

A Message From Mayor Ronald M. Serpico

*With 2024 in our rearview mirror,
I look forward to another productive year that benefits all Melrose Park residents!*

Dear Neighbors,

The recent freezing temperatures forced me to stay indoors, allowing me time to research some of the events and accomplishments in Melrose Park in 2024.

The village installed a lighted walkway along our North Avenue business district and started constructing a decorative lighting system. We dedicated a new 19th Avenue bridge to improve vehicle safety. Phase 7 of the Silver Creek Stabilization Project, running between Ninth and 12th Avenue, was completed, with one more phase to go. A new village parking lot was constructed on 20th Avenue.



Ronald M. Serpico
Mayor

The Police Department has installed solar cameras around town, cutting-edge technology that helps keep our streets safe. The department also brought in a new K9 dog to assist in sniffing out drugs and locating missing persons. The department instituted the Mark43 Platform, an artificial intelligence system to expedite police reports so officers can spend more time patrolling and less time in the station filling out paperwork.

The Fire Department was busy in 2024, answering 3,842 paramedic calls and 5,701 total calls. The Water Department cleaned approximately 350 manholes and replaced or rebuilt approximately 50 manholes.

The 42nd Annual Taste of Melrose Park, held over the Labor Day weekend, played host to some of our biggest crowds in many years. We also set a record for sponsorship donations that help defray the costs of the Taste. The 131st Feast of Our Lady of Mount Carmel was held in mid July and continues to be the longest-running religious celebration in Illinois.

Melrose Park resident Alexia Felice was named WGN TV's teacher of the month in March. In September, I had the honor of addressing 40,000 people in New York City's Times Square on cultural diversity as a kickoff for Hispanic Heritage Month. The Ruby Street baseball fields were renamed for the late Joe McMillan and my brother Terry Serpico for their years of service to youth baseball.

In June, we treated 150 kids to a White Sox game, which, by chance, happened to be one of their rare wins in 2024. This past October, the Pilgrim Virgin Statue of Fatima, which has traveled worldwide since 1947, was displayed in Mt. Carmel Church.

Veteran Park District held two well-attended summer concerts at Bulger Park. On Nov. 1, the village conducted a Veterans Day Observance at Bulger Park. We delivered 260 meals to residents for Thanksgiving. On Dec. 17, we continued a recent tradition of the Christmas Santa Light Parade traveling throughout the village.

Twenty-four small Melrose Park firms awarded \$400,000 to assist small businesses negatively affected by COVID-19. On June 28, our chamber of commerce hosted its largest crowd ever, 230 attendees, for its legislative breakfast.

In the late fall, the following projects were listed as completed or under construction:

- 100 W. North Ave. – Strickland Brothers 10 Minute Oil Change – Completed.
- 915 W. North Ave. – Chili's Restaurant – Completed.
- 925 W. North Ave. – Pollo Campero – Completed
- 10400 W. North Ave. – Navistar Buildings 1, 2 and 3 – Nearing completion, fully leased.
- 2001 Cornell – Fully leased buildout for Pures Bakery in progress.
- 8311 W. North Ave. – Menards Public Storage – Under construction.
- Coming Soon – Andy's Frozen Custard – Completed.
- Remodeling of White Castle – Completed.
- Sugar Milk Café – Completed.

With 2024 in our rearview mirror, I look forward to another productive year that benefits all Melrose Park residents.

Sincerely,

Ron Serpico
Mayor Ron Serpico



Follow us on Facebook.



Follow us on Instagram.

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

**Early Voting for the April 1, 2025 – Consolidated Election
Runs Monday, March 17-Monday, March 31 at the
Melrose Park Village Hall (Multipurpose Room), 1000 N. 25th Ave., Melrose Park.
Early voting hours are Monday-Saturday, 9 a.m.-5 p.m.; and Sunday, 10 a.m.-4 p.m.**



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.





Village of Melrose Park

Ronald M. Serpico, Mayor

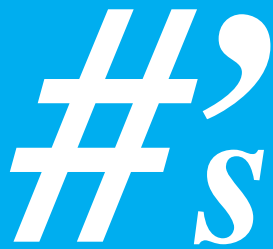
Mary Ann Paolantonio, Village Clerk

Trustees

Anthony N. 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.

Snow Removal(708) 649-4450

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 MeetingsMarch 24, April 28

Village Hall Holiday ClosingsApril 18, May 26

Resident Response

Dear Mayor Ron Serpico...

My family and I want to thank you for your time in the search effort for our mother. We are grateful for your attention and compassion on this matter.

We also want to thank Sam Pitassi and the Melrose Park Police Department for the hard work and dedication at locating our mother. We are overwhelmed at the community support. We are happy she is safe and home.

• Thank you,
Carol Aristodemo

Dear Melrose Park Police Department...

A sincere thank you for all of your support with the passing of our father, Richard Dietrich.

He was a proud 30-year veteran of CPD and a lifelong supporter of those who don the blue.

Please accept this donation from our family to a local MPPD-sponsored charity.

• With gratitude,
The Children and Families of Richard Dietrich

Dear Mayor Serpico ...

Many thanks to you for supporting our 14th annual Blast from the Past fundraiser for Misericordia. Together with your help and generosity we raised \$12,400 for Misericordia. Each year you have graciously donated to us the use of the Senior Center for our event, in addition to a generous monetary donation.

Once again, we want to thank the staff that helps us each year to set up and organize the Senior Center. They cannot do enough for us to make us feel comfortable and at home. We appreciate their time and effort.

The children and adults of Misericordia Heart of Mercy Center thank you for the love and compassion in supporting our fundraising efforts.

Misericordia exists because of the good people who share our ministry and support our fundraising efforts. Please know you are helping children and adults who are not able to create a good world for themselves. Your kindness does not go unnoticed.

God bless you and yours for being there for us!

• Sincerely,
Jo, Tom and Matthew Halleran

Dear Director of Police Sam Pitassi...

On behalf of the Illinois Department of Transportation (IDOT), Bureau of Safety Programs and Engineering, thank you for your agency's efforts during the first quarter of the Federal Fiscal Year 2025 Sustained Traffic Enforcement Program (STEP).

STEP is designed to provide local law enforcement agencies the additional resources needed to save lives and improve community safety with high visibility enforcement of traffic-safety-related laws.

Because of your participation, Illinois has seen a decline in fatalities on roadways in 2024. Your agency is to be commended for conducting exceptional enforcement activities during the November Additional Enforcement Campaign.

IDOT recognizes that your job is not always easy and your efforts often go unnoticed, but the success of the STEP reflects the dedication and commitment your agency displays toward highway safety.

Thank you, your agency makes Illinois a safer place to travel.

• Sincerely,
Stephane B. Seck-Birhame, P.E, PTOE, Bureau Chief
By: Steve Esslinger, Safety Projects Manager
Bureau of Safety Programs and Engineering

Mayor Serpico Asks You to Con

FOR MELROSE PARK VILLAGE PRESIDENT

RONALD M. SERPICO, SR.1

FOR MELROSE PARK VILLAGE CLERK

MARY ANN PAOLANTONIO2

FOR MELROSE PARK VILLAGE TRUSTEE

ANTHONY N. ABRUZZO3

JAIME ANGUIANO4

ARTURO J. MOTA5

LOUIS T. "SONNY" NICOTERA6

MARY RAMIREZ-TACONI7

ANTHONY "TONY" WILLIAMS8

FOR MELROSE PARK LIBRARY TRUSTEE

JUDITH DELAMORA MACIAS9

STEVE PESCE10

FOR PROVISO TOWNSHIP SUPERVISOR

MICHAEL A. CORRIGAN51

FOR PROVISO TOWNSHIP CLERK

ANTHONY "TONY" WILLIAMS53

FOR PROVISO TOWNSHIP ASSESSOR

STEVEN J. ZAWASKI54

FOR PROVISO TOWNSHIP TRUSTEE

JOSEPH CHRISTOPHER55

EVELYN CHAVEZ56

GAY F. CHASE57

TOM OLSON58



Consider Voting for the Following Candidates ...

FOR VETERANS PARK DISTRICT COMMISSIONER

For Melrose Park Residents Who Live East of 25th Avenue.

RONALD W. BOSCACCY	91
THERESA NARDIELLO	92

FOR SCHOOL DISTRICT 88 BOARD

For Melrose Park Residents Who Live West of 25th Avenue.

DOROTHY C. SMITH	142
TONY A. MORTON	143
SHELIA DAY-FOX	144
JASMINE MENDEZ	145

FOR SCHOOL DISTRICT 89 BOARD

For Melrose Park Residents Who Live East of 25th Avenue.

LAIGHTON SCOTT	141
TERI LEA CERVONE	142
SANDRA CIANCIO	143

FOR PROVISO TOWNSHIP HIGH SCHOOL DISTRICT 209 BOARD

For Melrose Park Residents Who Live South of North Avenue.

CANDICE ROSS	165
ZIHUALPILLI HERNANDEZ	166
ARBDELLA "DELLA" PATTERSON	167
JERRY L. JENKINS	168

FOR TRITON COLLEGE TRUSTEE

RICH REGAN	202
GLOVER "TRES" JOHNSON	203
DIANE M. VIVERITO	204



**ELECTION
DAY
IS
TUESDAY,
APRIL 1**

**Early Voting
Runs**

**Monday,
March 17
through
Monday,
March 31**

at the

**Melrose Park
Village Hall
(Multipurpose Room)
1000 N. 25th Ave.,
Melrose Park.**

**Early voting hours are
Monday-Saturday,
9 a.m.-5 p.m.,
and
Sunday,
10 a.m.-4 p.m.**

Paid for by Citizens to Elect Ronald M. Serpico, Sr.



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 smoking and home fire safety tips on behalf of the National Fire Protection Association. Please follow these tips to ensure your family's well-being!

Smoking & Home Fire Safety



The place where we feel safest — at home — is where most smoking-materials structure fires, deaths, and injuries occur. Smoking materials are the leading cause of fire deaths. Smoking material fires are preventable.

Smoking Safety

- » If you smoke, use only fire-safe cigarettes.
- » If you smoke, smoke outside. Most deaths result from fires that started in living rooms, family rooms and dens or in bedrooms.
- » Keep cigarettes, lighters, matches, and other smoking materials up high out of the reach of children, in a locked cabinet.

Put It Out

- » Use a deep, sturdy ashtray. Place it away from anything that can burn.
- » Do not discard cigarettes in vegetation such as mulch, potted plants or landscaping, peat moss, dried grasses, leaves or other things that could ignite easily.
- » Before you throw away butts and ashes, make sure they are out, and dousing in water or sand is the best way to do that.

Smoking and Medical Oxygen

Never smoke and never allow anyone to smoke where medical oxygen is used. Medical oxygen can cause materials to ignite more easily and make fires burn at a faster rate than normal. It can make an existing fire burn faster and hotter.

ELECTRONIC CIGARETTES

Fires have occurred while e-cigarettes were being used, the battery was being charged, or the device was being transported. Battery failures have led to small explosions. Never leave charging e-cigarettes unattended. E-cigarettes should be used with caution.

FACTS

- ! The risk of dying in a home structure fire caused by smoking materials rises with age.
- ! One out of four fatal victims of smoking-material fires is not the smoker whose cigarette started the fire.



Your Source for SAFETY Information

NFPA Public Education Division • 1 Batterymarch Park, Quincy, MA 02169



**MELROSE PARK
FIRE DEPARTMENT**

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

Melrose Park Police Department

A Message from Director of Police Sam C. Pitassi



*Sam C. Pitassi
Director of Police*



Important Parking Notice for Melrose Park Residents

A QUICK NOTE TO UPDATE WEEKEND PARKING RULES
Effective April 1, 2025, parking will be permitted on
both sides of the street on weekends

(Friday, 5 p.m.-Monday, 9 a.m.) until Dec 1, 2025.

These hours do not include the
Winston Park and West Melrose areas.
**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 FOR CARS VIOLATING
CURRENT AND FUTURE PARKING RULES.**

STREET SWEEPING BEGINS TUESDAY, APRIL 1

Beginning Tuesday, April 1, the street sweeper will be out sweeping roadways.
Please follow all street sweeping signs located on village streets.
Please remove your vehicle from the street to help expedite sweeping.

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.

Melrose Park Police Department Announces New Overnight Parking Program

The village of Melrose Park ordinance 10.44.080 states that parking is prohibited during certain hours on certain streets. It is unlawful, during the hours of 2 a.m. and 6 a.m., for any motor vehicle to be parked on any and all of the following streets:

- a) From Ninth Avenue to 25th Avenue, all streets traveling in an easterly and westerly direction in the village.
- b) From 31st Avenue to 37th Avenue.
- c) In the area commonly known as "Winston Park".



As a “courtesy” the Police Department realizes that issues may arise where street parking is necessary. The Police Department will allow parking as indicated below.

Some streets (or portions of) allow west-side/east-side parking during these hours. Permission cannot be granted on the west-side/east-side streets and in the event the computer system grants permission in error you are still liable. If you need to park your vehicle overnight you must submit your request using the online form at <https://melrosepark-il.dacragov.com/il/melrosepark/nightparking>.

If a resident needs overnight parking for more than three days due to extenuating circumstances, please contact the Melrose Park Police – Traffic Department, Monday-Friday, 8 a.m.-4 p.m., at (708) 344-8409. Each request will be handled on a case-by-case basis.

The Police Department reserves the right to revoke the privilege of those utilizing this night park system if a person is found to be falsifying or manipulating the system in order to obtain extra days of parking.

- Requests must be received prior to the midnight cutoff.
- Overnight parking is limited to three nights within a 30-day period.
- Any incorrect information entered resulting in the issuance of a citation will not be a reason to dispute the citation in question.
- Overnight parking cannot be granted for residents of multi-family (apartment) buildings.
- Overnight parking will not be granted when there is two inches or more of snowfall.
- Motor vehicle must be legally parked.

For more information, visit melroseparkpd.com



Always Stepping Up ...

A Gracious Thank You from MPPD Director of Police Sam Pitassi and Deputy Chief Greco Outstanding Work by Holiday Detail Team to Keep Melrose Park Safe Did Not Go Unnoticed

Dear Members of the Melrose Park Police Department Holiday Detail Team,

Director Sam Pitassi and I would like to extend our sincere thanks to each of you for your outstanding work during the holiday detail. Your presence was greatly appreciated by store owners and did not go unnoticed. We observed a noticeable reduction in retail thefts and the arrests made, as well as a decline in car burglaries. While we have not yet reviewed the official statistics, we are truly grateful for your hard work and dedication.

Thank you again for your efforts.

- Best regards,
Deputy Chief Anthony Greco

MPPD's Greco, Natale, Recognized by Cicero Police Department for Outstanding Service

The Melrose Park Police Department's Deputy Police Chief Anthony Greco and Sgt. Dennis Natale, members of the WESTAFF Investigations and Forensics Unit, were recognized earlier this year by the Cicero Police Department for their exceptional work and commitment to joint agency operations.

WESTAFF is a vital component and valued partner to the Cicero Police Department's coordinated response to Cicero's most critical needs. WESTAFF members routinely demonstrate an exceptional standard of professionalism and sacrifice by responding to Cicero's homicide call-outs that occur unpredictably and often outside of their regular work hours. That sacrifice includes time away from their personal lives, but also time away from their respective caseloads at their home agency. Their strength in numbers best characterizes the WESTAFF task force, but also their strength of team character.

The Cicero Police Department is grateful to Deputy Chief Greco and Sgt. Natale for their continued support and partnership, and proudly presented its Superintendents Award (signed by Cicero PD Supt. Thomas Boyle, First Deputy Supt. Luis Gutierrez and Deputy Supt. Francisco Diaz) to each of these hardworking individuals for the exemplary and professional work that contributed to the overall public safety of the Cicero community.

Deputy Chief Greco and Sgt. Natale – Melrose Park thanks you so much for all you do to keep our village and its neighboring communities safe for all.

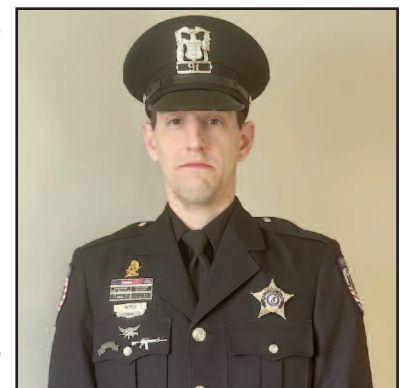


Congratulations to MPPD Officer Paul Rossi! First Responder Achieves Illinois' Master Tactical Patrol Officer Status

Melrose Park Police Ofc. Paul Rossi has once again successfully completed another training milestone. In October 2019, Ofc. Rossi achieved his Master Tactical Patrol Officer status within the state of Illinois. On May 17, 2024, he completed an intense four-week training program, achieving yet another highly distinguished title as an Illinois active threat master instructor!

"This first in the nation cooperative training and instructor certification process will provide the knowledge, specialized skill sets and associated instructor materials for graduates to develop, implement and teach a comprehensive ILETSB State Certified Active Threat Response Curriculum. This coordinated state-wide training initiative has been endorsed and adopted by the Illinois Law Enforcement Training and Standards Board, the Illinois State Police, the Illinois Law Enforcement Alarm System and the Illinois Tactical Officers Association".

Mayor Serpico, Director of Police Pitassi and Deputy Chief Greco extend their congratulations to Ofc. Rossi on another job well done on achieving these remarkable training achievements.



MP Police Officer Paul Rossi

flock safety

The Melrose Park Police Department is participating in a new public safety program that will enable the people of Melrose Park to help keep their community safe.



Your participation will greatly enhance emergency preparedness by enabling police, fire, and public safety professionals to better assess and rapidly respond to criminal activity and emergency situations. It will also enable investigators to easily gather evidence in case of an incident.

3 Ways to Get Involved

- 1 REGISTER YOUR CAMERA**
Your participation will greatly enhance emergency preparedness by enabling police, fire, and public safety professionals to better assess and rapidly respond to criminal activity and emergency situations.
- 2 INTEGRATE YOUR CAMERAS**
Businesses and residents can take community security one step further by giving the Melrose Park Police Department and first responders direct access to your camera feed in case of a nearby emergency.
- 3 PURCHASE CAMERAS**
Businesses and residents can purchase a camera that directly integrates with the Melrose Park Police Department and first responders. We'll even handle the installation.



"The Melrose Park Police Department is excited to offer a new way for citizens to contribute to the reduction of crime in Melrose Park through the use of technology and the Melrose Park Safe program."

MELROSE PARK POLICE DEPARTMENT

flock safety

flocksafety.com
(886) 901-1781 | support@flocksafety.com

Melrose Park MAYOR RONALD M. SERPICO Endorses



Township Advocates of Proviso

**Good Government
Starts with
Good People!**

FOR PROVISO TOWNSHIP SUPERVISOR

MICHAEL A. CORRIGAN51

FOR PROVISO TOWNSHIP CLERK

ANTHONY "TONY" WILLIAMS53

FOR PROVISO TOWNSHIP ASSESSOR

STEVEN J. ZAWASKI54

FOR PROVISO TOWNSHIP TRUSTEE

JOSEPH CHRISTOPHER55

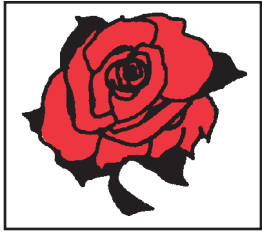
EVELYN CHAVEZ56

GAY F. CHASE57

TOM OLSON58

VOTE APRIL 1. EARLY VOTING BEGINS MARCH 17.

Paid for by
Citizens for
Michael A. Corrigan.



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.

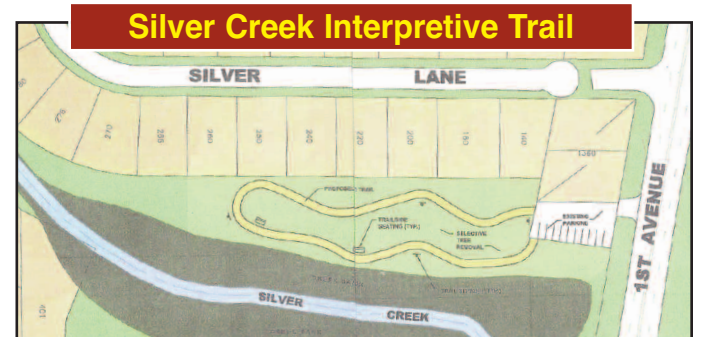
Phase 5 and 6 of the
Silver Creek Stabilization Project have been completed.
Phase 7 is underway.

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

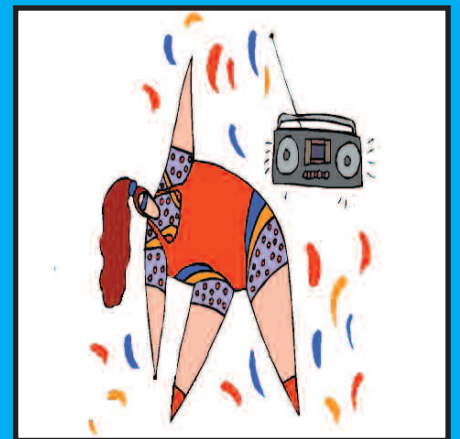
**Beneficio de Transporte Gratuito para personas Mayores de 65 años • Transporte Gratuito para Personas con Incapacidades
Descuento para la Placa de su Carro en la Secretaria del Estado**

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

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.

**Quality Education Leads To A
Brighter Future for Our Communities!**

**Melrose Park
MAYOR**

**RONALD M. SERPICO
Endorses**

**THE 209 STUDENTS FIRST SLATE
FOR PROVISO TOWNSHIP HIGH SCHOOL DISTRICT 209 BOARD**

**CANDICE
ROSS 165**

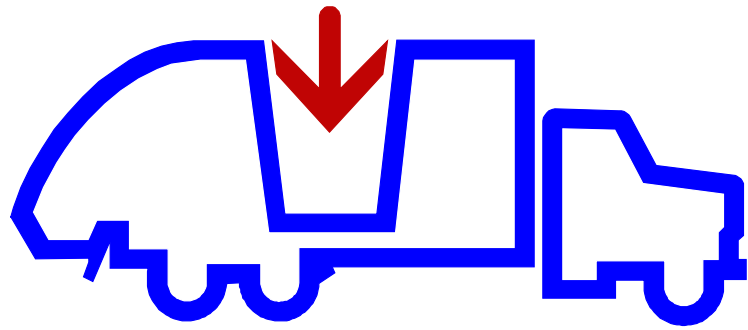
**ZIHUALPILLI
HERNANDEZ 166**

**ARBDELLA "DELLA"
PATTERSON 167**

**JERRY L.
JENKINS 168**

VOTE APRIL 1. Early voting begins March 17.

Paid for by
Citizens to Elect Ronald M. Serpico, Sr.



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.

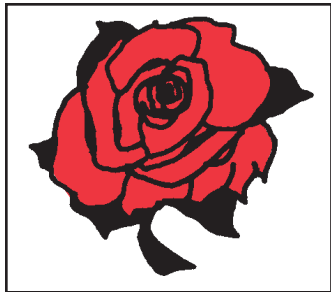
This information is also available at www.melrosepark.org.

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.



Village of Melrose Park Building Dept. Report

*From the Desk of
Ralph Sorce,
Building Commissioner*

A Note to All Melrose Park Residents Regarding Property Flood Protection, Flood Insurance, Village Assistance

The village of Melrose Park has earned a Class 7 Rating through the National Flood Insurance Program (NFIP) Community Rating System (CRS); for this reason, flood insurance policies issued or renewed in the Special Flood Hazard Area (SFHA) qualify for a 15 percent discount off the premium cost.

Flood Protection Information

The village of Melrose Park strongly encourages these flood protection tips to be used:

- Stream Maintenance – Per the Clean Water Act and village ordinance, dumping into our ditches, creeks and sewers is strictly prohibited. This regulation helps prevent contamination to our water supply and lessens the chance of flooding. Grass clippings, leaves and branches can also cause problems as they can accumulate and plug the storm sewer channels. If your property is next to a ditch or creek, please do your part and keep the banks clear of brush and debris. Please feel free to contact the Public Works Department for information regarding the village's Creek Maintenance Program or reporting downed tree and other major blockages.

- Construction Requirements – Always check with the Building Department before you alter, re-grade or fill your property. A permit is needed to ensure that projects do not cause drainage problems to other properties and to ensure the general public welfare.

- Flood-Proofing – There are several different ways to protect a building from flood damage – retrofitting (altering a building to eliminate or reduce flood damage) measures include:

- Elevations – This involves raising the house so that the lowest floor is above protection level.
- Relocation – Moving a building out of the flood zone is the surest way to protect it from a flood.
- Floodwalls – These work to keep water from reaching your home by constructing barriers out of fill or concrete between the building and the flood water.
- Dry Flood-Proofing – Makes the building's walls and floors watertight so water does not enter.
- Wet Flood-Proofing – Modifies the structure and relocates the contents so that when flood water enters the building there is little to no damage.

Important notice: Any alteration to a building or land requires a permit from the Building Department. Even re-grading or filling in the floodplain requires a permit.

Flood Protection Assistance

If you have any concerns or issues with flooding or drainage, please call the Village of Melrose Park Sewer Department at (708) 531-5347 or the Building Department at (708) 343-4000. The Building Department can provide information, professional input and problem-solving measures without negatively affecting nearby neighbors. The Building Department can also provide a list of flood proofing contractors and conduct inspections.

Sand Bags

During a rainstorm or flood, sand bags are readily available for pickup at the Melrose Park Public Works Building located at 1002 N. 27th Ave. The Public Works Department also drops off sand bags throughout the village's high impact flood areas.

Flood Event Suggestions

Please keep in mind, during a flood the less water pumped into the village's storm sewer system the better. Please avoid excessive water use such as washing clothes, showering, washing dishes and toilet flushing. This provides time for the sewer system to stabilize and catch up to the large influx of water, thus, lowering the probability of a sewer backup in a building.

