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Issue 15
December 14, 2012

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



WINTER

BEGINS
December 21st

ICE SKATING AT THE MCCORMICK TRIBUNE ICE RINK

Kicking off Chicago's winter season, the McCormick Tribune Ice Rink in Millennium Park will open on Friday, November 16, 2012 and will remain open through mid-march 2013, weather permitting. For the last 11 years, the rink has drawn more than 100,000 skaters annually and is free and open to the public. The rink, located on Michigan Avenue between Washington and Madison Streets, will still offer skate rental for only \$10.

Regular Hours for the season are as follows: Mondays through Thursdays: 12 pm — 8 pm; Fridays: 12 pm — 10 pm; Saturdays (through Dec. 29): 10 am — 10 pm; Saturdays (beginning Jan. 5): 10 am — 9 pm; Sundays: 10 am — 9 pm

Holiday Hours: Monday, December 24 (Christmas Eve): 10 am — 6 pm; Tuesday, December 25 (Christmas): 10 am — 4 pm; Monday, December 31 (New Year's Eve): 10 am — 8 pm; Tuesday, January 1 (New Year's Day): 12 pm — 9 pm

Admission: FREE. Skate rental is available for \$10 (includes tax). Skate sizes: Toddler 8 - Adult 13 (first come, first serve). Lockers are available to rent for \$1. Skate sharpening is available for \$9.

Hot chocolate and snacks are available at the Park Grill Cafe.

Contributions are Needed to Assist Skokie Families in Celebrating the Winter Holidays

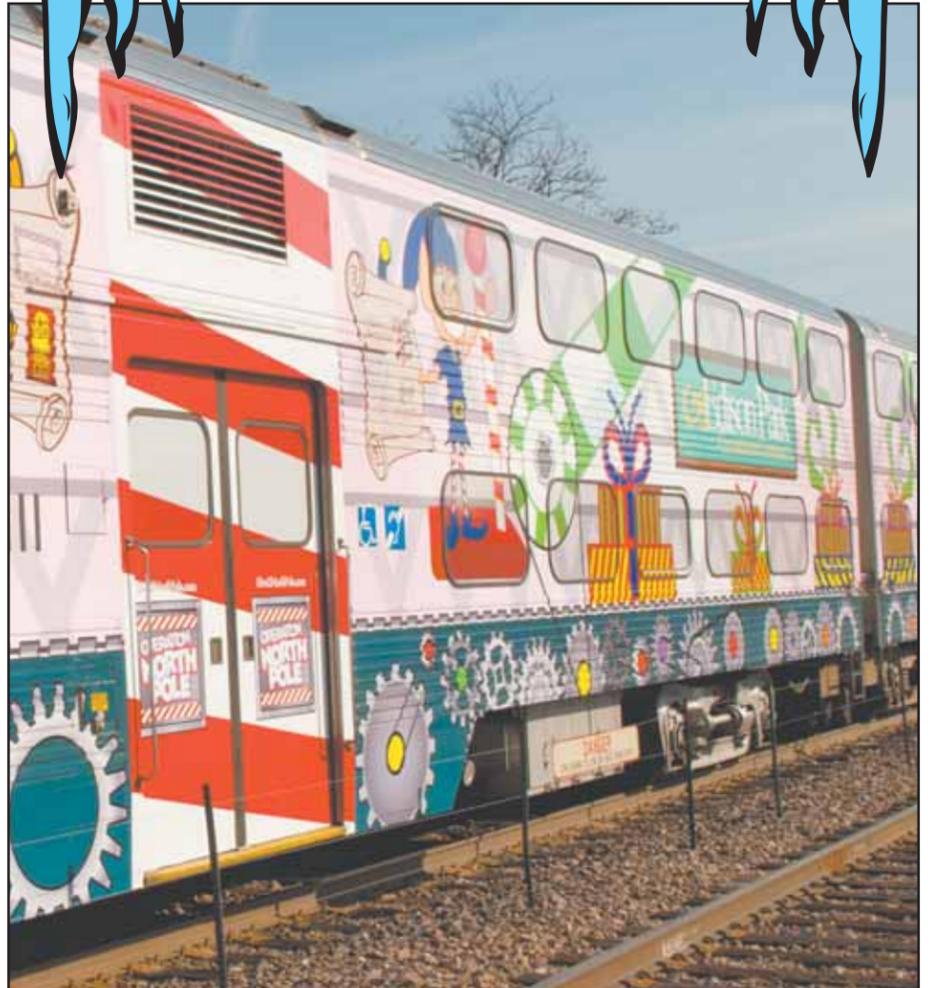
Please consider participating in the 2012 Community Giving Program. The program is designed to assist Skokie families struggling with limited financial resources to celebrate winter holidays. The program is administered by the Village of Skokie Human Services Division. Last year, nearly 200 families received gift cards through the program. Families receive gift cards for area businesses which they use to purchase food, household necessities and to buy items specific to each family member's needs and wants. Those interested in making a donation this year are asked to do so by Friday, December 7, 2012.

Please make checks payable to the Village of Skokie, and add Community Giving Program on the memo line. Send donations to the Human Services Division, 5120 Galitz, Skokie, IL 60077. For further information or to make a donation please contact the Human Services Division at 847/933-8208.

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.

Metra Train Wrap Hosts Polar Express



Fifteen businesses who participated in the Metra Train Wrap: Edison Park Chamber of Commerce, Edison Park Fest, Zia's Trattoria, Cafe Touche, Nonno Pino's, Emerald Isle, Moretti's, St. Patrick High School, John E. Horn & Associates, Joseph Mullarkey Distributors, Ori Brothers Family Flooring, Edison Park Inn, Don Juan's, Medical Aesthetics, and Co-op California.

Operation North Pole (ONP) once again shares the magic of Christmas and all the joy it can bring with 60 families who have a child or children suffering from life-threatening or terminal illnesses by taking them on a fanciful trip to the North Pole on Saturday, November 17, 2012. This very special Polar Express ride departed Des Plaines Metra station at 11:15 am.

In this their fourth year of delighting families, ONP is wrapping the exteriors of two Metra train cars, as well as a partial interior, with bright holiday colors and images of Santa's workshop. ONP is the first organization in the Chicago area to wrap a holiday train for the purpose of providing families who have children battling a life threatening illness with the fantasy of traveling to the North Pole to visit Santa Claus. The train cars will remain wrapped for the remainder of the holiday season, delighting young and old as it whisks

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Winter Wonderland at the
White Eagle Banquets & Restaurant

"Join Us For The Holidays"
CHRISTMAS EVE, Order early and take home our "Famous Homemade Specialties" to delight your family & friends (Call for a menu and to order)
CLOSED CHRISTMAS DAY

VISIT OUR GIFT SHOP FOR UNIQUE HANDMADE IMPORTS FROM POLAND

OUR DELI IS OPEN FOR TAKE-OUT OF OUR SPECIALTIES!

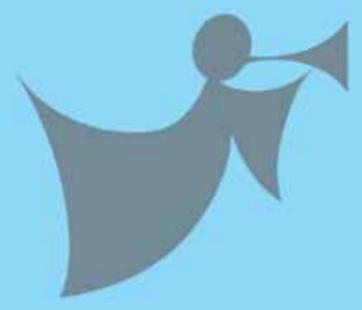
Have your holiday parties for any group size

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ST. THECLA CHURCH
6725 West Devon Avenue, Chicago (773) 792-3077

Christmas Eve
Monday December 24
3:45 pm Singing Christmas Carols
4:00 pm Family Mass
9:40 pm Singing Christmas Carols
10:00 pm Christmas night Mass in English
11:30 pm Spiewanie Koled-- Carols in Polish
12:00 am Pasterka--Mass in Polish

Christmas Day
December 25
8:00 am Mass
9:45 am Singing Christmas Carols
10:00 am Mass
11:30 am Mass in Polish



Our Lady of the Resurrection Medical Center Earns an 'A' Top Grade in Patient Safety

Our Lady of the Resurrection Medical Center rates an 'A' grade in patient safety according to the November 2012 Hospital Safety Score, created and administered by The Leapfrog Group, a national leader and advocate in hospital transparency and patient safety.

Leapfrog evaluated 2,651 hospitals nationwide and issued them letter grades: A, B, C, D and F, based on 15 process and 11 outcome measures of hospital safety publicly available at the national level, including data reported through the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services' Hospital Compare and the Leapfrog Survey.

