

Countryside CONNECTIONS

WINTER 2026

www.countryside-il.org



Coffee with Mayor—March 14th from 10-11 a.m.



Residents joined Mayor Sean McDermott for coffee and refreshments on Saturday, December 6th. The Mayor welcomed State Representative Nicole La Ha who represents Illinois' 82nd House District which includes portions of DuPage, Cook, and Will Counties. Representative La Ha highlighted her House Committee assignments including Childcare Access and Early Childhood Education, Elementary and Secondary Education, Health Care Availability and Access, and Museums, Arts, and Culture. She also highlighted her ongoing efforts in advocating for families, parental empowerment, individuals with disabilities, and fiscal responsibility.

The Mayor also welcomed Patrick Jeter who has been the Flagg Creek Golf Course General Manager since 2021. Patrick gave an informative presentation on the history of the golf course, leagues, outings, private events, and the intensive \$1.1 million capital program that was completed over the last five years.

Patrick also presented the renderings of the extensive club house improvements that are currently underway. This project will be completed by early March, just in time for the St. Patrick's day festivities and after party at this facility. Please also join us for the next Coffee with the Mayor on March 14th!



Economic Development

The Community Development department has been very busy in 2025. Year to date they have issued 598 building permits with a construction value of \$16.4 million. Some developments opened for business while others will be opening very soon.

In 2020, the City of Countryside entered into an intergovernmental agreement with the Village of Hodgkins to promote the redevelopment of the old Eddie Z's building (Hodgkins) and the adjacent parcel to its west (Countryside). On December 8th, members of the American Legion Post 1941 raised the flag marking the opening of the **Duck Stop Travel Center**. This facility includes a restaurant with a drive thru, bakery, ice cream shop, convenience store, gaming and a truckers' lounge on the second floor. The restaurant serves beef, sausage, chicken, hotdogs, hamburgers, and more.



The Midwest's largest Harley-Davidson dealership group, Legendary Harley-Davidson Dealer Group has acquired the Windy City Motorcycle Company which includes **Illinois Harley Davidson** at 9950 Joliet Road. The new owners have executed a real estate contract to purchase the vacant Aldi property to the east. Their goal is to expand their operations and possibly bring back the Route 66 motorcycle rental

Helping Hand Parking Lot

The City sold land to Helping Hand to help alleviate parking issues. This expansion provides additional parking for both their buses and staff. This project includes additional lighting, a perimeter fence, and landscaping. Mayor Sean McDermott and Executive Director, Bill Dwyer cut the ribbon on November 17th.



El Alebrije Mexican Restaurant & Bar is moving into the old 7 Gates restaurant at 10050 55th Street. This family owned business strives to deliver authentic and fresh food in a unique way. They moved to Countryside from Chicago. Their grand opening is scheduled for Tuesday, January 6, 2026 at 4 pm. Stop in to meet the family and enjoy a taco or two.

Don Javi Taco Grill is taking over the old Pizza Hut building at 5621 S. La Grange Road. Renovations to the exterior have been completed. Currently, they are working on the inside of the restaurant. They will be opening shortly. Check out their menu at www.donjavitacogrill.com.



2026 St. Patrick's Day Family Parade

Get your green shirts ready! The City of Countryside proudly announces our annual St. Patrick's Day Parade - **Saturday, March 7, 2026 at 1p.m.** The presenting sponsor is **Jack Phelan - Chrysler, Dodge, Jeep, RAM.** This year's grand marshal is **Patrick Rodgers**, former Lyons Township Supervisor and Cook County Circuit Court Judge.

The parade steps off at **1p.m.** at **55th Place and Edgewood** and ends at **63rd Street and Brainard Avenue.**

All parade proceeds will benefit **St. Cletus Food Pantry and Scout Troop 19.**

PARTICIPATE. Countryside businesses and families are encouraged to march in the parade. Consider creating a float or marching with your family or group. Prizes will be awarded for the best floats, banners, and "Best Party Along the Route."

