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Issue 6
December 18, 2009

Merry Christmas
FROM VILLAGE PUBLICATIONS

Navy Pier's Family New Year's Eve Bash

Winter WonderStage in Festival Hall
December 31, 2009 6:00pm - 7:45pm
Fireworks at 8:15pm
Free Admission!



Families can ring in the New Year at Navy Pier... a little bit early! Navy Pier presents a spectacular all ages showcase of hip hop dance, live music, and double dutch jumpers at the Winter WonderStage, located inside the Bank of America Winter WonderFest. The celebration culminates with a special 8:15pm Family Fireworks show outside on Dock Street.

Community Kwanzaa Celebration Expands to 2 Events

Celebrate Kwanzaa with family, friends and neighbors as Evanston's annual Kwanzaa observance expands to two days. Welcome the first day of the holiday with music, song and the traditional lighting of the Kinara starting at 5:30 p.m. Saturday, Dec. 26, in Fountain Square, Davis St. between Orrington and Sherman Avenues. A second community celebration starts at 6 p.m. Monday, Dec. 28, at the Fleetwood-Jourdain Center, 1655 Foster St. This evening includes spoken word, the history of Kwanzaa and a libation ceremony. Both celebrations are free and open to all. For more information, call 847-448-8254.

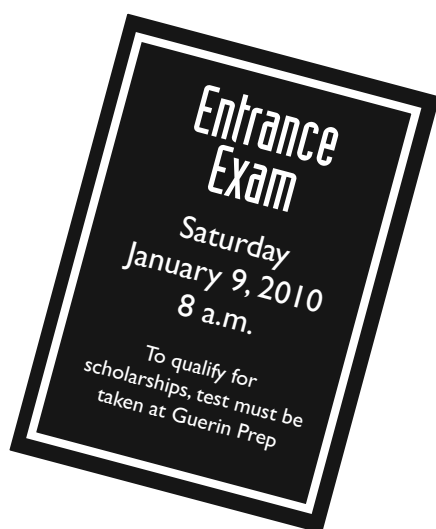
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Commodore Haben Assumes Command of U.S. Navy Destroyer Squadron 14

Captain Gary J. Haben, United States Navy, a native of Skokie, Illinois, assumed the command of Destroyer Squadron 14, based at the United States Naval Station, Mayport, Jacksonville, Florida, on December 11, 2009. Commodore Haben's Reading of the Orders and Assumption of Command was witnessed by Rear Admiral K. M. Quinn, Naval Officers from Mayport, Florida and around the country, local dignitaries and his immediate family from Skokie, Glenview, Park Ridge and Elmhurst, Illinois.



The U.S. Navy Destroyer Squadron 14 (DESRON 14) is the Commodore for both the FFG Class Squadron and the Surface Ministry Center in Mayport, FL in addition to the Immediate Superior in Command responsibilities for 13 ships and common support services across the Mayport waterfront. Its focus is on process improvement and cost control in the processes of manning, maintaining and modernizing Frigate forces, equipment, sustainment and training. Its goal is to increase the effectiveness and efficiency in producing "Warships Ready For Tasking" while at the same time reducing overall costs.

As a career Surface Warfare Officer, Commodore Haben has served predominantly in Frigates in both the Pacific and Atlantic Fleets. His afloat assignments have been Anti-Submarine Warfare Officer and Ordinance Officer on the USS Copeland, Navigator on the USS Jouett, Operations Officer on the USS Gallery, Executive Officer on the USS Samuel Eliot Morison and Commanding Officer of the USS Jarrett.

Ashore, Commodore Haben served on the staff of Commander, Naval Surface Reserve Force in New Orleans, LA, Commanding Officer, Naval Reserve Center, Syracuse, NY, Surface Full Time Support Junior Officer Detailer at the Navy Personnel Command in Millington, TN, and Assistant Chief of Staff for Operations, Commander, Naval Surface Forces.

Supporting the Global War on Terror, he completed an assignment in Guantanamo Bay, Cuba serving as Officer-in-Charge, Office for the Administrative Review of the Detention of Enemy Combatants. His most recent assignment was Deputy Commander, Amphibious Force, US Seventh Fleet, Sasebo, Japan.

Commodore Haben holds various personal decorations, including the Legion of Merit. He is most proud of the campaign and unit awards earned with his shipmates, as well as his six Sea Service Deployment ribbons.

Skokie TeenLink Program

The Village of Skokie offers the TeenLink program to unite Skokie residents who are in need of outside seasonal yard work, including snow shoveling, raking and lawn care, with Skokie teens who are available for hire to do the work.

The TeenLink program list provides contact information for Skokie teens available to do seasonal yard work. The list includes the name and address of the teen, days available, type of work they are willing to do and their expected rate of pay. Residents can receive the list by mail or email.

The resident is responsible for contacting the teen and for making financial and scheduling arrangements.

If you would like the TeenLink contact list please call the Village Manager's Office at 847/933-8210. Skokie teens can also complete an application to be added to the TeenLink program by contacting the Village Manager's Office or visiting www.skokie.org to download an application.

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Evanston Fire Department's Deputy Chief Retires

Deputy Chief Samuel S. Hunter will retire from the Evanston Fire Department after 33 years of service with the City of Evanston. A graduate of Evanston Township High School, Deputy Chief Hunter started with the Department in 1976 as a Firefighter. In 1979 he became a Paramedic and was promoted to Captain in 1980. He then became Medical Officer in 1984, Division Chief in 1987 and rose to the rank of Deputy Chief in 2008. His last day with the City will be December 23, 2009.

“It is hard for me to imagine Evanston without first thinking of Sam Hunter and all the wonderful things he has done for the community,” said Mayor Elizabeth Tisdahl. “He is a true Evanstonian who rose through the ranks to help protect this community in times of need, he was such an integral part of the Belize Sister City Program and he has always given me good advice when I have needed it. He will be missed and we hope he does not go far.

Deputy Chief Hunter has served in various capacities including Dive Master, Fleet Manager, Budget Officer, 911 Liaison, and Facilities Manager. He has been involved in numerous projects over the course of his career including the construction of Fire Stations #1, #2 and #3, Fire Department Explorer Program, ETHS Public Safety Program, Fire Department Recruitment Process and has received numerous recognitions and awards. In addition to his Fire Department duties, Deputy Chief Hunter was also a member of the City's Accident Review Board, Employee Advisory Committee, Evanston's Liaison to Belize City (the sister city of Evanston) and is in the Naval Reserves.

As the Mayor's liaison to the Belize Sister City affiliation, he opened avenues of communication with the Belize City government, supplied them with needed information and hosted visits from city staff of Belize City to Evanston where they received training in many forms of Public Works. He has gathered clothing, food, cars, fire trucks, parking meters, health supplies and other items to be donated to the Sister City. Additionally, he has personally carried medical and other supplies to Belize City at his own personal expense, spearheaded Belize Day in the Park, initiated the “Miss Belize” appointment that provided for an exchange of visits to Belize City and arranged all activities that extended hospitality to the Mayor of Belize City when he visited Evanston.

“Deputy Chief Hunter retiring from the City of Evanston is a tremendous loss not only to his department but to the city as a whole,” said former Mayor Lorraine H. Morton. “We wish him well in his future endeavors.”

A retirement party recognizing his career and commitment to the Evanston community will be held on December 16, 2009 at Lorraine H. Morton Civic Center, 2100 Ridge, 4th Floor in the Parasol Room at 3:30 p.m.

EVANSTON PUBLIC LIBRARY

1703 Orrington Ave. • 847-448-8600 • www.epl.org

Holiday Book & Fine Art Reproduction Sale 12/20/2009, All Day
The Evanston Public Library presents a special holiday book sale. Hours will be Saturday from 10 a.m. to 5:30 p.m. and Sunday from noon to 5:30 p.m. Stock up on gifts for the whole family! All proceeds benefit the Library.

