

Countryside CONNECTIONS

FALL 2022

www.countryside-il.org



Patriot Day Remembrance

2,997 people were killed in the September 11th attacks on the Twin Towers, the Pentagon, and in the United Airlines Flight 93 that crashed into a Pennsylvania field.

9/11 - A DAY TO REMEMBER



On Sunday, September 11th, the American Legion Post 1941 hosted a September 11 Remembrance Ceremony at the City of Countryside Municipal Complex to remember 21 years ago and the attacks on American soil. Dignitaries and first responders participated from the Village of La Grange and the City of Countryside. The program included: Ringing the Bell - Return to Quarters by the La Grange Fire Department, Keynote Address by La Grange President Mark Kuchler, Placement of the Memorial Wreath by La Grange President Mark Kuchler and Countryside Mayor Sean McDermott, and musical performances by bagpiper, Steve LaRue. Thank you for everyone who participated.

Mayor for A Day

Lanie Reilly is a Countryside resident attending Pleasantdale Elementary School. She won a contest at her school to be Mayor for a day. Lanie and her mother got to spend the day with Mayor Sean McDermott learning about municipal government. They toured the Municipal Complex, met with department heads and attended the City Council meeting that evening. Lanie did a great job gaveling the meeting to order and leading the City Council in the pledge of allegiance.



Coffee with the Mayor - November 19th 10 - 11 a.m.

The Mayor met with residents on August 20th to discuss public safety. Chief of Police, Joe Ford gave a presentation on the status of the department, the officers' training, the new training simulator and a special discussion on how to avoid being scammed. Jim Moldenhauer, Executive Director of the Lyons Township Area Communications Center was present to give an overview of the 911 consolidated dispatch center. He also reviewed the SMART 911 system which is utilized to send out alerts to residents, and you can create a free safety profile. You can sign up today at www.smart911.com/smart911/ref/reg.action?pa=CountrySide. Please join Mayor Sean McDermott for the next Coffee with the Mayor on Saturday, November 19th at 10 a.m.



Mayor Swears in Board Members and Commissioners

Mayor Sean McDermott swore in one member to the Plan Commission/Zoning Board of Appeals and one member to the Board of Fire and Police Commission.

Appointment Terms:

Board of Fire & Police - 3 years

Plan Commission/Zoning Board of Appeals - 5 years

Interested in serving on a board or commission? Residents are appointed to the Board of Fire and Police, Flagg Creek Golf Course Advisory Board, Plan Commission/Zoning Board of Appeals and the Police Pension Board with a recommendation by the Mayor with concurrence by the City Council.

Any interested resident 18 years or older may complete the Committee/Board Member Interest Form on the City's website www.countryside-il.org/forms-permits/ or you may obtain a copy from the Clerk's Office. Applications are kept on file for a minimum of 2 years.



Pictured L to R: Plan Commission/Zoning Board of Appeals member Thomas Geraghty and Board of Fire and Police Commission Michael Wilson.

\$50 Gas Card For Every Household

Beginning in October, Countryside residents will be eligible to receive a free \$50 gas card (1 card per household). The Mayor and City Council feel residents are being hit hard by inflation, especially increased gas prices. This is our way of giving back to the residents the increased sales taxes received by the City on the higher fuel cost.

In order to receive a gas card, residents must fill out a claim form and bring it to City Hall with their I.D. City Hall hours are Monday - Friday 8:30 a.m. - 4:30 p.m. Gas cards will be available at the Clerk's Office from October 3rd - November 30th only.

Claim forms are available at the Clerk's Office or on the City's website www.countryside-il.org.



2022 Street Resurfacing Program Update

In September, the City began its annual street resurfacing program and resurfaced three streets. The project included curb replacement as needed, roadway base repair, and replacement of asphalt surface from curb to curb. The following streets were resurfaced:

- Longview Drive (northbound), from Brainard Avenue north to 59th Street.
- Longview Drive (southbound), from 59th Street to Brainard Avenue.
- 59th Street, from Brainard Avenue to Kensington Avenue.



NEW Smoke Detector Law - Effective January 1, 2023

Effective on January 1, 2023 a new state law will require that all battery-powered smoke detectors (i.e. those that are not hardwired) must be replaced with detectors that feature self-contained, non-removable, 10-year sealed battery.

This will apply to single family, multi-family, rentals, condominiums and town homes. The law requires that a smoke detector be placed inside every bedroom and also outside the bedrooms within 15 feet of the bedroom doors. One detector is required per story, including basements but not including unused attics.



