

# North Township NAVIGATOR

YOUR GUIDE TO NEWS AND SERVICES IN EAST CHICAGO, HAMMOND, HIGHLAND, MUNSTER AND WHITING • SPRING 2016

## WICKER MEMORIAL PARK GENERATES NEARLY \$1 MILLION

Balmy temps, abundant sunshine and just the right amount of rain made 2015 one for the record books at Wicker Memorial Park.

Led by an increase in the number of golfers frequenting the links, the 226-acre park generated more than \$950,000 in revenue last year, second only to 2012.

Golf fees, carts and duffer-related concessions generated \$574,000 – nearly 60 percent of all revenues – while shelter rentals, the splash pad, special events and concessions added another \$381,000 to the bottom line.

“After many years of navigating unexpected costs because of weather and natural disasters, we are very close to break-even,” North Township Trustee Frank Mrvan said. “We are hoping 2016 is our breakthrough year.”

Activities, such as concerts, movies in the park and nonprofit walks, along with recreational pursuits that include the splash pad, sand volleyball, tennis courts, walking trails and a dog park, draw hundreds of thousands

### BY THE NUMBERS

PICNIC RENTALS	\$102,276*
SPLASH PAD/BIKE RENTALS	\$40,221
DRIVING RANGE	\$74,488
BAR/BEVERAGE CART	\$134,102
PRO SHOP GOLF	\$574,291

\* UPDATED NUMBERS REFLECT ALCOHOL SALES

visitors to the park each year.

“Wicker Memorial Park has been a haven for township residents for almost 90 years. We have seen growth in the number of people using the park every year,” Mrvan said.

“We want the park to pay for itself. Any profit will be used to create additional programs – concerts, senior and children’s activities – to improve the quality of life for residents. Golf is our financial anchor. It allows us to keep the Wicker Park course on par with others and continue upgrading facilities.” ▲



Julio Merced, a Wicker Memorial Park supervisor, loads jugs of water into a pick-up truck bound for Flint, Michigan.

### TOWNSHIP HELPS FLINT

When North Township officials learned of the water crisis in Flint, Michigan and that a group from East Chicago was assisting, they pitched in with a donation of their own – a pallet of water to help tide residents over until new pipes are installed.

“Flint is in desperate need of clean water. We were happy to help out, in whatever way we could,” North Township Trustee Frank Mrvan said. “The people of Flint are in need of the very basics, which they cannot provide for themselves.”

## PARK TO UNVEIL NEW OUTDOOR FITNESS AREA THIS SUMMER

The next playground at Wicker Memorial Park is planned – for adults.

A concrete pad, which will be poured this spring on the west side of the park near the pavilion, will feature an open-air fitness area with an elliptical machine, leg press, rower bike, vertical press and pendulum.

The area will also include benches for resting and a bike rack for those who choose to pedal to the park. The fitness area is being developed to be handicapped-accessible wherever possible.

Fitness equipment that can handle the wear-and-tear of constant use – and the elements – is a relatively new concept.

Wicker Memorial Park Superintendent Brett Bierman said North Township Trustee Frank Mrvan was the brains behind the project.

“Frank had seen something similar at one of the parks in East Chicago and wanted to make it available to residents of the township,” Bierman said. “Our plan is to open the fitness area in July so people can exercise outdoors yet this summer.” ▲



**SPRING IN THE PARK:** Wicker Memorial Park readies the grounds, including the new fitness area and dog run, for spring visitors. **PAGE 3**



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



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 Board Member

**HAMMOND OFFICE**

5947 Hohman Avenue  
 Hammond, IN 46320  
**PHONE:** (219) 932-2530  
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**HOURS:** 8 a.m.-6 p.m. Monday – Thursday

**EAST CHICAGO OFFICE**

2105 Broadway  
 East Chicago, IN 46312  
**PHONE:** (219) 398-2435  
**FAX:** (219) 397-2190  
**HOURS:** 8 a.m.-6 p.m. Tuesday – Friday

**HESSVILLE CIRCLE OF SERVICES**

2835-165th Street  
 Hammond, IN 46323  
**PHONE:** (219) 803-0659  
**HOURS:** 8 a.m.-6 p.m. Monday – Friday



**NEWS TIP? STORY IDEA?**

Send your suggestions to:  
[northtownship@theideafactory.us.com](mailto:northtownship@theideafactory.us.com)

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# NEARLY 100 EMPLOYERS SEEKING QUALIFIED CANDIDATES AT JOB FAIR

Job seekers take note.

North Township is partnering with the City of Hammond to host a job fair that is one of the largest in the region.

