



VILLAGE OF
Willow Springs

MESSENGER

FALL 2026 EDITION



KEEPING THE COMMUNITY INFORMED



Dear Willow Springs Residents,

As fall approaches, I want to thank everyone who helped make this summer in Willow Springs memorable. A special shout-out to our Willow Fest sponsors! I also appreciate the efforts of the staff, volunteers, and everyone who participated in the festivities. Your support and community spirit truly make these events meaningful.

I'm pleased to congratulate Michael Jurak on his appointment as Interim Chief of Police! Michael has been a dedicated member of the Willow Springs Police Department for almost twenty years, and we truly appreciate his ongoing commitment to making our Village a better, safer place.

There's so much to look forward to around Willow Springs, with fun fall and end-of-year events coming up. You'll find many of these events highlighted in this newsletter. I hope you can join us, enjoy the beautiful season, and create wonderful memories with friends and neighbors!

Looking ahead, we are preparing next year's budget and planning projects and priorities to ensure our Village continues to move forward and remains strong.

Willow Springs is fortunate to have such a supportive and connected community. Please reach out anytime with a question, idea, or concern. On behalf of the Village Board and Staff, we wish you and your families a happy, healthy fall. We hope to see you around the Village soon!

Sincerely,
Melissa Neddermeyer

Willow Springs Village President



2026 WILLOW SPRINGS FEST SPONSORS

NAME	LEVEL	NAME	LEVEL	NAME	LEVEL
Kustom Towing, Inc.	Platinum	Technicraft Collision Repair Experts	Gold	TPS Sports & Fitness	Silver
Township of Lyons	Platinum	Louis F. Cainkar	Gold	Local 225	Silver
Keith's Cartage & Excavating, Inc.	Platinum	Pleasant Dale Park District	Gold	State Rep LaHa	Silver
Justice-Willow Springs Water Commission	Platinum	Sandi Auto & Truck Repair, Inc.	Gold	Lucky Slots/Old Willow	Silver
Novotny Engineering	Platinum	Currie Motors Chevrolet	Gold	Remax Market (Lucy Mierop)	Family
Tressler LLP	Platinum	Coach Corner	Gold	The Friendly Tap	Family
Rowell Chemical Corporation (Kieran Hyer)	Platinum	LRS	Gold	Senior Club	Family
Teamsters 25	Platinum	Valvoline of Willow Springs	Silver	Sinnot Tree Service	Family
Willow Glen LLC	Platinum	Greg & Arlene Lauriano	Silver	Magix Hands	Bingo
Gold Rush Gaming	Platinum	Young at Heart	Silver	Young at Heart	Bingo
Argo Roofing Company	Diamond	Magix Hands	Silver	Sandy	Bingo
Senator Curran	Diamond	Mo's Willow Pub and Grub	Silver	Zarzycki Manor Chapels	Bingo
B.Zartler	Diamond	Willow Springs Lion Club	Silver	Rowell Chemical Corporation (Jon Salinas)	Bingo
Steak & Egger	Diamond	Mulch Magic/Ken's Landscaping	Silver		
Chester's	Diamond	Pizza 750	Silver		
I-80	Diamond	Breaker Press	Silver		

Police Department NEWS

It's hard to believe how quickly the summer has gone by! We wanted to take a moment to share a few updates and highlights with our community.

With all of our schools now back in session, we would like to remind everyone to slow down and pay a little extra attention when driving through our school zones. There are more pedestrians, children crossing streets, school buses, and increased traffic during the morning and afternoon hours. A few extra seconds of patience can make a big difference when it comes to keeping our kids safe.

We also continue to receive questions about the ongoing road construction on Archer Avenue. Archer Avenue remains closed to through traffic in the area of the 9100 block due to the ongoing road construction project. According to IDOT, the current estimated completion date has been updated to the end of December 2026. We know the construction and detours have been an inconvenience, and we appreciate everyone's patience as the project continues.

Looking ahead to January 2027, Illinois will also be implementing a new law addressing e-bikes capable of traveling over 28 mph. With the popularity of e-bikes continuing to grow, we encourage residents who use them to familiarize themselves with the new requirements. More detailed information can be found on the Illinois Secretary of State's website.