Winter Break Family Films: Up 12/22/2009, 2:00 PM
Carl Fredricksen spent his entire life dreaming of exploring the globe and now in his 78th year he launches his house into the sky via thousands of balloons. Right after liftoff he discovers he has a stowaway in the form of an over optimistic 8-year-old Wilderness Explorer named Russell. This hilarious journey takes you into a lost world with the least likely duo on Earth. 2009. Registration is not required. Rated: PG

Winter Break Family Films: Babe 12/23/2009, 2:00 PM
Based on Dick King-Smith's beloved children's novel, Babe: the gallant pig, this is the story of an intelligent swine whose talents in sheep herding just might save him from the slaughterhouse. Featuring live-action comedy with state-of-the-art special effects and performances by animal actors, Babe is an inventive, heart-warming film. 1995 Registration is not required. Rated: G

Winter Break Family Films: Annie 12/29/2009, 2:00 PM
Little Orphan Annie dreams of the day when her parents will rescue her from evil Mrs. Hannigan's orphanage for girls in this heart-warming musical. Her dreams are dashed, however, when she discovers her family was killed in a fire. But Annie finds happiness with millionaire “Daddy” Warbucks who reluctantly falls in love with this precocious little red head. 1982 Registration is not required. Rated: PG

Hunger Games in the Loft 12/29/2009, 2:00 PM
Did you love The Hunger Games? Or you haven't read it yet but can't wait to get your hands on a copy? We will have our own version of reality games based on Greek mythology, filming, and a book discussion. Registration Ends: 12/30/2009 at 9:00 AM Presenter: Christie Chandler-Stahl Attendees must be between the grades of 6 and 12. Registration is required.

Recycled Drumming in the Loft 12/30/2009, 4:30 PM
Are you dying to make noise? Or maybe you want to pound on something as hard as you possibly can! Now's your chance with Drumming in the Loft. This scrappy percussion ensemble meets again after our successful session in November. We will thrash out energetic rhythms and create original beats on found objects, junk salvage, old drums, and recycled car parts. Open door: No drumming experience necessary, all teens are invited. Ear plugs will be provided. Meet in the Loft at 4:15. REGISTER TO ATTEND! See you there. Attendees must be between the grades of 6 and 12. Registration is required.

Winter Break Family Films: The Jungle Book 12/30/2009, 2:00 PM
The famed, exciting story of The Jungle Book by Rudyard Kipling bursts to life in this amazing adventure of young Mowgli, an orphaned boy who was left alone in the dense forests of India only to be rescued then raised by wolves. 1994 Registration is not required. Rated: PG

Free Holiday Light Exchange with Energy Star Pledge

The City of Evanston will be sponsoring a LED Holiday Light Exchange at the Morton Civic Center for Evanston residents while supplies last. For a limited time, residents who sign the ENERGY STAR pledge to reduce their energy use will be given one free LED holiday light strand in exchange for a strand of old incandescent holiday lights, which will be recycled.

After you take the Energy Star Pledge, forward the confirmation e-mail to epalmer@cityofevanston.org with your name and simply stop by the Morton Civic Center, Fourth Floor, Room 4600, 2100 Ridge Ave., Mon.-Fri 9-5 p.m. to exchange your old lights – ask for Eric Palmer, Community Information Coordinator. Please be able to show ID showing who you are and that you are an Evanston resident.

LEDs are naturally better at color; most people think they look more vibrant and colorful. Because LEDs are cool to the touch; the holiday lighting reduces the risk of fire. The bulbs are not made of glass and don't have filaments that will burn out, so that requires fewer light string replacements.

They are better for the environment, not only because they use less power, but also because repeatedly throwing away and replacing strands creates pollution. Manufacturing the incandescent light strands over and over takes a toll on the environment, and discarded lights take up space in landfills.

The lifespan of LED holiday lights can average 25,000 to 50,000 hours, outlasting the lifetime of standard incandescents, which is about 2,000 hours. During the standard 30-day holiday season, which averages about 300 hours of electricity use, replacing traditional holiday lights with LEDs reduces energy usage and saves money over time. Eco-friendly lights use only 10 percent of the electricity required to power regular lights, saving a household money on their power bills and helping to protect the environment at the same time.

For further information, please contact Eric Palmer, Community Information Coordinator, at epalmer@cityofevanston.org or 847/448-8085.

Go Green & Save Green - ComEd's Ideas for Your Business

The City of Evanston's Office of Sustainability reminds area businesses that the ComEd “Smart Ideas for Your Business” program funds are gone for the program year (June 2009 - May 2010), however, if you are an Evanston business, there is still time to participate. As a participant in the ComEd Community Energy Challenge (CEC), \$350,000 in program incentives was set aside for Evanston businesses exclusively. This funding is still available, but time is running out. If the reserved funding isn't spent by January 31st, the funds will be returned and reallocated to projects on ComEd's waiting list.

Now in its second year, the ComEd Smart Ideas for Your Business program offers prescriptive and custom incentives to facilitate the implementation of cost effective energy efficiency improvements for non-residential (commercial and industrial) customers. The reserved dollars for the 2009 program year ensure that Evanston businesses will be able to participate in this beneficial program to “go green and save green.”

If you have a project that meets the ComEd Smart Ideas for Your Business criteria and would like to apply for Evanston's reserved program allotment through the CEC, contact Carolyn Collopy, Sustainable Programs Coordinator for the City of Evanston at sustainability@cityofevanston.org or 847/448-8069 or Erin Daughton, the City's CEC liaison, at 312/499-3529 or Erin.Daughton@shaw-grp.com.

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Evanston to Hold Third H1N1 Vaccination Clinic by Appointment

The Evanston Health and Human Services Department will be holding its third H1N1 Public Vaccination Clinic December 19 from 9 a.m. until 4 p.m. which will be by appointment only at Evanston Township High School (Bacon Cafeteria entrance at rear of building, 1600 Dodge Ave.). This Clinic will only be available for residents who fit the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) priority groups.

- Priority Groups:
- Pregnant women;
 - People who live with or care for children younger than 6 months of age;
 - Health care and emergency medical services personnel (EMTs/paramedics);
 - All people ages six (6) months through 24 years of age; and
 - Persons aged 25 through 64 years who have health conditions associated with higher risk of medical complications from influenza.

“The City’s Health and Human Services Department also reminds parents whose children are less than ten years of age who received their first H1N1 vaccine need to get their second dosage of the H1N1 vaccine,” explained the Director of the Evanston Health and Human Service Department Evonda Thomas. “Parents must bring proof of the first H1N1 vaccination with them to the clinic.”

Residents who wish to make an appointment for the H1N1 Public Clinic must contact the City’s Emergency Response Coordinator A-Reum Han at 847/859-7829 or e-mail her ahan@cityofevanston.org.

Please alert the clinic staff if you have received seasonal flu mist in the last 30 days. Please be prepared to show proof of residency and verification of the priority group to which you belong.

The department wants to reiterate to residents that the clinic is ONLY for those who meet the CDC priority groups. Additionally, the department is stressing the high importance of the need for pregnant women and pre-school children to get vaccinated against H1N1.

Parents/guardians must have a signed consent form completed for children 18 and under in order for them to receive the H1N1 vaccination. Children at least six months of age but younger than 10 years of age will need to have two doses of the H1N1 vaccine, separated by 28 days.

Further information on H1N1 and updates on vaccine availability will be posted on the Health and Human Services Department’s website at www.cityofevanston.org/health.

