

# Talk of the Township<sup>SM</sup>



Newsletter of Moraine Township, Illinois

Vol. 7, No. 1 - Summer 2012

## Talkin' About:

- ▲ *Transportation Initiatives*
- ▲ *Mooney Cemetery Update*
- ▲ *Grants Awarded, Program October*
- ▲ *Latino Advisory Needs Members*
- ▲ *Pantry Plants Garden*
- ▲ *FinancialTalk*
- ▲ *AssessorTalk: Understanding Taxes*
- ▲ *ClerkTalk: Big Election Year*
- ▲ *Calendar: Moraine Hosts Programs*
  - *October 5 NFP Development Skills*
  - *October 10 Transit Forum*
- ▲ *Contact Us*

## Mission

*Moraine Township government administers public funds to provide responsive, efficient and compassionate services and support for residents in need.*

Our boundaries include all of Highwood, most of Highland Park, and small portions of Deerfield and Lake Forest. The Township officially provides general assistance to individuals; property assessment services in the Assessor's office; election and record-keeping functions in the Clerk's office; and operates two cemeteries, Mooney and Daggitt, in Highland Park.

## Transportation Key Moraine Activity Our Own Door-to-Door, LCCTSC, Fall Transit Meeting

Moraine Township is delighted to give our residents advance news of a Transit Forum focusing on southeast Lake County public paratransit needs. Partnering with other units of government, Pace, nonprofits and activists who believe that the time is now to improve low-cost access to borderless paratransit, Moraine initiated hosting a Forum in Highland Park at which providers will share concerns and seek solutions. It will be held at the Police Department facility on Old Deerfield Road, on October 10, 9:30 to 11am.

From the inception of the present administration under Supervisor Mari Barnes, addressing resident needs in transportation has been a priority. With seven years of activity under our belts, we can proudly point to a smoothly operating system crossing township borders as far away as 15 miles, delivering seniors, disabled and other low income residents safely and conveniently to medical appointments.

"I consider Moraine Door-to-Door to be open to any resident, not just income challenged," asserts Supervisor Barnes. "While we have had a priority on getting to medical appointments, the service is for all of our residents – anyone who cannot drive – and

*continues on page 4*

## Mooney Cemetery Update Survey Completed, Graves Catalogued, Landscaping Planned

Based upon completion of the much-anticipated mapping report from archeological geophysicist Dr. Tim Horsley (received in June, 2011), Township Records Manager Shannon Mosier has been cataloguing gravesites with far greater accuracy than what existed previously. (See *Photo Gallery* on our website.)

"We inherited quite a disorganized set of hand-written historical records, overwritten in a confusing way by earlier personnel, so I'm happy to say that is being corrected," Mosier observed. "Getting information into the specialized cemetery database software we purchased is already making the records easier to manage and more useful."

As part of the data entry, Mosier has been taking photographs of gravesites with known/named occupants for our own purposes, as well as making this information available to people tracking their family genealogy. Many have found Mooney (and Daggitt) Cemetery through online searches that point them to Moraine Township's website.

In the meantime, the Board has been discussing the overall plans submitted by Nancy Hannick of NLH Landscape Architects in Highland Park. Now that we know where there are actual graves, the issues of ponding can be addressed. At a meeting of the Township

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## Calendar

Moraine Township Board of Trustees  
meets in the Township Office  
777 Central Avenue, Highland Park  
2nd Thursdays of the month at 5:30 pm  
&  
4th Thursdays of the month at 7:00 pm  
This meeting is recorded for cablecasting.

