



TOWN OF CORTLAND

59 S. Somonauk Rd., P.O. Box 519
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THIRD LARGEST TOWN IN ILLINOIS



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Hello Friends and Neighbors,

To say that this winter was exceptionally brutal would be putting it mildly! The record breaking snows and extreme temperatures made it difficult on all of us, especially Town staff. I commend our Public Works Department for the job they did keeping our streets plowed and reasonably safe to drive, despite area-wide salt shortages. All of our snowplows were deployed throughout the winter to combat the snowstorms and the drifting snow that followed. The Town of Cortland has approximately 63 miles of roadways and alleys; our four plow trucks accrued approximately 6500 miles this winter. That's a lot of plowing! At one point during the winter our three full-time Public Works employees worked 34 days straight, rotating in shifts around the clock, to keep our streets open. At times they were assisted by our Water/Wastewater Department employees. If you thought you saw me driving a snowplow, you were not hallucinating – I did what I could do to assist our staff. I would be remiss if I did not thank Trustee Chuck Lanning for procuring the use of DeKalb Municipal Airport's giant earthmover in order to clear eight foot snowdrifts from Loves Road and other areas that were prone to heavy drifting. I also appreciate the efforts of our Police Department, as Officers responded all winter to numerous motor vehicle crashes and vehicles that left the roadway and became stuck in ditches along Route 38 and other arterial roadways. I also have great respect for their efforts to consistently enforce the Town's parking regulations during the snow events. This enforcement, although not appreciated by some, helps to expedite the clearing of snow from our roadways. I also want to thank our Town Hall staff and Clerk's Office. While many communities closed their public buildings, the Town Hall was open during regular business hours every day, despite the extremely cold temperatures, in the event it needed to be used as a Warming Center.

I would like to take this opportunity to briefly comment on several topics that were highly publicized by local media.

The Town's attorneys and I were able to negotiate an out-of-court settlement of a Judgment that was placed against the Town of Cortland pursuant to litigation that was brought against the Town in 2006. The Town lost at trial and appealed the court's decision, only to lose that appeal in 2010. While it was publicized that the Town paid 1.75 million dollars to settle the suit, there was little said that the original judgment was for 2.1 million dollars and that interest was being accrued on that amount since 2010. While 1.75 million dollars is a substantial "hit" for the Town of Cortland, the judgment had grown to roughly 3 million dollars. I believe we needed to get in front of this matter in order to cut our financial losses. This was not going to go away on its own. We were able to satisfy the judgment without any negative impact on the delivery of services to you, our residents.

I'm sure you may also be aware that it was necessary for me to terminate the employment of our Town Treasurer. This termination came after an extensive review of the Treasurer's work by our staff and a financial firm that I brought in from the private sector which specializes in government finance. Nothing criminal was suspected or had taken place. However, the manner in which business was being conducted for most of the past two years was shamefully inadequate and clearly not what is required or demanded from the Treasurer. The good news is that this problem was suspected by our Department Heads and staff and that immediate action was taken to resolve the problem. At the time of this Newsletter the Town's FY2015 Budget has been prepared by the contracted firm of Lauterbach and Amen and all looks well, due in large part to our Department Heads and their ability to work cohesively with their financial experts.

(Mayor's letter continues in insert)

In December, the Town of Cortland and the Village of Maple Park ratified a Boundary Agreement which is similar to those the Town of Cortland already has with the City of DeKalb and the City of Sycamore. Despite numerous talks between Maple Park and Cortland officials, this matter had been at a stalemate since 2009. It was a pleasure to work with Maple Park Mayor Kathy Curtis in making this Agreement possible. It is in the best interest of both communities that we work together to create a blueprint for future annexations and development.

Since the last Newsletter there has been much needed rehabilitation of the interior of the Town Hall and offices that are attached to the Building at 250 South Halwood. I expect that the Cortland Police Department will be relocated to those offices on Halwood by the time of this Newsletter. The relocation of the police department will save the Town approximately \$13,000 a year in rent.

All winter our Town's attorneys have been communicating with Cambridge Homes in an effort to complete the remaining required improvements in Richland Trails. Talks are on-going with Cambridge Homes and the bonding company. I have nothing new to report to the Richland Trails homeowners at this time. Given our winter, I'm thankful that we were able to take over the maintenance of the Richland Trails roadways when we did.

Our Town Engineers have worked diligently with our attorneys to obtain easements to property which will allow the Town to mitigate problems of surface water in the Elm Avenue area. I hope to see grading commence this spring.

