City of Crystal Lake, Illinois
CITYLETTER



Beginning the Holiday Season in Crystal Lake

Historic Downtown Crystal Lake / Main Street always has surprises for the Holidays. This year's theme, "A Vintage Noel" includes many activities, excitement, and anticipation for kids of all ages.

The Festival of Lights Parade kicks off the season with 50 parade entries dazzling with lights, music, and holiday glow. On Friday, November 25 at 7 p.m., businesses and nonprofits display their holiday cheer with brilliant displays of lights, music, and magic as the parade floats travel around the Downtown. Best of all is the final float, featuring that jolly man in red with a twinkle in his eyes... Santa Claus!

The parade's finale is the lighting of the majestic Christmas Tree. This years tree will not be at the end of Williams Street and Crystal Lake Avenue. The new location will be in the Brink Street Market Courtyard.

Santa will throw his magic dust, bringing the Christmas Tree to life with lights! Once the tree is lit, Santa starts the Santa House season with visits available up to December 23. Remember, the visits are free, but the memories are priceless!

The Festival of Lights Parade will not feature candy distribution as organizers recognize the risks of dark streets and young children taking chances to retrieve candy that does not make it to the sidewalks. The lights, music, and magic provide plenty of excitement for families. Many of our stores will be open if treats are desired during the parade. **(Continued on page two)**

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Last year's Santa House had a record number of visitors, with over 2,000 children coming to tell Santa what they wanted under their own Christmas tree.

Saturday, November 26, is Small Business Saturday in Downtown Crystal Lake. Get a jump on your gift giving by touring the many locally-owned shops and selecting gifts for everyone on your list while shopping and supporting local businesses.

Come to Downtown Crystal Lake for unique shops, customer service, gift wrap, and friendly smiles. Make your memories in Downtown Crystal Lake. More information, maps, and events calendar are online at www.DowntownCL.org.

FIRE RESCUE DEPARTMENT

Winter Heating Quick Tips

- Keep anything that can burn at least three feet away from heating equipment, such as the furnace, fireplace, wood stove, or portable space heater.
- Have a three-foot “kid-free zone” around open fires and space heaters.
- Never use your oven to heat your home.
- Have a qualified professional install stationary space heating equipment, water heaters, or central heating equipment according to the local codes and manufacturer’s instructions.
- Have heating equipment and chimneys cleaned and inspected annually by a qualified professional.
- Remember to turn portable heaters off when leaving the room or going to bed.
- Always use the right kind of fuel specified by the manufacturer for fuel-burning space heaters.
- Make sure the fireplace has a sturdy screen to stop sparks from flying into the room. Ashes should be cool before putting them in a metal container. Keep the container a safe distance away from your home.

Source: www.nfpa.org

Gas Meters and Furnace Vents

With winter weather looming, please remember to keep your gas meter and furnace vents clear! A meter or vent covered in snow can cause furnaces and water heaters to stop working and cause carbon monoxide to build up in your home. Carbon Monoxide is an odorless, colorless, deadly gas that can come without warning. Make sure to test your CO detectors regularly. If your CO alarm goes off or you feel any symptoms such as headache, dizziness, weakness, upset stomach, vomiting, chest pain, and confusion, get out of the house and call 9-1-1 immediately. Spread the word, check on your elderly neighbors and family members, and stay safe!



Crystal Lake Fire Rescue Department
(815) 356-3640

POLICE DEPARTMENT

Thanksgiving Safety

Thanksgiving is one of the most traveled holiday periods in the year. In 2019, the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration reported that 279 passenger vehicle occupants were killed, 54% being unbuckled. Nearly 800 people died in crashes involving drunk drivers.

The Crystal Lake Police Department would like to remind you to do your due diligence this Thanksgiving week. Wednesday, November 24, the day before Thanksgiving, is known as “Blackout Wednesday.”

"Blackout Wednesday" is an unofficial pre-Thanksgiving holiday celebration that focuses heavily on activities involving alcohol. Please remember to drink responsibly. Impaired driving should never be an option.

Throughout Thanksgiving week, the Crystal Lake Police Department will be on the roads for traffic and DUI enforcement. Remember, if you feel different, you drive different.

