City of Crystal Lake, Illinois
CITYLETTER







Show Your Love for Downtown Crystal Lake

The month of February brings thoughts of love, hearts, and romance. Downtown Crystal Lake would like you to shop local this winter and support your small businesses. Supporting local businesses is easy! It's as simple as eating at a local restaurant, shopping at local retailers, treating yourself at a downtown salon, leaving a good tip, buying local gift cards, leaving a positive review, and encouraging your friends to shop local in Downtown Crystal Lake. By investing in your downtown, you are keeping money in your community. For every dollar you spend at a small business, 70 cents stays in the local economy.

Help spread warmth and compassion this season by participating in the Downtown Crystal Lake Have a Heart Food Drive! Embrace the spirit of giving by contributing non-perishable food items to support local families in need. Participating Downtown merchants will be collecting donations from February 12 – 19 for the Crystal Lake Food Pantry. Our vibrant community is coming together in the heart of Crystal Lake to make a positive impact on the lives of those less fortunate. Let's build a stronger, more connected community as we collect and distribute essential food items. Join the cause, share the love, and let's fill every heart with the joy of giving!



For more information and to sign up for our email list visit www.DowntownCL.org.

Left image taken by Kelsey of K-Adams Foto.

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Sanitary Sewer Backup Information

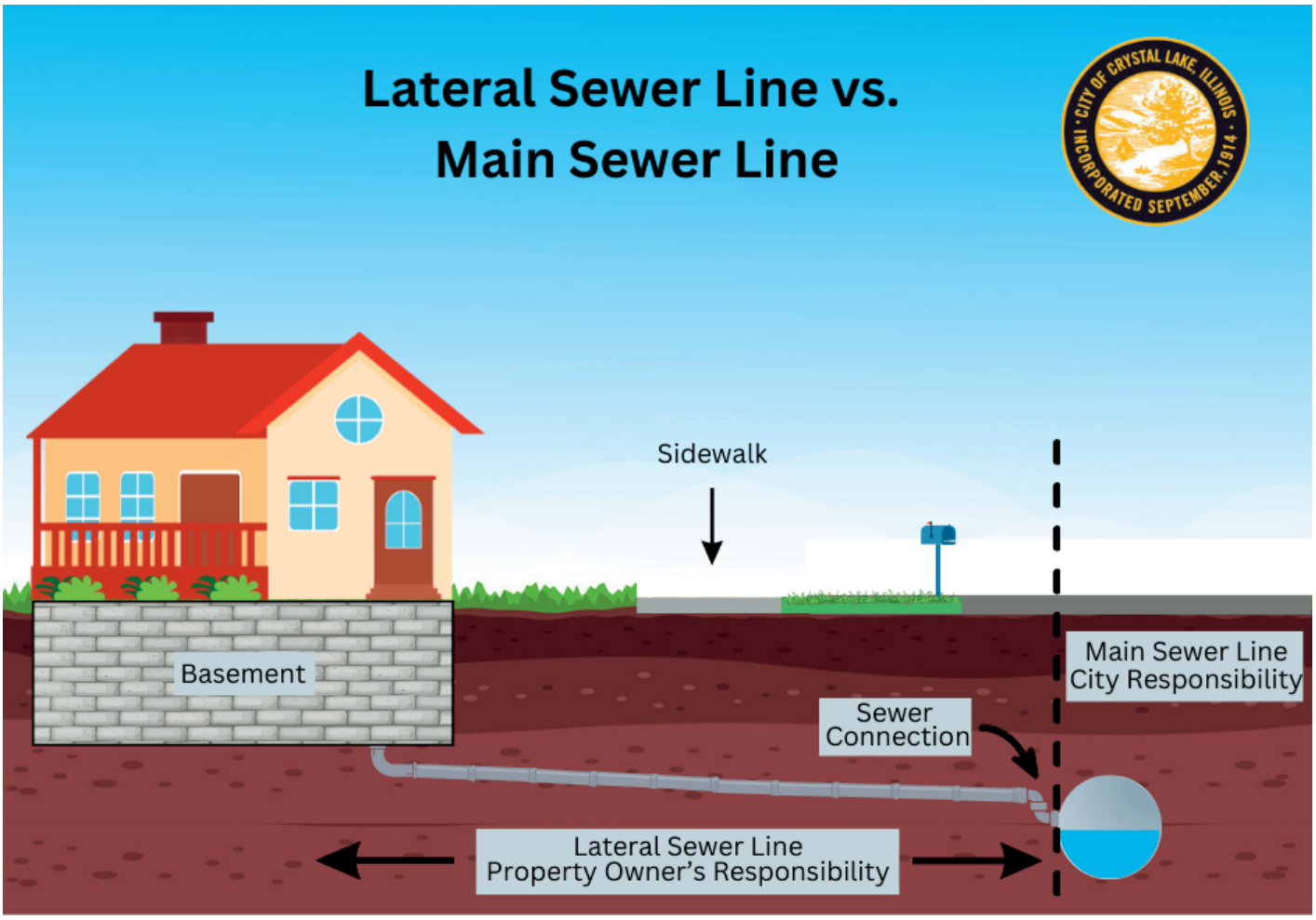
Below are important steps to remember when experiencing a sewer backup:

