

SOUTH HOLLAND

Living

Nov | Dec 2024



**A Dazzling Display
Christmas at Veterans Memorial Park**

Winter Wonderland

Friday, December 6
6:00-8:00pm

Veterans Memorial Park
500 E 160th Place

JOIN US FOR
FUN FAMILY
ACTIVITIES
INCLUDING:

- Tree lighting
- Skating rink
- Trolley rides
- Holiday crafts and vendors
- Cookies and hot chocolate
- Train rides on the South Holland Express

Photos with Santa are reserved for South Holland residents. Register in advance at the Community Center.

southholland.org



FROM YOUR MAYOR



Mayor De Graff at the 2024 Fun Run

Dear South Holland Residents and Friends,

As I write this, a team from the Village of South Holland is in North Carolina, aiding in cleanup efforts after the devastation of Hurricane Helene. Partnering with Samaritan's Purse, they've been working tirelessly to clear mud, remove damaged walls and flooring, cut down trees, move debris, and do whatever they can to restore some sense of normalcy to the lives of people affected in the southeast. Alongside thousands of others from around the country, they are offering both help and hope.

I am both thankful and proud that the Village of South Holland—through our dedicated staff and compassionate community—understands the importance of serving those in need. This is who we are and who we strive to be as a community. Our team in North Carolina reflects the spirit of South Holland, embodying what it means to 'be the hands and feet of Jesus.'

This commitment to service is also a guiding principle in our strategic plan, **Coming Together 2030**. One of its primary goals is to help equip groups in our village—churches, businesses, schools, service organizations, and residents—to actively serve one another. Through our bi-annual meetings, these groups are finding more meaningful ways to communicate, connect, and support one another.

As we approach Thanksgiving, Christmas, and the New Year, I encourage us all to reflect on—and act on—our ability to serve. Whether it's restoring storm-torn towns or simply lending a hand to a neighbor, service is at the core of our community, making South Holland truly a Village like no other.

Don A. De Graff
Mayor

VILLAGE BOARD

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Don A. De Graff

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6th Annual WINTER SPORTS SHOWCASE

Sunday, December 8 • 12:30-6:00pm

Learn skills in each of the following sports:

**BASEBALL/SOFTBALL • FOOTBALL
BASKETBALL • SOCCER • VOLLEYBALL**

*** FREE * CHEER SESSION: 12:30-1PM
CHECK IN: 1-1:30PM
SHOWCASE: 1:30-6PM**

For boys and girls ages 5-12.

\$20 by November 27, \$25 after November 27

**PRE-REGISTRATION IS REQUIRED AT SOUTHHOLLAND.ORG
OR AT THE COMMUNITY CENTER.**



South Holland Community Center
501 E 170th Street • South Holland, IL 60473
www.southholland.org • 708 331-2940



Annual Holiday

Toy Drive

Accepting toys November 1-December 6

Local 4109 and the South Holland Fire Department, in conjunction with the Village of South Holland, is collecting new, unwrapped toys for the Annual Holiday Toy Drive. The toys will be donated to Restoration Ministries, whose mission is to rebuild communities by helping men and women who struggle with addictions.

All items donated are made available to parents for purchase with their own money, but at greatly reduced prices. This gives parents a sense of pride by enabling them to buy toys for their children. The proceeds from the toy sale are returned to Restoration Ministries in support of their programs.

All toys must be new and unwrapped. Donations of gift-wrapping paper and bows are also welcomed. The Fire Department will also collect children's gloves and mittens.

DONATION DROP-OFF SITE

SOUTH HOLLAND FIRE DEPARTMENT • STATION #1
16230 WAUSAU AVE
SOUTH HOLLAND, IL 60473

QUESTIONS?

CONTACT THE SOUTH HOLLAND FIRE DEPARTMENT
AT 708.331.3123.



*For more info on Restoration Ministries,
visit restorationministries.net.*



WHAT'S HAPPENING AROUND SOUTH HOLLAND



NEW AMBULANCE

The South Holland Fire Department has added a newly refurbished 2024 F550 4X4 ambulance to its fleet! This vehicle is fully equipped to provide Advanced Life Support, ensuring the SHFD can better serve our community. This high-tech ambulance comes with life-saving equipment, including:

- A new Zoll Cardiac Monitor for heart emergencies
- A Zoll Auto Pulse for mechanical CPR
- A battery-powered Stryker cot with auto-load, which helps give patients a smoother ride in and out of the ambulance

The South Holland Fire Department would like to thank the elected officials for supporting this upgrade and ensuring they have the best tools to keep South Holland safe!



