



FREE

OUR VILLAGE



FREE

Volume XIII

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Issue 1
February 6, 2009

NEED FOR HEALTH CARE REFORM IN ILLINOIS UNAFFECTED BY CHANGES IN SPRINGFIELD

Illinois voters continue to rank the need for health care reform as their top concern. When voters are asked which issues concern them the most, the economy is number one and health care ranks as number two. The economic issue that most concerns voters? Being able to afford health care.

The Obama administration is already working with Congress on a number of major health care initiatives, including the reauthorization of SCHIP and provisions for health care included in the Economic Recovery and Investment Act. "In Illinois, we are ready to act in conjunction with the Obama administration in the fight for health care for all. Like families across the country, Illinois families and businesses understand that health care is the key to economic security and opportunity," stated Jim Duffett, executive director of the Campaign for Better Health Care.

Duffett continued, "Yesterday's changes in Springfield do not change the urgency for reform in Illinois. The health care crisis is not about one person, it is about Illinois families, businesses and providers. We are all in this together. Governor Quinn has been a champion for health care reform and we look forward to working with him. As the economy grows even worse, we dare politicians to cut the programs enacted in the last six years that, for many women and children of working families, are often the only health care options they have. To do nothing, or to eliminate or reduce funding for existing programs, will cause even greater peril to Illinois families and businesses."

New Property Tax Bills Are Due March 3, Pappas Says

A due date of March 3, 2009, is on tax bills being mailed to Cook County property owners, Cook County Treasurer Maria Pappas said today.

The bills are for the first installment of tax year 2008 on some 1.8 million homes and other parcels of real estate in Cook County, the nation's second-largest county.

Pappas said payment can be made:

- Electronically, from a checking or savings account at cookcountytreasurer.com.
- In person, at more than 330 Chase Banks, including 68 at Dominick's stores.
- In person, by direct debit at 220 participating community banks.
- By return mail, postmarked no later than March 3, 2009.

For on-line payment, owners should have their 14-digit Property Index Number available. For other forms of payment, owners should write the PIN on all checks, returning the payment coupon by mail and having the bill with the payment coupon when making payment at banks.

Owners can call 312.443.5100, enter the PIN and get the bill amount in English, Polish or Spanish.

SCULPTURES OF SNOW DECORATE GRANT PARK ON SNOW DAYS! February 12-16

During Snow Days Chicago, February 12-16 in Grant Park, gifted and talented artists from around the Midwest and Mexico City will team up to create 15 unique sculptures out of man-made snow. Sculptors will begin carving on the eve of the event and continue forming their sculptures until Saturday at noon.

Snow Days Chicago is free and open to the public daily from 11a.m. - 8p.m., closing early on the final day, Monday, at 6p.m. Other activities include dog sled demonstrations and weight pulling, snowboarding demonstrations and competition, storytelling and arts and crafts for children. Plus, visitors to the event will be able to vote on their favorites on Friday and Saturday until noon. For a complete list of times and sculptors, visit www.snowdayschicago.us.





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Resurrection Health Care

To the Editor:



At Resurrection Health Care, providing excellent care is fundamental to our mission and values. Area residents should be confident that the scope of services provided at Resurrection Medical Center and Our Lady of the Resurrection Medical Center is comprehensive, and quality of care is our highest priority. We are proud of the employees who deliver that care and we invite the community to share in our sense of pride to have been selected among the top 20 Best Places to Work in Healthcare award by Modern Healthcare magazine.

We respect the fact that patients, families, physicians and others can make more informed decisions about their health care if they have access to our quality information. We carefully monitor quality outcomes and are pleased to now make that information available to you on our web site.

A labor union that does not represent Resurrection employees has been distributing materials to the community that use outdated information to present an unfair and incomplete view of our quality record.

It is our hope that area residents will make use of quality data now available at quality.reshealth.org to help you make an accurate and fair assessment of how we deliver care.

Sincerely,

Sister Donna Wolowicki, C.R.
Chief Executive Officer
Resurrection Medical Center

Ivette Estrada
Chief Executive Officer
Our Lady of the Resurrection Medical Center

THE IRVING PARK YMCA PROVIDES SUPPORT TO MILITARY FAMILIES

As part of the new \$31-million Armed Services YMCA (ASYMCA) and Department of Defense (DoD) Outreach Initiative, Irving Park YMCA will provide military families with access to youth development, family strengthening, and health and well-being programs at community YMCAs nationwide. Membership fees will be underwritten by the DoD and administered through Military OneSource, an information and referral service for military families. YMCA of the USA, the national resource office for America's 2,686 YMCAs, will help launch the initiative at participating YMCAs across the country.

"The Irving Park YMCA is happy to help meet the critical needs facing families of deployed military service members," said McCamie Cole, Membership Director at Irving Park YMCA. "Families are the most affected when a loved one gets deployed, so we are deeply committed to providing them with the support they need."

The ASYMCA-DoD Outreach Initiative responds to a provision in the National Defense Authorization Act of 2008, which requires the Secretary of Defense to develop a plan to support military family readiness and to ensure that military family readiness programs and activities are available to all deployed National Guard and Reserve families, and some active duty families in certain special categories.

Eligible military families participating in the initiative are eligible for YMCA memberships based on participation requirements. Those eligible to participate in the new initiative include:

All interested families of joint deployed National Guard and Reserves of all military branches;

Families living in newly established Joint Base Realignment and Closure (BRAC) bases;

Active Duty Independent Duty station personnel and their families; and Relocated spouses/family members of deployed Active Duty personnel.

"The YMCA has a long history of supporting military service members and their families – since the Civil War – so it was natural for us to join this initiative," said Mr. Cole. "During this time of conflict, it is more important than ever that we continue providing services and support to these families in the absence of a deployed spouse."

More information about the ASYMCA-DoD Outreach Initiative can be found by visiting www.asymca.org. For information about participating YMCAs, please visit www.irvingparkymca.org or www.ymca.net.

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COALITION LAUNCHES PHONE CAMPAIGN TO KEEP NORTH RIVER MENTAL HEALTH CENTER OPEN

Members of the Coalition to Save Our Mental Health Centers have vowed to picket in front of the entrance to the North River Mental Health Center, 5801 N. Pulaski, every Friday afternoon for as long as it takes to win assurance from the City of Chicago that the neighborhood mental health facility will not be moved, merged or molested in any way.

