



VILLAGE OF

EST. 1892

LA GRANGE PARK LEAFLET

WINTER 2026 NEWSLETTER



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Village News



President's Message

Happy New Year! 2026 promises to be a wonderful year in La Grange Park, filled with opportunities for us to come together and strengthen the connections that make our Village special. In these letters, I often share updates about Village programs and community events, but this time I want to devote this message to providing information about an important issue: the 2026 Road Bond Referendum.

The General Primary Election is coming up on **March 17, 2026 (St. Patrick's Day)**, when residents will be asked to consider a \$10 million general obligation bond related to the Village's Road Improvement Program. If approved, the bonds would replace the expiring 2016 Road Bonds and Fire Equipment Bonds and allow the Village to continue resurfacing streets, improving drainage, and making infrastructure upgrades, without increasing the Village portion of the property tax bill. Our roads are more than pavement; they are the connections that carry us to local events, small businesses, and the places that make La Grange Park feel like home.

We've already seen the impact of the 2016 Road Bond Program: more than 11 miles of roadway resurfaced, sidewalks repaired, and drainage improved. These investments have made our streets safer and more accessible for everyone. As construction costs rise and our infrastructure continues to age, maintaining a consistent funding approach is necessary for the Village to make timely improvements and avoid more expensive repairs in the future.

The proposed 2026 bonds would focus on streets most in need of attention - those in failed or poor condition. This work would be carefully planned and coordinated to improve efficiency and minimize disruption to residents. La Grange Park has a long history of fiscal responsibility, reflected in strong bond ratings and the successful use of grant funding to supplement local funding and support infrastructure projects.

Below you will find the ballot question, followed by additional educational information about the referendum, including its purpose and estimated impact. Based on current projections, approval of the bonds would not increase the Village portion of the property tax bill, as the new bonds would be structured to replace existing debt that is scheduled to expire. I encourage residents to visit the Village's website for comprehensive FAQs and details.

To provide residents with an opportunity to learn more and ask questions, the Village will host a **Town Hall meeting on Wednesday, January 28, at 6:00 p.m. at Village Hall (447 N. Catherine Avenue)**. Most importantly, please remember to vote in this election - participation helps ensure that community voices are heard.

Thank you for being part of what makes La Grange Park such a special place. As always, please feel free to reach out to me at any time.

President James F. Discipio

Proposed Ballot Question

Shall the Village of La Grange Park, Cook County, Illinois, undertake road improvements in and for the Village, including street resurfacing and sidewalk repair, all on property owned by the Village or over which the Village has sufficient easements, and issue its general obligation bonds to the amount of \$10,000,000 for the purpose of paying the costs thereof, said bonds bearing interest at not to exceed the rate of 6.00% per annum?

2026 Road Bond Referendum

Stronger Roads, Stronger Connections

March 17, 2026 General Primary Election

On March 17, 2026, La Grange Park voters will consider a \$10 million general obligation road bond referendum to continue the Village's long-term investment in its road system for the next ten years. The proposed bonds would replace the 2016 Road Bonds and Fire Equipment Bonds that expire in 2026, allowing the Village to maintain a consistent level of funding for road resurfacing, curb and gutter repairs, drainage improvements, and related infrastructure work without increasing the Village portion of residents' property tax bills. Ongoing reinvestment in roads supports safe travel and reliable access to homes, schools, parks, businesses, and other community destinations.



A YES vote allows the Village to issue \$10 million in bonds to resurface roads - with NO increase in property taxes

What is the cost to residents?

\$389K Average cost to resurface one block

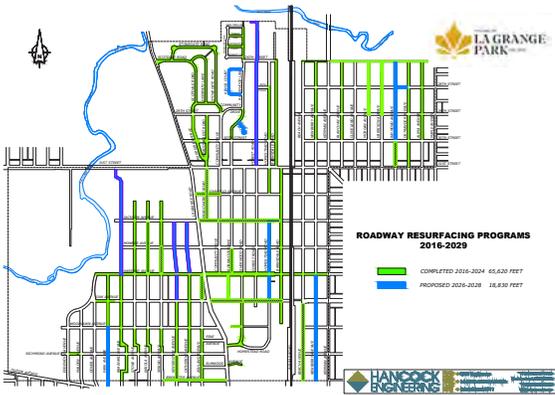
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PER DAY
Cost to fund critical road improvements (for median homeowner)



0% Increase to Property Tax

Priority Roads for the next 10 years (in blue)