### ~ Of Special Interest ~

#### *Spotlight on Nonprofit Agencies*

Agencies receiving Township grants  
discuss their services & community needs  
at meetings, usually on 4th Thursdays.  
Attend our meeting in person or watch us  
on Cable Channel 10  
Thursdays at 12:30 pm, Saturdays at 6:00 pm  
*(Find Local Cable Listings on Highland Park website.)*



Moraine Township Grant Application  
Deadline: February 1, 2013

## Talk to the Township

Township Office ..... (847) 432-3240  
Supervisor ..... (847) 432-3240  
Clerk ..... (847) 432-3240  
Assessor ..... (847) 432-2100



Van Line ..... (847) 432-3000



Fax ..... (847) 432-2178



Email ..... [info@morainetownship.org](mailto:info@morainetownship.org)

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Jackie Schechter ..... [TrusteeSchechter@morainetownship.org](mailto:TrusteeSchechter@morainetownship.org)

<http://morainetownship.org>

## SuperTalk: Mari Barnes Township Government Works for You



Township government is what stands between our citizens' quality of life and the downturn in the economy. From the State of Illinois not paying what they've promised to area agencies and cutting back on programs that people living on the edge depend upon, to the federal government's cutbacks, and even belt-tightening in our local governments – critical gaps exist that must be filled. More and more, our office is seeing people who are brand new to the system, who have never had to seek assistance before, and need a guide into it. That is our purpose.

There has been a lot of talk about getting rid of unnecessary layers of government, but I feel strongly that Illinois townships are not one of those. In a way, the Board of Trustees/Supervisor's part of township government is the local community's public foundation, here to support agencies and individuals in need. For a relatively small tax (think of it as a fully deductible "contribution"), the community has a means of helping to fill gaps in human services close to home. We are your neighbors, familiar with local needs and able to address them efficiently and compassionately. This year, our tax rate is .059, or \$97 to the median homeowner – nearly half of which goes to fund the Assessor's functions.

Support township government not because it is inexpensive, but because it acts in a way no other arm of government is prepared to do.

Our grant-making program supports nonprofit groups serving our residents. Our General Assistance/GA functions directly serve individuals and families in dire straits.

The past two summers, even more than usual, we have made it a point to monitor fragile populations in our midst who are afraid to run their air conditioning exactly when it is most needed; we have stepped up to check on them, and to give "grants" towards utility bills when the State has run out of money. Our statutory GA and Emergency Assistance are in place to keep people from harm, stepping in after a fire or other disaster, providing temporary shelter and sustenance. Our Food Pantry operates all year to supplement healthy diets for families struggling to break even. We organize the annual Santullano Holiday Gift Drive.

But we do more than merely give handouts; I subscribe to the dictum "teach a person to fish rather than give the fish." At Moraine Township, we believe our job is to help the resident in need to acquire the information or access existing resources in order to become self-reliant again. How do we do that? We act as a clearinghouse, and should be the community's first stop when searching for help. Our General Assistance Manager, Paula Peddle, spends hours working with residents to educate them on where to go for additional training, resources, education, job coaching, mental and physical health services, and more. It is never enough to just hand out cash; I have felt particularly frustrated when I hear about that type of "help." I believe strongly that handouts make people more dependent and that sort of treatment, at bottom, is very disrespectful.

Some referral resources we support with direct grants, others are government agencies. Paula speaks Spanish and English and can help most clients with applications that may be daunting. Grizell Toledo, our receptionist/van scheduler likewise is bilingual. We established the Pantry Plants Garden Project as a way to encourage diverse populations to

*continues on page 3*

## CommunityTalk: Township Awards Grants Funding Increased, Program Planned for October 5

The Citizen Grant Advisory Committee again did an exceptional job studying grant applications submitted by the annual February 1 deadline. This year, proposals were required to be submitted electronically, making the process more efficient and environmentally friendly. On April 26, the Moraine Township Board of Trustees awarded grants totaling \$225,875 to area nonprofit agencies serving local residents during this fiscal year (April 1-March 31).

The Township received applications from 20 agencies, down from 25 last year. The Committee recommended funding support for all 20, involving 23 different programs. Requested funds totaled \$271,535. Regrettably, some agencies funded in the past failed to apply this year by the annual deadline.

The electronic submission system was an effort to be greener, to reduce wear and costs of duplicating proposals on the Township’s photocopying machine, and to more efficiently circulate the proposals to the committee. It proved to be further advantageous since missing or incomplete portions of the proposals were vetted in advance, allowing agencies to improve the clarity of their proposals before distribution to the committee.

