



# THE BREMEN BEACON

SHINING A LIGHT ON BREMEN TOWNSHIP GOVERNMENT & SERVICES



## Message from Kathryn

Greeting My Township Neighbors,

This past year has been the most challenging that anyone can remember, and none of us has been immune from being negatively impacted or suffering losses one way or another.

It is with a heavy heart that I introduce myself to you and make my first appearance as Bremen Township Supervisor, following the untimely passing of Maggie Crotty. Bremen Township not only lost its finest public official, but lost a true friend to all of us.

The following pages in this issue are a testament to and reflection of the commitment that she had to help all residents and make Bremen Township a better place to live, and together with you, I pledge to continue this journey and serve with the same unquestionable integrity and dedication that Maggie possessed.

This issue also introduces you to some of the people that work behind the scenes and play an integral part in making our township work for you and keep it affordable by following the sound financial practices that have been established. It is an honor to be a part of this team and selected unanimously to lead the way to our future undertakings to keep Bremen Township in the forefront of service, cost effectiveness, and efficiency.

We will maintain our open door policy to any resident needing assistance, so please contact us with any needs or concerns to see if we can help you.

As always, my very best to all of you,

*Kathryn Straniero*

Your neighbor,  
Bremen Township Supervisor  
Kathryn Straniero



“Service  
to others is  
the rent we pay  
for your room  
here on earth.”

MUHAMMAD ALI

# PEOPLE

## You Should Know



### **Rondal Jones** – ADMINISTRATOR & OFFICE MANAGER

Ron oversees and directs the day to day operation at our Markham facility, located at 16361 Kedzie Ave., where he also serves as Deputy Clerk. His responsibilities include the reconciliation of all township finances and funds. In addition, he manages the flow of information from the township to the residents and works closely with the Supervisor in setting forth the agenda and implementing services to our residents. You can reach Rondal at (708) 333-9530 Ext. 1000 or at [rjones@bremementownship.net](mailto:rjones@bremementownship.net).



### **Shari Dore** – GENERAL ASSISTANCE CASE WORKER

Shari is the point person for Bremen Township residents in need and is located at our Markham facility. Her department assists with utility bills, rent, and medical supplies from our nurse's closet. She also serves as a provider for the Benefit Access Program, which includes discounts for License Plates or R.T.A. Free Ride Card for eligible seniors and qualifying disabled residents. Additionally she serves as a representative for F.E.M.A., Deputy Registrar, and free of charge notary. Contact her at (708) 333-9530 Ext. 1100 or [shari@bremementownship.net](mailto:shari@bremementownship.net) for all your service needs.



### **Willanda Williams** – OFFICE MANAGER

As Office Manager of the Assessor's Office, Willanda is on the front line of assisting our residents property tax needs and issues. Under her guidance, this office files appeals, exemptions, and initiates Certificates of Error, along with many other services for homeowners. She also works closely with every municipality within the township with Building Permits and other property issues. Her office is located at the Bremen Township Administrative Office located at 16361 Kedzie in Markham. To contact Willanda with any property tax questions or services, please call (708) 333-1591 Ext. 1200 or [assessor@bremementownship.net](mailto:assessor@bremementownship.net).



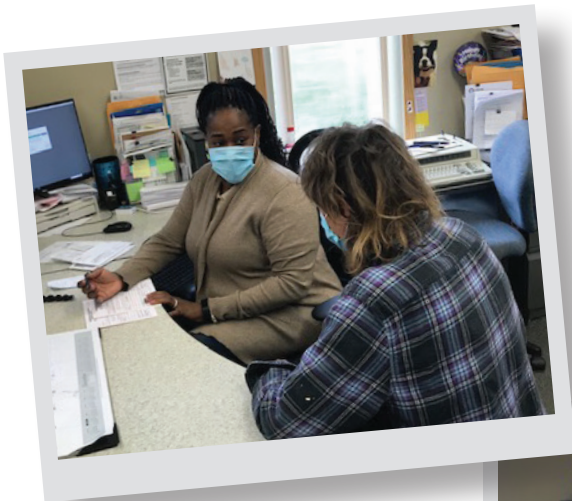
### **Shelly Smith** – PROGRAM COORDINATOR

Along with managing our Senior Wheels Program, Shelly also coordinates all other senior activities from our Oak Forest facility at 15350 Oak Park Ave. In addition she also serves as the townships representative for our Youth and Family Services and works in conjunction with Sertoma and NAMI which provides Bremen Township youth and families with counseling and other mental health assistance. For a comprehensive list of the wide variety of services available to our residents, including free Notary and voter registration. Contact Shelly at (708) 687-8220 or [ssmith@brementownship.net](mailto:ssmith@brementownship.net).