Be Prepared!

Have a plumber inspect sump pumps regularly!

If you experience flooding or drainage issues on your property, the village's staff may be able to help. Remember to televiser and clean sewer laterals to prevent sewer backups.

Leaf Removal, Street Sweeping, Storm Sewers and Swales

It is a violation of village code and the Clean Water Act to directly or indirectly discharge illicit substances into a storm sewer. The village strongly encourages that all grass clippings, leaves and yard waste be placed in approved containers and placed at the designated location for garbage pickup on scheduled pickup days.

Community Effort

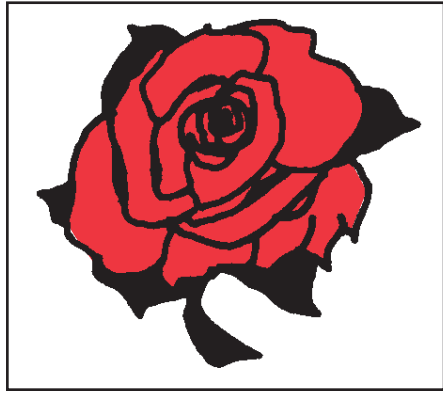
The Public Works Department kindly requests your help. Throughout the village's corporate boundaries there are many streets with curbside storm sewer catch basins, culverts and storm sewer pipes that are prone to trouble in heavy rains when they are blocked by leaves and grass clippings. The village street sweeping vehicle is not effective in removing large quantities of wet or dry leaves off the streets and curbed areas. The street sweeper's intended use is to remove road debris such as gravel, dirt and trash from the road surface by way of water and scrubbing brushes.

The Public Works Department respectfully asks that every village resident do their part in keeping our storm sewer grates, culvert pipe and swales in front of their property free from leaves and debris throughout the year. By doing this, this will greatly diminish the need for storm sewer cleanups, as well as, eliminating street inlet flooding due to leaves clogging the designed drainage path.

Flood Insurance

Homeowner's insurance policies do not cover damage from floods. The village strongly encourages property owners to invest in flood insurance. This insurance is backed by the federal government and is available to everyone, even properties that have been flooded. In some cases, flood insurance is required by a bank when people purchase a property and get a mortgage or home improvement loan. These policies typically only cover the building's structure and not its contents. During the types of flooding that occur in your area, there is usually more damage to the furniture and personal items than there is to the structure. Be sure you have contents coverage! Don't wait for the next flood to buy insurance protection! In most cases, there is a 30-day waiting period before NFIP coverage takes effect. Contact your insurance agent for more information on rates and coverage.

For more information regarding important Melrose Park flood information, please visit our village website at www.melrosepark.org and check under the Village Services tab. If you have any questions, comments, or concerns regarding flooding in Melrose Park, please feel free to contact the Building Department at (708) 343-4000, Ext. 4419. Your cooperation is greatly appreciated.



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.

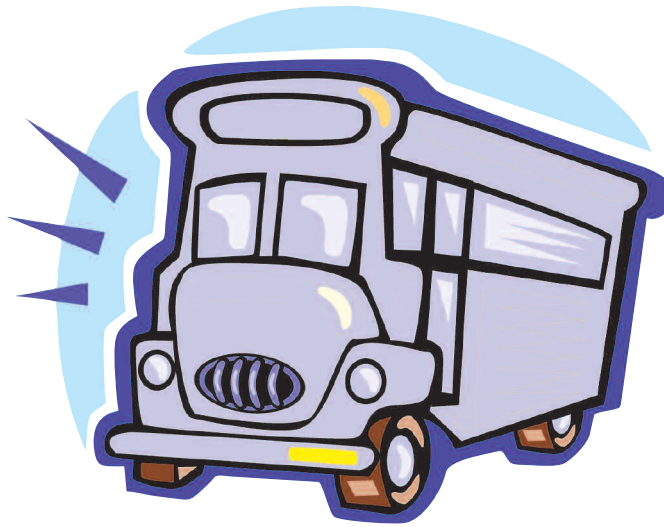
Policies and Procedures

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.

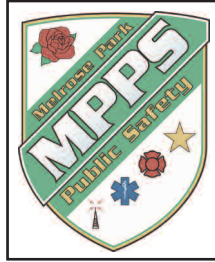
Only three shopping bags per rider. Forgotten items in the van will be returned at the next pickup date. Please note that our service is getting more popular every day so we will try to accommodate your needs to the best of our ability.



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.

Melrose Park Public Safety News



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

The Village of Melrose Park Notification System Provides Information that Matters to You the Most ... When You Need It, the Way You Want It

Mayor Ronald M. Serpico and the village of Melrose Park are committed to keeping the public safe and informed about events that may impact your lives. The village of Melrose Park Emergency Notification System allows the village to quickly and directly send messages to individuals or groups on various types of media and devices to keep you informed during any significant event in our village.

The Village of Melrose Park Emergency Notification System lets you sign up to receive emergency and community messages through a cellphone, work phone, home phone, text message or email. You can also choose locations you'd like to be contacted about if you like. You can receive notifications about emergencies that may affect your home, your parent's home, your workplace or your child's school – or any other location of interest and importance to you – as long as those locations are within Melrose Park.

Types of Notifications

The Village of Melrose Park Emergency Notification System allows the village to relay timely and essential information quickly. The system communicates two types of messages: Emergency Notifications and Community Notifications.

Emergency Notifications

In an emergency, the village will contact individuals or groups in a certain area that can be affected by a crisis. Emergency notifications are used in a situation that has an effect or may have an impact on a certain number of people involving immediate or pending threats to public safety or property, and where immediate notification is necessary. Emergency notifications can be sent village-wide at any time of day or night if the circumstances of the event dictate this type of widespread notification to be necessary. If inclement weather creates any hazards or situations that affect village services, the system is used to notify individuals of those affected services, such as road closures and utility outages.

Please note: The village of Melrose Park has a weather notification mode which will notify you of warnings, watches, forecasts and other hazard information for potentially threatening weather-related events. You may choose the types of warning and watches you want to be notified about and you can set a time for notifications, if you do not set the time, all weather notifications will be sent at anytime.

The village encourages residents and businesses to proactively seek weather-related information from official channels such as the National Weather Service or their preferred local media outlet. It is a best practice to have a National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) weather radio at your residence or business that broadcasts official Weather Service warnings, watches, forecasts and other hazard information 24 hours a day, seven days a week. In addition, the National Weather Service issues official weather watches and warnings, and is authorized to send wireless emergency alerts with certain warning information, including tornado warnings. (These are automatic emergency messages with a unique tone sent to cellphones in areas where specific weather warnings are issued.) You can check your cellphone's settings to ensure this feature is not turned off.

Community Notifications

Community notifications are meant to notify residents and interested parties about events or projects that may temporarily impact their day-to-day routine but do not impact health or safety. The village will contact individuals with this type of information only if they choose to receive this type of news.

Community notifications will be sent between 7 a.m. and 9 p.m. Due to the nature of certain categories, messages may be sent in the earlier or later hours of this timeframe. The village will send notifications as it deems appropriate based on the need and type of message.

Listed here are the community notification categories the village of Melrose Park is making available:

- Utility Outages – Information about scheduled outages of any duration and unplanned outages anticipated to be four or more hours in duration or impacting a large segment of the village.
- Public Safety – Information about public safety topics, including safety tips and announcements, crime and fire prevention information, public safety events, crime alerts, code compliance information and animal control information.
- Road & Utility Work (Local) – Information about localized neighborhood road work and utility projects, such as parkway tree trimming, storm system repair, alley reconstructions, tree trimming, sanitary sewer lining, planned water main repairs and hydrant repairs/replacement.
- Special Event Alerts – Information about major and minor special events occurring in the village of Melrose Park, including dates, times, locations, street closures, parking lot closures and other important event information.
- Traffic Alerts (Major Roadways) – Information about major arterial roadway projects taking place in the village or unanticipated and sudden road closures.
- Winter Operations – Information on snow removal operations in the village, including plowing operations and anticipated snowfall, as well as reminders about the village's snow plowing.

Upon registration and sign-in with the system, individuals can select which any or all of the community notification categories they would like to receive.

For more information, please contact the village of Melrose Park Departments of Homeland Security ~ Public Safety – (708) 649-8000.



Melrose Park Public Library



MP Melrose Park PL Public Library

www.MPPLibrary.org

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

- 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

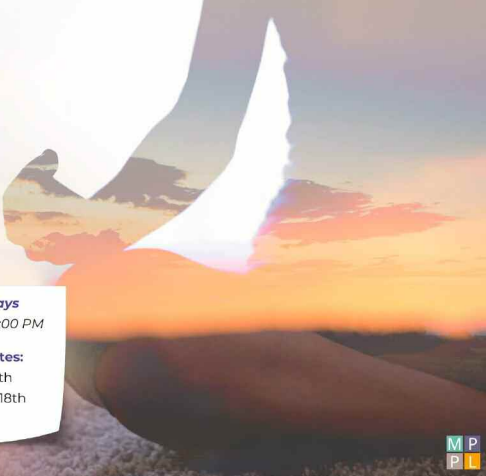
Registration Required

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

Register Now!

Saturdays
12:00 PM - 1:00 PM

2025 Dates:
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.

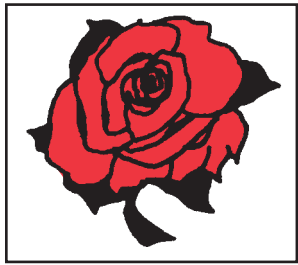


Check the website or call for the most current information on hours and procedures.



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

Wednesday Mornings
10am-11am
Ages 1-5
with caregiver

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

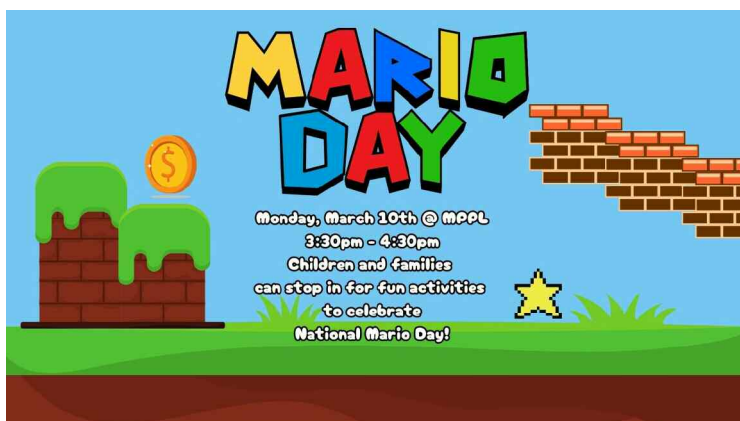


Melrose Park Public Library



M P Melrose Park
P L Public Library

Youth Services



Mario Day

Children and families can stop in for fun activities to celebrate National Mario Day! This is a drop-in event for children and families.

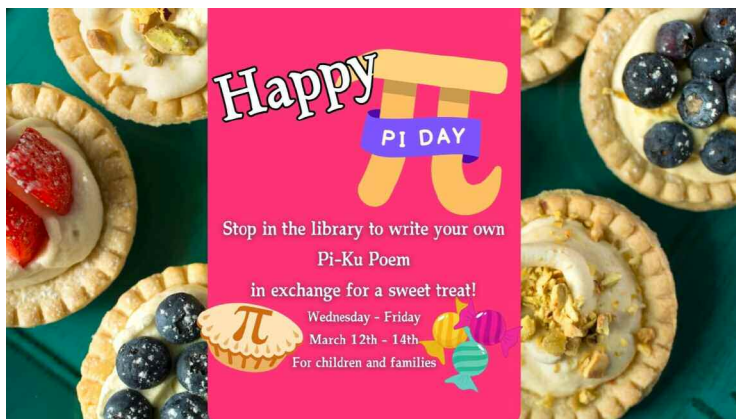
**Monday, March 10th
3:30pm-4:30pm**

Crafty Corner

Monthly Craft Program

Join us for our monthly craft program for grades 1st-5th! This month's craft is Clay Pinch Pots!

**Tuesday, March 11th
3pm-3:45pm**

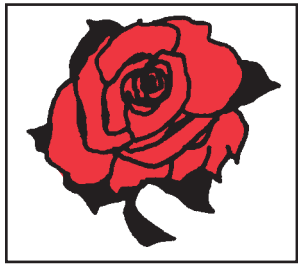


Pi Day Pi-ku's

Children and their families can stop in the library to write their own Pi-ku's in celebration of Pi Day in exchange for a sweet treat!

**Wednesday, March 12th
Thursday, March 13th
Friday, March 14th**

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 Public Library



M P Melrose Park
P L Public Library

Youth Services



Full STEAM Ahead

Monthly STEAM Program

Join us for our monthly STEAM program for children grades 1st-5th!

This month's activity is Foil Boat Float!

Tuesday, March 18th

3pm-3:45pm

Registration Required

Story Adventures

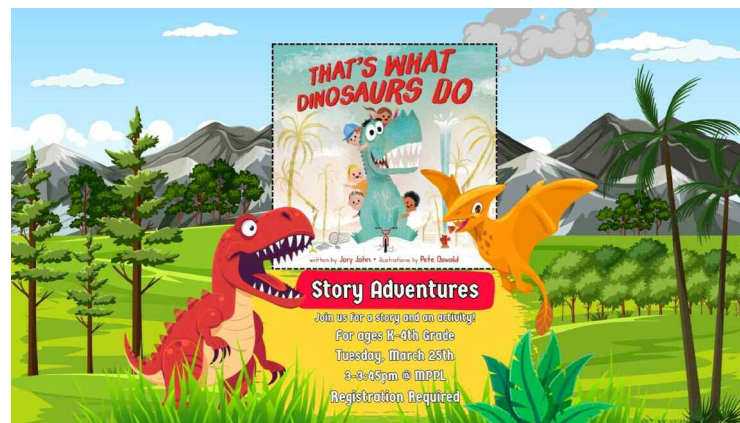
Monthly Program

Join us for a story and activity. This Story Adventures includes reading *That's What Dinosaurs Do* by Jory John and will be followed by a craft!

Tuesday, March 25th

3pm-3:45pm

Registration Required



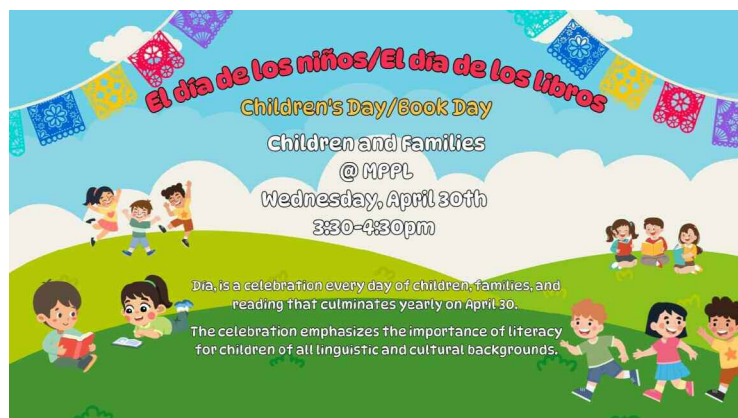
Día: Children's Day/Book Day

Día, is a celebration every day of children, families, and reading that culminates yearly on April 30.

The celebration emphasizes the importance of literacy for children of all linguistic and cultural backgrounds. Children and families are invited to stop in for book-related activities!

Wednesday, April 30th

3:30pm-4:30pm



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

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.

Mayor Serpico/Melrose Park Youth Commission



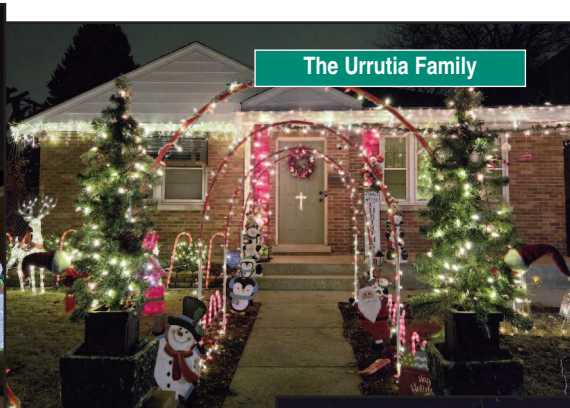
Outdoor Holiday Decorating Contest Homes



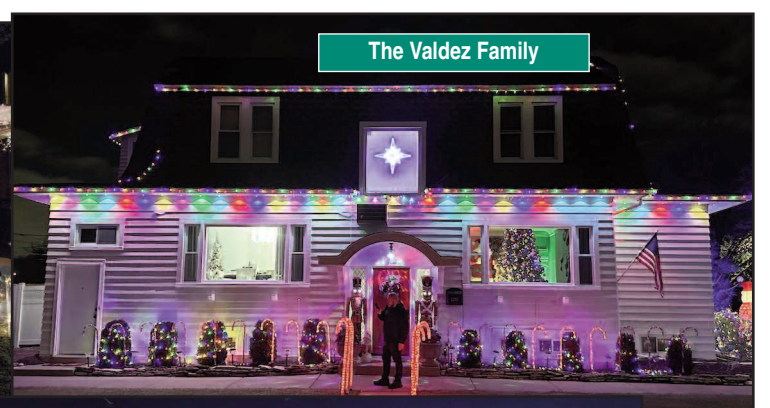
5 – \$150 Top Prize Winners



The Monreal Family



The Urrutia Family



The Valdez Family



The Garcia Family



The Verni Family



5 – \$50 Runners-Up Prize Winners



The Laino Family



The Sanchez Family



The Dominguez Family

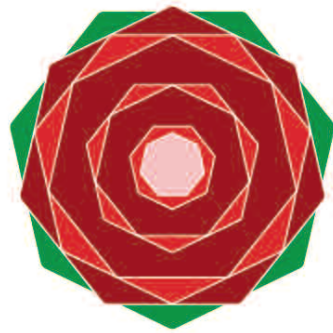


The Sanchez Family



The Mendez Family

**Thank you to everyone for joining in the seasonal fun!
Watch for details on our 2025 Holiday Decorating Contest in upcoming issues of *The Rose*!**



MELROSE PARK

CHAMBER OF COMMERCE & COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

New Chamber Members and Renewals

The Melrose Park Chamber of Commerce and Community Development (MPCCCD) welcomed four new businesses as members to the chamber in January and February 2025, and now has over 220 current members. Please help us welcome the CM Cargo Solutions, LLC; Gaia Enterprises, Inc.; Harmony Care Home Services, Inc.; and Legion Security Consultants, Inc., on their membership and partnership with the MPCCCD.

We also want to give special thanks to the 12 businesses that renewed memberships in January and February, 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 local businesses, they are 5 Star Sports, Inc.; Above and Beyond Black Oxide, Inc.; Action Painting Co.; Alpha and Omega Learning Center; Alpha and Omega Outreach Ministries; Aqua Fiori Inc.; D and P Construction; Elite Electric Co. Inc.; Lincoln Technical Institute; Maywood School District 89; Sacred Heart Parish; and Skippers Clippers Barber & Beauty.

The Melrose Park Chamber of Commerce and Community Development now has over 220 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@mpccd.org or call (708) 343-9500 and he will schedule 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://mpccd.org/benefits-dues/>.

Connecting Businesses to Resources

On Feb. 13, the Melrose Park Chamber of Commerce hosted its monthly business breakfast and seminar, and welcomed Diana Alfaro from the Department of Commerce and Economic Opportunity (DCEO) to provide information regarding the 2025 Capital Grant Program.

This Capital Development Grant specifically focuses on the needs of small businesses with less than 25 FT employees for businesses owned by socially economically disadvantaged individuals (SEDI) or other very small businesses with less than 10 employees. Grant sizes will range from \$10,000 to \$245,000 with a total program budget of \$10 million. The overall objectives of this program are to help qualifying businesses:

- Facilitate growth and expansion.
- Improve operational efficiency and expansion.
- Acquire property.
- Promote energy efficiency and sustainability.
- Fuel job creation and workforce development.
- Long-term business sustainability.

Eligible businesses can apply for this grant before 5 p.m., April 7, 2025.

For additional information regarding this grant opportunity, visit <https://dceo.illinois.gov/aboutdceo/grantopportunities/2160-2940.html> to get details on the funding opportunity, training and information sessions, as well as links to apply.

We also want to recognize and thank the 50 small business owners that attended the seminar for their participation.

A special thanks to Diana Alfaro from the Office of Economic Equity and Empowerment (OE3) at DCEO for an outstanding presentation, and for her continued support and partnership with the Melrose Park Chamber of Commerce and Community Development.



Melrose Park Welcomes SabeaZuila Restaurant

On Jan. 18, representatives from the MPCCCD, the village of Melrose Park and the management team at Winston Plaza gathered for the Grand Opening Celebration and Ribbon Cutting at SabeaZuila Restaurant, 1384 Winston Plaza, North Ave., Melrose Park!

Please join us in welcoming SabeaZuila to our village by adding them to your list of new, local businesses that we need to support. The MPCCCD encourages everyone to shop local and support local businesses every day and not just during the holiday season.

Thank you to the owners and employees of SabeaZuila and welcome to Melrose Park!



Upcoming Events, Training and Information Sessions

One of the primary functions of the MPCCCD is to connect businesses to resources to help support growth and to make a difference in the community. Although this takes many different shapes and approaches, one of the primary efforts is to host monthly training events, informational meetings, networking sessions and participate in community events.

Upcoming Events for 2025 Include:

April 14, 2025 – Annual Legislative Breakfast, 8 a.m.-10:15 p.m., in the Melrose Park Civic Center Gymnasium, located at 1000 N. 25th Ave., Melrose Park. Registration and continental breakfast begin at 8 a.m. and the program will begin promptly at 9 a.m. Senate President Don Harmon and Illinois Speaker of the House Emanuel “Chris” Welch will provide information and updates on important legislative issues regarding business and economic development in the state. As in the past, the agenda will provide about 30-45 minutes for Q&A.

Registration will open about three weeks prior to the event. Registration information will be sent via email to all that are currently members or have signed up to receive emails from MPCCCD. For additional information, see the MPCCCD website at <https://mpcccd.org/events/>.

May 2025 – Food Safety and Sanitation Certification. Although the date and time have not been finalized, the training and information session for the month of May will focus on our restaurants and hospitality businesses, and we will be partnering with representatives from the Culinary Arts Program at Triton College to lead this session which will provide attendees an opportunity to obtain necessary certifications for food safety and sanitation.

June 19, 2025 – Digital Marketing Strategies for Small/Midsize Businesses, 8:30-10 a.m., at 900 N. 25th Ave. Andrew Madden, of MaddenCreative, will lead this training session and topics will include search engine optimization (SEO), optimizing video and image content to improve search rankings, using Google analytics to learn how visitors are finding and using your website, and using social media to drive more traffic to your website.

For more information and details on MPCCCD Events and to register, visit the event calendar on the MPCCCD website at <https://mpcccd.org/events/>.

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.



The 43rd Annual Taste of Melrose Park is Looking for VOLUNTEERS to Be a Part of a Great Weekend

Mayor Serpico and the Taste of Melrose Park are seeking volunteers for the beverage booths (individual or groups of eight or less) or ticket booths (a group of six or less) to help support this year's big event and we appreciate any assistance you can provide over the three-day festival.

All volunteers receive a 2025 Taste of Melrose Park T-shirt and we're sure you'll have plenty of fun!

Friday, Aug. 29 • 5:30-11 p.m.

Saturday, Aug. 30 • 11:30 a.m.-5:30 p.m. or 5:30-11 p.m.

Sunday, Aug. 31 • 11:30 a.m.-5:30 p.m. or 5:30-10:15 p.m.

To volunteer, please complete the Taste of Melrose Park Volunteer Form and mail it to:
Taste of Melrose Park, Attn.: Lorena Anguiano,
1000 N. 25th Ave., Melrose Park, IL 60160

Interested parties, please respond before Aug 1, 2025.

If submitting as a group, please send a main contact person's information.

Mayor Serpico and the Taste of Melrose Park Volunteer Form

Please print clearly.

Name _____ Age _____

Address _____ Apt. # _____

City _____

Phone _____

Please check all that apply.

Individual Group

Available to work: Friday Saturday Sunday

Would like to volunteer for:

Ticket Booth Beverage Stand

For more information, call Lorena at (708) 343-4000, Ext. 4452.

**Selling or Buying Property Representative
For the Good, Bad and Ugly**

50 Years Experience Any Type of Real Estate

RON FABIANI SR.

YOUR "REAL ESTATE" SPECIALIST

MID-AMERICA REALTY & MORTGAGE

MULTI-MILLION DOLLAR SALES AWARD WINNER

FREE PROPERTY APPRAISALS - ALWAYS CUTTING CORNERS



**EVERYTHING I TOUCH TURNS INTO
SOLD, LEASED AND NEGOTIATED
HANDLING ALL OF ILLINOIS, INDIANA
AND PARTS OF WISCONSIN**

**CALL RON AT 1 (708) 415-2484
FOR YOUR PRIVATE APPOINTMENT/7 DAYS A WEEK**

Jackson Hewitt[®]
TAX SERVICES

It matters who does your taxes



Larry Pasternock
Office Manager

1270 WINSTON PLAZA

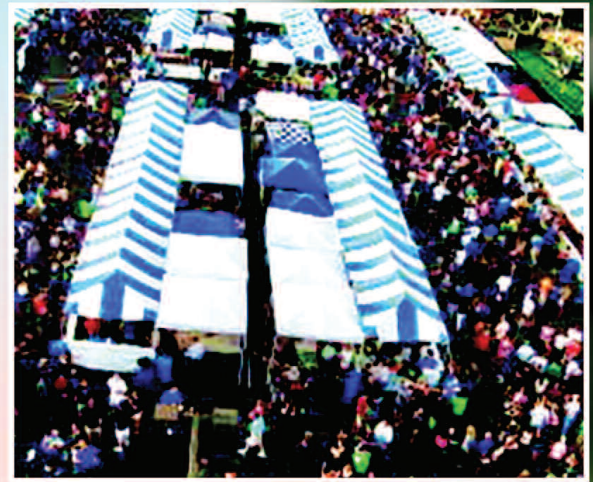
WINSTON PLAZA SHOPPING CENTER

MELROSE PARK, IL 60160

(773) 289-1950

JHTS1040@GMAIL.COM

jacksonhewitt.com



Your Financial Help Makes This All Possible!