Premise Alert Program Form Now Available Online

The Premise Alert Program (PAP) is a confidential computer-aided dispatch (CAD) database designed to enhance the safety of people with disabilities/ special needs. These individuals, their families, and/or their caregivers may voluntarily submit information about their special circumstances for inclusion in the PAP database free of charge. For more information and application go to www.cityofevanston.org

Legacy Project at DANK-Haus

Saturdays 11am - 3pm DANK-Haus Scharpenberg Gallery

When Sara left Germany, fleeing from the war torn Eastern front, authorities would not allow her 4 month old son to board the plane. It took 14 months before they were reunited in the States. She still has the sailor suit in which the stewardess dressed him. Now it hangs in the Scharpenberg Gallery for your appreciaton.

Moving interviews of our oldest members. Stories their families have not heard before. Vibrant photography. History as you live and breathe. A multigenerational celebration.

Trio Contrasts Winter Concert Dec 20, 2009 at 3pm

A premiere concert by German trained, Julliard School of New York graduate students Maja Pawelke, Clarinet, - Doren Dinglinger, Violin and Liza Stepanove, Paino. Works on the program include those by Mendelssohn, Brahms, Ives, Bartok and Schumann. Advance tickets available at \$18 for the general public, \$15 for Seniors and DANK members and \$12 for youth. At the door all tickets are \$20. Reserve yours today.

For further information and tickets contact DANK-Haus 773.561.9181 or dank@dankhaus.com. DANK-Haus German American Cultural Center, 4740 North Western Avenue.

Join the Lincolnwood Social Club (55+)

Are you tired of staying home? Would you like to do fun and exciting things? Do you want to make a few new friends? Then why not join the Lincolnwood Social Club 55+. You do not have to be a resident of Lincolnwood to join. We go to exciting places every week in addition to the numerous special events held at our Community Center. Give us a call and find out what we are all about, our number is (847) 677-9740. This is one phone call you won’t be sorry that you made.

Registration Open for Free ESL Classes at Oakton

The Alliance for Lifelong Learning at Oakton Community College offers free English as a Second Language (ESL) classes for adults 16 years and older, sponsored by the Illinois Community College Board. Day and evening classes start the week of Jan. 4, 2010. Bring proper identification and Social Security number, if available, to registration. A complete schedule of ESL class days and times will be available at registration. For more information, call 847-635-1426.

Take Basic Sign Language at Oakton in 2010

Enroll in sign language courses this spring at Oakton Community College, 1600 E. Golf Road, Des Plaines.

Basic Sign Language (SPE 125) is available for students interested in conversing with the deaf and hard of hearing. This course is the first step toward national certification. One 16-week course meets 7 – 9:50 p.m., Tuesday, starting Jan. 19. Another 16-week section meets 9:30 – 10:45 a.m., Monday and Wednesday, starting Jan. 20.

For more information, contact Denis Berkson at 847-635-1870, or dberkson@oakton.edu.

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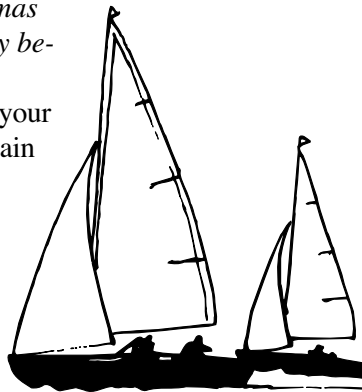
GREAT OUTDOORS

Legends of the Lake

by Tracy Seglin

“There are children in Chicago waiting for Christmas trees.” — Captain Hermann Schuenemann, shortly before embarking upon his final tree journey.

Chances are good that the Christmas tree gracing your living room this season was purchased at a major chain store, bargained for at a small tree lot, or possibly chopped down by hand at a local tree farm. It is the rare Chicago family that sails a schooner to Michigan, braving November winds and sleet, to trudge a tree back to Chicago shores. This season, as you place the last bit of tinsel on your tree and stand back in awe of Tannenbaum, take a moment to remember “Captain Santa,” and the ill-fated Rouse Simmons.



It wasn't until the late 1800s that Americans placed real evergreen trees in their homes and adorned them with ornaments to celebrate Christmas. Here in Midwest, the challenge soon became clear – with very little ground transport, how could trees from the forests of Wisconsin and Michigan travel to cities like Chicago?

Intrepid Great Lakes captains quickly realized the potential bounty to be made – all they had to do was to brave gale force winds, ice storms, and blizzards to make late-season tree shuttles. The risk was great, but so were the profits. Here in Chicago, crowds would eagerly await their arrival, clamor to the docks at Clark Street, and board these schooners festooned with lights to choose the perfect tree.

Hermann Schuenemann was one of these gritty entrepreneurs, but he distinguished himself from his competition with rock-bottom prices and a reputation for generosity. Each season, he donated trees to Chicago's neediest families, earning himself the moniker “Captain Santa.”

On November 22, 1912, Schuenemann's schooner, the Rouse Simmons left the Thompson, Michigan dock, groaning under the weight of some 3,000-5,000 (some guess even more) Christmas trees. Onlookers said it looked like a floating forest.

Schuenemann's wife and children, along with throngs of buyers, eagerly waited for the Christmas Tree Ship and Captain Santa to return. They never did.

Details of the schooner's last hours are unknown, but a ferocious winter storm on Lake Michigan claimed several other ships. At nearly 3:00 the morning after she departed, Rouse Simmons was spotted briefly, its flag at half-mast signaling distress, but then she was lost.

For weeks, remains of Christmas trees washed ashore in Wisconsin like ghosts.

Despite her tragic loss, Captain Santa's widow Barbara and her daughters carried on Hermann's tradition. The year after his death, she chartered a new Christmas ship and sold trees at port. She continued his legacy by ship and later by rail until her own death 22 years later.

Today, Captain Schuenemann and his beloved “Christmas Tree Ship” are honored each December by the U.S. Coast Guard Cutter Mackinaw which retraces Schuenemann's final journey from northern Michigan and delivers Christmas trees to underprivileged Chicago families.

Save Your Spot on a Car-Free Lake Shore Drive

Don't let thoughts of warmer weather fall by the wayside. The 9th annual Bike the Drive is your ticket to soak up the Chicago sun and registration is now open!

Save \$5 when you register by Dec. 24. Sign up now!

Get even more biking with our discounted Gold Package. Only \$75 for Bike the Drive, Boulevard Lakefront Tour and an Active Trans membership.

Enjoy sandy beaches, a sparkling lakefront, and the towering skyline as you cruise along without a car in sight!

Bike the Drive benefits the Active Transportation Alliance's work to improve biking, walking, and transit in Chicagoland.

Urban Wildlife Coalition: Black Squirrels

I've been seeing more black squirrels in our neighborhood. Are they a different species than the usual grey ones we see? Ted C., Edison Park

No, they are not a different species, but are a sub-group of the grey squirrel. They are much more rare than their grey cousins, but they didn't used to be. Scientists hypothesize that hundreds of years ago, black squirrels outnumbered grey, here in the U.S., and some say their numbers may be back on the rise, especially here in the northern Midwest. Here are some more interesting tidbits about black squirrels:

Their black color comes from extra melanin, the opposite of albino squirrels that have no melanin.

Two grey squirrels can have a litter with both grey and black baby squirrels. Marysville, Kansas loves their black squirrels so much, they've named themselves “Black Squirrel City.”

Because their dark fur is better at absorbing heat, black squirrels may stay warmer in winter. And because they stay warmer, it is likely that they require less food to keep their metabolism running. Perhaps we are seeing more black squirrels in the northern Midwest because of natural selection – they are better able to adapt to colder winters.

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

21st Annual MOSES Organic Farming Conference

WHO: Organized by the Midwest Organic and Sustainable Education Service (MOSES), the Organic Farming Conference (OFC) is now in its 21st year and the largest in the country.

WHAT: More than 2,600 attendees come to the OFC attracted by the keynote sessions, 60 workshops and 140 exhibitors of products and services that serve the organic and sustainable farming community.

