McHENRY TOWNSHIP’S NEW EMERGENCY WARNING SIRENS
THREE NEW WARNING SIRENS TO BE ADDED TO AREA EMERGENCY ALERT SYSTEM

As local governments find it increasingly more difficult to operate, it becomes apparent that intergovernmental agreements will become more and more commonplace as a means to cut costs and survive. Many local taxing bodies such as park districts, school districts and municipalities are joining forces to provide facilities and services to their residents at reduced costs in order to trim their budgets while at the same time offering high levels of necessary service.

There will be two intergovernmental agreements involved with installing the new early warning weather sirens. The first is between the Village of Ringwood, the Fire District and McHenry Township; each paying 1/3 the cost of one siren located at the new Fire Station 5 in Ringwood. The second intergovernmental agreement is between the Fire District and McHenry Township with the agreement that each split the costs of the two additional warning sirens.

The collaborative agreements save taxpayers money while providing the need for an extended potential danger warning system. The new rotating outdoor warning sirens have a 4-mile sounding radius. They will be strategically placed: one at Fire Station 5 on Ringwood Road; another in the area of Ringwood and Spring Grove Roads; and the third on the McHenry Township grounds.

The siren system was not designed to be a warning device for people inside their homes—it was designed for people who are outside of their homes, away from radios or televisions, which may be broadcasting warnings. When you hear the siren seek shelter!

The siren indicates approaching severe storms capable of producing hazardous conditions. The City of McHenry Communications Center activates all the sirens simultaneously. They receive reports from the National Weather Service plus notification by local law enforcement officers and a trained network of weather spotters.

While the peak time for tornadoes tends to be from the late spring to midsomer, there is no defined tornado season. A so-called second tornado season typically ramps up in November, again because of the transitional seasonal weather pattern. However, tornadoes have happened in every month of the calendar.

A **tornado watch** is issued by the National Weather Service when weather in a particular area could produce tornadoes (often this means thunderstorms are in the area). But it doesn’t mean tornadoes will definitely occur, it just means you need to be alert and paying attention to weather updates.

If our community is under a **tornado warning**, it means that a tornado has been spotted on the ground in the area or that the storm circulation seen on Doppler radar could produce a tornado. Now is the time to seek shelter.
How Do We Do This???

A Message from your Supervisor:

The McHenry Township Board and your McHenry Township Elected Officials continuously listen to our township residents regarding their problems, concerns and suggestions for ways to improve McHenry Township Government. We are very aware that the residents of McHenry Township entrusted us with the leadership to represent their needs and concerns. We also are aware that we are public servants representing the people.

We have been listening to your suggestions and have tried to implement your ideas towards a more efficient government. I would like to share with you what the Township Board has accomplished during the 2016 calendar year.

Your Board has heard your concerns regarding property taxes being too high in McHenry County. The Board has been very fiscally responsible with your tax dollars. To our credit, for the past six years in a row, we have kept the Township Property Tax Levy flat without increasing taxes by one penny during this time period.

In 2016, the Board analyzed all ways and means possible to reduce expenses and as a result the Board lowered every McHenry Township Property Tax bill by 10% for both the McHenry Township Budget and the McHenry Township Road District Budget.

*McHenry Township is one of the first governmental bodies to reduce its tax levy in McHenry County. We are leaders in property tax reduction!*

While McHenry Township is one of the lowest portions of your property tax bill, we as a government must become even more frugal in these economic unsteady times as have our constituents been forced to tighten their belts and adjust their budgets. We are a very small portion of your property tax bill but we are inspired to do our part to give taxpayers more for their dollar... and still be able to lower property taxes.

We listened and came up with ways to help meet your concerns yet provide excellent services and programs. We incorporate many intergovernmental agreements. Intergovernmental agreements save the taxpayers money by combining forces with the communities and municipalities within the township. We also strive for grants, such as the county and federal grants we receive to operate our Senior & Disabled Transportation Program buses.

We partner with many organizations and agencies that offer services at no cost to the township. On our township campus, we are proud to include FISH Food Pantry of McHenry, an all volunteer service organization that strives to meet the supplemental nutritional needs of the disadvantaged in our community. Also on our campus, our Senior Center is the home of Senior Services Associates, Inc. that provides services and assistance to our senior residents. The Township’s General Assistance Program works with a host of organizations and agencies including Illinois Department of Human Services, Illinois Department of Employment and Illinois Job Link.

The McHenry Township Board and your McHenry Township Elected Officials believe we are a large diverse group of people living in the same neighborhood. As a result of sharing our expenses by using all our resources and instituting new ones, the Township is staying on its toes to keep this community a place in which everyone benefits through our team effort and reasonable taxation.
McHenry Township — 815-385-5605 — www.mchenrytownship.com

TOWNSHIP NEWS

YOU’RE INVITED
McHENRY TOWNSHIP
ANNUAL MEETING
Tuesday, April 11, 2017 at 7 p.m.
McHenry Township Hall
3703 N. Richmond Road, Johnsburg

The Annual Township Meeting is held on the second Tuesday in April. The purpose of this meeting is to publish the Supervisor’s Annual Financial Report and the Road District Treasurer’s Annual Report; to discuss and vote on issues of Township Business; and to allow electors to speak on Township Government issues.

All McHenry Township residents are invited however only registered voters are able to vote at the meeting.

RULES OF THE ROAD REVIEW COURSE
Wednesday, March 1 from 1:30 to 3:30 p.m.
Wednesday, June 7 from 1:30 to 3:30 p.m.

The Rules of the Road Review Course is designed to give all drivers the knowledge and confidence needed to renew or obtain a driver’s license. This class is especially valuable for senior citizens and persons with disabilities. The class updates drivers on the current rules of the road and prepares them for the general writing and road sign examination. Learn what is expected for your actual road test and take a practice written exam.

The course is offered at McHenry Township Hall, 3703 N. Richmond Road, by the Illinois Secretary of State Office and will prepare you for your driver’s license test.

