

Village Spokesman

Village of La Grange
53 South La Grange Road
La Grange, IL 60525



November/December 2015



2015 Hometown Holiday – The 24th Annual Hometown Holiday sponsored by the Village of La Grange and the La Grange Business Association will be held on Saturday, December 5, 2015 from 5:00 p.m. to 9:00 p.m. Festivities will begin with a free holiday matinee at the La Grange Theatre at 3:00 p.m. after which an all Village Sing will take place on the Village Hall lawn, followed by Santa's arrival by fire truck and the traditional lighting of the "Village Tree."

The Hometown Holiday will also feature merchants' open houses, Santa and Mrs. Claus in the Village Hall Auditorium, strolling musicians, trolley rides, ice sculptures, a petting zoo along with a S'mores station and bonfire at the Village fountain area. Join us for free activities, entertainment and fabulous open houses at our festive shops and restaurants, as they keep their doors open late to celebrate with you.

Referendum Follow-up – In April 2015, the citizens of La Grange approved a referendum to increase the Village's non-home rule sales tax by 0.75% (with a corresponding rescission of the Village's 1.0% Food and Beverage Tax along with several other tax and fee increases). The Village pledged to use approximately 85% of those funds towards sewer improvements. The remaining funds were to be used for restoring the cost containment vacancy maintained in the Police Department since 2011, and \$50,000 per year towards economic development activities. The Village would like to provide residents with a status update on those three initiatives. They are as follows:

1. Engineering plans for the 50th Street storm sewer are 75% complete.
2. The Board of Fire and Police Commissioners appointed Ryan Nemecek to the referendum-funded position of Police Officer. Officer Nemecek graduated from the Police academy on September 11 (along with Officer Heredia who was appointed to fill the vacancy of Officer Robert Wardlaw who was promoted to Sergeant in June). Officers Heredia and Nemecek are currently in field training and are expected to be released to work independently in January 2016.
3. The Village is conducting a pilot program for free valet service in downtown La Grange as its first economic development initiative funded by the referendum. Several highlights to date:
 - ▲ about 150 vehicles are parked by the valet service each weekend between the hours of 5pm – 10pm, or approximately 15 cars per hour
 - ▲ Friday nights are slightly busier than Saturday nights
 - ▲ Top user destinations: Francesca's, Prasino, Nickson's, and Kama Bistro. The La Grange Theater is the top non-dining destination.

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New Management Team at the Police Department — At its regular meeting on July 13, the Village Board appointed Renee Strasser to the position of Chief of Police. Chief Strasser earned this merit based promotion after 26 years of progressively responsible experience and notable service record with the Village.

With this appointment, a series of corresponding promotions occurred within the Police Department and were also recognized at the Village Board meeting on July 13. They were as follows: Andy Peters, Deputy Police Chief; Dave Rohlicek, Police Sergeant. With Officer Steve Ljubenko and Officer Rob Wardlaw being promoted to Police Sergeant in March and May, respectively,. The La Grange Police Department has a team of five new leaders among its eight supervisory positions.

Congratulations to all.

Comments or questions may be directed to the Village at 708-579-2313
