

# North Township NAVIGATOR

YOUR GUIDE TO NEWS AND SERVICES IN EAST CHICAGO, HAMMOND, HIGHLAND, MUNSTER AND WHITING • FALL 2015

## STRENGTH IN THE WAKE OF TRAGEDY

### North Township joins community leaders to raise awareness about gang prevention

Just 16 when she was murdered by gang warfare in July, Lauren Calvillo is inspiring a movement to keep teens out of gangs.

North Township Trustee Frank Mrvan said a group that includes law enforcement, the faith-based community and civic groups are creating a program that discourages middle-school, at-risk youth from associating with gangs.

“This group of teens and tweens are the

most likely to be influenced by gangs in our communities,” he said.

In 2010, 45 percent of high school students and 35 percent of middle-schoolers said there were gangs in their school.

“This is a complex situation,” Mrvan said. “It is going to take all of us working in collaboration to ensure no other innocent children are killed by gangs.” ▲

#### CALLING ALL LEADERS ...

Did you know nearly one in 12 youth belong to a gang at some point during their teens?

North Township Trustee Frank Mrvan cordially invites all community and church leaders to join him in November for a second public forum on gang prevention awareness.

**RSVP:** Call Lori Polgar at the North Township Trustee's office at (219) 932-2530, ext 324.



## MEALS ON WHEELS PARTNERS WITH NORTH TOWNSHIP

A newly minted pilot program between North Township and Northwest Indiana Meals on Wheels will mean qualifying seniors – as well as those with temporary or permanent disabilities – can get hot meals delivered to their door.

As an added bonus, Meals on Wheels also provides well-being checks during stops.

Sandy Nowles, executive director of the local Meals on Wheels, said there is no underestimating the value of daily interaction along with nutrition. Nowles credited North

Township Chief Deputy Jane Dudley for coming up with the notion of a partnership that guarantees seniors get a healthy hot meal four days a week with microwavable meals for the other days.

Dudley said she wanted to do something beyond providing food vouchers, which require clients to shop and prepare meals.

“I feel better knowing that some of our most vulnerable people are being cared for, that they will have something to eat. No one should be hungry,” Dudley said.

“Meals on Wheels not only delivers meals, they bring pet food for those who have a dog or cat. As importantly, when the volunteers deliver food, they make sure the lights are on, that the heat or air conditioning is on and that everything seems okay.

“They don't leave until they know everyone on their route is safe and well.” ▲

**QUESTIONS?** For more information on the Meals on Wheels program or to see if you qualify, please contact Jane Dudley at (219) 932-2530 ext. 313.



WE'RE HERE TO HELP YOU! FOR MORE INFORMATION, VISIT US AT [NORTHTOWNSHIPTRUSTEE.COM](http://NORTHTOWNSHIPTRUSTEE.COM).



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**OAK HILL CEMETERY:** When residents noticed the latest round of improvements, they started coming back to tend to the graves of their loved ones. “Today, wherever I look, I can see flowers on grave sites and people visiting the cemetery,” Oak Hill Manager Kelli Vicari said. “We’ve been vigilant about getting the cemetery back in shape and they have told me they feel safe coming back.” [North Township photos]



**LETTER FROM THE NORTH TOWNSHIP TRUSTEE**

**Thank you to organizations, volunteers whose contributions make Oak Hill Cemetery shine**

This summer has been one for the record books for Oak Hill Cemetery. Through the efforts of dozens of volunteers, we were able to replace the front pillars and gates, trim back brush, mow around headstones and make Oak Hill a suitable final resting place for our region’s departed.

I want to thank every person who volunteered their talents to this very worthy project. We could never have done it without you!

- Iron Workers Local #395 – Portage
- Finishing Trades Institute – Merrillville
- Bruno’s Tuckpointing – Hazel Crest, Illinois

**FLAG DONATIONS**

- Iron Pack Brotherhood
- VFW 802 – Hammond
- DAV Chapter 17 – Hammond
- Joanie (Channic) Ross – Arizona

**DONATION OF TIME**

- Boy Scouts – Region
- Girl Scouts – Region
- Veteran Views – Hammond
- Veterans Café – Merrillville
- USW Union 7-1 – Whiting

**FRANK J. MRVAN**  
 North Township Trustee

**CLARA’S FINAL RESTING PLACE ...**

When Kelli Vicari began work as the manager of Oak Hill Cemetery, she noticed a well-worn headstone against the back fence – an imposing monument carved with the name Clara James (see photo above).

