



CITY MANAGER'S NEWSLETTER



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WILLIAM C. DONATO CONSERVATION AREA

In December, 2014, a local 30-acre conservation area, which includes woodlands & wetlands, formerly known as the Albert Property / Gerry Street Nature Area, was renamed the William C. Donato Conservation Area.

A group of students from Woodstock High School, along with their teacher, Mr. Bill Donato, will be clearing invasive species and burning brush piles on Tuesday, March 3 from approximately 8:00AM until noon at the Conservation Area.



MCRIDE – MCHENRY COUNTY DIAL-A-RIDE



MCRide is a great way to get around McHenry County. Whether you need transportation for work, school, shopping, or visiting a friend, MCRide provides an affordable and stress-free way to travel.

Simply call the Pace Call Center at 800-451-4599 the day before you need a ride and let them know your pick-up and drop-off location, along with your desired pick-up or drop-off time. If you are a senior 60 years or older, or someone with a disability, you will receive a discounted fair.

When your scheduled pick-up time arrives, meet the MCRide bus at the curb and enjoy the trip to your destination. MCRide is a shared-ride service, so you may even meet a new friend along the way!

For further information, call Pace Customer Relations at 1-800-606-1282, Option #2, or go to www.pacebus.com or www.mchenrycountydot.org

- 2 Polar Plunge**
- 3 Ban on Overweight Loads**
- 4 Library News**
- 5 Bingo Bash**
- 6 HR News**
- 7-9 Health News**

AARP DRIVER SAFETY PROGRAM AVAILABLE

The Woodstock Police Department will be hosting the *AARP Driver Safety Program* on **Monday, March 16, 2015** and **Tuesday, March 17, 2015**. The classes will be held in the Training Room at the **Woodstock Police Department** located at 656 Lake Avenue. Classes will be held on each day from 10:00AM to 2:00PM. Participants *must* attend both sessions.

The AARP Driver Safety Program is the nation's first and largest classroom course designed especially for drivers age 50 and older. Course completion helps older drivers refine existing skills and develop safe driving strategies in today's challenging driving environment.

Successful completion of the course may entitle the participant to a discount on their auto insurance. Participants are charged a nominal fee of \$15 for AARP members and \$20 for non-members.

There are still places available. For more information or to register for the class, please contact **Tamara Reed** at the Woodstock Police Department at 815-338-6787.

COME TO THE OPERA THIS SUNDAY

The Friends of the Opera House, in cooperation with Classic Cinemas, is presenting a special screening of the digitally remastered classic Marx's Brothers' movie *A NIGHT AT THE OPERA* on Sunday afternoon at 1:30. Admission is \$15 with all attendees receiving a free Groucho disguise. In addition, anyone going to the Pour House restaurant after the movie will receive a 50% discount on any appetizers if they are wearing their disguise. All proceeds from this event go to support projects and programs at the Woodstock Opera House.

POLICE POLAR PLUNGE EARNS COLD HARD CASH

On Sunday, February 22nd members of the **Woodstock Police Department**, including three former Explorer Scouts, participated in a fundraiser benefiting Special Olympics – the Polar Plunge! A total of \$2,500.00 was raised in support of Illinois Special Olympics by this hardy band of plungers! (The air temperature was 12 degrees at plunge time!)

Plungers included: **Sergeant Constantino Cipolla, Detective Rob Branum, Officer Eric Schmidtke, Officer Mike Niedzwiecki, Officer Michael Karnath, Telecommunicator Grant Havens, Community Service Officer Glen Davis**, and former **WPD Explorers Stephanie Kroll, Brandy Jenkins and Sandra Urbina**.

Many thanks to Sergeant Cipolla for once again organizing and leading the WPD team. Congratulations to everyone who took the plunge in support of Illinois Special Olympics – and to those who supported them with their donations and their presence! The slogan says it all – “freezin’ for a reason!”

MEETINGS NEXT WEEK...

Tuesday, March 3 – City Council, 7PM, Council Chamber

Thursday, March 5 – Library Board, 7:30PM, Library

TEMPORARY BAN ON OVERWEIGHT LOADS

Several area local road jurisdictions place temporary weight restrictions on their local roads and streets each spring to reduce the amount of damage on the roadways and road base when the subgrade thaws. The City of Woodstock does not expect to place any temporary restrictions for the allowable legal weight limit for any street under our jurisdiction. However, the City will not approve any requests for special permits for overweight vehicles for any City road or street this spring.

