Preserves Prepares for Winter Weather

The Forest Preserves may never know how much snow will cover its 70,000 acres on any given winter day, but our crews are always ready with nearly 60 snowplows and salt trucks. When winter weather arrives, the Preserves open as quickly as possible to be safe for all visitors – and for the environment, too.

Three brining trucks from the Landscape Maintenance Division hit the road before the first flake hits the ground at priority locations among the 251 parking lots across the Preserves, facilities such as nature centers, campgrounds, pavilions, off-leash dog areas, sledding hills, visitor centers, the volunteer resource center, police stations and maintenance yards.

Brining before the snow arrives is part of the Forest Preserves' aim to limit the amount of salt put down on parking lots. Excess salt can get into waterways and the soil that supports native plants. By diluting with water, brine makes it easier for plows to get down to the pavement surface and remove all snow and ice, allowing salt to be used conservatively in the middle of lots and entrances so that cars entering and exiting will spread it around.

Setting Your Intentions for the New Year? The Forest Preserves Can Help

Are you making a list of priorities and intentions for 2025? Do you have an annual set of New Year's resolutions? Visits to the Forest Preserves of Cook County can help fulfill a wide range of goals if you know where to look.

Volunteer

Have you resolved to volunteer to give back to your community? Winter lends itself to large-scale restoration projects that require brush and tree removal because frozen ground protects the soil – and also because most wildlife is dormant, reducing the impact on animals.

Throughout the Forest Preserves, thousands of dedicated volunteers head out to help with restoration efforts all year long. From cutting invasive species like honeysuckle and buckthorn to harvesting native seeds to cleaning up litter, there are myriad ways to get out and give back in the new year.

Try Something New

If this is the year to try different experiences, there is a wide array of possibilities at the Forest Preserves. Whether you've always wanted to strap on some cross-country skis and experience an exhilarating trek on groomed ski trails or you're ready to pick up a bow and arrow to test your aim with archery, the Forest Preserves has robust programs to help you explore new hobbies and activities.

Learn Something New

Maybe you want to expand your horizons. Join us in the Forest Preserves to explore topics ranging from becoming more sustainable at home and in your community to learning about native animals and plants.

Did you know there is plenty of nature happenings in winter? Mammals, like foxes and coyotes, remain active in winter, while reptiles and amphibians go into semi-hibernation (called brumation), but will come out of dormancy on warmer days.

Meet New People

Have you resolved to get out and meet new people? There's no better venue to find folks with similar interests than being out in nature. Whether joining volunteer efforts, attending a nature-inspired arts and crafts program or participating in a guided walk, there are endless opportunities to spend time outdoors and make new friends.

Improve Mental and Physical Health

The new year is a great time to make changes to improve your mental or physical health. Consider how you can use nature as a resource for exercise, meditation and well-being, whether with family or friends, or on your own.

The Forest Preserves offer up heart-pumping fitness hikes throughout the year and those looking for a slower, more contemplative walk can join a Forest Therapy or Photography Walk or a guided Walk & Talk that integrates interpretation about local ecology.

Be sure to check out our events page (fpdcc.com/events/) for more inspiration on ways to spend time outside experiencing amazing nature while making the most out of 2025.

Get Your 2025 Wall Calendars and Winter Guides!

2025 wall calendars and winter guides are now available – for free! The calendars feature beautiful photographs taken throughout the Forest Preserves that highlight some of the breathtaking animals, plants and landscapes that thrive locally. The guides boast events and programs for visitors to learn more about the land and animals surrounding them. They are now available to the public on a first-come, first-served basis at Forest Preserves nature centers. Be sure to check their Facebook pages or call for updates on availability.

Chill Thrills: Winter Camping in the Forest Preserves

As the temperatures drop, a different kind of adventure awaits in the Forest Preserves of Cook County. Winter camping offers a chance to enjoy the great outdoors in a way that many overlook, proving that it is not just a summer activity. While the idea of camping in colder weather can seem intimidating, Forest Preserves Camping Program Coordinator Brian Arnoldt says that with the right preparation, it can be just as enjoyable as in any other season.

**Take some time
to explore
our website at
www.fpdcc.com for
additional events and
valuable information
linked to the
Cook County
Forest Preserves
experience!**

Your next visit to Brookfield Zoo isn't complete unless you've experienced the amazing things on hand.

Here's a list of some incredible current and upcoming attractions. Be sure to check out our website at www.brookfieldzoo.org for additional happenings.

Want to make the most of your zoo experience? Become a member and you'll get exclusive discounts to most attractions, not to mention so much more!

It's Exciting – Brookfield Zoo's Holiday Magic **This Holiday Season, Get Ready to Visit** **Chicagoland's Longest-Running Lights Festival, Dec. 19-22 and Dec. 26-31,** **Featuring Over 2 Million Twinkling LED Lights!**

Step into a wonderland of Holiday Magic, where enchanting scenes come to life with giant illuminated animals, a dazzling tunnel show, Santa and captivating walkthrough displays! Marvel at over 900 beautifully decorated trees that illuminate the night, each adorned by local community groups and organizations. Take a leisurely stroll through our NEW immersive displays, Candy Cane Lane and Sparkling Coast, and enjoy the festive atmosphere. It's a magical experience filled with joy and wonder for the whole family!

NEW! Two New Themed Lighting Areas

Experience two new immersive lighting areas at the zoo! The Wild Encounters pathway will be transformed into Candy Cane Lane. Keep an eye out for reindeer in Wild Encounters – they might just know where Santa is! This enchanting pathway will lead you to the East Mall Holiday Market.

