



2827 7TH AVENUE
ROCK ISLAND, IL 61201
309-788-3417
rockislandtownshipil.gov



Supervisor's Message



2015 is flying by! It seems like only yesterday we had the Senior Holiday Luncheon and now we're planning for the 2015 event, starting work on the 2016-17 budget and looking at improving and creating programs and activities.

With about 50 General Assistance clients per month, 30 monthly Senior Cares voucher recipients, 40-60 food pantry and 50-60 meal site clients daily, the building is busy from 8 a.m. until about 6:30 p.m. It also gives us a chance to show off our upgraded kitchen, remodeled bathrooms, sealed and striped parking lot (including our new Newport Plum tree) and energy efficient lighting.

The remodeling has saved us some money on utility costs (water, sewer, electricity and gas). These savings, along with other efforts to reduce expenses, resulted in a reduction in the Township's tax levy by nearly 5 percent. I hope to continue this trend, holding the line on taxes, while continuing to offer high-quality services.

One new initiative is the Township's Facebook page. Please check it out and "Like Us" or "Join Us." We'll be sharing timely information about the Township. I encourage you to take a look, comment or ask questions.

Another major initiative is creating an Emergency Program (see the separate article on page 7). We know that things happen that divert money from your budget and you have to juggle what you have left. If you have an emergency car repair and you can't make your rent payment, contact us and we'll see if you qualify for this new program.

As always, if you have any comment, questions or suggestions, do not hesitate to call 309-788-3417, e-mail ritownsupervisor@gmail.com or stop in and see me.

Alan M. Carmen
Township Supervisor

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Mission Statement

To professionally, courteously, equitably and efficiently administer general assistance, property assessment and other programs and to properly maintain the Township Hall and property for the benefit of Township residents and the building's tenants.

FALL | WINTER
2015-16

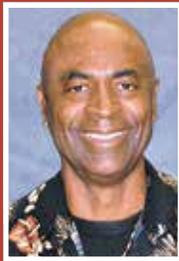
Elected Officials

of

Rock Island Township



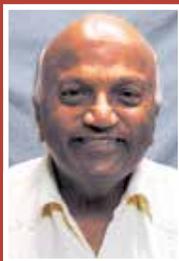
Heather Gray
Trustee



James "Jim" Kerr Sr.
Trustee



Rita Kirk
Trustee



Vincent G. Thomas
Trustee

Assessor's Office

Brenda L. Carmen \ \ \ Assessor

The phone in my office rings a lot. Connie Abernathy or Donna Jungwirth will usually answer it. Both of them are Certified Illinois Assessment Officials (CIAO) just as I am and they can answer your questions just as well. If they can't answer your question, they'll provide you with the name and number of the proper County or City office to call.



Here's a few of the questions that we are most often asked:

Q. "I just got my tax bill in the mail and my neighbor, who has a bigger house, got a lower tax bill than mine. How can that be?"

A. When you compare tax bills alone, it doesn't take into account any exemptions that the homeowner is entitled to. Your neighbor could very well be over 65 years of age and receiving the Senior Homestead Exemption. In addition, your neighbor may qualify for the Senior Freeze Exemption, the Disabled Persons Exemption or one of the Veteran's Exemptions. All of these exemptions lower your assessment by various amounts, which in turn, lowers your tax bill.

Q. "What do I have to do to get you to change my assessment?"

A. The first thing to do is to call my office, or come in and talk to us. Each property has a property record card which lists all the information we have about your house, such as: the square footage, does it have a garage, how many plumbing fixtures, porches, patio, pool, fireplaces, etc. Maybe the property record card states that you have a finished attic, but you don't. Information like this should be corrected so that we can come up with a more accurate assessment of your property.

Q. "Why did you increase my assessment? I haven't done anything to my house in years."

A. On behalf of your neighbors, I am sorry to hear that, but you can do nothing to your house for years and if other houses in your neighborhood are selling for more money, it's going to increase the value of your house. A good example of that in our township is the Broadway Historic District. Thirty years ago it was considered run down and undesirable, but as families moved in and began to fix the old houses and bring them back to their original grandeur, the values began to rise and it's a very different neighborhood now than it was in 1980.