- Stop using water! This contributes to the backup. Do not run any water down your drains until the blockage has been cleared.
- Remove any items near floor drains.
- Before calling a plumber, call the City of Crystal Lake Public Works and Engineering Department at (815) 356-3614 to inspect the City's main sewer line.

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, Public Works crews will resolve the issue. This saves the expense of having a plumber come out for a blockage they cannot clear. If the City's inspection of the main line shows a blockage is not in their portion, residents should call a plumber as the problem could be in the lateral sewer line.

How can sewer backups be prevented?
The City inspects and cleans the sanitary sewer main lines throughout the City. Homeowners can help prevent backups by refraining from flushing diapers, disposable wipes, sanitary napkins, paper towels, rags, or grease down the toilet or drain. Tree roots can also invade the lateral line. Homeowners can hire a plumbing company to do preventative maintenance in removing tree roots.

What portion of the sewer lines are the homeowner's responsibility?
Homeowners are responsible for the lateral line and sewer connection, which is the portion of the sewer line that services your home.



How to Prevent Frozen Pipes

When temperatures drop below freezing, water pipes and water meters exposed to cold air may freeze. Below are some helpful suggestions to make sure your water supply stays flowing this winter.

Provide Warmth:

- Check for proper temperatures in all areas where water pipes are located and eliminate cold air from blowing on water pipes.
- If a sink is located against an exterior wall, open the cabinet doors.
- Open the door to rooms, closets and cabinets where water pipes are located to allow air circulation.

Use Your Water Supply:

- Allow a small trickle of cold water to run through your faucets.
- Make sure your drains remain clear to prevent overflow or flooding.

If in spite of best efforts you find yourself with frozen pipes this winter, please contact a plumber.



Curbside Electronics Collection Event: March 4 - 8

LRS will be conducting curbside electronics collection during the week of March 4 - 8, 2024. Residents may set out a maximum of five electronic items, including a limit of one TV or one computer monitor. The electronics will be collected on residents' regularly scheduled collection day. LRS will conduct the next electronics collection week in September 2024. The following table details which items may and may not be set out for electronics collection.

Please contact LRS at (847) 381-9300 with any questions regarding the electronics collection event.

