



# The Village News



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## Mayor's Message



Mayor Jeff Pruyn

As the days grow shorter and the air takes on that familiar chill, our Village settles into the rhythm of winter. This season reminds us of what makes our community special: shared traditions, friendly faces, and the local spirit that brings warmth even on the coldest days.

We begin the season together with Winter Wonderland on November 30<sup>th</sup>. The holiday lighting ceremony will fill the park with color and cheer, welcoming neighbors to share in the excitement. This year, a holiday market will add a new way to enjoy the celebration, with seasonal treats and gifts to explore while connecting with friends and family.

The holiday spirit continues with the Lions Club Luminaria, a cherished tradition that fills neighborhoods with a warm glow each Christmas Eve. Residents can pick up their kits ahead of time at Village Hall on December 6<sup>th</sup> and 13<sup>th</sup>. This simple, beautiful activity brings neighbors together, one street at a time. More information on Winter Wonderland and the Luminaria is available on page 7.

As the holidays approach, it is also a time to support the local shops, restaurants, and services that give our Village its character. Whether finding a thoughtful gift, enjoying a meal, or booking an experience, every local purchase strengthens the businesses and neighbors that make our community vibrant. From handmade items and specialty foods to gift cards for dining, beauty, or travel, there are countless ways to give something meaningful while keeping your dollars close to home.

The Only in Itasca program provides another way to connect with the community. Launched this year by the Village Board, the program helps local businesses host events that welcome residents in new ways. Church Street, Fulla Beans, Buon Johnny, Eaglewood, and Vivant Spa have all recently created gatherings where neighbors can explore offerings, meet the people behind the businesses, and enjoy experiences that showcase what makes our Village special. Details on upcoming events are available on the Village website and social media pages.

Looking ahead to 2026, there is much to anticipate. The Presidents Cup will come to Medinah Country Club in September, bringing visitors from around the world.

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## Mayor’s Message Continued...

Local restaurants, hotels, and shops will have the chance to welcome guests and showcase our community’s energy and hospitality. Residents will also see continued progress on major community projects. Springbrook Nature Center will receive enhancements, including a larger picnic shelter, new bird enclosures, wetland restoration, and a seasonal ice rink for families to enjoy. These updates will enrich one of our most treasured spaces and give residents even more ways to connect with nature throughout the year.

Here’s to a season of warmth, generosity, and local pride, and to a year ahead filled with opportunity, growth, and shared success for all.

## Administrator’s Message

### Usher Park: Back and Better Than Ever

For the past few months, I haven’t gone a week without someone—a friend, neighbor, or even a family member—asking when Usher Park will reopen. The follow-up question is almost always the same: Why is it taking so long?

When the Village closed the park at the end of February, we told everyone it would reopen in time for Winter Wonderland. Behind the scenes, our hope was to have the park complete by late July as a surprise for residents. But as Scottish poet Robert Burns said, “the best laid plans...often go awry.”

In the spring, crews began digging the new walking paths when a manager in the field discovered an elevation error. The ground in parts of the park was lower than shown on the plans. That meant the paths, if built as drawn, would have been too steep to qualify for the \$600,000 state grant the Village secured.

Work paused while engineers corrected the plans. By then, contractors had moved on to other projects and had to be rescheduled for late summer. Over the following months, staff from the Village and Park District, plus our design and construction teams, worked together to keep the project on track and deliver on our promise to reopen by Winter Wonderland.

I’m pleased to share that we did it. When you visit for Winter Wonderland, I hope you’ll enjoy the new paths and amenities. We do ask that visitors stay off the lawn until late next spring to give the grass time to establish strong roots.

A heartfelt thank-you to everyone who helped bring this project across the finish line. Itasca Park District Executive Director Maryfran Leno worked closely with the design team and Trustee Ellen Leahy on design elements. Parks Superintendent Matt Alexander collaborated with Village Superintendent Brian Yarborough and their crews throughout construction. Trustee Jeff Aiani provided leadership and guidance from concept-to-completion, and Public Works Director Mike Subers managed the project from start-to-finish.

As always, it’s our privilege to serve you. I hope you and your family enjoy Usher Park’s new features for many years to come.



Carrie Anne Ergo

## Itasca Recreation & Fitness Center Expansion Project



The Itasca Recreation & Fitness Center has long been a hub where people come to play sports, take classes, attend camps, or just spend time with friends and family. Earlier this fall, the Park District began expanding the building to give everyone more space to enjoy the programs they love. The centerpiece is a 6,200-square-foot addition for Itasca Gymnastics & Cheer, while other parts of the center are being updated with refreshed courts, new activity spaces, accessible restrooms, and flexible rooms for classes, camps, and community programs. The \$5.5 million project is being paid for through a combination of existing Park District funds and bonds, carefully planned so that residents will not see an increase on their property tax bills. The expanded center is expected to open in early March, giving the community more room, more options, and more ways to come together.