Living Coast will be transformed into the Sparkling Coast, adorned with wintery blue moving light patterns and magical underwater light statues. Feel a deep connection to the sea as you stroll beneath the radiant waters.



Meet Santa!

Meet Santa this holiday season at the zoo! Visit him from now-Dec. 22, 5-8 p.m., at the Pavilions. Before you enter Santa's Workshop, send your letters to Santa or animals using our North Pole Express Mailbox. It's a magical experience for the whole family!

NEW! Holiday Market

Embrace the winter spirit at our NEW Holiday Market! Enjoy unique shopping alongside seasonal food and beverages that will warm your heart. Visit the Cranberry Bar for craft holiday cocktails, cozy winter apparel and delicious funnel cakes. Don't forget to stop by The Nutcracker Hut for custom ornaments and handmade gifts that are perfect for the holidays!

Holiday Treats & Sips and Jolly Gift Shops

Indulge in delicious food and cozy beverages, including hot chocolate available at various locations throughout the park to keep you warm during the event. Plus, explore our Jolly Gift Shops to find the perfect holiday gifts and keepsakes that will make this season memorable!

Experience Winter Wildlife

Warm up as you explore indoor habitats. There are three open indoor habitats during Holiday Magic: The Swamp, Living Coast and Seven Seas Underwater Viewing. Don't miss the outdoor habitats, where you can encounter incredible animals like big cats, bison, camels, kangaroos, reindeer and more!

Seasonal Animal Experiences Available for Purchase

Enhance your visit and delight in the beloved animals of Brookfield Zoo Chicago. Separate fees apply for these experiences.

- Nightly holiday-themed Dolphins in Action presentation at 6 p.m.
- Nightly Penguin Encounter at 6 p.m.

Seasonal Attractions Available for Purchase

Take a ride on our seasonal attractions (open weather permitting). Separate fees apply for these experiences.

- Elf Power: Virtual reality experiences.
- Carousel: Featuring 72 animals and stationary chariots.
- Anniversary Ferris Wheel: Available only through Dec. 31 (don't miss your chance!).

We're excited to offer a few different types of tickets for Holiday Magic! Please explore your options at <https://www.brookfieldzoo.org/HolidayMagic> and remember to select both admission and parking during check-out.

North Gate Entry –

General Admission

Choosing North Gate admission provides entry and parking at the North Gate. Advance ticket purchases are strongly encouraged.

Address: 8400 31st St.,
Brookfield, Illinois.

South Gate Entry –

General Admission

Choosing South Gate admission provides entry and parking at the South Gate. Reservations are required.

Address: 3300 Golf Rd.,
Brookfield, Illinois.

Member Admission

Members do not need to reserve North Gate entry, but reservations are required for South Gate entry. To use member guest pass vouchers for South Gate entry, it is required to redeem these for advance reservations as well.

Address: 3300 Golf Rd., Brookfield, Illinois.

Active, Reservist and Retired Members of the Military

Active, reservist and retired members of the military who present a valid ID at one of the zoo's admission booths will be admitted to Holiday Magic free of charge.

Please note – Brookfield Zoo Chicago is only open 3-9 p.m., on Holiday Magic dates.

Shop the Zoo's Holiday Gift Guide for the Perfect Present!

Visit www.brookfieldzoo.org/holidaygiftguide/ today!



Make your list, check it twice! Brookfield Zoo Chicago's Holiday Gift Guide offers the perfect presents for the animal lovers in your life. Ranging from our Wild Connections up-close animal encounters and zoo memberships to ornaments and cozy apparel, there's something for everyone. Proceeds from your gifts will help support the care and conservation of the animals of Brookfield Zoo Chicago, too!

holiday magic
Sparkling Highlights
Your guide to an enchanting Holiday Magic experience

Presented by **comed** and **meijer**
AN EXELON COMPANY

NEW Themed Lighting Areas:
Candy Cane Lane
Sparkling Coast

Themed Lighting Areas:
Underwater Viewing
Great Bear Wilderness

Open Buildings:
The Living Coast
The Swamp
Seven Seas

Map Locations:
North Gate, South Gate, North Mall, South Mall, Big Cats, Formal Pool, The Swamp, Jingle Bell Rock Dance Party, Gingerbread House, Giant Orb, Giant Bear, Polar Bear Sled, Giraffe Display, Polar Bear Display, Wild Explorers Virtual Reality, The Living Coast, Café del Sol, Sparkling Coast, Underwater Viewing, Great Bear Wilderness, Tropical Forest Opens Summer 2025, Nutter's Stage, Jingle Bell Rock Dance Party, The Swamp, South Gate Market, Giant Snowman, Timber Reindeer, Hamill Family Wild Encounters, Candy Cane Lane, Lighted Archway, Ferris Wheel, Lighthead Archway, Santa's North Pole Mailbox, Holiday Letters to Animals, Jingle Bell Rock Dance Party, Wild Explorers Virtual Reality, Walk of Lights, Open Buildings, Restrooms.

Shopping & Foodie Guide

- NEW Festive Holiday Market**
Introducing our new Holiday Market featuring seasonal shopping, knitwear, craft cocktails, and roasted candied nuts.
- North Gate Shop**
- South Gate Market**
- Coast Gifts & Holiday House**
- Bear Crossing**

Seasonal Treats & Sips

- Cup & Cone** (several locations)
Hot chocolate, pretzels, frosted nuts
- Leinie Lodge**
Beer, pretzels, hot chocolate
- Defrost Depot** (several locations)
Beer, pretzels, hot chocolate
- Toasty Post**
Pretzels, hot chocolate, and more
- BZ Red Hots**
Burgers, hot dogs, chicken, pizza, hot chocolate, and more
- Sweetie Bird Gourmet Popcorn & Treats**
Hot chocolate, retail and glowing retail
- Café del Sol**
Burgers, hot dogs, chicken, hot chocolate, and more
- Graze**
Poutine, croissant dogs, raclette sandwiches, and more
- Funnel Cakes**
Seasonal funnel cakes and bread pudding bites
- Cranberry Bar**
Craft cocktails

BROOKFIELD ZOO CHICAGO

For more details or a complete listing of the fun, family activities happening at Brookfield Zoo Chicago, check out www.brookfieldzoo.org/events or call (708) 688-8000.