AFTER-PARTY. Everyone is invited to check out the local establishments participating in this year's **post-parties.** (*Establishments and specific information will be announced later.*)

SPONSOR. SPONSORSHIP LEVELS AND FEES:

- \$1,000 Pot of Gold Sponsor** (name on website, shirts, and large print on banners)
- \$500 Emerald Sponsor** (name on website, shirts, and banners)
- \$250 Shamrock Sponsor** (name on website and banners)
- \$100 Parade entry fee for Political Parties and Non-residents**
- \$25 Parade entry fee for Non-profits & Residents**

VOLUNTEERS NEEDED! There are many volunteer opportunities available for teens and adults. Please contact Parade Chairman John Finn at (708) 299-7387 or send an email to parade@countryside-il.org.

St. Patrick's Day Parade Queen. The 2026 **Parade Queen** will be selected from applications received from the community. We are seeking candidates who possess any of the following: Irish heritage, demonstrated community involvement, or reside in the Countryside area. Applications are available on the City's website and at City Hall. Applications must be received by February 2, 2026. The queen will be crowned at the February 25, 2026 City Council meeting.

Rules, forms, and ongoing parade updates can be found on the City's website www.countryside-il.org under the special events tab, or at the Municipal Complex. Applications and fees should be returned to the City of Countryside no later than **February 9, 2026.** If you have any questions please contact **Parade Chairman John Finn** at parade@countryside-il.org or (708) 299-7387.



JACK PHELAN



DODGE



Jeep



Police Department Updates

Household Safety Resolutions for 2026

As Winter weather returns, please take a moment to consider how prepared your home is for a safe new year:

- Check smoke and carbon monoxide detectors—replace batteries and check expiration dates. Smoke detectors last 8-10 years and CO2 detectors are good for 3-5 years.
- Ensure your furnace is functioning properly—change filters and schedule an inspection and cleaning from a reputable HVAC company.
- Stoves and ovens should not be used as heat sources—If using space heaters, ensure they are level and that any flammable items are at least 3 feet away from the unit.
- **DON'T WARM YOUR CAR IN ANY ENCLOSED SPACE**—pull out of your garage immediately after starting your vehicle. Keep outside meters and vents clear of ice and snow and use caution when plowing/shoveling around them.
- Ensure any plumbing pipes on exterior walls or unheated spaces are insulated. In extreme cold, let water drip from faucets and open cabinet doors to allow warmer air to circulate around pipes.
- Avoid icy gutters—clear leaves and debris from gutters so ice and water buildup doesn't cause damage to the roof or walls.



E-Bike Injury Prevention

According to the American College of Surgeons, more than 1.1 million electric bicycles were sold in the United States in 2022 with a projected annual growth rate of 10%. These increasing sales have driven a corresponding rise in injuries among e-bike riders.

Over 20,000 people are injured while riding E-bikes annually with approximately 3,000 individuals requiring hospitalization and these numbers are likely underreported. E-bike injuries are increasing annually and are more severe than their manual bicycle counterparts.

Head injuries occur most frequently, and only a third of injured patients are reported to wear helmets. Helmets certified by the Consumer Product Safety Committee are intended for bicycle speeds 20 miles per hour and under, and the Department of Transportation-certified helmets are recommended for speeds above 20 mph.



Water Department

Water Main Break Notification Procedures

If a break occurs during normal working hours, City staff will generally attempt to notify the affected homes and businesses in person. If the break affects a large number of properties, a "Reverse 911" call will be initiated. If the break occurs after 10 p.m., the Water Department will make repairs and generally request a "Reverse 911" call in the morning (5 a.m.) if repairs are not complete.



The Reverse 911 system is an important tool for notifying residents of problems or conditions. ***It is important to remember that Reverse 911 calls go only to listed phone numbers.*** If you have an unlisted phone number and want to be added to the call list, contact the police non-emergency number

Help Keep Fire Hydrants Clear of Snow

The City asks that you help to keep fire hydrants accessible for firefighting operations by keeping space clear around sides of the hydrant as you do your shoveling or snow blowing. With 446 fire hydrants in Countryside, it is not possible for the City's employees to clear them all after a major snow storm when the priority is snowplowing the roads. If you notice a damaged or leaking fire hydrant, please call Public Works Department at (708) 354-3390.



