City of Crystal Lake, Illinois
CITYLETTER



Luminary Nights Downtown

Come enjoy an extra festive and glowing atmosphere in Downtown Crystal Lake! Watch these special nights come alive on Thursdays, December 5, 12, and 19 from 5:00 p.m. - 8:00 p.m. Luminary candles will line the sidewalks, and many stores stay open a little later for holiday shopping. Warm up with hot chocolate at the Downtown Crystal Lake tent, relax with occasional live music, enjoy your holiday shopping armed with the Downtown gifting guide (available at downtowncl.org/holidays), and of course, say hello to Santa!

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Santa House Visits

Now through December 22, the Santa House will be open in the Downtown Crystal Lake Brink Street Market. While this yearly event is free, the memories of visiting with Santa are priceless! Bring your camera, and be prepared to smile!

HOURS

Thursdays & Fridays:	5:00 p.m. - 8:00 p.m.
Saturdays:	10:00 a.m. - 3:00 p.m.
Sundays:	Noon - 3:00 p.m.



Youth Commission

The City of Crystal Lake's newest commission held their first meeting on October 10, 2024. Please welcome the intelligent, hard working, and forward thinking individuals who make up the Youth Commission!

Charlie Ann Benton
Leo Camasta
Andrew Cioper
Alyssa (Theo) Johnston
Jack Lisle
Sunny Tomberlin
Lauren Wolfe





FIRE RESCUE DEPARTMENT

Heating Equipment Safety

Did you know that one of the leading causes of home fire deaths is due to heating equipment? When it comes to home heating-related fires, almost half are reported between the months of December and February.

This winter season, inspect your homes for any potential hazards that may contribute to a home heating fire accident. To help make your home safe from heating hazards, follow some of these simple safety tips:

- Always keep anything flammable at least three feet away from any type of heating equipment. This could include fireplaces, a wood stove, furnace, or portable heaters.
- Ensure that the only heating equipment being used in your home has the label of a recognized testing laboratory.
- NEVER use your oven for heating!
- Make sure a qualified professional installs stationary space heating equipment. Ensure water heaters and central heating equipment are installed according to local codes and manufacturing instructions.



- Keep up to date on heating equipment maintenance. For example, if you have a chimney, make sure you have it cleaned and inspected by a professional every year.
- Always turn portable heaters off before leaving the room or going to bed.
    - For fuel-burning space heaters, make sure you are always using the proper fuel as specified by the manufacturer.
- If you have a fireplace, ensure that it has a sturdy screen to prevent sparks from flying into the room. Burn only dry, seasoned wood in your fireplace and allow ashes to cool before disposing of them in a metal container. When disposing of ashes outside, make sure the metal container is discarded a safe distance away from your home.



Christmas Trees

If part of your holiday tradition is to decorate your home with a tree, follow these tips to help you decorate safely:



Picking the Tree

- Choose a tree with fresh, green needles that do not fall off when touched.

Placing the Tree

- Cut two inches from the base of the trunk before placing the tree in its stand.
- Make sure the tree is at least three feet away from any heating source.
- Make sure the tree is not blocking an exit.
- Add water to the tree stand daily.

Lighting the Tree

- Replace any string of lights with worn or broken cords or loose bulb connections.
- Never use lit candles to decorate the tree.
- Always turn tree lights off before leaving home or going to bed.

Sources: NFPA.org



Crystal Lake Fire Rescue Department (815) 356-3640

Follow the Crystal Lake Fire Rescue Department on Facebook for safety tips, events, and community updates!

POLICE DEPARTMENT

National Impaired Driving Prevention Month

Impaired, drunk, drugged, or distracted driving has impacted so many lives. Without notice, it has taken countless loved ones from their families. This holiday season, we urge you to apply the necessary preventable measures by driving sober, designating a sober driver, or taking a cab.

Additional Crystal Lake Police Officers will be participating in a traffic enforcement campaign throughout the holiday weekends. Our focus remains on deterring distracted and intoxicated drivers. Remember, 'Drive Sober or Get Pulled Over'.

The Crystal Lake Police Department wishes you all a joyful and safe holiday season. Celebrate responsibly and ensure the safety of yourselves and others on the road.

