



REPORT



From the Desk of the Supervisor – Maria Zeller Brauer

Dear Neighbors,

As we reflect on another busy year at Wheeling Township, I want to begin by expressing my heartfelt thanks to our community. The generosity shown through donations of time, food, and financial support for our holiday programs, food pantry, and community initiatives has been truly inspiring.

Our annual holiday programs, including Thanksgiving Baskets and Adopt-A-Family, are only possible through community support. In 2025, thanks to your generosity, we collected and distributed **420 Thanksgiving baskets**, ensuring families could gather around the table and share a holiday meal. Through our Adopt-A-Family program, we were also able to support **132 families, including 340 children**, helping to brighten the season for our neighbors who needed it most. Residents, businesses, faith organizations, and civic groups once again stepped up in remarkable ways, and on behalf of the Township Board, staff, and the many families served, thank you for making these programs a success.

In addition to supporting our local neighbors, our community also came together to support active-duty military service members serving overseas. Through the Township's partnership with **Operation Support Our Troops**, we collected nearly **2,400 pounds of care package items**, which will be assembled and sent to servicemembers around the world. This outpouring of generosity reflects the deep gratitude and respect our community holds for those who serve.

Your support is especially critical as we prepare for increased needs in the months ahead. Changes to federal SNAP benefits are expected to significantly impact many households, stretching already limited food budgets even further. As a result, we anticipate a rise in food pantry usage across our Township. In fact, our monthly pantry visits have already increased from approximately **550 to more than 600 visits per month**, a clear indication that food insecurity continues to affect many in our community.

In **2025 alone, Wheeling Township's food pantry helped feed 13,686 individuals**, including **3,179 children and 6,022 seniors**. These numbers underscore just how essential this service is for our neighbors who rely on the food pantry to meet basic needs. The continued generosity of our donors allows us to keep our shelves stocked and respond to growing demand with compassion and care.

The Township also continues to invest in services that support independence and quality of life for our residents. Our Transportation Department has implemented **new route planning software, Ecolane**, which will help streamline operations, improve efficiency, and decrease wait times for our riders. This investment allows us to better serve seniors and residents with disabilities who rely on Township transportation to remain connected to medical appointments, essential services, and community activities.

I would also like to take a moment to recognize and thank **Sue Hayes**, who will be stepping down as President of the Township's Community Mental Health Board. Sue's leadership and dedication have played an important role in strengthening mental health services for our residents. We are deeply grateful for her service and the lasting impact she has made on our community.

Wheeling Township is fortunate to be surrounded by neighbors who look out for one another. Your continued generosity and engagement ensure that we can meet challenges head-on and provide critical support to those who need it most. Thank you for being an integral part of what makes our community strong.

With gratitude and commitment,

Maria Zeller Brauer
Wheeling Township Supervisor

P.S. If you know someone who needs assistance, or you would like to donate or volunteer, please visit www.wheelingtowship.com or contact the Township office. Together, we can continue to care for our neighbors.

A WORD FROM THE ASSESSOR

Ken Jochum

LET'S TAKE A LOOK AT THE TAXPAYER'S SCORECARD

As in past years, I would like to review the 2024 tax year bill analysis, utilizing the final report from Cook County Treasurer Maria Pappas. Some information will be directly taken from her report, with additional comments by this Assessor.

COUNTYWIDE

Property owners across Cook County are being asked to pay about \$872 million more in taxes, for a grand total of nearly \$19.2 billion. That's an increase of almost 4.8%, well above the 3.5% rate of inflation for 2024. It marks at least the 31st straight year property taxes have gone up.

NORTH AND NORTHWEST SUBURBS

In suburban Cook County, north of North Avenue, taxes rose by a total of \$209.04 million. The median residential tax bill increased by 3.4% to \$7,503. This does not reflect the reassessment, which will impact the tax bill paid in August 2026.

REASSESSMENT IMPACT

This was the third year in a row in which median homeowner taxes increased by more than 15% in areas that were reassessed. Our reassessment will be reflected in the August bill. During the previous reassessment for our area—tax year 2022, billed in 2023—the North and Northwest Suburbs increased 15.7%.