Sump Pump Discharge

Winter is here and with that comes ice. City code prohibits sump pumps and downspouts from discharging into the street since the water freezes and creates hazardous situations. The ice can also create a dam that prevents melting snow from reaching the storm sewers. Please take a moment to ensure that your sump pump and downspouts are in compliance. City Code section 7-7-5 states that sump pumps and downspouts shall discharge the water at least 25 feet from the front or rear property line and at least 15 feet from the side property line.

If you are unsure about your property, please feel free to contact the Community Development Department at (708) 354-1860 and we will assist you.

Disconnect hoses that have been connected to outside spigots to prevent frozen pipes.

Owners of vacant properties are reminded to have enough heat in their buildings to keep pipes from freezing.

Reminder...Parking After 2" of Snowfall

Per the City code, there is **NO** parking on any public street in the City at any time within twelve hours after a snowfall of two inches or more, unless the snow has been plowed off or otherwise removed from the street.

Holiday Decorations Reminder

Please be cognizant of how long your holiday decorations stay up & stay on. LED lights are much brighter.

We ask that all holiday decorations be removed no later than January 31, 2026. You can recycle holiday lights at Lyons Township all year round.

How to tell if your thermostat is bad?

A bad thermostat can be detected when your AC or furnace is not turning on, your HVAC systems are not turning off, the thermostat is not responding, your HVAC system is short-cycling, the room temperature is not matching the temperature displayed on the thermostat, and if the programmed settings are resetting themselves. Also, remember to change your thermostat batteries.



Countryside Pursues Tree City USA Recognition

The City of Countryside is proud to announce that we are in the process of applying for designation as a Tree City USA community. This national program, sponsored by the Arbor Day Foundation, recognizes cities and towns that demonstrate a strong commitment to urban forestry, environmental stewardship, and community pride.

Becoming a Tree City USA requires meeting standards that promote healthy trees and sustainable forestry practices, including maintaining a tree care ordinance, dedicating funding for tree management, holding an annual Arbor Day celebration, and establishing a tree advisory board. These efforts help ensure that our community's trees continue to provide clean air, shade, storm water management, and enhanced neighborhood beauty.



Public Works and City staff plant parkway trees on 11/7/25 to celebrate Arbor Day.

This initiative reflects Countryside's ongoing commitment to protecting our natural resources and investing in a greener future for residents and visitors alike. We look forward to sharing updates as we move through the application process and invite residents to join us in supporting tree planting and preservation efforts throughout our city.

BSI for Water Systems



BSI Customer Service Team: 888-966-6050

The State of Illinois requires all water systems to have and maintain an effective cross-connection control program. A component to the program is a comprehensive mail survey of the water system.



The City of Countryside partners with Backflow Solutions, Inc. (BSI Online) to assist in cross-connection management, including mail surveys and annual testing notifications.

What is a Cross-Connection?
A cross-connection is a physical connection between a possible source of contamination and the public drinking water system piping. This connection, if not properly protected, can lead to the contamination of the drinking water system through a backflow event – or when the flow of water is reversed.

The City of Countryside Public Works staff has teamed with BSI to assist in cross connection management. If you receive mail from BSI, **it is legitimate!**

General information: As part of its ongoing responsibilities under Illinois Environmental Protection Agency (IEPA) regulations, the City must maintain an active cross connection program to prevent backflow. This page answers some of the common questions the City receives about cross connections and the role they play in our water system.

What is backflow? Backflow is the reserve flow of water from an individual water customer's private system to the public distribution system. This can occur any time there is pressure change in the system (from a water main break, etc.). If pressure in a private system becomes higher than in the public system, it can cause water to be suctioned back into the public system.

