VILLAGE OF

Willow Springs

MESSENGER

WINTER 2026 EDITION

KEEPING THE COMMUNITY INFORMED

Message from the Mayor

Happy New Year, Willow Springs!

2026 is shaping up to be an exciting year for our village. From seasonal celebrations and family fun events to concerts and educational opportunities, there is something for everyone. Check out the full calendar in this newsletter.

I'm thrilled to announce the winner of the village vehicle sticker art contest: Madison Corella, age 8. Her artwork captured the spirit of Willow Springs and will be featured on this year's vehicle sticker. Excellent job, Madison! And thank you to all the talented young artists who participated – your engagement is inspiring and we loved seeing your creativity.

This year we will be moving forward with important infrastructure projects, including sidewalk installation, street resurfacing, and park enhancements. This work will make Willow Springs safer and more enjoyable for everyone.

I encourage you to enjoy our events and share your feedback. Questions, ideas, or concerns are always welcome – your input helps make our village event better. Here's to a wonderful year ahead!

Warm Regards,

Melissa Neddermeyer
Willow Springs Village President

Winning Vehicle Sticker Design

Police Department NEWS

It's hard to believe that 2025 has come and gone! It has been a great year for the Willow Springs Police Department. Our roster is flush with full and part-time officers. We have filled all of our vacancies. Our equipment is constantly being upgraded, especially our fleet, with more vehicles coming in on a regular basis. It won't be long until the fleet is all white cars, and the black ones are a thing of the past. We were also able to give an entrance exam and a corporal test this year, resulting in two separate eligibility lists. At the same time, we have been able to increase our specialized training, especially SWAT training, all of which has an impact on the morale of the department, and all of which costs money. I would like to acknowledge and thank Mayor Neddermeyer and Administrator Grace, along with Trustee Kennedy, for their support and hard work in providing us with the resources to make all of this happen over the past year. The department will continue to evolve.

We also have received great support from our community, and on December 16th, we were able to give back and conduct our annual "shop with a cop" program with Walmart. We took twelve children from the community on a shopping spree, with donations from the community, Walmart, and the village. Afterwards, everybody was treated to a pizza party at our police headquarters. Thank you to all who assisted in this event.

Finally, the department participated in the Willow Springs Winterfest at Willow Springs School on November 22nd, handing out goody bags to youngsters in attendance. I was happy to attend with my son, Kiernan, who apparently enjoyed meeting Santa more than Santa enjoyed meeting him! Afterwards, we attended the village tree lighting ceremony and enjoyed the fireworks. It was a great night!

2025 was a great year, let's make 2026 a greater one!

Garry McCarthy
Willow Springs Chief of Police

Public Works DEPARTMENT

Public Works would like to wish everyone a happy and healthy New Year in 2026!

With salt and brine, Public Works and its fleet are well-equipped to tackle the challenges of the winter season. While salt continues to be applied to our roadways, we also use liquid anti-icing and de-icing solutions to delay and prevent ice from bonding to pavement. These solutions not only improve safety but also provide a cost-effective and less intrusive method for protecting storm water and meltwater drainage systems.

Please note that any overspray is unintentional, non-harmful, and will wash off vehicles easily.

To help us serve you better this season, please remember:

- No parking on village streets after two inches (2") of snowfall.
- The Village does not plow Archer Avenue, Nolton Avenue (south of Archer), County Line Road, German Church Road, Wolf Road, or 87th Street.
- Public Works cannot clear private property or driveways.
- Homeowners are responsible for keeping mailboxes, sidewalks, and fire hydrants adjacent to their property clear and accessible.
- Do not shovel snow into public streets.
- Exercise patience and yield to snow removal vehicles in your vicinity.

Snow Removal & Treatment Priority List:

- Through streets
- Side streets
- Cul-de-sacs
- Public lots
- Alleys
- Pedestrian areas

Thank you in advance for your support this winter season as we work to maintain clear and safe passageways throughout the Village.

For assistance, contact us at **708-839-3027** or **kgrantland@willowsprings-il.gov**. You may also call the Village Hall at **708-467-3700** and leave a message.

