



Committed to our future.  
Inspired by our past.

Arbor Day (p8) - courtesy  
of Itasca Park District



# The Village News



Help Restore Local Funding (p3)



Shape of Itasca (p5)



Go Green Itasca – Green Day Event (p8)



Seasonal Jobs Available (Back Cover)

## Mayor's Message



Mayor Jeff Pruyn

As winter fades and spring takes its place, I look forward to the simple joy of witnessing the world come alive and grow year-after-year.

It is similar to the pride I feel watching businesses grow and thrive here in Itasca. Many of our businesses have been rooted in the Village for generations. Their steadfast presence and investment in Itasca are valuable beyond measure. Their continued commitment and reinvestment in our community contributes to the resilience and expansion of our local economy.

Recently, I had the pleasure of hosting my Coffee with the Mayor series at Hamilton Partners, located at 300 Park Blvd. Hamilton Partners is at the forefront of commercial, retail, and industrial real estate development in the Chicago region and has been an invaluable partner to the Village for nearly four decades. Responsible for the majority of development north of Thorndale Road in Itasca, it's no wonder that when I-390 was built, we decided to name the access road Hamilton Lakes Drive. Each year, Hamilton Partners plans and hosts the Village's annual Fourth of July celebration at the beautiful grounds of Hamilton Lakes Business Park.

During the last fireworks show, you might have noticed two new buildings in the business park. NTT Global Data Centers is in the process of developing a 19-acre campus near Pierce and Arlington Heights Road. As a top-five IT provider and the third-largest data center provider globally, NTT's development is a significant milestone, not just for Itasca but for the entire Chicagoland area. It is cementing Itasca as a hub for data storage solutions. Why is this important? Data centers have become integral components of our technology infrastructure in today's society. Cloud computing is rapidly growing to meet our communication demands, online shopping, access to medical records, and everyday operations.

Beyond the global impact, this development is important to Itasca as it is transforming vacant office space into a technology corridor that has an infrastructure investment expected to surpass \$1.5 billion. NTT's expansion in Itasca not only brings jobs and investment to our Village, but also supports government services and schools through an increased and diversified tax base. NTT's investment helps ensure our community thrives and competes regionally and nationally, while at the same time lowering our community's reliance on residential property taxes.

Supporting our local businesses isn't just a choice; it's a lifestyle that has lasting impacts for future generations. Businesses need your support to establish roots and flourish. That's why for the past

Continued on page 2 >

## Mayor's Message Continued...

year, I've been hosting my Coffee with the Mayor series at different establishments around town. It's a way to stay informed about village projects and events, as well as an opportunity to discover businesses

you might not have noticed. Join us for the next Coffee with the Mayor on May 4<sup>th</sup> at Gift of Hope; details can be found on page 5. I look forward to seeing you there.

## Administrator's Message

Happy New Year! I hope this message finds you well. As we step into spring, I wanted to take a moment to update you on what is happening in town.

Village staff is working hard to wrap up projects as we approach the new fiscal year, which starts May 1<sup>st</sup>. One major initiative that has kept us busy is the Advanced Metering Infrastructure (AMI) project. Last fall, the Village embarked on the significant task of replacing all residential water meters and modernizing our infrastructure.



Carie Anne Ergo

Some of you have asked, "Why do you need to replace water meters?" Great question! Most meters being replaced have exceeded a 20-year lifespan; they are now out of warranty and prone to failure. To avoid water loss throughout the system, the Illinois Department of Natural Resources recommends that older meters be replaced with new Advanced Metering Infrastructure.

Another question I get is: "Will this new meter cost me more money?" The answer is no – and in some cases, it may save you money in the future. First, there is zero additional charge to

homeowners for the installation of new meters. The automated smart meters allow both Village staff and property owners to easily monitor their water usage. This technological advancement isn't just about convenience; it's about addressing potential issues promptly. If water is consistently used for 24 hours, the smart meters will alert our staff, and allow us to connect with you about a potential leak. This proactive approach reduces potential damage to your home and limits high bills by swiftly addressing issues. The next question is generally: "What do I need to do to get a new meter?" Simply wait for a mailed letter to arrive to your home and promptly make an appointment. Residents will receive communications 1-2 weeks prior to their scheduled meter replacement, asking them to schedule an appointment. The installation takes about 30 minutes and briefly interrupts water service. Installers need access to your water meter, usually found in a basement or crawlspace.

Finally, people ask: "Why is my water bill so high?" That depends. The Village Board has not increased water rates for the past 26 months, so any recent increases in your bill are directly related to your actual water usage. Consumption tends to increase over the summer as people use water for recreation and gardening, as well as during holiday seasons when people host friends and family.

As the Village Board works together to implement policies to keep Itasca moving forward, know that staff and I are always here to assist. If you have any questions, please feel free to reach out.

## Where Do Property Taxes Go?

Did you know that less than 5 cents of every dollar you pay in property tax goes to the Village of Itasca? So where does it go?

Your property tax dollars are split between several different local government bodies to provide services you use every day, including schools, libraries, fire protection, and more. Approximately 63% of your property tax bill goes to fund local schools. The State of Illinois consistently ranks last, or almost last, of all states when it comes to state funding of public K-12 education. As a result, local school districts must rely heavily on property taxes to educate area students. The average homeowner in Itasca will pay \$5,712.84 to school districts in 2023<sup>1</sup>.