WHEN: February 25-27, 2010

WHERE: La Crosse Center, La Crosse, Wisconsin

WHY: 60 conference workshops, the opportunity to network with other farmers and lots of organic food.

Organic University: Thursday, Feb. 25, MOSES will hold the Organic University (OU), 10 intensive day-long courses for growers interested in an in-depth look at organic farming practices.

Keynote speakers

· Chuck Hassebrook, Executive Director of the Center for Rural Affairs (Feb. 26)

· Dr. Margaret Mellon, Director of the Food and Environment Program at the Union of Concerned Scientists (Feb. 27)

Organic Research Forum: Held in conjunction with the OFC, the second-ever Organic Research Forum offers a unique opportunity for students, scientists and farmer researchers to engage and share their work.

Seed Swap: New to the conference this year will be a seed swap hosted by the Organic Seed Alliance.

More than 35 media typically attend the OFC in person. In addition to the formal sessions and media conference, it is a great opportunity to interview organic farmers specific to their geography and area of crop/livestock interest. The Media Conference is scheduled for Friday, February 26th.

CONTACT: To request information contact MOSES at 715-778-5775, info@mosesorganic.org or www.mosesorganic.org.

Evanston Winter Break Camps Spice Up the Holidays

Whether it's basketball, tennis, chess, art or the great outdoors that captures a child's imagination, parents can probably find it at one of the 11 winter break camps being offered this holiday season by the City of Evanston's Recreation Division. New this year is Winter Pee Wee Sports Camp for boys and girls age 4-5. This camp meets mornings or afternoons Dec. 21-23 at the Chandler-Newberger Center.

With camp options that range from drop-in programs to those that meet over one week or two, half-day or full-day, there is a camp to satisfy almost every interest and schedule. Choose from such specialty camps as the Ecology Center's EcoFreeze Camp or the Winter Arts Camp. There are also camps devoted to specific sports, including Holiday Hoops Camp and Winter Break Indoor Volleyball Camp. Most camps start Monday, Dec. 21. For more information, call 847-866-2900 or go to www.cityofevanston.org/recreation.

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“A Theater Review”

“*Million Dollar Quartet*”

***Apollo Theatre
3450 N. Lincoln Ave.
Chicago, Illinois***

Reviewed by Richard Allen Eisenhardt

As Jerry Lee Lewis would say “Great Balls of Fire” we have a major hit on our hands and not only with that hit song of his but with “Million Dollar Quartet” which celebrated its first anniversary November 5 at the Apollo Theatre.

I’ve seen the show three times. It opened first at the Goodman Theatre in the Owen Theatre and then after its run there it opened at the Apollo.

The show will open off-Broadway in the spring of 2010 but will become an international hit in the future.

The show has a cast of eight who are talented singers as well as musicians. From first viewing there has been a couple of cast changes but each time I’ve see it the show’s cast has gotten stronger.

Rob Lyons plays Carl Perkins, Lance Guest is Johnny Cash, Eddie Clanden plays Elvis Presley, the incredible Levi Kreis is Jerry Lee Lewis, Tim Decker is Sam Philips who runs Sun Records, Billy Shaffer and Chuck Zayas as Fluke and Jay Perkins accompany the cast as drummer and bass player in the band. The only female in the cast is the beautiful Kelly Lamont as Dyan-nie, who for the story is Elvis’ girlfriend. Her rendition of “Fever” a song made famous by Peggy Lee is done in a sexy, sultry style and you don’t want her to stop. She also has one other solo “I Hear You Knocking” and does one with the group.

Most of the songs you’ll be familiar with and many you can come out singing. Songs from the show are “Riders in the Sky: that also was a major hit for Vaughn Monroe, “See You Later Alligator,” “Peace in the Valley,” “I walk the line” and “Whole Lotta Shakin’ Goin’ On.” The show runs 100 minutes and features 21 songs.

The show has a book by Colin Escott and Floyd Mutrux and is under the direction of Floyd Mutrux and Eric Schaeffer. Produced by Relevant Theatricals, John Cossette Productions and Northern Light Inc. Gigi Pritzker is one of the co-producers. The show premiered in Florida and Washington before coming to Chicago.

The story deals with how on December 4, 1956 an auspicious twist of fate brought Cash, Lewis, Perkins and Presley together. The setting is in Sun Records a storefront studio in Memphis where their careers began. The man that made it all happen was San (the father of rock n’ roll) Phillips who discovered them all. These four legends-to-be are reunited for an impromptu recordings and audiences get the jam session all the time.

Governor Quinn of Illinois proclaimed November 6 “Million Dollar Quarter Day.” for a free lunchtime concert in the Thompson Center.

“Million Dollar Quartet” is here for an open run however tickets are currently now on sale through March 28, 2010. For performance schedule and reservations call 773-935-6100. Ticket prices are \$25-\$70. It’s worth it.

- Four Stars -

“*Oh Coward*”

Writers Theatre, 664 Vernon Avenue, Glencoe

Reviewed by Richard Allen Eisenhardt

The Writer’s Theatre in Glencoe, IL is doing a cabaret revue called “Oh Coward” and hopefully they have another major hit on their hands in Books on Vernon in a small theatre in back of the store.

Noel Coward was a brilliant playwright and performer and his shows were witty and sophisticated.

Jim Corti is an actor who has Broadway credits but makes his home in Chicago. New York audiences will remember him as Harry Houdini in “Rag-time” and he has done a superb job with his direction of this show.

One of Chicago’s top musical directors Doug Peck is the only musician for the show and he is an outstanding pianist as well.

The show offers a cast of three very talented singers who are Kate Fry, Rob Lindley and John Sanders.

The show features 34 songs by Coward and most notably are “Zigeuner” from the operetta “Bittersweet,” “Sail Away” from the show of that name “Mrs. Worthington,” “I Went to a Marvelous Party,” “Someday I’ll Find You,” “London Pride” and “I’ll Follow My Secret Heart.” Each performer has a solo number, duets and trios.

The book has been devised by Roderick Cook and he has kept the dialog witty, humorous and sophisticated. It is 90 minutes with an intermission break and one review that should be seen as it is a delightful show.

“Oh Coward” runs until March 21. For show times and reservations call 847-242-6000. Tickets are \$40 - \$60.

- Four Stars -

New Lira Holiday Concert at Orchestra Hall

The Lira Ensemble, renowned praised for its performances of Polish music and dance, returns to Symphony Center in Chicago on Christmas weekend with a concert of Polish carols - and some American ones too – along with music of master Polish composers and lots of folk song and dance.

“Rejoice! Polish Carols, Song and Dance”

Sunday, December 27, 2009 at 3pm

Orchestra Hall at Symphony Center

220 South Michigan Avenue in Chicago

Recommended parking for Symphony Center is Grant Park South Underground Parking. Orchestra Hall opens at 2:30pm for the concert. Lira recordings will be available for purchase in the lobby.

Tickets for “Rejoice! Polish Carols, Song and Dance” are very reasonably priced because of the current recession – from \$20 to \$70, with discounts for groups of 20 or more and half price tickets for children under age 16 in all price ranges. Tickets may be purchased by calling the Lira Ensemble at 773-508-7040 or from Symphony Center at 312-294-300 or www.cso.com.



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Central St. "Shop Small Stores" Campaign Kicks of Dec. 6

On Sun., Dec. 6, the Central Street Merchants Association will kick off the shopping season with a Holiday Open House and will bring the grassroots "Shop Small Stores" campaign to Central Street. "Shop Small Stores" reminds shoppers to make their first stop at small, locally owned stores in the community, to spend their money locally and to support independent, neighborhood businesses. The campaign continues after the holiday season.

Jewish Art Calendar 2009/2010 Available

Lubavitch Chabad of Skokie has once again published the Skokie Jewish Art Calendar 09/10 for the current Jewish 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 e-mail info@SkokieChabad.org.