In early December, scarcely a month after 23,492 voters living in the area served by

North River overwhelmingly approved the Nov. 4 referendum to increase their property taxes in order to restore funding of the center, Coalition members learned that the North River Center was slated to be closed. They are now distributing flyers urging those voters and all right-thinking citizens to contact the Mayor's office (312-744-3301) to register their opposition to the closing.

At a Board of Health meeting Jan. 20, Dr. Terry Mason, Commissioner of the Department of Public Health, conceded that city authorities were "rethinking" the fate of North River which, along with four South Side City Mental Health Centers, had been slated to be merged with other existing centers. The North River Center was to have been merged with the Northtown/Rogers Park facility located at 1607 W. Howard St.

The city established 12 such centers throughout the city following the late President John F. Kennedy's signing of the Community Health Act just weeks before his assassination in 1963. The City established the centers using funds from the Federal Government. The running of those centers was then to become the responsibility of local government.

Supporting Coalition efforts are 35 faith leaders from the area who have signed letters of support for keeping the Center in its present location. Among those faith leaders is the Rev. Wayne Prist, Pastor of Queen of All Saints Parish, who announced his support of the Coalition's efforts to stop the closing of the Center at the 11 a.m. Mass Sunday, Jan. 25. Flyers supporting the Coalition's efforts were also distributed at several area churches. The letters of support were presented to Mayor Daley Jan. 9.

At the heart of the closings is the City's claim that the budget for mental health has been decreased by \$1.2 million. Opponents cite the fact that the North River Center, although woefully understaffed, is actually self-sufficient economically netting the City a profit of \$150,000 annually. In addition, the additional tax monies voted to be allocated to the Center would bring an additional \$600,000 to maintain and improve services for area residents.

Submitted by Rosemary Tirio

St. Paul's Free Couple's Movie Night.

St. Paul Lutheran School and Church, 5650 N. Canfield Ave. Chicago, will be hosting a Couple's Movie Night on March 14th at 7:30pm in the school gymnasium. Couple's Movie Night will be a chance for all married couples—newlywed to veteran—to enjoy an evening out together for a positive and encouraging movie. The March movie will feature "FIREPROOF," an action packed love story to inspire married couples and transform relationships. There will be free on-site childcare, refreshments, and an opportunity to share thoughts about the movie. This free event is open to the entire community. For more information call the school and church office at (708) 867-5044.

Foster Harlem Property Owners Association's Next Meeting Set

The Foster Harlem Property Owners Association's next meeting is scheduled for Thursday February 19th, 7:00pm at St. Monica's Beyenka Hall, 5101 N Mont Clare. The Association will host candidates who are running for the vacant seat in the Illinois 5th Congressional District. Candidates will have an opportunity to give a brief presentation. Chicago Police Officer James Olszanski will also present on neighborhood safety.



Coalition to Save Our Mental Health Center volunteers have braved winter temperatures for three consecutive Fridays to publicize the plight of the North River Mental Health Center located on the grounds of North Park Village.

KeyLime Cove (No School Teen Trip)

KeyLime Cove is an exciting tropical inspired indoor waterpark resort in Gurnee, Illinois. Come on in and let the sunshine of paradise surround you all year! KeyLime Cove is Chicago's largest, family friendly, water resort with excitement for all ages. Come splash the day away at the Lost Paradise Waterpark. Food and beverages are not included, but are available at one of the waterpark's concession stands. Enjoy your day off of school at this indoor waterpark! Please register by February 23rd. (Min 15 / Max 50)
Ages: Grades 6 - 8

Date: Friday, February 27, 9:00am - 4:30pm

Location: Bus leaves from the Lincolnwood Community Center, 6900 N. Lincoln Ave., Lincolnwood, IL

Fee: Resident: \$75 Non-Resident: \$101

Pre-Registration is required, for more information contact the Lincolnwood Parks & Recreation Office at (847) 677-9740.

Lincolnwood Social Club (55+) Monthly Lunch Bunch

All those who attend will be responsible for transportation to and from the restaurant. Each member will also be responsible for paying for their own lunch.

Date: Friday, February 20, 11:30am - Lunch

Location: Whistler's, 3420 W. Devon Ave., Lincolnwood, IL

Fee: FREE - Lunch & Transportation are on your own

Registration is required, for more information contact the Lincolnwood Parks & Recreation Office at (847) 677-9740.

Lincolnwood Social Club (55+) Mix N' Mingle

Come to our monthly gathering and catch up with all your friends! Coffee and refreshments will be served, but this month feel free to bring in your own treat for the group to celebrate Valentine's Day!

Date: Friday, February 13, 11:00am - 12:30pm

Location: Lincolnwood Community Center, 6900 N. Lincoln Ave., Lincolnwood, IL

Fee: \$2 Club Member \$3 Non-Members

Registration is required, for more information contact the Lincolnwood Parks & Recreation Office at (847) 677-9740.

Liberty Bank for Savings to Host Identity Theft Prevention Seminar

The public is invited to attend a preventative seminar on Identity Theft on Wednesday, Feb. 18 at 10 a.m. at Liberty Bank for Savings' Norwood branch, 6210 N. Milwaukee Ave., in Chicago. Reservations are required. There is no cost to attend.

Those who attend will learn the basics of protecting themselves and how to react if they become victims of the crime. A representative from the Cook County Sheriff's Office will be on hand to raise awareness of the crime which affects millions of Americans every year.

Liberty Bank for Savings has been providing safe and secure banking service since 1898. The community bank, with offices on the northwest side of Chicago, in Park Ridge and Lincolnwood, celebrated its 110th anniversary in 2008. To make a reservation for an event or for more information on times, cost or location, call Susan Andrews at 773-489-4458 or visit www.libertybank.com.

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GREAT OUTDOORS

Legends of the Lake

by Tracy Seglin

If you live in or near Chicago, you are familiar with the terms “lake effect snow” and “cooler by the lake,” but how much do we really know about this tall drink of water in our own backyard?

She was born around 14,000 years ago as glaciers retreated north, heralding the end of the last Great Ice Age. Her name is derived from the Algonquin term “michi gama” or great lake, but in her lifetime, she has also answered to “Gran Lake,” “Lake of the Puans,” and undoubtedly to her chagrin, “Lake of Stinking Waters.” That didn’t make for compelling tourism brochure copy, so Lake Michigan stuck.