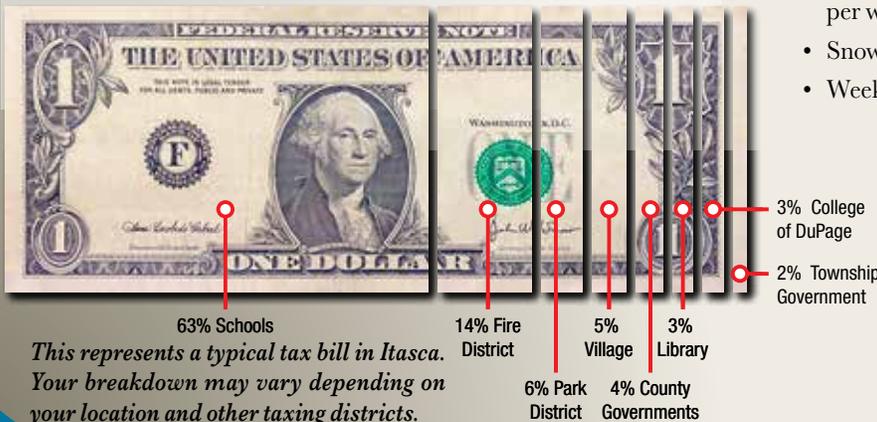
### How much property tax do I pay to the Village of Itasca?

The average homeowner in Itasca will pay \$439.82 in property taxes to the Village this year. Of that amount, \$357.04 will be used to fund police pension benefits. The State of Illinois approves public safety pension benefit levels and requires local governments to fund the associated costs. The remaining \$82.78 will be used to support the Corporate Fund, which helps provide Village services.

### What Village services do I receive for my tax dollars?

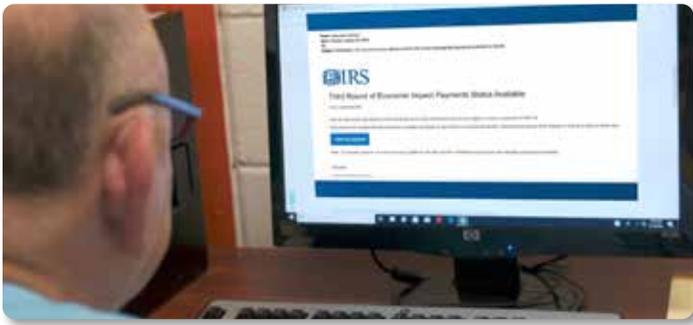
Some of the services residents get in return for their tax dollars include:

- Emergency police response, 24 hours per day, 7 days per week
- Emergency 9-1-1 operator assistance, 24 hours per day, 7 days per week
- Snow and ice removal from streets, 24 hours a day, as needed
- Weekly garbage and recycling service
- Weekly brush and yard waste removal, April-November
- Roadway construction and maintenance
- Sidewalk construction and maintenance
- Storm sewer construction and maintenance
- Streets clean of debris



<sup>1</sup> The median EAV being used is \$379,700.

## IRS Tax Scams



Every April, the daunting task of filing taxes looms over us, and for some, it can be a scary endeavor. Unfortunately, there are individuals who exploit these fears, preying on vulnerabilities and attempting to extract personal information by capitalizing on people's anxieties about the IRS.

The IRS has issued a warning about phishing email scams that impersonate the IRS. These fraudulent emails lure victims with promises of phony tax refunds or intimidate them with false legal and criminal charges related to tax fraud.

Scammers are also resorting to text message-based scams, known as "smishing." These messages may falsely claim that a taxpayer's account is on hold or suggest unusual activity has been reported.

Taxpayers should resist responding to any tax-related phishing or smishing attempts and avoid clicking on any provided URL links. If you suspect an IRS scam, promptly report it by sending an email or a copy of the text/SMS as an attachment to [phishing@irs.gov](mailto:phishing@irs.gov).

Keep the following in mind:

- The IRS will never send emails or texts about bills or refunds.
- Always exercise caution when clicking on a message.
- Never disclose information, especially your Social Security Number, to someone claiming to represent the IRS.

## Help Our Community Restore Local Funding

Itasca is joining communities across the State to urge Springfield to restore local funding for essential services and fulfill its agreement with municipal governments. The Local Government Distributive Fund (LGDF) is a portion of Illinois income taxes, paid by you, our residents, and businesses, that are collected by the State and redistributed back to municipalities per capita. LGDF can account for a significant portion of a municipality's operating budget. Since 2011, the State of Illinois has shorted the Village more than 6 MILLION DOLLARS in LGDF funding. That's funding for police services, road repairs and maintenance, garbage collection, flood prevention, and other infrastructure needs. It also helps avoid increases in property taxes. Itasca should be able to rely on predictable funding levels and consistent distribution of funds each year. Please visit [www.InvestInCommunities.org](http://www.InvestInCommunities.org) to learn more about this important topic and how to make your voice heard in Springfield this spring.



## A Year of Growth and Development

In 2023, Itasca witnessed a significant transformation in its economic landscape, laying the groundwork for a future marked by prosperity and sustained success. Below are the milestones and initiatives that defined 2023 and will shape our community's financial narrative for years to come.

### **New Beginnings:**

Last year, the Village welcomed the arrival of 29 new businesses! From inviting restaurants and helpful wealth management advisors to global manufacturing companies, stylish salons, and even a gas station, a diverse group of businesses are building their legacies in our community.

### **Development in Action:**

Last year, Community Development issued 848 building permits and conducted 1,549 inspections and 1,106 plan reviews. These permits signify more than construction; they represent investments in the community and confidence in its future. Such developments contribute to increased property values, making our village a desirable place to live and do business.

### **Downtown Redevelopment:**

The heart of the Village underwent a transformative moment with the approval of Itasca Station, a five-story luxury apartment building on Orchard Street and Maple Street. This project, supported by the Village Board's Tax Increment Finance (TIF) District in May 2023, emphasizes the Village's collective commitment to growth and revitalization. Permit submissions for Itasca Station are slated for early summer, with groundbreaking scheduled for fall 2024.

### **Funding the Future:**

The most pivotal initiative to emerge in 2023 was the approval of the Village's first-ever Tax Increment Finance (TIF) District in the downtown area. This groundbreaking move allows the Village to support downtown development financially, avoiding the need to raise taxes or divert funds from other essential services. According to Mayor Pruyn, "The approval of our TIF marks the dawn of a new era of growth and prosperity for our community. It sends a clear message to developers that Itasca is ready for impactful projects."

### **Expansion of Office and Industrial Parks:**

The expansion of growth has extended from downtown into office and industrial parks. As highlighted in the Mayor's message, NTT Global is rapidly enlarging its campus. With their first building fully leased, they are in the final stages of completing their second building, with plans for a third building underway.