**Mayor
Ronald M. Serpico**



Celebrating Our 43rd Year

August 29th, 30th & 31st



Melrose Park Campus
Near the NW Corner of
25th Ave. and Lake St.



WELCOME TO THE 43RD ANNUAL TASTE OF MELROSE PARK

Dear Friends of Melrose Park,

I am writing to invite you to participate as a sponsor for the 43rd Taste of Melrose Park, which will be held over the Labor Day weekend, from August 29th to August 31st.

The Taste of Melrose Park is a family-friendly food festival that attracts thousands of attendees each year. What sets us apart from other food festivals is that most of our food vendors are residents who showcase their unique family recipes. In addition to the delightful culinary offerings, we provide continuous free entertainment on our two stages.

Your sponsorship will help cover many of the costs associated with the event. It also presents a fantastic marketing opportunity for your business or organization, allowing you to showcase your name to the thousands of food enthusiasts who attend our three-day festival.

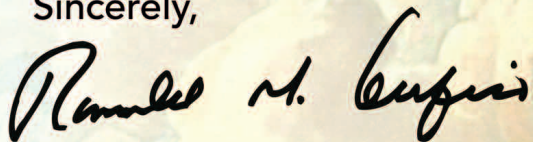
With your financial support, we can continue to host this wonderful family-oriented event and keep our food prices at \$5 or less per serving, despite rising food costs.

To those who have generously supported the Taste of Melrose Park in the past, I sincerely thank you and hope you will consider continuing your sponsorship in 2025. Without your generosity, we would not be able to execute such an ambitious event.

This insert contains information about various sponsorship packages that can fit your budget. If you find a package that suits you, please cut out the application form located on Page 33.

For additional information, please feel free to email our Taste of Melrose Park Director, Peggy DiFazio, or Lorena Anguiano at taste@melrosepark.org, or call 708-343-4000 ext. 4452 or 4448. Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,



Ronald M. Serpico
Mayor of Melrose Park





Your Donation Helps Underwrite More Than Just a Food Festival... It Helps Create a Better Melrose Park

Besides helping underwrite music and food, the most important result derived from your donation to the Taste of Melrose Park is the money raised for the *Melrose Park Sports and Family Benefit Fund*. Since this fund was initiated, we have raised \$1.5 million dollars from the sale of beer and wine at the three-day festival.

The *Melrose Park Sports and Family Benefit Fund* has only a 2% overhead with 98% being used to help underwrite youth athletics, senior citizen and veteran events, computer purchases for schools, donations to local charities, helping families in need, and much more.

When you donate to the Taste of Melrose Park you are not only helping underwrite a three-day food festival, but you are also helping make Melrose Park a better community to live, work and play. Long after the Taste folds its tents the smiles on the faces of those who benefit from the *Melrose Park Sports and Family Benefit* will endure... and helping our neighbors is what the Taste of Melrose Park is all about.



**Attention All
Area Businesses,
Community and
Public Service
Organizations ...
Etc., Etc., Etc.!**

The Taste of Melrose Park is looking for area businesses/organizations, etc., to purchase a spot on Information Row at the 2025 Taste of Melrose Park, Friday, Aug. 29-Sunday, Aug. 31.

This is a great opportunity to showcase your products and services to the more than half a million people expected to patronize this year's big event.

For more information, please send an email to peg@melrosepark.org or call (708) 343-4000, Ext. 4448.

TASTE OF MELROSE PARK SPONSORSHIP PACKAGES

\$8,000.00 PLATINUM SPONSOR PACKAGE

1- Full Page Color Ad (9" wide x 10.5" tall)
10' x 10' Hospitality Tent
2 - Main Stage Video Walls
1 - 4' x 6' Banner
1 - 2' x 4' Billboard

1 - Ad (4.5" wide x 2.28" tall) to run 6 times in *The Rose* newspaper
Public Address System Announcements
2 - VIP Parking Passes

\$5,000 GOLD SPONSOR PACKAGE

1 - Half Page Color Ad (9" wide x 5.5" tall)
10' x 10' Hospitality Tent
Main Stage Video Wall
1 - 3' x 4' Banner
Public Address System Announcements
1 - VIP Parking Pass

\$3,500 SILVER SPONSOR PACKAGE

1 - Full Page Color Ad
Main Stage Video Wall
1 - 2' x 4' Billboard
Public Address System Announcements

\$1,500 BRONZE SPONSOR PACKAGE

1 - 9.25" x 5.5" Color Ad
1 - 3' x 4' Banner
Public Address System Announcements

\$1,000 MAIN STAGE VIDEO WALL ADVERTISING PACKAGE

Your Ad Will Scroll on an 8' x 15' Screen
6:00 PM - Close Each Night

MORE SPONSORSHIP OPPORTUNITIES

\$3,000 T-SHIRT SPONSOR

Your Company Logo
Printed On 500+ Volunteer Shirts
(T-Shirt Space Will Be Limited)

★ **MUST SUBMIT** ★
BY JUNE 6TH

\$850.00 COLOR BANNER

1 - 3' x 4' Color Banner will be displayed throughout the grounds
1 - Ad (4.5" wide x 2.28" tall) to run one time in *The Rose* newspaper

\$500.00 COLOR BILLBOARD

1 - 2' x 4' Color Billboard, which can include your logo.
Displayed the month of August facing 25th Avenue
1 - Ad (4.5" wide x 2.28" tall) to run one time in *The Rose* newspaper

If none of these packages meet your needs or budget, we will work closely with you to design a sponsorship package that will.



TASTE OF MELROSE PARK ORDER FORM

See Page 32 for the
43rd Annual
Taste of
Melrose Park
Sponsorship
Details!

MAKE CHECKS PAYABLE TO: TASTE OF MELROSE PARK

Please Return This Form With
A Check Or Money Order
No Later Than May 16th To:
Taste Of Melrose Park
1000 N. 25th Ave.
Melrose Park, IL 60160

Please Select One of
the Following Packages:

___ \$8,000.00 PLATINUM SPONSOR

___ \$5,000.00 GOLD SPONSOR

___ \$3,500.00 SILVER SPONSOR

___ \$1,500.00 BRONZE SPONSOR

___ \$3,000.00 T-SHIRT SPONSOR
(Submit by June 6th)

___ \$1,000.00 VIDEO WALL SPONSOR

___ \$850.00 3 X 4 COLOR BANNER

___ \$500.00 2 x 4 COLOR BILLBOARD

___ OTHER

PLEASE PRINT CLEARLY

Sponsor Name: _____

Contact Name and Title: _____

Street Address: _____

City, State: _____ Zip: _____

Phone: _____ Fax: _____

Email: _____

Call Peggy DiFazio or Lorena Anguiano at
708-343-4000, ext. 4448 and they will work with your company
to develop a sponsorship package that will meet your budget.

Please detach this order form on the dotted line and return with your payment.

Important Please Read!!!

No later than June 13th we need you to email us your billboard or banner
Camera Ready Artwork or email us the vital information we need for us
to create your billboard or banner to: taste@melrosepark.org

For more information or if you have a question, please call Peggy DiFazio
or Lorena Anguiano at 708-343-4000, ext. 4448 or email them at taste@melrosepark.org



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 – April 2025
 (Deadline for material March 25, 2025.)
 Schedule for 2025
 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)

Date _____

Name of Business _____

Contact Name _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

E-mail _____

Phone _____ Fax _____

The **ROSE**

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



Village of Melrose Park

**Mayor Serpico
and the
Village of Melrose Park
are Seeking
Landscaping and
Snow Removal 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.

Join Melrose Park Boy Scout Troop 4112 Today!



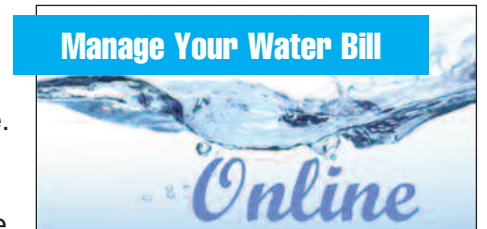
**The Melrose Park
Boy Scouts Program
is Looking for
New Members.**

Any boys interested in joining the troop are encouraged to call Fred Croncich 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.

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.

Mayor Serpico's Christmas Lights Parade with Santa – Thank You!

A special team of village employees and volunteers brought a lot of merriment to the Melrose Park residents over the holidays as they helped with Santa's visit and the annual Christmas Lights Parade. Thank you to all for bringing so much joy to the children of our community!



Village Hall Announces Holiday Closings

The Melrose Park Village Hall will be closed for the following holidays: 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 2025 is: 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.

Melrose Park Can Help You Remove Unwanted Animals From Your Home

For any animal control issues on residential property like skunks, raccoons and bats ... call the Melrose Park Police Department non-emergency phone number at (708) 344-8409 to report the problem and they will contact an outside contractor to eradicate the issue.



Christmas in Proviso

Helping Families Throughout the Township Celebrate Christmas!

Mayor Serpico and members of the MP Chamber of Commerce and Community Development joined Illinois Speaker of the House Emanuel "Chris" Welch, state, county and township leadership, and local mayors at the Christmas in Proviso event held in December, at Proviso West High School.



St. Luke School Staff Members Win Illinois State Board of Education Awards

Melrose Park Residents Danielle Coduti and Elisa Scudiero Receive Recognition

Members of the St. Luke School staff have been selected for a 2025 Those Who Excel Award. Since 1970, the Illinois State Board of Education (ISBE) has sponsored the Those Who Excel & Teacher of the Year Program to honor educators who have made significant contributions to our state's public and nonpublic elementary and secondary schools.



Danielle Coduti, assistant principal, has been selected for an Award of Meritorious Service. Educators presented with the Award of Meritorious Service have gone above and beyond in service to their school communities. They are experienced educators who take on leadership opportunities and whose accomplishments uplift the culture of learning in their school. They stand as exemplars of their profession and have become integral members of their school.

The St. Luke School Preschool teaching team of Nancy Colagrossi, Lori Mathes, Jean Stumbris, Debbie Wirkiowki and Elisa Scudiero have been selected for an Award of Special Recognition. Educators presented with the Award of Special Recognition have shaped their school community for the better. They are valued members of their school community who have been recognized by their colleagues, students, families and administrators for the skills, passions and talents they bring to their school community.



Danielle Coduti

St. Luke School is proud of these amazing educators and congratulate them on this prestigious honor. Their dedication to our students and community is unparalleled.

St. Luke School is located in River Forest, Illinois, and has been educating students in grades preschool through eighth since 1921.

Learn more at www.stlukeschoolrf.org.

Veterans Park District

Programs & Happenings

Early Childhood

Lucky Leprechauns Parent & Tot Workshop • Ages 2-5

Celebrate St. Patrick's Day with a magical journey! Kids will explore shamrocks, leprechauns and rainbows! They might be lucky enough to find a pot of gold.

- Monday, March 17; 10:15-11 a.m.; Grant Park Recreation Center, 44 W. Golfview Dr., Northlake; Fee – R\$20/NR\$30.

Toddler Turf Time • Ages 2-5

Join us for a fun-filled morning of fitness and sports challenges. Led by Ms. Monica, the park district's early childhood instructor, children will be introduced to fitness and sports equipment in a positive and playful setting. Each session features themed play-based stations, interactive circle time with music and movement, and mini fitness activities.

- Mondays, April 14-May 19; 10-11 a.m.; Leoni Complex, 800 N. 17th Ave., Melrose Park; Fee – R\$65/NR\$75.

Bunny Bonanza Parent & Tot Workshop • Ages 2-5

Hop into spring with our bunny-themed workshop! Participants will enjoy creating colorful eggs, festive baskets and delightful bunny crafts.

- Thursday, April 17; 10:15-11 a.m.; Grant Park Recreation Center, 44 W. Golfview Dr., Northlake; Fee – R\$20/NR\$30.

Creative Arts

Drawing 101 • Ages 6+

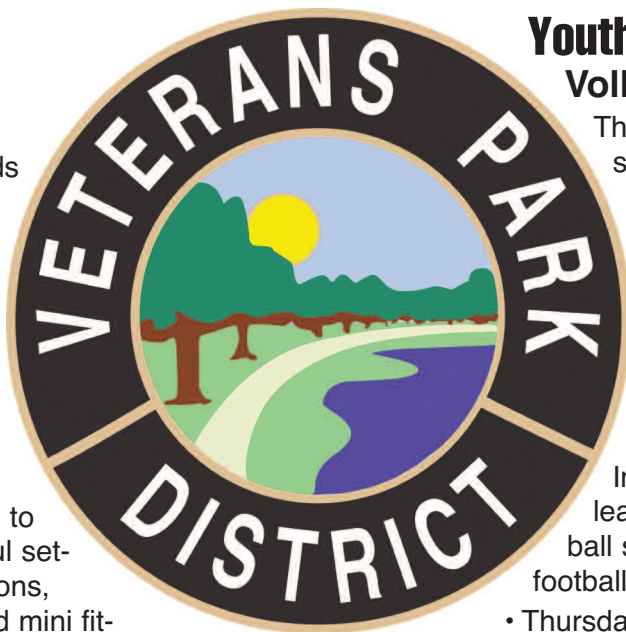
Drawing introduces a new perspective of the world. Basic drawing techniques will be covered, such as tracing, penciling in and shading. This class is aimed to help young children expand their imagination, use their creative side and interpret the world around them. Supplies are included.

- Mondays, March 31-May 5; 6:30-7:30 p.m.; Grant Park Recreation Center, 44 W. Golfview Dr., Northlake; Fee – R\$70/NR\$95.

Intro to Acrylic Painting • Ages 6+

Children will learn to express themselves through painting in this fun and fulfilling class. This program gives children the opportunity to become more creative, increase their critical thinking skills and gain a lifelong appreciation of art. Supplies are included.

- Saturdays, April 5-May 17 (not offered on April 26); 12:30-1:30 p.m.; Grant Park Recreation Center, 44 W. Golfview Dr., Northlake; Fee – R\$70/NR\$95.



Youth Sports

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, March 24-April 14; 4-5 p.m.; Grant Park Recreation Center, 44 W. Golfview Dr., Northlake; Fee – R\$55/NR\$70.

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, March 20-April 10; 5-6 p.m.; George Leoni Complex, 800 N. 17th Ave., Melrose Park; Fee – R\$55/NR\$70.

Mini Basketball • Ages 4-7

This four-week clinic, led by VPD staff, focuses on developing ball handling, passing and shooting. Players will significantly improve their basketball skills!

- Tuesdays, March 18-April 8; 4-4:45 p.m.; Grant Park Recreation Center, 44 W. Golfview Dr., Northlake; Fee – R\$55/NR\$70.

Fitness Classes

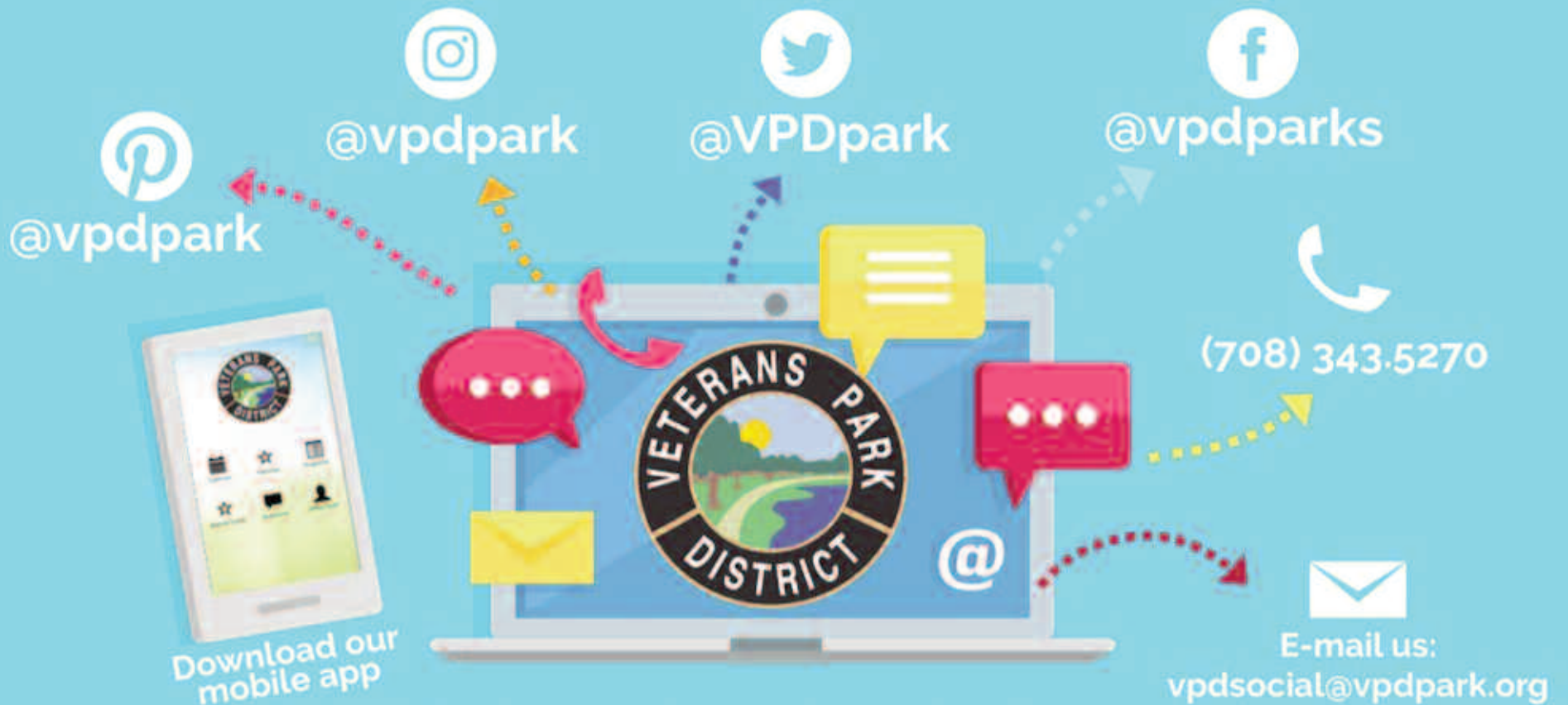
We offer a variety of fun, exciting fitness classes for all ages and fitness levels. Our classes include Zumba, Pump & Sculpt, Strong Nation, Middle Eastern Belly Dancing, Chair Yoga, CIRCL Mobility, Youth Fitness, Youth Boxing and Youth Speed & Agility. Call Cimbalo Fitness Center at (708) 343-5151 for more information.

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. Our golf simulator 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. 24th Ave., Melrose Park. Call (708) 343-5151 to reserve a time.

**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". Social media handles are listed: @vpdpark for Pinterest, Instagram, and Twitter; @VPDpark for Twitter; and @vpdparks for Facebook. A phone icon is accompanied by the number (708) 343.5270. An envelope icon is accompanied by the email address vpdsocial@vpdpark.org. Dotted lines with arrows connect the social media handles to the central laptop.

@vpdpark

@vpdpark

@VPDpark

@vpdparks

Download our mobile app

(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*



Travel with Veterans Park District to

FOUR WINDS CASINO

New Buffalo, Michigan

March 27

\$ 38 PER PERSON

Receive \$15 Instant Slot Credit & \$10 food voucher.

REGISTRATION IS OPEN!
(708) 343-5270
vpdpark.org



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





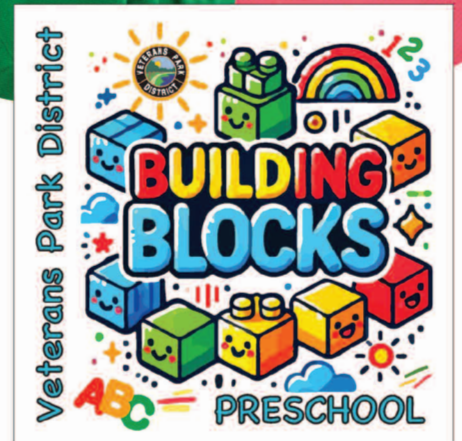
**Veterans
Park
District**

*Programs
&
Happenings*



**VETERANS PARK DISTRICT
Building Blocks Preschool**

A play-based approach to learning



Ages 3-5 / Registration is ongoing / AM classes 9am-12pm

Building Blocks Preschool Program

OPEN HOUSE

Saturday, March 29

Call us for more info

 **+708-343-5270**

Bulger Park Community Center

1601 Hirsch St., Melrose Park

708-343-5270  vpdpark.org  gregstanczyk@vpdpark.org



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





**Veterans
Park
District**

*Programs
&
Happenings*



Sponsored by
Veterans Park District &
Village of Melrose Park Youth Commission

Scramber EGG HUNT

AGES 2 - 10

Friday, April 11
HUNT BEGINS AT 6:30PM !!!

ARRIVE BY 6PM AND BRING YOUR EASTER BASKET

BULGER PARK PLAYGROUND

1601 Hirsch, Melrose Park

WWW.VPDPARK.ORG



708-343-5270



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





**Veterans
Park
District**
*Programs
&
Happenings*

THE DA VINCI CODE

LIVE ON STAGE

AT THE DRURY LANE THEATER

Conspiracy, Secrets, and the Holy Grail
Witness the action-packed novel live on stage as Professor Robert Langdon and cryptologist Sophie Neveu race against the clock to unlock the secrets of Da Vinci.

THURSDAY, APRIL 24

9:45am-4pm

\$115 Per Person
includes; Gourmet three course luncheon, theater tickets
and transportation.

CALL NOW TO REGISTER

www.vpdpark.org  +708-343-5270



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

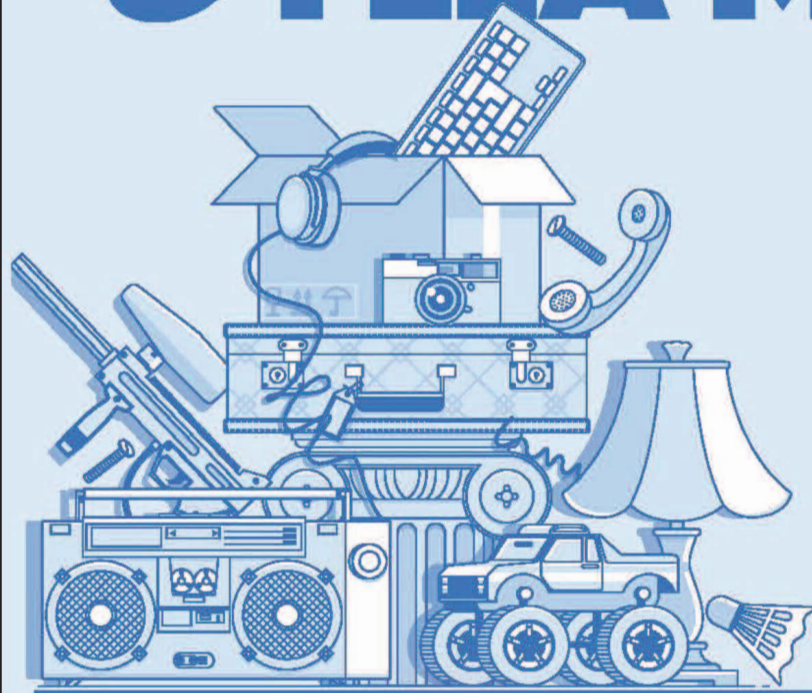




**Veterans
Park
District**

*Programs
&
Happenings*

INDOOR FAMILY GARAGE SALE & FLEA MARKET



SATURDAY, APRIL 26

9 AM-2:30 PM

GRANT PARK GYMNASIUM

44 W. GOLFVIEW DR.

NORTHLAKE

*Free entry to
SHOP!*

**Sellers secure your spot at our sale by registering in advance !
Space is limited.**

Seller's registration fee is only \$25 for residents / \$35 for non-residents

Registration deadline is April 21st.

Contact us today to obtain a seller's application form.

708-343-5270



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



St. Joseph Day Table



Friday March 14, 2025 Noon-8:00pm
Missionary Sisters of St. Charles
Melrose Park Senior Building
900 N. 25th Avenue Melrose Park
Monetary Donations Accepted at Door

**FOR
ADDITIONAL
DETAILS
REGARDING
THIS YEAR'S
EVENT OR
TO MAKE A
DONATION,
PLEASE
CALL
(708)
343-2162.**

REGISTER
YOUR VEHICLE



Presented by Triton College

Sunday, April 27, 2025
10 a.m.-2 p.m.

Gates open to exhibitors at 8 a.m.

Triton College West Campus
Fifth Avenue and Hemingway Drive

Check out over 600 hot rods and classic cars, then take a tour of Triton's incredible Automotive Technology facilities.

CONCESSIONS • TOURS • FREE GUEST ADMISSION
• FREE EXHIBITOR ADMISSION

For more information or to register your vehicle, please visit
triton.edu/carshow.

In case of inclement weather, alternate date will be Sunday, May 4, 2025.



Triton College is an Equal Opportunity/Affirmative Action institution.

There's
a place
for you.



