

## President's Letter

**Happy 2023!** What a year we had in 2022!

- ✓ The *Land We Love Run* 5K-10K walk/run almost tripled its registrations.
- ✓ Barrington Hills Fall Festival moved back to the Riding Center which accommodated almost 700 visitors.
- ✓ Dundee Township officially opened Hickory Hill Park on our Village's west side.
- ✓ Home improvements, additions and new construction surpassed the previous year.
- ✓ Barrington Area students got a peak into local government.
- ✓ And the Village, once again, lowered the tax levy!

I would like to think that our approach to fiscal responsibility, and our dedication to maintaining and preserving our zoning, open spaces, and village characteristics were considerations that contributed to Niche.com's 2022 *Best Places to Live* ranking of Barrington Hills in the top 5% nationally.

We have been able to either keep steady or reduce the tax levy for the past nine years. The 2022 tax levy was reduced by \$28,500. This may seem to be a small amount but at a time when taxing bodies are adding new or increased taxes, I am proud that our Village's approach to running government like a business is a proven model benefiting the taxpayers.

The Roads & Bridges Committee is busy working on the 2023 Road Program. Overall, our Village's roads are in great shape! This didn't happen overnight. It is a result of proactive planning and conscientious efforts that took advantage of various programs and technologies over the years that caught up the Road Program to the Village's plan and ultimately reduced spending.

Home fires occur during winter more than any other season. As a former paid on call firefighter, I can't stress enough the importance of working smoke alarms and carbon monoxide detectors. I recently witnessed the devastation from a fire in our community, one that included rescuing animals. Our Police Department, together with both the Barrington Countryside and Fox River Grove Fire Departments, deserve a special #ShoutOut for quickly arriving on the scene and using their equine safety and horse handling training which was a big part of the animal rescue.

We live in a village that is heavily dependent on community involvement. I am an active volunteer for numerous Barrington-area organizations including our local government. As President, I visited Prairie Middle School's 7th graders to introduce them to the innerworkings of local government and to personally answer their questions. It's encouraging to see our future leaders' enthusiasm for community involvement. Residents of any age can easily get involved to make a difference. Thank you, Barrington Area Council of Governments, for the invitation to participate in your Local Government Education Initiative!

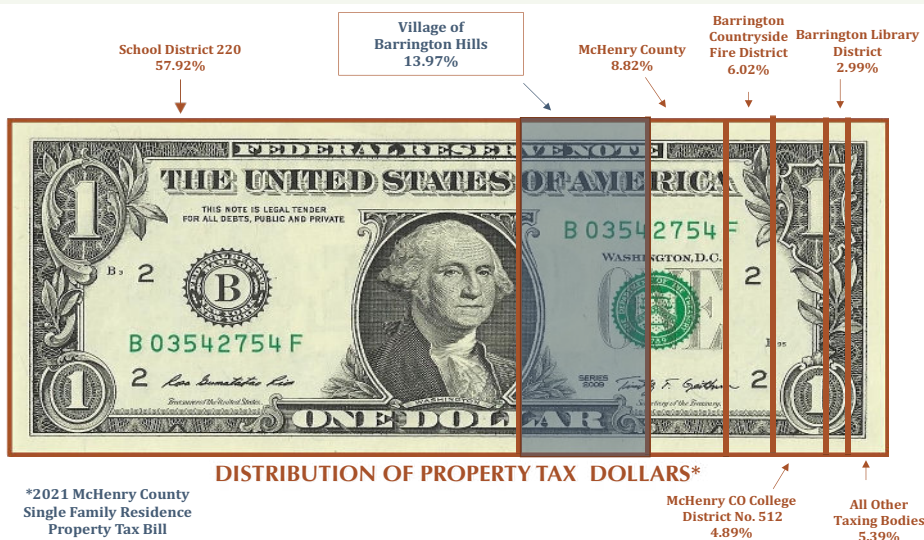
Additionally, our Police Department welcomed Countryside Elementary's first-grade class to tour its facilities, learn about Police Equipment and sit in the Police Vehicles as part of the class's community helpers curriculum. Our officers explained the Department's main functions, the different types of calls they receive, and how their response helps our residents, as well as our neighboring communities. I am very proud of our CALEA-accredited department.

Volunteering is a worthwhile commitment, one that satisfies the soul and benefits those you want to help. The Village's Boards and Commissions are all comprised of resident volunteers. We are grateful for our residents' talents, dedication and everything they bring to the table. Additionally, we are grateful to those organizations that are dedicated to the preservation of our natural environments. The culmination of everyone's efforts is what makes Barrington Hills one of *The Best Places to Live*.

With gratitude,  
**Brian D. Cecola, President**



President Cecola with Prairie Middle School 7th Graders



## New 2023 Illinois Laws

### Vehicle Registration Rate for Senior Citizens



Senior citizens who receive benefits under the Senior Citizens and Person with Disabilities Property Tax Relief Act will now pay \$10 for their vehicle registration. This new rate also applies to the spouse of a qualifying senior citizen.



