

NEW TRIER Township Courier

FALL 2015

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.

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Message from the Supervisor

As days get shorter and school children settle into the routine of a new academic year, the Township is gearing up for another busy season serving the community. We are currently in the process of conducting funding hearings, a system through which volunteers vet proposals from social service agencies and determine to which agencies grants will be awarded. Secondly, much like retailers annually ushering in the holiday season ever earlier, the Township is already planning the holiday programs which will help our neighbors in need to have a more pleasurable and less financially stressful celebration. Following the holidays, we will begin reviewing grant applications for individuals with disability and their families. In the spring, we wrap up our season with the Annual Town Meeting, a time at which we reflect on our year in review.



*Paddie Brennen
Supervisor*

For those of you who are thinking, "Aha... that sounds intriguing. I want to be part of the work of the Township!" that's wonderful. We encourage you to come by or call to learn about holiday programs or Advisory Committees for which you may volunteer. However, you may also want to consider getting involved in the life of the community through volunteerism offered by The Volunteer Center or The Kindness Connection, two of our social service agency partners who are featured in this issue of *The Courier*. Many residents find fulfilling engagement through volunteerism at the Township or through these two incredible agencies.

As always, we are grateful for the support of our residents in making all of our programming possible. We wish you a happy and healthy school year and a holiday season filled with joy.



Paddie Brennen

Elected Official Positions Available

The New Trier Citizens League is seeking interested residents to serve on the New Trier Township Board of Trustees. These individuals serve a four-year term during which time they meet monthly during the period September through June. The Trustees oversee the work of the Township in conjunction with the Supervisor, and they participate on Advisory Committees to allocate grant funding to social service agencies that meet the needs of residents. The process of exploring a fit begins now in order that candidates may be slated on the ballot in November, 2016 for the April, 2017 Consolidated Election. The only requirement is that elected officials must be registered voters who reside in

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News from the Assessor's Office—Cook County Board of Review Property Assessment Appeals Opened September 14



You still have one last chance to impact your 2015 tax obligation (payable in 2016) by filing an appeal at the Cook County Board of Review before October 14. Just give us a call for assistance. However, any reduction received this year will hold for just the one year.

Next year, 2016, is the triennial reassessment year for New Trier Township. You will receive a notice of your proposed assessed valuation then. The time to file an appeal is when you get your reassessment notice. This is your opportunity to reduce your taxes for the following three years.

The grounds for appeal and the supporting data needed for each are:

Lack of uniformity with similar properties

Comparable homes should be in your class and neighborhood, and similar in size, construction and age.

Error in square footage of home or lot

A survey is required as proof based on measurements of the exterior of the house, excluding basements, garages, and unfinished attics or porches.

Overvaluation

An assessment that is more than 10% of the current market value based on a recent appraisal or open market purchase (not a short sale or foreclosure).

Forms and support with appeals are available in the Township Assessor's Office. For a list of comparable homes, residents should call our office at 847-446-8200 and leave their name and address. Please specify whether you want to pick them up the next day or have us mail them to you. The necessary appeal forms will be included in any mailing.

Agency Funding Grant Award Cycle Under Way

Some townships administer social service programs to meet the needs of residents. Others provide support to existing agencies to enable them to achieve their missions on behalf of residents. In New Trier Township, we are fortunate to have a plethora of professional agencies that provide a broad range of services including youth programming, services for seniors, support for those with disabilities, assistance for those with mental illness, and many other critical services. As a result, the Township's role is to assess agencies' effectiveness and determine those which are eligible for funding based upon Township guidelines.

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.

The process of applying for Township grants by agencies serving residents begins annually in October and continues through early December. Committee members first meet to review grant proposals. In the next round of meetings, each agency appears for a thirty-minute session in which they briefly present responses to a questionnaire provided to them in advance.

Last year New Trier Township allocated \$1.42 million to fund 35 nonprofit agencies serving the community. The hearings are open to the public, and the schedule is listed on the Township website as soon as it becomes available. Hearings take place in the evening at the Township office.

New Trier Township Holiday Giving Programs Invite Resident Participation

The following Township programs are offered both for the benefit of those in need as well as those for whom helping others brings holiday pleasure

Caring Neighbors—Caring Neighbors is our most popular holiday giving program. The concept is quite simple. Caring neighbors sponsor a neighbor in need at the holidays. The Township’s role is to identify and qualify resident families who are facing financial hard times. Those families provide wish lists of items their children would enjoy. Donors select a wish list and purchase gifts for the children. Although very few adults make wishes, many donors choose to also provide gifts in the form of grocery gift cards for the parents. The process is confidential for both donors and residents, and the gifts are distributed by Township staff in private appointments with the recipients. Residents who participate tell us the effort is tremendously rewarding. Please consider joining us this year to make the season brighter for your neighbors in need. Wish lists may be selected by appointment during November, and wrapped gifts must be delivered to the Township Office by Friday, December 11. For more information or to sign up, please contact Social Services Administrator Jeanne Winsted Rosser at jwinstedrosser@newtriertownship.com or 847-446-8201.