There is no class admission fee however reservations are required call the Township at 815-385-5605.

MEMORIAL DAY OBSERVANCE
Monday, May 29, 2017

The Johnsburg Memorial Day Observance & parade by the Johnsburg Area VFW Post 1149 will begin on Monday, May 29 at 9 a.m. at the Waterfront Hotel & Marina on Chapel Hill Road on the east side of the Fox River bridge. A Wreath Drop ceremony for those lost at sea, and a Flyover for lost air force crews will be followed by the parade across the bridge to the Flag Memorial, where a wreath will be laid for all those soldiers who gave their lives for our freedoms.

After closing statements, all attendees will be given a FREE lunch and are invited to view a baseball game at the Johnsburg Community Club Park.

McHenry Township will participate in paying our respects to those who died in military service. Hope to see you there as we will also be in the parade!

RTA PASS PROGRAMS: Apply at McHenry Township — Monday through Friday from 8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.

RTA’s Reduced Fare Program & Circuit Ride Free Program is for citizens age 65 or over and persons with disabilities who live in the RTA service region and are eligible for free or reduced fares on fixed routes operated by the Chicago Transit Authority (CTA), Metra and Pace (route buses).

Applicants will need a wallet-sized color photo or McHenry Township provides the service of taking your photo for your application. (There is a charge for non-resident photos.) The person in the photo cannot wear a hat, scarf or sunglasses.

For detailed information and instructions about RTA Reduced Fare Program or the Circuit Ride Free Program go to: www.mchenrytownship.com/rtapasses.htm We also provide links to area transportation options.
TOWNSHIP NEWS

TOWNSHIP FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE

The township’s financial assistance program is administered by the Township Supervisor and 2 part-time caseworkers. Our caseworkers are required to have extensive training to comply with the Department of Human Services requirements of providing General Assistance in a consistent and unbiased manner.

Individuals who qualify for general assistance (a monthly grant) are required to make every attempt to look for other sources of income such as unemployment and TANF (Temporary Assistance for Needy Families) and Social Security Disability (if disabled and unable to work). They must also apply for food stamps (SNAP) and for Medicaid. Veterans are required to apply for all benefits for veterans and their dependants.

If a person who is able bodied and qualifies for General Assistance, they are required to do the following:

- Register at the Workforce Network to do on-line searches for available jobs
- Attend job coaching, resume writing and networking opportunities held at the Shah Center
- Have proof of job search attempts during a monthly period
- Are scheduled to work at the township to develop additional job skills and work habits

Our goal is to work with our clients to find employment or find other sources of income if they are disabled and unable to work. General Assistance is meant as a temporary form of assistance. Our clients are required to come in every month for a redetermination. Their ongoing grant depends on the client taking steps toward resolving their situation. Some clients receive assistance for a month or so until they can find employment, some are on our assistance for a longer period of time while they appeal their denials for social security disability. Some clients also qualify for medical assistance from the township that pays for necessary medical care.

McHenry Township works closely with our local food pantries, faith based outreach programs, social service agencies, service organizations and governmental agencies to provide assistance to our residents that have been negatively impacted by our economic downturn. Our office answers inquiries, provides advocacy for our residents and acts as a portal for many people who have never had to navigate the public assistance bureaucracy.

For additional information, please call the Financial Assistance office at 815-322-5144.

SENIOR & DISABLED TRANSPORTATION

McHenry Township’s Transportation Program is more than a paratransit bus service to area seniors and disabled adults who no longer are able to drive— it is a lifeline to doctors, groceries and friends. It allows them to remain independent.

McHenry Township’s bus service provides door-to-door service which assists seniors but is a necessity for adults with disabilities. It allows them to board the bus in their driveway instead of maneuvering a wheel chair or a walker to the street for a curb-side pickup as with Pace service.

McHenry Township Transit services only township residents living in the 60050, 60051, 60097 and 60072 zip code areas. It operates within McHenry Township plus we additionally take passengers to Centegra Medical Centers, Pioneer Center and McHenry Community Health Center.

Township buses operate Monday through Friday from 8 a.m. to 3 p.m.

Riders are asked for a $1 donation for each one-way trip. As always, riders unable to pay will be provided service.

New riders must register for service with the Township by calling 815-385-5605.

Once you’ve completed this one-time simple registration, you call Pace to set up all your paratransit rides as often as you need transportation:

Pace’s Dispatch Center
Monday through Friday from 6:30 a.m. to 7 p.m.
800-451-4599 (TTY) 888-454-4724

For detailed information about McHenry Township Transit and other regional transportation options visit our website http://www.mchenrytownship.com/transportation.html
McHenry Township has been paying the cost for mosquito abatement for its residents for over 30 years. The McHenry Township Board accepted the bid proposal from Clarke Environmental Management, Inc.

Clarke will provide a larvicide mosquito control program within the Township including the villages of Johnsburg, McCullom Lake, Lakemoor, Ringwood and Wonder Lake; the City of McHenry; and all unincorporated areas. Participation in this program is based on the execution of an inter-governmental agreement with the municipalities and the Township.

Work includes the inspection of potential breeding areas, application of the EPA approved larvicides when breeding is found at respective site treatment (by hand, power backpack and helicopter) and treatment of all street catch basins, manholes and/or inlets; and adult mosquito surveillance and arbovirus testing.

Residents can participate and help control mosquito development by alerting Clarke to the locations where water has remained standing for four or more days by calling its toll-free Mosquito Hotline at 800-942-2555.

WEST NILE VIRUS FACTS
West Nile Virus (WNV) is a mosquito-borne infection. The most successful way to avoid WNV is to prevent mosquito bites. The most effective defense against mosquito bites is Mosquito Abatement and the most valuable method of mosquito abatement is larviciding.