Our Roads

12-15 YEARS Average lifespan of an asphalt paved road surface

by the

32% Amount of roadways in greatest need of resurfacing that are targeted for improvement by this project

Numbers

37 MILES Total amount of roadway the Village maintains

For more information about the 2026 Road Bond Referendum including Frequently Asked Questions, visit lagrangepark.org or scan this QR Code:

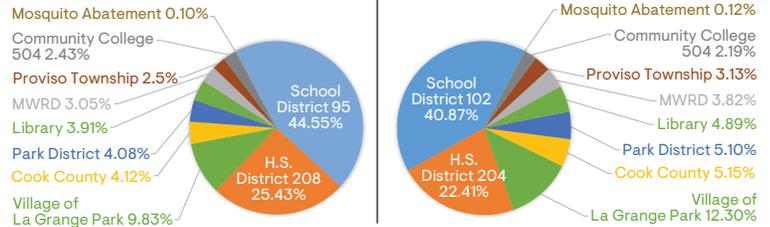


Village Property Tax Summary

The Village strives to deliver exceptional value for every tax dollar by providing excellent police and fire services, keeping streets and public areas well-maintained, protecting the residential and commercial buildings of our community, and doing all of it as efficiently as possible.

The Village's portion of your 2024 total property tax bill (collected in 2025) is between 10% and 13%, depending on your school district. The majority of your property tax bill, approximately 63% to 70%, supports the grade schools and high schools. The La Grange Park Public Library, the Community Park District, and the Village, make up approximately 18% to 22% of your total tax bill.

2024 PROPERTY TAX BILL DISTRIBUTION



Total Tax Levy

The 2024 total tax rate per \$100 of Equalized Assessed Valuation (EAV), which was payable in 2025, was 8.910 for properties in School District 102 and 11.151 for properties in School District 95. Please refer to the included chart for the tax rate history.

	Total Property Tax Rates if you live in School District 102	Total Property Tax Rates if you live in School District 95
2015 Tax Year	10.179	12.328
2016 Tax Year	10.778	12.403
2017 Tax Year	9.202	10.880
2018 Tax Year	9.618	11.858
2019 Tax Year	9.766	12.076
2020 Tax Year	8.860	11.046
2021 Tax Year	9.739	12.181
2022 Tax Year	10.407	12.918
2023 Tax Year	8.467	10.709
2024 Tax Year	8.910	11.151

How Your Property Tax Bill is Calculated

To determine how much your property tax bill will be, you first need to know the assessed value of your home. In Cook County, residential property is assessed at 10% of its fair market value. The Illinois Department of Revenue calculates an equalization factor to apply to the assessed value of property per county to ensure equitable assessment across individual counties. The equalization factor for Cook County for the 2024 tax year was 3.0355. If you own a home valued at \$450,000, then the equalized assessed value will be [450,000 x .10 x 3.0355], or \$136,598. This equalized assessed value is then multiplied by the tax rate for your property's particular location to determine the total tax bill. Using the 2024 tax rates as listed above, a property with an equalized assessed value of \$136,598 paid the following estimated amounts in 2025 for the 2024 tax year (prior to any exemptions):

District 102 → \$136,598 x .08910 = \$12,171
 District 95 → \$136,598 x .11151 = \$15,232

In both examples, the Village's portion of the tax bill is approximately \$1,497.

While we won't know the 2025 property tax rates until next summer, the Village Board approved an ordinance in November that authorized the 2025 Village tax levy (collected in 2026). Tax cap laws will limit the Village's 2025 operating levy to a 2.9% increase plus any new property value.

Village News

Speed Limit Lowered to Enhance Safety on La Grange Road

In November, the Illinois Department of Transportation (IDOT) approved the Village's request to reduce the speed limit on La Grange Road from 30 mph to 25 mph between Ogden Avenue and 31st Street. This change was part of the Village's "Take Five" traffic-calming initiative. IDOT prioritized installation of the new signage, and the reduced speed limit is now in effect. To support the change, the La Grange Park Police Department has conducted targeted enforcement along the corridor at varied times. These efforts aim to slow vehicle speeds, enhance pedestrian safety, and make La Grange Road more accessible for everyone.

The Village is also advancing a Phase I Preliminary Engineering Study, which evaluates traffic, crash patterns, pedestrian conditions, and potential roadway design improvements along La Grange Road.