Food Gift Cards—Seniors who live on fixed incomes often struggle to make ends meet, so the Township provides grocery gift cards at the holidays to our qualified elderly residents to help make the holidays more enjoyable. The Township Angel Fund in collaboration with The Grand Food Stores make this program possible. Residents may send checks payable to Angel Fund—New Trier Township to the attention of Jeanne Winsted Rosser at New Trier Township, 739 Elm Street, Winnetka, IL 60093.

Food Drive—Resident sponsored food drives are a tremendous source of support for the Food Pantry all year long. They are even more important at the holidays when children are home from school, which requires that parents provide all their meals at home. Organizing a food drive can be a fun and team-building activity for any organization. Even if you’re not part of a scout troop or youth group, a neighborhood of families or a group of friends can join together to organize a successful food drive to help stock the shelves of your Township Food Pantry. For information on how to sponsor a Food Drive, see the Township website at www.newtriertownship.com or contact Community Services Administrator Brian Leverenz at bleverenz@newtriertownship.com or 847-446-8203.

Elected Official Positions Available *Continued from page 1*

New Trier Township. Interested parties or those wishing to nominate an acquaintance are encouraged to contact League President Peter Tyor at 847-446-2217, 847-924-8457 or ptyor@ripco.com for more information.

The New Trier Citizens League is a non-partisan community organization made up of volunteers who function as a caucus to slate candidates to serve as Township officials. Secondly, the Citizens League functions as a watchdog group to provide oversight on behalf of residents to observe the work of New Trier Township. The relationship between the Citizens League and the Township is a partnership wherein members of the Citizens League educate themselves on the business of the Township to assure the Township stays focused on its core mission of providing leadership, advocacy and resources to benefit the physical, mental and social well-being of Township residents.



Current Elected Officials Trustee Stefan Mozer, Supervisor Paddie Brennen, Trustee Hamilton Chang, Trustee Jan Gargula and Trustee Gerri Kahnweiler

The Volunteer Center and The Kindness Connection offer volunteerism opportunities that enrich life in our community.

The Township supports two agencies whose mission is to facilitate volunteerism in the community. Anyone who has dealt with either The Volunteer Center and/or The Kindness Connection knows the professionalism and resourcefulness which they bring to their work. We invite residents to become familiar with the important work of these agencies, and to participate in the volunteerism available to you through them if you feel the call.

The Volunteer Center (VC) was established by Winnetka School District 36 in 1960, as an intergenerational tutoring program between the North Shore Senior Center, Winnetka schools and New Trier High School. As the program grew and expanded its boundaries to include all of the villages in our township, it became known as The Volunteer Talent Pool. It also sent volunteers to a dozen or so nonprofits that needed assistance. The group responded to increasing demand from residents to find diverse, meaningful volunteer experiences (not limited to local school tutoring) in even more nonprofit organizations. Thus, in 1994 the organization changed its name to The Volunteer Center to align itself with over 400 other Volunteer Centers across the country with a similar purpose – to engage people of all ages and abilities in meaningful, ongoing or episodic volunteer opportunities.

Today the VC has grown into a full service program that currently connects both individuals and service groups – schools, faith based organizations, corporations and civic groups – to any of its 140 nonprofit partners. The Volunteer Center is a large contributor to the New Trier Township Food Pantry through Make A Difference Day and Martin Luther King Day.

The VC hosts five Days of Service where residents and service groups can take advantage of a one day impactful volunteer event: **911 Day of Service and Remembrance**; **Make A Difference Day** on the fourth Saturday of October every year (October 24th this year); **Thanksgiving Share Your Bounty** on Thanksgiving morning; **Martin Luther King Day of Service** – co-hosted with The Kindness Connection every year; and **Kids Against Hunger**, a project organized by The Rotary Club of Winnetka-Northfield. The Volunteer Center also helps the Make It Better Foundation with its December Warming Hearts and Hands program and will be serving as a drop-off site this season. Information about those projects and how to become involved can be found on the VC website: www.VolunteerCenterHelps.org.

Another service offered by The Volunteer Center is training and networking events for its nonprofit partners to help them recruit, manage and retain volunteers and maximize their support to the organization. In these days with budget cuts which frequently result in staff cuts, an ongoing, committed volunteer is an extremely valuable commodity to lighten the burden. Both the volunteer and the nonprofit organization benefit from this complementary working relationship. Nonprofits are also facing difficult times recruiting new board



The Volunteer Center Board at their Make A Difference Day event

members and the VC is currently looking at providing a Board Development event to address that need.