The one-day event will feature nearly 100 employers from a host of sectors, including government, finance, gaming, healthcare, sales, manufacturing and trade unions.

Resource Coordinator Cindy Rivera, who builds partnerships that lead to jobs for North Township residents, said joining forces with Hammond is the perfect way to amplify the job-seeking potential for those looking for work.

“This is going to be a large event that will be busy from the moment it begins,” Rivera said. “We have successful candidates tell us about their new jobs and we hope to see even more smiling faces after this one.”

Township residents, who need help putting together a resume or work attire, can find assistance at North Township’s Circle of Services, 2835-165th Street, Hammond. ▲

**SPRING CAREER FAIR**

Dress for success and bring your resume to an upcoming career fair hosted by North Township Trustee and the City of Hammond.

**WHEN:** 11 a.m. to 3 p.m. Thursday, March 24

**WHERE:** Hammond Civic Center

**INFO:** Call Cindy Rivera at (219) 803-0659 or email her at [riverc@ntto.net](mailto:riverc@ntto.net).

**3 GREAT REASONS TO ATTEND!**

- ✓ **INSTANT JOB OPPORTUNITIES:**  
Employers attend job fairs for only one reason – they want to hire. Career fairs are designed to be entertaining, not tedious.
- ✓ **ON-THE-SPOT INTERVIEWS:**  
Speak with hiring managers immediately instead of waiting months for a call. This is an opportunity to check out other job seekers to see how your skills and education measure up.
- ✓ **IMMEDIATE GRATIFICATION:**  
No need to mail your resume dozens of times. No waiting weeks or months for an answer. Employers at career fairs are prepared to hire the best candidates then and there.



**LETTER FROM THE NORTH TOWNSHIP TRUSTEE**

## Wicker Memorial Park nearly self-sustaining as we roll out new features and enhancements

Thank goodness it’s spring!

We’ve been busy this winter, planning for a series of grand openings and firsts at Wicker Memorial Park – a new, expanded recreation area for dogs, an outdoor fitness center and a variety of saplings to replace those seriously impacted by the emerald ash borer.

The township is looking forward to another spectacular summer concert series, turning on the water at the splash pad, and throwing out our version of the red carpet to our picnickers, walkers, golfers, birders, and those who love to curl up with a book under our trees.

Wildlife aficionados, take note! Earlier this year, we had an unexpected fly-in when a bald eagle was spotted in the park. Great job by Park Superintendent Brett Bierman on snapping a photo of this feathered friend, who we hope will become a regular visitor.



I am very proud of our own crown jewel – Wicker Memorial Park.

Not only does the park offer more than ever before, it has become nearly self-sustaining. Every year we strive for the paid events to offset the costs of operating and maintaining this incredible greenspace. Our hope is that 2016 is the year we turn that corner. ▲

**FRANK J. MRVAN**  
 North Township Trustee

# SPRING IN THE PARK

There are wonders in every season at Wicker Memorial Park, but there is something extraordinary about spring. The crest on the red-bellied woodpeckers shines a little brighter and squirrels have more pep in their steps when the park is transformed by the season. Join us this spring for a walk, a bike ride or a rest in one of the most peaceful places in the township.

## NEW DOG PARK NOW OPEN!

The portion of the park dedicated to our four-legged friends is set to open by May 1. Improvements include dog fountains and benches along with an expanded venue that is sectioned so that your pup can always run on grass. New rules will mean a modest fee and proof that your dog is vaccinated. Register your dog at the Wicker Memorial Park picnic office.

## WALKING & BIKING

The 2.5-mile trail that runs along the perimeter of the park is perfect for walking, running, biking – or event skates! The half-mile inner trail takes you on a scenic tour of the park, volleyball courts and playground. All trails are paved and open from dawn to dusk.

## TENNIS & VOLLEYBALL COURTS

The park features five tennis courts and three sand volleyball pits for the community to enjoy. First come. First served.

## GOLF COURSE

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

## PICNIC SHELTERS

Summer rentals for picnic areas, shelters and the pavilion are going fast. If you are thinking about booking a rental yet this year, you can check available dates by calling the Wicker Memorial Park office at (219) 838-3420.

## BANQUET FACILITIES

Looking for a place to host your party, spring wedding, retirement bash or meeting? Our banquet facilities are perfect for you. To make an appointment to view our facilities, call Bridget at (219) 923-3830. For information about rental fees and catering, visit our caterer's website at [www.diningsolutionswickerpark.com](http://www.diningsolutionswickerpark.com).