Acceptable Electronic Items	
One Television or One Computer Monitor	Fax Machines and Printers
Cell Phones, Telephones, and Tablets	Holiday Lights
Cameras	Modems
CD Players	Paper Shredders
Computer Drives	Satellite Receivers
Cords and Cables	Scanners
Electronic Mice and Keyboards	Stereos and Video Game Consoles

Items NOT Accepted	
Air Conditioners	Hair Dryers and Hair Irons
Batteries	Humidifiers
Appliances and Refrigerators	Liquids or Chemical Waste
Battery Operated Toys	Smoke and Fire Detectors
Coffee Makers	Packaging Materials
Computer Disks	Microwaves
Dishwashers	Water Softeners

The next electronics collection event will take place in September.

The History of McCormick Memorial Park is Preserved

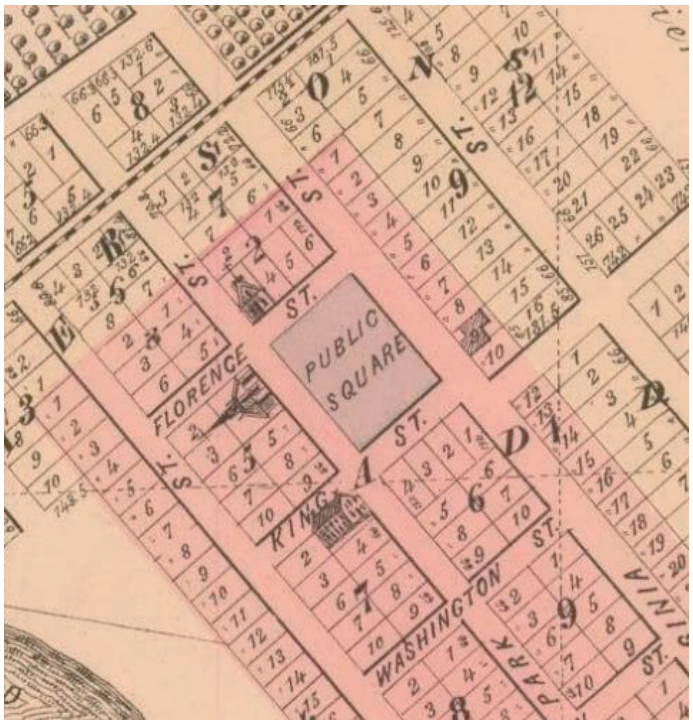
The City of Crystal Lake has approved its 18th landmark designation in protecting McCormick Memorial Park.

The park was documented as a Public Square as early as 1840. Over the years, it has been an important gathering location and a landmark for travelers along Virginia Street (US Route 14). US Route 14 was part of the Black and Yellow Trail. This trail could take travelers from Chicago, through Crystal Lake, past the Black Hills of South Dakota and into Yellowstone National Park in Wyoming.

There are numerous memorials and plaques all around the park. The first commemorative plaque was set on the property in 1936 at the 100th anniversary of the founding of Crystal Lake. Under this plaque is a time capsule.

McCormick Memorial Park received its current moniker in 1956 after the untimely passing of Pastor Edwin A. McCormick the year prior. A description of the history of the park was given during the dedication to the memory of Father McCormick. It was stated, “may this memorial serve to remind us that we too can make our mark, each in his small way in the annals of Crystal Lake”.

The park is owned and maintained by the City. The landmark status will help protect the existing park layout, existing memorials and plaques, and the fieldstone portion of the Chamber of Commerce building.



Information about other landmarked properties can be found on the Historic Preservation Committee’s page on the City website.

Do you have a unique home over 50 years old and are interested in landmarking it? City staff and the Historic Preservation Commission members can assist with the application and research. Landmarked properties are also eligible to apply for grant funding. Contact City Planner Elizabeth Maxwell at emaxwell@crystallake.org or 815-356-3738 to learn more.



