

NEW TRIER Township Courier

Fall 2012

Dial-A-Ride Switching to Voucher System

What Is Township Government?

The Township form of government was created in Illinois in 1849 to bring government closer to the people it served. It originated as the settlers' agency for maintaining order and dealing with lawbreakers. Over time, its focus has changed, and today it provides quality-of-life services that address the immediate and emerging needs of residents.

In This Issue

- Agency Funding Hearings
- Community Support Grants Program Deadline 12/31/12
- New Township Assessor
- Opportunities to Participate



As many of our readers know, Dial-A-Ride is a door-to-door taxi service that provides registered riders with discounted fares.

Many Township residents take advantage of this service for its convenience and affordability. In fiscal year 2012, resident usage of Dial-A-Ride increased by 50%.

In order to create a more efficient system of administration, the current user identification cards are being phased out and a new voucher system is being introduced. This change takes place on December 15. All current Dial-A-Ride card holders need to re-apply to receive vouchers. In addition, new applicants are encouraged to apply at this time. Applications can be found on the Township website. They can be mailed in or dropped off at the New Trier Township office at 739 Elm Street in Winnetka weekdays between the hours of 9:00 a.m. and 5:00 p.m.

Upon acceptance into the program, applicants will receive a notification in the mail requiring them to sign for the vouchers at the Township office. Photo identification is required. Vouchers must be signed for in person the first time only. Subsequent vouchers may be mailed. One booklet contains twenty vouchers each valued at \$6.00 good for twenty one-way rides

Community Support Grants Available

Grants to Meet a Variety of Needs

Imagine a New Trier Township family whose child has been diagnosed with Asperger's Syndrome or another disorder on the autistic spectrum. This child will need therapeutic intervention typically covered minimally or not at all by insurance. Treating the special needs of their child is emotionally draining as well as financially distressing.

Imagine now another family in one of our Township communities. This family's teenager is anxious over the social pressures encountered in high school. He has been apprehensive due to the enormous burden of his academic and extracurricular commitments.

(continued on page 4)



Watch the Township website for news of registration events.



A Message From The Supervisor



The Township is a busy place during the holiday season.

Over the many rewarding years that I have served New Trier Township, I never cease to feel overwhelmed by the kindness of our residents. This is especially true during the holiday season. Year after year we find that people come forward willing, ready and able to help neighbors who are less fortunate. The sad truth is that our programs for assisting needy residents are growing due to the ever increasing demand in our community. The good news is that the Township has support programs that can provide critical assistance to our families, friends and neighbors when life's challenges require them to ask for assistance. And we have generous residents who step up to help to fill in the gap. We are all guilty of thinking, "That would never happen to me," but life can blindside anyone. It's truly a gift that local government can

provide the safety net that makes all the difference in getting one's footing back after a life crisis comes along. Once again I find myself humbly giving thanks as the holiday season approaches. I am personally grateful for the spirit of generosity prevalent in this community. If you have a need, I encourage you to seek our support programs, and if you have good fortune I encourage you to join your neighbors who find fulfillment in donating to those same programs. Wishing every one of you good health and good times with loved ones this holiday season.

*Patricia B. Cantor
Supervisor*

Township Government Promotes Neighbors Helping Neighbors

Senior Snowflakes

The Township holiday giving programs are a welcome relief for many residents who need assistance during a season that can be simultaneously joyful and yet stressful when illness, financial difficulties or other unforeseen burdens occur. That is why the Township continually seeks new ways to provide assistance to meet residents' needs. The Township is introducing a new initiative for seniors this season, which will be offered in a pilot program called Senior Snowflakes.

Senior Snowflakes will initially be introduced to target a small group of seniors who live within New Trier Township and who rely on fixed incomes. Some seniors receive as little as \$700 per month out of which they must pay rent, utilities and medical costs; that leaves them very little for food and personal needs. The selected group of seniors will be given a wish list form which will allow them to submit a list of items they hope to receive. Snowflakes are being designed by members of Our Place of New Trier Township, a local nonprofit whose mission is to support adults with developmental disabilities so that they can live productive, meaningful lives in their home community with family and friends.