Another development of significance is Andrene Lane, where 7.5 acres of land, previously consisting of six individual residential lots in an industrial area, has been transformed into a new 130,500 SF Class-A speculative industrial building. While market trends and industries may fluctuate, the stability of industrial-use buildings persists. The continuous demand to house products, due to the increasing reliance on e-commerce, makes our proximity to the airport and highways a highly sought-after location for construction. This not only boosts property values but also brings in more jobs and opportunities in Itasca.

## Spring Improvements



As we approach the spring and summer seasons, it's a great time for homeowners to consider various home improvement projects. Remember that certain remodeling and building projects require permits, such as kitchen and bathroom renovations, roofs, fences, driveways,

decks, patios, sheds, swimming pools, and lawn sprinkler systems.

Obtaining a building permit is important, as it grants legal permission to initiate construction based on approved plans and specifications. The Village encourages homeowners to consult with the Community Development Department before starting construction, especially if there's uncertainty about whether a permit is needed.

Contact the Community Development Department at (630) 773-5568 between 8:00 a.m. and 4:30 p.m., Monday through Friday, to discuss your construction plans, permit applications, submittal requirements, or the review process.

For your convenience, building permit information, application forms, and contractor requirements are available online at [www.itasca.com](http://www.itasca.com) under the "Community Development" section of the "Government" tab.

## Fire District Home Safety Inspections

Did you know that cooking fires were the leading cause of residential building fires? According to national estimates, in 2021, there were 5,200 residential fires and 470 deaths. Fire is fast, and it only takes minutes for thick black smoke to fill your home. Prevention starts with understanding and preparing in case of a fire. Your family has seconds of precious time to get out in the event of a fire. The first task is to ensure your home has smoke detectors on every floor and in each bedroom of the house. A carbon monoxide detector should also be installed on every floor of the home.



Let the Itasca Fire Protection District help with the first steps in fire prevention with a Home Safety Visit. Their crew will come to your home to assess the current smoke, carbon monoxide detectors, and any visible safety hazards. After their assessment, they will install any missing or broken smoke and/or carbon monoxide detectors free of charge!

Visit their website at [itascafd.org](http://itascafd.org) and click the Home Safety Visit button, or call (630) 773-1223 ext. 301 to schedule your appointment today!



## Building Safety Month

Building Safety Month is an international campaign celebrated in May, that highlights the importance of building safety and sustainable structures. This year's theme is "Mission Possible." To support this initiative, the Village offers helpful tips to ensure the safety of you, your home, or business.

### Deck Safety:

- Regularly check for warning signs of an unsafe deck, including loose or wobbly railings, support beams, missing or loose screws connecting the deck to the house, as well as signs of corrosion, rot, and cracks.

### Electrical Safety:

- Confirm that GFCI outlets are functioning properly.
- Avoid using extension cords as permanent wiring.
- Do not use appliances with damaged cords.
- Avoid overloading circuits.

### Have an Escape Plan:

- Develop a plan for exiting your home during emergencies, such as fires.
- Verify that basement egress windows are operational.
- Ensure hallways and doorways are clear of obstructions.

### Outdoor Grill Safety:

- Place grills away from the home, deck railings, eaves, and overhanging branches.
- Never leave a grill unattended.
- Always fully extinguish the grill after cooking.

For more information, please visit <https://www.iccsafe.org/advocacy/building-safety-month/building-safety-month/>.

## Call Before You Dig

With spring around the corner, it's time for planting, gardening, and sprucing up your home with new decks or patios. No matter how small your project, remember to give JULIE (Joint Utility Locating Information for Excavators) a call before you grab that shovel. It's not just a good idea; it's the law!



JULIE will help locate any underground utilities and mark your property for safety. Just dial 8-1-1 or (800) 892-0123 to schedule your free locate at least 48 hours before you start digging (excluding weekends or holidays). You can aid in the process by marking the digging area with white paint or flags. For more details, visit [illinois1call.com](http://illinois1call.com).

# Business Spotlight



Itasca is home to several remarkable organizations, and one of the most extraordinary may be the Gift of Hope Organ & Tissue Donor Network. This non-profit is federally designated to coordinate organ and tissue donations in the northern three-quarters of Illinois and Northwest Indiana. Since its establishment in 1986, the organization has been a key player in facilitating hundreds of thousands of organ and tissue transplantations, witnessing a surge in lifesaving donations in recent years. With a dedicated team of over 330 staff members based at 425 Spring Lake Drive in Itasca, Gift of Hope is gearing up for the upcoming National Donate Life Month in April.

During this month-long initiative, the focus is on encouraging individuals to register as organ, eye, and tissue donors. It's also a time to honor those who have made significant contributions by saving and enhancing lives through donations. The broader goal is to bring hope to the over 100,000 individuals on the national transplant waitlist. Additionally, 2024 marks the beginning of an exciting partnership between Gift of Hope and RUSH, aimed at improving transplant outcomes and increasing the availability of transplantable organs.



*If you are a small business owner in town and would like to be featured in our next edition, please contact [commdev@itasca.com](mailto:commdev@itasca.com) with your information.*

Beyond its primary mission, Gift of Hope actively extends its impact into the community. In October, the organization collaborated with the Fire District, Police Department, and the Northwest Community Hospital Paramedic Program to host an active shooter training drill at its Itasca headquarters. A flag-raising ceremony was also conducted to honor local first responders and champions for donations. Mayor Pruyne stated, "It's valuable to have community-oriented organizations in the Village, such as Gift of Hope. These positive connections make life better for residents and build a strong community. Come and join me on May 4<sup>th</sup> at noon for the Coffee with the Mayor Series, taking place at their headquarters." To learn more about Gift of Hope or to register your decision as a donor, visit [www.giftofhope.org](http://www.giftofhope.org).



