Richa Shah, of Des Plaines, and Nicolette Grabiec, of Niles, prepare organic strawberries for the agua fresca during an Earth Day celebration at Niles Public Library on April 22. PAGE 5  CURTIS LEHMKUHL-SUN-TIMES MEDIA

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Revelers share what Earth Day means to them

BY TRACY GRUEN
Contributor

What does Earth day mean to you?
For teenagers who attended a special Earth Day event April 22 at Niles Public Library, it means a whole lot, though they believe people should think more about how people treat the earth every day.

Donna Block, young-adult librarian, organizes a special Earth Day event for youngsters every year with different fun activities that also get them thinking about the environment.

First, the group of teenagers worked together to make fresh strawberry-and-lime smoothies, and then they made a salsa using all fresh ingredients.

The project allowed participants to practice teamwork while making the treats and also learn tips about purchasing food. For example they learned that tomatoes purchased still on the vine are not treated with chemicals, and that some labels on chips indicate that the corn has not been genetically altered.

The third activity involved the teenagers making little purses out of plastic bottles, a process which involved sewing colorful zippers onto two pieces of the bottle.

While the teens participated in Earth Day activities, Tasneem Rafiqui, a library volunteer, was busy handing out special pens made out of plastic bottles to patrons entering the library.

"It's nice to celebrate Earth Day," Rafiqui said. "We need to have a good environment."

Rafiqui said she and most of her neighbors in Niles recycle and she feels people are generally more interested in being good stewards of the environment.

"I think you should be aware of the earth every day of the year," said Nicolette Grabiec, who attends Whitney Young school.

"We try to throw away as little as possible," Grabiec said of her environmental efforts at home.

Grabiec feels the activities at the teen Earth Day event gave her good ideas for things to try at home.

"Earth Day means a lot to me," said Alisha Ahmed, who attends Stevenson school in Des Plaines. "I feel like everyone cares about the earth."

Ahmed feels that everyone should care about the earth — and noted that we would not be here without it.

"Some teens don't really care about it," Ahmed said, recounting how she made a globe out of paper-mache a few years ago, as well as cleaned up trash in a park with her third-grade classmates.

She reflected back on those memories with a smile.

Block said she remembers learning about Earth Day in junior high and it is something that has stuck with her. She recycles at home and participates in Earth Hour, during which participants turn off their lights for an hour in March to help bring awareness to the issue of climate change.
IN PROFILE

Apple of arboretist’s passion doesn’t fall far from tree

BY CATHRYN GRAN
cgran@pioneerlocal.com

With a name that conjures up images of stands of trees it only seems fitting that the village of Morton Grove would have an arboretist on staff.

William Burns, a public-works employee for 20 years, fits that bill. As part of the department’s Forestry Division, Burns’ duties include overseeing the maintenance of the village’s estimated 24,000 trees.

Burns comes by his appreciation of trees honestly. “My father liked to plant trees,” he said. “It was a hobby of his.”

Forestry wasn’t Burns’ first choice.

He just happened upon a seminar that made him think the village’s Forestry Division could better-manage the tree population.

“I realized there was a lot more the village could, and should, be doing,” he said.

Duties of an arboretist include tree pruning, planting and moving; tree and stump removal; braiding; and diagnosing and controlling insect infestations and disease.

Burns said the village is preparing for the loss of ash trees, of which Morton Grove has about 1,400 on public parkways, due to emerald ash borers. The insect first was discovered in the village in 2009.

“I think we learned from the Dutch elm disease problem that too many trees stayed up too long and infected other trees,” Burns said. “And now we have the emerald ash borer.”

Burns called the ash problem one that needs to be addressed both by the public and private sectors.

Noting that the first sighting of emerald ash borers in the village was in 2009, Burns said it probably was about two years earlier.

“In Year 5 is when the infestation takes root, generally speaking,” he said.

And that means this year the Forestry Division most likely will be monitoring the ash trees and determining which should be targeted for removal.

Usually one trims a tree for such reasons as to remove dead branches and rubbing limbs, and to eliminate hazards. But each cut potentially can change the growth of the tree.

According to the International Society of Arboriculture a knowledgeable arboretist never will top off a tree or use tree-climbing spikes when trimming a tree.

While removing a tree requires some finesse, the trimming of a tree is more of an art than the removal of a tree, Burns said.

Burns also will be overseeing the planting of 10 different types of trees, thanks to a $10,000 grant from the federal Great Lakes Restoration Initiative and Cooperative Lands program that focuses on improving the health of the Great Lakes region.

Specified in the village's plan to be planted are sugar maple, river birch, northern catalpa, hackberry, Kentucky coffee, tulip, burr oak, London plane, triumph elm and American hornbeam.

Burns said the trees were chosen for their heartiness.

“They’ll do well on the parkways,” he said.

In addition to maintaining the health of the village’s trees, the Forestry Division also performs other services.

“We do parkway repairs,” Burns said. “We put up the holiday decorations. We have our hand in just about everything. I may spend about four hours per week in office.”

The rest of the time Burns is on the street watching over nature’s gift of trees that define the look — and name — of Morton Grove.
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At new frozen-yogurt store in Niles, being self-serving is all right

BY TRACY GRUEN
Contributor

Who could go for a sweet, creamy dessert with lots of toppings that you’d put on an ice-cream sundae without an extra scoop of guilt? If you said yes, you’re in luck.

Yogli Mogli self-serve frozen yogurt is planning to open its second Illinois location at 8200 W. Oakton St. in Niles, just across from neighboring Park Ridge.

An Atlanta-based frozen-yogurt chain, the self-serve frozen-yogurt store offers 16 different flavors and more than 40 different toppings. There are now 19 Yogli Mogli stores and five others preparing to open this year.

Customers can have fun decorating their yogurt with various toppings, including fresh fruit, granola, brownie bites and even gummy worms.

“We have a little bit of everything to fit everyone’s needs,” said Jyoti Bhalla, co-owner of the new Niles location along with her partner, Larry Davis.

Bhalla said the yogurt treats are healthy, filled with beneficial live and active yogurt cultures that help with healthy digestion. It is about 70 to 120 calories per serving and low in cholesterol and sodium. The yogurt is also a source of calcium and Vitamin B, and is gluten-free and Kosher-certified.

The product is certified by the National Yogurt Association for exceeding the required criteria for healthy yogurt, whereas some other frozen-yogurt stores make their yogurt from powder mix and artificial flavors.

The Niles location will be the second store for Bhalla and Davis, who now run a store in Douglasville, Ga.

“We’re very excited about bringing this to Niles,” Bhalla said. “They don’t have anything quite like it.”

Bhalla said that the store will provide a “good, wholesome” environment that offers a healthy treat and nice gathering place. The store will offer free wireless Internet access.

“We partner with the community in every way we possibly can,” said Bhalla, adding that the store intends to partner with the schools and have days where they give back a portion of their sales to education. They also work with local churches and other community members.

Bhalla said they hope to open their store in June.

The Niles location will be open seven days a week and will staff 15 part-time employees. There will also be indoor and outdoor seating and catering for special events and fundraisers.

Water pump maker adopts sustainable business model

BY CATHRYN GRAN
cgran@pioneerlocal.com

One of the planet’s most necessary resources is at the heart of a longtime Morton Grove industry.

Xylem, on the 8200 block of Austin Avenue, has been making water pumps at that location since 1941.

Some, like pumps for residential use, are small enough to carry in one’s hand, while others, as big as a 12-foot-square room, are used for carrying water in high rises.

While the analytics are relatively new, the company manufactures pumps for both residential and commercial uses, explained Donna Lutter, communications manager.

The core business of the company is to move water, clean it and funnel it through the products it manufactures, Evan said.

“We’ve evolved from manufacturing relatively small pumps to the larger ones,” said Mike Evan, director of manufacturing at Xylem.

“As technology changes, we have to change with it; to the large-scale products we build today.”

To celebrate Earth Day the Morton Grove facility took part in activities to promote sustainability.

“We wanted to celebrate how important sustainability is to the corporation,” Lutter said. “Xylem’ means transporter of water in plants.”

In honor of Earth Day the Morton Grove plant joined about a dozen other Xylem facilities to plant trees around the world.

In Morton Grove the “Plant the Seed for Sustainability” project consisted of the planting of two trees on company property.

Those facilities without open space donated trees to schools or park districts, Lutter said.

In addition each employee can go online and choose a location to plant a tree in one of 16 underserved countries.

“It’s just another initiative to build sustainability,” Lutter said.

In addition to its Earth Day projects Xylem encourages its employees every day to think “green.”

Based on suggestions from employees the Morton Grove site recycles everything from cans to bottles to batteries.

“We try to save the environment,” Evan said. “Small improvements can bring large results.

“Something as simple as changing to more-energy-efficient lighting or, in our case, looking at using solar energy to heat water in the summer.”

The Austin Avenue plant also is looking to make its training facility a net-zero-energy-consumption operation, Evan said.

“As a water company, we have so many possibilities,” he noted.
DISTRICT 71

Student-services director resigns

BY NATASHA WASINSKI
Contributor

Longtime Niles School District 71 administrator Kristen Ninni has relinquished her role as director of student services.

In a resignation letter dated March 12, Ninni said it was “with both a heavy heart and great regret” that she leave to pursue part-time opportunities in order to maintain a better work-family balance.

“Careful thought and consideration about the students, staff, and Niles community as a whole were taken into account,” the letter stated. “It has been my genuine pleasure to be part of District 71.”

Ninni, who had been on maternity leave this school year following the birth of her son, was expected to resume her post in the summer. Interim director Stephanie Beane had assumed Ninni’s duties last July.

“It was a surprise,” Superintendent Amy Kruppe said of Ninni’s departure, effective March 20. “We were set on her coming back. But at this point her family needs her.”

Ninni, who has three children younger than age 6, said being with her children during their “formative years” is especially important, she said.

“I’ve had the opportunity to foster relationships with many of the students and families, and they will be missed. Culver has been my second home,” Ninni said of her 11-year career at the school. “We all have to prioritize, and continuing to make my family number one is my priority.”

The announcement came a month after the board approved a three-year contract with Ninni beginning with the 2012-13 school year.

Under the new contract she was to annually work 260 days and earn $96,820.

Before the 2010-11 school year Ninni had split full-time principal duties with former administrator Roxanne Ferri for kindergarten through fourth-grade students. Janice Geisheker served as principal for grades 5-8.

Ninni assumed the then-new director of student services position in fall 2010 when District 71 restored its administration to improve its effectiveness and save money. Culver now has one full-time principal, a position held by Peggie Maniscalco.

Kruppe said the district would not do an extensive search, as is typical for filling an administrative vacancy, as the position needs to be filled by July 1. Beane’s contract expires June 30.

Kruppe said while Beane “has been a great addition to our staff” and is welcome to apply, the district seeks someone with master’s-level certification for special-education administration.

It’s important to have someone who understands the legal pieces (of special education), just to make sure our students needs are being met,” Kruppe said.

SCHOOLS DIGEST

RESURRECTION

Resurrection College Prep High School has created a program to address the needs of transfer students — The Transfer Connection.

Started in January 2011, the Transfer Connection is a group of students whose purpose is two-fold: to develop a bond among students who have transferred into Resurrection from another school at some point during their high school career; and to make certain that new transfer students feel at home at Resurrection.

Current Resurrection students who are part of the Transfer Connection are called “transfer connectors.” Transfer connectors share ideas and strategies to assist new transfer students as they find academic and social success.

New transfer students are paired with a transfer connector to shadow on their first day as a new student at Resurrection. During the shadowing, transfer connectors help new transfer students feel welcome and comfortable in their new school. Also, when new students transfer to Resurrection, all transfer connectors wear pink Transfer Connection T-shirts so that new transfer students can easily identify Transfer Connection members as they move through the halls and classrooms on campus. If the new transfer student has questions or needs the company of another friendly face, they know which girls have been in their shoes on their first day of transferring to another school.

As a group, the Transfer Connection members meet four times during the school year. Students discuss issues transfer students may face and how they as a group and as individuals can play an active role in assisting new students to make a smooth transition to a new school.

Resurrection College Prep High School, at 7500 W. Talcott Ave., Chicago, is the largest all-girls Catholic, Christian college preparatory high school on the North Side of Chicago. For more information call (773) 775-6616, ext. 129, or go to www.reshs.org.

ST. PATRICK

Saint Patrick High School senior Daniel Potts Jr. has received Student of the Month honors for the second time during the 2011-12 school year.

Potts was nominated for February by Business/Computer teacher Jerry Kehoe.

Potts is a four-year member of the Shamrock swimming team and is on the honor roll. He has narrowed his college prospects to a psychology major at University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign or the University of Wisconsin-Madison.

He is the son of Dan and Ann Potts.
An ongoing debate at Niles Township District 219 about placing more students in rigorous coursework has been reignited since administrators presented recent test scores and grade data to the school board.

Most alarming are exam scores from last fall showing that half the district's incoming students are not deemed "high school-ready." If that trend continues, that same group of students will not be prepared for college courses when they graduate in 2016, said Anne Roloff, assistant superintendent for curriculum and instruction.

Benchmarks for academic "readiness," or the ability to succeed in school, are determined by the ACT organization and based on three rounds of testing.

District 219 administers the EXPLORE test to eighth-graders in the fall and the PLAN program to sophomore students. Students take the ACT, a curriculum- and standards-based test, during their junior year.

The composite EXPLORE score for the class of 2016 was just over 16. Each of the subjects tested - English, math, reading and science - have varying college-readiness benchmarks.

For math, the passing score was a 17, of which 56 percent of students achieved. Most did well in English and as long as they need a pass-rate of 79 percent and 60 percent, respectively.

Only one-third of students scored a 20 or higher in science, which Roloff pointed out has been a "notoriously high" benchmark.

Lisa Lipin, parent of a Niles North High School senior and an incoming freshman, told board officials she is frustrated by the emphasis placed on EXPLORE scores when determining students' placement in classes.

She said her eldest son had a subpar score on the high school entrance test but she had pushed for him to take an honors class because she knew he could handle it.

"According to the EXPLORE test, he wouldn't have been placed there," Lipin said.

Since then he earned the highest possible score on all five of his advanced placement exams and is in the top 10 percent of his class, she said.

Lipin now faces a similar problem with the EXPLORE scores of her other son.

She said the district sent her family a negative-sounding letter from that identifies him as someone who needs a reading readiness class despite a track record of high grades in the subject.

"You didn't go to the school and learn that he has an A in reading. He's always had As and Bs in reading," Lipin said.

"It appears, as a parent of an incoming freshman, that everything is based on this EXPLORE exam."

She added: "It makes him feel like he's not competent."

Lipin said instead of focusing on college-readiness, the district should look at why students aren't first prepared for high school.

Superintendent Nanciann Gatta said the district is focusing on both ends of the spectrum by pushing for less academic tracks.

"I want (her son) to be able to climb the letter to success," she said. "I don't want District 219 to dictate what that is. We want the third step in the ladder."

Administration pushes for AP

Gatta said her administration's efforts to place more students in advanced classes instead of on lower-level tracks have been met with resistance because of "a culture" that believes not all students are AP-capable.

"The fact of the matter is they're handling AP all over the north and south and including Chicago," she said, referring to an Illinois map that showed the percentage of students in AP classes by geographic location.

Between 20 and 29 percent of the District 219 student body take advanced placement coursework.

School districts surrounding Niles Township have 30 percent or more of their students in AP classes.

"As you can see we aren't like our neighbors," Gatta said. "We're more like Lincoln Way, Yorkville and DeKalb."

She added: "This is a very good illustration that we can do more."

Gatta said she rejected the notion that students need a variety academic tracks as opposed to of placing more of them in advanced courses.

She said next year when the district reviews its course-restructuring plan she hopes the "gatekeeping" of AP is taken into consideration.

District 219 is already propelling students into higher-level classes subjects like public speaking and math. 
**DISTRICT 219 NOTES**

Desjardins chosen for teachers' exchange program

Dana Desjardins, a Niles West English teacher, has been chosen as one of only 11 U.S. teachers who will travel to Ukraine this April in the Teachers for Global Classrooms (TGC) program. TGC is funded by the U.S. Department of State.

During the last two weeks of April, Desjardins will travel to Ukraine this April in the Teachers for Global Classrooms (TGC) program. TGC is funded by the U.S. Department of State.

Those students are succeeding and not "failing in mass numbers" as some predicted, Gatta said.

Math progress

One area in particular where the district dramatically reformed its placement methodology is math.

Math directors Bob Williams of Niles West and David Wartowski of Niles North tag-teamed a presentation to show how more students are demonstrating higher proficiency in the subject as a result of higher courses.

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Math directors Bob Williams of Niles West and David Wartowski of Niles North tag-teamed a presentation to show how more students are demonstrating higher proficiency in the subject as a result of higher courses.
Jim Lonergan was standing along the Chicago River on April 20 telling his high school students about a nearly 100-year-old disaster when a real one unfolded before their eyes.

Lonergan, an English teacher at Maine South High School in Park Ridge, said he was recounting the sinking of the SS Eastland. The ship was docked at the Clark Street bridge in 1915 when it rolled over, killing 844 passengers and crew.

“I was in the middle of my tale about the Eastland disaster when a guy jumped into the river,” Lonergan said. “One of my students said, ‘Someone is standing on the rail of the bridge.’ I turned around and saw the splash.”

Lonergan said his students called 911 while he sprinted down the bridge looking for help for the man, who plunged into the Chicago River shortly after 10:30 a.m.

A city worker tossed the man a life-saving ring attached to one of the bridge houses.

Someone on a water taxi threw out another ring.

Lonergan said his 11 students and other passersby were on the bridge, encouraging him to tread water.

The man appeared to try to remove his coat before he slipped under the water. Scuba divers from the Chicago Police marine unit rescued the man and he was pulled onto a water taxi.

The students watched from above on Wacker Drive as fire officials gave the man CPR.

Some of the students sobbed as the man was rushed to Northwestern Memorial Hospital in an ambulance, where he died.

Lonergan, who has been teaching “Literature in Chicago” to seniors since 1972, said this was the 30th tour he has led in downtown Chicago. Lonergan, who also coaches volleyball and track, is retiring at the end of the school year.

“I couldn’t be prouder of my students,” Lonergan said. “They have to feel very good that they did everything they could to keep this troubled human soul with us.”
TOWN HALL FORUM

Parents' role vital in helping teenagers make safe choices

BY NATASHA WASINSKI
Contributor

Distracted driving, underage drinking and an overload of online information are a few of the problems today's law-enforcement and officials work to combat.

The Park Ridge Police Department tackled these issues and more at an informational “town hall” meeting this month to inform residents of their own responsibilities on the road, at home and online.

Though much of the night's discussions were related to teenagers, a similar message emerged from each of the presentations: Adults need to lead the way in fostering life skills and making positive choices.

Cyber-safety is one area of concern that has grown so much in recent years that Illinois' public schools are required to have a curriculum and policy in place for protecting students online. Sarah Migas, an internet-safety specialist from the Office of the Illinois Attorney General, discussed in length the ways in which children and adults could become smart digital users, especially on social networking websites.

With the advent of sites like Facebook and Twitter, “so much of our lives is documented publicly,” she said. “In so many ways we as adults are setting up our children to fail if they think (the Internet) is a private place.”

Children who utilize technology tools and toys are getting younger every year — the average age for getting a first cell phone and creating a social networking profile is 12 — but most do not know how to properly manage them, Migas said.

Responsibility involves more than not losing a device. An over-sharing of information is perhaps the biggest mistake every Internet user makes, Migas said. She warned against giving access to personal, privileged information by blindly adding “friends” on Facebook or sharing passwords with non-family members.

“Anyone can be anyone online,” she said. “We need to challenge our kids to be critical thinkers.”

That constant urge to share or view information on computers and phones is not limited to tweens or high-schoolers.

“If we (adults) are struggling to set boundaries, of course our kids are,” Migas said.

One example of when a beeping phone should be left unanswered is when its owner is driving behind the wheel. In addition to explaining how and why police conduct traffic stops, Park Ridge officer Laura Kappler reminded residents of road-safety rules, like not texting while driving and staying off cell phones in school zones and construction areas.

Kappler said she once encountered two drivers who took their eyes off the road because of their phones within the same week.

One had driven through a red light and crashed into three cars on Western and Touhy avenues after reading a text message. An 8-year-old in the backseat was transferred to a nearby hospital, Kappler said.

The bottom-line is drivers need to take precautions and decrease distractions in order to reduce injuries, accidents, and ticketing, she said.

Helping people make better choices is the aim of Maine Community Youth Assistance Foundation. Kim Radoy, the organization's grant coordinator, said decisions by adults play a large role in limiting teen substance abuse.

She reported that since 2008 binge drinking and tobacco use among Park Ridge, Niles and Des Plains teenagers has gone down. Their attitudes toward marijuana, though, have softened, as its usage slightly increased in recent years. MYCAF's findings come from annual self-reported surveys from students in Maine Township High School District 207.

When an audience member asked how to respond to other parents who say it's better for kids to drink under their roof than somewhere else, Police Chief Frank Kaminski stepped in and said driving the problem underground is not the solution.

He pointed to a “notorious” chain of events a few years ago in Deerfield, in which a couple was convicted for allowing their son's friends to drink in their basement. Two of the teenager guests died in a car crash shortly after leaving the party.

“We're trying” Kaminski said of police efforts to curb underage drinking. “Now (residents and parents) have to get involved.”

