GOVERNMENT IS FAILING US AT ALL LEVELS — BUT ONE.

Unleashed career bureaucrats. Hidden, self-serving agendas. Red tape. Lopsided priorities. Roadblocks built from mountains of paperwork and regulations. Corruption, waste, political graft. The reasons are too numerous to list why government is so often so uncaring, unresponsive, out of touch and useless—or, worse, actively harmful.

One thing is certain. Government—federal, state and municipal—shares the responsibility, accountability and the blame for being so criminally absent, out of touch and out to lunch.

Just ask a Flint, Michigan resident. Or a Katrina or Sandy victim. Just ask a Chicago cop. Or the family of an innocent victim of a cop’s trigger finger. Just ask a veteran waiting for months—or years—for a critical medical procedure. Just ask a child left behind. Especially a special needs child. Or their special ed teacher whose meager salary Governor Rauner is threatening to slash. Just ask a senior or mental patient who’s lost their Medicaid benefits. Just ask the residents of Chicago’s poorest neighborhoods where heroin and cockroaches flood the pothole-pocked streets and alleys in amounts unmatched by any other American city.

Just beyond the pale of all this governmental failure, a beacon of light glows bright. That light emanates from…township government, where service to the public is not a forgotten concept. Largely unnoticed, township government remains reassuringly in touch, engaged and actively serving its residents, filling gaps created by the dysfunction of other governmental bodies.

There is no better example of this than the largest township in Illinois, Thornton Township. This township devotes itself to addressing the needs of its residents, monitoring their issues and coming through, time and again, with the help and support we have come to expect from our townships.

In the wake of the great recession of ’08, Thornton Township supported programs aiding families of the unemployed, delivering 3,000 food baskets monthly, along with assistance paying utilities, rent and mortgage payments. They helped blunt the shock of unemployment by finding 50 full time jobs within the township, as well as funneling many more residents into retraining programs, creating more opportunities for productive full-time work. Thornton Township supports seniors and students alike with a mutually beneficial program paying students to do yard work for seniors in need of this help. And additional help is available for seniors to aly outdated drug costs while providing medical screenings and transportation for doctor appointments and trips to the supermarket. The township even helps build ramps to enhance mobility for handicapped residents.

And all of this tangible real-life support comes at a cost of less than eight cents. For every property tax dollar that comes in, less than eight cents goes to funding township government that provides this wide array of life-enhancing, often life-saving services directly to township residents.

Government, whether it’s federal, state or municipal, too often squander precious tax dollars keeping bloated bureaucracies afloat and wasting precious dollars on pointless programs and phantom services. Meanwhile, at ground level, where people live their lives, Thornton Township and countless other unsung township governments quietly go about the business of delivering valuable services—and a healthy return on taxpayers’ investment.

Sincerely,

Frank M. Zuccarelli
Thornton Township Supervisor

Members of the Faith, Dignity, and Respect Initiative met with Bishop John Bryant, Senior Bishop and Presiding Prelate of the Fourth Episcopal District of the African Methodist Episcopal Church, to discuss the lessons of love, peace, and forgiveness learned from the delegation’s trip to the Emanuel AME Church in Charleston, South Carolina in September. Bishop Bryant was honored by Supervisor Zuccarelli’s decision to have the Emanuel AME Church nominated for the Nobel Peace Prize, and promised to help promote the nomination within the AME church nationwide.

Rev. Dr. Albert Tyson III, Director of Thornton Township Youth & Family Services Dr. LL. Weems, Thornton Township Supervisor Frank M. Zuccarelli, Rev. Dr. Steven Lewis, Bishop John Bryant, Director of Thornton Township General Assistance Troy O’Quin, Rev. Dr. Ozzie Smith, Algonia Pern
I heartbreak and healing. Supervisor Zuccarelli presented the 1963 bombing of the 16th Street Church in Birmingham and the desire to learn from their experience concerning the delegation’s efforts to recognize Emanuel AME and the Charleston community, as well as the desire to learn from their experience.

Councilman Gregorie was invited to meet with the delegation to share his experience on the day of the shooting, as well as the city government’s reaction. The vivid recollection of the events of June 17th, as well as the personal connection to the victims and survivors, gave the entire tragedy a much more human element. According to Councilman Gregorie, the peaceful response of the city and community was mostly spontaneous. He attributed the generous and close nature of the community for the lack of anger and violence in the aftermath of the massacre. Dr. JL Weems inquired about the use of mental health services in the aftermath, to which Councilman Gregorie recounted that the response was immediate and wonderful. With the delegation being driven by a strong religious influence including Rev. Steven Lewis and Rev. Ozzie Smith, the meeting concluded with a prayer led by Rev. Albert Tyson III.