Our Lady of the Resurrection Medical Center was one of only 729 U.S. hospitals and 51 Illinois hospitals to receive an 'A' grade on how well it protects patients from avoidable mishaps.

"While we are pleased to offer our patients the latest technology and best specialty care available, we also are focused on keeping our patients safe," said Martin Judd, Chief Executive Officer, Our Lady of the Resurrection Medical Center. "This 'A' rating is indicative of our hospital team's commitment to providing a safe environment of care for our patients."

The Hospital Safety Score provides data and research to help the public make informed decisions about a critical aspect of a hospital stay – patient safety, which includes a hospital's preventing infections and eliminating medical and medication errors and injuries. The goal of the Hospital Safety Score is to reduce the more than 180,000 yearly deaths from hospital errors and injuries by publicly recognizing safety and exposing harm.

The Leapfrog Group focuses on measuring and publicly reporting hospital performance through the annual Leapfrog Hospital Survey, an evidence-based national tool in which more than 1,100 hospitals voluntarily participate.

Click on the link below to read more or visit www.leapfroggroup.org.
http://www.leapfroggroup.org/policy_leadership/leapfrog_news/4971031

Skokie and SWANCC Provide a Holiday Light Recycling Program

The Solid Waste Agency of Northern Cook County (SWANCC) and the Village of Skokie are offering a free Holiday Light Recycling Program.

All holiday string lighting and extension cords can be dropped off at the Skokie Public Works Department, 9050 Gross Point Road, December 3, 2012 through January 25, 2013 from 8:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m.

Garland, live greens, wreaths or other non-recyclables are not accepted in this program. Elgin Recycling is processing the material, www.elginrecycling.com.

For more information please contact the Public Works Department at 847/933-8427.

Village of Skokie Receives Award for Project Excellence (APEX)

The Village of Skokie was recently presented with the 2012 Award for Project Excellence (APEX) in the building category for the CTA Yellow Line Oakton Station in Downtown Skokie by the Lake County Contractors Association. The new CTA Yellow Line Station in Downtown Skokie began service on Monday, April 30, 2012.

"The Village of Skokie is honored by this award," said Mayor George Van Dusen. "The award plaque is inscribed 'In recognition of your spirit of cooperation that resulted in the successful completion of this project.'" This statement recognizes that numerous state and federal agencies, utilities and contractors were involved in this important long-term project. Many Village staff members, particularly those from the Engineering Division, worked diligently to bring the project to fruition. Ridership statistics from the new station have surpassed initial goals, with over 950 boardings every weekday. The station also brings people to jobs and stores in Downtown Skokie, and nearly every nearby merchant attests to the station's positive impact on their business."

The \$20 million station construction project was funded by a \$14 million federal grant, with the Village funding the remaining \$6 million through the Downtown Skokie Tax Increment Financing (TIF) District.

Consolidated Election Information

Independent and Non-Partisan candidates for the April 9, 2013 election who file their petitions and other required documents at the Village Clerk's Office in Skokie should note that the filing period has been extended from December 17, 2012 until December 26, 2012.

The Skokie Clerk's Office is located Village Hall, 5127 Oakton Street. Regular Village Hall business hours are 8:30 a.m. to 5 p.m. Monday through Friday.

Please note that the Village of Skokie offices will be closed on Tuesday, December 25, 2012.

For more information, please contact the Village Clerk's Office at 847/933-8203.

FRITCHEY'S HELPING HANDS CAMPAIGN CONTINUES INTO ITS 11TH YEAR

Program to Assist Those in Need During Holiday Season

Cook County Commissioner John Fritchey (D-12) today announced the kick-off of his eleventh annual Helping Hands Campaign. Working in collaboration with local community groups, Commissioner Fritchey is collecting new and slightly used hats, gloves, scarves and other clothing, as well as hygiene products for those who are in need this holiday season. Items collected will be given to service organizations in the 12th District who will distribute the goods directly to those who need it most.

"I am proud to continue the tradition of the Helping Hands campaign, and I look forward to bringing it into its eleventh year," Fritchey said. "The holiday season reminds us of how fortunate we are and inspires us to give. Although helping those in need is a year round responsibility, this season in particular celebrates the spirit of generosity."

Numerous neighborhood organizations will be assisting with the drive this year. Participants include:

Congressman Mike Quigley (IL-5)
45th Ward Alderman John Arena
47th Ward Alderman Ameya Pawar
Park West Community Organization
Lincoln Park Market
Chicago Public Libraries - Lincoln/Belmont Branch and Sulzer Regional
West Lakeview Neighbors
South Lakeview Neighbors
Bucktown Community Organization
Sheffield Neighborhood Association
Wrightwood Neighborhood Association



"I sincerely appreciate the help of all the groups who are participating this year. Together we can work to improve the lives and well-being of those in need this holiday season," said Commissioner Fritchey.

Drop-boxes will be available through the new year at Commissioner Fritchey's district office (2539 N. Southport Ave.), Congressman Quigley's office (3742 W. Irving Park Rd.), 45th Ward Ald. John Arena's office (4754 N. Milwaukee Ave.), 47th Ward Alderman Pawar's office (4243 N. Lincoln Ave.), Lincoln Park Market (2500 N. Clark St.), Lincoln Belmont Branch Library (1659 W. Melrose St.), Sulzer Regional Library (4455 N. Lincoln Ave.).

For more information, please contact Bridget Luehrsen at (773)871-4000 or Bridget@fritchey.com.

Attorney General Madigan, ICC Warn Utility Customers of Scam Artists Posing as Utility Company Reps, Demanding Payment

Illinois Attorney General Lisa Madigan and the Illinois Commerce Commission alerted utility customers to a recent scam targeting residents in the Chicago area in which someone claiming to be a utility employee asks for immediate payment of a bill either at a customer's door, over the telephone or by e-mail.

The ICC has received complaints from utility customers about scam artists claiming to be utility representatives, telling customers that their service will be disconnected unless payment is made directly to the scammers. The scammer may direct the consumer to purchase a prepaid credit card, "Cash Card" and to call them back with the personal identification number (PIN). The stories can vary, for example, with the scammer saying that the customer's billing cycle has changed and payment must be made immediately, that the account is past due and payment can be made to them directly to avoid disconnection of the utility service, or the customer's previous payment was rejected or never received.

"If someone appears at your door claiming to be from your utility company and asking for immediate payment of your bill, I would slam the door in their face, call the police and contact your utility company directly. Utility companies do not go door-to-door collecting payments," Madigan said. "Any consumer who has provided their personal information to make an on-the-spot payment to someone claiming to represent a utility company should contact my office's Consumer Fraud Bureau with the details."

ICC Chairman Doug Scott urged consumers to always ask for identification from those who knock on their door offering a "service." "Scam artists are good at what they do, so arm yourself with information before doing business with anyone who comes to your door or calls you on the telephone. Ask for identification and if doesn't look right to you, it probably isn't. You don't have to do business with anyone who shows up at your door or calls you asking for personal information," Scott said. "Contact the utility and check it out for yourself."

The Attorney General and the ICC offer these reminders to utility customers:

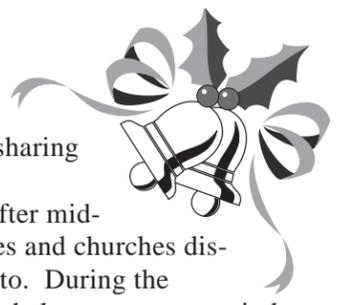
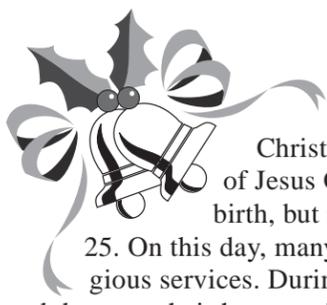
*Never provide personal information to anyone who comes to the door or calls you claiming to be a representative of the utility.

*Contact the utility at the phone number listed on your bill to confirm the caller or the representative at your home is a verifiable employee of the utility. Do not call a different number suggested by the potential scammer.

*Utility field personnel in Illinois do not take payments from consumers. Be on guard with anyone who asks for your personal information, or says you must pay immediately and suggests a method to get the money quickly.

If you suspect you have been scammed, have a suspicious incident to report or have questions, contact the Attorney General's office at 1-800-386-5438 or the ICC at 1-800-524-0795.

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 maesse, 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 holi-

day 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 julgrot, 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.



Metra Train Wrap Hosts Polar Express

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by on Metra's Union Pacific Northwest rails this winter.

