



WILL COUNTY, ILLINOIS

NEWSLETTER

FEBRUARY 2026



JENNIFER BERTINO-TARRANT
WILL COUNTY EXECUTIVE

When we launched the Imagination Library of Will County in July of last year, I was unsure about the level of interest that we would have from local families for the literacy program. So, I was surprised to learn this week that after just over six months, **Will County is the first program in the state to exceed 6,000 children registered** for free, monthly books mailed directly to their home!

I am pleased that so many local families see the value of this program and the power of literacy for children. This program is more than just free books: the research is clear that by reading to children under five, you're ensuring stronger learning outcomes and educational growth. By already mailing 25,162 books throughout the county, we are strengthening early childhood education in all our communities.

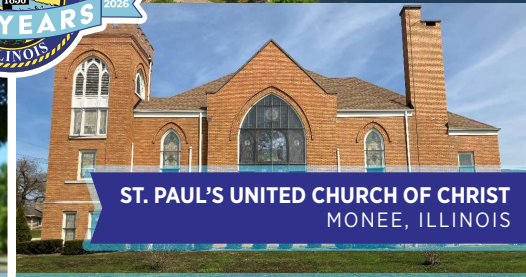
This milestone would not have been possible without our local partners, especially the generous financial support we've received from local businesses and organizations. I also want to thank our state legislators for continuing to support the state match, which ensures that this program remains viable at the local level. We're leading the state as the program continues to grow statewide at a rapid pace, with 88 counties maintaining active programs.

If you haven't already, please visit www.WillCountyImaginationLibrary.org to learn more.

Jennifer Bertino-Tarrant | Will County Executive



LINCOLN HIGHWAY MARKER
NEW LENOX, ILLINOIS



ST. PAUL'S UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST
MONEE, ILLINOIS

LOCAL LANDMARK SPOTLIGHT

Will County at 190: February History Spotlight

To celebrate Will County's 190th anniversary of incorporation, the Executive Office is partnering with the Will County Historic Preservation Commission to spotlight the officially designated Local Landmarks throughout the county. This month, we recognize a Lincoln-themed highway landmark in honor of Abraham Lincoln's birthday and the county's newest landmark.

Lincoln Highway Marker – New Lenox

One of the last remaining of 3,000 commemorative concrete highway markers that were installed along the historic Lincoln Highway in the late 1920's by the Boy Scouts of America, this marker honors the memory of Abraham Lincoln and celebrates the interconnectivity of the United States that occurred in the early 20th century by the national highway system. Illinois remains the only state in the nation to designate its entire stretch of Lincoln Highway as a National Scenic Byway, reflective of the historic importance of transportation to the state's growth.

This marker was relocated from its original location in New Lenox, placed at a location in front of Lincoln Way Central High School, and was landmarked by the County in September 2016.

St. Paul's United Church of Christ - Monee

Will County's newest landmark, the St. Paul's United Church of Christ's history dates back to the earliest German settlers of eastern Will County. The original church dates back to 1854 and was located in the St. Paul's Cemetery immediately next to the current structure, which is also an official landmark. Construction of the existing church was completed in 1915 and the church has served as a cultural anchor of the community for over a century.

The church was constructed in the gothic revival style, emphasizing tall structures with a focus on height to create a sense of awe. The church was officially landmarked on June 18, 2025 and the plaque was presented at the February meeting of the Will County Historic Preservation Commission.

Women's HEALTH CARE EXPO



SATURDAY
MARCH 21

9:30AM – 11:00AM

Women's Health Care Expo to be Held in Plainfield

Will County residents are invited to attend a Women's Health Care Expo in Plainfield on Saturday, March 21. The event is being hosted by State Senator Meg Loughran Cappel in partnership with Will County Executive Jennifer Bertino-Tarrant, State Representative Natalie Manley, House Assistant Majority Leader Dagmara Avelar, and Emediate Cure.