Those exempt from the requirement are: homes with hardwired smoke alarms, or smoke alarms running on Wi-Fi or low-powered radio frequencies.

Remember ... Fall is upon us and the Community Development Department would like to remind you that some home improvement projects require a permit, which can be obtained from the Community Development Department. Some examples of work that does not require a permit are painting, carpeting or flooring, landscaping (as long as it does not change the grading of the land), or sealing your driveway. Most other work around your home or business does require a permit and if you are ever in doubt - please call and your City staff will be happy to assist you with your questions. For more information or to answer any questions, please call the Community Development Department at (708) 354-1860.

Summer Concert Series

🎵🎵🎵
🎵 *A Special Thank You* to Westfield Ford for being our Presenting Sponsor and all the
🎵 attendees for coming out and enjoying the music.
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The City Issues Bonds to Fully Fund its Police Pension Plan

Countryside confronts its pension funding challenge: Like many Illinois municipalities, the City faced a funding shortfall in its police pension fund that developed over many years. The police pension plan was 73% funded as of the fiscal year ending April 30, 2021. The unfunded liability was driving increased annual contributions by the City, from approximately \$800,000 in fiscal year 2022 up to a projected \$1.5 million by 2040 to reach statutorily required funding levels. This outlook prompted City officials to consider cost-effective strategies to stabilize pension funding and relieve budgetary pressure from pension payment obligations that were escalating annually.

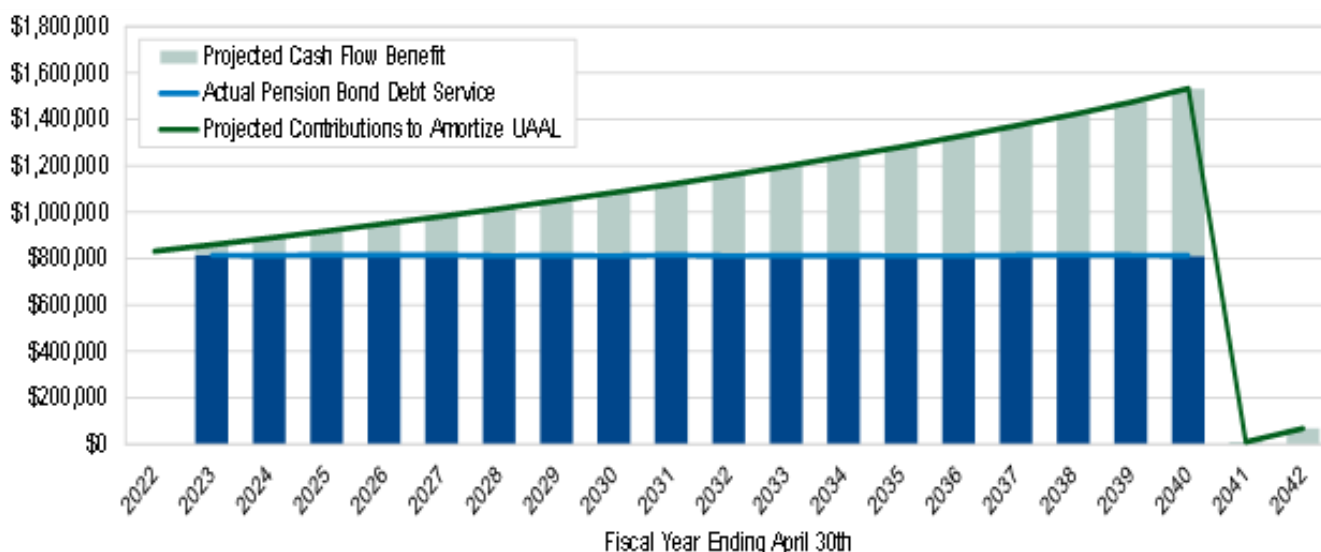
The plan: The City settled on a 100% pension funding approach that would require a deposit to the police pension fund in the amount of \$10.6 million. Under the plan, the City would issue taxable fixed rate bonds with level annual payments. The proceeds would boost pension funding to 100% and eliminate the projected ramp-up in contributions that would've otherwise been needed to amortize the unfunded actuarial accrued liability (UAAL) over time.