The Volunteer Center's website is a valuable resource to uncover the profiles of its current 140 nonprofit partners and hundreds of opportunities posted by each to engage individual and group volunteers. The Volunteer Center's tag line, "Help Us Help You Help Others" speaks to the collaborative spirit that has always been at the hallmark of The Volunteer Center's mission to promote volunteerism, support nonprofit organizations, and engage people in meaningful volunteer service in the communities we serve.

The Kindness Connection began as a vision of two Wilmette mothers who were in search of meaningful volunteer opportunities for their young children. TKC's main focus is providing turnkey service learning projects to schools. The Kindness Connection works with 5,000 children a year in 20 to 25 schools in New Trier Township and beyond to inspire the next generation of volunteers. They do this in a three step process; providing schools with a comprehensive curriculum guide, facilitating a Kindness Connection event where students discuss the importance of volunteering and learn about a specific charity while creating a "gift from the heart" that is donated to the charity, and providing reflection activities after the event. Since 2006, TKC has worked with 30,000 children in 75 schools and organizations to help create 45,000 handmade gifts that have been donated to 40 local and worldwide charities.

As more and more people have heard about what The Kindness Connection accomplishes, they, especially parents, have asked how they can continue to volunteer with their children. TKC offers the residents of New Trier Township several ways to volunteer. Their largest event occurs on Martin Luther King Day. For several years, The Kindness Connection has partnered with The Volunteer Center to provide a day of giving back. The community can attend this free event and create projects that are donated to many area charities.

Another easy way for a family to get involved is to purchase one of TKC's projects from their Kind Kids Club. The Kind Kids Club allows families or children to do projects similar to the ones offered to schools, but at home. Simply purchase one project or sign up to be a member of The Kind Kids Club and you will be mailed supplies, instructions, and information on where to donate your project.

For people who are hosting a birthday party, bat/bar mitzvah, or special event and want to add more meaning to their event, The Kindness Connection offers a turnkey solution. They will provide you with supplies to create a "gift from the heart", information on the charity where it is going and deliver the projects for you. This program has evolved to also offering similar opportunities to corporations who are looking for ways to give back. If you are interested in learning more about any of these options or volunteering for The Kindness Connection, please contact info@thekindnessconnection.org.



Student volunteers make gifts from the heart.



Handmade gifts ready for distribution

Community Support Grants Offered by New Trier Township to Assist Persons with Disabilities

New Trier Township is currently accepting applications for grants for persons with disabilities through the Community Support Grants Program for fiscal year 2015-16. Grants are provided to persons with disabilities that cover a wide range of issues. To be eligible to apply, one must be a resident of New Trier Township with a diagnosed disability. Applications are available at the Township Office at 739 Elm Street in Winnetka or on the Township website at www.newtriertownship.com. The deadline for submission of applications including all supporting documentation is January 4, 2016. Applicants will be notified of their grant award by mail in February, 2016 and award checks will be disbursed in April, 2016.

Community Support Grants provide financial assistance to help meet some of the special service needs and extraordinary expenses related to the person with a disability. The grant can be used for any number of unanticipated but necessary costs involved with the care of the person with a disability.

Types of services/expenses the program covers (but is not limited to):

- Respite Care
- Child Care
- Therapy Services
- Medical Expenses
- Family Counseling
- Modifications to make the home more accessible to the disabled person
- Special vehicle or other equipment
- Home health services
- Personal care services
- Training and assistance in self-care
- Habilitation and rehabilitation services
- Crisis management
- Purchase of medicine, nutritional supplements, adaptive equipment

Individuals, children or adults with the following disabilities are eligible:

- Autism spectrum disorders
- Developmental and/or cognitive delay
- Mental disorders
- Physical impairments
- Multiple impairments

The program annually awards grants of up to \$1,500 for qualifying residents who need financial assistance for a host of reasons that relate to a disability. There are no age or income restrictions. A complete explanation of eligibility considerations, residency requirements and covered expenses are also available on the Township website. For more information, please contact Social Services Administrator Jeanne Winsted Rosser at 847-446-8201 or jwinstedrosser@newtriertownship.com.

Township Calendar

October

- 12 Office closed in observance of Columbus Day
- 13 Township Board of Trustees Meeting @ 7:30 PM
- 27 Committee of the Whole Meeting @ 7:30 PM

November

- 11 Office closed in observance of Veterans Day
- 17 Township Board of Trustees Meeting @ 7:30 PM
- 26 Office closed in observance of Thanksgiving
- 27 Office closed

December

- 8 Township Board of Trustees Meeting @ 7:30 PM
- 24 Office Closed in observance of Christmas Eve
- 25 Office Closed in observance of Christmas Day
- 31 Office Closed in observance of New Year's Eve

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 or sign up online. 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



New Trier Township
739 Elm Street
Winnetka, IL 60093-2524

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