There has been interest expressed by local developers to begin the construction of residential homes in Robinson Farm and Nature's Crossing Phase I. Only two building permit applications have been returned to the Town for review at this time. The number of building permits that the Town will be able to issue will be contingent on available irrigation space associated with our sanitary sewer system. Efforts are on-going to secure additional irrigation sites.

While new construction in Town is welcome and nice to see, as a community we have some "housekeeping" to do. I began an aggressive effort to rid the Town of abandoned/derelict residential homes. These homes are not only eyesores that reflect poorly on our community, but they also have a negative impact on property values. This is not an easy or quick process. At the present time I am in court seeking condemnation and demolition of the house at 85 South Somonauk Road. We are preparing to do the same with four other similar homes in the Original Town of Cortland and one in the Chestnut Grove subdivision.

This year, we are attempting to determine Motor Fuel Tax projects for road improvements earlier than in the past. I hope that those projects can take place during the summer months as opposed to late fall.

In the FY15 Budget, we are allocating significantly more money for sidewalk replacement/repair. We should be able to complete twice the amount of sidewalks as last year. We have also budgeted for the painting and lettering of the Spruce Street water tower and similar lettering on the water tower located near Cortland Community Park. You will also see improvements completed at the new Hetchler Park shelter and the new Suppeland Park shelter. ComEd will be pulling power to Suppeland Park so we can provide lighting for the memorial flag at East Meadow Avenue and Pampas Street and other areas of the Park as needs arise in the future. Plans are being made to enhance the memorial by summer of 2015 and to re-dedicate the memorial in conjunction with the Town of Cortland's 150-Year Anniversary. Plans

are also being discussed to provide for off-street parking in the area of Suppeland Park and the addition of bleachers at the baseball field.

The Town has received a grant totaling \$100,000 to improve the esthetics of some of our water detention areas. Specifically, \$25,000 will be used to improve the area along Spruce Street and to the area north of Hetchler Park as well as \$75,000 to improve the area just east of Cortland Community Park. We will have 2 years to complete these projects.

Construction has begun again on the North Avenue Lift Station Project. Construction of the new Lift Station should be completed by August 2014. I ask for everyone's patience as crews need to excavate the intersection of North Avenue and Prairie Street and the roadway going east of that location.

I would like to take this opportunity to welcome two news businesses to the Town of Cortland. Quality Recycling recently moved into 255 West Lincoln Highway, and Alfredo's Welding moved into 280 West Lincoln Highway. Both are located near the intersection of Route 38 (Lincoln Highway) and Loves Road. I wish both businesses great success!

Lastly, I apologize for the length of this letter but there was a lot of information you needed to know. It was unfortunate, but due to the extraordinary work load of our staff, we were unable to provide you with some of the Newsletters that are normally presented to you bi-monthly.

I am looking forward to a pleasant spring and summer and hope you will take advantage of the many family-oriented events being planned by our Parade & Festival Committee.

As always, I thank you for the opportunity to serve our community.

Russ Stokes
Mayor

DATES TO REMEMBER

April

- 18 Good Friday (Town Hall Closed)
- 21 Easter Sunday
- 26 Magic Matt (Cortland Lions Den)
- 28 Town Board Meeting

May

- 11 Mother's Day Town
- 12 Board meeting
- 26 Memorial Day
(Town Hall closed)
- 27 Town Board meeting (Tuesday)

June

- 9 Town Board meeting
- 15 Father's Day
- 23 Town Board meeting

All Town meetings start at 7 p.m. unless otherwise noted. Please check our website for cancellations or changes to meeting schedule. Planning Commission Meetings, when scheduled, are held the first Thursday of every month. Check the Town's website for meeting agendas.

CORTLAND TOWN OFFICIALS

Mayor

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 Mayor@cortlandil.org

Clerk

Cheryl Aldis
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TRUSTEES

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Chuck Lanning (815)739-1673	

You may reach any Trustee by email by using their first initial and last name @cortlandil.org. For information regarding articles for this newsletter you may email the Deputy Clerk at deputyclerk@cortlandil.org.

CORTLAND POLICE DEPARTMENT NEWS AND REMINDERS

The Cortland Police Department will be moving from its current location on Route 38 to the Public Works Building located at 250 S. Halwood Street. The police department will be located on the southwest side of the Public Works building, outside of the fenced-in yard. Any mail sent should be addressed to P.O. Box 519, Cortland, Illinois 60112-0519. The move should be complete by May 1, 2014.

With spring finally approaching and the weather starting to warm up, there are reminders that need to be addressed:

- Parking across public sidewalks is prohibited.
- Scooters, mini bikes and go carts are not allowed on the streets or sidewalks. If you ride any of these vehicles, they must be ridden on your property only.
- Refuse and trash should be placed at the curb no sooner than 6 p.m. the night before your scheduled pick-up day and the containers brought in the same evening as the pick-up day. This will hopefully keep the neighborhoods and streets clear on windy spring and summer days.
- Dogs, when not on your own property, are required to be leashed and controlled. Also, it is required that you clean up after your animals.