McCormick Memorial Plaque



Time Capsule

POLICE DEPARTMENT

Celebrating K-9 Unit's 20th Anniversary

This year, the Crystal Lake Police Department is celebrating its 20th year of having a K-9 Unit. Over the past 20 years, our K-9s have served a valuable role within the Department, the Crystal Lake community, and the McHenry County area. They have assisted with criminal investigations, searches for missing persons, and performed public demonstrations. Former K-9s Ike and Ace served with the Department until their retirements in 2012 and 2017. The Department currently has two K-9s, Zeus and Cruise. Officer Ryan Schack is Zeus' handler and Officer Brendan Schumacher is Cruise's handler. Each K-9 has gone through an intensive eight-week training course prior to being certified as a Police K-9. The Department's K-9s continue to attend training and complete annual certifications for their patrol functions.

K-9 Zeus was born in 2017 and began serving with the Crystal Lake Police Department in 2018. Zeus is a German Shepherd that is trained in various patrol disciplines. Over the past five years, Zeus has assisted officers in a wide variety of incidents and investigations. In addition to serving the Crystal Lake community, Officer Schack and Zeus have also been requested to assist other law enforcement agencies (both local and federal) when the need for a K-9 has arisen. In 2023 alone, Zeus has provided his services nearly 100 times in various capacities.



K-9 Zeus

In 2023, the Crystal Lake Police Department expanded it's K-9 program by adding K-9 Cruise. Based upon a community needs assessment, the decision was made to select a K-9 that the community could directly interact with. Cruise was born in early 2023 and began serving with the Department in November 2023. Cruise is a Golden Retriever trained in the same disciplines as Zeus. Community members can interact with Cruise when Officer Schumacher determines it's alright to do so. In fact, Cruise has already received certification through the American Kennel Club as a Canine Good Citizen. In just his first month as a police K-9, Cruise has already assisted officers in multiple investigations and has also interacted with students in classrooms and citizens at public demonstrations.

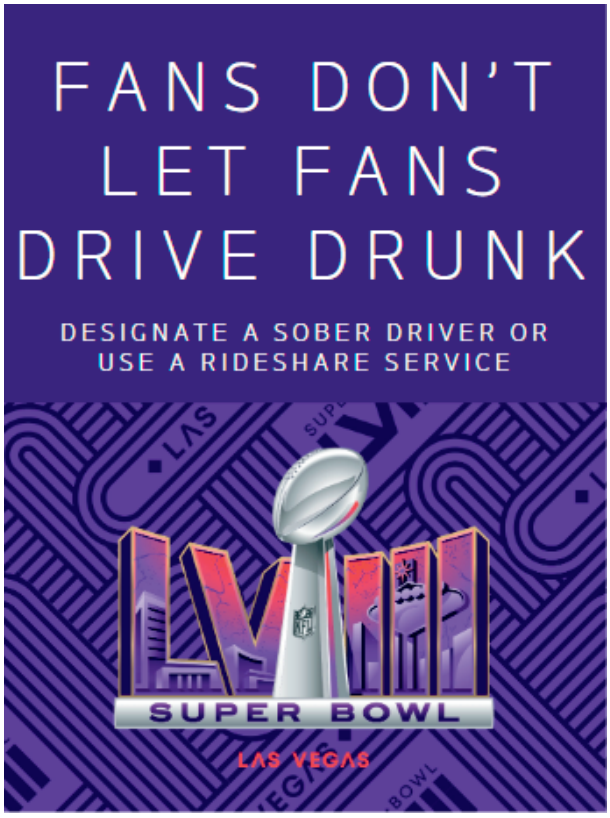


K-9 Cruise and Handler Officer Schumacher

Should you see one of our K-9s out and about, we encourage you to wave hello! However, prior to approaching Zeus or Cruise, please ask their handlers if it's okay to do so. Please understand that our K-9s may be working or training and the handler does not want them to become distracted.

Lastly, we value interactions with the citizens of Crystal Lake. One of the ways we facilitate interaction and education is through public demonstrations with our K-9s. These demonstrations range from smaller groups such as students in a classroom and the Citizen's Police Academy, up to larger public groups such as National Night Out. If you are interested in having Officers Schack and Schumacher bring their K-9 partners for a demonstration, please contact the K-9 Unit's supervisor, Commander Ryan Coutre at rcoutre@crystallake.org.