RECAPTURE

Under a state law (RECAPTURE ACT), an additional \$165.5 million in property taxes was added to bills across the county. Recapture allows non-home rule taxing agencies to recover money refunded to taxpayers after their property assessments were lowered. This means that regardless of your appeal, which corrected a County Assessor error, you will still end up paying additional tax. In the three years since the bill was passed, Cook County taxpayers have paid an additional \$490,050,263 in taxes for over-assessment errors. Agencies are not required to take the money, but many have. For instance, this last year Arlington Heights Township High School District 214 received nearly \$5.6 million, according to Maria Pappas.

You may be interested in reading the following articles:

“Bill headed to Pritzker could set up a wave of annual property tax hikes by forcing other taxpayers to make up for over-assessment errors,” by Rick Pearson, *Chicago Tribune*, June 25, 2021

“How a controversial law allows local governments to recapture refunded property taxes,” by Jake Griffin, *Daily Herald*, March 25, 2023

SUBURBS WITH THE HIGHEST TAXES

The suburb with the biggest overall percentage increase for homeowners was Harwood Heights, where taxes on homes rose 7.6%. In our township, homeowners' taxes in Mt. Prospect grew by 6%.

ACTION WHICH YOU CAN TAKE

The Cook County Assessor will be sending Senior Freeze notifications in early March. If you have not heard anything by late March, contact our office. March will also be a good time to call our office to make sure you have the exemptions to which you are entitled.

Exemptions will be reflected on the August tax bill.

HOW PROPERTY TAXES ARE DETERMINED

1. School districts, municipalities, park districts, and other local governments set the levy, or the overall amount of taxes to be collected to pay for their operations.
2. The County Assessor estimates the value of properties and sets homeowner exemptions, which are then used to determine what portion of the overall tax bill each property owner pays.
3. The Clerk determines the tax rates, based on the levies and overall assessed value in each local government. The assessed value, multiplied by the rate, needs to equal the total levy.
4. The Treasurer sends out the bills, collects the money, and distributes it to the local governments.

FROM THE CLERK'S OFFICE

Joanna Gauza

2026 PRIMARY ELECTIONS & VOTER REGISTRATION

Primary Elections will be held on March 17, 2026 to determine party candidates. The party candidates that win will then run in the November 3, 2026 General Election. These elections will determine the Illinois Governor, U.S. Senator, U.S. Congressional Representatives, Illinois Legislative offices and other local governing officials. In fact, candidates are already campaigning for their respective party nominations. Now is a good time to make sure you are registered. If you are not registered, have just moved into the Township, have moved to another residence in the Township, or changed your name, you need to register to be able to vote in this election. To register, come to the Township Clerk's Office, Monday-Friday, between 9:00am-4:30pm. All you need are two forms of identification (one showing your current address), to be a citizen of the United States, be 18 years of age or older by November 3, 2026, and to have lived in the Township for at least 30 days before the election. If you have an Illinois driver's license or state ID, you may register online through the Illinois State Board of Elections website <https://ova.elections.il.gov/>. If you don't have a driver's license or state ID, go to <https://www.cookcountyclerk.com/agency/register-vote> and complete the form online, print, sign and mail it to the address on the application. If you register by mail, you must bring a valid state issued picture identification when you vote for the first time. As always, you can register to vote in-person during early voting or on Election Day. If you want to vote by mail, please contact Cook County at <https://www.cookcountyclerk.com/agency/vote-mail> to request a mail ballot.



PRIMARY ELECTION 2026



Key Dates for the March 17, 2026 Gubernatorial Primary Election

02/17/2026	Voter registration closes for deputy registrars and local election officials
03/01/2026	Last day to register to vote by online application
03/02/2026	First day of early voting
03/12/2026	Last day to request a mail ballot , including military and overseas voters
03/16/2026	Last day of early voting
03/17/2026	Last day mail ballots can be postmarked
03/17/2026	Election day



WHEELING TOWNSHIP COMMUNITY MENTAL HEALTH BOARD

President Sue Hayes

We are grateful for the opportunity to share an important update and to thank our community for its ongoing interest in the well-being of our residents.

We extend our deep appreciation to Supervisor Maria Zeller Brauer and the Wheeling Township Board of Trustees for their leadership and commitment in adopting and implementing the voter-approved levy that supports our work. This vital investment ensures essential resources remain available for individuals and families in our community, both now and in the years to come.

With this support, the Board will move forward with planned program expansions and capital investments to strengthen mental health, substance use, and intellectual/developmental disability (I/DD) services. These efforts include, among others, expanding competitive employment opportunities, enhancing behavioral health supports, and increasing community engagement for individuals with I/DD. Additional investments will also expand access to specialized mental health counseling and supports, including care for individuals and families facing serious illness, perinatal mental health needs, recovery from abuse, expanded psychiatry services, intensive clinical case management, and substance use disorder counseling.