Another great highlight from the summer was our department's participation in a three day, multi-jurisdictional Rapid Deployment training held at Spring-Gurrie School in La Grange. Every member of the Willow Springs Police Department participated in the training, along with officers from 13 different municipalities. Working together as a large group gave everyone an opportunity to practice and improve their skills, tactics, communication, and coordination. Training alongside neighboring departments is a great way to make sure we are prepared to work together when the need arises.

Finally, you may have noticed a new addition to our fleet during this year's Willow Fest. The Willow Springs Police Department now has a fully marked Utility Task Vehicle (UTV), which was put into service for the first time during the festival. The UTV will give our officers the ability to access off-road terrain, trails, and wooded areas that our regular patrol vehicles simply cannot reach. It will also be a great tool for community policing and will be used at community events throughout the year.

As always, we appreciate the continued support of the residents of Willow Springs. We hope everyone has a safe and enjoyable fall, and please remember that our officers are always here if you need us!

Lt. Michael Jurak
Interim Chief of Police
Willow Springs Police Department



Public Works DEPARTMENT

As summer comes to a close, the Village of Willow Springs welcomes fall! With cooler temperatures and changing leaves ahead, this is a great time for residents to prepare their homes and enjoy all that our community has to offer.

The Village would also like to recognize and celebrate Patti, a valued member of our Public Works team, as she begins her well-deserved retirement. Patti has helped make Willow Springs a more beautiful place through her years of hard work, including planting and caring for flowers and landscape throughout the community. Her dedication and hard work towards the Village will have a lasting impact, and she will certainly be missed.

The Village would also like to remind residents of several seasonal services and important information as we head into the fall months.

BRANCH COLLECTION NOTICE

As the Village transitions into leaf collection season, **branch collection will be suspended for the remainder of the season.** Residents should be aware that branches will not be collected during the leaf collection season, as they will not be collected. Branch collection will resume in May 2027.

VILLAGE LEAF PICK-UP

Public Works leaf collection will begin in **October** and continue through **December, or until the first major snow-fall, whichever occurs first.**

There is no set collection schedule. Residents should place leaves in small or medium piles in the front easement, as close to the curb as possible, while keeping sidewalks and roadways clear.

Please **do not place leaves on or over storm sewer inlets.** Leaf piles containing yard waste, branches, or other debris will not be collected. Residents should ensure leaves are properly placed prior to collection, since crews begin work at approximately 7:00 a.m. and will make one visit per home on leaf collection days.

FALL REMINDERS

As the weather changes, residents are encouraged to prepare for the upcoming winter months by keeping sidewalks clear, checking outdoor lighting, and ensuring leaves and other yard debris do not obstruct streets or drainage areas.

The Village thanks residents for their continued cooperation in keeping Willow Springs clean, safe, and welcoming year-round. For assistance, contact Public Works at 708-839-3027 or kgrantland@willowsprings-il.gov

Have a safe and enjoyable fall season!

Keith Grantland
Director of Public Works



BeautificationCOMMISSION

Feeling that chill in the air brings reflection - let's take a look back at the events and successes of the past few months.

Our family friendly summertime events were all a huge success! We appreciate the time, effort, and wisdom shared by our volunteers and master gardener friends. During MONARCH FEST kids "traveled" to Mexico, discovered the secret life of monarch butterflies, and released a few to begin their journeys south.

HARVEST FEST celebrated the end of the growing season with crafts, treats, and our first annual Scarecrow contest, with 23 entries! Our winner, Carol Fox from the Willow Springs Seniors Club; 2nd Place was a tie, "Bee Scarecrow" Eleanor Zieba & "Dog Mom" Diana Lenckus; 3rd Place, "Candy the Scarecrow" Ms. Musto's 2nd Grade Willow Springs School. A huge THANK YOU to our judge, Dianne Washburn, Pleasantdale School Art Teacher of 50 years!

Once again we had the pleasure of working with WILLOW SPRINGS SCHOOL. Fourteen classrooms entered our scarecrow contest and their creativity and ingenuity was clearly on display! We were also able to share one of the community garden boxes with the middle school teachers and students. They grew swiss chard, peppers, and tomatoes!

Our annual BINGO fund raiser expanded this year to include Bonus BINGO - a third day of fun and prizes. Many were in attendance including our Willow Springs Lionesses! Overall this was a popular and successful event with many returning attendees from previous years. We thank and appreciate the local businesses, groups, and individuals who contributed to our prize table. Without their support, we could not make this happen.