Symptoms generally occur 3 to 15 days following the bite of an infected mosquito and range from a slight fever, headache, rash, swollen nodes and conjunctivitis (irritation of the eye) to the rapid onset of a severe headache, high fever, stiff neck, disorientation, muscle weakness, inflammation of the brain, paralysis, coma or death. Less than 1% of persons infected with WNV will develop severe illness. Many people infected with the disease have no symptoms. The case fatality rate ranges from 3-15% of those diagnosed with WNV.

Educate yourself about West Nile Virus go to:
• https://www.cdc.gov/westnile/index.html
• http://www.idph.state.il.us/envhealth/wnv.htm

ABOUT ZIKA VIRUS DISEASE
Zika virus is transmitted to people primarily through the bite of an infected Aedes species mosquito. There is no vaccine to prevent or medicine to treat Zika virus.

No local mosquito-borne Zika virus disease cases have been reported in Illinois, but there have been travel-associated cases. The number of Zika cases among travelers visiting or returning to the United States will likely increase. Specific areas where Zika is spreading are often difficult to determine and are likely to change over time.

Most people infected with Zika virus won’t even know they have the disease because they won’t have symptoms. The most common symptoms of Zika are fever, rash, joint pain, or conjunctivitis (red eyes). Other common symptoms include muscle pain and headache.

A pregnant woman can pass Zika virus to her fetus during pregnancy. Zika is a cause of microcephaly and other severe fetal brain defects. Zika virus can be spread by a man to his sex partners; the virus is present in semen longer than in blood.

To learn about the Zika Virus go to: www.cdc.gov/zika

McHenry Township — 815-385-5605 — www.mchenrytownship.com
TOWNSHIP NEWS

State Senator Pamela Althoff & McHenry Township host

Shred Day
in McHenry Township Park
Saturday, June 10 from 9:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m.
in McHenry Township Parking Lot
3703 North Richmond Road

Free Shred Day will provide volunteers to unload your car!
Clean out your household! Empty your file cabinets while helping the environment by bringing your outdated documents papers, CDs, film, and/or x-rays. Bring it all to McHenry Township parking lot for safe and confidential shredding! You will receive a Certificate of Destruction.

Enter at the Johnsburg Road stop-light
(turn west past the Moose Lodge)
and follow the drop-off signs.

AMS Store & Shred
13 Prosper Court
Lake in the Hills, IL 60156
800-262-2344

Sen. Althoff’s District Office:
5400 West Elm, Suite 103
McHenry, IL 60050
815-455-6330
pamela@pamelaalthoff.net

RELAY FOR LIFE 2017 EVENT CHANGES

Relay For Life Of North McHenry County will not hold their annual event this year in McHenry Township Park. McHenry County has combined all teams into one event to be held from 7 p.m. on Friday, June 16 to 7 a.m. Saturday, June 17 at Prairie Grove Elementary School, 3223 IL Rt.176 in Crystal Lake. https://www.facebook.com/relaymchenryil

Get involved!! Volunteer workers are needed. Attend event planning meetings plus Leadership Team and Committee meetings; some of these meetings will be held at McHenry Township Senior Center, 3519 N. Richmond Road in Johnsburg. To get up-to-date information or to donate, go to www.relayforlife.org/mchenryil

Visit their website for detailed information and on-line registration. For specific information or to volunteer your services, contact Kaitlin at kaitlin.thompson@cancer.org or 404-653-8019 at the American Cancer Society.

McHenry Township — 815-385-5605 — www.mchenrytownship.com
ATHLETIC FIELDS

Every year, thousands of residents benefit from McHenry Township recreation areas and athletic fields for outdoor enjoyment! Our parks accommodate year-round recreation opportunities for all ages.

McHenry Township Athletic Fields are in use from early spring until the snow flies at the end of the football season. Baseball, softball, soccer, and football leagues utilize the fields throughout the playing seasons. Additionally, there are special sporting events throughout the season.

Our Athletic Fields include:
- 4- baseball/softball fields with skinned infields, backstops, foul-lines and home run fences (2 fields are lighted for evening games)
- 3- striped NCAA size approved soccer fields
- and a 100 yard football field with bleachers

To assure users of a safe, playable and aesthetically pleasing venue, McHenry Township Parks Department’s field maintenance includes: raking, mowing and fertilization of turf areas, weed and pest abatement, field renovation and irrigation plus an aggressive aeration and top dressing program plus annual improvements. During baseball season infields are dragged and re-striped daily.

A new 20x40 foot weather pavilion was recently erected to provide protection for players & spectators from blistering sun, rain or hail. The shelter is strictly an inclement weather shelter; it is not designated for picnics.

If you require more information about the teams that are scheduled to play in McHenry Township Park go to our website at www.mchenrytownship.com/athletic-fields.html Readers can scroll down the Athletic Fields pages where all the teams that utilize the fields are listed. If you need information or are interested in joining a team you can contact the teams through the links to their websites.

For additional information about the parks or athletic field scheduling, please contact Terry Wagner, Parks and Facilities Operations Manager at 815-322-5147 or e-mail Terry at operations@mchenrytownship.com

IT’S YOUR PARK—please take care of it!
Enjoy your park & help preserve its environment.
The park is open dawn to dusk!

Obey posted McHenry Township Park Rules!

- No alcoholic beverages allowed in the park unless a beer/wine permit is obtained. Alcohol permits must be submitted three weeks prior to the picnic.
- Smoking is prohibited in all Township buildings and outdoor recreational areas.
- No Fundraising allowed unless with a special permit.
- No pets or animals with the exception of assist dogs. No animals shall be allowed in parks or facilities unless otherwise authorized in writing by the Township.
- Parking is restricted to parking lots only. No parking is allowed on grass areas.

Violators will be prosecuted. The Johnsburg Police Department is empowered to enforce the rules and regulations of the Township Parks and Facilities.

PICNIC SHELTER RESERVATIONS

In McHenry Township Park there are eight cedar shelters in a shaded rolling picnic grove running water, rest-rooms & parking picnic tables, grills & a few w/electricity.