*For more information*

WICKER MEMORIAL PARK  
8554 Indianapolis Boulevard  
Highland, Indiana 46322  
[www.wickermemorialpark.com](http://www.wickermemorialpark.com)



# Around the Township

## East Chicago

### STARS SUMMER CAMP

East Chicago Parks and Rec kicks off registration for STARS Summer Camp.

**REGISTRATION:** 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. weekdays, April 25 – May 31.

**WHERE:** Parks & Recreation office

**INFO:** Call (219) 391-8476.

## Whiting

### PARTY LIKE A PIRATE

A treasure map takes little pirates on a journey through Whiting in search of the ultimate pirate's booty. Along your way, kids will enjoy crafts, Jack the Pirate and the best pirate grub.

**WHEN:** 11 a.m. to 3 p.m. April 30

**WHERE:** Downtown Whiting

**INFO:** Call (219) 659-0292.

## Munster

### CASH FOR CLUTTER

Clear the clutter and earn quick cash by selling things you don't need anymore. Early bird deadline is April 29.

**WHEN:** 8 a.m. to 2 p.m. May 21

**WHERE:** Community Pool Parking Lot

**VENDOR FEES:** \$16.05 to \$64.20

**INFO:** Call (219) 836-PARK.

## Hammond

### EXPLORE THE SOUTH SHORE

Discover all the South Shore has to offer with our kick-off to summer. Games, giveaways, entertainment, rides and more. Admission is free.

**WHEN:** 11 a.m. to 3 p.m. May 7

**WHERE:** Indiana Welcome Center, 7770 Corinne Drive, Hammond

**INFO:** Call (219) 989-7770.

## Highland

### BLACKHAWKS TAILGATE PARTY

Join us for a tailgate party as the Blackhawks take on the Columbus Blue Jackets. 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:** 5:30 p.m. April 9.

Game starts at 6 p.m.

**WHERE:** Wicker Park Pro Shop

**INFO:** Call (219) 932-2530, ext. 331.

## EASTER HAM BINGO

Grab a friend and head over to Wicker Park for an afternoon of fun. Winners receive a gift card for a ham at a local grocer. Township residents only

**WHEN:** 1 to 3 p.m. Tuesday, March 22. Doors open at noon. Sign in at door and show ID.

**WHERE:** Wicker Park Social Center, Highland

**INFO:** Call Eleanor at (219) 313-3934.



## FOUR WINDS CASINO TRIP

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.

**WHERE:** 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. Thursday, March 31, Monday, April 25 and Tuesday, May 31

**WHERE:** Four Winds Casino, New Buffalo, MI

**FEE:** \$26 per person includes round-trip transportation to/from Wicker Memorial Park.

Upon arrival at the casino, you'll receive a \$15 slot credit and a \$10 food credit.

**RESERVATIONS:** Call Eleanor at (219) 313-3934.



## SENIOR MOTHER'S DAY DANCE

Join us as we celebrate Mother's Day with a special luncheon followed by dancing to the tunes of Peter Oprisko. Menu includes tossed salad, pot roast, mashed potatoes, vegetable medley, homemade bread, peach cobbler, ice tea and coffee.

**WHEN:** 11 a.m. to 3:30 p.m. Monday, May 2

**WHERE:** Wicker Park Social Center, Highland

**FEE:** \$20 per person includes a delightful luncheon, gifts and entertainment.

**RESERVATIONS:** Call Eleanor at (219) 313-3934.



## WRIGLEY FIELD BUS TRIP

Join us for a senior bus trip to Wrigley Field, where the Chicago Cubs take on the LA Dodgers. Deadline to register is April 15.

**WHEN:** 1:20 p.m. (game time) Thursday, June 2

**WHERE:** Wrigley Field, Chicago

**FEE:** \$52 per person includes ticket and round-trip transport (10:30 a.m./5:30 p.m.) from Wicker Park.

**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 in Highland. Doors open at 11 a.m. Lunch begins at noon. All meals include bread and butter, hot tea and coffee.

**MARCH 9:** Mixed green salad, spaghetti, garlic bread and peppermint ice cream.

**APRIL 13:** Mixed green salad, chicken ala king on rice and orange sherbet.

**MAY 11:** Mixed green salad, pork loin, potatoes, applesauce, peas/carrots and peach cobbler.

**RESERVATIONS:** Call (219) 932-2530, ext. 2.



## SALUTING OUR VETERANS

There is a project afoot that will forever honor and remember the youngest soldiers buried at Oak Hill Cemetery.

Later this year, the lanes that meander through the cemetery will be named for 17 men – all of whom died before their 24th birthdays.