THANK YOU TO OUR PRIZE TABLE CONTRIBUTORS

Anonymous Donor
Half Price Books
Magix Hands
Tammi Grantland Phelan
Beth Piersialla

ReMax – Lucy Mierop
Rowell Chemical Corp
Jon Salinas
Sandy

Village of Willow Springs
Village of WS Public Works
WS Lioness Club

Robin Urbaniak
Young at Heart
Zarzycki Manor Chapels, Ltd.
Clarence & Maryann Zima



Thanks to the generous donations of community members, our LITTLE FREE LIBRARIES are vibrant elements of the community. Board books have been especially appreciated to support our younger readers! If you'd like to contribute, drop your donation at the Village Hall and stop by one of the five locations to find your next read.

In this first year of the Veterans Memorial brick project, with the support of the Veterans Commission, 62 new bricks have been added, bringing the total to 100 WILLOW SPRINGS COMMEMORATIVE BRICKS. Together these bricks honor our families, village community, local business, organizations, and groups. Those interested in adding a brick can visit the Village website to access the application.

The end of the season for our COMMUNITY GARDEN plots is here. Gardeners please clean out your garden box no later than October 15 and return the water faucet key to Village Hall by October 31 to be eligible for return of your deposit.

Our commission is ever evolving and we'd like to thank outgoing commissioner, Jason Buege for his years of dedicated service to our community and for being an original member of the Beautification Commission since 2018. His thoughtful insight, commitment, and contributions have been greatly appreciated.

Our newest commissioner is Chuck Scott, who will bring strong project oversight skills and appreciation for nature to the commission. We're excited to have his experience and enthusiasm as part of our team.

Community GROUPS

WS Senior Club

Did you know? Willow Springs has a Senior Club that has been in existence since the 1970s. All seniors aged 55+ in Willow Springs and surrounding communities are welcome to come to one of our meetings to check us out. We really are a friendly group.

Our mission is serving the community by providing a place for members to come for lunch, have a good time with friends, and maybe learn something new along the way. Due to a change in leadership we find ourselves looking to explore new experiences to provide a sense of fun and fellowship for all of our members. When we say 'all are welcome here' we really do mean it

Our meetings are the 2nd Tuesday of the month, held at the community center. We start with a business meeting at 11:00 am followed by either a game, activity or presentation until lunch is served at noon. After lunch we play bingo for modest cash prizes. We also offer a raffle for a \$20 prize. (Both bingo and the raffle do require a fee.) We are also looking into playing other games as member interest increases and time permits.

Over the past few months we have celebrated the start of the summer with a wonderful picnic lunch from Spring Forest Deli, (sponsored by the WS Lions), shared information about the upcoming property tax reevaluation, played trivia, and had a luau themed cookout at Lions park featuring our village master gardener Beth who answered all of our questions about all things green. We also had a luau themed "senior oasis" booth at Willowfest this year, that, although it was rained out, was really a lot of fun. Hula hoop anyone?

Upcoming meetings include a Halloween themed meeting October 13th, with a presentation on meat and knives from a butcher's perspective (along with some Halloween surprises), Thanksgiving themed meeting November 10th, with a Medicare presentation and turkey luncheon, and a Christmas party to be held offsite at a local eatery. We are also investigating day trips that are fun but don't break the bank.

We would love to have you join us. The first time you come to a meeting lunch is on us! If you do decide to join yearly dues are \$20 per year. We charge \$10 for lunch, and bingo cards and raffle tickets are \$1 each. (Participation in lunch, bingo and the raffle is voluntary.)

Please call 708-601-0181 to RSVP for our next meeting, or get more information about the club. You can also send an email to cfox108@gmail.net.

Hope to see you soon.

VILLAGE OF WILLOW SPRINGS VETERANS DAY CELEBRATION

The Village of Willow Springs Veterans Commission will host its **Veterans Day Celebration on Saturday, November 7, 2026, at 11:00 a.m.** in front of Village Hall. Light refreshments will be served following the ceremony.

All community members are welcome to attend as we take a moment to remember, recognize, and thank our local veterans for their service and sacrifice.

The Veterans Memorial Brick Program continues to grow, with **61 Veteran Resident bricks now proudly displayed in the designated Veterans Area in front of Village Hall.** We invite all Willow Springs resident veterans to apply for a commemorative brick in their honor at no cost. Applications are available on the Village website, at Village Hall, or by scanning the QR code.



