

## A Message From Mayor Ronald M. Serpico

Ho, Ho, Ho, Neighbors,

For my annual holiday letter, I decided to research unusual Christmas facts, which I now present to you to share with family and friends while sipping eggnog.

The image of Santa Claus flying his sleigh dates back to 1819 and was created by Washington Irving, the same author who dreamt up the Headless Horseman in *The Legend of Sleepy Hollow*.

The Montgomery Ward department store created Rudolph the Reindeer as a gimmick to encourage children to buy their Christmas coloring books. The original Rudolph the Reindeer did not have a red nose because back then red noses were seen as an indicator of chronic alcoholism.



*Ronald M. Serpico*  
Mayor

Tinsel was invented in Germany in 1610 and was initially made of real silver.

NORAD's "Santa Tracker" was born from a misprint in the newspaper. A 1955 Sears ad was supposed to print the number of a store where children could call and tell Santa what they wanted for Christmas. The number printed was for the hotline of the director of Operations for the U.S. Continental Air Defense. Colonel Shoup ordered his staff to give the children updates on Santa's flight. A tradition began and continues to this day.

Almost 28 sets of LEGO are sold every second during the Christmas season.

Mariah Carey earns an estimated \$2.5 million in royalties each year from *All I Want for Christmas Is You*.

Approximately 35 million Christmas trees are produced during the Christmas season.

Fruitcake, when stored properly, can last for years and sometimes indefinitely. The oldest fruitcake was 114 years old and was passed down from generation to generation.

The classic image of a happy and plump Santa that we all know today came in part from Coca-Cola ads, drawn in 1931 by illustrator Haddon Sundblom.

*Silent Night* is actually the most recorded Christmas song in history. It's had more than 733 different versions copyrighted since 1978.

The Consumer Product Safety Commission estimates that 14,700 people visit hospital emergency rooms each November and December from holiday-related decorating accidents.

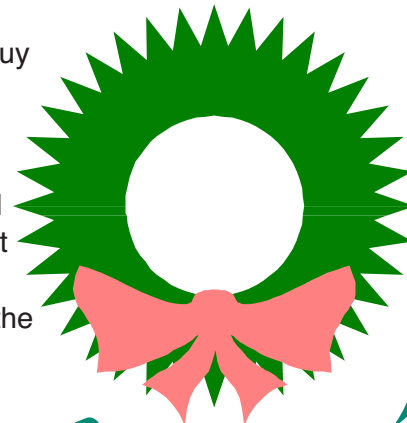
Despite the rise of e-commerce, in-store shopping remained the dominant method for holiday purchases last year with 59% of Americans buying gifts in physical stores.

On a personal note – Michael Castellan will retire at the end of December after over 40 years of service to Melrose Park. Starting in 1983 as a patrol officer with the Police Department, he advanced through the ranks to the position of deputy chief, contributing significantly to public safety and community organizations. After retiring from the Police Department, Michael continued as director of Licensing and Enforcement. The village thanks Mike for his outstanding service and wishes him a happy retirement.

In closing, on behalf of the village clerk, village trustees, village employees, my wife Donna and I, we wish you and your family a safe and enjoyable holiday season, and don't forget to make wonderful holiday memories with your children and grandchildren.

Sincerely,

*Ron Serpico*  
Mayor Ron Serpico



*Season's  
Greetings!*

**Check Out [www.MelrosePark.org](http://www.MelrosePark.org) to  
Learn More About Our Community!**



Follow us on Facebook.



Follow us on Instagram.

### A Note to All Residents from Mayor Ronald M. Serpico Regarding Snow Removal

On behalf of the village of Melrose Park administration, I kindly ask that all residents refrain from blowing or shoveling snow into the cleared streets once the plows have gone through and the Public Works Department has created clear and safe passage for all.

This will ensure the safety of our residents and visitors to the Melrose Park community.  
Violators will receive a notice of violation with a possible fine to follow.



# 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 Emergency .....911**

**Non-Emergency .....(708) 344-8409**

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

**Fire Emergency .....911**

**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 Meetings.....Dec. 22 and Jan. 26**

**Village Hall Holiday Closings .....Dec. 24 (1/2 Day), Dec. 25,**

**Dec. 31 (1/2 Day), Jan. 1 and Jan. 19**

# Resident Response

## *Dear Mayor Serpico and Friends in Melrose Park ...*

At this most wonderful time of the year, we would once again like to thank you for your donations to St. Jude Childrens Research Hospital through the BIG BASH BUFFET, Melrose Park, Illinois.

We remind you that at St. Jude, no one pays, not even for room and board for the entire family.

St. Jude believes the family should not worry about anything and focus on getting their child healthy – and so do we.

Because of your generosity the BIG BASH BUFFET 2025 has raised over \$70,000 and over \$370,000 since we began.

We hope to do more in 2026 and ask you to join us. Your donation will help us in our fight to end childhood cancer and do it while making donating fun!

• Sincerely,

The BIG BASH BUFFET, NFP Committee

## *Dear Melrose Park Mayor Serpico ...*

A big thank you to the firemen/paramedics (includes phone personnel) who have helped me recently at my home. They were kind, professional, concerned, efficient, helpful and provided suggestions to prevent further situations.

• G.M. Caputo, Melrose Park Resident, 20+ Years

## *Dear Director of Senior Services Peggy DiFazio ...*

Good morning and snowy morning, Peggy! Thank you! My driveway has been plowed and my front sidewalk and porch have been shoveled! Thank you, thank you, thank you so very much to you and everyone from the village who provide this wonderful service! I absolutely could not do this without your help and I appreciate it so very much. It is truly an act of kindness and I hope that you will pass along my thanks to everyone involved.

• Jan Roeder, Melrose Park Resident

## *Dear Deputy Police Chief Rodriguez and Lieutenant Pesce ...*

Recently, the Bellwood Police Department executed a search warrant on the 1000 block of 22nd Avenue. This search warrant was part of a long-term investigation into drug trafficking in the area. The execution of this warrant was a success, with a great amount of its success thanks to Ofc. Rovito and K9 Lupo. The assistance they provided resulted in the recovery of 60 grams of heroin (35 grams raw and 25 grams prepackaged and ready for distribution), 32 grams of cannabis and various pills.

It was a pleasure to work with Ofc. Rovito again, and I hope that I can continue to count on Ofc. Rovito's assistance and K9 Lupo's well-trained abilities in the future. If there is anything I can do to assist the Melrose Park Police Department, please do not hesitate to ask.

• Thank you all again and stay safe,

Detective Cameron Woods-Ortiz #805

Bellwood Police Department, Investigations Division

## *Dear Chief of Police Anthony Greco ...*

I wish to thank you and your department for your participation in our 9-1-1 Silent Parade and Remembrance Service. The event was very successful, thanks to your support. We hope you will be able to participate again next year to help us support all our public safety personnel.

• God Bless You,

Fr. Leandro Fossá, C.S., Pastor of Our Lady of Mt. Carmel Parish

VILLAGE OF MELROSE PARK  
VEHICLE STICKER INFORMATION  
FOR 2026-2027

All vehicles registered in the village of Melrose Park are required to display a current Melrose Park vehicle sticker.

New stickers (valid from Jan. 1, 2026-Dec. 31, 2027) can be renewed now and must be displayed on or before Jan. 1, 2026.

All 2025 Vehicle Stickers Expire on Dec. 31, 2025.

- New stickers for 2026-2027 are available at the Melrose Park Village Hall.

Who Needs a 2026-2027 Sticker?

- All vehicles registered to a Melrose Park address.
- All vehicles registered to businesses located in Melrose Park.
- You must buy a sticker within 30 days of moving into the village or purchasing a vehicle.



2024-2025  
VEHICLE STICKERS  
EXPIRE  
DEC. 31, 2025.

Vehicle Sticker Fees

Passenger Cars (Regular Vehicles)

- Covers two years if purchased on time.

Seniors (Age 65+)

- Covers two years (2026-2027) if purchased on time.
- One free sticker per household (65 and older).
  - Choose one free two-year passenger car sticker or one free one-year B-truck sticker.
- Second vehicle for a senior in the same household is \$15 (half price).
- Bring a valid driver's license or state ID as proof of age to receive your sticker.

Car Vehicle Sticker Fees

	First Year	First Year	First Year	Second Year
Passenger Plate	Jan.1-Feb. 28	March 1-June 30	July 1-Dec. 31	Jan. 1-Dec. 31
	\$30	\$40	\$55	\$55

Note – If you purchased your vehicle or moved into town within the past 30 days, you will pay the regular \$30 fee, not the late penalty. Proof of vehicle purchase and residency is required.

Trucks

- Prices depend on the license plate class. • Sticker is valid for one year only.

Truck Vehicle Sticker Fees

Plate Type	Jan.1-Feb. 28	March 1-June 30	July 1-Dec. 31
B Plate	\$50	\$65	\$95
C Plate	\$75	\$90	\$145
D Plate	\$75	\$90	\$145
F Plate	\$75	\$90	\$145
H Plate	\$75	\$90	\$145
J Plate	\$80	\$95	\$155
K Plate	\$80	\$95	\$155
L Plate	\$90	\$105	\$175
M Plate	\$95	\$110	\$185
N Plate	\$100	\$115	\$195
P Plate	\$105	\$120	\$205
Q Plate	\$105	\$120	\$205
R Plate	\$110	\$125	\$215
S Plate	\$115	\$130	\$225
T Plate	\$125	\$140	\$245
V Plate	\$135	\$150	\$265
X Plate	\$145	\$160	\$285
Z Plate	\$155	\$170	\$305

IMPORTANT — PLEASE READ

- You must bring your current state of Illinois vehicle registration card to purchase stickers. (This proves your name, address and license plate.)
- No registration card = No sticker.
- Late fees may apply if not purchased on time.
- Even if your vehicle is not parked at your home, you still need a sticker if it is registered to a Melrose Park address.

For more information, please call (708) 343-4000  
or visit [www.melrosepark.org](http://www.melrosepark.org).



Happy Holidays  
from  
Mayor  
Ronald M. Serpico  
Village Clerk  
Mary Ann Paolantonio  
Village Trustees  
Anthony N. Abruzzo, Jaime Anguiano,  
Arturo J. Mota, Sonny Nicotera,  
Mary Ramirez Taconi,  
Anthony "Tony" Williams  
and the  
Employees of the  
Village of Melrose Park





# Melrose Park Fire DepartmentNEWS



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 candle and portable space heater safety tips on behalf of the National Fire Protection Association. Please follow these tips to ensure your family's well-being!



Candles may be pretty to look at but they are a cause of home fires — and home fire deaths. Remember, a candle is an open flame, which means that it can easily ignite anything that can burn.

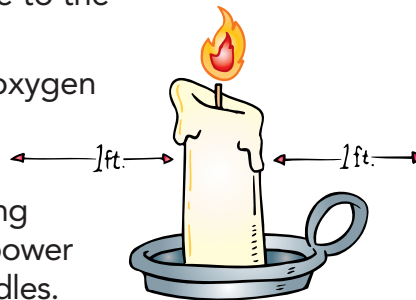
### "CANDLE WITH CARE"

- Blow out all candles when you leave the room or go to bed. Avoid the use of candles in the bedroom and other areas where people may fall asleep.
- Keep candles at least 1 foot (30 centimetres) away from anything that can burn.

Think about using flameless candles in your home. They look and smell like real candles.

### IF YOU DO BURN CANDLES, make sure that you...

- Use candle holders that are sturdy, and won't tip over easily.
- Put candle holders on a sturdy, uncluttered surface.
- Light candles carefully. Keep your hair and any loose clothing away from the flame.
- Don't burn a candle all the way down — put it out before it gets too close to the holder or container.
- Never use a candle if oxygen is used in the home.
- Have flashlights and battery-powered lighting ready to use during a power outage. Never use candles.



### Candles and Kids

Never leave a child alone in a room with a burning candle. Keep matches and lighters up high and out of children's reach, in a locked cabinet.



### FACTS

- ! **December** is the peak month for home candle fires.
- ! More than **one-third** of home candle fires started in the bedroom.
- ! **Three of every five** candle fires start when things that can burn are too close to the candle.



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



**MELROSE PARK FIRE DEPARTMENT**

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





# Electric Portable Space Heater Safety

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

## HEATER CHECKLIST

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

## Types of electric space heaters

### Oil or water-filled radiator

Heated oil or water travels through the heater.

### Fan-forced heater

A fan blows warm air over metal coils.

### Ceramic heater

Air is warmed over a ceramic heating element.

### Infrared heaters

Heat is created by infrared bulbs.

## Fact

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



**Melrose  
Park  
Fire  
Department**

*Connecting  
You to  
Community  
Resources!*



**NATIONAL FIRE  
PROTECTION ASSOCIATION**

The leading information and knowledge resource  
on fire, electrical and related hazards



**MELROSE PARK  
FIRE DEPARTMENT**

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



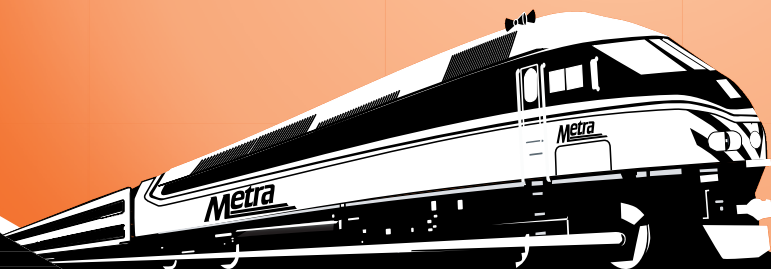
# Your Safety is our Highest Priority.

You can now report safety and security concerns with the new Metra COPS app, available for Apple and Android devices.



***Metra encourages you to report:***

- ***Unattended bags or packages***
- ***Safety concerns***
- ***Suspicious activity***
- ***Vandalism***
- ***Robbery or theft***



You can also text comments/photos to 312-313-9015.

*(Text or data rates may apply.)*

In the event of an emergency, call 911 or  
Metra Police at 312-322-2800.

***Metra***

## Melrose Park Police Department

### A Message from Chief of Police Anthony Greco



*Anthony Greco  
Chief of Police*



# IMPORTANT PARKING NOTICE

A QUICK NOTE TO UPDATE YOU  
ON WEEKEND PARKING RULES ...  
AS OF MONDAY, DEC. 1, 2025,  
PARKING IS NO LONGER PERMITTED ON  
BOTH SIDES OF THE STREET ON WEEKENDS.

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

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

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

**ALL VILLAGE OF MELROSE PARK  
PARKING RESTRICTIONS WILL BE STRICTLY  
ENFORCED AND TICKETS WILL BE  
WRITTEN FOR CARS VIOLATING  
CURRENT AND FUTURE PARKING RULES.**

## Provide an Anonymous Crime Tip

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

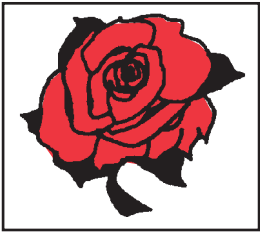
If you have information about criminal activity, please submit it.  
However, if you would like to be contacted by a police officer,  
just include a telephone number or email address where you can be reached.  
Submit to [tips@melroseparkpd.com](mailto:tips@melroseparkpd.com).

Visit the Melrose Park Police Department Website at [www.melroseparkpd.com](http://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.





# 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

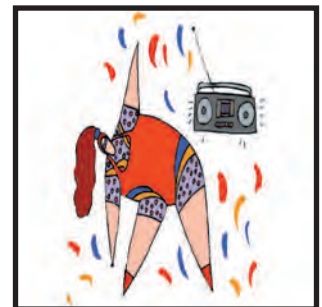
## Programa Para el Acceso de Beneficios

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

Come Join  
in the Fun  
with Instructor  
Barb Rubright  
(Rube's Garage)



Monday-Friday • 9-10 a.m.

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

Socially Distanced Activity • Face Masks Required

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



# Happy Holidays!

## Now's the Time to Join in the Seasonal Fun!

**Is your home decorated for the holidays ...  
Send us a photo for the Winter 2026 Issue of *The Rose*!**

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

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

**Take a nighttime photo of your home all lit and email it to  
[therose@melrosepark.org](mailto:therose@melrosepark.org) on or before Jan. 7, 2026.**

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

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

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

On Friday, Nov. 14, the Melrose Park Firemen's Association held their Annual Fall Raffle Dinner to help raise funds for charitable contributions to organizations the association works with throughout the year. On behalf of the Melrose Park Fire Department, the association would like to graciously thank all those who helped make this year's dinner and commemorative ad book an incredible success, including the following supporters, as well as current and retired MP firefighters ...

**Ronald M. Serpico, Mayor, Village of Melrose Park**  
**Lake Book Manufacturing, LLC**  
**Pan American Bank & Trust**  
**Norcomm/Superior Ambulance Service**  
**Restore Disaster Restoration Experts**  
**Cerami Construction Company, Ltd.**  
**Cerniglia Co.**  
**Macqueen Emergency Pierce**  
**Paramedic Services of Illinois, Inc.**  
**Elite Electric Co., Inc.**  
**Veterans Park District**  
**Suburban Sporting Goods**  
**Joseph A. Casale/Richard D. Dalitto**  
**C & O Window Cleaning LLC**  
**Tom Olson, President, Triton College Foundation**  
**Signco**  
**Swaporama**  
**Scores Chicago O'Hare**  
**R.J.N. Supplies, Inc.**  
**Kushner Medical**  
**Air One Equipment**  
**Spicer Construction, LLC**  
**Above and Beyond Black Oxide**  
**Construction Management Service Corp.**  
**Fairway Custom Landscaping, Inc.**  
**The Law Offices of Carlos H. Davalos**  
**Chicago Metropolitan Fire Prevention Co.**  
**CXI Trucking**  
**Al Piemonte NISSAN**  
**Royal Pipe & Supply Co.**  
**Darley**

**Planet Group Inc.**  
**Area Towing**  
**Fox Outdoor Products**  
**Carnicerias Jimenez**  
**JB Food & Beverage**  
**Alpha Omega Learning Center**  
**MWI Property Group**  
**Carmel Hall Raffle**  
**Melrose Dental Center**  
**Chicago Soccer Fields**  
**Our Lady of Mt. Carmel Parish**  
**Cafe Gaspar**  
**Melrose Park Police Department**  
**Mickinzie-Vertuno F.O.P. Lodge 19**  
**Riley Heating & Cooling**  
**Victory Centre of River Woods**  
**Triton College Foundation**  
**Republic Services**  
**Commercial Tire Service**  
**FRICOLD Heating and Cooling**  
**School District 89**  
**Ella's Tavern**  
**Mittera of Illinois**  
**Duke of Oil**  
**Carbit Liquid Coating Solutions**  
**Cermak Fresh Market**  
**Carnitas Don Alfredo**  
**Aqua Fiori**  
**Tom's Steak House**  
**Proviso Township**  
**Michael A. Corrigan, Supervisor**

**Belcore Electrical Contractors**  
**Taverna on Division**  
**Customized Protection Services**  
**Torres Supermercados Freshmarket**  
**Special T Unlimited**  
**Best Packaging**  
**Mohr Oil Company**  
**J & J Sealcoating Inc.**  
**Wigit's Truck Center**  
**Cozi Recycling**  
**Provant Insurance**  
**Scudiero's Italian Bakery**  
**Julie Anne Moore, M.D.**  
**Flowers of Italy Club**  
**Thatcher Oaks Commercial Awnings**  
**Olympia Maintenance**  
**Consumers Meat Packing Co.**  
**Dynamic Fleet Services**  
**3MD Relocation Services**  
**Brian W. Carey, Attorney at Law**  
**Sabe A Zulia**  
**Venezuelan Food**







# Always Stepping Up ...

## Lomeli Receives Cook County Sheriff's Police Department Commendation

On Oct. 20, 2025, Ofc. Ruben Lomeli, a nine-year veteran of the Melrose Park Police Department, received the Cook County Sheriff's Police Department Commendation Award in recognition of his recent outstanding law enforcement act and achievement which brought credit to the department, and involved performance above and beyond what was required by his assignment.

Lomeli, who's currently attached to the Cook County Sheriff's Police Department on a task force conducting various investigations, also teaches recruits (new police officers) at the Cook County Sheriff's Basic Law Enforcement Police Academy, and he's a certified instructor through the Illinois Law Enforcement Training and Standards Board, teaching various courses to current certified police officers.

Ruben has received five previous Melrose Park Police Department Commendations while on patrol, and two Cook County Sheriff's Police Department Commendations (2023 and 2024) in his current assignment.

Congratulations Ofc. Lomeli on this well-deserved recognition. Thank you for all you do to keep the village of Melrose Park and Cook County safe for all residents and community visitors.



## Melrose Park Assistant Fire Chiefs Visit VPD Preschool

Melrose Park assistant fire chiefs Frank Islami and Jim Wrosch went to Veterans Park Preschool on Monday, Oct. 27 and Tuesday, Oct. 28, to talk to preschoolers about fire safety and to read a book.

Veterans Park District thanked the first responders for taking the time out of their busy schedule to visit the preschoolers and teach them about fire safety awareness. The children truly enjoyed meeting some of our local heroes and learning more about the important work they do to keep our community safe. They had a lot of fun interacting with the assistant chiefs.

The dedication, generosity and commitment to educating the young learners was appreciated.



## MP Fire Dept. Announces New Lt. Appointment

At the village of Melrose Park November board meeting, Melrose Park firefighter Steve Saviozzi was promoted to his new position of lieutenant with the Melrose Park Fire Department (MPFD).

Mayor Serpico and the village of Melrose Park congratulate Mr. Saviozzi, and wish him and his family good luck as he embarks on his new role. Thank you, Lt. Saviozzi, for your hard work and for always going above and beyond to keep Melrose Park safe for its residents.



Pictured (left photo, left to right) are Director of Fire Dept. Rick Beltrame, Lt. Steve Saviozzi and Mayor Serpico. Lt. Saviozzi (right photo) receives congratulations from his MPFD colleagues.



# A Message from Chief of Police Anthony Greco



*Anthony Greco  
Chief of Police*



**Visit the  
Melrose Park  
Police Department  
Website at  
[www.melroseparkpd.com](http://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.