Rather than have to cite for violations, the police department asks for compliance in these matters.



Award Received

Congratulations to Water/Wastewater Superintendent Joel Summerhill and staff for receiving the Illinois Department of Public Health along with the Illinois Environmental Protection Agency awards for maintaining state mandated fluoride levels every month in 2013. This is the 6th consecutive year the Town has received this award.

BE ALERT FOR VIOLENT WEATHER

The Town of Cortland does not have a community shelter. Pre-plan with your family where you will go and what you will do in the event of a tornado warning.

NOTICE TO HOMEOWNERS

It is illegal to run your sump pump into the sanitary sewer system. If you suspect that your pump is hooked into your sanitary sewer or know of someone whose is, please contact the Water Department at 816-756-9684.

SPRING CLEAN

The Town of Cortland, with the assistance of its Police Department and Public Works Department, is providing large waste containers for a week of spring clean-up activities. We would like to encourage Cortland residents to take advantage of this opportunity to dispose of household trash and accumulated “junk”! These containers will be placed at the Cortland Fire Station located at 30 West North Avenue and will be available from **Monday, May 5, until Monday, May 12**. These dumpsters may NOT be used for the disposal of yard waste, large appliances, or tires, paint or other hazardous materials.

Sesquicentennial Banners

In celebration of the Town’s 150th Anniversary we are offering the opportunity to purchase banners to promote local businesses and community organizations. These banners will be placed on light poles on our main streets. Mr. Rich Wheeler of Community Sponsors will be contacting businesses and community organizations in the next few weeks with pricing and details. This is a great opportunity for you to promote your business or organization and show support for your community.

UPCOMING EVENTS

(Visit the Town’s website for details)

Garage Sales May 2 & 3

Registration forms may be found on the Town’s website at www.cortlandil.org

Magic Show

Free Magic Show— Join us for an afternoon of entertainment for kids of all ages. Magic Matt’s Family Fun Show, Saturday, April 26, 2014, at Cortland Community Park Lions Den, 70 S. Llanos Street, 3:00 to 6:00 p.m.

Spring Clean—May 5 through May 12 (see above article for details)

Cortland Summer Fest

The 2014 Cortland Summer Fest will be held August 8, 6:00 p.m. until midnight, and August 9, 12:00 p.m. until midnight. Local bands, food vendors, and more surprises all weekend!

Parade and Festival

The 33rd Annual Parade and Festival will be held on October 12 at 1:00 p.m. This is a wonderful event that is fun and affordable for the whole family.

Building Permit Requirements

Permits are required for: replacing a roof surface, replacing or installing a hot-water heater, installing central air conditioning system or furnace, installing a deck/porch, “screening in” a deck, adding a pergola to a deck, a swimming pool capable of holding 24” or more water depth, installing a fence, installing a shed, building a detached garage, any additions, upgrading electrical service, adding switches or receptacles, changing/adding plumbing lines, finishing/remodeling a basement.

Please call 815-756-9041 to determine if your project requires a permit. Permit Applications are available at the Town Hall.

The following trees are not permitted on any premises per 4-2-1 “D” of the Cortland Town Code: Cottonwood, Weeping Willows, and Box Elder.

**CORTLAND COMMUNITY
LIBRARY NEWS**

Hours: Monday-Thursday 9-9
Friday & Saturday 9-5
website: www.cortlandlibrary.com

- Monday @ 4:30 pm.....Writers Group (grades 3 & up)
 - Tuesday @ 7 pm....Story Time with Miss Terri
 - Wednesday @ 10 am....Preschool Story Time
 - Wednesday @ 7 pm....Adult Crochet Class
 - Thursday @ 10 am....Preschool Story Time
 - Thursday @ 4:00 pm.... First Grade & Up Story & Craft
 - Thursday @ 5:30 pm... Poke-Club
- *Program times may change in the summer*

**“Paws to Read”
Summer Reading at Cortland Library**



Read for enjoyment and prizes! All ages invited to participate!
 Summer Reading begins Saturday, June 14th.
 Many programs and activities all summer long!
 Take part in the library sponsored “Amazing Race ” coming in July.
 Join us for games & activities at Cortland Summer Fest.
 Visit a museum: check the library Museum Pass link for specific discounts.

Follow us on Facebook or visit www.cortlandlibrary.com for more information.



Town of Cortland
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**Resident of
Cortland, IL 60112**