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December 20 • 2:00 pm Lesley Goodman: From the Moulin Rouge to Broadway Singing songs of Francis Poulenc, Kurt Weill, Ricky Ian Gordon, Jerry Herman and more. Accompanist Jeffrey Panko Tickets are \$20 in advance, \$25 at the door.

December 20 • 8:00 pm Midwest Jazz Collective Reunion Tickets are \$20 in advance, \$25 at the door.

December 31 • 8:00 pm STAND BY ME - Great music of the Fifties with Marcus Gentry

December 31 • 10:30 pm TURN BACK THE HANDS OF TIME - Soulful hits of the Sixties with Marcus Gentry

January 3 • 2:00pm The Fatum Brothers' Jazz Orchestra in "Dreaming" with Duke Ellington

January 10 • 2:00pm Love Letters starring Jan Ellen Graves with special guest State Rep Lou Lang

January 16 • 8:00pm Three Cat Media presents "Golly Gee! Broadway in the 1950's"

January 22 • 7:30pm Latino Opera Hour presents "La Dolorosa"

January 23 • 8:00pm Tribute to Veterans starring Jack Muccio

January 24 • 2:00pm Love Letters starring Jan Ellen Graves with special guest Mayor George Van Dusen

Free Roasted Chestnuts in Downtown Evanston

Holiday shoppers and visitors to downtown Evanston should be sure to stop by the corner of Church Avenue and Maple Street where free roasted chestnuts will be passed out, courtesy of Church Street Plaza. Fridays and Saturdays, 3-5 p.m. through Dec. 19.

Evanston Mayor Makes Wager Over NU vs. Auburn Outback Bowl Game

Mayor Elizabeth Tisdahl today announced a friendly wager with Auburn, Alabama Mayor Bill Ham, Jr. betting that the Northwestern University Wildcats (the Big Ten Conference representative) will win over Auburn University (the Southeastern Conference representative) in the 24th Annual Outback Bowl in Tampa on New Year's Day.

"This is the first time I have ever made a bet with another mayor," explained Mayor Tisdahl. "NU has a great team, a great record and now they are going to a bowl game this year. We wish them luck and we are confident that they will return home with a victory."

The bet that Mayor Tisdahl made with the Mayor of Auburn is that if Northwestern wins the bowl game that the Auburn City Council would all have to wear Northwestern t-shirts to one of their City Council meetings and that the Evanston City Council would have to wear Auburn t-shirts to their council meeting in the event that Northwestern lost.

Northwestern is making its eighth postseason appearance, and its seventh since the 1995 season. The Wildcats are playing for the third time on New Year's Day since 1996. This is the second time that Northwestern has faced an SEC team in a bowl game.

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Melomakarona

from Eleni Andritsakis

Melomakarona are a tradition at Christmas. The spice cookies are made with cinnamon and cloves, are soaked in a honey syrup, and sprinkled with sesame seeds, walnuts, and cinnamon. And they disappear as quickly as you can make them. Cook Time: 30 minutes



Ingredients:
FOR THE COOKIE DOUGH
12 cups (1.5 kg or 3.3 pounds) of all-purpose flour
3 cups of olive oil
2 cups of sugar
1/4 cup of brandy
1 cup of lukewarm water
juice and grated peel of 1 lemon
2 teaspoons of baking powder
1 teaspoon of baking soda
1 tablespoon of ground cinnamon
1 1/2 teaspoons of ground cloves
1 cup of coarsely ground walnuts (optional)

Preparation:
Dissolve baking soda in the lemon juice. In a bowl, combine the flour, sugar, and baking powder, and whisk until well blended.
In a large mixing bowl, combine the oil, water, lemon juice (with baking soda), cinnamon, cloves, brandy, and grated lemon peel. Beat for 2 minutes until thoroughly combined. Continue beating and add two-thirds (8 cups) of the flour mixture, 1 cup at a time, beating on low speed. (If using walnuts, add now.)
Gently knead in remaining flour 1/2 cup at a time. Knead gently for about 5 minutes. The dough will be oily.
Notes: Don't overwork the dough or beat in the flour at high speeds or the cookies will be too dense. The cookie shape should be rounded, not flat or they will harden during baking.
Preheat oven to 355°F (180°C).
To shape the cookies, take a fistful of dough and squeeze 5 times to compress. Roll into a log shape between palms of hands. Press the dough gently with your fingers on one side to flatten slightly. The traditional shapes of the cookies are slightly rounded circles or ovals.)
Place the cookies, finger-marked side down, well spaced on a greased cookie sheet (or on parchment cooking paper, or on a non-stick cookie sheet), place on the middle rack in the oven and bake at 355°F (180°C) until browned (about 30-35 minutes).
Remove from the oven and allow to cool completely on paper towels.
Combine all topping ingredients and grind coarsely.
The cooled cookies will be dipped in the hot syrup, so don't start the syrup until the cookies have cooled.
Place all syrup ingredients in a wide pot (like a deep frying pan) and bring to a boil over medium heat and boil for 10 minutes. Turn the heat down to lowest possible setting. Remove the cinnamon stick and cloves.
Put cookies (as many as will fit on the bottom in one layer) into the hot syrup and use a spatula to hold them down for about 30 to 45 seconds. Once the cookies have been soaked, remove them with a slotted spoon, letting excess syrup drip, place on a large serving plates or platter, sprinkling liberally with the mixture of ground sesame seeds, walnuts, and cinnamon. (The cookies will darken from the syrup.)
Melomakarona are not refrigerated. Cover them well with plastic wrap to keep for several days or store in tins so they don't dry out, and they'll last for weeks or months - if they aren't eaten by then.

FOR THE SYRUP
1 cup of honey
2 cups of sugar
2 cups of water
1 cinnamon stick
juice of 1/2 lemon
10 whole cloves

FOR THE TOPPING
2 1/2 cups of toasted sesame seeds
1 2/3 cups of walnut pieces
1 teaspoon of ground cinnamon

Keeping Christ in Christmas

As we already begin the holiday season with Thanksgiving and Advent, one may expect that the battles will continue: Does your local store allow is workers to say "Merry Christmas" or have they redesignated the season a "Holiday?" Is the "Reason for the Season" still allowed to be part of it?
A British newspaper reported that only one in one hundred Christmas cards sold in Britain contains any religious imagery or message. One card ignored Christmas altogether, wishing the recipient a "Happy December." How much of this political correctness has spilled over to the United States?
How should we respond to the threat? It seems a bit ironic to react with anger or outrage. Any serious celebration of Christmas acknowledges that God brought peace on earth by sending His Son to become part of His creation (Luke 2).
Do we fight to keep Jesus in Christmas? It depends on how we fight. Clearly not with harsh demands, sinful attitudes, or belligerent actions. Our response calls for faithful and bold professing that Christ, the Savior, is born. The test: Are we fighting the "good fight of the faith" (1 Timothy 6:12) or simply waging a war for war's sake or, worse yet, our own sake?
Consider the 2006 lawsuit heard by the Supreme Court in which a school system banned nativity scenes because the leaders considered the Christmas tree a Christian religious symbol, just as the menorah represents Judaism and the crescent and star represent Islam. It seems unfair and almost absurd to claim that one thinks of Jesus every time one sees a Christmas tree.
A more pertinent question may be whether we are able to keep Christ in our own Christmas. How strange and ironic it would be if we invested so much energy and money into retaining the name of Christ in our holiday but neglected to see the significance of His birth for ourselves. Indeed, this seems a predictable battle strategy that Satan would employ to turn Christmas on its head: encourage the anxiety and worry that others are driving Christ out of Christmas so that you will invest huge amounts of energy, money, and anger to retaining rightful ownership of the day. How quickly we can lose our perspective on the season.
Perhaps the best way to fight to keep Christ in Christmas is to present our "bodies as a living sacrifice, holy and acceptable to God" (Romans 12:1). Our giving, forgiving, and being patient will be living proof that the Christ of Christmas makes a difference in our lives. By allowing our faith to be part of our daily interaction with others, and by not getting bent out of shape when that which is near and dear to us is attacked, we publicly confess that Christ makes all the difference in the world.
There is quite another aspect to remember when responding to the threat to remove Jesus' name and Christian symbolism from Christmas. While we do not have to roll over and play dead, we can calmly, but firmly and consistently, state our position because we find great comfort in our Lord's promise: "Blessed are you when others revile you and persecute you and utter all kinds of evil against you falsely on My account. Rejoice and be glad, for your reward is great in heaven, for so they persecuted the prophets who were before you" (Matthew 5:11-12). Instead of acting in anger, we remind ourselves that we are blessed. Jesus never expected His path would be easy to follow. Nor should we.
We strive to keep Christ in Christmas. That is basic and the very essence of Christmas. But let us do so in a fitting way. For Christ, the Savior, is born!
Author Unknown