31st Street Corridor Transportation Plan Update

Progress continues on the Village's 31st Street Corridor Transportation Plan, an important initiative focused on improving safety, accessibility, and the overall vibrancy of 31st Street (from La Grange Road to Maple Avenue) and Barnsdale Road (from 31st to 26th Street). Thank you to all who attended the public open house on October 15 and shared your feedback.

If you were not able to join us, we invite you to explore the interactive project map on the project webpage, where community members have highlighted what they value most about the corridor as well as opportunities for improvement. Feedback emphasized the corridor's strengths, including its unique local businesses, strong growth potential, and effective partnership with the Village. Residents also noted several weaknesses, such as limited aesthetics, narrow or ADA-challenged sidewalks, signage concerns, and delays at train crossings.

Community input pointed to opportunities for beautification, improved signage, expanded bicycle accommodations, and enhanced landscaping. Challenges identified in the area include traffic congestion, hazardous intersections, and unclear parking signage. Overall, residents expressed clear goals for the project: safer crossings, a more attractive and welcoming streetscape, and better bicycle connectivity.

Next, the project consultant will use this input, along with ongoing data collection, to develop design alternatives for Village review.



La Grange Road Traffic Safety Improvements Phase I Update

The Village's Phase I Preliminary Engineering Study for traffic safety improvements along La Grange Road, led by consultant Kimley-Horn, is underway. This effort stems from community feedback during the Village Market Streetscape Improvement Plan, where residents expressed strong interest in enhancing pedestrian safety with an additional pedestrian crossing or signalized crossing.

This fall, Kimley-Horn provided technical information to IDOT reflecting community feedback and incorporating the latest crash data. While the Village is not considering specific plans at this time, the consultant included a traffic signal warrant analysis and a pedestrian signal warrant analysis for the intersection at Woodlawn Avenue. This technical information is intended to solicit feedback from IDOT on potential technical concepts before any options are further developed and brought back to the community for input.

Although the intersection does not currently meet warrants for a traffic signal, the Village is requesting IDOT's consideration of a signal to provide a more controlled environment for pedestrians and, importantly, to support safer and faster emergency vehicle response times (police, fire and ambulance). An alternative to signalization could include the installation of pedestrian beacons to enhance pedestrian safety.

The Village's consultant remains in the information-gathering phase of the study. Engaging with IDOT early allows the Village to understand what concepts IDOT may support, helping guide the development of feasible options. The public will have another opportunity to provide input before the Phase I Study is complete.

Village Adopts ADA Transition Plan

The Village is pleased to announce the adoption of its Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) Transition Plan, developed with support from the Chicago Metropolitan Agency for Planning (CMAP). Through this initiative, CMAP and consultant Oates Associates assisted the Village in conducting a comprehensive self-evaluation of public right-of-way infrastructure, including sidewalks, crosswalks, curb ramps, parking areas, and transit facilities, to identify barriers and guide future accessibility improvements.

As the plan was being finalized, the Village also began implementing several recommended projects. Recent work in the Village Market area (part of the Paint and Post Pilot Project, a Village initiative to enhance safety and placemaking at key intersections) included concrete and accessibility improvements at the Homestead & Sherwood and Sherwood & Woodlawn intersections. Additional enhancements, such as painted curb extensions, flexible posts, and artist-designed asphalt art, are planned for spring 2026 to improve safety and support the Village's placemaking goals.



A Warm La Grange Park Welcome to Jimmy's Bagels!

In December, Jimmy's Bagels officially opened in Plaza 31 (716 E. 31st Street) with a grand opening and ribbon cutting ceremony. This new addition to our community offers a welcoming space and a menu of fresh, delicious bagels, breakfast sandwiches and coffee. Please support this local business by visiting Jimmy's Bagels and following them on Facebook for updates and specials.

Heart's Desire Antiques Reopened in December

After months of repairs, La Grange Park's cherished Heart's Desire Antiques officially reopened its doors in early December. The grand reopening featured food, drinks, holiday-themed treasures, and even an ice sculpture of Rudolph the Red-Nosed Reindeer. Owner Susan Hull, who has been in the antique business for 41 years, poured her heart into restoring the shop with incredible support from the community. Heart's Desire has been a fixture in La Grange Park for 29 years, welcoming generations of customers. As Hull shared, "We have customers that have shopped with us for decades and now their kids are coming back... it's a nice little community." One of the shop's most unique qualities is how it evolves with the seasons and holidays. There is always something new to discover, whether it's festive décor, unique antiques, or themed treasures that reflect the time of year. Be sure to visit Heart's Desire Antiques in the new year!



