

West-Win Homeowners' Association

Spring 2026 Newsletter



General Meeting ~ 7pm Tuesday April 28th

Winfield Township Road District Office ~ 30W575 Roosevelt Rd, West Chicago

- 6:30 🖐 Welcome & check in. Meet your Board, other members & local officials
- 7:00 🖐 Brief business meeting
- 7:15 🖐 Updates from Winfield Township Roads & Assessor, County Sheriff, & Winfield Fire Dept
- 7:45 🖐 Guest speaker: DuPage Historical Society
- 8:30 🖐 Adjourn

✓ **Celebrating Our History.** In keeping with the celebration of the 250-year celebration of the United States coming in July, the DuPage County Historical Museum will present a short program entitled – “Inheriting DuPage: 175 Years of DuPage County”. The program promises to provide insight into early life in our area and how this shaped the future of our County. Time for questions and answers will be provided following the presentation.

✓ **Spring has sprung.** Another winter is now behind us, and we can look forward to the beautiful spring, warm summer, and exciting fall enjoying our great area. When you can, be sure to take advantage of walking, riding a bike, or just seeing and visiting the opportunities our parks and forest preserves offer and enjoy the peaceful environment and lifestyle of our neighborhoods.

✓ **A wonderful resource** for West-Win homeowners resides within easy reach on our website! In case you’ve missed past issues of the newsletter, or if you would like to reference one of the many informative articles published in the Newsletter Index, visit us at west-win.org. The articles date from 2012 to current and are listed by title. Worth a look!

West-Win is a voluntary, information-sharing association in unincorporated Winfield Township that includes about 700 independent homeowners bounded by Warrenville, West Chicago, Wheaton & Winfield.

🌸 *Spring is in the air...no wait, that's pollen!* 🌸

>>> Board of Directors <<<

President:	Ralph (Skip) Watt	(313) 218-5653
Vice President:	Vacant	
Secretary:	Bill Kovacs	(630) 362-0975
Treasurer:	Eileen Kelly	(630) 876-1316
Past President:	Rose Kuntze	(630) 234-8891

Directors:	
Mary Bakas	(773) 799-4326
Lisa Gaspero	(630) 334-2055
Kathy Hydo	(630) 210-2093
Giulia Naccarato	(312) 339-3195

Message From The “Acting” President...

Hello Members,

You will note this message is from the “Acting” President. Unfortunately, Rose Kuntze has chosen to retire from her position as President of West-Win. We all wish her the best and thank her for her years of faithful service to our community. While her leadership will surely be missed, Rose has agreed to continue working with the Board in the position of Past President so the rest of us can learn and take up where she leaves off.

West-Win (WW) continues to honor the organization’s goal to promote our area’s peaceful environment and lifestyle. WW’s Board serves its neighbors and works tirelessly to maintain contact with local officials at the County, Township, surrounding communities, and the Forest Preserve to provide members with information about what is happening as well as what is being planned for our area. When appropriate, we actively advocate for our neighbors directly with officials at all levels.

For more than 50 years, our objective has been to keep our neighbors informed and we hope that you find this newsletter both informative and useful. To continue this mission, West-Win needs your support. If you are not already a paid member, we encourage you to consider becoming a paid member and support us with these goals. While we serve an area of more than 700 homes and have historically opened our meetings and provided the newsletter to every home, our actual paid membership includes less than half of those receiving the benefits of West-Win. Please note our minimal member dues of \$25 per year are used exclusively to publish and mail these newsletters and to maintain the Association website. No dues are ever paid to any Director, Officer, or person working for the Association. If you haven’t already done so, please send your 2026 dues to us today using the enclosed self-addressed envelope.

Thank you for your past and continued support. We hope that you find this newsletter informative and helpful and maybe even a little entertaining. Lastly, mark your calendars for Tuesday, April 28th for the Spring General Meeting. Come out, meet your neighbors and some of our local officials, and vote for members of the next West-Win Board. Hope to see you there!

Ralph (Skip) Watt

ELECTIONS – KNOW YOUR CANDIDATES

(and your WW Board)

Peter Sanderson – Peter arrived in our area in 2025, having moved here from Rye, New Hampshire. Peter immediately fell in love with our area and is eager to bring his talent and experience to assist WW move into the future. Peter has multiple degrees in business and management, specializing in financial management, operational efficiency, and long-term planning. Peter has served on various professional boards where he gained valuable experience in governance and oversight. Peter is dedicated to bringing a thoughtful, collaborative approach to the WW Board with a long-term focus on the community.

