

Countryside CONNECTIONS

WINTER 2022

www.countryside-il.org



Coffee with the Mayor - January 29th 10 - 11 a.m.



The Council Chamber was full on October 15th for coffee with Mayor Sean McDermott. Dr. Kiran Joshi, Senior Medical Officer at the Cook County Department of Public Health was the guest speaker. Dr. Joshi is co-leading the agency's response to COVID-19. His expertise was evident in his very informative presentation on the status of COVID-19 cases and vaccination rates within Cook County. Dr. Joshi graciously took time after his presentation to answer numerous questions from residents and address their concerns. The City wants to thank Dr. Joshi for his time given his pressing schedule.



No Property Tax Levy for the 8th Consecutive Year!

City staff presented a proposed fiscal year 2023 Corporate Fund budget to the Finance Committee in November of 2021 which concluded that all Corporate Fund operating and capital costs could be funded without the use of a property tax levy. "Due to our responsible approach to managing City finances, I am pleased to report that this marks the 8th consecutive year that the City will meet its budgetary obligations without the use of property taxes" said Mayor Sean McDermott. On December 8, 2021, the City Council voted to abate all debt service property tax levies which are automatically filed with the Cook County Clerk when the debt is issued. The unanimous vote eliminated any property tax extensions for fiscal year 2023. The Finance Committee will meet again in February to further discuss the fiscal year 2023 operating and capital budgets for the other City funds. City staff expects to present a balanced budget to the City Council for consideration before the end of the current fiscal year.

New U.S. Citizen Leads Pledge of Allegiance

At the December 8th City Council meeting, Arben Plakolli also known as "Benny" led the Pledge of Allegiance at the beginning of the meeting. Benny is an immigrant from Albania and he recently became a U.S. Citizen. He is a 3rd Ward resident and is also the owner of Benny's Barber Shop & Salon, located at 907 W. 55th Street. It was an honor to have him lead us in the pledge!



WINTER / 2022

2022 St. Patrick's Day Family Parade - NEW Parade Route

Get your green shirts ready! The City of Countryside proudly announces our annual St. Patrick's Day Parade - **Saturday, March 5th at 1p.m.** This year's Grand Marshal is **Thomas Boyle**, who has been very instrumental in the Irish American community. The presenting sponsor is **Jack Phelan - Chrysler, Dodge, Jeep, RAM**.

The parade steps off at 1p.m. at **55th Place and Edgewood** and proceeds two miles - ending at Constance Lane and Joliet Road. (See map to the right.)

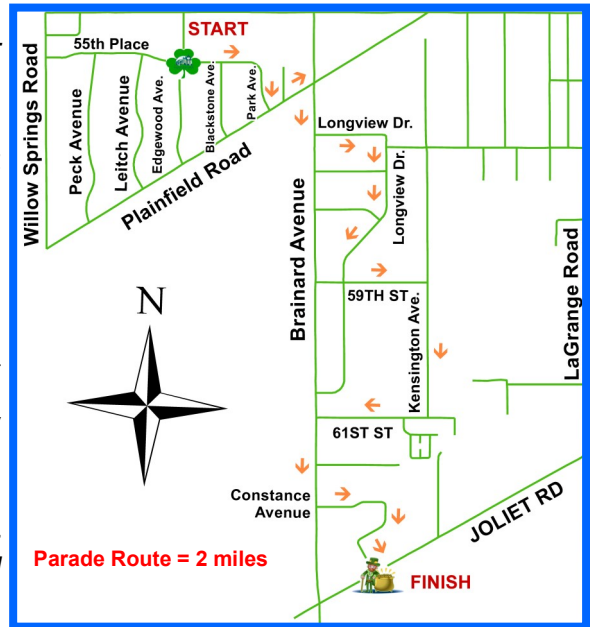
All parade proceeds will benefit **Beds Plus and Interfaith Community Partners**.

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."

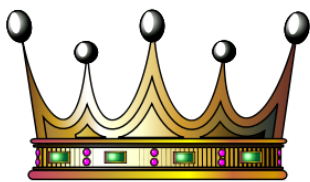
AFTER-PARTY. Everyone is invited to check out the local establishments participating in this year's **post-parties**. (Establishments and specific information will be announced later via our website and Facebook page.)

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**
- ✱ **Local Schools are FREE**
- ✱ **Non-advertising Business Sponsor** - support the parade and our charities by making a donation in any amount you choose.



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 2022 **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 14, 2022. The queen will be crowned at the February 23, 2022 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 11, 2022**. 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

**NOW
HIRING**
APPLY TODAY

Hiring Part-Time Community Service Officers

The Countryside Police Department has several openings for Part-Time Community Service Officers. The starting salary is \$15/hr. For more information and a full job description, visit www.countryside-il.org/general/employment-opportunities/.