Triton College
triton.edu

2000 Fifth Ave.
River Grove, IL 60171
(708) 456-0300



Triton College NEWS

Triton College Welcomes the 52nd Annual Triton Troupers Circus

Step right up for an amazing, spectacular and incredible show! The Triton Troupers Circus returns for its 52nd annual show. Held in Triton College's R Building Gymnasium, the circus will feature skilled performers and circus specialties, including clowning, juggling, trapeze, unicycling, wheel gymnastics and feats of strength, among other thrilling stunts and entertainment. The Triton Troupers Circus is a nonprofit organization dedicated to preserving the circus arts.

Advanced ticket sales has started. This year, tickets can be purchased online at tritontroupercircus.com.

Tickets can also be purchased in person Monday-Friday, 9 a.m.-4:30 p.m., at Triton College's RSVP Office (R Building, Room R-221) and at the door on the day of the show. Admission is \$10 per person (cash only).

Doors open one hour before the following showtimes:

- Thursday, April 10, 7 p.m.
- Friday, April 11, 7 p.m.
- Saturday, April 12, 1 p.m.
(This show interpreted for the hearing impaired.)
- Saturday, April 12, 7 p.m.
- Sunday, April 13, 1 p.m.

Visit tritontroupercircus.com or call (708) 227-6068, for circus and ticket information.



**Summer Registration
is Open!**
Secure Your Classes Early!
Visit triton.edu/summer.

Harmon, Welch, Honored at Triton College Foundation President's Reception

The Triton College Foundation received an outstanding show of support at the 28th Annual Triton College Foundation President's Reception held this past fall.

While honoring Illinois Senate President Don Harmon and Speaker of the House Emanuel "Chris" Welch, the big event brought together close to 500 people and raised funds toward student scholarships, and new programs and services, to benefit and improve our students' education and learning environment.



Pictured at the 28th Annual Triton College Foundation President's Reception are Triton Foundation President Tom Olson, Speaker of the House Chris Welch and Senate President Don Harmon.

Honorees, Harmon and Welch, both true proponents of education and tremendous supporters of Triton College and the Triton Foundation, were recognized for their continuing commitment to quality education and public service.

This meaningful fundraiser, held on Triton's campus, served as an opportunity for attendees to mix, mingle and enjoy the culinary talents of the students and staff representing Triton's Jerome J. Drosos School of Culinary Arts and Leyden High Schools, as well as to commend the honorees on their deserving award.

The celebration was further complemented by entertainment from Bill O'Connell Music and featured a delectable spread of specialty dishes prepared by several local restaurants, including TriCafe, Elmcrest Banquets, Maria's Mexican Restaurant, Athenian Foods, Circle Tavern, Donnie G's, Edelweiss, Tom's Steak House and Top Butcher Market.

"I have unlimited respect for Senate President Harmon and Speaker Welch, two of the hardest working individuals in the country. It's an honor for us to salute them for the incredible job they're doing for the state of Illinois and members of the Triton community," said Triton College Foundation President Tom Olson. "I want to extend a gracious thank you to each for everything they've done for the college, the Foundation and our students – the ultimate beneficiaries."



**Triton College
FOUNDATION**

A 501(c)(3) organization.
Gifts to the Foundation are
tax deductible as allowed by law.

Consider the Triton College Foundation as a Source for Your Goodwill ... 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.



Students Participate in Mental Health Training

Students from Washington Dual Language Academy, Irving Middle School and Stevenson Middle School recently participated in a full-day mental health training organized by Proviso Public Partnership (PPP). The training, which was held on a nonattendance teacher institute day, provided students with essential knowledge and tools to support their peers facing mental health challenges.

Throughout the session, students explored common issues affecting youth today, including anxiety, depression, substance use and eating disorders. They also learned a comprehensive five-step action plan to assist friends and classmates in crisis and noncrisis situations.

This program plays a crucial role in reducing the stigma surrounding mental health and encourages open, supportive conversations among students. District 89 continues to prioritize student well-being, and foster a culture of empathy and awareness by equipping young people with the skills to recognize and respond to mental health concerns.

Spelling Stars Shine in District 89's Exciting Bee



Middle school students across the district showcased their spelling skills in an intense and exciting Spelling Bee competition. Before the event began, Dr. Hassan offered words of encouragement, wishing all participants good luck and reminding them that, in her eyes, they were all winners.

Ms. Anderlick opened the event by announcing the rules and guidelines, ensuring all contestants understood the competition process. Ms. Bolden served as the pronouncer, delivering each word with precision. A panel of judges – Ms. Sykes, Ms. Jackson, Ms. Modugno and Ms. Watkins – carefully evaluated the participants' responses, while a second team of judges – Ms. Frasier and Mr. Yatvin – provided definitions, sentences and clarifications as needed.

The competition progressed through 13 thrilling rounds, with participants demonstrating exceptional focus and determination. As the rounds progressed, the field narrowed to three outstanding finalists. After an impressive display of skill, the top three winners emerged: First Place – Meraly (Stevenson); Second Place – Zakirah (WDLA); and Third Place – Ruby (WDLA).

With the winning word "Indistinguishable," Meraly claimed the championship title and will now advance to the West 40 Cook Spelling Bee, where she will represent District 89 on the next level of competition.

Congratulations to all participants for their hard work and perseverance! The competition highlighted their spelling abilities, confidence and dedication.

Thanks to the organizers, judges and families who supported and made this event successful.



Melrose Park Students Celebrate 100 Days of Learning

Melrose Park Elementary celebrated the 100th school day with fun and engaging academic activities. Students and staff embraced the milestone by dressing as if they were 100 years old, participating in lessons centered around the number 100 and reflecting on their learning progress over the past 100 days.

In first grade, students explored estimation and measurement by predicting how full a cup would get with 100 drops of water. Working together, they carefully counted each drop, strengthening their teamwork and problem-solving skills. At the end of the activity, each student took home a dropper as a reminder of their hands-on learning experience. Through activities like these, students celebrated not just a number, but also their growth and achievements over the school year.

Roosevelt Students Gear Up for IAR with Interactive Learning

At Roosevelt Elementary, Ms. Hoffman is actively preparing her fifth grade students for success in the Illinois Assessment of Readiness (IAR). Through engaging and strategic IAR prep activities, she is equipping students with the skills and confidence needed to excel. Students practice key test-taking strategies by incorporating interactive learning techniques while strengthening their understanding of core subjects.

One highlight of her preparation efforts is coordinating COORD planes, a hands-on approach that allows students to apply mathematical concepts dynamically. Students fully engage in problem-solving and critical-thinking activities using various tools and resources, reinforcing their learning. Ms. Hoffman's dedication to student achievement is evident as she fosters a supportive and encouraging environment, ensuring her students are well-prepared for the upcoming assessments.



Innovative Teaching at Emerson Elementary School Sparks Student Connections

At Emerson, teachers have successfully reintroduced dynamic teaching strategies that foster deeper engagement and differentiation in the classroom. One powerful approach pairs students with collaborating on "mind-work" and "heart-work" when analyzing texts.

In this strategy, one student focuses on the mind work, examining key story elements such as character, setting and theme. Their partner then engages in the heart-work, connecting to the text and reflecting on how it relates to their experiences and the world around them. Students strengthen their analytical skills and develop a deeper understanding of literature through this method. By connecting with texts on both intellectual and personal levels, they enhance their comprehension and make meaningful connections to their learning.



www.maywood89.org

Follow Us on Twitter “@maywood89”



Washington Dual Language Academy Preschool Explores Music and the Arts

At Washington Dual Language Academy Preschool, young learners are discovering the power of music and art while celebrating African-American artists. Students explored the vibrant rhythms of salsa by learning about Celia Cruz, the legendary “Queen of Salsa.” Through storytelling and music, they experienced how her voice and energy inspire generations.

Literacy came to life in the classroom as students eagerly read *The Jacket I Wear in the Snow*, a class favorite. Their enthusiasm reflected the school’s commitment to fostering a love for books and language.

Creativity flourished as students worked on paintings of snowmen. “I need orange for his carrot nose!” one student shared, demonstrating an ability to explore and express ideas through visual arts.

By integrating music, literacy and art, Washington Dual Language Academy Preschool nurtures well-rounded learners who engage with culture, creativity and self-expression every day.



Stevenson Middle School’s Lady Pirates Cheer Team Shines at IESA State Competition

Academic excellence remained a priority for the Lady Pirates Cheer Team throughout their season. Coaches Mapes and Belsey closely monitored student progress, providing support to ensure success in both school and cheer. Each athlete signed a contract committing to academics, behavior and sportsmanship, reinforcing the team’s dedication in the classroom and on the mat.

Their hard work paid off as they transformed from sideline cheerleaders in September to state competitors in February. After placing fifth at the Riverside Brookfield Middle School Mashup Competition, the team practiced countless hours to perfect their routine for the IESA Cheer State Competition in Peoria, where they competed against 30 other teams. Their teamwork, determination and skill have made Stevenson Middle School proud and we can’t wait to see what they accomplish next season!



Lincoln Elementary Celebrates Winter MAP Growth Success



Lincoln Elementary students continue to excel academically, as shown in the Winter 2025 MAP assessments. In math, 94% of kindergarteners met their growth projections, ranking in the 80th percentile, while over half of students in grades one through five met or exceeded their targets. Reading scores also showed strong progress, with 72% of kindergarteners reaching their growth projections in English and dual language students ranking in the 80th percentile for Spanish literacy. Fifth grade science students demonstrated impressive growth, with 55% meeting their targets and ranking in the 61st percentile.

These achievements reflect the dedication of our students, teachers and families in fostering a strong learning community. With continued focus on academic excellence and personalized instruction, our Lincoln Lions are making great strides toward success. Go Lions!

District 89 Students Experience a Life-Changing Visit to the Supreme Court

On Feb. 19, 75 middle school students from across District 89, chosen for their interest in politics and law, had the extraordinary opportunity to hear United States Supreme Court Justice Ketanji Brown Jackson. This immersive experience allowed students to witness firsthand the workings of the nation's highest judicial body, deepening their understanding of the legal system and inspiring future leaders.



The visit was made possible through Mr. Keith Mahone Sr., principal of Irving Middle School, who coordinated tickets with Rev. Dr. Charlie Dates, senior pastor of Salem Baptist Church of Chicago. Thanks to this partnership, students received VIP seating at the House of Hope Arena, special recognition for participation and a gift bag with a signed copy of *Lovely One* by Supreme Court Justice Ketanji Brown Jackson.



During their visit, students were honored to hear from Justice Ketanji Brown Jackson. She spoke about the judicial system and her journey to the Supreme Court, and shared words of encouragement for the young scholars. She emphasized the importance of perseverance, education and civic engagement, leaving a lasting impression on the students.



“The teachers and students were inspired. It was a life-changing experience,” said Dr. Michelle Hassan, superintendent. “Hearing directly from a Supreme Court justice and understanding the impact of the court was an invaluable opportunity that will shape their futures. Learning more about the Constitution is especially important.”

Niyla Collier, a sixth grade student, shared her perspective, “The experience was very memorable to me. I was quite surprised by how much time and research goes into each Supreme Court decision. I did not realize how many perspectives and steps the justices must go through and consider, before deciding cases that impact everyone in our country and their lives. Hearing from someone who works in the highest court in the U.S. was an amazing experience. Being there made me truly think about how the laws affect everyone. The visit also really changed my perspective on the justice system. Again, being in

the presence of Supreme Court Justice Ketanji Brown Jackson was a huge pleasure and a time I will never let slip off my mind.”

As part of this initiative, students were encouraged to participate in the Middle School and High School Essay Competition inspired by Justice Ketanji Brown Jackson, which challenges students to reflect on Justice Jackson's journey, the role of the Supreme Court or the importance of civic engagement.



For more information about this visit, the essay competition or other educational initiatives, please visit www.salemchicago.org or www.maywood89.org.

MARCH
2025

19

MASS for MAN

WEDNESDAY

SPANISH:
6:30 PM

ENGLISH:
7:00 PM

NOVENA & MASS

OUR LADY OF
MOUNT CARMEL

📍 1101 23rd Ave. Melrose Park, IL
📞 (708) 344 - 4140
🌐 www.olmeparish.org



Joseph *saint* DAY

Greetings from Fr. Leandro Fossá, cs The Parish of Our Lady of Mt. Carmel

Pope Francis: The Jubilee of 2025 A Sign of Rebirth, Hope and Trust



"The coming Jubilee can help a lot to re-establish a climate of hope and trust, as a sign of a new renaissance that we all perceive as urgent." Pope Francis writes in his letter addressed to Monsignor Rino Fisichella, president of the Pontifical Council for Promoting the New Evangelization, the Dicastery entrusted with the organization of the Ordinary Jubilee of the year 2025, which has as its motto "Pilgrims of Hope."

The Jubilee a Special Gift of Grace

"The faithful, usually at the end of a long pilgrimage access the spiritual treasure of the church by passing through the Holy Door and venerating the relics of the Apostles Peter and Paul preserved in Roman basilicas ... Bearing living witness to their enduring faith"

Our Lady of Mt. Carmel is going to Rome in a pilgrimage in this Holy Year and all are invited to participate. During this Lent we will walk this journey of Lent, a journey of penance, reflecting about our missing pews and baren floors. A new begging for a time where society has changed, and we prepare our hearts to walk with Our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. Please see the calendar of our activities and participate.

• Fr. Leandro Fossá, cs
Pastor and Rector



Our Lady of Mt. Carmel Holy Thursday Schedule – April 17, 2025

The Mass of the Lord's Supper and the Washing of the Feet

English at 6 p.m./Spanish at 8 p.m.

The Altar of Repose in the Shrine,

Adoration – 9 p.m.-Midnight

The Pilgrimage to Seven Churches

Bus leaves at 7 p.m. from the church and should return by 11 p.m.

Reservations are limited to the first 55 people and payment must be made at the time reservations are made.

Deadline to sign up is Monday, April 7, 2025.

Call the rectory for details, costs or to make a reservation – (708) 344-4140.

Our Lady of Mt. Carmel Good Friday Schedule – April 18, 2025

Via Crucis ... The Way of the Cross

Two words that mean the same in all languages around the world. Whether you come to the stations of the cross in the afternoon, the funeral dirge in the evening or just to pray at 3 p.m. as the church bells mark the time of Jesus' death, it's a day of reflection and each interpretation transcends any language barrier. All are welcome to all three experiences.

9 a.m.-Noon – Confession

3 p.m. – Bilingual Service

4 p.m. – Via Crucis

The Hispanic community re-enacts the passion of the Lord with a procession through Melrose Park.

The procession starts at Melrose Park School on 17th and Rice, and proceeds through the town, ending at the Village Hall.

Come walk the stations of the cross with Jesus and feel the torture he endured as he carries his cross accompanied by the soldiers who walked with him and the ones riding horseback with their swords and shields.

6 p.m. – La Passione ...

Over 25 Italian societies who originally started the Comitato Venerdì' Santo, come to participate with the Italian community to continue the Good Friday traditions that are still carried out in Italy today. The procession of banners into the church signals the start of the rosary, followed by reciting the *Lord's Passion* and Veneration of the Cross.

The presentation of Our Lady of Sorrow and Cristo Morto conclude the service.

As the band plays the funeral dirge, all banners and statues leave the church for a candlelight procession through the streets in town.

MARCH 2025 ORGANIZE YOUR BLESSED MOMENTS

Stations of the Cross

2128

Every FRIDAY / Trilingual
ITALIAN, ENGLISH & SPANISH: 7:30 pm

Feast of St. Joseph

LA TAVOLA DI SAN GIUSEPPE

Organized by La Società "I FEDELI DI SAN PIO - Chicago"

Mass: 10:30 am - ITALIAN

Procession: 11:30 am

St Joseph Table: 12:30 pm

St Joseph Day

MASS FOR MEN

SPANISH 6:30 pm

ENGLISH 7:00 pm Novena and Mass

The Annunciation

SOLEMN MASS • ROSARY PRAYER

SPANISH 6:30 pm in Church

ENGLISH 7:00 pm in Chapel

St. Anthony Fish Fry

DINNER • ENTERTAINMENT

Friday: 5:30 pm - 8:30 pm

Parish Lenten Evening Recollection

ALTAR & ROSARY

Mass: 6:00 pm followed by

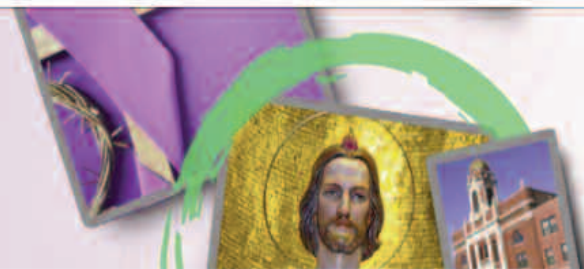
Dinner and Reflection • Carmel Hall

📍 1101 23rd Ave. Melrose Park, IL

☎ (708) 344 - 4140

🌐 www.olmcparish.org

OUR LADY OF
MOUNT CARMEL



APRIL 2025

Special Masses & Events

3

Evening of Recollection ✦

Event organized by ALTAR & ROSARY. Mass 6:30pm
Speaker of the night: Fr Chan cs



4 & 11

Stations of the Cross ✦

Every Friday at 7:30pm
Trilingual: ITALIAN, ENGLISH & SPANISH



9

Lenten Penance Service ✦

CONFESSIONS



13

Palm Sunday ✦

Distribution of Palms - Regular Sunday Mass Schedule

Feast of Santa Maria dell'Arco

Distribution of Palms Banner carried in Procession
ITALIAN MASS 10:30am



15

Mass of Chrism ✦

HOLY OILS BLESSING AT HOLY NAME CATHEDRAL
CLERGY ONLY

17

Holy Thursday ✦

MASS OF LAST SUPPER: ENGLISH/ITALIAN 6:00pm - SPANISH 8:00pm
PILGRIMAGE TO 7 CHURCHES: Bus departs from Church 7:00pm
ADORATION: 9:00 pm - Midnight



18

Good Friday ✦

Confessions: 9:00am - 12:00pm
BILINGUAL SERVICE: ENGLISH/SPANISH 3:00pm
VIACRUCIS: SPANISH 4:00 pm **Re-enactment**
ITALIAN PASSIONE: 6:00pm Rosary - 7:00pm Liturgy
"Cristo Morto" Procession followed the service.



19

Easter Vigil ✦

TRILINGUAL SOLEMN MASS: ENGLISH/ITALIAN/SPANISH 8:00pm

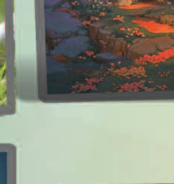
20

Easter Sunday ✦

MASS OF RESURRECTION: Regular Sunday Mass Schedule

Easter Egg Hunting for kids

After some designated Masses only. TBD



27

Divine Mercy ✦

CHAPLET BEFORE MASS: Regular Sunday Schedule
Confessions during designated Masses only

Mass for Padre Pio

ITALIAN: 10:30am - Mass follow by reception



April & May

Scalabrinian Priest Retreat

MONDAY - FRIDAY
8:00am English Service ONLY
6:30pm Spanish Mass



ORGANIZE YOUR BLESSED MOMENTS

📍 1101 23rd Ave. Melrose Park, IL
☎ (708) 344 - 4140
🌐 www.olmeparish.org

OUR LADY OF MOUNT CARMEL



Pilgrimage to Italy



JOIN FR. LEANDRO FOSSÁ ON A SPIRITUAL PILGRIMAGE THROUGH ITALY

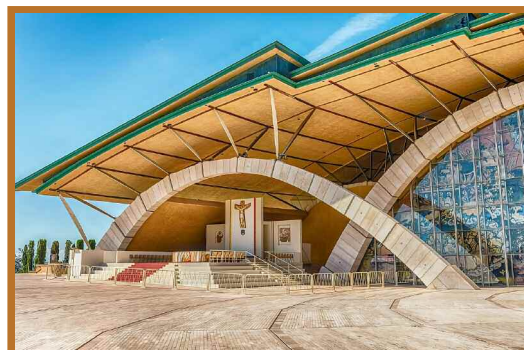
WHAT'S INCLUDED:

- Airfare from Chicago to Rome and back
 - Transfers by motor-Coach bus all throughout the itinerary
 - 10 nights accommodations (4 star Hotels)
 - Daily Breakfast and Dinner
 - Whisper headset
 - All entrance fees as per program
 - English speaking tour guide all through the itinerary
 - Celebrate Masses
 - Name Tags
 - Portage in and out of Hotels
 - Wine Tasting
 - Farewell Dinner
- ✦ \$500 DEPOSIT AT THE TIME OF RESERVATION AND THE REST OF THE AMOUNT CAN BE PAID IN INSTALLMENTS.
- ✦ FINAL PAYMENT IS DUE 101 DAYS BEFORE DEPARTURE DATE. (JULY 18, 2025)

THE VATICAN CITY



SAN GIOVANNI ROTONDO (ST. PADRE PIO)



1 VISITING

Rome * Orvieto * Florence * Siena * Vatican City (Papal Audience with Pope Francis) * Assisi (St. Francis) * Monte Cassino * San Giovanni Rotondo (St. Padre Pio) * Monte Sant'Angelo (St. Michael)

2 12 DAYS (OCT. 27 - NOV. 7) 2025

Price: \$4600 Per Person (LIMITED SEATS)

3 2025 JUBILEE YEAR

Jubilee Year happens once every 25 Years celebrated in Rome & The Vatican City. It is a special year of forgiveness and reconciliation. It's a time to reconnect with God.

For more information or to register, please contact the Parish office at: olmtcarmelchurch@gmail.com or call +1 (708)-344-4140

Lumilitas

MISSIONARIES OF ST. CHARLES
SCALABRINIANS

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



MELROSE YARD SERVICES

PLANTING

Evergreens • Shrubs • Flowers
Trees • Sod • Seed

INSTALLATION

Pavers • Retaining Walls • Lighting
Decorative Stone/Mulch

MAINTENANCE

Lawn Service • Fertilization
Bush Trimming • Cleanups

SUBCONTRACTOR

Concrete/Asphalt Driveways
Lawn Sprinkler Systems

MICHAEL KESSLING

Over 35 Years Experience

(708) 280-4448

SACRED HEART & ST. EULALIA PARISH



JOIN US FOR OUR LENT, HOLY WEEK AND EASTER SERVICES!

STATIONS OF THE CROSS | Fridays in Lent

6:00pm English at **Sacred Heart**

6:00pm Spanish at **St. Eulalia**

Palm Sunday, Holy Week & Easter

PALM SUNDAY | April 13, 2025

Saturday 4:30pm English Palm Sunday Mass at **Sacred Heart**

Saturday 6:00pm Spanish Palm Sunday Mass at **Sacred Heart**

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

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

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

12:30am Spanish Palm Sunday Mass at **St. Eulalia**

HOLY THURSDAY | April 17, 2025

8:00am Prayer Service at **Sacred Heart**

7:00pm English Mass of the Lord's Supper at **Sacred Heart**

7:00pm Spanish Mass of the Lord's Supper at **St. Eulalia**

GOOD FRIDAY | April 18, 2025

8:00am Prayer Service at **Sacred Heart**

3:00pm English Stations of the Cross at **Sacred Heart**

3:00pm Spanish Stations of the Cross at **St. Eulalia**

7:00pm English Liturgical Service at **Sacred Heart**

7:00pm Spanish Liturgical Service at **St. Eulalia**

HOLY SATURDAY | April 19, 2025

8:00am Prayer Service (Laudes) at **Sacred Heart**

10:00am Blessing of the Food at **St. Eulalia**

3:00pm Blessing of the Food at **Sacred Heart**

7:00pm English Easter Vigil Mass at **Sacred Heart**

7:00pm Spanish Easter Vigil Mass at **St. Eulalia**

EASTER SUNDAY | April 20, 2025

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

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

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

12:30am Spanish Easter Mass at **St. Eulalia**

**Sacred Heart &
St. Eulalia Parish**
ST. JOSEPH TABLE
Dinner & Desserts

Saturday
March 15, 2025
5:00pm to
8:00pm

*Monetary Donations
Accepted at the Door*

Cash Raffle
1st Prize - \$500
2nd Prize - \$300
3rd Prize - \$200

The Raffle Drawing will be held
Saturday, March 15, 2025
Winners need not be present to win
Tickets available at Parish Office

Sacred Heart Church
Marian Hall
(Church Basement)
15th Ave & Iowa St.
Melrose Park, IL
708-344-0757



SACRED HEART CHURCH: 819 N. 16th Ave., Melrose Park



ST. EULALIA CHURCH: 1825 S. 9th Ave., Maywood

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 – April 4, May 2

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

March 20 - April 17 - May 15 & May 29 at **Sacred Heart**.

March 27 – April 10 & 24 – May 8 & 22 at St. Eulalia.

Women's Club Camaraderie Meeting on APRIL 3

7:00pm at **Sacred Heart's Alpha Room**. Bring a snack to share!



Tamale Sale on PALM SUNDAY—APRIL 13

From **9:00am—12:00pm** in **Sacred Heart's Marian Hall**.

Adoration & Anointing of the Sick on MAY 15

7:00pm at **Sacred Heart**.



Taco Sale on MAY 18

11:00am—3:00pm in **St. Eulalia's Parish Hall**
after 10:30am & 12:30pm Masses.



Father Francisco Ortega welcomes you to join us for our weekly Masses at Sacred Heart & St. Eulalia Parish. Below are our weekly Mass times. For more information, please visit our website at shsparish.org.

WEEKDAYS **8:00am English** at **Sacred Heart**

SATURDAYS **4:30pm English** at **Sacred Heart** **6:00pm Spanish** at **Sacred Heart**

SUNDAYS **8:30am English** at **Sacred Heart** **10:30am Spanish** at **Sacred Heart**
10:30am English at **St. Eulalia** **12:30pm Spanish** at **St. Eulalia**



A Message from Tim Bouman, Head of School Warm Greetings from Walther!