Follow us on Twitter:  
[@ItascaMeans](https://twitter.com/ItascaMeans)  
and on Facebook:  
[Itasca Means Business](https://www.facebook.com/ItascaMeansBusiness)

The Village of Itasca is proud of its business community and being a premier destination for all types of businesses and would like to extend a warm welcome to the following companies that received Village Board approval to operate in our town:

#### **Midwest Goods, Inc – 700 District Dr.**

Midwest Goods, Inc. offers retailers wholesale vaping and tobacco-related products, including smoke shops and gas stations. For further details, visit <https://www.midwestgoods.com/>.

#### **National Corporate Housing – 1115 Hilltop Dr.**

National Corporate Housing provides temporary corporate housing across the United States. For more information, visit <https://www.nationalcorporatehousing.com/>.

#### **Simon Hegele Healthcare Solutions – 1380 Industrial Dr.**

Hegele Healthcare Solutions is a global company specializing in the installation and maintenance of hospital and clinic equipment. The Itasca location will serve as a storage facility for medical systems and installation tools. For additional details, visit their website at <https://www.simonhegele-healthcare.com/>.

#### **Silverline Wholesale, Inc – 1442 – 1456 Norwood Ave.**

Silverline Wholesale, Inc. operates as a wholesaler specializing in selling vaping and tobacco-related products to other businesses. For additional details, please visit <https://silverlinewholesale.com/>.

#### **Sorensen Landscape and Specialty Designs, LLC – 412 N Oak St.**

Sorensen Landscape and Specialty Designs, LLC, is a local business providing landscape design, consultation, and installation services as well as garden art sales. For more information, visit <https://sorensenlandscape.com/>.

#### **V&M Motorworks, LLC – 1519 Industrial Dr.**

V&M Motorworks is a new shop providing auto repairs in Itasca near the corner of Irving Park Road and Prospect Avenue. For more information, contact (312) 833-1858 or [vmmotorworksllc@gmail.com](mailto:vmmotorworksllc@gmail.com).



## Shape of Itasca

Mark your calendars for the 32<sup>nd</sup> annual Shape of Itasca. For those unfamiliar, the Shape of Itasca is a yearly townhall meeting where representatives from Itasca's public taxing bodies—the Village, Park District, Fire District, School District, and Library—gather to discuss their achievements over the past year and unveil upcoming plans. This event offers residents a chance to pose questions to officials and actively engage in community dialogue. Join us on Thursday, May 30<sup>th</sup>, at 7:00 p.m. at the Village Hall to be part of this informative session and contribute to the shaping of Itasca's future.

# Celebrate Our Community

To register for a library event, please call (630) 773-1699 or visit [www.itascalibrary.org](http://www.itascalibrary.org). To register for a Park District event, please call (630) 773-2257 or visit [www.itascaparkdistrict.com](http://www.itascaparkdistrict.com).



**Fri., March 8<sup>th</sup>**  
**Teen Book Boxes**  
 Library  
 Open to Close

Teens can register by the 8<sup>th</sup> of each month for a customized box with a book, candy, and other fun stuff!



**Mon., March 18<sup>th</sup>**  
**Family Storytime**  
 Library  
 10:00 - 10:30 a.m.

Drop in for stories and more every Monday from March 18<sup>th</sup> through May 6<sup>th</sup>. Geared to ages 6 & under. No registration is needed.



**Mon., March 18<sup>th</sup>**  
**Flashlight Egg Hunt**  
 Itasca Park District  
 8:00 p.m.

Grab your flashlights and head to Washington Park for an egg hunt in the dark! Ages 1 - 14 years old; \$12 per child. Registration is required.



**Tues., March 19<sup>th</sup>**  
**Eggstreme Teen Night**  
 Itasca Park District  
 8:00 p.m.

Twens and Teens come enjoy an "eggcellent" egg hunt at Washington Park. This event is free for ages 10-15 years old.



**Wed., March 20<sup>th</sup>**  
**Water Egg Hunt**  
 Itasca Park District  
 6:00 or 7:00 p.m.

Get ready to jump in the Eaglewood pool and gather some Easter eggs in this super-fun egg hunt! All participants are welcome to swim after the hunts. Registration is required. Cost is \$15 per participant for ages 1-14



**Wed., March 20<sup>th</sup>**  
**Senior Scramble Egg Hunt**  
 Itasca Park District  
 7:00 p.m.

Itasca Seniors, come out and remember what it is like to be a kid! This free 60+ egg hunt is sure to bring out the child in everyone! Inside each egg there will be candy, or a ticket for a prize!



**Thurs., March 21<sup>st</sup>**  
**Adult Eggstravaganza Egg Hunt**  
 Itasca Park District  
 8:00 p.m.

Egg Hunts are not just for kids! Get your running shoes on and be ready for an intense egg hunt! Hundreds of eggs will be hidden throughout Washington Park — free event for ages 18+.



**Sat., March 23<sup>rd</sup>**  
**Shark Tank Junior: Craft Sale for Kids and Teens**  
 Itasca Library  
 1:00 - 3:00 p.m.

Come and shop to support local young entrepreneurs. Kids in grades 1 - 8 can apply to sell their products. Registration is required.



**Sat., March 23<sup>rd</sup>**  
**Spring Fling**  
 Itasca Park District  
 10:30 a.m. - Noon

Join Itasca's ultimate Easter event at Washington Park! Meet the Easter Bunny, snap pics, discover hidden treats. The free egg hunt will start at 11:00 a.m. sharp. Don't forget your cameras!



**Sun., March 24<sup>th</sup>**  
**Hoppy Visits**  
 Itasca Park District  
 11:00 a.m. - 3:00 p.m.

The Itasca Bunny will be hopping around town, offering residents a 5-minute driveway visit with a bunny basket! The first child is \$25; additional children are \$15. Registration is required.



**Wed., April 10<sup>th</sup>**  
**Leap Into LEGO**  
 Library  
 6:30-7:30 p.m.

Families come join in a spring celebration with LEGO! Enjoy LEGO stations and a related craft. Registration is required.