Six Flu Myths Debunked by a Walgreens Pharmacist

Is it Too Late to Get Vaccinated? No Way, and Walgreens Pharmacy Manager

Kaliope Tsirogiannis Explains What's Fact and Fiction About All Things Flu, Vaccines and Testing

Feverish foreheads, contagious coughs and unstoppable sniffles confirm sick season is in full swing. As the holidays approach and many spend more time indoors with loved ones, the risk of contracting common respiratory illnesses like flu, COVID-19, pneumonia and RSV will rise.

But germs aren't the only things spreading this winter; many vaccine-related myths and misinformation are also circulating and posing a risk to the health and safety of communities.

Pharmacy manager Kaliope Tsirogiannis, who has worked at Walgreens for 24 years, breaks down common flu myths that you might hear this season.

Myth #1: I'm healthy, so I don't need to get vaccinated.

FALSE. Vaccines are a safe and dependable way to help build immunity even in healthy individuals. They are the best way to protect against respiratory illnesses and reduce the severity of symptoms if you do get sick.

"A lot of people really think this myth is true and ask about it," Tsirogiannis says. "And although a flu shot might not always prevent you from getting the flu, it may prevent you from being hospitalized because of the flu."

This time of year can be busy, but it's critical that everyone takes the time to get their annual flu shot, updated COVID-19 vaccine and other CDC-recommended immunizations, like RSV and pneumonia (pneumococcal). Getting vaccinated also reduces the chances that you'll spread respiratory illnesses to people who are at higher risk of developing severe complications.

Myth #2: Getting the flu shot can give you the flu.

FALSE. Injectable flu vaccines are not infectious because they're made with inactive flu strains, Tsirogiannis says.

"When I hear this one, I just explain to patients that it's not going to cause the flu," she says. "Worst case symptoms after a flu shot are going to be a low-grade fever and some redness or soreness at the injection site."

According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), symptoms of the flu include fever, cough, sore throat, runny or stuffy nose, headaches, body aches and fatigue.

Myth #3: It's too late to get vaccinated.

FALSE. If you haven't gotten the flu, COVID-19 or RSV vaccine, it's not too late.

"At the end of the day, it's better to get vaccinated than not be vaccinated at all," Tsirogiannis says.

However, you should get your recommended vaccines as soon as possible, especially before you travel or gather this holiday season to allow for time for immunity to fully develop and increase your protection.

Walgreens makes it simple to get all the recommended vaccines you need in one visit. To schedule a vaccination appointment in English or Spanish, use the Walgreens app, visit [Walgreens.com/ScheduleVaccine](https://www.walgreens.com/ScheduleVaccine) or call 1-800-WALGREENS. We offer flexible openings, including nights and weekends, and walk-ins are welcome.



Myth #4: I won't be able to afford my vaccinations.

FALSE. The flu shot and other recommended vaccines are covered by most insurance plans and for those who are uninsured, Walgreens offers 200,000 flu shot vouchers annually to provide free flu immunizations for medically underserved populations that need them most. Vouchers are available in-store and at clinics operated by Walgreens off-site, while supplies last.

"Just talk to your local pharmacist about the vouchers and they'll explain it you," Tsirogiannis says.

The voucher program is part of a broader effort by Walgreens to help ensure underserved and at-risk communities stay safe from respiratory illnesses while improving awareness, access and equity to vaccines.

Myth #5: Pregnant women shouldn't get a flu shot.

FALSE. They should. Pregnant women – along with young children and seniors – are at a higher risk for complications if they contract the flu.

"Getting vaccinated while pregnant can also help protect a baby from flu, especially since they are too young to get vaccinated for the first few months of life," Tsirogiannis says.

Are there any group of patients who shouldn't get a flu shot? According to the CDC, there are only a few groups who shouldn't, including children younger than 6 months; people with life-threatening allergies to any ingredient in a flu vaccine (other than egg proteins) like gelatin, antibiotics or other ingredients; and people who have had a severe allergic reaction to a flu shot in the past.

Allergic to eggs? Flu vaccines are safe to administer to people with egg allergy of any severity.

Myth #6: I have mild symptoms, so I don't need to get tested for flu or COVID-19.

Flu and COVID-19 have similar symptoms to the common cold or other respiratory illnesses. Individuals who are experiencing a runny or stuffy nose, cough or other respiratory symptoms should consider getting tested.

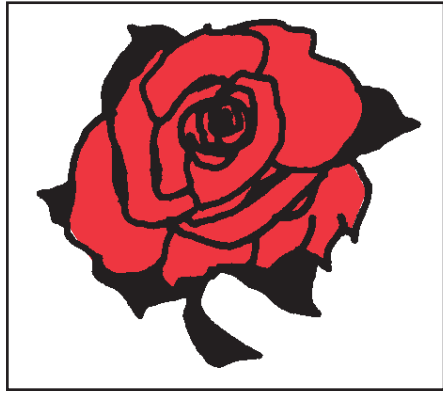
"Especially with the holidays coming up, you should get tested not just for yourself, but to protect your loved ones around you," Tsirogiannis says. "You don't want to pass the flu or COVID-19 on to someone who is immunocompromised."

