

May 2026

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MAYOR

Thomas B. Hood

BOARD OF TRUSTEES

- Greg Garner
- Quin O'Brien
- Cheryl Ross
- Karen Thorstenson
- Kevin Woodside

VILLAGE ADMINISTRATOR

Patrick Muetz

VILLAGE CLERK

Andy Harris



VILLAGE OF GURNEE

325 N. O'PLAINE RD.

Village Hall: **847-599-7500**

Utility Billing: **847-599-7525**

Community Dev.: **847-599-7550**

Police Non-Emergency: **847-599-7000**

Public Works: **847-599-6800**

www.gurnee.il.us



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This newsletter is published by the Village of Gurnee, and the programs and services described apply only within the Village's corporate limits. To provide feedback, please contact: Apollack@village.gurnee.il.us

MAYOR'S MESSAGE

Dear Residents,

Welcome to Spring! This is the time to start enjoying all things outside, which includes our beautiful parks and the many events planned for Spring and Summer including Gurnee's America 250 Celebration, Gurnee Get-Togethers, Gurnee Days, block parties and many more that you can find on the Village website.

Today, I would like to give you some thoughts about the Village's financial operation. The Village in many ways runs like a medium-sized business. We look to maximize our revenue, minimize our expenses and serve our customers, the residents of Gurnee. The Village Board recently approved a \$110,000,000 budget that allocates revenue to support the costs of various Village services. Again, for the 26th year, this budget is balanced without a property tax.

In order to accomplish this, we must invest in the business community through excellent Village services, capital grants, promotion and much more. As an example, years ago Gurnee Mills transitioned from an outlet mall to a hybrid mall that contained a mix of outlet stores as well as higher end stores. The Village agreed to contribute \$10,000,000 towards developing Macy's, and since that time it has been integral to the success of the mall. Gurnee Mills is in the top 1 percent of all malls in the United States, it is over 95 percent full and provides 20 percent of all sales tax revenue each year. Quite the success story!

Most of the time when the Village looks at an investment, it is considering the return on investment (ROI) in dollars back to the Village. We look at what is the minimum amount that we can invest while generating the maximum amount of income to return our investment as quickly as possible. Dollars are not the only measure of a successful investment. There is a more holistic approach when you consider the well-being of our Village. The Village has recently invested in Dandelion Gallery that will offer an artistic venue for all types of ventures in the Arts. Will Dandelion Gallery be a good return on investment as judged strictly by a financial standard, maybe not. However, when it comes to investing in our Village's culture, creating new opportunities for residents to express themselves in ways that were not previously available is a meaningful investment.

This year, the Village made an investment in our residents through the Gurnee Cares Commission. The Cares Commission seeks out worthy charitable organizations such as A Safe Place, Big Brothers Big Sisters and WTHS Blue Devils' Food Pantry to invest in that care for Village residents in need. I cannot think of a more important investment that has more eternal implications than this one.

I will continue to pray that we enjoy all that God has given to us and to especially appreciate those that He has placed in our lives.

As always, please feel free to reach out to me to discuss whatever you have on your mind.

Sincerely,

Mayor Tom Hood



VILLAGE BOARD APPROVES GRANTS TO SUPPORT LOCAL NONPROFITS

At the Village Board meeting on April 20, the Village of Gurnee approved \$248,207 in Gurnee Cares Grants to support 10 local nonprofit organizations dedicated to enhancing community resources and aid. The grant recipients include the Mothers Trust Foundation, Prairie State Legal Services, Warren Township High School Blue Devils' Pantry, A Safe Place, Erie Family Health Centers, Keeping Families Covered, Big Brothers Big Sisters of Metropolitan Chicago, CYN Counseling Center, Nicasa Behavioral Health Services and Youth & Family Counseling. These funds are directed toward critical priority areas such as food security, housing stability, mental health services and youth mentoring to ensure essential support for Gurnee residents and students.

WOODLAND INTERMEDIATE HOSTS STUDENT LEADERSHIP SUMMIT

Woodland Intermediate's PBIS Student Leaders were recognized this April at a Student Leadership Summit celebrating their hard work and accomplishments throughout the school year. As part of the event, students were invited to submit essays on leadership and questions for a panel of community leaders including Mayor Hood and Police Chief Gaughan about the challenges they face and the lessons they have learned. Ten essays and student questions were selected. The assembly began with students reading their essays, followed by a panel discussion in which local leaders answered questions one by one. The event highlighted the leadership potential of Woodland Intermediate students and served as an inspiring reminder that these young leaders are already making a positive impact and will help shape the community's future.