A park permit is required to reserve a picnic shelter for any group of 20 or more people. Reservations must be made in person. To guarantee the reservation, a deposit fee must be paid for shelter reservations. For information about the parks, shelter pricing or to download a Rental Agreement go to www.mchenrytownship.com/shelter-rental.html

The park must be left clean and in original condition. Renters are responsible for set up and clean up. Tent set-up and take-down must occur the same day of the event unless special approval is obtained. For questions about availability call the Township at 815-385-5605.
CLERK’S CORNER

McHenry Township
Clerk Marsha A. Nelson
Monday thru Friday
8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.
815-385-5605
fax 815-385-5671
clerk@mchenrytownship.com

ILLINOIS CONSOLIDATED ELECTION
will be held on Tuesday April 4, 2017.

The Consolidated Election is our local government election and it affects our community and our taxes. It includes candidates for Municipal Offices, Library Trustees, Fire Protection District Trustees, Fox Waterway Management Agency, School Board Members and Township Offices.

You are much more likely to spot your town’s mayor at your local grocery store than the U.S. President. If a pothole develops on your street, you’ll probably call your road commissioner to get it fixed. Police and fire protection are paramount to our safety. Parents put their kids on the school bus in the morning to be educated at our local public schools. Electing local officials committed to communicating with citizens is the most effective way of knowing what is going on in our community and having a voice in local government; holding it accountable.

If your schedule prevents you from voting before Election Day on April 4, 2017, cast your ballot by using touch-screen voting machines at the McHenry Township office. For information about voting at the township go to: http://www.mchenrytownship.com/voter-services.html

Early Voting at McHenry Township

Monday, March 20 to Friday, March 24
8:30 a.m. to 4:00 p.m.

Monday, March 27 to Friday, March 31
8:30 a.m. to 4:00 p.m.

Saturday, April 1
9:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m.

Monday, April 3
8:30 a.m. to 4:00 p.m.

Early Voters must display valid photo identification such as a current Illinois Drivers License or a state issued ID card or another government-issued ID with a photograph.

For more detailed information about elections visit http://www.co.mchenry.il.us/county-government/departments-a-i/county-clerk for voting information.

The law prohibits any voter who has been issued a Vote-By-Mail or Early Voting ballot from appearing at his precinct polling place and requesting another ballot.
McHenry Township’s Blue Star Banner Program Honors the Families of Our Military

While the men and women of the armed forces preserve our freedom and democracy, their families support them with strength and love… we salute the strength, pride, patriotism and sacrifice of military families.

At the October 13th Board of Trustees Meeting, in recognition of the commitment and sacrifices military families makes every day, McHenry Township honored three families. They were presented a special Resolution plaque which is a formal expression of acknowledgment voted on and signed by the Board of Trustees.

Beta Omicron Master Chapter of Beta Sigma Phi Sorority presented each family with a Blue Star Banner to be displayed in their windows indicating that one of their family members is in our country’s military service.

The township-wide Blue Star Banner Program provides our residents an opportunity to show support to the families of those serving in the United States Armed Forces. Eligibility to receive a Blue Star Flag, includes persons in all military departments, including the National Guard.

The qualified family member accepting the Blue Star Banner must currently reside in McHenry Township.

McHenry Township’s Blue Star Banner Program provides our residents an opportunity to show support to the families of those serving in the United States Armed Forces. For more information or to download an application, go to: http://www.mchenrytownship.com/blue-star-banner.html

For more information or to download an application: www.mchenrytownship.com/Blue_Star_Banner.htm

E-mail the form to: clerk@mchenrytownship.com or fax it to: 815-385-5671 or mail it to: McHenry Township Blue Star Banner Program, 3703 N. Richmond Road, Johnsburg, IL 60051
About The Office…

January 2, 2017 marked the third anniversary of when I stepped into this office and began to serve as your assessor. It’s sometimes hard to believe that it has been that long but then again, I am often amazed at how much we have accomplished.

One change we have made is in the configuration of the office to have my receptionist in a better position to greet people when they come in. We have been working on improving this part of the office and we have finally been able to bring it all together.

Once you enter, Annette can quickly assist you with filling out paperwork, answering questions or easily directing you to the best person to handle your inquiry. I think this makes for a much more welcoming atmosphere….I hope you do as well.

About You…

Have you Checked Your Property Record Card Lately?

This is a good time of year to take a look at our website and see if we have the correct information regarding your property in our records. If you are in a neighborhood that has not been visited by a staff member in many years, it’s possible that things have changed. Call us if you believe there is a mistake and we will correct it. You can also check to make sure you are receiving the exemptions you are entitled to.

Exemptions!!

I know you may get tired of reading about exemptions but I assure you that there will be many property owners who see this for the first time and will contact my office to receive the exemptions they are entitled to. The sooner you let us know that you are not receiving an exemption you believe you are entitled to, the sooner we can correct it. We can also answer questions regarding any of the exemptions and whether you qualify for them. Please check your records and tell your friends and family to check too.

Remember, exemptions mean tax savings!!

The list below includes the most common exemptions. You can only receive these exemptions on one home which is designated as your primary residence. You cannot receive duplicate exemptions on any other home, even if it is in another state. When you receive an exemption, it is subtracted from your assessment prior to the tax rate being applied, ultimately reducing your tax liability.

Assessment – Exemptions x Tax Rate = Taxes

- General Homestead Exemption ($6,000)
- Senior Citizens Homestead Exemption ($5,000…being 65 is the only requirement)
- Senior Citizens Assessment Freeze Homestead Exemption (varies…65 and income under $55,000)
- Homestead Exemption for Persons with Disabilities ($2,000…specific requirements)
- Homestead Improvement Exemption (varies…for qualifying, newly added improvements)
- Veterans with Disabilities (several available starting at 30% service related disability)

For more detailed information, call the office of the Assessor or go to the Department of Revenue website at:
www.revenue.state.il.us/LocalGovernment/PropertyTax/
Opportunities to Meet Your Assessor, Mary Mahady

Stop and Chat.....
Johnsburg Business Expo.........Saturday March 11 10:00 a.m. – 4:00 p.m.