At 22,300 square miles around and 925 feet at her deepest point, she is the third brawniest of her sisters, but Lake Michigan is the only one of the Great Lakes entirely within the United States. As you read this, her temperature is likely hovering in the low to mid 30s where water meets sand in Chicago. Twelve million people live on her shores, more than 10 million consider her their drinking fountain, and some 100 species of fish call her home.

If Lake Michigan could speak, perhaps she would share stories of shipwrecks, of lighthouses, submerged monsters and monuments, floating Christmas trees, Great Fires, and the pull of the moon. Or maybe she’d just smile and wave.

Get your feet wet. Look to future issues of *Our Village* and join us as we dive into the history, mystery, legend and lore of our Great Lake Michigan.



Urban Wildlife Coalition

Winter Robins

Q: I thought robins went south for the winter, but I saw some in our backyard. What do they eat now that the ground is frozen and they can’t get to the worms? – David, age 8, Edgebrook

A: Not all robins migrate, some stay the winter if food is available. Robins do like to eat worms and insects, but in the winter, they will eat berries and other types of fruit. Robins generally do not like to eat birdseed though, so if you choose to feed robins in your yard, try placing berries on branches where they are already accustomed to finding fruit. Or, consider planting a winter fruit-bearing tree or bush.

Urban Wildlife Coalition is a community-based organization founded to help preserve our treasured urban wildlife. For more information about urban animals and tips for living in harmony with them, visit www.urbanwildlifecoalition.org. Questions? Call 773-545-8136 or e-mail us at urbanwildlifecoalition@gmail.com.



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The Real Reason for Groundhog Day

Punxsutawney Phil, America’s most famous weather forecaster, will have love, not weather, on his mind when he emerges from his hole on February 2. Researchers tracked 32 groundhogs for more than four years and concluded that the real reason for the early February appearance is a version of the dating game, groundhog style.

Male groundhogs wake up after three months of hibernation to check out the available pool of ladies within their territory. They select a female with whom they spend the night, and this sleepover acts as a first date, allowing the groundhogs time to get to know each other before the official start of mating season the following month. During these meet and greet sessions, contact is confined to rubbing noses - there's no going "all the way."

After scoping out two or three females, the male groundhog returns to his burrow to sleep again until March, dreaming of the hotties he has just met. When he awakes and revisits each of the females, the earlier slumber parties allow the woodchucks to skip the small talk and get right down to the business of breeding.



Climate Change

Here’s a round-up of recent news on how climate change is affecting wildlife: (Go to nwf.org for articles.)

Has Punxsutawney Phil been predicting climate change?

Are the seasons shifting? The highest summer and lowest winter temperatures have been happening an average of two days earlier.

Antarctica is warming faster than previously thought.

Deep sea life is being impacted by climate change.

Climate change forces tropical insects to higher elevations.

Forests are in decline as temperatures rise.

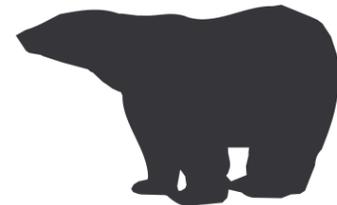
Climate change effects are irreversible according to new study.

David Mizejewski, Naturalist

National Wildlife Federation *Adapted from materials provided by USDA/Agricultural Research Service. Contact us at info@nwf.org, 1-800-822-9919, National Wildlife Federation, 11100 Wildlife Center Drive, Reston VA, 20190. © 2008 National Wildlife Federation. All rights reserved.*

About the Polar Bear...

1. Of all living bear species, polar bears are the largest, averaging eight feet in height and weighing between 440 and 1,700 pounds.
2. Polar bears inhabit Arctic sea ice, water, islands and northern limits of the continental coastlines of the Northern Hemisphere.
3. Black skin protected by a dense coat of under fur, covered by a coat of longer guard hairs, allows the polar bears to survive harsh Arctic conditions where temperatures drop to well below freezing.
4. Polar bears can live as long as 30 years, but only a small number live beyond 20 years.



Protecting Wildlife Can be Easy and Fun!

Just follow these four simple steps and open your backyard to a wonderful world of wildlife.

1. Grow native plants found in your area, including trees, shrubs and other plants that offer food such as pollen, nectar, nuts, cones, berries and other seeds.
2. Provide water for wildlife with a small pond, birdbath or shallow dish ... or care for a natural spring or stream on or near your habitat.
3. Create protective cover for wildlife by growing a meadow, a prairie, densely branched shrubs and, when appropriate, evergreens. Place hollow logs and rock piles in your yard.
4. Build birdhouses, attach to metal poles and monitor their use. Grow host plants for butterfly and moth caterpillars to eat and provide dense plantings to create safe areas for nesting wildlife.

Please watch what you plant in your garden. Exotic species not native to you region can become invasive and can be harmful to both people and wildlife. NWF’s Certified Wildlife Habitat™ program helps you plan your landscape with the needs of wildlife in mind.

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THE WEST RIDGE CHAMBER OF COMMERCE

ATTENTION BUSINESS OWNERS!

Snow & ice removal along with LITTER PICK UP are required of all business owners and licensees.

Please shovel any snow/ice from the public way and pick up any litter from sidewalks abutting your property.

Questions? Call the 50th Ward Streets and Sanitation office at 312-744-3099.

For businesses located within the Devon Avenue SSA area, snow removal is being provided when there is an accumulation for 2 inches or more by the SSA/West Ridge Chamber of Commerce.

Need to know if you are located in the SSA area? Please contact the Chamber office. 773-743-6022



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The West Ridge Chamber of Commerce is pleased to announce an additional way to recycle in our neighborhood!

365 days per year, 24 hours per day you can simply drop off your paper items to be recycled at 2 Paper Retriever Boxes in the neighborhood.

Devon Bank - Easily accessible in the southeast corner of the lot at 6445 N. Western Avenue. High Ridge YMCA - Accessible to all through the YMCA lot 2424 W. Touhy entrance on Western Avenue.

We can accept your newspapers, school & business documents, junk mail, catalogs, soft cover books & magazines.

