



WILL COUNTY, ILLINOIS

# NEWSLETTER

FEBRUARY 2024



**JENNIFER BERTINO-TARRANT**  
WILL COUNTY EXECUTIVE



CELEBRATES

## BLACK HISTORY MONTH

Will County was proud to celebrate Black History Month throughout February! This annual observance offers us all an opportunity to honor the achievements, resilience, and cultural history of the Black community on a national, state, and local level.

To help spread the word about the enduring importance of recognizing Black History Month, I asked a group of local leaders to share their perspectives as part of the ongoing Will County Leadership Series. I'm very thankful for those who took the time to share their thoughts, which we've featured on our website:

**Dwayne Barefield** – Pastor, All Nations COGIC and President of the Harvey Brooks Motivational and Development Foundation

**Yolanda Farmer** – Executive Vice President, Joliet Junior College

**James R. Farrell** – Chief Information Officer, Village of Bolingbrook

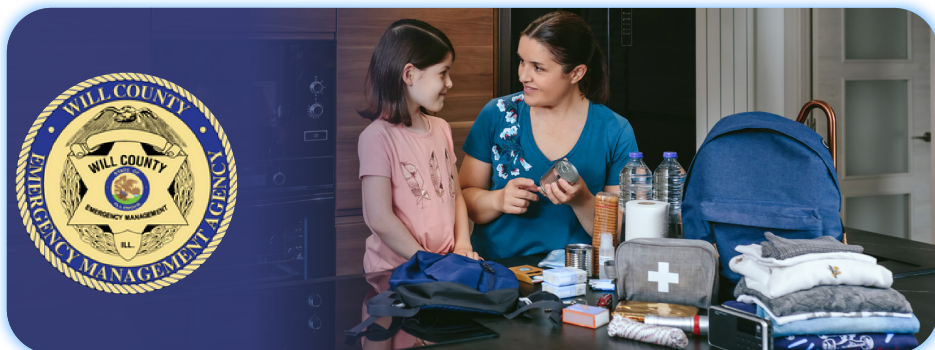
**Betty Washington** - Community Leader

**Debra Upshaw** - NHBW Joliet Chapter President

Each leader was asked about the importance of this month and why everyone should take the time to learn more about Black History. For Dr. Yolanda Farmer, Black History Month “serves as a collective moment for our country to deliberately recognize and honor Black Americans’ rich history, enduring traditions, and invaluable contributions.” For James Farrell, showcasing African American history “inspires future generations, especially young people of color, to pursue their dreams and strive for excellence.”

**Read The Full Responses At:**  
[willcounty.gov/news/will-county-leadership-series-black-history-month-2024](http://willcounty.gov/news/will-county-leadership-series-black-history-month-2024)

*Jennifer Bertino-Tarrant*  
Jennifer Bertino-Tarrant | Will County Executive



## When Seconds Matter – Public Preparedness Workshop

Don't miss this opportunity to strengthen your preparedness skills and safety knowledge!

The Will County Emergency Management Agency is hosting its first-ever Public Preparedness Workshop, “When Seconds Matter”, to help residents expand their knowledge about public safety and how to prepare for a wide range of emergency situations. The workshop will take place from 9:00 AM until 3:00 PM on March 9 at Joliet Junior College.

The Public Preparedness Workshop will cover important disaster-related topics such as histories of past local disasters; hands-on preparedness training, including on essential skills like CPR, Stop the Bleed and Narcan administration; threat recognition; and how to assess potential hazards.

Spots are still available in the General Public Track! If spots fill up, stay tuned for future educational opportunities from Will County EMA.

**Register Today At:** [willcountyema.org/publicpreparednessworkshop](http://willcountyema.org/publicpreparednessworkshop)



## 2024 Kids' Fair – Education, Entertainment, and Fun!

Over 800 attendees joined us for a fun-filled morning on Presidents Day at Will County Executive Jennifer Bertino-Tarrant's Kids' Fair!

The three-hour event featured a wide variety of games and prizes for the kids at the 60 vendor tables, while parents, grandparents, and caretakers could learn more about resources available in the community. Guests were also entertained with live performances from Spectrum Youth Singers, Thrive Dance Team, and TM Martial Arts.

This annual event is a wonderful opportunity to provide fun and educational programming for local kids on their day off from school. A very special thank you to Troy School District 30C for hosting this fair again at Troy Middle School!

## 2024 PATHWAYS to PROFESSIONS CAREER EXPO



March 13th  
Romeoville Athletic & Events Center  
55 Phelps Ave.  
Romeoville, IL 60446

## Workforce Services Expo Highlights Careers and Professions – March 13

The Workforce Services Division of Will County is gearing up for the 2024 Pathways to Professions Expo, taking place from 2:30 PM - 5:00 PM on March 13 at the Romeoville Athletic & Events Center.

The expo offers a hands-on experience for residents to meet with various businesses and industries about in-demand careers, training opportunities, and available positions in the community.

The Workforce Services Division launched the Pathways to Professions Expo last year with the primary goal of introducing high school students to possible career paths to explore after graduation. The event's afternoon session is open to the public to learn more about local career opportunities.

**Learn More At:** [jobs4people.org/Calendar/P2P-Career-Expo](https://jobs4people.org/Calendar/P2P-Career-Expo)

## INTERNATIONAL WOMEN'S DAY Blood Drive

Friday, March 8, 2024  
1:00 PM - 6:00 PM

American Red Cross  
Training Room  
1293 Windham Parkway  
Romeoville, IL 60446



## Donate Blood for International Women's Day – March 8!

In celebration of International Women's Day, Will County Executive Jennifer Bertino-Tarrant, Representative Natalie Manley, Senator Meg Loughran Cappel, Representative Dee Avelar, and the American Red Cross are hosting a blood drive from 1:00 PM - 6:00 PM on March 8 in Romeoville.

Donating blood will help us reach our goal of donating 30 units of blood in the midst of a nationwide shortage. The drive will be held at the American Red Cross Training Room at 1293 Windham Parkway in Romeoville.

To schedule an appointment, use the link below, or call/text Representative Manley's District Office at: (815) 725-2741.

**Join the "30 unit challenge" and register today!**

**Schedule an Appointment Today At:**

[redcrossblood.org/give.html/drive-results?zipSponsor=RepManley](https://redcrossblood.org/give.html/drive-results?zipSponsor=RepManley)



## Introducing: Will County Animal Protection Services!

Responding to a national animal welfare crisis, Will County Executive Bertino-Tarrant announced earlier this month a series of ordinance changes that aim to expand the role of the county's animal services. The changes include renaming the county's animal welfare department to "Will County Animal Protection Services Department" to better reflect their enhanced mission.

Several ordinance changes have been approved to modernize how the county protects animals, serves the public, and provides resources to pet owners. This progressive new direction is in the wake of a nationwide increase in animal shelter populations.

In addition to the new department name, other important changes include:

- Establishing an adoption program for the first time in the agency's history.
- Incentivizing microchipping for cats and dogs by offering free microchips to pets owned by senior citizens, military personnel, and veterans.
- Strengthening animal protection laws through harsher penalties for animal cruelty violations.
- Providing more services to residents to keep pets in homes with their loved ones.

Earlier this month Will County Executive Jennifer Bertino-Tarrant, Will County State's Attorney James Glasgow, and Will County APS Administrator Anna Payton (pictured) celebrated the progressive new approach to animal services, which represented the first updates to county animal care and control ordinances in Will County since 2006.

Stay tuned for future department updates, including adoption events and services available to pet owners!

**Connect with APS At:** [facebook.com/willcountyanimalservices](https://facebook.com/willcountyanimalservices)