Niles resident Norine Wonsowicz, mother to a high-school freshman, eighth-grader and sixth-grade student, attended the meeting with two other parents.

One of the most pressing concerns for her now is Facebook. None of her children currently has a profile on the social-networking site “but they're asking and that day will come,” Wonsowicz said. She plans to download privacy tips from the Attorney General's website to help limit what information gets shared online.

Wonsowicz said she is proactive about knowing what her children — and those around them — do in their spare time.

“I know they don't tell me everything, but I ask,” she said. “My ears are open and I'm listening.”

NILES POLICE DEPARTMENT

Cop fired in 2010 ordered reinstated

BY TRACY GRUEN
Contributor

Two years after officer Fotis Markadas was fired amid allegations of sexual assault, an arbitrator has ordered that he be reinstated to the Niles Police Department.

The arbitrator ordered that Markadas be paid 21 months of back pay and various benefits that he would have received during that time period.

“We sent a letter yesterday (April 16) that he should be reinstated immediately, but we have not yet heard from the village,” Jerry Marzullo, attorney with the Metropolitan Alliance of Police who is representing Markadas, said April 17. “We told the village all along that this was going to happen.”

In January 2010, a waitress at a Niles bar alleged that Markadas sexually assaulted her in the basement of the business while he was off-duty. The village terminated Markadas and he filed a grievance.

“We were disappointed in the findings of the arbitrator,” said Niles Village Manager George Van Geem.

Van Geem added: “We're reviewing our options. We could probably appeal it or pursue a couple different avenues.”

Marzullo said the village could file a motion to vacate the arbitration, but speculated that it would not be a successful action.

“Every minute he is not reinstated the clock keeps ticking for the tax payers of the village of Niles,” Marzullo said.

No criminal charges were ever filed by the waitress.
Debate over outside legal counsel hints at village manager exit

BY TRACY GRUEN
Contributor

Niles trustees engaged in a heated discussion last week over an ordinance that would allow them to consult with outside legal representation rather than the attorney who works for the village. That, in turn, led to a discussion about the future of the village's manager.

The Village Board of Trustees on April 18 voted to approve an ordinance allowing trustees to consult with an attorney who does not work for the village if they feel there is a conflict of interest to discuss the matter with the village's own attorney.

Mayor Robert Callero said he planned to veto the ordinance at a meeting this week. Trustee Jim Hynes said that Ethics Board members felt that the role of the village attorney is to represent the village as a whole, not individual trustees.

Hynes said there may be times when the trustees disagree with the legal opinion of the village attorney or do not feel comfortable discussing something with him because the village is the client. Hynes said the mayor has the ability to hire an outside attorney for a cost of as much as $20,000, and he felt trustees should be able to do the same. Other trustees echoed Hynes, but

Trustee Andrew Przybylo voted against the ordinance. Przybylo emphasized that no taxpayer funds have been expended prior to the ordinance being passed and may never be expended.

Przybylo suggested putting a cap of $1,500 for legal representation and consultation. Board approval would be required if it goes over that amount. His motion failed.

Trustee Joseph Lo Verde said he would be supportive of a cap of $10,000 and felt $1,500 was unrealistic. The board approved the ordinance without putting a cap on the amount.

"They're trying to change municipal law," Callero told the Niles Herald-Spectator. "They're trying to take the power from the executive branch to give it to the legislative branch."

Currently the mayor appoints village department heads and others with the village board's advice and consent. At the April 18 meeting trustees wished to discuss an ordinance that would have allowed the mayor to appoint people to those positions for only a 30-day period and not reappoint anyone more than once per year. The ordinance was not on the April 18 special-meeting agenda as a result of procedural issues.

What did surface at the meeting was a discussion about a Village Manager George Van Geem and a possible "buyout" offer made to him. At one point during the discussion of the attorney ordinance Trustee Andrew Przybylo asked, "So, it really has nothing to do with the fact this board is trying to discharge George Van Geem?"

Przybylo then asked Hynes if the reason for the ordinance was a specific ethics issue. Hynes said it was not pertaining to a specific case but they wanted to have a mechanism in place in case it was necessary to hire outside counsel.

"I don't think it's appropriate to discuss personnel matters in public," said Hynes, who said the matter regarding Van Geem was only discussed in executive session.

"It is not executive session when you go out and you offer a manager a buyout," Callero replied. "Everything that is leading into that was clearly meant to be kept confidential and everyone in this room has kept it confidential," Hynes said.

ETHICS BOARD
Trustees defer decision on new disclosure proposal

BY TRACY GRUEN
Contributor

The Niles Ethics Board held off on taking action last week regarding a resident's proposal that would require more people doing business with the village to submit specific disclosure statements.

At an April 17 Ethics Board meeting, Community Development Director Chuck Ostman and Finance Director Scott Neukirch shared their concerns regarding a proposal that would require vendors bidding on larger village contracts or applying for a liquor license or zoning ordinance variance to submit a conflict of interest disclosure statement.

Resident Joe Makula's proposal would ask if the applicant's officers, directors or partners are related by blood or marriage or reside in the same residence as any Niles elected official, appointed official and village employee. It would also require the applicant to disclose information regarding political contributions to any such elected official, appointed official or Niles employee.

Neukirch said that while he understood the spirit of what the Ethics Board was trying to accomplish, he felt the proposed conflict of interest statement would limit
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PROPERTY TRANSFERS

Information is provided by Record Information Services, P.O. Box 894, Elburn IL 60119; phone (630) 557-1000; fax (630) 557-1001.

DES PLAINES

9009 Golf Road Apt 4a: Dusko Lukic to Niki Parikh, $72,000, March 16

1285 Henry Ave.: Ohio Investments LLC to Trista J Magnifico, $160,000, March 21

937 Landings Lane Unit 305: Robert Kempe to Kornelia Hier, $80,500, March 19

76 N Broadway St.: American Telephone & Telegraph Co to Kimberly Thoms, $187,000, March 19

ELMWOOD PARK

708 N 76th Ave.: Firstmerit Bank N.A. Trustee to Kristin L Murphy, $187,000, March 19

2667 N 76th Court: Steven W Moos to Terry Jekens, $94,000, March 19

7093 W Westwood Drive: Grace A Bristo to Josephina Santiago, $155,000, March 21

EVANSTON

640 Judson Ave.: Patrick Spain to Philip L Harris Gricel M Harris, $837,500, March 22

1903 Livingston St.: Thomas Andre Beckley to Dennis Dillingham Vanessa Irving, $312,500, March 22

1925 Keeny St.: Marija Roby to Stephen Ruppert Kathleen Ruppert, $275,000, March 19

1622 Madison St.: Maribel Fuentes to Kristina Guglizia Samuel Guglizia, $135,000, March 20

1316 Maple Ave. Apt L2: Sanke Trust to Ralph K Chisholm, $150,000, March 19

1750 Oak Ave. Unit 409: Rb Resolution Properties Llc to Terence C Lee, $165,000, March 19

2535 1/2 Prairie Ave. Apt 2: Prairie Manor Closeout Llc to Heather Cullen, $126,000, March 23

503 Sheridan Road Apt 83: Michael H Hanley to Gordon Wagner Shirley Wagner, $124,000, March 19

2515 Sherman Ave.: Louis P Maltese to Thomas Nacher, $540,000, March 20

2616 Thayer St.: Daniel Chias to Heather C Barnfield Mark Barnfield, $665,000, March 21

FRANKLIN PARK

2651 Leona St.: Kalish Trust to Julio C Gamez, $80,000, March 22

460 S Northwest Highway

6534 W Montrose Ave. Apt 1w: Montemayor Trust to Dimitrios Drake, $75,000, March 20

LINCOLNWOOD

7240 N Lowell Ave.: Herz Trust to Yousuf G Bagban Farahzad S Bagban, $265,000, March 22

4024 W Morse Ave.: Samuel P Rita to Amber Mian An, $300,000, March 19

MAYWOOD

211 W Roosevelt Road: Our Sliders Llc to Camelia Gabriel, $839,000, March 20

MELROSE PARK

1650 Riverwoods Drive Unit 609: Fannie Mae to Sandra Cano, $67,000, March 21

2010 Scott St.: Meleco Zurita to Felipe Zurita Veronica Zurita, $76,500, March 20

MORTON GROVE

7930 Lotus Ave.: Grantor Ing Bank Fsb to Abdul Karim Abdullah, $155,000, March 16

6160 Mayfair St.: North Shore Holdings Llc to Gigi Pao Kun Xiong Wang, $226,000, March 22

8100 Waukegan Road Unit 21: Fannie Mae to Anthony Castro, $110,000, March 19

850 Private Road: Peters Trust to Kamran Bajwa Suza Asbahi, $141,000, March 19

850 Private Road: Peters Trust to Kamran Bajwa Suza Asbahi, $141,000, March 19

NORTHLAKE

132 N Roy Ave.: Ronald J Jablonski to Susan M Dalman, $177,000, March 20

OAK PARK

413 S Kenilworth Ave. Apt 3: Jp Morgan Chase Bank to Anthony D Bryant, $178,000, March 22

720 S Oak Park Ave.: Brian Siemian to Andrew I Qab, $345,000, March 21

3016 Wisconsin Ave.: Avers Trust to Rinaldo M Mugo Teresa F Mugo, $380,000, March 19

PALATINE

1078 S Claremont Dr.: Fannie Mae to Andrej Klimazewski, $160,000, March 22

351 N Roziewski Road: Federal Home Loan Mtg Corp to Roland Sardone Mylene Sardone, $215,000, March 23

945 N Williams Dr.: Huss Trust to Kollin C Kowalski Marjorie A Kowalski, $420,000, March 22

239 S Bothwell St.: Chicago Title Tr Co Trust to Shirley Amongshek, $168,000, March 16

336 S Cedar St.: Karin Macin-Gatos to Chengwen Chen Xiu Yang Wang, $200,000, March 21

1257 S Leo Court: Terry Auff to John A Biffin, $165,000, March 21

1273 S Parkside Drive: Daniel B Deary to Elaine Trabosi, $67,000, March 23

410 W Mahogany Court

6534 W Montrose Ave. Apt 1w: Fannie Mae to Sandra Cano, $67,000, March 23

NORTHEASTCHICAGO

7938 N Nora Ave.: Ryszard J Krupa to Gwennolyn M Graf, $82,000, March 23

2616 Thayer St.: Daniel Chias to Heather C Barnfield Mark Barnfield, $665,000, March 21

2651 Leona St.: Kalish Trust to Julio C Gamez, $80,000, March 22

6534 W Montrose Ave. Apt 1w: Montemayor Trust to Dimitrios Drake, $75,000, March 20

1524 Walters Ave.: Schneider Trust to Federico Maisch Florencio Maisch, $349,000, March 19

1300 Wendy Drive: Pamela Handy to Champa K Raju Lila M Raju, $360,000, March 22

NORTHWICK PARK

832 E Willow Road Unit 201: Scannegine Trust to Jose J Cabrera, $71,000, March 23

RIVER FOREST

508 Bonnie Brae Place Apt 11: Fannie Mae to Robert F Dillon, $80,000, March 29

RIVER GROVE

8023 O Connor Drive Apt 1: Sa Lammer to Norbert Godlewski Anna Koberszko, $195,000, March 15

ROSEMONT

6124 Hawthorne St.: Ralph W Lange to Frank J Carrillo, $349,000, March 16

SCHILLER PARK

4539 Kolze Ave.: Fannie Mae to Tadeusz Domanski Barbara Solow, $181,000, March 23

SKOKIE

8001 Lockwood Ave. Apt 406: Fannie Mae to Zane Smith, $80,000, March 23

4064 Keystone Ave.: Percival R Corpuz to Amir Rashid Aiaz, $160,000, March 16

4700 Old Orchard Road Apt 406: Fannie Mae to Haroon Tabani Erum Tabani, $97,000, March 22

9216 Tripp Ave.: Real Equities Inc to Naved B Hooda Shabnam Kamali Hooda, $225,000, March 22

5039 Warren St.: Rappat Patel to Mark Green, $159,000, March 16

9655 Woods Drive Unit 1505: Fannie Mae to Anthony Castro Willa Castro, $196,000, March 18

WILLENTA

1631 Lake Ave.: Fannie Mae to Chinh Chien Hsu, $235,500, March 16

WINNETKA

850 Private Road: Peters Trust to Kamran Bajwa Suza Asbahi, $1,300,000, March 16

58 Woodley Road: Deutsche Bank Trust Company Of America Trustee to Hamad Mian An, $1,373,000, March 22

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'60s-era property features inviting open floor plan

8904 Ozark Ave., Morton Grove — $279,900

constructed in 1963, this 1,149-square-foot split-level is situated on 0.14 acres and features a three-car garage.

Highlights of the kitchen include stainless steel appliances, hardwood flooring and a breakfast area.

Tile flooring lines the family room, which features decorative trim, exposed lighting and two large windows.

The master bedroom has a ceiling fan, hardwood flooring and a spacious closet.

The back yard of the property is divided in half by concrete and grass sections.

This home is situated 1.6 miles southwest of the Golf Metra station.

**SOUND OFF**

Q: What impact do condominium rules and regulations have on a property's marketability?

A: It is extremely important for condo rules and regulations to remain flexible and owner-friendly. Associations with too many restrictions limit potential buyers and thus negatively affect their market value.

Real estate investors and home buyers want the security of knowing that there are options in the event that they cannot stay or sell. The ability to secure a lease adds to the seller's peace of mind and the security of those lending. Many buildings only allow one-year hardship rentals. While these are better than nothing, it is unrealistic to believe that the real estate market will significantly change in such a limited time.

When buyers are bound by inflexible condominium boards and limitations, they are often forced to foreclose or short-sell their units. As a result, condo buildings benefit greatly, in morale and market value, by allowing their owners as much flexibility and freedom as possible.

— Abbey Schrager Turilli of Coldwell Banker Residential

**MARKET WATCH AS OF MONDAY**

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<th>City</th>
<th>For sale</th>
<th>Median price</th>
<th>Foreclosure rate</th>
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<th># of foreclosures</th>
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<td>12.23%</td>
<td>548</td>
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<td>$580,000</td>
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<td>32.75%</td>
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<td>262</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Chicago BlockShopper.com. Data tracks last 12 months of sales.
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Platter lovers flock to Record Store Day

BY KATHY ROUTLIEFE
krouteff@ptoneerlocal.com

Everything sounds better when it's running at 33 and a third rpm (or 45, or perhaps even 78.)

If that resonates with you — if you prefer music spun out from a spindle, occasional pops and hisses notwithstanding, to the electronic immediacy of an iTunes download — then you may well have been roving the record aisles at your favorite local music store Saturday, adding to it Saturday, although she couldn't find the Phish platter she'd wanted, or the Grateful Dead's "Dark Star" record that was a Record Store Day special release. She was able to nab a Black Keys album she said, ticking that off her list.

A few blocks to the south at 2nd Hand Tunes, 800 Dempster St., shopper Shannon Hicks didn't know it was Record Store Day, but that didn't matter.

"I love browsing for records," she said.

At 11 a.m., customers were light on the ground at 2nd Hand Tunes, but only because the big rush came 11 hours earlier, when owner Johnny Balmer opened the doors at midnight.

Balmer's store has been involved with Record Store Day since the beginning, he said, and this year's midnight sale had been the most crowded and successful one he'd had.

"I talked to one guy who camped outside the door since 8:30 p.m. (Friday), with a lawn chair and everything," Balmer said. "It's a huge event and this year it's been kind of amazing."

At Wilmette's Hip Cat Records and Music, 5540 Lake Ave., Kenilworth teen McKay Womsley cradled the Stevie Wonder albums she'd just bought. It was her first visit to Hip Cat, she said, a specific Record Store Day destination. She'd grown up with her father's record collection and now was working on one of her own.

As Womsley exited with her finds, Hip Cat owner James Cooper talked power ballads and the failings thereof, while ringing up another buy for enthusiast Ed O'Sullivan of Mundelein.

For Niles record aficionado Robert Tanchez, a Hip Cats fan for years, depending on digital downloads for one's music was more than uninteresting, it was downright dangerous.

"The thought of losing my entire collection with one mistake, one wrong button ... I can't risk that," Tanchez said. Cooper and Vintage Vinyl owner Steven Kay understand the passion of people like O'Sullivan. They are why Record Store Day is a success, Kay said Friday as he was preparing for Saturday's rush.

"A person has a different visceral response to buying music in a real store as opposed to buying something online.

People are returning to records, or discovering them for the first time, Kay said.

For Balmer, watching someone discover the joys of records is part of his fun. "It's especially cool in this age of buying everything online, to see them come in and have the experience of handling something real."
One-on-one dialogue is a start, but it’s not enough to tackle society’s most complex problems. Powerful solutions require multiple perspectives. That’s why the Adler School is training tomorrow’s psychology practitioners to bring more voices into the conversation. Apply today—and empower communities to speak up. adler.edu

**Leading Social Change**

**POLICE BLOTTER**

The following incidents were listed in the weekly bulletin prepared by the Adler School Police Department. Readers are reminded that an arrest does not constitute a finding of guilt. Only a court of law can make that determination.

**SUSPICIOUS ACTIVITIES**

The groundskeeper at a cemetery in the 8500 block of Shermer Road told police she discovered on April 15 a cardboard box in the corner of the property containing old clothing and two dead roosters with their heads severed.

**PROPERTY DAMAGE**

Someone scratched a 2005 Infiniti parked between April 15 and April 17 on the 8,200 block of Ozanam Avenue.

**TELEPHONE HARASSMENT**

A 23-year-old woman from Norridge told police that while at work she received various bizarre and threatening text messages from a 35-year-old male co-worker between March 15 and April 16. The messages reportedly were about the sender being invisible, watching the victim and knowing where she lived.

**DOMESTIC BATTERY**

James Wyatt, 45, of 7632 Milwaukee Ave., Niles, was arrested April 14 and charged with domestic battery at his apartment. The victim, a female who lives with Wyatt, reported that while at work she received a phone call and was told police that during an argument Wyatt pushed her in the bathroom, causing her to fall into the bathtub and scratch her right forearm and her lip. Wyatt has a May 2 court date.

**THEFT**

A 21-year-old Des Plaines woman reported that her car was stolen April 19 after she left it running in a parking lot on the 9100 block of Golf Road while picking up her daughter from a day care center there.

A 49-year-old man told police that someone entered his unlocked 2008 Lexus between April 4 and April 5 while it was parked on the 8,500 block of Bruce. A cell-phone charger was reported stolen.

Someone took a $400 cell phone from a man’s gym bag while he was working out April 19 at a fitness center on the 9200 block of Milwaukee Avenue, police said.

**DUI**

Kyle Goette, 45, of 796 Center St., Des Plaines, was charged with driving under the influence of alcohol on April 15. He was taken into custody on the 8300 block of Oakton Street. His court date is May 7.

**SHERIFF’S REPORTS**

The following incidents in unincorporated Maine Township were compiled by the Cook County Sheriff’s Department. Readers are reminded that an arrest does not constitute a finding of guilt. Only a court of law can make that determination.

**DRUG POSSESSION**

Jose Contreras, 19, of the 1500 block of Woodland, Des Plaines, was charged with possession of marijuana and consumption of alcohol in a public way on April 12. According to police, Contreras was stopped by a police officer just before 1 a.m. after he was reportedly seen walking in the area of Potter and Ballard roads in possession of open alcohol. Contreras was also found to be in possession of under 10 grams of suspected marijuana, police said.

**BATTERY**

A woman told police that she was pushed by a neighbor April 11 during an argument over the removal of laundry from a dryer inside the laundry room of a building at Bay Colony, 9400 Bay Colony Drive. The woman declined to pursue criminal charges, police said.

**CRIMINAL TRESPASS**

John DeFrank, of the 8900 block of Church Street, unincorporated Maine Township, was charged with criminal trespass April 9. A security officer for a condominium at 8900 Ballard Point reported that police told DeFrank that he was not allowed on the property, but he returned later that day. The security officer had detained and handcuffed DeFrank prior to the arrival of officers.

**PROPERTY DAMAGE**

A property was damaged between March 31 and April 1 with someone stealing $1,100 from his wife's wallet, which was inside the couple's residence on the 9200 block of Golf Road.

**THEFT**

A man told police that on the 9200 block of Golf Road, police said.

**AMBULANCE ASSIST**

Police on the afternoon of April 10 were called to an unincorporated Maine Township, was charged with driving under the influence of alcohol on April 7. He was taken into custody near his home after police reportedly saw his vehicle cross over lane markers at 2:25 a.m. on Golf Road near Dee.

4 a.m. April 10 from Ctgo, at Golf and Dee roads,

Christopher Watry, 48, of the 8900 block of Stevens Drive, unincorporated Maine Township, was charged with driving under the influence of alcohol on April 7. He was taken into custody near his home after police reportedly saw his vehicle cross over lane markers at 2:25 a.m. on Golf Road near Dee.
Man drowns in pond after apparent swan attack

BY JENNIFER JOHNSON
jjohnson@pioneerlocal.com

A 37-year-old man who drowned April 14 following an apparent swan attack on an unincorporated Maine Township pond was not wearing a life preserver at the time.

That, said North Maine Fire Chief Rich Dobrowski, could have potentially saved his life.

"The only way of ever preventing any kind of water accident is to use a personal flotation device or a life jacket," Dobrowski said. "That would be the safety message to anyone out there."