Did you know that 1 week of daily newspapers can add up to 10 lbs of paper? The West Ridge Chamber of Commerce is committed to community education. Our local RECYCLING program is in place not only to help the earth, but to assist community schools. In the 2007-08 school year the Chamber raised \$2,000 through these programs. Funds provided financial assistance to Boone Community School. The entire 4th grade class and 5 teachers were able to attend a science field trip at Experiencia at no cost to them.

On the trip, students had a chance to experience hands on learning of subjects like recycling, composting and water conservation and collection.

Help us generate funds to do it again! Recycle your paper with us Please call the Chamber offices with questions 773-743-6022



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Chicago Board of Education To Honor Illinois' Top Elementary School in Illinois

On December 17, 2008, Decatur Classical School, located in the East Rogers Park community, was recognized and congratulated by Arne Duncan and Rufus Williams at a Chicago Board of Education meeting.

Decatur's Principal Kukielka and members of Decatur's Local School Council attended the meeting to receive the impressive recognition.

Decatur Classical is a selective enrollment school, offered by Chicago Public School's Office of Academic Enhancement for gifted and enriched academic programs.

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Portage Park Resident Receives 2008 Artist of the Year Award

Dave Krueger, 46, a local Chicagoan is an accomplished artist and musician. Dave was born with Down's Syndrome, but doesn't let his disability interfere with his dreams. He will be receiving the 2008 Artist of the Year Award in early February for his accomplishments at the Arts of Life, an artistic community that provides adults with developmental disabilities an environment to experience personal growth. For years Dave, raised on Chicago's Northside, worked in a workshop for people with disabilities until he joined the Arts of Life as a working artist in the Fall of 2007.



Dave Krueger

In addition to drawing & painting, Dave is an accomplished singer and songwriter, performing with the Arts of Life Band. He wrote the music & lyrics and provides lead vocals for "Around the World", a popular dance party song in Chicago. He did the same for "The Bells and The Dogs" which has a danceable reggae rhythm. Both of these songs are featured on the self-titled, debut ARTS OF LIFE CD, which was released in Fall 2008.

His paintings, along with his fellow artists, are being sold in Starbucks and other locations throughout Chicago. His artwork is mixed media combining water colors, markers and colored pencils to create brightly, colored, geometric pop style art. His work is influenced by comic book drawings and characters in addition to professional artists such as Lichtenstein, all of which is reflected in his work.

Dave will be receiving the 2008 Artist of the Year Award for his accomplishments at the Arts of Life Annual Award Show being held at Architectural Artifacts at 4325 N. Ravenswood on February 12th from 6-11pm. For more information about the event, please visit www.artsoflife.org.

Call for Artists for Evanston Festivals

The City of Evanston is seeking artists for its two summer arts festivals, the Ethnic Arts Festival, July 18-19, and the Lakeshore Arts Festival, Aug. 1-2. Set against the scenic backdrop of Evanston's lakefront, both festivals are held in Dawes Park, Church St. and Sheridan Road.

The Ethnic Arts Festival is a juried festival open to all ethnic, folk and fine artists whose work expresses the heritage of a national, regional, tribal or language group. Exhibitor fees are \$240 and the nonrefundable jury fee is \$35. The deadline for submitting applications is Monday, April 6.

Always held the first weekend in August, the Lakeshore Arts Festival continues to earn its reputation as one of the North Shore's premiere fine arts summer festivals. Also a juried event, it is open to all fine visual artists and crafters. Exhibitor fees are \$310 and the nonrefundable jury fee is \$35. Applications for the Lakeshore Arts Festival must be received by Friday, March 6.

Artist applications for both festivals are now available online at www.cityofevanston.org/arts. For more details, call 847-448-8260. The Ethnic Arts Festival and Lakeshore Arts Festival are produced by the City of Evanston's Cultural Arts Division and are partially supported by a grant from the Illinois Arts Council, a state agency.

SKOKIE ART GUILD

CALL FOR ARTISTS:

Skokie Art Guild's 48th Annual Art Fair. July 11/12, 2009. Fine Art. Prizes and Awards. \$150.00 Booth Fee. 75 Exhibitors. Held on the beautiful Village Green, downtown Skokie, IL., 5211 W. Oakton. APPLY NOW! Contact: skokieart@aol.com Tel. 847-677-8163



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Celebrate Valentine's Day in the Parks with Dances and Parties

The Chicago Park District celebrates Valentine's Day with numerous dances and parties throughout the city Feb. 6-14, including the traditional daddy daughter/mommy son dances and a family ice skating party. Most events feature recorded music, refreshments, photo opportunities, games and an arts and crafts station.

Many programs are admission free or have nominal entrance fees. Please contact each individual park for additional information. Click here for the full schedule of Valentine's Day events. Following are highlights:

Daddy Daughter/Mommy Son Dance Friday, Feb. 6, 6-8 p.m.
Wicker Park, 1425 N. Damen Ave., 312-742-7553 Admission free, recommended for all ages

Daddy Daughter/Mommy Son Dance Friday, Feb. 6, 7-9 p.m.
Horner Park, 2741 W. Montrose Ave., 773-478-3499 Admission \$5, all ages, children must be accompanied by an adult Music performed by the Horner Park Jazz Band.

Family Valentine Dance Thursday, Feb. 12, 6:30-8 p.m.
Gompers Park, 4222 W. Foster Ave., 773-685-3270 Admission \$4 per couple, ages 10 and under with an adult

Daddy Daughter/Mother Son Ice Skate Friday, Feb. 13, 6-10 p.m.
Daley Bicentennial Plaza, 337 E. Randolph St., 312-742-7648 Admission is \$10 per couple and includes skate rental, all ages

4th Annual Daddy Daughter/Mother Son Valentine Dance Friday, Feb. 13, 6-8:30 p.m.
Mayfair Park, 4550 W. Sunnyside Ave., 773-685-3361 Admission \$3, all ages

Daddy Daughter Valentine's Dance Friday, Feb. 13, 6:30-8 p.m.
Loyola Park, 1230 W. Greenleaf Ave., 773-262-8605 Admission \$5, all ages

Daddy Daughter/Mother Son Valentine's Day Disco Bash Saturday, Feb. 14, 6-8 p.m.
Indian Boundary Park & Cultural Center, 2500 W. Lunt Ave., 773-764-0338 Admission \$5 per couple (\$1 each additional child), all ages



St. Valentine's Tea and Cookie Exchange

"Love is in the Air." A St. Valentine's Tea and Cookie exchange will be held at Bethany Lutheran Church, 1701 N. Narragansett, Chicago, on Saturday, February 14, 2009 at 2:00 p.m. This will be in support of LCMS World Mission and specifically for missionaries Betsy Karkan and Sara Longmire serving the Thailand.