### Electronic Orders of Protection

Filing paperwork to take your abuser to court should not be dangerous. To better protect survivors, this law allows anyone to file for a protective order at any time by email or online in addition to the in-person option. It also requires counties with populations above 250,000 to offer the option of a remote hearing.

### Made In Illinois



To encourage Illinoisans to support the state economy, this law reduces vehicle registration fees for cars and small trucks if they are manufactured in Illinois.



### Smoke detectors with 10-year batteries

Illinois home smoke alarms must be equipped with 10-year sealed batteries starting January 1. According to a 2017 law, smoke alarms that were installed in homes prior to January 1st can remain in place until they are 10 years old. Homes built after 1988 that already have hardwired alarms or wireless integrated alarms are exempt from the new law.



### Helping Women Afford Treatment

In order to prevent osteoporosis and other medical conditions, this law requires health insurance plans to cover medically necessary hormone therapy treatments for women who have undergone a hysterectomy and therefore induced menopause.

### No Fees for Carjacking Victims



You shouldn't be on the hook for tickets when your car gets stolen. This law ensures people whose cars have been stolen will not be liable for violations, fees, fines or penalties when their vehicles are caught on red light or speed cameras.



### Honoring Illinois Service Members

When families of fallen Illinois service members who died during state or federal active duty are honored, their next of kin will be presented an Illinois state flag.

### End of Gas Tax Freeze



The Gas Tax is scheduled to increase every six months, but as a part of a tax rebate law for residents, the state froze the increase from July 1 to Dec. 31 of 2022. The tax, which mostly funds Rebuild Illinois projects, will be back at the pumps starting Jan. 1. There is also another increase scheduled for July 1, 2023.

For the full list, visit [vbhil.gov/news](http://vbhil.gov/news). Source: [abc7chicago.com](http://abc7chicago.com) & [wcia.com](http://wcia.com)



A new State law requires that home smoke alarms must be equipped with a 10-year sealed battery. For those residents that need help installing a smoke alarm, contact your fire district to possibly take advantage of the *Be Alarmed* program. Be sure a fire grid sign is visibly installed at your driveway's entrance so first responders can easily find your location. If your sign is missing or damaged, email [TMorey@vbhpd.net](mailto:TMorey@vbhpd.net).

**Horizon Farm is fully open for public use**, including the introduction of several official trails available for pedestrian, biking and equestrian use. Since gaining full possession of Horizon Farm in 2019, the Forest Preserves of Cook County (FPDCC) has created new trails and addressed maintenance and safety issues for public use, including demolition of more than 20 buildings that were beyond their useful life. The site features meadows, wetlands and small streams, as well as open habitat for grassland birds. As of December 30, 2022, Horizon Farm is available from sunrise to sunset for activities like hiking, birdwatching, photography, horseback riding and cross-country skiing.

FPDCC plans to reconvene with key stakeholders in early 2023 with the goal of completing a draft for presentation to the public this summer. The master plan will include plans for the remaining facilities on the site and a completed trail system, as well as strategies for investment in visitor amenities, promotion of ecological restoration efforts, and how to expand and deepen partnerships with local stakeholders.

Riders utilizing the equestrian trails, driveways and paths within Forest Preserves of Cook County are reminded to obtain a Rider's License and Horse Tag. Further information, including trail maps, can be found at the Forest Preserves of Cook County website: [fpdcc.com/things-to-do/equestrian/](http://fpdcc.com/things-to-do/equestrian/)





## "HABITAT TREES"... SOMETHING TO CONSIDER

**Do dead trees pose a risk to people and properties?** Certified Arborist Charles Keppel with The Davey Tree Expert Company says yes, but not always. *Thank you for sharing this valuable information:*

There are many dead trees that are out of our "danger zone" which can remain upright! On the other hand, there are others that are dangerous and require safe removal due to disease and insect deterioration.

Dutch Elm Disease, Oak Wilt, and Emerald Ash Borer are some examples of reasons to remove a tree. These trees should be removed to the ground to reduce the risk of additional infections of neighboring trees. In other situations, trees can die from stress, such as lack of water and construction, as well as old age. Many times, these can be left standing for many years. The moment a tree dies, living things ranging from bacteria to insects to birds move in to dissolve or chew on the wood to turn it into food or a homey habitat. A habitat has four essential components that make it suitable for a particular population of animals, such as: food, water, shelter, and space. A wildlife tree provides three of these four elements, making it an essential part of your backyard habitat by increasing biodiversity.



If a whole tree that is still standing poses a hazard, an excellent option is to safely prune off the upper part of the canopy and leave the trunk for habitat. This will reduce safety risks to people, desirable trees, as well as desirable forest floor vegetation. The remaining, standing trunk can last 10-15 years. This way it can continue to serve as food and shelter for our wildlife. It can serve as a food source and home to as many as 85 different birds, mammals, reptiles, and amphibians during that time. After it falls, it can also serve as a microenvironment for many smaller animals. In the last chapter of its life, the decomposers break the nutrients down to assist the next generation of the living biodiversity of plants and animals.