The body of Anthony Hensley, 37, of Villa Park, was discovered by rescue divers using sonar equipment in the murky waters of a pond at Bay Colony condominiums, located just southeast of Interstate 294 and Golf Road.

Hensley, who had reportedly gone out on the pond in a kayak, was believed to be in the water roughly 15 minutes between the time firefighters were called to the scene about 7 a.m. and when divers located his body.

Hensley, a married father of two, worked for a company that used swans and dogs to keep geese away from properties. He was checking on the swans in the Bay Colony pond that Saturday morning when one of the swans attacked Hensley as he tried to swim after it. The man was no longer visible on the water, the fire chief said.

A witness reported that the swan continued to swim after Hensley as he tried to make it to shore. By the time rescue personnel arrived, Hensley was underwater. An autopsy found the cause of death to be drowning.

Hensley's family and friends learned of his death when one of the swans swam to them. "Maybe he didn't fight back enough when the swan attacked him. Maybe he didn't want to hurt the animal. I can't understand how this was possible," Koutsogiannis said.

Divers from the Mutual Aid Box Alarm System Division Three were on the scene within 10 minutes and their use of sonar equipment helped them to pinpoint the location where Hensley had gone under the water, Dobrowski said. Once in the water it took divers 2 to 3 minutes to locate Hensley's body, he said.

Hensley liked working with animals, his father-in-law, George Koutsogiannis, said. "Maybe he didn't fight back enough when the swan attacked him. Maybe he didn't want to hurt the animal. I can't understand how this was possible," Koutsogiannis said.

Dobrowski said the Bay Colony pond is about 10 to 15 feet deep. Hensley died without life insurance and a memorial fund has been established to help his family. Donations can be sent to Amy Hensley, e/o Steuerle Funeral Home, 350 S. Ardmore Ave. Villa Park, IL 60181.

--- Sun-Times Media contributed to this story.
A group of fourth-grade girls giggled as they sat together on the floor and listened to a district nurse talk about various aspects of a subject almost guaranteed to elicit such reactions from youngsters—puberty.

Despite the expected snickers, fourth-grade girls attending school in Park Ridge-Niles School District 64 learned new and valuable information to prepare them for changes in their bodies during a special event attended by the girls and their mothers this month at Washington School.

Participants watched a video on puberty that discussed things like changes in physical appearance and menstruation, and how to prepare for it.

Following the movie, district nurse Noelle Norris talked with the girls about subjects discussed in the video, particularly menstruation and personal hygiene. Many of the girls asked questions, including what they should do if they first get their period while at school or how old they would be when they stopped menstruating.

Norris talked about the importance of washing your face a couple of times a day and using deodorant. She said the girls will start to see changes in their bodies when they look in the mirror.

Norris talked about the pituitary gland and how it sends a message to the ovaries to release eggs, starting the menstruation cycle.

According to Norris, some girls are getting their periods earlier these days, at age 9 as opposed to age 13, so she believes this fourth-grade presentation is the perfect time to help young girls and their parents.

The district has provided the program for several years.

During the presentation, Norris showed the girls how to put a pad on a pair of underwear and showed them various products, including tampons.

“It makes them not as scared,” Marie Moran, a parent who attended the event, said of the presentation.

Amy Brown has four girls and she has attended the special program for mothers and their daughters a few times before. Brown said that some children may not feel comfortable talking to their parents about such topics at home, so the program provides a great venue for them to discuss important issues.

“The video is better than her talking about it,” said Mcclain Clancy, who feels it is easier to watch a video about puberty than to talk about related issues at home.

After the presentation, some girls acknowledged that parts of the presentation and video were humorous and slightly uncomfortable, but they all said they learned information they did not know before. Parents felt it was a great launching point to start discussions on the topic at home.
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QUESTION OF THE WEEK
We asked five folks at Linne Woods and Prairie View Park: Have you changed any habits to become more environmentally responsible?

“'I feel really guilty about taking long, hot showers. It's like I have a built-in timer that tells me, 'that's long enough.'”
KEN SCHAEFER

“I've changed to more efficient light bulbs; I use the car less; use reusable grocery bags and lunch containers instead of plastic ones.”
CINDY LEVIN

“I'm more aware of littering, and I do more recycling.”
GEORGE KOWALCZYK

“I do a lot more recycling; a lot of paper, glass, plastic.”
BOB SCHULTER

“I watch my water and my power use. For laundry, I do full loads. And I drive my wife nuts because I'm always turning off lights.”
CHARLIE BAUER

PIONEER PEOPLE POLL

This week’s question comes from the Cover Story on Page 5. How much does Earth Day mean to you?

- Nothing
- A little
- A lot
- I'm an unapologetic tree-hugger

To submit your answer, go to niles.suntimes.com.

PIONEER PRESS wants to hear from you. Please send your Letters to the Editor to Matt Schmitz at mschmitz@pioneerlocal.com, or by mail to 3701 W. Lake Ave., Glenview IL 60026. Please limit letters to 250 words or less, and provide a home telephone number. Pioneer Press reserves the right to edit letters for length, clarity, and content. In order to be published, all letters sent by mail must be signed. If you send your letter by email, please include your name as well as your email address and home telephone number. Thank you.

Looking for a perfect fit at mall? Remote chance

My friends, I'm en route to the 2012 Erma Bombeck conference in Dayton, Ohio, and because I've put on weight (stifling sobs, reaching for tissues), I need spiffy new clothes.

At the mall I pass the trendy section of teensy-size zeros, summoning my courage. Pretend Stacey and Clinton are with me from "What Not To Wear." Find clothes that flatten my figure type. My figure type right now is "schlump."

In the shoe section I marvel at the stilettos on display. Walking is not possible in those. Hobbling, yes. For a minute sanity deserts me and I try on a pair, feeling like Cinderella's tubby step-sister. "Faction," I think. I wear these, and I wind up on a hospital cot and sending my husband to Walgreens for economy-sized heat packs.

My husband and then give one of us the TV remote.

He never stays on one channel past 30 seconds, while I watch shows that make him grind his teeth.

"Drooling over him"
"Give me that remote."

The prom section teems with low-cut dresses. I reflect on my first prom dress, a navy, full-length creation which could at best be described as "Amish meets polka dots." And I still safety-pinned the neckline.

I reflect on my first prom dress, a navy, full-length creation which could at best be described as "Amish meets polka dots." And I still safety-pinned the neckline.

He returns, grunting with disgust. "This Don Draper guy, I can't believe you like him. You worked in advertising, Cheryl. Draper would've stolen all your ideas."

"That may be true," I grin. "But there would be the payoff."

"What?"

"Drooling over him."

"Give me that remote."
Happiness is just a tipoff from a guy named Joe

Joe Kaminski, a Fixer reader in Streamwood, didn’t fail for this rip-off but he wanted to make sure none of you get sucked in.

A week or so ago, Joe’s girlfriend got a letter from an entity called “Local Records Office” that looked terribly official. The timing was interesting, as she had recently inherited some property. The envelope had a boxed warning on it reminding against tampering with the U.S. Mail or risking a $2,000 fine, 5 years imprisonment or both.

Inside that serious-looking envelope was a document that upon first glance, might be mistaken for a government document. It had a detachable payment coupon and stated that Local Records Office would provide a copy of her property deed for $89.

Unfortunately, Jay is worried that other consumers might not examine the letter closely, which is why he alerted The Fixer.

An elderly or unsophisticated consumer might construe this as an official document and send in the $89, Joe warns.

We’ve found similar set-ups around the country with businesses calling themselves “Record Retrieval Department,” “National Record Service,” or other official-sounding names. If you get one of these letters, don’t be fooled into thinking it’s from the county.

Dear Fixer: I grew up in Naperville and my family still lives there. I had driven to town in October and felt terrible — sore throat, etc. I decided to go to the Central DuPage Hospital River North Convenient Care center, which I had been to before on more than one occasion, to have a strep test. I spent literally five minutes in the clinician’s office, where he examined my throat and did the test. It turned out it wasn’t strep but he did prescribe medication, which I took and quickly recovered. No problem.

A couple of months later, I received a bill and the test report was listed as $156 total. I checked with my insurance company to see what they would pay for such services and they said $165. I have a high-deductible plan where I pay 100 percent until I hit $6,000, so I would be paying the total bill for this visit.

I wrote a letter to CDH expressing my displeasure and included a check for $165. Unfortunately, my letter and check didn’t have the effect I wanted. They sent me a new statement demanding an additional $247.50.

Meanwhile, I checked with three other urgent care facilities in the area and they charge between $95 and $180. I did manage to speak to a person with “client services” within CDH who thought the charges should have been $156 total.

I hope you can help.

Jay Rensink

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Piano Ensemble honors Northfield musician

BY LARA JACKSON
Contributor

If one piano sounds good, will six pianos sound six times better?

At Oakton Community College, it would seem so. The school's Six Piano Ensemble has been a performance favorite since it was founded in 1980 by Glenna Sprague of Skokie, professor and coordinator of music at the college.

"Initially," she said, "the ensemble was developed in 1980 as a class to introduce more advanced students to duet music. I arranged the music for the concert in 1980 and everyone really enjoyed it, so we kept doing the ensemble."

At each concert the ensemble plays works ranging from classical, symphonic pieces to ragtime to popular music, always ending each concert with John Philip Sousa's rousing "Stars and Stripes Forever."

Loyal fans

Often, said Sprague, the annual spring concert is sold out and there are audience members who have attended every concert. This year's concerts, 8 p.m. Saturdays, April 28 and 3 p.m. Sunday, April 29, will feature Scott Joplin's "Maple Leaf Rag," "Alexander's Ragtime Band," and the Adagio-Allegro movement of Joseph Haydn's Symphony No. 104, in addition to works by Muzio Clementi, Max Reger, Johannes Brahms.

As usual, Sprague arranged all pieces for multiple keyboards. Music from six instruments adds layers of complexity to the music, and an auditory texture, as the melodies move from pianist to pianist, each playing a different part of every composition.

Ensemble members must audition each year for one of the six openings. So, even seasoned members are not guaranteed a seat each year.

However, Beatriz Levi of Northfield has made the cut every year for the past 25.

During the upcoming concerts Levi will be honored for her achievement and artistry. Originally from Buenos Aires, Levi received a bachelor's degree in piano from the Conservatorio Superior de Musica Manuel de Falla in Buenos Aires. Levi then went on to receive a master's degree in biochemistry at the University of Buenos Aires.

What's kept her coming back all these years, Levi explains, are the challenges and pleasures of playing with others.

"I enjoy working together and learning new pieces and compositions," she explained. "I also enjoy camaraderie with my fellow ensemble members including the various trips we've made throughout the country and the world. I still find its performances extremely stimulating and they keep me on my toes."

Musical challenge

It's not always easy music. "We play symphonic pieces that are usually not played by a piano — these pieces are always a big challenge," states Levi.

In addition to playing with the ensemble, Levi teaches piano to children and adults. She also holds a master's degree in pedagogy, the art of teaching, from Northeastern Illinois University in Chicago.

"What I enjoy about teaching piano is that music is a language which opens up a whole new world. Also, unlike sports, music is something we can do and enjoy when we're older," says Levi.

Levi also performs outside of the Six Piano Ensemble and has played several dual recitals with some of her fellow ensemble members.

And even after 25 years, her ensemble concerts are still a joy. "We have a strong following," she said. "We have strong support from the community and the college, and I look forward to the concert every year."
In a high-risk world of quick profits and borrowed luxury, Timon is a god among men. But can this titan survive when the tides of fortune turn?

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—THE NEW YORK TIMES

FAMILY FRIENDLY

Band embodies theme of Spring Greening

BY MYRNA PETLICKI
Contributor

Skip Landt is convinced his Strictly Jug Nuts jug band belongs at Skokie's Spring Greening.

"We play recycled music, we wear recycled clothing and we play largely on instruments that have been created from things that were originally intended for another use," Landt said. "For example, one of our instruments is the canjo, which is made from two tin cans with a guitar string suspended between them."

Other band instruments include a milk jug and a beer jug. You can hear the current champs of the Chicago Battle of the Jug Bands at the free event from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. Sunday at Niles North High School, 9800 N. Lawler.

Other entertainment includes "Parker in the Park," a natural science musical, family entertainer Ricky Recycle and a Trashy Fashion Show. There will be workshops on green living, a green products and services expo, and recycling games for kids.

For details, call (847) 674-1500, ext. 2500, or visit skokiespringgreening.org.

Double day

A bilingual good time is planned for families from 10:30 to 11:30 a.m. Saturday during Dia de los Ninos/Dia de los Libros (Children's Day/Book Day) at the Niles Public Library, 6960 W. Oakton St. The celebration will include stories and rhythms in English and Spanish, a craft project and treats. Reservations are required.

For details, call (847) 673-7774 or visit nileslibrary.org.

Active outlet

Kids ages 2 to 6 will meet community helpers and participate in activities with a parent at Skokie's Busy, Busy Town Party from 10:30 a.m. to noon Saturday at the Skokie Public Library, 5215 Oakton St. That's when the youth services department will turn into a Richard Scarry busy town. Registration is required.

For details, call (847) 674-1234 or visit nileslibrary.org.
MOVIE REVIEW

Diane Keaton and her "Darling Companion" in the latest film from Lawrence Kasdan, director of "The Big Chill."

Who let the dog out?

BY BRUCE INGRAM  Film Critic

DARLING COMPANION

★ 1/2

Unlike the dog that motivates the plot of this baby-boomer dramedy from Lawrence "Big Chill" Kasdan, "Darling Companion" never entirely loses its way. But the emotional territory it sniffs and explores is only mildly diverting at best.

There's every reason to expect it might have been better. "Darling" assembles an excellent ensemble cast of aging actors led by Kevin Kline (also featured in Kasdan's "Chill" and "Grand Canyon," both predecessors in an informal boomer trilogy) and Diane Keaton. It's also apparently based on a personal experience Kasdan shared with his wife Meg (who co-wrote the screenplay) when their adopted dog got lost in the Rockies and they spent three weeks searching for him together.

Unfortunately, whatever life lessons were learned during the Kasdan search-and-rescue mission have been translated into an only modestly affecting personal growth resulting from an only moderately alarming crisis. With a handful of warm, fuzzy love stories, a thin veneer of snappy one-liners and heaps of gorgeous Colorado scenery to maintain interest.

It all works, reasonably well, but only if your expectations are low and you have the patience to allow a first-rate cast to squeeze what charm they can out of an assortment of nice, likable, thinly drawn, not-particularly-interesting characters.

At the heart of the whole bland melange is Freeway, a scruffy dog rescued while wandering along an expressway by hyper-emotional empty-nester mom and grandma Beth (Keaton). Freeway kicks off the film's first love story (excluding Beth's head-over-heels attraction to his own scruffy canine charms) when Beth's fairly obnoxious grad-student daughter Grace (Elisabeth Moss of "Mad Men") falls for sexy veterinarian Sam (Jay Ali).

A year later, Grace and Sam are getting married in the Colorado vacation home of Beth and Joseph (Kline), a somewhat arrogant, work-obsessed spinal surgeon who is perpetually annoyed by Beth's emotional "over-reacting." Also on hand are Joseph's sister Penny (Dianne Wiest) and her new boyfriend Russell (Richard Jenkins), Penny's son and Joseph's surgical partner Bryan (Mark Duplass), Joseph's exotic gypsy caretaker Carmen (Ayelet Zurer), and Sam Shepard as a crotchety sheriff.

The wedding goes well, but then Joseph lets Freeway run off into the woods and disappear, leading to a total meltdown from Grace, who sees this as the epitome of years of her husband's self-absorption and neglect. A concerted effort by all hands (including gruffly reluctant Joseph) to find the canine runaway ensues.

Actors of the caliber of Kline and Keaton and Wiest and Jenkins and Shepard are almost guaranteed to find a way to enliven any story, and that's what happens in "Darling Companion." Though it's difficult not to think of better films in which all of them were employed to much, much better effect.

Chances are good they could have wrung just as much interest out of a group reading of AARP magazine.
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THE FIVE-YEAR ENGAGEMENT

Rated: R for sexual content and language
Stars: Jason Segel, Emily Blunt, Chris Pratt
A group of aging friends and relatives goes into crisis mode when a beloved dog adopted by an empty nester (Keaton) goes missing in the Colorado mountains. Lawrence Kasdan ("The Accidental Tourist") wrote and directed the comedy romance.

THE PIRATES! BAND OF MISFITS

Rated: PG-13 for some violent images and brief strong language
Stars: Hugh Grant, Alice Eve, Luke Evans
Edgar Allan Poe (Cusack) becomes involved in a police investigation when a serial killer begins replicating the horrific deaths in his stories. James McTeigue ("V for Vendetta") directed the thriller.

SAFE

Rated: R for strong violence throughout, and for language
Stars: Jason Statham, Catherine Chan, Chris Sarandon
A young girl being hunted by gangsters for a priceless numerical code in her memory is protected by a former cage fighter (Statham) whose life was ruined by the same bad guys. Boaz Yakin ("Prince of Persia") directed the thriller.

STILL PLAYING

BULLY

* * 1/2
Rated: PG-13
Stars: Alex Libby, Kelby Johnson, ja'Maya Jackson
This controversial, activist documentary offers an uncomfortably personal view of how it feels to be bullied, and the devastating effect it can have on the lives of young people and their families. Emmy-winning director Lee Hirsch ("Amishdol!") examines the stories of five bullied kids. Haunting.

THE RAVEN

* * 1/2
Rated: R for bloody violence and grisly images

STILL PLAYING

THE CABIN IN THE WOODS

* * 1/2
Rated: P-13 for sexual content, some crude humor and brief drug use
Stars: Chris Brown, Kevin Hart, Gabrielle Union
In one sense an extended infomercial for comedian Steve Harvey's bestselling relationship advice book, "Think Like a Man" also works reasonably well as a romantic comedy with a variety of women playing head games with the men in their lives after Harvey gives them the lowdown on male psychology. But that's mostly due to an appealing cast and the ensemble chops of director Tim "Barbershop" Story.

THE THREE STOOGES

Rated: PG for slapstick action violence, some rude and suggestive humor including language
Stars: Sean Hayes, Will Sasso, Chris Diamantopoulos
Moe, Larry and Curly (Diamantopoulos, Hayes and Sasso) uncover a murder plot while trying to save their childhood orphanage. Bobby and Peter Farrelly directed the comedy.
SHOWTIMES

Movie times are effective Friday and are compiled from information available on Tuesday. Please note that theater schedules are subject to change. If no listings are provided, please call the theater for information.

ARLINGTON THEATERS
53 S. Evergreen St.
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The Five-Year Engagement
(R) Fri 4:40-7:10-9:50; Sat,
Sun 11:40-2:10-4:40-7-10-9:50; Mon, Tue 4:40-7-10;
Wed 11:40-2:10-4-7-10-9:50; Thu 6:45-7-9:10

The Pirates Band of Misfits
(PG) Fri 2:15-4:45-7:15-9:45; Sat,
Sun 12:30-2:45-7-9:30; Mon, Tue 2:50-5:15-7-9:15;
Wed, Thu 2:45-5:15-7-9:15

The Lucky One (PG-13) Fri
4:50-7-10; Mon, Tue 4:50-7-10-9:50; Thu
4:50-8:15-9:30

Chimpanzee (G) Fri
3:45-5:45-7:45-9:45; Sat,
Sun 11:45-1:45-4:45-7:45-9:45; Mon, Tue
3:45-5:45-7:45-9:45; Wed 11:45-1:45-4:45-7:45-9:45; Thu
3:45-5:45-7:45-9:45

The Three Stooges (PG) Fri
3:45-5:45-7-9:45; Sat,
Sun 12:30-3:45-6:45-9:45; Mon
3:45-6:45; Wed
12:30-3:45-6:45; Thu 3:45-6:45

SALMON FISHING IN THE YEMEN (PG-13) Fri-Sun 12:15-2:50-5:30-8:10; Mon-Thu 2:50-5:30-8:10

Monseur Lazhar (PG-13)
Fri-Sun 12:30-3:30-6:30-9:30; Mon-Thu
3:30-6:30

Darling Companion (PG-13)
Fri-Sun 12:15-2:45-5:15-7:45-10:15; Mon-Thu
2:15-5:15

The Deep Blue Sea (R) Fri-Sun
12:30-3:30-6:30-9:30; Mon-Thu
12:30-3:30

Footnote (PG) Fri-Sun
12:30-3:30-6:30-9:30; Mon-Thu
12:30-3:30

HIGHLAND PARK 445 Central Ave.
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The Artist (PG-13) Fri, Sat
2:15-4:45-7:15-9:45; Sun
2:15-4:45-7:15; Mon-Thu
4:45-7:15

Damsel in Distress (PG-13)
Fri-Sat 2:40-4:30-7-9:30; Sun
2:40-4:30-7-9:30

The Lucky One (PG-13) Fri-Sat
2:45-4:45-7:45-9:45; Mon-Thu
2:45-4:45-7:45-9:45

The Pirates Band of Misfits
(PG) Fri-Sun 2:45-4:45-7-9:45; Sun
2:45-4:45-7-9:45

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p.m.