Walgreens offers a variety of convenient, low-cost options for flu and COVID-19 testing, including an easy combination test for COVID-19 and influenza A/B with results in 30 minutes or less, for \$24.99. Additionally, at-home tests, along with over-the-counter medicine cabinet essentials, are available for delivery in as little as one hour. And, if you are sick or just looking for affordable, convenient home delivery, Walgreens offers Same Day Prescription Delivery for \$5.99 at more than 8,000 Walgreens with no membership required.

This season, Walgreens is here for you. Walgreens is your one-stop resource for all your immunization, testing and treatment needs this holiday season. If you have any questions, our expert pharmacists are here to help navigate the latest vaccination guidance and what is recommended for you and your loved ones.

"I truly love being pharmacist, and I love helping people," Tsirogiannis says. "If you have questions or concerns, your local pharmacist is there for you."

Schedule your vaccine now at [Walgreens.com/ScheduleVaccine](https://www.walgreens.com/ScheduleVaccine).



Village of Melrose Park Dial A Ride Program for MP Residents

Convenient Ride Service Now Available 8 a.m.-5 p.m.

The Village of Melrose Park Dial a Ride Program was initiated in 2000 to provide residents of our community with a new transportation resource to any location in the Melrose Park boundaries. Residents are encouraged to use the program to do their everyday needs such as grocery shopping, doctor appointments, etc. We are also handicapped accessible.

This service is available to residents Monday thru Friday, 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. To make a reservation, please call (708) 343-7047. You can make appointments during the hours of 8 a.m.-5 p.m., Monday thru Friday. We are closed on Saturdays and Sundays and all major holidays. To book an appointment or make a cancellation, you must call at least 24 hours in advance.

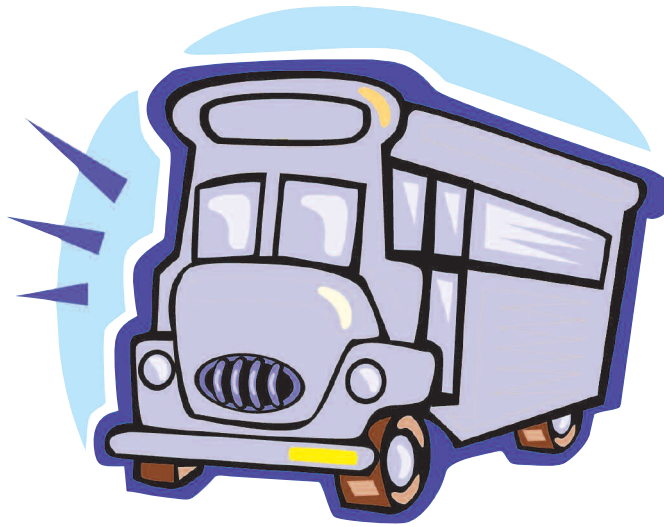
Policies and Procedures

Only one reservation per rider per day. NO EXCEPTIONS!

Only two appointments a week can be made for miscellaneous use such as grocery shopping etc. Anyone using the van for doctor appointments, etc., may use the van up to three times a week.

You must stay at your destination you are going to for a minimum of an hour. Any residents of Victory Centre MUST go with the group provided at their center for grocery shopping, etc. Any doctor appointment can be made with us.

Only three shopping bags per rider. Forgotten items in the van will be returned at the next pickup date. Please note that our service is getting more popular every day so we will try to accommodate your needs to the best of our ability.



Mayor Serpico encourages residents to use this convenient transportation resource for their everyday needs, such as shopping, doctor appointments, etc.

Call (708) 343-7047 for service.

ComEd Rebates Now Available for Pre-Owned Electric Fleet Vehicles

Rebates Designed to Accelerate Adoption of Fleet EVs for Business and Public Sector Customers

As part of a larger investment to accelerate the equitable growth of electric vehicles (EVs) in northern Illinois, ComEd is announcing that its business and public sector fleet EV rebate program can now be utilized for the purchase of certified, pre-owned electric fleet vehicles and repowered battery electric vehicles to help reduce the costs of transitioning to electric commercial and public sector fleets.

“We want making the switch to EVs to be easy, which is why ComEd is continuing to offer more tools, resources and programs to remove barriers, like cost, from EV adoption,” said Melissa Washington, senior vice president of Customer Operations and Strategic Initiatives at ComEd. “As fleet electrification continues to grow in Illinois, ComEd is now offering rebates in the same amount for customers pursuing both pre-owned EV models and new EVs, which will help support a more affordable journey for the customer and accelerate the clean air benefits of widespread fleet adoption for all of our communities.”

Recognizing that the cost of new EVs is still a main barrier to EV adoption, the ComEd Pre-Owned Electric Fleet Vehicle Rebate will help more commercial customers – including businesses of all sizes and public sector customers – qualify for pre-owned electric fleet vehicle purchase rebates ranging from \$5,000-\$180,000 depending on the vehicle class they are purchasing and on whether the customer is located in or primarily serves a low-income or equity-investment eligible community (EIEC).



Customers interested in utilizing the fleet EV rebate program must complete a rebate application within 90 days of vehicle delivery. Through the program, pre-owned vehicles qualify for the same amounts of funding as new EVs. ComEd customers can submit rebate applications at ComEd.com/clean.

“Programs, such as the newly expanded ComEd pre-owned vehicle rebates, will be instrumental in expanding access to electric vehicles across the state,” said Megha Lakhchaura, EV officer for the state of Illinois. “Pre-owned EVs can be a key entry point for business and public entities to adopt electric vehicles and further benefit from fuel savings. We commend ComEd for launching this program and allow more customers to make the transition to zero emission vehicles.”

