The early settlers included the Conrads, Craigmills, Henrys, Murphys, Polks and Winslows. Most came to the area by the railroad which connected the prairie land, which sold for $2 per acre. Chicago was heading into a boom era that would make her the jewel of the Midwest and center of the nation’s commercial life. But the boom era of Chicago did not spread to Countryside. The settlers apparently preferred the quiet of farm life. They used the post office, growing shopping facilities, and churches of LaGrange for the most part. The growth period for Countryside was still many years into the future.

The settlers did build their own school on a site that today is a quarry southeast of the intersection of East Avenue and Joliet Road. The educational institution was later replaced and improved with the construction of a two-room wooden building on the northeast corner of the same intersection. The Vial family donated the land around the turn of the century. That wood structure later was replaced by a brick building which became a nursing home. Today, most Countryside children begin their schooling at ideal School on 58th Street. For most of the 19th century, the school construction was the largest development of the area. While families moved into the area, potential development remained unnoticed during the early 1900s and did not start to emerge until the late 1920s.

For many years the Sieling family, who homesteaded in the area, farmed the land south of Plainfield Road (an early Indian trail). In 1929, a large tract east of LaGrange Road was sold and subdivided as Sherman Gardens. Only a few lots were individually purchased, however, and the remaining property reverted back to the family. In 1935, the Gethner Land Office purchased this land, and a number of “shell” houses were offered for sale. The firm sold many of them to workers in the City who saw the homes as an economical means of escaping the urban frenzy. The workers had to finish the structures in their spare time.

Continued on next page
The first concentrated building and the development of Countryside started in post World War II America. The need for housing at the time was unprecedented in our nation’s history. And Countryside was ripe for development with open acreage of unincorporated land. It was in 1947 that concentrated building of homes began in the area. At that time LaGrange Terrace was built. As fast as the houses were finished, they were filled by people who poured out of Chicago looking for attractive homes with large lots for their children. The Don L. Dise subdivision followed in 1954, and soon Edgewood Park I and II were built. Fountain View Estates was one of the later subdivisions.

In the years between 1949 and 1960, homeowner groups, the LaGrange Terrace Civic Association, and the Countryside Homeowners’ Association, started in the community. Residents were tired of being considered second-class west suburbanites with their smelly septic systems, receding levels of hard water wells, and gravel streets full of chuck holes and ruts. Their purposes covered a broad spectrum, from the protection of the residents’ interests in building, zoning, and annexation proceedings, to the promotion of civic improvements. These groups served their purposes well and eventually joined forces to do the groundwork necessary for the establishment of the Countryside Sanitary District and the incorporation of the City of Countryside. After Countryside’s incorporation in 1960, the homeowners groups were dissolved.

As a result of a special election held at Ideal School on August 15, 1959, the Countryside Sanitary District was formed. Original boundaries were set to include the area between East Avenue and Brainard Avenue north of Joliet Road and south of the then south boundary of the Village of LaGrange. This was an irregular line ranging from 49th Street at East Avenue to 53rd Street at Brainard Avenue.

Funds were authorized at a referendum and revenue bonds totaling $690,000 and general obligation bonds totaling $315,000 were sold, both issues bearing 5 ¼ percent interest. Contracts were let, and approximately 15 miles of sewers were installed, ranging from eight inches to 18 inches in size. These were completed in September, 1960. The Metropolitan Sanitary District of Greater Chicago installed an interceptor to handle this collection system, which was finished in September, 1961. After the incorporation of the City of Countryside, some confusion resulted from the similarity of names. The name changed from Countryside Sanitary District to South Lyons Township Sanitary District.

The decision to incorporate as a City rather than as a Village was made because incorporation as a Village would have required the consent of all municipalities within one mile. LaGrange had been asked to consider annexation all the way to Highway 66. Because of a peculiarity in the law, the decision to annex or to incorporate had to be made by a certain date, otherwise incorporation would have to be approved by LaGrange. Faced with this deadline, LaGrange filed a petition calling for a referendum annexing south only to 55th Street. The next day, the residents south of 55th Street filed a petition to incorporate that area. LaGrange’s referendum was defeated by a 3 to 2 margin, but the incorporation petition of Countryside carried by a 9 to 1 margin. Within the next 2 ½ years the unincorporated land lying between Countryside and LaGrange became part of one or the other of these municipalities by petition or annexation proceedings.

