# WASHINGTON TOWNSHIP



# FALL NEWSLETTER

# Assessor Carol Ann Blume Retires

On July 31, 2018, Assessor Carol Ann Blume retired as the Washington Township Assessor. Blume served as Township assessor for 32 <sup>1</sup>/<sub>2</sub> years and was the longest serving member on the current Township Board. Blume said her "life circumstances" have changed and it was necessary to resign and it was an honor to serve the residents of Washington Township as Assessor.

At the September 6th Washington Township Board meeting, the Board passed Resolution #18-01, a resolution "<u>In Appreciation of Washington</u> <u>Township Assessor Carol Ann Blume</u>". Township Supervisor Mike Stanula congratulated Assessor Blume for her hard work and her many years of dedicated service and on behalf of the Board, presented Blume with a plaque containing the resolution. The Board publicly thanked Carol for her service and began the search to replace Blume.



Carol Ann Blume & Supervisor Mike Stanula

# News from the Washington Township Community Building Board of Managers

The Washington Township Community Hall Board of Managers have continued their mission to update and maintain the Community Hall by approving and completing several projects over the past year. The repair to the brickwork, concrete accents and windows on the south side of the building was completed last November, restoring not only the appearance, but more importantly its safety and stability. The floors on the lower level have been professionally cleaned and waxed, the walls painted and light covers replaced to update that area also. Two of our next projects that will be completed before the end of November 2018 will be the replacement of the glass block windows on the upper level and the replacement and installation of new Exit Signs and Emergency Lights throughout the building.

To encourage greater utilization and promote awareness of the facility, during the months of September, October, November and December 2018 we have been offering a special rental rate of \$100/day for Washington Township Residents. We hope to spread the word that the Community Hall is a great location for family parties (anniversaries, birthdays, baby showers, weddings, etc...) as well as meetings and seminars. Anyone interested in seeing the building or reserving a date should contact Kellie Karstensen, Community Hall Manager at 708-417-6403 to check availability and details.

We are also excited to invite you to our  $2^{nd}$  Annual Holiday Bazaar on Saturday, December 8 from 9 am – 2 pm at the Community Hall. We have over 20 vendors lined up featuring a variety of unique gift ideas and we will be offering various food items for purchase as well. To add to the holiday fun we will have a special visit from Santa Claus from 12 noon – 2 pm with an opportunity for young and old alike to tell Santa their Christmas Wishes! A list of vendors and more information will be published over the next several weeks so we hope you mark your calendars now and join us on December 8<sup>th</sup>!

# From Supervisor Mike Stanula...

Hello Friends and Neighbors-

I hope that everyone enjoyed their summer this year, as we look forward to the sunny cool days of autumn. Speaking of the sun, I would like to take a few minutes to talk about Solar Farms. Solar technology has been around for at least 60 years. Originally developed by NASA for the space program, solar technology has trickled down to power everyday things like calculators and light fixtures.

There are mainly two types of solar power; active and passive. Passive solar uses the heat of the sun to warm things up. This is as simple as opening the drapes on your Living Room windows to let the sun warm the room up. Another example of passive solar is solar hot water systems. Solar panels on a roof collect the suns' heat, which in turn heats up water that is stored until you need to use it.

Active solar technology uses the suns' radiation which is collected by panels. This can be used even in the winter time when the sun doesn't even feel warm. The process is done thru photovoltaic panels. The panels have what the solar industry calls thin film technology, which easily conducts electricity.

There has been a lot of talk about solar farms as of late. This is because of the recent Illinois New Future Energy Jobs Act, which has allowed solar companies to develop commercial and community solar farms. Commercial Solar farms or utility solar farms use active solar to collect and convert electricity to sell to utility companies. Community Solar Farms also use active solar, but let residential customers buy into or invest in the community solar farm and in turn would receive credit on their electric bill for the electricity produced by the farm. Solar Farms are about 20 acres in size and need to be near utility lines.

How is Washington Township involved? Recently two solar companies have approached the Township to develop Community Solar Farms, one off of Indiana Ave. and one near County Line Road. The properties are agricultural and would be leased from the owner(s) for a minimum 20 years. Once the solar farm is no longer functional (average life span of the panels is about 20 years) the property would be renovated back to farm land. The solar farm would be surrounded by a secured fence as well as landscaping to buffer the view.

