



WILL COUNTY, ILLINOIS

NEWSLETTER

OCTOBER 2024



JENNIFER BERTINO-TARRANT
WILL COUNTY EXECUTIVE

As October comes to a close, I would like to take a moment to spotlight the importance of National Breast Cancer Awareness Month. This month is an opportunity to raise awareness of breast cancer, stand with survivors, and honor the memory of those who have lost their lives.

This is a deeply personal topic for so many in our community, as breast cancer remains the most common cancer diagnosis for women. In Illinois, more than 11,000 women are diagnosed with breast cancer annually and one in eight will be diagnosed with breast cancer in their lifetime. It remains the leading cause of cancer death in women aged 20 to 59. Raising awareness is key, as it reminds both women and men about the importance of screening and early detection.

At the county level, we hosted a breast cancer awareness event for staff in coordination with the Will County Health Department to honor survivors and share information about early detection resources. Our Facilities Department also illuminated the Will County Courthouse in the colors of green, teal, and pink in recognition of Metastatic Breast Cancer Awareness (MBC). Also known as Stage 4, MBC is when cancer has spread beyond the breast to the other parts of the body.

These are just a few examples of how we can work to spotlight the impact of this disease and the need for continued research. Together, we can show our support and bring a message of hope to those affected by cancer.

Jennifer Bertino-Tarrant | Will County Executive



Will County Expanding Space for Veteran Services

Will County leaders and the Will County Veterans Assistance Commission (VAC) recently announced a collaboration to create a unified Veteran Assistance and Support Center in Joliet. The center will occupy an existing county building at 1300 Copperfield Avenue and would be at the heart of a centralized campus for Will County veterans.

The goal of the project is to house the VAC and other veteran organizations at the county-owned office building, creating a unified “one-stop shop” for veterans and their families to access resources. The VAC would use the expanded footprint to increase existing services, including case management, mental health services, and their physical health program.

The VAC will occupy at least the first two floors of the four-story office building, with the other space reserved for veteran-focused outside agencies. The expanded space would allow the VAC to hire more veteran service officers, reduce appointment wait times, and expand programmatic offerings.

The new center would join both the Hines VA’s Joliet Community Based Outpatient Clinic and the Volunteers of America Illinois’ Hope Manor Housing at a new unified Veteran Support Campus on the east side of Joliet. This unified campus will make it easier for veterans and their families to access wrap-around services.

[Learn More: willcounty.gov/News/will-county-pursuing-expanded-space-for-veterans-services](http://willcounty.gov/News/will-county-pursuing-expanded-space-for-veterans-services)



Dog Adoption Fees Waived During “Barktober”

Will County Animal Protection Services (WCAPS) celebrated “Barktober” throughout the month by waiving all adoption fees for dogs in recognition of National Adopt a Shelter Dog Month.

As part of the promotion, all adoption fees for dogs are waived during the month of October. Adoption fees for all dogs under 50 pounds are being covered by a generous donation from Will County State’s Attorney James W. Glasgow.

National Adopt a Shelter Dog Month is sponsored by the American Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals (ASPCA) and was created to raise awareness of the increased population of dogs entering the shelter system.

Miss the promotion? Adoptable dogs are still available throughout the year and can be viewed on the WCAPS Petfinder website – IL1035.petfinder.com. Schedule an appointment to visit available pets by calling (815) 462-5633 or emailing adopt@willcountyillinois.com. Adoption hours are Monday through Friday from 12:00 p.m. until 4:00 p.m.

Find your new best friend searching for a forever home!

[View Available Pets: IL1035.petfinder.com](http://willcounty.gov/News/will-county-pursuing-expanded-space-for-veterans-services)





Moody's: Will County Maintaining an "Excellent" Credit Position

Will County Executive Jennifer Bertino-Tarrant announced this month that Moody's Ratings (Moody's) has released their most recent credit analysis for the County. According to Moody's, Will County is maintaining an "excellent" credit position due to financial management practices and a growing local economy. Will County continues to maintain a "Aa1 Stable" credit rating, which is the highest tier of a AA credit rating. Moody's cites an "expectation that the county will maintain its strong financial position" due to the county's "conservative financial management and growing revenue."

The county's high credit score is strengthened by its economic base, strong reserves and liquidity, and above-median resident income. The county also achieved the highest ranking for fiscal governance, due to "strong budgetary management with multiyear planning and strong transparency and disclosure inclusive of quarterly financial reports."

This positive report reflects Will County's fiscally responsible practices, proactive budgetary planning, and the strength of our local economy. Congratulations to the Finance Department on working hard throughout the year to keep the county on a strong financial footing!

Three Family-Friendly Events Focused on Transportation Planning

Will County's Long-Range Transportation Plan is taking shape, and your input is needed!

The Will County Executive Office and the Will County Division of Transportation will be hosting three fall community workshops to present the project's latest findings and recommendations to address key transportation concerns throughout the county.

Family-friendly fun awaits! Enjoy food, interactive activities, and the opportunity to make a difference in your community.

To learn more and stay connected, visit the WCLRTP website at the link below!

[Learn More: ourwaywill.co](http://ourwaywill.co)



Music and Pie for Your Thoughts Workshop

Beecher Amvets Post 67

Thursday, November 7 | 4PM - 7PM

Enjoy live music and free food, including delicious pie and apple cider, while sharing your thoughts!

Touch-a-Truck Workshop

Manhattan Fire Department

Saturday, November 9 | 11AM - 2PM

Bring the family for an up-close look at fire trucks and fire safety demonstrations, while participating in an interactive workshop.

Petting Zoo Workshop

Wilmington North Island Park

Sunday, November 10 | 11AM - 2PM

Share your thoughts on the future of transportation, while the family enjoys a fun-for-all-ages petting zoo!

Investing in Public Safety

Will County's allocation of American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) dollars is funding large-scale infrastructure improvements and public safety initiatives throughout the county. Read how ARPA funds are being utilized by Will County organizations to enhance public safety services.

Village of Manhattan

The Village of Manhattan and the Manhattan Fire Protection District utilized \$500,000 in ARPA funds to support their long-term goal of creating a unified public safety campus. Local leaders held a groundbreaking ceremony earlier this month to celebrate the ARPA-funded water and sewer infrastructure project that will support the new campus.

The project marks a pivotal step in enhancing essential services for the Manhattan area. The installation of new water and sewer lines will not only lay the groundwork for the forthcoming Public Works Facility, but it will also support the operations of the Manhattan Fire Protection District.

"We are thrilled to begin this much needed infrastructure project, which represents our commitment to working together with our taxing partners to save residents money. Thanks to the support from Will County Executive Jennifer Bertino-Tarrant and the Will County Board for providing ARPA funds, we can enhance our community's infrastructure and improve public safety while also promoting economic development in our area." – Mayor Mike Adrianse



Plainfield Fire Protection District

Plainfield Fire Protection District utilized nearly \$200,000 of ARPA funds by reimbursing staff expenditures from the pandemic, which made funding available a new ambulance for the district. Adding one more reliable ambulance to the fleet has increased the district's ability to ensure the safety of their community.

"ARPA funding allowed the Plainfield Fire Protection District the ability to enhance our services and ensure staffing levels could be maintained during the pandemic." – Chief Vito Bonomo

[Learn More | Manhattan Project: willcountyillinois.org/village-of-manhattan](http://willcountyillinois.org/village-of-manhattan)

[Learn More | Plainfield Project: willcountyillinois.org/plainfield-fire-protection-district-maintaining-staffing](http://willcountyillinois.org/plainfield-fire-protection-district-maintaining-staffing)