The City communicated to bond rating agencies and investors that the borrowing did not represent "new" debt. Rather, the City was replacing a pension liability accruing at an interest rate of 7% with a borrowing rate that would be hundreds of basis points lower. The difference between the actuarial rate and the lower borrowing rate represents financial value captured by the City. The City benefitted from the issuance of pension bonds as pension returns outpace the borrowing rate over the 18-year life of the financing.

Crystalizing the value of Countryside's pension funding plan: The City engaged Mesirow Financial as the underwriter for the new bond issue. Mesirow priced the City's bond issue in mid-July and the transaction closed in August of 2022. As communicated to the elected officials, rating agencies, and bond investors, the City set forth a plan to invest the \$10.6 million into the pension fund over the next 12 months (rather than all at once) in an effort to "smooth out" market volatility and reach 100% funded status.

Based on actuarial projections, the financing is expected to provide **\$6.3 million of cash flow relief over the next 18 years (\$4 million in net present economic value)**. The City supplemented a tax-exempt bond component in addition to the taxable pension bond. This reduced the overall borrowing rate from 4.44% to 3.92%. The 52 basis point rate reduction represents over \$800,000 of interest cost savings and similarly lowers the breakeven rate-of-return hurdle rate for pension assets.

Please see the chart below which reflects the economic value achieved from this financing plan.



Police Department Citizen's Police Academy

The Countryside Police Department is accepting applications to organize our next Citizen's Police Academy (CPA). Any citizen who lives, works, or volunteers in the City of Countryside is encouraged to apply. **With exciting new topics and content, past CPA graduates are also encouraged to apply.** The Citizen's Police Academy provides insight into law enforcement techniques and classes are geared toward assisting citizens in understanding laws and police practices. The program lasts 12 weeks and is no cost to attend. Classes are held one evening per week from 7 PM until 9 PM at the Countryside Police Department. For questions or additional information, please visit our webpage or contact Executive Assistant Charity Mitchell at (708) 485-4018 or cmitchell@countrysidepolice.org.

Dunkin' "Cop on a Rooftop" for Special Olympics Illinois

On Friday, August 19, 2022, the Countryside Police Department participated in the Law Enforcement Torch Run 2022 Cop on a Rooftop campaign for Special Olympics Illinois. Officers were at the Dunkin' on 55th and La Grange in Countryside from 5 AM until 12 PM in support of Special Olympics Illinois. This event raised **\$4,193.84** for Special Olympics Illinois.



COMMUNITY SERVICE OFFICER - PART-TIME: The Countryside Police Department has openings for Part-Time Community Service Officer. The **starting salary for this position is \$15.45/hr.** For more information and a full job description, visit <https://www.countryside-il.org/general/employment-opportunities/>. Applications are available at: COUNTRYSIDE MUNICIPAL COMPLEX, CLERK'S OFFICE 803 Joliet Road, Countryside, IL Hours: M-F 8:30 AM - 4:30 PM.



Pictured above are two of the new police bikes purchased by the Countryside Police Department. These bikes help support community relations and allow the officers in our bicycle patrol unit to be more visible and accessible to the public during the warmer months and at outdoor events. Keep a look out for them on Halloween night as they will be out on patrol handing out candy. The **photo on the right** is from Chick-fil-A Countryside's Community Safety Night that was held on August 24, 2022.

HALLOWEEN 2022 Trick-or-Treat Hours 3pm to 8pm October 31st.



Survey REQUIRED of All Residents & Businesses

The City is required to inventory all water services lines in our water system by the Lead Service Line Replacement and Notification Act. A survey was mailed to all residents/businesses in June. The City is requesting that you complete the survey with the type of material (i.e. lead, copper or galvanized steel) your service is made of and return as soon as possible.

NEED HELP? If you need help identifying your service line, you can contact the Countryside Water Department at (708) 354-8827 and schedule an appointment to have your service identified.

Climate Change

The effects of climate change are in the news regularly with wildfires out west and flooding down south to name a few. Here are a few things the Sustainability Committee recommended doing to combat climate change.

Protecting Land and Water: The City is committed to maintaining open space within the community. We are in the process of updating the Comprehensive Plan with a goal of increasing open space.

