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*Have a Very Merry
Christmas, A Happy and
Prosperous New Year
From Village Publications*



Attend the Grand Chanukah Menorah Lighting on Dec. 18

On Thursday, December 18, community members are invited to join Evanston Mayor Elizabeth B. Tisdahl and other civic, business and community leaders at Fountain Square, located on Davis St. between Orrington and Sherman Avenues, for the Grand Chanukah Menorah Lighting event beginning at 5:30 p.m.

The ceremony will celebrate the triumph of light over darkness, good over evil, and freedom of conscience over oppression. Attendees will enjoy musical entertainment and free refreshments.

The free event is hosted by Tannenbaum Chabad House. For more information about the menorah lighting, please call 847-866-2914.



11th Year of Holiday Trees and Displays in Pappas' Office

Reflecting Chicagoland's ethnic diversity, holiday trees and cultural displays decorated and mounted by some 90 religious and ethnic groups are on display through the holiday season in the office of Cook County Treasurer Maria Pappas.

This is the 11th year of "Holiday Trees from Around the World," on display for public viewing to January 9, 2015, in Room 112 of the Cook County Building, 118 N. Clark St., Chicago.

Sponsoring groups and individuals decorated three-foot-high Christmas trees in ways that show their own cultural traditions. In addition, displays from African American, Hindu and Jewish traditions and a Christian Nativity scene stand on counters through the Treasurer's Office.

Pappas noted that with the traditional ornaments and tinsel, the trees have animals, flowers, fruit, balls, candles, plates, boats, stars and flags.

"These trees and cultural displays show the great diversity of Cook County, one of the nation's most diverse regions," Pappas said. The countries and traditions represent include:

African American, Albania, Armenia, Assyrian, Australia, Austria, Bahamas, Bangladesh, Barbados, Barbie, Belarus, Belgium, Belize, Bolivia, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Brazil, Bulgaria, Canada, Canada-Quebec, Carpatho-Rusyn, China, Colombia, Cornwall, Costa Rica, Croatia, Cuba, Denmark, Ecuador, Egypt, El Salvador, Estonia, Ethiopia, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Guatemala, Haiti, Honduras, Hungary, India, India Catholic, Indonesia, Iran, Ireland, Italy, Jamaica, Japan, Korea, Laos, Latvia, Lebanon, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Macedonia, Mexico, Native American, Nepal, Nigeria, Northern Ireland, Pakistan, Panama, Peru, Philippines, Poland, Puerto Rico, Romania, Russia, Scotland, Senegal, Serbia, Slovakia, Slovenia, South Africa, Sweden, Switzerland, Syria, Taiwan, Thailand, Turkey, Ukraine, United States, Uruguay, Vietnam, Wales.



Winter BEGINS December 21st

ST. THECLA CHURCH

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Confessions:

- Saturdays 4:00pm - 4:45pm
- Sunday Dec. 21st
11:30 - 3:00pm

Spowiedz:

- Niedziela (po polsku)
11:00 do 11:25am
- W niedziele 21 grudnia,
spowiedz po polsku od
11:30 - 3:00pm

Christmas Eve Family Mass at 4:00pm

- Christmas caroling starts at 3:45pm

Christmas Solemn Night Mass at 10:00pm (in English)

- Christmas caroling starts at 9:45pm

Koledowanie at 11:45pm & Pasterka 12:00am

Christmas Morning Masses in English 8:00 & 10:00am

Msza Swieta o 11:30am (Po polsku)



**Mike's Barber Shop accepting donations
of new, unwrapped toys until December 23
773-775-2771 • 6680 Northwest Highway, Chicago**

Tis the Season
to be Jolly



The Taft High School Choir

GET IN THE HOLIDAY SPIRIT AND JOIN US FOR AN EVENING OF FUN!

Starting at 6:30pm there will be an outdoor Christmas tree lighting with Hot Chocolate to keep you warm! Holiday caroling by the Taft High School Choir followed by a full-length (indoor) holiday concert at 7:30pm.

Light refreshments provided inside the train station following the Tree Lighting. Goodwill donation to be taken for the Taft High School Music Department.

Co-sponsored by the Norwood Park Chamber of Commerce and Friendship Presbyterian Church with special thanks to Norwood Crossing for providing the Christmas tree and hot cocoa!

Friday December 19th starting @ 6:30pm
at the Norwood Park Metra Station [6088 N Northwest Hwy]

Friendship Presbyterian Church
sponsors a free concert the third Friday of every month.
For more information visit our website fpccchicago.org



St. Paul Lutheran Church

Christmas Eve Worship Services December 24

Holy Communion at all Services
7:00PM - Candlelight Service
11:00PM Candlelight Service
Christmas Day Worship

December 25

10:00AM Service - Holy Communion

5650 N. Canfield Avenue, Chicago (Norwood Park)
708/867-5044

Niles Township Food Pantry Serves Record Number

Tony Araque, Manager of the Niles Township Food Pantry, reported to the Niles Township Government Board that a record number of clients were served during the Thanksgiving food distribution.

Over 4,600 individuals were reported to have been served during the food distributions held on November 17 and November 18.

The Food Pantry is expecting a similar number of clients being served during their Holiday food distribution on December 15 and December 16.

The costs of serving this record number of clients has strained the resources of the Niles Township Food Pantry Foundation, the 501C-3 charitable corporation, which pays for the food distributed by the Niles Township Food Pantry.



Contributions to the Niles Township Food Pantry Foundation can be made by dropping a donation, or mailing a donation, to the Niles Township Food

Pantry Foundation at 5255 Main, Skokie, IL. 60077.

Visit us at www.nilestownshipgov.com or like us on Facebook.



Ed McElroy, host of "Community in Focus" TV show, recently interviewed Tony Fornelli, Publisher of *Fra Noi* and John Chandler, Vice President of St. Ignatius High School.

The show will air on Friday, December 19th at 5 p.m. and again on Sunday, December 21st, at 12 noon on Senior Network Can TV, Channel 19.

McElroy is Past National Commander of the Catholic War Veterans, USA.

Pictured from the left are Tony Fornelli, Ed McElroy and John Chandler.

Proud Of Our Past, Focused On Our Future

We need your support to preserve German American heritage

Share History

There is no better sight on the staff calendar than the days a tour group is scheduled. It isn't unusual to have 110 visitors in a single day. They come by bus, see the entire center from the Bismarck and train models to the gallery and museum, have a meal at Chicago Brauhaus, visit the Berlin Wall installation, and the Hamburg street lamp. From seniors to high schoolers to cub scouts and families visiting the old neighborhood, we welcome them all!



Share Language

Everywhere we go, we run into someone who has attended Kinderschule over the last 50 years. Even the salesperson at the printshop! Sommercamp had triple the number of campers this year. The theme was Deutschland Reise and all their activities took them on a pretend trip through the 16 states: visiting the Berlin Wall, baking Bavarian pretzels, and building ships for Hamburg. It was so fun having them all over the center and hearing them speak so much German by the final days.

Share Experiences

To come together over a fantastic meal or for an amazing performance with other people is such an important time. There are at least 5 musical programs each year in the center, celebrating the wide range of German and Austrian classical masterpieces. The artists infuse so much energy into the works and you can see the audiences truly immerse themselves. The same is true of the culinary arts programs. Cooking foods passed down from generation to generation is a wonderful and daily way for people to learn about their heritage.

How we do it

Our docents and instructors keep German on the top of the mind and the tip of the tongue. Be it through reading groups, exhibit tours, lectures, or cooking demonstrations, there is hardly a day that passes at the center without an opportunity to get into German. From 8 months old to over 80, you have a place! Four full-time staff and 14 instructors coordinate the efforts of 240 volunteers and 180 students. We operate with a lean budget and a can-do attitude. More and more individuals are helping us preserve and promote German American Culture in Chicagoland. As a result, we are able to increase programming and educational offerings at low to zero cost for the public!

On the third Friday of every month the DANK Haus hosts a Stammtisch on the 6th floor in the beautiful Skyline Lounge. We invite everyone to the Haus to catch up with old friends and to make new ones. Alle sind Willkommen!

DANK HAUS
GERMAN AMERICAN
CULTURAL CENTER

4740 N. Western Avenue
773/561-9181 • www.dankhaus.com
Chicago's German home, Lincoln Square.



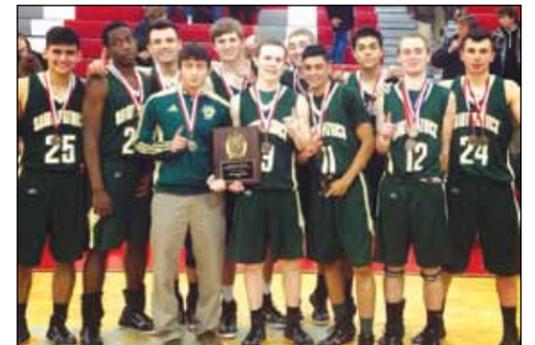
Statement From Mayor Emanuel On The Passing Of Illinois Comptroller Judy Barr-Topinka

"I was deeply saddened to learn of the passing of Comptroller Judy Baar Topinka. Judy had a passion for serving the people of Illinois that equaled her passion for life. For more than three decades, she brought a relentless work ethic, a determination to attack our state's fiscal challenges, and a sense of humor and smile that brightened the day of anyone in her path. As the first woman to serve as Illinois Treasurer, she will always have a special place in the history of our state. The thoughts and prayers of the City of Chicago are with Judy's son Joseph and her staff members, and her many friends during this difficult time."

Guards Power The Shamrocks Over Hersey For Thanksgiving Championship

Story by Greg Swiderski '72, and Ed Duffy

Saint Patrick won the championship of the Kurland/Schnurr Thanksgiving Tournament 59-39 over a talented Hersey squad Friday night at Niles West. The Shamrocks came out strong against Hersey with a initial 9-0 run, and after the first quarter St. Patrick led 16-4. Sr. Adrian Pierzchanowski, scored 6 points and Sr. Andres (Andy) Velazquez scored 5 in the quarter. At half



time the Shamrocks had doubled their lead on the Huskies (3-1) at 26-13. Hersey made a late run to get within 51-39 with 4:12 left in the game, but the Shamrocks hit 6 of 8 free throws in a 8-0 run to shut the door and come away with the championship. Sr. Nicholas (Nick) Coleman was named the tournament MVP, and Sr. Andres Pierzchanowski and Sr. Duncan White were named to the all tournament team.

Coach Mike Bailey was enthusiastic about the team's performance. "We played real good teams like Simeon over the summer and I think that toughened us up. Andy set the tempo for us on both backboards today," said coach Bailey. "He's been playing with a lot of intensity. On offense, Nick Coleman led the charge by doing a lot of different things for us. He only scored 6 points but he helped get the others in position for open shots. To continue to be successful this year we have to rebound and play good defense."