One example of religious community involvement is Justice Ministry, a coalition of roughly 27 churches of all denominations and faiths which brings problems in the community to the attention of local authorities. They were able to persuade city officials to prioritize funding for early childhood education above what the state required as well as ensure development opportunities for minority contractors.

The purpose for the trip to Burke was to attend a community forum comparing the effects of violence in the aftermath of the massacre. They were able to persuade city officials to prioritize funding for early childhood education above what the state required as well as ensure development opportunities for minority contractors.

The Thornton Township delegation’s first day in Charleston was a dawn ’til dusk affair. Immediately after the complimentary hotel breakfast, media coordinator Melvin Caldwell received word that local news outlets were on their way. NBC 2 and ABC 4 conducted interviews with Supervisor Frank M. Zuccarelli and Senator Donne E. Trotter. They also captured Charleston Councilman, and mayoral candidate, William Dudley Gregorie meeting with Zuccarelli and the delegation.

The delegation traveled to the historic Burke High School, the first high school for African Americans in Charleston. With the school as a backdrop, local news outlets conducted more interviews with Zuccarelli and Trotter concerning the delegation’s efforts to recognize Emanuel AME and the Charleston community, as well as the desire to learn from their experience.

This is what we learned.

Day One: September 16, 2015

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THE JOURNEY TO EMANUEL

Day Two: September 17, 2015

On the second day in Charleston the delegation visited with the leadership at Charleston First Assembly of God Church. The church is well known in the community for having a multiracial congregation. Pastor Charles Taylor and Dr. Barbara Dilligard welcomed the delegation to a conversation about the Charleston faith community and how it handles to socioeconomic issues and race relations. According to Dr. Dilligard, Charleston’s spiritual richness lends itself not only to the city’s nickname ‘The Holy City’, but it also brings the community together in times of crisis.

“When tragedy strikes, people forget their boundaries and come together,” said Dr. Dilligard. She also cited the combined efforts of the Emanuel AME leadership, city officials, and a responsible effort by local media for keeping the community calm. The tragedy was a catalyst for plans already in place, according to Dr. Dilligard. She compared the Emanuel shooting to the Walter Scott shooting death by a police officer in North Charleston. Although she admits the attitudes between Charleston and North Charleston are “like different continents”, she believes the quick response by Mayor Summey and Police Chief Driggers prevented violent outbursts by citizens.

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Pastor Taylor feels privileged to lead a multi-ethnic congregation and believes open conversations about race relations are necessary. He believes the only way to affect
Justice Ministry

Faith

Day Two Takeaways

- Faith: The church and the church leadership took charge of the message and helped to express the church’s compassion and faith.

- Justice Ministry: 27 interdenominational churches and ministries that came together to highlight community issues and seek resolutions.

- Bible Study: The Bible Study being led by Elder Goff was emotionally charged and presented a message of forgiveness and faith.

Day Three Takeaways

- Black Lives Matter: Activists urge and open and honest conversation with community leaders and legislators.

- Community First Policing: Chief Mullen stressed the importance of building trust with the community and carefully shaping the image of law enforcement.

- Message Control: In times of crisis, Barbara Vaughn emphasized having a clear communication strategy to prevent misinformation.
SPECIAL SERVICES

Celebrating the holidays, Thornton Township’s Special Services held a Holiday Dance and a Sports Night Turkey Trot. Food, fun and even gifts were presented to those in attendance. For information on upcoming Special Services events call 708-596-6040, ext. 3163.

Thornton Township would like to thank these generous donors for their contributions to the annual holiday toy and food giveaways.

- 135th Chemical Company Illinois Army National Guard
- A Step Up Career Academy
- American Association of Retired Persons, Inc (South Holland chapter 3886)
- Andrews Printing
- Barack Obama Learning Academy
- Calumet City Plumbing Co, Inc.
- Carl Buddig
- Congresswomen of the 2nd District
- Robin Kelly
- Cook County Commissioner of the 6th District
- Joan Patricia Murphy
- Eisenhower Elementary School
- Flowers by Michelle
- Garden Club of South Holland
- Gournie Ferrell
- Harvey 1st Ward Alderman
- Shirley Drowinski
- IL State Rep Will Davis – 30th District
- International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers
- James Hart School
- John Kasperek Co, Inc.
- Kiddie Kulture Child Care
- Lansing Cleaners
- Lansing Mayor Norm Abbott
- Lauren Montessori School
- Lowell-Longfellow Elementary School
- Maya Angelou School
- McKinley Elementary School
- Mike’s Copy Production Inc
- Phi Theta Kappa – S.S.C.
- Prowen Business Systems
- School District 148
- Early Childhood Center
- Sifton Academy
- South Suburban College
- Standt Tire and Auto
- Styles by Marty
- Ted’s Feed Store
- Thornton Fractional North High School
- Thornton Fractional South High School
- Tronwood High School
- Tri-State Disposal Inc.
- Ventura Foods LLC
- Village of South Holland
- Walt’s Food Center
- Washington Elementary
- Wentworth Tire
- Whittier School