Together, these investments help sustain a stable, responsive system of services that residents can rely on at different stages of life. Thank you for your continued trust and engagement. We look forward to sharing more updates as this important work continues.

On a more personal note, I would like to thank the Citizens of Wheeling Township for giving me the opportunity to serve on the Wheeling Township Community Mental Health Board. It has been exciting to participate in the establishment of this important public service.

Over the last three years, I have learned so much about the many needs and services in our community. The abundance of individuals with a heart to serve their neighbors is overwhelming. How grateful I am for the wonderful Board Members, Township Members and staff who have been my colleagues and become friends.

Due to an unexpected family situation, I will be moving out of the Township and must resign from the Wheeling Township Community Mental Health Board prior to the completion of my four-year term.

I wish the Wheeling Township Community Mental Health Board continued success in its important work.

Sue

CURRENTLY FUNDED WHEELING TOWNSHIP COMMUNITY MENTAL HEALTH BOARD AGENCIES

- Ascension Center for Mental Health
- Avenues to Independence
- Center for Enriched Living
- Children's Advocacy Center
- Clearbrook
- Countryside/Little City Foundation
- Josselyn Center
- Journeys/The Road Home
- Kenneth Young Center
- Omni
- Search, Inc.

Thankful & grateful

WITH GRATITUDE...

The 2025 holiday programs were a tremendous success, made possible by the incredible generosity of our community. Through the Township's annual Thanksgiving Basket program, holiday meals were distributed to 420 local families, helping ensure that neighbors across Wheeling Township were able to celebrate during the Thanksgiving holiday.

The spirit of giving continued with the **Adopt-A-Family** program. Thanks to overwhelming community support, 132 families received holiday assistance, bringing joy to 340 children and 261 parents. Hundreds of donors made the holidays brighter for families facing financial hardship, while additional gifts of children's hats, gloves, scarves, and books ensured that young residents were both warm and supported during the winter months.

None of this would be possible without the generosity and compassion of our donors. While space does not allow us to list each individual contributor, we extend our deepest gratitude to every donor who gave during the holiday season. Your kindness made a lasting difference in the lives of our neighbors.

We also thank the businesses, churches, and community organizations listed below for their continued partnership and support. Together, your generosity truly embodied the spirit of the season and demonstrated the strength of a community that comes together to care for one another. We couldn't do it without you.

2025 HOLIDAY CORPORATE/ORGANIZATION DONOR LIST

10U Arlington Cardinals Red Baseball Team
 Arlington Heights Memorial Library
 Arlington Heights Jr. Woman's Club
 Athletico Wheeling
 Brentano
 Calvary Presbyterian Church
 Chicago NW Suburban Alpha Phi Alumnae
 Drost Kivlahan McMahon & O'Connor LLC
 Elite Soccer Community Organization
 Indian Trails Public Library District
 Indian Trails Public Library District Staff
 Lutheran Church of the Good Shepherd
 Martin Medical Billing
 OAV Group LLC
 Our Redeemer Lutheran Church
 Pathway Church of Arlington Heights
 PEO Chapter HN
 PEO Chapter IX
 Project Gratitude
 Rotary Club of Arlington Heights Noon
 Sunshine Tuesday School
 Taylor Plumbing, Inc.
 Terrazzo & Marble
 Visualedge, Inc.



SENIOR AND DISABILITY NEWS

Call 847-259-7730 to register for any of the Programs & Services offered through Wheeling Township.

Upcoming Programs

Debunking Medicare & Medicaid Myths

Attorney Melissa Kallio, Dutton Casey & Mesoloras, PC

Tuesday, May 5

10 – 11:30 am on Zoom

This presentation will debunk 14 commonly held myths about Medicare and Medicaid, show you how to prepare for the reality of long-term care, and how to take advantage of opportunities to maximize your quality of life. Attorney Melissa Kallio is an expert in Elder Law and has spoken to Wheeling Township many times; don't miss her informative presentation. Program will not be recorded, so you need to be available on 5/5. To register: 847-259-7730.



Have trouble hearing on the phone?