**Tues., April 16<sup>th</sup>**  
**Homeschool STEAM Meetup**  
 Library  
 10:30-11:30 a.m.

Join the Library for STEAM-based activities and an art project. For grades 1-8. Registration is required.



**Tues., April 23<sup>rd</sup>**  
**Bring the Outside In: Spring**  
 Library  
 10:00 - 10:30 a.m.

Looking to keep the little ones entertained? Stop by the Library and enjoy several activity stations all about spring. Geared to ages 2-6. Registration is required.



**Sat. April 27<sup>th</sup>**  
**Arbor Day Celebration**  
 Springbrook Nature Center  
 10 a.m. - 2:00 p.m.

Join the Village and Park District at the Nature Center to celebrate Arbor Day. There will be several free activities and demonstrations available.



**Sat., May 4<sup>th</sup>**  
**Green Day Recycling Event**  
 Public Works  
 8:00 a.m. - Noon

Dispose of unwanted electronics during the Village's annual Green Day event. More information on this event can be found on page 8.



**Sat., May 4<sup>th</sup>**  
**River Sweep Event**  
 Springbrook Nature Center  
 9:00 a.m. - Noon

Mark your calendar and join an incredible community tradition. The DuPage County River Sweep is an annual cleanup event encouraging citizens to improve local waterways by removing debris and litter.

# Celebrate Our Community



**Sat., May 4<sup>th</sup>**  
**Coffee with the Mayor**  
 Gift of Hope  
 Noon

Join Mayor Pruyn for coffee and connect with a non-profit business committed to making a positive difference. Find more details on Page 5.



**Wed., May 8<sup>th</sup>**  
**Kiddieland Remembered**  
 Library  
 7:00 p.m.

Come explore the 80-year history of the park with vintage pictures and memorabilia, and hear why it had to close. Registration is required.



**Thurs., May 23<sup>rd</sup>**  
**100 Things to Do in Chicago Before You Die**  
 Library  
 7:00 p.m.

Chicago tour guide and author Molly Page shares tips for planning your next staycation in the city, ideas for a memorable night out, and hidden gems to explore with the whole family. Registration is required.



**Mon., May 27<sup>th</sup>**  
**Memorial Day Parade**  
 Usher Park  
 9:30 a.m.

Join us for the annual Itasca Memorial Day Parade! VFW Post #5167 will provide a memorial service, and a picnic will follow the parade at Usher Park. Any group wishing to participate, please contact the Itasca Park District. Entry deadline is April 26<sup>th</sup>.



**Thurs., May 30<sup>th</sup>**  
**Shape of Itasca**  
 Village of Itasca  
 7:00 p.m.

All are invited to attend this traditional town hall meeting, where leaders from each taxing body will be present to discuss their accomplishments and plans for the upcoming year.

## Shark Tank Junior: Craft Sale for Kids and Teens

Shark Tank Junior is back at the Library on Saturday, March 23<sup>rd</sup> from 1:00 – 3:00 p.m.! All young entrepreneurs are invited to bring their business to the Library for the Shark Tank Junior competition and craft sale. Sell your homemade jewelry, sewing projects, artwork, or other craft items at your booth. Make a pitch to representatives from Itasca Bank & Trust Co., just like on Shark Tank. A cash prize will be awarded by the bank. Registration for this event began in February, so don't delay, bring your application and registration to the Library.



## Spring Mini Art Show

Show off your talent by participating in the Library's mini-art show! Artists of all ages are encouraged to participate. Canvases can be picked up starting March 15<sup>th</sup> and should be returned by March 29<sup>th</sup>. The art will be on display for the entire month of April. Can't wait to see what you create!



## Sign of Spring

Ever wonder how to tell if spring is here? Just look to the sky. The arrival of turkey vultures is a clear indicator that spring is underway, typically starting in March and April, but some may appear sooner. With an average wingspan of six feet, turkey vultures distinguish themselves as one of the larger birds of prey in Illinois. However, they are usually absent during most of the winter season as they migrate south in colder weather. If you're uncertain about what a turkey vulture looks like, come and explore these fascinating creatures at Itasca's Springbrook Nature Center, where two resident turkey vultures reside year-round!

These birds are cared for by Wings and Talons, a 501(c)(3) non-profit run entirely by volunteers. Funding for their care comes from public donations. For more information, visit Wings and Talons at <https://wingsandtalons.org> or on Facebook and Instagram.

## 2024 Early Bird Pool Passes

Get ready to make the most of your summer with a season pool pass to the Itasca Waterpark. Early bird pool passes go on sale April 1<sup>st</sup>. Passes can be purchased online at [itascaparkdistrict.com](http://itascaparkdistrict.com) or in person at the Itasca Park District Recreation Center located at 350 E. Irving Park Road.



# Go Green Itasca

Embracing a green lifestyle is important for the sustainability of our planet. There are some simple yet powerful ways you can participate in making a greener tomorrow. Below are events and activities that offer opportunities for you to contribute to creating a more environmentally conscious future this season.

## Celebrate Arbor Day



Did you know that trees have the remarkable ability to thrive for centuries? Express your lasting love by dedicating a tree to someone special this year. Show your care through the Village's website or by contacting the Village's tree arborist, Kevin Farley, at [kfarley@itasca.com](mailto:kfarley@itasca.com) for a lasting tribute.

All tree dedications will be celebrated on Saturday, April 27<sup>th</sup>, during the Village and Park District's annual Arbor Day celebration. Arbor Day is a global celebration emphasizing the importance of trees and will be celebrated by Itasca starting at 10:00 a.m. Everyone is invited to join Mayor Pruyn as he begins the event by reading the Arbor Day proclamation.

Following the proclamation, unleash your creative side by participating in a craft that contributes to the beauty of our forest through planting native wildflowers. Davey Tree Expert Company will be on-site for a tree climbing demonstration and to provide seedlings to attendees. Wings & Talons will also be part of our Arbor Day celebration with their captivating Birds of Prey display.