Veterans Day

World War I, known as “The Great War,” officially ended after the Treaty of Versailles was signed on June 28, 1919. An armistice went into effect between the Allied Nations and Germany on the eleventh hour of the eleventh day of the eleventh month. For that reason, we celebrate Veterans Day on November 11, 2022. The Crystal Lake Police Department wishes all Veterans in our community a Happy Veterans Day!



Marine Corps Reserve's "Toys for Tots"

The Crystal Lake Police Department collects new unwrapped toys for the Marine Corps Reserve’s Toys for Tots Program every year. The toys that are collected are wrapped and distributed to children residing in McHenry County.

Now through Monday, December 26, 2022, please help the Crystal Lake Police Department by donating a new unwrapped toy in the marked Toys for Tots cardboard box in the Police Department lobby. Together, we can make a child’s holiday special.



What are you Thankful For?

The Crystal Lake Police Department is extremely thankful for all citizens and businesses. Because of your support and involvement, the mission to make Crystal Lake a “Good Place to Live” has been achieved. We want to thank you for participating in events such as National Night Out, Cop on a Rooftop, Back-to-School Backpacks and Supplies Giveaway, Lakeside Fest, and many more. From our family to yours, Happy Thanksgiving!



Crystal Lake Police Department (815) 356-3620

Officer Sal Alfano - (815) 444-5956 or by email at salfano@crystallake.org

Scan this QR code with your phone and follow The CLPD on Facebook to stay up to date on the latest news, events, and safety tips!

Newest Landmarked Property: "The Grantham House"

The owners of the cute Sears Kit Home have applied for and have been granted landmark status through the City of Crystal Lake. Initially constructed in 1929, the home has been well preserved while still being updated for changing families. The landmark status preserves the exterior façade of the house for all future generations.

The home will receive an identification plaque and be featured on the City's website.

The home is the Barrington Model, which is represented by the angled window frame above the door in the front high peaked roof, the flat top dormer, and the flat top front door.

The current owners, the Reeds, purchased the home in 1967. The house's interior has a built-in telephone niche and side sconces on either side of the fireplace. The family remodeled the inside, adding a family room with a second-floor master bedroom to the rear of the house. Another unique feature is the brick chimney with a stone fireplace inside the house. The house now qualifies for grant funding if appropriate renovation or restoration projects are undertaken to protect and preserve the home.



Sears Kit Home "The Grantham House"
215 Illinois Street, Crystal Lake, IL

If you are interested in landmarking your property, you can contact City Planner Elizabeth Maxwell, emaxwell@crystallake.org.



New Construction: 95 East Crystal Lake Avenue

New Construction Activity has begun!
The development team who purchased the former Hines Lumber property at the southwest corner of Crystal Lake Avenue and Main Street has started construction. Underway are a total of 99 units of new housing options known as "Enclave".

The above pictured 51-unit apartment building will frame the corner of the intersection and extend the Downtown feel. Along Main Street and in the rear of the property will be 48 rental townhomes.

Within Enclave there are amenities including enhanced green space, a dog park and outdoor seating areas. The biggest amenity is the proximity to the downtown and the thriving business community. The residents of this new walkable community will enjoy a short 6-minute walk to the Metra Station or a 4-minute walk to the heart of downtown. The development will feature a full access entrance from Crystal Lake Avenue and a right-in/right-out on Main Street for those who choose to drive. It is anticipated that units will be available to rent starting in 2023.

New Development: McHenry County College

McHenry County College broke ground on the new state-of-the-art Foglia Center for Advanced Technology and Innovation (CATI). Here, residents will have access to equitable career and continuing education opportunities to gain the skills necessary to meet current manufacturing and technology needs. The center will serve as a showcase for both old and new technologies, skills, and trades. Programs in welding, heating and cooling systems, industrial maintenance, engineering technology, construction management, artificial intelligence, metallurgy, and metrology will fill the classrooms and laboratories of the new center.



Inside the Foglia Center for Advanced Technology

New Businesses in the Community

Now Open
Ollie's Bargain Outlet - 4483 Northwest Highway
Pots and Pies - 67 E. Woodstock Street

Coming Soon
Wingstop - 5005 Northwest Highway, Unit 102
Soil & Spade - 12 E. Crystal Lake Avenue

Sanitary Sewer Backup - "What should I do?"