Property Assessment Question and Answer Forum
(Held at the McHenry Township Hall, 3703 N Richmond Road)
Tuesday, April 25 10:00 a.m.– 12:00 p.m.
Thursday, April 27 6:30 – 8:30 p.m.
Thursday, May 18 6:30 – 8:30 p.m.

Property Assessments, Taxes and Appeals: What do they mean to you?
(Held at the McHenry Township Senior Center, 3519 N Richmond Road)
Wednesday, May 24 10:00 – 11:00 a.m.

An RSVP would be appreciated to 815-385-0175
If you cannot attend one of these forums, I will always be available for individual appointments

Combinations…Do You Own Multiple Parcels?

There are many homes in the township that have two or more parcels that make up the property. For example, the main parcel on which the majority of your home sits may be 09-00-000-001 and you have another lot next to it that is 09-00-000-002. Another similar situation is the home sits on one parcel and you have a detached garage on another parcel. It is possible to combine these if they are in the same section (based on the PIN) and in the same ownership name.

If you would like to combine multiple parcels or just have questions about how it effects your assessment, please call or come in. We keep the combination forms here in the office and will gladly explain the process to you. There is no cost to you to do this. If you ever determine that you want to divide them again in the future that can be done as well.

Fighting For You!

As the new State Legislature gets underway, we are already hearing talk of “freezing taxes”. There are already some laws in place to make sure that taxing bodies can only raise their levies by certain amounts and others that have been suggested.

I am fairly certain that if I asked any property owner if they were happy with the amount of their real estate taxes, they would say no. So why would you want to freeze the amount of your taxes? If we allow the system to work, I believe that we will start to see our tax bills returning to levels we were used to seeing.

So how do taxes go down? 1) Taxing bodies need to spend less. The need to have the money necessary to provide services, but cut out any waste they can. 2) Increase the tax base. As we see more commercial growth and rising homes values, the distribution of the tax burden will be spread out differently. For example, as we add businesses to previously vacant buildings, the value of that property increases which results in a higher portion of taxes paid for that property. 3) Making sure the value of your property is correct. If you believe the value is wrong, you need to take the steps to correct it. 4) Exemptions: make sure you have all that you are entitled to. Every exemption reduces the amount of your tax liability.

As it is difficult to explain all of this in a short paragraph, I really hope that you will make an effort to come to one of the forums listed here in the newsletter. These offer a chance for you to ask questions and further discuss the role assessments have in your taxes. If you cannot make one of these, please call and make an appointment….my door is always open.

Mary Mahady
To register for activities on the SENIOR CENTER pages or for more detailed information call Activities Director Jane Gregory 815-344-3555

McHenry Township Senior Center
3519 North Richmond Road
just west of Route 31 & Johnsburg Road

PROTECTING YOURSELF FROM SCAMS
Wednesday, March 15 at 10:00 a.m.

Learn about the latest scams and rip-offs that target seniors. Senior Services will be hosting representatives from the McHenry County Sherriff’s office, who will update you with the current scams and trends, arming you with knowledge to help protect yourself and friends from being exploited by criminals. Join us to avoid becoming a victim. No Fee. Registration required.

FREE LEGAL CONSULTATIONS
2nd & 3rd Monday each month from 9 a.m. until noon

Attorney Jenette Schwemler will be available to seniors at McHenry Township Senior Center to answer legal questions seniors have regarding estate planning, Medicaid benefits, veteran benefits, divorce, wills, or other general legal inquires. Semi-private consultations are available and there is a $5 deposit required to reserve your spot. Please come in and schedule your appointment.

St. Patrick’s Day Celebration
Friday, March 17 at 11:30 a.m.

McHenry Township invites senior residents to celebrate at its annual St Patrick’s Day Party where everyone is Irish! The wearin’ o’ the green will take place at McHenry Township Hall, 3703 N Richmond Road.

The festivities begin with a hearty Irish luncheon featuring corned beef and cabbage with all the trimmings. After dessert, Irish eyes will be smiling with the entertaining performance of Mike Knauf and the Nippersink Rouges.

The group will be performing a diverse blend of vocal and instrumental traditional Irish music... plus all of your sing-along favorites. Join us and celebrate an over the rainbow fantastic St. Patrick’s Day!

Tickets are $15 per person. To register call Jane at 815-344-3555. Reservation deadline is Friday, March 10.
FREE TAX PREPARATION FOR SENIORS
The McHenry County district of the AARP Tax-Aide is a program co-sponsored by AARP and the IRS and is again offering its annual free tax preparation for Senior and Special Needs Citizens with low to moderate income. Both Federal and State returns are electronically filed for rapid refunds.

In McHenry Township the AARP Tax-Aide site is located at McHenry Public Library, 809 N. Front Street. They are open by appointment only on Tuesdays, Wednesdays and Thursdays. Call to make your appointment at 815-451-1578. No walk-ins are accepted.

For additional locations throughout McHenry County click on AARP Tax-Aide Locator at http://www.aarp.org/money/taxes/aarp_taxaide/

The program is for seniors 60 or over with incomes of $60,000 or under. The program does not cover business income, rental real estate or excessive stock sales. Both Federal and State returns are electronically filed for rapid refunds. If you used the AARP program last year, you should return to the site that did your taxes last year.

Taxpayers should bring their 2015 tax return and the paperwork that went with it: all W2s, 1099s, and financial statements for 2016 (Medical expenses, contributions, etc.) If you sold stock you must know what you paid for it and when. If you have not used AARP Tax Aide before, you should also bring a picture I.D. and Social Security Card for each taxpayer. All sites will close on April 14.