This is all very new to not only our area but also to the Will County. The Township has looked carefully into these applications and has expressed concerns to the county about such things as maintenance of the grounds, quality of the landscaping, environmental impact and feasibility of returning the land back to agricultural use. As of the end of this past March, Will County has delayed the approval of three solar farms (including Washington Township) until more information is obtained and the concerns of the agricultural community can be addressed. The Township Board will stay on top of this and will keep our community informed. Because Beecher is a Great place to be!

Learn more about Washington Township and the services we offer our residents by visiting us online at:

www.washingtontownshipil.com

Washington Township would like to THANK all of our businesses that advertise in our newsletter. Please patronize our advertisers as they have shown a commitment to support your Township!! Advertising helps keep the cost of printing and mailing this newsletter to a minimum!

## From Road Commissioner Jerry Meyer

By the time you read this newsletter, I predict that we may no longer be using air conditioning and your furnace may be heating your home. Like any weatherperson, it's only a guess and Mother Nature has her own way of handling the weather, and when living in the Midwest we learn to accept anything she gives us. Farmers are busy working in the fields and the farm equipment is getting bigger every year and they have to move from field to field and we share the same roads. So let them have room on the roads so they can get their job done. After all, we all eat because of the products they grow.

Just an update on what is happening around the Township. Commonwealth Edison is working on the high tension power lines from Cottage Grove west to Western Avenue. They are upgrading the single pole high-line, replacing the wire and replacing one of the towers and this project should last until February. There will be a lot of truck traffic in and around the power lines so drive carefully around this area.

The railroad is upgrading the crossings throughout the Township and all crossings should get done this year. As they go through the Township, the railroad crossings might be closed for a few days as repairs are being completed. The railroad has just completed a big crossover, as they call it, meaning a switch between tracks just south of Eagle Lake Road. They had to bring in a lot of heavy equipment to get the job done. They stopped trains for only 12 hours to finish the crossover. The crossover was 400 foot long and was installed in one piece.

As for the Township Highway Department, we are working on Klemme Road between Brunswick and Offner Roads. The road is being straightened and the base of the road is being upgraded along with updating drainage on both sides of the road. We will install 12 inches of stone on the road base and then begin tar and chipping some time in 2019 or 2020 depending on weather. All of this roadwork is being performed with township equipment and by township employees. While this work is being done, the road will be closed to thru traffic. We also will be cutting roadsides this year when the corn and beans have been harvested. We will mow fence line to fence line and this is done to keep the snow from collecting on the roads when the wind blows it around.



# Washington Township Partners with Toys For Tots

Washington Township is once again collecting toys for "Toys For Tots". Working to make this a true township effort, "Toys for Tots" collection boxes are located at the Washington Township Center, Beecher Village Hall, First Community Bank and Trust and Midland States Bank. New, unwrapped and unopened toys can be dropped off at these collection sites during their regular business hours. The township is very thankful for the support the community offered last year and invite our residents to come out and support this worthy cause.

The Toys For Tots program was founded in 1947 and is run be the U. S. Marine Corps Reserve. The Marine Toys for Tots Foundation, is a 501(c)(3) not-for-profit public charity located in Triangle, Virginia and all donations are tax deductible.

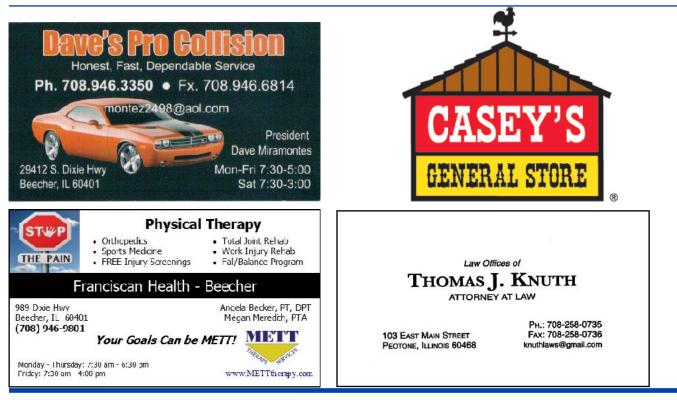
The collection boxes will be available now through December 3. To learn more about Toys For Tots visit them at **toysfortots.org**.