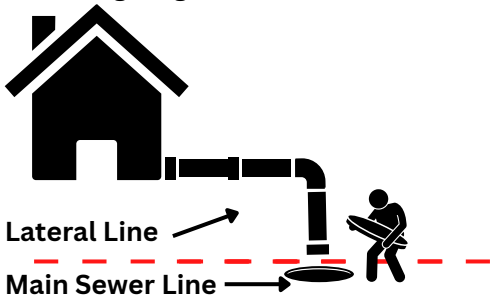
Sewage is backing up into my home! What should I do?
1. Stop using water! This contributes to the backup. Don't run any water down your drains until the blockage has been cleared.

2. Call the City of Crystal Lake Public Works Department at (815) 356-3614 to inspect the City's main sewer line. City staff is available 24/7, and at no charge to inspect the City's main sewer line.

3. Quickly close all drain openings with stoppers or plugs. Tub, sink, and floor drain plugs may need additional weight to keep them sealed. A string mop can be used to help plug toilet openings.

Why do I call the City before I call a plumber?
The City maintains the main sewer lines. If the backup is in the City's lines, City crews will resolve the issue. This saves you the expense of having a plumber come out for a blockage they couldn't have cleared. If the City's inspection of the main line shows it's clear, you'll then call a plumber, as the problem is in your lateral service line.

What portion of the sewer lines are the homeowner's responsibility?
Homeowners are responsible for the lateral line, which is the portion of the sewer line that services your home. Please see the following diagram for clarification.



How can sewer backups be prevented?
The City inspects and cleans the sanitary sewer mains throughout the City. Homeowners can help prevent backups by NEVER flushing diapers, sanitary napkins, paper towels, rags, or grease. Tree roots may invade your lateral line. Homeowners can hire a plumbing company to preventatively remove tree roots.

Address Identification

It is important that address identification numbers are properly displayed on your property. Address numbers are required to be a minimum of 4 inches tall with a ½-inch thick stroke. The reflective numbers should be clearly visible from the street, day or night, and contrast with the surrounding background.

If placing numbers on a mailbox adjacent to the street, it is recommended that numbers be placed on both sides of the mailbox for ease of identification. Proper identification of your home or place of business helps Police and Fire Rescue first responders quickly locate your address in case of an emergency – when seconds count! Please take the time to make sure that your property has identification numbers attached that are visible from the street during the day and night.



McHenry County Santa Run for Kids

We are excited to bring the McHenry County Santa Run for Kids to Crystal Lake for the 11th year! With a familiar course, lively crowd, and spirited holiday atmosphere, this race is one the whole family can enjoy!

The 2022 Santa Run for Kids features a 5k walk/run through the beautiful streets of downtown Crystal Lake, and the 1 mile fun walk/run is a great way to enjoy the festivities and get into the holiday spirit! New this year - 5k participants will be able to choose a full Santa suit or a long sleeve Santa run t-shirt as their race swag.

“This is such a fun event for our community! What could be better than a Santa-themed run benefiting local youth-based charities right here in our home town,” says Race Director Trudy Wakeman.

The 2022 McHenry County Santa Run for Kids will be hosted in downtown Crystal Lake on Sunday, December 4. Registration is open online through December 3 and in-person the morning of the race. In addition to runners and walkers, we are in need of about 60 volunteers to make this race safe and FUN!

Register to participate or volunteer for the Santa Run for Kids using the link: https://bit.ly/3fYYIWH.

The McHenry County Santa Run for Kids benefits Main Stay Therapeutic Farms, Girls on the Run of Northwest Illinois, CASA of McHenry County, Big Brothers Big Sisters of McHenry County, Kiwanis Club of Crystal Lake and Turning Point.



Scan this QR code with your phones camera to register or donate for this event!

Annual Fall Leaf Collection

The City’s Annual Fall Leaf Pick-up Program continues until the second Friday in December. Lakeshore Recycling Systems (LRS) is the City’s contracted service provider for this program. Lakeshore Recycling Systems crews will collect bagged leaves placed at the curbside in front of residential homes along public streets. Bags must be placed in the parkway before 7:00 a.m. on residents’ regular refuse collection day.

Leaves must only be placed in biodegradable paper bags or resident-owned waste bins clearly marked for leaf disposal in order to be collected. Paper leaf bags are available at local grocery and hardware stores. The City and Lakeshore Recycling Systems do not provide leaf bags.