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Liturgy of the Hours
Sunday, December 20, 4:00pm

Christmas Schedule
Christmas Eve, Thursday, December 24
4:00pm Family Christmas Mass
Children's Choir
10:00pm (Pasterka) Christmas Eve Mass in Polish – Carols begin at 9:30pm
Traditional Midnight Mass- Carols begin at 11:30pm

Christmas Day, Friday, December 25
8:00am, 9:30am, 11:00am, and 12:30pm (in Polish)

St. Stephen's Day, Saturday, December 26
12:30pm Mass in Polish

Mary, Mother of God, January 1, 2010
(Holy Day of Obligation)
December 31 - 5:00pm
Mass of Anticipation
January 1 - 8:00am, 9:30am, 11:00am, and 12:30pm (in Polish)

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Santa Paws

A few years ago I told this story, it was a huge hit; however, it still surprises me that many of you think it is made up. Well, Humans its not! Us dogs have been helping Santa out for ages; we know who has been naughty and nice; so we better get something good for dinner tonight!

Recently I have discovered that many of you don't know the story of Santa Paws, Santa Clause's dog. Everyone knows about his reindeer, so why not his canine friend? So, I am taking this opportunity to share Paws' story.

Once upon a paw, it was a cold and snowy Christmas Eve and Santa Clause was busy making his usually deliveries. As he stopped to check his list he heard a small cry. Santa went to investigate and discovered a tiny white ball of curly fur; it was a poodle puppy. Santa picked up the puppy and instantly saw the mischievous twinkle in the puppy's eyes. Not wanting to leave the poor creature, Santa took him along on his sleigh.



Santa quickly discovered that there was something special about this puppy, the spirit and magic of Christmas seemed to be alive in this pup's eye. This pup should have been afraid and concerned, but instead sat upon Santa's sleigh as if he was meant to be there. Santa realized that this puppy was to remain by his side.

Santa often observed the bonds of people and their dogs, after all dogs are mans best friend. So, he decided to let him come home with him and Mrs. Clause. As the puppy, now name Paws because of his big feet, grew it was obvious to all that met him that he was special. He possessed the ability to make people smile and laugh, there was never a creature that he didn't like or who didn't like Paws. Paws seemed to carry that magic of Christmas with him throughout the year! With that magic came the ability to communicate freely with both animals and people.

As time passed, so did the demands for Santa. He was beginning to wonder how he could possibly keep track of all the good or bad children in the world. Seeing Santa's distress got Paws thinking, and then he came up with an idea. However, Paws was uncertain about how to approach Santa. You see, Paws was considered the happy-go-lucky clown of the North Pole and wasn't sure if his idea was even good enough to tell. Mrs. Clause noticed that Paws seemed concerned about something. Paws then told her that he might have an idea to help Santa, but wasn't sure how to tell him. Mrs. Clause then reminded Paws that everyone ideas are important and should be shared, those ideas may not be used exactly but we can always build upon them. With new confidence Paws set out to find Santa.

Paws idea for helping Santa was very simple, he told Santa that they could get the other dogs of the world to help keep an eye on the children in there lives. Santa was thrilled with the new idea and added that we should also ask the cats, birds, snakes, hamsters, and all creatures that have children around to watch them and report back to Santa. Santa was very proud of Paws and put him in charge of communicating with all the pets in the world. Those pets started calling him Santa Paws, the Santa of the animal kingdom! These pets don't just work for Santa, but are rewarded on Christmas day along with the good children.

Santa Paws had helped Santa and to this day continues to be along side his favorite person and help communicate with all pets. So, on Christmas Eve when you here Santa's bells listen closely because you might here the howling of Santa Paws. Also, remember to reward your favorite pet because they have been keeping an eye on you all year and they report directly to Santa Paws! Have a very Merry Christmas and Happy Howlidays!

Bosley

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



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.

Are you looking for a love bug? Someone who will adore the ground you walk on and only have eyes for you? Well, if you are, then you have to come meet **Nena**! Nena is a super sweet and very affectionate 10-year old black kitty. Her fur is "bunny" soft and is ohhh so very cuddly. Nena came to the shelter when her owner no longer had time for her -- poor Nena! She is a sweetheart of a girl who would be a wonderful addition to almost any family. Our vets noted that Nena came to us with two broken teeth, which we will gladly remove at the time of Nena's adoption. Other than that, Miss Nena is healthy, happy and ready to purr her way into your heart. Nena loves to be held and cuddled, and promises that you'll never be lonely with her around. Nena will be an absolutely amazing friend and companion -- she is a doll! Please come and meet Nena, she is available for hugs and love at The Anti-Cruelty Society, just ask for Tab Band #690028.



http://www.anticruelty.org/site/epage/36804_576.htm?seecomp=317527 For more information about animals available for adoption, please call 312.644.8338 after 11:30 a.m.



Charlie is a cute little guy with lots of energy. He's a 2-1/2 years old Jack Russell Terrier and currently weighs in at a healthy 16 lbs. Happy and social, Charlie should acclimate well to a variety of homes, however, any children in the family should be older. Quality playtime with you will help this little guy burn off some energy and would be a great way for the two of you to spend time together. Charlie is already housetrained and altered and ready to move into his new home today! He's a fun little guy! Hurry on over to The Anti-Cruelty Society and visit Charlie today -- don't forget to mention Tab Band #690009. http://www.anticruelty.org/site/epage/36804_576.htm?seecomp=316455 For more information about animals available for adoption, please call 312.644.8338 after 11:30 a.m.

Keeping Your Home Safe for Your Pets during the Holidays

Part 2

by Peter S. Sakas DVM, MS

Electrical Cords - Electrical cords often seem delectable to many pets, especially cats and young puppies. Chewed cords can cause severe burns and sometimes fatal, electrical shocks. If your pet seems overly interested in electrical cords, string or tape them in a position that is inaccessible to your pet. If that does not work you can cover the cords with hot pepper sauce or use bitter tasting commercial products sold in most pet stores.

Ornaments - Avoid using glass ornaments around pets. They are fragile, break easily and the shattered pieces are sharp. If any of the pieces are swallowed, the glass can puncture the intestines, which could lead to peritonitis and possibly death. Ornament hooks are also very sharp. They can be picked up and swallowed, resulting in gastrointestinal problems such as obstructions and punctures.

Be cautious with 'edible' type ornaments. Sometimes the store-bought varieties may not be edible and contain hardening agents/preservatives that could be toxic. If you make your own edible ornaments, your pet may try to eat them. They may knock over the tree trying to get a string of popcorn or a gingerbread ornament.

The safest ornaments are one-piece, non-breakable and made of non-toxic material. They should be too big to swallow. Also, have them out of the reach of curious beaks, mouths and paws.