There will be a special musical performance by harpist Missy Rusnak. Tickets are \$10.00. For tickets and other information please contact Rachel Leininger at 708-345-2988, or e-mail leininger@ameritech.net. All are invited.

Did You Know...?

It seems only natural that February is National Weddings Month. After all, Valentine's Day is the most popular day of the year for wedding proposals. The second-most popular day to "pop the question" is New Year's Eve.



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WELCOME



"A Theatre Review"

"Jersey Boys"

Bank of America Theatre, 18 West Monroe St., Chicago, IL

Reviewed by Richard Allen Eisenhardt

"Jersey Boys," the 2006 Tony Award winning musical is celebrating its second year at the Bank of America Theatre. Audiences love this show and it is my opinion that it is one of the top ten musicals of 2008 and even with the cast changes it hasn't gotten stale and if you haven't seen it, it is not to be missed and if you are a big fan of Frankie Valli and the Four Seasons, go see it again. "Jersey Boys" is a story of Valli and the Four Seasons. Four blue collar boys from poor families who find themselves in trouble with the law as well as gangsters.

Cory Grant is the new Frankie Valli and Chicagoan Brian McElroy is the new Tommy DeVito. These replacements all give strong performances.

Major roles by Drew Gehling as Bob Gaudio and Michael Ingersoll as Nick Massi as the remaining Four Seasons have been with the show since it opened in October 2007. Also with the cast since it opened is the very talented Chicago actor, Jonathon Weir who plays several roles as well as Gyp DeCarlo, a New Jersey gangster who helps launch the Four Seasons' career.

The show runs about 2 hours and 3 minutes and time flies by and you hate to see it come to an end. The cast sing a total of thirty three songs that include "Sherry," "Walk Like a Man," "Rag Doll" and "Can't take my eyes off of you." DeVito is the character who books the others but who is a small time Jersey hood and Mafia wannabe who is in trouble with the law, the gangsters as well as all his friends as he mismanages them and owes the mobsters close to a million dollars.

Each character narrates a part of the story. Massi is a friend of DeVito and in the second act leaves the group. When Gaudio joins the group he becomes their song writer and arranger for the group.

Success does not affect the group and the rebel daughter of Frankie Valli travels with the group and takes to drugs as they become celebrities.

The show is so powerful that it gets a standing ovation. "Jersey Boys" is having an open end run. For performance dates, show times and reservations call 312-902-1400 or purchase tickets at Broadway in Chicago's box office. Ticket prices are \$30 to \$110.

"The Bowery Boys"

Marriott Theatre, 10 Marriott Drive, Lincolnshire, IL

Reviewed by Richard Allen Eisenhardt

The Marriott Theatre in Lincolnshire is closing out their season with a brand new musical called "The Bowery Boys." The show was inspired by the works of Horatio Alger, Jr. and George M. Cohen. Alger, Jr. is often called the American Charles Dickens. The book and lyrics for this world premier is by David H. Bell with music by Jeremy Cohen and the show is being directed by David H. Bell. The show has an energetic cast of twenty six. The show's musical director is Michael Mahler. The show offers first rate dancing that is being staged by actor, singer and dancer Matt Raftery.

The show's case is headed by Brian Sears and Morgan Weed. The production has a youthful cast that make up the Bowery Boys along with veterans Lesley Bevan, Jeff Dumas, Sean Fortunato, Susan Moniz, Roger Mueller, Bernie Yvon, Jeffrey Baumgartner, Catherine Lord and Ericka Mac.

The Bowery Boys are made of Wilson Bridges, Andrew Kehz, Nick Graffagna, Christian Libonati, Zach Zube and Matthew Gold to make up this rags to riches story along with others.

Two familiar songs in the show are "Yankee Doodle Dandy" and "Mary" the other fifteen are all new and include "Makin' it Through the Day," "Clothes That Make The Man" and "Life's a Funny Proposition After All."

The show will remind you of "Oliver" with Fortunato a touch of Fagin and the movie Dead End Kids. The show is set in 1876 New York in the world of Diamond Jim Brady, Tammany Hall and the notorious Five Points.

Sears plays Dick, a streetwise punk kid and Weed plays Mary, young British heiress whom Dick befriends after she is cruelly abandoned on the mean streets of New York.

Baumgartner, Yvon, Fortunato, Dumas and Bevan make perfect villains. "Bower Boys" runs through February 15. For performance schedule, show times and reservations call 847-634-0200. Tickets range from \$45 to \$55.

book by John Weidman / music & lyrics by Stephen Sondheim / additional material by Hugh Wheeler



Pacific Overtures

From the creators of *Assassins* comes this fascinating exploration of the Westernization of Japan as told through the story of two friends caught in the inevitable winds of change. Mixing elements of Kabuki theatre with conventions of the Broadway musical, this is considered by many to be the artistic pinnacle of the legendary Sondheim-Prince collaborations.

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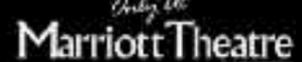
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KIDS STAY ACTIVE THIS WINTER AT 16 NEIGHBORHOOD SPORTSFESTS ACTIVITIES KEEP KIDS BUSY AFTER SCHOOL, PLUS ON SCHOOL HOLIDAYS AND WEEKENDS

The Chicago Park District takes Mayor Daley's Sportsfest program into the city's communities with the launch of 16 Neighborhood Sportsfest events Feb. 7-March 28. The family friendly program is admission free and open to the public.

Chicago neighborhood parks will host day-long activities, most of which will include a variety of mini-tournaments (floor hockey, soccer, basketball, dodgeball), electronic game stations (Wii, Dance Dance Revolution), and interactive kid zones (fishing ponds, tumbling, tots obstacle course, inflatables). Contact each park for scheduled activities.

"Families are more active than ever," said Chicago Park District General Superintendent and CEO Tim Mitchell. "Neighborhood Sportsfest provides families with an opportunity to incorporate exercise and fun during these long winter months."

For more information, or to volunteer visit www.chicagoparkdistrict.com or call 312.742.PLAY, 312.747.2001 (TTY).