The Five-Year Engagement
(R) Fri-Sun 10:45-1:15-4:15-7:15-10:15; Mon-Wed 1:15-4:15-7:15-10:15

The Raven (R) Fri-Sun
10-12:40-3:10-5:40-8:10-10:40

The Pirates Band of Misfits
In 3-D (PG) Fri-Sun 10:45-1:15-4:15-7:15-10:15; Mon-Wed 10-12:40-3:10-5:40-8:10-10:40

The Hunger Games (PG-13)
Fri-Sun 10:45-1:15-4:15-7:15-10:15; Mon-Wed
10-12:40-3:10-5:40-8:10-10:40

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Monsieur Lazhar (PG-13) Fri
4:45-7-10; Sat-Tue 2:45-4:45-7-10; Thu 4:45

The Secret Garden Live for Kids (NR) Sat 10 a.m.
Page To Screen: A Place In
The Sun - Lecture (NR) Thu 1 Opera In Cinema: Rigoletto
From London (NR) Thu 7
The Avengers (PG-13) Thu
12:01 a.m.
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NEW ON VIDEO

A case of smuggler's blues

BY BRUCE INGRAM
Film Critic

NEW THIS WEEK
CONTRABAND
★ ★ 1/2
Rated: R for violence, pervasive language and brief drug use.
Stars: Mark Wahlberg, Giovanni Ribisi, Kate Beckinsale
- No surprises here, but no disappointments either for not-too-choosy fans of hard-core action and/or Wahlberg in likable-tough-guy mode. This reasonably satisfying remake of a 2008 Icelandic hit features Wahlberg, looking surprisingly weary at times, as a gone-straight super-smuggler forced to do One Last Big Job to protect his family from tattoo-crazy drug lord Ribisi.

TINKER TAILOR SOLDIER SPY
★★★
Rated: NA
Stars: Alec Guinness, Ian Richardson, Ian Bannen
- Right after "Star Wars," Guinness scored another major success with this 1979 British mini-series dramatizing John le Carré's mega-smash spy novel, with a portrayal of aging, world-weary M16 spy George Smiley that seemed definitive — though Gary Oldman gave him significant competition last year. Guinness is basically the whole show in this otherwise fairly drab and confusing adaptation, but it's a show well worth seeing.

EXTRAS: This Blu-ray debut include a 2002 interview with le Carre, a le Carre biography included in Shout! Factory's "Ernie Kovacs Collection," but this release serves as an excellent primer for anyone unfamiliar with the work of this pioneering comic genius.

MISSION: IMPOSSIBLE - GHOST PROTOCOL
★★★ 1/2
Rated: PG-13 for sequences of intense action and violence
Stars: Tom Cruise, Jeremy Renner, Paula Patton
- The fourth installment in the Cruise-driven "Mission: Impossible" series is the most solidly entertaining of the lot, thanks to the energy and inventiveness and (above all) the humor of super-talented animation director Brad Bird ("The Iron Giant," "The Incredibles") in his live-action debut. The plot's nothing special — another mad Russian who's stolen a batch of nuclear launch codes — but Bird keeps "Ghost Protocol" humming along.

CRIME AFTER CRIME
- This award-winning documentary explores the life of Debbie Peaglar, a woman sentenced to life in prison in connection with the murder of a man who brutally abused her. Extras include extended scenes and special introductions by Oprah Winfrey and Rosie O'Donnell.

THE FIELDS
- A young boy fascinated with the story of the Manson family discovers similarly strange goings-on in the Pennsylvania countryside. Cloris Leachman stars in the indie horror. No MPAA rating.

LET THE BULLETS FLY
- In 1920s China, a bandit chief (Wen Jiang) attempts to take over a town by posing as the new mayor, but runs afoul of the local tough guy (Yun-fat Chow). Wen also wrote and directed the Hong Kong crime thriller. No MPAA rating.

PARISH
- An African-American teenager (Adepero Oduye) in Brooklyn attempts to come to terms with her lesbian sexuality and her controlling mother's (Kim Wayans) disapproval. Writer-director Dee Rees makes her feature debut with the drama. Rated R for sexual content and language.

THE RED HOUSE
- A disabled farmer (Edward G. Robinson) cautions his adopted daughter to stay far away from the sinister red house on their property. Deimier Davies ("The Petrifed Forest") directed the fully-restored 1947 noir. Extras include the original trailer and a before-and-after restoration demo.

STONY ISLAND
- Director Andrew Davis ("The Fugitive") made his debut with this 1977 musical drama about a white kid on Chicago's South Side who puts together a super-funky R&B band. Extras include interviews with Quincy Jones, Susanna Hoffs and Chuck D, and an alternate ending.

NEXT WEEK
- Blu-ray debuts include stories "About a Boy," with Hugh Grant playing big brother to a needy kid, about a girl with Amy Heckerling's "Clueless" featuring dumb-like-a-fox blonde Alicia Silverstone, and about time with the long-overdue 1959 Doris Day-Rock Hudson romcom "Pillow Talk.

Mark Wahlberg is in likable-tough-guy mode in his role as a world-weary smuggler who longs to go legit but gets pulled back in for one last job in "Contraband."
STAGE

"Absolute Hell," through April 29 at The Gift Theatre, 4802 N. Milwaukee, Chicago. In London one month after World War II has ended the members of the La Vie En Rose club prepare to repair both country and selves. Performances are at 7:30 p.m. Thursday-Saturday; 2:30 p.m. Sunday. Tickets: $20-$30. Call (773) 283-7071 or visit www.thegifttheatre.org.

"The Cherry Orchard," by Anton Chekhov, will be presented by Piccolo Theatre through May 5 at the Evanston Arts Depot, 600 Main St., Evanston. Curtain at 8 p.m. Fridays and Saturdays; and 4 p.m. Sunday, April 29. Tickets: $25; $22 for seniors; $15 for students; free for children under age 5. Call (847) 553-4442 or visit www.piccolotheatre.com. "Encores: After the Theatre and Other Stories," through May 13 at the Noyes Cultural Arts Center, 927 Noyes St., Evanston. $30-$40; $15-$20 for Young Adult (ages 25 and younger) and students. Call (847) 475-1875 or visit www.saintsebastianplayers.org. "The Light in the Piazza" will be presented by Petite Opera through May 3 and 10; 8 p.m. Fridays and Saturdays; 2:30 p.m. Sundays. Tickets: $15; $10 for children under 12 and senior citizens. Optional dinner available, with three courses for $20 excluding beverages, taxes and tip. Call (800) 595-8849 or visit www.petiteopera.org.

"The Mikado," by Gilbert and Sullivan, presented in English by Petite Opera through May 20 at Mary Wilson House Beyer Auditorium (part of St. Mary's Episcopal church campus), 306 S. Prospect Ave., Park Ridge. Performances are at 7:30 p.m. Fridays and Saturdays; and 4 p.m. Sunday, April 29. Tickets: $25; $22 for seniors; $15 for students; free for children under age 5. Call (847) 553-4442 or visit www.petiteopera.org.

"Nunsense — The Mega Musical!" will be presented by The Rising Stars Theatre Co. at 7:30 p.m. April 28 and 2 p.m. April 29 at the Stahl Family Theatre, 5900 W. Belmont, Chicago. Tickets: $17; $15 for children 14 and under and senior citizens. Order tickets online at www.risingstarschicago.com or call (773) 736-2490.

"The Rest Unknown: how to live and how to die," through May 8 at 5344 W. Lawrence, Chicago. Genesis Ensemble, a Chicago theater and performance company, has taken over three empty storefronts in Jefferson Park to lead an interactive tour of art and performance inspired by Maira Kalman's book, The Principles of Uncertainty. Space is limited to 12 people per tour. Tickets should be booked in advance at www.brownpapertickets.com/event/224711. For information, call (773) 736-2490.

"The Mikado:" Cleverly updated... smart... zany.
—Chicago Sun-Times

CLASSICAL

"Albert Herring," Benjamin Britten's chamber opera, will be staged by Northwestern University Opera Theatre at

SEE GO, PAGE 88
Bach, Niels Wilhelm Gade, Giuseppe Guami, Horatio Parker and others. The 7:30 p.m. May 4 concert features guitar soloist Adam Levin playing Bach's Lute Suite in E Major. The 10 p.m. May 4 candlelight concert features harpsichord soloist Jason Moyer playing lesser-known versions of Bach keyboard works. The May 6 concert offers Bach's Sonata No. 1 in G Minor, with violinist Robert Harford, and other works. Single ticket prices are $40; $35 seniors; $25 students; and $10 children 12 years and younger. Festival subscriptions are $105; $90 for seniors; $60 for students. Tickets for the candlelight concert are $20. Call (800) 595-4849 or visit www.bachweek.org.

Chicago Chamber Musicians. (312) 225-5226. www.chicagochambermusic.org. Concerts are held at 7:30 p.m. Sundays at Pick-Staiger Concert Hall on Northwestern University's campus, 50 Arts Circle Drive, Evanston. Tickets: $25-$45; $10 for students. June 3: Celebration of the 25th anniversary of the ensemble's Signature Series concerts. The program includes Richard Wagner's "Siegfried Idyll"; John Stevens' "Seasons, A Symphony for Brass Quintet"; and Johannes Brahms' Serenade No. 1 in D Major, Op. 11.

Chicago Choral Artists presents a concert for Earth Day, with music by Sibelius, Brahms and Whitacre and a Midwest premiere of Robert Kyri's "The Nature of Creation," at 4 p.m. April 29 at Luther Memorial Church, 2500 W. Wilson, Chicago. $20; $15 for students; $10 for seniors; Conductors' Circle $40. Visit www.chicagochoralartists.org or call (708) 848-1762.

Evaston Symphony Orchestra performs at 2:30 p.m. Sundays at Pick-Staiger Concert Hall, 50 Arts Circle Drive, Evanston. (847) 864-8804. www.evanstonsymphony.org. Tickets in advance are $27; $22 for senior citizens. Tickets at the door are $30; $25 for seniors. Tickets are $5 for students, subject to availability, at the box office with ID. Admission is free for children 12 and younger. May 13: "Dufour Plays Mozart," with guest soloist Mathieu Dufour, principal flute of the Chicago Symphony Orchestra. The program includes Bach: Toccata & Fugue in D Minor; Mozart: Flute Concerto #2 in D Major; and Brahms: Piano Quintet in G Minor.

Lutkin Hall at Northwestern University, 700 University Place, Evanston. (847) 467-4000. April 30, 7 p.m.: Richard Goode piano master class. $6; $4 for students. May 2, 6:30 p.m.: Chicago Chamber Musicians present Classical Conversations. Hosted by conductor Ryan Nelson, the concert and conversation focus on the influences of jazz, blues and tango on classical music. $20; $10 for students.

Music of the Baroque performs at First United Methodist Church, 516 Church St., Evanston, unless noted otherwise. (312) 551-1414. www.baroque.org. Tickets are $30-$75. May 20, 7:30 p.m.: "Friends," with the music of the Baroque Orchestra, Jane Glover, music director and conductor. The program includes works by Vivaldi, Haydn, Dittersdorf and Mozart.

Music Institute of Chicago, Nichols Concert Hall, 1490 Chicago Ave., Evanston.
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Cellist Dorothy Deen with pianist Roger L. Bingaman perform in concert for the Irving Park Fine Arts Committee at 2 p.m. April 29 at the Irving Park Lutheran Church, 4100 N. Harding Ave., Chicago. Free-will donations will be accepted. An informal reception with the performers follows the concert. For more information, visit www.carsoncommunityservices.org. [ANDREW A. NELLES-FOR SUN-TIMES MEDIA]

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Actress has awfully good role

BY MYRNA PETLICKI
Contributor

To look at her, you wouldn't suspect that Nancy Pollock is a noodge. That's acting.

The Highland Park native plays playwright Rick Jacobs' mother Beatrice — Mama to him — in the Saint Sebastian Players' production of Billy St. John's "Figments." Rick is suffering from writer's block and mom's prodding doesn't help the situation.

Pollock said that the farce, which is directed by Jack DuGen Carpenter, shows Rick's process of writing. "It's acted out by the figments of his imagination," Pollock said. "I play his Jewish mother, who is very controlling and hovering, and tries to interfere in his life. I want him to get married so I'm anxious for him to find the right girl — as long as I approve of her, of course."

All in fun

"I love doing comedy," Pollock said. Because she is Jewish, Pollock added, "It's fun to play an over-the-top mother."

As if Rick doesn't have enough trouble with his real life mother, there's a Mama 2, who is one of the figments of his imagination. "She is really over the top," Pollock declared.

Although the show is very funny, Pollock said, there's more to it than laughs. "There's relationships within the play that can be very touching," she said.

Pollock retired in 2007 from a 39-year teaching career in Skokie. She started as a speech pathologist, then became a special education teacher and finally a second-grade teacher. "I had a varied career and I loved every minute of it," she said. "I still miss it so I go back to school and work with first-graders. We're putting on little plays so I still get my fix of kids."

The acting aspect of Pollock's life began when she first stepped onstage as a fifth-grader at Elm Place School. "I was February," she said. Pollock instantly loved acting but primarily danced in high school and at the University of Wisconsin.

Then, in 1987, the 100-year anniversary of Highland Park High School, "They put on a huge variety show," Pollock reported. "Anyone who had been involved in the high school in the last 100 years was able to participate."

Dance into acting

Pollock danced for that performance but the variety show led to the formation of Highland Park Players. "That's where I started getting interested in acting," she said. "I was in the first play, 'Mame.' Then, I started taking acting lessons."

Pollock has taken scene study classes at Act One Studios and Victory Gardens Theater.

Her acting credits include shows with Theatre in the Woods in Riverwoods, Oakton Community College, the Summer Place in Naperville, and Alchemy Theatre Company in Woodridge. She became a company member of Saint Sebastian Players 14 years ago.

Pollock's first show with the company was "Crossing Delacyne."

In addition to acting with the group, Pollock has handled other tasks, including producing shows and producing the annual Monologue Matchup competition for nearly a dozen years.

Pollock loves being associated with Saint Sebastian Players. "It is a family," she said.

Nancy Pollock and Max Ganet in "Figments," a comedy from Chicago's Saint Sebastian Players. | PHOTO BY JOHN L. OSTER
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Deepening the story at Piven

BY MYRNA PETLICKI
Contributor

Joyce Piven's current title at Piven Theatre Workshop may have the ring of retiree, but the artistic director emeritus is still actively involved with the company that she and her late husband Byrne co-founded 40 years ago. That includes teaching part-time at the workshop and directing one show a year.

Her latest project is staging three stories by Anton Chekhov, which she called, "Encores: After the Theatre and Other Stories." It's an appropriate choice for this anniversary year.

"Our first production was of Chekhov's "The Seagull," Piven reported, adding, "It was heralded by [theater critic] Richard Christiansen as being impeccably directed and beautifully acted."

"Byrne and I collaborated on that," Piven said. "It took us a year to do one story because it was an entirely new literary form of story theater.

Instead of having an outside narrator standing to the side of the stage, each character narrates himself into the scene. In other words, the actor is a guide to the audience." 

Story theater

"It's all about transformation," Piven explained. "We felt that we were uncovering the art of story theater when it comes to the text.

Piven has never tire working in that format. "Character and story remains very, very exciting for me to create and navigate," she said. "I'm still exploring and trying to deepen this form.

She credits this technique with being the reason the company has been so successful in developing theater artists — actors as well as writers. She noted that award-winning playwright Sarah Ruhl "grew up on that form.

The theme of "Encores" is "the various forms of love," Piven said.

That begins with the title story, "After the Theatre," which the director said, "explores young romantic ideas — breathtaking love."

The evening includes Sarah Ruhl's adaptation of "Lady with a Dog.

"It's one of Chekhov's greatest stories," Piven said. "It's a beautiful story about a middle-aged man who has been quite a seducer, leaving women all the time. He's married to some woman that he doesn't really love."

Then he discovers true love with a younger married woman who has a "fresh way" of looking at life.

Bittersweet tales

Because it is the Victorian era, they can't leave their families and be together.

"It's very bittersweet," Piven said. "It was revolutionary at the time Chekhov wrote it."

"The third selection is "The Trick," which Piven described as another bittersweet lovely story."

A young man impulsively plays a trick on his wealthy young girlfriend while they are sledding down a mountain. It turns out to be the single most beautiful moment of her life, Piven said.

The show will be performed by a cast of eleven, including director Daniel Smith and Joanne Underwood, plus Susan Applebaum, Olivia Cigan, Gillian Hemm, Allison Hendrix, Michael Moran, Tom Schneider, Aly Sklare, Warren Weber and Nathaniel Williams.

Piven believes that she has "taken a couple of new steps" in exploring the story theater form with this show. "For me, that's very exciting," she said, playfully adding, "If it's exciting for an audience — I can only hope."

"ENCORES: AFTER THE THEATRE AND OTHER STORIES'

Piven Theatre Workshop, 927 Noyes St., Evanston
7:30 p.m. Thursdays-Saturdays and 2:30 p.m. Saturdays and Sundays, April 26-May 20
$25
(847) 866-8049 or visit piventheatre.org

Music Institute of Chicago, 1490 Chicago Ave., Evanston
$26; $23 for seniors
10 for students.
(630) 628-9951 or www.svso.org
May 6, 7:30 p.m.: "All That Jazz" featuring a world premiere by guest pianist Miguel de la Cerna, a Fauré quartet and Glass's "Rhapsody in Blue."


The Northwestern University Arts Circle Drive, Evanston. Information: (847) 491-5441; tickets: (847) 467-4000. www.picketstar.org. April 27, 7:30 p.m.: Contemporary Music Ensemble presents "Chicago Voices," a program featuring composers with strong connections to Chicago. $4; $4 for students.

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Festival looks Bach to its roots

BY DOROTHY ANDRIES
Contributor

The 39th annual Bach Week in Evanston is called "Bach to the Beginning," and that is exactly what is happening.

Karel Paukert, founder of the Bach Week Festival nearly four decades ago, will return to play organ duets with Richard Webster, who took over the festival not long after it started.

The first Bach Week was held at St. Luke's Episcopal Church in Evanston where Paukert was music director. Webster was his student at Northwestern and his assistant at St. Luke's. "Karel left in 1974 to become curator of musical arts at the Cleveland Art Museum," Webster recalled. "He and I have remained close friends ever since and he actually gave a clavichord recital during Bach Week in 2001."

Organ duets

This year, however, is a special celebration, with Paukert and Webster playing the festival's first-ever organ duets on the opening program at 7:30 p.m. April 27. "We will play at first on that large organ at the back of Alice Millar," Webster explained, referring to the chapel's 100-rank Aeolian-Skinner organ. "We're calling it four hands, four feet." Their program will include "Three Duets" by C.P.E. Bach, a son of J.S. Bach.

The pair will then come to the stage and play several duets on two chamber organs. Paukert will also play a solo organ work by J.S. Bach: the monumental Fantasia and Fugue in G Minor, much revered by organists and organ aficionados.

"Karel's hallmark is that he is a very intense performer," Webster said, "and I tell you he is just as fiery as ever. He has retired from the Cleveland Museum of Art, but he is still director of music at St. Paul's Episcopal Church in Cleveland Heights. I'm looking forward to our concert together."

For the last six years Webster has been music director of the historic Trinity Church in Boston. "But I can't give up my Bach Week Festival," he said. "Chicago will always be my second home."

BACH WEEK FESTIVAL

7:30 p.m. April 27 at Northwestern University's Alice Millar Chapel, 1870 Sheridan Road, Evanston

7:30 p.m. and 10 p.m. May 4, and 3 p.m. May 6, at the Music Institute of Chicago's Nichols Concert Hall, 1490 Chicago Ave., Evanston

Single tickets $40; $35 seniors; $25 students; and $10 children 12 years and younger. Festival subscriptions are $105; $90 for seniors; $60 for students. Tickets for the candlelight concert, (10 p.m. May 4) are $20

Call (800) 595-4849 or visit www.bachweek.org

Adam Levin | PHOTO BY JUAN R. LUIS

invited him to propose a program of J.S. Bach for this year's festival.

"I immediately suggested Bach's B Major Lute Suite," Levin explained, "and I am preceding it by Eugene Ysaye's prelude 'Obsession,' which ingeniously uses material from that prelude."

There was a challenge, as the prelude was written for solo violin. "Having fawned over the piece for years," he said, "I finally decided to take on the baroque task of transcribing the 'Obsession' for the guitar."

His initial choice of the Lute Suite had to do with the dance movements in the score. "They serve as a source of eternal optimism for me," he confided.

The May 4 program includes the Bach Week Festival Chorus, under Webster's direction, singing motets "Komm, Jesu, komm!" and "Singet dem Herrn," BWV 225.

Other Bach works on the May 4 program include two that have never been heard at the festival: the Toccata in E Minor, BWV 915, with harpsichordist Jason Moy; and Flute Sonata in E Major, BWV 1035, with flutist Alyce Johnson and harpsichordist Moy.

That concert will air live over WFMT (98.5 FM), sponsored in part by the Consulate General of the Federal Republic of Germany.

At 10 p.m. May 4 in the Nichols Concert Hall lobby there will be an all-Bach Candlelight Concert with Jason Moy as harpsichord soloist. The program includes Cantabile from Violin Sonata in G Major with violinist Dawn Gingrich.

The final concert will be at 3 p.m. Sunday, May 6 in Nichols Concert Hall. The program includes Bach's Sonata No. 1 in G Minor, with violinist Robert Hanford, concertmaster of the Lyric Opera Orchestra; Cantata "Nunc dimittis" with orchestra; and harpsichordist Moy.