### **Sue Ernst** – SENIOR CAFÉ MANAGER

Sue is the our townships partner with Age Options, which provides healthy, nutritious lunches at our Senior Café located at our Oak Forest facility. When available, she also coordinates the securing and distribution of carry out boxed lunches and care boxes to our home bound seniors. In addition, Sue also assists with any senior related activities that are available. For updates on the Senior Lunch Program contact Sue at (708) 687-8220 Ext. 1401 or at [sernst@brementownship.net](mailto:sernst@brementownship.net).





## New Walking Path Completed

The long awaited Walking Path located directly behind our Senior Café has been completed. This three acre parcel of scrubby vacant land has been transformed into an approximate quarter mile of walking area for all of our residents to exercise and enjoy. This coming spring benches and rest areas will be installed in partnership with local businesses and individuals that will sponsor them. This will allow the entire cost of this project to be paid through sponsorships at no cost to the taxpayers. Any individual or local business that would be interested in either or included in this project by being a sponsor or advertising is urged to call our offices at (708) 333-9530 or (708) 687-8220 for details.



## Bremen Township New Services and Update

In our efforts to better serve all the residents in Bremen Township, many of the services offered at our Markham location are now available at our Oak Forest facility. This extension of services allows more residents easier access from all areas of our township. Some of these programs include Access to Care, Pace Bus Tickets, along with the Benefit Access Program. For a comprehensive list of services available at the Oak Forest facility please call our office at (708) 687-8220.

## Mental Health Services for Youth

In our partnership with Sertoma, we are proud to provide counseling and support services to youth experiencing many of the challenges that they face every day.

Sertoma is an experienced provider of services that can help the youth of our community get the support they need.

Sertoma's programs offer support, resources, and individualized care tailored to each individual and their family.

To get started please call our office at (708) 687-8220 or (708) 748- 1951 Ext. 455.



# Senior Services Update

The current and ever changing Covid 19 pandemic has had a direct impact on the availability of services being accessible to our senior citizens. Following guidelines, recommendations and protocol from the Illinois Department of Health the department is taking every precaution to deliver services in a safe and protective manner. Please call us at (708) 687-8220 to receive the latest information about services being offered.

## NAMI Update



At this time all NAMI in person activities at our facility in Oak Forest have been temporarily suspended due to the Covid 19 situation. However, on line support is still available with our partners at NAMI. Please do not hesitate to call Director Marianne Bithos at (708) 351-6871 for all the latest information for on line accessibility to classes.

## Produce Day



Free produce on 2nd Friday of each month. (Partnering with Greater Chicago Food Depository and Together We Cope).

## STAY CONNECTED With Us

Please send your email address to [info@brementownship.net](mailto:info@brementownship.net) to get all the latest updates for programs and services and follow us on facebook.



# Officials **REPORTS**

## Supervisor



*Kathryn Straniero*

As challenging as this past year has been I take pride in the fact that not only has Bremen Township has been able to maintain a high level of service but were able to expand and increase Programs and Services to our residents. Like you, I am looking forward to a new beginning this coming year and have hope that the future is brighter for all of us.

With that said, let us all continue to work together to stay safe and helping each other. Wishing you happy holidays and all the best for our New Year.

## Assessor's Office



*Willie Jones*

Working through this pandemic filled year has had an impact on everyone, and the Assessor's Office was no exception, as we learned and navigated through it to continue to assist our homeowners through the Appeals process (Sept. 16- Oct.22). In normal times, as in the past, this process is one of the times when we experience the highest volume of residents visiting our office for assistance.

I am proud to say that the resiliency of the staff, and the safeguards that were put in place, the office was successful in our residents receiving the personal assistance that they are accustomed to. Whether it be a visit to the office, or via electronically, our staff searched for comparables, assisted with written narratives, and provided any additional documentation to successfully complete the process. May we all have a brighter 2021 and Happy Holidays to all.



*John Lord*

## Clerk's Office

The Office of the Clerk of Bremen Township is here to serve the residents of the township. I am going to alter my regular report this issue to pay tribute to our former leader and Supervisor – Maggie Crotty. Her unfortunate and untimely passing was a terrible loss for every resident of Bremen Township. The words, (to serve) was the mantra of Maggie

and she instilled that in everyone of us that had the privilege of working with her, and inspired us to follow her lead. So many of the programs and services highlighted in this issue are here for one reason – her determination to help others. Although she is no longer with us, and we will miss her dearly as a guiding leader and true friend, her example of dedication and commitment will live on. Best wishes to all in the new year.