YARD WASTE PICKUP

The South Holland Public Works department would like to remind residents that Homewood Disposal will stop picking up yard waste from their totes on November 30 through the winter months. Pickup will resume April 1. From December through March, the yard waste totes can be used for regular garbage.



SNOW ORDINANCE

Please be aware of the Village's snow ordinance, which states that vehicles shall not be parked on any street if snow exceeds two inches or more. This helps us plow the streets effectively and efficiently. When shoveling snow in a driveway, we recommend depositing the snow to the right side (when facing the street) to minimize plows from blocking you in.



SECURITY ALARM PERMITS

From now until January 1, 2025, those with a residential or business security alarm system will need to renew their permit for 2025, or register for a permit if it is a new system. Having a permit ensures that emergency responders have current contact information for the occupants of your home or the managers of your business. Registration/renewal can be done at the South Holland Police Department or at southholland.alarmreg.com.

OUT AND ABOUT

FACES FROM EVENTS AROUND THE VILLAGE

FUN RUN 5K

Nearly 400 runners and walkers came out on a beautiful morning in September for the 2024 Fun Run 5K. The goal of this annual run/walk is to combine fun and fitness. "Fun stations" were set up along the course, featuring live music, bubbles, balloons, and happy faces holding motivational signs and doling out high fives. Many participants dressed in costume, adding to the entertaining flavor of the race. To top it off, approximately \$4,000 was raised for the Family Centered Educational Agency in South Holland.



OUT AND ABOUT

FACES FROM EVENTS AROUND THE VILLAGE

HARVEST FEST

Kids and families were invited to the always popular Harvest Fest, held at the Community Center. Kids dressed in costume and enjoyed dancing, games, candy, craft projects and pumpkin decorating.



OUT AND ABOUT

FACES FROM EVENTS AROUND THE VILLAGE

BREAST CANCER WALK

This year marked the seventh year of the annual Breast Cancer Walk/Drive. Participants walked the path at Veterans Memorial Park or drove in a car caravan down South Park Ave to raise awareness of breast cancer. The day concluded with a ceremony to recognize survivors, along with a launch of pink balloons representing each survivor.



OUT AND ABOUT

FACES FROM EVENTS AROUND THE VILLAGE

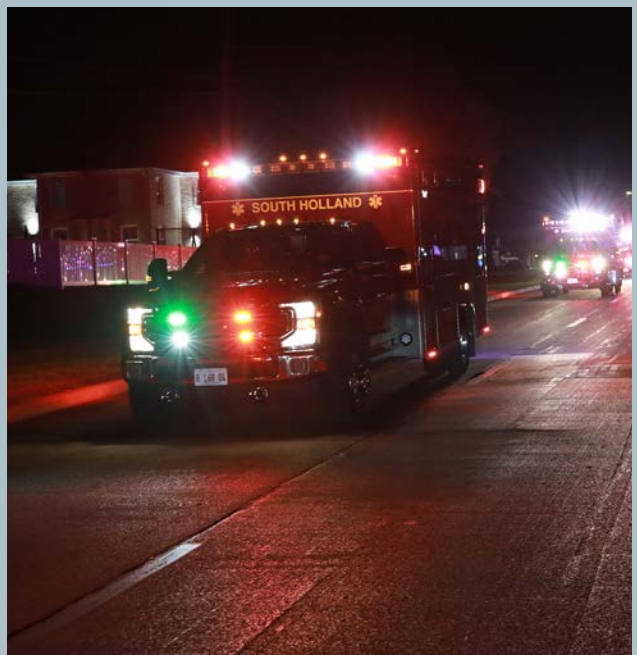
LUNCH WITH FIREFIGHTERS

The South Holland Fire Department invited the community to the fire station for lunch and tours of the station, fire engines and a brand-new ambulance. Many families attended and learned about the life of a firefighter/EMT while enjoying hot dogs, ice cream, and other treats.



PARADE OF LIGHTS

In honor of Fire Prevention Week, the South Holland Fire Department held the annual Parade of Lights. This is a "lights only" parade held in the evening to pay tribute to those affected by fires, loss of life, and fire-related injuries. The event began with a brief service at Thorn Creek Reformed Church, followed by the parade through South Holland and Thornton.



OUT AND ABOUT

FACES FROM EVENTS AROUND THE VILLAGE

HERITAGE FEST

Residents and friends filled Paarlberg Park on Labor Day for the annual Heritage Fest, which celebrates local history and heritage. The event featured food vendors, quilters and woodturners, a farmers market, South Suburban historical societies, and a performance by the South Holland Municipal Band and South Holland Master Chorale.