There is a 50-pound maximum weight limit per bag. Leaves placed in the other containers such as plastic bags, garbage cans or boxes, or in bags too large for one person to handle will not be accepted.

To contact Lakeshore Recycling Systems with any questions, please call their customer service number (844) 633-3577 or visit their website at www.lrsrecycles.com.



Brush Drop-Off Site Closes November 19

The Brush Drop-Off Site is located at 410 S. Main Street in Crystal Lake. It is open 8:00 a.m. – 1:00 p.m. on the 1st and 3rd Saturday of the month from April through November. Residents may dispose of brush, sticks, and branches six inches or under in diameter, and six feet or less in length.

This site cannot accept leaves, grass clippings, root balls, twine bound bundles of sticks, or branches bigger than the stated parameters. If you used twine to bind the brush during transport, you must remove the twine once you get to the site. Once closed for the season, this site will not reopen until the 1st Saturday in April.

Remaining 2022 Brush Drop-Off Dates:
November 5 & November 19



Trim the Fat and Cease the Grease

During the upcoming holiday season, it is important to remember that fats, oils and grease don't just clog your arteries; they can clog the City's arteries too. Grease can cause significant problems in the City's sewers and increases the potential for failure in the system. When a clog develops in the sanitary sewer, the line is surcharged behind the clog and can result in sewage overflowing into basements, roadways, or other low-lying public areas. These backups can create an environmental and health hazard depending on where the discharge point is located.



Grease is a byproduct from cooking with meat fats, lard, oils, shortening, butter, margarine, food scraps, baked goods, sauces, and dairy products.

When washed down the sink, grease sticks to the insides of sewer pipes (both on your property and under the street). Over a period of time, it can build up and block entire portions of your home's plumbing system. Remember, garbage disposals may allow table scraps to fit in the drain, but do not prevent grease from sticking in the sewer.

The best way to prevent fats, oils and greases from clogging in your sewer is to never put these materials down the drain. Here are some helpful tips:

- Never pour grease down sink drains or into toilets.
- Scrape grease and food scraps from trays, plates, pots, pans, utensils, grills and cooking surfaces into a can or the trash for disposal.
- Do not put grease down garbage disposals. Put baskets/strainers in sink drains to catch food scraps and other solids, and empty the drain baskets/strainers into the trash for disposal.

The Public Works Department needs your help to cease the grease buildup in the City's sewers. If you have any questions, or would like more information about the hazards of fats, oils and grease in your sewer system, contact the Public Works Department at (815) 356-3614.

THREE OAKS RECREATION AREA

Trails and Sled Hill

Even though summer-themed fun may have ended, all of our excellent walking trails will remain open daily. Also, don't miss out on the fishing that will still be available at the park until the lake freezes over! The sled hill will open during regular park hours when snowfall has accumulated.

Sledding is at your own risk as staff members are not always present during this time.

The Park will remain open for all hiking, fishing, sledding, beautiful views, and other fun Three Oaks Recreation Area activities between 6:30 a.m. to sunset year round!



Photo Credit: Park Staff



Photo Credit: Teri Rolewick



Photo Credit: Sara Joswiak



www.Crystallake.org/three-oaks-recreation
Email: threeoaks@crystallake.org

5517 Northwest Highway Crystal Lake, IL 60014

Information Line: (815) 356-2447
Rainout Line: (815) 506-9333

FOLLOW US ON SOCIAL MEDIA!

THE SOUTH PRAIRIE SCHOOL

DIANA KENNEY

Chances are you've driven down Golf Course Road and never noticed the South Prairie School which is located on the east side of the road between Ackman Road and Alexandra Boulevard. This little piece of educational history has been a single family home since the late 1940s and has somehow found a way to blend into its neighborhood of modern subdivisions.

According to the book, *Historic Country Schools of McHenry County, Illinois*, written by Crystal Lake resident, Bob Frenz, McHenry County was once home to over 140 country schools. More than half of these schoolhouses are still standing, with many of them being converted for other uses, such as the South Prairie School.

The South Prairie School (aka "Whittaker District") was built sometime before 1862 on land owned by Thomas Whittaker. Whittaker purchased his 120-acre Algonquin Township farm in 1849. Census records indicate Thomas Whittaker was born c. 1819 in Canada. His wife Mary was born in France. The Whittaker's three children were born on the farm.