Super Bowl Reminder



With the Super Bowl around the corner on February 11th, we want to ensure everyone enjoys the game responsibly. If your celebration includes consuming alcoholic beverages, plan for a designated driver or use rideshare services. Impaired driving is both unsafe and illegal, so please plan ahead.

Additionally, don't forget to lock up your home and vehicles by securing doors and windows. Keep your valuables out of sight for added security.

The Crystal Lake Police Department along with other law enforcement agencies will be participating in a state-wide traffic enforcement campaign sponsored by the Illinois Department of Transportation (IDOT) to encourage everyone to please drink responsibly and avoid getting behind the wheel of a vehicle if you have consumed any alcohol or used marijuana. If you see someone getting into a vehicle who appears impaired, please do not hesitate to call 911, as it can save a life.

Polar Plunge

Get ready to dive into icy waters for a good cause! The Polar Plunge, benefiting the Law Enforcement Torch Run for Special Olympics Illinois, is back! Exciting news this year is Crystal Lake's Main Beach is again hosting a regional event on March 3rd. Save the date for a thrilling day filled with fun, camaraderie, and heart, all in support of a fantastic cause. Scan the QR code to join the Police Department team or contribute to our fundraising efforts. Don't miss out on this unforgettable experience. Mark your calendars now!



IRS Scam Season

With tax season in full swing, scammers are on the prowl. The IRS scam season is upon us, and it's crucial to stay vigilant. Below are some tips to protect yourself.

- **Avoid immediate payments**: The IRS will never demand immediate payment or threaten legal action over the phone. If you receive such a call, hang up.
- **Secure personal information**: Guard your personal and financial information. Don't share sensitive details with unknown individuals or respond to suspicious requests.
- **Check for official notices**: Legitimate IRS communications often come through traditional mail. If in doubt, verify the authenticity of any notice directly with the IRS.

Remember, awareness is your best defense. Stay informed, and report any suspicious activity.

Crystal Lake Police Department (815) 356-3620

Officer Kristiana Stolzman - (815) 356-3673 or kstolzman@crystallake.org

Follow The CLPD on Facebook and Instagram to stay up to date on the latest news, events, and safety tips!

THREE OAKS RECREATION AREA

Park Hours
6:30 A.M. - Sunset

Join The Team!

Applications are being accepted to join us this season! Seasonal Lifeguards, Marina Attendants and Assistant Marina Manager roles are available.

For all position details, visit the City of Crystal Lake Human Resources Employment page and complete an employment application today!

Fun Fact February

- Did you know, our lifeguards aren't the only staff members at Three Oaks that can help in an emergency? Every employee you interact with during your visit to the park is trained and certified in CPR/AED for adults, children, and infants.
- Did you also know, there are 11 different types of fish in the lake. Populations include: Muskellunge, Largemouth Bass, Smallmouth Bass, Yellow Bass, Rock Bass, Channel Catfish, Northern Pike, Walleye, and Pan Fish including Bluegill and Yellow Perch.



Photo By: Kate Agnes Jensen



Photo By: Jim Sanaxay



Photo By: Wes Smith

History of Three Oaks

Starting in the early 1950s, Vulcan Materials began extracting sand and stone from the site known today as the Three Oaks Recreation Area. After four decades of mining, the water table was exposed and created two lakes. When Vulcan Materials completed mining in the late 1990s, the site became the property of the City of Crystal Lake. The City then began years of development planning to construct a passive recreation area. In the fall of 2010, Three Oaks Recreation Area, named after the road that once ran through the land, opened to the public.

www.crystallake.org/three-oaks-recreation
Information Line: (815) 356-2447 | Rainout Line: (815) 506-9333 | threeoaks@crystallake.org
5517 Northwest Highway, Crystal Lake, IL 60014

FIRE RESCUE DEPARTMENT

Candle Safety Awareness

Candles, if not used properly, can pose a significant fire and safety risk. Between 2015 and 2019, candles were reported to have caused 2% of home fires. Around 1/3 of all fires caused by candles began in bedrooms, and three out of every five candle fires were started through contact with combustible material left too close to the candle. It is important to remain vigilant and remember candles can ignite anything in your home that is flammable. Below are tips to keep your home safe.