Effective Monday, March 2 and continuing at least through Monday, April 6, the City of Woodstock will not approve nor allow any trucks, trailers, or other vehicles that are in excess of the axle loading established by the State of Illinois to use any City street. Depending on weather conditions and the conditions of the roadways, this temporary restriction prohibiting overweight vehicles could be extended.

If you have equipment that would result in an overweight load that needs to be moved to/from your job site this spring, the transportation needs to be completed prior to March 2 or after April 6, 2015.

If you have any questions about this temporary ban, please call the **Department of Public Works** at 815-338-6118.



HOLIDAY LIGHTS RECYCLING PROGRAM ENDS FOR THE SEASON

The City of Woodstock's Holiday Lights Recycling Program will be ending for the season as of March 2. If you still have any holiday lights that you'd like to drop off, please stop by one of the recycling locations: City Hall, 121 W. Calhoun Street; Woodstock Public Library, 414 W. Judd Street; and the Department of Public Works, 326 Washington Street. In addition, Public Works will accept any lights for recycling and store them until the program begins again in December.

Lights that will be accepted for this program are: Mini-lights (or Italian lights), C7 lights, C9 lights, rope lights, LED lights, extension cords, etc. All colors and lengths will be accepted. *Garland, live greens, wreaths or other non-recyclables are not accepted in this program.*

For further information or questions about this program, go to www.elginrecycling.com



LIBRARY NEWS

Golfing in the Library

There will be golfers in the library in a few weeks, albeit only miniature golfers. It is that time of year again—the annual Friends of the Library Mini Links Golf Outing is just around the corner, Friday, March 13 and Saturday, March 14. This is your chance to putt your way through the library, support the Friends of Woodstock Library, and generally have a great time.

This year's course will feature traditional favorites like "Putt through Tut" and the notorious "Toilet Hole", but there will be some new challenges as well. Several new sponsors have joined us this year, and there could be some very interesting hole designs on the course. The 18-hole layout will again travel all three levels of the library, and with the changes made last April, several holes are guaranteed to be different from last year. Naturally, there will be a 19th hole where anyone can stop by and enjoy a delicious treat from Jaci's Cookies cookie.

As always, there will be fabulous raffle prizes to be won, including the Tower of Games, golf accessories, and Page for a Day for Rep. Jack Franks. Raffle entries begin on March 2, with the winning tickets being drawn at the end of the event on Saturday. Winners need not be present to win. Raffle tickets are \$1 each or 6 for \$5. Mini Links will again feature a Friday night event just for the grown-ups on March 13. The *Library After Dark* event includes a round on the course, hors d'oeuvres, and drinks. Attendees must be 21 years or older to participate. Tickets for the *Library After Dark* event are \$25/person and must be purchased at the library in advance. No tickets will be sold at the door.

The traditional Saturday Mini Links will be held from 10AM to 3PM (last tee time) on March 14. A round of golf is \$3 for children 8 and under and \$5 for all others. Tickets may be purchased at the door.

Teen Study Night

Midterms? Finals? Your kids have to study anyway, so do it with friends and classmates at the library. Join us Wednesday, March 4, 6-8PM. They bring the work, we provide the pizza and drinks. They can also bring food from home if there are allergy concerns. The entire top floor of the library will be available for studying.

Tax Help at the Library

Volunteers from the AARP will assist senior citizens with their income taxes on Tuesdays and Fridays at the library. Volunteers are available 9-5 both days, now through tax day (April 15). Appointments **MUST** be scheduled ahead of time at 815-344-3555.

BINGO BASH DRAWS BIG NUMBERS



The City of Woodstock and Hearthstone communities partner once a month to present a community event or trip for local senior citizens. This past Thursday **Woodstock Police Chief Lowen** was the guest caller at the BINGO BASH held at Hearthstone Communities. Thirty-four eager seniors attended the fun afternoon to win tickets for a basket raffle. They were served lunch, dessert and a fun time with The Chief!