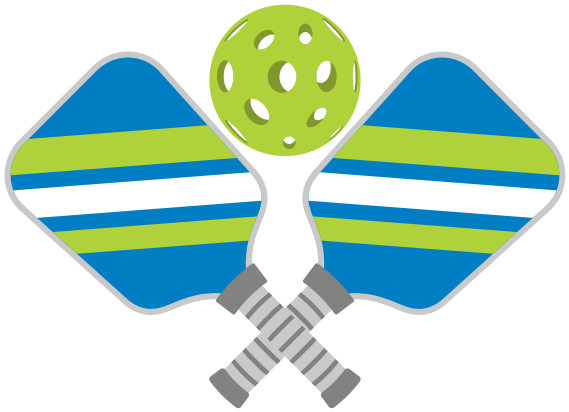


Holiday Safety Tips

- **Secure Your Home**: Ensure all doors and windows are locked before leaving home. Similarly, lock your car and avoid leaving valuables visible inside.
- **Online Shopping Caution**: Be wary of online scams and only shop from reputable websites. Avoid public Wi-Fi when making financial transactions and regularly check bank statements for any suspicious activity.
- **Designated Drivers**: Encourage responsible drinking during gatherings. Arrange designated drivers or alternative transportation options to ensure everyone gets home safely.
- **Package Delivery Security**: With increased online shopping, be mindful of package deliveries.
- **Preventing Purse Theft**: Be vigilant in crowded places, keeping your purse closed and zipped. Avoid carrying excessive cash or valuables and be cautious of distractions used by thieves.

Pickleball Tournament

The Crystal Lake Police Department's Pickleball Tournament originally scheduled for December 8, 2024, has been postponed. We appreciate everyone's interest in this event, and we are excited to bring it to the community in 2025. Stay tuned for future newsletters and social media posts with the new date and details. Thank you all for your understanding, and we look forward to hosting this fun and supportive event next year!



Winter Safety

- Make sure there is plenty of space between your car and the vehicle ahead of you. It can take TEN TIMES AS LONG to stop on ice and snow as on dry roads.
- Always clear ALL the windows and lights on your car of snow and ice prior to heading out on the roads.
- Always drive appropriately for the weather conditions. Even if you're driving under the speed limit, you may be going too fast to be safe on wintry roads.
- Stock your car with an ice scraper, snow brush, booster cables, extra gloves and a blanket just in case of an emergency.

Citizen Police Academy

We are excited to announce our upcoming Citizen Police Academy, designed to educate residents and foster community relationships. This free program will cover various aspects of law enforcement and provide insights into how the Crystal Lake Police Department operates.

Program details:

- *Eligibility*: Participants must be at least 17 years old and pass a criminal background check.
- *Duration*: 11 weeks, every Thursday from 6:00 p.m. to 9:00 p.m. Beginning January 30th to April 17th.

For more information and to access the application, please visit our website by scanning the QR code below or stop by the Police Department.





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

Pavilion Rental Reservations

Reservations for 2025 will begin on Thursday, January 2, 2025 at 8:00 a.m. for rental requests. Rental requests submitted online prior to 8:00 a.m. on January 2nd will not be accepted.

After January 2nd, the rentals will open for instant booking and will no longer require needing to wait for your request to be approved by staff.