The Shamrocks displayed a lot of confidence in their victory over Hersey. Andy Velazquez, who scored 15 points and had 6 rebounds in the win, said "Last year my family told me that every time I had the ball I looked a little scared," said Velazquez. "This year I feel like I'm playing with more confidence like 'the eye of the tiger.'" Nick Coleman, now in his fourth year playing with the varsity team says the team's confidence has never been higher. "This year we are veteran team and we have a lot of confidence in each other. In the title game, it was important for us to come out fast in the first and third quarters. We had to play good defense on their shooters and block out underneath."

To get to the title game, the Shamrocks (4-0) defeated Phillips 67-47, Hyde Park 55-42, and Douglas 86-20. The Shamrocks are back in action against Immaculate-Conception Friday night on the 'Kurland Court.' Sunday afternoon they will have a rematch with the St. Charles North Stars at 12:00 pm at Ridgewood.

Chanukah Party And Puppet Show At Ezra-Habonim, The Niles Township Jewish Congregation

The public is invited to a gala Chanukah party and puppet show, sponsored by the Men's Club of Ezra-Habonim, the Niles Township Jewish Congregation, 4500 W. Dempster, Skokie, Sunday, December 21, starting at 10:30 a.m.

Admission is free and open to kids of all ages.

Entertainment for the morning is puppeteer Dave Herzog and his Marionettes, who are dedicated to preserving the uniquely American art form of the marionette variety show. Dave creates all of the beautiful hand carved marionettes used in his dazzling performances. He has been involved in the art of puppetry since receiving a toy marionette from his father when he was four years old.

As a full time professional puppeteer for 40 years Dave has performed thousands of shows in theaters, amusement parks, schools, and libraries nationwide. Refreshments will be available for purchase after the performance.

For further information or for reservations, please call the office of Ezra-Habonim, the Niles Township Jewish Congregation, 847-675-4141.

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WANTED

TO BUY:

- Old Holiday Items
- Old Costume Jewelry
- Old "Pretty" Things (Purses, Hats, etc.)

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City Reminds Chicagoans To Drive Safely During Holiday Season

As the year comes to a close, the Chicago Department of Transportation (CDOT) reminds everyone to drive safely, obey traffic signals and adhere to posted speed limits. To illustrate the danger of disobeying traffic laws, CDOT today released video from automated enforcement cameras of crashes that resulted from drivers running red lights this year. The video can be viewed at: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=w8NwUrqcrow&feature=youtu.be>

"Chicagoans can stay safe this holiday season by driving safely, sober, without distractions and obeying the rules of the road," said CDOT Commissioner Rebekah Scheinfeld. "These videos show the real danger of running red lights. Automated red light enforcement cameras are an important tool in our effort to prevent serious injuries, save lives and help Chicago's families avoid the emotional and financial burdens caused by vehicle crashes."

There are nearly 80,000 crashes in Chicago each year, 15,000 of which result in injuries, which is more than 40 crashes with injuries each day. About 3,000 crashes involve

pedestrians. On average, 125 Chicagoans are killed each year in vehicle crashes across the city.

Chicago's red light camera program, which has been operational since 2003, works to encourage drivers to obey red light signals to increase public safety. From 2005 to 2012 at the 174 intersections that currently have cameras, the number of crashes resulting in an injury or fatality was 22 percent lower, and crashes involving pedestrians were 23 percent lower, according to data provided by the Illinois Department of Transportation (IDOT).

Last year, CDOT conducted a review of the performance of red light cameras after the annual release of IDOT data, and for the first time in the program, removed 32 cameras from operation at 16 intersections which had seen a significant reduction in serious crashes.

As 2013 IDOT crash data – the most recent data available – is released, CDOT will again conduct a year-end review of red light camera performance to evaluate the program and consider removing or relocating cameras to where they

would be more effective in increasing safety and decreasing the number of crashes, injuries and fatalities.

The City's automated enforcement programs are only one part of the "toolbox" CDOT uses to enhance traffic safety for all Chicagoans, including:

- Pedestrian refuge islands in crosswalks
- Safety zone signage and street stencils
- High-visibility crosswalk markings
- Speed feedback signs
- Speed humps
- Traffic signal improvements
- Curb and ramp improvements
- Pedestrian countdown timers
- Lead pedestrian intervals
- In-street "Stop for Pedestrians" signs
- Bike and Pedestrian Safety Ambassadors
- Targeted enforcement events with Chicago Police

City Launches Two Consumer Protection Campaigns On Credit Fraud

Business Affairs and Consumer Protection Educates the Public of Free Ways to Fix Credit Reports and Tools to Research Reporting Agencies

As the holiday season approaches, more people will be using their credit cards. To help consumers stay safe, the City of Chicago's Department of Business Affairs and Consumer Protection (BACP) has launched two consumer protection campaigns to ensure consumers know their rights when it comes to their credit report and ways to avoid becoming victims of fraud.

"The City of Chicago protects consumers from fraud by resolving complaints and taking action against fraudulent businesses," said Commissioner Maria Guerra Lapacek of Business Affairs and Consumer Protection. "We also take a proactive approach by promoting consumer awareness through educational campaigns to help people protect themselves and their credit."

The dual campaign is made up of Know Your Credit Report and Know How to Fix Your Credit Report.

Know Your Credit Report informs consumers:

- About the information that may be contained in their report,
- That they are entitled to a free credit report every 12 months,
- On how to deal with bad credit,
- On activating a fraud alert on accounts.

Know How to Fix Your Credit Report brings awareness to:

- What credit repair companies are required to provide,
- What credit repair cannot do,

- Consumer protection tips,
- Seeking reputable credit counseling assistance,
- Disputing inaccurate information on your credit report.

The campaign also provides contact information for several organizations that can help with credit issues, which includes calling 311 and filling a complaint with Business Affairs and Consumer Protection.

To minimize your risk of becoming a victim of identity theft during black Friday and this holiday season, follow these basic guidelines:

- If you are asked to disclose personal information, ask the requester how the information will be used and if they will share your information with anyone else.
- Know when your mail gets delivered and pick it up as soon as possible. Consider purchasing a secure mailbox that is difficult for thieves to gain access to. Never allow your mail to build up while you are out of town.
- Know when your bills are due to arrive. If they are late, contact your creditors.
- Keep your personal information and all items containing your personal information (such as account statements, receipts, and forms) in a secure location. When you no longer need these items, tear them up before throwing them away.
- Leave your Social Security card in a safe place. Do not disclose your Social Security number unless it is absolutely necessary.

Only carry the identification and credit cards you need. Leave the rest in a secure location. The Department of Business Affairs and Consumer Protection ensures a fair and vibrant market place for both businesses and consumers. BACP licenses businesses and public vehicles, provides free business education and access to resources, enforces the Municipal Code, and protects consumers from fraud. Learn more about BACP at www.cityofchicago.org/BACP.

Free Legal Advice - Saturday, December 20TH

Attorneys with the Chicago Bar Association's Call-A-Lawyer program will be taking calls on Saturday, December 20th, from 9 a.m. to noon at no cost. Call (312) 554-2001 to speak with an attorney about any legal question or issue.

Callers may explain their situations to an attorney who will then suggest self-help strategies to resolve their legal issues. If callers need further legal services, they will be advised to see their own attorney or, if they wish to hire a lawyer, to contact the CBA Lawyer Referral Service (LRS).

The LRS has over 300 prescreened, qualified lawyers experienced in almost every area of law. Meeting the American Bar Association's Standards for Lawyer Referral, the service has some of the highest experience requirements for its member attorneys in the entire nation.

Call-A-Lawyer events are held from 9 a.m. to 12 p.m. on the third Saturday of each month. The number to call is (312) 554-2001.

When contacting the LRS during normal business hours, callers can be referred to attorneys practicing in over 40 different areas of law including:

- Domestic Relations (including divorce, custody, support and other family law matters);
- Personal Injury (including auto accidents, slip and falls, products liability, wrongful death, malpractice and other types of injury cases);
- Estate Planning (including will drafting, trusts, probate and will contests);
- Real Estate (including buying or selling real estate, foreclosure defense, and landlord tenant issues);
- Employment Law (including wrongful termination, harassment and discrimination); and
- Numerous other areas of law.

About the Chicago Bar Association

Founded in 1874, The Chicago Bar Association is one of the largest and oldest municipal bar associations in the United States. With 21,000 members, the CBA serves the profession and the public through a variety of education, charitable and service initiatives.

Resurrection Entrance Exam And Shadow Days

Resurrection College Prep High School invites eighth grade girls to take the Class of 2019 Entrance Exam on Saturday, January 10, 2015 from 7:45 am to 12:30 pm. No pre-registration is necessary – students should bring #2 pencils and a \$25 testing fee. Lunch will be provided following the exam. Students testing at Resurrection are eligible for the Top 10 Tester Scholarship and additional scholarship opportunities.

Parents are welcome to attend a Parent Information Session in the Resurrection Library at 8 am on the day of the Entrance Exam. Parents can learn about the curriculum and programs at Resurrection, including AP and college credit classes, technology initiatives, the advantages of single gender education and block scheduling and the unique Resurrection Practicum/Job Shadowing Program. Information will also be presented about athletics, tuition assistance and scholarship opportunities.

Shadow Days are available for girls to spend the day at Resurrection to experi-

ence the school first-hand. Eighth grade girls may shadow on select days and seventh grade girls are invited to a special "Experience Res" Day on Friday, February 13, 2015. Shadow registration and additional information is available on the Resurrection website at www.reshs.org or by contacting Nancy O'Leary at noleary@reshs.org or 773.775.6616 Ext 129. Information regarding limited accommodations on the Entrance Exam may be discussed with Lorie Martinez at lmartinez@reshs.org or 773.775.6616.

Resurrection College Prep High School, located at 7500 West Talcott Avenue in Chicago, is the largest all girls' Catholic, Christian college preparatory high school for young women on the north side of Chicago. Since its founding in 1922, Resurrection has graduated over 13,500 alumnae. For more information about Resurrection College Prep High School, call 773.775.6616 Ext 129 or visit www.reshs.org.



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Willkommen 2015 in a blaze of sequins, guitars and flaming punch!

New Year's Eve Fundraiser

Sliding into the new year accompanied by The Polkaholics has become a tradition on New Years Eve at DANK Haus.

The Polkaholics' repertoire is filled with songs that are all about FUN! Their glittery outfits and wild showmanship create an unforgettable party atmosphere. The songs are a collision of polka and punk and will make you sing along to tunes while dancing your shoes off.

And what would be a New Years Eve party at the DANK Haus without the traditional Feuerzangenbowle. Arrive early and you will see a tasting of a sugar cone soaked in rum, lit on fire and melted over a spice wine. Did anybody say vorglühen?