The following is the schedule for Northside Neighborhood Sportsfest:

Saturday, Feb. 7 10 a.m. – 2 p.m.

Riis Park, 6100 W. Fullerton Ave., 312-746-5363

Inflatables, interactive fitness video games, Dance Dance Revolution, bike road races, arts and craft projects, free ice skating from 10 a.m.-12 p.m., sledding (bring your own sled), snowshoeing (weather permitting) and more.

Saturday, Feb. 14 10 a.m. - 2 p.m.

Warren Park, 6601 N. Western Ave., 773-262-6314

Inflatables, indoor hockey shoot out, obstacle course, miniature golf, face painting, free ice skating from 10 a.m.-12 p.m. and sledding (weather permitting and bring your own sled).

Saturday, Feb. 28 11 a.m. – 3 p.m.

Broadway Armory Park, 5917 N. Broadway St., 312-742-7502

Inflatables, climbing wall, badminton, arts and crafts, carnival games, DJ, interactive fitness video games, Dance Dance Revolution and bike road races, plus lots more.

Saturday, March 7 10 a.m. – 2 p.m.

Dunham Park, 4638 N. Melvina Ave., 773-685-3257

Chess, three-on-three soccer, board and table games, floor hockey skills, two-ball, badminton, wrestling, kids fitness, inflatables, arts and crafts, table tennis and healthy snacks.

Saturday, March 21 10 a.m. - 2 p.m.

Hamlin Park, 3035 N. Hoyne Ave., 312-742-7785

Inflatables, floor hockey, 3-on-3 indoor soccer, hotshot 2-ball, dodgeball.

Saturday, March 28 10 a.m. - 2 p.m.

Horner Park, 2741 W. Montrose Ave., 773-478-3499

Inflatables, broomstick toss, soccer shoot out, pitching off mound, ground ball knockout, hitting in cages, and wiffleball game and more.

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Date: Saturday, February 14, 2009 Time: 11:00 AM

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Early Literacy Parent Workshops

Learning to read begins with parents. Learn how you can help your child develop the skills necessary for learning to read. For parents of children ages birth to age 5. Saturday, Feb. 28th Another session will take place in March. Reservations required. For more information, please call (312) 744-0152.

Polish Book Discussion Group

The Polish Book Discussion Group meets the first Monday of the month at 7:00 p.m. The selection for February 2 Luty is Dzieci Cesara by Claire Messud. Copies are available at the Information Desk. Meet other fluent Polish readers to discuss interesting and controversial ideas.

The Fourth Tuesday Book Discussion Group meets the fourth Tuesday of each month at 7:00 p.m. Discussions are always lively and entertaining. The group participates in the selection of titles to be read.

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Lyric Opera Lecture Corps

A member of the Lyric Opera Lecture Corps will present the music and history of The Abduction from the Seraglio by Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart on Saturday, February 21st at 1 p.m.

In honor of Woman's History Month Betsey Means will present selected readings from Alicia My Story by Alicia Appleman-Jurman on Thursday, February 26 at 7:00 p.m. Alicia My Story is a tragic yet uplifting story of a young Jewish girl surviving outside of the concentration camps in 1942 war-torn Poland during the Nazi occupation. This autobiography brings touching insight into the life of this strong woman, the people whom she helped and the hope they found in order to survive.

CALLING ALL TEEN VOLUNTEERS

Teen volunteers are needed and service learning hours are available for all teens between the ages of 15 and 18. To register as a teen volunteer, please call the library at 312-744-8313.

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Classic Film Series: Take Two. Join film expert Ralph Amelio. Watch classic, important films, then join in a discussion of merits of the films. This month's films will be Seven Brides for Seven Brothers with Howard Keel and Jane Powell on Thursday, February 12; and Shadow of a Doubt with Teresa Wright and Joseph Cotton on Thursday, February 26th. All films begin at 1 p.m. Films are free.

Microsoft Word. The world's most-used word processing program. Part 1 Tuesday, February 10. Part 2 Thursday, February 12. Both classes meet from 6:30-8:30 p.m. (This class repeats on February 24 and 26, 12-2 p.m.). Cost is \$20.00 for both sessions. Limit 12.

I Bought It. Now What? You've gone ahead and purchased that new computer. What do you do with it now? This is a lecture class. Up to 40 people may register. Wednesday, February 18, 6:30-8:30 p.m. cost \$10.00.



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A Loan May Be Taxing



Chester M. Przybylo

People lend money to their families all the time. Whether it is lending your daughter money to get settled after college or lending your son money to get started in business, it can be a great way to help your kids. However, it is important to know the rules of the road to avoid getting sideswiped by unexpected taxes.

If you charge interest, you must pay income tax on that interest. So, if you loan your son \$200,000 at 5%, that \$10,000 in interest must be added to your income for the year.

If you lend money, the IRS expects that you should charge interest, just like a bank would. It sets a benchmark rate, the "Applicable Federal Rate" (or "AFR"), which varies depending upon the month and the term of the loan. For example, in December 2008, the mid-term AFR was 2.85%. (The mid-term AFR is applicable to loans longer than two years and shorter than nine years in length.) If you charge less than this, or nothing, it is a "gift loan" and special rules apply.

A loan of less than \$10,000 is disregarded. For a loan of between \$10,000 and \$100,000, if you charge interest less than the AFR, the difference is considered a gift for which you may have to pay a gift tax. If the loan is greater than \$100,000, not only is the forgone interest considered a gift, but the IRS pretends that the forgone interest was paid to you as interest and you would have to pay income tax on it. Even though you are trying to be nice, you might get a big surprise come tax time!

For example, if you lend your son \$200,000 in a 5-year (mid-term) interest-free loan to start a business in December 2008, the IRS will pretend your son paid you 2.85% of \$200,000 = \$5,700 and you must pay income tax on that amount annually. Assuming you are paying a combined 40% federal and state income tax rate, that would be \$2,280 in tax each year.

There may be solutions to this. For example, an Irrevocable Trust that you set up for your son's benefit could operate the business. The Trust could be set up so that transactions between you and your Trust are not considered for income tax purposes. So, if you lent the Trust \$200,000, the IRS would ignore the forgone interest for income tax purposes. The forgone interest is still considered a gift. But, the Trust can be designed so that the "gift" to the Trust (of the forgone interest) will be considered a gift to your son. Since you can give \$13,000 each year to anyone gift tax-free, this imaginary gift of \$5,700 would be ignored.