HONORING TRUSTEE JEANNE BALMES FOR HER DEDICATED YEARS OF SERVICE TO THE GURNEE COMMUNITY

After more than two decades of dedicated service on the Village Board, Trustee Jeanne Balmes will retire effective April 20, leaving behind a lasting legacy of leadership, civic involvement and commitment to the Gurnee community. First elected to the Board of Trustees in May 2001, Jeanne has played an important role in guiding the Village through years of growth and progress. Her decision to serve was rooted in a deep love for Gurnee and a desire to help keep the community moving forward. "I love the Village of Gurnee," Jeanne once shared. "I've been involved in several organizations and had a business in town. I wanted to keep the Village going in a positive direction and a leading community in the county and felt the need to become an active member of the Village Board." That commitment to service has extended far beyond her role as trustee. Over the years, Jeanne has been actively involved in numerous local organizations, including the Gurnee Chamber of Commerce, the Gurnee Days Committee, the Breakfast Exchange Club and the Gurnee Women's Business Association. In recognition of her many contributions to the community, she was named the Gurnee Days Honoree in 1996.

Jeanne was also a nationally recognized florist and successful business owner in Gurnee, further demonstrating her longstanding investment in the Village and its residents. Her professional accomplishments, combined with her civic leadership, helped strengthen community connections and contributed to the quality of life that residents enjoy today. During her time on the Village Board, Jeanne also served as alternate Director for the Central Lake County Joint Action Water Agency and remained involved with the Gurnee Chamber of Commerce. Her leadership, perspective and dedication have made a meaningful impact on countless initiatives and helped shape Gurnee into the thriving community it is today. Trustee Balmes' years of service reflect an unwavering commitment to public service and community pride. As she retires from the Village Board, the Village of Gurnee thanks Jeanne Balmes for her many years of leadership and service, and for the lasting contributions she has made to the community.

NEW BUSINESSES

AJ's Putt 'N' Play
Gurnee Mills

Apex Pediatric Therapy Services (Expansion)
105 N Greenleaf St.

Art Expressions (Expansion)
905 Lakeside Dr.

Country Financial – Jason Magana
4606 Old Grand Ave.

Gurnee Glen Apartments – Clubhouse
1 Woodlake Blvd.

Haraz Coffee House
5572 Grand Ave.

Integrated Family Behavioral
3575 Grand Ave.

Rivertree Wealth Management
1800 Nations Dr.

Sapore Cafe
3900 Washington St.

Saratoga Square – Brittane's Event Center (Expansion), Meat n' Melt and RDK Chinese Restaurant
5101 Washington St.

COMING SOON:

Beef-A-Roo
1504 Nations Dr.

Gurnee Community Bank
7320 Grand Ave.

Gurnee Hyundai (Expansion/Remodel)
6251 Grand Ave.

Gurnee Mills – Sky Zone Trampoline Park, Victoria's Secret (relocation), IKEA
6170 Grand Ave.

Liberty Point Apartments
10 Woodlake Blvd.

Seasons at Gurnee Apartments
1500 Tri-State Pkwy.

VILLAGE MEETINGS

Village Board

May 18
June 1
June 15
June 22
July 6
July 20
July 27

Planning and Zoning Board

May 6
May 20
June 3
June 17
July 1

Village Board and Planning and Zoning Board meetings are held at the Gurnee Village Hall (325 N. O'Plaine Road) and begin at 7 p.m. Village Board meetings take place on Mondays and Planning and Zoning Board meetings on Wednesdays (Schedule Subject to Change).

MORE COMMUNITY EVENTS



BBQ WITH THE MAYOR
Saturday, June 13
11 a.m. to 1 p.m.
Mission BBQ - Gurnee
6430 Grand Ave.



OUTRUN THE COPS 5K WALK/RUN
Saturday, June 27
Start time: 8 a.m.
Gurnee Police Department
100 N. O'Plaine Rd.

Upcoming Events

Park Beautification Day

Saturday, May 16, 9 a.m. to 10:30 a.m.

It's time to grab your gardening gloves and join the Park District to help beautify community parks! They will be planting flowers, mulching and picking up branches/trash at four Gurnee park locations. Please plan to dress in layers based on the weather (long pants, old sneakers/shoes, gardening style gloves, etc.). Additional tools and supplies will be provided and all ages are welcome! For park locations and to sign up, please visit <https://www.gurneeparkdistrict.com>

First Responder Expo

Saturday, May 16, 11 a.m. to 3 p.m.