Gathering the cemetery paperwork for more than 20,000 gravesites and getting the grounds up to snuff took most of Vicari’s time while Clara waited.

After a request from a family member, Vicari put all of her efforts into reuniting the headstone with its burial site – but it was no easy task.

“I found a family with a last name of James, but all of the graves had the appropriate headstone,” she said. “The family member knew a little bit about her, that she had a son by the name of Vincent, who died in 1962. Eventually, I was able to find her maiden name, which was Moore, and found that Clara was buried with her brothers in another section of the cemetery.

“We dedicated July 22, 2015 to Clara. That’s the day her headstone was placed where it always belonged.”

# AUTUMN IN THE PARK

## SCENIC TRAILS

The 2.5-mile trail along the perimeter of the park is perfect for the avid walker, runner or bicyclist. The half-mile inner trail takes you on a scenic tour of the park, volleyball courts and playground. Trails are paved and open from dawn to dusk.

## DOG PARK CLOSED UNTIL SPRING

Beginning September 1, the dog park closed to make way for an array of enhancements – a sprinkler system, a doggie fountain, new fencing, concrete and benches – which will almost double the size while pampering our pooches.

## GOLF COURSE

This 18-hole, par-72 course offers tree-lined fairways, a practice green and driving range. Fall rates are \$27 to ride 18 holes or \$23 for 9 holes on the weekend. Weekdays with cart are \$23 for 18 holes and \$17 for 9 holes. For more info or to schedule a tee time, call the Pro Shop at (219) 838-9809.

## TENNIS & VOLLEYBALL COURTS

The park features five tennis and three sand volleyball courts for your enjoyment.

## BANQUET FACILITIES

Looking for a place to host your wedding, retirement party or meeting? Wicker Memorial Park banquet facilities are perfect for any occasion. To make an appointment to view our facilities, call Bridget at (219) 923-3830. For rental fees and catering, visit [www.diningsolutionswickerpark.com](http://www.diningsolutionswickerpark.com).



### WHERE TO CHARGE ...

Our electric charging stations are located in the parking lot near the Prairie Street entrance.

## PLUG INTO WICKER PARK AND CHARGE YOUR ELECTRIC VEHICLE, TOO!

Wicker Memorial Park has created a convenient system for those wanting to enjoy the links, trails or leisure time at the park while charging their electric cars.

Brett Bierman, superintendent of Wicker Memorial Park, said the charging stations

were installed as a convenience for park-goers and a bonus for air quality. The stations are even encouraging folks to go green.

Since charging an electric car takes hours – not minutes – the park is an ideal place to multitask in the most enjoyable of ways.

“We wanted to make it convenient for those who drive electric cars to charge their vehicles at the same time,” Bierman said.

“A car in need of a charge provides a perfect reason to pop in for a quick 18 holes or simply spend some quality time in the park.”

## CELEBRATE MEXICO!

Celebrate Mexican Independence Day with Visions of Santana, a group that covers the music of Carlos Santana like no other. Cash bar and concessions are available. You must be at least 21 years of age with valid ID to attend.

**WHEN:** 7:30 to 10:30 p.m. Sept. 10  
Doors open at 7 p.m.

**WHERE:** Wicker Park Social Center  
**ADMISSION:** \$5  
**INFO:** Call (219) 932-2530, ext. 324.

## GUARD GOLF OUTING

North Township Trustee Frank Mrvan will host local soldiers for a day of fun at Wicker Memorial Park. This National Guard appreciation day includes a free cookout and a round of golf.

**WHEN:** 9 a.m. to 2 p.m. September 10  
**WHERE:** Wicker Memorial Park  
**INFO:** Call (219) 932-2530, ext. 324.

## CEMETERY TOUR

Join us for the 2015 Suzanne G. Long Annual Cemetery Tour at Oak Hill Cemetery. Participants will learn about the lives and experiences of Civil War soldiers who are buried there.

**WHEN:** 1 to 4 p.m. Oct. 4  
**WHERE:** Oak Hill Cemetery, corner of Hohman Avenue and 165th Street  
**ADMISSION:** \$5, children under 12 free  
**INFO:** Call Richard Lytle at (219) 931-5100, ext. 307 or email [lytler@hammond.lib.in.us](mailto:lytler@hammond.lib.in.us).