# Washington Township Food Pantry

The Washington Township Food Pantry is open to any Washington Township individual or family that is in need of help. Offering canned foods, paper goods, cleaning items, frozen food and at times, fresh products, the pantry strives to provide quality items for those in need.

As the <u>holiday season</u> approaches, we ask that you consider a donation to the pantry to help those, who are less fortunate, get through the holiday season. If you would like to help, items can be dropped off at the Washington Township Center on Monday through Friday from 9am - 3pm. The pantry also accepts cash donations that is used only to purchase items from the Chicago Food Depository.

The pantry is open on the 2nd & 4th Wednesday of each month from 9am - 10am AND from 6pm - 7pm. Please call Trustee Paul Goldrick at (708) 516-2594 for additional details or if you need assistance. Many thanks to the volunteers who assist at the pantry!





# From Beecher Fire Chief Joe Falaschetti Jr.

#### **Carbon Monoxide (CO) Detectors**

Carbon Monoxide also referred to as CO, is an odorless, colorless, and tasteless gas. It is produced when any fossil fuel, such as; propane, natural gas, coal, oil, or gasoline is burned, and a buildup is caused by insufficient oxygen supplies. Overexposure to CO can cause CO poisoning, which can lead to serious illness, even death.

As of January 1, 2007, CO detectors are required to be installed within 15 feet of all sleeping rooms of all dwelling units. This may require multiple detectors for your home or apartment. This applies to single-family homes, duplexes, townhouses, apartments, hotels, and motels.

#### Types

There are various types of detectors that can be used: battery powered, plug-in with battery backup, and direct-wired in the building electric system with battery back-up. There are some combination smoke detectors that may be used. Please consult the product literature or manufacturer for compatibility with existing detectors.

#### Installation

The homeowner is responsible for the installation of the detector. If you occupy a rental unit, the installation is the landlord's responsibility. The State of Illinois Public Act 094-0741 requires that CO detectors be installed and there are penalties in the act for noncompliance. A copy of the act is available on the Illinois General Assembly.

#### Placement

Place detectors nearest to bedrooms as possible since you are most vulnerable to CO poisoning while sleeping. If your bedrooms are in different parts of the house, place separate detectors near each bedroom area. If you live in an apartment building with forced air heat, make sure there's a detector in the boiler room as well as near the bedrooms.

#### React

It usually takes several hours or more for CO to increase to dangerous levels. If your CO detector goes off *with* illness, get out of the house immediately and call 9-1-1 from another location. The 9-1-1 dispatcher will dispatch the fire department.

If your CO detector goes off and there is <u>no</u> illness, press the reset button to verify the presence of CO. If the alarm goes off again after five minutes, open your windows to allow fresh air into your home leave the house and call 9-1-1. The 9-1-1 dispatcher will dispatch the fire department to check for a CO leak in your home.

#### Please contact the Beecher Fire Protection District at (708) 946-6585 with any questions.

#### **Driving Safely on Icy Roads**

- 1. Decrease your speed and leave yourself plenty of room to stop. You should allow at least three times more space than usual between you and the car in front of you.
- 2. Brake gently to avoid skidding. If your wheels start to lock up, ease off the brake.
- 3. Turn on your lights to increase your visibility to other motorists.
- 4. Keep your lights and windshield clean.
- 5. Use low gears to keep traction, especially on hills.
- 6. Don't use cruise control or overdrive on icy roads.
- Be especially careful on bridges, overpasses and infrequently traveled roads, which will freeze first. Even at temperatures above freezing, if the conditions are wet, you might encounter ice in shady areas or on exposed roadways like bridges.
- 8. Don't pass snowplows and salt trucks. The drivers have limited visibility, and you're likely to find the road in front of them worse than the road behind.
- 9. Don't assume your vehicle can handle all conditions. Even four-wheel and front-wheel drive vehicles can encounter trouble on winter roads.
- 10. If you have to leave your vehicle stranded on the roadway please leave a contact number so we can call when the roads are open.