What are cross connection programs? A cross connection program is designed to identify potential places where backflow can occur and secure them by means of installing a special backflow prevention device. These devices work by preventing water that has already flowed through the device from reversing course. In Illinois, these programs require that utilities oversee the annual submission of testing certifications for each testable backflow device in their service area and conduct periodic surveys to identify any previously unknown devices or places where a device is required but not currently installed.

Who is BSI online? BSI online (also known as Backflow Solutions, Inc.) is a backflow device data management firm that has been contracted by the City to manage its cross connection program. If you have one or more backflow prevention devices, you will receive notice directly from BSI Online regarding when your annual tests are due. Additionally, you will also receive notices from BSI Online about the periodic backflow surveys that the City must conduct. These notices are legitimate. If you have any questions about these notices, please contact BSI Online directly via email (support@backflow.com) or by phone at (888) 966-6050 if you have any other questions.

Patience Requested for Driveway Apron Plowing

The City of Countryside continues to offer a free service to its senior citizens—clearing snow from their driveway aprons. Each year we get several calls from program participants upset that their apron has not been plowed. The City's snow removal procedures are as follows:

1. It is a priority to plow all the streets and municipal lots for public safety responses.
2. The sidewalks are then cleared to provide a safe path for those walking.
3. The Driveway aprons are then plowed only after the drivers have received adequate rest for their safety.



The City would like to thank our Public Works staff for the impeccable job they did clearing the streets for this year's first snow storm. They work extremely hard in adverse conditions. We also want to thank the many residents who called complimenting the staff and even bringing in goodies which goes a long way with employee moral. As always, we appreciate your patience.

Coyote Sightings

The City Code prohibits ground feeding of any animals. By feeding squirrels, deer, etc. you are attracting coyotes to the neighborhood. This is very dangerous especially for family pets. Deer eat the feed left for them. They then move on to eating your landscaping. Please keep our neighborhoods safe and do not ground feed the wildlife. If ground feeding is witnessed a citation may be issued and the minimum daily fine can be \$250 - \$750. Thank you for your cooperation.



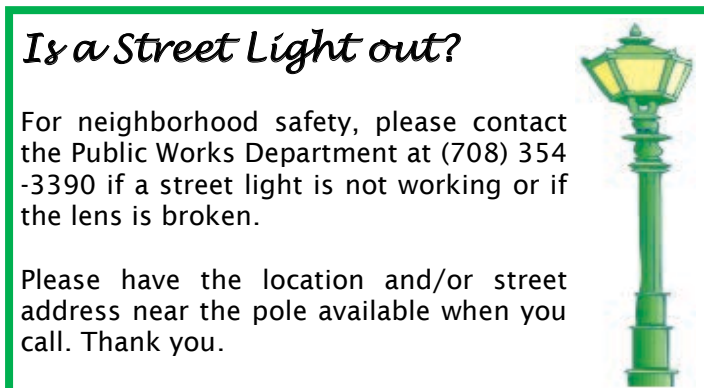
City Code—Title 6 Chapter 3 Nuisances

Ground feeding. Ground feeding of animals and or birds, including but not limited to cats, squirrels, chipmunks, rats, mice, rabbits, raccoons, opossum, skunk, deer, ducks, and geese is prohibited. To spread, cast, deposit or dump food, including birdseed, corn, bread pieces, food scraps, animal chow or any like or similar substances on any public or private property in the city. Above ground bird feeders shall be permitted as long as all feed is placed in a container or feeder designated for the specific purpose of feeding birds.



Sign Up Today

Countryside residents can receive City News updates via email. To join the list, click on "Sign Up for E-News" on the home page of the City's website, www.countryside-il.org, and follow the easy onscreen instructions.



Code Corner

The City of Countryside is pleased to announce an important update that will help strengthen safety, support modernization, and improve the overall quality of construction within our community. Effective immediately, our jurisdiction has officially adopted the **2021 International Building Code (IBC)** and the **2021 International Existing Building Code (IEBC)**.



The adoption of the 2021 IBC and IEBC reinforces our commitment to safety, sustainability, and responsible development. We appreciate the continued cooperation of our building professionals and residents as we implement these improvements.