Getting more zero-emissions fleet vehicles on the road is an essential component of reducing tailpipe emissions and reaching the state’s goal of putting 1 million EVs on the road in Illinois by 2030, as outlined in the state’s Climate and Equitable Jobs Act (CEJA). Today, over 116,000 EVs are registered in Illinois, with a majority owned by ComEd customers.

“As EV adoption grows in Illinois, so does the interest in certified, pre-owned EVs,” said Jennifer Morand, president of Chicago Automobile Trade Association (CATA). “CATA new-car dealers are committed to supporting vehicle electrification for interested consumers and being able to offer a wide selection of pre-owned EVs that can benefit from a ComEd Pre-Owned Electric Fleet Vehicle Rebate is one of the many ways dealers are staying at the forefront of the EV revolution.”

ComEd’s residential, and business and public sector EV rebate programs are helping residential, business and municipal customers alike increasingly turn to EVs. With nearly \$90 million in rebates launched earlier this year, and more available in 2025, the programs are designed to ensure equitable EV adoption by reserving more than half of all funds for low-income customers and for customers who reside or primarily serve EIECs.

“With dangerous air pollution still a regional challenge and with the burdens of asthma weighing more heavily on lower income communities, ComEd’s pre-owned EV fleet rebates will help increase the number of EVs on the road and reduce air pollution in northern Illinois,” said Brian Urbaszewski, director of Environmental Health Programs at Respiratory Health Association. “Making access to EVs more affordable is key to increasing adoption and supporting critical health benefits.”

EVs provide a variety of benefits for customers. Not only do they offer fuel and maintenance cost savings and performance benefits, but communities can experience broad environmental improvements from reduced tailpipe emissions. Additionally, electrifying transportation – especially vehicle fleets – can create tangible health benefits for all communities and families across northern Illinois, especially communities which have traditionally borne the brunt of climate change and air pollution.

ComEd is committed to making EV funding accessible to all qualifying customers. In addition to its various EV fleet and charging rebates, ComEd offers an EV Toolkit, which includes EV load capacity maps, fleet electrification assessments for commercial customers and a new make-ready reservation process, helping grant commercial and public sector customers more visibility around infrastructure funds available to support EV charging expansion and installation.

To learn more about the various resources available and explore ComEd’s EV rebate options, visit ComEd.com/clean.

Illinois Energy Companies and BBB Remind Customers of Increase in Scams During the Holiday Season

On Utility Scam Awareness Day (Nov. 20), ComEd, Nicor Gas, Peoples Gas and North Shore Gas Provided Tips to Identify Scams Used to Steal Money and Personal Information From Families and Businesses

With the holiday season upon us, northern Illinois energy companies are joining the Better Business Bureau (BBB) of Chicago and Northern Illinois to warn customers to be on heightened alert for attempted scams, which tend to increase during this time of year.

During national Utility Scam Awareness Day, ComEd, Nicor Gas, Peoples Gas and North Shore Gas reminded families and businesses to stay vigilant to imposters who will show up at homes and businesses, then threaten to turn off utility service if payment is not immediately made.

“Scammers use the holiday season to increase their attempts to separate businesses and consumers from their money and personal information, like Social Security or bank account numbers,” added Steve J. Bernas, president and CEO of the Better Business Bureau. “Scammers know that we’re busier this time of year, distracted with plans and paying less attention to our spending and bill-paying habits. They use urgency and demands to pay now or lose power, which is something ComEd or other utilities would never do.”

Scammers are getting creative and expanding their schemes in the digital space. Traditionally, they use technology to call using a number that looks like the name and number of a legitimate business. More recently, imposters are sending QR codes and instructing recipients to make payments at retail stores like Walmart and Walgreens. Others are demanding payment through mobile banking apps.

“ComEd is committed, especially during the holidays, to helping customers identify potential schemes so they don’t unwittingly send their money and personal information to imposters,” said Melissa Washington, senior vice president of Customer Operations and Strategic Initiatives at ComEd. “When it comes to mobile banking apps, the scammer will claim not to have received a payment to get the victim to transfer money two or three times, allowing imposters to scam victims out of thousands of dollars with a single encounter.”

“Scammers are also using new technology more and more, but the way to keep yourself safe remains tried and true,” said Bill Mastoris, interim president – Peoples Gas and North Shore Gas. “If what the person is saying doesn’t feel right or if you’re being pressured in any way, end the conversation, hang up the phone or close the door. If you have any further concern, contact your utility using the phone number or website address on your utility bill.”

Recently, private companies or individuals unaffiliated with energy companies are posing as bill-management companies and offer to manage customer bills on their behalf. These fraudulent companies place the utility account in their name and collect the customer’s payment, but do not forward it to the utility.

“We hold ourselves accountable to customers first and foremost and will never use aggressive or intimidating tactics to pressure customers into making a payment toward their natural gas bill,” said Pat Whiteside, senior vice president of Operations at Nicor Gas. “The personal safety and financial security of our employees and customers are of utmost importance.”

Tips to Help Identify Scam Attempts

Illinois energy companies remind customers that they will never call or visit a home or business to:

- Pressure you into making an immediate payment using aggressive or threatening tactics.
- Threaten to disconnect service if payment is not made within a short timeframe.
- Ask for direct payment with a prepaid cash card like Green Dot or a third-party payment app like Zelle, Cash App, QuickPay and Venmo.
- Ask for personal information, such as Social Security number or driver’s license number, or banking information is needed for a refund.