Q. "What if everything is correct and we still disagree?"

A. Sometime in September, the Chief County Assessor's office will publish a list of all the changes made to assessments. At the same time, they will mail letters to each individual taxpayer informing them of the change. You will have 30 days from the date of that letter to file an appeal with the County Board of Review. You can pick up the appeal forms at my office or at the Chief County Assessor's office. We will be glad to answer any questions you have about the appeal

process. You don't need an attorney to file an appeal, although you may have one if you wish. At the hearing itself, you have five minutes to tell the hearing officer why you think the assessment should be lower, I have five minutes to tell the hearing officer why I think the assessment is correct as it is. We do not know the decision until the Board of Review sends us a notice. This could be months after the appeal depending upon how many appeals there are that year. If you don't agree with the Board's decision, you will then have 30 days to file an appeal with the Property Tax Appeal Board in Springfield.
DON'T WAIT UNTIL YOUR TAX BILL ARRIVES IN MAY WHEN IT'S TOO LATE TO DO ANYTHING ABOUT IT!

Q. "I had a rental property that I demolished last year in June, but the house is still showing on my tax bill. Why?"

A. We assess your property based upon its condition on January 1st of that tax year, so if the house was still standing on January 1st it is taxed for the entire year.

Find additional questions and answers residents have had on our website, rockislandtownshipil.gov

Assessor's Contact Information: If you have questions about your property's value, or to see if you qualify for one or more of the property tax exemptions, **please contact the Assessor's Office at 309-786-2961 or riassessor@sbcglobal.net**. The fax number is 309-786-3731. Office hours are 8 a.m. - Noon and 1-4 p.m. Monday through Friday.

Clerk's Corner: //

Joan Clark \\\ Town Clerk

The Township Clerk is the keeper of records. That simply means; maintaining the history of the Township and continuing to build on it. Along with that duty, the clerk is responsible for taking the official minutes of all Township meetings, posting in the newspaper all notices that are required by state law, assuring that budget ordinances, prevailing wage ordinances, etc. are filed with the proper county/state agencies and administering the oath of office to newly elected or appointed officials. The Clerk is a non-voting member of the Town Board. That being said, I've always been a people person and the above duties do not encourage much interaction with the public! Please understand the above duties take a good deal of time, but most of my responsibilities are filled sitting behind a computer!

In 2013, when I was sworn in as Clerk, I decided to look outside the box for ways to expand my work to provide hands-on service to the people living in our township. I've always been the "very

unofficial township photographer" and, of course, I will continue to help out when the need arises; unfortunately there isn't a lot of need for the job!

Slowly, I'm beginning to develop ways to help my position evolve into more than filing, posting and taking minutes. The position has evolved into direct interaction with Rock Island Township residents. I am a certified Notary Public. If you are a Rock Island Township resident in need of a notary, I will be happy to come to your home and notarize your documents. Unfortunately, it is when we are unable to get out of the house that the need occurs. Many insurance companies, banks, and most legal documents must be notarized prior to claiming benefits. Usually, the people who most need the service are seniors or disabled residents. Please keep this service in mind. **Call the Township office at 309-788-3417 to leave a message for me.**



VOLUNTEERS NEEDED! ///

The St. Joseph Evening Meal, a Ministry of St. Pius X Catholic Church, provides evening meals for the hungry in our community. In the fall of 2005, the St. Joseph Evening Meal site moved into Rock Island Township's Lund Hall at 2827 7th Ave. Rock Island. The closing of St. Joseph Church caused the Evening Meal Committee to find a new location for its nightly meals. Talk about a perfect fit; Rock Island Township had the space — they had the service.

The evening meal is cooked off-site and served by several churches of all faiths, fraternal organizations, retailers, and people just interested in serving the community. Over 11,000 meals are served each year. Guests are singles, families, and elderly; many who are lonely or who may not be able to cook.

All are invited. Meals are served promptly at 5:30 p.m. Monday through Friday.

If you, your family or a group you get together with are looking for a truly rewarding way to serve your community, try cooking and serving the Evening Meal. If you are alone and would just like to help — stop in and check with the supervisor of the meal to ask what day they could use help. You won't regret it!