Test free amplified phones at Wheeling Township

Monday, April 13

Do you have trouble hearing on the phone (landline or cell)? Test the free ITAC amplified phones and amplified cell phone attachments at the Wheeling Township office on **Monday, April 13, 10:00am - 3:00pm.**

Free amplified telephones and cellphone attachments are available to qualified Illinois residents with a hearing loss. **Participants MUST make appointments by calling Schaumburg Township at 847-285-4541 in advance; NO walk-ins.**



Want to Make a Difference?

We're always looking for a few more friendly faces! Come join our amazing team — this program is successful because of the many dedicated volunteers who deliver meals throughout the year. Home Delivered Meal Program Volunteers must be available between 11am – 1pm. Routes and days are pre-assigned. For more information, call Katie Ferguson at 847-259-7730, ext. 19. Or send an email to HomeDeliveredMeals@WheelingTownship.com



Home Delivered Meal Program

The Township offers a reasonably priced home-delivered hot meal program for residents of the Township who meet eligibility requirements.

How does the program work?

A hot, freshly prepared meal is delivered at mid-day, Monday through Friday, right to the door of the recipient by a friendly volunteer. Applicants must agree to receive meals five days a week for at least a month.

Cost of the meals? Wheeling Township's program is a self-pay program: The hot meal is \$8.00 per day. A cold meal (which is delivered at the same time) is available for an additional \$5.75 per day. Bills are mailed monthly for the meals received.

Who is eligible?

- Must be a resident over 60 or permanently disabled individual over 18
- Must reside within Wheeling Township
- Must be considered homebound and/or no longer driving
- Must not have a full-time caregiver
- There must be availability on a route

If you're interested in finding out more about the program, call Katie Ferguson, our Home Delivered Meal program Coordinator, at 847-259-7730, ext. 19, or send an email to: HomeDeliveredMeals@WheelingTownship.com.



Wheeling Township Transportation

Much more than just a ride!

Looking for safe and affordable transportation?

If you are over 60 (or 18+ and permanently disabled), Wheeling Township's outstanding transportation service may be the perfect solution for your needs.

When is service available?

Rides are available for Township residents to a wide variety of locations within the Township, Monday – Friday, 9:00 am - 3:30 pm. **Call as soon as possible to reserve your ride, as buses fill up quickly (you may call up to 30 days in advance for medical appointments).**

How much? \$2 each way.

How do I sign up? Call the transportation department with questions – or for an application. Applications can also be found online at www.wheeling-township.com under "services."

Call the Transportation Office for information and applications: 847-259-7743.





Community Paint-a-thon

Does the EXTERIOR of your home need to be painted?

Do you own your own home – and does the outside of it need a fresh coat of paint? Find out whether you might qualify to get your home painted for FREE as part of the **39th Annual Community Paint-A-Thon**. Wheeling Township is one of many Townships, Villages and Municipalities participating in this annual program. Seniors (60+), veterans, and permanently disabled persons may qualify to get the exterior of their home painted. Homes must be single-family, owner-occupied, and in sufficient condition so that scraping and spot priming are the only preparations needed. All who apply should be financially disadvantaged and not able to paint their own homes. **Paint Day this year is Saturday, September 12.** Applications are due by July 1, 2026. Call 847-259-7730, ext 21 for



Wheeling Township's SHIP Counselors from L to R: Kim, Marvin, Tara, Bob, Dhun, Lou, Carol



Medicare is complicated...SHIP Will Help!

If you are enrolled in Medicare, are close to enrolling in Medicare, or have health insurance questions, Wheeling Township's outstanding SHIP Counselors may be able to help you. SHIP Counselors **objectively** counsel Medicare beneficiaries, their caregivers or representatives who have Medicare questions - and the service is free.

In addition to Wheeling Township's Resource Specialist, Kim Sauchgrow, we have six dedicated and knowledgeable volunteers extensively trained by the **Illinois Department On Aging** to assist Medicare participants with understanding their benefit coverage, helping with filing medical bills and claims, explaining Medicare Supplemental and Part D Insurance, and providing resolution support for problems. Our SHIP Counselors also assist with Benefit Access.

Want to switch your Medicare Supplement Policy (Medigap)? You have options! If you are enrolled in a Medigap policy in Illinois and are between the ages of 65 to 75 years old, you have 45 days after your birthday each year to change your Medigap policy without being underwritten or answering health questions. The new policy must be equal or lesser coverage from your current Medigap carrier. Our SHIP Counselors will review your options to switch based on your situation.