Countryside's Recording Secretary Fran Prokop Retires

After 32 years spent taking notes for many meetings including City Council, Plan Commission & Zoning Board of Appeals, and public hearings, Fran Prokop is giving her pen, notebook and recorder a break.

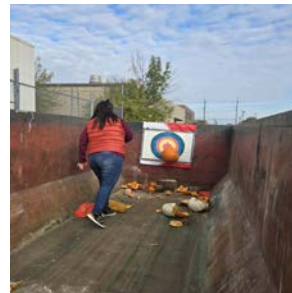
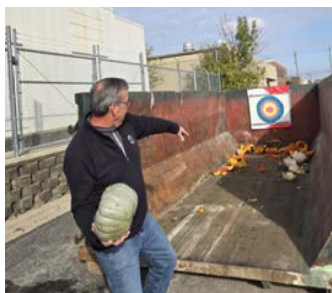
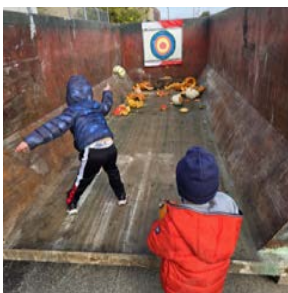
Prokop, 89, started working as the City's recording secretary in September, 1993. She attended her final City Council meeting on September 24, 2025. She is already missed.

Although Fran still loves the work, it's the commute that made up her mind to retire. Mayor Sean McDermott said at her last meeting, "The City Council wants to thank you for the outstanding contribution you have made to the City of Countryside."



Pumpkin Smash

On November 1, 2025, in partnership with the Township of Lyons, the City of Countryside and Cook County Farm Bureau hosted its inaugural Pumpkin Smash. This year the sustainability crew collected 1,420 pounds of pumpkins for composting in the designated dumpster!



Flagg Creek Welcomes Santa

Flagg Creek Golf Course was excited watching Santa cruising along a white covered fairway in his festive golf cart. The children were so happy to see Santa arrive. They enjoyed a delicious breakfast with their family and the children got to tell Santa all their wishes.



The Clubhouse will be closed during the winter months to renovate the clubhouse. Contact the ProShop for assistance at (708) 246-3336.

Happy Holidays

From the staff at Flagg Creek Golf Course



Healthy Countryside

Open to adults and high school students

Find Your Calm:

Tools to Reduce Stress, Beat Burnout, & Boost Mental Well-Being

Free!

Tuesday, February 24, 2026
6:30 – 8 pm

Lyons Township High School South
4900 Willow Springs Rd, Western Springs

Presented by:

OptWell
choosing healthy. thriving together.
Visit OptWell.org/events

**Details/RSVP/
Sponsor Opportunities**



Speakers:

- **Michelle Anderson**, Co-Host of Cozy Conversations with The Sister Project Podcast
- **Jim Maley**, Host of The Maley Way Podcast, Teacher, Former D1 Basketball Player
- **Stef Schodrof**, Wellness-preneur & Founder, SENSEORY
- **Alma Jimenez Tapia**, MSW, LCSW, Pillars Community Health
- **Michelle Halm**, LPC, FT, Founder, Grief Connection Space

Resource Room open before and after presentations

Launched as Healthy Countryside, OptWell continues to bring free wellness programs to our residents.
Learn more and also sign up for free 2026 Mindful Movement sessions at optwell.org.

Community Happenings



Children's Holiday Celebration

The 2025 Children's Holiday Party was held on Saturday, December 6th at Premiere Catering and Events where 170 children attended. Entertainer Jim the "Scribble Monster" performed original songs, read a story, and danced with the kids. Two girls and boys from each age group were awarded a special gift, presented by Alderman Von Drasek, Alderman Benson, and Alderman Finn. Two grand prize winners were each given a \$200 gift certificate from Terry's Bike Haus. Thanks to Santa and all his helpers and a big thank you to Premiere Catering and Events for helping make the event such a success.