Eileen Kelly - Incumbent WW Director since 1995. Eileen is a retired employee from the office of the Supervisor of Assessments in DuPage County. Since retirement, she has taken her passion for antiques and made it her business. Eileen has been a resident of WW for 33 years. A member of the WW Board since 1995 and Treasurer of WW since 2010.

Lisa Gaspero – Incumbent WW Director since 2025. Lisa graciously accepted an offer from the Board to complete the term of Anthony Gosling when he moved from our area at the beginning of 2025. Lisa and her husband are residents in West-Win’s southern area and co-owners of a law firm specializing in estate planning, real estate, business law, and litigation. Lisa is an avid marathoner and enjoys training on the local trails. With significant experience in business and governance, she brings perspective to the Board in dealings with elected officials. She believes in balancing development with conservation to ensure future generations can enjoy the area’s unique environment.

Kathy Hydo – Incumbent WW Director since 2014, served as WW secretary for many years. Kathy is a 13-year resident of WW and a 40-year resident of DuPage County, making her home on Garys Mill Road. She is a manager at FGMK LLC, an audit, advisory and tax firm in their DuPage County office.

Ralph (Skip) Watt – Incumbent WW Director, currently serving as President. Board Member since 2022, Vice President 2023-2025. Skip has been a resident on Morningside Ave for more than 25 years after moving from Wheaton and has lived in DuPage County for more than 60 years. Skip is a retired civil engineer who has worked on major construction projects around the world, most recently in Africa. He relishes the lifestyle of the WW area and enjoys tending his property and flower and fruit gardens. Skip is passionate about maintaining the peaceful ambiance of our area and solving complex issues that we face.

Incumbent Board Members not up for re-election this year:

- **Bill Kovacs** – Resident of WW since 1989; Board member since 2025. Now retired, Bill is dedicated to protecting our area from overcrowding, and ensuring that future changes enhance rather than diminish our quality of life.
- **Mary Bakas** – WW Board member since 2017. Mary works full-time as a Realtor and business coach. Mary is committed to the community and believes it is crucial to maintain the desirability of homeownership in our area.
- **Giulia Naccarato** – Giulia has been a Board member since 2025 and lived in the WW area since 2017. Giulia works full time in the banking industry and is focused upon maintaining the beauty and safety of our area.
- **Rose Kuntze** – Past President and Board member since 2020 she is a 36-year resident of the WW area. Rose is committed to the goals and values of WW and brings a wealth of knowledge to the Board.

😊😊😊 **Chuckles** 😊😊😊

- ✓ I'm so glad cold season is over so allergy season can begin.
- ✓ Why can't you trust an atom? Because they make up absolutely everything.
- ✓ Why aren't dogs good dancers? Because they have two left feet.
- ✓ Our child has a great deal of willpower – and even more won't power.

Because You Asked ...

With every newsletter we send, we enclose a page for members to express concerns they have identified in our area. We also regularly monitor our emails where members can let us know of any concerns they have that we may be able to address. So that you know, the Board reads and discusses how we can help with every note and message received. While some concerns can be handled quickly by notifying officials handling resolution, others require long term commitment and perseverance to address. Here are some of the messages acted upon recently.

- **Traffic, speeding, and congestion on Garys Mill, Purnell, and Winfield Roads.** As part of our efforts through the ad-hoc WW Traffic Committee, we are working with County officials to address long-term solutions to all the traffic and congestion issues in our area (see article below). This is an on-going effort that unfortunately will take a lot of time to resolve. In the short-term, our officials have made several changes to reduce the problems but we are not done yet.
- **Dogs off leash in neighborhood.** West-Win has been working to bring DuPage County Animal services to speak at our regular semi-annual meeting to address these concerns. So far, they have not been available to come when our meetings are scheduled but stay tuned, they may be our next featured speaker. In the meantime, if there are concerns in your neighborhood, we suggest that you call DuPage County Animal Services at (630) 407-2800.
- **Recommend resources for candidate information in local, township, and county elections.** While West-Win is not affiliated with any political organization, we do regularly have visits from elected officials at our General Meeting. Members are free to ask any questions of these officials. While not all officials come to every meeting, nor do we

offer a candidate forum during election years, our turn-out increases at these times (surprise!). We do encourage all members to vote as these same elected officials do impact our daily lives. General election information is mailed to every registered voter in the County by the County Clerk and detailed information is available online for any candidate of interest.