This month I want to share a snapshot of progress on our Strategic Plan. Strategic Plans are usually announced with great fanfare, the culmination of months of study, discussion and drafting, a big picture attempt to guide an organization. Ours was completed during the 2021-2022 school year and it has been on our website ever since (<https://www.walther.com/strategic-plan/>). We've had some successes, as well as some setbacks, but it remains the map that guides our work and directs our resources and energies. So, from the past few months, here are some examples of accomplishments we've achieved by following it:

1. Expand opportunities for students. In partnering with Exelon, we've offered students access to a wonderful STEM program. We've also taken advantage of the opportunity to send advanced choral students on a weekly basis to sing with Concordia University Chicago's "Schola Cantorum."
2. Enhance Walther's campus: This year we've upgraded our weight room with new equipment; replaced nearly all our light fixtures with brighter, energy-efficient LED lighting; upgraded exterior signage; installed a digital Athletic Hall of Fame kiosk; and have planned a major baseball field upgrade to take place in the coming weeks.
3. Strengthen fiscal foundation and long-term sustainability: We've paid off all of our debts seven years early and our Investment Committee is exploring new ways to maximize our investments.
4. Create excellence in organizational operations and culture: Our Walther Parent Association is up and running, our new style guide has given our publications an updated and uniform look, and our upcoming hiring of a new principal to join our head of school all provide focus and improvement.

Walther is in an exciting place right now, fulfilling its mission and sharing Christ's love daily, while poised for continuous improvement. Keep Walther in your prayers as we move into the spring.

• Yours in Christ,
Tim Bouman, Head of School/Principal

From Our Advancement Director Supporting Our Students

The Bronco Benefit was a huge success with nearly 180 attendees engaging in fellowship and fundraising. The event brought in more than \$110,000 to support Walther Christian Academy. Highlights included encouraging messages from our head of school, Tim Bouman, Roger Krueel '74, Matthew Swan '24 and Kira McGhee '26, and wonderful music from our talented students and music directors. Make plans to join us next year. We would love to have more alumni from all decades in attendance.

The next opportunity to support our students is Career Day 2025 which is coming up on March 21. We are still looking for presenters in these fields – architecture, food industry, graphic design or interior design.

If you have interest in presenting to our students on this day, contact me at bill_koehne@waltheracademy.org or call Walther at (708) 344-0404.

Thank you for supporting the Walther family through this work.

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

Alumni Spotlight: Dennus Bishop

Dennus Bishop, Walther Class of 1996, currently serves as an executive special agent in charge for the United States Postal Service Office of Inspector General – a federal law enforcement agency. He manages about 75 federal law enforcement agents and their supervisors in a 13 state region throughout the midwest. The agency's focus is on fraud, waste and abuse as it pertains to the USPS. This includes narcotics being shipped through the mail, theft of mail, health care fraud by USPS workers, financial fraud and misconduct allegations.



Dennus Bishop

After graduating from Walther, Dennus received a BA in psychology from Trinity Christian College in Palos Heights, Illinois, and later completed an MA in Social Work from UIC. In his professional career he has worked for Lutheran Social Services of Illinois as a foster care licensing representative, for the Illinois Department of Child and Family Services as a child protection investigator, and as a special agent with the US Secret Service. In 2016, he began his work in the USPS Office of Inspector General and has worked his way up to taking his current position in 2023.

When asked for his career highlights, Dennus shared, "My DCFS work will always be near and dear to my heart. There may be no greater calling than protecting children who can't protect themselves. That role also laid the foundation for my work in investigations."

Another highlight was becoming a federal agent in 2009. "The Secret Service gave me the opportunity to work at the White House protecting the president and travel around the world with foreign dignitaries."

As Dennus reflects on his time at Walther, three things stand out. "The dedication of the teachers. I realized this later, but they could have been somewhere else making more money. Instead, they dedicated themselves to the ministry of Walther. That speaks volumes." Another item that he didn't realize until later was the importance of faith development. "Walther reaffirmed what was taught at home. It was not uncool to talk about your relationship with the

Lord. I know that kept me on the right path.” One other thing that Densus cherished was the family atmosphere. “It was good to be back at Walther for an open house recently and hearing that the family atmosphere is still prevalent here.”

Right after graduating from college in 2000, Densus began coaching basketball at Walther. He spent two years as the freshman coach and then 11 years as the varsity assistant under three different coaches. “The highlight from those years was the relationships I formed with the team members.”

“Whether it is the lifelong friendships I formed with classmates while a student at Walther, or the relationships I formed while coaching, there is something special about the bond formed through Walther.”

Winter Sports Recap

The girls varsity basketball team finished the year 10-18 (5-4 in the Chicago Prep Conference). Senior Isabella Zuipsnys and junior Tamia Allen were named to the All-Conference team. The girls made it to the regional championship game where they lost to perennial power Chicago Marshall.

The boys varsity team, despite starting four sophomores and a freshman for most of the season, ended up with a record of 9-18 (3-4 in the CPC). Highlights included a late season come from behind win vs. Timothy Christian and a regional win vs. Chicago Orr. Sophomores Brandon Pettigrew and Nathaniel Castillo were named to the All-Conference team. The sophomore team finished third in the CPC Tournament and the freshmen won the CPC Tournament.

The wrestling team finished the season with a dual meet record of 10-15 and fifth place in regionals. Senior Caleb Peterson (144) was a regional champion. Sophomore Kevin Gomez (157) placed second, while senior Antonio Gonzalez (150), and sophomores Steven Rodriguez (165) and Tyler Schoessow (175) placed third. Caleb ended his career second all-time at Walther with 115 wins.

The bowling team was led by junior Dillon Carey who qualified for sectionals out of the Glenbard East Regional with a score of 1164.

Bronco Math Team

The Walther math team competed on Feb. 22 in the ICTM Regional Competition. Despite having a young team with one freshman, five sophomores and one junior, the team competed well. The two-person team of Jason Nguyen and Nathan Tuomi finished third in the junior/senior two person team competition. We look forward to even greater accomplishments in the years to come.

Upcoming Walther Events

Registration Night for the Class of '29
Thursday, March 20

Career Day – Friday, March 21

Spring Break – March 24-28

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

Purchase a Walther Paver!

Do you want to support Walther and leave your mark? Or, purchase a gift for someone you love?

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.

The ROSE

Wants to Hear Your Story ...

**We want to provide readers
with helpful information and
highlight local individuals,
organizations, businesses
or special events
that make Melrose Park
a unique and thriving
community!**

Do you know any interesting people in town
who are worthy of recognition?
Is there great news about an organization or
business that you are involved with
that you want others to know about?

If you answered “Yes,”
then we want your story!

Please send all your exciting details
by direct mail to:

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.**



Proviso Township Handyman Program

Winter 2025 – Proviso Township Handyman News

Did you know that ceiling fans help distribute heat evenly to your rooms?
Are yours in good working order? When was the last time you changed the filters in your furnace?
Time to check the caulk around your tub and sinks! Leaky sinks mean higher water bills!

Replace your furnace filter for better air flow.

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 +

**Michael A. Corrigan
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
Light Bulbs - Change	
Light Fixtures - Repair or Replace	

PROVISO TOWNSHIP – Your Neighbors, Your Government

MICHAEL A. CORRIGAN, SUPERVISOR

Anthony "Tony" Williams, Clerk • Steven J. Zawaski, Assessor

Gay F. Chase, Trustee • Evelyn Chavez, Trustee

Joseph Christopher, Trustee • Clarence E. Thomas, Trustee

Here to Serve Melrose Park & Surrounding Communities

Thank You Mayor Serpico!



TOWNSHIP OF PROVISO
 4565 Harrison St.
 Hillside, IL 60162
 P: 708-449-4307
 F: 708-202-1265
 www.provisotownship.com



Illinois State Representative NORMA HERNANDEZ

77th District



Illinois State Representative
Norma Hernandez

State Rep. Norma Hernandez Returns to Springfield for the Commencement of the 104th General Assembly

State Rep. Norma Hernandez has officially begun her second term in Springfield with the commencement of the 104th General Assembly.

Reflecting on her previous term, Rep. Hernandez expressed deep gratitude for the opportunity to serve the community and advocate for their values. She acknowledged the significant progress made during the 103rd General Assembly and voiced her eagerness to build upon those achievements in her new term.

On Wednesday, Jan. 8, Rep. Hernandez was sworn in, marking the beginning of her second term. She enters this new chapter with enthusiasm and a commitment to continue serving her constituents from her newly updated office at 251-E in the Stratton Building. The start of the 104th General Assembly brings new opportunities to address the needs of the community and work toward a brighter future for Illinois.

Rep. Hernandez is dedicated to ensuring that the voices of her community are heard and that their interests are represented in Springfield. She is eager to begin her work on the various committees she serves on, which include Adoption & Child Welfare, Appropriations: Health & Human Services, Appropriations: Pensions & Personnel, Energy & Environment, Higher Education and Transportation: Regulation, Roads & Bridges. With

her second term underway, she is poised to tackle the challenges and opportunities that lie ahead, continuing to show up with purpose, dedication and compassion for the Latino community across the state of Illinois.

Illinois State Representative
NORMA HERNANDEZ
77th District

104th General Assembly
Committee Assignments

1. Adoption & Child Welfare
2. Appropriations: Health & Human Services
3. Appropriations: Pensions and Personnel
4. Energy & Environment
5. Higher Education
6. Transportation: Regulations, Roads & Bridges

Norma Hernandez
@rep.normahernandez

251-E
W. Stratton Building
Springfield, IL 62706

district@repnormahernandez.com
repnormahernandez.com
708-365-8498

I had the honor of witnessing Gov. Pritzker's State of the State & Budget Address – a critical moment that sets the course for Illinois' future. As co-chair of the Illinois Legislative Latino Caucus, I stand firm with my colleagues in our commitment to ensuring a balanced budget that prioritizes equity, opportunity and the needs of our communities. From investing in education to strengthening health care and economic opportunities, we are ready to fight for a budget that truly serves all of our districts.



State Rep. Hernandez Named Co-Chair of the Latino Caucus

It is with great pride that we announce Illinois State Rep. Norma Hernandez as the new co-chair of the Illinois Legislative Latino Caucus. This appointment recognizes Rep. Hernandez's dedication to her community and her commitment to advocating for the needs and interests of the Latino population across the state.

In her role as co-chair, Rep. Hernandez will work alongside her colleagues to advance policies that promote equity, opportunity and social justice for Latinos in Illinois. Her leadership and experience will be instrumental in shaping the caucus's agenda and ensuring that the voices of the Latino community are heard and respected in the legislative process.

"I am beyond excited to take on this role, which will enable me to lead the way on policies that impact Latino families across Illinois and address the issues that many in our community have in common," Hernandez said. "Keeping Illinois moving forward means ensuring our policies lift up everyone and leave nobody behind. Representation matters and that's the message I'm bringing to the House floor over the next two years." The caucus consists of the Democratic members of the Illinois House of Representatives who are of Latino heritage. They comprise 11 of the 78 Democrats in the House. Caucuses are groups of legislators, usually of the same party, who unite around some aspect of shared identity to bring focus to policies aimed at addressing the particular needs of that group.

The Illinois House Democrats have an Asian Caucus, a Black Caucus, a Downstate Caucus, a Women's Caucus, a Moderate Caucus and a Progressive Caucus. Individual legislators can be members of more than one of these. In addition, the House Democrats are considered a caucus.

Rep. Hernandez's appointment as co-chair of the Illinois Legislative Latino Caucus underscores her unwavering commitment to public service and her passion for empowering the Latino community. We are confident that she will excel in this new leadership role and continue to make a positive impact on the lives of Illinois residents.

77th District of Illinois Hosts Small Business Expo

State Rep. Norma Hernandez recently hosted a highly successful Small Business Expo, bringing together a wealth of resources and opportunities for local entrepreneurs. The event, held in partnership with the village of Bensenville, the Bensenville Park District, The Northwest Hispanic Chamber of Commerce, IL DCEO/OE3, The Illinois Capital Development Board, Sisco Advisors and tabling partners IHCC, aimed to empower small business owners by providing them with valuable information and connections.

The expo featured a variety of programs and initiatives designed to support small business growth and success within the state. A key highlight of the event was information about the OE3 Grant available from the Illinois Department of Commerce and Economic Opportunity (DCEO). This grant offers crucial funding for small businesses seeking to make capital improvements, enabling them to expand, modernize and enhance their operations. Attendees had the chance to learn about state certification processes, funding opportunities like the OE3 Grant and other resources available to help them thrive. Rep. Hernandez emphasized the importance of creating equal opportunities for women- and minority-owned businesses, ensuring they have access to the tools and support needed to compete and succeed in today's market.

The Small Business Expo served as a testament to Rep. Hernandez's dedication to her community and her commitment to fostering economic development. By bringing together key organizations and resources, the event provided a platform for small-business owners to connect, learn and grow. The success of the expo underscores the importance of ongoing support and investment in small businesses, which are vital to the health and prosperity of Illinois' economy.



APPLY TODAY! COOK COUNTY OPENS VIOLENCE PREVENTION, TRANSPORTATION AND COMMUNITY BUILDING GRANTS

Cook County Community Violence Intervention Grants and Wraparound Services for Survivors of Gun Violence



Cook County Commissioner
Frank J. Aguilar

Cook County Community Violence Intervention Grants (CC-CVI) will provide up to \$20 million of funding for community-based services to reach and support residents who are at risk of being involved in instances of gun violence. The Cook County Wraparound Services for Survivors of Gun Violence (CC-SGV) initiative will provide up to \$10 million in funding for services to support survivors of gun violence and their families.

To apply, please visit the JAC website at www.cookcountyil.gov/JACGrants?utm_medium=email&utm_source=govdelivery.

Both grant opportunities are open to community-based nonprofit organizations located and providing services in Cook County.

• Key Dates

- Monday, March 17, 2025 – Notice of Funding Opportunities released.
- Thursday, March 27, 2025 – Pre-Submittal Conference.
- Monday, April 14, 2025, 5 p.m. CST – Application Deadline for CC-CVI and CC-SGV.

Cook County Announces Call for Transportation and Community Development Grant Program Applications



Applications are due by March 21 for programs that promote economic development, enhance public services and improve transportation throughout the county

• How to Apply

- Invest in Cook

The application deadline for Invest in Cook is Friday, March 21, 2025, 5 p.m. CDT.

Under the Invest in Cook Program, DoTH is seeking applications from local governments and transit agencies.

Private and nonprofit organizations can submit project proposals, but must have a public sponsor.

DoTH staff will evaluate and score Invest in Cook proposals to determine which projects will be chosen this year.

For more information and to apply, visit www.cookcountyil.gov/investincook.

Community Development Block Grant and Emergency Solutions Grant Programs

The application deadline for CDBG capital improvement and public service grants, as well as for ESG, is Friday, March 21, 2025, 5 p.m. CDT.

Under both the CDBG and ESG programs, DPD will accept applications from units of government and nonprofit organizations.

For more information and to apply, visit www.cookcountyil.gov/service/community-development-division.

Virtual Webinars

CCDoTH hosted a virtual workshop for potential Invest in Cook applicants on Feb. 5, 2025.

The recording of the webinar can be found by following this link – <https://youtu.be/OxPWvFQPLeA>.

The Department of Planning and Development, in conjunction with the Cook County Department of Transportation and Highways, hosted a webinar for potential applicants for CDBG and ESG, as well for the Invest in Cook Program, on Feb. 5, 2025.

The webinar focused on program-compliance guidelines, along with detailed information on applying for the grants.

View the webinar here – <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=h4-Sy5MbOD4>.

Cook County Commissioner Frank J. Aguilar Hosts Three Kings Celebration

On Monday, Jan. 6, Cook County Commissioner Frank J. Aguilar hosted a Three Kings Celebration at his district office. Over 200 children were present, receiving toys which were donated by Chicagoland Toys for Tots. Attendees also had the opportunity to drink hot chocolate and eat Rosca de Reyes, which were donated by Aracelis Bakery, with fellow members of their community.



Partnering with Commissioner Aguilar were Chicagoland Toys for Tots, Rincon Family Services, West 40 and Gabriel Studios, who distributed community resources to residents. Also in attendance was Cook County President Toni Preckwinkle and representatives from Congressman Chuy Garcia's and Cook County Circuit Clerk Mariyana Spyropoulos' offices, Lyons Mayor Chris Getty, and Alivio Medical Center, who provided support services for constituents.

"I'd like to thank Chicagoland Toys for Tots for helping make sure all children receive a toy this holiday season. I'd like to thank President Preckwinkle, Congressman Garcia and Clerk Spyropoulos for their continued support for our district. I also want to say how grateful I am for all our sponsors for being on-site, making families' holiday wishes come true while also distributing important information and resources," said Commissioner Aguilar. "This is a wonderful time for residents to come together and celebrate our community and the things that unite us."

Three Kings Day, also known as the Feast of Epiphany, celebrates the last of the 12 days of Christmas. The holiday celebrates the biblical tale in which the three kings, or three wise men, visit baby Jesus after his birth. In keeping with the Chicano culture of many 16th District residents, Rosca de Reyes, a sweet bread meant to represent a king's crown that is a mile long, was also available for residents to enjoy. Children were able to receive toys as well, which were donated by Chicagoland's Toys for Tots organization.

Carbonara Funeral Directors

Traditional Funerals
Cremations
Memorial Services
Immediate Burials



Pre-Arrangements,
with or without
prepayment of services

Chapels available
near your home

Now Open at
1515 N. 25th Ave., Melrose Park

Bus: (708) 343-6161 Home: (708) 865-8124 Cell: (708) 724-7500



News from Illinois Secretary of State Alexi Giannoulias

Giannoulias Announces Launch of Electronic Lien and Titling

ELT Program in Illinois Will Reduce Customer Wait Times

For the first time in Illinois, the Secretary of State's Office is making electronic lien and titling (ELT) available when purchasing a vehicle from a participating dealer, Secretary Alexi Giannoulias announced.

Illinois joins 25 other states that have active ELT programs. This new program allows vehicle titles to be processed, stored and released digitally, eliminating the need for arduous paperwork, physical document mailing or in-person visits to a DMV facility.

"An electronic lien and titling program will make the process of buying a car significantly faster, more convenient and more secure than the paper system. What used to take months can be done with a few clicks, dramatically reducing the 'Time Tax' customers were forced to pay when titling a vehicle," said Giannoulias. "Implementing new technology strategically enables our office to create efficiencies and benefit consumers. These investments are crucial to providing convenience, but more importantly security for our customers and their data."

The Illinois General Assembly first approved ELT in 2000, but outdated technology delayed full implementation. Upon taking office in 2023, Giannoulias made modernization a top priority and created the infrastructure to allow for ELT to launch.

ELT allows an individual purchasing a vehicle at a dealership to complete an online title application that determines whether the lender has opted in for ELT. If they have, an electronic copy of the paperwork is sent to the Secretary of State for review and a third-party vendor stores the electronic record until it is time to release the title.

Instead of customers waiting for lienholders to search through physical title records that may be stored for years, lienholders can now mark the title as paid and the Secretary of State will send the released title to the owner.

The ELT system also reduces the potential for fraud by preventing "title-washing" and fraudulent lien releases when applying for a new title. These practices can prove devastating to customers who unknowingly purchase a stolen vehicle and to lienholders that are unaware of titles being fraudulently released.

The Secretary of State's Office does not charge for this service, but some ELT service providers may charge fees to participating lienholders.

The first phase of the Illinois ELT Program is focused on transitioning new titles to the electronic format. Future phases of the program may allow lienholders to convert existing paper titles to electronic format and enable vehicle owners to hold their titles electronically on their phones.

Giannoulias Warns Illinoisans of Scammers Selling Used Vehicles

Recent Uptick in Wholesale Dealers Defrauding Consumers with Odometer "Rollbacks"

Secretary of State Alexi Giannoulias is warning Illinoisans shopping for a used vehicle to exercise caution and employ best-practices amid a rise in fraudulent vehicle purchases across the state.

The Secretary of State's Office has uncovered a growing number of fraudulent sales from out-of-state businesses licensed as wholesale dealers that illegally falsify the mileage shown on a used vehicle's title and odometer to defraud car buyers.

Giannoulias' warning comes on the heels of an Illinois car buyer, who thought they purchased a used vehicle from a wholesale dealer with 80,000 miles, only to find out the seller rolled back the odometer from over 200,000 miles and deliberately failed to disclose major mechanical problems with the car.

"Nightmare stories like this one is one of the worst-case scenarios when purchasing a used car," Giannoulias said. "In many cases, the purchaser is in a desperate financial situation or needs a car fast, which leads them to overlook red flags and fail to do their due diligence."

The wholesale car dealer scam is a deceptive practice in which someone licensed in other states to sell vehicles exclusively to dealers, instead poses as a private vehicle owner. Vehicles are often sold in Illinois through online advertisements and social media channels at seemingly low prices. In many cases, these vehicles have serious mechanical issues or are missing the ownership documents required to title and register the vehicle. By the time the buyer discovers the problem, the wholesaler is long gone.

Odometer fraud across the country is rising each year. The National Highway Traffic Safety Administration estimates that more than 450,000 vehicles are sold annually with false odometer readings causing consumers to lose over \$1 billion annually. In December, Carfax ranked Illinois the fifth highest state in the nation with 79,000 cars discovered with rolled-back odometers.

With older vehicles, odometers scammers roll back odometers manually. However, newer vehicles have digital odometers that can be altered by removing or manipulating a car's circuit board, deceiving buyers into believing a car has a lower mileage that would sell for a higher price.

"My office is continuing to work with law enforcement and to educate the public to identify these scammers before they take advantage of customers," Giannoulias added. "It's imperative that buyers do their homework and know the signs before it is too late."

To best protect yourself against fraudsters, Giannoulas recommends the following when buying from an individual seller:

1. When buying from an individual, always get the properly signed title at the time of purchase.
2. Make sure the seller owns the vehicle.
3. If there is a lien on the vehicle, make sure it is paid off before taking ownership.
4. Look for evidence of erasing or other tampering with the title documents.
5. Make sure the wear and tear on the vehicle appears to match its age and mileage.
6. Closely examine the vehicle history report on Carfax, AutoCheck or the National Motor Vehicle Title Information System (NMVTIS) and compare the report to the name on the title, title number, VIN number, issue date and odometer reading. Compare the VIN on the vehicle's dashboard against the title and history report.
7. Have the vehicle inspected by an automotive professional.
8. Never buy a previously junked vehicle, meaning the vehicle is in operable, wrecked or dismantled. You cannot register the vehicle in Illinois and it cannot be rebuilt, no matter what it looks like.
9. If you believe you are buying from an individual seller, but the last assigned owner looks like a dealer name, do not buy it. You may have trouble registering the vehicle and you may pay additional taxes.

For more information, visit [ilsos.gov](https://www.ilsos.gov) and scroll down to Publications & Forms where, under the Law Enforcement section, you can find informational forms on odometer fraud and buying or selling a vehicle. If you believe you are a victim of odometer fraud or other vehicle-related fraud, contact your local police department.

Do You Need a REAL ID? Maybe ... Maybe Not

Secretary of State Clears Up REAL ID Confusion Ahead of May 7 Deadline

Secretary of State Alexi Giannoulas wants Illinoisans to make sure they know if they need a REAL ID ahead of the federal deadline, now less than three months away.

The Secretary of State's Office is proactively raising awareness about the uses of REAL IDs and clarifying that they are not mandatory for driving a vehicle or required for valid identification or proof of citizenship.

The primary reason for Illinoisans over the age of 18 to obtain a REAL ID is to fly domestically on a commercial aircraft or visit certain federal facilities, such as a military base or federal courthouse as of May 7. Individuals who have a valid U.S. passport and those under the age of 18 will not need a REAL ID.

The deadline for obtaining the REAL ID has been pushed back multiple times, most recently in 2022 when the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) cited the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic. Meanwhile, the DHS has not provided details on how it plans to enforce the REAL ID Act once the deadline arrives, suggesting it will implement a "phased enforcement approach" over a two-year period, which could allow travelers to board flights with warnings about the requirement.

"Between implementation delays and a lack of clarity about enforcement procedures, the REAL ID initiative has led to a great deal of confusion and misinformation about what is required and how the federal government plans to implement it," Giannoulas said. "We do know that REAL IDs will not be mandatory for most tasks other than flying and our employees have been doing an outstanding job at handling this unprecedented demand."

Giannoulas launched the office's "Get Real Illinois" campaign last May to raise awareness about the requirements and deadline associated with the federal initiative. The campaign has leveraged partnerships across the state to boost enrollment through a series of REAL ID "pop-up" events throughout the past year.

Giannoulas' office has experienced an uptick in REAL ID issuances with 628,279 issued in 2022, 864,240 in 2023 and 1.1 million in 2024. In January of 2025, the office issued 128,000 REAL IDs, a record for a single month.

To accommodate the recent demand, the office has increased the number of available daily appointments by nearly 2,500 at the 44 appointment-only DMVs in Chicago and the suburbs. Because the office's two "walk-in" facilities in the Chicago area – the Loop and Chinatown DMVs – have experienced longer wait times leading up to the deadline, the office is suggesting that REAL ID applicants make plans to visit an appointment-only DMV to avoid any possible waits.

Currently, just 3.4 million Illinois residents with a driver's license or state ID – or about 30% – hold a REAL ID driver's license or ID.

Giannoulas also stressed that Illinoisans who need a REAL ID should make an appointment at a DMV to avoid longer lines closer to the deadline or wait until after May 7 to apply if they do not have immediate travel plans.

Individuals applying for a REAL ID must do so in person at an Illinois DMV and are required to present:

1. A U.S. birth certificate, U.S. passport, Naturalization Certificate, Report of Birth Abroad or a Certificate of Citizenship. If you are not a U.S. citizen, an employment authorization document, a permanent resident card or a foreign passport with an approved I-94 form is also acceptable. If you've changed your name, you'll need to provide name-change documents.
2. Proof of a full Social Security number (SSN). Examples include a Social Security card, a W-2 or a pay stub with your full SSN.
3. Two current residency documents that list your full name. Examples include a utility bill, rental agreement, deed/title or a bank statement.
4. Proof of your signature. Examples include a signed credit or debit card, canceled check or current state driver's license or state ID.