Consult a qualified estate planning attorney to make sure your loans are structured so you do not generate unnecessary income taxation.

Chester M. Przybylo is a member of the American Academy of Estate Planning Attorneys and has been engaged in the practice of law for the last 40 years. For more information or to attend an upcoming seminar, call (773) 631-2525.

Guerin Prep High School 2nd Annual Big Event Even Bigger than Last Year

Guerin Prep High School's second annual Big Event on Saturday, March 7, 2009 promises to be even bigger than last year, providing something for everyone and a good time for all.

The event will be held at the school, 8001 W. Belmont Av., River Grove, from 6:30 to 11:30 p.m. Adults can play Texas Hold 'em, roulette and other Las Vegas-style games in one area or dance the night away to jazz and Beatles music. The event brings back the ever-popular chocolate room and offers a brand new Comedy Club and plenty of food and drinks.

Decorations in the gym and music is being coordinated by the Band Boosters. The Cavern Beat, a look-alike Beatles Band featuring Armando Regalado, a former Guerin Prep's theology teacher, will rock the halls, and Guerin Prep's outstanding Jazz Band will accompany a dance competition in addition to providing Big Band music for everyone to enjoy.

"High energy, lots of diversity, phenomenal" said a 1974 alumna who attended last year.

"We had 600 people and look forward to topping that," said Sister Dawn Tomaszewski, SP, vice president of advancement. "Our parents, alumni and staff are all working together to pull out the stops. We have everything—wine-tasting, a repeat of our very successful chocolate lovers' room, silent auctions and raffles."

Couples made up of moms and sons or dads and daughters will compete head-on in Guerin Prep's parent rendition of Dancing with the Stars. Auditions for Guerin students and parents will be held at 7 pm in the Smythe Gym on Feb. 12.

The school's foyer will be transformed into a mini Las Vegas with poker, black-jack and other games under direction of the Athletic Boosters. People who only want to visit this venue pay no admission fee.

"In addition to some terrific raffle and silent auction items, we will have a big raffle. First prize is a year's tuition at Guerin Prep, second is tuition for a semester and third is a Deluxe Panasonic 42" HD plasma TV," explained Janis Ryan, special events coordinator. The Parents Club is coordinating raffles baskets and silent auction items.

Guerin Prep faculty will host the now traditional chocolate lovers' room, where Synchronicity, Guerin Prep's string ensemble will provide entertainment. Plenty of dinner food will also be on hand provided by a wide variety of local restaurants and caterers and is included in the ticket price. Cash bars will be available throughout the event.

Major sponsors include LaSalle Capital Group, Winston & Strawn, LLP, both of Chicago; Solidarity Clothing, Evanston; Holy Cross alumni Roy McCampbell '72 and Terry John Malik '69, president of Guerin Prep. Additional sponsors include Manor Press, Pan American Bank, Performance Graphics, Inc., Stadium Sports Club and Pizza and Neighbors. Additional sponsors and benefactors are being sought.

Details about The Big Event are available at www.gpbigevent.com. Tickets are \$30 per person in advance or \$40 at the door. They may be purchased online or by calling Janis Ryan at 708-437-4734. There is no charge for admission to the Vegas-venue only.

Proceeds from the event will benefit the Annual Fund of Guerin Prep High School, helping to keep tuition affordable for all who wish to attend. Guerin Prep is a Catholic college preparatory secondary school for young men and women.

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FINALLY

By Bosley

After months and months of anticipation and waiting; and dealing with my confused Human; I finally was able to see our new finished place of business. Wow, is it big there is lots of room for us to play! I will confess to you my friends that I was a little intimidated. New places can be sometimes scary and overwhelming. I was a little hesitant at first because the place is big, and I don't know what my Human has in mind. You never know what to expect with those Humans, so I was a little apprehensive!

My Human finally seems much happier now that she is back to work! Don't get me wrong, as far as Human's go she is still nuts, but in a much different way than before. I think like me, she missed our furry friends and was pawisively eager to see everyone! Now that she has, thank pawness, she is doing a lot better and so am I.

She has been explaining to everyone that the new space will offer some new stuff for us pups! Something called Doggie Day Care made my ears perk, at first I thought it was something bad. Turns out it is basically like a camp where us pups get together and play! Well that sounds like a good idea to me, with my Human's craziness of late my fellow housemates and I have not been getting the social activities we normally do. So, what is better the going to work with my Human, and seeing my friends to play!

I know that new places can be scary, but sometimes it turns out, you will have more fun than you ever expected! So, come out and see the new place. My Human has mentioned hosting an open house when the weather gets a little warmer (hopefully soon)! So, keep your paw tuned to my articles for updates. It is really good to get to see everyone again!

Submitted by Bosley's mom, Nicole Carfora, CMG, owner of Canine Corral.



How to Protect Your Pet in Cold Weather

Continued from last issue

Antifreeze (Ethylene Glycol) Toxicity

A serious winter danger is antifreeze poisoning. The problem is not limited only to the winter but most commonly occurs in winter, spring and fall when people are draining and flushing their radiators/coolant systems. Antifreeze has a sweet odor and pleasing taste for animals. However, it is extremely toxic and can produce severe, irreversible kidney damage. Only a small amount can be toxic. High blood levels can be reached in 1-3 hours after ingestion, illness develops within 24 hours and death can occur in less than 2 days. Signs of poisoning include, vomiting, abdominal pain, diarrhea, depression, incoordination and staggering. As the disease progresses they may show difficulty breathing, rapid heart rate, lowered body temperature, muscle twitching, convulsions and acute renal failure. The animal becomes drowsy, can go into a coma and die.

If you believe that your pet has been exposed to antifreeze, seek veterinary care immediately. If you wait until symptoms develop irreversible damage may have already occurred and it may be too late. However, this is such a severe condition, that even with proper treatment some animals may not survive. Your veterinarian may have to treat the poisoning with intravenous fluids for 2-3 days and hopefully the treatment will be successful.