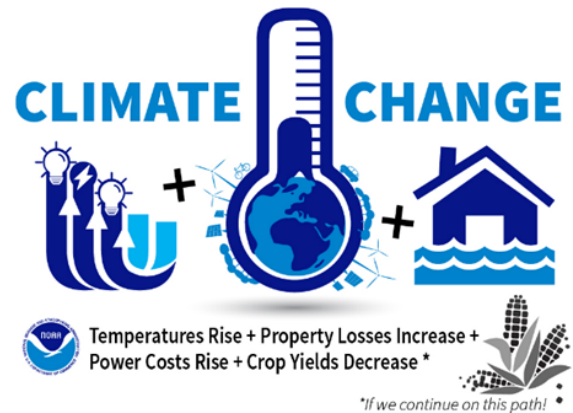
Growing the Tree Canopy: The City plants approximately 80 trees annually. Some are additions to the community while others are to replace dying trees. The City embarked on the La Grange Road Streetscape project which beautified the City's main thoroughfare with walkways and landscaping with several new trees. The City Council also approved a landscaping ordinance which requires new businesses to install and maintain landscaping which meets the City's criteria.

Policy Solutions: It's important to the City to design our roads, transit and trails to support a livable, walkable and vibrant community that preserves and enhances open space. The City is committed to expanding the multi-use paths within our community and provide connections to neighboring communities, the forest preserves and other paths. The City has been awarded two grants for the Joliet Road multi-use path. This path will be constructed on the south side of the Joliet Road from Wolf Road to East Avenue. This path will connect to the Villages of Indian Head Park and Hodgkins, the Forest Preserves of Cook County, and the Brainard Avenue multi-use path.

Education: Providing educational assistance to schools and the community about climate change is important. The City will be working with Ideal School to create a native garden to attract butterflies and other pollinators.

What can you do to help with climate change?

- ♦ **Eliminate Food Waste:** Try shopping for only what you need, eat your leftovers, and compost scraps.
- ♦ **Improve Insulation:** Older homes can lose up to 35% of heat through their walls. Modern insulation reduces the energy needed to heat a home, therefore reducing emissions and saving you money.
- ♦ **Recycle:** Be sure to rinse out your recyclable materials and stay up to date with your waste hauler's list of acceptable items. Consider donating items such as clothing or household items to a charity rather than sending them to the landfill.
- ♦ **Rethink Transportation:** Walk or bike the next time you need to take a short trip. You can also reduce emissions by using public transportation or driving an electric or hybrid vehicle.
- ♦ **Use Clean Energy:** You can purchase renewable energy. Guess what? The City has already done this on behalf of our residents.
- ♦ **Use LED Lighting:** LEDs (light-emitting diodes) use 90% less energy than incandescent bulbs and 50% less than compact fluorescents. LEDs use electricity to create light without giving off heat, which wastes energy. Switching your lighting to LEDs will reduce your cooling bill and save on bulb replacement costs as LEDs last much longer.



West Suburban Ballet Conservatory Ribbon Cutting



The City of Countryside welcomed the West Suburban Ballet Conservatory (located at 915 W. 55th Street) with a ribbon cutting on Saturday September 10th. Pictured are Mayor McDermott, Kyle Seguin, owner of West Suburban Ballet Conservatory, Alderman Tom Frohlich, City Clerk Liz Kmet, Kristen Laakso, Non-Profit Manager for the West Suburban Ballet Conservatory and the students of the West Suburban Ballet Conservatory. We are happy to have you as a part of the Countryside Business Community!

Turn Off Your Idling Engines

According to the Environmental Defense Fund (EDF), a simple turn of your key can keep the air cleaner and save money and fuel. Every time you turn off your car engine in place of idling, you'll:

- **Make the air healthier** by cutting down on hazardous pollution in your town or community. Idling tailpipes spew out the same pollutants as moving cars. These pollutants have been linked to serious human illnesses including asthma, heart disease, chronic bronchitis, and cancer.
- **Help the environment.** For every 10 minutes your engine is off, you'll prevent one pound of carbon dioxide from being released (carbon dioxide is the primary contributor to global warming). An EDF report shows that in New York City alone, idling cars and trucks produce 130,000 tons of carbon dioxide each year. To offset this amount of global warming pollution, we would need to plant an area the size of Manhattan with trees every single year.
- **Keep money in your wallet and save fuel.** An idling car uses between 1/5 to 7/10 of a gallon of fuel an hour. An idling diesel truck burns approximately one gallon of fuel an hour. With average U.S. prices for diesel fuel topping \$4 a gallon, that's about \$4 an hour wasted.



Public Works Reminds You . . .

Fall Leaf Pick-Up (October 10 - December 2)

Crews will be collecting leaves on a continuous cycle throughout the entire program period. The leaf collection program provides residents with an alternative way to dispose of leaves. Instead of bagging or mulching, residents may rake leaves onto the parkway.