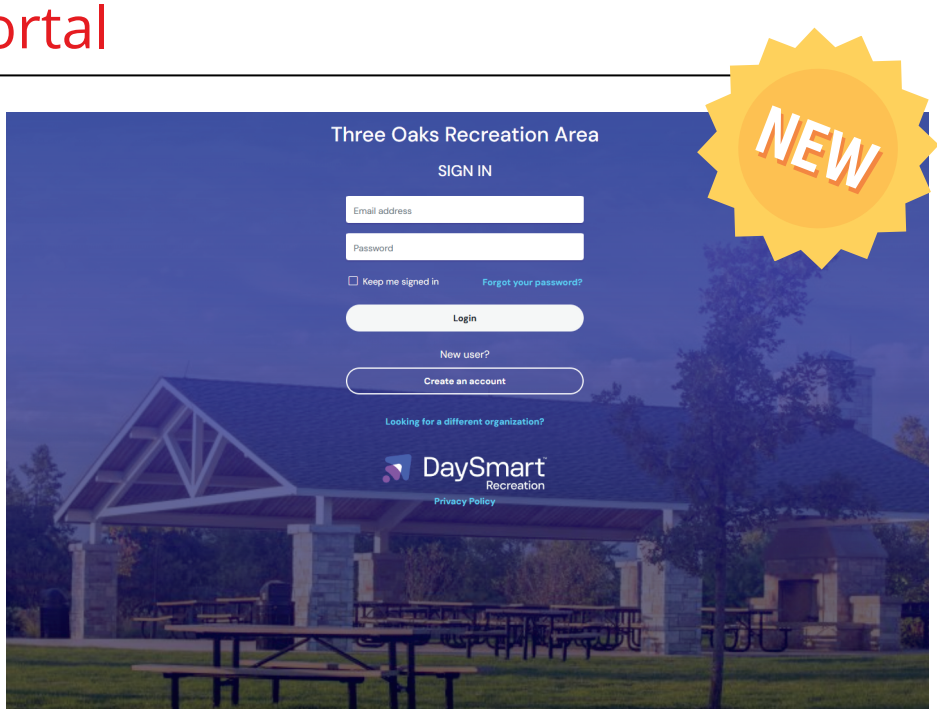
Be sure to set your special event date for the year as pavilions go quickly!

New Pavilion Rental Portal

While Three Oaks has had an online portal to reserve pavilions for quite some time now, we are excited to announce a new and improved portal! If you previously held an account from reserving a pavilion in prior years, you will need to create a new account for 2025.

New this year is the ability to pay for your pavilion as you book online to complete your rental all at once. You will no longer need to wait for a request to be approved in order to make your payment.

Visit our website for additional information on creating an account, booking your rental, FAQs and pavilion details.



Employment

Applications are being accepted to join us this upcoming 2025 season! Seasonal Lifeguards, Cashiers, and Marina Attendant roles are available. For position details, visit the City of Crystal Lake Human Resources Employment page and complete an employment application today!

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

THE BEST FOR LAST

DIANA KENNEY

Three years ago, the Crystal Lake Historical Society started a project called, "S.O.S. – Save Our Stones" to raise the necessary funds to clean and repair historic headstones in the Crystal Lake Cemetery on Lake Avenue. First priority for the use of the S.O.S. funds was to repair headstones of veterans buried at the cemetery.

Established in 1840, the Crystal Lake Cemetery is the oldest public burial ground in Crystal Lake. 54 veterans are buried at the Crystal Lake Cemetery. Most of these veterans have government-issued headstones which are in good shape.

Trained volunteers of the Crystal Lake Historical Society and Historic Preservation Commission have teamed up to clean 60+ veteran and non-veteran headstones using approved methods so as not to damage the stones. The work of cleaning headstones is ongoing and is making a significant difference in the appearance of this historic cemetery.

With the assistance and expertise of Warner & Troost Monument Co. in East Dundee, four broken veteran headstones were deemed repairable. Phase 1 of the S.O.S. repair project was completed in 2023 with the repair and restoration of three of those veteran headstones: Colonel Gustavus Palmer, Dr. James Graves and Colonel William Huffman.

Phase 2 of the S.O.S. project (Spring 2025) will be to repair several obelisk headstones (including that of Civil War veteran James Best) where the base is in place, but the obelisk on top is laying on the ground. Our stone setter indicates these repairs are most likely to successfully stay in place for the next century.



The headstone of Civil War veteran, James Best, who died in service is currently broken with the top obelisk portion laying on the ground.

James Best was born June 21, 1842 in McHenry County, Illinois. He was the son of Michael and Hannah Best. The family's 160-acre farm was located in Dorr Township near today's Pleasant Valley Road and Hamilton Road. The Best family moved to Crystal Lake in 1880, living at the corner of today's Pomeroy Avenue and Douglas Street.

On August 24, 1862, 20-year old James Best enlisted for service with the 95th Regiment Illinois Volunteer Infantry, Company E. This regiment went to Camp Fuller in Rockford for training before heading south to Tennessee in November 1862.