## Winter Holiday Safety Tips

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

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

### If You are Traveling

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

### If You are Out for the Evening

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

### If You are Shopping

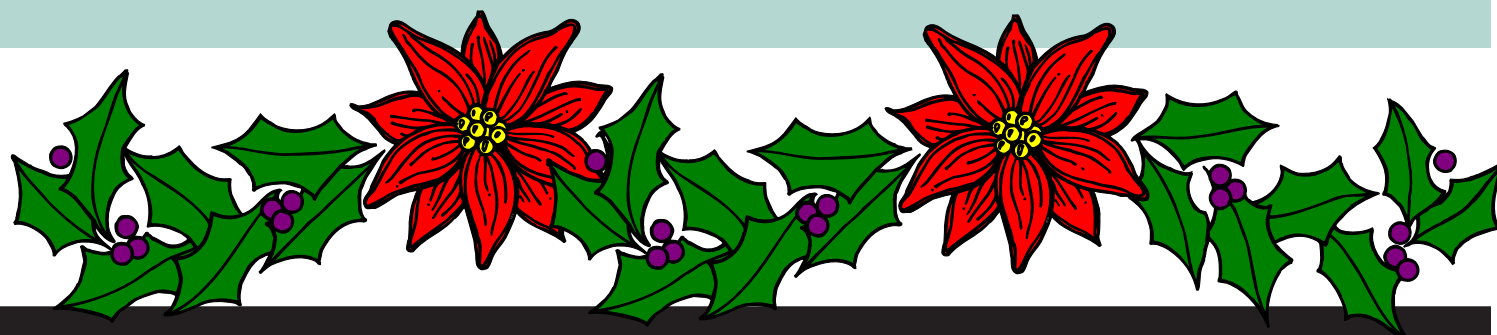
- Stay alert and be aware of what's going on around you.
- Park in a well-lighted space and be sure to lock the car, close the windows, and hide shopping bags and gifts in the trunk.
- Avoid carrying large amounts of cash, pay with a check or credit card whenever possible.
- Deter pickpockets and purse-snatchers.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

### Protect Your Vehicle

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

### If a Stranger Comes to Your Door

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



## After You've Opened the Gifts

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

## Take a Holiday Inventory

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

## Celebrate Responsibly

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

## Holiday Package Theft

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

## Enjoy the Season!

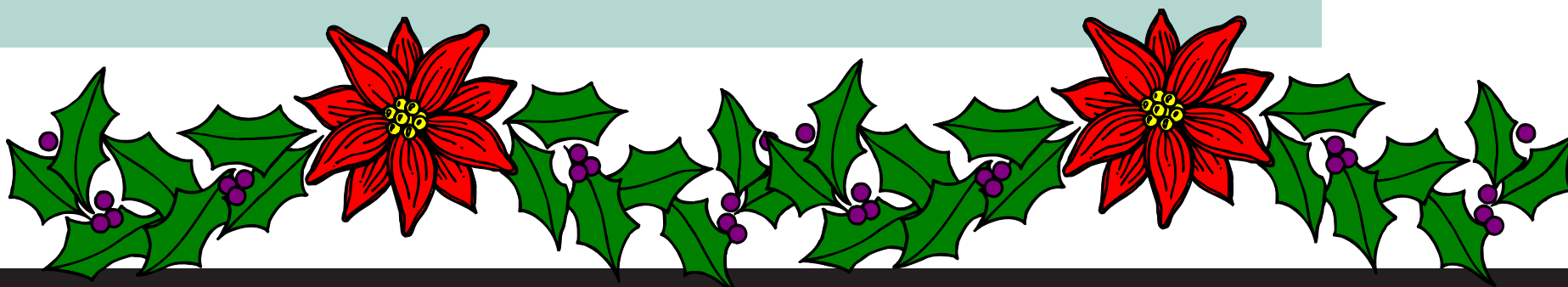
- Last but not least, don't let holiday stress get the best of your holiday spirit. Make time to get together with family, friends and neighbors. And think about reaching out in the spirit of the season and helping someone who's less fortunate or lonely.

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



**Melrose  
Park  
Police  
Department**

*Connecting  
You to  
Community  
Resources!*







# 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 foot-ball field, soccer field, uni-fied 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.

## 2026 – Fall Tree Planting Program

The list is now open for 2026 – Fall Tree Planting. To request a tree for 2026, please call the Public Works Department at (708) 343-5128.

## 2026 – 50/50 Sidewalk Program

If you would like to participate in the 2026 – 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.

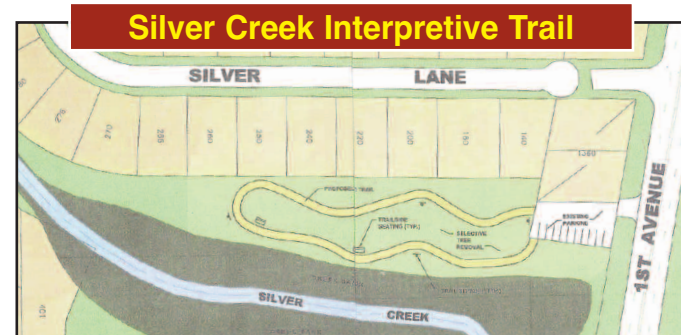
**Phase 5 and 6 of the  
Silver Creek Stabilization Project have been completed.  
Phase 7 is underway.**

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 2026 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 2026 Senior Painting Program list will be closed July 31, 2026.  
Only one item will be painted per year.  
Get your request in early as the list fills fast.

## Mayor Serpico's 2026 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 2026 list will be closed July 31, 2026.



## Village of Melrose Park

**Mayor Serpico  
and the**

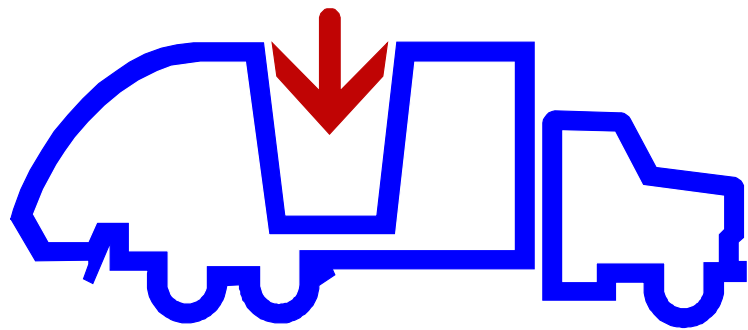
**Village of Melrose Park  
are Seeking  
Landscaping and  
Snow Removal Professionals  
to Provide Affordably Priced  
Assistance to Our Residents  
When Needed ...**



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.



# **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](http://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.





Melrose Park  
Public Library



# Sign up today E-Newsletter

GET OUR MONTHLY EMAIL  
NEWSLETTER FOR ALL THE  
LATEST AT THE LIBRARY!

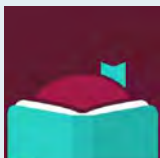
[www.mpplibrary.org](http://www.mpplibrary.org)



**KEEP UPDATED!**



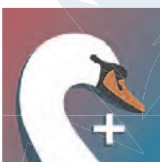
## Stream, Download, & More!



**MEDIA ON DEMAND | LIBBY APP:**  
BORROW EBOOKS,  
AUDIOBOOKS, MAGAZINES, &  
MORE--ALL FOR FREE!



**FREEGAL MUSIC:** ACCESS  
MILLIONS OF SONGS TO STREAM,  
TO DOWNLOAD, & TO CREATE  
YOUR OWN PLAYLISTS.



**SWAN LIBRARIES + APP:**  
MANAGE YOUR ACCOUNT,  
ACCESS THE CATALOG, SAVE YOUR  
CARD AND MORE.



**COMICS PLUS:** ENJOY UNLIMITED  
ACCESS TO 1000S OF DIGITAL  
COMICS, GRAPHIC NOVELS, & MANGA.



**KANOPY:** STREAM POPULAR FILMS,  
AWARD-WINNING FILMS, FOREIGN  
FILMS, KID'S FILMS, & DOCUMENTARIES  
WITHOUT PAYING A DIME.



**HOOPLA:** READ, LISTEN, AND WATCH  
EBOOKS, AUDIOBOOKS, MOVIES,  
MUSIC, COMICS, & TV SHOWS  
WITH YOUR LIBRARY CARD.

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

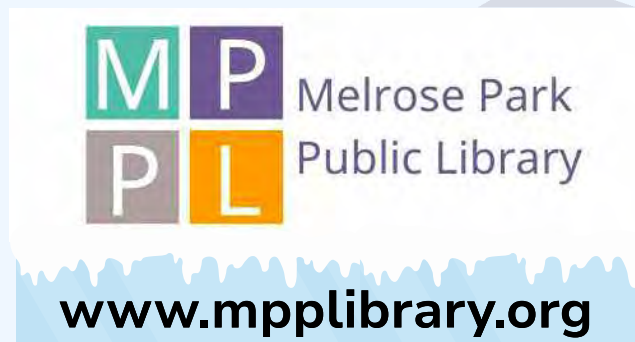


Mon Wed Fri 9:00am - 5:00pm  
Tue Thu 9:00am - 7:00pm  
Sat 10:00am - 2:00pm  
Last Saturday of the month - Closed  
Sunday - Closed

**Memorial Day thru Labor Day - Closed on Saturdays**

[www.mpplibrary.org](http://www.mpplibrary.org)  
801 N Broadway  
Melrose Park, IL 60160  
[mps@mpplibrary.org](mailto:mps@mpplibrary.org)  
(708) 649-7400





## Adult Winter Programs

**Melrose Park Public Library**

### FOOD DRIVE

**DECEMBER 1ST - MARCH 20TH**

**Most Needed Items:**

- Unexpired/non-perishable food items
- Canned foods with pull tabs.

**Receive a Free Print or Fax Coupon!**

Patrons who donate items will receive a print coupon at the front desk for a free print job or free fax job!

**Contact**  
☎ (708) 649-7400    🌐 www.mpplibrary.org



### GIFT WRAPPING PAPER STATION

*Need to wrap your holiday gifts?*  
Bring them to MPPL any time in December and you can wrap them for FREE!  
We will supply the wrapping paper, bows, & tags!



**Digital Learning**

### COMPUTER HELP SESSION

**Adult & Senior Program**

Monthly computer one on one help sessions. A Librarian will help answer your technology-based questions.

**Mondays @ 3:30 PM - 4:30 PM**  
Dec. 22<sup>nd</sup>, Jan. 5<sup>th</sup>, Jan 19<sup>th</sup>, Feb. 2<sup>nd</sup>, & Feb. 23<sup>rd</sup>

Registration is required. First come, first served.  
Call: (708) 649-7486 or Email: mpref@mpplibrary.org



MELROSE PARK PUBLIC LIBRARY    **Adults and Seniors**

### Adult Winter Reading Program

**December 20, 2025 - February 27, 2026**


Grab a book and log your winter reading!

Register online via Google Form and download a paper log

Turn in your weekly log every Friday to enter the weekly raffle for a prize!

At the end of the program, ALL ENTRIES will go into a drawing for GRAND PRIZES.

Registration required  
Call: (708) 649-7485  
Email: mpref@mpplibrary.org  
Online: mpplibrary.org



**ADULT & SENIOR PROGRAM**

11 🌿 Health & Wellness

### CHAIR YOGA CLASS

**Instructor: Rhonda Fentry**



Designed for all levels.  
No equipment needed.

**Fridays @ 10:30 am - 11:30 am**

**Dates**  
Jan. 16th & Feb. 6th

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

[Register Now](#)



**ADULT & SENIOR PROGRAM**

03 🌿 Health & Wellness

### MEDITATION SOUNDBATH



**Instructor: Rhonda Fentry**

Please bring your own yoga mat.

**Saturdays @ 12:00 pm - 1:00 pm**  
Dates: January 17th

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

[Register Now](#)



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.



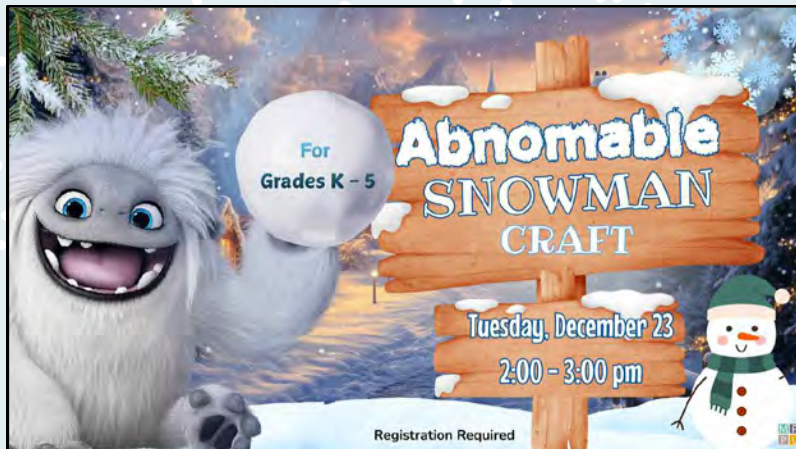


# Youth Winter Programs

**Make it Mondays:** Stop by the Library on Mondays to grab your weekly craft bag. First-come, first-served. Ages 3+

**ABC Storytime:** Join us every Wednesday for our interactive playtime of fun, featuring stories, music, and toys! Ages 1-5 with caregiver.

**Spanish Bilingual Storytime:** Starting in January, we'll have an in-person bilingual storytime on the second Thursday of each month. Ages 1-5 with caregiver.



[www.mpplibrary.org](http://www.mpplibrary.org)

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.



# Veterans Park District Proudly Honors All Who Have Served

A Salute to Our Veterans ...

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



## Veterans Park District • Veterans Day Observance • Friday, Nov. 7, 2025

It's an honor and a privilege to salute our veterans and thank them for their courage and service to our country.

Today, our roll call is missing several front row military men and women who have always been here to support our Veterans Day cause.

Let's remember them for the remarkable soldiers they were and the powerful strength they gave to others to quietly overcome the obstacles of war and courageously promote world peace.

George A. Leoni, Joe Montino, John Babowice, Leo Cannici, John Misasi, Lou Salvino, William Galvin, Thomas Biscan, Duke Lullo, Frank Moccio, William Spencer III, Hector Canestrini, Angelo Provenzano, Al Acey, Mathew Alek, Daniel Amendola, Anthony Catizone, Joseph Di Costanzo, Vito Zanzola, Michael Hanlon Jr., Vincent Pierri, Fred Rizza Jr., Dale Ries, John Puccio, Russell Sabatino, Samuel Teresi, Vincent Mormino, Armando Aristodemo, Glenn Compton, Ubaldo Herrera, August Rojek, David Colbert Sr., Lester Edens, Daniel James, Gaetano Macino, Guadalupe Longoria, Alfred Cechini, Vito Valerio, Jack Conner, Bernard Kremske, Joseph Sands, George Tighe Jr., George Anast, Miriam Clintron, Peter Rohrich, Eric LePak, Gerald Quantrano, Daniel Spratt, Joseph Spillone, Leo Van De Zande, Richard Bennett, Joseph Fazio, Richard Pieruccini, George Paterson, Rochelle Shehi-Martell, Larry Hickman Sr., Antonio Sanchez, Bernard Bruno, John McHugh, John Shines Jr., Frederick Meyer, David Hernandez, James Graham, Caroline Banks, John Morrissey, Robert Charito, Eugene Gillette, James Graham Jr., Richard Tamashiro, Anthony Angelico, John Fitzgerald, Ralph Anthony Vicari, Jasper Mitchell, James E. Gorski, John Sommesi, Leo R. Zyglar, Hugh Allen Smith, Mario Colantonio, Louis Ingoglia, John J. Racila Jr., Leonard Kotelman, Donald Yuzetis, Christian Earl, Dominic J. Mondo Sr., Charles Virruso, Francis Spataro, Edwin H. Walker IV, George D. Macaluso, Donald Kuffel, Keith Heinz, Kenneth Heppner, Joseph E. Hogan, Toribio Acosta, John J. Kinsella, Jerry Devaris, Larry La Riviere, Shannon Smith, Fred Marunde, Victor DiFazio, Barbara Bailey, John Coronado, Nello Di Domenico, Peter F. Venute, James Curry and others who have passed recently.





It's an honor and a privilege to salute our veterans and we thank them for their courage and service to our country.

On Friday, Nov. 7, Veterans Park District held its annual Veterans Day Observance in honor of those who have served our country. Community members came out to salute veterans and current members of the U.S. Armed Forces – Army, Navy, Air Force, Marines, Coast Guard and Space Force. Observance ceremony speakers and participants included American Legion Franklin Park Post #974, Fr. Marvin Ajic Arana, Veterans Park Preschool Class of 25/26, Mayor Serpico, VPD Executive Director Bill Otte, Vocalist Gianna Capra Uroni, Vietnam War Veteran Angelo Egizio and Veterans Park District Board President Tom Olson.

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



**Melrose Park Police Commander Mark Rieger, a US Marine Corps veteran, is pictured with his son Andrew, presently serving in the Army Illinois National Guard, remembering his Grandpa Amendola who served in the Navy during the Vietnam War.**

# Melrose Park Expands Village Bus Fleet with New Pace Vehicles

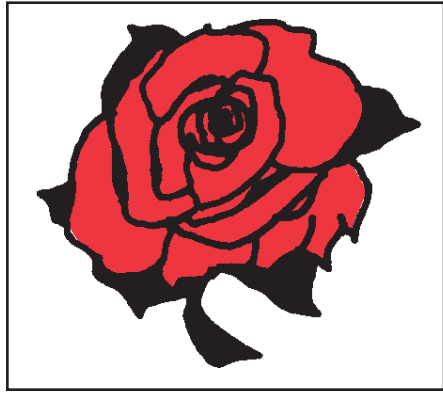
The village of Melrose Park is proud to announce the addition of new, upgraded Pace buses to its community transportation fleet. These vehicles officially entered service Nov. 13, 2025, enhancing mobility and convenience for local residents.

Mayor Ron Serpico was instrumental in securing these state-of-the-art vehicles, reaffirming his commitment to maintaining a modern and accessible transportation network for Melrose Park residents. “We’re proud to keep our community moving safely and comfortably,” said Mayor Serpico. “Upgrading our fleet means our residents can continue to count on dependable, high-quality service – completely free of charge.”

The Melrose Park Dial A Ride bus service provides free transportation to residents throughout the village, offering a vital link to shopping, medical appointments and community destinations. The addition of these new Pace buses ensures the continued reliability, comfort and safety of this essential service. The new buses mark another step forward in the village’s ongoing investment in community services and quality of life.







# Village of Melrose Park Dial A Ride Program for MP Residents

## Convenient Ride Service Now Available 8:15 a.m.-4:30 p.m.

The Village of Melrose Park Dial A Ride Program provides public transportation to any location within Melrose Park's boundaries. No one is turned away from utilizing this service. Riders 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-Friday, 8:15 a.m.-4:30 p.m.

To make a reservation, please call (708) 343-7047. You can make appointments between the hours of 9 a.m.-5 p.m., Monday-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

- 1) Only one reservation per rider per day. NO EXCEPTIONS!
- 2) 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 service up to three times a week.
- 3) You must stay at the destination you are going to for a minimum time 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.
- 4) 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.



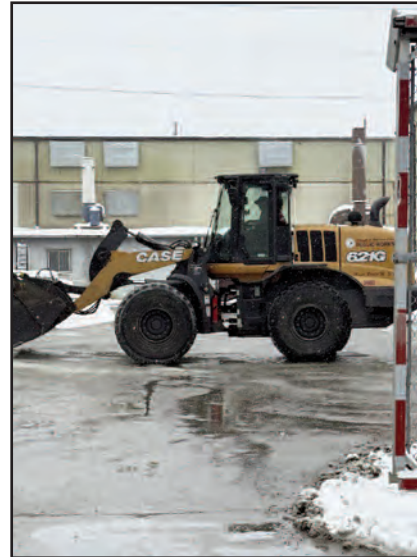


## Mayor Serpico's Snow Removal Program Out in Full Force During Recent Snowstorms

Mayor Serpico's Snow Removal Program provided support for seniors and disabled residents during the big snowstorms that impacted the area recently.

Crews removed the snow from approximately 280 homes of Melrose Park residents who called in for assistance.

A special thank you from Mayor Serpico to all the Public Works employees and members of our community for their patience and their hard work in keeping the streets, sidewalks and alleys clean and passable.



### A Note to All Residents from Mayor Ronald M. Serpico Regarding Snow Removal

On behalf of the village of Melrose Park administration, I kindly ask that all residents refrain from blowing or shoveling snow into the cleared streets once the plows have gone through and the Public Works Department has created clear and safe passage for all.

This will ensure the safety of our residents and visitors to the Melrose Park community.

Violators will receive a notice of violation with a possible fine to follow.

### Village Hall Announces Holiday Closings

The Melrose Park Village Hall will be closed for the following holidays:  
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; Martin Luther King, Jr. Day – Monday, Jan. 19, 2026; Presidents Day – Monday, Feb. 16, 2026; Good Friday – Friday, April 3, 2026; Memorial Day – Monday, May 25, 2026; Juneteenth – Friday, June 19, 2026; Independence Day – Friday, July 3, 2026; Labor Day – Monday, Sept. 7, 2026; Columbus Day – Monday, Oct. 12, 2026; Veterans Day – Tuesday, Nov. 11, 2026; Thanksgiving Day – Thursday, Nov. 26, 2026; Day After Thanksgiving – Friday, Nov. 27, 2026; Christmas Eve (1/2 Day) – Thursday, Dec. 24, 2026; Christmas Day – Friday, Dec. 25, 2026; New Year's Eve (1/2 Day) – Thursday, Dec. 31, 2026; and New Year's Day – Friday, Jan. 1, 2027.

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

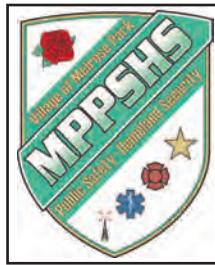
Take notice that the village of Melrose Park, Cook County, Illinois, will conduct the regular scheduled meetings of the president and the board of trustees on the fourth Monday of each calendar month, unless otherwise noted, at 6 p.m. at the Village Board Meeting Room located on the first floor of the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

The remaining schedule for calendar year 2025 is: Dec. 22.

The schedule for calendar year 2026 is: Jan. 26; Feb. 23; March 23; April 27; Tuesday, May 26; June 22; July 27; Aug. 24; Sept. 28; Oct. 26; Nov. 23; and Dec. 28.

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

# Melrose Park Public Safety News



From the Department of Homeland Security – Public Safety

## Winter Storms ... The Deceptive Killers

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

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

### Know the Difference

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

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

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

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

### How to Prepare for a Winter Storm

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

### Put Together a Supply Kit

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



# Winter's Impact

## Storms with Strong Winds

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

## Extreme Cold

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

## Ice Storms

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

## Heavy Snow Storms

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

# Winter Precipitation

## Snow

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

## Sleet

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

## Freezing Rain

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

# Winter Storm Facts: What Makes a Winter Storm?

## Cold Air

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

## Moisture

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

## Lift

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

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





# Village of Melrose Park

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



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

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

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

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

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



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

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

Name \_\_\_\_\_  
Address \_\_\_\_\_  
Phone \_\_\_\_\_ Age \_\_\_\_\_

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

# **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**



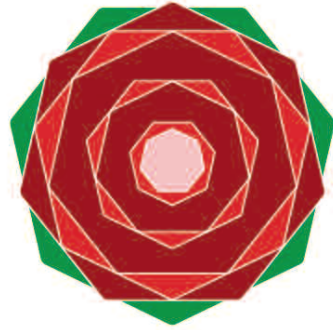
### **Attention Residents**

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](mailto: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.