New to Bach Week is classical guitarist Adam Levin, who grew up in Lake Forest and Lake Bluff, and will play at 7:30 p.m. Friday, May 4. His home base is Boston, but he also spent three years on fellowships in Spain and has just recently begun playing on the North Shore.

Judith Kulp, principal oboe with the Lyric Opera Orchestra and a family friend, introduced Levin to the administrative staff and "Karel's hallmark is that he is a very intense performer," Webster said, "and I tell you he is just as fiery as ever. He has retired from the Cleveland Museum of Art, but he is still director of music at St. Paul's Episcopal Church in Cleveland Heights. I'm looking forward to our concert together."

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Adam Levin | PHOTO BY JUAN R. LUIS

invited him to propose a program of J.S. Bach for this year's festival.

"I immediately suggested Bach's B Major Lute Suite," Levin explained, "and I am preceding it by Eugene Ysaye's prelude 'Obsession,' which ingeniously uses material from that prelude."

There was a challenge, as the prelude was written for solo violin. "Having fawned over the piece for years," he said, "I finally decided to take on the baroque task of transcribing the 'Obsession' for the guitar."

His initial choice of the Lute Suite had to do with the dance movements in the score. "They serve as a source of eternal optimism for me," he confided.

The May 4 program includes the Bach Week Festival Chorus, under Webster's direction, singing motets "Komm, Jesu, komm!" and "Singet dem Herrn," BWV 225.

Other Bach works on the May 4 program include two that have never been heard at the festival: the Toccata in E Minor, BWV 915, with harpsichordist Jason Moy; and Flute Sonata in E Major, BWV 1035, with flutist Alyce Johnson and harpsichordist Moy.

That concert will air live over WFMT (98.5 FM), sponsored in part by the Consulate General of the Federal Republic of Germany.

At 10 p.m. May 4 in the Nichols Concert Hall lobby there will be an all-Bach Candlelight Concert with Jason Moy as harpsichord soloist. The program includes Cantabile from Violin Sonata in G Major with violinist Dawn Gingrich.

The final concert will be at 3 p.m. Sunday, May 6 in Nichols Concert Hall. The program includes Bach's Sonata No. 1 in G Minor, with violinist Robert Hanford, concertmaster of the Lyric Opera Orchestra; Cantata "Nunc dimittis" with orchestra; and harpsichordist Moy.

New to Bach Week is classical guitarist Adam Levin, who grew up in Lake Forest and Lake Bluff, and will play at 7:30 p.m. Friday, May 4. His home base is Boston, but he also spent three years on fellowships in Spain and has just recently begun playing on the North Shore.

Judith Kulp, principal oboe with the Lyric Opera Orchestra and a family friend, introduced Levin to the administrative staff and
Tickets start at just $20
Buy tickets at steppenwolf.org or call 312-335-1650
Order your tickets today to experience the story of Grammy Award winner Marvin Gaye. Previews start May 11, show opens May 20. Reserve tickets by phone at 773.769.4451, through Ticketmaster, or online at blackensemble.org.
GO | CONTINUED FROM PAGE 16B

4650 Brunnel St., Skokie. (847) 674-1500. Through April 29: Skokie Art Guild's 2012 Members Only spring exhibit. For information, visit www.skokieartguild.org.

Phantom Gallery, 141 N. Damen, Chicago. (847) 217-7423. Gallery hours are 6-8 p.m. weekdays; 1-8 p.m. weekends. April 28-May 25: Works by Skokie artist Jacqueline Moses. Opening reception will be held from 6-9 p.m. April 28.

Services for Adults Staying in Their Homes, Celebrating Experience: A Gallery of Art by Older Adults, 1123 Emerson, Suite 200, Evanston. (847) 864-7274. www.SASalive.com. Gallery hours are 11 a.m.-4 p.m. Wednesdays and Fridays or by appointment. All art is for sale, with a portion of the proceeds benefiting SASL, a community nonprofit that helps adults in Chicago and the north/northwest suburbs who, due to aging, illness or injury, need assistance in the home. Through May 11: Paintings by Lorel Goone and Joanne Salvator.

AUDITIONS & OPPORTUNITIES

Artists and craftsartists are invited to jury to participate in the 22nd annual Art & Crafts Adventure, presented by American Society of Artists from 9 a.m.-5 p.m. May 12-13, at Broadway and Vine streets, Park Ridge. Potential exhibitors are invited to submit four images representative of their work. Three names of first-, last-name, address, and daytime telephone number; resume, list of exhibitions and awards. For information, visit www.americansocietyofartists.org.

Custer's Last Stand festival of the arts is accepting applications from artists and crafts vendors for the 2012 edition of the fair, slated for June 16-17 in Evanston's Main Street Station shopping district. For an application, call (847) 737-2294 or visit www.custerslaststand.com.

Skokie Art Guild is seeking artists for its 51st annual Art Fair, June 14-16, on the Village Green, 5211 Oakton, Skokie. Fine art; prizes and awards available. For information, visit www.skokieartguild.org or call (847) 677-8163.

Gorilla Tango's Skokie Theatre is seeking submissions of all types of shows for its "Primetime Series" which will be produced by GT Skokie throughout the remainder of 2012. The theatre is especially interested in any unusual, experimental or weird show ideas. Shows must be approximately 60 minutes in length; you or your group must be willing to direct/creates. There is no budget provided for the show, however you will be given the space free of charge and will receive a percentage of ticket sales. Submission deadline is May 15. For more information, contact Suzanne Coors at susanne@gorillatango.com or (773) 598-4549.

Benefits "Sunday School Cinema," a letters-only version of the "Late Night Catechism" productions, will be performed at 3 p.m. May 20 at May, Seat of Wisdom School's Kalas Center, 920 Granville, Park Ridge. $20 in advance; $25 at the door. Proceeds from the event will support parish programs. For tickets, call Matt Furjanic, (847) 825-8763, or visit www.mswparish.org.

BOOKS & POETRY


May 3, 4 p.m.: Appearance by Josh Meyer, co-author of The Book of Jokes, at the University Club of Evanston, 1633 Chicago Ave., Evanston. May 4, 10:30 a.m.: Lorrie Heimich Memorial Book Review features Elise Ginsberg reviewing The Tenth Song by Naomi Ragen.

Northwestern University Library, 1970 Campus Drive, Evanston. May 10-11, 10 a.m.-4 p.m.: The Library's annual book sale will be held in the Vejar room. The sale features Northwestern University Press stock, large numbers of classical records, and books about art, architecture, photography, fiction, mathematics and science. Hardcover books are $3 each; paperback books $2 each; mass-market paperbacks 50 cents; and Friday is "Bag a Book Day." Visit www.library.northwestern.edu/book-sale2012.

Child's Play

Altoe Theatre at Rosemont, 5400 N. River Road, Rosemont. Tickets are available at www.ticketmaster.com or (800) 745-3000; the tickets may be sold for $35-$45, but do not include service fees. For more information about the theater, call (847) 671-5100 or visit www.rosmontonetheatre.com.

May 3-6: Sesame Street Live: "Elmo's Super Heroes." Performances at 10 a.m. and 1 p.m. Thursday and Saturday; 10 a.m. and 4 p.m. Sunday; 1 p.m., $25, $15, $25, $40. Gold Circle seats and $50 Sunny Seats. Opening night, all seats (excluding Gold Circle and Sunny Seats) are $15.


COMEDY

Mayne Stage, 1328 W. Morse Ave. in Rogers Park, Chicago. www.maynestage.com. (773) 381-4554. April 27-28, 8 p.m. and 10:30 p.m.: Comedian Nick Thune. $18 general admission; $13 reserved.


Northwestern University's Marjorie Marshall Dance Center, 10 Arts Circle Drive, Evanston. May 17-19, 8 p.m.: 2012 Senior Dance Concert. "The Golden Year," the final project of Northwestern University senior dance majors. $10; $5 students. Call (847) 491-7282.

Chicago Dance Charter of USA Dance, the national organization representing amateur ballroom dancers. Admission begins at 7:30 p.m.; dancing from 8:15-11 p.m. Admission: $8 members, $10 nonmembers; $6 for students ages 17 and under. Call (847) 491-7282.

DANCE


Chicago Dance Charter of USA Dance, the national organization representing amateur ballroom dancers. Admission begins at 7:30 p.m.; dancing from 8:15-11 p.m. Admission: $8 members, $10 nonmembers; $6 for students ages 17 and under. Call (847) 491-7282.

PERLA CAFE, 1813 Dempster St., Evanston. (847) 424-6000. www.lincolnwoodlibrary.org. April 30, 8 p.m.: "Organic Poetry Jam." For more information, call (847) 577-9014 or visit www.lincolnwoodlibrary.org.

PERLA CAFE, 1813 Dempster St., Evanston. (847) 424-6000. www.lincolnwoodlibrary.org. April 30, 8 p.m.: "Organic Poetry Jam." For more information, call (847) 577-9014 or visit www.perlacafe.com.

FAIRS & FESTIVALS

"A Fair to Remember," a boutique fair showcasing
Civic Orchestra offers energetic mix of music

BY SARA BURROWS
sburrows@pioneerlocal.com

Surprise will be the order of the afternoon for the final concert of the Park Ridge Civic Orchestra on April 29 at the Pickwick Theatre. Two works not performed very often, Dvorak's Scherzo Capriccioso, Op. 68, and Mahler's “Blumine,” open the program.

The second half of the program will be Carl Orff's “Carmina Burana.” While some melodies of this great choral work are well-known, “when people come and hear the whole thing, it's a very different experience. So it will be a concert of surprises,” says Victor Muenzer, artistic director designate of the orchestra.

For this program, he will share conducting duties with his father, Edgar Muenzer, the orchestra's founder. The elder Muenzer will conduct the Dvorak and Mahler works; Victor Muenzer conducts “Carmina Burana.” David Schwam, announcer at WFTM radio and freelance reporter and news anchor for WGN radio, will serve as host for the concert.

The Scherzo is “very energetic, a wonderful piece,” says Victor Muenzer. He expects audiences will enjoy the spiritedly tempo and colorful melodies of the piece, which is a celebration of nature, and has the joyful feel of a village festival.

Mahler's “Blumine” has an interesting history. “It was originally intended as the second movement of the composer's first symphony, but he took it out. It doesn't fit with the rest of the piece,” explains Edgar Muenzer.

Lost and found

And after that 1989 premiere, “Blumine” disappeared for 70 years. It was rediscovered in a collection of Mahler's papers at Yale University in 1966, and given its first 20th century performance in 1967. Since then, though some conductors have reinstated it into Mahler's First Symphony, most present it as a stand-alone work. “It's a lovely piece of music,” Edgar Muenzer says, “and it has a beautiful trumpet solo.”

With Orff's “Carmina Burana,” the focus will shift to vocal virtuosity. “The choruses are really the star of the piece,” notes Victor Muenzer. It will be a formidable gathering of voices, combining the Park Ridge Civic Chancel Choir, Society Soloists for the day, Sarah Hibbard, soprano, and Peder Reiff, tenor, are Sarah Hibbard, soprano, and Peder Reiff, tenor.

Sarah Hibbard

Orchestra Chorus, the Park Ridge Community Church Chancel Choir, and singers from the Northwestern Choral Society. Soloists for the day are Sarah Hibbard, soprano, and Peder Reiff, tenor.

“Tt's a crowd-pleaser, a fun piece,” says Edgar Muenzer. “It's got marvelous orchestration and composition.”

This is the second time the Park Ridge orchestra has done “Carmina Burana.” “We did it about seven years ago, with just our chorus,” recalls Edgar Muenzer.

Majestic sound

Those many extra voices will create a rather more majestic sound for this performance. For the audience, says Victor Muenzer, “it adds that through the work is harmonically very simple, full of pleasing melodies and uncomplicated themes, rhythmically, it is very complicated. The rhythm changes constantly,” he says, which keeps it constantly interesting.

“Carmina Burana” is a series of poems written by Bavarian monks, mostly in the 11th and 12th centuries, and set to music by Orff in 1938-39. The poems are, surprisingly, about love, lust, drinking, and the earthly pleasures of life.

However, says Victor Muenzer, “We don't know whether these monks were longing for these things they'd left behind, or they were criticizing secular life. But what it really amounts to is a creative viewpoint of what makes life go round. It's a fascinating observance of real human beings.”

The afternoon will also honor musicians and singers who have been with the Park Ridge Civic Orchestra for 10 years, and the concert will be followed immediately by a reception and refreshments on the second floor of the theater.


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FROM www.pioneerlocal.com | THURSDAY, APRIL 26, 2012
Swept away: Visitors to Chateau Chantai vineyards in Traverse City, MI, can enjoy sweeping views of Grand Traverse Bay while enjoying wine from the European-inspired winery. SUPPLIED PHOTO

Thanks to the moderating “lake effect” climate off Lake Michigan and sandy soils and ridges courtesy of the glacial age, western Michigan has long been an important fruit (including grape)-growing region. But winemaking has expanded to almost every corner of Michigan, with more than 90 vineyards, wineries and tasting rooms in both the Lower and Upper Peninsulas. Sample the fruit of the vine on a weekend getaway or longer winery tour with the help of the free Michigan Wine Country magazine from the Michigan Wine Industry www.michiganwines.com. Lovers of the grape may want to consider checking out some of these interesting wineries spread out across three regions of Michigan:

Southwest Michigan

Fenn Valley Vineyards & Wine Cellar
6130 122nd Ave.
Fennville, MI 49408
(800) 432-6286 (Northern IL, IN, MI)
(269) 561-2396
www.fennvalley.com

When Bill Welsch moved from Chicago to Michigan to establish a winery in 1973 he chose a fruit farm on a sandy-soiled ridge for the moderating effect of nearby Lake Michigan. Fenn Valley credits “The Lake Effect Everyone Loves” for the success of its grape and fruit wines, especially the raspberry, cherry and blueberry. Enjoy complimentary tastings all year-round, and check the calendar for special events.

Reserve a spot on the Grape Train for a vineyard tour ($8) that includes wine samples in your keepsake logo glass and coupon for wine shop purchases. The annual Wine Festival and Open House, 1-5 p.m., Saturday, June 23, features tastings through the vineyard, music, food and winemaking demonstrations.

Fenn Valley is located in Fennville near the popular Lake Michigan resort towns of Saugatuck and Douglas. Saugatuck/Douglas Visitor Info; www.saugatuck.com

Lake Michigan Shore Wine Trail: www.lakemichiganshorewinetrail.com
Replica colonial homes for lodging in Michigan

BY KATHY USITALO
For Sun-Times Media

Travel by air became much more accommodating in 1931 when automobile industrialist Henry Ford opened the world's first airport hotel across the road from his airfield in suburban Detroit.

Ford Airport was transformed long ago into Ford Motor Company product proving grounds, but the Dearborn Inn, a graceful Georgian-style hotel, still welcomes guests to its 223 rooms and suites.

The inn was designed (with considerable input from Ford) by prolific Detroit architect Albert Kahn, whose major works for the automaker included the Ford Highland Park and River Rouge plants. But Ford, a history buff, didn't need Kahn for the unusual lodging he planned for the landscaped grounds behind the main inn.

The Colonial Village at the inn consists of replicas of the homes of five famous Americans whom Ford admired. Constructed in 1997 of the same building materials as the originals, they were the first of 17 homes Ford envisioned for the Village. However, World War II intervened and the project was halted. Although the exteriors have the appearance of single-family homes, the interiors of four of them have been configured to accommodate multiple guests in private rooms; the Poe house is rented as a single unit.

Ford's American idols and their replicas homes:
- Oliver Wolcott, Revolutionary War General and signer of the Declaration of Independence; George Washington slept at his Litchfield, Connecticut home
- Edgar Allan Poe, author; New York City home where he wrote Annabel Lee and other poems and stories.
- Patrick Henry, known for his "Give me liberty or give me death" speech; his home in Red Hill, Virginia, circa 1794
- Walt Whitman, poet; his birthplace, a farmhouse on Long Island
- Barbara Fritchie, American patriot; the Maryland cottage where she famously hung the Union flag

Decorated in a Colonial style, the homes have not yet benefited from the refurbishing recently completed in the main inn. The houses are popular with families, groups and history buffs. A Bed & Breakfast package is available.

All guests can enjoy the Dearborn Inn's seasonal outdoor pool, restaurant and lounge, and relaxing in the elegant lobby with its original black and white Italian marble floor.

Rates in the Colonial Village vary depending on the home and availability but generally start at $179 per night; the Poe house is $450 per night. Rates for a room in the Inn begin at $198, but specials are available.

The Henry Ford (The museum, not the man)

Henry Ford collected American examples of American ingenuity and historical importance, from furnishings to farm equipment and farmhouses. He assembled them in the indoor Henry Ford Museum and outdoor Greenfield Village, just a half mile from The Dearborn Inn.

Now called The Henry Ford, the complex was dedicated in 1929 as The Edison Institute in honor of Ford's inventor friend, whose Menlo Park laboratory he had relocated to the Dearborn site. The Greenfield Village neighborhood includes the Wright Brothers' cycle shop and home, a plantation house, industrial buildings, a railroad roundhouse and stagecoach stop that serves 19th century dining experiences (in a good way). Special events in the Village range from the Memorial Weekend Civil War Remembrance to car shows, Ragtime Street Fair (July 14-15) and World Tournament of Historic Baseball (August 11-12).

The Henry Ford Museum recently unveiled its Driving America exhibit, which explores the evolution of the automobile and its cultural side effects. Other permanent displays include the only remaining Dymaxion House created by Buckminster Fuller, presidential limousines, and the exhibit "Liberty & Justice for All" (be sure to take a seat — any seat — in the civil rights icon, the Rosa Parks Bus).

Now through Sept. 30 the museum is hosting Titanic: The Artifact Exhibition. Pose for a photo on a replica of the grand staircase of the fated ship and see items retrieved from the ocean floor. Tickets for the exhibit are timed.

Village Admission: $19; $18 ages 62+; $17.50 ages 5-12

Museum Admission: $17; $15 ages 62+; $13.50 ages 5-12

Titanic exhibit: Museum admission plus $10

Also of interest at The Henry Ford IMAX Theatre, two films at additional fees: TITANICA and James Cameron's Titanic: An IMAX 3D Experience.

The Dearborn Inn package with admission tickets to The Henry Ford begin at $189 (extra fee for Titanic tickets).

DIR: (313) 271-2700; www.dearborninnmarrriott.com

The Henry Ford:
20900 Oakwood Blvd.
Dearborn, MI 48124
(313) 982-6001
www.thehenryford.org

IF YOU GO

For those planning on checking out the Dearborn Inn or The Henry Ford, contact information is below:

Dearborn Inn
20301 Oakwood Blvd.
Dearborn, MI 48124
(313) 271-2700
www.dearborninnmarrriott.com

The Henry Ford
20900 Oakwood Blvd.
Dearborn, MI 48124
(313) 982-6001
(313) 271-1629 (recorded info)
www.thehenryford.org

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Berrien Springs, MI 49103
(269) 471-1321
www.lemoncreekwinery.com

In 1854 the Lemon family arrived in the southwest corner of Michigan, and in 1855 began farming the land worked by generations. The 300-acre Berrien County farm produces wine grapes and a variety of fruit used in winemaking and sold at the summertime farm market. Tastings of Lemon Creek’s 100 percent estate grown and bottled wines are $5 for five samples, and you keep the Lemon Creek glass.

Lemon Creek is known for its annual series of special events featuring wine, music and classic cars, including the Memorial Weekend Wine & Art Fair May 26-27, Father's Day Festival June 17, Vintage Blues Bash July 21 and Harvest Festival September 8. Want to learn to turn grapes into wine? Check the website for details on the Home Wine Makers Event in late September.

Southwestern Michigan Tourist Council: www.swmichigan.org/
Lake Michigan Shore Wine Trail: www.lakemichiganshorewinetrail.com/

Northwest Michigan
Black Star Farms
10844 E. Revold Rd.
Suttons Bay, MI 49682
(231) 944-1270
www.blackstarfarms.com

Follow the winding drive past rows of grapevines to a brilliant red manse with gleaming white pillars that would look more at home in the French countryside than along the 45th parallel near Suttons Bay. Built as an equestrian center, Black Star Farms has grown into a 160-acre agricultural tourism destination with cherry orchard, farm animals, vegetable crops and farmers market, cheese-producing creamery, distillery, vineyard and winery.

Sample award-winning Riesling, Cabernet Franc and Pinot Noir beneath the soaring ceiling of the handsome post-and-beam tasting room; five tastes are $5 with a keepsake glass.

In warm-weather months the Hearth & Vine wine bar and café serves wood-fired pizzas and other casual fare. The luxurious, 10-room Bed & Breakfast Inn is open year-round (rooms from $225).

Traverse City Visitor Info: www.traversecity.com
Leelanau Peninsula Vintner's Association: lpwineries.com

Chateau Chantai
18900 Rue de Vin
Traverse City, MI 49686
(800) 989-4909
www.chateauchantal.com

Sip a glass of wine and take in the sweeping views of vineyards, woods and the sparkling waters of Grand Traverse Bay from the patio at Chateau Chantai. The European-inspired winery and 11-room Bed & Breakfast sit high on a ridge a dozen miles north of Traverse City.

Located on Old Mission Peninsula along the 45th parallel, Chateau Chantai offers complimentary tastings of its Chardonnay, Riesling, Pinot Noir and other varietals year-round. Summers are special with daily wine tours and free jazz at Sunset on Thursday evenings. Reserve a spot for a lunchtime Tapas Tour ($28) or a seven-course wine dinner ($70) for abundant food and wine pairings. Complete the experience with an overnight stay at one of Gayot’s Top 10 Wine Country Inns in the U.S. (rooms from $155).

