

# **West Peoria News**

Published by the West Peoria Residents Association

February - March, 2024

# ATTENTION WEST PEORIA RESIDENTS! THE WEST PEORIA FIRE DEPARTMENT NEEDS YOUR HELP!

By: Friends of the West Peoria Fire Department

A general primary election will be held on Tuesday, March 19th. On the election ballot, the West Peoria Fire Department (WPFD) will be asking for your help in the form of a tax referendum. The WPFD has never raised or asked to increase taxes since its incorporation in 1939. With the rising costs in our current economy, it is an ongoing endeavor to supply and maintain the equipment that is needed. Because of lifestyle commitments to jobs and family, it is also becoming more difficult to seek and train individuals for the department. Therefore, the WPFD is seeking alternative ways to continue the commitment to the community to maintain a volunteer fire department and ambulance service.

On the ballot will be a question requesting acceptance of an ambulance/rescue tax that will allow the WPFD to create a duty (paid) crew for the ambulance to be at the station to respond quicker to emergency calls at specific times and days of the week.

 Question: Shall the West Peoria Fire Protection Disrict levy a special tax at a rate not to exceed 0.40% of the value of all taxable property within the District as equalized or assessed by the Department of Revenue for the purpose of providing an ambulance service?

Also on the ballot will be a second question asking for 0.10% increase in Fire District tax to help purchase equipment, supplies and vehicles. We want to retain our WP Volunteer Fire Department and not have to contract out to other departments.

 Question: Shall the maximum allowable tax rate for the West Peoria, Peoria County Illinois, be increased from 0.30% to 0.40% of the value of all taxable property within the District as equalized or assessed by the Department of Revenue?

A "yes" vote on March 19th is needed to continue to provide the fire and ambulance service to the residents of the City of West Peoria! Without this tax increase, the current services will have to be provided by other entities with a much higher price per call. Your vote is needed on March 19th!





# **SPECIAL MEETINGS SCHEDULED**

Special informational referendum meetings will be held at the WP City Hall
Thursday, February 15th, at 6:30 p.m.
Sunday, February 25th, at 2:00 p.m.
All West Peoria residents are invited to attend!

# **Meeting and Event Dates**

All event dates listed in this issue are subject to change. Check the City of West Peoria website, the West Peoria Community page on Facebook, or the Simplicity app.

**Please note**: All meetings are at City Hall unless otherwise noted. \*Township Building, 2516 West Rohmann

### <u>February</u>

# Wednesday, February 7 Finance 5:30 p.m. Land Use 6:30 p.m.

### Tuesday, February 13 City Council 7:00 p.m.

# Wednesday, February 14 Neighborhood Watch 6:00 p.m. Maggie Moore, April Silver Co-Coordinators

# Monday, February 19 Garden Club 7:00 p.m.

# Wednesday, February 21 Transportation 5:30 p.m. Public Safety 6:30 p.m.

# **Thursday, February 22** Seniors Afternoon 1:00 p.m.

# **Tuesday, February 27**Planning & Zoning 5:30 p.m. City Council 7:00 p.m.

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### <u>March</u>

### Wednesday, March 6 Finance 5:30 p.m. Land Use 6:30 p.m.

# **Tuesday, March 12** City Council 7:00 p.m.

# Wednesday, March 13 Neighborhood Watch 6:00 p.m. Maggie Moore, April Silve Co-Coordinators

### Monday, March 18 Garden Club 7:00 p.m.\*

### **Wednesday, March 20** Transportation 5:30 p.m. Public Safety 6:30 p.m.

# Tuesday, March 26 Planning & Zoning 5:30 p.m. City Council 7:00 p.m.

# **Thursday, March 28** Seniors Afternoon 1:00 p.m.



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# **City News**

The following information has been provided by Kinga Krider, West Peoria City Administrator. If you have any question regarding these topics or any other concerns, please contact City Hall, (309) 674-1993.

WINTER IS HERE - Please remember that all streets in West Peoria are considered snow routes. When 2 or more inches of snow are predicted in the forecast, ALL cars must be removed from the streets. Stay tuned to local weather forecasts. Visit the City website for options on how to get your vehicle(s) off the street. Vehicles are to be off the streets once the 2" of snow has fallen until 12 hours after the snowstorm. ALL vehicles obstructing snow removal may be towed at the owner's expense and will be ticketed. NO EXCEPTIONS!