Wishing you a safe, healthy, and happy winter season and New Year!

Keith Grantland
Director of Public Works

Community EVENTS

Looking Ahead in 2026

March 28th - Easter Egg Hunt
April 25th - Garden Park Cleaning
May 9th - Shredding Event
May 17th - Insect Zoo and Planting Pumpkins
May 25th - Memorial Day Ceremony
June 11th - 14th - Village Wide Garage Sales
June 12th - Music in the Park
July 10th - Music in the Park
July 31st - Music in the Park
August 13th-16th - Willow Fest
August 23rd - Monarch Family Fest
August 28th - Music in the Park
August 29th - Fishing Derby
September 11th - Movie in the Park (Lions Park)
September 18th - Movie in the Park (Willow Park)
September 27th - Harvest Fest (Garden Park)
October 31st - Wicked Willow
October 31st - Trick or Treating Hours
November - Veteran's Day Ceremony
November 21st - Winter Fest

Beautification COMMISSION

Brisk Days Bring Reflection and Planning

We ended the year with heartwarming events and now begin planning for the 2026 season. As always, we are grateful for the opportunity to serve our community and support the beauty of our village. As a commission, we meet quarterly at Village Hall and welcome your attendance, comments and suggestions.

Memorial Bricks for Veterans

What began with a single brick purchased by a resident to honor a family member grew into a meaningful project for our entire community. Commissioner Kathy Thalji led the project bringing the brick designs to reality with her dedication and insight. Her efforts resulted in a partnership with the Willow Springs Veterans Commission and in November a dedication ceremony took place at the Veterans Memorial Brick Plaza located in front of Village Hall.

Scout Troop 69 conducted the Flag Ceremony and led the Pledge of Allegiance. Village administrators, representatives from Cook County, and many community members were present. It was a dream come true for families of veterans from our Village; the spirit of community was felt throughout the morning, as stories of service, sacrifices, and remembrance were shared.

More bricks will be installed this spring. Willow Springs residents who have served in the military may receive a brick through the Willow Springs Veterans Commission with proof of residency and military service. Details are available on the Willow Springs Village website.

Community Participation

Joining several other community organizations and businesses, the commissioners decorated our Christmas Tree! It's our way of keeping things green while we celebrate all we've accomplished and look forward to spring.

Did Someone Say, Spring? **Dates to SAVE!**

March 2: Get your application for a garden box at Legacy Garden Park, available on the Village website or at Village Hall.

April 25: Cleanup day at Legacy Garden Park, 9:00 am to noon. Join us in preparing for the planting season.

May 9: Shredding Event, 9:00 am to noon at the Community Center, 8156 Archer Ave, in the parking lot.

May 17: Insect Zoo and Planting Pumpkins, noon to 2:00 pm at Legacy Garden Park. A touch & feel experience with unusual bugs. Learn how insects function and play an important role in the environment around you.

August 12: Kick off Willow Fest with Big Tent Bingo, Time-TBD **Money and beer tokens are the prizes!

Saturday, August 15: BINGO at Willow Fest, Time-TBD
Sunday, August 16: BINGO at Willow Fest, Time-TBD

August 23: Monarch Family Fest, 12:00 pm to 2:00 pm at Legacy Garden Park. Fun for all ages! Learn about our state insect, their life stages, habitats, the challenges facing their population, how to become a monarch waystation.

September 1: Scarecrow contest applications open for the Willow Springs Village Inaugural Scarecrow Contest taking place during Harvest Fest. Details to follow!

September 27: Harvest Fest- Harvest mini pumpkins and scarecrow contest, 12:00 pm to 2:00 pm at Legacy Garden Park. Crafts, food, kiddos harvesting mini pumpkins and a scarecrow contest to celebrate the end of the growing season.

