



For The People

What can your New Trier Township government do for you? We asked our township supervisor to expound on the mission that has bound our communities for 160 years.

New Trier Township is proud to be a part of the launch of *Quintessential New Trier* magazine. This new publication steps forward just as our township marks its celebration of 160 years of service to the residents of the North Shore. As part of the community landscape, New Trier Township has supported the many villages that encompass our borders including Wilmette, Winnetka, Kenilworth, Northfield and Glencoe. In our 160 years, however, the actions of New Trier Township remain one of least understood governmental bodies serving residents.

The mission of New Trier Township is simple — to provide community leadership, issue advocacy, and resources to benefit the physical, mental and social well-being of township residents. That mission rarely been tested more than today during this current economic condition.

All too often the essence of township government is not seen until a resident is in crisis. Daily, our residents are in search of resources to aid in devastating situations that might include: the pending divorce; the death of a spouse; the accident causing a disability that is now permanent; the loss of a job; and the increase of domestic violence. Through our 160 years of service history, New Trier Township government has played a key role in providing a safety net for those adversely affected by these and other issues, but never has that net been stretched so widely.

Historically, in troubled economic times our citizens have turned to local government for help. Today, we are experiencing double-digit increases in demand for community-based services across the board. Our most visible service program, the New Trier Township Pantry, has seen a significant increase in the number of families needing to supplement their grocery and hard good needs. The Township has worked closely with many organizations for families impacted by the foreclosure crisis. On a daily basis, the township witnesses the challenges of residents who must choose between paying their health insurance premium and paying their utility bills. Many residents have been struggling in silence — without

even their families knowing the severity of their circumstances.

When those in need learn the New Trier Township government can be a resource in times of hardship they come to our office with hesitation, and sometimes embarrassment. Respectfully, each resident is treated with dignity and their situation is kept in utmost confidence. Our knowledgeable and professional staff has been trained and understands that we all need a little help from time to time.

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Beyond emergency assistance, our Community Support Grants Program is a non-income restrictive program that provides limited financial assistance to cover the overwhelming costs involved in caring for children and adults with disabilities. We also have a financial assistance program for income-eligible families to assist with child care expenses for parents who work

or are in job training. We regularly host township-wide preventative health screenings and “life-support” educational programs. Our Peer Jury program, featured in this issue of *Quintessential New Trier* magazine, was one of the first in the country and continues to be a model that many communities reference, duplicate and use as a guideline.

Our social and community-based services are provided by a small, trained and dedicated staff. Thankfully, we are able to widen the services provided through other agencies and contracted service providers. Through our funding application process, more than 45 community-based programs are operated by 33 agencies ranging from employment assistance and foreclosure counseling to services for seniors wishing to age in place. Support programs for persons with disabilities and programming for youth in the township are also available.

A basic tenet of township government is to involve its citizenry. New Trier Township would like to thank the many volunteers who serve on our advisory committees that aid in making funding recommendations, identifying new program and service opportunities, and advocacy for residents in need. Our youth and adult advocates who serve on the Peer Jury program — in addition to the volunteers who keep our Pantry shelves stocked — provide valuable services. We would also be remiss not to recognize the many businesses, individuals, civic and religious groups that regularly donate items and provide financial contributions to our Angel Fund, a 501c3 corporation.

While back in its formation the greatest issues facing township government may have been chickens in the road and Prohibition, today New Trier Township strives to meet current challenges and continues to improve services for its residents. I invite you to stop by our office at 739 Elm Street in Winnetka or visit us online at www.newtriertownship.com. You will find numerous other services to assist you and we invite you to be part of democracy first-hand. [↕](#)