Thanks again to **Chief Lowen** for helping to serve coffee and lunch as well as for calling those same numbers, 1-75, countless times! Thanks to all city employees that donated to the themed baskets put together by **Recreation Program Coordinator Becky Vidales** and **City Manager Office Assistant Monica Amraen**.



Quotation

The most important single ingredient in the formula of success is knowing how to get along with people.

[Theodore Roosevelt](#)

HR NEWS

Important Notice Regarding Hiring of Non-Summer Seasonal Positions

We appreciate the interest in employment opportunities with the City of Woodstock.

The City Administration held several meetings concerning the recent FY15/16 Illinois State Budget address delivered by Governor Rauner and how the City must necessarily and responsibly react, given the severe impact the reduced State revenues will have on already fragile municipal budgets.

The City Administration certainly doesn't envy the financial challenges the Governor faces with the State's significant annual deficits. The budget excesses of the past several years in Springfield clearly demonstrate the negative effects of State versus Local government practices. During the last seven years, the State's budget increased by 23.5%, while Woodstock's budget for governmental funds, by comparison, increased only 1.2%. However, to provide a complete picture of the Governor's proposed cuts, he is now recommending a dramatic reduction to State spending, from \$33.6 billion to \$27.8 billion.

Unfortunately, the proposed reduction in revenue sharing reimbursements made to local municipalities presents extreme challenges for Woodstock. If approved, the income tax receipts received by the City would suffer a reduction in excess of \$1.2 million, or 13% of the total revenue reported in the City's General Fund, the City's main operating fund.

While the future of these proposed revenue reductions imposed by the State are unknown at this time, the City must begin to institute operational modifications to remain financially secure in both the short and long term. Therefore, the hiring freeze for all non-Summer Seasonal that was utilized during the recession is reinstated, for an indefinite period of time. All current and future staffing requests will need to be critically evaluated to determine service level losses. In many cases, these positions will need to remain open and unfilled until further notice.

We appreciate your patience while we take this prudent path and await clarification as to the true impact the State of Illinois' budget will have on the City of Woodstock.

RECRUITMENT

The following active positions are currently posted on the City of Woodstock's website:

American Red Cross Certified Lifeguards, WSI Instructors, Swim Aides (2015 Summer Seasonal): These positions provide safety and instruction to swimmers at Woodstock WaterWorks pool and work days, evenings and weekends, dependent on pool attendance and weather. Lifeguards ensure the safety and health of all pool patrons, while WSI Instructors and Aides provide proper instruction/teaching for all City of Woodstock Recreation Department swimming lessons. **Application Deadline: Friday, March 6, 2015 at 5:00PM**

Playground Program Counselors (2015 Summer Seasonal): Counselors interact with and supervise a group of 8-12 children, ages 4-12 years, in a recreational setting. This position requires planning, implementing, and evaluating daily activities, and communicating with participants' parents on a regular basis. Counselors ensure safety of campers at all times. **Application Deadline: Friday, March 6, 2015 at 5:00PM**

Public Works Seasonal Maintenance Workers (2015 Summer Seasonal): These temporary positions perform various manual unskilled and semi-skilled tasks in the maintenance of City streets, parks and sewer/water utilities. Positions work under the direction of Supervisors and/or Foremen for the respective divisions of the Public Works Department. **Application Deadline: Friday, March 6, 2015 at 5:00PM.**

Please refer to the City's website at www.woodstockil.gov and click on the Employment Opportunities section for further details and the application process on the above opportunities. *The City of Woodstock is an Equal Opportunity Employer.*

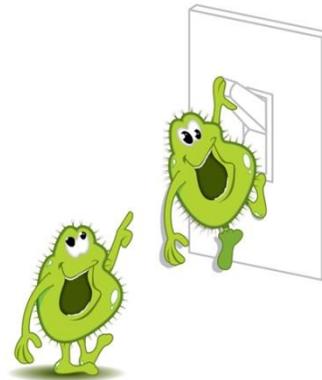
THE GERMIEST PLACES IN YOUR HOME

Your home may be host to all sorts of unwelcome guests—namely germs. While you can't avoid all microbes, since young children, the elderly, and people with compromised immune systems are especially susceptible to viral and bacterial infections (like the easily transferrable staphylococcus aureus, or staph) that may not affect otherwise healthy adults, it's a good idea to try to keep your home clean, and limit your (and your loved ones') exposure to germs.