## MELROSE PARK CHAMBER OF COMMERCE & COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

### Shop Melrose Park this Holiday Season We Encourage You to Shop and Eat Local this Holiday Season!

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

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

### New Chamber Members and Renewals

The Melrose Park Chamber of Commerce and Community Development (MPCCCD) welcomed three new businesses as members in October and November, and now has over 225 members. Please help us welcome Royal Garden Banquets and Catering; Superior Rooter and Drain, LLC; and View Transit on their membership and partnership with the MPCCCD.

We also want to give special thanks to the 10 businesses that renewed memberships in October and November, and continue to participate in networking events, information sessions and provide feedback to surveys to help the chamber to connect them with resources and solutions needed to support and fuel economic growth in their business. Please join us in thanking and supporting these local businesses – they are Corrigan Financial Services, Inc.; Flood Brothers Disposal; Fricold Heating and Cooling; Playas Nayaritas; S & S Towing; Small World Learning Center; Victory Centre of River Woods; Walther Christian Academy; Winston Plaza; and West Regional Enterprise Zone.

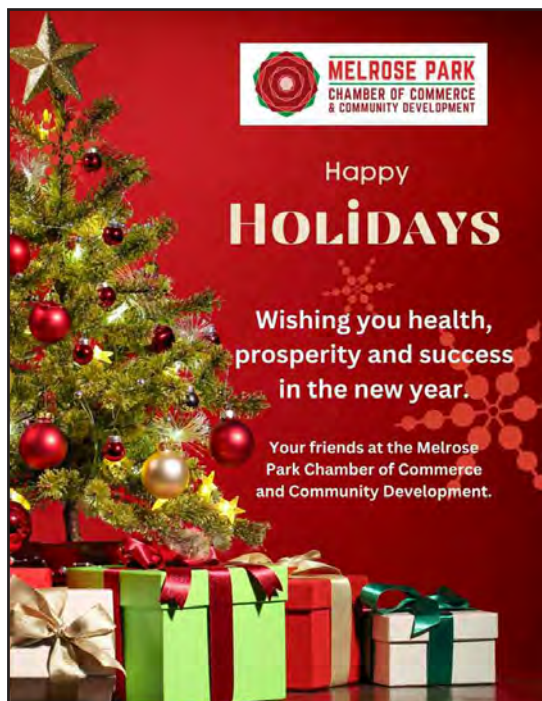
The Melrose Park Chamber of Commerce and Community Development has over 225 members, and the list continues to grow each month. If you are not currently a member of the MPCCCD, please reach out to Isaac Bazbaz, executive director, via email at [ibazbaz@mpcccd.org](mailto:ibazbaz@mpcccd.org) or call (708) 343-9500 and he will schedule a time to meet with you to discuss the benefits of partnering and working with our chamber.

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

### 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](mailto:ibazbaz@mpcccd.org) or call (708) 343-9500 and he will schedule a time to meet with you.



### Wishing You All a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year!

*As we wrap up this year, we want to take a moment to thank each and every one of you for being a part of our wonderful community. Your support, engagement, and positivity have made this journey truly special.*

*May your holidays be filled with joy and cherished moments with those who matter most.*

*Here's to a bright and prosperous 2026! May the new year bring you happiness, success and all the best that life has to offer. We can't wait to continue growing together in the year ahead!*

*• Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year from all of us!  
Melrose Park Chamber of Commerce and Community Development*



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

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

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

Village trustees and representatives from Melrose Park's Homeland Security – Public Safety; Fire, Police and Public Works departments; the MP Senior Program; MP Youth Commission; Veterans Park District; and several residents helped deliver the holiday meals prepared by Cuomo Catering, Northlake. Mayor Serpico thanks all the volunteers for making our community members' Thanksgiving Day extra special!







**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.**

## The AD RESERVATION FORM

### Save the Dates!

Next Issue – February 2026  
(Deadline for material Jan. 25, 2026.)  
Schedule for 2026

February, April, June, August, October and December

Dear Community Member,

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

Included is display ad pricing for your review.

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

The Rose c/o Village of Melrose Park • 1000 N. 25th Ave. • Melrose Park, IL 60160

or Email to: [therose@melrosepark.org](mailto: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 \_\_\_\_\_

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

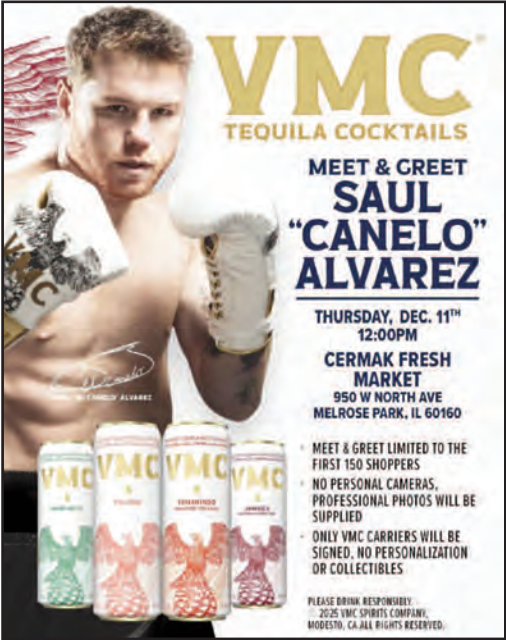
The  **ROSE**

# Mayor Serpico Meets World Champion Alvarez at Cermak Fresh Market

On Thursday, Dec. 11, Melrose Park's Cermak Fresh Market welcomed boxing world champion Saul "Canelo" Alvarez to its Winston Plaza location for a VMC Tequila Cocktails Meet & Greet.

Mayor Serpico attended the event with fans who didn't want to miss out on this incredible opportunity to meet the boxing legend, and be face-to-face with one of the greatest boxers of all time to experience a once-in-a-lifetime chance to dive into the mind of a champion.

This was an amazing event! "Canelo" Alvarez is a true legend in boxing and being able to meet him in person is such a rare opportunity. Fans were hyped for this and had the chance to chat with him about his legendary fights, his training and his thoughts on the current state of boxing.



Mayor Serpico is pictured with World Champion Saul "Canelo" Alvarez and Melrose Park Police Department Lt. Eddie Guzman.



Several Melrose Park police officers stopped by Cermak Fresh Market to connect and take a picture with the champ!

# Mayor Serpico Joins Speaker of the House Welch at Blue Christmas Toy Drive



On Wednesday, Dec. 10, Illinois Speaker of the House Emanuel "Chris" Welch held his 4th Annual Blue Christmas Toy Drive. The event collects new toys and gifts for families in need.

The drive, held at Fogo de Chao/Oak Brook, brings good people together for fun, fellowship, and the opportunity to give families the magic of the holiday season.

Mayor Serpico, pictured with Santa and Speaker Welch, was on hand to support the Blue Christmas cause and to make a bigger impact as one of Santa's helpers.

# Proviso Township High Schools District 209 to Implement Safety Tipline

Proviso Township High Schools District 209 is proud to announce a new partnership with Gaggle to further enhance school safety and student well-being. Through the Gaggle SpeakUp Safety Tipline, students now have a simple, confidential way to report concerns such as threats of violence, bullying, weapons on campus or peers who may be in crisis.

Students can access the SpeakUp Safety Tipline easily by using a dedicated district phone number or email address. There is no app to download, students can simply text or call the phone line, or send an email whenever they need assistance. This ensures students always have a direct and confidential way to report concerns or seek help.

Gaggle's trained safety representatives monitor incoming tips 24 hours a day, 365 days a year. Nonemergency information is forwarded to designated district and school staff, while urgent or life-threatening situations trigger immediate phone contact to school leaders and, when necessary, local law enforcement support.

"We want every student to feel safe, supported and empowered to speak up when something doesn't feel right," said Superintendent Krish Mohip. "This partnership with Gaggle gives our students a confidential lifeline when they or someone they know needs help. Whether the concern is bullying, personal safety or the well-being of a friend, we want our students to know that someone is always there to listen and respond. Safety and emotional security are foundational to learning and success, and Gaggle helps us strengthen those supports."

Gaggle has been a leader in digital student safety for K-12 schools since 1999, providing tools and services that help school systems confidently use technology for communication, collaboration and learning. For more information about Gaggle, visit the company's website.







# Santa and Mrs. Claus Make an Early Stop at Winston Plaza

On Saturday, Nov. 15, a large crowd gathered in the Winston Plaza parking lot to experience the annual helicopter arrival of Santa and Mrs. Claus.

The children really enjoyed speaking with Santa and taking photos with the jolly old man in the big red suit to power up the sparkle of the season.

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

Melrose Park thanks Winston Plaza for hosting another fun and crowd-pleasing community event.



# Now's the Time to Take Advantage of Jackson Hewitt's Early Tax Refund Advance Loan

Jackson Hewitt's Winston Park Office, a trusted local provider of professional tax preparation services for over 35 years in Melrose Park, has announced the offering of an Early Tax Refund Advance Loan for the holidays this year. The application period for the loan runs now through Jan. 11, 2026.

**Loan Amount** – You could get up to \$1,500 if approved.

**Cost** – There are no upfront fees to apply, but a finance charge (interest) applies to the loan.

**How to Apply** – You must book an appointment with a Jackson Hewitt Tax Pro at a participating location and bring your most recent paystub(s) and a government-issued ID.

**Funding Speed** – If approved, you can receive the money on a prepaid card the same day you apply, or have it direct deposited into your bank account within one to five business days.

**Credit Impact** – Applying for the loan will not impact your credit score.

**Repayment** – The loan is repaid automatically from your federal tax refund once the IRS sends it.

For more information, you can contact your Winston Plaza, Jackson Hewitt Office manager, Larry J. Pasternock at (773) 289-1950 or by email at [taxpros11423@gmail.com](mailto:taxpros11423@gmail.com), or you can visit the website – <https://www.jacksonhewitt.com/refund-advance/>.



## The Money Today Guarantee

Only at Jackson Hewitt! Come in with a recent paystub to apply and leave with money in minutes. We guarantee it, if approved for an Early Tax Refund Advance Loan on prepaid card.

**Larry Pasternock**  
Office Manager

Winston Plaza Shopping Center  
1270 Winston Plaza  
Melrose Park, IL 60160  
[jacksonhewitt.com](http://jacksonhewitt.com)

Ph. 773-289-1950  
[taxpros11423@gmail.com](mailto:taxpros11423@gmail.com)

YEAR ROUND ADDRESS: 6787 W 159th St. • Tinley Park, IL 60477 • 708-633-1040





Merry Christmas  
and  
Happy New Year!

From the  
**MELROSE PARK  
POLICE DEPARTMENT**

**ANTHONY GRECO**  
CHIEF OF POLICE

**ALFONZO RODRIGUEZ   MICHAEL SCUDIERO**  
DEPUTY CHIEFS OF POLICE

*Season's  
Greetings!*



From the  
**MELROSE PARK  
FIRE DEPARTMENT**  
**RICK BELTRAME**  
DIRECTOR OF FIRE DEPARTMENT  
**JAMES WROSCH, FRANK ISLAMI**  
AND **DOM DiFAZIO**  
ASST. FIRE CHIEFS

Merry Christmas  
and  
Happy New Year!



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



Happy  
Holidays!

**DISTRICT 89**

MAYWOOD | MELROSE PARK | BROADVIEW

**(708) 450-2460 • [www.maywood89.org](http://www.maywood89.org)**

HAPPY HOLIDAYS!



**PROVISO  
TOWNSHIP**

*Your Neighbors, Your Government*

**MICHAEL A. CORRIGAN, SUPERVISOR**  
Anthony "Tony" Williams, Clerk  
Steven J. Zawaski, Assessor

TRUSTEES

Gay F. Chase • Evelyn Chavez  
Joseph Christopher • Tommy Olson



**Season's  
Greetings!**



**(708) 410-3000**  
**[www.sd88.org](http://www.sd88.org)**





*Happy  
Holidays!*

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



**Merry Christmas  
and  
Happy New Year!**

**Village of  
Melrose Park  
Public Works  
Department**



*Happy  
Holidays!*

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



**Merry Christmas  
and  
Happy New Year!**

**MELROSE PARK  
SENIOR SERVICES  
DEPARTMENT**



**Season's  
Greetings!**

**Village of  
Melrose Park  
Building Department**

**Happy  
Holidays!**



**MELROSE  
PARK  
YOUTH  
COMMISSION**

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

# Season's Greetings!



## Veterans Park District

(708) 343-5270 • [www.vpdpark.org](http://www.vpdpark.org)

# Season's Greetings!



## Triton College

(708) 456-0300  
[www.triton.edu](http://www.triton.edu)



# Happy Holidays!

## MELROSE PARK BOY SCOUT TROOP 4112

# Season's Greetings!



## MELROSE YARD SERVICES



**MICHAEL  
KESSLING**  
Over 35 Years  
Experience

(708) 280-4448

# Season's Greetings!



(708) 279-0519

[www.mapofhopefoundation.org](http://www.mapofhopefoundation.org)

# Season's Greetings!



## ELLA'S TAVERN

MELROSE PARK





Merry Christmas  
and  
Happy New Year!

**S&Y**  
TECH REPAIR

**SPECIALIST ON:**

- COMPUTER REPAIR
- REPAIRS & VIRUS
- MAINTENANCE
- SECURITY CAMERAS
- INSTANT CELL PHONE REPAIR
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- UPGRADE & EXCHANGES

WE ALSO SELL COMPUTERS, CELL PHONES AND ACCESSORIES

**LOCATION:**  
1505 W. LAKE ST.  
MELROSE PARK, IL 60160  
TEL: (708) 493-4242 EMAIL: SY.TECH.REPAIR@GMAIL.COM

Merry Christmas  
and  
Happy New Year!



**INBOXX**

Your Mailing & Business Service Center



INBOXX  
643 N York St, Elmhurst, IL 60126  
info@inboxxco.com  
(630) 359-5956

Happy Holidays



**Anthony Renelli**

Licensed Mortgage Loan Officer  
NMLS 677025

arenelli@guildmortgage.net

O 630.230.8405 1815 Meyers Road Suite 250  
M 630.465.0425 Oakbrook Terrace, IL 60181



**Guild**  
mortgage  
OWN WHAT MATTERS

Company NMLS 3274. Equal Housing Opportunity.



Merry Christmas  
and  
Happy New Year!

**ALLIANCE BUILDERS &  
CONSTRUCTION Co. INC.**

**4105 W. Armitage • Chicago  
(773) 235-8765**

**alliance-building.com**



Merry Christmas  
and  
Happy New Year!

**CHICAGOLAND  
BROKERS**

**MARTIN TKACZYK**  
REAL ESTATE BROKER

**5151 N. Harlem Ave. • Chicago  
(312) 788-7740**

*Season's  
Greetings!*



**Dr. Christine Heck**  
675 W. North Ave. • Suite 301  
Melrose Park

**(312) 852-2525  
(949) 703-8496 Fax**



Merry Christmas  
and  
Happy New Year!



**DAVID DELIA**

630.364.9136  
david@delia-inc.com

708.731.3933  
info@delia-inc.com • www.delia-inc.com  
2900 West Soffel Avenue • Melrose Park, IL 60160



**Merry Christmas  
and  
Happy New Year!**



**Dan Parise, DPM**

Board Certified

675 W. North Ave.

Melrose Park, IL 60160



312.852.2525



949.404.8351

Happy Holidays



**JUAN ACHOA  
SNOW REMOVAL**

**126 N. 14th Ave.  
Melrose Park  
(708) 289-9737**



**Merry Christmas  
and  
Happy New Year!**

**JOHN'S  
LANDSCAPING**

Lawn • Tree • Garden  
(708) 289-0737  
Residential • Commercial

Season's Greetings!



CHICAGO'S ORIGINAL JUMBO SLICE

**Slice Factory**

**Pizza • Wings • Salads**

2212 W. North Ave • Melrose Park  
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www.slicefactory.com



*Season's  
Greetings!*



2212 W. North Ave. • Melrose Park  
(708) 888-4388



**Mayor  
Ronald M. Serpico**

**2025**

**Taste of Melrose Park**

**Celebrating Our 43rd Year**

**August 29th, 30th & 31st**







**We Couldn't Have Done  
What We Did Without You ...  
Thank You!**



**Save the Dates – Taste of Melrose Park 2026 ... Labor Day Weekend • Friday-Sunday, Sept. 4-6, 2026**



# SPIN INTO A NEW YEAR OF BIG WINS!

STOP IN TO CHECK OUT OUR PROMOTIONS!

HANDICAP ACCESSIBLE!

OPEN DAILY  
9AM – MIDNIGHT!

.....

2209 DIVISION #4  
MELROSE PARK, IL  
708.710.7294



\$2 COORS LIGHT



FOLLOW  
US ON  
FACEBOOK!

LOOKING FOR  
ALL YOU  
NIGHT OWLS!

## \$10 MATCH PLAY

VALID TUESDAYS & WEDNESDAYS • 4pm-12am • Expires 2/28/26



Play \$10.00 and we will play an additional  
\$10.00 on the machine of your choice.  
See a staff member to walk you through the process.

2209 Division #4 • Melrose Park, IL 60160

CUSTOMER NAME \_\_\_\_\_

EMAIL \_\_\_\_\_

PHONE \_\_\_\_\_

Must be 21 or older to game. No purchase necessary. Management reserves all rights. Redeem this coupon to receive \$10 Match Play at the awarding establishment. Match Play is offered and provided exclusively by the awarding establishment. If you or someone you know has a gambling problem, crisis counseling and referral services can be accessed by calling 1-800-GAMBLER (1-800-426-2537) or text "GAMB" to 833234. Individuals can enroll in the IGB Self-Exclusion Program at all of the IGB offices located at all casinos. Additional information can be found on the Self-Exclusion Page at <https://igb.illinois.gov/>.

## \$10 MATCH PLAY

VALID MONDAYS & THURSDAYS • 9pm - 12am • Expires 2/28/26



Play \$10.00 and we will play an additional  
\$10.00 on the machine of your choice.  
See a staff member to walk you through the process.

2209 Division #4 • Melrose Park, IL 60160

CUSTOMER NAME \_\_\_\_\_

EMAIL \_\_\_\_\_

PHONE \_\_\_\_\_

Must be 21 or older to game. No purchase necessary. Management reserves all rights. Redeem this coupon to receive \$10 Match Play at the awarding establishment. Match Play is offered and provided exclusively by the awarding establishment. If you or someone you know has a gambling problem, crisis counseling and referral services can be accessed by calling 1-800-GAMBLER (1-800-426-2537) or text "GAMB" to 833234. Individuals can enroll in the IGB Self-Exclusion Program at all of the IGB offices located at all casinos. Additional information can be found on the Self-Exclusion Page at <https://igb.illinois.gov/>.

Must be 21 or older to game. If you or someone you know has a gambling problem, crisis counseling and referral services can be accessed by calling 1-800-GAMBLER (1-800-426-2537) or text "GAMB" to 833234. Individuals can enroll in the IGB Self-Exclusion Program at all of the IGB offices located at all casinos. Additional information can be found on the Self-Exclusion Page at <https://igb.illinois.gov/>.





# Haunt on Hirsch – Another Fun Ghoulish Night!

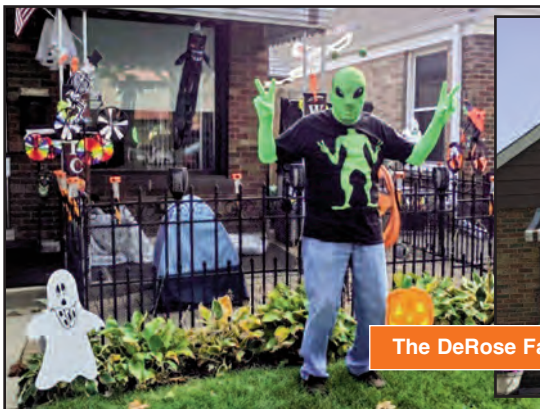
On Friday, Oct. 17, Veterans Park District and the Melrose Park Youth Commission joined forces once again to host Haunt on Hirsch Street at Bulger Park. The screamworthy Halloween event was fang-tastic and full of excitement for all. Everyone had an incredibly good time!



The Robertstad Family



The DeCarlo Family



The DeRose Family



## KOOKY and SPOOKY!

Several Melrose Park families were excited about this year's Halloween! Pictured are some of the frightful and fun decorations that were set up throughout the village to celebrate the day of make-believe, spine-chilling, creepy, crawly, fun and mischievous activities! Things looked boooooo-tiful!



# Veterans Park District

## Programs & Happenings

### Early Childhood

#### Pee Wee Playtime • Ages Up to 5

This is a great opportunity for you and your child to socialize. The room is set up with tables, fun toys, games, mats, big wheels and even a ball pit! You and your child can play, interact, make a craft, enjoy music and movement, and have lots of fun!

- Thursdays, Jan. 8-March 25; 9:30-11:30 a.m.; Bulger Park Community Center, 1601 Hirsch St. Melrose Park; Fee – single visit \$5 per child/\$3 per sibling, or purchase a punch pass \$20 for six visits (savings of \$10), supervising adult is free. Plan to enjoy the free coffee bar. No registration needed drop in anytime.

#### Music & Me • Ages 2-5

Through singing, movement, rhythm activities, and simple instrument play, families will engage in a fun, interactive experiences that support early development and build a love of music. This class encourages bonding, creativity, and confidence in a welcoming environment (2- and 3-year-olds must attend with adult).

- Wednesdays, Feb. 11-March 4; 12:15-1 p.m.; Bulger Park Community Center, 1601 Hirsch St. Melrose Park; Fee – R\$40/NR\$50.

#### Little Chefs' Dessert Dishes • Ages 2-5

Curious minds will mix, layer, and decorate a variety of fun and tasty desserts through hands-on activities, creative exploration and plenty of sweet fun. Each class features a simple no-bake dessert and a take-home treat or recipe card to keep the creativity going at home (2- and 3-year-olds must attend with adult).

- Thursdays, Feb. 26-March 19; 4:45-5:30 p.m.; Grant Park Recreation Center, 44 W. Golfview Dr., Northlake; Fee – R\$40/NR\$50.

### Creative Arts

#### Vision Board Making Workshop • Ages 6+

Start the new year with creativity and goal! In this hands-on workshop, you'll design a personalized vision board using a mix of scrapbooking techniques, painting and inspirational images. Whether you're setting goals, dreaming big or simply organizing your thoughts for the year ahead, this is your space to reflect, create and be inspired. All materials are provided.

- Thursday, Jan. 8; 5-6 p.m.; Grant Park Recreation Center, 44 W. Golfview Dr., Northlake; Fee – R\$20/NR\$30.