If a utility field representative visits your home or business, they will wear logoed uniforms and provide identification. If contacted by phone, verify the legitimacy of the call by requesting the caller confirm information only you would know, such as date, amount or method of last payment.

If ever in doubt about the validity of the person calling or at your door, hang up or shut the door and call the energy company using a phone number from a trusted source like your latest bill or the company website or mobile app.

Nicor Gas Awards \$100,000 in Grants to Support Basic Needs and Provide Energy Assistance Throughout its Service Territory

Nicor Gas is announcing \$100,000 in grants to support the basic needs of customers including food, clothing and shelter through community nonprofit organizations across its service territory.

"A thriving community is built on health and stability and at Nicor Gas we are committed to investing in organizations that provide essential services to help communities flourish," said Jackie Nagel, manager of Community Engagement at Nicor Gas. "Through our Basic Human Needs and Energy Assistance Giving Pillar, we support initiatives that address critical needs, such as food, shelter, clothing and disaster relief, ensuring our communities have the resources necessary for stability and wellness."

This year, Nicor Gas is awarding 23 organizations with grants to support their basic needs programming, including:

Cook County

- Connections for the Homeless – Provides homelessness prevention services, emergency shelter services, short- and long-term housing services and advocacy services for people facing homelessness.
- Cornerstone Community Development Corporation – Provides community members with crucial access to health services, information and connection to resources.
- Housing Forward – Provides emergency support services and shelter, street outreach and case management, rapid-rehousing, medical respite, prevention and diversion services.
- Howard and Evanston Community Center – Provides relief for food insecure individuals and families through twice weekly food distributions.
- PADS to HOPE – Supports the HOPE Center, where clients can access a food pantry, clothing closet, showers, laundry, transportation and shelter as part of the Interim Housing Program.
- Pathlight Human Services – Provides comprehensive support for older adults with difficulty accessing, affording and/or preparing nutritious food.
- Westchester Food Pantry – Provides families in the greater Westchester area with nutritious food through a once-a-month large food order.
- WINGS Program – Provides emergency housing and supportive services to survivors of domestic abuse and their children.



DuPage County

- Loaves and Fishes – Provides access to nutritious food and resources to break the cycle of poverty-related chronic disease and address the root causes of hunger.
- Outreach House – Provides access to basic needs, including food, diapers and clothing for all ages and emergency financial assistance for utilities.
- People's Resource Center – Provides free groceries, clothing and financial assistance for housing and utilities.
- West Suburban Food Pantry – Supports the Food for Health initiative, which gives families in need access to food items through shopping at a physical food pantry and online at a virtual food pantry.

Iroquois County

- Watseka Area Food Pantry – Provides food and essential household items through self-selection of grocery and hygiene needs.

Kankakee County

- Coal City Food Pantry – Provides food, including dry goods, dairy and fresh meat to support families experiencing food insecurity in the Coal City area.

Kane County

- Aurora Interfaith Food Pantry – Provides food distribution services to families, including weekly food deliveries to homebound residents and emergency text for food services.
- Big Hearts Fox Valley – Provides basic essential items, such as day-to-day clothing, shoes, toiletries, laundry detergent and warm outdoor wear, including winter coats, gloves, hats and boots to families in the Fox Valley area.

Kendall County

- Kendall County Community Food Pantry – Provides nutritious protein to families in need through supplemental meat purchases and distribution.

Lake County

- Council for Jewish Elderly – Supports clients in helping to identify, enroll in and maintain vital government benefits and help increase participation in private assistance programs through education, guidance and advocacy.

McHenry County

- Home of the Sparrow – Provides transitional housing for women and children with essential shelter and resources, such as food, clothing and disaster relief.

Will County

- Faithful Meals in Motion – Provides a boxed supply of food for children and families experiencing food insecurity. Food is also provided during extended school breaks.
- Morningstar Mission Ministries – Provides programs and services to families in need, including a women's shelter, hot meals café, residential recovery program and a veterans program.

Winnebago County

- Rock House Kids – Provides a hot meal for students Monday through Friday evenings and a supplemental food bag for weekends and holidays.
- Rock River Valley Pantry – Provides nutritious food distribution to those in urgent need.

To learn more about Nicor Gas' commitment to basic needs and energy assistance initiatives, visit www.NicorGas.com/CharitableGiving.

Experience Big Savings with Energy Efficiency Tips From Nicor Gas

With the weather being cooler, now is the perfect time for Nicor Gas customers to make some simple changes that can help save money and energy in their homes, businesses and communities.

Since 2011, the Nicor Gas Energy Efficiency Program has helped more than 1.35 million customers save over 235 million therms – that's enough to fuel more than 162,000 homes for one year – through weatherization offerings and other incentives totaling over \$270 million. Those avoided emissions, made possible through energy efficiency, equate to 1.24 million metric tons of carbon dioxide.

During this time of the year, the Nicor Gas Energy Efficiency Program is sharing simple, affordable tips customers can put into action to save money and energy on their monthly energy bill:

- Use a programmable or smart thermostat – Setting a programmable thermostat to a lower setting when away from home can help reduce energy costs by approximately 10%. Smart thermostats can automatically learn household daily schedules and adjust accordingly during the day or night to maximize energy savings.
- Caulk air leaks – Sealing cracks and openings in homes help keep warm air in and cold air out. Weatherizing with insulation and duct sealing can help with year-round comfort and maximize energy efficiency.
- Get equipment tune-ups – HVAC systems and water heaters should be inspected annually to help prevent mechanical issues and ensure efficient operations, as well as peace of mind.