Salvation Army Nutrition Program
Have a nutritious lunch & socialize with other seniors!

Golden Diners Deli

11:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. weekdays
hot soup, salad bar, choice of sandwich or a hot entrée, & dessert; choice of milk or coffee

Donations are welcome.
For reservations and information call
Site Manager, Mary Ann at 815-385-8260

The Home Delivered Meal Program provides home-bound older adults with nutritious meals which are delivered by Salvation Army employees and volunteers. The meal delivery also provides a vital “well-being check” to assure that all is well in the life of the homebound. Whether your disablement is temporary or permanent, apply by calling Senior Services Associates: 815-344-3555.

SPRING FLING
Friday, April 7 at 1 p.m.
Come and join in the fun! Enjoy light appetizers and beverages while listening to the Vegas-style Singer & Entertainer, Vito Zatto with a show full of hilarious stand-up comedy, celebrity impersonations, incredible singing, audience participation and lots of good times! Fee: $5. Reservation deadline is Friday, March 31.

AARP DRIVER SAFETY PROGRAM
Thursday, March 23 & Friday, March 24 from 9 a.m. to 1 p.m. both days
Senior Services is sponsoring AARP Driver Safety classes for drivers at the Senior Center; attendance both days is required to receive a certificate. Course participants may be eligible to receive a discount on their auto insurance premiums; consult their insurance companies for details.

The 8 hour course will review the rules of the road and teach you accident prevention skills. Cost is $20.00 which covers the cost of the comprehensive course workbook. Pre-registration is required.

SENIOR CENTER MOVIE MATINEE
Come enjoy the wall sized projection, and easy to hear sound system! Complimentary popcorn is available to all who attend. Show Time is 12:00 Noon. No admission charge!

COMING ATTRACTIONS

- Friday, March 3: Cocoon (1985)
- Friday, March 17: No Movie (St. Patrick’s Day Party)
- Friday, April 7: No Movie (Spring Fling Party)
- Friday, April 21: The Savages (2007)
- Friday, May 5: Secondhand Lions (2003)
- Friday, May 19: The Straight Story (1999)
- Friday, June 2: Driving Miss Daisy (1990)
- Friday, June 23: No Movie
OLDER AMERICANS MONTH LUNCHEON
Thursday, May 18 at 11:30 a.m.

May is Older Americans Month, a time when we recognize older Americans for their contributions to our nation. We are celebrating with a 1950s-themed Senior Sock Hop! Dine on a fabulous catered lunchen, and then be entertained by Al Curtis. He will wow you with his stories from the past 50 years in the entertainment business! Fee: $8. Reservation deadline: Friday, May 12.

SPONSOR APPRECIATION LUNCHEON
Friday, June 16 at 11:30 a.m.

Please join Senior Services in thanking our sponsors. We will be serving a delicious chicken dinner and dessert, but we need YOUR help for the entertainment! We are putting together a ‘variety show’ of acts, and almost anything goes! Grab a friend: sing a song, read a poem, tell a few jokes...the sky is the limit! Show our sponsors how much we appreciate all they do for us throughout the year. Fee: $8. Reservation deadline is Friday, June 9.

MEMORIAL DAY OBSERVANCE
Friday, May 26 at 10:00 a.m.

Let us remember and honor those who died while serving in our county’s military and fought to secure our freedoms. Don and Barbara Klapperich from the VFW will share with us a tribute to remember the sacrifices of our veterans and share their display of war memorabilia beginning with WW II.

Enjoy cake and coffee as we honor these heroic men and women. No Fee. Reservations are required.

If anyone wants to bring a couple of items for oversea care packages, their contributions would be very welcome. Any questions about care package items call Don or Barb at 815-385-8128.

UNDERSTANDING YOUR PROPERTY TAXES & EXEMPTIONS
Wednesday, May 24 at 10:00 a.m.

Are you unsure what your property assessment notice means? McHenry Township Assessor Mary Mahady will explain the assessment process, answer your questions and make sure you are receiving all of the exemptions to which you are entitled.

Senior Services Information & Assistance Specialists, Valerie Usalis and Patricia Fitzgerald will also be available to explain the forms and exemptions for seniors, the disabled and our veterans that we can help them complete, their due dates and the documentation needed to complete these forms. No fee. Reservations required.

THE GIFT OF TIME

Have you considered giving the gift of your time?

Senior Services is looking for volunteers to help with a variety of projects. Several opportunities are currently available for those willing to assist seniors with staying independent and in their own homes. Included is a list of programs that are currently in need of volunteer help:

- Respite – volunteers are needed who are willing to provide caregivers with an opportunity to take a break. Extensive training provided followed by once a week visit enables them to keep their loved one at home lessening the risk of institutionalization.
- Senior Companion (Friendly Visitor Program) – make a new friend, simply make a visit or phone call weekly helps to encourage socialization in order to lessen isolation and depression.
- Transportation Volunteers – Those volunteers willing to transport seniors who are no longer able to drive to “needs based” locations like dialysis, doctor visits, picking up prescriptions, etc.
- Meal Delivery – Help seniors maintain their nutritional well-being by assisting with delivery of a noon meal along with a well-being check to homebound and isolated seniors.

Volunteers are also needed to assist with other opportunities for service at many other area non-profits throughout McHenry County. The Retired & Senior Volunteer Program can help you utilize your skills of a lifetime!

If you are interested in learning how you can get involved in the program, contact Debbie Danitz, Director of Volunteer Services at 815/344-3555 or ddanitz@seniorservicesassoc.org
2017 THE YEAR TO FEEL BETTER!
Be in Control, Do the Things YOU Want to Do!

Senior Services Associates offers many classes for older adults who have low mobility, feel they are slowing down or are afraid of falling. Class sizes are limited and fill quickly. Make your reservation NOW!