SOUTH HOLLAND MASTER CHORALE CONCERT/RECEPTION

The South Holland Master Chorale kicked off its 2024-25 season with a concert at Christ Our Savior Parish in South Holland. The theme of the concert was "Let me listen, let me dream, let me move, let me sing." Following the performance, Chorale members and attendees were treated to a reception.



CALENDAR OF EVENTS



December 1 and 8

SOUTH HOLLAND MASTER CHORALE CHRISTMAS CONCERTS

*Dec 1: 4pm, St. John Neumann Church
17951 Dixie Hwy, Homewood*

*Dec 8: 4pm, Christ Our Savior Parish
880 E 154th St, South Holland*

The South Holland Master Chorale is hosting two holiday-themed concerts in December. The theme of both concerts is "Holiday Joy & Fanfare," featuring holiday favorites and sing-alongs. Gargoyle Brass and organist Mark Sudeith will join the Chorale in this festive Christmas concert.

December 3

MAYOR'S COFFEE

*7pm, South Holland Community Center
501 E 170th Street*

Residents can hear from and speak with Mayor Don De Graff. Coffee and refreshments will be served.

December 6

WINTER WONDERLAND

*6-8pm, Veterans Memorial Park
500 E 160th Pl*

The annual holiday extravaganza features a tree-lighting ceremony, trolley rides, an iceless skating rink, a craft/movie tent, refreshments and more. Visits with Santa are for South Holland residents only and advance registration is required; register at the Community Center.

December 7

COFFEE WITH FIREFIGHTERS

*9am, Fire Station 1
16230 Wausau Ave*

Residents can meet and talk with members of the South Holland Fire Department on the first Saturday of every month.

December 8

WINTER SPORTS SHOWCASE

*1-6pm (free cheer session 12:30pm)
South Holland Community Center
501 E 170th St*

Boys and girls ages 5-12 will learn the fundamentals of baseball, basketball, football, soccer, and volleyball. Registration is required; register at southholland.org or at the Community Center.

December 10

COMMUNITY POLICING MEETING

*10am, South Holland Community Center
501 E 170th St*

The South Holland Police Department hosts a Community Policing Meeting on the second Tuesday of every month, alternating mornings and evenings. This is an opportunity to address any questions or concerns for the Police Department.

December 13

SHPD CHRISTMAS BINGO

*11am-2pm, South Holland Community Center
501 E 170th St*

The South Holland Police Department is inviting residents aged 55+ to enjoy a day of Bingo, food and prizes. Visit southholland.org to register.

December 14

BREAKFAST WITH THE ELVES

*10am-noon, Heritage House
443 E 157th St*

South Holland residents and their children are invited for pancakes, cookie decorating, and pictures with Santa's elves. Tickets are \$10 per adult with a child, \$5 for any additional children. Spots are limited so register for a spot by December 5 at the Community Center.

AT THE LIBRARY

The following programs are held at the South Holland Public Library,
16250 Wausau Ave, unless otherwise indicated.

November 13

WORLD KINDNESS DAY

Stop into Youth Services to create a kindness magnet. You can keep it for yourself or share it with a friend. Supplies limited.

November 16

FURever HOME

12pm

The South Suburban Humane Society will bring a selection of animals available for adoption to the Library's first-ever adoption event. Come and meet your new best friend! The Library is also accepting pet donations for the Humane Society throughout the month of November.

November 21

T-REXPLORERS

6pm

Check out real fossils and dinosaur bones when our friends from T-Rexplorers return to the Library!

December 11

OPTIMIZE YOUR SOCIAL SECURITY

7pm

Learn how to maximize your claiming status by calculating how taxes and pensions affect your social security income. Presented by McChell A. Reid.

December 19

NOON YEAR'S EVE PARTY

11am

Ring in the New Year at this fun celebration where little ones can enjoy festive stories, fun activities, and a lively countdown to noon with friends at the Library!

FAITH IN

Motion

THE GIFT

A REMINDER OF THE PRICELESS PRESENT THIS SEASON

By Rev. Dr. Sheila J. Grant

'Tis the season when we anticipate happy holidays. We prepare for perhaps the best meal of the year, which we will share with friends and family who will travel from near and far. At the Thanksgiving meal, we expect to be joyous and reminisce about great memories and fun times throughout the year and even years past. We begin to think of the many things in our lives to be thankful for, even if we have not thought about it much all year. We find ourselves taking inventory of the blessings in our lives and realizing that we have overlooked some things. Thanksgiving brings our hearts and minds to a place where we remember to give thanks and be grateful.