The snowflakes will be displayed at the Township Office. Par-

ticipants pick a snowflake and exchange it for a corresponding wish list. The participant then fills the wish list by shopping for the senior who made that particular request. Participants return their wrapped presents to the Township by early December, and the gifts will be delivered to senior recipients by Township staff. Both recipients and donors remain anonymous in this process. Suggested spending is \$50.

Holiday Sharing

The Senior Snowflakes initiative is just one of the many ways in which the Township strives to support residents in need at the holidays. A longtime Township tradition in which many residents enjoy participation is the Holiday Sharing program. Residents volunteer to sponsor those in need by filling the wish list of a Township family with children. Last year, the Township assisted families by arranging gifts for approximately seventy-five children. This year, it is anticipated the requests for assistance may exceed last year's number. Each donor accepts the task of shopping for and purchasing gifts and delivering those items to the Township by the deadline of December 14. Donors may contribute gift cards for the parents should they so choose. The donated gifts are distributed by Township staff in private

(continued on page 5)

Township Welcomes the New Assessor



Martin Houlihan joins the Township as Assessor to serve the needs of the New Trier community.

New Trier Township is pleased to introduce the new Assessor, Martin Houlihan. Mr. Houlihan, an experienced real estate appraiser, was sworn in at the September Board of Trustees meeting. Mr. Houlihan is a certified general real estate appraiser and a designated Member of the Appraisal Institute (MAI) having attained the highest achievement available to an appraiser. He has over fifteen years experience conducting commercial, industrial and residential appraisals.

As Assessor, Mr. Houlihan will serve to provide a variety of services and act as liaison between the taxpayer and the Cook County Assessor's Office. His goals include ensuring the assessments in New Trier Township are fair and equitable, helping the citizens of the Township to better understand the complexity of the property tax appeals process and to provide expertise and service to the community.

Mr. Houlihan will be serving out the remainder of JoAnn Shrier Gordon's term. Ms. Shrier Gordon, the previous Assessor, relinquished the position when she moved out of the Township. The Township is grateful for Ms. Shrier Gordon's dedication. She served as Assessor from 2006 until 2012, and her contributions are much appreciated. Lois Cross will continue on as Deputy Assessor. Ms. Cross is located at the Township office and remains available to assist citizens with appeals, exemptions and refunds, sales and building permits, taxpayer of record information, detailed assessment information and property description, legal descriptions of property, property tax identification numbers, name and address changes, tax exempt property listings, plat maps, tax rate information and much more. For more information on the services provided by the Office of the Assessor, please contact lcross@newtriertownship.com or 847-446-8200.

Agency Funding Hearings Scheduled

New Trier Township awards grants to social service providers to ensure that residents have access to needed programs that impact their well-being. The Township grant application process is currently under way, and social service agencies applying for grants are required to appear at funding hearings scheduled throughout November.

The process of applying for Township grants by agencies serving residents began in October with the Township Advisory Committees review of grant proposals. Committee members developed questions to elicit critical information from agencies in order for the committees to assess the agency missions, the focus of their work, and their compatibility with the Township strategic plan. A list of questions was provided to agencies in October to give them time to prepare for the review, which takes place in November.

Agencies appear for a thirty minute session in which they briefly present responses to the questionnaire followed by a period of question and answer. For fiscal year 2013, New Trier Township has budgeted \$1.26 million to fund almost 50 programs operated by more than 35 agencies. The hearings are open to the public.



To see the Funding Hearings Schedule, visit the Township website at www.newtriertownship.com

Community Support Grants Available to Residents in Need

(continued from page 1)

Facing the college application process has caused this young man sleepless nights. This extended period of extreme stress has plunged the youth into a clinical depression.