#### Candle Making Workshop • Ages 8+

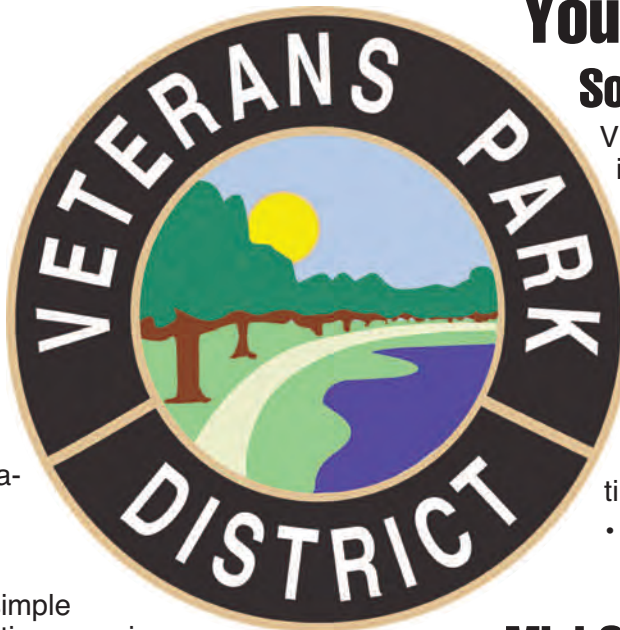
Get creative with candle painting using colored wax themed for Valentine's Day! A fun and festive craft activity.

- Thursday, Feb. 8, 5-6 p.m.; Grant Park Recreation Center, 44 W. Golfview Dr., Northlake; Fee – R\$20/NR\$30.

#### Candy Hearts Party • Ages 6+

Get crafty and festive! Join us for a fun-filled Valentine's celebration featuring a Valentine's box decorating, cookie decorating and friendship bracelet making. Perfect for kids and families (participating adults must enroll).

- Friday, Feb. 13; 6:30-8 p.m.; Grant Park Recreation Center, 44 W. Golfview Dr., Northlake; Fee – R\$20/NR\$30.



### Youth Athletics

#### Soccer • Ages 8-12

VPD staff will lead players in specific drills while they improve their overall understanding of the game while having a blast! Each class lasts for one hour and players will rotate through different stations and drills.

- Thursdays, Jan. 8-29; 5-6 p.m.; George Leoni Complex, 800 N. 17th Ave., Melrose Park; Fee – R\$55/NR\$70.

#### Baseball • Ages 8-12

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

- Mondays, Jan. 5-Feb. 2; 5-6 p.m.; George A. Leoni Complex, 800 N 17th Ave, Melrose Park; Fee – R\$55/NR\$70.

#### Mini Sports • Ages 4-7

Get ready to run, kick, hit and play! Our mini sports introduce kids ages 4-7 to the exciting world of sports through a fun mix of soccer, tee ball and a mix of field games.

- Fridays, Jan. 9-30; 5-6 p.m.; George A. Leoni Complex, 800 N. 17th Ave., Melrose Park; Fee – R\$55/NR\$70.

### Fitness

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, Youth Fitness, Youth Boxing, Youth Speed Training and Beginner Yoga. Call Cimballo Fitness Center at (708) 343-5151 for more information.

### Golf Simulator

Come experience Cimballo 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. Cimballo 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](http://www.vpdpark.org) or our Facebook Page for updates.**



# CONNECT WITH US!



## 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](http://CuomoToGo.com).**

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



# ***CIMBALO FITNESS CENTER***



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

**JANUARY  
5-9**

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

[www.vpdpark.org](http://www.vpdpark.org)

1203 N. 24th, Melrose Park

708-343-5151



(708) 343-5270 | [VPDPARK.ORG](http://VPDPARK.ORG) | FOLLOW US ON







**Veterans  
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# PEEWEE PLAYTIME!

 **Pee Wee Playtime  
2026 Punch Pass**

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

1 2 3 4 5 6

## **DROP-IN PROGRAM**

**Ages 0-5 with adult  
Thursdays  
9:30-11:30 am  
Jan 8-Mar 26**

Free Coffee Bar & Admission for Adults

### **SINGLE VISIT**

\$5 per child/\$3 per sibling

### **PUNCH PASS**

\$20 for 6 visits (\$10 savings)



#### **ACTIVITIES**



Fun toys, games & mats



Simple crafts



Big wheels & a ball pit



Music & movement

**BULGER PARK COMMUNITY CENTER  
1601 HIRSCH ST, MELROSE PARK**

(708) 343-5270 | [VPDPARK.ORG](http://VPDPARK.ORG) | FOLLOW US ON







**Veterans  
Park  
District**

*Programs  
&  
Happenings*



# Vision Board Making Workshop

Start the new year with creativity and goal setting!

Design your own Vision Board using scrapbooking techniques and painting to bring your goals and dreams to life.

**Ages 6+  
Wednesdays  
5-6pm  
January 8  
\$20R/\$30NR**

Activity Highlights:

- Organize your plans and goals for the new year
- 🔧 Get hands-on with paints, magazines, and craft materials
- ♥ Create a visual reminder to stay motivated all year long

**Grant Park Recreation Center  
44 W. Golfview Dr, Northlake**



(708) 343-5270 | [VPDPARK.ORG](http://VPDPARK.ORG) | FOLLOW US ON







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

# MUSIC & ME

**Enjoy singing, movement, rhythm games,  
and simple instrument play that build  
early development, creativity, and  
confidence.**

**AGES 2-5  
WEDNESDAYS  
FEB 11-MAR 4  
12:15- 1PM  
\$40R/\$50NR**



**Bulger Park • 1601 Hirsch St. • Melrose Park**



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



# CANDY HEARTS

## VALENTINE'S DAY PARTY

Join us as we celebrate in the sweetest way!

**Ages 6+**

**Friday**

**6:30-8pm**

**February 13**

**\$30R/\$35NR**

### Activities Include:

- ✂️ Decorating Valentine's Boxes
- Cookie Decorating
- 💞 Friendship Bracelet Making

Grant Park Recreation Center, 44 W. Golfview Dr, Northlake



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

# Mini Poms



Get ready to  
move, shake and shine!

In this fun and energetic  
class, participants will  
learn basic pom dance  
skills, simple routines, and  
teamwork in a fun and  
encouraging environment.

Perfect for beginners this  
class builds rhythm,  
coordination and  
confidence.



## Ages 6+

Wednesday  
5-6pm  
March 4 – April 8  
\$65 R / \$75 NR

Grant Park Recreation Center  
44 W. Golfview Dr, Northlake



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Spring  
into  
Success!



**Register now!**  
[triton.edu/spring](http://triton.edu/spring)







# Triton College NEWS

## Aspen Institute Names Triton as a Top 200 U.S. Community College Eligible for the 2027 Aspen Prize

Triton College is proud to announce that it has been named one of the 200 institutions eligible to compete for the \$1 million Aspen Prize for Community College Excellence – the nation’s premier recognition of high achievement and performance among two-year colleges.

The 200 colleges were selected based on their student outcomes data, including retention, completion, transfer and bachelor’s attainment rates. Started in 2010, this is the ninth cycle of the Aspen Prize.

Together, these 200 colleges represent the breadth and diversity of the community college sector. They are located in urban, rural and suburban areas across the country and serve anywhere from a few hundred students to tens of thousands. Some of these colleges focus primarily on workforce programs, while others focus on transfer and bachelor’s attainment or a combination of the two.

“The Aspen Prize rewards colleges that achieve the kind of outcomes that actually matter to students – completing college degree programs that, in turn, lead to lifelong success,” said Josh Wyner, executive director of the Aspen Institute College Excellence Program. “Aspen Prize winners offer a powerful message: Community colleges can deliver the kind of life-changing education that makes the American Dream real.”

Community colleges educate nearly 6 million students. Yet community college student outcomes fall short in both the rate at which students graduate and the percentage of students who achieve success after graduation. The Aspen Prize process identifies and celebrates community colleges that demonstrate that achieving stronger outcomes is possible, providing a roadmap of effective practices and strategies for other colleges to follow.

The 200 eligible colleges have been invited to submit an application and participate in a rigorous review process that will culminate in the naming of the Aspen Prize winner in spring 2027. Over the coming 20 months, the colleges that apply for the Aspen Prize will be assessed based on (1) student outcomes data, ranging from student transfer and completion rates to employment and wages after graduation, and (2) whether they have engaged in scaled practices that led to high and improving student outcomes.

“Among these 200 colleges are some really special places that deliver strong and improving outcomes for students across the board,” Wyner said. “Our job over the coming 20 months is to gather a lot more data and work with a deep

bench of field experts to assess which of these 200 stand out so we can not only honor them with a monetary award, but drive attention to the most effective field practices that other colleges can replicate.”

This is the first time since the inception of the Aspen Prize that 200 colleges are eligible to apply, growing from 150. This year, in addition to publicly available federal data, over 600 colleges authorized the use of National Student Clearinghouse data on their institution’s degree completion, transfer, and bachelor’s attainment rates for full- and part-time students.

Since its founding in 1964, Triton College has remained steadfast in its mission of educating and serving the community. Through its welcoming learning environment, affordable tuition and open admission policy, the institution has expanded the accessibility of post-secondary education for residents across its district. For more information, visit [triton.edu](http://triton.edu). The full list of eligible community colleges can be accessed at [higher.ed.aspeninstitute.org](http://higher.ed.aspeninstitute.org).

## Triton Prepares and Distributes 1,000 Thanksgiving Meals to Students and Local Families

Just ahead of the Thanksgiving holiday, Triton College’s Hospitality Industry Administration Program undertook an extraordinary effort to prepare and distribute 1,000 Thanksgiving meals to students and families in the community.

After many hours of prep work, cooking and packaging holiday meals in Triton College’s Hospitality Kitchen, Chef Manuel “Manny” Uribe, Culinary Arts faculty, and his team of students delivered about 500 meals to Troy Mart to support students. The remaining 500 meals were distributed to local food pantries in advance of the holiday.

Under the direction of Chef Manny, HIA students are applying their training in large-scale meal planning, preparation and service, while giving back to the community. The packaged meals contained all the holiday essentials, including roast turkey, mashed potatoes, mac and cheese, and corn.

While Chef Manny is coordinated this generous operation, he said the idea originated from his students.

“The students wanted to do it, and I made it happen with the participation of our fellow faculty and admin team,” he said. “There’s a need out there, and that was something felt by the students and myself.”

Chef Manny especially thanked the Triton College Faculty Association for its significant contribution to the initiative, as well as Triton College President Mary-Rita Moore and others across the campus community who supported the effort.

Chef Manny said he and his students felt it was important to support the student body and address food insecurity. Emphasizing Triton College’s role as a community college and servant of the community, he added that they also felt it imperative to feed Triton’s neighbors as well.

“For many, Thanksgiving is a time to look forward to a home-cooked meal with friends and loved ones,” he said. “But the reality is that not everyone is fortunate enough to enjoy a meal or the company to share it with. No one should be hungry on Thanksgiving. That’s really the idea behind this effort and we’re thankful to be able to give back.”

Learn more about Triton College’s Hospitality Industry Administration Program by visiting [triton.edu/hia](http://triton.edu/hia).



A 501(c)(3) organization.

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

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

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

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

**Visit [www.triton.edu/foundation/pledge](http://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](mailto:tcfoundation@triton.edu).





# Want to make a difference in your community?



## MAKE A DIFFERENCE WITH RSVP

Put your talents and experience to work with the RSVP Volunteer Program of West Suburban Cook and Southern DuPage Counties. We can help by identifying volunteer opportunities in your community.

### You can:

- Provide tax assistance.
- Help ESL students practice their English conversational skills.
- Give companionship by visiting, listening, talking or reading to older adults.
- Serve as a mentor.
- Work with children.
- And more.

### What you will receive in return is the joy of volunteering, as well as:

- Free membership in a national organization.
- A quarterly newsletter.
- Mileage reimbursement upon request.
- Supplemental auto insurance.
- Invitation to volunteer appreciation events.
- A feeling of accomplishment by giving back to the community and feeling good about yourself.

**For more information, please call the RSVP Volunteer Program at Triton College, (708) 456-0300, Ext. 3603, or email us at [RSVP@triton.edu](mailto:RSVP@triton.edu).**

## Triton College Active Retired Citizens Club

Looking for something to do in your retirement? Want to make new friends? Triton College's Active Retired Citizens Club is a social club that provides activities and networking opportunities to adults who are young at heart and want to expand their social and intellectual life.

**For more information, please call (708) 456-0300, Ext. 3603.**



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**Sammy Alfano**  
[sammya@apnissan.com](mailto:sammya@apnissan.com)



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NEEDED!**

Monday thru Friday mornings  
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Mileage reimbursement available!



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.

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




# NEWS89 **School District 89 BRIEFS**

## District 89 Partners with Local Libraries for Family Storytime


Preschoolers at Garfield Elementary enjoyed a special Family Storytime and Craft Event as District 89 partnered with local public libraries to support early literacy and school-family engagement. Librarians visited classrooms to lead interactive read-aloud, music and hands-on crafts, giving students and their parents the chance to explore new books and literacy skills together.

This collaboration highlights District 89's commitment to fostering early literacy, strengthening school-family connections, and encouraging a lifelong love of reading.







**DISTRICT 89**  
MAYWOOD | MELROSE PARK | BROADVIEW



**RONALD McDONALD CARE MOBILE**




**SCHOOL DISTRICT 89  
&  
RONALD McDONALD MOBILE HEALTH  
PRESENTS: WINTER HEALTH SCREENINGS**

**MONDAY, DECEMBER 22, 2025**  
8:40 am - 2:00 pm  
906 WALTON ST, MELROSE PARK, IL

- SCHOOL PHYSICALS
- SPORTS PHYSICALS
- IMMUNIZATION

[www.maywood89.org](http://www.maywood89.org)

[BOOK NOW](#)



Scan me!

Families with Medicaid and without insurance are welcome.  
Please note: Private insurance is not accepted.

## District 89's Winter Mobile Health Screenings Support Students' Wellness

District 89 offered free winter mobile health screenings recently at the District Office and all available spots filled quickly, prompting the addition of an extra day to serve more families. In partnership with Ronald McDonald Mobile Health, students received their sports physical and many were able to get up to date on required immunizations. Parents and community members were encouraged to take advantage of this valuable service to ensure their children were healthy and ready for school activities.

[www.maywood89.org](http://www.maywood89.org)

Follow Us on Twitter

“@maywood89”



# Bat Echolocation Exploration – Science in Action!

Roosevelt’s third graders in Mrs. Jennifer Duzinskas’ science class explored how bats navigate their environment through a hands-on echolocation activity. Blindfolded bats relied on sound cues from classmates to locate one another, helping students understand how bats use sound waves to see, experience the challenge of relying on hearing, practice collaboration and inquiry, and reflect on animal adaptations. This engaging lesson strengthened their life-science knowledge while fostering teamwork and curiosity.



# Students Explore Engineering and Technology Through WozEd Club

Fourth and fifth grade students in Dr. Kostelaz and Ms. Ruiz’s WozEd Club at Lincoln Elementary are gaining a rich, hands-on introduction to robotics and artificial intelligence. Through building, coding and testing functioning prototypes, students strengthen their analytical thinking, develop perseverance and collaborate meaningfully with their peers. This authentic learning experience is equipping students with foundational knowledge and a problem-solving mindset that will support their success in the rapidly evolving fields of engineering and technology.



# Understanding Cells Through Analogies

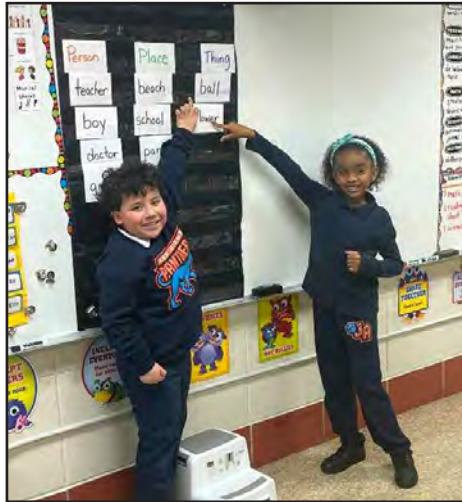
Seventh graders in Mr. Thomas’ science class at Irving Middle School created organelle analogy projects to help them understand plant and animal cell structures, and how they relate to larger body systems. Students developed analogies connecting each organelle to familiar objects or functions, then presented their projects to the class, demonstrating their growing scientific knowledge and communication skills.



# Sixth Graders Demonstrate Understanding of Ancient Egypt Through Mummy Model Project

Sixth graders in Ms. Frank’s class at Washington Dual Language Academy completed a culminating project that showcased their understanding of the importance of the afterlife in ancient Egypt. Students chose to build either a detailed model of the Great Pyramids of Giza, including the Great Pyramid, a smaller pyramid, the Nile River and a sacrifice chamber, or a sarcophagus complete with a mummy, burial items and symbolic decorations. Through these creative projects, students demonstrated their understanding of how deeply Egyptians valued the afterlife and the elaborate ways they prepared for eternal life.





## Second Graders Explore the Joy of Reading

Ms. Taylor's second graders are diving into reading with engaging, hands-on activities that help strengthen their literacy skills. Students are exploring new stories, practicing fluency and expanding their vocabulary, all while gaining confidence as independent readers.

These classroom experiences reflect Jane Addams' dedication to building strong reading foundations and nurturing a lifelong love of learning.



## First Graders Celebrate Classroom Library Opening at Melrose Park

On Nov. 7, students in Mrs. Archuletta's first grade class celebrated the grand opening of their cozy new classroom library with a special ribbon-cutting ceremony. Assistant Principal Mrs. Bonilla joined the celebration, helping students explore space and discussing how books spark imagination, build knowledge and support confident reading. The event marked the start of many new reading adventures and created an inviting space for students to develop a lifelong love of books.

## Third Graders Strengthen Writing Through Superhero Stories

Third graders in Ms. Magnus's ELA classes at Emerson School are developing their creative writing skills by crafting superhero stories. Students created original characters, imaginative settings and engaging storylines, building confidence as they practiced narrative structure, vocabulary and descriptive writing. This project encourages critical thinking and allows students to express their creativity while deepening their understanding of strong storytelling.





# St. Luke School

Excellence. Faith. Service.



## Open House

Sunday,  
January 25th  
10:30 am - 12:30 pm

519 Ashland Avenue  
River Forest, IL 60305



At St. Luke School, we honor our mission of engaging the intellect and nurturing the spirit of every student. We are proud to offer an exceptional Catholic education to students in Preschool through 8<sup>th</sup> grade.

- **Superior academics** : 75% of students meet/exceed Reading expectations and 67% do so in Math - well above Illinois state averages.
- **Small classes**: A 10:1 student-teacher ratio creates a close-knit, high-impact learning environment.
- **Experienced educators**: Our dedicated teachers average 18 years of classroom experience and their dedication to St. Luke is evident with an average tenure of 9.5 years.
- **Inclusive athletics and extra curricular activities**: A no-cut program beginning in 4th grade promotes growth, teamwork, and leadership.
- **A values-driven community**: Rooted in academic rigor, kindness, and service, preparing students for success in high school and beyond.

We invite you to experience the St. Luke Difference.

Contact Jessie Wiktor for more information at  
[jwiktor@stlukeschoolrf.org](mailto:jwiktor@stlukeschoolrf.org) or visit our website at [stlukeschoolrf.org](http://stlukeschoolrf.org)

Applications for the 2026–27 school year will open on  
January 5, 2026.





# Greetings from The Priest and Staff of OLMC

This Christmas is special for Our Lady of Mt Carmel. A group of 48 participants just came back from Rome and participated in a pilgrimage in the Jubilee Year that is about to end. We came back enthusiastic because of the history, saints, religious experience and blessings received.



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

**“For today in the city of David, a savior has been born for you who is Messiah and Lord.”**

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

I wish a merry Christmas to all the families of Melrose Park. I know that your home will be open to welcome those you love and please save a space for those who might show up unexpectedly and have nowhere to go nor no one to welcome them. Merry Christmas! Buon Natale! Feliz Navidad! Christ has born! Yes, amid so much unexpected diseases, masks, violence, wars and desperation ... Christ has born again. HE is our hope and the best gift for Christmas!

• Fr. Leandro Fossá, C.S.

May the light of the season glow and fill your soul with peace, joy, and love.  
Wishing you and your family all of God's blessings this Christmas  
and throughout the new year.