A Matter of Balance: Developed by Roybal Center Consortium, Trustees of Boston University, this program is designed to reduce the fear of falling and increase activity levels among older adults. Learn to set realistic goals to increase activity, change your environment to reduce fall risk factors, and learn simple exercises to increase strength and balance. Classes meet for 2 hours, once a week and two 8-week sessions will be offered: May 4 – June 22 and September 28 – November 30.

Fit and Strong!: An award-winning exercise program developed by University of Illinois at Chicago Center for Research on Health and Aging. This is for older adults with osteoarthrosis (OA) in their knees, hips, lower spine, ankles, and/or feet. Research has shown that people who enroll in the program and attend regularly experience increased confidence about their ability to exercise, begin to exercise regularly, and experience decreased pain and stiffness in their joints. Classes meet for 1 ½ hour, three times a week and one 8-week session is still available: June 5 – July 28.

Take Charge of your Health: A Stanford University Self-Management program designed to energize people with ongoing health conditions such as: arthritis, diabetes, high blood pressure, anxiety, and heart disease. This program covers a new topic each week and provides opportunities for interaction and group problem solving. By sharing in the process, participants find that the answer to someone’s question is usually right there in the room. Classes meet for 3 hours once per week. Two 6-week sessions will be offered: March – April & July 31 – September 22. Dates are subject to change; participants will be notified in advance.

“Twenty Fifth” Anniversary Fashion Show!
Sunday, April 9, 2017 — Doors open at 11:00 a.m.
Crystal Lake Holiday Inn

Senior Services is happy to announce they are celebrating a fantastic afternoon of Twenty Five Years of Fashion, Fundraising and Fun at their “25th Anniversary” Fashion Show. Back this year with fabulous attire will be Black Orchid Boutique, Kohl’s, Wear Did U Get That, plus others to be announced. Models include all local talent including men, women, teens and “steal the spotlight” children.

Along with a delicious three course luncheon, there will be opportunities to purchase Raffle Basket tickets and a 50/50 Raffle plus participate in a Silent Auction with tables filled with outstanding gift baskets and quality items.

Tickets are $40 for adults, $38 for members ($42 after March 24) and $15 for children 10 and under. A table of ten is $370 and reservations are required. Come celebrate to make this major fundraiser their best ever. Tickets will be available at the Crystal Lake & McHenry offices. For more information call Rita at 815-344-3555 in McHenry or Claudia in Crystal Lake at 815-356-7457.

Businesses are welcome to be sponsors, take ads in the program or contribute baskets for the Silent Auction.

For information or TO REGISTER FOR ACTIVITIES on the Senior Center pages contact Jane Gregory call 815-344-3555

On Facebook, go to “McHenry Township Senior Center, Illinois” and click “Like”
MORE QUESTIONS FROM OUR ELECTORATE

As in past newsletters I would like to take a little time to address some of the concerns expressed by our constituency both by direct contact and through various forms of the media:

**How often are Township Roads Paved?** — In the past our township roads are generally repaved every 12 to 15 years, contrary to 6 to 8 years that some people have been stating. There are generally two philosophies in maintaining roads, one being the routine paving of roads every 12 to 15 years as we do and the other being leave the roads deterioarte over about 20 years and then reconstruct them. I believe our method has worked best for McHenry Township. And as stated in previous newsletters we are taking roadway preservation one step further by starting to utilize other treatments such as reclamite to try and extend the paving cycle out to a 20-year cycle.

**Why do we continue to increase our annual levy?** — The truth is that we have kept our levy flat for 6 years and have actually reduced it by over 10% this year. I know of no other government agency that has been able to do this and I am quite proud of the fact that we have learned to do more with less. And no this was not a result of any pressure from outside sources but rather the result of being fiscally responsible.

**Why do we collect taxes from residents in municipalities while they receive no benefit from the Township?** Yes, we do collect these taxes but we also returned 50% of the Road and Bridge Levy to the municipality in which the taxes were collected which amounts to over $530,000. And, I have to say that although I live in the City of McHenry I routinely travel on Township roads and am greatly benefited by them.

*Please feel free to contact us anytime you have a question or need verification on issues involving the Road District.*
MORE OF THE MCHENRY TOWNSHIP ROAD DISTRICT STAFF

Again, I would like to take a little time and introduce you to more of our Road District staff. This month I would like to introduce Nels Pedersen, Phil Grana, Jack Smith and Jim Walters. These four fine employees have over 15 years of combined experience at the Road District and many more years of experience prior to working for the Road District.

Nels Pedersen

Nels has worked for the Road District since 2012 and is an example of our very versatile employees. He has his CDL Class “A” license and thus is able to not only drive our largest plows but also trailer our largest equipment to various job locations. He can operate almost every piece of equipment ranging from the backhoe and bucket truck used for tree trimming to our 1968 all-wheel drive winged snowplow used for dealing with extreme snow drifting.

Phil Grana

Phil has worked for the Road District since 2013 and is always one of the first to arrive in the morning ready to take on the day’s tasks. Along with that he always shows an enthusiastic attitude doing what is asked of him even if it is after normal working hours. Phil is willing to provide another point of view when asked regarding the many challenges we tackle here at the Road District.

Jack Smith

Jack has worked for the Road District since 2014 and comes to us after working for another township and many years in the concrete industry. Due to his extensive experience with concrete he affords us the opportunity to repair and replace many of our existing storm structures and concrete curbing at a significant savings to the Road District. Jack is one of the hardest working staff we have and very rarely will you see him not doing something as he has that natural go-getter personality.