## Shaping Downtown: Your Feedback in Action

Ever wonder why a building in downtown Itasca looks the way it does, or why a business chose one location over another? The rules that guide building heights, density, types of uses, parking, and other development details are all part of the Village’s zoning code. These rules help shape the look, feel, and character of our community.

This past fall, residents and business owners had the chance to provide feedback on the future of downtown and the area around the Metra Station. The input collected has guided proposed updates to the zoning code that reflect the community’s preferences, ensuring the code supports a vibrant and welcoming downtown while keeping development aligned with the shared vision for the area.

Draft amendments are now being finalized and will be presented to the Village Board for review and approval. You can follow the process, review updates, and see how the zoning code is evolving by using the QR code below.



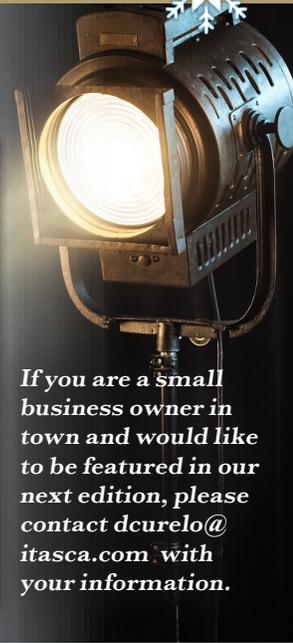


# Business Spotlight

Looking for a winter getaway close to home? Eaglewood Resort & Spa, located at 1401 Nordic Road, offers relaxation, entertainment, and seasonal cheer across more than 100 scenic acres. The resort combines modern comfort with warm Midwest hospitality, making it a welcoming destination whether you are staying overnight or just stopping by to enjoy the spa, a meal, or a round of golf.

The resort features 295 spacious guest rooms and suites, many with beautiful views of the golf course and surrounding landscape. Visitors can spend time at the full-service spa or explore the dining options. Burnham's Restaurant serves chef-inspired seasonal buffets, while Prairie River Restaurant and Patio provides a cozy, casual setting for family meals or a night out. Music lovers can enjoy free live performances at Prairie River, including special "Only in Itasca" shows on December 6<sup>th</sup>, 13<sup>th</sup>, and 27<sup>th</sup>.

Eaglewood brings the holiday season to life with festive brunches, themed dinners, and family-friendly events that make every visit memorable. The resort also offers more than 37,000 square feet of flexible event space, including elegant ballrooms and breakout rooms, which makes it an ideal setting for weddings, graduations, birthdays, corporate retreats, and holiday celebrations.



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

This winter, discover why Eaglewood Resort & Spa feels like a getaway while staying conveniently close to home. For reservations, event details, or special offers, visit [eaglewoodresort.com](http://eaglewoodresort.com) or call (630) 773-1400. Follow Eaglewood on social media for seasonal updates, promotions, and upcoming events.



The Village of Itasca proudly supports a vibrant business community and welcomes the following companies, who have recently received their Zoning Certificates.

## **Ellie Mental Health** - 915 W. Hawthorn Dr.

Ellie Mental Health is a new outpatient mental health practice in Itasca. Their mission is to compassionately transform the culture of mental health care by providing creative solutions that make wellness accessible to everyone. Learn more at [elliementalhealth.com](http://elliementalhealth.com).

## **Advanced Thermal Corp.** - 555 Pierce Rd., Ste. 200

Advanced Thermal Corp. recently relocated its corporate office to Itasca. Established in 1987, ATC provides high-quality, low-maintenance engineered insulation systems and full-service solutions for the industry. Learn more at [advancethermal.com](http://advancethermal.com).

## **Dacra Tech LLC** - 450 E., Devon Ave., Ste. 100

Dacra Tech LLC opened its U.S. corporate headquarters in Itasca. They provide software solutions that help municipalities and tribal governments streamline enforcement, administrative, and finance operations. Learn more at [dacratesh.com](http://dacratesh.com).

## **Ripple Fiber** - 945 W. Hawthorn Dr.

Ripple Fiber recently expanded with a new office in Itasca. They provide high-speed fiber optic internet nationwide, empowering people to create a future that previous generations never imagined. Learn more at [ripplefiber.com](http://ripplefiber.com).

## Holiday Cheer Starts Here

The holiday season is here, bringing lights, laughter, and the joy of giving. It's the perfect time to explore the Village and discover the people, places, and businesses that make it feel like home. Behind every shop, restaurant, and salon is a story, a passion, and a dedication you simply won't find online.



Shopping locally this season isn't just about gifts; it's about connecting with the people and businesses that give the Village its character. Each visit offers a personal touch and a moment of connection, from picking out a thoughtful gift to enjoying a holiday meal or treating yourself to a spa service. The Village has compiled a list of local favorites to make holiday shopping easier.

Visit: [itasca.com/giftbig](http://itasca.com/giftbig) or scan the QR code to explore ideas for gifts, meals, and experiences that keep the holiday spirit close to home.





## New Hires, Promotions, & Retirements

As frost settles across the Village streets and winter takes hold, it's a season of change in more ways than one. Behind the familiar doors of Village Hall, the team that serves the community has been quietly stepping into new chapters.