## Participate in the Green Day Recycling Event

The annual Green Day recycling event, sponsored generously by Itasca Bank & Trust Co., is scheduled for Saturday, May 4<sup>th</sup>, from 8:00 a.m. to noon at the Public Works facility (411 N. Prospect Ave). While electronic waste will be accepted, there will be limitations on tube (CRT) televisions/computer monitors, allowing only one per car, with a size restriction of 32" and smaller and no projection screen TVs. On-site paper document shredding will also be available, limited to Itasca residents, Itasca Bank & Trust Co. customers and associates, and in-home businesses. Shredding services are restricted to five (5) "copy paper sized" boxes, which will be returned to individuals.



Please ensure documents are removed from 3-ring binders, and

note that books, catalogs, magazines, newspapers, and hazardous household waste or paint will not be accepted. For paint disposal, contact Earth Paint at 147 Front Street in Wood Dale.

In addition to electronics and paper, the event will welcome fabric, used bicycles, American Flags, eyeglasses, hearing aids, prescription medications, used motor oil, used antifreeze, automotive batteries, scrap metal, fire extinguishers, books, school & office supplies, cell phones, inkjet cartridges, keys, clothing buttons, safety pins, and cooking oil. Cooking oil can be presented in containers, or the oil can be disposed of with the container returned. Fellowes, Inc. will provide personal paper shredders as giveaways to random participants throughout the day. For more details, visit the Village website at [www.itasca.com](http://www.itasca.com) or email [byarbrough@itasca.com](mailto:byarbrough@itasca.com) with specific questions.

## Join DuPage County River Sweep



Save the date for Saturday, May 4<sup>th</sup>, and join the Village and Park District at Springbrook Nature Center for a cherished tradition that began in 1991. The annual DuPage County River Sweep is a self-coordinated stream cleanup spanning the entire county, held each spring. This one-day event encourages volunteer groups to contribute to "sweeping our rivers clean" by collecting debris from local waterways. Since its inception, the program has successfully removed over 292 tons of debris from DuPage waterways. With over 20 participants last year, you are invited to be part of this initiative at the nature center grounds and along the creek. For more information and registration details, please visit [www.theconservationfoundation.org/sweep](http://www.theconservationfoundation.org/sweep).

## Get a Rain Barrel

Reduce stormwater runoff from your property with an easy, cost-effective solution – rain barrels. With estimates indicating that a quarter-inch of rain on an average home yields over 200 gallons of water, rain barrels capture roof stormwater that would otherwise be lost as runoff. Modern rain barrels are sealed, child-safe, insect-resistant, and customizable, offering a practical way to access and utilize harvested rainwater. This untreated water is ideal for gardening or car and window washing, potentially decreasing your water bill. Emptying the rain barrel after a storm benefits your



usage and reduces the burden on sewer systems and waterways.

Obtain your rain barrel this spring through the Village's partnership with the Conservation Foundation, which offers residents a chance to purchase barrels at a reduced cost. Orders can be placed on the Village's website at [www.itasca.com](http://www.itasca.com) and picked up during the Green Day event on Saturday, May 4<sup>th</sup>, at the Itasca Public Works facility (411 N. Prospect Ave).

### Create a Rain Garden

Rain gardens not only enhance your landscape's beauty but also serve a functional purpose. These slightly depressed areas, planted with native grasses and wildflowers, effectively absorb rainwater from roofs, sump pumps, and runoff from paved surfaces like parking lots and sidewalks. By allowing approximately 30% more water to permeate the ground compared to a traditional lawn, rain gardens enable homeowners and businesses to play a role in reducing polluted runoff.



### Choosing the Right Spot

Ideal locations for rain gardens include areas near downspouts or where your sump pump discharges, receiving full sun or partial shade. Position the garden so that pipes from downspouts or sump pumps can directly drain into it, maintaining a distance of about 10 feet from the foundation and downhill from the building.

### Get Support

Did you know that rain gardens may qualify for the Village's Rear Yard Flooding Assistance Program? The Village could cover up to 50% of eligible improvement costs, with a maximum of \$3,000. Participation operates on a first-come, first-served basis and depends on available funding. Explore more about the yard flooding assistance program at [www.itasca.com/2028/Rear-Yard-Drainage-Assistance-Program](http://www.itasca.com/2028/Rear-Yard-Drainage-Assistance-Program).

### Support Itasca Garden Club Plant Sale



Start planning for your summer garden now! Begin the growing season by participating in the Itasca Garden Club's plant sale, featuring a diverse selection of perennials,

vegetables, and herbs. Preorder forms will be available at the Itasca Community Library and the Itasca Park District starting April 1<sup>st</sup>. Remember to pick up your orders on Saturday, May 18<sup>th</sup>. The proceeds from the plant sale actively support gardening and nature-related programs, fostering a strong community of club members who share a passion for horticulture. To join or for additional details, contact (630) 773-8518.

All plant material is sourced from Murphy's, allowing you to beautify your home while supporting a local business.

### Sign Up for Paperless Water Bills

Discover the benefits of enrolling in autopay for your water bills! It's a win-win for both you and the environment. By going paperless and opting for autopay, you contribute to a greener lifestyle by reducing the need for paper, saving trees and lessening carbon emissions associated with production.

Not only is autopay good for the environment, but it also saves you valuable time. Forget about writing checks, worrying about due dates, or dealing with postage. With autopay, your water bills are seamlessly taken care of each month, automatically. It's a hassle-free way to manage your utility services.

Ready to simplify your life and make a positive impact? Signing up for autopay is quick and easy. Just visit our Village's website at [www.itasca.com](http://www.itasca.com), navigate to "Water Bill Payments," and follow the simple instructions to enroll. Must have your account number to register.