In order for this program to be successful, we ask all residents to observe these guidelines:

- Leaves **SHOULD** be raked onto the parkway near the street.
- Leaves should **NOT** be raked into the street.
- Do **NOT** deposit branches, sticks, garbage, or other debris into the leaf pile. This can damage the equipment and cause a dangerous situation for our employees.

Please allow 7 to 10 working days between pick-ups as it typically takes a week or more to do a full cycle of the City.

Brush Pick-Up

Branch and brush pick-up will be provided through **October 31st**. Crews will be covering the City on a weekly basis. If you have questions, please call the Public Works Department at (708) 354-3390.



Welcome to Countryside

Ceda of Cook County
6325 Joliet Road, Floor 1
Social service agency

Glossy Nails Salon
1419 55th Street
Manicures, pedicures, face waxing and nail enhancement

Lily & Grace Interiors, LLC
5343 LaGrange Road
Interior design, home decorating and home staging

Lyons Township School Treasurer's Office
6438 Joliet Road, Unit 103
Investment banking and accounting



Mak Investment Group
6428 Joliet Road, #103
Real estate office

Viet Heritage Cuisine
114 Countryside Plaza
Vietnamese cuisine

West Suburban Ballet Conservatory
915 W. 55th Street
Ballet, dance classes and rehearsals for shows



Upcoming Meetings

OCTOBER

4	Plan/ZBA Commission	7:15 p.m.
12	City Council	7:30 p.m.
19	Flagg Creek Admin. Board	7:00 p.m.
26	City Council	7:30 p.m.

NOVEMBER

1	Plan/ZBA Commission	7:15 p.m.
9	City Council	7:30 p.m.
16	Flagg Creek Admin. Board	7:00 p.m.

DECEMBER

6	Plan/ZBA Commission	7:15 p.m.
14	City Council	7:30 p.m.
13	Fire & Police Commission	5:00 p.m.
21	Flagg Creek Admin. Board	7:00 p.m.

New Hybrid Vehicle

You may see our inspectors driving a new vehicle around town. The City just purchased a 2020 Fusion plug-in hybrid from Westfield Ford. This is the fourth hybrid vehicle in the City's fleet. This purchase furthers the City's commitment to being environmentally-friendly.



Bluegrass & Brews Festival



The City of Countryside hosted its first Bluegrass and Brews festival on August 27th. The event kicked off at 3:00 p.m. with music by Aaron Dorfman & Pete Smith of Bluegrassify, followed by Miles Over Mountains, and Anderlik, Otto and Church Bluegrass Band wrapped up the evening. Beer connoisseurs were able to sip local brews from Imperial Oak Brewing and Buckle Down Brewing. There were a couple food trucks on site as well as many delicious items from Ledo's Pizza. Several hundred attendees came out to enjoy the event.

Back To School Celebration and Neighborhood Festival

On Saturday August 20th, the City of Countryside and School District 105 hosted its first annual Outdoor Wellness Fair/Celebration and Neighborhood Festival at Ideal School Park. Although the weather was not cooperative, many local District 105 families benefitted from the event. We would like to thank our sponsors: the Greater Chicago Food Depository, the Community Memorial Foundation, The LeaderShop, Pepsico and the Adelante Team for raising funds to purchase the book bags and school supplies.



Driveway Apron Snow Removal Program

Citizens 62 and older and disabled residents may sign up each year to have their driveway aprons plowed if more than 2-inches of snow falls. This removal will be done **ONLY** after all City streets are cleared. Please note that the City is **NOT** responsible for any driveway damage. To receive this service, please fill out the form below and return to the City Clerk's office. Allow 48 hours for processing.

City of Countryside Senior/Disability Snow Removal Program Application

Name: _____

Address: _____, Countryside, IL 60525

Home Phone #: _____ Mobile Phone #: _____

Email: _____

How many driveways do you have? _____

What street is your driveway on? _____

Basis of Application (initial where applicable)

_____ I am 62 years or older.

_____ I have enclosed: (1) medical certification from my doctor confirming my disability and inability to shovel/remove snow; or (2) A copy of the Secretary of State License Disability Placard or registration of disability through Social Security.

Please note that once we receive your form, it will take up to 48 hours to be registered.

By submitting this documentation, I hereby voluntarily release protected health information to the City of Countryside that is otherwise protected by law, including but not limited to the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act of 1996 (HIPPA).