Tree Lighting

Thornton Township and the Human Relations Commission hosted the annual Spirit of Thornton Township tree lighting on Saturday, November 28th. Kids and guests were entertained by magician Christopher George. South Holland Bank and Trust provided popcorn and Jimbooo’s Restaurant and Catering supplied hot chocolate. With the help of Miss Collegiate Illinois 2016 Shenell Randall, Supervisor Frank M. Zuccarelli threw the switch to light up the 18 trees in front of Thornton Township Hall in South Holland. Each of the 17 trees representing the 17 municipalities in Thornton Township were decorated by groups and individuals in the community. Reflecting the spirit of the holidays, Supervisor told the large crowd that the best way to improve our communities is through cooperation, togetherness, and love for each other.

Toy & Food Drive

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On January 18th, 2016, Thornton Township, The Thornton Township Human Relations Commission, School District 205, and South Suburban College hosted a Martin Luther King, Jr. day Celebration.

The District 205 Honor Band and Choir performed music selections, Thornridge student Rodney Jackson performed an excerpt from "A Long Way Gone: Memoirs of a Boy Soldier", and the Thornton H.S. New Generation of Men performed a steppers dance routine.

Keynote speaker Rev. Dr. Derrick Wells, Senior Minister, Christ Universal Temple spoke of the legacy and mission of Dr. King. South Suburban College President Don Manning stressed the importance of education. After Thornton Township Supervisor Frank M. Zuccarelli emphasized the importance of a strong community, the Top Teens of America presented a generous donation of food for the Thornton Township Food Assistance Center.

Thornton Township hosted a free Holiday Dinner at the South Suburban College field-house on Saturday, December 3rd, 2015. Hundreds of hot meals were served to Thornton Township residents. Volunteers from all over the community helped in the serving line. Hundreds of donated frozen turkeys were given away throughout the afternoon. Live music entertainment was provided by Past Life.

Thornton Township’s senior citizens celebrated the holidays in style with a couple of parties to kick off the new year right.
Senior Services

The Thornton Township Senior Transportation Program operates a curb-to-curb service for township seniors age 60 and older. Our service complies with all American With Disabilities Act (ADA) requirements. Service is available from 7:00 a.m. to 6:15 p.m., Monday – Friday to any point within the township and designated medical facilities only.

Appointments are made on a first call, first serve basis. Medical appointments are given priority status. Residents are asked to call the township dispatch office with any changes to your appointment. Suggested donation for each one-way ride is $1.00. An Exact Fare Only Policy is also in place to avoid the bus drivers from having to handle money on the busses.

To schedule a ride, call 708-339-9980

For further information on the program, call 708-596-6040, Ext. 4011

Senior Transportation Schedule
The following is a list of the only major medical facilities outside the township that riders may be transported to.

- DaVita Comprehensive Renal Service, 222 Douglas, Hammond
- Governors Highway Clinic, 17901 Governors Highway, Homewood
- South Suburban Hospital, 17800 Kedzie, Hazel Crest
- MetroSouth Medical Center, 12935 South Gregory, Blue Island
- St. Margaret Mercy Healthcare Center, (North) 5900 Homan Avenue, Hammond
- Hammond Clinic, 7305 Calumet Avenue, Munster
- Community Hospital, 901 MacArthur Blvd., Munster

Shopping is also provided to the following locations on these specified days:

- Monday: Halsted Street Shopping Area (Homewood)
- Tuesday: Jewel, Walt’s & Aldi’s (South Holland), Ultra Food & Walmart (Lansing) 2:00 pm Return
- Wednesday: River Oaks, East & West (Calumet City) 2:00 pm Return
- Thursday: K-Mart (Lansing)
- Friday: Food 4 Less (Dolton), Almar Plaza (Dolton), and Pete’s Fresh Market (Calumet City)

All township bus drivers have CDL (Commercial Drivers Licenses) and must comply with all IDOT (Illinois Department of Transportation) regulations and guidelines.