Illinois residents can go online to access an interactive checklist to make sure they have the documents they need before heading to a DMV.

Some Illinois DMVs require an appointment, so residents are encouraged to plan ahead and visit www.ilsos.gov if they need to schedule one.



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

Illinois Treasurer Frerichs Announces State Investment Earnings Up 11% Money Will Help During Tough Budget Year, Frerichs Says

Illinois State Treasurer Michael Frerichs recently announced that investment earnings on the state portfolio are up more than 11% as state government faces tough budgeting decisions this spring.

Investment earnings stand at \$803.8 million for the first six months of Fiscal Year 2025, up from \$723.2 million the first six months of Fiscal Year 2024. That's an increase of \$80.65 million.

"This is money that doesn't have to be raised in taxes or cut from things like our schools, and our roads and our bridges," Frerichs said after Gov. JB Pritzker's annual budget speech at the Capitol.

The Commission on Government Forecasting and Accountability's monthly report showed how important this extra income the Treasurer's Office is earning is for state finances.

"My office cannot solve all of Illinois' problems, but we can be part of the solution," Frerichs added.

Treasurer Frerichs is the state's chief investment and banking officer. He is responsible for investing revenue in the state investment portfolio. In Fiscal Year 2024, Frerichs' office set a record by making \$1.5 billion in investment returns for the state.

According to state law, the Treasurer's Office is prohibited from directly investing the state's portfolio in the stock market. Treasurer Frerichs convinced the General Assembly to allow his office to invest in secure local government bonds, such as those issued by Illinois school districts to purchase land or construct buildings, and prime money market funds that emphasize security and liquidity.

Under Frerichs, the Treasurer's Office has improved returns by diversifying the portfolio to take advantage of current interest rate environments and by working with the governor and General Assembly on innovative ideas.

Key monthly metrics and more are available in The Vault, the transparency website that allows Illinois residents to see how the State Treasurer's Office is working for them.

Fitch Affirms Top AAA Rating to Illinois Funds \$10 Billion Local Government Investment Pool Complements Local Banking Relationships

The Illinois Funds, a mutual fund investment used by local governments through the Illinois State Treasurer's Office, has earned the top AAA rating from Fitch Ratings, Illinois State Treasurer Michael Frerichs said recently.

The Illinois Funds rating reaffirms the confidence Fitch and other ratings agencies have shown throughout all of Frerichs' tenure. The funds have consistently received an AAA rating since he took office.

"This is an example of an outside firm pointing out that we're doing things right," Frerichs said. "Every dollar we can earn through safe, smart investing is a dollar that local governments that take part in Illinois Funds don't have to raise in property taxes or cut from vital services."

Established in 1975, more than 1,500 units of government, such as cities, counties, libraries and school districts have invested in the Illinois Funds because it is a safe, liquid and competitive investment.

The \$10 billion local government investment pool (LGIP) invests in assets focused on safety, preservation of principal, liquidity and income. The investment can be as short as overnight. The weighted average maturity is less than 60 days.

"The key rating drivers for the affirmations are the fund's overall credit quality and diversification, holdings of daily and weekly liquid assets consistent with

shareholder profiles, asset maturity profiles meeting Fitch's rating criteria, and the capabilities and resources of the investment advisor," Fitch wrote. "Fitch views the investment advisor's capabilities, resource commitments, operational controls, corporate governance and compliance procedures as consistent with the ratings assigned to the funds."

U.S Bank is the pool's primary service provider and custodian. The fund officially is named the Illinois Public Treasurers' Investment Pool (IPTIP).

For more information about the Fitch rating, visit www.fitchratings.com/.

State Treasurer Frerichs Returned \$299 Million In Missing Money in 2024

Check I-CASH Website for Unclaimed Property Twice a Year

The Illinois State Treasurer's Office returned nearly \$299 million in missing money during 2024, Illinois State Treasurer Michael Frerichs announced recently.

Illinois' missing money program — also known as I-CASH — processed 331,032 claims last year. Preliminary numbers show that \$260.6 million in cash and \$38 million in securities were returned last year. The average amount of a claim was \$902.

"Putting money back in people's pockets helps families and our state's economy. This money belongs with its rightful owners," Treasurer Frerichs said. "We have made it easier to file a claim in many cases and streamlined the system with the help of state lawmakers."

I-CASH is one of the state's oldest consumer protection initiatives. The state treasurer is tasked with safeguarding unclaimed property, including unpaid life insurance benefits, forgotten bank accounts, unused rebate cards and the contents of overlooked safe deposit boxes. Treasurer Frerichs completely restructured the missing money process. The State Treasurer's Office has added electronic claims, eliminated red tape that slowed small-money claims, and leveraged technology to allow payments to be made without a claim even needing to be filed.

The numbers tell the success story. In 2003, the earliest year for which there is computerized data, approximately 25,000 claims were paid each year. As Treasurer Frerichs took office in 2015, that had risen to roughly 60,000. Today, as a result of Treasurer Frerichs' reforms, more than 300,000 claims are paid each year.

Last fall, Frerichs returned nearly \$13.2 million to 140,000 people as part of the Enhanced Money Match Program that allows the State Treasurer's Office to automatically return money to individuals without the need to file a claim. The vast majority of checks were for \$50 to \$100.

Frerichs also has added a Friends and Family "share" feature. When visitors to the I-CASH website come across the name of someone they know, they can select the "share" icon and provide the email address of their friend or relative. Frerichs' office then will notify the individual by sending an email that mentions the missing money, along with the name of the friend or relative who spotted it. Then, that person can start the process of retrieving it.

Last year, Treasurer Frerichs added a Spanish-language website, es.icash.illinoistreasurer.gov, to make it easier for people to claim missing money. Other states rely on Google Translate, but the Illinois Treasurer's Office built a website from the ground up to better serve the needs of Spanish-speaking residents. All forms have been translated into Spanish.

More than \$2.2 billion has been returned since Frerichs took office, the most in state history. In May 2024, the Treasurer's Office surpassed the \$2 billion mark in unclaimed property by returning \$500,000 to a Lake County veteran whose late wife, also a veteran, had taken out a life insurance policy through a former employer. The man, who didn't want his name used to protect his privacy, said he didn't know about the life insurance policy and at first thought the call he received trying to return the money was a scam.

Illinois is a national leader in the unclaimed property space and is frequently consulted by other states that are reforming their unclaimed property laws, rules and procedures. The State Treasurer's Office recommends people check for missing money at least twice each year. You can check icash.illinoistreasurer.gov to see if missing money is waiting for you. Illinois holds more than \$5 billion in unclaimed property.

The state treasurer is legally required to return unclaimed property to its owners or heirs, no matter how long it takes.

The Illinois State Treasurer's Office is a powerful economic engine that invests in people to drive prosperity, development and growth throughout the state.
Please visit www.illinoistreasurer.gov/ for more information.



***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***

Deer Grove Nature Artists – Tuesday, March 18 • 9 a.m.

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

Do you love art and nature? Join the like-minded nature enthusiasts – BYO-art supplies. All mediums and artistic levels welcome.

Cost – Free

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

Little Red Rocks – Tuesday, March 18 • 6 p.m.

Little Red Schoolhouse Nature Center (9800 Willow Springs Rd., Willow Springs)

Perform or listen to music and poetry at an open-mic night on the grounds at sunset.

Cost – Free

Contact – (708) 839-6897.

Senior Fitness Walk – Wednesday, March 19 • 9 a.m.

Thatcher Woods (Chicago Avenue, West of Thatcher Avenue, River Forest)

Join other seniors for a gentle, moderately paced 1-mile walk.

Cost – Free. Registration required.

Contact – (708) 366-6530.

Spring Equinox – Thursday, March 20 • 1 p.m.

Schiller Woods-East (Irving Park Road, West of Cumberland Avenue, Chicago)

A celebration of renewal with native dancing, drumming, storytelling and a planting demonstration.

Presented by the American Indian Center. Grove 13.

Cost – Free

Contact – (773) 275-5871/info@aicchicago.org.

Morning Bird Walk – Saturday, March 22 • 8 a.m.

Trailside Museum of Natural History (738 Thatcher Ave., River Forest)

Enjoy a casual guided walk to look for birds and bird behavior. Led by John Elliott of Chicago Bird Alliance. Binoculars available.

Cost – Free. Registration required.

Contact – (708) 366-6530.

Stroll Into Spring – Saturday, March 22 • 10 a.m.

Miller Meadow-South (First Avenue, South of Roosevelt Road, Near Forest Park)

Join us on a short, 1.7-mile loop, paved trail with resting points throughout. Perfect for strollers, wheelchair users or those with limited mobility. Grove 6.

Cost – Free.

Contact – (312) 533-5751/experience.nature@cookcountyil.gov.

World Water Day – Saturday, March 22 • 1 p.m.

Sagawau Environmental Learning Center (12545 W. 111th St., Lemont)

World Water Day returns! Join us for an indoor presentation to celebrate and recognize the critical role water plays in our world.

Cost – Free.

Contact – (630) 257-2045.

Spring Eggstravaganza – Saturday, March 22 • 1 p.m.

Caldwell Woods (Devon Avenue and Nagle Avenue, Chicago)

Celebrate the changing season and its importance in various cultures while exploring this historical preserve, including the wildlife that calls it home. Crafts, themed walks and more. Drop-in.

Cost – Free.

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

“Bone” Appétit – Saturday, March 22 • 3 p.m.

Trailside Museum of Natural History (738 Thatcher Ave., River Forest)

Join us during feeding time to learn about Trailside’s outdoor resident animals.

Cost – Free.

Contact – (708) 366-6530.

Truckin' into Spring – Sunday, March 23 • 11 a.m.

Bemis Woods-South (Ogden Avenue, West of Wolf Road, Near Western Springs)

In partnership with Go Ape Chicago, enjoy the treetop nets, a nature obstacle course and more. Food trucks and vendors on-site. Cost – Free.

Bucket Bug Hunt – Sunday, March 23 • 1:30 p.m.

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

Walk through our sugar bush to find out who has fallen into the sap buckets. All ages.

Cost – Free.

Contact – (847) 824-8360.

Waterfowl Watch – Wednesday, March 26 • 10 a.m.

McGinnis Slough (La Grange Road, South of 135th Street, Orland Park)

Join Sagawau naturalists as we peer through a spotting scope and watch for migratory waterfowl. Ages 14 and up.

Cost – Free. Registration required.

Contact – (630) 257-2045.

Spring Break Camp: Forces of Nature – Thursday, March 27 • 9 a.m.

Crabtree Nature Center (3 Stover Rd., Barrington)

Explore the forces of earth, wind, water and fire, as well as the plants and animals they affect through games, outdoor play and crafts. In-person registration required. Ages 7-12.

Cost – \$30/child. Registration required.

Contact – (847) 381-6592.

Camping 101 – Thursday, March 27 • 5:30 p.m.

Camp Bullfrog Lake (9600 Wolf Rd., Willow Springs)

Join us for a workshop to learn basic camping skills like how to set up a tent, build a fire, dress for the weather and more!

Cost – Free. Registration required.

Contact – experience.camping@cookcountyil.gov.

Be a Better Birder: Birding and Technology – Thursday, March 27 • 6 p.m.

Virtual Event

Join us to learn about technology that can be used to enhance your birding experience.

Cost – Free. Registration required. Contact – Jessica.becker@cookcountyil.gov.

Woodcock Walk – Friday, March 28 • 7 p.m.

Wolf Road Prairie Nature Preserve (31st Street, West of Wolf Road, Near Westchester)

Witness the amazing spring courtship flight of the male woodcock at Wolf Road Prairie. Led by John Elliott of the Chicago Bird Alliance.

Cost – Free. Registration required.

Contact – (708) 366-6530.

Women in the Wilds Expo – Saturday, March 29 • 10 a.m.

Sand Ridge Nature Center (15891 Paxton Ave., South Holland)

Celebrate women in conservation and the natural sciences with presentations, hands-on activities and information promoting job and volunteer opportunities. Light refreshments provided.

Cost – Free.

Contact – (708) 868-0606/sandridge.naturecenter@cookcountyil.gov.

Music Jam – Saturday, March 29 • Noon

Caldwell Woods (Devon Avenue and Nagle Avenue, Chicago)

Create music with the community and listen to local talent. Bring your own instrument. All ages.

Cost – Free.

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

Tree Faces – Sunday, March 30 • 1:30 p.m.

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

Make faces on our trees with natural materials. All ages.

Cost – Free.

Contact – (847) 824-8360.

**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.czs.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!

Endangered Spider Monkeys Rescued from Wildlife Traffickers Find a Forever Home at Brookfield Zoo Chicago

Guests Can See and Learn About Spider Monkeys in New Tropical Forests Outdoor Habitats Opening at the Zoo this Summer

Five young Mexican spider monkeys (*Ateles geoffroyi vellerosus*), victims of the illegal wildlife trade, have found a forever home at Brookfield Zoo Chicago. Confiscated by authorities in 2023 after being smuggled into the U.S., these endangered primates were separated from their mothers – who were likely killed during their capture – and arrived at rescue facilities malnourished and traumatized.



Young spider monkeys have found a forever home at Brookfield Zoo Chicago.
Photo credit – © Brookfield Zoo Chicago.

After 18 months of rehabilitation by dedicated care teams at San Diego Zoo Wildlife Alliance and Houston Zoo, the monkeys have made a remarkable recovery and are thriving in their new home behind the scenes at Brookfield Zoo Chicago. Soon, guests will be able to meet the extraordinary primates when Tropical Forests, the nation's largest outdoor primate exhibit at any accredited zoo, unveils this summer.

"The arrival of these spider monkeys highlights the integral role zoos play in addressing the illegal wildlife trade, providing expert care to rescued animals and inspiring conservation action," said Dr. Mike Adkesson, president and CEO of Brookfield Zoo Chicago. "Thanks to the dedication of our partners, these monkeys now have a second chance while playing a critical role as ambassadors for their species – reminding us of the challenges they face in the wild."

Spider monkeys are often targeted by traffickers due to their small size, striking appearance and perceived value as exotic pets. Most buyers are unaware that these animals are poached from the wild, contributing unknowingly to a practice that decimates wild populations. Once trafficked, animals like these spider monkeys require specialized lifelong care – usually around 50-years – at facilities like Brookfield Zoo Chicago.

"Caring for rescued animals comes with many unique challenges, especially for primate species. Among them is helping the animals, which could not be released back into the wild due to their age, feel comfortable in their new home," said Kimberly Skelton, director of Primate Care and Conservation at Brookfield Zoo Chicago. "Our team of animal care specialists are going above and beyond to ensure the spider monkeys receive the best possible care and look forward to introducing them to the public this summer when Tropical Forests opens."

The opening of the \$66 million Tropical Forests marks a new chapter in Brookfield Zoo Chicago's commitment to primate conservation and ultimately enabled the zoo to welcome the five rescue animals. Tropical Forests embodies the zoo's mantra: Connect. Care. Conserve. With a long history of primate care, welfare and behavioral research, Brookfield Zoo Chicago is deeply committed to protecting endangered and critically endangered species. The new habitats are designed to foster human-animal connections, inspiring guests to care about these animals and join efforts to conserve them and their ecosystems.

The Wildlife Trafficking Alliance, an initiative of the Association of Zoos and Aquariums (AZA), estimates that over 50,000 live animals were seized or abandoned at U.S. ports of entry between 2015 and 2019. Tragically, spider monkey confiscations are on the rise. Since October 2023, the Wildlife Confiscations Network – a collaborative program supporting the placement of confiscated wildlife – has helped care for more than 3,800 animals, including turtles, corals, tarantulas and primates like these five spider monkeys.

"When wildlife enforcement officers seize critically endangered spider monkey infants, time is of the essence," said Dan Ashe, president and CEO of AZA.

“Due to their fragile health state, immediate access to expert animal care professionals is essential. The Wildlife Confiscations Network (WCN) is the crucial ingredient to ensure these infants have the best chance at survival. By providing this coordinated response, wildlife law enforcement can focus on their mission of catching and prosecuting criminals and shutting down their illegal supply chains. Simultaneously, WCN facilities are working together to ensure the best outcome for the individual animals.”

The public can support the zoo’s efforts to care for the rescue monkeys by donating to the zoo’s “Grow the Forest” fundraising effort at brookfieldzoo.org/GrowTheForest.

To learn more about Brookfield Zoo Chicago’s conservation efforts, Tropical Forests and other news, visit brookfieldzoo.org.

Join Us for These Exciting Events!

Spring Fest – Zoowide/Saturday, April 12 and Sunday, April 13 • 10 a.m.-6 p.m.

Celebrate the arrival of spring at our first-ever Spring Fest – a weekend filled with fun, fresh air and unforgettable experiences. Enjoy live performances, savor seasonal food and drinks, shop from art vendors and explore family-friendly activities for all ages.

Looking for the best spring festival near Chicago? Spring Fest is your ultimate destination to welcome the season with vibrant energy, delicious food and exciting activities.

Mark your calendar and make this spring celebration one to remember! This event is free with general admission and/or membership to Brookfield Zoo Chicago. More details coming soon!



Brunch with the Bunny – Savannah Ballroom Discovery Center Saturday, April 19 and Sunday, April 20; 10:30 a.m., 11:30 a.m. and 12:30 p.m.

Experience an unforgettable Easter celebration at Brookfield Zoo Chicago!

This Easter, hop on over for a one-of-a-kind brunch experience at the zoo. We're not just serving brunch; we're crafting memories.

- Create Colorful Creations at the Coloring Book Tables: Let your creativity shine at the designated coloring book tables, where children can unleash their artistic spirit.
- Enjoy an Egg-cellent Brunch Buffet: Delight in a brunch buffet that caters to everyone's tastebuds featuring an array of classic and new brunch favorites.
- Get the Party Hopping on the Dance Floor: Get into the festive spirit with an energetic interactive DJ, who will keep the brunch atmosphere lively with upbeat music and engaging activities for kids and adults alike.
- Explore the Zoo: Tickets for Brunch with the Bunny include admission and parking at Brookfield Zoo Chicago. Purchase your online tickets today!



Zoo Uncorked: Flocktails & Feathers – Zoowide/Saturday, May 10 • 6-9 p.m.

Discover a whole new way to enjoy an evening out at Flocktails & Feathers, Brookfield Zoo Chicago’s unique 21+ event. Enjoy a refreshing selection of cocktails and mocktails, take part in engaging activities, and experience the zoo like never before in a lively and relaxed atmosphere.

Flocktails & Feathers will include exclusive experiences like the flamingo parade, macaw chats and more! Connect with friends, see the animals in the evening, and enjoy a night of fun, creativity and conservation. Whether you’re looking for a unique night out or a refreshing way to celebrate the season, Flocktails & Feathers is the perfect event to enjoy with friends and family. Tickets will go on sale soon!



Mother’s Day Brunch – Discovery Center Sunday, May 11 • 9 a.m., 10:30 a.m. and Noon

Join us this Mother’s Day for a one-of-a-kind brunch experience at Brookfield Zoo Chicago, where the beauty of nature meets the joy of family.

- Savor a Delicious Brunch: Indulge in a gourmet brunch buffet featuring an array of savory and sweet treats, crafted by our talented culinary team.
- Live Music: Enjoy the vibrant sounds of live music, setting the perfect backdrop for a wonderful Mother’s Day celebration.
- Bottomless Mimosas: Toast to the incredible mothers in your life with our bottomless mimosas, ensuring your brunch is as bubbly as it is delicious. We will also have a full cash bar available for those that would like other options.
- Special Mother’s Day Gift: Each mother will receive a specially selected take-away gift of our house-made jam as a token of appreciation.
- Explore the Zoo: Your brunch ticket includes full-day access to explore Brookfield and enjoy the exhibits and animals at your leisure.



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

ComEd Highlights 2024 Efforts to Advance the Clean Energy Transition in Northern Illinois

In 2024, ComEd Delivered Best-in-Class Reliable Service and Advanced Renewable Energy Initiatives for Customers Across Northern Illinois

ComEd is announcing how a series of investments and initiatives in 2024 led to record progress made in terms of enhancing reliability, clean energy access, community investment and jobs, and overall value for over 9 million people served in northern Illinois last year. Even amid record-breaking storms impacting the grid and the region, ComEd continued to deliver best-in-class reliability, connected thousands of customers to new renewable and cleaner energy resources, like solar and EVs, and continued to expand energy efficiency programs that help customers reduce usage and combat climate change.

Additionally, ComEd last year continued its commitment to the communities it serves by growing job training and educational programs to reach thousands of area residents, deploying a record level of financial assistance to those in need, and by securing approval on future investments that will allow the company to continue preparing the region for increased electrification and to support a clean and equitable energy transition for years to come.

“In 2024, ComEd worked hard to modernize northern Illinois’ power grid, strengthening its resilience to extreme weather conditions and preparing it to power a cleaner, more electrified economy,” said Gil C. Quiniones, president & CEO of ComEd. “Thanks to the support of our more than 6,600 dedicated professionals and countless partners, ComEd is positioned to support economic development across the region and to ensure that every community enjoys the benefits of the clean energy transition.”



Learn More About How ComEd Made Advancements on Behalf of its Customers and Communities in 2024 ...

Providing Best-in-Class Reliability and Resiliency

- ComEd earned the 2024 ReliabilityOne® award for Outstanding Reliability Performance in the Midwest Metropolitan Service Area, and a Climate Action Leader Award from PA Consulting, a global innovation and transformation consultancy.
- ComEd delivered continued reliability in 2024 with nearly 2.3 million customers not experiencing a single outage or interruption – more than half of the customers ComEd serves. Among comparable large utilities in the United States, ComEd delivered the most reliable service.
- Smart grid investments helped avoid more than 400,000 outages during a record-breaking summer storm that brought more than 40 tornadoes to the region, prompting crews to work around the clock for one of the fastest large-scale storm restorations in company history.
- Since ComEd started smart grid improvements in 2012, it has improved overall reliability by more than 57%, helping customers avoid nearly 24.7 million customer interruptions and save more than \$4.3 billion in outage-related costs.

Empowering Customers for a Cleaner and Affordable Future

- ComEd’s award-winning Energy Efficiency Program, one of the largest in the nation, reached a new milestone when it surpassed the \$10 billion mark in total customer bill savings. The program helps reduce energy consumption and costs and has saved over 89 million megawatt-hours of electricity since its launch in 2008, enough to power more than 10 million ComEd customers’ homes for one year and avoid nearly 66 billion pounds of carbon emissions that contribute to climate change.
- The electric service total bill rate per kWh of an average ComEd residential customer was 22% below the average residential rate of the top 10 U.S. metropolitan areas, according to the *EEI Annual Report*.
- In 2024, ComEd customers had access to 96% clean power on an hourly basis – thanks to a large amount of nuclear generation in the region making our grid one of the cleanest in the nation – and with plans to reach 100% thanks to CEJA.
- ComEd launched a variety of new clean energy programs to help customers lower costs as they go green – including launching nearly \$90 million in customer rebates for the purchase of fleet EVs and the buildout of EV charging infrastructure, and creating a new Go Electric website to empower customers seeking to transition to more efficient heating and cooling systems with information on heat pumps and company rebates offered.

Supporting Customers and Communities in Need

- ComEd achieved an overall J.D. Power ranking of two (out of 15) in the Midwest for the second consecutive year, an improvement from eight in 2022.
- To reduce the burden for those facing economic hardship, ComEd last year connected more than 229,000 customers to over \$133 million in financial assistance and other support options, which is the most support ComEd has provided since the pandemic.
- In 2024, ComEd held nearly a half dozen Powering Lives Resource Fairs, providing 1,600 families in underserved neighborhoods with education and tailored support services, including bill-assistance options, workforce development opportunities, family care programs and health screenings. More than three quarters of those families were successfully connected to financial assistance and other support options.

- ComEd provided over \$630,000 in grant funding to 90 organizations and municipalities through its Green Region, Powering Safe Communities, Powering the Arts and Powering the Holidays competitive grant programs.
- ComEd employees logged over 26,000 volunteer hours and contributed over \$1.8 million to more than 1,200 community-based causes.
- ComEd was named a 2024 Customer Champion by Cogent, a division of Escalent, a key market research firm.

Expanding Renewables, EV Adoption and Preparing for a Lower-Carbon Future

- 2024 saw a record year for growth in solar and distributed generation – from the number of rebates awarded to the volume of new renewable energy sources added to the system. This includes:
 - 356 MW of distributed energy resources (DER), like solar and battery storage systems, were interconnected to the ComEd grid last year alone, the most in any single year to date and enough energy to power approximately more than 11,800 ComEd homes for one year.
 - 173rd community solar site livened, enabling more than 32,000 residential customers in northern Illinois to realize the benefits of solar energy and earn credits that reduce their electric bill without having to install solar panels on their homes.
 - A record \$71.6 million in Distributed Generation (DG) Rebates were provided to help offset the out-of-pocket costs related to adding new solar energy in residential, commercial and community solar settings. This is a nearly 800% percent increase from 2019, when only \$8 million in rebates were provided.
- Boosted home electrification projects – with more than 4,000 heat pump installations funded through ComEd rebates last year and more than 600 homes electrified through Whole Home Electric Program, designed to help low-income customers lower their net energy usage, costs and carbon footprint with all-electric upgrades to heating and cooling systems and appliances.
- ComEd’s EV investments helped incentivize the addition of more than 3,500 L2 and DCFC EV charging ports and more than 170 EV fleet vehicles. Over half of the EV funds were distributed to low-income customers and those located or primarily serving equity-eligible investment communities. Additional EV funding programs are available in 2025 at [ComEd.com/Clean](https://www.comed.com/Clean).
- To prepare communities for the growing demand for EVs, ComEd partnered with the Metropolitan Mayors Caucus (MMC) to train more local governments as part of the EV Readiness Program, which has to date helped 41 communities in developing local code and infrastructure plans needed to roll out EVs, and charging safely and equitably.
- Expanded the integration of EVs, plug-in hybrid EVs and other electrified equipment to make up nearly one quarter of ComEd’s fleet and closed the year with over 600 EV charging ports across ComEd facilities, a key step as ComEd electrifies its own fleet.