INTERESTED?
Call Rita Kirk
@ 786-3799



Please note that the Food Pantry, Evening Meal and building tenants (Safer Foundation, Roofers' Union and Delacerda House) schedules may differ.
Call 309-788-3417 to see if they are open.

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ETHEL SCHURLOCK GIVING CENTER

In memory of Ethel Schurlock, who served with distinction as a Township Trustee from 1990-2000, the Giving Center was dedicated in her memory in 2001 to recognize her selfless and charitable nature. We accept donations of gently used clothing, shoes and other items (books, VHS or DVD movies, household goods) that are given away for free to those who need them. The Giving Center is open during the Township's business hours.

CONCEALED CARRY ACT

The Town Board took action last year to approve a resolution that complies with the Illinois Firearm Concealed Carry Act. It states, among other things, that a licensee shall not knowingly carry a firearm on or into any building or portion of a building under the control of a unit of local government.

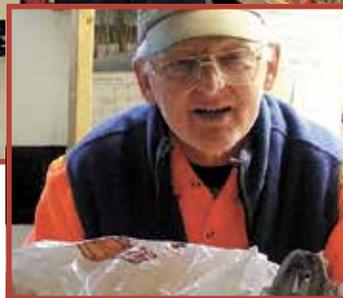
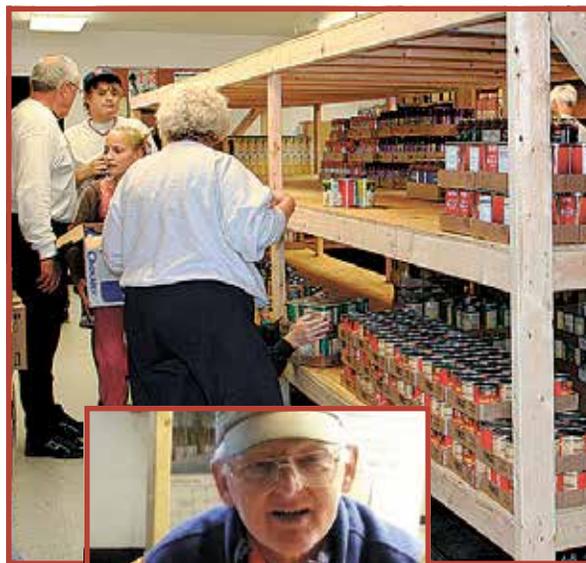
Sacred Heart Food Pantry

The Sacred Heart Food Pantry is located on the lower level (west side of building) of Rock Island Township.

The Pantry is open Monday through Friday, 9-11 a.m.

Volunteers are totally responsible for the daily operation which includes: picking up food at the River Bend Food Bank, keeping the shelves stocked and helping distribute the food. The Pantry is supported by local churches and private/public donations. If you have food to donate, or you have a surplus from your garden, you can bring it to the Pantry during the time it is open.

If you have a couple of hours during the day you would like to help, call Sacred Heart Church at 309-794-0660 or the Township at 309-788-3417 and leave a message for Mike Clark to call you. This is another great way to get involved and all you have to do is schedule a time and show up!



**Mike Clark,
Food Pantry
Coordinator**

2015 HOLIDAY LUNCHEON

A tradition for many years, the Township is pleased to host the 2015 Holiday Luncheon for seniors (65 and older) on December 9th at 11 a.m. Fabulous food, entertainment, gifts for our guests and fellowship are the order of the day. Any senior citizen interested in attending this year's event should call 309-788-3417.



Area senior residents and guests had a fabulous time at the 2014 Christmas luncheon.



GENERAL ASSISTANCE PROGRAM

If you have applied for disability benefits but have not been approved, or are an unemployed single individual looking for work who needs temporary help, the Township's General Assistance Program may be for you. If you qualify, we can pay up to \$200 for rent, provide a \$10 food voucher (in addition to food stamps) and a \$57 Kmart voucher for personal needs. Contact the office during business hours to get more information.

G.A. SUCCESS STORY

Jane had a checkered past — drug and alcohol abuse, abusive marriage, jail. She had no job, but did have an expired CDL license. She came to the Township looking for help and we assisted with rent and vouchers to meet other basic needs. She found a truck driving job using the Township's computers as part of her required job search and was able to renew her CDL through Scott Community College, with help from the Township's Work Readiness Program. She is now gainfully employed, clean and sober and doing very well. This is an example of how the Township can assist clients turn their lives around!