#### PLEASE DRIVE SAFELY & DON'T TEXT WHILE DRIVING!



# Beecher Women's Club to Hold **2**nd Annual "VERY BAZAAR SALE"

The Beecher Women's Club will host their  $2^{nd}$  annual "Very Bazaar Sale" on Sat., Nov. 3, from 9 AM – 2 PM. The sale will be held at Beecher Elementary School, 629 Penfield Street, Beecher, IL. Entrance will be through the West gym doors, and admission is free.

Bring your family and shop for home-baked goods, crafts, garage sale items, and visit our vendors. A hot dog lunch will be served. Support the oldest philanthropic organization from our community, and shop for the holidays!

If you are interested in being a vendor, please contact Kathy C. at: 708-209-0624. Tables are still available on a limited basis.

## SHOP LOCAL! SUPPORT BEECHER!

#### Arnold's Tree Service, Inc. Beecher, IL (Since 2002) Professional Service! Stump YOUR Grinding Tree Trimming **Tree Removal** Website: Prairie **PROGRAM HIGHLIGHTS:** ArnoldsTreeServiceInc.com eMail: Accredited institution and registered info@arnoldstreeserviceinc.com College apprenticeship program **Fully Insured** Earn your CDL-A in 22 days 708-946-1305 No out-of-pocket tuition costs æ Employment opportunities with **KLLM Transport Services and FFE** KLLM Paid driver training and internship L & H Service 708-300-3345 CLASSES START **EVERY MONDAY!** WWW.KLLMDRIVINGACADEMY.COM amfort and Peace of Mind Heating • Plumbing • Cooling **Geothermal Systems Design. Install. Service.** BEECHER 708-946-2526 GILMAN 815-265-9926 www.LHSERVICESHVAC.com **24 Hour Service** Funding provided in whole or in part by the illinois Department of Commerce & Economic Opportunity. Students must meet hiring standards, successfully complete training and Fax: 708-946-9632 12 months of employment with KLLM, KLLM, FFE and PSC are equal opportunity employers IL LICENSE #055-035893



# Washington Township Wins Three TOI Awards

The Township Officials of Illinois (TOI) recently announced the winners of their 2018 "Mighty Message" contest and Washington Township won awards for best <u>Newsletter</u>, <u>Website</u> and <u>Best Township Event</u> (Senior Breakfast & Flu Shot Clinic) for townships with a population from 5,001 - 15,000 residents. Washington Township had a population of approximately 6,200 residents as of the 2010 Census.

This is the third time Washington Township has won the TOI "Mighty Message" Award for "best" newsletter and website!

TOI serves Illinois' 1,432 townships, offering information on proper government procedures and strongly supports township government. TOI sponsors educational meetings for township officials, and is proactive with township-related legislation in the Illinois General Assembly and U.S. Capitol. Every year TOI holds their "Mighty Message" contest to recognize townships for their achievements in communicating township issues, programs and information to their residents. Entries were judged on four factors:

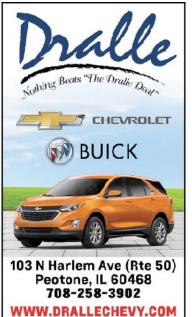
- Usefulness and significance of information presented
- Clarity of information communicated
- · Overall attractiveness and readability
- Creativity

The awards will be presented at the annual TOI Educational Conference held in early November.









Your Right To Know **The Freedom of Information** Act (FOIA) provides that all government bodies make public records readily available for inspection. You can access our agendas, minutes, recent budgets and many other items by visiting our website and clicking on the "Public Information" button on our homepage. Don't see what your looking for? Contact Clerk Joe Burgess at (708) 946-2026 Ext 1176

#### Your Township Officials:

#### Supervisor

Mike Stanula supervisor@washingtontowshipil.com

#### Clerk

Joe Burgess clerk@washingtontownshipil.com

#### Assessor

Mary Margaret Tamez assessor@washingtontownshipil.com

#### **Highway Commissioner**

Jerry Meyer commissioner@ washingtontownshipil.com

#### Trustees

Paul Goldrick Tracy Heldt Mark Herlitz George Obradovich

#### Office Coordinator / General Assistance

Tammy Hitzelburger transportation@washingtontownsh ipil.com **OR** ga@washingtontownshipil.com