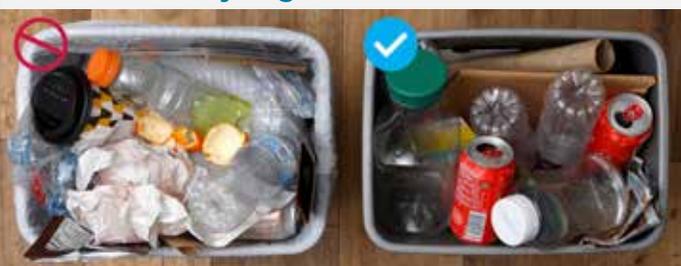
### Recycle Right

Despite good intentions, recycling efforts can be undermined when items that shouldn't be included end up in the bin. When recycling, keep the following in mind:

#### NEVER place these items in your recycling container



#### What Your Recycling Container Should Look Like



❌ Food waste

❌ Soiled or wet paper and cardboard

❌ Liquid in bottles

❌ Coffee cups

✅ Empty. Clean. Dry.™

✅ No smell

✅ No plastic bags

✅ No bagged recyclables

## Usher Park Receives OSRAD Grant

In the Fall newsletter, the Mayor shared that the Village and Park District were working together to secure a \$600K Open Space Land Acquisition & Development (OSRAD) matching grant from the Illinois Department of Natural Resources for the revitalization of Usher Park. We are pleased to announce that on January 26<sup>th</sup>, Governor Pritzker approved this grant.



This collaborative project between the Village of Itasca and Itasca Park District will include replacement of the 38-year-old gazebo with a new performance gazebo and plaza, an interpretive trail around the existing pond, natural play area, interpretive gardens showcasing native and pollinator species, and site improvements throughout the park, which will bring the entire site up to ADA standards and provide new path locations to provide access to existing amenities. Mayor Pruyn expressed his excitement about the project, commenting, “This project is a great example of what government can achieve when we work together. The improvements at Usher Park support the Village’s Downtown Strategic Plan, along with the Park District’s master plan and Illinois’s priority of enhancing open space.”

As the project unfolds, we’ll keep you updated on our websites and notify you about opportunities to share your input.

## Itasca Food Pantry Renovation

The Village is proud to announce that it was awarded a grant last year from the Illinois Department of Commerce and Economic Opportunity or DCEO. This grant, totaling \$100,000, is part of a \$165,000 project budget dedicated to enhancing the Itasca Food Pantry at 336 W. Center St. Did you know that the current Food Pantry building originally served as the first Public Works garage, dating back to the pre-1950s?



Using these funds, the Village upgraded the aging infrastructure of the property, including the electrical, HVAC, and plumbing systems. Additionally, the public entrance and exits were improved with ADA-compliant double doors, ensuring better accessibility for all patrons.

Jeanne Otero, President of the Itasca Food Pantry, expressed her enthusiasm for these positive changes: “These welcome improvements to the Itasca Food Pantry enhance accessibility for all our neighbors, making life a little easier for everyone. We prioritize the needs of every individual, providing facilities that reflect inclusivity for everyone who steps onto our premises.”

## Yard Waste Collection



Yard waste and brush pickup will begin on Monday, April 1<sup>st</sup>. The Village appreciates our residents’ efforts to maintain their property and recognizes that removing tree debris and yard waste may be difficult. This is why the Village offers residents free Yard Waste and Brush Collection between the first Monday of April through the last Monday in November. To ensure Republic Services pick up your material, please follow the guidelines below:

### Yard Waste Collection

- Place in biodegradable paper bags or reusable containers marked “Yard Waste.”
- Maximum reusable container size – 34 gallons
- Maximum bag or reusable container weight – 50 pounds

### Brush Collection

- Bundle brush with biodegradable twine.
- Stack bundles in the parkway in neat, manageable piles with the cut ends facing the street.
- Maximum bundle weight – 50 pounds.
- Maximum branch diameter – 6 inches.
- Maximum branch length – 4 feet.

Contact Republic Services Itasca Customer Service for yard waste or brush pick up questions at (847) 981-0091.

### Holidays Impacting Refuse

The following holiday will impact refuse and recycling pick up:

- **Memorial Day – 5/27**

*Refuse will be picked up on Tuesday instead of Monday.*

## Property Maintenance Reminders

Taking care of your residence is a basic responsibility of all property owners. As we transition into the warmer months, it’s important to be mindful of common property maintenance issues. Here are some reminders to preserve the beauty of our town.

**Grass Height:** Property owners are responsible for regularly mowing lawns, which applies to grass in parkways and roadside drainage ditches. Grass should not exceed 12 inches in height.

**Garbage Cans:** Waste, recycling, and yard waste containers may be placed by the street after 4:00 p.m. the day before garbage is picked-up and removed by 10:00 p.m. on garbage day. Containers should not be stored in front of residences when not in use.

**Storage of Recreational Vehicles:** A single boat or recreational vehicle is permitted on or off the trailer from May to October when parked on a hard surface driveway. Ensure that no vehicle or boat encroaches upon sidewalks, parkways, or public ways.

# New Hires, Promotions, & Retirements

## New Hires



John Gruskovak

The Itasca Police Department (IPD) is pleased to introduce three new members to its team: Officer John Gruskovak, Officer Adrianna Sanchez, and Officer Jessica Izaguirre. Officer Gruskovak was hired on June 26<sup>th</sup> and recently graduated from the Suburban Law Enforcement Police Academy on December 15<sup>th</sup>. Currently undergoing the department's 3-month field training program, he is acquainting himself with Itasca's specific procedures alongside a senior officer. Officer

Gruskovak, who enjoys studying history, watching movies, and spending time outdoors, expresses excitement about starting his career in the village he grew up near. He states, "I am excited to embark on my career in a village close to where I grew up. I know Itasca is a community filled with many wonderful people, and I look forward to getting to know and serve them."



Adrianna Sanchez

Additionally, the department welcomed lateral transfer officers Adrianna Sanchez and Jessica Izaguirre. Officer Sanchez, who has several years of patrol officer experience from the Melrose Park Police Department, joined the IPD on November 14<sup>th</sup>. Having completed the field training program, she now holds solo patrol status. When asked about joining the Itasca Police Department, Officer Sanchez stated, "Being a police officer was a dream of mine. I am in my fourth year of this career and am grateful for the opportunity to serve on the Itasca police force. My daughter means everything to me, and one of the best parts of my job is showing her what it's like to have a hero for a mom."