**Our Lady of Mt. Carmel Parish & Shrine**

*Fr. Leandro Fossá, cs*  
*Fr. Richard Bezzegato, cs*  
*Fr. Khan Vu, cs*  
*Fr. Narasimhulu Mareddy Joseph*



MISSIONARIES OF ST. CHARLES  
**SCALABRINIANS**



Join us to celebrate

# CHRISTMAS

Tue, Dec 16 to Tue, Dec 23

Posadas Navideñas - 7 pm

Sunday, December 21

Children's Christmas Concert - 6 pm

Wednesday, December 24

Christmas Eve Vigil

5 pm Trilingual mass

7 pm Spanish mass

11:30 pm Choir Concert

Midnight Mass trilingual

Thursday, December 25

Christmas Day

10:30 am Italian mass

12 pm English mass

1:30 pm Spanish mass

Wednesday, December 31

New Year's Eve

5 pm Trilingual mass

7 pm Spanish mass

[www.olmcparish.org](http://www.olmcparish.org)



*Special  
Masses  
and  
Events  
at  
Our  
Lady of  
Mount  
Carmel*

**PARISH & SHRINE**



# JANUARY 2026

## *special Masses & Events*

### ORGANIZE YOUR BLESSED MOMENTS

#### **1** *Mary, Mother of God*

SOLEMNITY, HOLY DAY OF OBLIGATION

*Thursday, January 1*

10:30 am Mass in Italian  
12:00 pm Mass in English  
1:30 pm Mass in Spanish

#### **4** *Epiphany*

*Sunday, January 4*  
Regular Sunday  
Mass Schedule

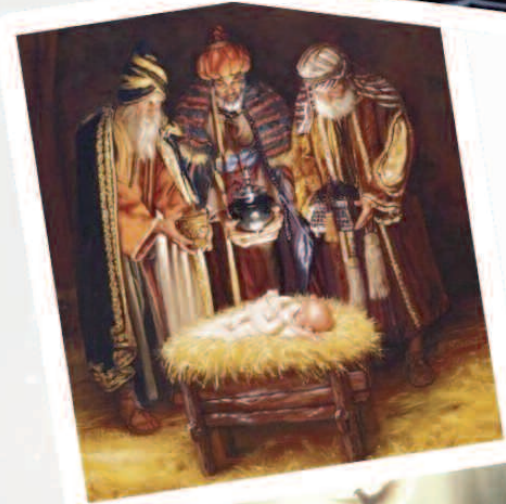
#### **11** *Baptism of the Lord*

*Sunday, January 11*  
Regular Sunday  
Mass Schedule

#### **25** *Mass for Padre Pio*

*Sunday, January 25*

10:30 am Mass in Italian  
Followed by Reception at  
Carmel Hall



OUR LADY OF  
MOUNT CARMEL

1101 23rd Ave. Melrose Park, IL  
(708) 344 - 4140  
[www.olmcparish.org](http://www.olmcparish.org)



# ST. BLAISE

*Feast of*

HOLY MASS AND  
BLESSING OF THE  
THROATS

Tuesday  
February 3, 2026

ENGLISH &  
ITALIAN 6:00PM



SPANISH 7:00 PM

Our Lady of  
Mount Carmel Parish

PROTECTOR FROM AILMENTS OF THE THROAT





# SACRED HEART & ST. EULALIA PARISH

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



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



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

*Please join us for our 2025  
Christmas & New Year's  
Celebrations!*

## **Christmas Eve—DEC. 24**

**5:00pm** English Mass at **Sacred Heart**  
**7:00pm** Spanish Mass at **St. Eulalia**

## **Christmas—DEC. 25**

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

**—The Solemnity of Mary—**

## **New Year's Eve—DEC. 31**

**5:00pm** Bilingual Mass at **Sacred Heart**  
**6:00pm** Bilingual Mass at **St. Eulalia**

## **New Year's Day—JAN. 1**

**10:30am** Bilingual Mass at **Sacred Heart**  
**10:30am** English Mass at **St. Eulalia**  
**12:30pm** Spanish Mass at **St. Eulalia**

*Christmas Blessings to You  
and Your Loved Ones*

Parish Phone  
**708-344-0757**

Parish Website  
**shsparish.org**





# SACRED HEART & ST. EULALIA PARISH



WEBSITE: [shsparish.org](http://shsparish.org)

PHONE: 708-344-0757

EMAIL: [shseparish@archchicago.org](mailto:shseparish@archchicago.org)

## UPCOMING EVENTS



### First Friday Devotion to the Most Sacred Heart of Jesus

Mass every First Friday of the month **7:30pm.**

Upcoming dates: **Jan. 2** at **Sacred Heart**, **Feb. 6** at **St. Eulalia**

### Second & Third Saturday Chaplet of Divine Mercy

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



### Thursday Adoration and Confession at 7:00pm

**Jan. 15** & **Jan. 29** and **Feb. 12** & **Feb. 26** at **Sacred Heart**.

**Jan. 8, Jan. 22** and **Feb. 19** at **St. Eulalia**.



## COMMUNITY POSADAS 2025



**Saturday, December 20**  
**7:00pm**

**Sacred Heart Church**

819 N. 16th Ave., Melrose Park



**Sunday, December 21**  
**1:30pm**

**St. Eulalia Church**

1825 S. 9th Ave., Maywood

### ASH WEDNESDAY - February 18, 2026

**8:00am** Mass at Sacred Heart and **7:00pm** Mass at both Sacred Heart and St. Eulalia. Ashes distributed from **10:00am-1:00pm** at Sacred Heart & **4:00pm-6:00pm** at both Sacred Heart and St. Eulalia. Then Mass at both Sacred Heart & St. Eulalia at **7:00pm**. Up-to-date information at [shsparish.org](http://shsparish.org).





# Proviso Township Handyman Program

## Early Winter 2025 – Proviso Township Handyman News

Winter is fast upon us! If you have not called to have your home winterized, call now. The weatherproofing is best done before the cold weather sets in to ensure the caulk or plastic covers will adhere for the winter season. Have your filter in your furnace changed to help your furnace run efficiently.

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

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

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



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

**+ Only Homeowners within the boundaries of the Proviso Township +**

**Michael A. Corrigan  
Supervisor**

**Anthony "Tony" Williams  
Clerk**

**Steven J. Zawaski  
Assessor**

**Gay F. Chase • Evelyn Chavez • Joseph Christopher • Tommy Olson  
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 - <b>No Rodding</b>
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 • Tommy Olson, 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](http://www.provisotownship.com)





**BILL CARO**  
PRESIDENT

**(312) 726-4950**  
**(888) 308-8210**

**2210 W. NORTH AVENUE**  
**MELROSE PARK, IL 60160**

**EMAIL – LEGION\_911@YAHOO.COM**

**EXECUTIVE PROTECTION**  
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**PRIVATE GATHERINGS**

**SPORTS FIGURES**

**AUTOGRAPH SIGNINGS**

**ENTERTAINERS**

**CONCERT TOURS**

**PRIVATE ESTATES**

**PRIVATE FAMILY**  
**PROTECTION**

**JEWELRY TRANSPORT**  
**PROTECTION**

**SPECIAL EVENTS**

**BUSINESS MEETINGS**

**SECURITY CONSULTING**

**CONSTRUCTION SITE**  
**SECURITY**

**BUSINESS | ESTABLISHMENT**  
**SECURITY**

**BACKGROUND**  
**INVESTIGATIONS**

**ALL SERVICES**

**HAVE THE OPTION OF**  
**BEING ARMED & UNARMED**



# 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*



## 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**

# Illinois Secretary of State Office in Melrose Park Offers an Abundance of Important Services

- **Address Change**
- **Administrative Hearings Officer**
- **Commercial Drivers License**
  - Duplicate/Corrected
  - Renewal
  - Vision Screening
- **Disability Placards**
  - Temporary First Time Issuance
  - Temporary Replacement
- **Drivers License**
  - Duplicate/Corrected
  - First Time Issuance
  - Instruction Permit Duplicate/Corrected
  - Instruction Permit First Time Issuance
  - Instruction Permit Renewal
  - Motorcycle Road Test
  - Motorcycle Written Test
  - Non-Visa Temporary Visitors (TVDL)
  - Renewal
  - Road Test
  - REAL ID
  - Vision Screening

- **Drivers License**
  - Written Test
- **License Plates**
  - Renewal Stickers
  - Sticker Replacement
- **Non Sufficient Funds**
- **Non-CDL Road Test**
- **Non-CDL Written Test**
- **Organ Donor Registry**
- **Reinstatement Fees**
  - Discretionary Suspension (Traffic related)
  - Failure to Appear Suspension
  - Parking Suspension
  - Tollway/Automated Traffic Suspension
- **State ID**
  - Duplicate/Corrected
  - First Time Issuance
  - Renewal
  - REAL ID

- **Vehicle**
  - Registration Renewal
  - Sticker Replacement
  - Seven-Day Drive Away Permits
  - Titles
- **Voter Registration Applications**

**The Illinois  
Secretary of State Office  
is located at  
1903 N. Mannheim Rd.  
Melrose Park.**  
**For more information,  
visit [www.ilsos.gov](http://www.ilsos.gov).**

OFFICE OF THE ILLINOIS SECRETARY OF STATE

Alexi Giannoulas  
Secretary of State







Illinois State Representative  
**NORMA HERNANDEZ**  
77th District



Illinois State Representative  
Norma Hernandez

## State Rep. Norma Hernandez Returns to Springfield For Veto Session

During the fall Veto Session, State Rep. Norma Hernandez advanced a series of impactful legislation focused on lowering costs for families, protecting vulnerable residents, and strengthening fairness and accountability across Illinois. She supported major affordability initiatives like the Clean and Reliable Grid Affordability Act (SB 25) to reduce energy bills through clean-energy investments and the Low-Income Senior Citizens Assessment Freeze Homestead Exemption (SB 642), which raises income eligibility to help more seniors stay in their homes. Rep. Hernandez also backed the landmark Transit Reform Package (SB 2111), safeguarding public transit across the state without raising taxes on everyday services. In addition, she championed HB 1312, a comprehensive immigration omnibus that enhances civil rights protections by limiting intrusive enforcement practices in sensitive locations. Together, these measures reflect Rep. Hernandez's commitment to equity, safety, economic stability, and expanding opportunity for all Illinoisans.

Here's a closer look at the impactful measures she's led:

### Veto Session Legislation Updates

#### SB 25: Clean and Reliable Grid Affordability Act

Seeks to reduce energy costs for families facing recent sharp rate increases. This is achieved through significant investments in clean energy capture, enhanced battery storage and improved energy efficiency.

#### SB 642: Low-Income Senior Citizens Assessment Freeze Homestead Exemption

This measure strengthens existing legislation for older adults by increasing the income eligibility cutoffs for the senior property tax assessment freeze. This adjustment, made to reflect inflation, allows more seniors to manage their finances, reduce their property tax burden and remain in their homes.

#### SB 2111: Transit Reform Package

Aims to reform and save public transit across Illinois, including Chicago. The bill achieves this without introducing new taxes on food delivery, real estate or streaming services, and without increasing funding for bureaucratic mismanagement.

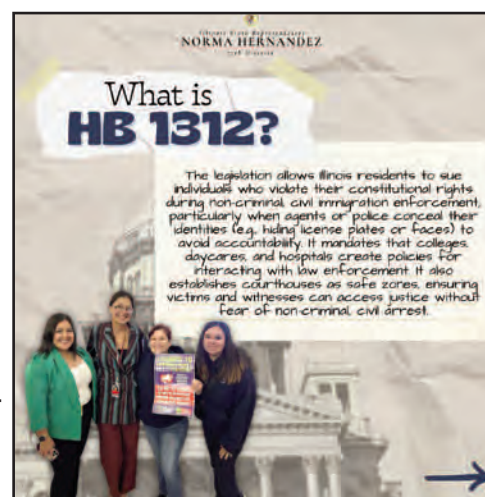
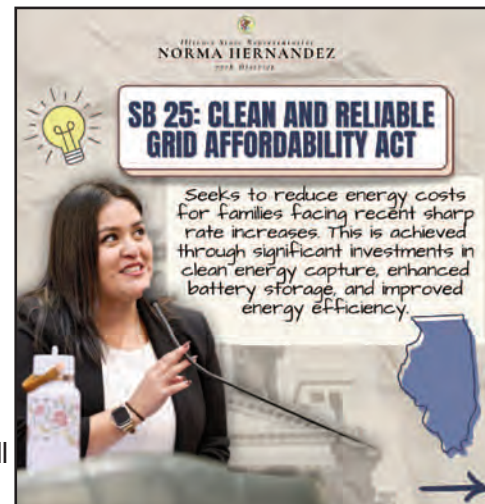
#### HB1312 Immigration Omnibus

What is HB1312? This robust initiative, championed by Rep. Hernandez, Illinois leaders and advocates, is designed to enhance accountability in civil immigration enforcement. This legislation aims to prevent intrusions into sensitive locations like hospitals, daycares and institutions of higher education, while also establishing a civil cause of action for violations of constitutional rights.

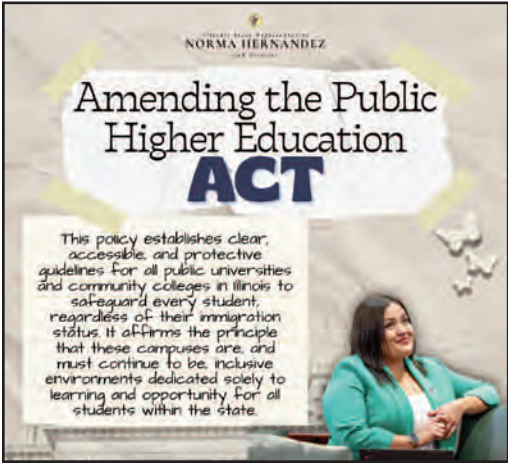
The legislation allows Illinois residents to sue individuals who violate their constitutional rights during noncriminal, civil immigration enforcement, particularly when agents or police conceal their identities (e.g., hiding license plates or faces) to avoid accountability. It mandates that colleges, daycares and hospitals create policies for interacting with law enforcement. It also establishes courthouses as safe zones, ensuring victims and witnesses can access justice without fear of noncriminal, civil arrest.

#### Court Access Safety, and Participation Act

This measure establishes a prohibition on civil arrests occurring within or in the immediate vicinity of Illinois courthouses. The purpose of this protection is to safeguard and ensure unimpeded access to the judicial system for all individuals, allowing them to attend to legal matters without fear of detention.







**Safe Licensed Daycare Centers**

This provision prohibits daycare providers from permitting immigration enforcement agents to enter a licensed daycare center unless the agents present a valid judicial warrant or court order signed by a judge. The intent is to establish a legal safeguard protecting the children and staff within the daycare center from unwarranted immigration enforcement actions on the premises.

**Amending the Public Higher Education Act**

This policy establishes clear, accessible, and protective guidelines for all public universities and community colleges in Illinois to safeguard every student, regardless of their immigration status. It affirms the principle that these campuses are, and must continue to be, inclusive environments dedicated solely to learning and opportunity for all students within the state.

**Christmas Tree Giveaway**

Our office was proud to partner with Coca-Cola, Mr. Pibb, and the Village of Melrose Park to provide free Christmas trees to constituents in

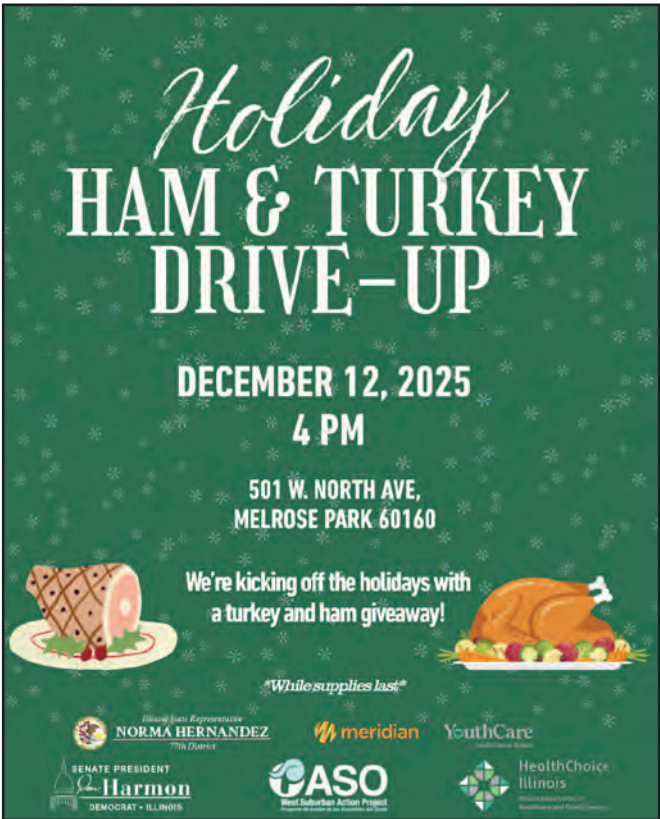


Melrose Park and across the 77th District. Families received trees, lights, ornaments and stands, and enjoyed complimentary beverages from our partners. We're grateful to everyone who helped make this a bright and festive start to the holiday season.



**Holiday Ham and Turkey Drive Up**

On Dec. 12, our team partnered with Senate President Don Harmon, PASO, Meridian and HealthChoice Illinois to host a Holiday Ham & Turkey Drive-Up in Melrose Park. Hundreds of families received holiday meals to bring home and share with loved ones. Community coming together is what the season is all about!



**Happy Holidays from Team Hernandez!**

*As we gather with loved ones this holiday season, our office would like to wish each of you peace, rest and moments of joy.  
May this season bring comfort, unity and brighter days ahead.*





*Cook County Commissioner  
Frank J. Aguilar*



# IMPORTANT NEWS FROM **FRANK J. AGUILAR** COOK COUNTY COMMISSIONER

## **Cook County Officials Celebrate Hispanic and Latine Heritage Month**

### **Officials, Accompanied by Musical Guests, Honored Notable Hispanic and Latine Residents for Their Contributions to Cook County and Honored Three Individuals with Awards**

On Wednesday, Oct. 15, Cook County commissioners and the Office of Cook County Board President Toni Preckwinkle celebrated Hispanic and Latine Heritage Month in the lobby of the Cook County Building.

The event began with a performance by Mariachi Los Jinetes of Morton East High School from Cook County's 16th District. After the performance, remarks were given by President Preckwinkle and commissioners Frank J. Aguilar, Alma Anaya and Jessica Vasquez.

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

After the musical performance, President Preckwinkle honored local leaders for their dedication to serving their communities and empowering Latine families across Cook County with the Latino Community Leadership Award. Awardees included commissioners Anaya, Vasquez and Aguilar; Jorge Perez, executive director of Ensemble Español; Billy Ocasio and Veronica Ocasio of the National Museum of Puerto Rican Arts and Culture; and José Ochoa of the National Museum of Mexican Art.

To close the press conference and ceremony, a performance was given by the Ensemble Espanol Music and Theater dance group.

"Growing up as the proud daughter of Colombian immigrants, I learned that Colombian liberation was won by a broad coalition of indentured servants, enslaved Africans, Indigenous people, and mestizos," said Commissioner Jessica Vasquez. "The lessons I learned growing up about Colombian history remind me that the same truth holds here in Cook County today – our liberation depends on one another. As we celebrate Latine Heritage Month, let's not only honor our culture and our roots – let's also carry forward the revolutionary spirit that unites us."

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







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

## **Cook County and City of Chicago Officials Celebrate Día de Los Muertos Officials Remember Deceased Cook County Residents at Ofrenda in the Cook County Building**

On Thursday, Oct. 23, Cook County and city of Chicago officials came together to celebrate Día de Los Muertos ("Day of the Dead"). In attendance was Cook County Board President Toni Preckwinkle, commissioners Frank J. Aguilar, Alma Anaya, Tara Stamps, Bridget Degnen, Maggie Trevor and Chairman John Daley.

Joining from the City of Chicago was Alder Anthony Quezada and the Department of Immigrant, Migrant and Refugee Rights Director of Policy and Strategic Initiatives Jesus Del Toro.

After remarks from elected officials, singer Zamari Parra performed the song La Llorano, before the Ocelotl-Cihuacoatl Calpulli Dance Group blessed the altar with a dance and song performance. To close the ceremony, Zamari Parra performed the song La Bruja.

"The celebration of Día de Los Muertos acknowledges that we still have a relationship with our ancestors and loved ones that have passed away. Today, we invite those Cook County residents who have left us to come back into our lives, if only for a moment, and remember the impact they had on all of us," said Cook County Board President Toni Preckwinkle.

Held annually on Nov. 1 and 2, Día de los Muertos is a traditional Meso-American holiday dedicated to the ancestors, it honors both death and the cycle of life. It is observed as a day to honor deceased family members and loved ones by "welcoming them back" through various customs, including making dedicated altars (ofrendas), laying out special food offerings and visiting their graves.

"The Día de Los Muertos ofrenda represents a memorial to remember and honor the lives of loved ones who passed on. It's remembering the good times we've had spent with them, keeping their memory alive in our hearts," said Cook County Commissioner Frank J. Aguilar.

An ofrenda is a traditional altar with a collection of objects placed on a ritual display during the annual Día de Muertos celebration. An ofrenda is created for individuals who have died and is intended to welcome them to the altar setting.

This is the fifth consecutive year that county officials have celebrated Día de los Muertos with an ofrenda in the Cook County Lobby. This is the first year featuring the artwork of local Chicago artist Oscar Romero. The artwork merged Mexican, Mexican-American and Chicano culture to show the rich history and traditions that have carried from Mexico to Cook County, Chicago and throughout the world.

"Día de Los Muertos calls us to come together and remember those who are no longer with us," said Chicago Deputy Mayor of Immigrant, Migrant and Refugee Rights Beatriz Ponce De Leon. "Through the music, artwork and food we reunite with loved ones and share this moment with our community. The city of Chicago and Cook County are proud to stand together in remembrance of our past, and to honor our histories, both personal and shared."





## News from Illinois Secretary of State Alexi Giannoulias

# New Year, New Laws: Giannoulias Rolls Out New Measures to Improve Government Efficiency, Increase Road Safety and Protect Libraries

Several initiatives spearheaded by Illinois Secretary of State Alexi Giannoulias will take effect in the new year.

"This past legislative session delivered some big wins for Illinoisans that will make a real difference in their everyday lives," Giannoulias said. "These laws move us closer to our goals of making our roads safer, ensuring our libraries have the tools they need to serve their communities and creating a more efficient and responsive government."

They include:

- **Road Safety and DMV Modernization**

New multi-pronged legislation provides clarification on cheating on DMV exams, allows the office to administer written tests online and enhances bicycle safety.

The measure clarifies that any attempt to have someone else provide answers to an individual taking a DMV exam, including attempts to use a hidden microphone or cellphone, constitutes cheating.

It also enhances the office's *Rules of the Road* publication to include information about the laws and best practices for safely sharing the road with bicyclists and pedestrians. In addition, it requires that before passing a cyclist, a driver of a vehicle must make a lane change.

HB 2983 was sponsored by State Rep. Edgar González Jr. (23rd District – Chicago) and State Sen. Steve Stadelman (34th District – Rockford).

- **Enhancing Library Security**

Amid an alarming increase in threats of violence to libraries and librarians across Illinois, the Secretary of State's Office can now issue security grants for libraries throughout the state, ensuring their ability to provide a safe environment for patrons, employees and the community.

Under the new law, grant applicants have the ability to request funding to install equipment, including security cameras, silent alarms or security checkpoints.

SB 1550 was sponsored by State Sen. Laura Murphy (28th District – Des Plaines) and State Rep. Michael Coffey Jr. (95th District – Springfield).

- **Cracking Down on Rogue Towers**

This legislation, which the office supported, strengthens oversight of towing companies to protect Illinoisans from predatory practices.

The law empowers the Secretary of State's Office to suspend tow truck registrations for companies that fail to pay Illinois Commerce Commission fines or penalties. It also improves consumer protections during towing and vehicle impoundment, including clarified rules around personal property left in towed vehicles.

SB 2040 was sponsored by State Sen. Celina Villaneuva (12th District – Chicago) and State Rep. Will Davis (30th District – East Hazel Crest).

- **Enabling Court of Claims E-Filing**

A new law will modernize the way the Illinois Court of Claims operates, transforming it from a court currently reliant on paper filings and in-person sessions that can cause delays.

The measure will save time and create new conveniences for Illinoisans by enabling the court to hold sessions remotely and allowing the public to file claims, provide evidence or testimony, and pay fees electronically.

HB 1576 was sponsored by State Rep. Terra Costa Howard (42nd District – Lombard) and State Sen. Michael Halpin (36th District – Rock Island).

## Avoid the Fee, Get REAL ID: Giannoulias Leads Push to Spare Illinoisans from TSA's \$45 Penalty

With the Transportation Security Administration's (TSA) new \$45 penalty set to catch travelers off guard starting Feb. 1, Illinois Secretary of State Alexi Giannoulias is taking action to reduce the Time Tax by making it easier than ever for Illinois residents to get their REAL ID.

"With costs rising across the board, Illinoisans shouldn't have to pay a \$45 penalty just to get on a plane, especially when that fee is higher than some flights themselves," Giannoulias said. "We're doing everything possible to remove barriers, save people time and make getting a REAL ID simple and stress-free. With a REAL ID in your wallet, you avoid TSA's penalty entirely and skip a massive travel headache."