Flu Shots
Thornton Township, in cooperation with the Respiratory Health Association of Metropolitan Chicago, administers flu shots once a year to senior citizens age 65 and older and also those individuals who are chronically ill. Call for date and form.

Blood Pressure Screenings
Daily 10:00 am - 3:00 pm
Thornton Township Hall
Calumet City Senior Center and Riverdale Senior Center

Cholesterol and Glucose Testing
Monday through Friday
9:00 am - 3:45 pm
Thornton Township Hall

Two hour fasting is required and results are given within three minutes. There is a nominal fee to help cover the cost of materials.

Senior Health Insurance Program (S.H.I.P.)
This free program is sponsored by the Illinois Department of Insurance and provides counseling to seniors. This public service is designed to help answer questions, and organize and assist in the filing of insurance papers to Medicare and supplemental insurance companies. The service also provides assistance in comparisons of supplemental insurance plans and affordable Med D drug plans. Now serving you at three (3) locations.

55/Alive Mature Driving Course
This is a 2-day instruction course that refines existing safe, defensive driving techniques. 55/Alive teaches preventive measures to use when driving that saves lives. Upon completion, a certificate is provided that will entitle participants to receive a car insurance premium discount.

This course is currently offered at the Senior Center in Calumet City.

Upcoming dates
Tuesday, March 15, 2016
Wednesday, March 16, 2016
8:45 a.m. to 1:00 p.m.
$15 for AARP members
$20 for non-members

Income Tax Service
Thornton Township, in conjunction with A.A.R.P., assists persons 65 years of age and older with federal and state income tax preparation. This service is provided every Friday beginning on the first Friday of February through the end of the tax season in April.

Senior Committee on Aging
This committee meets monthly to advise the township of the needs and concerns of their senior community.

They also serve as volunteer coordinators for luncheons and special township events. A list of members is available at either the Township Hall or Senior Center.

Exercise Class
This class provides light to moderate aerobic workouts to aid seniors in maintaining health and fitness.

A certified instructor currently conducts this class

Monday and Friday
Senior Center
Calumet City
9:30 a.m. to 10:30 a.m.

Wednesday
Thornton Township Hall
in the lower level
9:30 a.m. to 10:30 a.m.

Tuesday and Thursday class is scheduled at the Senior Center in Riverdale
9:30 a.m. to 10:30 a.m.
Senior Luncheon Program
Thornton Township senior citizens, 60 years of age and older, are entitled to attend one luncheon per week at your designated town luncheon site. There are currently thirteen luncheon facility sites located throughout the township. There is a nominal fee charged per meal. The luncheon program is designed to provide a place to meet new friends in a social setting, eat a nourishing meal and to keep you informed of current information affecting seniors. Proof of residency and age are required when you sign up. For information call 708-596-6040, Ext. 3170 or 3190.

**Tuesday**
- Harvey: Ascension Church, 15234 Myrtle
- Lansing #1: Eisenhower Center, 2550 178th Street
- Lansing #2: Thornton Township Senior Center, 1420 Huntington Drive
- Hazel Crest, American Legion Hall, 17034 Park Avenue

**Wednesday**
- Dolton: Park Fieldhouse, 721 Engle Street
- Riverdale: Thornton Township Senior / Youth & Family Center, 14323 S. Halsted
- Homewood: Freedom Village, 935 Maple

**Thursday**
- Calumet City #1: Thornton Township Senior Center, 1420 Huntington Drive
- Calumet City #2: Downey Park, Stewart Ave & Jeffery Ave
- South Holland: Thornton Township Hall, 333 E. 162nd
- Burnham: Village Hall, 13925 Entre Ave

Lunch & Movie Days are open to all senior Township residents. Call (708) 596-6040, ext. 3170 for movie dates and listings.

**Upcoming Events**
Thornton Township Senior Center
1420 Huntington Drive, Calumet City, IL

Tickets for events are sold on a first come – first serve basis.

**For more information call (708) 596-6040, EXT. 3190 OR 3170**

### Senior Luncheon Program
- **Pinochle Club**
  - Every Tuesday 12:00 pm to 3:00 pm
  - Calumet City Senior Center
- **Bunco Club**
  - Every Thursday 1:00 pm to 3:00 pm
  - Calumet City Senior Center
- **Bingo**
  - 1st Wednesday Every Month
  - 1:00 pm to 3:00 pm
  - Calumet City Senior Center
- **Bid Whist Club**
  - FREE Every Tuesday
  - 9:00 am to 3:00 pm
  - Riverdale: Thornton Township Senior/Youth & Family Center

### Senior Trips
A variety of one day trips are sponsored throughout the year to theaters, dinner shows, professional sporting events, touring and gambling boats. Due to the popularity of these trips, seniors are requested to reserve tickets in advance.