Tim Mace

On the Police side, Deputy Chief Tim Mace retired earlier this August after 24 years of service. During his career, Tim held roles in Investigations, as Sergeant, Watch Commander, and Deputy Chief of Administration and Operations, always focused on supporting the community. "I am grateful for the opportunities I've had to serve this Village. My connection to the residents is unwavering, and I will always treasure the relationships I've built here," Tim said. Director Robert O'Connor reflected, "Tim led with calm, care, and confidence. His guidance has left a lasting mark on the department and the community."



Mike Walker

Following Tim's retirement, Sergeant Mike Walker assumed the role of Deputy Chief of Administration. With nearly 28 years of law enforcement experience and recent training at the University of Louisville's Southern Police Institute Administrative Officer's Course, he brings insight and steady leadership to the position. "I am honored to take on this role and look forward to serving the Village of Itasca

and its residents," Mike said. Director O'Connor added, "Deputy Chief Walker brings the skills and dedication necessary to guide the department effectively. Residents and staff alike will benefit from his positive approach."



Keith Endres

Keith Endres also advanced to Sergeant. Since joining the department in 2016, he has served as a Field Training Officer, Evidence Technician, Elderly Service Officer, Officer in Charge, and Detective, gaining experience across multiple areas. "It has been a privilege to serve Village residents for the past nine years. I've had mentors who helped me achieve my goals, and I plan to continue learning and providing the best service I can," Keith said.



Charlie Voss

In Community Development, Charlie Voss moved from intern to Project Assistant. Charlie now supports zoning certificates, Plan Commission work, business licensing, and economic development activities. "I am excited to take on this role and support the community I grew up in. I look forward to working with residents and businesses to make a positive impact," Charlie said. Outside of work, Charlie enjoys watching sports and spending time with his grandmother. Please join us in wishing them the best in their new roles.

## Itasca Police Department Maintains Top Professional Standards

Winter's chill has arrived, painting the Village in frost and early sunsets. While the season slows the pace outside, inside the Itasca Police Department, work continues at full speed. This year, the department earned Tier 1 re-accreditation from the Illinois Law Enforcement Accreditation Program, a distinction held by just 67 of the state's 846 police agencies.



Accreditation isn't about a certificate on the wall; it's about the work behind the scenes. Every policy, every training exercise, every patrol, and report is carefully reviewed to meet the highest standards. It reflects officers spending hours preparing for emergencies, learning new skills, and running programs that keep the Village safe and connected. From quick decisions in urgent moments to the daily care put into every task, this recognition shows a department committed to doing the job right, every time.

## Step Inside the Badge: Join the Citizen Police Academy

The Itasca Police Department is welcoming back the Citizen Police Academy (CPA)! This 8-week program gives residents and businesses a behind-the-scenes look at local law enforcement and the work they do to keep the community safe.

Participants will explore topics such as crime scene investigation, traffic enforcement, crime prevention, get to know members of the police team, and strengthen community connections. Ride-along opportunities in police vehicles are also available for those interested.

The program runs Wednesdays from February 4<sup>th</sup> to March 25<sup>th</sup>, from 6:30 p.m. to 8:30 p.m. at the Itasca Police Department, 540 W. Irving Park Road. Participants must be at least 18 years old and live or work in the Village of Itasca.



Applications are available at [itasca.com](http://itasca.com) under Police Department forms. Space is limited to 20 participants, so apply early! For questions, contact Sergeant Jim Duda at (630) 228-5756.



# Making an Impact

While the holidays remind us to give and serve, many in Itasca embody that spirit year-round. In September, the Village honored several residents at the second annual Itasca Impact Awards for their community impact.

### Citizen of the Year Award

Linda Aiani was honored for her ongoing commitment to Itasca—supporting parks, local programs, and beautification projects through her work with the Park District Board, Itasca Cares, and the Garden Club.

### Business Brilliance Award

Itasca Bank & Trust Co. received this award for supporting local events, youth programs, and nonprofit initiatives that bring neighbors together across generations.

### Civic Excellence Award

Tina O’Neill earned this award for her leadership in District 10, enhancing student learning, mentoring colleagues, and supporting families through programs that benefit the wider community.

### Community Builder Award

Megan Sheridan was honored for her work with the Itasca Food Pantry, coordinating volunteers and organizing resources to support neighbors in need.

### Guiding Light Award

Craig Benes was recognized for his mentorship in District 10, fostering programs and guidance that help students and staff thrive.

### Hometown Hero Award

Tim Troutman was honored for stepping up when it mattered most, keeping children safe through his calm, quick, and compassionate response.

### Neighborhood Gem Award

Sharon Hower was recognized for her volunteer work and everyday acts of kindness, uplifting her community and fostering a welcoming environment for all.

### Neighborhood Gem Award

Carmela Primavera was honored for bringing neighbors together through her culinary talents, sharing meals and baked goods that create comfort, connection, and community spirit.