For a full list of energy efficiency tips, visit nicorgas.com/tips. Nicor Gas also offers energy efficiency solutions for customers, including:

- Free energy-saving kits – Nicor Gas customers can request free water-saving and weatherization kits. The water-saving kit includes a high-efficiency showerhead, bathroom faucet aerator, dual-spray kitchen faucet aerator, shower timer and plumber's tape. The weatherization kit includes outlet and switch foam gaskets, closed cell foam tape weatherstripping, V-seal type weatherstripping, self-adhesive door sweep and rope caulk.
- Find a contractor – The Nicor Gas Energy Efficiency Program provides a free online database of qualified contractors for natural gas-saving home, commercial, multi-family property or industrial projects.
- Apply for a rebate – Customers that are homeowners can apply for rebates for energy-saving products, equipment and services, including smart thermostats, furnaces, boilers, air sealing and insulation.

To learn more about the Nicor Gas Energy Efficiency Program, visit nicorgas.com/waystosave.

NEWS FROM LOYOLA MEDICINE, A MEMBER OF TRINITY HEALTH

Loyola University Medical Center Awarded on *Newsweek's* List of America's Best Cardiac Hospitals 2024

Loyola University Medical Center has been included on *Newsweek's* inaugural list of America's Best Cardiac Hospitals 2024. This prestigious award is presented by *Newsweek* and Statista Inc., the leading statistics portal and industry ranking provider. The award list was announced on July 24, 2024, and can be viewed on the *Newsweek* website.

The America's Best Cardiac Hospitals 2024 ranking awards 175 leading hospitals in the field of cardiac care in the U.S., as well as highlighting the notable conditions/surgeries. The underlying data analysis is based on four data sources:

- Nationwide Online Survey: Health care professionals and hospital managers with knowledge about orthopedics, e.g., orthopedists, orthopedic surgeons and orthopedic nurses were asked to recommend leading orthopedic hospitals in the U.S. The survey was also promoted on newsweek.com.
- Hospital Quality Metrics: Hospital quality metrics with a focus on indicators relevant to orthopedic care were considered.
- Results from Patient Experience Surveys: Survey of patient experience during hospitalization.
- Statista Patient Reported Outcome Measures (PROMS) Implementation Survey: Voluntary PROMS implementation survey to determine the status quo of PROMS implementation, audits and reporting of data.



www.loyolamedicine.org

Based on the study results, Loyola University Medical Center is honored to be recognized on *Newsweek's* list of America's Best Cardiac Hospitals 2024.

"I'm proud to continue our long history of excellence as a cardiac hospital offering state-of-the-art cardiac therapies, superb clinical outcomes and talented faculty," said Lowell Steen, MD, chair of Cardiology at Loyola University Medical Center.

Statista publishes hundreds of worldwide industry rankings and company listings with high-profile media partners. This research and analysis service is based on the success of statista.com, the leading data and business intelligence portal that provides statistics, relevant business data, and various market and consumer studies and surveys.

"Since establishing the area's first heart transplant program in 1984, Loyola has been at the forefront of cardiac care," said Shawn Vincent, president and CEO of Loyola Medicine. "We continue to build upon this tradition of excellence and innovation and are proud to have a talented team working to provide quality care to our patients and their families."



Know your options.

Make the choice that is right for you.

Beginning **May 7, 2025,**

the federal government will require you to use a valid **U.S. passport*** or obtain the new Illinois **REAL ID** to fly domestically.

* For a complete list of acceptable REAL ID-compliant documents, visit www.tsa.gov.

You **NEED** a REAL ID if:

- You do **not** have a valid U.S. passport or passport card; AND
- You use airplanes as a mode of domestic transportation; or
- You visit military bases; or
- You visit secure federal facilities.



The federal government requires REAL ID applicants to provide documentation confirming identity, Social Security number, residency and signature.

You **DO NOT NEED** a REAL ID if:

- You have a valid U.S. passport or passport card;
- You do **not** use airplanes as a mode of domestic transportation;
- You do **not** visit military bases; or
- You do **not** visit secure federal facilities.



If you have a valid U.S. passport, you are NOT required to have a REAL ID to fly.

Current Illinois driver's licenses and identification cards will continue to be accepted at airports until May 7, 2025.

For additional information:

REALID.ilsos.gov
833-503-4074



ALEXI GIANNOULIAS
Secretary of State

Obituaries

Cardona

Pedro Juan Cardona. Loving father of Olivia, Rosalie, Erica, Romeo, Isiah and Dominick; beloved son of Rosalie and Francisco Reyes; fond grandfather of Daniel, Catteyla and Angelo Jr.; dear brother of Ana, Jose, Sylvia, Rebecca and Carlos; loving uncle, cousin and friend of many. Arrangements by Carbonara Funeral Home. Interment Queen of Heaven Cemetery.

Ciconte

Kathleen Ciconte, age 81, from Melrose Park, Illinois, and formerly lived in Williams Bay, Wisconsin, passed away on Oct. 24, 2024. Proud mother of Jenna Beth, daughter of late Joseph Ciconte and Elizabeth (nee Ragone); dear sister of the late Joseph (late Jan), late Frank and wife Jan, John (late Laura) and late James Ciconte (late Millie); beloved aunty of Cheryl, Joanne (late Jeff Schlitter), Elizabeth (Tony Carbon), Joseph (Barb Richter), Frank, Mary (Ron Ploof), Michael (Sandy), Michelle (Steve Ceraulo), Gina, Seaneen (Chuck Snider) and Steve Buck (Viviane), and the beloved late John; great-aunty of Joya and George, and great-aunty of the beloved late Andrew, Sammy and Michael; great-great-aunty to 14 nieces and nephews; and great-great-great-aunty to two nieces and a nephew. Arrangements by Carbonara Funeral Home. Kathleen ("Kat") was an avid reader, film buff, crossword and trivia pro, a family history enthusiast and very involved in Melrose Park, Illinois, and Williams Bay, Wisconsin, communities.