All Around the Home

Germs commonly lurk in and around garbage cans and pet habitats. Faucets also rank high on bacteria count, as do light switches, remote controls, phones, computer keyboards and any other household items your hands (and the hands of others) routinely touch. Routine cleaning will generally keep germs at bay, though you should disinfect surfaces when someone in the household is sick.

As you've probably guessed, the bathroom is also prime breeding ground for bacteria. "Even your toothbrush can easily become contaminated," says Catherine Passaretti, MD, infectious disease specialist at Carolinas HealthCare System in Charlotte, NC. "Especially if it is kept in close proximity to the toilet." Keep your toothbrush in a closed cabinet, and close the toilet lid before flushing to help prevent microscopic germs from toilet water vapors rising up and contaminating toothbrushes.



Food Safety and Clean Kitchens

Some common bacteria, such as salmonella, E. coli and staph, which lives in the intestinal tract and on the skin (even in healthy humans), can also be contracted from raw and undercooked foods. Although undercooked meat and other animal foods are most often associated with bacteria and foodborne illnesses, any type of food can harbor germs. So be sure to wash all fresh fruits and vegetables under running water, including those with skin or rind that will be discarded.

To kill kitchen bacteria on household surfaces, and prevent cross-contamination from food to appliance, appliance to food, or from one food to another, routinely clean your sink, dishcloths and sponges, cutting boards, countertops and refrigerator shelves, where germs that cause foodborne illness are easily spread. Here's how to keep your kitchen surfaces and tools clean:

Cutting Boards

- Never place cooked food on an unwashed cutting board or plate that held raw animal products such as meat, poultry, seafood, or eggs.
- Clean sponges in the dishwasher; change them every two weeks.
- Wash and replace dish cloths at least every other day (or immediately if used to clean up after handling raw meat). You can throw dishcloths in the washing machine or microwave wet or damp dishcloths for three minutes (and damp sponges for one minute) to kill bacteria. Do not microwave dry towels or sponges as they may catch on fire.
- You can also soak dishcloths and sponges in the same diluted bleach solution you use to sanitize surfaces and cutting boards.

Food Safety

- Store animal products separately from other foods in the refrigerator and immediately clean up any package leaks or drips from these foods.

The Best Prevention

Other than keeping household items and surfaces as clean as possible, the single best way to prevent the spread of germs at home is to routinely wash your hands and make sure children and other family members do the same. Germs from unwashed hands easily spread to foods, drinks, toys, household appliances, and work surfaces.

The best tools for killing bacteria and preventing infection are plain soap and water, and rubbing your lathered hands together for at least 20 seconds while washing (or, for children, the amount of time it takes to sing "Happy Birthday" twice). "It doesn't matter how warm the water is," Passaretti advises. "What is important is the friction caused by rubbing." In most cases, you don't need antibacterial soap to do the job, but you can use an alcohol-based hand cleaner containing at least 60% alcohol if soap and water are not available. "But sanitizer residue can build up on hands," Passaretti adds. "So if used repeatedly, it is important to wash your hands with soap and water after every four or five uses."

It is especially important to wash your hands:

- Before and after handling food.
- After touching any type of garbage.
- After using the bathroom.
- After being in contact with someone who is sick.
- After touching doorknobs, handles, light switches, or anything else that is handled often by different people.

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**Want to Start to Get Healthy with an
Exercise Program?**

City of Woodstock employees receive an employee discount at the **Woodstock Recreation Center**. **The initiation fee is waived! Executive membership is \$35 per month. Full membership is \$25 per month.** Try a week for free! For more information, contact Mary Lynn Lisk or Renee Torrez at 815-338-4363 or visit www.woodstockrecreationdepartment.com for more information.



You are cordially invited to join Chief Robert Lowen at the Woodstock Police Department for coffee, conversation, and an informative program.

Hans Mach, Development Director at Turning Point Domestic Violence Agency and Chairman of the Continuum of Care to End Homelessness in McHenry County will present a program on homelessness in McHenry County.

Coffee with the Chief



Monday, March 9, 2015
7:00 p.m. – 8:30 p.m.
Woodstock Police Department
656 Lake Avenue

For further information, please call
Tamara Reed at 815-338-6787.