### Benefit Access Application (BAA)
Formerly Circuit Breaker
A program providing assistance with license plates and bus fares for qualifying seniors and persons with disabilities. Assistance in preparing your claim is available beginning annually in mid-February. Call for information or to make an appointment.
708-596-6040, Ext. 3170, 3190 or 2000.
Now serving you in three (3) locations.

### Information and Referral Program
Senior citizens can obtain forms and receive current information regarding Medicare forms, Social Security forms, legal services, housing, Illinois Living Will Act forms, and Illinois Statutory Short forms such as durable power of attorney for health care and property.
Other information affecting local seniors will also be disseminated as the information becomes available. Now serving you at three (3) locations.

### State of Illinois Identification Card
Twice a year, Thornton Township in conjunction with the Secretary of State’s Office, offers seniors 65 years of age and older an opportunity to get their I.D. card at the township. Call for information and requirements.
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  - 1420 Huntington Drive, Calumet City, IL
  - Tickets for events are sold on a first come – first serve basis.
  - For more information call (708) 596-6040, Ext. 3190 OR 3170

- **Happy Hearts Party**
  - Monday, February 8th, 2016
  - 11:00 am – 3:00 pm
  - $15 per person
  - $20 Per Person for out of Township residents
  - Includes dinner and live entertainment

- **St. Patricks Day Party**
  - Monday, March 14th, 2016
  - 11:00 am – 3:00 pm
  - $15 per person
  - $20 Per Person for out of Township residents
  - Includes dinner and live entertainment
Lansing resident Shenell Randall has recently donated her time to helping the Thornton Township community. Currently crowned Miss Collegiate Illinois 2016 and Miss Collegiate Missouri in 2015, Randall has been active in pageantry for 12 years. “Community service has always been at the center of pageantry. I love helping people. I love feeding people,” Randall said. A family friend of Troy O’Quin, Food Assistance Center Manager, Randall read a copy of the Focus newsletter at home and asked O’Quin how she could get involved. Along with her mother Claudia Stevenson, Randall has packed food boxes at the Food Assistance Center, helped throw the power switch that lit up the trees at the Spirit of Thornton Township, served food at the Special Services holiday dance, wrapped gifts for the Children’s Tree toy drive, and assisted Santa Claus during the gift giveaway. Shenell Randall is a graduate of Thornton Fractional South High School in Lansing and currently attends Lindenwood University in St. Charles, Missouri where she is majoring in Musical Theater. Her other community service work includes BRAVE (Building Respect And Values for Everyone), an anti-bullying initiative, and Mini Me, an organization aimed at building confidence in young girls.

Meet Gournie Ferrell

On November 19th, Gournie Ferrell, age 11, of Chicago IL donated ten boxes of food to the Thornton Township Food Assistance Center. Gournie was accompanied by her mother Genice, little sister Joy, grandmother Jeanne Bester, and fellow church members David and Ida Conner. With the help of Christ Strengthens Church located in Phoenix, and the Kiwanis Southeast Area Chapter, Gournie has made it her mission to help her community. “I didn’t want anyone to go hungry.” Gournie said.

For more information on how to help Gournie collect more food contact aboxjourney@yahoo.com

A Special Thank You

Over thirty volunteers from Christ Community Church, located in South Holland, went to the Thornton Township Food Assistance Center on November 21st to help pack food boxes. Pastor Dr. Carl E. King, Sr. was invited by longtime friend, former pastor, and manager of the Food Assistance Center Troy O’Quin. “After talking with Pastor Troy (O’Quin) we knew partnering with Thornton Township was a no-brainer. They can reach more people than we can alone,” said Pastor King.

Members of Christ Community Church volunteer throughout the year, but Pastor King emphasizes, “The holidays are not a happy time for everyone. We have a heart for those in need.”

In just two hours the volunteers packed 450 family boxes!

The public response was not rage, vengeance or violence, but one of Christian forgiveness, unity and peace.

That’s why Thornton Township is sponsoring a petition drive to nominate the Emanuel AME Church of Charleston South Carolina for the Nobel Peace Prize.

Please honor the victims, their families and the Emanuel AME Church by logging onto www.nobelpeaceprizeforcharleston.com and signing the petition.

Thank You,

Frank M. Zuccarelli
Thornton Township Supervisor