What a magical trip to the North Pole it will be! The excited families will board the train in Des Plaines. The non-stop journey to Pingree Road station in Crystal Lake will include activities led by Mrs. Claus, the Polar Express Conductor, Candy Cane Girls, and volunteer firefighters from the North Pole Fire Department! At the Crystal Lake station, everyone will be welcomed by members of the McHenry County Fire Department who will provide refreshments, special treats and small presents. On the return ride to the Des Plaines station, fire departments in the towns along the way will be out with their fire engines and dressed in holiday attire holding up signs with arrows reading "North Pole this way!"

Once back in Des Plaines, the families will board awaiting charter buses and parade with Santa, riding atop a Fire Department ladder truck, to a Winter Wonderland at the Donald E. Stephens Rosemont Convention and Banquet Center. Arriving at the North Pole, they will find the 28,000 square foot south

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 tsourekaki. 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 before 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

ballroom transformed into a child's sugar plum dream. They will discover Mrs. Claus' Pizza Kitchen, The Pink Penguin Beauty Salon, Prancer's Popcorn, Frosty's Soda & Slush, and Lollypop Land with hundreds of donated candies. There will be magicians, face painters, photo booths, cookie decorating, craft making, make-your-own ice cream sundaes and a model train display for all to enjoy. The topper of the day will be a private visit with Santa! Each child aged 12 and younger will visit with Santa and receive wrapped gifts selected from wish lists they wrote to Santa earlier in August. This is truly a day of magical moments for each family.

Children participating in this incredible day are referred to ONP by Child Life Specialists from area children's hospitals and directors from four area Ronald McDonald Houses.

It is a day free from the worry and stress of hospital stays and medical treatments; a day to just be a child at Christmas. With the emotional and financial stresses that a family with a child battling a life-threatening or a terminal illness may face, ONP makes sure that all of the children in the immediate family participate and share in the joyful festivities. Approximately 150 children will participate this year.

A non-profit organization, ONP relies on the generosity of many to make the magic happen. They host two major fundraising events in which volunteers and supporters are given the opportunity to "adopt" a child for Christmas, fulfilling their wish lists to Santa. Organizations such as Edison Park Chamber of Commerce, Rosemont Convention Bureau, Transportation Solution Enterprises, LLC, The Dempster Family Foundation and many private contributors have helped with most of the major expenses of this year's event.

This event relies on the creativity, imagination, and hearts of many volunteers. Timothy Crossin, Treasurer of Operation North Pole, Inc said, "Our organization has grown by more than 100% every year since our existence. We intend to continue our growth until we are able to wrap an entire train and fill it with even more families who could use a day away from the daily grind of hospitals, doctors, clinics and treatments."

For more information about Operation North Pole's November 17th Polar Express ride, please contact Carmen Schmidt, Media Elf, 773-509-5533 or 847-707-5500 (cell).

To learn more about ONP visit www.operationnorthpole.org.

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

Local Arts and Entertainment

THEATER AND DANCE TAKE CENTER STAGE

The Chicago Department of Cultural Affairs and Special Events (DCASE) is pleased to announce a new, streamlined process, making it more accessible for Chicago's theater and dance companies to take advantage of performance space and opportunity to workshop their programs.

While the Storefront Theater, located across the street from the Chicago Cultural Center at 72 E. Randolph, has afforded these opportunities before, the program is now expanded to include new performance spaces. Additionally, it allows for theater and dance companies to utilize space according to their needs, whether those needs are a few days or a six week run.

"The City of Chicago is fortunate to have a rich theater and dance community," said Michelle T. Boone, DCASE Commissioner. "What we hope to provide is a nurturing element for those budding productions as well as bringing original and exciting artistic pieces to new audiences."

The process to take advantage of this opportunity will also be streamlined into one application, no matter the size of the company, whether it's theater or dance or whether or not it's a fully realized performance or a new work in development for a future production. One application will be available to companies seeking to be part of the Chicago Cultural Center Presents (fully realized performances) and In the Works (plays in development). Deadline is January 15, 2013 for projects that will be ready for performance, September 2013-August 2014. Projects that are in need of development space for March 2013-December 2013 will also have a January 15, 2013 deadline.

Applications are now available on line at www.chicagoculturalcenter.org.

The performance schedule for 2013 includes 16 dance and theater companies utilizing space in the Storefront Theater, on stage at the Jay Pritzker Pavilion and in newly renovated dance studios at the Chicago Cultural Center, will be available in mid-December.

CHICAGO CULTURAL CENTER'S WINTER EXHIBITS

Michigan Avenue Galleries Host "frizzflopsqueezepop"

An Exhibit by artist Claire Ashley, January 12 – March 31, 2013

Beginning in the New Year, the first floor galleries of the Chicago Cultural Center (78 E. Washington) will showcase Oak Park artist Claire Ashley, whose unconventional work strains the boundaries between not only painting and sculpture, but between static and mobile. Playfully entitled, "frizzflopsqueezepop," the exhibition features vibrantly colored works painted on tarpaulin: some hang on the wall, others occupy space on the floor, while still more can be inhabited by humans who will place the objects in motion in two scheduled performances. The artist's reception is January 11 and the exhibit runs from January 12 – March 31, 2013.

The Chicago Rooms on the second floor of the Cultural Center will open January 26 – April 27 with an exhibition entitled INDIGO: New Works by Shelly Jyoti & Laura Kina. The two artists share a mutual interest in textiles, pattern & decoration, as well as Asian History. While Jyoti's work utilizes traditional embroidery and embellishments from coastal Gujarat to comment on the history of Indigo, Kina's Sampler series brings it closer to home with imagery from her Desi/Jewish neighborhood on the north side of Chicago. This trans-national collaboration also engages artisans from MarketPlace: Handwork of India, a fair trade women's organization in Mumbai for its creation. The Artists Reception is January 25 and a gallery talk with the artists will be at 12:15 p.m. on Thursday, January 31.

Beginning February 1 – May 5, the Yates Gallery will host Shawn Decker: Prairie. This sound installation mimics what one hears and feels on prairie lands, with computer generated programming, and a minimalist sculptural presence. His recent three-week residency at the Ragdale Foundation in Lake Forest allowed him to expand and produce a much larger version of this work to fill the Yates Gallery. The Artists Reception is May 3.

Industry of the Ordinary: Sic Transit Gloria Mundi continues in the Exhibition Hall through February 17, 2013. The final two platform shows are: Faheem Majeed: Planting & Maintaining a Perennial Garden III, December 16 – January 19; and Paige Cunningham/Anna Kunz: One Careless Gesture Away from Destruction, January 20 – February 17.

The former is based on the William "Bill" Walker mural; the latter is a collaborative dance project combining ordinary materials from art and design with those eras in dance and culture.

For more information on exhibits and installations in the Chicago Cultural Center, visit www.chicagoculturalcenter.org

New Year's Eve @ the DANK Haus

Willkommen 2013 in a blaze of sequins, guitars and umlauts

DANK Haus German American Cultural Center mixes the rocking madness of The Polkaholics with a traditional German flaming punch and German bubbly to make your New Year's Eve one to remember.

Arrive early for a demonstration and tasting of Feuerzangenbowle, or flaming tongs punch, where a sugar cone is soaked in rum and lit on fire to melt over a spiced wine. While the cone burns, the party gathers and warm conversation ensues. This event is Monday December 31 at 9:00 pm. Early bird tickets are \$10.00 for the first 200 guests, then only \$15.00 thereafter. Attendees must be 21 years and older. Each entrance includes raffle ticket for an Epiphone guitar from The Polkaholics!

DANK-Haus German American Cultural Center, 4740 North Western Avenue, 5th floor, Chicago, IL 60625; 773.561.9181. www.dankhaus.com.

SKOKIE ART GUILD

FIGURE DRAWING WORKSHOPS

Saturday Sessions continue every week 9:00 AM - 12:00 PM

(Thursday evening sessions have been eliminated)

Live models / no instructor



Fees per session SAG Members \$12.00; non-members \$20.00. For information: Steve Gal 847/673-4450

Devonshire Cultural Center, 4400 Greenwood St., Skokie, IL 60076
www.skokieartguild.org Members: \$12.00 / Non-Members: \$20.00

Mitchell Museum to Unveil 'New Treasures'

Recent Acquisitions to Be Showcased in 'New Treasures of Our Collection' Exhibit December 15 to September 8, 2013

The Mitchell Museum of the American Indian in Evanston will unveil noteworthy new additions to its permanent collection in an exhibit opening this month.