“Our position is that we want to fund agencies serving our residents, so we make every effort to help them be successful in their proposals. And certainly, the Board could not be as confident of our decisions to make these important awards without the detailed study of proposals made by our community volunteers,” Supervisor Barnes observed.

“The allocation was again significantly more than last year’s to respond to the continuing economic crises facing local nonprofit agencies,” according to Board liaison Trustee Jackie Schechter (Highwood).

Members of the Citizen Grant Advisory Committee this year were Chair Harry Crane, Joel Carp, Judith Datz, Wendi Ezgur, Mark Gilhooley and Beth Olderman (all Highland Park) and

*SuperTalk...continued from page 2*

ships help our garden grow, and provide a great deal of satisfaction on all sides. We created Moraine Door-to-Door van service, with rides underwritten by the Healthcare Foundation of Highland Park – and were recognized with a statewide award for our efforts. We urge more neighbors to volunteer for our Latino Advisory Committee, to increase their input into programs.

These types of services and activities are provided on behalf of the entire community. I hope you will agree that having pro-active township government is useful and a source of community pride.

Many thanks to all the volunteers and agencies who work with us to accomplish so much season after season. Turn to us for help and information. Stay cool. ■

■

### Catch us on Cable!

Board of Trustee meetings held on 4th Thursdays of the month are recorded. These meetings include reports on community needs from our grantee agencies and all public business.

Shown on Cable Channel 10, Thursdays at 12:30 pm and Saturdays at 6:00 pm

*CommunityTalk...concludes*

Matthew Ferrari from Highwood. A second Board liaison was Trustee Bryna Gamson (Highland Park). Crane has completed his term as Chair, and Datz was appointed to that position for next year.

Details on the grant process, the Grant Advisors’ Executive Summary, and links to grantee agency websites may be found on the Township’s website.

Funding support was voted for services to Moraine Township residents provided by the following: *A Safe Place, Cancer Wellness Center, Career Resource Center, Center for Enriched Living, College Bound Opportunities, Community Partners for Affordable Housing, Equestrian Connection, Family Network, Family Service, Focus on the Arts, Highland Park Community Nursery School & Day Care Center, Interfaith Housing Center of the Northern Suburbs, JCYS/Champ Camp, The Josselyn Center, Lambs Farm, Links-North Shore Youth Health Service, Nurture, Southeast Lake County Faith in Action Volunteers, Tri-Con Child Care Center, and Zacharias Sexual Abuse Center.*

### Program for NFPs October 5

In further support of nonprofit agencies serving Township residents, Moraine plans to repeat a free program, **Achieve Fund Raising Success**, to be held on Friday, October 5 from 9:30 to 11:30am at the Highland Park Police Department, 1677 Old Deerfield Road. Presenters include representatives from the Donors Forum, Executive Service Corps and Lake County Community Foundation. Look for detailed announcements in September. ■

### Talk of the Township

Moraine Township is pleased to communicate with residents about Township business. We hope this periodic publication will foster our goal to keep the public fully informed about Township services and activities.

- Supervisor . . . . . Mari A. Barnes
- Clerk . . . . . Ellen S. Gussin
- Assessor . . . . . Patty A. Powers
- Trustee . . . . . Dwayne Douglas
- Trustee . . . . . Bryna G. Gamson
- Trustee . . . . . Margo K. Moreno
- Trustee . . . . . Jackie B. Schechter

Consult our website for timely information, including Agendas, Meeting Minutes, links to related information and on-line versions of *Talk of the Township*.



<http://morainetownship.org>

*Transportation...continued from page 1*

although especially to medical appointments, we are opening up the possibilities for trip access to jobs, shopping and social recreation.”