A bit further in the season, we move from counting our blessings to counting our dollars and the number of people on our Christmas list. This is the season of giving and receiving gifts. It is a very festive time of year. Many of us shop the sales that we have saved up for all year, to make sure that everyone on our list gets a gift. We search for bargains, attempting to get the best gifts we can for our money. We like it when the item we purchase is of greater value than the amount of money that we actually spend, which is a real bargain. We have so much fun shopping, and giving and receiving gifts, that we often overlook the greatest gift of all in this season...

"For to us a child is born, to us a son is given, and the government will be on his shoulders. And he will be called Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace." (Isaiah 9:6, NIV)



Rev. Dr. Sheila J. Grant

Let us in this season remember first, the one whose coming into this world is the priceless gift; a debt so great we can never repay. Let us remember the family that traveled to the town of David, for a child to be born and placed in a lowly manger. This gift makes every other gift possible, including the gift of eternal life. Let us remember to be grateful to the one who loves each of us so much that He gave his only begotten son. When we celebrate and enjoy this season, let us remember to celebrate the Christ in Christmas, for He is truly the Gift!

Real Results

NUMBER OF RENTAL PROPERTIES DOWN SIGNIFICANTLY



The Village of South Holland is widely recognized as a gem in the Southland, and as a result, people love to find a way to live here. For most, that means home ownership. For others, who aren't in a position to purchase yet, it has meant finding a home to rent since the village doesn't have traditional apartment buildings. The community has always been welcoming to renters, and historically, renters have been

contributors to the life of the community. The Village has always desired to balance these two categories, as it is typically the case that high home ownership rates translate into positive things for a community.

With the housing crash around 2008, investors saw an opportunity to buy up hundreds of homes in this gem community. Sadly, some of these companies did not prioritize the success of the community, but instead focused primarily on profit. Over the next ten years, Village staff started to take note of what seemed to be a higher demand from rental properties for police, fire and paramedic services, as well as higher instances of water bill late payments, water shut-offs, and property code violations. All of these deplete valuable taxpayer resources.

THE RESEARCH

In 2019, the Village conducted research to analyze the data to determine if the concerns of staff could be seen in the actual calls-for-service. Indeed, the research indicated that code enforcement violations were 166 percent higher in rental homes versus owner-occupied homes. Late payments on water bills, along with water shut-offs, were found to be higher. Public safety incidents—the vast majority of which were police incidents—were found to be 62 percent higher among rental homes than owner-occupied homes.



It had become clear to the Village Board and Administration that rentals had become a disproportionate drain on municipal resources. So, the Village set out to achieve a healthy balance between home ownership and rentals, which would enable them to protect scarce resources needed for police, fire, public infrastructure, etc. The Village Board was committed to acting in the least restrictive means possible, while still achieving a healthy balance.

THE SOLUTION

As a result, in March of 2020, the Village Board passed an ordinance that established a maximum percentage of residential rental licenses that could be issued within each federal Census Tract, and in the community as a whole. Today, residential rental licenses can be issued to no more than 10% of homes within a given U.S. Census Tract, or 10% of the homes in the entire community, whichever is less.

Licenses already in existence at the time were grandfathered. However, if a Census Tract is over the 10% limit, and a license expired, it could not be renewed. If the property sold, a new license could not be issued.

THE RESULTS

The ordinance has succeeded in bringing about a healthier balance. At the time it was adopted, there were 969 rental units. In just four years, that number has decreased by 31 percent, to only 667 rentals.

"The success has been swift, even more so than we anticipated," says J. Wynsma, Village Administrator.

The research conducted in 2019 revealed that 18 corporations owned 352 (or 36 percent) of the rental homes, and one of those corporations owned 119 homes. Only 42 South Holland residents owned rental homes at the time. The number of single-family homes being licensed to rent was growing by 2 percent per year. At that rate, if the Rental Density Ordinance had not been adopted, the Village was on pace to be at 25 percent rental homes by 2025 and 35 percent by 2030.

Today, only 8.7 percent of South Holland homes are rentals. "This is a significant decrease, and home ownership is on the rise," says South Holland Mayor Don De Graff. "South Holland has a long, well-established history of promoting diversity and good citizenship and proactively managing community health at all levels—fiscal, economic development, family values, social and recreational opportunities, educational and spiritual—and housing is just as important."