Please Connect with us on Facebook & Nextdoor.
#BeautifyWillowSprings

Community GROUPS

WS Senior Club

Happy New Year! The Willow Springs Sr Club would like to invite YOU to join us! We meet the second (2) Tuesday of each month at the Community Center, 8156 S Archer. Meeting starts at 11am, followed by an optional (fee) hot lunch, bingo, and lots of camaraderie. We have an extensive free, no-time-limit, paperback library and cards are played every Monday at 10am. The Center is ADA-compliant, and parking is available adjacent to the building.

We are looking forward to a busy spring, which includes Wind Creek Casino in February, also on tap; the 4 C Notes and/or Beach Boys in March, and the Ocean Rat Pack in April, all at the Jacob Henry Mansion in Joliet. In May, we are hoping to go to the Chicago Botanic Garden, and in June we'll have our annual picnic. For more information, please contact Nancy (member chairperson) at 708-209-5581.

WS Historical Society

Welcome to another year of History. We wish everyone a great year ahead. I would like to explain to everyone who wishes to visit us that procedure for visiting our Society is every month on the first Saturday of the month. The Society is open from 10:00 AM to 12:00 PM. We hold meetings for members at 11:00 AM. They usually last from 11:00 AM to 12:00 PM.

Our secretary, Irene Haugen, informs all members by e-mail as to whether we will hold a meeting on that Saturday. If there is no meeting on that day, we will be notified by her and no one else. We welcome visitors whenever they can visit and can arrange to have someone available for a special visit if requested. We are also displaying our newest items given to us and hope anyone interested will stop by and take a look.

WS Lions Club

First, we would like to thank all that attend one or more of our fundraisers. The Pork Chop Dinner was a great success. The car show was cancelled because of storms in our area, but we cooked pork chops on Sunday at the fest, and things went well. Our Las Vegas Night was a fun night for all the Lions and the neighbors who attended.

Lions donated $2,000.00 to help in Texas with the flooding through Lions Clubs International Foundation. Lions helped with the Willow Springs Food Pantry, serving more than 100 families in cooperation with the Village of Willow Springs, Lyons Township and the Chicago Food Depository.

Lions decided to help the schools in the Willow Springs area, donating $1,000.00 to each Willow Springs Public School and Trinity Lutheran School. We delivered 14 Christmas meals and toys to families with children. Our Pork Chop Dinner will be held on Sunday, April 26, 2026. We are always looking for people who would like to help continue making Willow Springs the great community it is.

Lion Mike Smigielski
Secretary Willow Springs Lions Club

VILLAGE OF
Willow Springs

One Village Circle
Willow Springs, IL 60480
Phone: (708) 467-3700
Email: contact@willowsprings-il.gov
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Follow us on Instagram

Parks & Recreation Commission

The Park and Recreation committee is excited to announce the dates for our upcoming community events, and we can't wait for you to be part of them. Join us for our very first Triva night on February 20th 7 – 9:00 at the Community Center. Bring your friends, test your knowledge, and enjoy a fun night out! As the weather warms up, we look forward to welcome everyone back to our Concerts in the Park. We're thrilled to share that we've added a fourth concert this year! Mark your Calendars for June 12th, July 10th and 31st and August 28th. Movie nights will be September 11th and 18th. Stay tuned for band lineup and movie titles. We're also bringing back the Fishing Derby on August 29th – bring out the family for a fun day by the pond.

Tri-State Fire Protection District

IN ILLINOIS, A WORKING SMOKE ALARM AND CARBON MONOXIDE DETECTOR ARE REQUIRED WITHIN 15 FEET OF BEDROOMS. All new smoke alarms must have a ten-year, sealed battery. Smoke alarms (10 years) and Carbon Monoxide detectors (7 years) have a limited lifespan. Check your detector for a replacement date. A date is usually located on the back of the device.

After gathering public input last Fall and conducting public meetings at the four District fire stations, the Fire District has decided to proceed with placing a bond measure question on the ballot March 17, 2026. Tri-State Fire Protection District is seeking additional funds to update its four fire stations, helping the Fire District maintain 911 call response times, protect emergency services districtwide, improve Firefighter occupational health, wellness, and safety, and enhance its ability to attract and retain First Responders. For more information go to Bond Proposal - Tri-State Fire Protection District on our web page.