CommunityEVENTS



Willow Springs Historical Society

Willow Springs Historical Society News

The latest news from our group is to tell you what a great presentation we put together for the public on Saturday, September 19, 2026.

The sad news is that it was missed by everyone except the five people who showed up. We are so happy that you stopped by. Thank You!

You missed a great presentation by our history buff, Ron Leffler, with assistance from Bruce Beveridge. This was his fourth presentation of the town, featuring Archer Avenue from Willow Springs Road to the confluence at Archer and Route 83. Many thanks to them both for their performance.

I want to especially thank Alice Latham and Eileen Hulme for all their hard work, and Rick Muller for doing the heavy work. I am sorry their work was not seen.

Anyway, per usual, we will open on the first Saturday of the month for anyone who wishes to visit us and learn more about town.

Carbon Monoxide Safety



Did you know?

More than 150 people in the U.S. die every year from accidental nonfire-related carbon monoxide poisoning.

Carbon monoxide or CO is a colorless and odorless gas. CO poisoning can occur when a fuel-burning appliance or machine, such as a furnace, heater or generator, is not working or vented properly. Breathing in CO at high levels can be fatal.

Learn what you can do to protect your family from the dangers of CO.

- ✓ Install and maintain CO alarms inside your home to provide early warning of CO.
- ✓ Install CO alarms in a central location outside each separate sleeping area and on every level of your home.
- ✓ Use portable generators outdoors in well-ventilated areas away from all doors, windows and vents.
- ✓ Make sure vents for the dryer, furnace, stove and fireplace are clear of snow and other debris.



NOVEMBER 13TH

7:00 PM - 9:00 PM

COMMUNITY CENTER | 8156 S. ARCHER AVE.

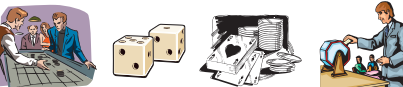
BRING YOUR OWN BEVERAGES



WILLOW SPRINGS LIONS CLUB

PRESENTS

LAS VEGAS NIGHT



♠ RAFFLE ♥ BIG WHEEL ♣ POKER ♦ BANG ♠ 3 CARD POKER
♦ BLACK JACK ♣ TEXAS HOLD-EM ♥ CHUCK-O-LUCK ♠

FRIDAY, NOVEMBER 6th
7:00 PM TO 12:00 AM

1st Prize: \$250.00 CASH 2nd Prize: \$200.00 CASH
3rd Prize: \$150.00 CASH 4th Prize: \$100.00 CASH

Refreshments

ROYALTY WEST
8675 S. Archer Avenue ♦ Willow Springs, Illinois
Donation: \$10.00 License CG-276



Willow Springs Lioness Lions Club

Serving Our Community

BINGO

Save The Dates!

Saturday, January 16th, 2027

Saturday, February 20th, 2027

Saturday, March 13th, 2027

Saturday, April 17th, 2027

Doors Open at 6:00 PM | Bingo Starts at 7:00 PM

Willow Springs Community Center
8156 Archer Avenue, Willow Springs, IL

\$20.00 per person CASH ONLY

MUST BE 18 to Enter & Play

Fun! Friends! Prizes!

Support Our Community!

BINGO

VILLAGE OF WILLOW SPRINGS PRESENTS

WICKED WILLOW

SATURDAY, OCTOBER 31ST
1:00PM - 3:00PM • FREE EVENT

CANDY • BONFIRE • HAYRIDES • PONIES • PETTING ZOO

TRICK-OR-TREATING: 3PM - 8PM

LIONS PARK | 201 PARK STREET



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Web: www.willowsprings-il.gov

 Like us on Facebook
facebook.com/villageofwillowsprings.il



NOVEMBER 21
DOORS OPEN AT 3PM

WINTER *Festival*

WILLOW SPRINGS ELEMENTARY SCHOOL | 8345 ARCHER AVE.
SANTA | FOOD | GIFTS FOR KIDS | FREE EVENT
3:00 PM - 4:00 PM (SPECIAL NEEDS ONLY) 4:00 PM - 7:00 PM (OPEN FOR ALL)
FIREWORKS IN FRONT OF VILLAGE HALL @ 7:30 PM