By 1970, the City of Countryside had an estimated population of 3,800 based on the 1970 census figures. The City boundaries were East Avenue on the east, Joliet Road and the expressway on the south,
Countryside Police Department

The Countryside Police Department is proud to share in the celebration of the City’s 50th Anniversary. We have been serving this community since we officially opened our doors on August 23, 1961. Of course back then the City’s population was much smaller than today. So with only 2,000 residents, our Department began with just 3 patrol officers and 1 vehicle. Officers worked 6 days per week, sometimes for 10 hours per shift and earned an annual salary of $4,800. Our Department was so small that it initially shared McCook’s radio operator, but within a short time it became clear that we needed our own. As the population grew and additional resources became available, we were able to add additional officers to our Department. We also moved from a one-room storefront on LaGrange Road to our present location when construction was completed in 1967.

As we reminisce about the past, it is important to remember two members of the force that were lost in the line of duty. On April 6, 1974, Officer Joseph R. Jankovski died while issuing a traffic ticket at 4:55 am on southbound LaGrange Road. He was struck and killed by a pick-up truck driven by a drunk driver. Officer Jankovski was survived by his wife and two children. The Countryside Police Department also lost our K-9, Dago, in the line of duty on August 4, 2006. Dago was a hard working K-9 that assisted many other Departments.

Our Department has grown through the years and expanded its level of service to accommodate a growing community. Today, our staff includes 23 sworn Officers, 5 Desk Officers, a Records Clerk, an Administrative Assistant, and a K-9 named Rico. The Countryside Police Department offers a wide variety of services to the community, including our new CONNECT-CTY (reverse 911) system.

Our officers attend many community events throughout the year, educating residents and children about safety issues. The Department also has certified safety seat installers on staff, who are available to install and inspect child safety seats.

Many things have changed since 1961, but one thing remains the same---our commitment to providing a safe environment for our residents.
residents a wide variety of shopping choices. Countryside Plaza and Salem Square house a number of retailers and service providers, as do hundreds of other stores and offices located throughout Countryside. Several hotels and more than 50 restaurants also contribute to the City’s sales tax revenue.

Longtime Mayor Carl LeGant held office from 1978 until 2007 when he handed over the reigns to the current Mayor, Mayor Robert Conrad. Mayor Robert Conrad presides over a six-member City Council which includes six Aldermen and a City Clerk, and a City Treasurer; Sean McDermott, Karen Michalczyk, Robert Pondelicek, Michael Smetana, Wayne Straza, and John Von Drasek are the six Aldermen, Sharon Sweeney is the current City Clerk, and Steven Jasinski is the current Treasurer.

The City is constantly moving forward in its thinking and attracting new businesses and residents to move here. The City has taken on a streetscape project which will be complete by mid-July. This project incorporates pedestrian friendly walkways and attractive streetscaping along LaGrange Road. New lighting, landscaping, crosswalks, and pedestrian oases at the intersections are included in this beautification plan.

Countryside has throughout the years transformed itself from a sleepy, undeveloped prairie land in its earliest years into a truly dynamic City in 2010; all the while maintaining the genuine values and traditions on which it was originally founded. Many residents who came to Countryside 50-plus years ago still call it home, as do their children and grandchildren.

Here’s to another 50 years Countryside!
Oldest Lifelong Resident in Countryside

Lorraine (Buck) Crnkovich - Born on March 31, 1931. Lorraine is the daughter of Anna and Oscar Buck; who moved here in 1925. The Buck’s lived on 56th Street, (across from what is now the City’s Water Tower) on her uncle John Rimnac’s five acre farm. Uncle John raised and sold 1,000 chicks every spring as a way to make a living. Lorraine’s father, Oscar R. Buck, drilled water wells in Countryside and the surrounding communities. Mr. Buck was also on the first Zoning Board in Countryside.