Local Business Incentives

Businesses play a vital role in the strength and vibrancy of our Village. We welcome the opportunity to discuss business and development opportunities in La Grange Park, along with the incentives available to support new and expanding retailers, restaurants, and property owners undertaking exterior improvements.

- Tax Increment Financing (TIF) District and Business Development District (BDD): Funding is available to support a wide range of property improvement and building activities, including acquisition, architectural design, demolition, engineering, infrastructure upgrades, interior remodeling, and site work, that help expand the tax base and foster retail development.
- Façade & Property Revitalization Grant Program: This program supports revitalization in the TIF and BDD areas by offering financial assistance to property owners and tenants for exterior improvements to existing commercial and restaurant buildings (50/50 up to \$20,000).

La Grange Park Shines in WGN Radio's "Your Hometown" Feature

This October, La Grange Park was proudly featured in WGN Radio's Your Hometown series! As part of the sponsorship, the Village was highlighted in radio spots on WGN Radio 720 and a special video tour where Village President Jim Discipio joined Jon Hansen to share the charm, character, and community spirit that make La Grange Park unique.

On October 30, WGN dedicated a full day of interviews to La Grange Park, spotlighting community members and their stories. Together, these features offered a wonderful celebration of what makes our Village such a special place to call home. Visit WGNRadio.com to watch the video and listen to the interviews!



Seeking Arbor Day Nominations

National Arbor Day is Friday, April 24. The Village is accepting nominations to plant a tree in honor or memory of a person or group that has made a positive contribution to the community, or whose achievements deserve special recognition. To submit a nomination, contact Sandy Bakalich (sbakalich@lagrangepark.org) or visit the Village's website for more information. Nominations will be accepted through Friday, February 6.

Water and Sewer Rates Increase January 2026

The Village's water and sewer rates increased beginning January 1, 2026. The new rates support the continued operation and maintenance of the Village's water and sewer systems and follow a 4% increase in the rate charged by the City of Chicago for Lake Michigan water earlier this year. Residents will see the new rates on their January water bills, which will be sent out mid-February.

- **Water - Current Rate: \$12.95 per 100 cubic feet; New Rate \$13.33 per 100 cubic feet**
- **Sewer - Current Rate: \$3.35 per 100 cubic feet; New Rate: \$3.45 per 100 cubic feet**

For more information about water rates and answers to frequently asked questions, please visit the Water and Sewer Rate page on the Village's website.

Seasonal Reminders & Safety Tips

Christmas Tree Disposal

Lakeshore Recycling Systems (LRS) will pick up real/organic Christmas trees at no charge during the first two weeks of January. Simply place your tree curbside, ensuring it's free of tinsel, lights and ornaments. Please note that trees should not be encased in plastic and if they become frozen to the ground or buried in snow, they will not be collected. Five stickers per tree will be required for pickup after the second week in January.



Home Winter Fire Safety Tips

- Have furnaces, chimneys and vents inspected and cleaned by qualified professionals. Not cleaning your chimney is the leading cause of chimney fires from built-up creosote.
- Only use dry, seasoned wood in fireplaces and wood stoves. Never burn wrapping paper or Christmas trees in your fireplace as the high heat can damage fireboxes, chimneys and ignite creosote.
- Ashes should be completely cool and stored in a covered metal container, outside and away from your home and other buildings.
- If you must use space heaters, make sure they are plugged directly into a receptacle, and an extension cord is not used. Use space heaters that have safety features such as automatically turning off when tipped, and keep them at least three feet away from anything that can burn: paper, bedding, furniture, etc.
- Make sure that smoke alarms are installed throughout your home and that you regularly test them to make sure they are working.
- Make sure to have carbon monoxide alarms, preferably one in or near every sleeping area.
- Keep snow clear of furnace and hot water heater air vents on the outside walls of your home. Not doing so can create carbon monoxide issues and some fire risks.

Winter Weather Reminders

The Village would like to share a few reminders during this season:

- Please remove vehicles from public streets when snow is forecasted.
- Keep sidewalks clear of snow.
- Do not shovel or blow snow into public streets.
- Keep fire hydrants clear of snow - Having quick access to fire hydrants is incredibly important to protecting property and firefighters should a significant fire occur. Village fire engines carry a limited amount of water, leaving firefighters only a few minutes to fight a fire. Valuable time can be wasted trying to find a hydrant or having to clear one for use to get more water.
- If you experience a power outage or see downed power lines, please contact ComEd immediately online or by calling 1-800-334-7661.