## Community Building Board of Managers

**Ronald Mazurek** 

Teresa Peterson

Dan Waterman

#### **Newsletter Editor:**

Clerk Joe Burgess

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# From Assessor Mary Margaret Tamez

#### "Success occurs when strangers become friends." ...... JJ Wilks

When I was growing up, I was always interested in people, spirited discussion, as well as spending time with family and friends... It has always been said, "If you take Mary anywhere, she will leave with a new friend..." This holds true to this day and I am happy to meet so many people in my line of work. I have had the pleasure to grow in the community with many, through my last 12 years of work, in the assessment field. I am grateful for the opportunity of the Assessor position. I am looking forward to building many more friendships and working with so many more as my career continues in Washington Township.

My favorite part of my position is the challenge that every day brings. With all of us being taxpayers, we have something in common; we do not like paying taxes. Having the ability to take the time to help understand the property tax cycle is my goal as Assessor. The burden of the payment is helpful when you as a taxpayer know that the taxing bodies make up the tax rates, how the assessors office calculates the assessment, and that you have all of the exemptions that you qualify for as a homeowner. With all of that information correct, you are paying your fair share as a member of the township community.

We are always working behind the scenes. Currently, we are working on getting the new PAMS program up and running for the township. This program allows us to have a tool that will help us maximize the process we currently have in place in assessing. Everything will be right at our fingertips. This will include property information, the land square foot, tax codes, subdivision names, as well as photos and drawings of all of the homes. It has lots of data that we will be able to use to easily assess property throughout the township. Over the next few months, please be aware that I will be out taking front photos of all of the homes. This will be useful information for the PAMS program. I appreciate you working with me throughout this transition. Being able to have the most accurate information for our assessing purposes is the goal.

If you ever have any questions please feel free to contact my office via email or phone.

Enjoy autumn; it's the year's last and loveliest smile ....



Mary Margaret Tamez

#### Meet Assessor Mary Margaret Tamez

Mary Margaret Tamez was hired as the Washington Township Assessor beginning August 13, 2018, following the retirement of Carol Ann Blume.

Mary has been in the assessing field for some time. Currently she is the elected Assessor for Crete Township beginning her term January 1, 2018. She served as Chief Deputy Assessor for the Township of Crete prior to her running for office. She has been with Crete Township for the past twelve years, assessing over 11,000 parcels and over 7,000 homes. She has been a resident of Crete for the last 30 years, spending her youth in University Park, Illinois.

Mary is currently an active member of the Illinois Assessors Association, Vice President of the Will County Assessor Association, and Township Officials of Illinois. She is the former PTO Co-President of the Crete Monee Middle School, former member of the Crete Elementary PTO, and former member of Crete ESDA.

#### ARE YOU ELIGIBLE FOR A TAX EXEMPTION?

There are many exemptions that you may qualify for! Call Assessor Mary Tamez's office if you qualify for any of the exemptions listed below.

#### **General Homestead Exemption**

•Do you live on the property, a named owner on the deed, and it is your principal residence? You qualify! This exemption is added and removed by our office, there is no form. ALWAYS check your property tax bill to make sure you have it if you qualify.

#### **Disabled Person Exemption**

•Are you collecting disability? You qualify! Please bring in the proof of disability or come to the office to get the form for the doctor to fill out for the proof and we will assist you with the exemption form.

#### **Senior Homestead Exemption**

•Do you turn 65 this year and a named owner on the deed? You qualify! Bring in your drivers license or ID for proof of age and we will assist you in the application.

#### **Senior Freeze Exemption**

•Are you 65 and have a total household income of less than **\$65,000**? You qualify! The income level was increased from \$55,000 to \$65,000 for the 2018 assessment year! Bring in your "Federal" income tax form and/or any forms you would normally take to have your income taxes done. If you meet the filing requirements, we will have the forms in our office after April 1st and can assist you in filling out the form.