Mark your calendars for the First Responders Expo this May! On Saturday, May 16, from 11 a.m. to 3 p.m., the parking lot at Gurnee Mills will be filled with exciting exhibits, hands-on activities and an opportunity to meet our everyday heroes. There will be a car show on Sunday, May 17 from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. and funds from the show will support Tunnel to Towers.

Memorial Day Ceremony

Monday, May 25, 12 p.m. to 1 p.m.

Join the American Legion Post 771 and the Village of Gurnee on Monday, May 25 for the Annual Memorial Day Ceremony. The event will be held at the Veterans Memorial Park located at the Gurnee Police Department (100 N. O'Plaine Rd.). This event is free and open to the public. In case of inclement weather, the ceremony will be moved to the American Legion Home located at 749 N. Milwaukee Ave.

Gurnee Farmers Market

Sundays, June 7 to September 6, 10 a.m. to 2 p.m.

The Gurnee Farmers Market at Saratoga Square located at 5101 Washington St. opens Sunday, June 7. The Farmers Market will run every Sunday from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. and conclude on Sunday, September 6. Management is still accepting vendors and those interested in joining the Gurnee Farmers Market as a vendor should email gurneefm@gmail.com for the application and more information. Follow Gurnee Farmers Market at Saratoga Square on Facebook for event updates.

Sounds of Summer

Thursdays, June 11 - August 13, 7 p.m. to 8:30 p.m.

Join the Gurnee Park District for the Sounds of Summer FREE concert series for all ages. The concerts will take place at the Viking Park band shell at 4374 Old Grand Ave. (unless otherwise stated) from 7 p.m. to 8:30 p.m. each evening. The 2026 dates announced include:

- June 11 - Latin Swing Factor
- June 25 - Disco Circus
- July 9 - Billy Elton
- July 23 - Mike & Joe (Hunt Club)
- August 13 - No Limit

Families on the Fairway

Friday, June 12, 7 p.m. to 9 p.m.

The Village of Gurnee, Gurnee Park District and Bittersweet Golf Club will hold the annual Families on the Fairway event on Friday, June 12 from 7 p.m. to 9 p.m. at the Bittersweet Golf Club located at 875 Almond Rd. This year's theme is "Music & Magic" and will feature a magician, roaming DJ, balloon artists, face painters, bounce houses, and more! Perfect your golf skills at the open driving and putting ranges. Limited clubs will be available, so feel free to bring your own. Drinks and snacks will be available for purchase.

More Events Continued on the Back Page

GURNEE

CONSTRUCTION SCHEDULE

Street Resurfacing Program (May - October)

The Village's contractor, Payne and Dolan, Inc., will be resurfacing 3.3 miles of roadway as well as completing pavement patching and curb and sidewalk repairs. The following streets will be resurfaced this year:

- Bayswater Pl., Westminster Ln. to Brompton Ln.
- Westminster Ln., Dilley's Rd. to Chancery Ln.
- Notting Hill Rd., Westminster Ln. to Chancery Rd.
- Woodhill Dr., West End to Dilley's Rd.
- Bough Ct., Woodhill Dr. to end
- Limb Ct., Woodhill Dr. to end
- Branch Ct., Woodhill Dr. to end
- Cemetery Rd., Washington St. to Southridge Dr.
- Indian Trail Rd., Southridge Dr. to Southridge Dr.
- Pheasant Meadow Ct., Indian Trail Rd. to end
- Quail Haven Ct., Indian Trail Rd. to end
- Southridge Dr., Indian Trail Rd. to end
- Sleepy Hollow Ln., Southridge Dr. to Knobb Hill Ln.
- Knobb Hill Ln., Cul-de-sac to Plainview Rd.
- Mother Rudd, parking lot pavement

The public should expect lane, sidewalk and temporary driveway closures throughout this project.

Street Reconstruction Program (May - November)

The Village's contractor will be reconstructing Fuller Rd. from Stearns School Rd. to IL Rte. 132. Additionally, drainage and sidewalk improvements will take place. Temporary road, sidewalk and driveway closures are expected.

Estes Ave. Water Main Replacement (May - August)

The Village's contractor, Everlast Blacktop, will be replacing the water main, hydrants and valve vaults on Blackstone Ave., Estes St., Woodlawn Ave., Dorchester Ave., Gould St., Ellis Ave., Ferndale St. and Drexel Ave. Once completed, the roads will be resurfaced. Lane and driveway closures as well as temporary water main shutdowns should be expected.

