



MARCH 2014

# TRAILS

Connecting Communities: Frankfort, Frankfort Township, Frankfort Square, Mokena, Orland Park and Tinley Park

## Jim Moustis, Frankfort Township Supervisor



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There's always something happening at the Frankfort Township Building.

It's a busy place. On any given day, people stop here to shop in the food pantry, borrow medical equipment from the nurse's closet or participate in our many programs for senior citizens.

That's a lot of activity. To get it all done, the township relies on a group of very special people: our many dedicated volunteers. Our programs wouldn't be nearly as successful without them.

Our food pantry, for example, is not funded by tax payers. It runs on donations from the public and the work of our volunteers.

Many of people who help us are here several days each week, like Birgie

Bergeson, who is saluted in this issue of the Frankfort Township Trails. They organize the offerings in the food pantry. They unload deliveries. They even slip into Santa suits and visit with the children during the township's annual Christmas party. When we need them, they are there.

Some volunteer their time, and others make financial donations voluntarily. Their contributions keep our food pantry well-stocked and allow us to distribute some store gift cards to people who are in need. When the township receives a cash donation, 100 percent of the money is used to help others. There simply are no administrative costs at all.

So thank you, volunteers. We appreciate you. And we truly couldn't do it all without you.

### Frankfort Township Officials

**Supervisor:**  
Jim Moustis

**Trustees:**  
Bruce Ebert  
Nick George  
Greg Griffin  
Dave Smith

**Assessor:**  
Joe Kral

**Highway Commissioner:**  
Bill Carlson

**Clerk:**  
Nella Piccolin

**Collector:**  
Patrick Markham

**Township Board:**  
7 p.m. on the 2nd and 4th Mondays

**Board Workshop:**  
Follows the meeting on the 2nd Monday

**Planning Commission:**  
7 p.m. on the 1st Monday

**VOLUNTEERS: A GIFT TO THE COMMUNITY**

Stop by the food pantry any day of the week and you'll probably see Birgie Bergeson, one of Frankfort Township's most active volunteers.

"He does everything," said Jodi Gallagher-Dilling, the pantry's director. "He is like the supervisor of our pantry."

Bergeson, who will be 89 on April 13, is retired from the Argonne National Laboratory in Lemont. But he never seems to slow down. One afternoon a few weeks ago, he was taking boxes of instant oatmeal and dividing the packets into portions to be given to the people who shop at the pantry.

He began volunteering at the township after a relative suggested that he might enjoy it.

"I needed something to do," Bergeson said.

Although he truly enjoys the work, he has another reason for coming day after day.

"I like the people here," he said. "They're good people."

And the feeling is mutual. Bergeson is one of the most popular volunteers, Gallagher-Dilling said.

"We all love him," she said. "He is everyone's best friend."

Thank you, Birgie.



**SPRING AWAKENING: THE POSSUMS AND RACCOONS RETURN**



During the past few months, possums, raccoons and other wildlife have been keeping a low profile. They've been hiding in their winter homes and staying out of sight. But that is beginning to change, Frankfort Township Animal Control Officer Karen Zobjeck said. As the weather becomes warmer, the animals are waking up and beginning to look for food. Because they are more visible, some residents have been concerned. They've seen possums on their decks or near garbage cans, and they have called Zobjeck, wondering what to do.

The township does not handle nuisance wildlife. But residents should make sure that their own pets have up-to-date rabies vaccinations, Zobjeck said.

"We already had a bat in a house this year where

the cat's vaccination had not been updated," Zobjeck said. "And the cat was playing with the live bat. Was the cat bitten? We don't know. Now the cat must be quarantined at home and placed on a watch list."

Many people believe their pets are safe if they do not go outside. But wildlife — like the bat — can get into a house, Zobjeck said.

Once spring truly arrives, it's a good time to make sure your home doesn't have somewhere for a possum or a raccoon to live. They often make their homes under decks or sheds, Zobjeck said. So it's a good idea to seal off any possible entrance.

And if you see one of the animals on your property that has not wandered away after a few days, contact a certified licensed expert who handles services to remove wildlife.

## LEARN ABOUT NEW PRODUCTS FOR THE BLIND AND VISUALLY IMPAIRED

The Chicago Lighthouse, a non-profit organization that works with the blind and visually impaired, is bringing a showcase of helpful products to display at the township from 10 a.m. until 3 p.m. on April 30, 2014.



The open-house style show will offer demonstrations and explanations of a variety of items to use everyday, said Sandra Valentino, a project manager at the Lighthouse.