To expand access, the office has extended the lease on its REAL ID walk-in supercenter located in Chicago's Loop through the end of 2026. It also continues to offer REAL ID services at DMVs throughout the state. Most located in Chicago and the suburbs require an appointment.

Giannoulias is also launching a new partnership with Cook County Clerk Monica Gordon aimed at cutting time, reducing hassle and ensuring that Illinoisans can secure their REAL IDs before the TSA penalty takes effect.

"Our office is committed to making it as convenient as possible for residents to access the vital records they need," Gordon said. "By teaming up with the Secretary of State's Office, we're expanding options and streamlining the process so Cook County residents can get their REAL ID required documents quickly, conveniently and without added stress."



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Those initiatives include:

- Helping residents obtain key identity documents – such as birth certificates and marriage licenses, which many residents don’t have readily on hand – more easily and efficiently.
- Designating cashiers at each Clerk’s Office location to expedite REAL-ID-related document requests.
- Establishing an appointment system to accommodate REAL-ID-related document requests.
- Dedicating a telephone helpline at (312) 603-6278 and email address at Clerk.RealID@cookcountyl.gov exclusively for customers who need help getting appointments for REAL-ID-related requests.

The Secretary of State’s Office has also streamlined its REAL ID portal – [realid.ilsos.gov](http://realid.ilsos.gov) – allowing residents to quickly identify which documents they need, schedule an appointment and come prepared. A dedicated call center helpline – (800) 252-8980 – is available to assist customers in confirming they have the necessary paperwork before they arrive.

With TSA’s new penalty looming, securing a REAL ID – or traveling with a passport – is the smart move that saves Illinoisans from paying more each trip. For example, a flight from Midway to Boston on Southwest can cost less than TSA’s \$45 Confirm.ID Fee. A REAL ID keeps travelers covered for years, helping them avoid added costs, long lines and last-minute airport stress.

## It’s Here: Giannoulas Launches Mobile ID, Add Yours Today

Illinois Secretary of State Alexi Giannoulas announced a major technological milestone: Illinois residents can securely add their Illinois-issued driver’s license or state ID to Apple Wallet and present their ID using their iPhone and Apple Watch. This marks a new era of convenience and digital innovation for the state, enabling residents to present their driver’s license and state ID in Apple Wallet in person, online and in apps at select businesses and organizations, including at TSA checkpoints at over 250+ airports in the U.S, including O’Hare, Midway and Lambert. The Illinois Mobile ID Program will soon expand to Google and Samsung Wallets, ensuring that every Illinois resident with a mobile phone has access to secure, digital identification.

“Mobile ID in Apple Wallet is now live for Illinois residents,” said Giannoulas. “This is just the start, our office will continue to work with businesses to expand where it’s accepted in order to make everyday life more seamless, secure and convenient.”

“The launch of Illinois’ Mobile ID in Apple Wallet gives United customers a faster, easier and more secure way to verify their identity at TSA checkpoints,” said Dan Lynch, vice president, State and Local Government Affairs at United Airlines. “As an airline committed to putting tools directly in our customers hands with the touch of a button, we’re excited that Illinois travelers can move through the airport with even greater convenience.”

This is not a replacement for a physical ID and for now residents must continue to carry their physical ID.

With the launch, Illinois joins 12 other states and the territory of Puerto Rico that offer driver’s licenses and state IDs in Apple Wallet to their residents.

### How to Add an Illinois Driver’s License or State ID to Apple Wallet

Adding a license or state ID to Apple Wallet can be done in a few easy steps. Residents can tap the Add (+) button at the top of the screen in Wallet on their iPhone, select “Driver’s License or State ID,” and follow the onscreen instructions to start the setup and verification process.

The resident will be asked to use their iPhone to scan their physical driver’s license or state ID card and take a selfie, which will be securely provided to the issuing state for verification. As an additional security step, residents will also be prompted to complete a series of facial and head movements during the setup process. Once verified by the issuing state, the resident’s ID or driver’s license will be added to Wallet.

Visit [www.ilsos.gov/mobile](http://www.ilsos.gov/mobile) for step-by-step instructions.

### Using an Illinois Driver’s License or State ID in Apple Wallet

Users can securely present their IDs in Apple Wallet in person, online and in apps to show proof of age or identity.

To present an ID in person, users can go to Apple Wallet and select their Illinois driver’s license and state ID in Apple Wallet. From there, they can hold their iPhone or Apple Watch near an identity reader, review the specific information being requested and use Face ID or Touch ID to authenticate. Users can present their ID in Apple Wallet at select TSA checkpoints, businesses and venues, in addition to Apple Store locations across the U.S. for order pick-up, Genius Bar appointments and more.

To present an Illinois driver’s license and state ID in Apple Wallet in apps and online, users can select the Verify with Apple Wallet or Continue with Apple Wallet button. From there, they can review the specific information being requested and authenticate with Face ID or Touch ID before information is shared.

### Presenting an ID in a Secure, Private Way

IDs in Apple Wallet use the privacy and security features that are built into Apple devices to help protect a user’s identity and personal information. When adding an ID to Apple Wallet, the state-issuing authority receives only the information it needs to approve or deny the request.

Once an ID is added to Apple Wallet, the information is encrypted on a user’s device, so others – including Apple – cannot access it unless a user chooses to present it. Apple and the state-issuing authority do not know when or to whom a user presents their driver’s license or state ID. A user’s presentment history is encrypted and stored only on their device, and Apple cannot see or access this information.

When presenting an ID in Apple Wallet, only the information needed for the transaction is presented, and the user has the opportunity to review and authorize the information being requested with Face ID or Touch ID before it is shared. Users do not need to unlock, show or hand over their device to present their ID.

### A Boost for Businesses

Alongside the launch of Illinois driver’s licenses and state IDs in Apple Wallet, the Secretary of State’s Office is launching a free mobile ID verifier app for businesses that checks proof of age for restrictive purchases, such as the sale of alcohol. The app streamlines age verification checks, all while protecting customer privacy. This app is currently available in the Apple App Store.

### Future Enhancements

Giannoulas emphasized that the Illinois Mobile ID Program will soon expand to Google and Samsung Wallets, ensuring that every Illinois resident with a mobile phone has access to secure, digital identification.

**To learn more, visit [www.ilsos.gov/mobile](http://www.ilsos.gov/mobile).**





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

# **Treasurer Frerichs Clinches Seventh Gold Rating for Bright Start College Savings Plan**

## **Bright Directions Receives Sole Morningstar Upgrade**

Illinois State Treasurer Michael Frerichs has announced that Illinois' Bright Start 529 College Savings Plan has earned its seventh Gold rating from independent analyst Morningstar, firmly placing the plan among the best in the nation.

"To be touted as one of the nation's best by Morningstar for the seventh time under my watch confirms from an independent source that Illinois' 529 College Savings plans are a great investment for Illinois families," Frerichs said. "Since taking office, my priority has been to ensure Illinois families have access to the highest quality savings plans in the nation with low fees and a high-quality range of investment options. We are proud to earn this honor and help families save for their children's future."

Morningstar independently evaluates college savings plans each year and assigns each one a rating of Gold, Silver, Bronze, Neutral or Negative. Bright Start is one of only five Gold-rated 529 plans in the country. In its review, Morningstar identified Bright Start 529 as a "Valedictorian" and a standout plan that "offers compelling investment options that are also highly cost effective."

"Notably, the state offers a wide range of high-quality investment options across multiple firms, compared with some peers whose offerings are restricted to a single asset manager," Morningstar wrote. "The state's investment team keeps a close watch on the portfolios and effectively negotiates better terms for its participants."

Morningstar's medal ratings represent composite scores of each plan's performance across the key performance pillars of Process, People and Parent, with Price also considered.

Morningstar's recognition is the latest high praise for Bright Start 529, which also has been recognized as among the nation's best 529 college savings plans by *Forbes*, *Business Insider*, Kiplinger, and the Motley Fool.

In addition, the adviser-guided Bright Directions Plan received an upgrade to a Bronze rating, the only 529 plan in the nation to get a higher rating than last year. Morningstar has consistently identified Bright Directions 529 as one of the nation's best options for families who prefer to work with a financial adviser.

Under Frerichs, Morningstar has awarded Bright Directions 529 with five Silver and three Bronze ratings. Other evaluators, such as Saving for College, awarded Bright Directions with "High Honors" in 2025.

Since entering office in 2015, Frerichs has worked consistently to upgrade Bright Start and Bright Directions through improvements to the investment menu, lower prices, and better account holder tools and education. In 2025, Bright Directions 529 lowered fees and launched a range of new tools for account holders. In 2024, Bright Start 529 lowered fees, enhanced the investment lineup and introduced a new phone app. Since 2015, Frerichs has negotiated more than \$100 million in fee reductions, ensuring more investment dollars go directly to college savings. Today, Bright Start and Bright Directions are among the most affordable and highest-rated college savings plans in their respective categories.

Frerichs' drive for continuous improvement has been well received by families across Illinois and around the country. Bright Start 529 has seen record account growth in 2025, with over 500,000 total accounts as of Sept. 30, 2025. Combined with Bright Directions 529, there are now more than 900,000 Illinois 529 college savings accounts with a combined \$23 billion in assets.

A child is three times more likely to attend college if they know they have a dedicated college savings account, according to research from the Center of Social Development at Washington University in St. Louis, Missouri. Ensuring top quality 529 programs is one of several initiatives by Frerichs' office to make college more accessible.

Treasurer Frerichs serves as trustee and administrator of the Illinois 529 College Savings programs. Bright Start and Bright Directions 529 plans can be used at eligible educational institutions, including two-year and four-year colleges and universities; technical and vocational schools; and registered apprenticeship programs. The investment grows tax-free when spent on qualified expenses. Illinois taxpayers also receive a deduction on their Illinois income taxes when they contribute to an Illinois 529 plan. The "529" designation refers to the specific part of the federal tax code that authorizes plans to encourage savings for future education costs.

For more information about the Treasurer's Office 529 College Savings programs, visit [www.illinoistreasurer.gov](http://www.illinoistreasurer.gov). To open an account, visit [BrightStart.com](http://BrightStart.com). There is no minimum amount to open an account.



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# Illinois Treasurer Michael Frerichs Returns WW II Purple Heart Medal to Family of Late Veteran at Ceremony in Oak Lawn Ahead of Veterans Day

On the day before Veterans Day, Illinois State Treasurer Michael Frerichs returned a lost Purple Heart medal to the niece of a World War II veteran who was injured while fighting in France and Germany.

Frerichs reunited Army Rifleman James R. Bennett's medal with niece Patti Knies during a ceremony at VFW Post 5220 in Oak Lawn.

It is the 17th lost medal Frerichs has returned as part of Operation Purple Heart, an unprecedented mission to reunite the military honor with the rightful owners. The iconic medal is awarded to individuals wounded or killed during military combat.

Bennett was wounded twice during his service – on Aug. 13, 1944, in France and again on Dec. 13, 1944, in Germany. He returned stateside to his wife Ann, a year later, in December 1945, and they made Oak Lawn their lifelong home.

"Rifleman Bennett served his country honorably. He frequently wrote his wife, assuring her of his safety and downplaying his sacrifice," Frerich said. "It is never too late to honor the men and women of the Greatest Generation."

A few years after the war, the Bennetts had their only child, a daughter named Susan. She suffered from encephalitis and developed disabilities so severe she was not expected to survive beyond early childhood. Susan lived into her 50s.

James Bennett died in 1990 at age 76. Ann Bennett died seven years later. Patty Knies, Mr. Bennett's niece, became Susan's legal guardian. Frerichs presented the Purple Heart to Patty during a ceremony at the Johnson-Phelps VFW Post 5220 in Oak Lawn.

"He was such a wonderful man and it is an honor to hold his Purple Heart," said Knies, who lives in northwest Indiana. "So many soldiers and families suffered and sacrificed so much. It is important that they be remembered."

James Bennett served as a volunteer firefighter and part-time member of the Police Department, and he repaired toys for children with disabilities.

The Purple Heart and other items were in an Oak Lawn bank safe deposit box in Ann's name. Knies said her aunt never mentioned it. The box's contents were surrendered to the Illinois State Treasurer's Office as unclaimed property in 2022. Safeguarding unclaimed property until it can be returned to its owners or heirs no matter how long it takes is a core function of the State Treasurer's Office. Other examples of unclaimed property include bank accounts, unpaid life insurance benefits and uncashed rebate checks.

This is the 17th Purple Heart medal Treasurer Frerichs has returned to the soldier or the soldier's family, an unparalleled record in Illinois and the nation. A list of unclaimed Purple Heart medals in possession of the Illinois State Treasurer's Office is available online.

"If you recognize a name, please reach out to their family. This is an honor that deserves to be in their loving hands, not the cold, dark vault of my safe," Frerichs said. "You also can contact my office through [operationpurpleheart.org](https://operationpurpleheart.org)."

Military medals are among the most difficult items to return because neither the Armed Forces nor the federal government maintain a comprehensive list of awardees. In most of these cases, the conflict in which the Purple Heart was awarded, such as World War I, World War II, Korea, Vietnam or Desert Storm, is unclear or unknown.



## Treasurer Michael Frerichs' Office Publishes Annual Report on Small Business Spending

Illinois State Treasurer Michael Frerichs' office increased its small business spending by more than 37% from Fiscal Year 2024 to Fiscal Year 2025, a new report states.

During Fiscal Year 2025, the Treasurer's Office spent a total of \$1,346,772.54 on contracts and other purchases with small businesses, which represents more than 5% of the office's overall contract and purchase spending of \$24,386,667.87. For comparison, spending during Fiscal Year 2024 totaled \$978,370.74. The information is included in the *Illinois State Treasurer's Office Annual Report* on the office's utilization of small business vendors.

The Treasurer's Office shares the state's goal, as stated in the procurement code, of increasing opportunities for small businesses. As a result, the office has taken steps during the past several years to increase small business participation. These efforts are outlined in the report and include procurements set aside for small businesses, as well as pricing preferences for small businesses.

The annual report, which covers the period from July 1, 2024, through June 30, 2025, was published recently. It is posted on the office's "Procurement Notices" webpage at <https://illinoistreasurer.gov/home/office-of-the-treasurer/procurement/procurement-notice/>. The report is required under Section 1400.4560(g) of the Office of the Treasurer Procurement Rules (44 Ill. Adm. Code 1400). It consists of two parts: (1) Policies and Procedures Relating to Small Business Contractors and (2) Utilization Data and Implementation.





## Christmas Greetings

On the heels of Thanksgiving, as I take a moment to reflect over these past months my heart is full of gratitude for how gracious and merciful God has been to us. He has sustained us and favored us. I praise God for the marvelous things he has done – and just for being God.



Dr. Terence Swims

There is a certain excitement that fills the air during this season, especially when you see it through the eyes of our children. They're anticipating Christmas with a joy that reminds us of the pure wonder of this time. I, too, find myself anticipating the angelic melodies of our choirs and the harmonious streams of our bands. I can already taste the homemade cookies and sweets. I love the lights, the décor, and of course the celebrations. There is excitement that comes with the expectancy of a new year – new possibilities, new opportunities and the beautiful culmination of all God has brought us through, with expectation for where he's taking us to!

This is the season of giving. Just as God gave us the greatest gift – his son – we honor him by giving to one another. I encourage all of us this year to lean into that spirit. Yes, many of us are blessed, thriving even ... but if we pause, reflect and look around, we'll see that our world is hurting. And sometimes that hurt sits closer to home than we realize. People beside us, people we love, people we pass every single day may be carrying the quiet weight of life for reasons we may never know.

And here is the truth: Some of the most meaningful gifts don't come wrapped. They aren't purchased. They don't cost a cent – A passing smile. An unsolicited compliment. An unexpected phone call. A corny joke that breaks tension. An intentional lunch date. A morning prayer text full of encouragement. These are gifts too ... Gifts that connect us on a deeper level. Gifts that require something real from us: our time, our presence, our vulnerability. This season, give from a personal place. Give the gift of kindness. Give the gift of compassion. Give the gift of Jesus.

Walther family, please know that I am profoundly grateful for each of you. You are my heart and my purpose in this season. And I will continue to pour out all that God equips me with – my time, my talents and my treasure – to ensure that we continue to grow and walk boldly into the future God is designing for us.

May your holiday season be wrapped in the warm, everlasting love of Jesus Christ.

• Dr. Terence Swims, Principal

## Walther Legacy Society



Bill Koehne

I am pleased to announce the launch of our new Walther Legacy Society which honors those who have chosen to create a lasting impact by including Walther in their estate plans. As of November 2025, Walther has received more than \$1.5M in estate gifts. These gifts, ranging from \$5K to almost \$500K, have helped us upgrade our facilities and put us in a healthy financial position. The list of members includes those who have already donated through an estate gift and those who have informed Walther of their plans.

Have you included Walther in your estate plans? If so, please inform us of your intent so that we may thank and recognize you in this Walther Legacy Society. Thank you to everyone who plans to give to Walther in this special way.

Not on the list yet? Please prayerfully consider the opportunity you have to make a long-term impact on the students and ministry of Walther Christian Academy by designating a portion of your estate to Walther. Gifts like these will help Walther spread the Gospel in this neighborhood for years to come.

• Bill Koehne '87, Director of Advancement

## Six Seniors Named Illinois State Scholars

Walther recently received word that six of our seniors have earned the distinction of State Scholar. State Scholars are determined by a combination of ACT/SAT scores and grade-point average. Congratulations to Isabella Aponte, Blythe Balock, Jillian Bjorklund, Michaela Eden, Ephraim Ennis and Jason Nguyen. This represents 12% of the senior class, a bit higher than the state average of 10%. These awardees received recognition in front of the whole student body recently after our Campfire Worship. Congratulations to all of these students. We are very proud of you.





# Walther Alumni Spotlight

Dr. Anitra (Bolden) Crockett, Walther Class of 1995, is the associate superintendent of Schools in Bourbonnais, Illinois. After graduating from Walther, she attended Northern Illinois University, where she earned a Bachelor of Science in family studies. She later completed her Master of Social Work degree at Aurora University, with a concentration in school social work.

Anitra began her career in education in District 89, which serves Maywood, Melrose Park and Broadview. During her 12 years in District 89, Anitra served as a social worker and special education supervisor and, after earning a second master's degree in educational leadership, became an assistant principal at Irving Elementary School. She then moved to Proviso Area for Exceptional Children (PAEC), where she served as special education supervisor for six years.

In 2009, Anitra entered the doctoral program at Chicago State University, where she earned an EdD in educational leadership-superintendency. Dr. Crockett moved to Bourbonnais District 53 in 2019, where she became the director of Student Services, overseeing the district's special education, residential and early childhood education programs for 2,300 students. Under her leadership, the program for students with severe autism or severe health and ambulatory conditions has grown from three to seven classrooms and has become the model program in that area. Dr. Crockett was recently promoted to associate superintendent, adding board negotiations and some HR duties to her job responsibilities.



Dr. Anitra Crockett

Anitra is also committed to preparing high-quality educators and supporting inclusive practices in schools. She currently serves as an adjunct professor at National Louis University (NLU), where she teaches Methods of Teaching Students with Disabilities, a foundational course for graduate students in the College of Education. In this role, Anitra blends practical district-level experience with research-based instructional methods to equip educators with the knowledge and skills needed to support diverse learners.

In addition to teaching at NLU, Anitra serves on the university's Teacher Preparation Advisory Board. As part of this advisory group, she offers guidance to specific programs within the College of Education and contributes insights on essential issues in teacher preparation.

"I didn't think, 25 years ago, that I would be in this kind of a role. But, I knew that I wanted to effect change," shared Dr. Crockett. "I recall in high school having Dr. Dawkins come to our classroom. We did a career assessment and my results pointed toward the helping professions. I have always had a heart for people. Growing up in the church, I see this as my life's calling."

"Of all the classes I took at Walther, I would say Algebra 2 with Mr. Koehne has helped me the most. I learned I could do math and loved it. I also realized math could support the work I wanted to do. It prepared me well for my BS, MSW and EdD programs, and I feel confident now while writing grant proposals, creating budgets and reading expenditure reports."

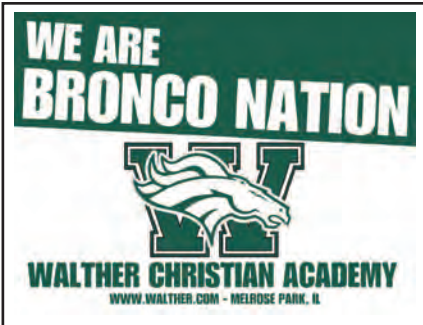
While at Walther, Anitra was part of the cheerleading team for football and basketball, and ran track in the spring. She was also part of the Gospel Choir. Her favorite memories include lunch with friends and attending cheer camp with Ms. Opel. Her favorite class was US History with Mr. Korntheuer. It is the reason she visited Pearl Harbor with her daughters on a recent vacation.

Most of all, Anitra appreciated the Walther community. "It was just big enough that I didn't know everyone, but small enough to feel a sense of belonging," Anitra explained. "Whichever club or sport I tried, I felt accepted. I knew my teachers and they knew our family. For several years, my dad recalled talking with Mr. Schultz in the bleachers at a football game. That kind of community meant so much to my family. I enjoyed walking around the school at our recent reunion and connecting with classmates, some I had not seen since graduation. If we lived closer, I would definitely send my daughters to Walther."

## Class of '95 Reunion

The Class of '95 held their 30th Reunion on Nov. 8. They first took a tour of Walther before moving on to Little Gem in Oak Park. Grads in attendance for the tour included Tirrell Robinson, Dr. Ed Kelly, Laura Zemke, Kathryn Johnson Reniguntala, Natasha Miller Williams, Dr. Anitra Bolden Crockett, Kevin Nolen, and Martesee Robinson.

At far right is a photo of Anitra signing the Wall of Doctors.



## Help Us Promote Walther We Are BRONCO NATION!

Do you live in the area? Are you willing to display a yard sign? We have new signs available. Stop by the school office, Monday-Friday, 8 a.m.-3 p.m., to pick one up and then share your story when someone asks.

## Upcoming Walther Events

**Bronco Benefit 2026 – Saturday, Feb. 21**

• **The Nineteenth Century Club, Oak Park**  
Ticket sales open on Walther's website Jan. 9.

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





# ***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***

## **Fun with Fossils! – Tuesday, Dec. 23 • 10 a.m.**

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

Learn all about fossils, make your own fossil and peruse some of our best fossils. Ages 4 and up. Drop in.  
Contact – (708) 366-6530.

## **Winter Exploration Day – Tuesday, Dec. 23 • 11 a.m.**

**Dan Ryan Woods Pavilion (Western Avenue and 87th Street, Chicago)**

Enjoy snowshoeing (weather permitting), nature hikes, art making, campfires and more!  
Cost – Free. Contact – (224) 763-4317/experience.nature@cookcountyil.gov.