In 1939, Lorraine’s parents purchased the corner acre on LaGrange Road and 56th Street, which is now the site of B&B and Ledo’s Pizza. Lorraine remembers as a young girl selling tomatoes, pears, peaches, and other fruit and vegetables (from her Uncle’s farm) on LaGrange Road from the edge of her driveway.

Lorraine graduated in 1944 from Ideal School on Joliet Road and East Avenue. During her high school years, Lorraine worked for Christenson’s Greenhouse, on the corner of 55th Street and LaGrange Road, where the Wendy’s and Mobil Station are currently located. After graduating from Lyons Township High School in 1948, Lorraine worked for the C, B, & Q Railroad as a Comptometer Operator.

In 1952, Lorraine married Nick Crnkovich, who in 1953 partnered with Lorraine’s father in opening B & C Supplies, located on the corner of 56th Street and LaGrange Road. The supply store specialized in plumbing supplies, hardware, pump repairs, and the like. The supply store was torn down in 1969 when Uncle John’s Restaurant purchased the property (now B&B Restaurant and Ledo’s Pizza site).

Nick installed the City’s first water meters when the City was able to receive Lake Michigan water from the City of Chicago. Nick later worked for the City of Countryside in the Water Department, and retired in 1989, after 25 years with the City. For many years, Lorraine planted flowers in front of City Hall.

Lorraine was a member of the Countryside Lion and Lioness Humanitarian Club for 25 years. Lorraine has a son who is married and she is a grandparent as well. Lorraine has seen many changes in Countryside and feels the best is yet to come.

A photo from lifelong resident Lorraine Crnkovich. From left the Crnkovich house, near 56th Street and LaGrange Road; on the right, the site of B&B Supplies, now the site for Ledo’s Pizza and B&B Restaurant.
Ward 1 Report  
Alderman Robert Pondelicek  
Alderman Michael Smetana  

The City recently signed a Memorandum of Understanding with Bradford Equities, LLC to market the nine acre parcel at Joliet and LaGrange Roads.

The City purchased 50 feet of the Bally’s property at 5917 LaGrange Road on the west side of the property. This will allow for the expansion of the ingress and egress to Countryside Plaza from LaGrange Road.

The Ideal School Park Renovation will begin this summer. Keep your eyes out for a brand new park. This project was able to come to fruition due to the joint efforts of School District 105, the Township of Lyons, and the City of Countryside.

The water tower will have a new look as it will be painted this summer.

The LaGrange Road Streetscape project will be complete by mid July. Look for new light fixtures, landscaping, and pedestrian friendly walkways along LaGrange Road.

Community Briefs

Countryside Welcomes New Businesses

Bella Banquets  
5412 S. LaGrange Road  
Banquet Hall

Cal-Mar Bakery, LLC  
6150 S. LaGrange Road  
Pre-packaged Baked Goods

Griffin Real Estate Services  
5308 Ashland Avenue  
Home Occupation/Real Estate Services

Heirloom Furniture Gallery  
6150 S. La Grange Road  
Furniture Sales

Supersonic Petroleum, Inc  
5300 S. LaGrange Road  
Gas station/car wash/convenient store

Via Bella Restaurant/Carry Out  
5412 S. LaGrange Road  
Restaurant/Carry Out

What A Deal, Inc.  
9930 W. 55th Street  
Variety Store

Power Outage Issues

With the recent power outage issues, the City would like to remind all residents to please call ComEd when you lose power.

ComEd’s outage number is: 1-800-EDISON-1.

Countryside Farmers’ Market

Don’t forget to stop by the West Suburban Chamber of Commerce’s Monday morning Farmer’s Market in Countryside!

The market runs every Monday from 8:00am to 2:00pm through October 25.

For more information, please call the WSCC at 708-387-7750.

Ward 2 Report  
Alderman Karen Michalczyk  
Alderman John Von Drasek  

Please drive safely through Ward 2 as many children will be present in and around our parks.

The resurfacing of Sunset Avenue (near the 5th Avenue Cutoff) will begin over the Summer. The City received CDBG funds for the renovation of the aging street.

Take time this Summer to enjoy our parks and the Flagg Creek Golf Course.