### Rising Star Award

Tanisi Malhotra was recognized for her leadership on the District 10 Youth Advisory and her dedication to community service, making a positive difference for students and neighbors alike.

### Rising Star Award

Bryce Taft was recognized for his leadership through the BT8 Foundation, creating charitable programs like food drives, coat donations, and community fundraisers that support neighbors in need and inspire kindness across Itasca.

These awards celebrate the everyday acts of kindness, leadership, and generosity that make Itasca a stronger and more connected community. Use the QR code to read full descriptions of all winners.



Linda Aiani



Itasca Bank & Trust Co.



Tina O’Neill



Megan Sheridan



Craig Benes



Tim Troutman



Sharon Hower



Carmela Primavera



Tanisi Malhotra



Bryce Taft



# Celebrate Our Community

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



## Sun., November 30<sup>th</sup> Winter Wonderland Holiday Market

Usher Park

2:00 – 6:00 p.m.

Shop local crafts and seasonal treats from a variety of unique vendors! Find handmade gifts, holiday décor, and delightful goodies perfect for checking off your holiday shopping list.



## Sun., November 30<sup>th</sup> Winter Wonderland Holiday Lighting

Usher Park

4:00 p.m.

Join us for a magical evening at Usher Park's festive lighting ceremony! Enjoy a free, family-friendly night in our sparkling winter wonderland.



## Sat., December 6<sup>th</sup> Luminaria Pickup

Village Hall

9:00 a.m. – 2:00 p.m.

Get into the holiday spirit by picking up your Luminaria from the Lions in the Village Hall parking lot. Luminarias should be lit at 5:00 p.m. on Christmas Eve (rain date Christmas Day).



## Sat., December 6<sup>th</sup> Free Pictures with Santa

Usher Park

11:00 a.m. - 1:00 p.m.

Get a free photo with Santa at the new Usher Park Gazebo! Bring your camera, take home a holiday token, and consider a donation of toys or food to support local families.



## Sat., December 6<sup>th</sup> Free Concert

Eaglewood Resort

7:00 – 10:00 p.m.

Spend an evening at Eaglewood Resort & Spa with live music from The Mix, bringing cool vibes to your winter weekend. Part of the Only in Itasca Program.



## Sun., December 7<sup>th</sup> Free Pictures with Santa

Usher Park

11:00 a.m. - 1:00 p.m.

Get a free photo with Santa at the new Usher Park gazebo! Bring your camera, take home a holiday token, and consider a donation of toys or food to support local families.



## Wed., December 10<sup>th</sup> Chess Club

Library

4:15 p.m.

Kids and teens ages 5-18 are invited to join us for minigames and free play. Chess sets and other activities are provided for a fun and engaging afternoon.



## Thurs., December 11<sup>th</sup> The Making of I Love Lucy

Library

6:30 p.m.

Todd Hunt, a nostalgic humorist and Lucille Ball historian, takes you back to the golden age of television, using slides, audio, and video clips, to reveal how this classic show was created.



## Sat., December 13<sup>th</sup> Luminaria Pickup

Itasca Village Hall

9:00 a.m. – 2:00 p.m.

Get into the holiday spirit by picking up your Luminaria from the Lions in the Village Hall parking lot. Luminarias should be lit at 5:00 p.m. on Christmas Eve (rain date Christmas Day).



## Charles & Company

## Sat., December 13<sup>th</sup> Free Concert

Eaglewood Resort

7:00 – 10:00 p.m.

Spend an evening at Eaglewood Resort & Spa with live music from Charles & Company, bringing cool vibes to your winter weekend. Part of the Only in Itasca Program.



## Sun., December 14<sup>th</sup> Free Pictures with Santa

Usher Park

11:00 a.m. - 1:00 p.m.

Get a free photo with Santa at the new Usher Park gazebo! Bring your camera, take home a holiday token, and consider a donation of toys or food to support local families.



## Wed., December 17<sup>th</sup> Free Pictures with Santa

Usher Park

6:00 - 8:00 p.m.

Get a free photo with Santa at the new Usher Park gazebo! Bring your camera, take home a holiday token, and consider a donation of toys or food to support local families.



## Wed., December 17<sup>th</sup> Itasca Holiday Trolley Lights Tour

Itasca Park District

5:00 - 8:00 p.m.

Hop aboard the Holiday Trolley Lights Tour! Enjoy hot chocolate and festive sights around Itasca and Usher Park's Winter Wonderland. Pre-registration is required.



## Thurs., December 18<sup>th</sup> Itasca Holiday Trolley Lights Tour

Itasca Park District

5:00 - 8:00 p.m.

Hop aboard the Holiday Trolley Lights Tour! Enjoy hot chocolate and festive sights around Itasca and Usher Park's Winter Wonderland. Pre-registration is required.



## Wed., December 24<sup>th</sup> Light Your Luminaria

Itasca Lions Club

5:00 p.m.

Please light your candles at 5:00 p.m. on Christmas Eve. Rain date will be 5:00 p.m. on Christmas Day Thurs., December 25<sup>th</sup>.