Jessica Izaguirre

In November, Officer Jessica Izaguirre also joined the IPD. With patrol officer experience from Bartlett and Hometown, Officer Izaguirre completed the field training program quickly and is now on solo patrol. Officer Izaguirre stated, "I'm excited to work with the Itasca Police Department and get to know the members of the community better; everyone has been very kind and welcoming already." In her spare time, Officer Izaguirre enjoys spending time with her two sons.

## IPD's New Ride

Not only are there new faces at the Police Department, but there's also a recent addition to the fleet.

The IPD recently acquired a vehicle for its patrol fleet – an F150 police responder supervisor's truck designed to enhance officer safety. Unlike any other SUV in the department, the F-150 comes equipped with unique features tailored for emergency response situations. Its generous cargo space enables officers to carry all necessary equipment to the scene of an emergency, simplifying response efforts.

This new supervisor's truck is set to play a crucial role in handling future calls. Fun fact: last year, the Itasca Police Department received 8,203 calls for assistance. The department is excited about the fleet's new addition and looks forward to deploying it to serve the community for years to come.



## Retirements



Dan Kompanowski

After 15 years as the Village's Special Events Coordinator, Dan Kompanowski has decided to retire, leaving a remarkable legacy of community service. The Village owes Dan tremendous gratitude for his commitment and tireless efforts in making our Village truly special.

While we like to claim him as our own, Dan is undeniably a man of the community, with his fingerprints all over the fabric of Itasca. Before being the Village's special events coordinator, he dedicated 17.5 years to the Village's Public Works Wastewater Department. But his commitment to public service doesn't end there – for the last 29 years, Dan has served as an Itasca Park Commissioner, and for an impressive 45 years, has been a proud member of the Itasca Lions. From ensuring that clean water flows into our homes to coordinating large-scale festivals, Dan has been involved in making Itasca the great community it is today.

According to Mayor Pruyn, "Dan Kompanowski is synonymous with Itasca; you can't say our town's name without thinking of him. He has been an instrumental part of our community, weaving traditions like ItascaFest and Oktoberfest into our lives that will resonate for generations to come."

While his infectious smile will be missed around the Village Hall, we look forward to the first festival where Dan can enjoy the event without worrying about the details. Please join the Village in wishing Dan a retirement filled with happiness and relaxation.

## Resident Spotlight: Anne Marie Schwarz

At the December 2023 Village Board meeting, Anne Marie Schwarz was honored with the Citizen Award of Appreciation by the Itasca Police Department for her quick and compassionate response on February 4<sup>th</sup>, 2023, at 5:15 a.m. near the



Mayor Pruyn, Anne Marie Schwarz, and Director O'Conor

Itasca Park District. While en route to work, Mrs. Schwarz noticed an individual hunched over on one knee in the 15-degree early morning. Upon receiving no response to her inquiries about the person's well-being, she promptly dialed 9-1-1 and remained on the scene until help arrived. Mrs. Schwarz's timely intervention played an important role in preventing the person from enduring further harm or succumbing to the frigid temperatures.

Expressing gratitude for Mrs. Schwarz's dedication to her fellow citizens, Director O'Conor remarked, "Itasca is known for its caring residents, but Mrs. Schwarz's actions went above and beyond. Instead of driving off, assuming someone else would handle it, she stayed and ensured the individual stayed warm. It is this spirit of community vigilance and support that makes our community stand out." Please join us in thanking this outstanding resident for her selfless and caring actions that embody the spirit of our community.

**The Village News**  
is the official publication  
of the Village of Itasca.

**Mayor**

Jeff Pruyn

**Village Clerk**

Jody Conidi

**Trustees**

Jeff Aiani

Brendan Daly

Dino Gavanis

Ellen Leahy

Frank Madaras

Patrick Powers

**Village Administrator**

Carie Anne Ergo

**Village Departments  
and Taxing Districts**

**Village Administrator**

773-0835

**Village Clerk's Office**

773-0835

**Community Development**

773-5568

**Public Works**

773-2455

**Wastewater Treatment Plant**

773-5571

**Police Department Non-Emergency**

773-1004

**Police Department Emergency**

9-1-1

**Itasca Chamber of Commerce**

773-2949

**Springbrook Nature Center**

773-5572

**Library**

773-1699

**School District #10**

773-1232

**Park District**

773-2257

**Fire District Non-Emergency**

773-1223

**Fire District Emergency**

9-1-1

**O'Hare Noise Hotline Complaints**

(800) 435-9569



Village of Itasca

550 W. Irving Park Rd.

Itasca, IL 60143

(630) 773-0835

www.itasca.com

CARRIER ROUTE PRESORT

PRESORT  
STANDARD  
U.S. POSTAGE  
PAID  
ITASCA, IL  
PERMIT NO. 14

**ECRWSS  
POSTAL CUSTOMER**

**Seasonal Jobs Available**

The Village of Itasca and the Park District are offering great seasonal jobs for local teens and young adults this summer. A summer job is a great hands-on experience for teens to learn about responsibility, time management, and expectations associated with being a valued worker. These essential skills are valuable for college admission and landing a full-time job in their chosen career. Encourage your child or neighbor to look and apply online today for a Village seasonal job at [www.itasca.com](http://www.itasca.com). Or apply on the Park District's website at [www.itscaparkdistrict.com](http://www.itscaparkdistrict.com) to become a lifeguard, waterpark cashier, or camp counselor this summer.



**Thank you to all the contributing editors  
of the newsletters, especially:**



**Schedule of Monthly Meetings**

**Monday:**

No Meetings Scheduled

**Tuesday:**

**1<sup>st</sup> Tuesday** - Board of Trustees - 7:00 p.m.

**3<sup>rd</sup> Tuesday** - Board of Trustees - 7:00 p.m.

**Wednesday:**

**3<sup>rd</sup> Wednesday** - Plan Commission - 7:00 p.m.

**Thursday:**

**3<sup>rd</sup> Thursday** - Historical Commission - 7:00 p.m.

**Friday:**

No Meetings Scheduled