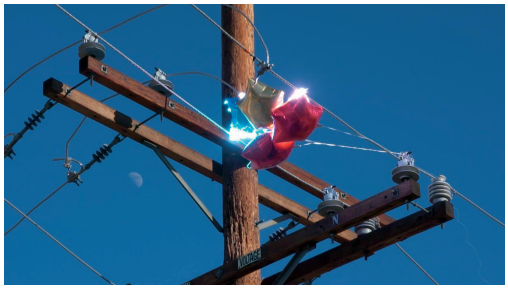
- Never leave burning candles unsupervised.
- Refrain from using candles in bedrooms or areas where people sleep.
- Extinguish candles before going to bed.
- Make sure candle holders are secure before using.
- Place candles on sturdy and clutter-free surfaces.
- Keep any flammable items at least 12 inches away from candles.
- Extinguish a candle if it burns within 2 inches of its holder.
- Keep candles away from children and pets.
- Consider using battery-operated candles.



Mylar Balloons

Are you thinking about buying a heart-shaped balloon for Valentine's Day? If so, follow these simple safety tips to prevent fires and other dangers mylar balloons can cause.

- Do not release balloons outdoors.
- Secure a weight to balloons.
- Keep balloons indoors whenever possible.
- Do not attach metallic streamers to balloons.
- Refrain from retrieving balloons that are tangled in power lines.
- Puncture balloons before disposing of them to prevent them from flying away.



Mylar balloons are made from nylon and have a metallic coating. Since they are made with a type of metallic foil, this can conduct electricity, potentially causing a danger if accidently released outside.



American Heart Month

February is American Heart Month. To recognize this month, familiarize yourself with the signs of a heart attack. Being able to identify signs of a heart attack can make a difference!

Discomfort in the Chest:
A large portion of heart attacks include discomfort in the center of the chest that lasts for more than a few minutes. The discomfort may also go away and return. The discomfort can feel like squeezing, pressure, fullness, and pain.

Other Upper Body Discomfort:
Other signs of a heart attack can include discomfort or pain in the arms, back, neck, jaw, or stomach.

Shortness of Breath:
Shortness of breath may occur either with or without chest discomfort.

Additional Signs:
Other possible signs of a heart attack can include nausea and/or lightheadedness, as well as cold sweats.

Even if you are not sure if it is a heart attack, don't hesitate to call 911. Minutes matter and can save a life!

Source: www.heart.org

Crystal Lake Fire Rescue Department
(815) 356-3640

Clearly CRYSTAL LAKE

CLEARLY CRYSTAL LAKE CORNER

2023 BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT

When it comes to business growth and development, 2023 was a successful year! Crystal Lake is the perfect blend of growth and excellent quality of life. Crystal Lake has seen exponential success with local small businesses, maintaining a 99% business occupancy rate in the downtown area, and continued attraction and growth of key national retailers along Northwest Highway. In 2023, Crystal Lake welcomed national brands into the City including Guzman Y Gomez, Wingstop, Crumbl Cookie, Banfield, Hallmark, and Boot Barn. Other local brands to join Crystal Lake included Rookies All-American Pub & Grill, Pots and Pies, Rosie's Gluten Free Sweets, Off the Vine, and Crystal Lake Junction.