## Sat., December 27<sup>th</sup> Free Concert

Eaglewood Resort

7:00 – 10:00 p.m.

Spend an evening at Eaglewood Resort & Spa with live music from In Session, bringing cool vibes to your winter weekend. Part of the Only in Itasca Program.



# Celebrate Our Community



## Thurs., January 8<sup>th</sup> Let's Talk Downsizing!

Library  
6:30 p.m.

Join certified professional organizer M. Colleen Klimczak to learn downsizing strategies, decide what to keep or let go, and discover helpful resources to make the process easier.



## Sat., January 10<sup>th</sup> Winterfest

Springbrook Nature Center  
11:00 a.m. - 2:00 p.m.

Celebrate Winterfest with fun for all ages! Enjoy snowshoeing, a scavenger hunt, crafts, hot cocoa, s'mores, and live animal shows—free winter activities that bring the season to life.



## Mon., January 12<sup>th</sup> Mobile DMV

Library  
10:00 a.m. - 2:00 p.m.  
Get help with driver's licenses, state IDs, license plate stickers, and more at the Illinois Secretary of State's mobile unit, plus register to vote or become an organ donor.



## Sat., January 17<sup>th</sup> Winter Carnival

Library  
1:00 p.m.  
Spend an afternoon indoors enjoying games, crafts, prize drawings, and exciting entertainment from juggler Andy Head. Fun activities and performances create a lively and memorable experience for all ages.



## Thurs., January 22<sup>nd</sup> Jazz for the Generations with Planet Flippo

Library  
6:30 p.m.

Jazz from Planet Flippo will perform a collection of extraordinary arrangements from the '60s to the present with something familiar for every listener.



## Tues., January 27<sup>th</sup> Family BINGO

Library  
6:30 p.m.  
Join an evening of BINGO with prizes, games, and friendly competition at the library. Enjoy a fun night of excitement and community for all ages.



## Tues., February 10<sup>th</sup> Toddler Olympics

Library  
10:00 a.m.  
Use your fine and gross motor skills to sort colored pom poms, run a relay, and more! Earn medals and become a Toddler Olympian.



## Wed., February 11<sup>th</sup> iPhone Basics

Library  
7:00 p.m.  
Learn must-know features, helpful tips & tricks, and how to customize settings to make your phone work for you in this introductory class.

## 4<sup>th</sup> Annual Winter Wonderland

Winter Wonderland returns to the newly upgraded Usher Park on Sunday, November 30<sup>th</sup>, and this year, the holiday season has even more to explore. Step into the sights and sounds of the season, with a new Holiday Market from 2:00 p.m. to 6:00 p.m. along S. Walnut Street, featuring festive treats, gifts, and seasonal surprises.

At 4:00 p.m., the Holiday Dickens Carolers and Inner Prestige Dance Team take the stage, filling the park with music and movement as everyone gathers. At 5:00 p.m., the lights come on, transforming Usher Park into a sparkling winter scene. Santa, Mrs. Claus, and their holiday friends will be on hand to greet guests and join in the celebration.

Admission is free, but guests are encouraged to support local families by bringing a new, unwrapped toy for Toys for Tots or a non-perishable food item for the Itasca Food Pantry.



## Luminaria Nights in Itasca

The Itasca Lions Club invites the community to take part in a beloved holiday tradition: the Christmas Luminaria. Started in 1960 by Boyd and Barbara Hindman and inspired by a Mexican custom, the event features candle-lit bags lining walkways and streets, symbolizing the guiding light of the Christ Child.

Residents can pick up their Luminaria kits at the Village Hall parking lot on Saturday, December 6<sup>th</sup>, and Saturday, December 13<sup>th</sup>, from 9:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m. Participants are invited to light their candles at 5:00 p.m. on Christmas Eve, December 24<sup>th</sup>. In case of rain, the lighting will take place at the same time on Christmas day. A drone will capture images of the glowing streets, with photos and videos shared after the event for everyone to enjoy.

The Itasca Lions welcome donations to support their work in helping neighbors in need. Contributions can be made during kit pickup or via Venmo at @ItascaLionsTreasurer.

Celebrate the season by joining this heartwarming display of light and community spirit!





## Crafters Anonymous

When it's too cold to spend time outside, bring your creativity indoors at the library's Crafters Anonymous group. It is a relaxed and welcoming space to knit, bead, paint, or work on any project that sparks your imagination. The library provides access to a fully stocked art cart and a friendly community of makers. Just bring yourself and maybe that half-finished cross stitch. All experience levels are welcome.



Crafters Anonymous meets on the first Thursdays of the month at 10:30 a.m. (December 4<sup>th</sup>, January 1<sup>st</sup>, and February 5<sup>th</sup>) and the fourth Wednesdays of the month at 7:00 p.m. (January 28<sup>th</sup> and February 25<sup>th</sup>). There will be no meetings on December 24<sup>th</sup> or January 1<sup>st</sup>.