Welcoming 2015 at DANK Haus will also not break your bank and we are selling bottles of German bubbly (750 ml bottle) for only \$30. Tables will have plenty of hats, tiaras, and noisemakers. Look for our signature cocktail - The Silvesterball, specially priced.

Moment mal, there's more! Each entrance includes raffle ticket to win an Epiphone guitar from The Polkaholics!

Early bird tickets are \$10.00 for the first 200 guests, then only \$20.00 thereafter.

Presales at <http://www.brownpapertickets.com>

All tickets at the door are \$25. Attendees must be 21 years and older!

EVENT DETAILS

Wednesday December 31 2014 @ 9:00 pm – 1:30 am

DANK Haus, 4740 North Western Avenue, Chicago IL 60625.

DANK Haus is located 1/2 block from the Western Brown Line stop.

THE POLKAHOLICS



4740 N. Western Avenue
773/561-9181 • www.dankhaus.com.
Chicago's German home, Lincoln Square.

Millennium Park's Ice Rink Is Now Open

The McCormick-Tribune Ice Rink in Millennium Park opened on Friday, November 14, and will remain open through Saturday, March 7, 2015, weather permitting. For more than a decade, the rink has drawn over 100,000 skaters annually and is free and open to the public. The rink, located on Michigan Avenue between Washington and Madison Streets, offers skate rentals.

The McCormick Tribune Ice Rink will operate under the following hours:

- Monday-Thursday: Noon-8pm
- Friday: Noon-10pm
- Saturday (Through Jan. 3): 10am-10pm
- Saturday (Beginning Jan. 10): 10am-9pm
- Sunday: 10am-9pm

For more information about events in Millennium Park during the winter months, visit millenniumpark.org or call 312.744-3316. Like us on Facebook and follow us on Twitter, @Millennium_Park.



City Wide Ice Rinks

The Chicago Blackhawks sponsor the Chicago Park District's ice rinks which remain open through February 23rd (weather permitting). All rinks will be closed on December 25th for Christmas Day.

New this year, most rinks will feature programming, including pick-up hockey games. Please contact the individual Northside parks listed below for lists of schedules and fees or call the Chicago Park District at 312/742-7529. you may also visit www.chicagoparkdistrict.com.

Indoor Rink McFetridge Sports Center at California Park: 3843 N. California Avenue, 773/478-2609

Outdoor Rinks Riis Park: 6100 W. Fullerton Avenue, 312/746-5735
Warren Park: 6601 N. Western Avenue, 773/761-8663



Anti-Cruelty Society

For more info on The Anti-Cruelty Society and our adoption process, please visit our website www.anticruelty.org or call (312) 644-8338.

Winter Weather Brings Challenges for Pet Owners

The early cold snaps of the past few weeks should serve as a reminder to pet owners that special precautions should be made for health and welfare of their dogs and cats as winter gets under way.

Dr. Donna Alexander, Administrator of the Cook County Department of Animal and Rabies Control, offered a number of tips for pet owners to keep in mind during winter and the upcoming holidays.

"Given that this is only December, and we realistically have several months of severe weather ahead of us, it is important for pet owners to remember that they should adjust their pets' normal routine," Alexander said. "Prolonged exposure to cold, snow and ice can be as dangerous for dogs and cats as it is for humans."

Among her recommendations:

- Bring all pets indoors. All dogs and cats, whether acclimated to outdoor living, must be brought indoors during sub-zero weather. Even creatures of the wild seek shelter when temperatures plummet. As the responsible caregiver of a pet, you should provide an indoor heated shelter for your animal. Despite their abundance of hair, all domesticated dogs and cats are subject to frostbite and hypothermia.

- Salt and ice. Both salt and ice can irritate your dog's footpads. If your dog will tolerate them, foot coverings are advised. If your dog will not tolerate foot coverings, avoid the salt when possible and wash their paws with warm water when you return home. Walking the dog in the snow as opposed to the salted sidewalk may be advisable, but in extreme low temperatures this could add to frostbite concerns.

- Frostbite. Dogs and cats may have fur coats but they also have exposed areas that are susceptible to frostbite. Limit their time outdoors for waste elimination only. Walks should not exceed 10 minutes in sub-zero temperatures. Check their pads when you get home and wash with warm (not hot) moist towels. If you suspect frostbite on any extremity (don't forget the nose or the tips of the ears) contact your veterinarian.

- Properly secure potentially poisonous material, such as antifreeze. Antifreeze is extremely toxic to all living creatures. It is sweet to the taste but even a drop can be lethal. Keep antifreeze bottles out of the reach of animals and clean up all antifreeze spills immediately.

Feral cats and wild animals will seek refuge and warmth wherever they can, Dr. Alexander said. A car's engine, for example, may provide a warm spot to "hole up" in sub-zero conditions.

"Honk your horn before you start your car to give a wake-up call to any critters before you turn on the ignition," she advised. "If an animal has chosen your attic, your garage or even space under a deck as refuge, close off access to the rest of the house. Contact local officials for their removal but be prepared for an assessment of your home for its accessibility to wildlife intrusion."

Dr. Alexander also reminded pet owners that they should have an established doctor-patient-client relationship with a veterinarian close to home and establish an emergency protocol.

"If your pet is receiving ongoing prescription treatment, make sure you have adequate amounts in case of closures due to weather," Alexander said. "Know where your closest emergency veterinary clinic is located or the policies of your primary care veterinarian regarding emergencies."

SPECIAL HOLIDAY TIPS FOR PETS:

- No treats from the table: There are many food items consumed by humans that may prove toxic to animals. No chocolate, stuffing containing sage, grapes or raisins should be given to any pets.

- Keep Christmas decorations safe: Tinsel and poinsettias can be toxic. If you are able, elevate your Christmas decorations above the grasp of your pet. Better yet, surround your tree with animal barricade such as child-proof fencing.

- Provide a safe haven for pets: Create a quiet spot for your pets where they can get away from the seasonal merriment. Acclimate them to their safe haven by placing familiar smells (blankets, pillows) or toys in the area you have designated. When guests arrive, make sure they are aware that this "pet secure" area should not be disturbed.

- Display rabies tags on collars and secure egress: Dogs and cats can become bewildered by the increase number of holiday guests and often try to escape. Remind your guests to close doors when entering or leaving and to secure gates. Make sure that your animal is wearing identification in case of escape.

Arbor Day Specialty Coffee – A Unique And Memorable Holiday Gift That Gives Back

Every Cup Saves Irreplaceable Rain Forest and Supports Coffee Farming Families

Celebrate this year's holiday season with friends and loved ones while supporting conservation and tree planting with the help of the Arbor Day Foundation.

The Arbor Day Foundation offers a unique holiday giving opportunity with conservation benefits that will endure for generations, all made possible through the purchase of quality, sustainable, shade-grown Arbor Day Specialty Coffee.

Protecting rain forests and farmers, Arbor Day Specialty Coffee is part of the Arbor Day Foundation Rain Forest Rescue program. Each cup helps to preserve irreplaceable rain forests that are home to many plant and animal species which are vital to our way of life. In addition, the purchase of Arbor Day Specialty Coffee helps to ensure a fair wage and access to healthcare and education for the coffee farming families in Latin America.

One example of rain forest farmers and families benefitting from Arbor Day Specialty coffee is that of Artemia Rojas Castillo. Artemia supports her Peruvian family by farming shade-grown coffee. She began growing coffee with her husband on their tree-covered farm at the foot of a mountain in Cajones, Peru, more than two decades ago. They worked hard together building their farm and nurturing their coffee plants in the shade of the rain forest so the crop could sustain them and their five children.

When her husband passed away, Artemia continued on with coffee farming. Because of the higher price she earns for the superior shade-grown crop, she is able to support her family. "For us, it is a very important plant," she said. "It brings us everything. We have all seen this. To take care of our children and educate them. It

is the most important plant that we have."

She sees coffee not only as a way to support her family. It is also vital to her community. "For all of the community, for them it is life. It is the plant that does everything for us. It's food, it's happiness—all of it. It is life."

Artemia has a clear appreciation for the role the rain forest trees play in her coffee farm—shielding the plants from the harsh summer sun, providing nutrients and allowing the coffee to mature slowly for a richer flavor. She also understands the need to maintain the rain forest from a larger ecological standpoint as well. She spoke of the importance of conserving the trees and how her land is rich with birds that she enjoys hearing while she farms.

Two of Artemia's children remain with her today, working beside her in the coffee fields. They will carry on the tradition of growing coffee under the canopy of the rain forest.

Arbor Day Specialty Coffee helps protect the planet's critical remaining rain forests and the communities that call them home. Arbor Day Specialty Coffee makes a measureable difference to people and the planet.

Arbor Day Specialty Coffee is available at arborday.org/coffee

About the Arbor Day Foundation: The Arbor Day Foundation, founded in 1972 on the centennial of the first Arbor Day, is a million member nonprofit conservation and education organization with the mission to inspire people to plant, nurture, and celebrate trees.

More information about the Foundation and its programs is available at arborday.org.

Holiday Traditions

Christmas Around the World

(excerpts taken from the World Book, 1999 Edition)

Christmas is a Christian holiday that celebrates the birth of Jesus Christ. No one knows the exact date of Christ's birth, but most Christians observe Christmas on December 25. On this day, many go to church, where they take part in special religious services. During the Christmas season, they also exchange gifts and decorate their homes with holly, mistletoe, and Christmas trees. The word Christmas comes from *Cristes mæsse*, an early English phrase that means Mass of Christ.

The word Xmas is sometimes used instead of Christmas. This tradition began in the early Christian church. In Greek, X is the first letter of Christ's name. It was frequently used as a holy symbol.

Many people attend church services on Christmas Eve or Christmas morning. Churches are decorated with evergreen branches, red poinsettias, and scenes of the Nativity. Churchgoers listen to readings from the Bible and join in singing Christmas carols.

Christmas is the happiest and busiest time of the year for millions of Christians throughout the world. People of different countries celebrate the holiday in various ways, depending on national and local customs.

In the United States and Canada, people decorate their homes with Christmas trees, wreaths, and ornaments. City streets sparkle with colored lights, and the sound of bells and Christmas carols fills the air.

A traditional Christmas dinner includes stuffed turkey, mashed potatoes, cranberry sauce, and a variety of other dishes. Some families have ham or roast goose instead of turkey. Favorite desserts include mince pie or pumpkin pie, plum pudding, and fruitcake. Eggnog is a popular Christmas beverage in many homes.