Sidewalk Replacement Program (May - September)

The Village's contractor, Schroeder & Schroeder Inc., will be working on sidewalk replacements in the general area of Hunt Club Rd. to I-94 and Grand Ave. to Rte. 120 as well as including neighborhoods south of Washington St. and east of I-94. The contractor will be providing door hangers to residents who will lose access to their driveways prior to the work beginning. This project will have minor impacts such as temporary lane and sidewalk closures.



Gages Lake Sidewalk Improvement (May - November)

The Village's Contractor will be extending the sidewalk northward along IL Rte. 21 from the Cobble Creek Subdivision towards Gages Lake and Rte. 21 intersection and adding a pedestrian crosswalk across Rte. 21. There will be traffic delays and lane closures.

Washington St. Sidewalk Improvement (March - August)

Lake County Division of Transportation (LCDOT) will be installing new sidewalk on the south side of Washington St., starting at Almond Rd. and working their way west towards Rte. 45. There will be traffic delays and lane closures.

Washington St. & Rte. 21 Improvement (May - November)

LCDOT will be improving the intersection safety at Washington St. and IL Rte. 21 intersection by providing dedicated left hand turns in all directions and upgrading the traffic signals. There will be traffic delays and lane closures.

Hunt Club Rd. & Washington St. Intersection (Fall 2024 - 2026)

LCDOT will be expanding the intersection at Hunt Club Rd. and Washington St. They will be adding dedicated left and right turn lanes for all four legs of the intersection as well as installing a pedestrian path that will tie the existing Washington St. path to the Village's path, north to Dada Dr. There will be traffic delays and lane closures.

