

# North Township NAVIGATOR

YOUR GUIDE TO NEWS AND SERVICES IN EAST CHICAGO, HAMMOND, HIGHLAND, MUNSTER AND WHITING • WINTER 2020

## WICKER PARK TAPPED FOR VACCINATION SITE

North Township Trustee Frank J. Mrvan is partnering with the Lake County Health Department to use the Wicker Park Social Center as a COVID-19 vaccination site. Details will be worked out over the next several weeks as the health department creates ideal satellite locations that will be available as vaccinations earmarked for Lake County are delivered.

"We are eager to do whatever we can to help residents get these life-saving vaccinations," Mrvan said. "Wicker Memorial Park routinely served as a blood donation site during the early days of the pandemic. It seems only fitting we can be of help as we work to make COVID-19 a thing of the past."

*For more information*

Vaccine times and dates will be posted as they become available at [northtownshiptrustee.com](http://northtownshiptrustee.com) and [WickerMemorialPark.com](http://WickerMemorialPark.com).



## NEXT STEPS FOR NORTH TOWNSHIP TRUSTEE TRANSITION

A plan is in place to transition to a new trustee for North Township when Frank J. Mrvan becomes congressman for Indiana's First District.

By law, a replacement will be named within 30 days of Mrvan's resignation.

Because Mrvan is a democrat, it will be the democratic precinct committeemen of Whiting, Hammond, East Chicago, Highland and Munster who will name

a new trustee to serve through 2022, when voters will choose a new individual to lead the township.

Lake County Democratic Chairman Jim Wieser is expected to call a caucus by the end of January.

Mrvan said his staff and the township board will continue helping residents in need of rental assistance along with food, medicine and utility help.

"Everyone in the township is aware of the acute needs of our residents during this pandemic and the widespread hardship it has caused," he said. "They are dedicated to providing urgent assistance and that will continue."

"I want every North Township resident to know I will continue fighting for assistance for our region in Washington," Mrvan said.



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



**FRANK J. MRVAN**  
 North Township Trustee  
 (219) 932-2530  
 fjmrvan@comcast.net

For more information about North Township assistance and services, visit [northtownshiptrustee.com](http://northtownshiptrustee.com) or call one of our offices below.

**NORTH TOWNSHIP BOARD**



**PETER KATIC**  
 Chairman



**RICHARD J. NOVAK**  
 Secretary



**LISA SALINAS-MATONOVICH**  
 Board member

**TRUSTEE'S HAMMOND OFFICE**

5947 Hohman Ave.  
 Hammond, IN 46320  
**Phone:** (219) 932-2530  
**Fax:** (219) 937-4412  
**Hours:** 9 a.m.-5 p.m. Monday-Friday

**EAST CHICAGO OFFICE**

2100 Broadway  
 East Chicago, IN 46312  
**Phone:** (219) 398-2435  
**Fax:** (219) 397-2190  
**Hours:** 9 a.m.-5 p.m. Monday-Friday

**HESSVILLE CIRCLE OF SERVICES**

2835-165th Street  
 Hammond, IN 46323  
**Phone:** (219) 803-0659  
**Hours:** 9 a.m.-5 p.m. Monday-Friday

**WICKER MEMORIAL PARK**

8554 Indianapolis Boulevard  
 Highland, IN 46322  
**Phone:** (219) 838-3420  
**Hours:** 8:30 a.m.-3 p.m. Monday-Friday  
[www.WickerMemorialPark.com](http://www.WickerMemorialPark.com)



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**LETTER FROM THE NORTH TOWNSHIP TRUSTEE**

**“Thank you and the hundreds of individuals who’ve brought assistance to our communities”**

For the past 14 years, you, the residents of North Township have given me the tremendous opportunity to help people in need. It was through partnerships with you, the residents of Whiting, Hammond, East Chicago, Munster and Highland that we have been able to create new and innovative ways of delivering assistance to those most in need. Thank you for all you have done. Together, we have created and fostered:

**SOCIAL WORK TEAMS:** Providing assistance to persistent users of police services to improve the health of families.

**NO MORE SECRETS:** A partnership with the U.S. Attorney for the Northern District of Indiana to identify and assist victims of childhood sexual abuse and expand the role of schools in the campaign to end it. A state law followed that mandates all schools implement age-appropriate child sexual abuse education. A special thank you to my wife Jane, Isha Haley, Mayra Rodriguez-Alvarez and Fairhaven House for their insight and expertise.