In some parts of the United States and Canada, various ethnic groups observe Christmas customs of their ancestors. For example, Spanish traditions are popular in the Southwestern United States. Many families in the province of Quebec follow French customs. Some black Americans combine Christmas with Kwanzaa, an Afro-American holiday. Kwanzaa lasts seven days, from December 26 through January 1. Each day, families light a candle symbolizing one of seven principles, including creativity, faith, and unity.

The cultural celebrations of Christmas are as varied as the groups themselves. The following is a sampling of those traditions.

In the British Isles. On Christmas Eve, children hang up stockings for Father Christmas, the British version of Santa Claus, to fill with presents. On the afternoon of Christmas Day, most British families watch their monarch give a special Christmas message on television. In England, dinner on Christmas Day features roast turkey and dessert of mince pie and plum pudding.

Visitors sing carols in return for a drink from the wassail bowl. The bowl contains hot punch made from ale, apples, eggs, sugar, and spices. The word wassail comes from *Was Haile*, an old Saxon greeting that means "Be Healthy."

In Ireland, people put a lighted candle in their window on Christmas Eve as a sign of welcome to Mary and Joseph.

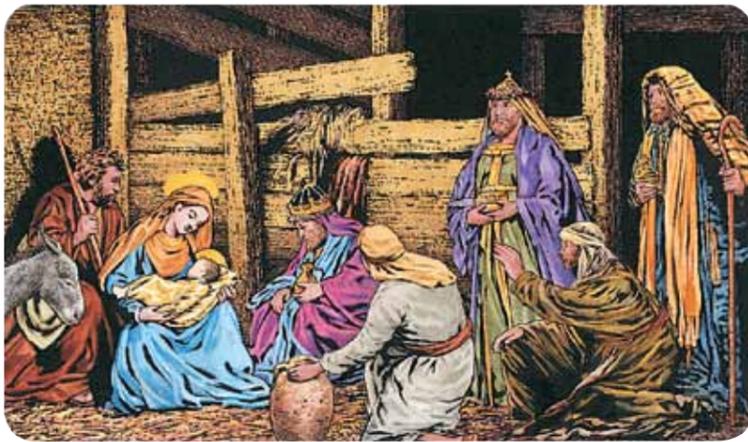
Most Scottish families decorate a Christmas tree and sing carols, but most hold their main celebrations on New Year's Day.

In France, children put their shoes in front of the fireplace so Pere Noel (Father Christmas) can fill them with gifts. Many families attend midnight Mass and then have a festive supper called *Le reveillon*. Large numbers of French families also decorate their homes with small Nativity scenes. In these scenes, clay figures called *santons* (little saints) portray the story of Jesus' birth.

In Germany, Saint Nicholas visits children's homes on St. Nicholas Eve, December 5, and delivers candy and other sweets to be opened on December 6, St. Nicholas Day. Most German families have a Christmas tree that they decorate with lights, tinsel, and ornaments. Spicy cakes called *lebkuchen* are made in various shapes and used as decorations.

The "*Christmas Tree*" dates back to medieval times in Germany and was introduced in America by the German immigrants who settled here. Most countries now have some form of the tree as wreaths or boughs, decorated with red and green. Evergreens symbolize the strength of life over the forces of winter. Each culture has its own decorating techniques, but a star at the top of the tree is a constant, representing the Star of Bethlehem which led the magi to the Christ Child.

The Christkindl (Christ Child) Market first originated in Nuremberg, Germany, and



has become a popular tradition in many parts of the world during the weeks before Christmas. People of all nationalities buy their special holiday gifts, decorations and foods. The Market is held outdoors and is a festive gathering place for sharing good times, music and togetherness.

In Spain, people dance and sing in the streets after midnight Mass on Christmas Eve. Most Spanish homes and churches display a miniature Nativity scene called a *Nacimiento*. During the evening of January 5, children put their shoes on a balcony or near a window. The next day is Epiphany, the last day of the Christmas season. It celebrates the visit of the Magi to the infant Jesus. According to legend, the Wise Men arrive during the night before Epiphany and fill the children's shoes with small gifts.

In the Netherlands, Belgium, and Luxembourg, according to legend, Saint Nicholas gives presents to children on St. Nicholas Eve, December 5, which they open on December 6, St. Nicholas Day. Wearing a red robe, he arrives on a boat from Spain and rides down the streets on a white horse. His servant, Swarte Piet (Black Pete), accompanies him. Saint Nicholas goes down the chimney of each house and leaves gifts in shoes that the children have put by the fireplace.

In Italy, most homes and churches have a *presepio* (Nativity scene). On Christmas Eve, the family prays while the mother places a figure of the Bambino (Christ child) in the manger. Many Italians serve eels and other fish dishes for dinner on Christmas Eve. They also bake a Christmas bread called *Panettone*, which contains raisins and candied fruit. Italian children receive gifts from *La Befana*, a kindly old witch, on the eve of Epiphany.

In Poland, people attend *Pasterka* (Shepherd's Mass) at midnight on Christmas Eve. Many Polish families follow the Christmas tradition of breaking an *oplatek*, a thin wafer made of wheat flour and water. Nativity scenes are stamped on the *oplatek*. The head of the family holds the wafer, and each person breaks off a small piece and eats it. The Christmas Eve meal features fish, sauerkraut, potato pancakes, and beet soup.

In Denmark, Norway, and Sweden, Christmas dinner includes rice pudding, called *julgrøt*, which has an almond in it. According to tradition, whoever gets the almond will have good luck throughout the new year.

In some countries, especially Britain, France and the Scandinavian nations, many families burned a Yule log at Christmastime. The log was a large piece of a tree trunk, and people kept an unburned part of it to light the next year's log. Early Europeans believed the unburned wood had magic powers. It was thought that bad luck would follow if the Yule log fire went out.

In Latin America, the nine days before Christmas have special importance in Mexico. These days are called *posadas*, which means inns or lodgings. On each day, Mexicans reenact Mary and Joseph's search for lodgings on the first Christmas Eve. After each *posada* ceremony, Mexicans feast and celebrate. Children enjoy trying to break the *piñata*, a brightly decorated paper or clay figure containing candy and small gifts.

In Asia there are relatively small numbers of Christians, and so Christmas is not widely celebrated there, but in the Philippines people attend *Misas de Gallo* (Masses of the Cock), which are celebrated early each morning the nine days before Christmas. On Christmas Eve, Filipinos parade through the streets carrying colorful star-shaped lanterns called *parols*. These lanterns are also displayed in the windows of most homes.

On Christmas Eve, Christians from throughout the world gather for midnight Mass in Bethlehem, the town near Jerusalem where Jesus was born. They kneel to kiss the silver star that is set in the ground at the spot where Jesus' birth is believed to have taken place.

The traditional colors of Christmas are green and red. Green represents the continuance of life through the winter and the Christian belief in eternal life through Christ. Red symbolizes the blood that Jesus shed at His Crucifixion. Christmas decorations that feature these colors include the Christmas tree, the Christmas wreath, holly, and mistletoe.

The first Christmas card, was created in 1843 by John Calcott Horsley, an English illustrator. It featured a drawing of a family enjoying Christmas together. Smaller drawings on the card showed people helping the needy. About 1,000 copies of Horsley's card were sold. Today, of course, millions of people send greetings to family and friends by way of Christmas and Seasons Greetings cards sent through the mail.

No matter how one celebrates Christmas, it is a time of year when we feel charity toward our fellow man. The spirit of the season has always evoked joy, peace and good will.



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Waiting Or Preparing For Christmas

By: Rev. Francis S. Rog, C.R.

Catholics – and most Christians – begin the season of Advent (four weeks before Christmas). At the same time most people are WAITING for Christmas from Black Friday: see the great number of newspaper pages filled with pre-Christmas sales – sales for anything and everything. Some stores were opened from midnight or 3 a.m. ... and people were WAITING.

This followed with cyber Monday sales. Is this the season to SHOP for CHRISTMAS?

Some wait to see the Nativity scene erected in the church or at its front lawn ... the Christ in the stable ... in the straw ... in a feeding trough.

But this is a reminder of that first Christmas Day ... yet Christ is present with us today!

How did Christmas Day become a day to exchange presents? Perhaps the custom of St. Nicholas (Santa Claus ... December 6th) and his generosity brought about the hanging of a “Christmas” sock and the

children WAITING with joy for a sock full of candies and other “goodies.” (Some might remember that some parents jokingly threatened: “If you didn’t behave your sock might be filled with coal.”)

But to PREPARE for Christmas is not the purchase of presents ... but rather a realization of how we as individuals COM-PROMISED this Christ in us! How we have HALF-HEARTEDLY seen Christ in the “least of our brothers and sisters.”

Remember the words of Sacred Scripture: “I was hungry ... thirsty ... naked ... homeless ... sick ... in prison ... and you cared for me.” “What you did to the least of my brothers and sisters you did to me.”

Advent – PREPARING for Christ’s coming – is a time to remove the obstacles that keep us from being ENTHUSIAS-TIC in our faith, from being SELF-CEN-TERED... omitting our love for others of family and neighbors.

Advent is a good time to consider how MATERIALISTIC we are – tying ourselves to possessions (more and bigger).

While we might “give up” candy, movies and the Internet, smoking, alcohol, not eating to loss weight, vulgarity, we might add St. Paul’s admonition regarding immorality ... impurity ... enmity ... jealousy ... hostility ... greed ... laziness ... thoughtlessness ... compromise faith and love.

And perhaps for many of us ... the life of being “TOO BUSY.”

But that leaves us empty – unless we consider the positive Pauline words: generosity ... zeal ... courage ... gentleness ... support to the suffering ... the sick ... the poor ... the lonely ... the rejected ... even the confused ... and the proud.

Simply the courage to burn and be thoroughly spent in love as we consider God’s gift to us: He touched you and me that we might touch others ... even when it hurts ... to enter the place of another’s pains ... to share in others’ brokenness ... confusion ... fear ... anguish.

Gods’ gift to each of us is to Heal ... TO BRING peace ... AND IN humility TO AC-CEPT God’s gift of our lives and talents, as we can reach out to others.

We bring HOPE through our talents ... time ... treasure. And so we are not better when someone is not grateful ... not jealous that someone is better off ... not to revenge a wrong ... not to feel undue disappointment.

Our gift of welcome: not only to our own relatives ... but to consider the needy ... the loveless ... the marginalized.

Our gift of availability ... to the elderly ... to the young ... to walk with someone who physically, mentally, or spiritually needs you.

Our gift of listening ... with compassion ... respect ... in a sense to suffer with another.

Our gift of fidelity ... understanding ... tolerance ... forgiveness.

Advent is a fresh turning to Christ ... not waiting to see the nativity crib ... but to see Christ in the downtrodden.

So to have a richer fullness of our Christian existence ... an exuberant joy in what we believe.

Let Christ be in you and me ... it will be a MERRIER Christmas.