South Holland values both homeowners and renters. We thrive as a community when we all live as responsible citizens who care for the property where we live, respect our neighbors, and make good choices that don't lead to higher-than-necessary use of police, paramedic and fire services.

Wynsma says, "The Village Board takes seriously its role to keep the Village safe, inclusive and balanced, so that South Holland can remain the desirable community it is." 🔥

SPARKLING

Joy

VETERANS MEMORIAL PARK
SHINES BRIGHT THIS CHRISTMAS



South Holland's Veterans Memorial Park is a regional treasure that attracts many visitors during the summer months, but it truly shines during the holiday season.

The annual Winter Wonderland event, scheduled for December 6 at Veterans Park, marks the beginning of the festive season with a spectacular tree lighting ceremony. This event illuminates not only a towering

Christmas tree but also transforms the entire park into a dazzling spectacle. From north to south and east to west, the park sparkles with twinkling lights adorning fence lines, treetops, and everything in between.

In a significant change from previous years, the South Holland Public Works Department took on the responsibility of lighting this expansive 20-acre park—equivalent to the size of a city block—previously outsourced to a lighting company. This initiative, launched in 2022, has saved taxpayers thousands of dollars while maintaining the park's stunning visual appeal.

This year, the Village received a grant to enhance our holiday light display. South Holland was selected as one of only 24 Illinois communities (out of 68 applicants) for the ComEd Powering the Holidays Program, which provides up to \$2,500 for each community's light display. The grant funds will be used to purchase additional lights for the park, further conserving taxpayer resources.

Following Winter Wonderland, the park will remain illuminated daily through January 3, 2025. Visitors are invited to stroll through the park at no cost during this period, allowing them to capture memorable photos and enjoy the festive atmosphere.

While the overall beauty of the park is breathtaking, several specific spots are particularly ideal for family photos:

THE PROMENADE



As you enter the park, the 16 trees lining the promenade are adorned with elegant white lights, creating one of the most picturesque areas of the entire display.

LIGHTED ARCHWAY



Just east of the Christmas tree along the walking path is an archway draped in hundreds of colorful lights that delight visitors of all ages.

SPONSORED CHRISTMAS TREES



Alongside this walking path leading to the large gazebo are two rows of Christmas trees sponsored by local schools, churches, and non-profit organizations. Each tree showcases decorations reflecting its respective group's theme, spreading awareness and cheer to all who pass by.

PREMIER CHRISTMAS TREE



The centerpiece of the winter display is a majestic 20-foot Christmas tree located in front of the bandshell. It is decorated with large ornaments and LED lights and serves as the focal point for the countdown during Winter Wonderland.

LED LIGHT DISPLAYS



Explore various light displays throughout the park featuring holiday characters and scenes such as Santa and his sleigh, reindeer, candy canes, and much more!

ALL ABOARD THE SOUTH HOLLAND EXPRESS!



What began as an old riding lawnmower evolved into last year's main attraction at Winter Wonderland. Previously, Village events featured a kiddie train made from 55-gallon plastic drums with wheels. However, last year, innovative mechanics from the Village's Maintenance Garage transformed that old lawnmower into a stunning early-1900s-style train known as the South Holland Express.

This charming train accommodates 16 passengers (both kids and adults) and features steam effects, colorful LED lights, and music playing in each car. The creative ingenuity of Village employees allowed this project to be completed at a fraction of what it would have cost to purchase a similar train outright.

Families are invited to ride the South Holland Express free of charge during Winter Wonderland on December 6. Join us at Veterans Memorial Park from 6-8pm to see this beautiful train and hop aboard!

For a glimpse of the park illuminated in all its glory, visit southholland.org/winterwonderland. Make sure to include Veterans Memorial Park in your family's holiday plans this Christmas season! 🎄



Christmas Bingo

with the
South Holland Police Department

Friday, December 13
11am-2pm
South Holland Community Center
501 E 170th St

Join the South Holland Police Department for Bingo, food and prizes!

For South Holland residents aged 55+
60 maximum participants

Registration required.
Please register online at southholland.org



ALARM PERMITS

If you have a security alarm system for your residence or business and have not yet registered for a permit or renewed your permit for 2025, please do so at southholland.alarmreg.com

or at the
South Holland Police Department
16330 South Park Ave



Deadline is January 1, 2025



*****ECRWSEDDM*****

LOCAL POSTAL CUSTOMER



Mayor's Coffee

**Tuesday, December 3
7:00am**

**South Holland Community Center
501 E 170th Street**

**Meet Mayor Don De Graff
and
enjoy coffee and refreshments!**



southholland.org