Traverse City Visitor Info: www.traversecity.com/
Winery of Old Mission Peninsula: wineriesofoldmission.com

Upper Peninsula
Garden Bay Winery
321 Superior St.
Munising, MI 49882
(906) 644-2683
gardenbaywinery.com

The label’s illustration of berries and blue wine bottle in the shape of the Upper Peninsula says it all: Garden Bay Winery specializes in fruit wines “made with a lot of berries and a lot of love.”

Ask for the story behind Garden Riot, a blend of berries, and be aware if you sip Northern Lights, a blackberry wine. “It has a higher alcohol content so that’s kind of fun,” says owner Gloria Anderson.

She and her husband John Lucas founded the winery on the Garden Peninsula, on Lake Michigan in the southern U.P. The tasting room is north of there in Munising, near the Pictured Rocks National Lakeshore on Lake Superior. That’s where you can sample three fruit and grape wines for $5 (keep the glass) and buy works by local artists including daughter Emily Lucas, who designed that colorful wine label logo.

Munising Visitor Info: www.algercounty.org

Mackinaw Trail Winery
120 W. Lakeshore Dr.
Manistique, MI 49854
(906) 341-3303
www.mackinawtrailwinery.com

Laurie and Ralph Stabile blazed the trail for commercial winemaking in the Upper Peninsula when they opened the first winery there in 2005. Now three other winemakers have followed suit and produce fruit of the vine in the northernmost part of the state.

Mackinaw Trail, based in Manistique on Lake Michigan, grew out of the Stable family’s tradition of winemaking. Among its grape varieties, Mackinaw Trail’s medal-winning White Ibis and signature Big Red are popular; favorite fruit wines include the sweet dessert Razzberry, cranberry, blueberry and the new Cherry Sangria and Strawberry Rhubarb.

Samples are five for $5, including the glass. Visit the tasting room at the Manistique marina on summer Saturday evenings for free live music beginning June 23.

Manistique Visitor Info: www.visitmanistique.com/

Michigan Travel Information: www.michigan.org
Answers: Inside today's classified section

Beloved husband of Leslie; Deard father of Andrea (Donald) Doan, Jennifer, Michael and Charles; Friend of former spouse, Mary Lou Scinto Allen; Loving grandfather of Ellie Doan; Dearest brother of Barbara (the late John) Austin, J. Kim, Mark Avery, Robert James (Jeanette) and Christopher Quinn Allen; Fond uncle to many nieces and nephews.

Visitation was held Tuesday, Apr. 24th. 3:00 p.m. to 9:00 p.m. at Habers Funeral Home & Crematory, 8817 Niles Center Rd., Skokie. Funeral Mass was held Wednesday, April 25th, 10 a.m. at St. Lambert Church, Skokie. Interment was private at Calvary Cemetery, Evanston. In lieu of flowers, memorial contributions may be made to Franciscan Outreach Association, 1685 W. LeMoyne Ave., Chicago, IL 60621. Funeral info: 847-673-6111 or www.habenfuneral.com.

Michalko, Ruth R. Age 84, of Skokie and formerly of Park Ridge, passed away on November 3, 2011. A graveside service will be held Saturday, April 28, 11:00 a.m. at Town of Maine Cemetery in Park Ridge. Please contact Ruth’s daughter, Sylvia at 812-449-8017 or email: skline3@hotmail.com for more information.

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in Memoriam

Rortvedt, Robert A.
77, of Dallas, formerly of Park Ridge, died on Tuesday, April 17th at Presbyterian Hospital, Dallas, surrounded by his family. He was born May 9, 1934 in Brewster, MN, son of Otto and Cecelia (nee Kalessa) Rortvedt. He was the husband of Joani (nee Jorgenson); Beloved father of Leslie (Jim) Forst, Charles F.; loving mother of Meghan (Jim) Malooy; great-grandmother of Connor and Alex Smith, Charlie and Grayson Kennedy and Liam Malooy; dear sister of the late Harold (the late Dorothy) Kalessa, the late Lt. Col. Russell (Rea) Kalessa and the late Dr. Floyd (the late Betty) Kalessa.

Evelynne was a member of St. Paul of the Cross Church, Mary, Seat of Wisdom Church, Park Ridge Catholic Women’s Club, 20th Century Club & Park Ridge Senior Center.

Visitation was held Tuesday, April 24 at Ryan-Parke Funeral Home, 120 S. Northwest Hwy., (2 bks. S. of Touhy) Park Ridge. Funeral Mass was held Wednesday at Mary, Seat of Wisdom Church, Evangeline Outreach All Saints Mausoleum. In lieu of flowers, memorials to Mary, Seat of Wisdom Church Building Fund, Northwest Community Hospital Foundation or the charity of your choice. Funeral Info: 847-823-1171.

Rortvedt Book at www.chicagolandobits.com
Most candidates naturally admit that compensation in all its forms (money, benefits, stock, paid time off, etc.) is the number one inducement to take a new job. It's obviously also a motivator for staying in a job or for leaving it.

Most experienced managers have had a talented employee approach them and say, "I’ve been offered more money elsewhere, but I’d like to stay." The market has spoken, the person has indicated a willingness to leave... and the manager has a choice. Assuming he wants to retain the employee, the manager can:

- Match the competitor's offer; this should be done if the offer is demonstrably within the market and doesn't create parity issues with other employees (if everyone is underpaid, you have a more serious problem).
- Work with the employee to find an equivalent reason to stay – an accelerated promotion, greater participation in other forms of compensation, and so on, based on the employee's performance.

Whatever the outcome, this is an opportunity to learn about the employment experience. At Monster, we always ask "why would you want to leave?" and also "why would you want to stay?" (as opposed to "what can I do to make you stay?" – the difference is important). The answers tell you the importance of compensation relative to the intangible rewards of working at the company.

Recruiter Terry Frugoli remembers how he learned that a money question was about a lot more than just money and turned it into a retention opportunity.

I was working for Omnivision Technologies at a time when competition for software specialists was keen. I found out a talented software engineer – a Ph.D. in image sensor technology – was looking for work after just a few months on the job, and asked him in confidence, "What's going on?" He said, "To be honest, the last job blindsided me with a layoff, so I'm feeling pretty insecure." Then he said, "Other companies have offered me a little more money, too." He was being completely honest.

So I went to his director, and explained the situation. He said, "We don’t want him to leave. Maybe we can move up his salary review and send him a message... if it means he'll stay." Then I went back to the engineer and said, "Your director definitely does not want you to leave, and this is what we're going to do to make sure you know how serious he is about your future here..." He looked at me, surprised, and he said, "You know, I've never had anybody take that much interest in keeping me in a company. It really makes me feel wanted." We shook hands, and he's still here, several years later.

Delayed compensation like bonuses, stock awards, and pension or retirement plan contributions is meant to induce people to stay when they're at top performance, but it also provides intangible benefits, says compensation consultant Tom Wilson. "What does it mean to somebody when they actually receive a bonus, stock, profit sharing, or some other form of equity?" he asks. "It means they are a part of the club, they’re special. Stories of start-up millionaires notwithstanding, most company equity doesn’t result in huge payoffs. There’s certainly a monetary reward, but not so great that other companies can’t match it to land a great midlevel employee."

For the purpose of retention, it's important to note that particular forms of compensation come and go with the times. Stock options had great cachet in the 1990s until the bubble burst. Filling retirement funds with company stock seemed great until Enron and others went bust.

Today, employees want robust health and medical benefits. In Monster's 2007 survey, 64 percent of employees in the United States rated health insurance as the most important benefit, and 82 percent rated it at least "highly valuable," yet only 22 percent of employers offer free health insurance, and just 42 percent offer subsidized insurance. Health-care costs are hitting the bottom line hard for both employees and employers, but clearly there is a disconnect between employer and employee on the issue, and aggressive companies can view health care as an opportunity to gain a competitive advantage by delivering superior health-care benefits. The report indicates that such a cost may be offset by better retention rates and decreased hiring costs.

The same research from Monster Intelligence's study, Tag of War: Exploiting the Benefit Opportunity Gaps, shows that long-term, conservative, and reliable monetary benefits such as competitive 401(k) and pension plans are highly appealing to employees when they look at total compensation packages. Employers show a strong preference for annual performance-based bonuses, tying greater compensation more closely to today's results.
NOW HIRING LOCAL CARTAGE & LINEHAUL DRIVERS

Holland Inc., a recognized leader in the transportation industry is looking to hire professional Local Cartage & Linehaul Drivers for McCook & Wheeling IL terminals.

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If you are interested in applying please go on-line to: http://www.yrcw.com/careers

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BEACH PARK: 38455 N. Spitz Dr. Fri 4/27 & Sat 4/28 9am-5pm. Furniture, antiques, collectibles, books, CDs, DVDs, toys, clothing, household goods. 708-333-6346.


DIAMOND BAR: 582 S. Fairview Ave. Fri 4/27 & Sat 4/28 9am-5pm. Furniture, antiques, books, CDs, DVDs, toys, clothing, household goods. 847-404-0909.


GLENCOE: 534 Grove St. Fri 4/27 & Sat 4/28 9am-5pm. Furniture, antiques, books, CDs, DVDs, toys, clothing, household goods. 847-404-0909.

HIGHLAND PARK: 276 Park Ave. Fri 4/27 & Sat 4/28 9am-5pm. Furniture, antiques, books, CDs, DVDs, toys, clothing, household goods. 847-404-0909.


KEVIN: 700 N. Sheridan Rd. Fri 4/27 & Sat 4/28 9am-5pm. Furniture, antiques, books, CDs, DVDs, toys, clothing, household goods. 847-404-0909.

LITTLE CHICAGO: 844 E. Northwood HWY. Fri 4/27 & Sat 4/28 9am-5pm. Furniture, antiques, books, CDs, DVDs, toys, clothing, household goods. 847-404-0909.


WAUKEGAN: 3651 Birchwood Dr. Fri 4/27 & Sat 4/28 9am-5pm. Furniture, antiques, books, CDs, DVDs, toys, clothing, household goods. 847-404-0909.


Find the Car of Your Dreams at todrive.com
We hereby give notice that a Judgment of Foreclosure has been entered in the Circuit Court of Cook County, Illinois, in Cause No. 09 CH 33619, in favor of Plaintiff, CERTIFICATE HOLDERS CWABS, LON F/K/A THE BANK OF NEW YORK MELLON, and against the defendants herein. The property subject to the said Judgment of Foreclosure is described as 9415 Keeler Avenue, Skokie, IL 60076.

The said Judgment of Foreclosure was confirmed on the date of June 12, 2012, at the hour of 11 am. in the 24th Floor, CHICAGO, IL 60606, of the Judicial Sales Corporation, which is authorized to sell the said property at public auction to the highest bidder, for the said judgment debt, the taxes, special assessments, or special interests thereon, and costs of sale, and for the payment of all sums of money, together with interest and costs, the said judgment being in the amount of $2,070,021.00, or any part thereof, or as hereinafter described.

The said property is a single family residential real estate whose rights in and to the same are subject to confirmation by the court. Upon payment in full of the amount bid, the purchaser shall have no further interest in the property. Any person acquiring the property shall be subject to the terms and conditions of the sale as hereinafter described.

The said property is located at 9415 Keeler Avenue, Skokie, IL 60076. The sale will be held on the premises of the Judicial Sales Corporation, 24th Floor, CHICAGO, IL 60606, on June 12, 2012, at the hour of 11 am. The sale will be conducted in accordance with the provisions of the Illinois Revised Statutes, Article 8, Sections 7-501 to 7-510, and the Judicial Sales Corporation, 24th Floor, CHICAGO, IL 60606, is authorized to sell the said property at public auction to the highest bidder. The sale will be conducted in accordance with the provisions of the Illinois Revised Statutes, Article 8, Sections 7-501 to 7-510.

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PUBLIC NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN that pursuant to a Judgment of Foreclosure and Sale entered in the above entitled cause on February 16, 2012, the Judicial Sales Corporation will on Thursday, May 10, 2012, at 10:30 AM in the office of 120 West Madison Street, Suite 118A, Chicago, Illinois, sell at public auction to the highest bidder for cash, subject to confirmation by the Judicial Sales Corporation, the residential real estate described as the "subject property" as set forth below, with the following conditions:

1. The property is subject to a Judgment of Foreclosure, pursuant to which a foreclosure sale was conducted on February 22, 2012, at the office of 120 West Madison Street, Suite 118A, Chicago, Illinois. The successful bidder shall be paid the amount bid subject to confirmation by the Judicial Sales Corporation.
2. The property is subject to a judgment of foreclosure, pursuant to which a foreclosure sale was conducted on February 22, 2012, at the office of 120 West Madison Street, Suite 118A, Chicago, Illinois. The successful bidder shall be paid the amount bid subject to confirmation by the Judicial Sales Corporation.
3. The property is subject to a judgment of foreclosure, pursuant to which a foreclosure sale was conducted on February 22, 2012, at the office of 120 West Madison Street, Suite 118A, Chicago, Illinois. The successful bidder shall be paid the amount bid subject to confirmation by the Judicial Sales Corporation.
4. The property is subject to a judgment of foreclosure, pursuant to which a foreclosure sale was conducted on February 22, 2012, at the office of 120 West Madison Street, Suite 118A, Chicago, Illinois. The successful bidder shall be paid the amount bid subject to confirmation by the Judicial Sales Corporation.
5. The property is subject to a judgment of foreclosure, pursuant to which a foreclosure sale was conducted on February 22, 2012, at the office of 120 West Madison Street, Suite 118A, Chicago, Illinois. The successful bidder shall be paid the amount bid subject to confirmation by the Judicial Sales Corporation.

Notice is hereby given that on May 9, 2012, U-HAUL Auctioneer, Executive Administrator, Storage Clerk for U-Haul Co. North Shore Chicago will be offering for sale under the Judicial Lien process, by public auction, the following storage units. The goods to be sold are generally described as household goods. The terms of the sale will be cash only. U-Haul Co. of North Shore Chicago reserves the right to refuse any and all bids. The sales will be at the following location, 4100 N. Western Ave., Chicago, IL 60641 and will be at or after 3:00 p.m. and continue day by day until all units are sold. The goods to be sold are generally described as household goods. The terms of the sale will be cash only. U-Haul Co. of North Shore Chicago reserves the right to refuse any and all bids. The sales will be at the following location, 1200 W. Fullerton Ave., Chicago, IL 60614 and will be at or after 8:00 a.m. and continue day by day until all units are sold.

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U-HAUL STORAGE AUCTION 756021 Portage Notice of Sale Under the Self Storage Facility Act, Illinois Revise Statutes, Chapter 114, Paragraph 301, ET. SEQ.

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We make it easy, convenient and virtually pain-free. The consultation begins with a free 3D CT scan that allows our team of specialists to evaluate and discuss your treatment options. We will answer your questions about cost and financing and develop a treatment plan that is best for you.

ATTEND A FREE DENTAL IMPLANT SEMINAR
Meet our doctors, learn the benefits of dental implants and how to receive a complimentary 3D CT scan valued at $750.
Tuesday, May 8 - Gold Coast
Wednesday, May 16 - Hoffman Estates

312.337.5868   www.eonclinics.com

*Qualified patients can have their procedure in one day after initial workup without additional bone graft surgery.
Pick a new hobby and go for it

Did you know April is “National Pick a New Hobby and Go For It Month”? Well, not officially, but since it’s also “Jazz Appreciation Month,” “National Poetry Month” and “National Mathematics Awareness Month,” I thought I’d add my own “National Pick a New Hobby and Go For It Month.”

Trying something new is good for the brain, it’s good for the body and it’s good for getting out of a rut. Who knows, you might discover a brand new passion.

To get started, I asked readers on Facebook and Twitter to share hobbies and skills they most wanted to learn. Although flying an airplane and hang-gliding topped the list, I decided to focus on activities that were a bit more “grounded.”

DISCOVER ASL

Interested in learning a new language? Consider American Sign Language (ASL). Although it was once only used within the deaf community, it has since grown in mainstream popularity thanks in part to films and TV shows such as “Children of a Lesser God,” “Four Weddings and a Funeral” and “Switched at Birth.”

School psychologist and owner of Signing Families, Louise Sattler, believes everyone would benefit from learning ASL. “It’s a beautiful language to learn and could be a lifesaver in an emergency,” says Sattler who often teaches ASL to first responders and healthcare professionals. To learn ASL, Sattler suggests attending a class at your local community college or visiting deaf events that are open to hearing people. You also can watch her videos to learn some basic words or take an online course at www.singingfamilies.com.

LEARN ART OF FLOWER ARRANGING

We’ve all been there. You buy a bunch of fresh flowers at the grocery store only to realize you have no idea how to arrange them. Somehow, they always look better at the store. Renowned florist Sarah von Pollaro understands this issue, which is why she created “Flowered Empowered,” an easy and inexpensive go-to guide and tool kit dedicated to making anyone a flower arranging pro. The reason I love this kit is because it includes all the little things you need to make a great arrangement such as Japanese clippers, floral tape, picks, wire and rubber bands. Von Pollaro also includes tips, tricks and video tutorials that are as easy as they look and include cool ideas such as adding fruit, grass and other inexpensive elements to your arrangements. For more information visit www.flowerempowered.com.

DRAW A CAT, GO ON TV, GET $25K FROM MARK CUBAN

Ever dreamed of starting your own company? Steve Gadlin did. The web manager by day turned into a cat-drawer by night when he decided to launch www.iwanttodrawacatforyou.com. The concept was simple enough: You pay Steve $10 and he draws a custom designed cat. But things really took off when he was featured on ABC’s “Shark Tank,” and Mark Cuban, impressed with Steve’s concept as well as the high profit margin (apparently drawing cats requires little overhead), offered Gadlin $25,000 for 33 percent of the company. Sure, we might not all dream of drawing cats as our next hobby, but it’s further proof that if you believe in yourself and really set your mind on a goal, anything can happen.

Engelman learns about arranging flowers for Mommy on a Shoestring. | DAN LUEDERT-SUN-TIMES MEDIA

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Did we miss a skill or hobby you really want to learn? Leave us a comment at www.pioneerlocal.com/mommy, on Facebook (www.facebook.com/pages/Mommy-on-a-Shoestring/118794533304) or Twitter (@momonasshoe).

Engelman shows off her cat drawing from Steve Gadlin of IWantToDrawACatForYou.com. | DAN LUEDERT-SUN-TIMES MEDIA
COMMUNITY CALENDAR

Submissions for Community Calendar are required 14 days preceding the date of publication. Send to: Niles Managing Editor, Pioneer Press, 3701 W. Lake Ave., Glenview IL 60026. Information may be faxed to (847) 486-7495 or emailed to mbottori@pioneerlocal.com.

Center of Concern

The Center of Concern, 1580 N. Northwest Highway, Suite 310, Park Ridge, (847) 823-0453, calendar of events includes:

- Mondays, May 7, 14, 21 - Employment counseling, by appointment.
- Monday, May 14 - Alzheimer’s Caregivers support group, 10 a.m.
- Tuesdays, May 1 and 15 - Medicare counseling, by appointment (sponsored by the federally funded Senior Health Insurance Program).
- Wednesdays, May 2, 16, 30 - Grief and loss support group (call first).
- Thursday, May 3 - Center of Concern annual meeting (public invited), 7 p.m., Park Ridge Senior Center, 100 S. Western Ave., Park Ridge.
- Saturday, April 28 - Blood pressure and blood sugar testing, 10 a.m.-noon (no appointment needed).
- Saturday, May 5 and 19 - Legal counseling, by appointment.
- Saturday, May 19 - Blood pressure and blood sugar testing, 10 a.m.-noon (no appointment needed).
- Homeowners desiring additional income, companionship, or the ability to remain in their homes may wish to consider the Center of Concern’s Shared Housing Program. Residents are matched with screened applicants who possess a temperament suitable to shared accommodations.
- Preparation of simple wills and durable powers of attorney for health care and property also is available by appointment. All services are offered at the Center of Concern offices at 1580 N. Northwest Highway, #310, in Park Ridge. For services that require an appointment, call (847) 823-0453, weekdays, 9 a.m.-4:30 p.m. (The center is open only until noon on Fridays.) The Center of Concern also offers housing counseling for seniors and others seeking affordable housing, programs designed to prevent homelessness, friendly visitors for the homebound, and volunteer opportunities in the office and in the field. See www.centerofconcern.org.
- Center counselors also are available to help eligible residents apply for Illinois Circuit Breaker property-tax relief grants and license-plate discounts, Illinois CareRx (prescription-drug assistance), the senior-citizen real-estate tax exemption and deferral, the senior-citizen tax-assessment freeze, and the longtime-occupant homeowner property-tax exemption.

Civic

The Chicago Bar Association Lawyer Referral Service and the Illinois State Bar Association will host a special Law Week Call-A-Lawyer program from 9 a.m. to 2 p.m. April 28. Volunteer attorneys will give free legal advice over the phone to Chicago residents who call (312) 564-2001. Attorneys will be available to answer general questions on a variety of legal issues including bankruptcy, domestic relations, immigration, personal injury and Social Security. If callers need further legal services, they will be advised to see their attorney or to contact the CBA Lawyer Referral Service.