St. Thecla’s Christmas Story

By: Fr. Gene Dyer - St. Thecla

When “Our Village” requested a Christmas story for this issue the following came to mind. I heard this story many years ago yet never knew who authored it.

Once upon a time there was a man who looked at Christmas as just another day. Unlike Mr. Scrooge he was a good husband, father, neighbor and generous to all. He didn’t believe all the incarnation talk Christians espoused about God becoming man in Jesus and he was too honest of an individual to pretend that he did.

Christmas eve would arrive and his wife and children who attended church every Sunday extended an invitation to join them for the 4PM family service; “Just come this one time,” they pleaded. “I’d feel like a hypocrite he replied. “You go, I will stay and prepare dinner and it will be ready by the time you get back.”

Mom and the children got into the car and drove to church. As he started preparing the meal he noticed the winter snow storm picked up some velocity with high winds and a lot of snow. He thought, “at least it will be a white Christmas.”

Fifteen minutes into the dinner preparation he was startled by loud thud noises on the living room window.

Assuming it was the sound of snowballs his investigation revealed the thud came from a flock of small birds who were caught in the storm. They were desperately trying to seek shelter and did not realize the window blocked them from their goal.

He thought. “I can’t let those poor creatures freeze to death. Maybe I can get them to fly into the garage.” Putting on a winter coat he goes outside, opens the garage door and turns on the light, but the birds didn’t go in. “Food will bring them in,” he thought.

Back in the house he prepares bread crumbs, goes back outside and creates a trail of crumbs toward the garage. The birds, however, ignored the crumbs and continued to fly aimlessly around the window. Waving his arms he tried shooping them into the garage but the birds scattered in every direction except toward the garage. In frustration he exclaimed aloud, “I wish I could be a bird myself for a few minutes, perhaps I could help them!”

Right at that moment the church bell pealed the start of the Christmas Eve service and he found himself sinking to a kneeling position in the snow. “Now I understand,” he whispered. “Now I understand why You became man.”

The personal and global challenges we face every day can make us look at Christmas as just another day with the

addition of gift giving and an invitation to dinner. Yet God invites us to know that Christmas expresses his desire for us; and for us to desire him. We hear of this desire in the Book of Isaiah, and in the Gospel passages that describe the preaching of St. John the Baptist. These readings are proclaimed during Advent and their message encourages people of all time to realize our need for God, that we must put Him first in our lives and prepare for His coming. They lead us to know how the birth of Jesus took place; and how his life has forever changed the darkness of hopelessness into the light of new life. The man in the story had a family who wanted him to know this truth.

Without knowing it the man was preparing himself to understand Christmas in his failing efforts to help some helpless birds. In helplessness and failure God’s providential grace changes all doubt into a sustained joyful discovery that He does exist and that we are the delight of His love. Together let us believe this and fall to our knees because Christmas is living in the Presence of God through His Son, our Lord Jesus Christ.

A blessed Christmas to you and your loved ones.
Fr. Gene Dyer, Pastor
St. Thecla Catholic Church and School

St. Paul Lutheran Christmas Message

By: Rev. David J. Bass

Do you find that this time of year fills you with more stress instead of the happiness that the commercials on Television and on the Internet suggest you can have when you purchase “stuff”?

Do you sometimes wish that we could just skip over all of the festivities because it all seems so stressful? Well then you are not alone.

In the gospel of St. Luke, chapter 2, we read about a decree that goes out from Caesar Augustus that all the world should be registered, so that they could be taxed. In the midst of the rush of people, we find a young couple, Joseph, and a very pregnant Mary, making their way from Galilee, to the city of David, also known as Bethlehem.

We can only imagine what is going through their mind, especially in light of what God’s angels have revealed to both Mary and Joseph about the child that would soon be

born! Stress surrounds them, and yet, God’s promise of comfort and joy is not far off.

God’s promise of comfort and joy is not far off from those shepherds in the Judean countryside either. Theirs was not an easy life. Surrounded by more sheep than people, they lived on the fringes of society, apart from everyone else. And yet, the message of the newborn Savior Jesus is revealed to them first!

This is the message of Christmas, for Mary and Joseph, for the Shepherds in the fields, for you and I as well! Read again the words that St. Luke has written for us to read in the midst of a stressful season: “Fear not, for behold, I bring you good news of great joy that will be for all the people. For unto you is born this day in the city of David a Savior, who is Christ the Lord.” (Luke 2:10-11)

Did you catch those words “good news of great joy that will be for all people?” That includes you!

Jesus is born into this world as a human to relate to our human condition and yet in Him dwells the fullness of God. (Colossians 2:9) He comes into our world to restore our relationship with our heavenly Father. He comes into our world to take our stress and brokenness, our sins upon Himself. He comes into our world to defeat death and give us the promise of everlasting life. (John 3:16-17) He comes into our world to bring us JOY, which we experience as we rest in His amazing love and grace.

My prayer for you is that in the midst of all of the stress of this season that you discover the Joy of what Christmas is all about- Christ the Lord.

Merry Christmas!
Rev. David J. Bass
St. Paul Lutheran Church
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Traditional Greek Christmas



On Christmas Eve, the children go from house to house to sing Christmas carols. They knock on the door and when the host/hostess opens, they ask: "May we sing?" They have to ask because if there is a recent death in the family, they are not allowed to sing. When the host/hostess answer "go ahead, sing" they begin. In Greece, the Christmas liturgy is done on Christmas Eve around midnight. When the liturgy is over and the parishioners return home, many families eat chicken soup with egg and lemon (avgolemono), Christmas bread, and pastries, such as kourapiedes and melomakarona. The traditional Christmas dinner is stuffed turkey. In Greece they do not exchange gifts Christmas day but New Year's Day. Christmas cards are not exchanged between members of the same family living together nor among friends who live near enough to be wished in person; instead cards are only sent to those friends and relatives who live far away. As elsewhere, the Christmas tree is a recent innovation and formerly (and indeed still on some islands today) a Christmas ship was decorated and had the place of the tree. Traditional Greek Christmas.

The Christbread is blended with special attention and patience, by the housewives, during Christmas Eve. This bread is blessed because it will bring strength to the family.

On Christmas day, during lunch, the father makes the sign of the cross over the Christ bread and after cutting it, gives a piece of cake to each person. This procedure is a revival of the Eucharist. The custom of the Christ bread is kept alive in few regions of Greece, especially in Crete. This custom has deep roots, and is considered to be an exclusive Christian custom.

Greeks place much emphasis on the first day of the New Year; They believe that if the first person they see on New Year's Day is a good person, they will have a good year. In contrast, if the first person they see is not a good person, then the year will not be as good.

In addition, Greeks also pay much attention to who will come to their house that day; therefore, many times they invite people they care for ahead of time to come, so that they can be the first people to come to the house. Also, they pay attention to how their New Year's Day weather is; if



it is good weather, and then the following day will be good. In contrast, if it is cloudy on New Year's Day, then it will be a heavy winter. Many games that test one's luck are played on this day as well; whoever wins is going to be the luckiest during the year.

The cake that is eaten on New Year's Day is called the "Vasilopita," and contains a hidden coin or trinket which gives good luck to the receiver. It is made of a variety of doughs, depending on regional and family tradition, including tsoureki. On New Year's Day families cut the Vasilopita to bless the house and bring good luck for the new year. A coin is wrapped and hidden in the bread by slipping it into the dough be-

fore baking. A piece of cake is sliced for each member of the family and any visitors present at the time, in order of age. Slices are also cut for various other people or groups, depending on local and family tradition.

None of the annual customs is continued so infrangibly by the Greeks (all over the world), and has not so deep roots through the years, as the New Year's cake. Because always, the hidden coin represents the fluke of luck, which shows the fortunate of the New Year.

Truly, Greeks, as members of a family, a fellowship or a society or organized people, do not celebrate the coming of the New Year without the cutting of the Vasilopita. In the collective conscience of our nation, the vasilopita, sweet or salty, with sugar or meat, refers to a new year's symbol with great attributes, not only revelational, but also determinative for the luck of the people, the animals and the possessions of the Greek family.

Best wishes, and Happy Holidays.
("Kales Giortes")

By Eleni Andritsakis



A German Christmas



I was born in Germany, 1935. During the second world war, my father was drafted as a soldier, and my mother raised us children as best she could. But all our Christmases were wonderful. On Christmas Eve, we had a nice dinner of potato salad and Frikadellen. Frikadellen are hamburgers without the buns. We drank punch without alcohol. After dinner, we all went to church later in the evening. I always loved to walk to church and sing the old German Christmas songs. I still love to sing them today. Later, as we children were sleeping, my mother decorated the small Christmas tree that we had brought home a few days before from the nearby forest. On Christmas morning, my mother lit the candles with a match, and called us to

come into the kitchen. Oh we were so happy to see the candles burning. For my sister, my brother and me, there was a decorated plate full of candies, chocolate, marzipan, cookies and fruits. We children painted pictures for our mother and made ornaments for her. My mother baked all cookies by herself, and we were invited to help her. I always volunteered to lick the baking utensils clean. We did pray a lot so that my father would come home soon and join us for Christmas. My mother was a tailor, and she made clothing every year for us for Christmas. I remember getting a pair of roller skates one year. As I tried them on, I ran into the Christmas tree and it tipped over because I could not stop early enough. That was after the candles

were extinguished, but several glass ornaments got broken. One year I got a box full of metal pieces. I could build wagons, houses and many other things with tiny screws. One year my brother and I received a train set, which we had to share. The train ran on 220 volt, and often we received electrical shocks by touching the tracks. We kept that train set for many years. We did not have a TV then, so my family did a lot of singing at Christmas time. My mother played a Mondolin and she accompanied us. We told many stories too, and read books. It was especially nice when we put more firewood in our stove and we could see the top glowing red hot. We could put apples on top of the stove and bake them. They tasted very

good. When the kitchen light was turned off, it was always a cozy atmosphere on winter nights. When it was time to go to bed, my mother always had a brick heated up inside the stove. Each of us got a hot brick wrapped in a towel and we used it to warm our feet under the thick cold feather comforter.

My Christmases now are shared with my wife, children and grandchildren in the suburbs of Chicago, but the memories of those far away days are still as vivid as my Mother's smile and the happiness she brought to us through her caring and efforts in the not-so-daisy times.

From my family to yours, Merry Christmas and Happy New Year
Gerhard Pils

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And love for the Heavenly King ...
Lift up your voice with song and praise
Until the rafters ring.

Let us have music for Christmas
In the glow of candlelight,
Mingled with snow and mistletoe
And shepherds that watch by night.

Sing of the star and wise men, too,
And angels watching above ...
Bring once again to the homes of men
The give of wondrous love.