Jim Walters

Jim has worked for the Road District since 2014 also and is our assistant mechanic along with filling many other roles. He seems to have a natural talent in repairing things especially with the newer vehicles and the vast amount of electronics that can routinely cause problems. His talent extends into other areas as Jim is one of our main employees that completes much of the layout for our culvert replacement and roadside re-ditching. He is a quiet roll up your sleeves and get to work kind of guy and we are lucky to have him as part of our staff.
ROAD DISTRICT NEWS

SPRING 2017 ROAD DISTRICT ACTIVITIES TO LOOK FOR:

As the weather warms up you will see us put the snowplows away and switch to warmer weather tasks. These include preparing the roads for the annual paving program. This task includes tree trimming in these areas, replacement of driveway culverts where needed, re-ditching and drainage improvements and grinding of butt joints for matching into existing pavements and driveways. Other tasks include roadside garbage pick-up and the first mowing of the ditches prior to Memorial Day. Please watch for the Road District crews and proceed carefully in work zones so work can be completed safely and without incident.

2017 ROAD PROGRAM

This year we have developed the following preliminary list of roadways we hope to repave. Please keep in mind that this is just a preliminary list and may be modified based on conditions after the spring thaw.

• Howe Road
• Annabelle Street
• Parkers Highlands Subdivision Roads

LINCOLN ROAD RECONSTRUCTION

In addition to our annual road programs we will be participating with the City of McHenry in the future reconstruction of Lincoln Road from Illinois Route 31 to Chapel Hill Road. Although we thought the construction would occur in 2016, the project funding has been pushed back by the McHenry County Council of Governments. We will keep you posted as we find out more information as to when the project may occur.

SANDBAGS CONTINUE TO BE AVAILABLE FOR FLOOD CONTROL

The Road District will continue its policy of providing sandbags for pickup by residents for emergency flooding. The first sandbags were picked up during the rain event of January 17. Bags will be available Monday through Friday from 7:00 a.m. to 3:30 p.m. With one day’s notice, we will also provide sand. Call the Road District office at 815-385-3076.

2017 RECYCLING DATES

McHenry Township residents/homeowners only!
on the third Saturday of the month
(April through November)
from 8:00 a.m. to 12:00 noon

McHenry Township Road District Recycling Center
in the township employee parking lot
at 3703 N. Richmond Road

Recycling drop-offs will not be accepted at any other time.

April 15   May 20   June 17   July 15
August 19   October 21   November 18

(No Recycling in September—closed for Touch-A-Truck)

For additional information call McHenry TWP Road District at 815-385-3076.

Pick up a copy of the McHenry County Green Guide Recycling Directory at McHenry Township Office, 3703 N. Richmond Road. You also can read or download a copy of the 32-page directory at http://www.mchenry.edu/recycling/greenguide.pdf

Brush and Electronic Scrap Recycling Programs

You will be asked to show a photo ID with your address at the recycling site. The recycling program is for McHenry Township residential homeowners only, no out of state residents, residents of other townships, or commercial enterprises. If the staff on duty, for whatever reason, feels the person requesting recycling is a contractor or lives out of the township, that person will be turned away. This
ROAD DISTRICT NEWS

It is no longer legal to put your laptop in the trash — or for that matter, over a dozen other items, from a mouse to portable digital music players which are part of an expanded list of electronics banned from landfills by Illinois law. Waste disposal companies cannot pickup electronics and dump them into a landfill or they face very high fines.

The township has an accessible drop-off location which is intended to motivate residents to dispose of their used computers and electronics in an environmentally responsible manner. In 2016, we recycled a total of 18.10 tons of TVs/monitors, 5.11 tons of other recyclables and 1 ton of household batteries.

You have an obligation to prevent the dangers that result from irresponsibly disposing of your highly toxic. Your electronic waste contains metals, which include gold, cadmium, lead and silver, if landfilled they can threaten groundwater.

McHenry Township residents can drop off their unwanted electronic equipment at our Recycling Center. We will then palletize the electronic discards for shipment to an end market, where they will be refurbished, demanufactured and/or electronic scrap recycled.

Again this year, the township is planning to partner with the Environmental Defenders of McHenry County for our recycling program. Acceptable items continue to include televisions, miscellaneous electronics, CFL bulbs, fluorescent tubes, VHS/cassette tapes, and CDs/DVDs.

Donations are suggested for particular items to offset the costs of transportation and proper recycling methods—see list below. All donations go to the Environmental Defenders of McHenry County which qualifies your donation as tax deductible.

We will provide one semi-trailer every month to haul away most of the electronic recycling except for a few items. Once the trailer is full, the doors will be closed for that date and recycling will resume the next month. If we find that we need more space, an additional semi-trailer will be added.

Accepted at no charge:

- computer hard drives
- keyboards and mice
- printers
- scanners
- word processors
- calculators
- battery backups
- VCRs & DVD players
- ink cartridges
- telephones
- VHS/cassette tapes/CDs/DVDs
- miscellaneous electronics (most anything that plugs-in or runs on batteries)
- automotive batteries
- eyeglasses (in cooperation with McHenry Lions Club)

Specific donation amounts requested for:

- Televisions and Monitors: .50 cents per pound or $40 maximum per unit
- CFL bulbs/Fluorescent tubes: .50 cents to $1 each
- Household batteries: .50 cents per pound

Brush:
We accept brush and tree limbs which Road District personnel put through the wood chipper to make wood chip mulch. Branches and twigs must be no larger than eight inches in diameter and ten feet in length. Last year, we produced approximately 90-100 tons of wood chips. The Road District dumps truckloads of wood chips in the Township Park parking lot.

Wood chips are available at no cost to Township residents only (not for commercial enterprises). The chip pile is located in the southeast corner of McHenry Township Park Athletic Field parking lot just south of the FISH Food Pantry building at 3515 N. Richmond Road (behind the Moose Lodge). Please help yourself!
NEED HELP FEEDING YOUR FAMILY?

McHenry Township is providing supplemental nutritional help to assist in meeting the needs of the disadvantaged in our community by sponsoring a Mobile Food Pantry on Wednesday, May 24 from 4 to 6 p.m.

3703 N. Richmond Road in the Township parking lot
(just north of Route #31 and Johnsburg Road)

Distribution will begin at 4 p.m. Do not line up prior to 3:30 p.m.!!!
You need to bring your own boxes or baskets to carry home your food!