Crystal Lake is the area's top shopping and dining destination. According to the *Melanithy & Associates 2023 Retail Sales Report*, Crystal Lake was:

- #1 in McHenry County for Auto Sales with over $284 million in sales.
- #1 in McHenry County for Drinking & Eating Establishments with over $147 million in sales.

In addition to having the highest sales in McHenry County, Crystal Lake was also:

- 11th in the Chicagoland Area for Home Improvement Sales, with over $115 million in sales.
- 13th in the Chicagoland Area for General Merchandise Sales, with over $162 million in sales.

2023 Growth

- 1,100,122 square feet of new and expanded commercial occupancies
- 666 new jobs created
- 41 new small businesses (with less than 20 employees)

2023 Accolades

- Crystal Lake is one of the nine best Illinois small towns to visit for a weekend getaway by *World Atlas*.
- *REJournals* named Crystal Lake among the "Most Affordable Suburbs.
- WGN Radio featured Crystal Lake in the "Your Hometown" Segment.
- *Chicago Parent* named Crystal Lake a "Top Town" in 2023.

TAKING THE LEAP

DIANA KENNEY

Leap year comes around once every four years. During Leap Year, an extra day is added to the calendar (February 29th) in order to correctly re-align our calendar to the actual movement of the earth around the sun.

Besides adding an extra day to the calendar, there is an old Irish custom which made it perfectly acceptable for women to initiate dances or propose marriage to a man on February 29th. Gasp! Americans in the early 20th century took this a step further and expanded the tradition beyond just one day during Leap Year.

And so we find in 1928, when Crystal Lake's population was about 3,500 people, the *Crystal Lake Herald* announced they would be publishing a list of eligible bachelors for the women of our community to select a husband for the Leap Year.



Herald To Publish List of Bachelors

Will Assist the Women in Selecting a Husband This Leap Year

Crystal Lake Herald - March 1, 1928 - page 1

From March through May, the Crystal Lake Herald featured 28 bachelors in our community. A short paragraph of information was included with each named man. Women were encouraged to pursue the bachelors. Though written in fun, one has to wonder how much the featured bachelors really enjoyed the *Herald*'s sense of humor!

Here are a few of the featured bachelors and part of their descriptions:

Benno Raue: A hard worker and a money maker. What is vastly more important—a money saver. Isn't strong on society life but likes a good time now and then.

Walter Kardas: Here's a young many who should be a gem to catch, for he operates a jewelry store. Besides making a comfortable living, he can provide his sweet mamma with those bits of jewelry which delight the ladies.

Walter Sparawk: Like the wary bull moose which for years has eluded the guns of score of hunters, here's a man who has passed safely and unscathed through many a leap year. What a man! Six feet tall with the physique of a Hercules, yet gentle as a lamb.

Dwight Goodwin: Dwight is a musician. Until a few years ago he managed the leading dance orchestra in this vicinity. Dwight is a confirmed, case-hardened bachelor. How to catch him we cannot say, but hook him and you have a real prize.

Roy Gilbert: Here we have another regular fellow. A young man who was raised among us. Roy is a railroader and like most railroad men has a sunny disposition which would help brighten things up on wash day and make blue Monday look like a rosy Saturday night.

Sture Pearson: A sport of the first water, is probably as good a way as any to describe him. And by sport we do not mean anything derogatory. Rather the type of young man who enjoys the active life, whether it's golf, baseball, hockey, foot races or what have you.

Charles E. Cohn: A couple of years ago we thought Charles had fallen. He had that dreamy, far-away look in his eyes and made frequent trips to Chicago in addition to his business trips. But something happened. What it was we do not know. At any rate, Charles is back among the eligibles.