Let us have music for Christmas ...
Sound the trumpet of joy and rebirth;
Let each of us try, with a song in our hearts,
To bring peace to men on earth.

Both Songs Submitted by Maria Bappert

The Music of Christmas

Author unknown

The music of Christmas is not just confined
To piano or trumpets or drums ...
It's heard in the laughter and pattering footsteps
of children when Santa Claus comes.
It echoes in all of the "oohs" and the "aaahs"
At the sight of a brightly lit tree ...
The clinking of glasses and talk 'round the
Table combine in a sweet symphony ...
The music of Christmas resounds in the joy
All loving hearts willingly share,
And we are the instruments playing together
To spread Christmas cheer everywhere

HAPPY HOLIDAYS AND A HEALTHY NEW YEAR FROM THE EVANSTON/SKOKIE VALLEY METROPOLITAN FAMILY SERVICES- GIVING HOPE AND OPPORTUNITY TO FAMILIES

With your help last year Metropolitan served more than 53,000 individuals and families in the Chicago area, helping them become more self-sufficient and strengthening family bonds. Learn more about our organization by visiting our website, metrofamily.org.

The Kiwanis of Ravenswood Wishes Everyone A Happy Holiday Season

Wishing you the gift of faith, The blessing of hope and the Peace of God's love at Christmas and always.
HAVE A BLESSED CHRISTMAS AND A HAPPY AND HEALTHY NEW YEAR!

The Kiwanis Club of Ravenswood meets every 2nd & 4th Thursday (with some exceptions) at the Hilltop Restaurant, NW corner of California & Foster Avenues, Chicago. Plenty of FREE PARKING is available in the lot west of the restaurant, on the north side. To confirm the meeting dates please call Maria Bappert at 773-728-8127. Thank you.

History of the Christkind

The Christkind, a fairy-like being, dressed in gold and white robes with a crown upon her golden locks, is the namesake of the Christkindlmarket Chicago. Christkind folklore dates back to the 1500s and stems from traditional customs: parades during the holiday season were guided by one "grand" angel, the Christkind. Since then, and still today, she is the bearer of gifts to most children in German speaking countries, much like Santa Claus is in the United States. Traditionally, gifts are exchanged December 24th and delivered by the Christkind, who leaves gifts under the Christmas tree and disappears before the children can catch a glimpse of her.

For further information on the Christkindlmarket and the Christkind herself, please visit the official Christkindlmarket website at www.christkindlmarket.com or call us at (312) 494-2175.



Lutheran Unity School Christmas Programs!!!

Come join us at Lutheran Unity School West Campus at 5650 N. Canfield in Chicago for our school children's Christmas Program on Thursday, December 18th. The Pre-K - 4th grade program is at 6:00 PM and the 5th-8th grade program is at 7:30 PM. All are welcome! For more information, contact the West Campus school office at (708)867-5044

Lutheran Unity School and Jehovah El Buen Pastor Lutheran Church at 3740 W. Belden in Chicago will be celebrating the Christmas season with the Mexican tradition of Las Posadas. Saturday, Dec. 20th all are invited to gather in the school basement at 4 p.m. to start the journey around the neighborhood to find shelter for Mary and Joseph. Shelter is found as we enter the church singing the traditional Posadas songs in Spanish. The children of the school will then reenact the Christmas story along with singing traditional Christmas hymns. After the service, all are invited next door for a Fiesta which includes food, pinatas and mariachis. For more information, contact the East Campus school office at (773)342-5854.



Yes, They're Funny ... It's In The Title

By Wayne Mell - Managing Director

Skokie Theatre's most popular show is back for a special New Year's Eve event. If you've never seen the Funny Old Broads, you're in for a treat. And if you have seen them before, you'll delight in their new material.

The Funny Old Broads was the brainchild of Skokie's own Caryn Bark. Caryn is a nationally recognized comedienne who has appeared on HBO, Comedy Central, and the Lifetime Channel's "Girls' Nite Out." She has made numerous appearances in comedy clubs across the country, and is most famous locally for her one woman show, "Diary of a Skokie Girl."

Caryn's humor has always been about her life, and now that her kids are grown she's turned her focus on growing old. And that focus is what the evening is all about. Caryn is joined by self-proclaimed "sit-down comic" Robin Riebman along with Pam Peterson and Jan Slavin as The Boomer Babes. Together, they target their finely honed wit on satire for the over-fifty set.

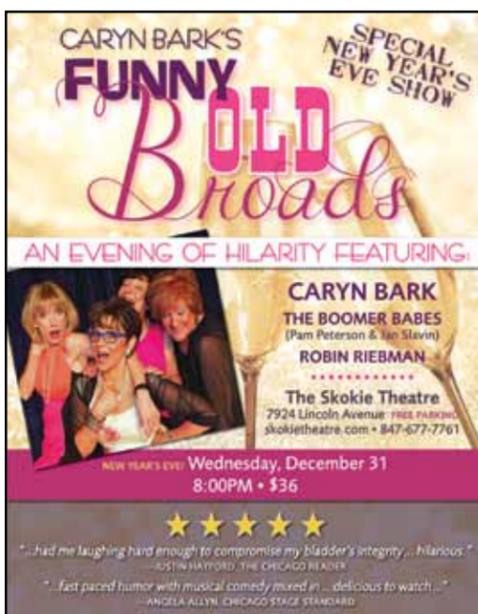
Robin Riebman calls herself a "sit-down comic" because she says that she's too old and tired to stand up for the whole routine. Comedy is a second calling for Robin, who began to perform after her 60th birthday.

Pam Peterson and Jan Slavin specialize in musical parodies. They take popular songs from the 50's and 60's and rewrite the lyrics to touch on memory loss, shrinking size, arthritis, menopause and all the parts of aging that are being experienced by the people who first made those songs hits. The duo have more than 10,000 hits on Youtube, and Pam's song Memory, about losing it, has gained her national attention.

Through these various acts, Caryn Bark plays host and treats us to her own witty material and razor-sharp timing.

The show is on New Year's Eve, December 31st at 8 pm. Tickets are \$36 and can be purchased online at SkokieTheatre.org or from the box office at 847-677-7761

Note: for the younger set, magician Sean Masterson will be performing his acclaimed Magic Matinee on Saturday, December 27th at 1:30. Children of all ages are amazed at his sleight of hand and amazing tricks. Tickets are only \$12



Fun Camps Available for Children During Winter Break Dec. 22-Jan. 2

Are your kids looking for something to do this holiday season during their break from school? The City of Evanston's Recreation Division is offering 14 winter camp programs for children ages 3 to 14 from Monday, December 22, 2014 to Friday, January 2, 2015.

Registration is now open for all winter programs, including ecology camp, art camp, adventure camp, sports camps and more. Options vary and include one-week or two-week programs, in full-day or half-day sessions.

Classes will not be held on Christmas Eve, Christmas Day or New Year's Day. To register, visit cityofevanston.org/register or contact the community center where the



camp will be held.

For more information, see the Winter 2014 – Spring 2015 edition of "Evanston Life" at cityofevanston.org/recreation or call/text 847-448-4311. For convenience, Evanston residents can simply call 3-1-1.

Chicago Students Are Encouraged To Keep Learning With The Chicago Public Library During The Winter Break

Research indicates that students lose skills when school is not in session. Chicago Public Library wants to help children and teens continue building their literacy skills, as well as enhance their critical thinking and creativity during the out of school time of winter break by offering the Winter Learning Challenge: Blast Off!, and Teen Winter Challenge: Book Cover Contest.

"The Winter Learning Challenge and Teen Winter Challenge keep Chicago students actively engaged in reading and creative opportunities even while outside of the classroom," said Mayor Rahm Emanuel. "By offering stimulating educational and creative avenues for children and teenagers, like Rahm's Readers Summer Learning Challenge, the Winter Learning Challenge and Teen Winter Challenge, the Chicago Public Library is continuing Chicago's commitment to the importance of lifelong learning."

"Nurturing learning is a key initiative of Chicago Public Library's Strategic Plan," said Chicago Public Library Commissioner Brian Bannon. "The Library is committed to providing access to a variety of programs and services that advance learning to all of its patrons including families with young children, school-aged children, teens, adults and seniors. The Winter Learning Challenge, Teen Winter Challenge and Summer Learning Challenge expand the Library's year-long family literacy programs."

The Winter Learning Challenge is generously funded by The Brinson Foundation through the Chicago Public Library Foundation. Funding support for the Teen Winter Challenge is provided by the William G. McGowan Charitable Fund, Inc., also through the Chicago Public Library Foundation.

Winter Learning Challenge: Blast Off!

Open for children up to 14 years old, the Winter Learning Challenge: Blast Off! encourages students to learn about objects in the night sky through a fun and engaging self-paced learning challenge available on the Library's website from December 15, 2014, through January 5, 2015. The two-week winter break is an optimal time to explore all the Library has to offer and to continue learning with the Winter Learning Challenge.

Participation is easy. Following the theme "Blast Off!" kids are invited to think and learn about objects in the night sky—the moon, planets, stars and more! Then participants complete the activities log, using the suggested Read, Discover and Create activities listed or enter their own theme-related activities. Activities logs are available on the Library's website or at all Chicago Public Library locations. To see a list of books, online resources and other activities, visit the Winter Learning Challenge page on chipublib.org/blast-off.

Suggested activities include reading a book, magazine or website for 20 minutes a day for at least five days, discovering new information about the night sky by doing an activity, and creating at least one story, a piece of art or design challenge inspired by the theme "Blast Off!". All entrants who return a completed log to a library branch by the end of the Winter Learning Challenge will receive a free book.

Teen Winter Challenge: Book Cover Contest

Judge a book by its cover for the chance to win prizes! From December 15, 2014 to January 5, 2015, Chicago Public Library is asking teenagers, ages 14 to 18, to redesign a book cover that doesn't tell the whole story. Teens can use their favorite book, or select a random title from their local branch of the Chicago Public Library. Create a new cover image by using the artistic medium of their choice including photography, graphic design, collage, etc.

All design entries must be submitted, with your name, telephone number and the name of your local branch library to teenservices@chipublib.org between Dec. 15 and Jan. 5. All submissions will be entered into a raffle for three handheld video cameras and three tangling drawing kits.

Some additional guidelines include:

- One entry per person.
- A book cover design should include the title of the book and the name of the author.
- All entries will be weighted equally in the raffle (not merit-based).

If children and teens need help with the Winter Learning Challenge and Teen Winter Challenge, they are encouraged to ask a librarian at their local Chicago Public Library branch.