**STORM DEBRIS -** During the months of February-March, the City will pick up limbs and debris caused by a big storm. Tree limbs must be prepared as follows:

- Place small limbs in 32 gallon garbage can or yard waste bags. NO PLASTIC GARBAGE BAGS AND CANNOT WEIGH MORE THAN 50 LBS.
- Large limbs must be cut in 4' lengths and be 2" in diameter or less. Tie in bundles using rope or twine. CANNOT WEIGH MORE THAN 50 LBS.
- Debris must be placed at the curb and NOT in the street.

NOTE: Our City Street Department makes every effort to get our community cleaned up as quickly and efficiently as possible. Refer to the City website or the Simplicity app for additional information or announcements regarding storm debris.

### MAKE SURE YOU RECEIVE THE RIGHT INFOR-MATION.....FROM THE RIGHT SOURCE!

Information is everywhere--from Facebook to Google. HOWEVER, is the information you are receiving about the City of West Peoria accurate? Make sure to contact the City for the correct information before believing other sources. Keep informed! Download the Simplicity App (with easy access to the City website), Peoria County Sheriff's Office, and WM (Waste Management) under 'services'. You can report a problem to WM or use the 'chat option' to find basic information.

The City website has lots of information and resources to offer. Utilize the "suggestion" feature that allows your comments to be forwarded to the City Administrator. We are here to listen!

### **RENTAL REGISTRATION THANK YOU!**

"Thank you" to all area landlords who participated in our Rental Registration update. This is a voluntary service and it helps the City in contacting an owner regarding his/her West Peoria property if needed.

### **City of West Peoria Resource Information**

# **City Hall**

Monday - Friday 8:00 am - 5:00 pm

Phone: 309-674-1993

Email: office@cityofwestpeoria.com

# **Mayor James R. Dillon**

mayor@cityofwestpeoria.com

# City Administrator Kinga Krider

administrator@cityofwestpeoria.com

### **City Clerk Margie Barnes**

city\_clerk@cityofwestpeoria.com

# Code Enforcement & Zoning Officer Roma Wallace

code-zoning@cityofwestpeoria.com

# **City News**

### **HELP KEEP OUR CITY CLEAN**

Always put trash out in proper containers and keep the lids closed to prevent blowing and to prevent intrusion by animals. Garbage containers should not be put to the curb for collection prior to the night before pick-up day. The container should be removed from the curb before 10:00 p.m.

Waste Management will not pick up large items such as furniture for free. Call them (309-694-6246 or 309-694-6247) or visit website (www.wm.com) and schedule a special pick-up for these items. An additional charge will be applied.

### SECURITY CAMERAS

Grant dollars are still available for outside security cameras with recording capabilities. The Neighborhood Safety Grant program will reimburse qualified residents 50% of the cost up to \$300. For more information, visit the City of West Peoria website or call City Hall (309) 674-1993.

# THANK YOU FOR PARTICIPATING IN OUR SURVEY!

The Planning Commission/ZBA will be reviewing all the collected data from the six-part survey. The goal of the committee is to develop a plan that will help West Peoria become an even better place to live, work, and visit. This is the question the City of West Peoria is answering as it begins the process of updating its Comprehensive Plan.

### **CLEAN-UP DAY**

The City is pleased to announce the annual Clean-Up Day is set for Saturday, April 27th, 9:00 a.m.-3:00 p.m. Start cleaning out those closets, basements, garages, yards, etc. to take advantage of this great opportunity to clean up our fine city! Watch the City website for more details!

# **HORSESHOE BOTTOMS**

By: Dave Pittman

After a very warm early winter, the first major storm of the season in early January arrived with very cold temperatures. Many of us remember the heavy snows and cold of past years, with cross country ski options and sledding on the steep hills of St. Mary's Cemetery. Maybe this will be the year those heavy snows return.

Volunteers at Horseshoe Bottoms seeded a new test plot during the January workday. Planning has begun to build a short trail to view the magnificent chinquapin oak on the slope between the two levels at St. Mary's.

Hike and workdays continue monthly but please call to confirm in case of bad weather cancellation. The free horseshoe bottoms hikes and workdays occur on: February 3, March 2, and April 6...Both workday and hikes begin at 9:00 a.m., meeting at the far west end of St. Mary's Cemetery. Dogs on leashes are welcome. Please wear shoes and pants that can get muddy! Liability waivers are required. Hikes last about 90 minutes and workdays about 2-3 hours. Call or text David Pittman (309-573-2354) to confirm all events.