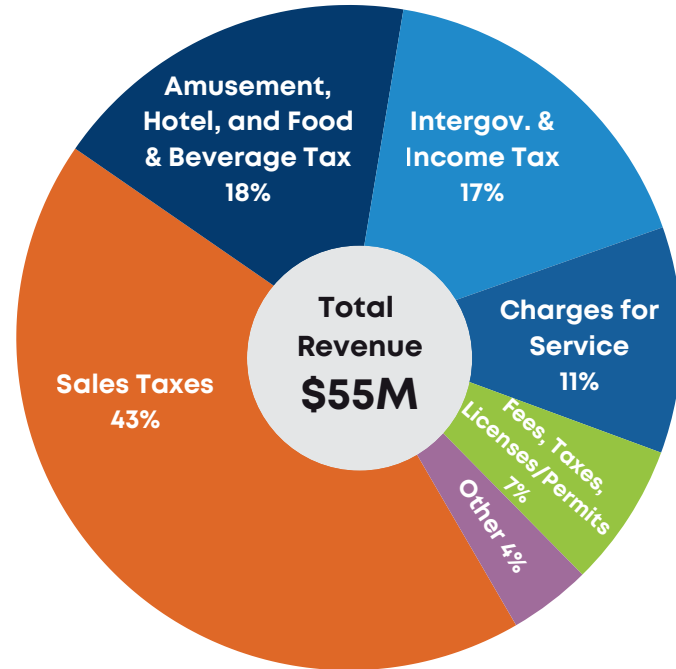
GURNEE POPULAR ANNUAL FINANCIAL REPORT

2025

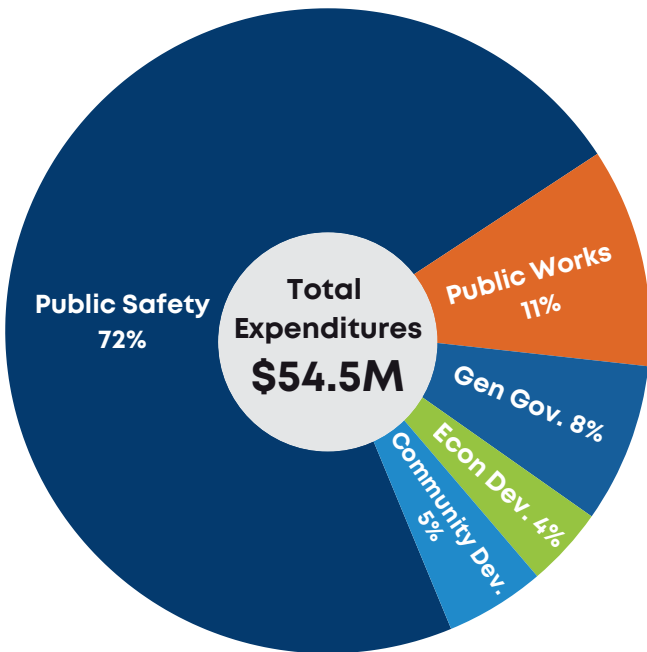
5 Key Takeaways

- **Balanced Budget and Minimized Debt:** Continued to pass a balanced budget and decrease debt.
- **Provided Value Back:** Through not levying a property tax or a utility tax, the Village saved each homeowner approx. \$6,500 over the past 10 years (based on the average home value of \$345,000 and the property tax levy of neighboring communities). Gurnee also has the lowest water rate among CLCJAWA towns.
- **Maintained Business Relationships:** Strengthened relationships with Six Flags, Great Wolf Lodge and Gurnee Mills, which combined provides 40% of all General Fund revenues.
- **Small Business Grant Program:** Awarded a total of \$1M over 5 yrs., resulting in \$5.4M in improvements.
- **Investing in Infrastructure:** 9.5 miles of roadway rehabilitated last year as part of the largest Capital Program in Gurnee's history.

Where Does the Money Come From?

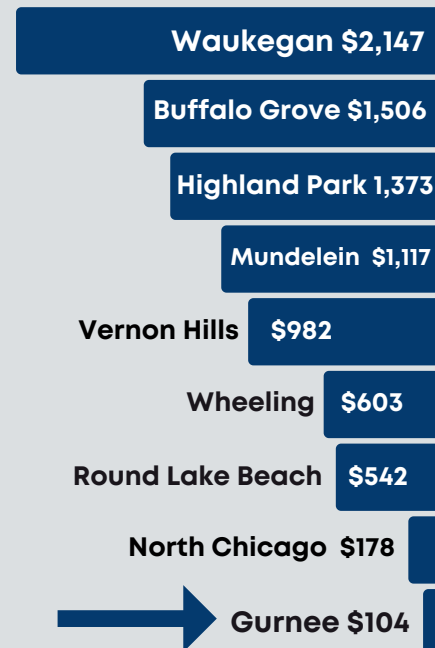


How Is the Money Spent?



The above pie charts are a description of the General Fund, which is the main operating fund. Fund accounting is used as a mechanism in government finance to maintain compliance and create a system of checks and balances.

Debt Per Capita of Lake County Communities with Over 25K Pop.



*The only debt that the Village has is a \$2M low-interest IEPA loan for the Knowles Rd. water tower.

PROGRAMS, SERVICE ANNOUNCEMENTS & SEASONAL REMINDERS

YOUTH CITIZEN POLICE ACADEMY

Ever wondered what it's really like to be a police officer? The Gurnee Police Department is now accepting participants for the Youth Citizen Police Academy, taking place July 6–10 at the Gurnee Police Department. This free, week-long program is designed for high school students interested in gaining a behind-the-scenes look at modern policing. Participants will take part in hands-on activities and interactive sessions covering topics such as patrol operations, investigations, department technology, and more. Throughout the week, students will work directly with officers and staff, building relationships while learning about the responsibilities and realities of law enforcement. This is a unique opportunity for students to explore a potential career path, develop leadership skills, and better understand how police serve the community. For more information and to register, please visit www.gurnee.il.us/cpa



BACKFLOW DEVICE TESTING

Residents with in-ground lawn irrigation systems are required to have backflow prevention devices installed on them. These devices protect the public water supply from possible contamination from hazardous chemicals or solvents that could come in contact with an underground irrigation system. These backflow devices must be properly maintained and tested annually by a licensed plumbing contractor certified to perform this type of work. Not only does this protect the safety of the public water supply, but it is also the law in Illinois. Residents should have their backflow device maintained and tested annually.

SPRING HOME MAINTENANCE REMINDERS

As the weather warms up, it is a good time for residents to take a look around their property and address common maintenance issues that can lead to complaints. Routine upkeep helps protect property values, maintain neighborhood appearance and support a safe community for everyone. Common issues that often generate complaints include tall grass and weeds, multiple RVs or trailers on a property, peeling paint, broken or deteriorating fences, outdoor storage of miscellaneous items, inoperable vehicles and the accumulation of trash or debris. Residents should also make sure sidewalks, driveways, and other exterior areas are kept in good condition and free of hazards. Seasonal cleanup is also a good opportunity to remove dead vegetation, trim overgrown landscaping and check that gutters and drainage areas are functioning properly. Taking care of smaller issues early can help prevent bigger problems later in the season. The Village encourages residents to stay ahead of these common concerns and do their part to keep Gurnee neighborhoods clean, safe and well maintained.