Since 1873, the Chicago Public Library has encouraged lifelong learning by welcoming all people and offering equal access to information, entertainment and knowledge through innovative services and programs, as well as cutting-edge technology. Through its 80 locations, the Library provides free access to a rich collection of materials, both physical and digital, and presents the highest quality author discussions, exhibits and programs for children, teens and adults. CPL recently received the Social Innovator Award from Chicago Innovation Awards; won a National Medal for Library Services from the Institute for Museum and Library Services and was ranked number one in the U.S. and third in the world by an international study of major urban libraries conducted by the Heinrich Heine University Dusseldorf in Germany. For more information, visit chipublib.org or call the Chicago Public Library's Marketing & Communications Department at (312) 747-4050.

Utilities Apprentice Program Open to All Evanston Residents Seeking Employment

Looking for a new employment opportunity? The Evanston Utilities Department invites all residents age 18 and older to apply to its Water Worker 1 Apprentice Program by Wednesday, December 31.

Apprentices will have the opportunity to gain exposure to the Water & Sewer Industry; develop skills in underground utility maintenance; develop skills maintaining water plant equipment; become familiar with requirements for City of Evanston workers; and earn an Illinois Commercial Driver's License (CDL).

Apprentice positions are full-time, two-year positions and start at \$11 an hour. Applications can be completed online at cityofevanston.org/utilities until December 31. All applicants are also required to take a written test on Thursday, January 15, 10 a.m., in the Parafol Room at the Morton Civic Center, located at 2100 Ridge Ave.

No previous experience within the field is required. However, all applicants must possess a high school diploma or GED,



have a valid driver's license and safe driving record (or have the ability to obtain a license), and be a resident of Evanston (Zip code 60201 or 60202).

Chosen candidates will be subject to a qualifying pre-employment medical examination and drug/alcohol screening.

To view the program's training guide and other information, visit cityofevanston.org/utilities or call/text 847-448-4311. For convenience, Evanston residents can dial 3-1-1.

Free Ged Preparation Classes

Chicago Public Library Austin-Irving
6100 W. Irving Park
Chicago, IL 60634

Registration Dates:

Friday, December 12, 2014 at 9:00 a.m.

Friday, December 19, 2014 at 9:00 a.m.



- Bring identification with name and address and a piece of mail to verify Bring identification with name and address and a piece of mail to verify residency.
- Please plan on 2 - 3 hours to complete intake forms and take a placement test.
- Classes meet 4 hours per week for 16 weeks
- Please do not bring children.

Spring Term 2015: January 16, 2015 - May 8, 2015

Class will meet: Friday 9:00 a.m. - 1:00 p.m.

Tony Powers, Branch Manager 312-744-6222

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New Year Brings Resolutions... and More



Chester M. Przybylo

The coming of the New Year presents an opportunity to reflect on the past year, and reorganize our priorities and goals. One important resolution is protecting our assets and our families through estate planning. The process to achieve this goal is discussed in this article.

At the start of a New Year we are each given an opportunity to reflect on the past year's ups and downs and gain a new perspective for the coming year. We look back at the good times: the holidays, vacations, birthday parties, and births of new children and grandchildren. We look back at the challenging times: the economic stresses, illnesses, and other hardships. As we reflect, we have an opportunity to reorganize our priorities and goals.

As we reassess our lives, we plan for the future, beginning with a fresh set of resolutions. We may plan to get fit and lose a few pounds. One way we can gain control (especially in these uncertain economic times) is to make sure our estate planning is in order. We do these things not just for ourselves, but for those we love and who are ultimately impacted the most by our planning.

Estate planning is one of the easier things to check off your list of resolutions. First, find a qualified estate planning attorney to consult.

The consultation is painless. You will discuss your family and your goals. Then the attorney will suggest a course of action which will likely include these basic documents:

- **Property Power of Attorney.** This allows someone appointed by you, your "agent," to make decisions for you during your incapacity.
- **Health Care Power of Attorney.** Allows your agent to make health care decisions for you when you are unable to make them for yourself.
- **HIPAA Power.** Allows your agent to gain access to health information. Without this, a hospital could refuse to release any information -- even your presence in the hospital.
- **Living Trust.** This is the engine of your estate plan. You transfer the bulk of your assets to this Trust. It allows for management during your life, including when you are incapacitated. It provides for distribution in the desired way after you are gone. It allows you to avoid the probate process.
- **Last Will.** This takes any assets accidentally omitted from your Trust and moves them to the Trust after your passing.

Getting your estate planning in order is an easy task. Starting with this simple task will give you the courage and motivation to move on to other resolutions - like losing those extra pounds that crept on over the holidays.

Chester M. Przybylo has been elected to the Board of Governors of the prestigious American Academy of Estate Planning Attorneys and has been engaged in the practice of law for the last 45 years. To register for an upcoming seminar, call the 24 hour reservation hotline at 1-800-638-7878 or register online at www.PlanOurEstate.com.

Norwood Park Seniors Club

at 5801 N Natoma Chicago meet the second and fourth Thursday of the month. We play pinochle and baingo, have parties on special occasions. Meetings start at 10:30 with coffee and a sweet roll. Call Joan at 773-774-7075.

St. Thecla Seniors Meetings

St. Thecla Seniors located at 6725 W. Devon meet at 11:30 a.m. on the first and third Thursdays of the month in the Queen of Peace room. There is a short meeting followed by sweet rolls and coffee. Bingo and cards are played. We have parties!!! Please join us as you may like us! For information, please call Joanie at 312/608-4092.

SKOKIE ART GUILD

FIGURE DRAWING WORKSHOPS
 Saturday Sessions 9:30 AM - 12:30 PM
 Live models / no instructor
 Fees per session SAG Members \$12.00;
 non-members \$20.00. For information: Steve Gal 847/673-4450

ESTATE PLANNING WILLS AND TRUSTS

CHESTER M. PRZYBYLO
COUNSELOR AND ATTORNEY AT LAW

Best Wishes for the
Holiday Season

5339 N. Milwaukee Avenue, Chicago
Tel (773) 631-7100

Law Offices of Chester M. Przybylo and Associates
www.PlanOurEstate.com

The Twelve Sites Of Social Security

By Andrew Salata, Social Security Public Affairs Specialist

Back by popular demand is our holiday favorite, "The Twelve Sites of Social Security." It's inspired by the popular traditional holiday song, "The Twelve Days of Christmas," a holiday favorite since 1780. Play it again, Santa!

For the first site of Social Security, we give to you: our home page, www.socialsecurity.gov. It's the place to go for all things Social Security. Everything you could want—from online services and benefit screening tools to publications and frequently asked questions—you can find easily on this site.

For the second site of Social Security, we give to you: answers to all of your Social Security related questions at our Frequently Asked Questions page at www.socialsecurity.gov/faq.

For the third site of Social Security, we give to you: an easy way to learn how to replace your Social Security card at www.socialsecurity.gov/ssnumber.

For the fourth site of Social Security, we give to you: an online application for retirement benefits that you can complete and submit in as little as 15 minutes, at www.socialsecurity.gov/applytoretire.

For the fifth site of Social Security, we give to you: five estimates of your future Social Security benefits! Or one, or as many estimates as you would like using different scenarios. Get instant, personalized estimates of your future benefits at www.socialsecurity.gov/estimator.

For the sixth site of Social Security, we give to you: a convenient way to apply for disability benefits at www.socialsecurity.gov/applyfordisability.

For the seventh site of Social Security, we give to you: an online application for Medicare that you can complete in as little as 10 minutes, at www.socialsecurity.gov/medicareonly.

For the eighth site of Social Security, we give to you: Extra Help with Medicare prescription drug plan costs. You can learn more and apply online at www.socialsecurity.gov/prescriptionhelp.

For the ninth site of Social Security, we give to you: our convenient publication library with online booklets and pamphlets on numerous subjects at www.socialsecurity.gov/pubs.

For the tenth site of Social Security, we give to you: services for people who are currently receiving benefits, such as the ability to replace your Medicare card, request a proof of benefits letter, or check your Social Security information or benefits. You can do these and other things at www.socialsecurity.gov/pgm/getservices-change.htm.

For the eleventh site of Social Security, we give to you: a way to get your Social Security forms online at www.socialsecurity.gov/online.

On the twelfth site of Social Security, (and we saved the best for last): open your own personal my Social Security account, which will enable you to verify your earnings, get future benefit estimates, obtain instant benefit verification letters, update your Social Security information, and more at www.socialsecurity.gov/myaccount.

And a partridge in a pear tree. Find it all (except the partridge and pear tree) at www.socialsecurity.gov.

Divvy Kicks Off Winter With Deals, #Holidivvy, And Four Red Keysm

Divvy, Chicago's bike share system, is celebrating the holiday season with discounts on gift certificates, a special holiday-themed bike, and four exclusive red membership keys.

Anyone who signs up for a membership or renews their current membership between now and the end of February 2015 will have a chance to win one of four red Divvy member keys, which represent the four stars on the Chicago flag. The winners will be chosen at random throughout the winter and, instead of receiving a blue member key, they'll receive a limited edition red key.

For those looking for holiday gift ideas, Divvy will also offer discounted \$65 Annual Membership gift certificates (regularly \$75) online at DivvyBikes.com/store through December 31. Anyone who purchases a gift certificate during this time will also receive a 24-hour pass (regularly \$7) for themselves.

"Divvy membership makes a terrific gift for Chicagoans," said Divvy General Manager Elliot Greenberger. "Membership gives someone a piece of Chicago, and lets them get around and explore what makes this city so great."

Chicagoans can also keep an eye out for the special #HOLIDIVVY candy cane striped bike. The bike is wrapped in a candy cane design that is fully reflective at night.

Those who are lucky enough to spot the special holiday bike may be rewarded when they post a photo of the bike on Instagram, Twitter, and Facebook using the hashtag #HOLIDIVVY. Divvy will select its favorite #HOLIDIVVY photo takers to receive an Annual Membership to give as a gift or to keep for themselves. The special bike will be available for riding through New Year's Day.

To make the candy cane bike a reality, Divvy worked with Spoken Art, a local artist collaborative that creates bicycle art, to design and fabricate the bike's festive appearance.

Divvy is Chicago's bike-sharing system, with 3,000 bikes and 300 stations across the city. In 2015 Divvy will expand to 550 stations with locations in new Chicago neighborhoods, making it the largest bike share program in North America based on station count and square miles of service area.

Since launching last year, Divvy has enrolled more than 23,000 annual members and has sold more than half a million 24-hour passes. In its first 17 months of operation, Divvy riders have taken more than 3 million trips totaling an estimated 6.5 million miles travelled.

Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Illinois is the exclusive sponsor of the Divvy bike share system.