2025 Tree of Hope



Thank you to all the generous "Angels" who participated in the 2025 Tree of Hope. This holiday program is designed to assist our residents who are experiencing a hardship during the holiday season. The generosity and goodwill of the community makes this program a success!

This year, we were able to assist 73 individuals from 16 families. Wish lists included items such as winter coats, snow boots and gloves, along with requests to assist with the payment of utility bills. The Clerk's Office staff coordinate this program each year. They work diligently to identify families and individuals who qualify for the program. A special thanks to Scout Troop 19 for volunteering to wrap gifts this season.



EMPLOYEE SERVICE RECOGNITION

Shawn Ligeikis	20 years
Steve Ourada	20 years
Mike Maher	10 years
Maricruz Reyes	10 years
Dave Schutter	10 years
Michele Sullivan	10 years
Ryan Venem	10 years
Juan Cahue	5 years
Cheryl Jordan	5 years
Elizabeth Kasprzak	5 years

Welcome to Countryside

Jack in the Box
5656 LaGrange Road

College Hunks
5340 East Ave.

Thunderbolt Locks
555 E. Plainfield Road

Duckee's Travel Center
10000 W. 75th Street

EZ Tent Rentals LLC
5430 Dansher Road

El Alebrije Restaurant
10050 55th Street

MarchOne Electrical Design
441 E. Plainfield Road

Allergy & Asthma Center
6412 Joliet Road, Suite 3

SamB The Barber LLC
6534 Joliet Road, Suite 2

Don Javi Taco Grill
5621 S. LaGrange Road



Healthy Kids Running Series

Is coming to Countryside in the Spring! This program an inclusive youth program led by local coordinators, where kids celebrate their success and develop an active healthy lifestyle. Races will be held at Countryside park. For more information please visit <https://healthykidsrunningseries.org/>.



EASTER EGG HUNT

Saturday, April 4, 2026
10 AM at Countryside Park
1,000+ candy-filled eggs
For more information call:
(708) 354-7270

2026 Upcoming City Meetings

January

6 Plan/ZBA Commission	7:00 p.m.
14 City Council	7:30 p.m.
20 Flagg Creek Admin. Board	6:00 p.m.
28 City Council	7:30 p.m.

February

3 Plan/ZBA Commission	7:00 p.m.
11 City Council	7:30 p.m.
17 Flagg Creek Admin. Board	6:00 p.m.
25 City Council	7:30 p.m.

March

3 Plan/ZBA Commission	7:00 p.m.
11 City Council	7:30 p.m.
10 Fire & Police Commission	5:00 p.m.
17 Flagg Creek Admin. Board	6:00 p.m.
25 City Council	7:30 p.m.



City of Countryside
803 Joliet
Countryside, IL 60525

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OFFICIALS

Mayor

Sean McDermott

Clerk

Elizabeth Kmet

Treasurer

Courtney Bolt

Aldermen

Mark Benson

John Finn

Tom Frohlich

Thomas Mikolyzk

Scott Musillami

John Von Drasek



WEBSITES TO KNOW

City of Countryside

www.countryside-il.org

Cook County Clerk

www.cookcountyclerk.com

Flagg Creek Golf Course

www.flaggcreekgolfcourse.org

Pleasant Dale Park District

www.pdparks.org

Pleasantview Fire Protection District

www.plvw.org

IMPORTANT PHONE NUMBERS



EMERGENCY 911

City Hall/Clerk's Office:

Main: (708) 354-7270

Fax: (708) 354-9445

Hours: Mon. - Fri. 8:30 a.m. - 4:30 p.m.

Community Development:

Main: (708) 354-1860

Fax: (708) 354-9445

Police Department:

Main: (708) 352-2171 (non-emergency)

Fax: (708) 352-1032

Public Works:

Main: (708) 354-3390

Fax: (708) 354-9445

Water Billing:

Main: (708) 485-2465

Fax: (708) 354-9445

Disclaimer: If you attend a local festival or City function and the event is photographed, your image may be used for news and promotional purposes.