Tinsel - One of the most dangerous materials to put on a Christmas tree is tinsel. Animals are attracted to its bright finish and flexibility. Cats are especially attracted to tinsel and if you have a cat, it is recommended that you do not use tinsel on your tree. If your pet eats tinsel, there is a good chance that it will become wrapped around the tongue. As the pet struggles to remove it, the tinsel gets stretched out and wraps even tighter. It can cut sensitive tissues in the mouth and stop the circulation of blood to the tongue. If a strand is swallowed it can bunch up and block the intestine. If this occurs, surgery is usually required to remove it. The best advice is, if you have pets, do not place tinsel on your tree. You may lose the aesthetics of the icicle effect, but your pets will be much safer.

Niles Animal Hospital & Bird Medical Center. 7278 N. Milwaukee Ave. Niles

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My Knees are Killing Me: Choosing Rehabilitation Services

Boomers have been on the vanguard of the fitness movement – we always intended to wear out, not rust away. And now, that commitment to fitness may be taking its toll.

Orthopedists agree that they are seeing younger and younger patients seeking knee and hip replacement surgery, often as a result of natural aging coupled with years of vigorous physical activity. When topical creams, over-the-counter medications, and other recommendations by healthcare professionals are not enough, joint replacement may be the preferred method of eliminating pain and increasing mobility.

Rehabbing from Joint Replacement

The good news is that rehabilitation from joint replacement surgery is much easier now than it was years ago. Oh, it’s no picnic, that’s for sure, but today’s rehab can involve warm-water therapy, deep-tissue massage, WiFi, catered meals – and Medicare or personal health insurance usually covers rehabilitation.

The better news is that because joint replacement surgery can be planned to fit your schedule, you can take your time choosing the facility that will oversee your rehabilitation. Your healthcare professional may feel that your rehabilitation can be best handled in a facility dedicated to such care. The physician may offer you a list of rehab centers that meet accepted standards of care. Then, it’s up to you. What should you look for?

First, let’s think about what will go on during your rehabilitation stay. Specialized physical and occupational therapies are provided on an inpatient or outpatient basis, with the goal of helping individuals reach their highest level of function with daily activities. Rehabilitation locations may be free-standing, in connection with a hospital, or be a part of the continuum of care at a retirement community.

Some rehabilitation centers offer a team of physicians, nurses, and therapists to develop a comprehensive plan for each patient. Physical therapists provide strength training and range-of-motion exercises. Occupational therapists help patients practice daily tasks, like cooking in a model kitchen, or getting in and out of a car. (Some centers have cars inside the building for practice sessions!) Restorative nursing helps maintain the benefits of rehabilitation therapy.

There are rehab centers that focus on building relationships between therapists and patients – setting up a team assigned to a patient throughout their stay and for all outpatient therapy that continues after discharge. The thought is that a team that works with a patient day after day can better assess the progress being made and whether any adjustments are needed in approach.

Questions To Ask at the Rehab Center

Take the time to visit two or three rehabilitation centers prior to your scheduled surgery, and ask friends and trusted counselors for their input about local rehab facilities. These centers should be happy to give you a tour and answer questions about your care. Their approach and physical setting are important to the success of your rehabilitation.

During the visit, are you comfortable with what you see and hear? Trust your own good judgment. Be ready to ask some key questions, either in person or on the phone. Some might include:

Does Medicare or my insurance cover this stay?

Do we need to make any special admittance arrangements?

Will I be seeing my own doctor or a new one?

If it’s a new doctor or a medical director, how often is this person in the center?

Will I be working with a regular team of therapists? Is the team experienced in treating my condition?

Is there an individual treatment plan for each patient? Who is responsible for monitoring the plan?

Has the center or team demonstrated success in treating my condition, including successfully discharging patients back into the community?

Does the staff understand family concerns? Is the location close enough for family members to make regular visits?

Does the center have medical support in case of a complication or new illness?

Will the equipment used in rehab be fitted to each individual patient?

Is the program accredited by the Commission on Accreditation of Rehabilitation Facilities (CARF) and/or the Joint Commission on Accreditation of Healthcare Organizations (JCAHO)?

Does the center offer support groups for patients and/or families?

Rehabilitation can be a slow and difficult process, but patients in rehab often build rapport with other patients and begin to encourage one another. Choose a rehabilitation center that is reputable, makes you feel comfortable and, if at all possible, is close enough for your family to be supportive.

By Theresa P. Paulin, Presbyterian Homes, Evanston, Illinois;
847-866-1643



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Family Feud- Don't Let This Be Your Legacy



Chester M. Przybylo

Few things are as heart-wrenching as a dispute among family members. We expect family to be a place of love and relative harmony in our often-tumultuous world. Even the thought of such a horrible occurrence may be unsettling.

But, problems in an estate or trust can often cause deep divisions in a family, divisions that outside forces might never have been able to cause. For example, Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. and Coretta Scott King's children, ended up in litigation shortly after Coretta's 2006 death. The Kings' three surviving adult children, Dexter, Bernice and Martin Luther III, fought for control of their parents' financial and historical legacy, including love letters and rights to the famous "I Have a Dream" speech. The fight was exacerbated by the fact that Martin left Dexter as his executor while Coretta left Bernice as her executrix. While the King children reached an out-of-court settlement in 2009, only they know the depth of the remaining animosity over the long family feud. It is certain that the Kings never had a dream that their children would end up in a bitter estate dispute after their deaths.

Unfortunately, the Kings are not the only ones who have left a legacy that included an estate dispute. Countless estates are disputed each year, in and out of court. These disputes do not just occur in the families of the rich and famous, though those disputes are more publicized. What can you do to preserve the harmony in your family in passing on your legacy? Here are 5 easy steps you can take:

- **Plan Professionally.** Your legacy is important. Be sure to engage a qualified estate planning attorney who focuses his or her practice in estate planning. Such a professional can design a well-coordinated plan that considers all your assets and wishes.

- **Choose Wisely.** When planning your estate, you will need to choose people to make decisions for you in case of your incapacity and regarding your legacy after your death. Consider the skills and relationships of the individuals involved. For example, do not choose more than one person to manage your Trust or estate unless you know they can work together.

- **Communicate with Your Family.** While your death may come as a surprise, your wishes should not. Surprises in your estate plan increase the chances that your legacy might include a bitter dispute. Open, honest communication about your wishes during your life may be the best way to achieve and maintain lasting family harmony after your death.

- **Consider a No Contest Clause.** A "no contest clause" disinherits anyone who challenges your wishes as set forth in your Will or Trust. Such a clause can be a powerful deterrent to family-destroying estate litigation and shows that you are serious about your desire to maintain family harmony.

- **Keep Current.** Make sure you keep your estate plan current. Otherwise, people whom you intend to benefit might be excluded unintentionally, disrupting family harmony and prompting a family feud.

When families feud, there are no winners, only losers. Be sure to follow the steps above if you have a dream of family harmony that continues long after your death. Your family needs your help and planning in order to achieve that dream.

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. For more information or to attend an upcoming seminar, call (773) 631-2525.

Here's Your Year-End Investment Checklist

We've pretty much seen it all this past year— a bear market, a long rally and even a period of neither-up-nor-down. But even though we've only got a few weeks left of 2009, you still have time to make some moves that can pay off for you in 2010 — and beyond.

Here are a few suggestions to consider:

- **"Max out" on your IRA** — and make regular contributions next year. For the 2009 tax year, you can contribute up to \$5,000 to a traditional or Roth IRA, or \$6,000 if you're 50 or older. And you have until April 15, 2010, to fully fund your 2009 IRA. Of course, it's not always easy to come up with lump sums of money, but do whatever you can to make up for any shortfalls in your IRA for 2009. And in 2010, consider setting up automatic monthly contributions to your IRA — it's a much more efficient way to maximize a great retirement-savings vehicle.

- **Increase your 401(k) contributions.** If your employer permits it, try to add more money to your 401(k) or other retirement plan before the year ends. By increasing your 401(k) contributions, you can lower your adjusted taxable income while you potentially build more resources for retirement.