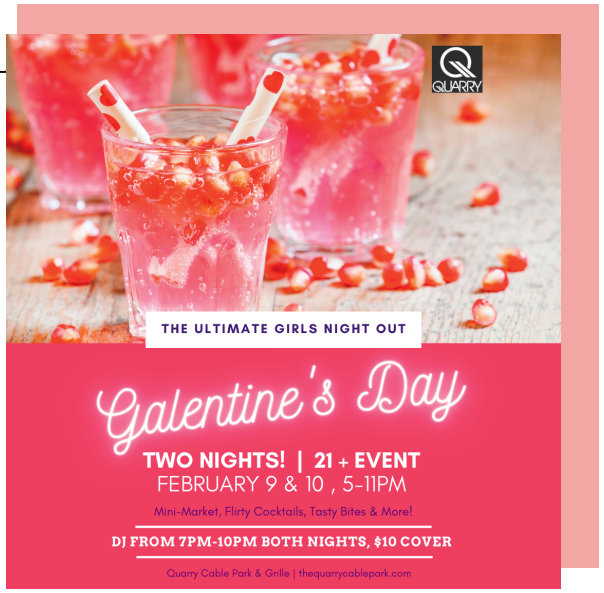
Cecil Shaler: If it's cave man stuff you are looking for girls, that "club 'em over the head and drag 'em home" type, here's your man. Six feet two with red hair, gruff and surly at times, but underneath it all a nature as sweet and gentle as Mary's little lamb.

Bob Lippold: Here's a wary old fox who has been in and out of many love tangles. Makes 'em think he has lost his heart to 'em and then just when they think he is about to pop the question, doesn't show up for the next date. The girl who lands Bob will not only have to grab him during leap year, but will have to slip up behind him in the dark, throw a sack over his head, drag him to some justice of the peace and marry him before Bob realizes what happened.

Of the 28 bachelors featured, eleven of them never married. Perhaps they really were confirmed bachelors beforehand or perhaps the *Herald*'s article scared them off from ever taking the leap into marriage.

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.

Quarry Corner Events



Let's go girls! Love is in the air and The Quarry Cable Park is celebrating friendship with the return of the popular Galentine's Day weekend, on February 9 & 10 at The Quarry. Themed food and beverage, fun decor, unique mini-market vendors, and a DJ spinning all your favorite female artists for you to dance the night away.. Purchasing your tickets in advance is recommended as this event typically sells out both nights. This is a 21+ event.

Please contact The Quarry with any questions by emailing events@thequarrycablepark.com.

Mardi Gras Run for the Beads 5K

Join in the fun of the 2nd annual McHenry County Mardi Gras Run for the Beads 5k. This event supports three local charities providing wonderful help for McHenry County families.

This 5K will be at Lippold Park on February 18, 2024, beginning at 9:00 a.m. Proceeds from the Mardi Gras Run for the Beads 5k will go to the following charities:

- Child Advocacy Center
- Options & Advocacy
- Independence Health & Therapy



For information, contact Theresa Beck at 815-338-1707 ext. 225 or tbeck@independencehealth.org.

CALENDAR | FEBRUARY 2024

Thursday, February 1
Historic Preservation Commission Meeting
7:00 P.M.

Tuesday, February 6
City Council Meeting
7:00 P.M.

Wednesday, February 7
Planning and Zoning Commission Meeting
7:00 P.M.

Monday, February 19
City Hall Offices Closed

Tuesday, February 20
City Council Meeting
7:00 P.M.

Wednesday, February 21
Sustainability Committee Meeting
6:30 P.M.

Wednesday, February 21
Planning and Zoning Commission Meeting
7:00 P.M.

Monday, February 27
Economic Development Committee
8:00 A.M.

All Meetings at City Hall, 100 W. Woodstock Street

City of Crystal Lake, Illinois

MAYOR
Haig Haleblian

COUNCILMEMBER
Ellen Brady
Brett Hopkins
Cameron Hubbard
Mandy Montford
Ian Philpot
Denise Smith

CITY CLERK
Nick Kachiroubas

CITY MANAGER
Eric Helm

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911

All Other Departments (Non-Emergency)
815-459-2020

www.crystallake.org

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to receive the newsletter by e-mail only.

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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