Salute To World War II Veterans

by Rita Kirk

On August 14th, Rock Island Township co-sponsored a "Salute to World War II Veterans" with South Rock Island Township. The breakfast was held at Friendship Manor. Trustee James Kerr and I went on a mission to find WWII veterans living in Rock Island Township to encourage them to attend the event. We visited Coventry, The Fort Armstrong and St. Anthony's and found a few veterans who we will talk about in future newsletters. For purposes of this newsletter we will focus on past Rock Island Township Trustee Matthew Parker Jr.

Matthew Parker was born in Chicago on December 21, 1925. He was sent to Fort Smith, Arkansas to live with his paternal grandparents. He graduated from Lincoln High School in 1942. Following high school he enlisted in the Navy. He was a Gunner and Baker achieving the rank of Petty Officer Third Class. He served from 1942 to 1944; 13 months in the Pacific. He did see some action, but only got a nick on the chin.

Matthew attended the University of Illinois. He married Katherine and moved to Moline and worked at Farmall for 39½ years. He and Katherine moved to Rock Island in 1957. They were blessed with 49½ years together and two children – Cynthia and Michael.

Other than his beloved Katherine, his greatest memory was in 1964. As a member of the UAWCIO 1309 he, along with others, was bussed to Washington, D.C., to hear the Rev. Martin Luther King Jr.'s "I Have a Dream" speech.

Matthew had been a Rock Island Township Trustee for 36 years, from 1977 to 2013. He is an inspiration to all who know him. The main lesson life has taught him is "to do unto others as you would have them do unto you." The world would be a better place if we all could live by these words as he does.



Rock Island Township Trustees: Rita Kirk and James Kerr Salute World War II Veteran Matthew Parker Jr.

WORLD WAR II VETERANS RECOGNITION BREAKFAST

August 14th marked the 70th anniversary of the end of World War II. Rock Island and South Rock Island Townships cosponsored a breakfast for 50 veterans at Friendship Manor to honor these members of the "The Greatest Generation." Veterans, family members and elected officials were entertained by the Chord Busters and the Friendship Manor Choir. The keynote speaker was William Albracht, retired U.S. Army Captain, and Vietnam Veteran, recipient of three Silver Stars for gallantry, three Purple Hearts, five Bronze Stars and Congressional Medal of Honor nominee. Mr. Albracht said one of the many differences between his service and that of World War II veterans was he knew he had a



Keynote speaker William Albracht addresses veterans attending the breakfast at Friendship Manor.

one year tour of duty while during World War II you were in "for the duration."

He expressed his appreciation for their heroic service and made special mention of those who paid the ultimate sacrifice so we could have the freedoms we enjoy today.

LEAF BAG DISTRIBUTION

The Assessor's Office distributes the City of Rock Island's leaf bags.

The 2015 Fall program dates are:

BAG DISTRIBUTION begins Monday, **October 5th**

BAG COLLECTION begins Monday, **October 12th** through Friday, **December 4th.**



FREE COPIES AND FAXES

We will make limited number of copies for Township residents or send a fax on their behalf. These can be related to employment, taxes, driver's licenses, etc.

FREE BLANKETS

Free wool emergency blankets are available starting in November and can be picked up during regular business hours. They are surplus from the Department of Defense and cannot be washed. **Supplies are limited.**

WORK READINESS

MetroLINK bus tickets are offered for a limited period of time to those looking for work and for the recently employed. Limited funds are also available to purchase work-related clothing, tools or certification costs (such as food handling).

FREE NOTARY

We will notarize your documents should that be needed.

Trunk or Treat/Open House/Evening Meal

On Friday, October 30th, the Township, in cooperation with Greenbush Neighbors, will host a Trunk or Treat event in the Township's north parking lot. Town Board members, Assessors, staff, Greenbush Neighbors and others will provide treats out of the back of their vehicles. They will also serve the evening meal, served at 5:30 p.m., and show off the building improvements that were completed last year. Work completed by general contractor QCGeneral included bathroom upgrades, new roof, parking lot sealing and striping, kitchen remodeling and energy saving electrical improvements.

