



WILL COUNTY, ILLINOIS

NEWSLETTER

JUNE 2025



**JENNIFER
BERTINO-TARRANT**
WILL COUNTY EXECUTIVE

Dear Residents,

Last month, my office partnered with the amazing team at ShareFest Will County to host our annual Free Food Giveaway at the Will County Office Building. I'm always honored to work with ShareFest, which provides free food to thousands of Will County residents annually. At this year's event we were able to distribute over 65,000 pounds of food to 1,150 families, along with sharing information about ShareFest's year-round food assistance opportunities.

This event would not have been possible without the volunteers who turn out every year to share food with their neighbors in need. We had a record of over 60 volunteers at this year's event who not only loaded food into vehicles on a sunny day, but worked overtime to make sure that all available food made it to those who needed it. I'm constantly inspired by Will County residents stepping up for their communities.

Our commitment to food assistance doesn't end with this event. On June 30, we're partnering with Joliet Township Government and Supervisor Cesar Guerra to host a Fresh Produce Pop-Up at Forest Park Community Center (1017 Woodruff Rd., Joliet) from 3 PM – 5 PM. These partnerships a wonderful way to connect residents with fresh and nutritious produce.

In closing, I want to take a moment to spotlight that we're celebrating equality and freedom this month with both Juneteenth and Pride Month. Both recognitions provide an opportunity to reflect on history and the vibrant diversity of our neighborhoods. I'm committed to celebrating and doing everything I can to support our communities.

Jennifer Bertino-Tarrant

Jennifer Bertino-Tarrant | Will County Executive



MAKING A DIFFERENCE



FUTURE HOME OF THE WILL COUNTY VAC

Construction Starts on Veteran Assistance and Support Center

Construction has started at the future home of the Will County Veterans Assistance Commission (VAC) at 1300 Copperfield Avenue in Joliet. Once completed, the new facility will serve as a unified Veteran Assistance and Support Center at the heart of a unified campus for veteran services.

County Executive Bertino-Tarrant and the Will County VAC announced in October 2024 a plan to create a unified "one-stop shop" by moving the commission into the currently vacant county-owned building, alongside other veteran services.

The expanded footprint will empower the VAC to expand services to Will County veterans and their families, including by hiring more veteran service officers, reducing appointment wait times, and increasing programmatic offerings. The VAC also plans on expanding their mental health and physical health programs to focus more on overall wellness, utilizing an on-site fitness center and personalized spaces for counseling.

The new center will 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/construction-begins-on-new-will-county-veteran-assistance-and-support-center

PUBLIC INFORMATION MEETING



**EASTERN WILL COUNTY
FREIGHT MOBILITY
CORRIDOR STUDY**

Public Meeting to be Held About Eastern Will County Freight Mobility

The Will County Division of Transportation (DOT) will hold a Public Information Meeting to share information and hear feedback about the ongoing Eastern Will County Freight Mobility Corridor Study. The open-house style meeting will take place from 4-7 p.m. on June 26, 2025, at Monee Elementary School, 25425 S. Will Center Road in Monee.

The meeting will focus on the next phase of an ongoing study resulting from community concerns regarding the growth in truck traffic and the lack of a dedicated east-west freight corridor during a period of rapid regional economic development. Will County DOT is currently studying opportunities to design and construct highway improvements along the Crete-Monee Corridor to create a dedicated truck route and to redirect freight traffic from local roads.

Participants can attend the meeting at any time during the meeting hours to view a presentation and project materials, share feedback directly to the project team, and submit written comments.

Learn More: www.eastwillmobility.com

 **THANK YOU!**



**FIGHTING OPIOID ADDICTION
IN THE COMMUNITY**



NEW GRANT LAUNCH

Construction Starts on Veteran Assistance and Support Center

The Imagination Library in Will County has received two major grant awards, marking a significant milestone in bringing the popular gift-giving program to Will County communities. Thank you to both the Rotary Club of Joliet and the Caesars Foundation for being partners in this initiative to promote literacy throughout Will County!

Rotary Club of Joliet (\$50,000)

The Imagination Library of Will County was selected by members of the Rotary Club of Joliet as the recipient of their 2025 grant award, which provided a \$50,000 donation to the gift-giving program. The donation aligns with Rotary's commitment to basic education and literacy, as the Imagination Library of Will County mails free, high-quality, and age-appropriate books to children throughout the county. The donation was presented by the club to Will County Executive Jennifer Bertino-Tarrant and the Will County Center for Economic Development.

Caesars Foundation (\$10,000)

The Caesars Foundation awarded a \$10,000 grant award to the Imagination Library of Will County, which was presented at Harrah's Casino in Joliet. The significant donation will provide free books to 625 children in Will County! The donation was made as part of the Caesars Foundation's competitive annual Foundation Grant, which has provided over \$80 million to charitable organizations since its inception.

Thank you again to our partners! Learn more about Imagination Library, including how to donate, by visiting the link below!

Learn More: willcountyillinois.org/imagination-library

Will County Launches Grant for Programs Addressing Opioid Epidemic

Will County has announced \$2 Million in grant funds available to support programs aimed at addressing the opioid epidemic and supporting people who have been impacted by opioids. Organizations in Will County can apply for up to \$250,000 to invest in treatment or prevention programs.

Funds were made available as part of a settlement agreement following a series of state and federal lawsuits against various pharmaceutical companies. As part of the agreement, Will County will receive settlement dollars received by the State of Illinois from companies involved with producing and distributing opioids. The Will County Board has voted to utilize these funds to create a grant opportunity aimed at treating Opioid Use Disorder and Substance Use Disorder.

Applicants for the grant must be located in Will County and dollars must be used for Will County residents only. Grant applications must be submitted by July 15, 2025.

Learn More: www.gotomygrants.com/Public/Opportunities/Details/eafca46a-15af-4f62-917d-831d3a5afe53



**PRIDE &
JUNETEENTH
CELEBRATING FREEDOM**