La Grange Park Chamber of Commerce Highlights

The Chamber is always on the lookout for engaging ways to promote local commerce and foster a vibrant, energetic business climate in La Grange Park! Neighborhood events are just one of the ways we support our local businesses and build a sense of community. We hosted several fantastic events in the fall/winter of 2025 including the following events:

- Chili Cook-Off
- Haunted Trolley
- Awards Dinner
- Small Business Saturday
- Winter Wonderland Walk-Thru

We look forward to another year of partnership with our fellow businesses and new connections within our community! Our Board is already busy planning some fabulous events for the months ahead. We'll be kicking off spring with our annual Run for the Roses 5K. Stay tuned for details!

"Like" our Facebook page for updates:
www.facebook.com/LaGrangeParkBusinessAssociation



Community Partner Updates



Community Park District of La Grange Park

Our special brochure featuring **Summer Camp 2026** and the **2026/2027 Ready Teddy school year** goes online January 29! Registration opens the week of February 9, and we'll be hosting our **Ready Teddy Open House on Monday, February 2**. Save the dates and get ready for a season full of fun and learning!

Community Park Fitness (CPF)

Every dollar earned at CPF goes directly back into enhancing the facility. With a 10-year lease now approved by the Park District Board, we are committed to long-term improvements including updated equipment, flooring upgrades, an enhanced member lounge, and improvements to Community Kids.

We are underway with our capital campaign, "Turn Up the Heat," to replace the saunas in the fitness center. Visit our website or stop by the facility to learn how you can support this effort—and keep an eye out for upcoming fundraising events and opportunities.

Recreation Center Expansion

Residents can look forward to significantly expanded recreation space by summer 2027. At the December 8, 2025 Board meeting, the Park District approved the construction contract, with groundbreaking scheduled for early spring.



Programming During Construction:

Ready Teddy and Summer Camp will continue operating at 1501 Barnsdale Road throughout 2026 and 2027. We will work closely with our contractor to minimize interruptions and plan the most disruptive work around holidays and scheduled skip days.

Yena Park

Despite some unanticipated delays this past summer, our project manager (JSD) and contractor (Landworks Limited) have worked diligently to keep the Yena Park renovations moving forward. We remain on track to open the hard surfaces in spring 2026, with the athletic fields expected to open in fall 2026 or early spring 2027.



New Programming

Our team continues to expand recreational options for all ages. Be sure to explore:

- Our NEW Active Adult "Prime Time Club" for adults age 55+
- Our Paint & Sip event series
- Expanded tennis and pickleball offerings
- Our re-imagined Magic Night, now for the whole family!
- Our brand-new Mother Son Superhero Night

Stone Monroe Park

The Community Park District has begun planning for the improvement of the Stone Monroe Park Tennis Courts. We are working with a local contractor on potential surfacing options. We are hoping to begin this project in the spring of 2026. Please check www.communityparkdistrict.org for updates.

Footlight Players

Our talented Footlight Players are back with their next production, *Beetlejuice Jr.* Join us for performances the weekend of January 17 at the Mario Parente Theatre in Oak Brook Terrace.

But the excitement doesn't end there. Our theater department keeps the momentum going! Auditions for *Peter Pan* begin right after the show, and we can't wait to see our young actors take flight. For show details, audition information, and updates, visit our website and stay connected with all things Footlight Players!



LA GRANGE PARK
PUBLIC LIBRARY



Reading Challenge: When It's Cold, Read For Gold!

Monday, January 5 to
Thursday, March 5, 2026

On your mark, get set, READ! The XXV Winter Olympic Games will be held in Milan and Cortina d'Ampezzo, Italy from February 6 to 22, 2026. In honor of this historic competition, we will be celebrating all things sports in our Winter Reading Program, When it's Cold, Read for Gold! Join us January 5 to March 5 by practicing one of our favorite sports – reading! Complete 4 hours of reading and 8 activities for a chance to win a basket of goodies!

Everyone who completes the challenge will also receive a coupon for a free bagel from Jimmy's Bagels, as well as a book of their choice!

Log your reading through the Beanstack website or app: <https://lplibrary.beanstack.org/reader365>. If you already have a Beanstack account, just make sure your information is up to date and join the challenge.