Please keep in mind that dead "Habitat Trees" are in limited supply. It is important to contact a certified

Arborist to determine if a tree is a danger and/or has died from an infectious disease or an invasive insect. An Arborist can also inspect a tree to help determine if it could be a good home for some of our endangered birds. Though we do not want our trees to die, I believe these "Habitat Trees" create a new chapter of their time on earth, giving back to the rest of the creatures on this earth even in this new stage.

### The Village is looking forward to Spring by planning its road projects!

We have an ambitious goal to resurface nearly 3 miles of road and apply Reclamite (road life-extending solution) on 1.3 miles of Village Roadways. Preliminary plans for roads to be resurfaced this year are the entirety of Oak Knoll Road and the portion of Cuba Road from Veterans Crossing (formerly known as the Cuba Road Bridge) to the Village limit near Route 14. Plans include the application of Reclamite on Old Dundee Road and restriping Ridge Road. Follow the Village's social media outlets to stay updated on the schedule for this Spring.

### DOES YOUR PRIVATE ROAD NEED RESURFACING?

**Save some money!** Historically, the Village's Road Program Contractor has offered an "in the neighborhood" discount to those living on private roads. Pricing is often lower than standalone bids since mobilization costs are less given that they are already working in the area. *You'll need to act quickly after the Village selects its contractor!*

To stay informed, email your name and the road being considered for resurfacing to [village@vbhil.gov](mailto:village@vbhil.gov). When a contractor is selected, the Village will email you the contractor's contact information to proceed with getting a quote. If taking advantage of the discount, residents will be contracting directly with the service provider. The Village is in no way involved with the residents' private contracts.



## Here are your 2023 Village Trustee Candidates for the upcoming April 4, 2023 Consolidated Elections: Darby Hills, incumbent Jessica Hoffmann John Carpenter Clarke

\* Trustees Colleen Konicek Hannigan and Bryan Croll chose not to seek re-election.

### KEY DATES FOR THE APRIL 4, 2023 CONSOLIDATED ELECTION

- ★ March 7, 2023: Last day for paper registrations to be postmarked
- ★ March 7, 2023: Last day to register in person with a certified registrar
- ★ March 19, 2023: Last day to register to vote by online application
- ★ March 20 – April 3: Early Voting
- ★ March 30, 2023: Last day to request a mail ballot
- ★ April 4, 2023: Last day mail ballots can be postmarked
- ★ April 4, 2023: ELECTION DAY! You must vote at your assigned polling location

### ARE YOU A NEW RESIDENT?

Don't forget to update your existing registration by visiting [ova.elections.il.gov](http://ova.elections.il.gov).



### FOR VOTING REQUIREMENTS, WHERE TO VOTE AND HOW TO VOTE, VISIT YOUR COUNTY CLERK'S ELECTIONS WEBSITE:

[cookcountyclerk.il.gov/elections](http://cookcountyclerk.il.gov/elections)  
[lakecountyil.gov/163/Elections](http://lakecountyil.gov/163/Elections)  
[kanecountyclerk.org/Elections](http://kanecountyclerk.org/Elections)  
[McHenryCountyClerkIL.gov](http://McHenryCountyClerkIL.gov)





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**Village of  
Barrington Hills**  
112 Algonquin Road  
Barrington Hills, IL 60010-5199  
[village@vbhil.gov](mailto:village@vbhil.gov)

[vbhil.gov](http://vbhil.gov)

**Phone**  
847-551-3000  
  
**Village Hall Hours**  
Monday-Friday  
9:00 a.m. — 5:00 p.m.

#### **Board of Trustees**

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*Trustee*  
Darby Hills  
*Trustee*

## **DO YOU LIVE IN THE FLINT CREEK OR SPRING CREEK WATERSHED?**

***The answer is probably YES!***

If you live in Barrington Hills, odds are that your property is within one of these two watersheds, and if it isn't, you are certainly benefiting from them! The protection of our watersheds is crucial in preserving the high-quality natural environment we enjoy in the Barrington Area.

The Flint Creek/Spring Creek Watersheds Partnership (FCSCWP) exists to educate citizens while building partnerships for projects to improve water quality, maintain water supply, preserve ecosystems, and restore wetlands, prairies and other natural features for current and future generations in both watersheds.

Be an active participant in this ever-important initiative by learning about your watershed and how to improve it! Join the Flint Creek/Spring Creek Watersheds Partnership at their 1st Annual Conference.

### **2023 Watershed Conference: Funding Sources for Restoration, Drainage, and Water Quality Projects**

**Thursday, April 20th  
8:30 AM – 1:00 PM**

**Barrington White House  
145 W Main St, Barrington, IL 60010**

Coffee & Lunch provided.

Details and required RSVP: [fcscwp-conf.eventbrite.com](https://fcscwp-conf.eventbrite.com)

## **What is a Watershed anyhow?**

A watershed is the area of land drained by a river, stream, or other body of water. If rain is not consumed by plants or absorbed to recharge our shallow aquifer, it may flow over the land to a low spot in the landscape, in this case Spring and Flint Creeks. Thus, the areas that flow to the Creeks are known as watersheds.