## **Forest Preserves Staff Art Show – Friday, Dec. 26-Wednesday, Dec. 31**

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

Come see an art show featuring the artistic talents of Forest Preserves staff. (Excluding Fridays.)  
Cost – Free. Contact – (708) 366-6530.

## **Story Trail – *The Snowy Day* – Friday, Dec. 26-Wednesday, Dec. 31**

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

Take a walk and read the posted children's story. Pick up a craft and activity bag for your own adventures.  
Drop-in. Contact – (708) 366-6530

## **Winter Nature Days – Saturday, Dec. 27 • 9 a.m.**

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

Drop in for family fun nature activities including pinecone bird feeders, walking sticks and more.  
Cost – Free. Contact – (847) 824-8360.

## **Winter Secrets Hike – Tuesday, Dec. 30 • 1:30 p.m.**

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

Discover the secrets beneath the snow and ice during a walk! Family program.  
Cost – Free. Contact – (708) 366-6530 (registration required, call for information).

## **New Year's Resolution Walk – Friday, Jan. 2 • 10 a.m.**

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

Fulfill your resolution of being more active by taking a brisk guided walk on our trails. Ages 18 and up.  
Cost – Free. Contact – (708) 366-6530 (registration required, call for information).

## **Sacred Wanderings – Saturday, Jan. 3 • 8:30 a.m.**

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

Connect with nature and surround yourself with energy of the natural world. Provided by Unity Temple of Oak Park.

Cost – Free. Contact – (708) 366-6530/mindful@unitytemple.org.

## **Winter Workshop: Crocheting Plastic – Saturday, Jan. 3 • 1 p.m.**

**Caldwell Woods Wellness Center (6350 W. Devon Ave., Chicago)**

Find an alternative use for plastic bags. BYO-bags encouraged. Presented by Chicago Muslim Green Team.

Cost – Free.

Contact – (773) 758-8899 (registration required, call for information)/northzoneprogram@cookcountyil.gov.

## **Family Winter Scavenger Hunt and Campfire – Sunday, Jan. 4 • 1 p.m.**

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

Enjoy a self-guided scavenger hunt for signs of animals and plant life. Followed by snacks and relaxing around a campfire.

Cost – Free. Contact – (708) 366-6530.

## **Bird Walk: Birds & Bagels – Saturday, Jan. 10 • 8:30 a.m.**

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

Observe bird feeder action while noshing on bagels. John Elliott from Chicago Bird Alliance will lead a guided walk.

Cost – Free. Contact – (708) 366-6530 (registration required, call for information).



# Have Some Fun Sledding at the Forest Preserves

When the snow starts falling, nothing says winter fun like sledding in the Forest Preserves.

## Sledding Hill Locations

Sledding hills are open when the ground is frozen and covered with a minimum of 3 inches of snow.

Public safety requires the temporary closing of some Forest Preserves parking areas during the winter season. However, our Maintenance Department prioritizes the clearing of parking areas serving winter activities. Always call ahead to make sure sledding hills and parking areas are open.

### With Lighting

Sledding hills with lighting are staffed and open Sunday-Thursday, 10 a.m.-7:30 p.m., and Friday-Saturday, 10 a.m.-8:30 p.m. (when conditions allow).

- Caldwell Woods (Devon Avenue and Nagle Avenue, Chicago).  
Call (847) 647-2240 for sledding hill status.
- Dan Ryan Woods Visitor Center (Western Avenue and 87th Street, Chicago).  
Call (773) 233-3766 for sledding hill status.
- Swallow Cliff Woods-North (Calumet Sag Road/Route 83, west of La Grange Road/96th Avenue, near Palos Park).  
Call (708) 839-5617 for sledding hill status. Requires a minimum of 6 inches of snow.
- Westchester Woods (Cermak Road, East of Mannheim Road/La Grange Road, near La Grange Park).  
Call (708) 447-0090 for sledding hill status.

### Without Lighting

Sledding hills without lighting are open 10 a.m.to sunset daily when conditions allow.

- Deer Grove (Quentin Road, north of Dundee Road, near Palatine).  
Sledding hill is located at Picnic Grove #5. Call (847) 437-8330 for sledding hill status.
- Pioneer Woods (107th Street, east of Willow Springs Road/Flavin Road, near Willow Springs).  
Call (708) 839-5617 for sledding hill status.
- Thaddeus S. “Ted” Lechowicz Woods (Central Avenue, north of Elston Avenue, Chicago).  
Call (847) 647-2240 for sledding hill status.
- Schiller Woods-East (Irving Park Road, west of Cumberland Avenue, Chicago).  
Call (773) 625-0606 for sledding hill status.

**Take some time  
to explore  
our website at  
[www.fpdcc.com](http://www.fpdcc.com) for  
additional events and  
valuable information  
linked to the  
Cook County  
Forest Preserves  
experience!**

# Get Your 2026 Wall Calendars and Winter Guides!

2026 Wall Calendars and Winter Guides are now available – for free! The calendars feature beautiful photographs taken throughout the Forest Preserves that highlight some of the breathtaking animals, plants and landscapes that thrive locally. The guides boast events and programs for visitors to learn more about the land and animals surrounding them. They are now available to the public on a first-come, first-served basis at ForestPreserves nature centers. Be sure to check their Facebook pages or call for updates on availability.

## Nature Centers

The Forest Preserves’ nature centers provide a gateway for discovery of the natural diversity of Cook County. Each nature center offers programs and displays about the plants, animals and natural communities of the region.

### Crabtree Nature Center (3 Stover Rd., Barrington • (847) 381-6592)

Discover the natural history and local wildlife displays in the Crabtree Nature Center exhibit building or explore Crabtree’s rolling, glacier-formed landscape on three self-guided trails.

### Little Red Schoolhouse Nature Center (9800 Willow Springs Rd., Willow Springs • (708) 839-6897)

Little Red Schoolhouse Nature Center has educated and delighted generations of families with live animals, exhibits and self-guided trails.

### River Trail Nature Center (3120 Milwaukee Ave., Northbrook • (847) 824-8360)

River Trail Nature Center’s free exhibits, walking trails and onsite nature educators help tell the story of the plants, animals and natural landscapes formed by the Des Plaines River. Learn how to make maple syrup, meet an owl or join a guided hike at all-ages events each week – or just let the kids climb and create at indoor and outdoor play areas.

### Sagawau Environmental Learning Center (12545 W. 111th St., Lemont • (630) 257-2045)

Sagawau Environmental Learning Center’s visitor center and classroom include exhibits on geology, human and natural history, and habitat management. Frequent educational programs and interpretive hikes teach visitors about our natural environment.

### Sand Ridge Nature Center (15891 Paxton Ave., South Holland • (708) 868-0606)

Sand Ridge Nature Center features interactive exhibits, programs and knowledgeable staff to guide you through the natural and cultural history of the Calumet Region. Visitors will find native wildlife ambassadors – including birds of prey, snakes, turtles and fish – as well as hands-on activities and self-guided nature fun. Watch birds at the feeders from the flight room, explore the nature play area, stroll through demonstration gardens, learn from the past at the replica log cabins or walk 4 miles of nature trails through woodlands, prairies and wetlands.

### Trailside Museum of Natural History (738 Thatcher Ave., River Forest • (708) 366-6530)

Visitors to the Hal Tyrrell Trailside Museum of Natural History will discover displays of live native animals, colorful wildflower gardens, information about local wildlife and their habitats, and more.





# News from the Zoo!

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

Here's a list of some incredible current and upcoming attractions. Be sure to check out our website at [www.brookfieldzoo.org](http://www.brookfieldzoo.org) for additional happenings.

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

## Holiday Magic Returns Brighter Than Ever to Brookfield Zoo Chicago with All-New Displays, Interactive Experiences and Festive Delights

**Chicagoland's Longest-Running Holiday Lights Festival Features Over 3.5 Million Lights, the Largest Display of Decorated Holiday Trees, Added Experiences and More!**

**Holiday Magic Tickets Available for Select Dates Now to Jan. 4**

Chicagoland's most dazzling holiday tradition is back and brighter than ever! Holiday Magic® at Brookfield Zoo Chicago returns reimagined for 2025, transforming the zoo into a winter wonderland illuminated by over 3.5 million twinkling lights and the region's largest display of decorated holiday trees. From now to Jan. 4, guests can stroll through breathtaking new light displays and interactive experiences that bring the season's sparkle to life like never before.

This year's Holiday Magic introduces an array of first-time offerings designed to make every visit unforgettable – from roasting s'mores at cozy firepits and renting private heated igloos to enjoying live carolers and the all-new, holiday-themed dolphin show. Families can also look forward to a sensory-friendly night for guests of all abilities, expanded festive food options and countless photo opportunities throughout the illuminated grounds. Tickets are on sale now for select dates, inviting everyone to celebrate the joy, warmth and wonder of the holidays at Brookfield Zoo Chicago.



"Each year we strive to make Holiday Magic more memorable, and this season we've elevated every detail to create an experience that feels both nostalgic and brand new," said Andrea Rodgers, senior vice president of Guest Experience and Operations at Brookfield Zoo Chicago. "It's about bringing people together in a setting filled with light, laughter and connection. Whether guests come to marvel at the displays, enjoy a warm treat or venture indoors to see some of their favorite animals after dark, we want them to leave feeling the true spirit of the season – knowing that their visit helps fuel our mission to care for wildlife and nature, and inspire conservation action."

Brookfield Zoo Chicago has also unwrapped a sleigh full of surprises for Chicagoland's longest-running holiday lights festival, including new Holiday Magic experiences and interactive light displays made possible by presenting sponsors ComEd and Meijer. Guests can roast marshmallows at s'mores stations; reserve a heated retreat at the new Holiday Igloo; explore a brand-new maze of lights; walk through new areas like a Candy Land path; underwater jelly area and Candy Cane tunnel; play illuminated tic-tac-toe and more! There are also new animal encounters in store, as bottlenose dolphins and their animal care team welcome guests to Overwater Viewing at Dolphin Bay from 6-8 p.m. on select dates (Dec. 18 and Dec. 29-31, plus Jan. 1-4).

On Dec. 4, Brookfield Zoo Chicago held its first sensory-friendly Holiday Magic. The modified evening featured dimmed lights, softer music and reduced visual effects to offer a calmer, more comfortable environment for guests of all ages and sensory needs. This experience is presented in partnership with KultureCity as part of the Zoo for All initiative, which underscores the Zoo's commitment to build an inclusive conservation movement. A dedicated sensory-friendly space will be available on all Holiday Magic dates at Hamill Family Play Zoo.

"For more than 40 years, Holiday Magic has been where Chicagoland comes together to celebrate wonder, connection and community," said Michael Garvey, village president of Brookfield. "It's a reminder that the brightest part of the season isn't just the lights. It's the neighbors and people who share



them, just as the village and Brookfield Zoo Chicago have celebrated the holiday season side by side for generations.”

Holiday Magic will also feature beloved experiences that generations have cherished year after year. Returning favorites include photos with Santa (select dates), the Holiday Market featuring zoo-inspired gifts, Letters to Animals mailbox, express North Pole mailbox for Letters to Santa and more. While located in new areas of the zoo, light displays will again include 300 feet of light tunnels with portions synchronized to seasonal sounds, a 16-foot-tall LED gingerbread house, a 41-foot-tall tree adorned with colored LED lights, amongst many other spectacular sights.

Brookfield Zoo Chicago will be open from 3-9 p.m. on designated Holiday Magic dates, with the following indoor habitats open until 8:30 p.m.: Australia, Dolphin Bay Underwater Viewing, Gorilla Conservation Center, Hamill Family Play Zoo and The Living Coast. Guests can also explore Big Cats and Hamill Family Wild Encounters along with paid attractions like the Carousel, Penguin Encounters and virtual reality Elf Power experience. Animal visibility is not guaranteed and may vary in outdoor habitats depending on weather.

Holiday Magic continues weekly, Thursday through Sunday, until Dec. 21. New this year, Holiday Magic will extend into the new year, remaining open daily from Dec. 26 through Jan. 4. Brookfield Zoo Chicago members receive free admission and North Gate parking on Holiday Magic dates. Guests are reminded that the zoo will be closed on Christmas Day. Holiday Magic tickets and additional information are available now at [brookfieldzoo.org/HolidayMagic](http://brookfieldzoo.org/HolidayMagic).

# Spotted: Amur Leopard Cubs Make Their Public Debut at Brookfield Zoo Chicago

## The World's Rarest Big Cats Explore New Habitat, Ready to Meet Zoo Guests

There’s double the reason to roar with excitement at Brookfield Zoo Chicago. Two Amur leopard cubs, the world’s rarest big cats, are now out and about for guests to see. Born on July 14 to first-time mom Mina (MEE-nuh), the playful sisters are exploring their outdoor habitat and ready to delight zoo goers with their playful personalities.

Each day brings new adventures for the 4-month-old sisters, who were spotted pouncing on each other in piles of leaves and climbing branches under Mina’s watchful eye. Amur leopards are agile and stealthy climbers, often resting on rocky ledges or in trees to keep watch for prey and stay hidden from potential threats.

“The cubs are bold, curious and love to climb, already getting comfortable on the upper rocks in their new habitat,” said Racquel Ardisana, associate director of Carnivore Care and Conservation at Brookfield Zoo Chicago. “There are a lot of new sights, sounds and scents for them to take in. When one initially came to explore the habitat’s ground level, she hissed while pawing at the grass – a texture she’s seeing for the first time!”

Prior to their public debut, the cubs have been growing, tumbling and pouncing behind the scenes under the care and close observation of the zoo’s dedicated animal care staff. Their comfort and confidence with climbing new structures was an important development milestone to prepare them for their debut.

The cubs mark a rare and important addition to the species’ global population, which is believed to be less than 100 animals total in the wild. The cubs are the first litter for 6-year-old Mina and a significant milestone in the zoo's ongoing efforts to help save one of the world’s most endangered big cats from extinction. This supports the Association of Zoos and Aquariums’ (AZA) Species Survival Plan working to maintain healthy and genetically diverse populations of threatened and endangered species in accredited facilities.

Native to the forests of eastern Russia, their ultra-thick coats and long tails help them stay warm in winter, making Chicago feel a lot like home. The cubs may be visible intermittently throughout the day this winter as they continue to explore and adjust to their new environment at the zoo’s Big Cats Walkway, near the entrance to Desert’s Edge. During the zoo’s upcoming evening hours for Holiday Magic, guests will have an opportunity to see the cubs’ father Sasha, who was born at Brookfield Zoo Chicago in 2020 and is known to hide amongst the habitat’s rocky facade.

The cubs are not yet named, but fans won’t have to wait long to find out – follow Brookfield Zoo Chicago on social media for the upcoming name reveal. In the meantime, guests and supporters can contribute to the ongoing care of Mina and her cubs through the zoo’s Adopt an Animal Program and Wildlife Conservation Fund. Donations help support critical conservation work at Brookfield Zoo Chicago and beyond.



Photo credit – © Brookfield Zoo Chicago.



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



# ComEd Announces Upcoming Low-Income Discount as Latest Program to Assist with Rising Energy Costs

## Newest Affordability Measure Offers Income-Eligible Customers Percentage-Based Discounts on Monthly Electric Bills

ComEd has announced the upcoming launch of its Low-Income Discount (LID) Program as part of efforts to help customers manage increasing energy costs. The LID Program, available Jan. 1, 2026, is intended to provide qualifying income-eligible customers with a percentage-based discount on their monthly electric bill based on income level.

LID is created in alignment with the Illinois Climate and Equitable Jobs Act, and is part of ComEd's commitment to affordability and customer support. With energy costs increasing up to 15% for the average residential customer, the aim of LID is to offer bill relief to income-eligible customers to help make energy costs more manageable.

"The launch of ComEd's LID comes at a time when customers are feeling the burden of this past year's bill increases," said Gil Quiniones, president and CEO of ComEd. "This new program brings long term relief for those who can least afford to pay and it will help them afford service as energy costs continue to rise."

Discounts under ComEd's LID will be divided into five tiers to give the greatest savings to those most in need. This system is designed to reduce the energy burden for these individuals to 3-6% of household income. Bill savings per customer will be based on average use within a residential service delivery class and will vary by income tier.

"ComEd understands that rising energy costs affect many of the 9 million people we serve in northern Illinois territory. That's why we constantly look to enhance solutions for customers who are behind or at risk of falling behind on their energy bills," said Ajit Apte, senior vice president, Customer Operations, ComEd. "Since October 2024, customers have been preapproved for LID by visiting local action agencies (LAAs) across Illinois and applying for and receiving state energy assistance programming, like LIHEAP and PIPP."

The announcement was hosted by the Community Action Partnership of Lake County which is one of the many LAAs across Illinois that administer LIHEAP.

"Over the decades, Community Action Partnership of Lake County has collaborated with ComEd to ensure that income-eligible customers receive electricity bill payment assistance through LIHEAP and other energy cost savings programs," said Mary Lockhart White, executive director and CEO of Community Action Partnership of Lake County. "We encourage every eligible household to take advantage of this new Low-Income Discount Program opportunity."

For ComEd customers to be approved for one of the first four tiers of LID, they must also have been approved for LIHEAP dating back to October 2024. For customers who haven't enrolled in LIHEAP, ComEd encourages them to visit their LAA to begin the enrollment process for LIHEAP and/or LID.

Customers with incomes up to 300% of the Federal Poverty Level (those who do not qualify for LIHEAP) are still eligible to participate in LID. These customers can enroll by visiting their local LAA now or, starting Jan. 1, 2026, self-enrolling through ComEd's Smart Assistance Manager tool at [ComEd.com/SAM](https://ComEd.com/SAM).

Upon qualifying, customers will receive LID for up to 24 months, based on their enrollment date, without the need to reapply. Those approved for LID will see a line item on their ComEd bill labeled "Low-Income Discount" as early as January 2026.

"Families are facing affordability issues for everyday essentials, from groceries to electricity bills. That's why we, as leaders with Community Organizing and Family Issues (COFI) and POWER-PAC IL, organized around the creation of the Low-Income Discount Program and are excited for the relief it will give eligible ComEd customers," said Michelle Morton, a parent leader with COFI and POWER-PAC IL. "Having this discount means families and neighbors in my community will have some extra cash to help them cover the rising costs of food, rent and more. We urge all electricity utilities within the state of Illinois, regardless of size, to take note and implement programs like this that help families keep the lights on in their homes."

For more information about ComEd's Low-Income Discount Program, visit [ComEd.com/LID](https://ComEd.com/LID).

### ComEd's Other Customer Support Programs

LID is ComEd's latest program to provide relief to customers with past-due balances and help them manage energy use to save money on future bills. Earlier this year, in anticipation of rising energy bills, ComEd launched a \$10 million Customer Relief Fund which, when fully disbursed, is projected to support more than 30,000 customers who are behind in their energy bills.

So far this year, ComEd has helped connect nearly 190,000 customers to more than \$94 million in financial assistance and other relief, along with helping hundreds of thousands of customers save more than \$12 billion on their electric bills since 2008 through the award-winning ComEd Energy Efficiency Program. For information about all of ComEd's bill-support programs, visit [ComEd.com/PaymentAssistance](https://ComEd.com/PaymentAssistance).

## Over \$803 Million Coming to ComEd Customers Payment Created by Climate and Equitable Jobs Act to Protect Customers

ComEd has announced that over \$803 million will be returned to customers under the framework established in Illinois' Climate and Equitable Jobs Act (CEJA) enacted in 2021, which requires nuclear plants to pay customers when prices are high. ComEd residential and commercial customers can expect to benefit from these funds in the form of bill credits, with the average residential customer expected to receive approximately \$13 a month, depending on usage, over the first five months of the year.

The funds are being returned as part of the CEJA's Carbon Mitigation Credit (CMC) Program that provided price support to select Illinois nuclear units that were scheduled to be closed. Importantly, that statute protected ComEd customers from over paying in the event that federal policymakers also stepped up to support nuclear generation.



The 2021 CEJA law created the CMC Program to support carbon-free nuclear generation facilities and in return, provide an adjustment to ComEd customers if energy prices exceed the agreed-upon price determined in CEJA. The CMC Program is in effect for five years, through 2027, and can result in a credit or a charge depending on energy prices.

“ComEd will always advocate on behalf of our customers and we are encouraged to see significant savings being passed through to them as a result of Illinois’ leadership in clean energy policy,” said Gil Quiniones, president and CEO of ComEd. “Thanks to the foresight and leadership of Gov. Pritzker and the Illinois General Assembly, CEJA puts our customers on a path to a cleaner future while upholding our commitment to ensuring sustainability and affordability.”

The savings from the \$803 million in credits reported on the nuclear generators’ tax returns will automatically reduce what customers pay and no action is required by customers to receive the credit.

While future prices cannot be forecast with certainty, the CMC Program is expected to continue providing credits, based on market prices, for at least another year, helping to offset supply cost increases and support families during periods of economic uncertainty.

## **ComEd Partners with Clean Energy Developers on \$10 Million Utility Low-Income Grant Program**

### **New, Five-Year Collaboration Offers Bill Credit Grants to Qualified Low-Income ComEd Customers from Community Solar Projects**

ComEd, BAP Power LLC (operating as Cenergy) and ESP Solar LLC (ESP) has announced a landmark, five-year collaboration on a low-income grant program valued at up to \$10 million for income-eligible ComEd customers. The grants will be delivered as utility bill credits to preselected ComEd customers who meet specific criteria, including qualifying for a Low-Income Home Energy Assistance Program (LIHEAP) Grant.

“Everyone should have access to safe, reliable, and affordable electricity, which is why ComEd remains committed to supporting all our customers, particularly those who are struggling most,” said Gil Quiniones, president and CEO of ComEd. “By working with renewable energy leaders like Cenergy and ESP, we can expand access to solar benefits while providing substantial, targeted relief to income-eligible customers who have past-due balances. This long-term commitment is an outgrowth of our mission to power lives and strengthen communities across northern Illinois.”

Funding for the grants will be derived from Cenergy and ESP’s community solar projects located primarily within the ComEd service territory. For instance, a few initial projects are located in Kankakee County, Dekalb County and Livingston County. The program structure ensures that a significant portion of the projects’ financial value is directly passed through to low-income participants in the form of utility bill credits.

“Cenergy is deeply committed to ensuring that the benefits of clean power generation flow through to local communities in meaningful ways, and we are excited to collaborate with ComEd and ESP on this low-income grant program,” said William Pham, CEO of Cenergy.

“This partnership with ComEd is a blueprint for how renewable energy developers can make a direct, tangible impact on energy equity,” said Rodolfo Hernandez, manager of ESP. “This program is consistent with our mission to benefit low-income households with our projects.”