While Moraine Door-to-Door is a very expensive personal service borne by the Township, care was taken to contain costs where possible. Rather than purchasing a vehicle (now two), we contracted with Pace to lease their 6-passenger vans. Pace pays for vehicle maintenance. At the conclusion of our first 5-year lease recently, we exercised an option to buy the van for \$1 and sold it for a nearly 70% reimbursement of the cost to lease it for 5 years. That van was replaced by a newer, leased one, so that now we have two wheelchair-lift vehicles available. We annually make about 4800 rider trips.

### Collaboration In Motion

Moraine’s administration has a keen interest in joining with others to create a borderless public paratransit system throughout Lake County and even Cook. In support of that focus, a member of our Board of Trustees has been liaison to the Lake County Coordinated Transportation Services Committee/LCCTSC since 2005. LCCTSC activities have fostered coordination and expansion of personalized public paratransit in various parts of Lake County. Our Moraine liaison, Trustee Bryna Gamson, was elected to their Board of Directors in 2011. Recently, our Board reaffirmed Moraine’s commitment to the LCCTSC by re-adopting a Resolution of support. (LCCTSC information can be found on our website, which links to Lake County’s transportation pages.)

The LCCTSC’s goals for this year include facilitating collaboration among transit providers in our own southeast quadrant of Lake County. Earlier this Spring, Supervisor Barnes initiated meetings with contiguous townships and nearby municipalities who also offer van services, to work out voluntary agreements

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*Transportation...concludes*

to coordinate van trips where possible, and explore increased efficiencies.

### Transit Forum October 10

Moraine’s proposal to host a free Transit Forum is part of that conversation. We look forward to increased regional collaboration outcomes, further involving Pace. **Transit Forum: Options for Paratransit Collaboration to Meet the Needs of Southeast Lake County** to be held on October 10 in Highland Park will kick off a gathering of providers aiming to close gaps in service in this quadrant.

We remind residents that Moraine Door-to-Door paratransit vans operate Monday through Friday from 8:30am to 4:00pm. Those qualified for \$4 rides each way include all Moraine residents, especially seniors, disabled or economically disadvantaged. Caregivers and mobility equipment ride at no extra charge. Many of our riders travel at half or no fare due to economic challenges. Those trips are underwritten by a generous grant we apply for annually from the Healthcare Foundation of Highland Park, averaging over \$35,000 a year. Trip priority is on medical appointments up to 15 miles away, but we are beginning to schedule other trips as openings occur. Van reservations must be made 48 hours in advance to a dedicated phone line at the Township office, (847) 432-3000.

Moraine also provides \$3 coupons to seniors, disabled and low income residents, to offset taxi rides that, under this administration, have no boundary or function restrictions other than airport exclusion.

We would like to hear from residents about their needs with regard to paratransit, so they can be presented by our representatives at the Forum. If you don’t let us know what you’d like us to provide, your voice isn’t being heard. Call us. We’re listening! ■

## Pantry Plants Garden Project: Help Wanted Partners Assist Productivity

As we are all aware, this has been a summer of drought, so “all hands on deck” – or rather, into the garden – if you have a moment to spare. Lead garden volunteer Sam Piro has put out a call for help with watering our parched vegetables.

The annual Pantry Plants Garden Project was planted with donated vegetables from Anton’s Fruit Ranch by volunteers like Sam and master gardener Sandy Washburn in June. Others organized by the Highland Park-based North Shore Health Department’s Outreach Worker, Olga Aguilar, also planted on personal plots. Throughout the season, these small plots are maintained by families for their own use, and the other section, as a supplement to Moraine’s Food Pantry.

**Please!**  
**Check with the**  
**Township**

*before bringing in a donation of food. Our clients have varying needs, not always in line with what is donated. Clothing and miscellaneous items are no longer accepted, since there are nearby options like the ORT store right across the street from us.*

*Call us at (847) 432-3240. Thanks!*

If you would like to help, just stop by at the land provided to us by the Park District of Highland Park at Woodridge Park off Barberry Road and water as needed. Our Food Pantry also relies on donations of canned and boxed goods from generous residents and organizations throughout the year. This season, garden cultivators are very much needed! ■



## ClerkTalk: Ellen Gussin Big Election Looms: November 6

The November 6 General Election will be here soon, and there are some important date changes to report on. You will find up-to-date information below on all the changes approved by the Illinois State Legislature and signed by Governor Quinn on July 6.