Finally, consider a family who had previously enjoyed good health. Everyone was doing fine, until the primary income earner lost her job. In just a few months, the family found themselves under financial strain. It may be some time until either parent secures a job to replace even a portion of their lost income. They have cut out unnecessary spending and yet their savings are quickly diminishing. Suddenly, the father is stricken with a disabling stroke requiring hospitalization and prolonged rehabilitation. Where does the money come from to help with the unexpected healthcare expenses?

Grants Can Help

Access to treatment can make a significant difference in many of these cases. Community Support Grants for Persons with Disabilities is a Township program which provides financial assistance that helps in meeting some of the special service needs and extraordinary expenses related to the person with a disability. Families such as those described in the examples above would be eligible to apply for a grant to help assist them as they support their loved one through their troubled times. There are no age or income restrictions on these grants. These Community Support Grants do not exceed \$1,500 per person per year. The grant can be used for therapeutic services, respite care, or any number of costs involved with the care of the person with a disability.

Eligibility for Grants

Disabled individuals, children or adults with disabilities are eligible, including but not limited to autism spectrum disorders, developmental and/or cognitive delay, multiple impairments, and mental disorders. In addition, residents with compromising physical impairments are also eligible to apply for the Community Support Grants program.

How to Apply

Individuals in need may apply through the Township by December 31, 2012. A lottery will be held from amongst the applicants who have returned completed applications. For a complete explanation of eligibility considerations, residency requirements and covered expenses, please go to the Township website at www.newtriertownship.com or contact Jeanne Winsted Rosser at jwinstedrosser@newtriertownship.com or 847-446-8201.



High School Volunteers Needed for Peer Jury



Jurors Needed

The Township Peer Jury consists of a group of high school students from public and private high schools in the Township who gather monthly to provide service to the community by listening to the cases of juvenile offenders and determining sentences. The Peer Jury is currently seeking volunteers.

How the Peer Jury Works

First time, non-violent offenders under the age of 17 may be referred to the Peer Jury by the Glencoe, Kenilworth, Northfield, Wilmette and Winnetka Police Departments. Not all juvenile offenders are referred to the Peer Jury. Those who have admitted guilt and have the consent of their parents and a referral by the police department may be considered. When a police officer makes the recommendation that a case go before the Peer Jury, it gives the offender the opportunity to avoid a criminal juvenile record. As an alternative to Juvenile Court, the Peer Jury system holds offenders accountable. Sentences always involve community service and often demand that offenders deliver an apology to the victims of their offense. Peer Jury programs have been found to cut down on repeat offenses. During the past twelve years of the Township program, offenders have successfully completed their assigned sentence over 96% of the time.

Benefits to Jurors

Students who serve on the Peer Jury experience the criminal juvenile justice system first hand, learn to work cooperatively, and accept the challenge to listen to the facts and to determine sentences. Most importantly, they must learn to maintain confidentiality about the cases they hear.

How to Apply for Peer Jury Service

If you would be interested in serving on the Peer Jury, you are encouraged to apply for this valuable service opportunity. You must be a current freshman, sophomore or junior in high school, and you must be available to meet once a month year round. When case loads are high, the jury may add an occasional special session. An orientation, training session and observation session are required before volunteers become jurors. To apply, go to the Township website at www.newtriertownship.com and download a Peer Jury Information Packet. For more information, contact Brian Leverenz at bleverenz@newtriertownship.com or 847.446.8203.

Neighbors Helping Neighbors

(continued from page 2)

appointments with the recipients. The process is confidential for both donors and recipients.

Angel Fund

Another caring opportunity is the Township Angel Fund. Monetary donations are accepted to allow staff to purchase items to create food gift bags for qualified seniors. The food bags are assembled by the young adult clients of Our Place of New Trier Township. Distribution is handled by New Trier Township staff in conjunction with the staff of the North Shore Senior Center.

Food Drives

Finally, the Township encourages residents to run food drives to actively engage themselves in assisting neighbors in need.

Food drives are a fun, hands-on way to help others. The Township has a Food Drive Kit which offers supportive tips and tools to make your drive a success. Copies of the kit are available in the Township office or on the website.