Applications are available at: CITY HALL, CLERK'S OFFICE 803 Joliet Road Countryside, IL 60525; Hours: M-F 8:30 A.M. – 4:30 P.M.

Officer Training and Continuing Education

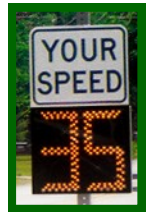
On Friday, December 10, 2021 Commander Stern graduated from the Northwestern University Center for Public Safety School of Police Staff and Command (SPSC). SPSC is a 10 week intensive police management and leadership program. Commander Stern attended the 500th Session of the program along with other command staff from across the country. Congrats Commander Stern!

In addition to state-mandated training, Countryside police officers complete hundreds of hours of discretionary training each year. Just over the past 3 months some of the training completed has included: Officer Batzel - Evidence Technician (80 hours), Officer Brunke - Bicycle Officer (32 hours), Officer Kuklinski - Crisis Intervention Team (CIT) (40 hours), Officers Jakubowski and Kuklinski - Field Training Officer (FTO) (40 hours). Officer Alonzo attended the 2021 Illinois Association of Technical Accident Investigators (IATAI) Annual Conference and Officers Jakubowski and Rinehart attended the annual 5 day SWAT training.



Radar Speed Sign Installation

New traffic calming technology is being installed near Ideal school in an effort to slow traffic down in the area around the school. Our main priority is the children and we continue to monitor traffic in the area. Several months throughout the year our officers conducted directed patrol in that area. The enforcement resulted in 85 traffic stops. With this new technology drivers will be alerted to their speed as they drive by. We will also be able to run reports on traffic patterns as well as the average speed and high speeds in that location.



Shop With a Cop



The Countryside Police Department held its 9th Annual Shop With a Cop event on Saturday, December 11, 2021. This event provided ten children from Countryside an opportunity to interact in a positive way with law enforcement officers while shopping with \$100 gift cards at T.J. Maxx for their family's holiday gifts. The children were taken in squad cars to T.J. Maxx, and after shopping, were returned to the police department where they wrapped their gifts and had pizza. Each child's family

also received a \$100 gift card to Jewel Osco. A special thank you to everyone who volunteered their time and to T.J. Maxx, Westfield Ford, and the Autobarn of Countryside for their generous donations that helped make this event possible.

New Squad Cars



The Countryside Police Department recently purchased two new police squads to replace squads that had reached the end of their service life and were becoming costly to repair. This year the finance department placed all squads on a replacement schedule to assist in ensuring the police department has vehicles that are mechanically sound which is important to officer and citizen safety both while officers are conducting routine patrol and while responding to emergency calls. Over the years, as we replace old squads, the new squads will have this new design.

FINANCE DEPARTMENT Direct Debit & Paperless

Go Green and Save Green!

Save money on your water bill by signing up for paperless and direct debit through the City. The City is offering a **one-time \$10 credit per account for all NEW customers** who sign up for paperless billing and direct debit. For more information, contact the Finance Department at (708) 485-2465.

Go paperless – receive bills via email

You will receive an email notification each time a new bill is ready to view and pay. Email notifications go to the email address used when you register. A courtesy email address may be added if you wish to send notifications to an additional email address.

Set it and forget it with Direct Debit

You can have your water payments automatically deducted from your checking or savings account on the due date of the water bill.

An application for the direct debit can be found in the Forms & Permits section on the City's website. Please return the form with a copy of a voided check to Holly Williams via email at hwilliams@countryside-il.org or by mail to 803 Joliet Road.

FAQ's

- * When will the \$10 credit be applied to my water billing account? *Within two billing cycles.*
- * What if I have previously signed up for both. Will I also receive the \$10 credit on my account? *Sorry, this is a promotional program for new enrollees only.*
- * If I sign up to go paperless, how will I receive my bills? *Invoices will be generated and sent electronically via email.*
- * Which form will have to be completed to receive the statement credit? *The form is called the "Water Direct Debit Form".*
- * When does this offer expire? *Last day of submittals will be March 31, 2022.*

Quick Summary

- * Visit the City's website www.countryside-il.org.
- * Click on "Forms & Permits" under the Quick Links on the home page.
- * Click on the "Water Direct Debit Form" under the water department.
- * Submit the completed form, indicating the paperless and Direct Debit options.
- * Please submit a voided check with the form.

Code Corner

The City would like to notify all residents and businesses of these newly passed ordinances which are effective immediately.

21-36-O: This Ordinance revised the existing Rental Housing Code. All rental dwellings and all of the common areas of the building will now be inspected every three years. This updated section of the code will also incorporate the Crime Free Housing Code; previously it was in a separate section of the code. The combination of the two sections of the code into one unified code section will allow the Police Department, the Clerk's Office and the Community Development Department a uniformed approach to interpretation, enforcement and inspections.