A representative from the Niles Township Clerk’s office will be available 9 a.m.-5 p.m. weekdays and evenings by appointment on the second and fourth Mondays of each month to accommodate residents with passport applications, voter registrations and temporary handicapped parking placards. To schedule an appointment at Niles Township in Skokie, call (847) 673-9300.

The Maine Township Neighborhood Watch meets at 7:30 p.m. on the first Wednesday of every month in the basement of Maine Town Hall, 1700 Ballard Road in Park Ridge. Meetings address issues within the unincorporated area of the township and all residents are invited. Reports from the Cook County Sheriff’s Police, North Maine Fire Department and the township’s Code Enforcement Department are shared, and residents are invited to ask questions and report any concerns or problems in their neighborhood.

Classes

The Joseph Regenstein, Jr. School of the Chicago Botanic Garden, 1000 Lake Cook Road, Glencoe, offers a variety of classes for the adults in the horticulture, garden design, nature studies and botanical arts by Garden staff and other experts. For information or to register, visit www.chicagobotanic.org/school or call (847) 835-8261.

Rainbow Animal Assisted Therapy Inc., is now offering “Introduction to Animal Assisted Therapy,” dog training classes at various locations, including 6042 W. Oakton St., in Morton Grove. The fee is $50. Contact Dorida King at dhking@yahoo.com or call (773) 736-9021, for schedules and locations.

Clubs

The Twenty First Star Chapter of the National Society of the Daughters of the American Revolution will hold a general meeting at 11:30 a.m. May 9 at the Park Ridge Country Club, 636 N. Prospect Ave., Park Ridge.

The 2011-12 chapter year in June. Women in the northwest area who are interested in membership in the DAR and are able to prove direct descent from a patriot who served during the American Revolution, may contact Dorothy Wilson at (847) 328-6946.

To green your spring cleaning, visit NicorGasRebates.com/SpringCleaning, call 877.886.4239, or scan QR code to the right with your smart phone.
CALENDAR | CONTINUED FROM PAGE 29

The Knights of Columbus (North American Martyrs Council, Niles), provides ways for members to help others in the community while trying to improve their family and spiritual lives. Call Bob Galassi, (847) 965-0920.

Niles Chapter Toastmasters meets at 7:15 p.m. the second and fourth Wednesdays of the month at the Morton Grove, 6140 Lincoln Ave. Members learn how to feel comfortable and have self-confidence talking to an audience. Call (847) 583-9328.

Community

or area residents interested in learning more about their home, the Norwood Park Historical Society will host its annual House History and Renovator Resource Day, 11 a.m. to 3 p.m. April 28, at the Noble-Seymour-Crippen House, 5624 N. Newark Ave., Chicago. The society will provide references on housing styles, appropriate renovations, and how to find more information about individual properties. Historic maps, older street names and addresses, and society researchers will be available to consult. At noon and 2 p.m., historian Anne Lunde will present a PowerPoint presentation, "Tell Me About My House — I Know It's Old," explaining research steps for Cook County properties in the Northwest Side and nearby suburbs. For properties within the Norwood Park neighborhood, additional historical information is available on former residents and many buildings that have been included in the society's annual house tours, community walks, articles, and other research projects. The society is currently preparing a history of Norwood Park in the 19th Century. The society's exhibits will be open until 4 p.m., including a special 100th anniversary display featuring the history of area Girl Scouts. Admission is free and the event is open to the public. Donations are welcome for research assistance. Call (773) 631-4633 or e-mail info@norwoodparkhistoricalsociety.org.

Illinois Holocaust Museum & Education Center, 9603 Woods Drive, Skokie; information: (847) 967-4800; reservations: (847) 967-4889, www.iholocaustmuseum.org. Museum admission prices: General Admission, $12; seniors (65+), $9; students (ages 12-22), $8; children (ages 5-11), $6. Reservations required for programs. Through June 17: Special Exhibition — Ours to Fight For: American Jews in the Second World War. Through their artifacts, letters, and photographs, the "Greatest Generation" tells the stories of what the war was like for all of its participants, and for Jews in particular. Ours to Fight for brings to life the actions and feelings of these young men and women. Free with museum admission.

May 10, 6:30-8 p.m.: Howard Reich, jazz critic for the Chicago Tribune and son of Holocaust survivor, moderates a panel of American and foreign-born Jewish GIs. The veterans will reflect on their wartime experiences, and the impact their religious affiliation had on their time in the service. Free with Museum admission.

The Solid Waste Agency of Northern Cook County recently established a Battery Recycling Program for rechargeable and alkaline batteries, partnered with Interstate Batteries in Skokie to provide recycling at no cost to SWANCC community. Common household batteries are no longer accepted at Illinois EPA-sponsored household chemical waste events and facilities due to their benign nature and high recycling costs. Batteries accepted in SWANCC's program: Alkaline (AA, AAA, C, D and 9V) and rechargeable (NiCd, NiMh, lithium polymer). Before dropping off rechargeable batteries, residents need to tape the contact points on each battery or place in an individual self-locking plastic baggie to avoid sparks. Local drop-off sites include: Niles Public Services Department, 6849 Touhy Ave., (847) 588-7900, 7 a.m.-4:30 p.m., Mondays through Fridays; Niles Village Hall, 1000 Civic Center Drive, (847) 588-8000, 8 a.m.-5 p.m., Mondays through Fridays; Park Ridge Public Works, 400 Busse Highway, (847) 318-5240, 7 a.m.-4 p.m., Mondays through Thursdays. Additional drop-off sites are posted at swanco.org/recycling/batteryrecycling.html.
any women interested in joining the Rainbow Hospice and Palliative Care Threshold Singers can contact Kathy Huber at (847) 685-9900. Practices are held on two Thursdays each month starting at 6:45 p.m. in Park Ridge. Threshold Singers are trained to sing in groups of two and three at the bedside of those who are sick and dying. The songs are generally traditional or simple rounds, chants, lullabies and hymns that can be chosen to respond to musical taste and spiritual direction. Singers go through patient care volunteer training, but there are no auditions; only requirements are a love of music and a desire to serve others.

Avenues Thrift Shoppe offers great prices and specials on gently used clothing for infants, children and adults, shoes, household items, books and small furniture. On Wednesdays, seniors 60 years and older receive 10 percent off all regularly priced items. The main shop is located at 7710 W. Touhy Ave. in Chicago, and the "boutique" shop at 7700 Touhy Ave. features upscale clothing, outerwear, collectibles and finer merchandise. Hours are 10 a.m.-5 p.m. Tuesday through Saturday and 9 a.m.-5 p.m. Sunday.

The new KTC’s “Spring Up for Service” will run from 5-7 p.m. and include discounted haircutting, service projects to benefit at-risk youth, and recognition of local school volunteerism. At the event, participating school communities will be inducted into KTC’s Honor Roll of Kindness for devoting hands, hearts and minds to service in the 2011-12 school year through Kindness Connection Day. A register for family fun and service at www.thekindnessconnection.org. Like New Auto Spa, Inc., 1050 Busse Highway, Park Ridge, has introduced a special fund-raising program that benefits Advocate Lutheran General Hospital, Advocate Lutheran General Children’s Hospital, anyone who visits Like New to have their car washed or detailed or buys a gift card from the company and also asks...
Family with babies, toddlers, preschoolers and kids can go to a library at 10 a.m. May 11. Of Miss Cate will be spinning all the best tunes. No registration is required.

Create Lego masterpieces with the new Lego Club for ages 5 and up from 4:30-5 p.m. May 21.

Come celebrate with stories and rhythms in English and Spanish, a craft, and delicious treats from 10:30-11:30 a.m. April 28 (Día de los Niños/Día de los Libros) for families with children ages 3 and up.

See a free big-screen movie, "Puss in Boots," at 2 p.m. April 28 and enjoy a movie treat.

Local teens and tweens commemorate the 100th anniversary of the sinking of the Titanic by performing the voices of the crew, passengers, the iceberg, and even the ship's rat in a Titanic Readers Theatre production on April 21. Parts will be practiced and performed in one afternoon: 1-3 p.m. practice and pizza break; 3-3:30 p.m. performance.

International Film Series — "Monsieur Ibrahim" will be screened from 2-3:45 p.m. April 26. An elderly Turkish widower befriended a lonely teenage boy in a working class section of Paris (2003, rated R, French language with English subtitles). Learn the basics of how to manage a busy work and personal life in the popular free companion to Email known as Google Calendar from 10 a.m. to noon April 28.

Researcher Stephen Szabados presents his popular program, "Mining the Latest US Census for Genealogical Data," updated and timed to the April 2 release of the 1940 U.S. Census from 2:30-3 p.m. April 29. This program includes information as to where people lived five years before, the highest educational grade achieved and detailed income and occupation.

For anyone who needs some help downloading ebooks, go to www.nileslibrary.org/contactus and click on eBook Help or click on the Overdrive Download link on the homepage to find step-by-step instruction sheets for different eBook readers as well as how to get started on MyMediaMall. MyMediaMall titles are now available for the Amazon Kindle.

Book Buddies — Students entering eighth grade in the fall and adults can become Book Buddies. Buddies read or listen to children read once a week for an hour. The Niles Public Library provides all materials and training.

The Niles Public Library is open on Saturdays from 1-5 p.m. all year.

Weekly, counselors from the Chicago Chapter of SCORE, the Service Corps of Retired Executives, will be at the library to help small business owners and anyone considering starting a small business. SCORE counselors are successful executives and business owners who can help with a wide variety of business issues. These experienced businesspeople offer private one-hour sessions of business coaching. SCORE is a nonprofit association of volunteers. Weekly sessions are held on alternating Tuesday evenings or Wednesday mornings. Sessions are free but an appointment is required. To set up an appointment online, visit the counseling page at www.scorechicago.org. If there are questions, call (312) 355-7724 or e-mail info@scorechicago.org.

Youth programs on a drop-in basis — Babytime: 11 a.m. on Mondays, for babies age 2 and under. Continuous year-round drop-in program for children with an adult. Includes stories, songs, fingerplays and extended playtime afterward. Rise & Shine Storytime: 10 a.m. on Thursdays, ages 2-6 with caregiver; enjoy stories, songs and more.
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See Calendar, Page 34

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For baking legacies, getting into family biz a piece of cake

BY JENNIFER JOHNSON
jjohnson@pioneerlocal.com

If baking is hereditary, then Kylie and Migz Anama have inherited the pastry gene.

The sisters, who are third-generation bakers, recently opened Mrs. A's Cupcakes and Cookies at 6 S. Northwest Highway, in Park Ridge, a shop specializing in cupcakes, cookies, cakes, doughnuts and brownies made from family recipes. The shop is the continuation of a business the family ran for four years at Westfield Old Orchard Shopping Center in Skokie and is named for Kylie and Migz's mother, Delia Anama, known to everyone as Mrs. A.

"She's the heart of our family," Kylie said. "She's the string that holds us all together."

Kylie and Migz practically grew up around flour and frosting. Their parents, Delia and Leslie, ran a bakery for many years in Winnetka and their grandmother had her own bake shop called The Rolling Pin in the family's native Philippines.

"I grew up crawling and walking in the bakery," Migz said.

After their parents emigrated to the United States when Migz was young, they continued the baking tradition. The sisters, who have three other siblings, recalled attending baking shows where their parents would ask for their opinions in an effort to better connect with the youth market.

"I'd tell them to do stuff with Legos," Kylie recalled.

Today, Mrs. A's offers a variety of cupcake flavors, from red velvet and double chocolate to "The Elvis," a banana-flavored cupcake with peanut-butter frosting. Their miniature pastries include petite fours, brownie bites and mini eclairs.

The shop also takes special requests for any of their pastries. According to Migz, a "Star Wars" fan recently asked for cookies decorated with the Death Star.

The most popular-selling cookies are the "smiley" yellow cookies, which can be made with different-colored "hair" (actually sprinkles). One customer orders his with brown hair to lift his spirits, Kylie said.

Each holiday and sports season also leads to new cookie designs. For St. Patrick's Day the Anamas whipped up Bailey's Irish Creme cupcakes, while Easter was all about lamb cakes and bunny-shaped cookies. With baseball season having arrived, Cubs and Sox cookies are on the way and for Mother's Day the sisters are planning a strawberry shortcake cupcake with powdered sugar.

Everything is baked on site and the sisters try to preserve the homemade quality of their products.

"Our stuff tastes like we baked it at your house," said mom, Delia.

"We're a reality show waiting to happen," said mom, Delia.

"If you've ever seen 'Cake Boss,' that's our family," Migz added.
A Mass will be celebrated in honor of St. Dymphna, the patron saint of persons with mental illnesses, at 8:45 a.m. May 15 at Queen of All Saints Basilica, 6280 N. Sauganash Ave., Chicago. A relic of St. Dymphna will be displayed for veneration following Mass. The St. Dymphna Society and Chicago Archdiocesan Commission on Mental Illness invite all mentally ill persons and their families and friends to take part in this liturgy. Call Jim and Shirley Weber at (773) 777-6022.

“Education and Support for You, Your Family, and Your Child with Mental Health Issues,” sponsored by the National Alliance on Mental Illness, Cook County North Suburban, is taking place Saturdays, April 29. Look for "Meetup" sign on table near Subway. Call (847) 830 7656.

La Leche League, a breastfeeding support group, will meet at 10 a.m. at Healthy Babies, Happy Families, 8267 W Golf Road in Niles. Expecting and nursing mothers are invited to attend this series of meetings, continuing April 20, May 18, June 15. No registration is necessary. Babies are always welcome. Visit llli.org.

Midwest Palliative & Hospice CareCenter (2050 Claire Court, Glenview) grief support groups meet for eight weeks and are offered at no charge to the general public. The schedule for winter includes: Drop-in Group, first and third Fridays of each month, 10:30 a.m. to noon. Call (847) 556-1777 to register. Registration deadline is four business days before the start date of each group. Visit www.carecenter.org/groupsupport.

Weight No More, a friendly weight loss support group, welcomes new members. Discussions include weight loss tips, recipes, and helpful ideas to help participants reach their goals. Fees are $5 monthly to defray the room rental costs and small fines for weight gain. Meetings take place from 9:30-10:15 a.m. Fridays at the Howard Leisure Center, 6676 Howard St., Niles (elevator accessible). Call (847) 679-4229.

The Lutheran General Hospital Stroke Club for stroke survivors and their caregivers meets from 3:45 p.m. on the first Thursday of the month (except January and July) at the Outpatient Therapy Center, 9375 Church St., Des Plaines; use south entrance. Contact Meg Potterfield, (847) 723-4765.

Catholic Charities of the Archdiocese of Chicago invites those who have experienced the loss of a loved one to suicide to participate in its Loving Outreach to Survivors of Suicide (LOSS) meetings at its Northwest office, 1717 Rand Road, Des Plaines. The minimum age for the monthly meetings or eight-session groups is 18-years-old. If possible, call the LOSS office, (312) 655-7283, for an initial intake before the first meeting or visit www.catholiccharities.net/loss. Groups meet 7:9 p.m. on the second Sunday of each month and also on the second Wednesday of each month.

Families Anonymous is a support group for family members and friends who are concerned about and affected by the substance abuse or behavioral problems of a loved one. Group 831 meets at 10 a.m. every Friday at Carter Westminster Church, 4950 W. Pratt Ave., Skokie, in the basement; enter from parking lot in the rear. Group 173 meets at 7:30 p.m. every Monday (except holidays) at First United Methodist Church, 418 W. Touhy Ave., Park Ridge, in the Parlor Room, south portion of main level; use entrance at rear (Grant Place), across from the parking lot. No dues or fees required. First names only are used at meetings to preserve individual anonymity. This is a nonprofessional and non-religious program. Call (773) 777-4442 or visit www.familiesanonymous.org. NorthShore Hospice will sponsor grief support groups. Soul Mates is an ongoing support group for those who have experienced the death of a spouse or life partner. This group meets on the second and fourth Tuesday of the month 6:30-8 p.m. at NorthShore University HealthSystem Home & Hospice Services office, 4901 Searle Parkway, Skokie. Legacy is an ongoing support group for adults who have experienced the death of a parent. The group meets on the first and third Tuesday of the month 6:30-8 p.m. at NorthShore University HealthSystem Home & Hospice Services office, 4901 Searle Parkway, Skokie. Handicap accessible and parking available. To pre-register for the programs, call Thom Dennis, (847) 982-4364 or e-mail dennis@northshore.org.

Tops Club, Inc. (Take Off Pounds Sensibly), an international weight-loss network of support groups, holds a local meeting weekly on Monday beginning at 6 p.m. at the Niles Park District Center, 6676 W. Howard St., Niles, on the lower level. The building is handicap accessible. TOPS has helped individuals live healthier lives since 1948 with a combination of sensible eating, regular exercise, and ongoing support to help members achieve and maintain their weight-loss goals. Women, men, teens and preteens committed to attaining and maintaining a healthy weight are all invited to join. Visitors are welcome to visit their first TOPS meeting free of charge. For more information about this meeting call (847) 966-4871 or to find another local chapter, visit www.tops.org or call 1-800-932-8677.

MOMS Club of Northern Chicagoland holds weekly activities (such as playgroups, outings, museums, park dates) and monthly member meetings and Moms Night Out. Call (773) 853-2834 or visit http://sites.google.com/site/momclubofnorthernchicago or e-mail chicagomomsclub@gmail.com.

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Jennifer Rebecca Szaflarski and John Joseph Pomagier were married on July 8, 2011 at Mary Seat of Wisdom church in Park Ridge, IL. Following the ceremony, a reception was held at Itasca Country Club in Itasca. The bride is the daughter of Margaret and Stephen Szaflarski of Park Ridge, IL. She graduated from Maine South High School in Park Ridge, IL and then from Marquette University in Milwaukee, Wisconsin where she received a bachelors degree in English. She currently is employed as a teacher in Highland Park, IL.

The groom is the son of Sheila and Thomas Pomagier of Park Ridge, IL. He graduated from Maine South High School in Park Ridge, IL and then from Illinois State University in Bloomington, IL. Where he received a bachelors degree in Interdisciplinary Studies. He continued his schooling towards being certified in Physical Education and will be certified in April 2012 and will be looking for a Physical Education job. The newlyweds spent their honeymoon in Aruba and reside in Park Ridge, IL.

Kevin and Julie Shotsberger of Park Ridge are pleased to announce the engagement of their daughter, Katherine Shotsberger to Andrew Cupp, son of Gary and Cathy Cupp also of Park Ridge. Both attended Maine High School and reconnected after college.

Katherine is a 2009 graduate of Bradley University and works in communications. Andrew is a 2009 graduate of Purdue University and is currently working toward earning his Masters degree in Biomedical Sciences at Midwestern University in Downers Grove, IL. He will begin dental school in the fall.

They will wed on Friday, September 28 at the Park Ridge Community Church.

To place your special announcement in the Celebrate Section, send inquiries to celebrate@pioneerlocal.com
Extra virgin olive oil — nectar of the gods

BY CAROL GODDARD
Contributor

Pour a small amount of the liquid into a tasting cup.
Swirl, then sniff.
Pour it into your mouth. Slurp it, then swallow.
Does it taste peppery? Buttery?
Musty? Grassy?
If you're thinking wine tasting, you'd be wrong.

With olive oil stores sprouting like daffodils in spring and a plethora of online sources, food aficionados in the Chicago area have been discovering the exquisite taste of genuine extra virgin olive oils.

Taste test
"We like people to taste before buying," said Matt Dine, co-owner of Old Town Oil. "We can't tell someone what tastes good; it's a personal preference."
Sandy Schuenemann, co-owner of Oh, Olive! in Glenview and Libertyville, agrees. "We want our clients to appreciate olive oil," she said. "We want them to know it's healthy and tastes good."

Extra virgin olive oil adds a distinctive aroma and flavor to many dishes. Salad dressings and marinades, for example, gain new depth when made with real extra virgin olive oil. Pasta dishes also benefit from sautéing ingredients in real olive oil (some experts suggest using a lower grade oil for sautéing) and then being given a finish with a drizzle or two of extra virgin olive oil. Using real olive oil when making bruschetta elevates this appetizer to a different level.

Like wine grapes, different olives produce different tasting oils, from mild to strong. Experts recommend matching the flavor of the oil to its dish: mild olive oils with a fish dish and a more robust olive oil with a beef entrée.

The highest quality olive oil is extra virgin, and in Europe oils must meet a specific chemical profile to be labeled such. (First pressed or cold pressed labeling is outdated, as new technology uses a different process to extract oil.) Because of its quality and preparation, extra virgin is the most expensive olive oil, the best tasting, and the healthiest, with the lowest acidity.

The health properties of olive oil are well documented. This monounsaturated, heart healthy oil has antioxidants and acts as polyphenols for healthy cell life. Studies also seem to indicate that olive oil helps prevent cancer, diabetes and obesity.

Tips for shopping and storage
- Oxygen, heat and light are the three worst enemies for fine olive oil so buy your oil in smaller amounts in dark bottles and keep in a cool, dark place.
- Unlike wines, olive oils do not improve with age. Shelf life is about one year unopened, three months opened.
- How to tell if it's rancid: Smells like crayons or musty paint, especially when heated.
- Taste olive oil on its own; soaking in bread makes it difficult to discern the oil's characteristics.
- Though a high price doesn't guarantee a good oil, anything less than $10 per liter suggests the olive oil has been adulterated or blended.
- The Olive Oil Source recommends substituting olive oil for butter or margarine, and has even put together a chart calculating substitutions (www.oliveoilsource.com/page/conversion-chart).