## Secretary of State Mobile DMV to Appear at Library

Skip the winter traffic and take care of your driver's license or state ID right at the Itasca Community Library. The Illinois Secretary of State's Mobile Driver Services Unit will be onsite Monday, January 12<sup>th</sup> from 10:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m. at 500 W. Irving Park Road.

Representatives from the Secretary of State's Office will assist with renewing or correcting driver's licenses, converting a standard license to a REAL ID, obtaining a renewed or first-time Standard or REAL ID, issuing free state IDs for seniors aged 65 and older, and selling license plate stickers.

While you're there, you can also register as an organ or tissue donor and register to vote when applying for a driver's license or ID. It's a convenient way to handle important tasks without leaving the warmth of your neighborhood.

For questions, contact Kristen Wunder at (630) 773-1699 or kwunder@itascalibrary.org. A full list of documents needed for first-time and REAL IDs is available at [ilsos.gov](http://ilsos.gov).

## Youth Winter Reading Challenge

The library encourages you to read this winter by taking their *Read S'more Books!* Winter Reading Challenge. Kids and teens in preschool through 12<sup>th</sup> grade can pick up a challenge sheet at the Youth Desk beginning Monday, December 15<sup>th</sup>, to earn cool prizes. The challenge ends Saturday, January 31<sup>st</sup>.

For more information, please call the Library at (630) 773-1699.



## Hat & Mitten Tree

The Village invites you to share the joy of the season through our annual Hat and Mitten Tree event. From December 1st through January 2nd, stop by the Village Hall lobby during business hours, Monday through Friday, 8:00 a.m. to 4:30 p.m., to donate a new hat, scarf, or pair of gloves or mittens and receive a candy cane as a small thank you. Every donation goes to the Itasca Food Pantry, helping local families stay warm this winter. Your gift, big or small, spreads comfort and kindness to neighbors in need. Together, we can brighten the holidays, bring our community closer, and ensure everyone in Itasca feels the warmth of the season.



## Little Learners, Big Adventures

District 10's Early Childhood Preschool Program is welcoming children ages 3 to 5 to explore, play, and grow. In this supportive environment, kids build confidence, social skills, and a love of learning while enjoying time in the classroom, gym, and playground.

State-certified teachers and on-site specialists guide every activity, helping little learners get ready for kindergarten and beyond.

Families can learn more at the Preschool Information Night on December 3<sup>rd</sup> at 6 p.m. at Benson Primary School.

More information at [Itasca10.org/Preschool](http://Itasca10.org/Preschool).

*District 10 Preschool*

Blended Preschool classrooms for children ages 3 through 5 who are typically developing, at-risk, or with identified disabilities.

**LOCATED AT BENSON PRIMARY SCHOOL**

[LEARN MORE](#)



## Shine Bright, Recycle Right

The holidays are sparkling across Itasca, but even the brightest lights can lose their shine. Instead of tossing those tired strands in the trash, give them a second chance to sparkle through the Village's Holiday Lights Recycling Program in partnership with Elgin Recycling.

From December 1<sup>st</sup> through January 31<sup>st</sup>, residents can drop off broken or non-working mini lights, C7 and C9 bulbs, rope lights, LED strands, and extension cords. A light collection bin is available 24 hours a day in front of the Itasca Police Station at 540 W. Irving Park Road. Lights can also be brought to Public Works, 411 N. Prospect Avenue, during regular business hours, Monday through Friday, 7:30 a.m. to 3:00 p.m.

Please note this program is for strand lights only. Ornaments, wreaths, and other holiday decorations should be donated or disposed of in the trash.

Recycle your lights, keep the season bright, and help Itasca shine green this holiday.



## Holiday Garbage Collection

As you take time off to welcome family, wrap gifts, or enjoy a cozy holiday at home, trash and recycling pickups will continue on schedule. Monday collections will run as usual through Thanksgiving, Christmas, and New Year's. Place your totes out after 4:00 p.m. on Sunday and bring them back in by 10:00 p.m. on Monday. If snow has blanketed the streets, set totes just before the curb in your driveway so plows can keep roads safe and clear.



## Gadgets for Good

The holidays often bring new gadgets and appliances, which can leave older electronics without a proper place. Instead of tossing them in the trash, these items can be donated or recycled to keep materials out of landfills and put to good use.

Many second-hand stores and donation centers accept gently used electronics, giving them a second life while helping neighbors. For items that can't be donated, the Village hosts Green Day on the first Saturday in May, providing a safe and convenient way to recycle electronics at no cost. If waiting until May isn't possible, DuPage County also has several locations that accept electronics for a fee.

Commonly accepted items include phones, tablets, cords, and small appliances. For more information on locations, accepted items, and upcoming recycling events, scan the QR code.



## Christmas Tree Pickup

Now that the holidays are over, it's time to say goodbye to your Christmas tree and get it ready for collection. Republic Services will collect natural trees the first four weeks after Christmas on December 29<sup>th</sup>, January 5<sup>th</sup>, 12<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup>. Remember to remove ornaments, lights, garlands, and tinsel, and place the tree in the parkway with the trunk facing the street.