Expanding Careers and Fueling Economic Growth for the Region

- ComEd expanded clean energy and construction job training – including the launching of the new ComEd Market Development Initiative, helping more than 80 job seekers and local entrepreneurs become certified to work in the burgeoning energy-efficiency industry, and by creating new construction and technical job training programs, like Power Up Academy, to help collectively reach nearly 1,000 local residents with career training last year alone.
- Continued to expand hiring to fill critical trades roles, with 135 new craft hires onboarded last year, bringing hiring of new entry-level trades jobs to more than 1,000 since a 2018 agreement was signed with the International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers Local 15.
- To spark economic development, in 2024, ComEd brought 15 commercial projects to northern Illinois, with planned projects set to add nearly 1,400 jobs and more than \$17 billion in local investment.
- Companies continue to invest in the region thanks to the unparalleled access to clean, affordable and highly reliable power, with ComEd being recognized by *Site Selection Magazine* as a national leader on driving jobs and investment to Illinois.
- The company’s track record of successful project execution, in combination with growing interest in the clean energy attributes uniquely found in our region, has led to an unprecedented volume of high-density load requests last year. This includes more than 40 large-load projects currently in the engineering or construction phase and expected to come online in the years ahead, and with continued interest from developers and high growth industries looking to power new or expanded business development projects in the region.

Building the Next Generation of STEM Talent

To improve representation in STEM careers, ComEd provided educational opportunities to more than 1,400 in 2024. These programs included:

- ComEd’s Black History Month STEM Labs, where 75 high school students worked with ComEd mentors to build personal Bluetooth speakers and learn more about STEM careers. Each student also received a \$250 scholarship.
- ComEd’s Hispanic Heritage Month STEM Labs, where 50 high school students worked with ComEd mentors to build small robots and learn more about STEM careers. Each student also received a \$250 scholarship.
- ComEd’s ASME DropMEin! Program, where 142 middle school students met ComEd employees to foster the engineering mindset and learn about power generation, energy sustainability, emerging technologies and utility career paths.
- ComEd’s Learning from Leaders, where 577 middle and high school students connected with ComEd STEM professionals to learn about career and education paths, what ComEd does and the importance of STEM.
- ComEd’s Power of STEM, where 487 middle and high school students worked with ComEd mentors to learn about microgrids, solar energy and climate change.
- ComEd’s Create a Spark Program, where 75 high school students learned how to complete transmission and distribution projects, and about climate impact.
- The ComEd Scholars Program provided \$340,000 in scholarships to nine students pursuing STEM degrees at either Illinois Institute of Technology (IIT), University of Illinois at Chicago (UIC), DePaul University or Chicago State University (CSU).

Nicor Gas Celebrates its First Renewable Natural Gas Interconnection

The Interconnection with Air Liquide's Largest RNG Plant in the World Marks a Milestone in the Clean Energy Future

Nicor Gas celebrated the opening of its first renewable natural gas (RNG) interconnection with Air Liquide's largest RNG facility in the world. The plant converts biogas from a nearby landfill into energy through the utility's first-ever RNG interconnection. To mark this historic moment in Illinois's clean energy future, the companies hosted an official ribbon cutting ceremony, attended by company leaders, local and national elected officials and community partners.

"This interconnection is a significant step forward for Nicor Gas and Southern Company Gas on the path to a sustainable energy future for Illinois and facilitating economy-wide carbon reductions while fueling resiliency, energy security and the growth of the clean energy economy," said Wendell Dallas, president and CEO of Nicor Gas.

The interconnection was established under Nicor Gas' Renewable Gas Interconnection Pilot Program approved by the Illinois Commerce Commission in 2021. This is the utility's first-ever interconnection of a biogas upgrading plant to the Nicor Gas delivery system, which went live June 12, 2024.



Located in Rockford, Illinois, Air Liquide's state-of-the-art plant uses biogas from the adjacent Winnebago Landfill operated by Waste Connections, Inc. to create RNG. The plant is projected to produce approximately 1.3 million metric million British thermal units (MMBtu) per year, which is the estimated equivalent to replacing natural gas with RNG in 12,000 homes annually.

RNG is a low-carbon intensity fuel produced from biogas that is derived from organic waste sources, such as household waste in landfills, wastewater treatment processes and agriculture. As organic waste decomposes, it produces biogas – a mixture of primarily methane and carbon dioxide. Instead of allowing it to be flared into the atmosphere, Air Liquide's Winnebago facility captures it at the landfill and purifies it into a pipeline-quality gas that is interchangeable with geologic natural gas. In some cases, RNG is one of the only energy sources that can have a negative carbon intensity on a lifecycle basis, depending on the feedstock.

Nicor Gas' pipeline infrastructure is a vital component in enabling reduced emissions for those entities who are purchasing and/or retiring the environmental attributes and delivering energy to end users, as well as encouraging RNG development. The company will receive and retire 13,900 MMBtu annually of environmental attributes associated with this project, contributing directly to Nicor Gas' reduction in greenhouse gas emissions from its operations.

To learn more about Nicor Gas' commitment to a clean energy future, visit <https://www.nicorgas.com/sustainability>.

ComEd and Nicor Gas Team Up to Offer Advanced Certifications to Local Contractors Focused on Energy Efficiency

Credentials Designed to Enhance Utility Training Programs that Help Local and Diverse Contractors Compete in the Growing Energy Efficiency Industry

ComEd and Nicor Gas are collaborating to provide advanced energy efficiency certification opportunities to recent graduates of the utilities' Market Development Initiative (MDI) programs. MDI is an educational offering designed to provide training and advanced certifications for new and experienced professionals in the growing energy efficiency, with a focus on local and diverse individuals and entrepreneurs.

The Building Performance Institute (BPI) certifications will allow home performance professionals to conduct energy modeling, building analysis and data evaluation services so that they can provide more thorough improvement recommendations. The certification will allow the participants to better compete in the energy efficiency industry.

"Our goal is to equip MDI graduates with the necessary skills to succeed in this growing industry," said Kelly Lena, director of Energy Efficiency Services for Nicor Gas. "The additional training will enhance their ability to make a significant impact in the industry while delivering essential weatherization services to the communities that need them the most."

"We are thrilled to collaborate with Nicor Gas to provide this important training opportunity," said Nick Bafaloukos, ComEd's director of Business and Customer Support. "By providing advanced educational opportunities, we are not only enhancing the skill set of our local, diverse workforce, but also contributing to the growth and sustainability of the energy efficiency industry."

MDI participants who achieved BPI certifications in Building Science Principles (BSP) and Building Analyst Technician (BA-T) through ComEd

or Nicor Gas MDIs have been invited to further enhance their expertise by earning the prestigious Building Professional (BA-P) credential.

In December, 22 past MDI graduates participated in two sessions hosted by the utilities in Chicago and Carol Stream, Illinois. The comprehensive BA-P curriculum was provided during three days of intensive content delivery, followed by a test review and final exam on the fourth day.

Visit ComEd.com/MDI and nicorgas.com/mdi to learn more about MDI offerings and future energy efficiency workforce.

Nicor Gas Opens Applications for Environmental Stewardship Grants

Nicor Gas is announcing \$100,000 in funding to support environmental stewardship programs, expanding on its commitment to protect the environment by investing in nonprofit organizations that contribute to clean air, conservation, preservation of green space and sustainable activities.

As of March 1, 501(c)3 designated community organizations and nonprofits may apply for these environmental stewardship grants from Nicor Gas to support their initiatives. Applications are open at www.NicorGas.com/CharitableGiving and close on May 31, with funding decisions by July 31.

"At Nicor Gas, we are deeply committed to being good citizens where we serve, understanding that environmental stewardship is essential for fostering healthy and thriving communities for our customers," said Jackie Nagel, manager of Community Engagement at Nicor Gas. "We prioritize investing in impactful projects that align with our environmental goals. We take pride in partnering with nonprofits throughout our service area to support efforts that enhance the well-being of our planet and ensure a sustainable future for generations to come."

As the largest natural gas provider in Illinois, Nicor Gas is committed to creating, maintaining and sustaining 10,000 acres of open space in its service area and helping to achieve equitable access to these cultural, educational and recreational spaces.

Last year, the company awarded \$100,000 in environmental stewardship grants to 20 organizations. Grants included:

- McHenry County Conservation Foundation – Supports the restoration of the High Point Conservation Area, clearing out invasive species, such as buckthorn, garlic mustard and box elders, and planting native grasses, sedges and forbs.
- Hoo Haven – Supports wildlife rehabilitation, providing medical care for injured and orphaned wildlife with the goal of restored health and release back into the wild.

Selected nonprofits and community organizations will be eligible to receive up to \$5,000 in grant funds this year.

To submit an application for an environmental stewardship grant and to learn more about Nicor Gas' commitment to the environment, visit NicorGas.com/Community.

Escalent Recognizes Nicor Gas As a 2024 Business Customer Champion

Nicor Gas is one of 24 utilities designated as a 2024 Business Customer Champion by Escalent, a top human behavior and analytics advisory firm. Among the 24 outstanding utilities nationwide recognized for exceptional service and commitment to customer satisfaction, Nicor Gas has been honored for its dedication to building trust and fostering strong relationships with its business customers.

The Business Customer Champion designation is awarded based on comprehensive research and analysis conducted by Escalent. This recognition highlights utilities that have excelled in delivering reliable service, maintaining transparent communication and providing innovative solutions to meet the needs of their business customers.

"We are honored to be named a 2024 Business Customer Champion by Escalent," said Meena Beyers, vice president of Business and Community Development at Nicor Gas. "This recognition demonstrates our commitment to providing outstanding service and support to our business customers and the industries we serve. We're dedicated to helping them meet their energy goals and grow their business, which in turn equals economic growth in the communities we serve. By partnering with others and working together on various projects, we're able to spark innovation, create jobs and drive sustainable development.

Business Customer Champions are selected based on having engaged customer relationship index scores in the top decile of the industry. Nicor Gas received a score of 817. This marks the third recognition for Nicor Gas from Escalent, as the company was also named as a Most Trusted Utility Brand among residential customers and a 2024 Utility Trusted Business Partner.

Across the country, 5.5 million businesses rely on natural gas, including the 195,000 commercial and industrial customers served by Nicor Gas. Since 2010, natural gas use by Illinois businesses has increased by more than 10% and remains the main fuel source used by manufacturers in the state. Choosing natural gas is an environmentally responsible way to get the reliability and performance businesses need as natural gas is a critical component to meeting consumers' energy needs, ensuring grid reliability, maintaining a diverse fuel mix and supporting economic development in Illinois.

To learn more about natural gas for businesses, visit www.nicorgas.com/business.

Gottlieb Memorial Named Among Best Nursing Homes in Illinois by *U.S. News & World Report*

For the third consecutive year, Loyola Medicine's Gottlieb Memorial Hospital was named to *U.S. News & World Report's* list of Best Nursing Homes in Illinois. Gottlieb was recognized for excellence in short-term rehabilitation which provides patients who had a recent accident or hospital stay with skilled nursing services for a few weeks or months.

Gottlieb Memorial Hospital received the highest possible rating, a five out of five and was recognized as "High Performing." Nationally, fewer than 15% of the nearly 15,000 nursing homes surveyed were rated as high-performing in short-term rehabilitation. Of the 682 nursing homes and skilled nursing facilities in Illinois, Gottlieb is one of only 59 to receive an overall rating of five out of five.



www.loyolamedicine.org

"More than 1 million individuals are receiving care from nursing facilities across the country," said Elizabeth E. Early, president of Gottlieb Memorial Hospital. "We are incredibly proud to be recognized for our excellence in patient care three years in a row."

The Skilled Nursing Unit at Gottlieb Memorial Hospital has 32 semiprivate beds. The team provides specialized, certified care that is proven to improve range of motion and help patients resume normal activities as quickly as possible following a long hospital stay or complications from a medical procedure. For the past five years, the unit has held a five-star rating by the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services.

On average, 80% of Loyola Medicine's Skilled Nursing Unit's patients return to the community (home, assisted living or similar places), 10% are discharged to long-term care and 10% receive additional care in our hospitals.

According to *U.S. News & World Reports*, "To be recognized as one of the 2025 *U.S. News* Best Nursing Homes, a home must have been "High Performing" in short-term rehabilitation, long-term care or both. 2,836 (19%) met those criteria out of the 14,832 nursing homes evaluated by *U.S. News*, of which 2,152 homes were high-performing in short-term rehabilitation.

Teresa Rasmussen Named Chief Nursing Officer at Loyola University Medical Center after 24 Years with Loyola

Loyola Medicine has named Teresa Rasmussen, DNP, RN, SCRNP, CNML, NE-BC, chief nursing officer (CNO) & vice president at Loyola University Medical Center (LUMC). Rasmussen's journey to this leadership position is a testament to her professional dedication and a heartfelt tribute to her family's legacy within the organization.



Teresa Rasmussen

Rasmussen has a long-standing connection to Loyola Medicine through her mother, a floor nurse at Loyola for nearly three decades. "My mom would come home from work and tell stories about her day and I wanted to be a Loyola nurse just like her," said Rasmussen.

Rasmussen began her Loyola career in 2001 as a library assistant. After earning her Bachelor of Science in nursing (BSN) she worked in the Neuroscience Intensive Care Unit, where she had the unique experience of working on the same floor as her mother. "I remember transporting our neuro ICU patients to CT scans in the middle of the night and waving at my mom as I turned the corner," said Rasmussen. "It gave me such a profound feeling of pride that I hope my mom felt, too."

Throughout the next two decades, Rasmussen progressed through every level of nursing. She continued to advance her education while caring for her patients and supporting her colleagues. While working as the nurse manager of the Neuroscience ICU, she earned her Master of Science in nursing (MSN) at Loyola University Chicago as well as a doctorate in nursing practice (DNP) from Georgetown University, focusing on ethical and systems leadership and health care policy. She is also board-certified as a nurse executive (NE-BC) through the American Nurses Credentialing Center.

"After reviewing numerous applicants from across the country, it was clear that Rasmussen's 24-year career at LUMC has prepared her well for the role of CNO," said Timothy M. Carrigan, PhD, RN, FACHE, NEA-BC, regional chief nursing officer of the Illinois/Indiana Region for Trinity Health. "Her extensive tenure, along with her deep understanding of the unique nursing practice at an academic medical center, will be a significant asset to the LUMC senior leadership team."

Throughout her career, Rasmussen has made significant contributions to nursing science, as evidenced by numerous presentations and publications. She currently serves as a manuscript reviewer for the *Journal of Stroke & Cerebrovascular Diseases* and as an abstract reviewer for the International Stroke Conference.

In collaboration with Loyola Medicine's academic partnership with the Marcella Niehoff School of Nursing at Loyola University Chicago, Rasmussen holds a position as an affiliate assistant professor. In this role, she has actively supported many students in completing their graduate programs (MSN and DNP).

Over the past four months, Rasmussen has served as the interim chief nursing officer, contributing to numerous workgroups and projects. She is frequently recognized for her collaborative and innovative approach to problem-solving along with her highly transparent leadership style, which positively influences colleague engagement and retention. In this new role, Rasmussen will be responsible for nursing professional practice and inpatient operations across Loyola Medicine's four-time Magnet® designated academic medical center.

"I'm beyond honored to be the chief nursing officer at LUMC and am looking forward to the endless possibilities. Words can't express how humbled I am for this opportunity and for the incredible support I've received from all areas of the organization," she says.

***Chicago* Magazine Names 89 Loyola Medicine Physicians to 2025 Top Doctors List**

Eighty-nine Loyola Medicine physicians have been recognized in *Chicago* magazine's 2025 list of Top Doctors in Cook County.

According to *Chicago* magazine selections are made based on nominations from peers who consider their fellow physicians to be the best in the area. The process for determining finalists takes into account these nominations along with the physicians' educational backgrounds and professional experiences.

"Loyola Medicine physicians are dedicated to advancing medicine through research while also providing exceptional patient care," said Shawn P. Vincent, president and CEO of Loyola Medicine. "We're very proud to have so many of our physicians featured on this year's Top Doctors list."

The annual Top Doctors list is published in the January 2025 issue of *Chicago* magazine and is also available online.

The list was compiled by Castle Connolly Medical Ltd., a health care research and information company. Their online nomination process is open to all licensed physicians in the United States, accepting nominations in any specialty across the country whom they regard as the best in their field. Each nominee's education and professional experience are verified before final selection and doctors cannot pay to be included on the list.

The Loyola Medicine Physicians Named in the 2025 Top Doctors List Are ...

Gerard J. Abood, Surgical Oncology
Sonya P. Agnew, Hand Surgery
Kathy Sue Albain, Medical Oncology
Brad G. Anstadt, Ophthalmology
Michael Anstadt, Surgical Trauma
Bernadette Aulivola, Vascular Surgery
Sanjay Bansal, Pediatric Endocrinology
Michael S. Bednar, Orthopaedic Surgery
Jose Biller, Neurology
Amy Blair, Family Medicine
Marc A. Borge
Vascular & Interventional Radiology
Richard W. Borrowdale, Otolaryngology
Charles S. Bouchard, Ophthalmology
Joseph M. Bresnahan, Gastroenterology
Nicholas Brown, Orthopaedic Surgery
Eleanor I. Bucholz, Plastic Surgery
Pauline M. Camacho,
Endocrinology, Diabetes & Metabolism
Gerald A. Charnogursky
Endocrinology, Diabetes & Metabolism
Steven Charous, Otolaryngology
Hannah Chow-Johnson, Pediatrics
Victor G. Cimino, Plastic Surgery
Nina M. Clark, Infectious Disease
Joseph Ignatius Clark, Medical Oncology

Scott J. Cotler, Gastroenterology
Felipe De Alba, Ophthalmology
Steven A. De Jong, Surgery
Sean M. Diamond, Pediatrics
Joshua M. Eberhardt, Colon & Rectal Surgery
Douglas Evans, Orthopaedic Surgery
Luis A. Fernandez, Surgery
Robert C. Flanigan, Urology
Judith E. Frank, Rheumatology
Marc A. Freed, Pediatrics
Nickolas Garbis, Orthopaedic Surgery
Karen A. Griffin, Nephrology
Gopal N. Gupta, Urology
Alain L. Heroux, Cardiovascular Disease
Erling Ho, Orthopaedic Surgery
Brian Ing, Internal Medicine
Adam S. Kabaker, Endocrine Surgery
Daniel M. Kurtzman, Otolaryngology
Aaron Lee, Sports Medicine
David J. Leehey, Nephrology
John P. Leonetti, Otolaryngology
Oscar R. Linares, Pediatrics
John J. Lopez, Interventional Cardiology
Fred A. Luchette, Surgery
James F. McDonnell, Pediatric Ophthalmology
Edwin McGee, Thoracic & Cardiac Surgery

Lynn Meisles, Rheumatology
Dennis M. Moore, Otolaryngology
Mary K. Mulcahey, Orthopaedic Surgery
Jonathan Muraskas, Neonatal-Perinatal Medicine
Thythy T. Pham
Urogynecology/Female Pelvic
Medicine & Reconstructive Surgery
Eliza Pierko, Sports Medicine
Robert Pooley Jr., Pathology
Ronald K. Potkul, Gynecologic Oncology
Vikram Prabhu, Neurological Surgery
Marcus L. Quek, Urology
Saba Quraishi, Ophthalmology
Mark Rabbat, Cardiovascular Disease
Joyce Rabbat, Pediatric Allergy & Immunology
Harold Rees, Orthopaedic Surgery
Gail E. Reid, Infectious Disease
Dane Salazar, Orthopaedic Surgery
Nabil M. Saleh, Pediatrics
Adam Schiff, Orthopaedic Surgery
David Schilling, Psychiatry
Michael J. Schneck, Neurology
Jeffrey P. Schwartz, Thoracic & Cardiac Surgery
Kevin P. Simpson, Pulmonary Disease
Marc A. Singer, Colon & Rectal Surgery
William Small Jr, Radiation Oncology

Do You Have Allergies or a Cold?

Although They Have Some Symptoms in Common, Allergies and Colds Have Different Causes, and the Best Options to Manage Them Differ.

Allergies vs. the Cold: What's the Cause?

The causes of allergies and the common cold vary in significant ways. The common cold is an illness brought on by exposure to a virus, most commonly the rhinovirus. Symptoms occur due to your body's immune response to the infection.

Allergy symptoms are also caused by an immune response, but allergies aren't caused by an infection. Allergies occur when the body mistakes a harmless protein called an allergen for a threat and launches an immune response to fight it off. People with allergies can develop symptoms in response to many triggers, including cockroaches; dust mites; molds; pet dander; urine and saliva; and pollen from grasses, trees and weeds

Because they're caused by a virus, colds are contagious. You can spread the illness to others. You can also catch a cold by breathing in droplets containing the virus or by touching contaminated objects. Allergies, however, are not contagious.

What are the Differences Between Allergy and Cold Virus Symptoms?

Sneezing, a runny nose and nasal congestion are common symptoms of both colds and allergies, but other symptoms vary. Some things to be aware of include:

- Itchy, watery eyes: Allergies frequently cause eye irritation, but colds don't. If a cold or virus does happen to affect the eye, it may be red and irritated as opposed to itchy, as with an eye allergy.
- Sore throat: Colds often cause a sore throat. While post-nasal drip and inflammation associated with allergies can also cause a sore throat, it's much less common.
- Coughing: Coughing is more likely to occur with a cold than with allergies. However, it is possible to develop a cough with allergies due to throat irritation and post-nasal drip. Both allergies and colds may also cause sneezing.
- Fever: A fever can occur due to a cold, fevers don't occur due to an allergic reaction.
- Mucus color: With allergies, mucus tends to be thin and clear. If you have a cold, your mucus may be thick and yellow or green, but this isn't always the case.

How and when symptoms occur can also provide clues about whether you have a cold or allergies. Cold symptoms usually resolve within a week to 10 days, but allergy symptoms may persist for much longer. You may have seasonal allergies if you develop similar symptoms around the same time every year. Allergy symptoms may also have an observable trigger. For example, you might develop symptoms after keeping the windows open in your home or after visiting a friend who has a pet.

Treating Allergies vs. the Common Cold

Because they have different causes, colds and allergies require different treatments. There's no cure for the common cold, so treatment typically focuses on helping alleviate symptoms until your body fights off the infection. In addition to resting and taking plenty of fluids, you may be advised by your health care provider to try over-the-counter medications for cold symptoms, such as:

- Pain relievers: Acetaminophen and non-steroidal anti-inflammatory drugs (NSAIDs), like ibuprofen and naproxen, can reduce fever and pain associated with colds.
- Decongestants: Pseudoephedrine alleviates nasal congestion that commonly occurs with a cold.
- Antihistamines: Diphenhydramine and other antihistamines may reduce sneezing and a runny nose.
- Cough suppressants: Dextromethorphan and other cough suppressants temporarily ease your coughing reflex.
- Nasal medications: Nasal sprays, such as Flonase, can help relieve stuffy nose, runny nose and postnasal drip from a cold.
- Expectorants: Guaifenesin thins mucus to reduce congestion and other cold symptoms.
- Multi-symptom medications: Some cold medications combine multiple active ingredients, such as a pain reliever and a decongestant to address more than one cold symptom.

If your child has a cold, check with your health care provider for appropriate children's versions of medications. Read the package carefully and follow all directions.

With allergies, you may need to follow a treatment plan year-round or during certain times of the year, such as grass or tree pollen season.

Treatments and remedies for allergy symptoms include:

- Allergen avoidance: Your health care provider may recommend changing your routine or modifying your home to reduce your exposure to allergens. For example, you may benefit from using an air cleaner to ease indoor allergies or wearing a mask outdoors during the pollen season. Allergy specialists may perform allergy skin testing to pinpoint your allergy.
- Oral medications: To control allergy symptoms, the over-the-counter antihistamine medications cetirizine, levocetirizine, fexofenadine and loratadine may be taken. Prescription oral allergy medications are also available.
- Nasal sprays: Antihistamines are also available as over-the-counter nasal sprays. Alternatively, your health care provider may recommend an over-the-counter corticosteroid nasal spray to alleviate inflammation associated with allergies.
- Immunotherapy: Administered via injection or sublingually, immunotherapy involves exposing the body to small amounts of allergens to desensitize the immune system and reduce allergy symptoms over time.

Determining whether you have a cold or allergies may be challenging on your own, but your health care provider can differentiate between the two by discussing your symptoms with you and conducting an examination. If you have a cold, your health care provider can recommend over-the-counter medications to help you rest comfortably while recovering. For allergies, they can order tests to identify what you're allergic to and develop a treatment plan that will allow you to manage symptoms over the long term.

The Walgreens logo is written in a red, cursive script font.



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

Aristizabal

Guillermo Duenas Aristizabal. Loving father of Cristobal Duenas and Andrea Duenas; dear brother of Arsenia Duenas Armenta, Antonio Duenas, Isaias Duenas, Paulina Duenas, Jorge Duenas and Carlos Duenas. Arrangements by Carbonara Funeral Home.

Asencio

Alma Garcia Asencio. Dearly beloved wife of the late Rafael Asencio; loving mother of Arelis and Rafael Asencio; beloved daughter of Eustolia and the late Felix Garcia; dear sister of Jose (Sandra) and Ricardo Garcia; loving aunt, cousin and friend of many. Arrangements by Carbonara Funeral Home. Interment Queen of Heaven.