SEE OLIVE OIL, PAGE 41
**Pasta with lemon and garlic, variation with smoked salmon**

Chef Barb of Figueroa Farms Boutique created this recipe for the Olive Oil Source (www.oliveoilsource.com). It's best made with a medium to intense extra virgin olive oil.

1 pound pasta
1/4 cup extra virgin olive oil
1 pound smoked salmon, chopped
1 leek chopped fine or 3 green onions chopped fine
2 garlic cloves, minced
4 large fresh basil leaves, chopped
1 lemon, zested and juiced
2 teaspoons capers
Salt and pepper to taste
1/8 cup grated or shaved Parmesan cheese

Cook the pasta according to package directions. Drain.

Break the smoked salmon into bite-size pieces. Heat 2 tablespoons of olive oil over medium heat. Add leeks or green onions, and sauté for 2 minutes. Add garlic and salmon pieces. Add the lemon juice, lemon zest, and capers. Taste for seasonings and add salt and pepper if needed.

Toss salmon mixture with the hot pasta. Drizzle with remaining 2 tablespoons of oil and top with Parmesan cheese.

**OLIVE OIL | CONTINUED FROM PAGE 41**

Refining, heating or blending extra virgin olive oils compromises all these characteristics. And because the United States has no standards for labeling olive oil, marketers can label a blended or adulterated oil "extra virgin."

"Extra virgin olive oil is hard to find in a grocery store," Dine said. "The label says 100 percent pure olive oil, and that sounds pretty good. But pure olive oil could be 90 percent refined oil."

**Misleading labels**

The UC Davis Olive Center recently surveyed supermarket oils in California and found that 69 percent of them had taste flaws indicating they weren't extra virgin olive oil.

But the same center found that 74 percent of average testers in another study did not like what expert testers deemed high quality oil. Clearly, the average consumer needs to take an Olive Oil 101 course.

And that is exactly what visitors experience in an olive oil store. Mary Koval, co-owner of Oh, Olive!, says her staff spends 15-20 minutes with each customer, offering them small samples of various oils to find the taste profile best for them.

Dine of Old Town Oil agrees: "A buttery taste is good for some, bitter is good for others. We encourage tasting. Tasting is huge."

**OLIVE OIL TRIVIA**

- Pepperness, bitterness (uncured olives are extremely bitter) and fruitiness are the three positive flavor profiles of true extra virgin olive oil.
- Olive oil forms the core of the Mediterranean diet along with vegetables, fruit, bread, fish and pasta.
- Like wine, the flavor profile of good olive oils varies from year to year and grower to grower, depending on the olive source, climate, soil and weather conditions.
- Americans eat a little less than a liter of olive oil annually, compared to 21 liters for Greeks, 13 liters in Italy and Spain and 1 liter in Britain. But the United States has the third largest overall oil consumption in the world, a market of $1.5 billion and growing at 10 percent a year.
- Color does not relate to quality; different olives impart a different color to their oils.
- Olive oil is the only "vegetable" oil made from a fruit, not a seed like sunflower, canola or corn oil.
- Olive oil has been traced back to the Paleolithic and Neolithic eras.
- More than three quarters of the world's olive oil comes from three countries: Spain is first, Italy second and Greece third.
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You're stranded on an island and the country, what school would you choose?

What's been your greatest high school sports accomplishment?

If you got to play for any college team in the country, what would it be and why?

What's your favorite restaurant and what are you eating there?

DON'T MISS

Today
Softball: Deerfield @ Niles North, 4:45 p.m.
The Warriors come to town in a CSL North matchup. It's the first of two important conference games in the next six days.

Rowen develops rapport with younger Vikings

By Eric Van Dril
Contributor
Michael Rowen, Jon Oh, Raymond Truong and Justin Suh all played on the Niles North varsity team last year.
The only senior of that bunch is Rowen.
"At first, it was (odd being the lone senior), but I've worked with this group all offseason," Rowen said. "A lot of us played on Velocity club, and I know them so well that it doesn't seem like I'm a senior and they're juniors. We all play together in the offseason, so it seems like one cohesive unit."
Eight other Vikings starters had never tasted varsity action before this season.
Throughout the early stages of the 2012 campaign, the band of four veterans has been tasked with bringing the team closer together and setting an on-court example of how to play as a unit.
"Jon Oh has stepped up a lot, leading us in practice and in games," said junior Steph Jan, one of the newcomers. "Raymond's been doing a lot, too - so they help us out on the court. They tell us where to go, what to do. They kind of help keep us together."
Oh and Rowen have been on varsity for three seasons.
The most tenured players on the team, the pair has connected with their teammates, especially through offseason work. Competing together during the offseason, especially by playing club volleyball with a few of his fellow Vikings, has helped Rowen feel more comfortable as the team's lone senior.
Offseason work also helped Niles North's inexperienced players prepare for this season.
"It's easy to see the level of enjoyment each Viking gets from playing volleyball. During Niles West bracket play in the Downers Grove South Invitational Friday, the Vikings fell to Loyola. But each positive play - especially kills and blocks - drew euphoric yells from the players and brought the bench to its feet."
Playing on an inexperienced team that struggles with consistency can provide frustrating moments. Yet the positive on-court spirit is something Niles North (4-9) has tried to maintain all season, especially after tough losses.
"After losing to Maine South at DGS, I kind of told everyone on the court, 'There's no point in stressing ourselves if we're not getting a perfect pass, getting a perfect set or hitting every ball,'" Truong said, "I told them that we should go out there and have fun. Take the game seriously and have fun at the same time."
If all the team's non-seniors return next season, the Vikings will have 11 players with varsity experience.
"Right now, we're trying to stick to the fundamentals, get our team chemistry up right now so that next year we can come back even stronger," Jan said.
Mendel Moskovits returns to the CSL Meet today, hoping to use it as a launching pad for a postseason run state. 

BY DAK SALIN

Niles North senior "Mendel Moskovits returns to the CSL Meet today, hoping to use it as a launching pad for a postseason run state."
Maloney hoping to help Dons win ESCC

BY MIKE CAMERON

Notre Dame senior Josh Maloney is all about giving to others. The speedster may just help the promising Dons to their first ESCC title in 16 years.

Maloney, a third-year varsity mainstay, leads a talented group of sprinters that includes exciting sophomores Chris James and Tommy O'Hara, along with Tristan Humbles and Rocco Figueroa, a pair of imposingly big, but swift, seniors. Senior David Contreras is right in the mix for the 800-meter relay.

"This is the first time we've had so many kids challenging each other (in the sprints)," said veteran head coach Mike Jankowski. "We're strong in the middle distances, and we have talent there."

More depth in the distances. "Winning conference is our challenge and our goal," he said. "It bodes well that Notre Dame, which finished third in the BSCC last spring, has defeated defending champ Carmel, as well as Marian Catholic, Marist and St. Patrick in triangular meets this season.

The conference meet, which determines the final standings, is May 18-19. Carmel will be the host site, but a few field events will be held at Notre Dame.

In the frigid nine-team Dons Relays on Friday, Notre Dame placed third with 85.5 points, behind Niles West (185) and St. Patrick (89). Sophomore Ken Szybka missed out on a personal-best 127 feet. The Dons' 400 relay lost both points and its fastest time on a bad start by senior Neal Omai; a two-second run, which tests speed, is critical.

"We have so many amazing athletes like Tristan and C. J. with so much potential," said Maloney. "We would love to get downstate and show everyone what a small school like Notre Dame can do."

Maloney came back from a torn hamstring in last year's sectional and helped the 800-meter relay to within a second of qualifying for State. He loves his team, but his real passion is helping the less privileged.

"Through the year, he works with special-needs kids as a program assistant with Northern Suburban Special Recreation Association for as many as 30 hours a week. Baseball players Matt Walsh and Brian McGinnis also participate."

"I love it so much I don't even consider it a job," said Maloney. "It's one of my favorite things to do other than being with my team and friends."

There are only about 4,000 kids in the world who get to work for the association. We help them play sports like bowling. This was my first year coaching baseball."

"The great thing about Josh is that he's a lot of our older kids is that they are really good Notre Dame men," said Jankowski. "They work hard at their school and for their teams, but they also make sure to give back to the community. Josh is a real leader that way."

In the throws, the progress of Szybka, junior Nick Barlow, senior Jim Kurpiel and sophomore Quatre Coats has helped take the sting out of the unavailability of seniors Colton Kelly (tornisa) and Connor DeChat (back).

Junior Ryan Zeidler is a possible state contender in the 300 hurdles, and senior Thomas Banks is coming on strong in the 110.
Gelfand brothers pose twin threat

BY ERIC VAN DRILL
Contributor

Zach and Eli Gelfand include themselves as the type of twins who do most things together. The Gelfand brothers hang out with the same group of friends. The sophomores also both play varsity volleyball at Niles West.

A couple of years ago, they looked ready to go their separate ways.

"We did play (volleyball) in middle school, but after grade school he played club for one year and I decided not to," Zach Gelfand said.

"He got really good and I got kind of jealous, so I wanted to also play with him. The next year I quit football, I didn't do basketball and I just focused on volleyball."

Ever since that club season, the Gelfands' sole athletic focus has been volleyball. As a result, they've both followed the same paths.

They were each members of Niles West's freshman team last season, played club volleyball for Velocity - which is run by Niles West - and were asked prior to Wolves' volleyball tryouts to try out for the varsity squad.

Although Eli Gelfand's first few varsity practices brought a fair amount of anxiety and nervousness, it was his freshman club season experience - he was played with many of the juniors currently the Niles West's varsity - that allowed him to settle in and play confidently.

"The very first (varsity practice), I was pretty nervous because I didn't want to mess up or something, and have them say, 'Oh, no, He's not good enough for varsity.'" Eli Gelfand said. "The other (practices) were pretty good, especially because I was playing with some of my friends from freshman year."

Eli Gelfand's friends from club quickly became his brother's friends, too. Although they already spend a great deal of time together, and a bad day on the court can lead to an argument at home, volleyball seems to pull the identical twins even closer together.

"I feel like we really started to bond more with the volleyball because we're always on the same team and everything," Zach Gelfand said.

"Sometimes, if we have a bad game or if we have a bad practice ... yeah, we'll bicker a little bit at home. But most of the time (the relationship) is pretty solid."

There are moments on the court together for Niles West, when their shared genetics and tight relationship at each other a little bit at home. But most of the time (the relationship) is pretty solid.

Niles West's Eli Gelfand pounds a kill during the Wolves' match with Glenbrook South. | BURLINGTON SUN-TIMES MEDIA

Wolves riding second season surge

BY ERIC VAN DRILL
Contributor

Entering their second varsity season after going 6-9 last year, the members of the Niles West boys water polo team knew they would be improved this season.

But ask them about the likelihood of putting together an II-game winning streak, which included wins over Stagg, Maine East and Glenbrook North, and their reaction largely mirrors Ryan Miller's.

"I expected us to be a little bit better, but this II-game win streak really surprised me," said Miller, a junior and one of the Wolves' captains. "I thought it was just amazing. Here's a team where we only won six games last year and then all of a sudden we came out and make an II-game win streak. That's pretty crazy, in my opinion."

Niles West's winning streak was the best string of water polo played in program history and provided the team with a unifying sense of belief, especially after defeating programs with a much longer history.

"We're starting to show that we can compete on a high level," Niles West coach John Przekota said. "It's just these guys showing the consistency and believing that they can do it all of the time (that Niles West now needs)."

Niles West has gotten production from myriad players this season.

The Wolves are led by co-captains Miller and Filip Zivkovic. Miller provides strength in the pool, working as Niles West's post-up player near the goal.

Niles West's supporting cast has been particularly strong, as well. Arguably the biggest surprise this season has been sophomore Kyle Patt, who was called up mid-season and has quickly shot up to third on the team in goals scored.

Max Romanelli has also played well, standing out in Niles West's match against New Trier April 19. Romanelli scored four goals and defended New Trier standout Jordan Palmer.

For Romanelli, transitioning from Niles West's goalie last year to a field player this season has made him feel like more a part of the team.

"Conditioning has a lot to do with it, but it's also so much more fun," Romanelli said of switching positions. "I feel like so much more integrated in the team and I play a much bigger part in the field."

While Niles West (16-7) has been pleasantly surprised with its improvement during its second season, Przekota knows the team still faces hurdles.

More specifically, Niles West must overcome being immolated by talented, prestigious water polo programs like New Trier. The Wolves battle the Trevians to a tie at halftime last week, before New Trier pulled away for a 16-8 victory.

"That's one of the things that we're trying to teach our team is that no matter where you're playing or who you're up against, it's about that game that day, not about what they've done to you in the past or what they're going to do the next time they play you," Przekota said. "So you've got to come out swinging."
MAINE EAST QUICK HITS

HIGH-FIVES

Boys Volleyball: Artur Theil (Sr.) — The big hitter had 15 kills in the Blue Demons’ 23-25, 25-20, 25-21 win over Maine West on April 17.

BIG NUMBERS

2
— Runners thrown out by Maine East catcher Phil Papianiou in the Blue Demons’ 5-4 loss to Lake View on Saturday. He also went 3-for-4 at the plate.

SOUND BITES

“We’re such a young team and we’re still trying to develop and learn how to play with each other, so we’ve learned from last year to take not having the first goal and not let our heads go down,”
— SAMANTHA CONTRERAS, JUNIOR SOCCER MIDFIELDER

CULTURE GRID

FIVE QUESTIONS WITH MARIA PROTIC, SOPHOMORE GIRLS WATER POLO

What’s your favorite tv show? My favorite TV show is Smash, which is about a girl coming to Broadway to try to make it big on stage and faces all these difficulties. It’s full of music and singing, and even though I am not a very musically talented person, I like the idea of a small town girl making it big, along with the good music featured on the show.

Who is your favorite super hero? Wonder Woman, no doubt about it. I like it when girls are shown as strong characters that are just as good as males. Call me a feminist but the one thing I can’t stand is when people think males are better than females at a job. And Wonder Woman is the perfect super hero example that counters that idea.

What’s your favorite restaurant and what are you eating there? My favorite restaurant is The Cheesecake Factory. My family has made it almost a tradition that when something worth celebrating happens, we go there. I like to eat the cobb salad and their dulce de leche cheesecake.

Besides playing sports, what do you like to do in your free time? I usually don’t have much free time with sports and school, but when I am free, I like to sit down with a good book and read. I can’t get enough of reading. In fact, after I saw the Hunger Games movie, the next day I went and read the next two books in the series in one day.

What’s been your greatest high school accomplishment away from sports? My greatest high school accomplishment besides sports has been a lot of the little things. I feel accomplished to say that even though I am a three sport athlete, I am able to get good grades and be involved in various clubs and also am part of the Advisory Club for our principal.

DON’T MISS

Today
Boys Volleyball: Glenbrook North @ Maine East, 6 p.m.
The Spartans come to Park Ridge for a crucial CSL North showdown. The Blue Demons are 9-3 overall and 2-1 in conference.

Friday
Girls Track: Maine East @ Elk Grove Invite, 4:30 p.m
The Blue Demons will have a busy few days as they travel to this Invite before competing in an invite at Maine West on Monday.

Contreras believes in Demons’ ability to score

BY ERIC VAN DRIL
Contributor

This year has been a season of change for Maine East girls soccer player Samantha Contreras.

In addition to switching positions, Contreras is finally getting the opportunity to play with Jackie Contreras, her younger sister.

This is the first time the Contreras sisters, who look extremely similar on the field, have played on the same soccer team. The opportunity to play alongside her younger sister has been exhilarating for the junior, yet in moments of frustration it has forced her to try to treat the freshman as a teammate, not her sister.

“I get hard on her because she is my little sister and I want her to do good. We’re learning how to play with each other and not yell at each other on the field,” Contreras said. “It’s fun having her out there, though.”

The Contreras sisters, who are twin sisters, are close off the field, and play near each other on it. They’re often seen running close together — you can tell them apart by their jersey numbers, and the younger Contreras’ bright orange shoes — since Jackie Contreras starts as Maine East’s defensive midfielder and her older sister has transitioned to central midfield this year.

Samantha Contreras played sweeper for Maine East last season, but was switched to center midfield.

The change was made to generate more offense for a team which struggled to score during its 0-18 run last year.

“I think she had gotten really comfortable playing sweeper,” Maine East coach Julie Dickinson said. “And now coming up and playing midfield, she’s still trying to figure out her role that way in terms of how she can get the offense going. But she is a good ball distributor and she has a really good shot from the 18 (-yard box), which is why we put her at midfield.”

While Maine East (0-6-1) is now seven games into its season, Contreras is still getting used to playing midfield. Being removed from her comfort zone has been hard, yet the allure of scoring goals — Contreras has two this season — has helped with the change.

Her experience in both roles has also allowed the Blue Demons to become more flexible.

“Over the summer I started playing midfield and (the coaches) made the change,” Contreras said. “They were like, ‘You have better ball control than last year, and we’re trying to switch that up.’ I’m perfectly fine with it. Me and my sweeper Kathy Janik, we’re learning how to play with each other. So if she gets tired, I can always go back to playing sweeper. We’re being versatile in the fact that we can switch back and forth with each other.”

The biggest change facing Samantha Contreras and Maine East is altering the program’s culture. The Blue Demons continue struggling to believe they can win, especially after surrendering the first goal.

One of the primary reasons Maine East is short on confidence is due to its lack of offensive output. The Blue Demons’ attack struggled mightily last year, and they have scuffled at times this season. But they have scored goals — three against Von Steuben, two against Northside Prep — which Contreras hopes can inspire Maine East to keep fighting in games where they fall behind.

“We’re starting to realize that yes we can score goals, and we can come back in a game,” Contreras said.
Bacalla standing tall against CSL opponents

BY ERIC VAN DRIL
Contributor

Having already earned his spot as one of the best 24 tennis players in the state as a sophomore, Niles North's Dave Bacalla experienced something in the off-season which made him a decisively more powerful, dangerous player this year.

Bacalla had a growth spurt.

"Last year I was actually significantly shorter," said Bacalla, who the USTA currently ranks significantly shorter, "But this year I had a growth spurt. I was five or six inches shorter, but in the summer I had a growth spurt." In becoming taller and stronger during the off-season, Bacalla has coupled increased power on his shot with the touch and consistent ball striking that made him such a tough player as a sophomore. Bacalla's growth spurt has brought him to 5-foot-10, and being taller has had the most noticeable effect on his serve.

"It helps my serve a lot because the angle of my serve is higher; aiming down," said Bacalla of his spurt. "Being able to hang with these big kids (is easier). Obviously I'm not one of the tallest players out here, but that added bonus helps a lot."

"His serve has probably increased in speed by a good 10 miles-per-hour," said Niles North coach Rich Jaffe. "I’ve always been an aggressive player, but he did the weight room this year and he’s a much more powerful player."

Since growing and putting on bulk during the off-season, Bacalla has seen his tennis ranking jump significantly; although a recent climb to the numbers, Bacalla's lone loss of the season came against Glenbrook South junior Konrad Zieba.

Playing nationally-ranked competition within the CSL has helped Bacalla and made the decision to play tennis at Niles North instead of USTA tournaments year round an easy one. "It's definitely a great conference," Bacalla said. "I get good competition playing these nationally-ranked players that I don't usually get to play against. High school is a good way to play against them."

Bacalla is significantly taller and stronger this season, yet those aren't the only two ways he's changed. Bacalla, whose primary goal this season is to finish in the top-10 at state, has become a mentor for some of Niles North's less experienced players, attempting to help them grow.

"I think the guys are looking up to me more as a leader as I grow up more," Bacalla said. "They're asking me questions and I'm educating them. Some of these guys are just learning how to play. I'm teaching them and they're getting better and better."

Niles North junior Dave Bacalla grew about five inches in the past year, which has added velocity to his serves. | CURTIS LEMMLEH-SUN-TIMES MEDIA

Lazar aiming for three berths at state

BY DAN SHALIN
Contributor

Niles West gymnast Ari Lazar has four meets left in his high school career, and hopes to be a three-event man in each of them.

The first meet for the senior is tonight's (Thursday's) CSL Meet, which Niles West host at 6 p.m. Lazar will be competing in his usual events: parallel bars, rings and pommel horse.

In addition to crowning conference champs, the meet will double as a qualifier for the May 19 John Brinkworth Invite at Niles North. That meet, in its second year, brings together senior all-star teams from all of the state's gymnastics conferences. The top five seniors in each event at the conference meet earn a ticket to the Brinkworth.

"I watched the meet last year and it would be exciting to be a part of it," Lazar said. "They had a handstand contest last year, which I want to win this year. I hope to represent Niles West in all of my events. Maybe I'll try a couple new moves, ones I never would do in a meet. But it would be fun to throw them in a meet that doesn't matter as much."

The Brinkworth is mostly about fun; the three weeks leading up to that event are all business.

Lazar and the Wolves will participate in the Lincoln-Way Sectional on May 3. Niles West gymnasts, including Lazar, hope to qualify for the state meet on May 11-12.

Lazar competed on pommel horse at state last season. This time around, the gymnast said he hopes to qualify in all three of his events and reach the finals (top 10) on horse.

After a solid performance at the 12-team John Cress Invitational at Niles North, Lazar said he just might be peaking at the right time.

At the Cress on Friday, Lazar finished third on horse (8.5), seventh on p-bars (8.0) and 11th on rings (7.5)."
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