### Changes In Voting Period

The most important change to note is that Early Voting has been shortened to a two-week period prior to Election Day rather than the former three-week period. The Grace Period Registration has been extended. For all up-to-the-minute changes that may occur between now and Election Day, remember to consult our Township Clerk webpage at <http://morainetownship.org/clerk.html> or the County links as given below.

### 2012 Election Dates

- Register by: October 9 (Grace Period: October 10 to November 3 in person in Waukegan)
- Voting by Mail: September 27 to November 1
- Early Voting: October 22 to November 3
- General Election: November 6
- Voter Registration reopens: November 8

### Voter Registration – [GetRegistered.info](http://GetRegistered.info)

You are eligible to register to vote if you are a U.S. citizen, 18 years of age by the next election, a resident of Lake County for 30 days prior to an election, and present two pieces of valid identification. Registration is available at the Moraine Township office at 777 Central in Highland Park, Monday through Friday from 8:30am to 4:30pm, or at the Lake County Clerk's office, through a commissioned Deputy Registrar. You can also register to vote at your local municipal office. Registration is open all year throughout the County except during the 27 days preceding an election and reopens the second day following an election.

To find a voter registration location, contact the County Clerk's Voter Registration department at [VoterRegistration@lakecountyil.gov](mailto:VoterRegistration@lakecountyil.gov) or call (847) 377-2410.

### Vote by Mail – [VotingByMail.info](http://VotingByMail.info)

Voting by Mail is available to any registered voter. Illinois law requires voters to complete an Application for Ballot form for each election. The completed application must be received by the Clerk's office before a ballot can be mailed to the voter. Voters can make a one-time request for an application or enroll in a convenient Voting by Mail program to automatically receive an application for ballot for each election specified. Voters can visit <http://LakeVoterPower.info> to track the Clerk's receipt of their voted ballot.

To receive a one-time application or enroll in a Voting by Mail program, visit <http://LakeVoterPower.info>, email the County Clerk's Voting by Mail Department at [VotingByMail@lakecountyil.gov](mailto:VotingByMail@lakecountyil.gov) or call (847) 377-2406.

### Vote Early – [VoteEarly.info](http://VoteEarly.info)

In-person Early Voting begins 15 days prior to Election Day. Any registered voter in Lake County may choose to vote early by presenting required valid government-issued identification

with photograph. Each voter has a convenient local Early Voting site that is open Monday through Friday 9am to 4:30pm and Saturday 9am to 2 pm. Early Voting ends the Saturday prior to Election Day.

The Early Voting location for all Moraine Township residents except Lake Forest is the Lake County North Shore Health Center, 1840 Greenbay Road in Highland Park. Our Lake Forest residents Early Vote at their City Hall.

To locate your Early Voting site, visit <http://LakeVoterPower.info> or call (847) 377-2410.

### Online voter Resource – [LakeVoterPower.info](http://LakeVoterPower.info)

Visit <http://LakeVoterPower.info> to confirm your registration status and to view all your personalized election information:

- Sample ballot, beginning 40 days prior to Election Day
- Form to make Application for a Ballot by Mail
- Track receipt of ballot, if voting by mail
- Election Day and Early Voting site locations including driving directions and picture
- Current representative districts and those districts effective November 2012
- Current elected officials and contact information

### Questions and Concerns

As always, if you have any questions, please feel free to email me at [clerk@morainetownship.org](mailto:clerk@morainetownship.org) or call (847) 432-3240.

Need more voter or election information? Visit <http://LakeCountyClerk.info>, contact the County Clerk's Elections department at [Elections@lakecountyil.gov](mailto:Elections@lakecountyil.gov) or call (847) 377-2314. ■

## FinancialTalk

You will find a host of financial reporting documents about Moraine readily available on our website and in our office.