ComEd will receive the grant funds annually from Cenergy and ESP, reach out directly to eligible customers on the qualifications to apply and apply bill credits to the accounts of customers who consent to participate. This streamlined process ensures maximum impact and efficiency in delivering the assistance.

ComEd’s participation in Cenergy and ESP’s Low-Income Grant Program is the energy company’s latest effort move to provide relief to customers dealing with high energy bills. In June, ComEd launched a \$10 million Customer Relief Fund that is expected to help more than 30,000 eligible customers who are behind on their energy bills. This fund acts as a bridge low-income discount (LID), which will enable qualifying income-eligible customers to receive a percentage-based discount on their monthly electric bill determined by income level. So far this year, ComEd has helped connect over 144,000 customers with more than \$74 million in grants and other bill support. For information on ComEd’s bill-assistance options, visit [ComEd.com/EnergySavings](https://ComEd.com/EnergySavings).

## **ComEd No. 1 in U.S. in Providing Reliable Electric Service to Customers, Benchmarking Shows**

### **Investments in Grid Produce Nation’s Top Reliability**

In a benchmark study of ComEd, compared to similar utilities, the utility was ranked number one in terms of how low the frequency and duration of outages were for customers. Recent metrics that reflect the frequency of outages for ComEd customers have improved by more than 50% compared to 2012 and earlier. Additionally, metrics that reflect the duration of outages have improved by approximately 20% over the same timeframe, meaning customers experience shorter interruptions when service is disrupted.

“Our customers count on ComEd to deliver world-class reliability to meet their growing electrification needs,” said ComEd President and CEO Gil Quiniones. “Our performance on reliability and resilience is the result of targeted investments, tailored to address the growing challenges the grid faces from extreme weather, increasing load demands and cybersecurity. We will continue to take the steps necessary for the 4.2 million customers we are privileged to serve.”

ComEd customers have seen continuous improvement in grid reliability performance in recent years. 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.

The panel of peer companies in the study consists of publicly held utilities that primarily serve 1 million or more customers and have transmission and distribution operations. The primary sources of data come from multi-utility panel surveys conducted by reputable companies, regulatory reports and the U.S. Energy Information Administration.



# Loyola Medicine Announces New President of Gottlieb Memorial Hospital

Sarah Hunter, MHA, has been appointed as the new president of Gottlieb Memorial Hospital, effective Sept. 21.



Sarah Hunter, MHA

Sarah is a transformational health care executive with a deep history at Loyola Medicine. From 2012 to 2019, she held progressive leadership roles at MacNeal Hospital, beginning as an administrative fellow and advancing to director of Business Operations. She then served as director of Hospital Operations at Gottlieb from 2019 to 2021, where she oversaw procedural, ancillary and community-based departments. During that time, Sarah played a pivotal role in COVID-19 response and helped launch key health equity initiatives.



[www.loyolamedicine.org](http://www.loyolamedicine.org)

Most recently, Sarah served as chief operating officer at Northwest Health in Valparaiso, Indiana, where she led significant growth in procedural volume, introduced new service lines and established the system's first residency programs. Her leadership is defined by collaboration, innovation and a deep commitment to mission-driven care.

"We are confident that Sarah's operational expertise, her dedication to community health and her deep understanding of our organization will be instrumental in guiding Gottlieb into its next chapter," said Shawn P. Vincent, president and CEO of Loyola Medicine.

## Loyola Medicine Burn Center Provides Tips on Burn Prevention During Holiday Cooking

The holidays are a time for gathering with friends and family, giving thanks and enjoying a meal together. It can also be a time of stress and distractions in the kitchen, which can lead to burns and fires. Over the holiday season, many people test out new recipes or cooking methods that can quickly turn dangerous, like deep frying a turkey.

John Kubasiak, MD, regional director of Loyola Medicine's Burn Center, warns cooks to be extra cautious around the holidays to prevent burn injuries. Loyola's Burn Center is the largest in Illinois and a regional leader in treating adult and pediatric burns.

"During the holiday season, we see an increase in patients with burn injuries in our Emergency Department," said Dr. Kubasiak. "Even competent chefs can become overwhelmed in the kitchen around the holidays, with more people in the home causing distractions, cooking for a larger group, trying out an unfamiliar recipe or even cooking in loose clothing can lead to an accident."

Keeping cooking areas clean and distraction-free, avoiding loose clothing like sleeves that can catch fire and turning pot handles to the middle of the stove can greatly minimize the risk of burns while cooking.



Deep-frying a turkey presents an even higher risk. "I'm not convinced it can be done safely based on the number of experienced chefs we see each holiday," said Dr. Kubasiak. "Boiling oil gets much hotter than water and when moisture from a frozen turkey hits the oil, it can splatter in all directions."

### Visit a Hospital with a Burn Center for a Serious Burn

If you experience any burns this holiday season, Loyola Medicine's Burn Center can provide guidance on how to properly care for the injury to prevent lasting damage. "Some signs that a burn might be serious include skin discoloration (especially if the skin turns white or black), swelling, loss of sensation and burns covering a large area of the body," said Dr. Kubasiak. "If burns cover more than a hand-sized area or affect the face, eyes, hands or feet, definitely seek medical treatment."

Most physicians are not trained in advanced burn care and treating serious burns requires a multidisciplinary approach, which is why it's best to visit a hospital or care center with a dedicated burn unit. Severe burns can cause problems that affect other parts of the body, some requiring specialized nursing or surgical care. Burn centers can also provide the physical and occupational therapy and psychosocial support needed when recovering from serious burns.

Accidents, especially burns, can happen quickly and leave lasting effects. It's important to remember that everyone can play a role in preventing burns and keeping loved ones safe this holiday season.

To learn more about Loyola Medicine and the Burn Center or to schedule an appointment, visit [loyolamedicine.org](http://loyolamedicine.org).

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# Illinois Energy Companies and BBB Provide Practical Tips to Help Prevent Utility Scams

In mid-November, northern Illinois energy providers, in cooperation with the Better Business Bureau (BBB), shared practical guidance for customers to safeguard against fraudulent individuals impersonating utility representatives in an effort to obtain money or personal information.

On Utility Scam Awareness Day, Wednesday, Nov. 19, ComEd, Nicor Gas, Peoples Gas and North Shore Gas, in partnership with the BBB, were endorsing the Utilities United Against Scams (UUAS) initiative to "Slow Down, Verify, Stop the Scam."



The aim was to encourage people to "slow down" before sharing personal or account details, "verify" the caller's identity by contacting the company directly and "stop the scam" by reporting the activity to local authorities.

"Scammers are constantly changing tactics and often use threats or urgency to pressure customers," said Ajit Apte, senior vice president of Customer Operations at ComEd. "The 'Slow Down, Verify, Stop the Scam' framework helps customers pause and confirm suspicious requests before acting."

The Better Business Bureau also reminds individuals and businesses to stay vigilant to imposters who will show up at homes and businesses, then threatening to turn off utility service if payment to them is not immediately made.

"The BBB is honored to partner with ComEd and other energy providers to raise awareness about utility scams. As leaders in consumer protection, we have a responsibility to ensure people know how to protect themselves," said Steve J. Bernas, president and CEO of the Better Business Bureau. "The 'Slow Down, Verify, Stop the Scam' message is more than a slogan – it's a strategy for safety. Together, we're empowering consumers to recognize red flags and take action. Education is the first line of defense."

"Scammers are always trying new ways to trick people, but you can keep yourself safe by always slowing down and taking a moment to think," said Maria Bocanegra, president – Peoples Gas and North Shore Gas. "If what the person is saying doesn't feel right or if you're being pressured in any way, end the conversation. Hang up the phone, close the door, don't respond to the email. If you have any further concern, contact your utility directly."

"Scammers are getting creative and in recent years have expanded their schemes into digital spaces like social media," said Rich Asiyanbi, vice president of Operations at Nicor Gas. "Slow down, verify and stop scams – it's up to all of us to be vigilant to keep our personal and financial information safe."

## Tips to Help Identify Scam Attempts

Illinois energy companies also remind customers that they will never call or visit a home or business to pressure you into making an immediate payment using aggressive or threatening tactics; threaten to disconnect service if payment is not made within a short timeframe; ask for direct payment with a pre-paid cash card like Green Dot, or a third-party payment app like Zelle, Cash App, QuickPay and Venmo; ask for personal information such as Social Security or driver's license numbers or advise banking information is needed for a refund.

If a utility field representative visits your home or business, they will wear logoed uniforms and provide identification. If contacted by phone, verify the legitimacy of the call by requesting the caller to confirm information only you would know, such as date, amount or method of last payment.

If ever in doubt about the validity of the person calling or at your door, hang up or shut the door and call the energy company using a phone number from a trusted source like your latest bill, or the company website or mobile app.

## Nicor Gas Foundation Pledges \$100,000 to The Conservation Foundation for Environmental Restoration and Education Programs

The Nicor Gas Foundation is making a \$100,000 pledge to The Conservation Foundation, reinforcing its long-standing commitment to environmental stewardship and community well-being. This donation will accelerate the restoration of Belrose Farm in LaSalle County and expand two signature programs that connect people and children to nature: Nature Rx and Mighty Acorns.

Belrose Farm, a 183-acre property along the Illinois River, faces significant ecological challenges from invasive species such as Reed Canary Grass and Common Reed, which dominate 33 acres of its floodplain and wetlands. The Nicor Gas Foundation's funding will enable GIS mapping, herbicide application, prescribed burns and monitoring treatments to restore native plant diversity, and prepare the land for prairie and wetland species.

"As part of our ongoing commitment to create, maintain and sustain 10,000 acres of open space within our service area, we are proud to deepen our collaboration with The Conservation Foundation," said Wendell Dallas, president and CEO of Nicor Gas, which is affiliated with the Nicor Gas Foundation. "This pledge supports vital restoration and educational initiatives that benefit both the environment and the residents of northern Illinois."

For 25 years, Nicor Gas and the Nicor Gas Foundation have been champions of The Conservation Foundation, providing volunteer support and critical resources. Nicor Gas employees have helped with conservation activities such as the DuPage River Sweep and invasive species clearing at Belrose Farm, and the company and the foundation have donated more than \$160,000 to assist the nonprofit in its efforts.

"The support of organizations with a shared commitment to the environment is what helps us carry out our mission to improve the health of our communities by preserving and restoring open space and natural lands," said Brook McDonald, president and CEO of The Conservation Foundation. "With assistance from more than 5,000 members and 500 volunteers, like employees from Nicor Gas, we have helped preserve over 35,000 acres of open space."

**To learn more about Nicor Gas and its commitment to the environment through charitable giving, visit [www.nicorgas.com/2024-impact-report.html](http://www.nicorgas.com/2024-impact-report.html).**



# Obituaries

## ***Battaglia***

Eugenia Battaglia, Dec. 21, 1945-Oct. 29, 2025. Beloved wife of Frank Joseph Battaglia. Eugenia (Jeannie) passed away peacefully at the age of 79 after a long and courageous journey with Alzheimer's. Born and raised in Chicago, Illinois, Eugenia lived a life filled with love, laughter and generosity.

In her late teens and 20s, she worked as a talented hairdresser, known for her creative touch and caring nature. At the age of 21, she married the love of her life, Frank, and together they built a home full of warmth, good food and open arms. They loved to entertain, always bringing family and friends together around the table. Eugenia found her greatest joy in the kitchen – cooking, feeding and nurturing her loved ones with every meal she made. She truly knew how to run a kitchen and how to make everyone feel at home.

Her happiest moments were spent with her grandchildren, whom she adored and spoiled endlessly. Her love and devotion to her family were unmatched and will be felt for generations to come.

Loving mother of Gia Carol (Dominick) DeBartolo, Melisa Ann (James) Kratky and Nicole Battaglia; cherished daughter of Eugene and Camile Mormino; loving grandmother of Peter Joseph and Frank Nicholas DeBartolo, Graysen James and Christian Joseph Kratky, and Kayla Rose and Liliana Marie Battaglia; dear sister of Joseph (Rose) Mormino and the late Marie Monaco (the late Joseph); beloved sister-in-law to Jomarie (Ron) Stave, Micheal (Rose) Battaglia; loving aunt, cousin and friend to many; laid to rest with her in-laws Joseph and Florence Battaglia.

Arrangements by Carbonara Funeral Home. Interment Queen of Heaven Cemetery.

## ***D'Amato***

Mary Ann D'Amato, May 1, 1950-Nov. 24, 2025. Dearly beloved wife of the late Frank D'Amato; loving mom of Anthony (Jim LoBianco) D'Amato and Nicketta D'Amato; cherished nonna of Frank and Santino; dear sister of Judy (Lee) Dolce, Anna Marie (John) Fleming and the late Joe DeCarlo; loving aunt, cousin and friend of many. Arrangements by Carbonara Funeral Home. Entombment Queen of Heaven Cemetery.

## ***Del Boccio***

Chester Del Boccio, June 23, 1943-Nov. 25, 2025. Dearly beloved husband of Joann Del Boccio (nee Bartley) of 61 years; loving father of Chris Del Boccio (Julie Dufner), Carrie (Vito) Busse, Cheri Arcara, Curt (Carol) Del Boccio and Cindi (Ayman) Odeh; cherished grandfather of Rachael, Dominic, Brianna, Caden, Mikaela, Caylee, Tysen, Talia and Annabella; foster father of 19; beloved son of the late Edward and Theresa Del Boccio; dear brother of the late Lawrence Del Boccio; loving uncle, cousin and friend of many. Arrangements by Carbonara Funeral Home. Interment private.

## ***Garza***

Josephine Garza, Aug. 26, 1929-Nov. 9, 2025. Beloved wife of the late Roberto Garza; loving mother of Robert Garza and Jesse Garza; beloved daughter of the late Felix and Paz Dominguez; fond grandmother of Jessica, Judith and Robert Jr.; fond great-grandmother of Christian, Evelina, Joslyn and Sophia; dear sister of the late Maria, Isidoro, Alberto, Paula, Anna and Daniel; loving aunt, cousin and friend of many. Arrangements by Carbonara Funeral Home. Interment Queen of Heaven Cemetery.

## ***Janisch***

Josephine Janisch, Oct. 4, 1933-Dec. 7, 2025. Dearly Beloved wife of the late Charles Janisch; loving mother of Chuck (the late Linda) Janisch, Cathy (Paul) Visconti and Patrina (Emilio) Pontarelli; beloved daughter of the late Joseph and Patrina Degliomini; cherished grandmother of Eric Janisch (Kelly Dorsey), Erica (Brad) Florancic, Jessica Dawn, Giulia (Joseph) Kerns, Sabrina (Justin) Orick, Giacomo (Jessica) Visconti, Valeria (Rich) Rafael, Claudia Spinnato and Emilio (Carley) Pontarelli; great-grandmother of Sophia, Dylan, Veda, Ariella, Elliana, Milana, Marco, Angelo,

Dino, Giuseppe, Gia and Baby P; dear sister of the late Sarah, the late Mary, the late Tony, the late Fran, the late Teresa and the late Frank; loving aunt, cousin and friend of many. Arrangements by Carbonara Funeral Home.

## ***Martinez***

Juanita Martinez, June 26, 1935-Nov. 11, 2025, 90 years old, long time resident of Melrose Park, passed away peacefully on Nov. 11, 2025. Beloved wife of Isidoro Martinez; loving mother of Juanita (Victor) Ramos, Joe (Josephina), Mario (Dianna), Raffy Valenciano, Mary (Eduardo) Lemus, Hector (Carmen), Sylvia Lopez, Laura Martinez, Dora (Gerardo) Burciaga and Robert (Nancy); fond grandmother of 26; fond great-grandmother to 39; fond great-great-grandmother to five. Arrangements by Carbonara Funeral Home. Interment Fairview Memorial Park.

## ***Montenegro***

Roberta Montenegro, June 7, 1930-Dec. 4, 2025. Loving mother of Anita (Jose Miguel) Burciaga; cherished grandmother of Pascual Torres, Armando Torres, Arturo Torres, Magdaleno Torres, Celsy Amparan, Roberto Torres, Eduardo Torres, Jose Torres, Gil Torres, Juan Torres, Jaime Burciaga and Anita Sierra; great-grandmother of 25; great-great grandmother of two; loving aunt, cousin and friend of many. Arrangements by Carbonara Funeral Home. Interment Arlington Cemetery

## ***Moraliz***

Geraldine Moraliz, May 15, 1949-Dec. 5, 2025. Geraldine "Geri" Moraliz passed away peacefully on Dec. 5 2025, surrounded by the family who was the center of her life.

Born in Chicago to Vito and Lucy Zanzola, she spent her childhood in her parents' corner candy store, a place that shaped her warm personality and taught her the value of community. As an only child, she grew up embraced by neighbors, customers and the simple joys of connection that remained with her throughout her life.

Geri married her husband Rick and together they shared 52 years of devoted partnership. She worked as a beautician and was an exceptional homemaker known for her attention to detail, her hospitality, and the love she poured into her home and others. She raised two daughters – Kimberly Coverly and Dana (Jason) Adams; and later found profound joy in her seven grandchildren – Joseph, Nicco, Antonella, Anthony, Michael, Breyana and Bryce, who were truly the heart of her world.

Her loyal companion, Ivy, was never far from her side ... more than a dog, she was a source of comfort and constant devotion.

Geri faced dementia and Parkinson's with courage, grace and a quiet strength that inspired her family. She was loved deeply throughout her journey and cared for with the same tenderness she had shown to others all her life.

She will be remembered for her warmth, her loyalty and her unwavering love for her family. She will be forever missed and forever cherished.

Arrangements by Carbonara Funeral Home. Interment private.

## ***Pacheco***

Nicolas Pacheco, Aug. 17, 1957-Oct. 12, 2025. Devoted husband, devoted father and an ever-so-loving grandfather. He loved his job and all he wanted was to be able to go back and continue to make his co-workers laugh by cracking jokes and dancing for them daily. However, he got called home to be with God and gained his wings Oct. 12, 2025. His mission in life was to bring joy to others and help out as many people as he could.

Therefore, we kindly ask that you please help keep his memory alive by helping others in need as much as you can. May he rest up there, while we continue his mission and legacy down here on this Earth of helping others. Arrangements by Carbonara Funeral Home.

## ***Plunkett***

Jimmie Lee Plunkett Jr., July 29, 1956-Sept. 27, 2025, passed away peacefully at his home on Sept. 27, 2025. Jimmie was preceded in death by his parents Jimmie Lee Plunkett Sr. and Vivian Plunkett, by his brother



Timothy Plunkett and sister Linda Plunkett; Jimmie is survived by his children – Zachary Plunkett and Callea Plunkett, and by his siblings – Bill Urban, Jerry Plunkett, Kenneth Plunkett, Glenn Plunkett, Brenda Brady, Steven Plunkett, Ronald Plunkett, Craig Plunkett and Joelann Berg; Jimmie was a cherished uncle, cousin and friend of many. Arrangements by Carbonara Funeral Home.

**Roberto**

Filippo Roberto, March 7, 1941-Oct. 25, 2025. Dearly beloved husband of Anna Maria Roberto; loving father of Michael (the late Josephine) Roberto, Angela (Carlo) Sciullo, Vito (Shirleen) Roberto and Gino (Claudia) Roberto; beloved son of the late Michele Roberto and Angela Tatone; cherished nonno of Krystina (Preston Sr.) Cozzie, Dianna (Lucas Sr.) Nosek, Benjamin (Courtney) Sciullo, Anthony Roberto, Joseph Roberto, Michele Roberto, Annamaria ( Fiance Zach Larabee) Roberto, Emma Roberto, Romina Roberto and Enzo Roberto; bis nonno of Lucas Jr., Audrey, Hailee, Preston Jr., Parker, Elliott, Mila, Marleigh and Dakota; cherished brother of Isabella, Francesca, Anna, Vincenzo and Francesco; proud uncle to many nieces and nephews in Italy and United States; loving brother-in-law and friend of many. Arrangements by Carbonara Funeral Home. Interment Queen of Heaven Cemetery.

**Scrivani**

Andrew J. "Rick" Scrivani, Nov. 14, 1947-Nov. 4, 2025. Dearly beloved husband of Matilde Scrivani (nee Rocha); loving father of Nicholas (Katie) Scrivani, Samuel (Christy) Scrivani and Anthony (Amy) Scrivani; beloved son of the late Richard and Santa Scrivani; cherished grandfather of Allison, Joseph, Coralie, Gwendolyn, Hannah, Maddie, Ryan, Adayla and Avelyn Scrivani; dear brother of Antionette and Mary; loving uncle, cousin and friend of many. Arrangements by Carbonara Funeral Home. Interment private.

**Tinucci**

Dennis Erwin Tinucci, Feb. 5, 1943-Nov. 10, 2025. Beloved son of the late Mary and George Tinucci; dear brother of Donald (Jeanne) Tinucci; cherished uncle of Talia and Dionna; Arrangements by Carbonara Funeral Home. Interment Queen of Heaven Cemetery.

**Remembering a Loss**

Joseph James Loss was born in Melrose Park on Aug. 23, 1949, and went to his heavenly home on Oct. 5, 2025. Joe was raised on 24th Avenue upstairs from his maternal grandparents Englisina Milani (nee) Moretti and Amadeo, with his three aunts Nancy Fabiani, Gloria Lyko and Mary Markese, and one uncle, John Milani, by his mother and father, Caroline and Edward Loss. Joe attended Christian Assembly Church on 20th and Division from birth, His parents and other siblings moved to Bellwood when Joe was 9. He attended Proviso West High School and graduated in 1967. He attended Illinois State University and become a beloved founding member of Theta Rho Chapter of Sigma Nu Fraternity. He taught history at Proviso West for two years and then went on to Louis University of Law and received his Juris Doctor Degree. Joe was a brilliant and respected attorney in comp law – first at the law firm of Serpico and Provenzano, and then a senior partner with his close friend Louis Pavone of Loss and Pavone Attorneys for 40 years. Joe loved his big Italian family consisting of four sisters – Michele DeSantis, Cindy O'Connor, Karen DelBoccio and Julie Betori; one brother – Edward Loss; and their wonderful spouses, nieces and nephews, great-nieces and nephews; and so many cousins; he was very proud of all of his family. Joe was married and had three children, A voracious reader, his favorite book being his bible that he took anywhere and everywhere. He was a great sports enthusiast, loving golf the most, and he loved telling a good joke or great story. He also loved to travel and was a terrific cook of Italian foods, and always enjoyed a good cigar.

Joe had the kindest heart and was always eager to help anyone who needed it. He will always and forever be loved and remembered by his family, and all who were lucky to know him.



Joseph James Loss

# Carbonara Funeral Directors

Traditional Funerals

Cremations

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A photograph of three men in suits and ties. One man is in the foreground, slightly to the left, looking towards the camera. Two other men are standing behind him, one on the left and one on the right, both smiling.

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Melrose Park, IL 60160  
708.343.4000 FAX 708.343.9745

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