21-42-O: This Ordinance addresses the overnight parking, dropping, leaving or storage of tractors and/or trailers in the zoning code. Tractors and/or trailers may not be parked, dropped, left or stored in any front, side or rear yard of a residential, commercial, or office space. We have been noticing an increase in truckers dropping their trailers off in empty parking lots and hotel parking lots and leaving them there. It is only allowed when the individual is a registered guest at the hotel, and they must display a placard or notice from the hotel. The limit is one tractor trailer per overnight stay at the hotel.

Water Department



Water Main Break Notification Procedures

If a break occurs during normal waking 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 at (708) 352-2171.

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 the 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.

Don't forget to disconnect any hoses that may have been connected to outside spigots to prevent frozen pipes.

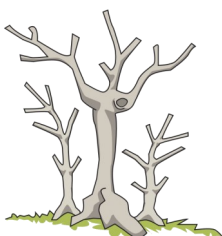
Owners of vacant properties are reminded to have enough heat in their buildings to keep pipes from freezing.

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 has occurred, unless the snow has been plowed off or otherwise removed from the street.



Shared Cost Tree Removal Program



At the October 27, 2021 Infrastructure Committee Meeting, the committee decided to suspend the Shared Cost Tree Removal Program effective November 15, 2021. We will resume the program effective May 1, 2022. We will continue to take care of emergency trees.

Countryside 2040 COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

A Blueprint for Our Future

The City of Countryside is excited to announce the kick-off of the planning process to update the City's comprehensive plan. The **Countryside 2040 Comprehensive Plan** will serve as the City's official guide for land use and development for the next 20 years. Informed by community consensus,

community vision, existing conditions, and future potential, the comprehensive plan will serve as a road map to the future by guiding policy decisions and helping the community achieve its long-term objectives.

The comprehensive plan will address several topics, including land use, residential areas and neighborhoods, economic development, transportation and mobility, community facilities, infrastructure, parks, recreational areas, and preserved open spaces that are within the City's boundaries. When completed, the **Countryside 2040 Comprehensive Plan** will be the product of the community, with a vision and recommendations guided by valuable input received from residents, business owners, community leaders, and other stakeholders.

Over the next year, residents should stay active and aware of the project as it progresses by tracking it through the project website at www.hla.fyi/Countryside, which is also linked on the City's homepage, www.countryside-il.org. The City and project team look forward to working with the community in crafting a plan for Countryside!

City Employees Service Recognition in 2021



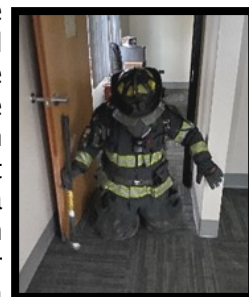
Upcoming City Meetings

January		
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.
February		
1	Plan/ZBA Commission	7:15 p.m.
9	City Council	7:30 p.m.
16	Flagg Creek Admin. Board	7:00 p.m.
23	City Council	7:30 p.m.
March		
1	Plan/ZBA Commission	7:15 p.m.
8	Fire & Police Commission	5:00 p.m.
9	City Council	7:30 p.m.
16	Flagg Creek Admin. Board	7:00 p.m.
23	City Council	7:30 p.m.

First Responders Train in Old City Hall



As the City finalizes negotiations for the redevelopment of the old City Hall property, both the Countryside Police Department and the Pleasantview Fire Protection District (PVFD) have been using the facility for training. This past November, the PVFD practiced locating a down firefighter, and removing them from the building. Another drill was for firefighters to find their way out from various locations in the building with zero visibility to simulate being inside a building with rapidly changing conditions. Training is essential for first responders.



City Receives the Greentelligence Award

The West Central Municipal Conference recognizes members who strive for excellence. At the 2021 annual meeting of members, Laura Bannon, Meteorologist with WBBM-TV, presented the Greentelligence award to Alderman Scott Musillami, Chairman of the Sustainability Committee for the design and construction of the Municipal Complex. The WCMC recognized the building's prestigious Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED) Gold Certification. They stated, "Quite simply, the City of Countryside Municipal Complex delineates a bold commitment to protecting the environment and mitigating the impact of climate change." The WCMC congratulated Mayor Sean McDermott and the City Council for their leadership with this great accomplishment.



Pictured L to R: Treasurer Bolt, Alderman Frohlich, Alderman Finn, Mayor Sean McDermott, Alderman Musillami, Alderman Mikolyzk, Alderman Benson and Clerk Kmet.

Sustainability Committee

The Sustainability Committee recommended a draft Sustainability Plan to the City Council. This plan was formally approved by the City Council at their meeting on December 8th. This plan includes a summary of historical sustainable initiatives and a framework of sustainable actions planned for the future. A copy of the plan can be found on the City's website.