## Highway Commissioner



*John Flaherty*

With our road construction season ending, the Highway Department has been preparing and is ready for the upcoming snow season. This past construction season our road resurfacing projects which were addressed in multiple locations throughout the township, 160 tons of stone along with 400 yards of asphalt were used to complete these projects. In addition we re-ditched approximately 3,200 feet of drainage ditches to ensure

proper flow to help elevate flooding in our low lying areas. Planning is now underway to identify, plan and bid out projects for our next construction season in the spring. We wish to extend happy holidays and a safe, prosperous New Year to all our residents. If you have any questions or concerns please call our office at (708) 333-9534.





# Board of TRUSTEES



*Carolyn Carter*

As Director of Community & Business Affairs for the Village of Hazel Crest, I understand the importance of establishing strong functioning relationships and cooperation between residents, government, volunteers, non-profit agencies and the business community. I appreciate the fact that Bremen Township reaches out to all segments to offer so many services, activities, and programs to all residents of all ages of all communities within our borders. The continuous effort by all members to seek and explore a variety of avenues in expansion of services is an example of how much we can accomplish by working together for the benefit of our residents. Wishing each and every one of you and your families a happy, safe, healthy, and prosperous New Year.

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*Mary Catuara*

During these difficult and unprecedented times, Youth and Family Mental Health and counseling services are in demand and needed more than ever. I am encouraged that Bremen Township has been in the forefront of exploring the options that best suit and deliver the needs to our residents, regardless of their ability to pay. Our ongoing effort with professional agencies that provide these services confirms the commitment that we share in prioritizing this much needed assistance, and am confident that these endeavors will be successful and beneficial. Like all of you, I am looking forward to a new year filled with hope, health, and happiness. Wishing all of you and your families the very best. Happy New Year to all.

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*Edward Maggio*

As the newest member of this team, bringing with me over 20 years of business experience in the financial sector, my instinct is to focus on the bottom line. What most impressed me was how seriously each and every member is laser focused on fiscal responsibility and their commitment to serve the residents rather than themselves. One of my first votes since joining this board was the unified decision to reject pay increases for ourselves. I am proud to be a part of this team and look forward to being involved and contributing member.

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*John M. (Mike) Tatro*

The partnerships that we have formed with other non-profit organizations, other government agencies, and collaborations with local businesses are a benefit for all homeowners of Bremen Township. Not only does this permit us to offer more services, it allows us to help ease the burden of all our communities. Looking forward, I am excited to expanding these joint ventures, and confident that these efforts will enhance our ability to help more residents.

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## THE BREMEN BEACON

16361 Kedzie Parkway  
Markham, IL  
708.333.9530  
info@brementownship.net  
www.brementownship.net

Supervisor, Kathryn Straniero  
Clerk, John D. Lord  
Assessor, Willie A. Jones  
Highway Commissioner, John P. Flaherty

### Trustees

Carolyn R. Carter  
Mary Catuara  
Edward P. Maggio  
John M. (Mike) Tatro

# A Final Farewell and Tribute

In closing this edition, we would be remiss if we didn't recognize the many accomplishments and contributions that Maggie Crotty brought to Bremen Township and the lessons we learned from her. Her leadership served as an inspiration for those of us who have followed her in public service.

During her tenure as Bremen Township Supervisor, Maggie was instrumental in establishing and expanding programs and services for residents of Bremen Township. She also ensured that each and every community had the same opportunity and access to services were available to anyone that needed assistance.

The financial policies and practices that she implemented resulted in our township being awarded the highest possible rating from independent financial institutions. Her unwavering belief that all elected officials are obligated to serve as advocates for taxpayers, was her guide throughout her career, and that we were here to serve the residents and not ourselves. This resolute approach led Bremen Township to be one of the few government entities to be debt free.

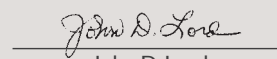
Some of the most important lessons Maggie taught us by example was her steadfast demand for accountability and her

courage to stand by her conviction to do the right thing for our constituents. We witnessed firsthand her firm stand against special interest groups and their unrelenting personal attacks that were not in the best interest of our residents. This strength resulted in Bremen Township saving thousands of dollars in unwarranted expenditures and establishing a partnership with one of the best youth programs in the south suburbs, so at the end of the day, she was right. Her integrity and resolve to do the right thing is truly an example of a Profile in Courage and her legacy.

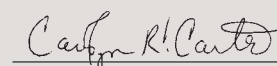


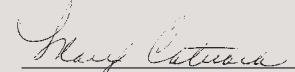
  
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