The Holiday Giving programs are designed to fulfill the Township mission of providing leadership, advocacy and resources to benefit the physical, mental and social well-being of residents. We encourage residents who feel moved to contribute to join us in our efforts and reap the rewards of helping neighbors in need. For more information on Township services or for opportunities to donate or volunteer, call 847-446-8202 or email info@newtriertownship.com. Also visit our website www.newtriertownship.com and find New Trier Township on Facebook.

Mobility Access Program Offered



The Township is pleased to have recently introduced in conjunction with the Council on Jewish Elderly (CJE) a ride program for physically disabled residents. With winter approaching, this program offers those with limited mobility a chance to get out in spite of inclement weather.

Those who require either a wheelchair or motorized scooter are picked up at home and given rides within a twenty mile radius. There is no limit on rides for medical appointments while rides for other purposes are limited to eight per month. Early reservations are preferred and rides are not guaranteed. Riders must be able to get out of their homes, off their scooters and into a seat independently. Wheelchairs can be secured in the vehicle.

Payment is required to CJE in advance by check or credit card. Fee is based on zone. Those with income below \$50,000 (verified by income taxes) receive a 75% discount, while those with income over \$50,000 receive a 25% discount. New Trier Township pays the balance after the discount is calculated.

Applications for the Mobility Access Program and information regarding scheduling rides can be found on the Township website. Applications should be downloaded and brought into the office. For more information on the Mobility Access program, contact Brian Leverenz at bleverenz@newtriertownship.com or 847-446-8203.

Consider Serving the Township

New Trier Township is in need of volunteers to serve on Advisory Committees. If you have an interest in participating in the grant assignment process or if you feel compelled to advocate for persons with disabilities, this opportunity could be for you. The Committee on Disabilities provides education and advocacy for those who have disabilities. The Mental Health, Money Follows the Person and Agency Oversight Committees play a vital role in balancing the social service needs of the Township while serving as stewards of Township tax dollars. Committee members monitor funded agencies' programs and performance and they also identify unmet needs within the community. Serving on a committee is a great way to become involved in the life of the Township. We are in need of members for these four committees and are actively recruiting at this time.

The Commitment

Committees typically meet monthly for one and one half to two hours. Committees do not meet

in January or the summer. The term of commitment is three years, although members have an option to serve a second term

Benefits to Committee Members

Committee members learn the activities of non-profit agencies in our community and become educated in community services. Serve your Township as you build an understanding of how the Township and other funders work with and evaluate these agencies for effectiveness. Engage in thoughtful discussion about non-profit agencies, community needs, inter-agency coordination, and community services with trained professionals and with other committee members.

How to Get Involved

For more information or to download an application, please visit the Township website at www.newtriertownship.com or contact Community Services Administrator Brian Leverenz at bleverenz@newtriertownship.com or 847.446.8203.



Township Calendar

December

- 3 Funding Decision Meeting @ 6:30 PM
- 11 Township Board Meeting @ 7:30 P.M.
- 12 Funding Decision Meeting at 6:00 P.M.
- 13 Funding Decision Meeting @ 7:00 PM
- 24 Township Closed
- 25 Township Closed
- 31 Township Closed
Community Support Grants Application Deadline

January

- 1 Township Closed

All meetings are held at the Township office located at 739 Elm Street in Winnetka unless otherwise noted. Meetings are subject to change. For the most up-to-date schedule visit www.newtriertownship.com.

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Our E-news provides custom-selected items of interest to you in a timely manner. Stop by for a visit and sign up. You can also find us on Facebook and follow us on Twitter.



Angel Fund Donation Form

Your contribution will make a difference to someone facing financial adversity.

Make check payable to: Angel Fund – New Trier Township.

Enclosed is my contribution in the amount of \$ _____.

Name _____

Address _____

City/State/Zip _____

Email _____

Mail to: New Trier Township, Angel Fund, 739 Elm Street, Winnetka, IL 60093



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