Beltran

Teresa Paz Beltran. Beloved wife of the late Dimas Beltran; loving mother of Juana Beltran, Gonzalo Beltran, Lourdes Efrain Beltran, Dimas Beltran, Antonio Beltran and Jesse Beltran; fond grandmother of Juan, Pascual, Lisa, Pablo, Marcos, Jose, Genesis, Sandra, Ana, Jennifer and Stephanie; fond great-grandmother of Leila and Kayla; loving sister, aunt, cousin and friend of many. Arrangements by Carbonara Funeral Home. Interment Queen of Heaven.

Burciaga

Juan Antonio Burciaga. Beloved husband of Norma Burciaga; loving father of Alexia, Brianna and Lily; beloved son of Jose and the late Ascension Burciaga; dear brother of Miguel, Rosalinda and Luis; loving uncle, cousin and friend of many. Arrangements by Carbonara Funeral Home.

Burson

Tyrone Burson. Our beloved Tyrone was born March 25, 1968, in Chicago, Illinois, to Gertrude Burson and Bennie Gardner. He was a loving, giving and peaceful person. Everyone who met Tyrone felt his warm and endearing spirit. Tyrone was a very family-oriented man.

Tyrone attended Foreman High School, where he graduated class of 1986. After graduating he started working for Helen Curtis for the next 15 years. Later went on to Hinkley Springs in 1998, where he would spend the next 26 years as an extremely hard worker and dedicated employee.

Tyrone gave his life to Christ over 20 years ago where he was under the leadership of Pastor Dennis Pennington at The Church of God. Tyrone served as deacon for 10 years. He was a faithful servant, devoted and spiritual leader always sharing the word of God.

Tyrone departed his life Wednesday Jan. 8, 2025. He is preceded in death by his grandparents Stella Burson and Booker T. Coaster; grandparents Leola Burson and Elvine Coaster; sister Regina Jones; nephew Martin Jones; aunts – Ruth Means, Bernadine and Sandra Burson, Mildred Allen, Mary Vaughn and Alverness Scales; uncles – Charles and Lester Burson and James Gardner; and cousin Eric Burson.

Tyrone leaves to cherish memories of his life and legacy, his mother Gertrude Burson; his father Bennie Gardner (Danielle); his children – Tiera Flowers (Andre), Tyra Burson and Tajah Burson; eight grandchildren – Aaron, Amya, Amari, Brooklyn, Braelyn, Heavenly, Tylen and A'sir; sib-

lings – Kenny Stringfellow, Derick Coaster, Danielle Coaster, Orlando R. Coaster and Jamal Gardner; special friend Lisa; and a host of nieces, nephews, uncles, cousins and friends. Arrangements by Carbonara Funeral Home.

Caccavale

Eleanor Caccavale, passed away peacefully on Jan. 28, 2025. She was born Nov. 30, 1927, in Chicago, Illinois, to Vito and Giustina Mastrogiacomo. She was the second of three children born to Italian immigrant parents and grew up in what was then Chicago's Italian neighborhood. She passed away at the age of 97 on Jan. 28, 2025, in Norridge, Illinois, after a five-year battle with dementia and Alzheimer's. She was a homemaker, wife, aunt, grand-aunt and known to many as "Auntie El". She was preceded in death by her husband Rocco Caccavale; her parents – Vito and Giustina Mastrogiacomo; her sister Lina and her brother Mario. She is survived by her nephews – Sal Caccavale (Cyndy), Robert Caccavale (Rhodora) and Michael DeVito (Maria); seven grandnephews and three grandnieces. Eleanor was a long-time Chicago area resident born and raised in "Little Italy" and worked as an accounting supervisor for 37 years at Sears in downtown Chicago. She and her husband retired in Barrington, Illinois, where they built their dream home in 1974. After Rocco passed away, she lived in Tucson, Arizona, to be close to her family there, but later returned to the Chicago area and lived in Des Plaines. As she grew older, she struggled with dementia and Alzheimer's, and at the age of 92, she became a resident of Central Baptist Village (Norridge, Illinois) for full-time assistance.

Eleanor was known for her generosity and love of family. She was very sociable and had many friends who she would have over for dinner or just a mid-afternoon coffee break. She and her husband hosted the Family Christmas Day Dinner and followed that with New Year's Eve parties for their many friends. She loved the Italian singers – Mario Lanza, Frank Sinatra, Dean Martin, Perry Como and Tony Bennett, plus the Big Band era. She and Rocco were quite the jitterbug couple. She was also a great homemaker, and loved to cook and bake. She kept her home nicely decorated and neat, and loved to decorate for every season and holidays. Eleanor was also a big slot machine fan and loved playing them, even when she lost. Most of all, she had a warm and gracious heart, a contagious smile and a good outlook on life. Arrangements by Carbonara Funeral Home.

Caesar

Laurie Caesar. Loving mother to the late Larry Michael Wanat; beloved daughter of Lawrence and Patricia Caesar; dear sister of Pamela (Michael) Marquardt, Steven (Donna) Caesar, Susan (George) Johnson, Lisa (Scott Aldinger) Cochiaro, the late Linda Caesar and Leanne Hovey; loving mother to many dogs; cherished, aunt, cousin and friend of many. Arrangements by Carbonara Funeral Home. Interment private.

Cassara

Fred F. Cassara. Beloved husband of the late Suzanne; beloved son of Luigia "Gina" and the late Frank Cassara; dear brother of Maria Cassara; fond uncle of Giovanni (Alexandra), Francesco (Alexa) and Antonio

(Heather); great-uncle of Isaiah and Isaac; loving nephew, cousin and friend of many. Arrangements by Carbonara Funeral Home. Entombment Queen of Heaven Cemetery.

Chairs

Jeffrey Chairs. Arrangements by Carbonara Funeral Home. Interment Forest Home Cemetery.

Cheval

Mildred "Millie" Cheval, nee Frey, age 91. Beloved wife of the late C. Donald Cheval; loving mother of Denice (John) Torracco, Donald (MaryBeth) Cheval, David (Kristi) Cheval, Donna Spitz (Sam Woollums) and her fur baby Mini; grandmother of Robert (Carly) Torracco, Dawn (Joe) Jaeger, Jamie (Zander) Donat, Michael Cheval, Daniel (AriSSa) Cheval, Michelle (Jon) Pilli, Robert (Traci) Gilbert and Daniel Gilbert; great-grandmother of Anthony (Amira) Torracco, Violet Torracco, Ivy Torracco, Riley Gilbert, Aleesa Jaeger and Justin Jaeger Gonzalez (Carlos Gonzalez Jaeger); sister of Louise (the late Robert) Sutton, the late Phyllis and Edward McCardell, and the late Alice and Michael Bartello; aunt to many nieces and nephews. Arrangements by Carbonara Funeral Home. Interment St. Adalbert Cemetery.

DiNovi

Marian Charlotte DiNovi, of Elmhurst, Illinois, passed away Thursday, Jan. 9, 2025, with her loving family at her side.

Marian was born on Sept. 22, 1930, to William and Margaret (nee Purvis) Hill in Oak Park. She grew up with her younger brother John in the Galewood neighborhood of Chicago and graduated in 1948 from Steinmetz High School.

Marian married her husband Dr. Michael Alex DiNovi in 1954. Together they moved to Melrose Park in 1960 to start their family and embark on a happy life together, building lifelong friendships and living close to family. After her husband's death, Marian moved to Elmhurst with her dog, Doc. She loved her townhouse in Elmhurst and the many friends she made in her neighborhood.

Marian was a dedicated wife, mother and friend. She was involved in all aspects of raising her children and took a keen interest in all of their activities. She was a room mother, PTA member, Cub Scout den mother and an avid fan of her children's sporting activities. Most importantly, she was an exceedingly loving, kind, considerate, generous and selfless woman. She instilled all of those traits in her children and she inspired all who knew her.

Marian's many interests ranged from animals to hockey. All animals loved Marian and she loved all animals. Through her sorority, she raised funds for the training of leader dogs, providing assistance to those who were visually impaired. She inherited her love of hockey from her Canadian father and shared that passion with her Hawks' fan husband. Until the very end, she loyally and passionately cheered on the Chicago Blackhawks.

Marian was preceded in death by her parents William and Margaret Hill; her husband Michael DiNovi; her brother John Hill; and her sister-in-law Mary Spezio. She is survived by her son Fiore (Marguerite) DiNovi; daughter Margaret (Alex) Primiano; and daughter Mary (Chris) Olson. She is also survived by her grandchildren – Paige Olson, Alexis (Peter Karahalios) Olson, Jessica Primiano and Michael Primiano; her sister-in-law Ronnie Hill; her nieces Roseann, Roberta and Liz; and her nephew David. Arrangements by Rago Brothers Funeral Homes. Interment at Wheatland Presbyterian Cemetery.

Edwards

Johnny "Cool" Edwards. Loving and cherished father, grandfather, brother, uncle, cousin and friend of many. Arrangements by Carbonara Funeral Home. Interment private.

Espino

Jorge Padilla Espino, Nov. 19, 1946-Jan. 24, 2025. Dearly beloved husband of Lilia Bustos; loving father of Ana Padilla, Erika Padilla, Jorge Padilla and Elizabeth Padilla; beloved son of Jose Carmen Padilla and Raquel Espino; cherished grandfather of Anmar, Maggie, Martin, Mia, Maya, Mateo, Kamila, Maria, Ximena and Santiago; dear brother of six; cherished uncle, cousin and friend of many. Arrangements by Carbonara Funeral Home. Interment Fairview Memorial Park Cemetery.

Ferruzza

Anna "Dolly" Ferruzza. Dearly beloved wife of Michael Ferruzza; loving mother of Marilyn and Michael Ferruzza Jr.; beloved daughter of the late Joseph and Dorothy Longo; cherished grandmother of Christopher, Alexander, Robert and Taylor; great-grandmother of Sarafina, Ken Jr. and Adeline; dear sister of Joseph, the late Paul, and Vito and Marilyn Longo; loving aunt, cousin and friend of many. Arrangements by Carbonara Funeral Home.

Garcia

Alejandro Garcia. Dearly beloved husband of Hisabel Romero; loving father of Brian Garcia and Lisbev Garcia; beloved son of Epifanio Garcia and Maria Lucas Salgado; dear brother of nine; cherished uncle, cousin and friend of many. Arrangements by Carbonara Funeral Home. Interment Queen of Heaven Cemetery.

Greco

Tracy L. Greco, nee Sherrill, age 53, of Melrose Park, Illinois. Born and raised in Evanston, Illinois, Tracy is the beloved wife of Anthony G. Greco; mother of Anthony R. and Trista J. Greco; dog mom to Meeka; daughter of the late Joyce and Robert Sherrill; sister of Linda Ratajczyk, the late Brenda Przybylski, the late Patricia Mierkiewicz, the late Judy Jansen and Bruce (Pat) Sherrill. Tracy was an aunt and great-aunt to many. She was also the proud business owner of Dental Staff Placement. Arrangements by Rago Brothers Funeral Homes.

Imielski

Robert Imielski. Beloved husband of Joanne (nee Rosucci); loving father of David (Jennifer) and Christine (Carl); beloved son of Matthew and Janice Imielski; fond grandfather of Sophia Imielski, Nicholas Alaimo and Angelina Alaimo; dear brother of the late James Imielski; cherished uncle, cousin and friend of many. Arrangements by Carbonara Funeral Home. Interment private.

Kaminski

Raymond Kaminski. Loving father of Raymond Kaminski, Ashley (Jin) Kang and Haley Kaminski; beloved son of the late Fred Kaminski and Margaret Jamros; cherished grandfather of Grace, Gwen, Meadow and Luke; dear brother of Patricia (Santo) Scavuzzo and Rose Haverstick; fond companion of Robin Siek; loving uncle, cousin and friend of many. Arrangements by Carbonara Funeral Home. Interment private.

Kinsella

John J Kinsella. Proud veteran of the United States Army. Beloved son of the late Charles and Margaret Kinsella; dear brother of the late Arthur Kinsella, James (Marion) Kinsella, Peggy (Mickey) Kotowski, Janet (John) Hyc and Joseph (Joann) Kinsella; cherished uncle of 18; great-uncle to many; great-great-uncle to many. Arrangements by Carbonara Funeral Home. Interment private.

Klugger

Josephine M Klugger. Dearly beloved wife of the late William; loving mother of Michael (Gene Anne), Richard (Kathy) and Linda (Kelley); cherished grandma of Nick (Salwa), Michael (Courtney), Jennifer (Michael), Tracey, Carly (James), Natalie (Robert), Richard (Michelle), Clayton (Rebecca), Andrew, Casey and Kandace (Tony); cherished great-grandma of Stevie, Zoey, Demetri, Cameron, Sarah, Austin, Michael, Rocco, Mason, Griffin, Milania, Declan, Brinley, Kaitlynn, Baylee, Milliana, Taylor and Ariana; cherished sister, aunt, cousin and friend of many. Arrangements by Carbonara Funeral Home. Interment Queen of Heaven Cemetery.

Lisuzzo

Gina Lisuzzo. Loving daughter of the late Clare and the late Joseph Lisuzzo; dear sister of the late Colleen, the late Tony, the late Richard, the late Benjamin, Georgette, Joseph, Kirk and Tanya; loving aunt, cousin and friend of many. Arrangements by Carbonara Funeral Home. Interment Mount Carmel Cemetery.

Loconti

Samuel P. Loconti. With broken hearts we announce the passing of Samuel P. Loconti, a good, kind and gentle man. Beloved husband of Lillian (nee Fiorito); loving father of Phillip C. Loconti and Lisa (Joe) Ranieri; proud grandfather of Phillip (Megan) Loconti, and Joseph, Louie and Julia Ranieri; cherished brother and uncle to the Berg and Nardella family; and devoted friend to all. With a grateful heart we thank Sam's extended family at The Illinois Veteran Home of Chicago for all their love and tender care the past two years. Arrangements by Carbonara Funeral Home. Interment private.

Lorusso

Michele Lorusso. Dearly beloved husband of the late Maria Lorusso; loving father of Maria (Diego) Falsone, Lucia (Roman) Criollo, Onofrio (Mena), and Michael (Sandy); cherished grandfather of Carmello (Giusy) Falsone, Liliana (Gianfranco) Falsone, Daniella (Francesco) Falsone, Roman Ulyses (Esmirna Concepcion) Criollo, Natalie (Patrick) McAlee, Marialisa (Anthony) Galasso, Michael (Erin), Joey, Michaelangelo (Sabrina), Adriana (Ernest John) Bursoni, Rosario and Nikko (Jasmine); great-grandfather of Diego, Matteo, Angelo, Diego, Angelo, Naomi, Alex, Alyssa, Mylo, Gianna, Gianluca and Lucas; great-great-grandfather of Gregorio; dear brother of the late Francesco, Alyssa, Vito, Isabella, Giuseppe and Chiara; cherished uncle, cousin and friend of many. Arrangements by Carbonara Funeral Home. Entombment All Saints Cemetery.

Marmolejo

Benjamin Marmolejo. Beloved husband of Maria Marmolejo; loving father of Julio Pablo Marmolejo, Benjamin Gonzalo Marmolejo, Santiago Miguel

Marmolejo and Luciano Felix Marmolejo; beloved son of Anna Zapata and the late Felix Marmolejo; dear brother of Pita Marmolejo, Martha Marmolejo, Armando Marmolejo, Rosa Mendoza and Jorge Marmolejo; loving uncle, cousin and friend of many. Arrangements by Carbonara Funeral Home. Interment Queen of Heaven.

Miranda

Miguel A "La Micha" Leyva Miranda. Dearly beloved husband of Rocío Roman; loving father of Miguel F. Leyva, Beatriz Madera-Leyva and Nayeli Leyva; beloved son of the late Jose Leyva Bustamonte and Edith Miranda; cherished grandfather of Mateo Leyva; dear brother of Carlos and Hector; loving uncle, cousin and friend of many. Miguel or known to many as "La Micha" loved to play and was very skilled at soccer. Arrangements by Carbonara Funeral Home. Interment private.

Prete

Marie Prete. Dearly beloved wife of the late Joseph Prete; loving mother of the late Marlene and Anthony Prete; dear sister of the late Johanna, Frances, Anthony and Ann; loving aunt, cousin and friend to many. Arrangements by Carbonara Funeral Home. Interment private.

Quezada

Manuel Lomeli Quezada. Dearly beloved husband of Gloria Viveros; loving father of Francisco (Edna) Lomeli; cherished grandfather of Alex, Israel and Samira Lomeli; dear brother of Maria De Jesus Lomeli and the late Antonia Lomeli; loving uncle, cousin and friend. Arrangements by Carbonara Funeral Home. Interment Queen of Heaven Cemetery.

Richter

Barbara Richter. Beloved and devoted wife of the late Donald Richter; loving daughter of the late Helen and Loretto Ratini; fun-loving and faithful mother of Danny, Laurie (the late John) Zinkel, Lynette (Jeff) Flight, Christine, David (Julie), Donald (Pam), Barbara (Joe) Ciconte, Julie (Todd) Mack and Dwayne. Known affectionately as Gram, Grandma, Granny, Grandma Firetruck, Grandma Doh, Grandma Tiny and Bub to Jonathon (Jessica), Daniel, Gabrielle, Christopher (Lauren), Brian, Andrew, Edward (Beth), Cortney (Brian), Jessica, Sarah (Jon), Rachel, Emma, Jeremy (Anna), Erin, Guiliana, Olivia, Gavin and Maddie. She also "adopted" as her own – Elizabeth, Lucas, Rylee, Jasper, Jack, Regina and Renee. Great-grandma to Sophia, Eliza, Fox, Max, Felix and Silas. Loving sister to Kenny (Sharon). She was a loving aunt, cousin, friend and neighbor to many. She was a dedicated parishioner at Sacred Heart Church. So much joy came from holding the office of president for the Sacred Heart Women's Club for over 20 years, because it brought so many friends and joy into her life. She also served as a Eucharistic minister and minister of care. She was the "queen" of baking, not only for her family, but for so many friends, neighbors and anyone she could bring a smile to, especially with her bacon buns. In her lifetime, she had been a friendly bank teller at Melrose Park Bank, salad chopper at Teodori's, supreme babysitter, lunchroom worker at Sacred Heart School and the neighborhood Avon lady. Barb loved celebrating all the holidays, especially Christmas and Halloween, enjoying the food, camaraderie and costumes that went along with them. Barbara liked to play bunco, Crazy 8's, bags, Play-Doh, taking walks looking for "stink fish" markers, and baking favorite sweet treats for birthdays and parties. Listening and dancing to music brought joy to her.

Barbara spent her entire 89 years in Melrose Park and loved it! Her loving and caring personality touched countless lives. Barbara's faith and family was always the cornerstone of her life. The family kindly asks that you pray the rosary to deepen your faith and spread acts of kindness in memory of Barbara. A phrase she always said to her loved ones, "LOVE YOU MORE!" will live on in the hearts of all who knew her. Arrangements by Carbonara Funeral Home. Interment Queen of Heaven Cemetery.

Rodriguez

Antonio Rodriguez. Dearly beloved husband of the late Providencia Colon-Rodriguez; loving father of Nereida (Bill), Sandra (John) Henley, Daniel (Lymarie) and the late Raquel Rodriguez; cherished abuelito of Hector, Antonio (Melanie), Raquel (Sam), Daniel Jr., Mateo, Jordan and Kaylee; great-grandfather of Avery and Zoraya; dear brother, uncle, cousin and friend of many. Arrangements by Carbonara Funeral Home.

Rubbone

Thomas "Tommy" John Rubbone. Cherished son of the late Dr. Mario Rubbone and Lily May Rubbone (nee Hayes); loving brother of Joseph (the late Angela) Rubbone, the late James Rubbone, Ann (the late Richard) Shermer and Robert (Dorothy) Rubbone; loving uncle of many nieces and nephews and cherished friend of many.

Thomas hailed from New York and was proud of his New York upbringing. He grew up spending his summers at Camp Marist in New Hampshire and at old Yankees Stadium watching his beloved Yankees. Tom ventured to Regis College in Colorado where he received his undergraduate degree. His studies led him to Dekalb where he attended Northern Illinois University Law School and received his Juris Doctor in 1980. Upon passing the Illinois Bar, Tom would call Chicago home for the remainder of his personal and professional life.

Tom took pride in the practice of law and was a fond colleague and mentor. Tom was devoted to his passion for law and left a lasting impression on all who knew him. Tom was a mainstay in the halls of the courthouse, where his sartorial style was always impeccable. Stories in memory of Tom often share the same sentiment illustrating Tom's booming personality, unique vernacular, captivating presence and his desire to give everyone "a beatin".

Tom was not only a practicing attorney for many years, but also the former director of Administrative Hearings at the Illinois Secretary of State, a member of the Justinian Society for Italian American Attorneys and a board member for the Italian American Political Coalition. But most importantly, Tom was a fierce protector of those he cared about and a man modern society seemingly no longer produces.

Arrangements by Carbonara Funeral Home. Interment private.

Sarabia

Modesta Sarabia. Dearly beloved wife of the late Feliciano; loving mother of Maurilio, Hermelinda, Christina, Lauro, Sofia, Bartolo, Ruben, Felipe, Monica and Lilia; cherished grandmother of 25; great-grandmother of 15; dear sister of Acencion, Julia, the late Francisca, the late Antonia, the late Pedro and the late Anselmo; loving aunt, cousin and friend to many. Arrangements by Carbonara Funeral Home. Interment Arlington Cemetery.

Thomas

Rhomeka Thomas, Feb. 15, 1968-Feb. 18, 2025. Arrangements by Carbonara Funeral Home.

Villacci

Donald Villacci, 89, of Melrose Park, passed away on Monday Feb. 10, 2025. He was born on June 18, 1935, in Maywood, Illinois, the son of the late Frank Sr. and Sylvia Villacci. He was the younger of two sons. Don, or Donny to his close friends and family, graduated from Proviso East High School in 1952 and became a fireman with the Melrose Park Fire Department. He rose through the ranks at the station, receiving many awards and commendations, eventually reaching the rank of deputy fire chief. Many of Don's firehouse meals were the stuff of legends. Don retired in June of 1997. He was an avid hunter, fisherman and boater his whole life, and travelled all over the world to enjoy these pastimes. Preceded in death by his brother Frank Jr. and his daughter Cindy Villacci; he is survived by his daughter Jill and son-in-law Russ Scott, his granddaughter Eris and her husband Paul Weiler, his grandson Eric and his wife Maria Zelepugas, his five adorable great-grandchildren – Cecelia, Olivia, Noelle, Bodhi and Lyla, his dear cousin Vic, and many adoring nieces and nephews. Arrangements by Bormann Funeral Home. Interment Queen of Heaven Cemetery.

Vitale

Anthony Vitale Sr. Dearly beloved husband of the late Donnarae (nee Pappa); loving father of Anthony Vitale; cherished papa of Gianna, Sophia, Rocco, Angel, Francesca, Marco and Nico; dear brother of the late Jean Giordano and Fred Vitale; loving uncle, cousin and friend of many. Arrangements by Carbonara Funeral Home. Entombment Queen of Heaven Mausoleum.

Zito

Steven Leonard Zito. Beloved son of the late Anthony and Rose Zito; dear brother of Reena (the late Joseph) Franze, Karen (Michael) Walsh, Anthony Zito and Cathy (the late Richard) Catizone; fond uncle of Joseph (Susan) Franze, Anthony Franze, Richard (Nicole) Catizone, Anthony Zito and Tarris (John) Turek; great-uncle of Sara (Pablo Hernandez Arias) Franze, Amanda Franze, Matthew Franze, Olivia Catizone, Chase Catizone and Ava Turek. Steve was a student at Sacred Heart Grade School in Melrose Park, Illinois, and a graduate from Proviso East High School in Maywood, Illinois. Steve was an avid listener of classic rock, mainly the band 'Steppenwolf', appreciated the comedy of 'The Three Stooges', was a loyal listener and 'Friend' of the WLS AM Radio Show, and was a fan of all Chicago sports teams, especially the Cubs. Steve spent his free time meticulously maintaining his home and property, where he lived his entire life. His favorite hobby was sustaining South American and African freshwater fish in magnificent and impressive aquariums, ranging from 70 to 125 gallons. Steve will forever be remembered by his family as someone who was reserved and good-hearted, a mild-mannered gentleman, with a kind and charitable soul. Thoughts of Steve will always be cherished and never forgotten. Arrangements by Carbonara Funeral Home. Interment Queen of Heaven Cemetery.



Village of Melrose Park
1000 N. 25th Avenue
Melrose Park, IL 60160
708.343.4000 FAX 708.343.9745

The Rose is published by the Village of Melrose Park and distributed free of charge to residents and business people in the village as a public information service. All materials, articles, photographs and illustrations in *The Rose* are the property of the Village of Melrose Park, and cannot be duplicated or used in any fashion without the express consent of the village.

MAYOR

Ronald M. Serpico

CLERK

Mary Ann Paolantonio

TRUSTEES

Anthony N. Abruzzo, Jaime Anguiano, Arturo J. Mota,
Sonny Nicotera, Mary Ramirez Taconi, Anthony "Tony" Williams

VILLAGE HALL HOURS

Monday through Friday, 9 a.m. to 5 p.m.

BOARD MEETINGS

Second and fourth Monday of each month (unless otherwise indicated)
at 6 p.m., 1 N. Broadway

**Village of Melrose Park
1000 N. 25th Avenue
Melrose Park, IL 60160**

PRSRT STD
ECRWSS
U.S. POSTAGE
PAID
PERMIT NO. 231
60160

**POSTAL CUSTOMER
MELROSE PARK, IL 60160**