The original schoolhouse was built of wood. County school records indicate Miss Lena Paul was responsible to teach 28 pupils of all ages in the school in 1862. An 1881 mention in the Nunda Herald indicates the current teacher was Miss Anna Munshaw. Her school had dwindled down to 5 or 6 students on account of a small-pox scare.



South Prairie School Building 1948

By 1914, the old schoolhouse was replaced with a new modern structure. The 1914 school was also built of wood, but larger.

The school measured 24' x 30'. The South Prairie School operated through 1947 before it consolidated into Crystal Lake School District #47. The building and half-acre lot were sold by auction in July, 1947 for $1,200 to Elmer Ackman, who then owned the old Whittaker farm. Ackman planned to remodel the schoolhouse into a retirement home for himself and his wife Florence.

Plans change, and Elmer Ackman decided to sell the old school in 1948 to local contractor Raymond Johnson. A 1949 article in The Crystal Lake Herald indicates Johnson was drawn to the structure because it was well-constructed and he liked the high elevation of its half-acre lot which afforded long-distance views in all directions.

The old schoolhouse had a full basement and a 180' deep well. The front door and steps leading up to it were removed by Johnson. The main entrance was relocated to the side of the house. The interior was remodeled to create a comfortable home with all modern conveniences.



The old South Prairie School no longer serves to educate students nor does it provide "long-distance views in all directions". But it does serve as a wonderful family home and a lasting reminder of life in Crystal Lake many years ago.

About the Author: Diana Kenney is an appointed member of the City of Crystal Lake's Historic Preservation Commission, and President of the Crystal Lake Historical Society.
To contact Diana email info@cl-hs.org

The Quarry Corner: November



The holiday season is here, and The Quarry Cable Park invites you and yours to gather at the Quarry. Unique spaces are available for private events year-round! Friendsgiving, Holiday Parties, and New Year's Celebrations are just a few holidays the Quarry is here to host this time of year. The festive ambiance and beverage service will be provided while you provide the potluck or catering. Enjoy the cozy setting that all your guests will enjoy!

To inquire about private events, please complete an event request at www.thequarrycablepark.com or email events@thequarrycablepark.com.

Early this November, don't forget about the 5th Annual Merry Market, which will be occurring Friday, November 4 and Saturday, November 5. Get all your holiday shopping done with custom gifts from 25+ vendors from Crystal Lake and the surrounding areas.



2023 Historical Society Calendars

Support the Crystal Lake Historical Society and its efforts to preserve our community's history by purchasing a 2023 Crystal Lake Calendar. This year's theme is, "Celebrations in Time". Each month of the calendar features various ways Crystal Lake has celebrated through the years. Examples of these celebrations include: Annual Fireman's Ball, Earth Day, Cardboard Cup Regatta, Lakeside Festival/Gala, Fireworks, Homecoming, and so many more. each calendar is $10.

The calendar would make a great gift for all of those who know and love Crystal Lake. Available at: City of Crystal Lake, Heisler's Bootery, The Inside Scoop Ice Cream and online: www.cl-hs.org.



CALENDAR | NOVEMBER 2022

All Meetings at City Hall, 100 W. Woodstock Street

Tuesday, November 1
City Council Meeting, 7:00 P.M.

Wednesday, November 2
Planning and Zoning Meeting, 7:00 P.M.

Friday, November 11
City Hall Offices closed, Veterans Day

Tuesday, November 15
City Council Meeting, 7:00 P.M.

Wednesday, November 16
Planning and Zoning Meeting, 7:00 P.M.

Thursday, November 24 & Friday, November 25
City Hall Offices Closed, Thanksgiving.

City of Crystal Lake, Illinois

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www.crystallake.org

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100 W. Woodstock Street
Crystal Lake, IL 60014

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WE VALUE YOUR OPINION

The City of Crystal Lake values the opinion of its residents. If you have any concerns or comments about the City Letter, please express them in the space provided below. (If you need more space, please attach a separate piece of paper). Clip this and mail to: City Letter, City of Crystal Lake, 100 W. Woodstock Street, Crystal Lake, IL 60014. Questions or comments can also be sent to comments www.crystallake.org.

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