Winter StoryWalk®

Monday, January 5 to
Thursday, March 5, 2026

Stop by the Library starting the first week of January to read our Winter StoryWalk®, written just for you by our Library staff! This adorable tale pays homage to the Winter Olympics, featuring some very fun and unexpected athletes! It's a DINO-mite way to spend an afternoon and it even counts as one of your activities for our Winter Reading Challenge, When it's Cold, Read for Gold!

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Stay Connected

Communication Tools for Residents

There are several ways to stay connected in the Village of La Grange Park. Visit the Village's website to sign up for the following:

- **Weekly E-Briefs Newsletter** – Includes vital information on Village initiatives, as well as news, services and events
- **Public Safety Briefs** – Provides important local news, tips and community alerts to help keep you, your family and your property safe. Please send an email to Bbaum@lagrangepark.org to be placed on the list.
- **Rave Smart 911** – For emergency updates
- **Facebook** – [Facebook.com/LaGrangePark](https://www.facebook.com/LaGrangePark)

Transparency Commitment

The Village is dedicated to open and accessible governance, ensuring residents have easy access to important public information.

- Agendas, minutes, and recordings of Village Board meetings are available on the Village website, providing insight into local decision-making.
- On the Transparency Portal, residents can review audits, budgets, financial plans and treasurer's reports, offering insight into the Village's fiscal responsibility. Additionally, the portal includes lobbying disclosures, police commission regulations, and current requests for proposals (RFPs) to keep the community informed about ongoing initiatives.

By maintaining this level of transparency, La Grange Park aims to foster trust and engagement, empowering residents to stay informed and involved in local governance. If you would like to attend Village Board and Committee meetings, please see the Village meeting schedule below.

Village Meeting Schedule

Sustainability Commission Meeting

First Monday of the month

Village Board Work Session Meeting

Second Tuesday of the month

Planning & Zoning Commission Meeting

Third Tuesday of the month

Village Board Meeting

Fourth Tuesday of the month

Village Holidays

Village offices will be closed on the following holidays:

Monday, February 16 – President's Day

Friday, April 3 at Noon – Good Friday

Good Neighbor Corner

The Good Neighbor Corner is a regular newsletter feature highlighting the good news in our community. In order to praise the efforts of local residents, organizations, and businesses, we need your help! We're looking for those friendly folks, good deeds, and neighborly touches that make living in La Grange Park special. If you know a Good Neighbor, please email Madelyn Dow (mdow@lagrangepark.org). Help us share the efforts of good neighbors with the entire community.

The wonderful neighbors of the 1500 block of Morgan Avenue

We had our first block party in over 20 years this past September. It was so lovely to see everyone together enjoying the beautiful day. From food, to games and music, all were happy to contribute, truly making it a success. We just moved here in 2024 and it has brought much comfort and joy to be surrounded by such kind humans, folks who are happy to help if you need anything, and are always there to greet you with a hello and a smile. We love our block and this neighborhood! A huge thanks to everyone! – *Nominated by Andrea & Ryan Parker*

Jeff Lauksmen

We'd like to nominate our neighbor and friend, Jeff Lauksmen for LGP's Good Neighbor Award. The phrase "salt of the earth" could have been penned for Jeff. In fact, if you look up the definition of that phrase there may in fact just be his photo!

Over the 8 or so years Jeff has been our neighbor, he has jumped my car after I left my keys in the ignition and drained the battery, jumped our son's car at 11:00 p.m., and hung out with him while it charged enough so he wasn't waiting alone late at night; jumped into action when our then naughty puppy took herself for a walk around the neighborhood; loaned us a lawn mower when ours went on strike: helped us fight the good fight after grubs took up residence on our front lawn coming over with grub treatment and a spreader; and has carried in endless trash/recycling bins and packages when we've been traveling. Earlier this month we were visiting our daughter at college, and asked Jeff to bring in our recycling bin. Well, while we were gone, we got our first big snowfall of the year, and knowing we were returning very late in the evening, after clearing his own sidewalks and driveway, Jeff cleared our sidewalk and driveway so that we wouldn't have to return to shin depth packed snow. Similar story involving mowing our lawn when we were off on a 3 week trip a couple of years ago. Jeff finished mowing his lawn and carried himself and his lawn mower across the street to tend to ours so we didn't return home to a mini jungle. We've told him this directly, but we hit the neighbor jackpot with this guy! – *Nominated by Lisa Vogt & Randy Harrison*