"New Treasures of Our Collection," an exhibit of 45 recent acquisitions on display at the Mitchell Museum for the first time, will open on Saturday, December 15, and will run through Sunday, September 8, 2013, at the museum, 3001 Central St.

The exhibit showcases "interesting, visually striking, and culturally relevant pieces" from among recently donated items, according to museum officials.

Among rare and unusual items are an 18th-century copper crown, fashioned by an Algonquin Indian craftsman for trade purposes; a 20th-century Inuit stone carving depicting seasonal scenes; and a western Canadian moose hair tufting, a colorful, three-dimensional floral design sewed with small bundles of dyed moose hair by Cree artist Helen Jakesta.

Visitors will see a watercolor of Crow Indian warriors by contemporary Crow painter Kevin Red Star, the first work by that celebrated artist in the Mitchell's collection.

Another well-known contemporary artist, Barbara Gonzales of the San Ildefonso Pueblo, is represented by her distinctive black pottery with inlaid turquoise stones.

The exhibit also offers basketry, beadwork, katsina dolls, miniature metal pots, and a child's woolen coat from the Cree culture of the Canadian Arctic. Some exhibit items reflect popular culture, including a Native-themed skateboard, Indian reservation postcards, and a bingo-card stamper.

A tabletop digital slide show will take visitors behind the scenes for a virtual tour of non-public areas of the Mitchell where the permanent collection of some 10,000 items are catalogued, preserved, and stored for future exhibits.

While focusing on new acquisitions, the exhibit also includes a companion display about the Mitchell's education collection, which consists of materials that can be handled by the public in the museum's exhibits, used for off-site demonstrations and presentations by museum representatives, and loaned to teachers for classroom use. Visitors will be able to touch examples of Native beadwork and a Navajo doll.

Admission to the exhibit and curator tour is included with Mitchell Museum admission, which is \$5 for adults and \$3 for seniors, students, teachers (with valid school ID), and children. Admission is free for Mitchell Museum members and tribal members. Admission is free to everyone on the first Friday of every month. The independent nonprofit museum is at 3001 Central St., Evanston. For information, phone (847) 475-1030 or email visitor.services@mitchellmuseum.org. Website: <http://www.mitchellmuseum.org>.

The Mitchell's 2011-12 exhibit "Deconstructing Stereotypes: Top Ten Truths" was a national finalist for an American Association of State and Local History 2012 Leadership in History Award. The Mitchell is the only non-Native run organization on the steering committee of the Chicago American Indian Community Planning Initiative.

The museum is partially supported by a grant from the Evanston Arts Council, a city agency supported by the City of Evanston, and the Illinois Arts Council, a state agency.

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773.561.9181 www.dankhaus.com

Volunteer at DANK Haus

Share your love of German culture with the public! Sign up today at <http://dankhaus.ivolunteer.com>.

New Event Klatschen!

Adult German learners are meeting at Noon on Saturdays to practice their speaking skills.

Informal, fun, native speakers available. Meet us in the Brandenburg Room this week!

Upcoming Events

16 Dec Stammtisch
31 Dec New Year's Eve
11 Jan Potato Pancakes
18 Jan - New in Town?

25 Jan Film Crazy
30 Jan New Semester Adult German
1 Feb Weiberfastnacht

SANTA'S COMING, SANTA'S COMING!

Santa Claus will bring presents for all the students of the MARY COURTENAY SCHOOL OF LANGUAGE ARTS at 1726 W. Berneau Avenue. - Mark your calendar & save the date!: When: Wed., December 19, 2012, at 11:00 am

When you arrive through the front door, you will be directed where to go. A buffet lunch will be served for which we will collect \$10 per person to help offset the cost, after which we will accompany Santa as he gives out the presents to the students. They all wrote a letter to him earlier, telling him what they would like to receive for Christmas. Thanks to Michelle Grunseld and her two daughters for sponsoring the presents for the students and to Direct Effect Charities for helping to arrange the event. Our Club has also contributed to its success by collecting Holiday wrapping paper as well as by making a donation to the school to support all the wonderful work they are doing in our community.



American Legion Edison Park Post #541 members would like to wish you a Merry Christmas and a Happy and Healthy New Year.

We also want to thank you for your support at our Edison Park flea market in August. Not only for your purchases but also those that brought donated items to be sold. We also want to thank those that attended the various events:

- Monument Park rededication, your attendance was inspiring.
- Hines Hosp. extended care Bingo.
- Supporting our annual Poppy donations.



THANK YOU
American Legion
Edison Park Post #541 Members

NILES NORTH CHOIR HITS THE ROAD FOR HOLIDAY CAROLING – CATCH THEM AT THESE LOCATIONS

If you are out and about this holiday season, here are some local stops to hear caroling from the Niles North Chorale:

7:30 to 9 p.m. on Wednesday, December 19 – Choir and Orchestra Holiday Concert at Niles North High School, 9800 Lawler, Skokie

5:30 to 7 p.m. on Sunday, December 23 – Caroling in the lobby at Chicago Symphony Center, 220 S. Michigan Avenue, Chicago

Chorale also performed at: Chicago's Goodman Theatre, Lord & Taylor with Young People's Chorus of New York City, Westfield Old Orchard's Tree Lighting Ceremony, Comer's Children's Hospital with Ronald McDonald in Chicago, and Rotary International Luncheon at Niles North.

Chorale is directed by Daniel Gregerman.

Veterans of Foreign Wars Accepting Donations to Help Veterans in Need

As we enter the holiday season, many veterans throughout Illinois are facing financial difficulties – unsure of how they will pay their rent, mortgage, utility bills or even purchase groceries.

As the Veterans of Foreign Wars tagline suggests – No One Does More For Veterans. More than 113 years ago, the Veterans of Foreign Wars of the United States was founded for two purposes – legislation directly impacting veterans and to assist veterans, our military, and their families.



As war continues in Afghanistan, multiple deployments impact the lives of those serving in our Armed Forces. Many of our nation's newest combat veterans return home to face eviction notices from landlords, mortgage foreclosures, and shut-off notices from utility companies. In addition, many of our older veterans face the necessity of choosing between the need to purchase medicine or groceries.

When called upon, the Veterans of Foreign Wars turn to donations from the public to help veterans facing a financial crisis. Through the generosity of local donations, organizations can assist our needy veterans with their rent, mortgages, utility bills and groceries.

That's where you – John and Jane Q. Public – can help.

Veterans of Foreign Wars posts in your community have funds established to which monetary donations can be earmarked to assist veterans in need. Those funds are collected through poppy drives, various fundraisers and generous individuals and businesses making monetary donations. In addition, many posts conduct food drives throughout the holidays to help provide holiday meals for veterans in their communities needing assistance.

During this holiday season while you are enjoying time with your family, please consider making a donation to your local Veterans of Foreign Wars post to help those veterans less fortunate in your community.

For information on making donations, contact the local Veterans of Foreign Wars post in your community.

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.

Holiday Cards

The Anti-Cruelty Society's holiday cards are hot off the press! Choose between two designs, our cat ambassador Guy, or Rita and her puppies. Each pack has 12 cards in it for \$15. All proceeds from these cards come back to us to help the animals who are still in need of a forever home. We hope to send many home for the holidays. Call Alison at (312) 645-8006, or stop by our store in our adoption center (510 N LaSalle) to purchase the cards and other great holiday gifts today!

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"IMAGERY AND SCENTS FOR STRESS REDUCTION" IS TIMELY TALK AT NORWOOD CROSSING ON DEC. 19

The holidays can stress the most stalwart person. Serenity, tranquility and other calming solutions are eagerly sought, including a vacation. One solution to these stressful situations can be as close to you as other conveniences in your home. Find out more by attending the Timely Talk, "Imagery and Scents for Stress Reduction," at 2 p.m., on Dec. 19, at Norwood Crossing, 6016-20 N. Nina Ave. in Chicago.

Linda Pawlitz, MA, LPC, CHT, a hypnotherapist, certified clinical aromatherapist, corporate consultant, and trainer will teach imagery exercises that take just one to five minutes and are fast, fun and effective for creating changes in your life.

A question and answer session and light refreshments will follow the program. To RSVP, please call (773) 577-5323 or email info@norwoodcrossing.org.