The Aldermen in Ward 2 would like to thank the neighbors, friends, relatives, the Department of Public Works, Police, and ESDA who all assisted the people on Golfview and Crestview while they were without power for 4 days.

Ward 3 Report  
Alderman Sean McDermott  
Alderman Wayne Straza  

The Salem Square Shopping Center has submitted drainage improvement plans for review to the Community Development Department.

Be sure to stop by Countryside Park, located in Ward 3, for our ever-popular summer concerts in the park.
Public Works Department

City Council Appoints Jim Essig as Public Works Superintendent

The Countryside Public Works Department said goodbye to Superintendent Bob Fullar early this spring. In April, the City Council Appointed Jim Essig, Foreman in the Public Works Department, to the Superintendent position.

Jim is a lifelong resident of Countryside and began working for the City in 1978 as a part-time summer help employee in the Public Works Department. Jim began working full-time for the City in 1984. In 1993, Jim was promoted to the Foreman position in the Public Works Department.

Jim’s wife Patti is also a lifelong resident of Countryside, and they have three children who have enjoyed all that Countryside has to offer. When not working, Jim enjoys traveling and coaching sports for the various leagues his children have participated in throughout the years.

A River Thru History


There will be Free Parking in the UPS parking lot at Willow Springs Road and 75th Street. Enter from 75th St. There will also be a Free Shuttle bus to the Rendezvous site.

A River Thru History is an early American party with all the trimmings! Join this festive gathering of fur trappers, settlers, craftsmen, and entertainers along the banks of the Des Plaines River.

City of Countryside Awarded Clean Air Counts Plaque

The City of Countryside was awarded a Silver plaque in recognition of its efforts to reduce ozone in the greater Chicago Metropolitan region. The plaque was presented to Mayor Robert Conrad by Oak Park Mayor Dave Pope on behalf of the Clean Air Counts Committee at the annual dinner of the West Central Municipal Conference held on May 7, 2010 at the Donald E. Stephens Center in Rosemont. The City was recognized for certain actions taken to help reduce ozone causing emissions. The Clean Air Counts Committee’s goal is to encourage municipalities and businesses in the Chicago area to reduce ozone producing emissions and improve air quality. The City of Northlake was also recognized at the dinner for their efforts with a Bronze plaque.
Recreation Department

Vulcan Materials Presents....
The Westfield Ford Summer Concert Series

Countryside’s 2010 Concerts in the Park Series

It’s Thursday night….looking for a fun way to spend the evening with your family and friends? Stop by Countryside Park for an evening of good food, fun and great music! All concerts begin at 7:00 pm under the gazebo. All concerts are held rain or shine.

As always, we will be raffling off gift cards to area restaurants, and NEW THIS YEAR, IN HONOR OF OUR 50TH ANNIVERSARY, WE WILL BE RAFFLING OFF A SCOOTER COURTESY OF WESTFIELD FORD. Stop by the information table for more information.


Check out our line up for the remaining concerts...

**July 8**

Joe Elvis Tiritto

Food Vendor: Kenny’s Tavern

Joe has been performing his Tribute for about 20 years. He has appeared on the Oprah Winfrey Show, the Geraldo Rivera Show, and was featured in the National Enquirer. His breathtaking rendition of Unchained Melody, sung acapella, will pull an audience to its feet with applause. Joe’s enormous energy electrifies his audiences and instills in them the joy he feels in his music. His magnetism will thrill old and young alike, making him a favorite for outdoor summer concerts!

**July 15**

Spoken Four

Food Vendor: Ledo’s Pizza

Spoken Four performs over five decades of music. All your timeless favorites, from every great time, but never locked in time. They’ll rock your childhood fave, then they’ll tear the roof off with today’s smash. If there’s an emerging trend in music, Spoken Four has it covered—mastered. The band is comprised of the finest, top-tier musicians in Chicago, and they bring the city’s pride and soul to audiences nationally.