The committee will be tasked with reviewing the plan each year and prioritizing the programs and initiatives for the next 6 to 18 months. On January 10th the committee will meet to review the 2021 accomplishments and set the priorities for 2022.

Wildlife Tips

As temperatures drop and snow falls it can be difficult for wildlife to find food and the cold can take its toll on the birds. Here are a few suggestions to entice more birds to visit your yard and survive the winter.

The National Wildlife Federation (NWF) provides tips for feeding birds during the winter:

- Birds need rich sources of fat and calories to combat low temperatures and severe storms. Suet, nuts and high-oil seeds such as nyjer, black-oil sunflower seeds and sunflower hearts are all good choices.
- Clean feeders regularly to prevent the buildup of bacteria that can cause disease.
- Don't forget bird food that nature provides. Seed-eating birds such as goldfinches and juncos will flock to the dried flower heads of aster, black-eyed Susans, coneflowers, sunflowers and other plants.
- Make sure to leave berries and other fruit on your native trees and bushes.
- Don't worry if you had leaves fall late in the season. The decaying leaf litter will provide a feast of insects, seeds, nuts and other treats for your backyard birds.



Don't forget ... water is just as important in the cold months as it is in the summer. If there is no snow, there is no water for the wildlife. Take care of the birds during the winter and they are sure to return during the summer to help control the mosquitoes in your backyard. Birds don't just feed on adult mosquitoes, they also eat mosquitoes in other stages of their life cycle, including when they're developing in the water. The most common birds known to eat mosquitoes are swallows, warblers, waterfowl, and sparrows.



Children's Holiday Celebration

The 2021 Children's Christmas Party was held on Saturday, December 4th at the Holiday Inn. Over 100 children attended. Performer Jeanie B! entertained guests with her interactive show and sing-alongs. Two boys and two girls from each age group were awarded a specialty wrapped gift, presented by Mayor Sean McDermott. Two grand prize winners were each given a \$175.00 gift certificate from Terry's Bike Haus good for the purchase of a new bicycle. Thanks to Santa and all his helpers and a big thanks to the Holiday Inn and their staff for helping make the event such a success.

Angel Tree Program Update



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

This year, we were able to assist 66 individuals from 16 families. Wish lists included items such as winter coats, snow boots and gloves, along with requests to assist with payment of utility bills. Clerk's Office staff members coordinate this program each year. They work diligently to identify families and individuals who qualify for the program. Happy Holidays to all of our Angel Tree participants!

Winterfest
CITY OF COUNTRYSIDE

WHERE: *Flagg Creek Golf Course*

DATE: *Saturday, January 15, 2022*

TIME: *1 - 4 P.M.*

A Special Thank you to our SPONSORS

5/3rd Bank
Heat Engineering
Lehigh Hanson
Mesirow Financial
NuMark Credit Union
Schwartz Excavating
Vulcan Materials Company



The City of Countryside and Flagg Creek Golf Course are pleased to announce that Winterfest will be back in 2022! Join family and friends for fun filled winter activities on Saturday, January 15, 2022. The event kicks off at 1:00 p.m. with Bingo for the kids, a balloon twister, a craft project by Home Depot, a magic show, a fire pit with the fixings for s'mores, cookie painting, kids indoor games, and a D.J. and photo booth. There will also be food available for purchase.

Community Happenings



Want To Get Involved?

Have you ever thought about serving on a board or commission? Now is the time. 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 at 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.

Boards

Board of Fire & Police

Board members independently fulfill all duties and responsibilities associated with the hiring, firing, promotion and discipline of Countryside's police officers.

Flagg Creek Advisory Board

Members advise on the operation and maintenance of the golf course.

Plan Commission/Zoning Board

Commissioners are responsible for land use planning and zoning including review of variance and special use requests.

Police Pension Board

Board members fulfill all duties and responsibilities associated with the Pension Fund including investment oversight and approval of applications for participation, retirement benefits, and disability.

Welcome to Countryside

Center for Covid

6568 Joliet Road
Covid-19 testing (rapid and PCR)



Engineered IT Inc.

6502 Joliet Road, Suite 209
Computer programming



Lopez and Company, Inc.

6502 Joliet Road, Suite 203
Roofing & concrete contractor (office/clerical)

Tinged Studio

26 E. Plainfield Road
Hair Salon



CENTER FOR COVID



FREE rapid and PCR COVID-19 testing at:
6568 Joliet Road

Hours: Monday - Saturday 9am-6pm
Sunday 10am-5pm

For more information, contact (708) 551-4453.

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 directions.



City of Countryside
803 Joliet
Countryside, IL 60525

Presorted Standard
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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

Countryside Chamber of Commerce

www.countrysidechamber.org

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.