Posted online (link to *Financial Info* from left column on home page) you will find annual Audits and Levies; a newly-required declaration of employees receiving over \$75,000 compensation per year; as well as Proposed (at the time they are being considered) and Adopted Budgets.

Looking at budget categories alone, however, does not tell the whole story about how funds are expended. While some line items do specify some hard costs allocated to a particular activity, they do not include the real cost of running it. In particular, in the Town Budget half that belongs to the Supervisor's role, Administration salaries, and portions of general overhead actually should be understood as allocated across programs. These include Moraine Door-to-Door (scheduling and book keeping are very labor intensive activities), the Food Pantry, Santullano Holiday Gift Drive, and even the Clerk's voter services, to name a few. To run these programs, we need an office, desks, telephones, utilities and, especially, qualified personnel.

If you are interested in learning more about how our program costs break down, give us a call. Our Records Manager, Shannon Mosier, can help you unravel the mysteries of the Budget.

As a side financial note, we are proud to inform our taxpayers that upon achieving a 5-year membership in the Township Officials of Illinois Risk Management Association/TOIRMA self-funded insurance pool, we received a 15% premium credit (worth \$1909) as a dividend in March. Supervisor Barnes joined the pool in 2005 to provide low cost insurance coverage for personnel bonding and workman's comp. TOIRMA has paid dividends for 21 years. ■

## AssessorTalk: Patty Powers

The Moraine Township Assessor is responsible for a fair and uniform system of property valuation that will equitably distribute the revenue requirements of our local governments among the township property owners.

### Taxes

Many of you were surprised to see an increase in your 2011 tax bill even though you had received a reduction in your 2011 assessment. Tax rates are determined by dividing the total Levy (the amount of tax dollars that your taxing bodies request) by the assessed value (the total of assessments in the taxing district)  $\text{Tax Rate} = \text{Levy} \div \text{Assessed Value}$ .

The final EAV (Equalized Assessed Value) of Moraine Township (after Board of Review decisions) for the tax year 2010 was \$2,722,890,713. When we reassessed the township for the 2011 general reassessment, our EAV was \$2,571,382,351, a loss in assessed value of \$151,508,362. The final 2011 EAV after Board of Review decisions was \$2,455,865,916 for a total loss of assessed value from 2010 to 2011 of \$267,024,797. (In Illinois, assessments are 33.33% of market value.) This loss of value, along with the increase of the levy, resulted in an increase of the tax rate from 2010 to 2011, for the majority of Moraine Township, over 12%. This means, even if your assessment stayed the same, your tax bill would have increased by over 12%.

Additionally, the number of assessment appeals for Moraine Township in the 2011 tax year increased from 1,797 in 2010 to 2,738 – a 52% increase. The number of appeals filed with the Board of Review for all 18 townships in Lake County was 25,500. The majority of these appeals were given some relief. This loss of assessed value resulted in a State Multiplier – on the tax bill of all Lake County taxpayers – of 1.0281 or 2.81%. The 2010 State Multiplier was 1.0199 or 1.99%.

### Bill Payment

Remember the second installment of your tax bill, payable to Lake County Collector, must be postmarked on or before September 6, 2012. You will not receive a second bill. Use the 2<sup>nd</sup> Installment Payment Coupon provided with your 2011 tax bill. If you have misplaced your bill, we will be happy to provide you with a copy.

### 2012 Assessments

It is my hope to have the new 2012 assessments published by the middle of August. If you feel the value is overstated, you can submit information on your recent purchase, comparable properties, or an appraisal for our review. My staff and I are here to help you and hope that you will contact us directly prior to filing with the Board of Review or hiring a tax representative. Remember, you have just 30 days after publication to file an appeal.

### Tax Consultants

You may have recently noticed real estate tax consulting companies soliciting for your business, boasting claims to reduce your tax bill by thousands of dollars. I would like you to know that there is no need to hire an outside company to review your assessment or file an assessment appeal on your behalf.