Join us at 5:30 p.m. for the meal and stay for Trunk or Treat immediately afterwards.

TRY-Play PROGRAM

Do you know any youths, under age 18, that want to participate in a recreational activity but cannot afford the fees or have transportation? If so, refer them to the Rock Island County Project (RICAP) at 309-794-1100. Limited scholarships and bus passes are available, based on need, through the TRY-Play Program (Township Recreation Youth Play Program). This is a partnership of Rock Island and South Rock Island Townships, RICAP, MetroLINK and the Rock Island Public Library and Parks and Recreation Departments.



A trunk filled with treats greeted the neighborhood children and adults last year.

Some improvement projects that took place this year.



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Emergency Program

As part of the Township 2015-16 budget, the Town Board approved a new Emergency Program. A payment of up to \$400 can be made for rent, mortgage or utilities (water/sewer or gas/electricity) that have resulted from an emergency situation. If you qualify for our General Assistance Program, you will not be eligible for this program. Application forms are available during regular business hours starting on September 14th. No more than \$1,500 will be paid out monthly, not to exceed a total of \$18,000. We hope to assist about 50 families during the year.
Call 309-788-3417 for more information.

TOWNSHIP GRANTS

Rock Island Township has limited funding to support agencies and organizations providing services and programs that benefit youth, seniors and veterans. Past grants were awarded to local food pantries, Papa's Helping Veterans, the King Center's A.C.T.I.V.E. Club, Rock Island Little League, Community Gardens, Rocktown 340 Basketball Club, among others. **If you are interested in receiving a grant application, contact the Township at 309-788-3417 or go to our website @ rockislandtownshipil.gov.**

WARMING/COOLING CENTER

Whenever we have temperature extremes, Lund Hall at the Township is open for you to drop in and get warm or cool, depending on the season.

VOTER REGISTRATION

We have several Deputy Registrars who would be happy to register you to vote, update your address, or change your voting status.

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MEETING SCHEDULE:

The Rock Island Township Board of Trustees meets the fourth Monday of every month at 4:15 p.m. in the Town Hall, 2827 7th Ave., Room 7. Our meetings are always open to the public. Please join us to watch, offer comments or ask questions. Our meeting agendas are posted on the Town Hall's bulletin board and our website rockislandtownshipil.gov.



HOURS:

The Assessor's Office and Township administrative offices are open from 8 a.m.-noon and 1-4 p.m. Monday through Friday (except holidays noted below).

The building is open until about 6:30 p.m. or until those attending the evening meal have cleaned up and left.

Please note that the Food Pantry, Evening Meal and building tenants (Safer Foundation, Roofers' Union and Delacerda House) schedules differ. Call 309-788-3417 to see if they are open.

CLOSED: Labor Day, 9/7; Columbus Day, 10/12; Veterans Day, 11/11; Thanksgiving Day, 11/26; Thanksgiving Holiday 11/27; Christmas Eve, 12/24; Christmas Day, 12/25; New Year's Day 1/1/16.

BOARD OF TRUSTEES MEETING

4th Monday every month, 4:15 p.m.

at Town Hall

Open to public.



Irene Garrison enjoys family, neighbors and friends at her birthday celebration.

ROCK ISLAND TOWNSHIP RESIDENT CELEBRATES 90TH BIRTHDAY! !!!

by Joan Clark

Although I'm sure you will read about many wonderful Township events in this newsletter, the 90th birthday party of Irene Garrison is one of my personal favorites!

Leonard & Irene Garrison moved into the Rock Island Township Greenbush Neighborhood in the 1960s — where they stayed to raise their four children.

Prior to Leonard's passing, Irene brought him to the township on numerous occasions — sometimes just to visit. Those of us who worked there came to know and love them both. When we became aware of an article in the paper detailing plans for Irene's 90th birthday, Trustee James Kerr and I made plans to reconnect with this very special lady. We were so very happy to see so many relatives, neighbors and friends who came to celebrate this very special birthday with Irene.

The picture says it all! Great day... for a very special lady! Happy birthday, Irene, from all your neighbors at Rock Island Township.