## ANNUAL COAT DRIVE

After collecting gently used coats/jackets and buying new ones with donated funds, North Township Trustee and Kusiak Care's 8th annual coat drive will distribute hundreds of winter items to township residents.

**WHEN:** 9 to 11 a.m. November 14  
**WHERE:** Wicker Park Pavilion  
**INFO:** Call (219) 932-2530, ext. 331.

### DROP-OFF LOCATIONS:

Wicker Memorial Park Social Center; Wicker Park Pro Shop; Kusiak Construction, 8338 Kennedy Ave., Highland; and Ridge United Methodist Church, 8706 Columbia Ave., Munster.

## BEARS TAILGATE PARTY

Join us for a tailgate party as the Bears take on the San Diego Chargers. Picnic tables available or bring your own chair to watch the game on our outdoor big screen while enjoying \$2 drafts, \$2 hot dog and chips or \$3 brat and chips. Full cash bar available. No coolers allowed.

**WHEN:** 6 p.m. November 9  
Game starts at 7:30 p.m.  
**WHERE:** Wicker Park Pro Shop  
**INFO:** Call (219) 932-2530, ext. 331.

## FOUR WINDS CASINO TRIPS

Roll the dice and let Lady Luck guide you to fame, fortune or at least a rollicking good time on this trip to New Buffalo, Michigan. Seats fill up fast and are first come, first served! Reserve your spot today!

**WHEN:** 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. Monday, September 28; Wednesday, October 28; and Monday, November 9  
**WHERE:** Four Winds Casino, New Buffalo, MI  
**FEE:** \$26 per person. Upon arrival at the casino, you will receive a \$15 slot credit and \$10 food credit.  
**RESERVATIONS:** Call Eleanor at (219) 313-3934.

## 20<sup>TH</sup> CENTURY DINNER SHOW

Peter Oprisko and The Chairman's Board will entertain us with legends like Tony Bennett, Dean Martin, Ella Fitzgerald and more. Menu includes tossed salad, pot roast, mashed potatoes, vegetable medley, homemade bread, tea, coffee, apple pie and ice cream.

**WHEN:** Noon to 4 p.m. Wednesday, October 14  
**WHERE:** Wicker Memorial Park Social Center  
**FEE:** \$30 includes dinner and show  
**RESERVATIONS:** Call Eleanor at (219) 313-3934.

## HOLIDAY TURKEY BINGO

Grab a friend and trot on over to Wicker Park for an afternoon of fun. Every winner – one per family – gets a gift card good for a free turkey at a local grocer! Open to North Township residents only.

**WHEN:** Noon to 3 p.m. Monday, November 16  
**WHERE:** Wicker Memorial Park Social Center  
**RESERVATIONS:** Call Eleanor at (219) 313-3934.

## LEGACY GIRLS VETERANS SHOW

Close your eyes and let The Legacy Girls take you back to the swing and boogie-woogie songs made famous by the Andrews Sisters as they put their own delightful twist on the patriotic songs you love. Menu includes mixed green salad, baked ham with au jus, mashed sweet potato, vegetable medley, homemade bread, tea, coffee and chocolate cake with strawberries.

**WHEN:** Noon to 4 p.m. Thursday, November 5  
**WHERE:** Wicker Memorial Park Social Center  
**FEE:** \$20 includes dinner and show  
**RESERVATIONS:** Call Eleanor at (219) 313-3934.

## SENIOR LUNCHEONS

Seniors enjoy great food, entertainment, guest speakers and door prizes for only \$5 at the monthly luncheon at Wicker Park Social Center. All lunches include homemade bread, tea and coffee. Doors open at 11 a.m. Lunch begins at noon.

**SEPTEMBER 16 PICNIC:** BBQ chicken, coleslaw, potato salad, dinner roll and watermelon.  
**OCTOBER 21 MENU:** Mixed green salad, beef stroganoff over noodles and chocolate cake.  
**NOVEMBER 18 MENU:** Chicken noodle soup, roasted turkey breast, stuffing, mashed potatoes, corn, cranberry sauce and pumpkin pie with whipped cream.  
**RESERVATIONS:** Call (219) 932-2530, ext. 301.