The Senior Health Insurance Program (SHIP) is a nationwide Medicare counseling service that provides FREE and OBJECTIVE Medicare counseling to individuals and their families. Call Wheeling Township at 847-259-7730 to make your SHIP appointment!



2025 Donation Drive UPDATE

Thank You!

Wheeling Township held its annual donation drive last November to collect food, cards and funds for Operation Support Our Troops America, Inc, a local nonprofit organization that mails 'Comfort & Care Packages' to active military personnel stationed around the globe. **Township residents REALLY outdid themselves — 2025's donations were incredible!**

Residents donated:

- **2,370 pounds** of snacks, socks, candy and toiletries;
- **Over 2,000 cards/letters/pictures** (the most ever!)
- **\$5,000** in monetary contributions.

2025's Donation Drive was incredibly successful – and it's all thanks to the generosity of Wheeling Township residents! Many thanks to everyone in the community who took the time to drop off snacks, candy, hygiene or other items, write a card, or make a financial donation for this great cause – **you made a difference.** Don't forget that we hold this donation drive EVERY November, so we look forward to seeing you again in November, 2026! For more information, contact Lynndah Lahey at 847-259-7730, ext. 21.



DRIVER SAFETY

AARP Real Possibilities

AARP SMART DRIVER COURSE

TUNE UP YOUR DRIVING SKILLS

The AARP Smart Driver Course is designed to help you **tune up** your driving skills, **learn** about normal age-related physical changes and how to adjust your driving to compensate, and **reduce** your chances of receiving a traffic violation or getting into an accident. Upon the completion of the eight hour, two-session class, you will be issued a certificate which may be submitted to your automobile insurance company for a discount on your auto insurance. You must attend BOTH nights to get the certificate.

Cost: \$20 for AARP members and \$25 for non-AARP members. Checks or cash accepted; checks should be made payable to AARP and brought to the first class. **Classes are held at the Wheeling Township building. Dinner is not provided, feel free to bring a sandwich with you. Coffee, water and cookies will be available.** Call 847-259-7730 to register.

Dates & Times: 4:30 pm – 8:30 pm on the following days:

- **May 5 & May 7**



Wheeling Township Report, Inc.

1616 N. Arlington Heights Road
Arlington Heights, IL 60004
847-259-7730

www.wheelingtowship.com

Hours: 9 am- 4:30 pm weekdays

Township Board Meetings: 7:00 pm
on the fourth Tuesday of each month

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WHEELING TOWNSHIP ELECTED OFFICIALS



Maria Zeller Brauer
SUPERVISOR



Ken Jochum
ASSESSOR



Joanna Gauza
TOWN CLERK



John Geier
TRUSTEE



Lorri Grainawi
TRUSTEE



Austin Mejdrich
TRUSTEE



Sheri Williams
TRUSTEE

**VETERANS ASSISTANCE
COMMISSION
OF COOK COUNTY**

We are excited to announce our partnership with the Veterans Assistance Commission of Cook County. The VACCC will be at Wheeling Township, 1616 N Arlington Heights Rd, Arlington Heights, on the third Friday of every month, from 9:00 am to 4:00 pm. No appointments necessary. The VACCC exists to support Veterans and their families by connecting them with the benefits, services, and resources they have earned. Contact the VACCC at (312)433-6010 or email them at vacc@cookcountyil.gov. Visit their website at vaccookcounty.org.



FOOD PANTRY TOP 5

SCAN ME!

While out shopping this Spring, please consider donating to the Wheeling Township Food Pantry:

CANNED FRUIT – Apricot Halves, Diced Mangos, Fruit Cocktail, Peach Slices, Pineapple Chunks, Mandarin Oranges

CANNED MEAT – Chicken Breast, Corned Beef Hash, Original Vienna Sausage, SPAM

CANNED SOUP – Chicken Quesadilla, Clam Chowder, French Onion, Hearty Beef Barley, Lentil, Split Pea, Vegetable

CANNED VEGETABLES – Peas, Peas & Carrots, Mixed Vegetables, Sliced Carrots, Sliced Mushrooms, Spinach

PERSONAL ESSENTIALS – Antiperspirant & Deodorant Stick, Toothpaste, Unscented Laundry Detergent, Body Wash, Shampoo, Conditioner, Facial Tissue

No time to shop? The Food Pantry now has an Amazon Wishlist: **Scan the QR code above.** Thank you for your support!



If you need a VSO or Emergency Financial Services Today, scan QR Code or visit <https://hovqr.to/de421623>