Tom Perski, a Lighthouse senior vice president, will be among the staffers who will assist anyone who visits the showcase.

Some of the products are inexpensive kitchen tools such as strainers or spatulas.

“They are larger and easier to use,” Valentino said.

There also will be new devices such as the Prodigy, a device that magnifies printed material and also has the capability to read text aloud.

For information on the show, call (800) 919-3375.

## MOKENA SENIORS CLUB: A LOCAL TRADITION

On a sunny day in the middle of March, the members of the Mokena Seniors Club lingered over corned beef sandwiches, their St. Patrick’s Day treat.

The games would begin soon. “This side plays Pinochle,” Mary Bucher of Frankfort explained, pointing toward one group of tables in the community room of the Frankfort Township Building. “The other plays Bunco.”

But they weren’t ready to start. There was the little matter of dessert, for one thing, and they also had to say the Pledge of Allegiance. But they weren’t ready for either one just yet.

“First we discuss the news of the world,” said Dee Snyder of Mokena, kidding a little. After the business part of the meeting, they would celebrate milestones and special occasions.

“The birthdays for March are Alice and Rita,” announced Violet Tolsky of Mokena, longtime president of the group. Everyone immediately began sing-

ing “Happy Birthday,” a few people chuckling as they fit both of the names into the song.

The Mokena Seniors Club started more than 30 years ago at local church, Tolsky explained. In the beginning, the group met on Saturdays. “But that made it hard if there was a wedding or a funeral, so we switched to Thursdays,” she said. In the beginning, there were about 80 members. That’s changed as the years have passed, but the friendly group is always looking for new people to join them.

“Anyone who is retirement age is invited to come,” Tolsky said.

“Anyone who is 55 and older.” Marjorie Tagliavia of Mokena nodded in agreement. “We do need more members,” she said.

For more information about the club, its meetings and activities, call Violet Tolsky: (708) 479-6760.



## FRANKFORT TOWNSHIP'S DIAL-A-RIDE: SERVICE AND A SMILE



Driver Mike Loblaco lends a hand to Sharon Shelinski as she exits the van.

Dial-A-Ride is a great way to travel Frankfort Township. The door-to-door service is inexpensive for everyone to use.

But it's also a lot of fun.

The drivers who work for Frankfort Township Transportation Manager George Tolsky make a point of getting to know the people who ride with them. And they enjoy taking good care of their riders.

"If it's raining outside, the guys will bring their own umbrellas to make sure everyone stays dry," Tolsky said.

Many of the riders go to the same places week after week. So the township's eight drivers quickly learn their schedules, likes and dislikes.

Just ask Sharon Shelinski of Frankfort Township. When she made the decision not to drive anymore, she was delighted to find Dial-A-Ride.

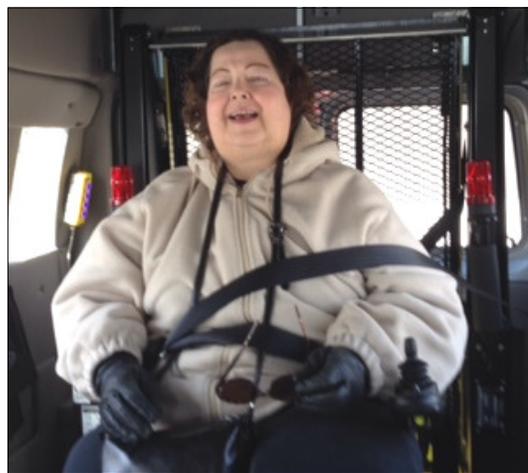
"I'm telling you, it's great. Everybody is so nice

— especially Mike Loblaco, one of the drivers. He helps me get in and out," Shelinski said. "All of the drivers — they are not just nice, they are extra nice."

As Loblaco drove Shelinski to her hair dresser on a recent Friday, they chatted about each other's lives and the news of the day. When they arrived at her stop, Loblaco reminded Shelinski to be careful leaving that particular van because it was a little taller than the others.

After Loblaco took Shelinski to her destination, he headed to the home of Karen Randolph.

"She's going to the doctor today," Loblaco said, checking a list. "Normally she goes to volunteer at the children's museum."



Karen Randolph uses Dial-A-Ride to get to her doctor's appointments and to her job as a volunteer.

Randolph is also a fan. "It's a great service," she said, smiling. To learn more about the Dial-A-Ride and how it can help you get around, call (815) 806-2767.