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

CHICAGO-BASED 'ELVES' KICK OFF SHRINERS HOSPITAL TOY DRIVE

Paratransit professionals SCR and Q Transport lead charge to provide toys that provide fun, stress-relief to hospitalized kids

Just consider paratransit experts SCR Medical Transportation Inc. and Q Transport Santa's Chicago-based elves as both companies kick off holiday toy drive donations for Shriners Hospital for Children-Chicago.

SCR and Q employees invite residents to join them in providing everything from MP3 headphones, new, unwrapped dolls, iTunes gift cars, board books for kids under age 3 and Play-Doh to the Shriners Hospital's recreation therapy/child life department. All gifts must be latex-free.

"Toys make the difference in difficult hospital stays," says Justin Rakestraw, president of Q Transport, the premium car service for physically challenged and older riders who prefer to arrive in style. In fact, SCR provides ADA and paratransit rides to and from The Shriners hospital. "The Shriners use play to help kids cope and reduce stress, and they're educational, too."

Direct additional questions to Shriners Hospital Donation Coordinator Mary McCauley at 773.385.5588. The toy drives runs through Dec. 20.

Vienna Gala Concert with Austrian Opera Star

Eva Lind Benefit Concert for a school project in Ghana

Internationally acclaimed opera star Eva Lind will perform January 18, 2013 at the DANK Haus German American Cultural Center. The net proceeds of the concert go to a primary school and a junior high school in Eyiakrom/Ghana which are in a very bad condition; goals include a new roof, latrines and the purchase of books and toys for the children Ms. Lind will travel to the site in February to personally work on the project.



----- The Program -----

W.A.Mozart: Voi che sapete (from "The Marriage of Figaro")

Non sò più cosa son, cosa faccio (from "The Marriage of Figaro")

Des kleinen Friedrichs Geburtstag KV 529

Franz Schubert: Die Forelle DV 550

Heidenröslein DV 257

Ave Maria DV 839

Seligkeit DV 433

F.Lehár: Viljalied (from "The Merry Widow")

J.Strauß: Mein Herr Marquis (from "Die Fledermaus")

----- Intermission -----

J.Strauß: Grüß dich Gott, du liebes Nesterl (from "Wiener Blut")

C.Zeller: Schenkt man sich Rosen in Tirol (from "Der Vogelhändler")

R.Stolz: Du sollst der Kaiser meiner Seele sein (from "Der Favorit")

R.Stolz: Im Prater blüh'n wieder die Bäume

J.Strauß: Draußen in Sievering

DANK-Haus German American Cultural Center, 4740 North Western Avenue, 5th floor, Chicago, IL 60625; 773.561.9181. www.dankhaus.com.



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 Dec. 25: Closed
 Dec. 31: 11 am - 5 pm
 Jan. 1: Closed



SCHOOL, LIBRARY AND PARK EVENTS

RESURRECTION HIGH SCHOOL ENTRANCE EXAM AND SHADOW DAYS

Resurrection College Prep High School invites eighth grade girls to take the Class of 2017 Entrance Exam on Saturday, January 12, 2013 from 7:45 am to 12:30 pm. No pre-registration is necessary - students should bring #2 pencils and a \$25 testing fee (calculators will not be allowed). Lunch will be provided following the exam.

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 block scheduling, the Practicum Program, the Strategies for Academic Success Program, and work/study tuition assistance opportunities.

Shadow Days are available for girls to spend the day at Resurrection to experience the school first-hand. Eighth grade girls may shadow on select days and seventh grade girls are invited to a special Shadow Day on Friday, February 15, 2013. Shadow registration and additional information about the upcoming Entrance Exam is available on the Resurrection website at www.reshs.org or by contacting Debbie Gillespie at dgillespie@reshs.org or 773.775.6616 Ext 129.

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.

After School Matters® Now Accepting Applications from Chicago High School Students for Spring 2013 Programs

Thousands of program opportunities in the arts, communications, sports, science and technology available to teens across the city

After School Matters is now accepting applications for its Spring programs, most of which begin early February. Programs in the arts, communications, science, sports and technology will be offered at 52 Chicago Public Schools high schools, and at more than 100 community organizations, Chicago Park District and Chicago Public Library locations across the city, as well as Downtown at the Gallery37 Center for the Arts. In total, approximately 7,000 opportunities in more than 300 programs will be available to Chicago teens this Spring.

All After School Matters programs, which typically meet three days a week for 75-90 hours over the course of 10-to-16 weeks, are free and open to Chicago teen residents who are at least 14 years of age, and entering or currently enrolled in high school. Teens can search for programs that interest them at locations in and around their neighborhood at www.afterschoolmatters.org. Teens must apply online and meet with program instructors to discuss and present their skills and interests. Teens are encouraged to apply early as program opportunities fill up quickly.

For more information about After School Matters and to apply for Spring programs, visit www.afterschoolmatters.org. Follow After School Matters on Twitter at @afterschoolmatters and on Facebook at facebook.com/afterschoolmatters.

NILES WEST ENGLISH CLASSES RAISE \$650 FOR GREATER CHICAGO FOOD DEPOSITORY

For about the last ten years, Niles West English teacher David Klingenger and his students have made the holidays a little less bleak for those who are hungry. Klingenger's English classes contribute money, and he matches their gift, presenting it to the Greater Chicago Food Depository. This year's donation of \$650.00 was the largest amount ever presented by his classes and will help provide over 1,000 of the 142,400 meals that are served each week.

NORTH STAR NEWS NAMED FIRST CLASS PUBLICATION BY KEMPA

North Star was recently named a First Class high school news publication by the Kettle Moraine Press Association (KEMPA). The organization of Midwestern school publications is based at the University of Wisconsin-Whitewater.

In the 2012 competition, KEMPA reviewed approximately 90 high school publications. Each publication, both print and online, was reviewed by an experienced, third-party judge in the categories of coverage and content, breaking news, design and navigation, interactivity and community and rich media.

Each category had certain point values. North Star scored 515 out of 600 possible points, ranking the online student publication as a First Class publication.

"There is so much to be very proud of on northstarnews," the judge said in North Star's KEMPA critique. "The site currently provides viewers with a good amount of variety and is really starting to use all the avenues available for digital media." The judge also remarked that northstarnews had one of the best logos.

The First Class award from KEMPA is North Star's first award as an online publication. Northstarnews.org went online after school on Feb. 23, 2011.

Senior Steffie Drucker is the student publication's editor in chief. Charles Pratt is the newspaper adviser.

BREAK A SWEAT, NOT THE BANK DURING ONE WEEK OF FREE ADMISSION TO CITYWIDE FITNESS CENTERS & CLASSES

New This Year, Offer Includes Fitness Classes & Lap Swim
One Week Only Jan. 7-13

Kick off the New Year in great shape by working out for free from Jan. 7-13, 2013, at any of the Chicago Park District's 71 fitness centers located throughout the city. New this year, the promotion includes free admission to all fitness classes and lap swim. All activities are first come, first served based on availability.

"We encourage Chicagoans to take advantage of this special incentive," said Chicago Park District General Superintendent and CEO Mike Kelly. "Physical activity is one step toward leading a healthy lifestyle."

The Chicago Park District's 71 fitness centers feature state-of-the-art equipment including: computerized treadmills, cross trainers, upright and recumbent bicycles, free weights and benches, cable cross-overs, multi-station weight machines and core-focused weight equipment.

The Chicago Park District also offers a wide array of fitness classes for a range of ages and abilities, including aquatic aerobics, cycling, Pilates, yoga, kickboxing, and strength training, to name a few. Fitness classes vary per location. Check the programs tab on the website, or contact your local park for options.

Lap swim is also available at many citywide pools. Hours and times vary by park.

Memberships are available to Chicago Park District fitness centers. Patrons must set up an account prior to registering either online or in-person for a monthly, three-month or annual membership. There is also a gold card membership option that allows patrons to workout at any of the Chicago Park District's citywide fitness centers.

Membership rates to the Chicago Park District's fitness centers are affordable and generally range from \$30-\$60 for three months, a fraction of the cost of commercial gyms. Accessible equipment for people with disabilities is available at 45 fitness centers. Hours of operation vary per location.

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

RESURRECTION HIGH SCHOOL SENIORS NAMED ILLINOIS STATE SCHOLARS

Resurrection College Prep High School is pleased to announce the members of the Resurrection Class of 2013 who have been named Illinois State Scholars in recognition of their outstanding academic achievement. Approximately the top ten percent of graduates from approved high schools are announced as State Scholars each year. Rankings are based on a combination of ACT test scores and GPA at the end of the sixth semester in high school.