**July 22**

Brit Beat

Food Vendor: Kenny’s Tavern

Take a trip back to 1964 with BritBeat’s tribute to the Beatles. With mop tops, retro costumes, vintage instruments and harmonizing vocals, BritBeat Beatles Tribute Band performs all of the memorable Beatles hits from the sixties. Their British style, charisma and Liverpudlian character creates the ultimate Beatles Tribute concert experience. They display the same youthful excitement and boyish charm as the original ‘Fab Four’ to recreate the electrifying performances made by the Beatles when they first came onto American scene and started the ‘British Invasion’ and ‘Beatlemania’.

**July 29**

New Odyssey

Food Vendor: Culver’s

Here is an act that is versatile, funny, novel, talented, polished, family-oriented and awesome in presentation. New Odyssey has been together for over 20 years and has performed at literally thousands of functions, always to complete satisfaction and rave reviews! This is a show you must see and hear to believe. Outstanding arrangements of almost every style are performed on 30 different musical instruments! With a unique combination of great music, audience participation, and sheer zaniness, mayhem can ensue at any moment. As a contractor, you will never have to worry about these entertainers. Group members conduct themselves in a friendly and professional manner both on and off the stage.

**August 5**

World Class Noise

Food Vendor: Ledo’s Pizza

Saviors of soul, for 15 years World Class Noise has been thrilling audiences all across the Midwest, bringing back to the masses, the music of the people, by the people and for the people….to dance & come together, one “Soul” nation under God indivisible that can no longer be denied! Marc Pulido & Christina Pawlowski bring the vocal fire & passion of Classic soul & contemporary favorites to the boil over point. They have made this 9 piece soul band juggernaut, a hallmark and standard of the Chicago music scene. Chicago music veterans, Paul Rau, Lee Taylor and Jake Ramseyer, provide the backbone of one of the greatest soul awakening live shows you will ever witness.

**SPONSORSHIP OPPORTUNITIES ARE STILL AVAILABLE!**
Countryside Business Association

Countryside Business Association (CBA) membership passes the 60 mark. Yes, over 60 local businesses have joined the CBA and we continue to get new members each week. To get through these tough economic times your business can find additional success from our strength and numbers. Bring your ideas, needs, and concerns to the CBA and network with local businesses, the City of Countryside, and the Community. Interested business owners and managers should email Lauren.Narducci@HHRehab.org for membership information.

The monthly “After Hours” events at local businesses have been and will continue to be a great success. The CBA would like to thank the City of Countryside Officials and staff for their support. A special thanks goes out to the local businesses that have sponsored the After Hours events so far this year. They are: Continental Motors Group, Harry’s Sports Bar, Flagg Creek Golf Club, and Casa De Montecristo. It is a great opportunity to network in a relaxed atmosphere and showcase your business.

The CBA website will be merging with a new website www.ShopCountryside.net. This new website will be advertised on I-55 billboards along with keystone businesses. The website will have information and links for all CBA members. The site will offer business feature and advertising opportunities as well as a calendar of events and other current and important information. Look for it!

THE CBA WOULD LIKE YOU TO SAVE THE DATE! SATURDAY, SEPT. 25, PARTY IN THE PARK/50TH ANNIVERSARY CELEBRATION. MORE INFO TO FOLLOW.
Mayor Robert A. Conrad  
City Clerk Sharon Sweeney  
Treasurer Steven Jasinski  
Alderman Sean McDermott  
Alderman Karen Michalczyk  
Alderman Robert Pondelicek  
Alderman Michael Smetana  
Alderman Wayne Straza  
Alderman John Von Drasek

5550 East Avenue  
Countryside, IL 60525-3689

### Countryside Calendar

#### July

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### Phone Numbers to Know

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<td>Clerk’s Office</td>
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<td>Police Non-Emergency</td>
<td>708-352-2171</td>
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<tr>
<td>Recreation</td>
<td>708-485-2595</td>
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<td>Public Works</td>
<td>708-354-3390</td>
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<td>Community Development</td>
<td>708-354-1860</td>
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<td>Water Billing</td>
<td>708-485-2465</td>
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### Websites to Know

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<td>City of Countryside</td>
<td><a href="http://www.countryside-il.org">www.countryside-il.org</a></td>
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<td>Shopping/Business Information</td>
<td><a href="http://www.gocountryside.net">www.gocountryside.net</a></td>
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