- *Invasive plants and trees.* Living in our relatively open area leaves us all this problem. West-Win has addressed the problem with unwanted vegetation in many ways including: article in Fall 2025 Newsletter – preparing your yard for winter; spring 2025 General Meeting speaker – Spencer Campbell of Morton Arboretum; fall 2024 General Meeting speaker - naturalist Pam Otto; spring 2024 Newsletter – animals eating your garden; plus various notes in most newsletters. Nevertheless, battling invasive plants and trees is a never-ending chore for all of us and West-Win will continue to offer information and helpful hints whenever we can.

Many of the comments received simply say thank you and complement our efforts to maintain our neighborhoods. We appreciate hearing that members think we are doing a good job with our mission. Knowing that our efforts are valued provides us with the motivation to keep going as we have for more than 50 years. We will do our best to keep up the positive vibes.

Escaping to Freedom, the DuPage County Forest Preserves and the DuPage River – how these familiar resources were a pathway to freedom for Freedom Seekers on the Underground Railroad.

DuPage County residents today enjoy the rich beauty of our forest preserves and the DuPage River. The winding paths and calm waters offer solace as well as entertainment to hikers, runners, bikers, and walkers. But many do not realize the role the County of DuPage and the Illinois and DuPage Rivers played for Freedom Seekers on the Underground Railroad.

The Underground Railroad was active from 1830 to the 1860s. Many of the original settlers in DuPage County were New England and upstate New York abolitionists who opposed slavery and wanted to help the Freedom Seekers. These local residents whose religion, conscience, or political views caused them to oppose slavery helped “conduct” the “passengers” to the next station place.

Freedom Seekers in Illinois typically travelled North from Missouri to Chicago, and then Detroit, to cross into Canada. Approximately 3,000 to 4,500 Freedom Seekers passed through Illinois on their way to Freedom. It is estimated that a Freedom Seeker passed through Northern Illinois once every three or four days over three decades. Travelling at night, they relied on the stars and other natural resources to guide them. For example, finding moss on the north side of a tree to get a sense of direction, walking soundlessly, finding edible food in the forest, following or swimming in the rivers, and traveling in pitch dark through unknown areas. Their journey often began in the springtime. This is because heavy and long lasting Southern Spring rains made tracking the Freedom Seekers difficult.

According to oral tradition, quilt patterns were used by Freedom Seekers as signals to guide them along the Underground Railroad. The North Star was the guiding light for the slaves. They trusted God and followed that star until they reached Freedom. Other quilt blocks like the Log Cabin, Flying Geese, Monkey Wrench, Bow Tie, Bear’s Paw, and Crossroads carried specific meanings for their journey. Colors that were used in the quilts were very important: blue symbolized water, green was a grassy field, and yellow was a grain field. These quilts would be laid out either in the window or on a clothesline. Each quilt block served as a silent signal and carried specific meanings, ranging from instructions to gather supplies, follow certain trails, or navigate northward.

In The Underground Railroad in DuPage, Local Historian Glennette Turner writes: “Men, women, and children who’d been slaves – in Missouri for the most part – were called the passengers. They had accessed the best time to escape, evaded bloodhounds, lived on edible plants, and crossed the mighty Mississippi River before reaching Illinois.” The journey north from the Mississippi River followed the Illinois, Fox, DuPage and Des Plaines Rivers. The stations were typically close to these river sites. The river was an important guide as well as a source of protection in that Freedom

Seekers could swim in the river without leaving any scent for their captors to follow. Many of the “stations” were along or near these rivers. In addition to rivers, stations were on or near old plank “toll” roads or stagecoach lines. It is believed that Abraham Lincoln stayed at least once at the Castle Inn at Ogden and York Roads in Hinsdale, and may have even stayed at Warrenville’s old toll house as well.

Known DuPage County sites included in the National Park Service’s Network to Freedom include Blanchard Hall at Wheaton College, Sheldon Peck’s Homestead in Lombard, and the Blodgett House in Downers Grove. It is also believed the old toll house in Warrenville, Philo Carpenter’s house in Warrenville, the Strong House in Naperville, and Willoway Manor in Naperville – now the popular Meson Sabika restaurant – are also documented stations.

It is gratifying to know that these areas provide not only the natural resources that many of us enjoy, but also served as a valuable part of a rich and storied history.