The students who were honored for their academic achievements as Illinois State Scholars included the following Resurrection seniors: Shannon Barker '13 (60631), Sarah Black '13 (60646), Gabrielle Carsello '13 (Glenview, 60025), Kristy Getty '13 (Niles, 60714), Hailee Higgins '13 (Harwood Hts, 60706), Theresa LoBianco '13 (60631), Mia Manolis '13 (60656), Michelle McGlenn '13 (60631), Rebecca McGovern '13 (60641), Siobhan McManus '13 (60631) and Bailey Scianna '13 (60631).

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.

CHICAGO PUBLIC LIBRARY GIVES THE PUBLIC A TASTE OF SWEET HOME CHICAGO

What a sweet deal! There was a time when some of America's favorite confections including Snickers, Lemonheads, Butterfingers and Cracker Jack were made in Chicago. This is the subject of a new Chicago Public Library exhibit exploring the candy industry that developed in our city. Titled Sweet Home Chicago: The History of America's Candy Capital, the exhibit will be on display December 1, 2012 through March 3, 2013, in the Special Collections Exhibit Hall on the 9th floor of the Harold Washington Library Center, 400 South State Street. The exhibition is produced by the Elmhurst Historical Museum, a department of the City of Elmhurst, Illinois.

The Sweet Home Chicago exhibit includes numerous artifacts, photographs and other documentary items that tell the story of Chicago's iconic candy makers. At one time, Chicago produced about one-third of the candy in the U.S. and employed about 25,000 workers. Chicago was an ideal location due to its reputation as a transportation hub and—believe it or not—its climate.

The Chicago Public Library continues to encourage lifelong learning by welcoming all people and offering equal access to information, entertainment and knowledge through materials, programs and cutting-edge technology. Through its 79 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. For more information, visit chicagopubliclibrary.org, or call (312) 747-4050.

SCHOOL, LIBRARY AND PARK EVENTS

LINCOLNWOOD PUBLIC LIBRARY
4000 W. Pratt Ave., 847-677-5277

The library closes at 12:30 p.m. on Monday, December 24 and is closed on Tuesday, December 25. The library closes at 12:30 p.m. on Monday, December 31 and is closed Tuesday, January 1, 2013.

Book Discussion. January 3, 7 p.m. and January 14, 11 a.m. January 3: "Little Bee" by Chris Cleave." January 14: "The Rules of Civility" by Amor Towles.

Book and Travel Reviews. January 4, 10:30 a.m. Richard Klein presents "The Musical Sides of Audrey Hepburn."

Cinematic Classics shown Thursdays at 1 p.m. December 20: "It's a Wonderful Life"; December 27: "Holiday"; January 3: "The Searchers"; January 10: "Double Indemnity"; January 17: "The Red Shoes"; January 24: "Modern Times"; January 31: "The Big Sleep."

Dining for Wellness. January 16, 11:30 a.m. Chef demonstration by Lincolnwood Place.

Friday Films shown weekly at 1 p.m. December 21: "The Bourne Legacy"; December 28: "Hope Springs"; January 4: "Total Recall"; January 11: "Arbitrage"; January 18: "Trouble with the Curve"; January 25: "Samsara."

Friends of the Library Book Sale. January 5-12 during library hours. Paperbacks are \$.50 and hardcovers, DVDs, VHS, puzzles etc. are \$1. Please donate any gently used items to our Circulation desk.

Library Board Meeting. January 17, 7:30 p.m. The Library Board of Trustees meeting is open to the public.

Live@Lincolnwood. January 20, 2 p.m. The Legacy Girls sing hits from the nifty 50s and 60s. Free tickets available at the library's Circulation desk, three weeks prior to event to Lincolnwood residents and one week prior to non-residents.

Morning Matinees. Thursdays at 10:30 a.m. December 20: "Ruby Sparks"; December 27: "Sleepwalk With Me"; January 3: "Lawless"; January 10: "Natural Selection"; January 17: "Beasts of the Southern Wild"; January 24: "Sleepwalk with Me"; January 31: "To Rome with Love."

Acting Class. Mondays, 2-3 p.m. January 28-May 20 when school is in session. Theater games, improv, bit parts, and more for grades 3-5. Directed by Debbi Brodsky. Registration required. Contact the Youth Services Department at 847-677-5277 x234 or youthservices@lincolnwoodlibrary.org.

Beginning with Books. Wednesdays, January 9-February 27, 10 a.m. This stories, songs and activities geared for very young children and their caregivers. Participants are invited to stay for Playtime program following. Registration required. Contact the Youth Services Department at 847-677-5277 x234 or youthservices@lincolnwoodlibrary.org.

Bingo. January 28: "Book Character Bingo." Grades 3-8.

Chess. Sundays, January 13-March 10, 3 p.m. If you like puzzles and playing strategic games against your friends, community member Larry Rabyne is here to help you learn chess. Grades 3-5. Registration required. Contact the Youth Services Department at 847-677-5277 x234 or youthservices@lincolnwoodlibrary.org.

Family Night Storytime. January 10, 7 p.m. "Pajama Party." Families with young children are invited to join us for an evening of stories, activities, and celebrations. All ages are welcome but especially ages 3 through 8. Registration required. Contact the Youth Services Department at 847-677-5277 x234 or youthservices@lincolnwoodlibrary.org.

Fun-tivities. January 23, 3:30 p.m. Afterschool fun. Includes various games designed for 3-5th grade students.

Games. January 14 and 30, 3:30 p.m. Video or board games especially for school-age kids.

Just Because. January 9, 3:30 p.m. "Backwards Day." Have you ever wanted to do something wild and wacky, or crazy and fun like have an un-birthday party Just Because? Well, now is your chance. Grades 3-5.

Kid Flicks. 3:30 p.m. January 7: "Diary of a Wimpy Kid: Dog Days."

Knitting for All Ages. Fridays, 3:30-4:30 p.m. Adults and children, ages 10 and up, can learn to knit or work on a project.

Madlibs. January 16, 3:30 p.m. Each month we'll create a new hilarious madlib and play different games to spark creativity and have fun. Grades 3-5.

Open Grant Room. Mondays and Tuesdays, December 10-February 26, 2:30 p.m. Come hang out, do some homework, play a board game, and buy a snack. Students 3-8th grade. No- school days, no Open Grant Room.

Playtime. Wednesdays, January 9-February 27, 10:30 a.m. A relaxed play experience that helps young children develop social skills. Toys are provided.

Snow Blowout. Wednesday, December 19, 6:30 p.m. Students 6th grade and up. Make your spirit bright with gingerbread house and holiday bauble crafts, games, and a white elephant gift exchange. Registration required. Contact the Youth & Teen Services Department at 847-677-5277 x234 or youthservices@lincolnwoodlibrary.org.

Stories and More. Tuesdays, January 8-February 26, 10 a.m. This fun, interactive storytime is tailored for children ages 3-5 and emphasizes letters, numbers, shapes, colors and other concepts. Through a combination of picture books, online stories, magnetic board stories, songs, fingerplays, and crafts, each session provides a language-rich experience. Registration required. Contact the Youth Services Department at 847-677-5277 x234 or youthservices@lincolnwoodlibrary.org.

Thursday Club. Thursdays, 3:30 p.m. Grades 6+. Each month a new theme, each week, who knows what we will be doing? Come and find out during Jazzy January.

English as a Second Language Class. Tuesdays, 6-8:30 p.m. Registration is January 8 and class runs through June 4. Free weekly class for adults who want to learn to speak English. Sponsored by Oakton Community College. Call 847-635-1426 for more information.

EISENHOWER PUBLIC LIBRARY DISTRICT
4613 N Oketo, Harwood Heights, IL 60706

Eisenhower Public Library turns 40 this year.

Join us for a year-long celebration of events!

The Adult Book Discussion Group will be meeting on Monday, January 7 from 7 - 8:30 p.m. or Tuesday, December 8 from 2 - 3:30 p.m. Attend either session to discuss You Know When the Men are Gone by Siobhan Fallon.

The Non-fiction Book Discussion Group will meet on Saturday, January 19 from 2-3:30 p.m. to discuss The Sociopath Next Door by Martha Stout.

Classic Films continue at Eisenhower: The Roaring Twenties with James Cagney and Humphrey Bogart on January 10; Annie Hall with Woody Allen and Diane Keaton, directed by Woody Allen on January 24. Discussions with Ralph J Amelio. Free popcorn at all movies! All films begin at 1:00 p.m.