A letter from an un-named soldier dated January 8, 1863 published in the Woodstock Sentinel describes the regiment's long march to Tennessee. The author writes, "We are comfortably situated in Collierville and are living as well as one could wish except for the lack of mail being received. A number of our boys have become quite ragged, for the want of clothes, as we have had none since we left Camp Fuller. We may have to wait some time, as the rebels destroyed the clothing which was intended for us at Holly Springs." Sadly, James Best did not survive the stay in Collierville TN, contracting measles and dying on January 16, 1863. His body was brought home to Crystal Lake.

James Best was not the only casualty from measles. Measles was a highly contagious and deadly disease that affected 67,000 Union soldiers, killing more than 4,000. According to the National Park Service, twice as many Civil War soldiers died from disease as from battle wounds, mostly due to poor sanitation.

Although future phases of the S.O.S. project will address ongoing cleaning and restoration issues, the final act of Phase 2 will include the repair of obelisk-type headstones for a number of prominent citizens as well as for our last veteran, James Best.

For additional information on the S.O.S. project, visit: https://cl-hs.org/local-history/cemeteries/sos-save-our-stones/.

About the Author: Diana Kenney is President of the Crystal Lake Historical Society. To contact Diana, email info@cl-hs.org.

The Value of Water Campaign

On its ninth annual national poll, the Value of Water Campaign polls over 1,000 American voters to better understand their opinions on our nation's water infrastructure, what they view as priorities for action, and potential solutions. The 2024 poll results showed 88% of voters ranked ensuring a reliable water supply as extremely important or very important.

Water affordability rose 9% from 2023 as a concern among voters. This shows a growing support for a permanent federal water bill assistance program.

Read below for additional facts from the Campaign!

Better Public Health



The Covid-19 pandemic has shown that the public health benefits from safe drinking water and wastewater treatments are immeasurable.

1.7 Trillion

Gallons of drinking water lost each year to faulty, aging, or leaky pipes.





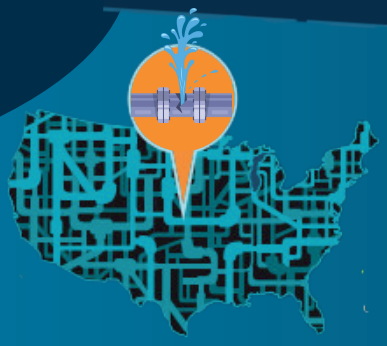


Employment Growth

With sufficient investment, the 30 largest US drinking water and wastewater utilities would be able to support 289,000 jobs by 2033.

Two Minutes

How often a water main breaks in the United States.

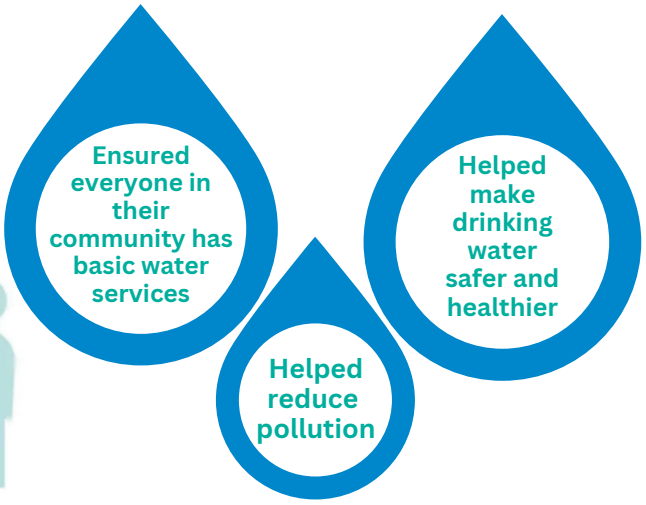


Source: US Water Alliance



61% of voters would pay $50 more per year on their water bills if it:





Clearly CRYSTAL LAKE CORNER

CRYSTAL LAKE



Sweet Treats Around Crystal Lake

Supporting the local economy by shopping and dining at local establishments is the heart of what makes Crystal Lake a welcoming, vibrant and sought after community to live and be part of. The holidays are in full swing and there are a lot of great places around town to find tasty treats to enjoy, or order ahead to bring for upcoming holiday get-togethers.

Pies, Cakes, Cookies, Oh My!