**VETERANS PROGRAMS:** Veterans retreats, housing and collegiality that address the widespread needs of soldiers returning home. Events include weekend retreats for soldiers suffering from issues like PTSD, the annual Victory for Veterans Ride, monthly roundtables with commanders of local veterans organizations and a home for a homeless veteran to help them become independent.

**DRUG ABUSE PREVENTION:** Programs that address the skyrocketing numbers of opioid deaths through Narcan Training for both professionals and families and drug-take back days. Knowing that children are exposed to addictive drugs at younger ages, the North Township provides age-appropriate tools to help children say no to drugs.

**13 REASONS WHY NOT:** An annual summit for youth – and by youth – that addresses issues like depression, suicide prevention, post-traumatic stress disorder and dating violence.

**AUTISM ASSISTANCE:** In collaboration with East Chicago Police, the township conducts training for police departments to keep individuals with autism safe, distributes easily identifiable bracelets to help police identify those in need and hosts an annual relay for families.

**JOB TRAINING:** Working with Indiana Workforce Development to help residents find employment, the township expanded the initiative through the retrofitting of the old Carpenters Hall in Hessville into the Circle of Services.

**OAK HILL CEMETERY RESTORATION:** When North Township took title to a civil-war era cemetery in disrepair, staff and volunteers cleaned up the grounds, recovered records, put headstones back where they belong, replaced the entrance gates and beautified the space.

**SENIOR ASSISTANCE:** In addition to monthly luncheons and senior trips, North Township launched a Senior Service Hotline that provides a host of resources for the township’s retirees.

**EMERGENCY ASSISTANCE:** Whether it is flooding along the Little Calumet River, fires that displace residents or industrial work stoppages, North Township provides emergency assistance to get people back to their lives. That initiative kicked into high gear when an entire neighborhood in East Chicago had to be relocated because of high lead levels and again this year when thousands were effected by the global COVID-19 pandemic.

**FRANK J. MRVAN**  
 North Township Trustee

# Winter Wonderland

Wicker Park is alive with activity throughout the winter season. Bundle up for a brisk walk or bring the kids and dog along to frolic in the snow.

## Winter snow trails ❄️

When the weather outside is frightful, walkers and runners are accompanied on the Wicker Park trails by snow-shoe enthusiasts and cross-country skiers. Bring your own equipment and join the fun on either the 2.5 mile trail or half-mile inner path.

## Friendly dog park ❄️

Our dog park features pet fountains, benches and plenty of space to run around. The annual fee is \$25 for township residents, \$60 for out-of-township and \$100 out-of-state. Register at the Wicker Memorial Park picnic office. Download forms at [WickerMemorialPark.com](http://WickerMemorialPark.com).

## Shelter & picnic rentals ❄️

All shelter and picnic rental reservations are postponed until further notice amid the coronavirus pandemic.

"Typically, we open reservations right after the New Year and are booked by the middle of January," said Renee Ramos, who coordinates the coveted race for shelter reservations. "However, this year, tighter COVID-19 restrictions have delayed those plans."

Thousands flock to Wicker Memorial Park for family reunions, picnics and get-togethers.

"We will continue to observe local and state guidelines to determine whether it is safe to reopen our facilities this spring," Ramos said.

Questions? Call (219) 838-3420 or email Renee Ramos at [ramosr@ntto.net](mailto:ramosr@ntto.net). Check [WickerMemorialPark.com](http://WickerMemorialPark.com) for updates.



## WICKER PARK GOLF COURSE HAS RECORD YEAR DESPITE PANDEMIC

Weeks of dryer-than-normal weather and an urge to exercise outdoors as a result of the pandemic led to record-shattering usage of the Wicker Memorial Park golf course in 2020.

As of November, the golf course received \$862,553 in fees and rentals, nearly \$100,000 more than the previous record of \$770,787 set in 2012.

Park Superintendent Brett Bierman said those receipts accrued despite a six-week closure of the park due to COVID-19.

Bierman attributes the uptick in Wicker Memorial Park golfing to:

- » Illinois residents migrating to Indiana courses that were open before theirs.
- » Golf is a no-contact sport.

- » Course conditions, which were exceptional because of non-stop maintenance and upkeep.

"Our staff takes great pride in making Wicker Memorial Park a course favored by golfers," Bierman said. "We have continued to put resources into the facility to make it the premier public course in Northwest Indiana."

North Township  
**FALLEN HEROES**  
**MEMORIAL**



THEIR DUTY WAS TO SERVE.  
OUR DUTY IS TO REMEMBER.