Rocky Glen Park workdays will be: February 4, March 3, and April 7...Volunteers meet at the Rocky Glen parking lot at 9:00 a.m. for 2-3 hours work.

FORG is an all volunteer non-profit with a goal of promoting the health and recreational value of the Kickapoo Creek watershed. Our educational programs include work with the Peoria Public Schools, private schools, and other non-profit groups. Volunteers alwayswelcome! Call or contact us via our website (www.friendso-frockyglen.org) for more information.

# **SCOUT THANK YOU**

The members of Boy Scout Troop 11 would like to thank all the residents who purchased Christmas wreaths and Butter Braid breads. Your support for these fundraisers is greatly appreciated!

Also, the members of Cub Scout Pack 11 would like to thank all the residents who enthusiastically greeted them as they made their annual 'Christmas caroling trip' through the streets of West Peoria!

# BUSINESS OWNERS PLAN PARADE EVENT

West Peoria CORES (Commercial Owners of Retail, Entertainment and Services) are once again planning to host a West Side St. Patrick's Day Parade, pending IDOT approval. The event will be held Saturday, March 9th at 11:00 a.m. on Farmington Road, between Park Road and Raber Packing Company. PLEASE NOTE: Due to the parade, Farmington Road will be closed that day from 10:30 a.m.-12:30 p.m. For more information, visit the City of West Peoria website. Mark your calendars for March 9th and join the St. Patrick's Day celebration!

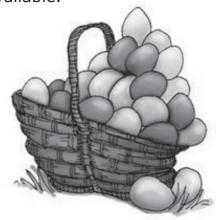


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### **EASTER EGG HUNT**

WPRA Board members have entered into a discussion with Carle Health and the Trillium facility on Heading Avenue to again plan an Easter Egg Hunt this year. Easter will be held on March 31st and more details regarding this event will be released as they become available.



# THE SISTERS OF ST. FRANCIS OF THE IMMACULATE CONCEPTION

invite you to join them in prayer

STATIONS OF THE CROSS FROM MARY'S PERSPECTIVE

Friday, March 22nd - 7:00 p.m.

Immaculate Conception Convent 2408 West Heading West Peoria, IL



# **NEIGHBORHOOD WATCH**

By: Maggie Moore & April Silver, Co-Coordinators

While our January meeting was unfortunately cancelled, we're excited to announce the next gathering on February 14th at 6:00 p.m. with a safety topic presentation.

We'll dive deep into practical strategies to safeguard your homes and families. We'll discuss topics like:

- Strengthening your home's defenses
- Smart security practices
- Neighborhood vigilance

Our local law enforcement representative will be on hand to share information regarding:

- Recent crime trends in the neighborhood
- Safety tips and resources
- Open question & answer period

Beyond practical information, this meeting fosters a sense of connection and collaboration among neighbors. We'll have time for introductions, sharing community concerns, and feedback and suggestions.

Mark your calendars for Wednesday, February 14th! An excellent opportunity to learn valuable safety tips, connect with neighbors, and work together to build a stronger, safer community. Don't hesitate to contact April (309-369-2104) or Maggie (309-673-0535) if you have any questions or suggestions. (Email: westpeorianeighborhoodwatch@gmail.com)

See you February 14th!



# SENIORS AFTERNOON A JOURNEY THROUGH TIME AND FUN

Hosted by West Peoria Neighborhood Watch Maggie Moore & April Silver, Co-Coordinators

Calling all history buffs and bingo enthusiasts! The next two Seniors Afternoon gatherings promise a delightful blend of intellectual exploration and lighthearted fun.

Unearthing Al Fresco's Treasures

On Thursday, February 22nd, 1:00 p.m., we'll be embarking on a fascinating journey through time with Barbara Brown from the Peoria Public Library. Get ready to discover the hidden stories and charming secrets of Al Fresco Park. Learn about its fascinating transformation from farmland to beloved community haven, and gain a deeper appreciation for this oasis from our past. Whether you're a dedicated local history buff or simply looking for a captivating afternoon, Barbara's insightful presentation promises to illuminate the past and enrich your understanding of this cherished landmark.