#### **Disabled Veteran**

•Are you a Veteran with at least 30% service-connected disability through the Department of Veterans Affairs and a named owner on the deed? You qualify! Bring in a copy of your DD 214 as well as the proof of disability for the current year you are applying for that lists your percentage of disability and we will assist you in filling out the form.



# 13th Annual Senior Holiday Dinner

On December 4 at **5:30 pm**, Washington Township will be sponsoring a free holiday dinner along with holiday music for our seniors at the Beecher Amvet Hall. This is one of our biggest events that you don't want to miss!

#### Please note this year's EARLIER start time.

Keep the date open and call us if you need a ride as we will be happy to assist you.

## "Sounds of the Season" Senior Bus Trip Planned

Washington Township is planning its annual senior bus trip to see and hear the "<u>Sounds of the Season</u>" holiday concert at Olivet Nazarene University on December 7 at 7 pm. Entry to the concert is free and there is no reserved seating.

This is a "must see" event as Olivet's program features innovative performances of favorite holiday music by their many talented groups and ensembles.

For more information or to reserve your seat on the bus please call the Washington Township office at (708) 946-2026 Ext. 2 between the hours of 9am - 3pm.

# Pizza & Movie!

On Saturday, January 19 at 1:30 pm, we will celebrate the new year with a "Pizza & Movie Matinee". The township will provide pizza prior to the start of our movie and of course, "pie" for dessert. Seating is limited so please call our office at 708-946-2026 to reserve a spot.

In case of inclimate weather, (blizzard, heavy snow or poor driving conditions) the movie will be held on January 26th.





"ADRIFT"

#### Starring Shailene Woodey & Sam Claflin

ADRIFT is based on the inspiring true story of two sailors who set out to journey across the ocean from Tahiti to San Diego but couldn't anticipate they would be sailing directly into one of the most catastrophic hurricanes in recorded history.

#### November 14, 2018 @ 6:30 PM

@ Washington Township CenterCoffee and Bakers Square pie will be served.

For more information about Will-Ride or our own Dial-a-Ride transportation program, call the township offices at (708) 946-2026.





# Important dates for our Seniors:

#### November 14 - 6:30 PM

Senior MOVIE Night - Come and watch "ADRIFT". Refreshments will be served!

#### December 4 - 5:30 pm

Senior Holiday Dinner at the Beecher Amvet Hall - A free dinner followed by a holiday concert.

#### January 19-1:30 PM

Senior PIZZA & MOVIE MATINEE - Refreshments will be served!

# Spring 2019 (date to be determined)

Senior Breakfast - Free breakfast and special presentations designed for our Seniors!

### Winter Tips for Seniors

A single fall can cause debilitating and costly injuries, but a few simple tips can help older adults stay safe and healthy through the winter months.

#### 1. Tread carefully

To help avoid falls, wear appropriate shoes outdoors and put road salt, sand or kitty litter on sidewalks and driveways.

### 2. Avoid overwork

Find someone to handle snow shoveling and other strenuous outdoor tasks.

#### 3. Exercise indoors

Staying indoors does not mean being inactive. Keep in shape by walking in place, using a stationary bike or working out with a fitness video, available at the local library.

#### 4. Bundle up

Cold temperatures are a serious threat to seniors. Wear layers!

#### 5. Keep the heat on

Inadequate indoor heat also can cause hypothermia. Keep home temperatures above 65 degrees and dress in layers to maintain body temperature.

#### 6. Clear the air

If you heat your home with a fireplace, gas furnace or gas-powered space heater, invest in carbon monoxide detectors, which can be purchased at a home improvement store for as little as \$30.

#### 7. Socialize

Depression is more common in the winter months, make efforts to spend time with family, friends and neighbors, and when weather makes visiting difficult, pick up the phone for a chat.

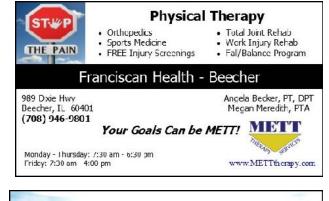


# WASHINGTON TOWNSHIP FALL NEWSLETTER



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# RESIDENT

Washington Township 60401



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