Village Cooking Corner

Holiday Baking

One of my favorite cookie recipes is from my sister-in-law Elisabeth. Baking cookies for the Holidays is a great passion with her. She and my brother Mike host the family's Christmas Eve dinner every year. It's always a real treat for the old taste buds. For dessert she brings out large platters of assorted cookies, along with freshly brewed coffee and tea. At the end of the evening, we all get a box of the cookies to take home. I like this particular recipe because it's easy to make, does not require you to use the rolling pin or pastry board, and they keep very well. Also, they look attractive, especially if you fill the centers with different flavors (and colors) of marmalade. you will also note that it calls for only 3/4 of a cup of sugar. So many of our cookie and cake recipes are overloaded with sugar. No wonder so many people come down with diabetes. A box of these cookies will make a welcome gift anytime.

Cinnamon Nut Balls

Ingredients:
3/4 lb. butter
3/4 cup sugar
2 egg yolks (or one whole egg)
4 cups sifted flour
2 tsp. vanilla

Preparation: Cut butter into flour and add the rest of the ingredients. Form the dough into little balls, flatten slightly, and roll in a mixture of ground nuts, sugar and cinnamon. Place on an ungreased cookie sheet. With a clean thimble, press a hole in the middle of each cookie. Bake in a 375 degree oven for about 15 minutes, or until slightly browned. Remove the cookies from the baking sheet and place on cooling racks. Fill the centers with apricot, raspberry or strawberry marmalade. Allow to cool completely before storing. Enjoy! File: Cookies

from the kitchen of Maria Bappert

Rock Cookies For The Holidays

Raisins, dates, nuts and spices such as cinnamon and cloves are classic ingredients in Holiday baking, along with brown sugar. These drop cookies will become one of your favorites, and with ingredients such as raisins, dates and nuts, they are not just delicious, but healthy as well. you can substitute dried cranberries if you want to.

Ingredients:
1 cup brown sugar
2 cups flour
1-1/2 tsp. cinnamon
8 oz. each raisins and dates
1 tsp. baking soda dissolved in a little warm water
1 cup chopped pecans or walnuts
2/3 cup butter, 2 eggs
1/2 tsp. cloves

Preparation: Cream butter with sugar and eggs until fluffy. Slowly beat in flour which has been sifted with the cinnamon and cloves. Add the dissolved baking soda. Stir in chopped nuts, raisins and diced dates. Drop by teaspoonfuls onto ungreased baking sheet. Bake for 15 to 20 minutes at 375 degrees.

from the kitchen of Maria Bappert

Piquant Meat Balls

2 pounds ground beef
1 egg
2 tablespoons bread crumbs
1 teaspoon salt
pepper to taste
12-ounce bottle of chili sauce
6 ounces grape jelly
Juice of 1 lemon

Combine meat, egg, bread crumbs, and seasonings. Shape into balls the size of a walnut. Heat chili sauce, jelly, and lemon juice in a heavy skillet or Dutch oven until blended. Add the meat balls, cover, and simmer for 30 minutes. Uncover and cook 15 minutes longer, stirring frequently to prevent sticking. Serves 8 to 10. Keep hot in a chafing dish.

from the kitchen of Rose Suter

Walnut Cake "Karithopita"

1/2 cup butter
1 tsp. soda
1 cup sugar
2 tbs. cognac
5 eggs
Syrup:
1 cup milk
2 cups of sugar
2 cups chopped walnuts
1 cups of water
1 tsp. cinnamon
2 tbs. cognac
1/4 tsp. ground cloves
1 tbs. lemon juice
1 1/2 cups dry bread crumbs
1 tbs. orange juice
1 1/2 cups flour
1 cinnamon stick
3 tsp. baking powder

Preheat the oven to 350°F. Butter and flour a 13 x 9 baking pan. In a bowl combine the walnuts, cinnamon, cloves, breadcrumbs, flour, and baking powder. In a small glass, dilute the soda with the cognac. In a large bowl of a mixer, cream the butter with the sugar and then add the eggs. Mix in the soda with cognac, and add the milk and the walnut mixture, beating until well combined. Spread into the prepared baking pan. Bake for 45-60 minutes, or until the center is firm. Prepare the syrup by mixing all the ingredients together in a medium sauce pan. Bring it to a boil and pour it over the baked cake. Let the cake cool completely before serving..

from the kitchen of Eleni Andritsakis

Christmas With A Greek Flavor

While Easter is the most important holiday of Greek Orthodox throughout the world, Christmas is certainly a close second. Both are celebrated with much religious service attendance and with the flavor of favorite Greek foods laden on festive holiday tables which includes an assortment of pastries to enhance the meal of family and friends. Of course, Roasted Lamb and Potatoes is a favorite on most Greek holiday tables, but Pastitsio is a close second to appear on that same table. It is certainly one of our family favorites. While it is a labor of love, it will certainly get you many rave reviews. Kali Orexi! Bon Appetit!

Pastitsio

2 lbs., Ground Beef (use Sirloin)
1 onion, chopped
1 tablespoon, chopped Italian Parsley
2 cloves, Garlic, minced
1 tsp., Cinnamon
1/2 tsp., Nutmeg
1 8 ounce can, Tomato Sauce (I use No Salt Added)
1/2 cup of White Wine
butter (I use unsalted butter)
olive oil
salt and pepper to taste
1 lb of MISKOS Macaroni #3 *
3 eggs, beaten
Grated Cheese (I use Mitzithra * - if not available use Parmesan
6 cups of Bechamel Sauce - which follows Pastitsio Recipe

Bechamel Sauce

Although this basic White Sauce is attributed to the French it can be traced to Ancient Greek cookery.

4 to 5 cups of hot milk
3 tbsp. All Purpose Flour
1/2 cup of Butter
Salt and White Pepper

Melt the butter in a pan, add flour and stir until smooth. Lower heat and then gradually add the hot milk, stirring constantly until it thickens. Season with salt and white pepper and add 1/2 tsp. Cinnamon.

Preheat oven to 350 degrees. In 4 tbsp. butter and 1 tbsp. Olive Oil saute ground meat along with the chopped onion, minced garlic and parsley. Crumble meat as you go along with a fork When no more pink is visible add cinnamon, nutmeg, salt and pepper and tomato sauce. Simmer for 30 minutes; remove from fire. In large pot of boiling water cook the macaroni as directed on the package. When cooked drain and rinse macaroni and place in a bowl. Add 1/4 lb of melted butter, beaten eggs and a generous sprinkling of grated cheese to the macaroni and mix well. Spread half of the macaroni mixture in a 9x13x2 pan which has been greased with olive oil. Spread the meat sauce over the first layer of macaroni and sprinkle with grated cheese; top with the balance of the macaroni. Pour prepared Bechamel Sauce over the top layer of macaroni and sprinkle lavishly with grated cheese; dot with butter and sprinkle delicately across the entire top with a little cinnamon. Bake 1 hour in preheated 350 degree oven. Cool and cut into 3 inch pieces. Arrange on a platter and serve!

*Miskos Macaroni #3 and Mitzithra Cheese can be found in Greek Specialty Food Stores like Marketplace on Oakton in Skokie or Northeastern Fruit and Garden Center on Lincoln & Peterson, Chicago.

from the kitchen of Anastasia E. Weaver

Boursin Cheese

8 oz. cream cheese
1 clove crushed garlic
3 tsp. fresh minced parsley
1 tsp. basil leaves
2 T chopped chives
1 T dry white vermouth
lemon pepper

Blend cream cheese and garlic and add everything else. Serve with crackers or in celery..

from the kitchen of Rose Suter

Join Us In Welcoming A New Neighbor!



Owners Mr. & Mrs. Max Purohit were welcomed to the neighborhood by Alderman Mary O'Connor, Senator John Mulroe, sports star Bill Wennington, Benny the Bull, The LoveBulls, The Norwood Park Chamber of Commerce Director, Bea McDonough and Taft High School Principal Mark Grishaber and Taft Eagles Choir led by Brian Lavery at their newest location at 5401 N. Harlem. As a generous gesture to the school choir Mr. Purohit donated \$500 to Taft High School.

Max also owns the location at Harlem & Touhy and Nagle & Higgins.

Photo Provided By Bill Morton Photography

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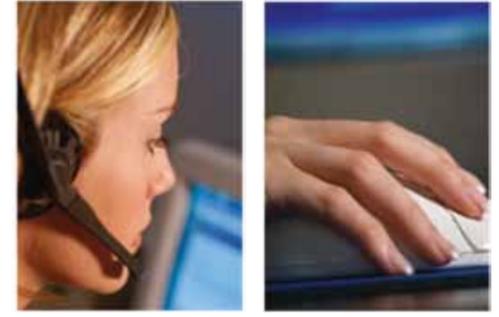
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312-554-2001 (M-F, 9:00 a.m. to 4:45 p.m.)

312-554-2055 (for the hearing impaired)

Evening/weekend help available for criminal, domestic relations and personal injury matters.

Visit www.chicagobar.org/LRS for 24-hour referrals.



Se Habla Español.



312-554-2001 or www.chicagobar.org/LRS

RODGERS & HAMMERSTEIN'S

THE KING AND I

Opens October 22!

Call 847-634-0200 Today!

The Marriott Theatre
MarriottTheatre.com

MARRIOTT THEATRE (for Young Audiences) Presents

THE WIZARD OF OZ

Opens November 7!

The Marriott Theatre
MarriottTheatre.com

Call 847-634-0200 for Individual Tickets.

Groups of 20 or more, call 847-634-5909.

Visit our website at MarriottTheatre.com for showtimes and more information.



Shadow Days

8th grade girls welcome *now* on select dates to shadow a current Resurrection student

7th grade girls welcome to an "Experience Res" Day on Friday, February 13, 2015

Register at www.reshs.org

Entrance Exam

Saturday, January 10, 2015
7:45 am to 12:30 pm

8th grade girls invited. Parent info session at 8 am in Resurrection library

Information at www.reshs.org



7500 West Talcott Avenue, Chicago 60631 | 773.775.6616

chicago park district

FREE FITNESS WEEK

January 2-11, 2015

Work out for **FREE** January 2-11 at any of the Chicago Park District's citywide fitness centers, fitness classes or pools during lap swim (hours and times vary by park).

For more information about your Chicago Park District visit www.chicagoparkdistrict.com, or call 312.742.7529 or 312.747.2001 (TTY).

Stay connected.



MAYOR RAHM EMANUEL
Chicago Park District Board of Commissioners
Chicago Park District, Michael P. Kelly,
General Superintendent and CEO



No matter your age or ability, we offer a fitness class that is right for you, such as:

- Yoga & Pilates
- Kickboxing
- Cardio Conditioning
- Mom, Pop & Tot Yoga
- Mighty Munchkins (age 3-5),
Mighty Fit Kids (age 6-12) &
Mighty Fit Family

Registration required. All activities are first come, first served based on availability. Classes vary per location, contact your local park or visit www.chicagoparkdistrict.com for options.