Dirutigliano

Angela Dirutigliano. Dearly beloved wife of Pasquale "Lillino"; cherished mother of Vito Michele (Jen), Paolo and Luisa (Tom); loving grandmother of Leo, Lia, Mikey and Luciano; dear sister of Grazia (Aldo), Antonia (Nicola), Pina (Giambittista), Vito (Gianna), Martino (Giavanna), Giovanni (Palma), Mateo (Dina) and Nicola (Anna); loving aunt, cousin and friend of many. Arrangements by Carbonara Funeral Home. Interment private.

Gonzalez

Fernando Gonzalez Sr. Dearly beloved husband of Ana Gonzalez; loving father of Fabiola and Fernando Jr.; beloved son of the late Jose and Margarita Gonzalez; cherished grandfather of Catalina Gonzalez; dear brother of 10; cherished uncle, cousin and friend of many. Arrangements by Carbonara Funeral Home. Interment private.

Olmeda

Hector Olmeda Jr. was the beloved son to Marivel Rivera-Lopez and Hector E. Olmeda. He was born in Chicago in one of the best eras in 1991. He attended John Hancock High School and finished graduating from South Elgin High School with honors. Following high school, he was a proud veteran of the United States Navy. Then he was contracted by the Navy and worked several years and lived with Ava in Escondido, California. He lived closely with his second family Hipolito and his wife Brandi, and children, and shared a lot of time together.

His greatest passion and devotion, and so much love, was being a father to Ava Victoria Olmeda – he was amazing father. He loved his family and had a very giving heart. He was a great brother to Gabriela Olmeda. Then had a second family, his stepmother Brandi Olmeda and then blessed with more siblings – Adrian, Noel and Victoria. He was a fond uncle of Leliani. He was a loving nephew, cousin, friend and shipmate of many. DW shipmate of USS Curtis Wilbur. He will be greatly missed.

Arrangements by Carbonara Funeral Home.

Padilla

Gonzalo Padilla. Dearly beloved husband of Clementina Padilla; loving father of Alma Padilla, Brenda Padilla, Llarelly Padilla and Anthony Padilla; cherished grandfather 13; loving brother, uncle, cousin and friend of many. Arrangements by Carbonara Funeral Home. Interment Queen of Heaven Cemetery.

Raglin

Jason Raglin. Dearly beloved husband of Alicia; loving father of Raven; dearly beloved son of the late Willie and Patricia; cherished brother of Justin (Erica) and Latasha; dear uncle, brother-in-law, son-in-law, teacher, cousin and friend of many. Arrangements by Carbonara Funeral Home. Interment private.

Rende

Ida F Rende. Dearly beloved wife of the late Francesco Rende; loving mother of Giovanni (Denise), Pete (Linda), Pamela, Tony, Mary (Dave) and the late Paul; cherished nana of Angelina (Sean), Francesco (Su), Lorenzo, Michael (Anna), Eric, Luigi, Giovanni, Nina, Lilly, Paolo, Luciana, Stella, Bruno and Luca; great-nonna of Charlotte and Sean; loving daughter, sister, aunt, cousin and friend of many. Arrangements by Carbonara Funeral Home. Entombment Queen of Heaven Mausoleum.

Stellato

Kerry Jo Stellato, July 11, 1961-Oct. 23, 2024. Passed away suddenly. Loving daughter of the late Anthony, Jr. and June Stellato; dearest sister of the late Joe "Pepe" Stellato; fond niece to the late Frances, Marie "Dolly" and Jerry Sperando; loving aunt to Joseph and Anthony Stellato; cousin, like a sister to Rich (Toni) Sperando, Vince (Deborah) Sperando, Dina (John) Peso and Joe (Helene) Sperando; special aunt to Remi, Matthew, Richie, Joey and Hugo. Arrangements by Carbonara Funeral Home. Interment Queen of Heaven Cemetery.

Torraco

Roseann Torraco. Loving sister, aunt, great-aunt, friend and beloved parishioner of Our Lady of Mount Carmel Church. Roseann Torraco passed away peacefully at her home in Melrose Park on Sunday, Nov. 17, 2024, at the age of 92.

Born on Oct. 15, 1932, in Oak Park, Illinois, to Frank and Josephine Torraco (nee Venute), Roseann spent her entire life in Melrose Park. Throughout her 92 years, her loving and caring personality touched countless lives. Guided by her deep faith, Roseann lived selflessly and brought joy to everyone she met.

She is survived by her beloved sister Mary Jane and brother-in-law Dennis. Cherished by her family, she leaves behind her nieces and nephews – Chris Bastas, Denise (Steve) Sagerian, Beth (Mike) Martinski, Steve Bastas, and several great-nieces and great-nephews.

Arrangements by Carbonara Funeral Home. Interment Queen of Heaven Cemetery.

Wagner

Stephen T. Wagner, Jan. 6, 1957-Nov. 28, 2024. Dearly beloved husband of Anna Wagner; loving father of Andrew (Megan) Wagner and Stephen Wagner; beloved son of Andrew and Julie Wagner; cherished papa of Liam and Libby; dear brother of Michael (Trish) Wagner, Maryann (Jim) Muzzillo, and Andrew Wagner; dear brother-in-law of Anthony (the late Claudia) Sabatino and Dino (Dina) Sabatino; loving uncle, cousin and friend of many. Arrangements by Carbonara Funeral Home. Interment private.



Village of Melrose Park
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