“While researching the histories of those who are interred here, I found there were a group of veterans who died so very young – one of the soldiers died in battle the day before World War II ended,” Cemetery Manager Kelly Vicari said. “I wanted to do something special to make sure these soldiers were always remembered for the sacrifices they made.”

Vicari has become a walking history lesson of those buried at Oak Hill. Her goal: to document veteran lives before their stories are lost to time. “It’s the very least I can do,” she said.

“We are still just in the beginning stages of this initiative and are planning to have plaques at each intersection with the name and a little bit about each of these soldiers.”

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### FLAG-RAISING CEREMONY

Oak Hill Cemetery will honor veterans with a flag-raising ceremony. More than 500 veteran graves will be decorated.

“Putting flags at the resting places of these brave men and women is an honor,” Cemetery Manager Kelly Vicari said. “The Girl and Boy Scouts have volunteered to help and we hope to see many people from the community, too.”

**WHEN:** 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. May 28  
**WHERE:** Oak Hill Cemetery, 6445 Hohman Avenue, Hammond.

### DID YOU KNOW?

There are 2,500 burial plots remaining at Oak Hill Cemetery. Most of the remaining burial spaces are located inside and near the two mausoleums on the property.

**INFO:** Call Cemetery Manager Kelly Vicari at (219) 746-7668.

### MOTHER’S DAY BRUNCH

Join us for a Mother’s Day Champagne Brunch with delicious food and live music from Peter Oprisko.

**WHEN:** 10:30 a.m.-2:30 p.m. Sunday, May 8

**WHERE:** Wicker Memorial Park Social Center, 2215 Ridge Road, Highland

**RESERVATIONS:** Call (219) 923-3830.



### COMMUNITY GARDEN

The Community Garden that produced a bumper crop of tomatoes, zucchini and peppers will stage a repeat performance.

The raised beds at the Circle of Services in Hessville will be planted in May.

“We have been so encouraged by the amount of produce we can grow in this very modest garden,” Resource Coordinator Cindy Rivera said. “We hope to see even more volunteers maintain the garden – and then enjoy the fruits of their labor.”

**WANT TO HELP?** Call (219) 803-0659.

### TOWNSHIP ASSISTANCE

A booklet of service providers – featuring organizations, churches and departments within local government that provide low- or no-cost assistance for counseling, clothing, emergency shelter, prescriptions, child care and gas vouchers – is available at the Hammond and East Chicago offices or online at [NorthTownshipTrustee.com](http://NorthTownshipTrustee.com).

## STATE BOARD OF ACCOUNTS COMPLETES NORTH TOWNSHIP AUDIT

The State Board of Accounts has concluded its 2015 audit of North Township.

As part of the audit process, the township has been given suggestions for tweaking processes to improve efficiency and reporting compliance.

“We have had our exit interview with SBOA auditors and are making the changes suggested by the state board to be in compliance with their

rules and regulations,” North Township Trustee Frank Mrvan said. “They spend a lot of time with us and it’s good to know what we are doing right – and where we need to make changes.”

New procedures already in place include:

- ✓ Increased fiscal controls to guarantee all monies collected by one person are verified by another.

- ✓ Surveillance cameras in all areas where money changes hands.

- ✓ Case-review processes to enhance compliance and guarantee residents receive the assistance to which they are entitled.

Mrvan is also working with the township board to have new policies and procedures, mandated by the SBOA’s new manual, in place by June 30.



# ROUTE 66 ROAD TRIP

Join us as we venture from Joliet to Pontiac along historic Route 66. We'll visit six iconic Illinois locations enroute to Bernardi's, where we'll enjoy a delicious and authentic Italian lunch.

## MONDAY, JUNE 6

**\$75 PER PERSON**  
**INCLUDES LUNCH AND TRANSPORTATION**

**COACH BUS LEAVES WICKER PARK SOCIAL CENTER**  
**@ 8 AM AND RETURNS @ 5:30 PM**

**RESERVATIONS: PLEASE CALL ELEANOR**  
**AT (219) 313-3934. DEADLINE IS MAY 18.**



## Frank J. Mrvan



**NORTH TOWNSHIP TRUSTEE**  
BUILDING A STRONGER COMMUNITY

**5947 HOHMAN AVENUE**  
**HAMMOND, INDIANA 46320**

## 10TH ANNUAL EASTER EGG HUNT

North Township children – ages 1 through 10 – are invited to hunt for eggs. DJ music and a visit from the Easter Bunny are all part of the festivities. Admission is free.

**10:30 AM • MARCH 19**  
**WICKER PARK PAVILION • HIGHLAND**

**FOR MORE INFORMATION: PLEASE CALL (219) 932-2530, EXTENSION 331**