**Special thanks to Glennette Turner for her insights and knowledge of the history of the Underground Railroad in DuPage County and contributions to this article.*

Traffic Safety Updates

For several months now, we have been in discussions with County officials and others concerning traffic, congestion,

letter to homeowners whose driveways face either Winfield or Purnell Roads to authorize the sheriff to utilize their driveways for monitoring passing traffic. The response was excellent with 14 property owners providing authorization to the sheriff. Note that the authorization is only for the purpose of monitoring and any vehicles pulled over for and safety conditions in our area, particularly those on Winfield, Purnell and Mack Roads. Since our update last fall, officials have decided to install all-way stop signs at the intersection of Garys Mill and Purnell Roads as well as the sheriff agreeing to increase monitoring of speeding and roadway offenders in our area.

- A special thank you goes to the Trillium Farm Homeowner’s Association for their work with the West Chicago officials and others to get the stop sign. It is hoped that this new stop sign will reduce cut-through traffic and provide some level of calming of traffic on Purnell Rd.
- Following a meeting with the DuPage County Sheriff officials, West-Win circulated a violation will be pulled over in a public area, not anyone’s driveway. Thank you to those providing authorization! If you are one of the property owners that have not yet provided the authorization but may wish to, we

encourage you to do so at your earliest convenience. Giving the sheriff options of where to temporarily park when monitoring will prevent regular offenders from knowing where the sheriff may be watching.

- Further in our efforts to address the traffic issues, we have met with County officials to discuss ways to reduce the congestion. As a result of these discussions, the County has agreed to take the lead in contacting Google Maps, WAZE and other mapping apps to notify them that Purnell Road is a level 6, minor collector, roadway not designed or constructed to handle the through traffic regularly directed on this route by the apps as a connection between Route 59 and Winfield Road.

As caution, the sheriff indicated that previous efforts by the Sheriff to redirect traffic in the apps had little impact. Our hope is that with the County Board, Transportation Department, and Sheriff all identifying the same problem, progress may be made to change the apps to alternate routes.

West-Win continues to pursue long-term solutions to make the roads safer for all of us. If you have any suggestions or recommendations, please pass them along to us at info@west-win.org.

STAY SAFE !

Finally... My winter fat is gone... now I have spring rolls!

WEST- WIN ON POINT !!!

Winfield Road Safety – The West-Win Ad Hoc Transportation Committee continues to monitor and maintain contact with the authorities concerning traffic safety along Winfield Road as well as Purnell and Mack Roads. We have recently received information that an all-way stop sign has been agreed and will be installed at the intersection of Purnell and Garys Mill. This step will hopefully reduce back-ups on Purnell and also reduce through-traffic to Winfield Road. Next, many of our members with private driveways facing both Winfield and Purnell Roads have authorized the sheriff to use these areas for monitoring traffic and identifying speeders and dangerous drivers. These enforcement activities have already begun with several citations already issued. Note that the sheriff will only use these areas for monitoring and will move to safe public areas to stop offenders. If you have a driveway facing either Purnell or Winfield Roads and haven't already provided authorization to the sheriff to monitor traffic from your drive, we encourage you to do so. We will have extra authorization forms available at the Spring General Meeting to sign up.

Mack Road Bridge – West Branch DuPage River Bike Path – The initial court hearings for the lawsuit brought by the City of Warrenville to condemn private properties on the north side of Mack Road are complete. The affected homeowners continue to object to the City's plans and the lawsuit has moved into the next phase of discovery. West-Win has met with various County officials and voiced opposition to the taking of private property for this project but it appears that the only resolution will be in the courts. As always, we oppose the taking of private property, particularly when an obvious and better option is readily available on the south side of Mack Road on Forest Preserve property.

Blackwell Forest Preserve Fleet Maintenance Campus – The Forest Preserve is moving forward with construction of the new Fleet Maintenance facility on Mack Road. We have been told that the project is proceeding nicely and is on-time and on-budget. The Forest Preserve anticipates "getting the keys" late this year with some final clean-up items and spring weather related items finishing up in 2027.

Winfield Road Potential Development – No activity has been noted as to the potential sale and development of the properties on Winfield Road just south of the Casey's so nothing new to report from the Board.

DuPage County Highway Maintenance Facility – Construction contract(s) for the new highway maintenance facility on the northeast side of the County Fairgrounds are anticipated to be awarded this spring. The facility will be approximately 178,000 sf of maintenance shops, offices, material storage, and garages. Actual construction is currently expected to begin with utility work and new green space later this year. Construction is anticipated to continue until the fall/winter of 2027 with occupancy planned for 2028.

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