Tired of Knitting Alone? Join our Knitting Circle! We meet the third Tuesday of every month from 2:30-3:30 p.m. January's Knitting Circles will be on 16th at 2:30. Bring your needles, bring your yarn and knit over snacks and coffee. No registration, just show up!

Computer Classes. No cost computer classes: Google Searching: Thursday, January 24, 2:30-3:30 p.m.; Ancestry Online: Wednesday, January 30, 7:00-8:00 p.m. Charge computer classes: Microsoft Word Parts 1 and 2: Tuesday January 15 and Thursday, January 17, 7:00-8:30 p.m.

Pen and Ink Adult Writers. Every third Monday of the month. This month's meeting is Monday, January 21, 6:30-8:45 p.m. Anonymous Writers for Teens meets every Thursday from 4-5:30.

Friends of the Library. Interested in helping the library, doing great volunteer work and meeting interesting people? The Friends of the Library meet monthly on the third Wednesday of each month from 6-8 p.m. This month's meeting is on January 16. And don't forget the Friends Mini Book Sales on Saturday, January 12 and 26 from 2-4.

Team Winter Reading. Form your team -- 2 people or more -- and start reading! Teams can be made of family, friends, or strangers who may become friends! Each team member reads four books between Jan 1 and March 20, the spring equinox (yes, winter is officially over). Prizes!

Create Your Own 40th Anniversary Button. Make your own button design for Eisenhower's 40th anniversary! We'll make a 2 1/4 button for you to keep -- your very own original. Stop in any time on Saturday, January 5 between 2 p.m. and 3:45 p.m.

Create Your Own Apocalypse. What does the new apocalypse look like? Zombies? Dystopian? Vampires? Fire and brimstone? Join us and create your own apocalyptic snowglobe, chibi, and phone ringtone or wallpaper. For grades 7-12 ONLY! Thursday, December 27, Friday, December 28, Thursday, January 3 and Friday, January 4, 10-12:00.

Pleasant Home Tour and Tea. Pleasant Home, also known as the John Farson House, is a landmark Prairie Style house museum located in the heart of Oak Park, Illinois, one the nation's most architecturally significant villages. Join us for a tour of this National Historic Landmark and then enjoy tea, from Todd and Holland Tea Merchants, in the library. \$35.00 charge. Monday, January 14, 12:15-4:15

Tea and Chocolate. Sheila Duda of Tea Lula and of Rocky Mountain Chocolate will show you how to pair the best of tea and chocolate. Curl up after the holidays! \$3.00 tasting fee Thursday, January 17, 7-8:30.

Brunches and Breads. A look at brunches and breads from past decades. Presenter Amy Alessio will hand out recipes so that you can recreate your own perfect brunch. \$3.00 tasting fee Tuesday, January 22, 7-8:15.

My Kind of Town Chicago Film. With Kevin Costner and Sean Connery, directed by Brian DePalma Wednesday, January 30, 1:30-3:30.

Please register for all programs by calling (708) 867-2299, or register online at eisenhowerlibrary.org. You must register for fee-based programs with library staff.

Rink at Wrigley Ice Rink Offer for Students

Rink at Wrigley For the fourth consecutive year, an ice skating rink will welcome skaters to the Friendly Confines of Wrigley Field this winter, thanks to the generosity of the Ricketts family and Chicago Cubs Charities, the City of Chicago, the Chicago Park District, Central Lakeview Merchants, local businesses and community groups.



Building on last year's success, a full-size skating rink will once again find a home in the Cubs parking lot at the corner of Clark and Waveland. Named The Rink at Wrigley, the endeavor is sponsored by the Ricketts family and Chicago Cubs Charities, Westrec Marinas and Christy Webber Landscapes.

For more information on the Rink at Wrigley, call 773.525.1638. Festive Decorations for The Rink at Wrigley were provided by Christy Webber Landscapes.

Student Special Looking for something to do after school or on the weekends? Come visit us at The Rink at Wrigley. \$45 for a SEASON LONG PASS to the rink. (Must show proof of enrollment.)

Wills and Trusts are Not Interchangeable



Chester M. Przybylo

Wills and Trusts are Not Interchangeable
 People often assume that wills and trusts are somewhat interchangeable. While both can be effective to transfer assets to loved ones after your death, they have important differences.

A will is effective to transfer property that is in your name at your death. Typically, a will must be signed and witnessed by two people. A will “speaks at death,” in other words its provisions are not effective until death. Assets which are in your name are controlled by the will, even if there is a trust in existence. However, the will can provide that your assets “pourover” into the trust.

By comparison, a trust comes into existence upon signing the document. While some states require a trust to be witnessed, the vast majority do not. A living trust holds title to the property transferred into it. If property is in a living trust, it will not be governed by the will because it no longer is in your name—it is in the name of the trust.

The importance of this distinction is illustrated by the circumstances surrounding Gay Dawn Tamplin’s death. Gay Dawn had both a will and a living trust. Gay Dawn lived in an Alaska condominium with her life partner, Larry Daly. Five years before her death, Gay Dawn set up a living trust and funded it with her condominium, avoiding the expense and invasiveness of probate. Upon her death, the trust was to distribute the condominium to her daughter, Gayleen.

In early spring, Gay Dawn was diagnosed with a terminal illness. She had been living with Larry in her condominium for six years and decided he should have it after her death. While in the hospital, she wrote a will herself and in it said that Larry should have her condominium. The problem was that she no longer owned the condominium in her own name. She had transferred the property to her trust to avoid probate. The will was not effective to transfer an asset that she no longer owned. Nor was the will effective to amend the trust because the will did not “speak” until her death. By that time it was too late to change the trust: Living trusts become irrevocable at death.

When tragedy strikes, people do not always think clearly. In order to accomplish her goal, Gay Dawn needed to amend her trust to provide that the condominium passed to Larry.

Legal documents have very unique characteristics that may not be obvious at first glance. Especially when hardship looms, do not try to go it alone. A qualified estate planning attorney can be a kind and caring shoulder to help you through the process and prepare documents that accomplish your goals.

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 40 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 bingo, have parties on special occasions. Meetings start at 10:30 with coffee and a sweet roll. Call Joan at 773-774-7075.

Jewish Art Calendar 2012/2013 Available

Lubavitch Chabad of Skokie is once again publishing the Skokie Jewish Art Calendar 2012/2013 for the Jewish New Year. The Jewish Art Calendar includes detailed information on upcoming holidays, educational messages, Shabbat and Holiday candle-lighting times, traditional Jewish recipes, and popular thematic artwork by famed artists including Yoram Lukav, Michael Muchnik, Baruch Nachshon, Chench Lieberman and Zalman Kleinman. To receive your free copy, call 847-677-1770 or contact us via the website, www.SkokieChabad.org.

The Lincolnwood Social Club

Day trips, drop-in programs, guest speakers and seasonal mixers are just a few of the activities enjoyed by Lincolnwood Social Club members. Area seniors, age 55 years and better, are encouraged to join the program and start taking advantage of some of the upcoming programming including theater outings to see *The Pirates of Penzance* (May 16), *Dream Girls* (October 10) and *Singin’ in the Rain* (November 28). Other day trips include the Glenn Miller Orchestra (May 22), History Lunch Tour on the Spirit of Chicago (June 20) and Lake Geneva Lake Tour and Lunch at The Abbey (July 18). Registration fees include round trip transportation and lunch for most outings.

Drop-in programs are offered on a weekly basis at the Lincolnwood Community Center (6900 N. Lincoln Avenue). Weekly activities include bridge, mah jongg and senior exercise. Classes are offered either free of charge or at a discount for Social Club members. In addition to day trips and drop-in programs, members enjoy monthly activities including movie viewings with catered lunch, area restaurant outings as well as outings to city locales (transportation included) and monthly social mixers highlighting member birthdays.

For membership information and a complete list of activities, please contact the Parks and Recreation Department at (847) 677-9740 or access at www.lincolnwoodil.org.

36th Annual Turkey Trot is a Success

The 36th Annual Lincolnwood Turkey Trot took place on Sunday, November 18, 2012 under sunny skies and perfect running weather. This year 1,853 runners, walkers and Drumstick “Dashers” participated in the event, the second largest crowd in the events history.

Almost 900 participants competed in the 5K race with Tommy Lawler, age 22 from Morton Grove, taking first place with a time of 16.55 minutes. The first place female finisher honors go to Columba Montes, 33 years of age from Chicago, with a time of 17.54 minutes. Scott Kalchik, age 43, and Rachel Bender, age 18, were the first place finishers from Lincolnwood.