# CIRCLE OF SERVICES SPOTLIGHT



**TOWNSHIP RESIDENT SHINES!** East Chicago's very own Walter Parris is one of a dozen gifted Hoosiers who overcame a host of employment barriers in pursuit of a better life. Parris, and 11 other Indiana residents were honored in April at a ceremony at the Indiana Statehouse. As an out-of-work truck driver, Parris received assistance from North Township and WorkOne that helped him re-establish his commercial driver's license and get his old job back. Seen here with Circle of Service Coordinator Cindy Rivera (second from left) and representatives of WorkOne's Northern Indiana office, Parris accepted the award in style, decked out in professional business attire donated to the trustee's office.

## LOOKING FOR WORK?

Elite Staffing is putting down roots at the Circle of Services Building in Hessville. The nationwide agency, which provides temporary light industrial and manufacturing jobs, opened a branch office in August on the lower level of the building, located at 2835-165th St.

Kevin Johnson, senior vice president of operations for Elite's Chicago offices, said the response has been better than expected. "We hired 40 people the first week. By the second week, we were up to 97 and that's without any publicity," Johnson said. "This is a partnership between Elite Staffing and North Township Trustee Frank Mrvan that is already proving a good fit for everyone." Mrvan said the temporary jobs are open to anyone and that you do not need to be a client of the trustee's office to take advantage of the opportunity to work.

**HOURS:** 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. Monday through Friday

**INFO:** Call the Elite Staffing office at (219) 316-1980.



## DRESS FOR SUCCESS!

When Resource Coordinator Cindy Rivera put a call out for donations of professional clothing from readers of the North Township Navigator, she was hoping a few people would respond. "We had people dropping off armloads of beautiful, gently used office-appropriate clothing," Rivera said. "As quickly as the clothing comes in, it is folded and hung. These clothes help people get back on their feet, first on interviews and then during those first days and weeks on a new job before they get their first paycheck. We can always use more." If you would like to donate, please bring items to the Circle of Services.

**HOURS:** 8 a.m. to 6 p.m. Monday through Friday

**INFO:** Call Cindy Rivera at (219) 803-0659.

## CIRCLE OF SERVICES

2835-165th Street in Hessville

**HOURS:** 8 a.m. to 6 p.m. M - F

**INFO:** Call Cindy Rivera at (219) 803-0659 or email [riverac@ntto.com](mailto:riverac@ntto.com) for more information on these and other township programs.



## COMMUNITY GARDEN

When Ralph Corriere read that North Township could use some help tending the neighborhood garden, he didn't think twice before extending a hand.

It wasn't as if the south Hammond resident didn't have plenty to do in the garden he created in his own backyard and that of his neighbor. He just likes to garden – and help where he can.

"I've been planting vegetable and flower gardens for the last 36 years," the Ford Motor Company retiree said. "I was happy to spend some hours weeding the township garden, too."

Thanks to Corriere, the raised vegetable gardens at the Circle of Services parking lot in Hessville are overflowing with nature's bounty. Tomatoes, cucumbers, zucchini, peppers and eggplant have taken root in the sunny location and are available to those in need.

**QUESTIONS?** Please call Cindy Rivera at (219) 803-0659.



**2 - 5 PM  
OCTOBER 24**

# Halloween Spooktacular

WICKER PARK PAVILION 2215 RIDGE ROAD

**TRICK-OR-TREATING • HAY RIDES • COSTUME CONTEST**  
BRING A DECORATED PUMPKIN FOR A CHANCE TO WIN A PRIZE!

FOR KIDS 3-12

FOR MORE INFORMATION: CALL (219) 932-2530, EXT 331

Frank J. Mrvan



**NORTH TOWNSHIP TRUSTEE**  
BUILDING A STRONGER COMMUNITY

5947 HOHMAN AVENUE  
HAMMOND, INDIANA 46320

## VICTORY FOR VETERANS MEMORIAL RIDE

WICKER MEMORIAL PARK ★ 2215 RIDGE ROAD ★ HIGHLAND

**11 AM – 5 PM ★ SEPTEMBER 27**

LIVE ENTERTAINMENT  
CONCESSIONS  
BEER GARDEN  
FOOD



**9 – 11 AM REGISTRATION**

**FOR MORE INFORMATION  
CALL (219) 932-2530, EXT 331**