Looking for an eco-friendly send-off? Consider mulching your tree for gardens, composted to enrich soil, or repurposed to create cozy bird habitats or winter décor. With a little creativity, your tree can continue to spread cheer throughout the season.



## How to Recycle Holiday Cheer

The holidays leave behind joy, memories, and a mountain of wrapping paper! Republic Services is here to help you clear away the tidings of the season and start the new year fresh.

### Keep out of recycling:

- Bubble wrap and foam peanuts, save them for next year's gifts
- Ribbons and bows, perfect to save for future celebrations
- Tree decorations, including tinsel and ornaments
- Sticky gift labels
- Coated or metallic wrapping paper and gift bags
- Soiled plates and utensils

### Recycling magic:

- Plain gift boxes
- Paper gift bags
- Clean tissue paper
- Holiday cards and envelopes
- Shoe boxes

Clear the clutter, recycle the right way, and let your home shine as bright as the holiday lights!

## Turn Holiday Oil into Gold

Cooking at home? Don't let used cooking oil go down the drain! Pouring fats, oils, or grease into your sink can clog your household pipes, damage the sewer system, and harm the environment.

Instead, do something good with that leftover grease; recycle your cooking oil into clean-burning biodiesel.

The Village offers a convenient, year-round drop-off location at the Public Works Facility (411 N. Prospect Ave.) Simply pour your used cooking oil into a sealed container and place it in the designated collection bins located by the entrance doors. The bins are available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, so it's easy to dispose of oil properly anytime. Questions? Call Public Works at (630) 773-2455.



## Overnight Parking Rules Take a Holiday Break

Santa's on his way, and the Itasca Police Department is making room for him! Overnight parking rules are lifted from December 18<sup>th</sup> through January 2<sup>nd</sup>. Residents and their guests can park between 2:00 a.m. and 6:00 a.m. without calling in their vehicle.



Just a reminder, do not park in front of fire hydrants, and move cars off the street whenever an inch or more of snow falls to keep streets safe and passable. This keeps the streets safe and clear, so both snowplows and Santa can make the season merry and bright!

## Snow Plow Reminders

As snow begins to fall, Public Works crews are hard at work clearing streets and keeping the community safe for travel. Their work often continues through long, cold hours, but they can't do it alone. A few simple steps from residents help make every storm safer for drivers and plow operators alike:

- **Move Vehicles Off the Street:**

When one inch or more of snow falls, remove all vehicles and garbage totes from the road. This rule is in effect day and night to give plows full access.



- **Keep Snow Out of the Street:** Shoveling or blowing snow into the road makes driving dangerous and slows plowing progress. Pile snow in your yard or parkway instead.

*Tip: When clearing your driveway, place snow on the right side (as you face the street) to reduce what gets pushed back by passing plows.*

- **Give Plows Space:** Stay back when driving near snowplows. Keeping your distance protects both you and our crews.

Thank you for helping make this winter safe, bright, and a little easier for everyone behind the wheel.

## Winter Storage for Boats and Recreational Vehicles

As winter settles in, it's time to tuck away summer fun! Boats, trailers, and recreational vehicles should be stored in your side yard from November 1<sup>st</sup> through March 31<sup>st</sup>. Make sure they're parked on an approved surface and screened with a fence that meets Village specifications. Preparing your vehicles for winter not only keeps your property looking neat but also ensures everything is ready for next summer's adventures. For details, check Section 4.22 of the Village Zoning Code, with questions about storage, call Community Development at (630) 773-5568.

## Salt Sense for Winter

Winter brings sparkling sidewalks and snowy driveways, but the salt we use to keep them safe can sneak in some surprises. Not only can it damage concrete, asphalt, and pavers over time, it can also wash into local waterways, affecting fish, plants, and the balance of our ecosystem.



Here's how to keep your home and the environment safe this season:

- Shovel early and often. Clearing snow before it gets packed down reduces the need for salt.
- Use just enough. One coffee mug of salt can cover 10 sidewalk squares.
- Try alternatives. Sand or gravel gives traction without harming surfaces or streams.

Little changes with salt can make a big difference, keeping your home and the season bright.

## Dashing Through the Snow

When snow dusts the streets and holiday lights twinkle from windows, it can feel magical to head out for errands or a festive outing. But winter driving in our area can be unpredictable, turning familiar roads into a slippery adventure. That's why it's important to be prepared each time you get behind the wheel.

Start by checking your tires to make sure they have good tread and are properly inflated to handle icy patches. Make sure your windshield wipers and washer fluid are ready for snow or slush, and keep your headlights clean so you can see and be seen. Pack a small winter kit with a blanket, flashlight, and water in case you get stuck. Slow down on shaded spots and bridges where ice may hide, leave extra space between cars, and stay focused on the road.

With these simple steps, winter trips can be safer and less stressful, letting you enjoy the season's beauty while staying in control on the roads.