Pots and Pies Bakery - *67 E. Woodstock Street*
Savory and sweet pies

Rosie's Gluten Free Sweets - *5150 Northwest Highway*
Vegan and gluten free pies, cakes and cookies

Around the Clock Restaurant - *5011 Northwest Highway*
Whole pies and pies by the slice

Cheshire Cakes - *40 N. Williams Street*
Cakes, cookies and cupcakes

Ana's Cakes and Bakery - *35 Berkshire Drive, Suite 9*
Cakes and pastries

Nothing Bundt Cakes - *5300 Northwest Highway, Suite B*
Bundt cakes and bite size bundtinis

Crumbl Cookies - *5500 Northwest Highway, Unit B*
Cookies large enough to share

Chocolates Galore

Mellie's Chocolates & Co. - *2 N. Williams Street*
Assorted chocolates and candies

Fannie May - *200 W. Virginia Street*
Assorted chocolates

The Inside Scoop Ice Cream & Candy Shop - *53 N. Williams Street*
Assorted chocolates and candies

New Businesses

Three new businesses now open just in time for the holidays!

- Hogar Furniture & More - 230 W. Virginia Street, Unit 300

A retail furniture store

- The Spice and Tea Exchange - 57 N. Williams Street

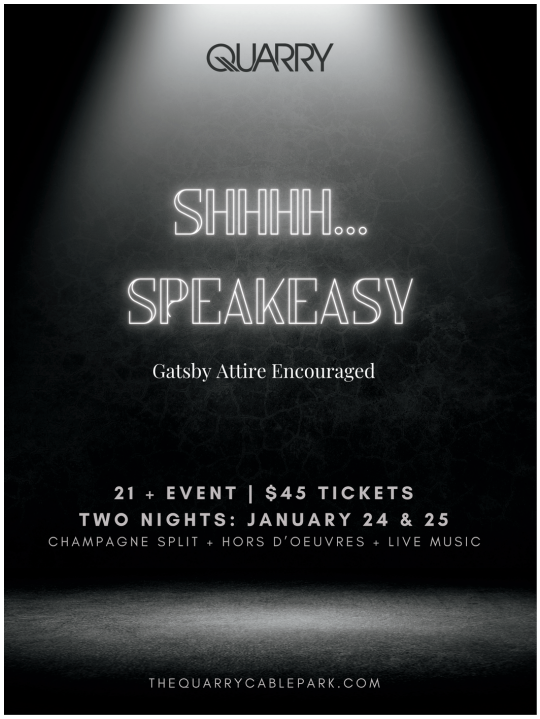
A specialty store for gourmet spices, fine quality tea, custom blends, honey, salts, sugars, olive oil and accessories

- Colorways Yarn Shoppe - 1 Crystal Lake Plaza, Unit D

A retail yarn store offering a wide variety of high quality yarn, fibers and classes related to the fiber arts.

The Quarry

Save the date! Great events are coming up after the holiday season! For more information, visit: https://thequarrycablepark.com/upcoming-events/.



Electronic Utility Bill

DID YOU KNOW you can receive your water and sewer utility bill electronically? Save yourself the wait for your City utility bill and sign up for paperless billing today. It also helps with going green! There is no charge for this service. Simply call, 815-459-2020 and a City staff member will be happy to assist you.



CALENDAR | DECEMBER 2024

Tuesday, December 3
Economic Development Committee
8:00 A.M.

Tuesday, December 3
City Council Meeting
7:00 P.M.

Wednesday, December 4
Planning and Zoning Commission Meeting
7:00 P.M.

Thursday, December 5
Historic Preservation Commission Meeting
3:00 P.M.

Thursday, December 12
Youth Commission Meeting
4:00 P.M.

Tuesday, December 17
City Council Meeting
7:00 P.M.

Wednesday, December 18
Sustainability Committee Meeting
6:30 P.M.

Wednesday, December 18
Planning and Zoning Commission Meeting
7:00 P.M.

Tuesday, December 24
City Offices Closed

Wednesday, December 25
City Offices Closed

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 MANAGER
Eric Helm

Police/Fire/Ambulance Emergency Only
911

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

www.crystallake.org

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100 W. Woodstock Street
Crystal Lake, IL 60014

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Visit: https://www.crystallake.org/your-government/communications/enews-sign-up

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 emailed to comments@crystallake.org.