- **Convert your traditional IRA to a Roth IRA.** Depending on your individual situation, a Roth IRA, which offers the potential for tax free growth, provided you meet certain conditions, may be a better choice for you than a traditional IRA, which offers the potential for growth on a tax deferred basis. Consequently, if you meet eligibility limits, you may want to convert your traditional IRA to a Roth IRA. However, this conversion is likely going to be a "taxable event," so you'll need to have money available outside your IRA for the tax bill. You'll want to discuss this move with your tax advisor.

- **Sell your "losers."** If it's appropriate for your portfolio balance and long-term goals, you may want to sell some investments that have lost value to take the tax losses. If these losses exceeded your capital gains from selling appreciated stocks, you can deduct up to \$3,000 (or \$1,500 for married couples filing separately) against your other income, reducing the amount on which you must pay taxes. And if you lost more than \$3,000, you can carry over the excess into subsequent years. Consult with a tax advisor before selling investments to claim a tax loss.

- **Consolidate your investment accounts.** Instead of having an IRA with one firm, some other investments with another and a cash-value insurance policy with a third, you might want to consolidate all your assets with one provider. That way, you'll be better able to align all your assets with a central, unified investment strategy.

- **Review your insurance coverage.** Over the course of a year, you could experience significant changes in your life: marriage or divorce, the birth of a new child or the departure of an older child from your home, the start of a new job or retirement from an old one, and so on. That's why you'll want to make sure you have the right amount and type of insurance to protect your family and your financial future.

By making these moves, you can close out 2009 on a positive note — while positioning yourself for progress on your long-term goals.

This article was written by Edward Jones for use by your local Edward Jones Financial Advisor. Edward Jones, its associates and financial advisors are not estate planners and cannot provide tax or legal advice.

Neil Gardner is a financial advisor with Edward Jones, 9175 Gross Point Road, Skokie, IL 60077, 847-933-9845.



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LOCAL SCHOOLS & YOUTH EVENTS



From left: Niles North Principal Robert Freeman, Jake Weiler and Jason Sacks from PCA, and Niles North Athletic Director Karl Costello

NILES NORTH HIGH SCHOOL WINS POSITIVE COACHING ALLIANCE'S NATIONAL HONORING THE GAME AWARD

For its outstanding work in creating a positive environment for youth athletes, Niles North High School has earned Positive Coaching Alliance's (PCA) coveted Honoring the Game Award. Niles North Athletic Director Karl Costello accepted the award in a ceremony at today's Winter Spirit Assembly at Niles North.

The award goes to schools or organizations serving athletes of high school age or younger that embody Positive Coaching Alliance principles in using sports to teach life lessons. Niles North is the first school in the Midwest to receive the award.

Award-winning organizations embrace Double-Goal Coaching® -- in which the first goal is winning, and the second, more important goal is teaching life lessons through sports -- as well as Second-Goal Parenting™, in which sports parents focus on helping youth athletes learn life lessons. The Honoring the Game Award is part of PCA's National Youth Sports Awards Program sponsored by Deloitte.

Open Studio Workshop

If you are an adult with a special child in your life, this is the workshop for you both! Start 2010 out right together by creating a one-of-a-kind 10 inch battery operated wall clock. Design & color your clock face, then embellish the case with lots of fun objects, colors and textures.

\$35 includes one clock & everything you need to decorate it. (Additional clocks - so you each can make one - are \$10)

Workshops open to artists of all ages - including playful grownups unescorted by a child. Saturday January 23, 2010 10am-12noon Facilitated by Karla Rindal

Open Studio Children's Art Classes

Support your child's creativity in an open, playful atmosphere where adventurous use of materials is encouraged. Children will explore a variety of 2-D and 3-D projects. Taught by Jan Ellenstein who has been making art fun for children for the last 30 years. Age Level: 2-5 yrs (parent/child class)

Fee, 5-week class: \$105 non-member, \$95 OSP member, \$75 sibling.

Fee, 6-week class: \$125 non-member, \$115 OSP member, \$90 sibling.

Fee, 7-week class: \$145 non-member, \$135 member, \$105 sibling.

Tuesday Mornings, 10am-11am Jan 19 - Feb 23, 5 weeks, no class Feb 9

Wednesday Mornings, 10am-11am, Jan 13 - Feb 24, 7 weeks

Wednesday Afternoons, 1:30 - 2:30, Jan 13 - Feb 24, 6 weeks, no class Feb 3

Register here or call (847) 475 - 0390 for more information.

St. Peter Catholic School News

The Christmas Corner was a success! Congratulations to Cynthia Berry, Mary Rita Guthrie, and all the parents who volunteered to help. It is a yearlong endeavor to put this event together and everyone's efforts were greatly appreciated.

During Advent our students are collecting money for the Heifer Project. This program enables students to purchase livestock for needy families all over the world: heifers that give milk, chickens that produce eggs, and sheep that provide wool. So far over \$500 has been raised for this worthwhile endeavor.

On 3 December, the sixth grade students made sandwiches and Christmas cards for a soup kitchen run by the Archdiocese of Chicago in Des Plaines. A special thanks of appreciation is owed to the sixth grade for giving their time and effort to those in need.

"NEW WORKS" BY NILES NORTH ARTISTS AT MORTON GROVE PUBLIC LIBRARY BEGINNING DECEMBER 1

The community is invited to an opening reception for the Niles North High School art exhibition "New Works," from 6 to 7:30 p.m. on Tuesday, December 1 at the Morton Grove Public Library, 6140 Lincoln Avenue, Morton Grove. The exhibit, which includes paintings, drawings and digital photography created by Niles North artists, will be on display in the Baxter Room (auditorium) from December 1 until January 2. The library's hours are Monday through Thursday, from 9 a.m. to 9 p.m.; Friday from 9 a.m. to 6 p.m.; Saturday from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. and Sunday from 1 p.m. to 5 p.m.

Evanston Children's Theatre Holds Auditions Jan. 12-14

The Evanston Children's Theatre will hold auditions Jan. 12-14 for its spring production of Looking Glass Lane, an adaptation of Lewis Carroll's Through the Looking Glass. Auditions for the show are now open to youth age 8 through eighth grade. For convenience, three auditions will be held over three days at two different locations: 4 to 6 p.m. Tuesday, Jan. 12, and Thursday, Jan. 14, at the Levy Center, 300 Dodge Ave., Evanston. In addition, auditions will be held 4 to 6 p.m. Wednesday, Jan. 13, at Fleetwood-Jourdain Center, 1655 Foster St., Evanston.

Auditions are free. No appointments are necessary; just arrive no later than 5:45 p.m. For youth who are cast in the play, there is a cast fee of \$75. The spring show will be presented March 19-21 at the Levy Center. For more information, call 847-448-8250.

Free Reading/ESL/GED Classes for Adults Tutors Needed

Adults who need help with their English speaking, reading, writing, math, or GED preparation can attend free classes through Oakton Community College. If you are searching for a meaningful volunteer activity, a required 3-part training session will be held at Oakton in Skokie on January 7 and 12, 6:15-10 pm and on Sat., Jan. 30, 1:30-3:30 p.m.

Call 847-635-1426 for a list of classes or more information about becoming a VITA volunteer

tutor. Our e-mail address is: www.oakton.edu/cont_ed/vita.html.



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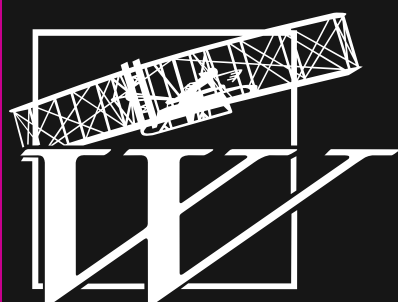
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