### Bingo Blitz!

On Thursday, March 28th, 1:00 p.m. get ready to dust off your lucky charms and sharpen your focus, because Bingo is back! Join your fellow seniors for an afternoon of friendly competition and exciting prizes. It's a chance to test your luck, share some laughs, and maybe even walk away with a little something extra. So grab your daubers, put on your game face, and prepare for an afternoon of lighthearted fun and community spirit.

Seniors Afternoon is more than just presentations and games. It's a chance to connect with neighbors, forge new friendships, and enjoy the simple pleasure of shared conversation and community spirit. We invite you to join us at City Hall on the above dates for a fun afternoon.

For more information, contact April (309-369-2104) or Maggie (309-673-0535). Seniors Afternoon meets every fourth Thursday at City Hall at 1:00 p.m. and is open to all seniors in the community. Join us for a year of laughter, learning and community spirit!

# PLANNING CONTINUES FOR THE NEW CITY HALL

Plans are in the making! The vacant lot at the intersection of Rohmann and Sterling, formerly the site of the old Busey Bank, sits idle awaiting construction of the new West Peoria City Hall. The new building will be a state-of-the art facility with plans to make the building as 'energy efficient' as possible. Plans will include additional meeting space, increased office and storage space for City staff, and an area adjacent to the building designed for future community activities and events.

City officials continue to meet with the architects as they "fine tune" the construction and design plans for our future West Peoria City Hall!

# **NO SOLICITATION!**

The City of West Peoria DOES NOT allow nor permit persons to go door-to-door. If you encounter this, please contact the Peoria County Sheriff's Office at (309) 672-6011.

# REMEMBER VALENTINE'S DAY!

Whether preparing a special meal, dining out or buying a gift for that 'someone special', don't forget to SHOP LOCAL!

Our West Peoria retailers will be happy to assist you in whatever your Valentine's Day plans might be!





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# **DON'T FORGET YOUR CLOCKS!**

It's hard to believe it's almost time to change our clocks again! On March 10th we will "Spring forward" to be Daylight Savings Time. Mark your calendars.... don't forget to change your clocks!

# SEE SOMETHING, SAY SOMETHING!

The Peoria County Sheriff would like to remind everyone to lock their cars at all times and don't let strangers in your home. We want 2024 to be a safe year for all of our residents. If you see anything suspicious, please contact the Peoria County Sheriff's office at (309) 672-6011.

"Thank you" to our Community Officers for their work in helping to keep our community safe...7 days a week, 24 hours a day!

# MARK YOUR CALENDARS FOR THE 4TH OF JULY PARADE!

West Peoria's annual 4th of July Parade is on schedule for 2024! This is the 52nd year for our community parade and volunteers are needed to make the parade a success. Call City Halll (309) 674-1993) and see if there is an area where you would like to help!





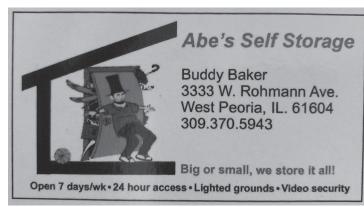
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# **GARDEN CLUB**

By:Priscilla Peterson

The Garden Club members will be meeting on Monday, February 19 to plan new programs, including summer garden tours, flower programs, and community projects. We invite anyone interested in gardening to join us on the third Monday of each month at 7:00 p.m. at the former Township Building.





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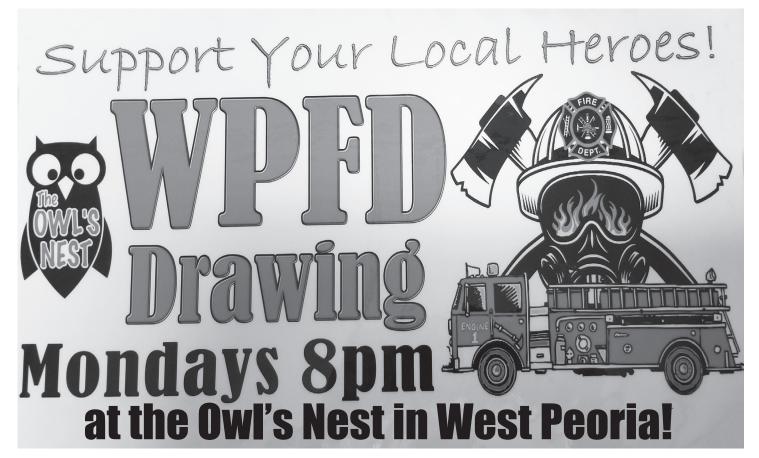


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# ARE YOU CLEANING HOUSE? REORGANIZING CABINETS & CLOSETS?