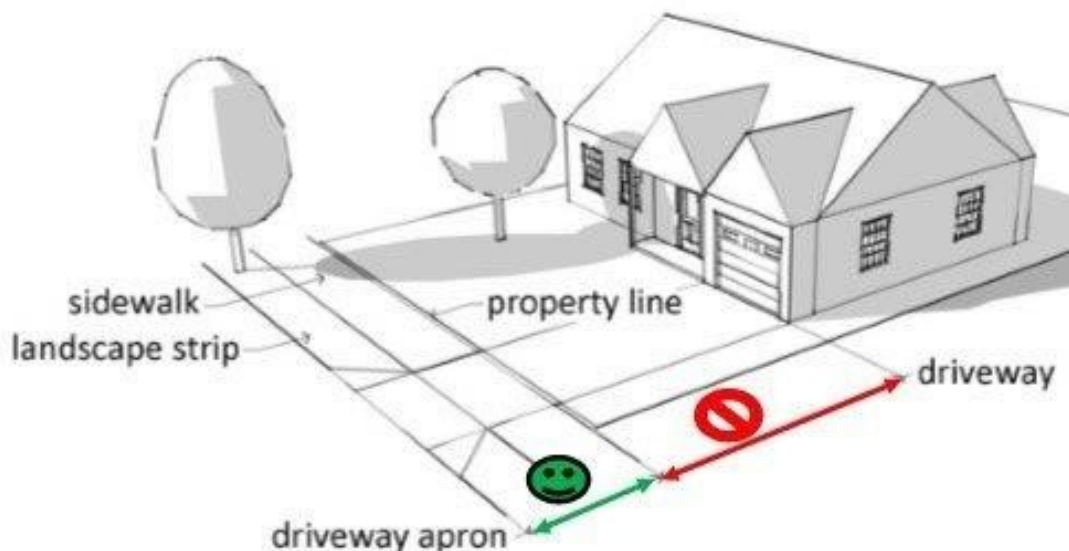
The resident(s) hereby release and hold the City, its officers, officials, and employees harmless from any damage to property or other liability which arises directly or indirectly from the City's snow removal program.

I state that, to the best of my knowledge, the information contained in this application is true, correct and complete.

Applicant's Signature

_____/_____/_____
Date

What is/isn't included in this program:



Community Events

Angel Tree Program

Are you looking for an opportunity to make a difference in your community? Do you know of a Countryside resident or family that could use a little help this holiday season? After many years of success, the City of Countryside is once again hosting our Angel Tree Program.



Beginning November 7th, our beautiful Angel Tree will be on display in the City Clerk's office. Generous sponsors are invited to select an individual or family from the tree and purchase gifts from their wish list. All gift recipients are anonymous. The donated gifts should be returned to the Clerk's Office by December 12th. Gifts will be distributed to families from December 14th through the 22nd.

The Angel Tree Program is an excellent opportunity for residents, families, community groups, and coworkers to spread holiday cheer to others who may not otherwise receive a gift this year. Check out our website at www.countryside-il.org/special-events or contact the Clerk's Office at (708) 354-7270 for additional information.

Small Business Saturday November 26, 2022



Countryside residents can join in and support the small businesses in our neighborhood and across our City by shopping small.



Reminder. . .

Children's Christmas Party

Date: Saturday, 12-3-22

Place: Premier Catering & Events *
6240 Joliet Road

Time: 10:30 a.m. - Noon

* *New Location**

For more information, call (708) 354-7270.



WHERE: *Flagg Creek Golf Course*
6939 S. Wolf Road

DATE: *Saturday, January 14, 2023*

TIME: *1 - 4 P.M.*

Some of the tentative activities include: DJ and photo booth, face painting, snowflake bingo, craft project, cookie painting, kids games, a magic show, cross country skiing, and snow shoeing. More information will be coming soon.

For more details, call (708) 485-2595 or visit www.countryside-il.org/special-events.

Upcoming Holidays

Please note that City Hall will be closed in observance of the following holidays:

Veteran's Day - Friday, November 11, 2022

Thanksgiving Day - Thursday, November 24, 2022

Friday after Thanksgiving - November 25, 2022

Christmas Eve - Friday, December 23, 2022

Christmas Day - Monday, December 26, 2022



City of Countryside
803 Joliet Road
Countryside, IL 60525

Presorted Standard
U.S. Postage
PAID
So Suburban, IL
Permit No. 928

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.