The 10K race welcomed 657 runners to the start line. Joshua Hinds, age 26 of Champaign, won the race with a time of 37.08 minutes. Meshelle Rich, age 38 of Chicago, had the winning women’s time with 39.25 minutes. The top Lincolnwood male finisher honors go to Gregory Stellatos, age 30, with a time of 40.23 minutes; Callie Sher, age 19, was the top Lincolnwood female finisher with a time of 47.06 minutes.

Participants traveled from near and far for this year’s event. Out-of-state participants traveled from as far away as Austin, Texas, Pleasantville, California, and Miami, FL. As always, Lincolnwood was well represented with a total of 259 Village residents participating in the day’s events.

This event would not be possible without the tremendous support received by the Lincolnwood community. Fifty volunteers assisted with event logistics including serving as course marshals and assisting with race day registration and gear check. Eighteen sponsors were on site for the event, with monetary and in-kind donations received from a total of 40 area businesses. Lincolnwood loves the Turkey Trot, and it shows!

Mark your calendars now for next year’s race on Sunday, November 24, 2013. Whether you race, walk, volunteer, or cheer, we hope to see everyone show their support for this community-favorite fall event.

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Christmas Tree Care

By: Nick Urhausen, Urhausen Greenhouses

Just because we do not sell any Christmas trees or poinsettias at Urhausen Greenhouses, as we are already growing our annuals and perennials for next spring and summer, we still receive and answer many questions about Christmas trees. As with everything in horticulture and floriculture, freshness is of the utmost importance. How "fresh" the tree which you purchase will determine how well it will look and how long it will last.

What does one mean by "fresh?" The freshness of a Christmas tree is determined by the length of time since the tree was cut and your purchase. When you purchase your tree it should look healthy and green, and few dead or brown needles should be visible. The needles should not be stiff and hard, but rather flexible and soft. It is a red flag if the needles fall off as you touch them.

Once a fresh Christmas tree is procured, keeping it fresh will depend on how much care the tree receives. Upon purchase, a fresh cut about one inch above the old base on the bottom of the tree should be made. Then the tree should be placed in a bucket of water. Make sure it is a rather large bucket as a tree may absorb almost a gallon of water the first day. Make sure you monitor the water level several times on that first day. At this time of the year you may read or hear about all kinds of additives to place in the water to preserve freshness. Most horticultural experts advocate the use of pure tap water and disavow the benefits of the so called additives.

The key to the freshness of your tree is to keep it watered and not let it dry out. The added benefit of doing this is that a well watered tree will not be a fire hazard. Use common sense when locating your tree. Don't place it near a source of heat, like a fireplace, stove, or a hot air duct. These measures promote safety and preserve freshness.

The information in this article is correct, however as a fellow consumer of Christmas trees it is becoming more and more difficult to find a fresh tree. Many years I have purchased a tree and followed all these guidelines only to be met with frustration. One sign that you have a stale tree is when the tree will not absorb any water after you place it in the bucket of water. Another is when the needles drop only a few days after the tree is placed inside your home. So, I guess it is important to ask the merchants selling trees when the trees were cut.

From all of us at Urhausen Greenhouses we wish everyone a Happy and Healthy Holiday Season.

Urhausen Greenhouses, Inc. is located at 6973 N. East Prairie Road in Lincolnwood. Phone: 847-675-1573, www.urhausengreenhouses.com



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.

Holiday Hazards

To make this holiday season safe and happy, we want to remind you to take extra care of your pets. Go to www.anticruelty.org/holidayhazards/ for a complete list of holiday hazards to be aware of as the hustle and bustle begins.

Village Cooking Corner

Chicken Risotto serves 10 people

1 cup sliced portobello mushrooms	½ cup sundried tomatoes
2 pounds boneless chicken breast	1 cup broccoli florets
1 cup sweet vadalia onions	2 cups chicken broth
6 cloves minced garlic	2 cups Arborio rice

Cut chicken breasts into 1 inch strips.

In a large frying pan, sautee chicken strips for about 4 minutes. Add 1 cup sweet vadalia onions and cook until onions are golden brown. Add minced garlic, sliced portobello mushrooms and sundried tomatoes, cook 2-3 minutes. Add 2 cups Arborio rice and 2 cups of chicken broth, cook for 5 minutes. Add broccoli florets, cook until rice is tender. Add salt and pepper to your liking.

Mini Cannoli Dessert 20 cannolis

2 pounds Sorrento ricotta cheese	6 ounces cool whip
½ cup granulated sugar	½ cup chocolate chips
2 ounces white crème de cocoa liqueur	1 cup crushed pistachio
1 ounce vanilla extract	20 mini cannoli shells (find in any italian store)

In a bowl, mix together 2 pounds Sorrento ricotta cheese, ½ ounce granulated sugar, 2 ounces white crème de cocoa liqueur and 1 ounce vanilla extract, mix for 2-3 minutes. Add 6 ounces cool whip and ½ cup chocolate chips, mix until equally combined.

Fill mini cannoli shells. Finish by sprinkling crushed pistachio on each end of the cannolis.

Vinces Italian Restaurant is located at 4747 N. Harlem Ave. in Harwood Heights; (708) 867-7770; www.vincesonharlem.com.

Tips on How to Find a Comfortable Kennel for Your Pets During the Holidays

As much as pet owners may want to take their furry or feathered friends with them wherever they go over the holidays, sometimes pets cannot come with. Finding a trustworthy kennel or pet care service becomes essential. The Better Business Bureau serving Chicago and Northern Illinois (BBB) has created a checklist to help pet owners choose a safe and reliable home-away-from-home for their pets.

Consumers have become much more proactive in researching boarding facilities for their pets. The BBB had had an increase of 66 percent in the number of people seeking information; 3,780 inquiries for this 12 month period compared to 2,274 for the previous 12 months.

"Many pets are viewed as family members. Having to leave them at home adds more stress during the holidays," said Steve J. Bernas, president & CEO of the Better Business Bureau serving Chicago and Northern Illinois. "Doing research before dropping off your pet will make you feel more confident that they will be well taken care of while you are away."

When looking for a reliable kennel, the BBB recommends the following checklist:

- Check the kennel out with the BBB first to make sure they have a good track record for keeping customers satisfied at www.bbb.org
- Consult friends, neighbors, veterinarian or local animal shelters for recommendations.
- Personally visit the facilities. Check for cleanliness and offensive odors, and note the overall safety of the kennel and cages.
- If your pet is prone to running away, ask about steps the kennel has taken to make their facilities escape-proof.
- Ask about how your pet may come in contact with other animals. Some kennels let animals play together while others keep them separate at all times.
- Ask about the feeding schedule, water accessibility and frequency of - or fees related to - exercise.
- Note the friendliness of staff members and how they interact with the other boarding pets. Ask about their background and experience.
- Make sure the facility requires that all entering pets have proof of immunization and ask about their policies regarding flea and tick control.
- Ask about the hours for drop off and pick up and make sure you understand their billing policy.
- Ask what happens in the case of a medical emergency or other unexpected situations.

For more advice on finding reputable businesses around the holidays, visit www.bbb.org

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VITA Tutors Needed

Many adults need help with basic English reading, writing and speaking skills.

Call Oakton Community College at 847- 635-1426 to learn how to become a VITA tutor.

A required four part training will be held at the Skokie Campus on

Tuesday, January 8, 6:15 - 10:00 p.m.

Thursday, January 10, 6:15 - 10:00 p.m.

Saturday, February 9, 1:00 - 3:30 p.m.

Saturday, March 9, 1:00 - 4:00 p.m.



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SCAN THIS CODE for fitness center locations, fitness classes offered and more information.

For more information about your Chicago Park District please visit: www.chicagoparkdistrict.com or call 312.742.PLAY (7529) or 312.747.2001(TTY).



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Entrance Exam

Saturday, **January 12, 2012**
 7:45 am to 12:30 am

No reservations necessary for Entrance Exam.

Students should bring a \$25 testing fee and #2 pencils. Lunch will be served following the exam.

Parent Information Session will be held at 8:00 am in the Resurrection Library.

For information, please contact Ms. Gillespie at dgillespie@reshs.org or 773.775.6616 Ext 129

Shadow Days

8th grade girls are welcome to shadow now on select days.

7th grade girls are welcome to a special Shadow Day on Friday, **February 15, 2013.**

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