The expo will be held from 9:30-11 a.m. on Saturday, March 21 at the C.W. Avery Family YMCA, located at 15120 Wallin Dr. in Plainfield. Speakers at the event will discuss the many stages of women's health, with a focus on menopause and nutrition. The expo's speakers will include health care professionals and several local resource entities will be on-hand at the event with informational resources.

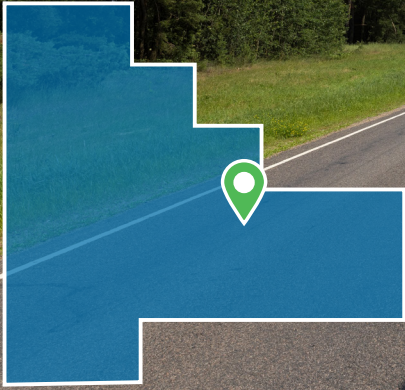
Attendees are also encouraged to donate items for a feminine hygiene products drive, with donated items going to the Will County Health Department.

For questions or concerns, residents can contact Sen. Loughran Cappel's office by calling (815) 267-6119 or visiting the link below.

Register Now: www.senatorloughrancappel.com

Manhattan-Monee Road

PROJECTS



DOT to Host Public Meeting on Manhattan-Monee Road Project

The Will County Division of Transportation (Will County DOT) will be hosting a meeting to discuss potential improvements to Manhattan-Monee Road from US 45 to Center Road. The meeting will be held from 4 p.m. to 7 p.m. on Thursday, March 19 at the Peotone Intermediate Center (9526 W. Manhattan-Monee Road, Frankfort).

The meeting will provide an overview of the project, a review of existing conditions, and discuss initial options to improve identified issues on the roadway. The meeting will be conducted in an open-house style format, with project displays and team members available to discuss the project directly with residents.

The future improvements are part of the Manhattan-Monee Road Projects, comprised of three separate road projects along the increasingly utilized corridor. The Manhattan-Monee Road from US 45 to Center Road Project will aim to address pavement at the end of its useful life, narrow shoulders, and needed improvements at the US Route 45 intersection.

Learn More: www.manhattan-monee-study.com/purpose-and-need-3

PAID Construction Pre-Apprenticeship Program

LIMITED SPOTS AVAILABLE!

SPONSORED BY



Will County Pre-Apprenticeship Program Returns in April

Applications are now available for the Will County Pre-Apprenticeship Training program, a partnership between HIRE360 and Will County Executive Jennifer Bertino-Tarrant!

The free nine-week program offers Will County residents a specialized training option in Joliet for entering the construction trades. The course offers a biweekly stipend, industry-recognized curriculum, apprenticeship site tours, test preparation, and credentials such as CPR and OSHA-10. The paid class prepares individuals for entry into registered union apprenticeship programs.

The program is funded in part by the Illinois Works Jobs Program Act, created as a result of the historic \$45 billion capital plan and Governor Pritzker's commitment to expanding equity in Illinois' construction workforce.

Spots are filling fast so register today!

Register Now: hire360chicago.com/will_county_il_works



Registration Open for Preparedness Workshop

The Will County Emergency Management Agency (EMA) will host the 3rd annual "When Seconds Matter: Public Preparedness Workshop" on Saturday, March 28, 2026, at Reed-Custer High School in Braidwood. The free community event is designed to help residents stay safe, informed, and prepared for emergencies and disasters of all kinds.

The workshop will include several expert-led sessions on nuclear readiness, severe weather preparedness, and how community awareness and early action can help prevent acts of targeted violence. Attendees will gain actionable steps they can take before, during, and after emergencies.

Attendees can also visit exhibit tables and connect with local volunteer organizations. The event is focused on ages 12 and up, and registration is required. Learn more and register at the link below!

Register Now: www.willcountyema.org/workshop

WHEN SECONDS MATTER PUBLIC PREPAREDNESS WORKSHOP

MARCH 28 | 8:30AM - 12:30PM