Tax consultants and lawyers can do all the work of an assessment review and possibly appeal for you – for a fee. It is your choice to decide to do so. My office makes every effort to assist homeowners and strongly encourages persons to forgo the costs and do it yourself.



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AssessorTalk...continued from page 6

Please feel free to contact our office with any questions you may have regarding your assessment. My staff and I are happy to discuss and review your assessment with you. We can evaluate the evidence and, if warranted, make a change to your assessment without necessitating further appeal. It is advisable to contact my office as soon as possible after you receive your new assessment notice. You can contact our office via phone, email, or in person.

We make every effort to make data and instructions available to assist in evaluating your assessment. The Township website has instructions on how to review your assessment and instructions on how to use the Lake County site.

## Services

My staff and I are committed to serving the people of Moraine Township fairly and equitably. We want you to know that customer service is our top priority. Some of the services that our office can provide or help you with are:

- Assist in filing the Senior Homestead Exemption (Lake County residents who receive the Senior Homestead Exemption DO NOT need to reapply each year.)
- Assist in filing the Senior Citizen Assessment Freeze (This Exemption MUST be applied for each year.)
- Homeowner's Exemption
- Disabled Person's/Disabled Veterans Exemption
- Home Improvement Exemption
- Provide information requested for Assessment Appeals
- Adjust assessments due to factual errors
- Provide a copy of your tax bill
- Address Change
- Names and address supplied for properties applying for variances
- Free Notary Service

## Exemptions

Illinois law provides homeowners with certain homestead exemptions – if you are the owner of record and live in the home as a primary residence. Using these exemptions will lower the amount of property tax you owe. Our office is able to assist you with the filing of your exemptions.

### Homestead Limited Exemption

This exemption currently lowers the equalized value of the property by \$6,000. Any owner of record who lives in the home as a primary residence is entitled to this exemption. Look for it on your tax bill.

### Senior Homestead Exemptions

If you turned 65 at any time during the tax year, the equalized value of your home will be lowered by \$4,000. You must notify the Moraine Township Assessor's Office to initiate this exemption.

### Senior Citizen Assessment Freeze Homestead Exemption (Annual Renewal Required)

If you are 65, qualified for the (above) Senior Homestead Exemption, AND have a total household income of \$55,000 or less, the assessed value on your property is frozen. Please note that this does NOT affect the tax RATE. Contact the Moraine Township Assessor's office to initiate this exemption.

### Homestead Improvement Exemption

If an improvement or addition is made to the home, the assessment increase due to the alteration is kept off the tax rolls for four years. There is a maximum of \$25,000 of assessed value which can be kept off the tax rolls for that period.

## Disabled & Veterans Exemptions

There are various exemptions available for veterans, veterans who are returning from active duty in an armed conflict, and disabled persons. Our office or the Chief County Assessment Officer can assist with the filings of these exemptions.

## Contact Us

Call us at (847) 432-2100. Information is online at: <http://morainetownship.org/assessor.html>. You can link to the County Assessor from our website or go directly to <http://www.lakecountyil.gov/assessor/Pages/default.aspx> and by calling them at (847) 377-2050. ■

## What's The Assessor Got To Do With Township Government?

*We're so glad you asked!*

*Townships were established by settlers working together to solve community problems like caring for the needy, providing for burial, schools and roads. To share the financial burden fairly, each according to his ability to contribute, a system of property assessment was established at the same time that "general assistance" was formalized. Over time, certain services were absorbed by municipalities, but in many areas of Illinois, townships still directly provide human services, road maintenance and even recreation programs.*

*In Moraine Township, property is assessed in value as objectively as possible so that each provides a fair share to the taxing bodies whose rates are applied to the valuation. The Assessor determines value of the property; Lake County collects the taxes on behalf of all regional taxing bodies, including relevant city/city services, schools, Lake County operations and Moraine Township government itself.*

Mooney Cemetery...continued from page 1

Cemetery Board (consisting of Township elected officials) on June 14, conceptual plans for re-landscaping were presented. The problems of drainage and flooding on this natural flood plain (historically called a swamp) will be addressed with native plantings and swales, simultaneously adding natural beauty to the setting. Hannick's overall strategy is to reforest without infiltrating the central area where most of the plots exist. Longterm plans call for putting in diverse tree species, selected to eliminate the possibility of disease wiping out the entire stock. Emphasis will be placed on low maintenance plants, and those not attractive to deer. Tree varieties will be selected to provide color throughout the seasons and for water tolerance.