OUTDOOR SIRENS

Summer weather means an increased chance of tornado warnings. The Village has twelve outdoor sirens to warn residents to move indoors and seek shelter in the event of a tornado warning. This siren is only activated when the National Weather Service issues a tornado warning for Gurnee. In the event of a tornado warning, the system will sound a VOICE MESSAGE & SIREN. The siren system is intended to be heard only while outdoors. Indoor warnings are relayed through television and radio. During severe weather, additional information can be received by tuning your radio to WKRS 1220 AM or STAR 102.3 FM and through the Village's Emergency Alert System. When the sirens are activated, residents should NOT call 911 and just seek shelter and monitor local emergency broadcast stations. The outdoor siren system is tested monthly on the first Tuesday at 10 a.m.

CALL BEFORE YOU DIG

No matter if your project is large or small, Illinois law requires anyone digging to call the Joint Utility Locating Information for Excavators (J.U.L.I.E.) hotline at least two working days prior to the start of excavation in order to locate and mark any utilities in the area in which you are working. The J.U.L.I.E. hotline can be reached at 800-892-0123 or 8-1-1, 24 hours a day. Requests may be submitted online at illinois1call.com.



Connect with your neighbors this year by hosting a block party!

- \$500 grants available for food & entertainment.
- Friendly visits from Police, Fire, & the Mayor.

For more information: www.gurnee.il.us/blockparty



325 N. O'Plaine Road
Gurnee, IL 60031

PRSR STD
ECRWSS
U.S. POSTAGE
PAID Gurnee, IL
Permit No. 45

Postal Patron

Gurnee Get-Together at Vicki Paddock Park

Friday, June 19, 6 p.m. to 8 p.m.

Join friends and neighbors at a "Gurnee Get-Together" on Friday, June 19 from 6 p.m. to 8 p.m. at Vicki Paddock Park located at 235 S. O'Plaine Rd.! This free, family-friendly event offers a wonderful evening of live music, crafts with the Gurnee Arts Commission, yard games, and opportunities to meet the Village's Police, Fire and Public Works Departments. Don't forget your lawn chairs and get ready to enjoy the energetic sounds of the Abby Kay Band!



America's 250th Celebration

Thursday, July 2, 3:30 p.m. to 9:30 p.m.

This year marks America's 250th anniversary, and Gurnee is planning to celebrate in a BIG way. Join us at Viking Park for live music, local food trucks and family-friendly fun, followed by fireworks to light up the night! This FREE community-wide celebration is brought to you in proud partnership with Gurnee Park District, Gurnee School District 56, Village of Gurnee, Warren-Newport Public Library, Warren Township Center, Warren Township High School and Woodland School District 50.



SAVE THE DATE:

Gurnee Days - August 7 - 8

Gurnee Days is the place to be for some of your favorite traditions, such as delicious food, live music, parade, one of the best fireworks shows in Lake County and so much MORE!

This year, we're kicking things off with live music and food trucks on Friday, August 7! Then, come back for all of your Gurnee Days favorites on Saturday, August 8, starting with the Gurnee Days parade at 9:30 a.m., and ending with an amazing fireworks show. Sunday, August 9 will feature select traditions, including the Car Show and "Battle of the Badges" softball game.



Gurnee Arts Festival on the Plaza - August 22

The Gurnee Arts Commission is hosting its first annual Gurnee Arts Festival on the Plaza on August 22 from 11 a.m. to 3 p.m. at Welton Plaza. There is a rain date of August 29 at the same time and location. Conveniently located at Welton Plaza, this arts festival will feature fine arts and live performances including music, dance and theater from the local community. This festival will be complemented by local food vendors and interactive fine arts activities for kids and adults alike. The Gurnee Arts Commission is looking for local artists to display their artwork in a pop-up gallery format in a 10" x 10" white canopy tent. Fine Art may include drawing, painting, ceramics, sculpture, photography and digital illustration. Artwork must be original and created by the artist. No work from molds, kits, manufactured items. For more information, please visit the Gurnee Arts Commission at www.gurnee.il.us/arts.

Mayor's Golf Benefit - August 28

The Gurnee Mayor's Golf Benefit will take place on Friday, August 28 at Bittersweet Golf Club located 875 Almond Rd. This benefit will be for Big Great Lakes, an organization that changes the way the world views adults with special needs.