North Township Trustee Frank J. Mrvan credited Highland Police Cmdr. John Banasiak (center) for bringing the idea to the table and making it happen.



The newly dedicated North Township Fallen Heroes Memorial – anchored by three granite pillars – features benches, memorial bricks and ample green space. “This is a place for remembering first responders who died in the line of duty,” North Township Trustee Frank J. Mrvan said. “We’ve been blessed that these brave souls took it upon themselves to keep us safe.” Memorial bricks are still available for as little as \$50. Simply fill out and return the order form on the back page or purchase online at [NTTfallenheroes.org](http://NTTfallenheroes.org).

# NORTH TOWNSHIP ASSISTANCE



Lake Area United Way, Attorney Kenneth J. Allen and North Township Trustee Frank J. Mrvan (above) distributed 1,200 Thanksgiving meals this year during a drive-thru giveaway at Wicker Memorial Park in Highland.

## DEMAND REMAINS HIGH AS CRISIS CONTINUES

Ten months into the Covid-19 pandemic, North Township has provided tens of thousands of meals and food deliveries, rental and mortgage assistance, medicines, even blood drives and virtual mental health help at no cost to residents.

North Township Trustee Frank J. Mrvan said relief will continue as long as it is needed in 2021.

"North Township's partnerships with the Northwest Indiana Food Bank, Catholic Charities, United Way, Clarity Clinic and more have helped our residents in a big way," Mrvan said.

"Our goal will continue to be keeping our residents healthy and working to eliminate prevalent food disparity in our communities," Mrvan said.

It's about putting one foot in front of the other, anticipating need and providing emergency relief.

"I encourage everyone who is requesting assistance to contact North Township's hardworking case managers," Mrvan said. "They are working every minute of their day helping residents."

In addition to food, funding for housing is becoming critical as the COVID-19 crisis continues.

"Historically, we have partnered with the state and federal government to qualify for dollars targeted for rental and mortgage assistance. You have our commitment that will continue."

### FINANCIAL HELP

North Township case managers are assisting North Township residents who need help paying their mortgage, rent, utilities and burials during the pandemic.

**INFO:** Hammond, Highland, Munster and Whiting residents should contact a case manager at the Hammond township office – (219) 932-2530. East Chicago residents should contact a case manager at the East Chicago township office – (219) 398-2435.

### EMPLOYMENT ASSISTANCE

While a record number of residents are unemployed due to the ongoing pandemic and businesses closing their doors as a result, North Township is working with Indiana Workforce Development and local employers to help those out of work find new jobs and prepare their resumes to help attract potential employers.

**INFO:** Call Cesar Garcia at (219) 803-0659.

### MENTAL HEALTH RESOURCES

Whether it's living in isolation, struggling to pay bills, working through home issues or simply the stress of living in the time of COVID-19, our mental health professionals are here to help.

**INFO:** Call our 24-hour hotline at (800) 706-2751. A licensed professional will gather information about the issues at hand, assess the struggle and connect you with a mental health provider from Clarity Clinic.





*In time of crisis ...*  
**WE'RE HERE TO SERVE YOU!**

Frank J. Mrvan  
  
**NORTH TOWNSHIP TRUSTEE**  
BUILDING A STRONGER COMMUNITY

Frank J. Mrvan



**NORTH TOWNSHIP TRUSTEE**  
BUILDING A STRONGER COMMUNITY

5947 HOHMAN AVENUE  
 HAMMOND, INDIANA 46320

**\$50**  
 donation

**MEMORIAL BRICKS**

Looking for that special gift that gives back while giving to others? Commemorate the graduation of a favorite niece or a marriage that has lasted a lifetime. Our 4" x 8" engraved bricks are a perfect tribute to your loved ones.

**NTTFALLENHEROES.ORG**

*North Township*  
**FALLEN HEROES**  
**MEMORIAL**



THEIR DUTY WAS TO SERVE.  
 OUR DUTY IS TO REMEMBER.

Name/Company: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Address: \_\_\_\_\_  
 City/State/Zip: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

- YES, I WANT AN ENGRAVED 4" X 8" BRICK FOR \$50
- YES, ADD A DUPLICATE "KEEPSAKE" BRICK FOR \$25

Please engrave my 4" x 8" brick as follows:


3 lines | 16 characters each (includes spaces, punctuation)

**TOTAL ENCLOSED = \$** \_\_\_\_\_

Please make contributions payable and mail to:  
**Wicker Park Memorial Fund**  
 8554 Indianapolis Boulevard, Highland, IN 46322

**For more info:** Call the park office at (219) 838-3420.