## Talk Back/Volunteer

We welcome feedback on any or all of our programs in Moraine Township. If you have a comment or question about something you've read in this issue of *Talk of the Township*, contact the Supervisor's Office at (847) 432-3240 or email Super@morainetownship.org.

If you are interested in joining our efforts in public service – for brief or on-going tasks – also contact the Supervisor's Office. We are always looking for volunteers to serve on Citizen Advisory Committees, in the following or other developing *ad hoc* capacities:

- Food Pantry
- Grant Advisory Committee
- Latino Advisory Committee
- Pantry Plants Garden Project
- Senior Services
- Transportation
- Township History Project

**Talk**  
of the **Township**<sup>SM</sup>

**Moraine Township**  
**777 Central Avenue**  
**Highland Park IL 60035**  
ph 847.432.3240 • fx 847.432.2178  
Van Reservations 847.432.3000  
Assessor's Office 847.432.2100  
email info@morainetownship.org  
http://morainetownship.org

PRSRT STD  
US Postage  
PAID  
Permit No. 31  
Highland Park IL

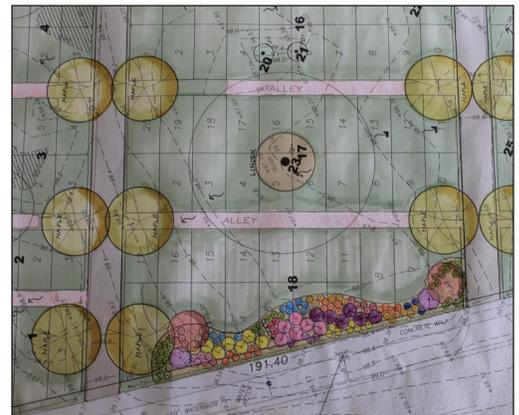
Mooney Cemetery...concludes

The plan also calls for an environmentally low-impact parking area (gravel, for example); there is no such accommodation currently. Additionally, replacing the present U-shaped aging asphalt driveway with a new pervious one would incur initial higher expense but be environmentally more desirable and allow water to drain better. Proposed reduction of the amount of grass on the site would decrease maintenance costs and related environmental impacts (watering, noise and mower/blower pollution, for example), and would model "green" behavior. For visitor contemplation, a Memorial Garden in a circular Jens Jensen format with a naturalized meadow is proposed to enhance the east end that presently has just a flagpole and bench.

The total design met with enthusiasm and Hannick was instructed to come back with cost estimates for the various segments. At their June 28 meeting, the Board did, however, approve proceeding immediately with proposed perennial beautification plantings along the Ridge Road fence, but any such activity has been postponed until the present drought and extreme heat is behind us. Early in the season, unsightly scrub and dead trees were removed.

"I am delighted to see this beautiful system of landscaping alternatives as a way to solve our occasional ponding problems. It's so much more appealing than resorting solely to invasive underground piping carrying water away," commented Supervisor Barnes.

The public is invited to stop by the office to view the landscape design proposal on display. Contact Records Manager Mosier for gravesite information by calling (847) 432-3240 or stop by during regular business hours. If your family holds title to a plot, please confirm that your records match ours, now, before there is a need (if you have not done so in the last 5 years). If you are interested in learning more about the history of either of our cemeteries, Daggitt or Mooney, check out our website's *Cemeteries* page (linked from the left column of our home page at <http://morainetownship.org>).



NLH landscape design proposal along Ridge at Mooney entry