Some residents are taking advantage of these cold winter days and have started doing some "Spring Cleaning"! While there are many organizations to donate clothing and miscellaneous items to, just a reminder that April will bring our annual Clean-Up Day for broken or unused appliances, furniture, etc. AND May brings our annual Community Garage Sale.

Both events bring thoughts of what to do with all those unused and unwanted household items!

# Check Out Our Website!

www.cityofwestpeoria.com

Contact: Sharon Kennedy (309) 208-7849

**Newsletter Advertising** 

# **SLOW DOWN WEST PEORIA!**

The Transportation and Safety Committees continue to monitor and review the traffic data regarding traffic patterns, time of day, and speed limits on the streets of West Peoria. At the January 23rd City Council meeting, Peoria County Sheriff's Deputy Drake Hart gave a detailed report on the recent activities in West Peoria. He stated 154 reports were filed within the last month, including 105 traffic Residents continue to park cars illegally, i.e., some in the wrong direction, some blocking driveways, and some blocking fire hydrants! While conducting traffic stops, it was noted children were not restrained by a seat belt or not in the proper car seat. Residents were also reminded to not keep their cars running and unattended. Be vigilant! Obey speed limits and stop signs! Drive responsibly!

# TAKE CARE OF YOUR PETS!

Please keep your animals contained at all times. Not only is it unlawful but we also want to make sure everyone's pets are safe. Animal Control may be called for excessive dog barking, animal abuse or if an animal is running at large.

Peoria County Animal Protection Number: Monday-Saturday (309) 672-2440 After Hours/Emergency: (309)674-3131





# **WPRA**

# PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

I would like to extend a special thanks to Bonnie Farrell. Since 2019 she has led the West Peoria Residents Association as President. Under her leadership we have seen many changes and improved offerings to our community. Key contributions under her leadership include a very successful Halloween "Trunk 'n Treat" and Christmas Tree Lighting Ceremony co-sponsored with the City of West Peoria, an annual State of the City Address program, and a successful reorganization of our WPRA bylaws and operations. Bonnie has also been successful in attracting new members and expanding our Board of Trustees.

After five years as the President of WPRA, Bonnie has stepped down from her leadership role to focus on a variety of other commitments. However, she will continue to serve on the Board of Directors. Thank you, Bonnie!

I'm happy to announce that I, Nicholas Baker, have been elected as the new President of WPRA beginning January, 2024. I have been a proud resident of West Peoria for 34 years and an active Board member with WPRA since 2019. I look forward to building upon the great work this organization has provided our community and am excited to work with our new and veteran Board members.

If you are not yet a member of our organization, I urge you to become one. It cost very little, about \$1.50 a month! It's because of membership support we are able to provide the great programs, events, and sponsorships, as well as our semi-monthly newsletters for the residents of West Peoria. Moving into 2024, as our costs of events and publication have continued to rise, we are focusing on the financial aspects of our organization while continuing to improve our offerings to the community.

Nicholas Baker, President		
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# **West Peoria Residents Association**

WPRA

West Peoria Residents Association c/o 2506 West Rohmann Ave. West Peoria, IL 61604

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### THE CHRISTMAS SPIRIT IN WEST PEORIA!

November 27th was a very cold night for the annual Christmas Tree Lighting ceremony at City Hall! Despite the frigid temperatures, residents gathered to visit Santa, place ornaments on the community tree, and enjoy refreshments with neighbors and friends. When Santa 'flipped the switch" to light the tree, the spirit of the Christmas season filled the air!

A special 'thank you' to the WPRA Beautification Committee for decorating the "Welcome Wall" at Main and Western with garland and lights, as well as the evergreen roping, lights, and bows at City Hall.



The Residents Christmas Holiday Decorating Contest was held again this year and the following residences were contest winners: 1st place: 2127 W. Moss, 2nd Place: 2206 West Barker, 3rd Place: 648 Coolidge Court. Congratulations and thank you to all the residents who participated!

We hope you enjoyed all the beautifully decorated homes in West Peoria, as well as the street lighting decorations courtesy of the West Peoria Lighting District. All added to a festive Christmas season in West Peoria!