The best way to avoid this is to take precautions when using antifreeze and monitor your pet when outside to be sure that it is not lapping up any strange liquids. During the draining of your radiator collect the antifreeze in a container that can be sealed and follow the proper procedure in your community for its disposal. If after changing and filling your radiator check for the presence of antifreeze on the floor or street in your work area. Clean any spills that may have occurred. Such spills are a danger to your pets and any animals that come in contact with it, pet or wildlife. If your neighbor is not following safe practices bring their attention to this potential risk for animals and children. If you have partial containers of unused antifreeze, make sure that they are properly sealed and placed in an area away from pets and children. Antifreezes are now available that are non-toxic and if you are concerned about the potential hazard of antifreeze poisoning these should be used.

Space Heaters

During the winter months we hear of numerous unfortunate fires that are started by space heaters. Space heaters can be dangerous when used around pets. They may chew on the electrical cords causing electrical burns or fraying the cords so they pose a fire hazard. Always check the cords for any unusual signs of wear and tear. An even more serious danger is the possibility that your pets may accidentally knock over the heater leading to the development of a fire. If you are not around to monitor your pets or space heater do not leave it turned on.

Conclusion

Hopefully this discussion will prove helpful to you in the prevention of the unfortunate injuries and deaths that occur in pets during the winter. The sad fact is that these occurrences can be avoided with the implementation of proper precautions. The care of our pets is a great responsibility. They provide us with so much love and affection, we should take the proper steps to insure their health and safety.

Two of the references used for this article were *A Dog for All Seasons* and *A Cat for All Seasons* by Jane Leon. If you desire further information about seasonal hazards in dogs and cats these books are excellent sources.

by Peter S. Sakas DVM, Niles Animal Hospital & Bird Medical Center.
7278 N. Milwaukee Ave. Niles

International Kennel Club of Chicago Dog Show

The Anti-Cruelty Society will have a booth with giveaways and sale items at this years International Kennel Club of Chicago Dog Show from Thursday, February 19th thru Sunday, February 22nd. For more information log on to www.ikcdogshow.com or call Kristin Hanson at (312) 644-8338 ext. 307.

The Anti-Cruelty Society Events

What: 110th Anniversary Celebration

When: Saturday, March 7, 2009 starting at noon

Where: The Anti-Cruelty Society, 510 N. LaSalle

Info: Stop by for give-aways and other goodies or to visit your favorite furry friend, free of charge. Denise Zak, pet intuitive, will be available for pet readings and there will be food and fun activities going on all day long beginning at noon in celebration of our 110 years of service.

Who: The Anti-Cruelty Society

What: The Chicagoland Family Pet Expo

When: March 20, 21 & 22, 2009, Friday - 11am to 6pm, Saturday - 9am to 6pm, Sunday - 9am to 5pm

Where: Arlington Park Racecourse, 2200 W. Euclid Ave., Arlington Heights, IL 60006

The Anti-Cruelty Society will be one of the many booths present and will have sale items from our boutique as well as give-aways for participants. About the expo: The Chicagoland Family Pet Expo is a pet lovers paradise. You can shop for your favorite pet at more than 300 exhibit booths of pet-related products & services. Enjoy entertaining shows and competitions, plus get "up close and personal" with hundreds of pets of all kinds.

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Senior Tax Tips

The following are some important tax tips for seniors to help you both pay as little as possible this year and plan appropriately so you'll pay even less in taxes next year.

Your effective CD interest may be less than you think? CD interest is generally taxable, even if you just roll the interest over and don't use it. For example if you made 4% interest on a CD in 2008 and are in the 25% tax bracket, you will be giving back 25% of that interest to the IRS and an additional 3% to the state. Your effective – After Tax – interest rate would be just 2.88%. In Addition, that CD interest may be pushing your income above one of the Social Security benefit tax thresholds (\$25,000 and \$34,000 for single filers, \$32,000 and \$44,000 for married filing jointly) and causing you to pay more taxes on your Social Security income. This will reduce your after tax CD earnings even further. Have your financial planner or tax professional figure out your actual after-tax CD earnings. When you learn the facts, you may want to make other choices for keeping your money safe.

Are your "tax-free" municipal bonds causing you to give back more of your Social Security benefits? Many people are not aware that their "tax-free" bond earnings are actually counted towards the taxable social security benefit thresholds, and may be causing you to pay more tax. Check with your tax professional or determine if this is the case. As with CD interest, what really counts is not how much you make, it's how much – after tax – you get to keep.

This may be a great year to sell some appreciated stock and not pay capital gains tax. The reduced tax rates on capital gains and dividends are still in effect. If you qualify, you may owe less or NO TAX whatsoever on some or all of your appreciated stock and mutual fund holdings. Check with your tax professional to see if this applies to you. Don't wait. This tax break is almost sure to go away as the Congress grapples with how to raise more money.

Aryeh Goldbloom
President

AGT Tax Advisory Group

The AGT Tax Advisory Group offers a \$49 tax service exclusively for seniors age 55+. Call us with your questions. 847-933-9222

Lenten Menu Ideas

Broccoli Lasagna

Makes 10 servings

- 2 10 3/4 oz. cans condensed cream of broccoli soup
- 1 10 oz. pkg. frozen chopped broccoli
- Salad Oil
- 3 carrots, thinly sliced
- 1 lg. onion, diced
- 3/4 lb. mushrooms, sliced
- 12 lasagna noodles (8 is enough)
- 2 8oz. pkgs. Shredded mozzarella cheese
- 1 15 oz. container ricotta cheese
- 2 lg. eggs.

About 2 1/2 hours before serving:

In 2 qt. saucepan over med-low heat, heat undiluted broccoli soup, frozen broccoli until broccoli is thawed.

In 10" skillet over med-high heat in 1T hot salad oil, cook carrots and onion until lightly browned. Reduce heat to low; stir in 1/4 cup water.

Cover and simmer 15 min. or until

vegetables are very tender; remove to bowl.

In same skillet over high heat, in 3T hot salad oil, cook mushrooms until lightly browned and all liquid has evaporated; stir in carrot mixture.

While veggies. are cooking, prepare noodles as label directs; drain. In bowl, mix mozzarella, ricotta and eggs.

Preheat oven to 375. In 13" x 9" dish spread 1 cup broccoli sauce. Arrange half of noodles over sauce, top with half of cheese mixture, then all the carrot mixture and half remaining sauce. Top with remaining noodles, cheese mixture, then sauce.

Bake 45 min. or until hot. Let stand 10 min. before serving.

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