## Keep Hydrants Holiday-Ready



Winter is here, and snow can quickly cover fire hydrants. You can help your neighborhood stay safe by adopting a hydrant near your home. Shovel around it and keep the area clear of ice and snow. This simple act ensures firefighters can quickly access water in an emergency and keeps your streets safe all season long.



## Winter Home Prep Tips

Cold weather can sneak up fast, and a little preparation now can keep your home safe, warm, and storm-ready. From protecting pipes to clearing gutters, these steps make winter much easier to manage:



- **Disconnect hoses** from exterior faucets to avoid freeze damage.
- **Clear gutters** so melting snow drains safely.
- **Trim tree branches** that could fall during storms.
- **Secure your mailbox** 6–12 inches behind the curb for snow plows.
- **Clean your fireplace** and ensure it's ready for use.
- **Service your furnace** and replace the filter.
- **Seal cracks** around doors, windows, and foundations to lock in warmth.
- **Protect pipes** by insulating, letting water trickle from high faucets, and opening cabinet doors to circulate heat.

## Winter Energy Assistance Available

Winter can bring chilly days and higher energy bills, but help is available. DuPage County's Low Income Home Energy Assistance Program (LIHEAP) assists eligible households with heating and energy costs during the cold months. Seniors 60 and older, people with disabilities, households with young children, or those who have had utility services disconnected may qualify.

Approved benefits are paid directly to utilities, helping keep homes warm all season long. Applicants will need to provide documentation such as a social security card, proof of income, a lease, and current electric or heating bills.

For more information or to apply, contact DuPage County at (630) 968-2087 or visit [dupageco.org/LIHEAP](http://dupageco.org/LIHEAP).

## Keep the Light On

As winter evenings arrive earlier, it's easy for houses to disappear into the dusk. In an emergency, every second counts, and being easy to find can make all the difference. Make sure your house number is clearly visible from the street. Adding reflective numbers or a small light helps guide first responders right to your door, keeping you and your loved ones safe all season long.



## Holiday Water Tips

Jack Frost may be nipping at the windows, but inside, our homes stay warm and busy. As the season brings cozy nights, holiday meals, and extra guests, water use can quietly add up without us noticing.

Watch your furnace humidifier this season. While it keeps your home comfortable, it's one of the biggest contributors to water use during the winter months.

Holiday guests add their own share too. Kitchens are bustling, showers run more often, and laundry piles up faster than usual. Even short visits can make a difference in your bill.

Here are a few easy ways to keep water use and bills manageable:

- If you're traveling or leaving for extended periods, pause the humidifier to avoid unnecessary water use.
- Be mindful in the kitchen by limiting running water when cooking or rinsing dishes.
- Wash only full loads in the dishwasher and washing machine to reduce water use.
- Encourage shorter showers during busy holiday visits.
- Fix leaks promptly in faucets, toilets, or pipes that may drip more in cold weather.

With a little attention, you can enjoy the warmth and cheer of the season without surprises on your water bill. Small changes now help make your winter both cozy and sustainable.



## Warmth When You Need It Most

Winter nights are magical with snow falling and holiday lights twinkling, but even the coziest home can lose its warmth if the heat goes out. For those moments, the community has safe, heated spaces ready to welcome you.

Warming shelters are available throughout the community for anyone in need of a warm place to rest. The Itasca Community Library (500 W. Irving Park Rd.) and Itasca Park District (350 E. Irving Park Rd.) are open during regular business hours, while the Itasca Police Department (540 W. Irving Park Rd.) provides assistance around the clock.



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

**Mayor**

Jeff Pruyn

**Village Clerk**

Jody Conidi

**Trustees**

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Melissa Christensen

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Dino Gavanis

Ellen Leahy

Patrick Powers

**Village Administrator**

Carie Anne Ergo

**Village Departments  
and Taxing Districts**

**Village Administrator**

773-0835

**Village Clerk's Office**

773-0835

**Community Development**

773-5568

**Public Works**

773-2455

**Wastewater Treatment Plant**

773-5571

**Police Department Non-Emergency**

773-1004

**Police Department Emergency**

9-1-1

**Itasca Chamber of Commerce**

773-2949

**Springbrook Nature Center**

773-5572

**Library**

773-1699

**School District #10**

773-1232

**Park District**

773-2257

**Fire District Non-Emergency**

773-1223

**Fire District Emergency**

9-1-1

**O'Hare Noise Hotline Complaints**

(800) 435-9569



Village of Itasca

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**Itasca Plates & Perks**

The Village is excited to launch Itasca Plates & Perks: Winter Dining Adventure, a passbook program designed to celebrate local restaurants and keep the winter season flavorful. From December through March, participating eateries will offer exclusive perks to residents with a Winter Dining Passbook. Each visit earns a stamp, and collecting multiple stamps unlocks special rewards across the community.

Details on participating restaurants, how to get your passbook, and full program guidelines are available at [itasca.com](http://itasca.com).

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



**Schedule of Monthly Meetings**

**Monday:**

No Meetings Scheduled

**Tuesday:**

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

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

**Wednesday:**

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

**Thursday:**

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

**Friday:**

No Meetings Scheduled