Kids flex their dictionaries
Olympic tribute at Field School emphasizes brains, not brawn | PAGE 13
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Congratulations On Your Engagement!

Natalie Barti and Juan Rodriguez

Gary and Trudy Barti of Morton Grove, Illinois announce the engagement of their daughter, Natalie Barti, to Juan Rodriguez, son of Juan and Urbana Rodriguez of Miami, Florida. Natalie is a 2002 graduate of Niles West High School. The future bride graduated from the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign in 2006 with a Bachelor of Arts in the Teaching of German and a Minor in Teaching English as a Second Language. She received a Master of Arts in Reading Education from Concordia University Chicago in 2010 and is currently employed as a German teacher at Niles West High School.

Juan is a 1999 graduate of Southwest Miami Senior High. The future groom graduated from the California Institute of Technology in 2003 with a Bachelor of Science in Mechanical Engineering and received a Master of Science in Finance from Florida International University in 2005. Juan is a senior manager in finance at Invenergy, which develops, owns and operates clean energy power generation facilities. A May 2014 wedding in Chicago is planned.

Mr. and Mrs. William Kramer of Stuart, Florida, are proud to announce the engagement of their daughter, Jacqueline Mary, to Christopher Dillon, son of Patrick Dillon and the late Julie Grossi Dillon of Hinsdale, Illinois.

The bride-to-be is a 2005 graduate of John Carroll Catholic High School, Fort Pierce, Florida. Jackie earned her bachelor's degree from Florida State University and attended Lynn University in Boca Raton, Florida, for her master's degree. She is a teacher at Kensington School in Wheaton, Illinois.

The future groom is a 2006 graduate of Hinsdale Central High School. Christopher earned his bachelor's degree from Lynn University and is employed at Barak Business Services in Bensonville, Illinois.

The wedding will take place on August 31, 2014 at The Addison in Boca Raton, Florida.

To place your special announcement in the Celebrations section, please send inquiries to: celebrates@stmedianetwork.com
WINGS a resale shop with a mission

The WINGS Resale Store is one of the three resale stores run by the Palatine-based Women In Need of Growing Stronger Program, or WINGS, which provides shelter for homeless and abused women and their children.

Page 25
Agenda is a new *Sun-Times* entertainment section that offers the best of the *Chicago Reader*'s coverage of events, restaurants and entertainment, along with critical voices and tips from the *Sun-Times*. DISCOVER YOUR AGENDA BY PICKING UP A COPY OF FRIDAY'S PAPER.
Skokie’s annual Winter Chilly Fest finally lives up to its name

By Mike Isaacs

There may have been only one place in all of Skokie Saturday where yet another serious snowfall was met with open arms.

Not to mention ice skates, a bonfire, hayrides and a warm and comfortable chili dinner.

The weather for the Skokie Park District’s annual Winter Chilly Fest does not always live up to its name, but this year it surely did. On its opening of two nights Saturday, white virgin snow consistently dropped from the sky, giving just the right picture-perfect look and feel to the cooly-wooded Emily Oaks Nature Center.

Temperatures were reasonable enough so that all outdoor activities - from winter games to skating on the pond, from hayrides through the park to a bonfire for keeping warm and roasting marshmallows - were full speed ahead.

“Winter Chilly Fest should be an evening that’s chilly and not too cold, and maybe one with a light dusting of snow,” said Lee Hansen, facilities manager at Emily Oaks.

“But boy, have we had our share of weird weather for Chilly Fest.”

Past Chilly Fests have seen ice and snow melting because the temperatures were as high as 60 degrees in February.

“We had another Winter Chilly Fest where it was zero degrees and we moved some of our outdoor activities indoors,” Hansen said. “Last year, sadly enough on day two, it was raining. So you never can tell what Winter Chilly Fest will bring, but we always find a way to do our activities and have a ball.”

Hundreds of people were certainly having a ball Feb. 8. The upstairs dining room - where both turkey and vegetarian chili were served in a room overlooking the grounds - was consistently busy. Across the way was a small kitchen where cooks stirred large silver pots brimming with chili and giving off a delectable aroma.

“I think it’s really nice to get out in winter - to have a reason to get out,” said Cheryl Toohey as she slowly stirred her pot of chili. “I think we offer something unique and it’s a lot of fun. We get people coming back year after year to participate in all the games and to come eat chili.”

Sanford Cherney of Skokie and Frieda Feiger of Morton Grove fueled up with some chili before Cherney was going to take to the pond for skating for the first time in years.

“Twenty years ago my nephew, who is now 28, had a birthday party in this very room,” Cherney said. “As a kid, I used to skate on this Emily Park lagoon back in the ‘70s.”

Skating is part of the annual Winter Chilly Fest only when weather permits, and most Chilly Fests, Hansen said, weather has not permitted. But Feb. 8 was a different story; not only did weather accommodate skaters of all ages - from novices to trained skaters who put on a special demonstration - but it did so while lovely flakes fell gently all around them.

The hayride, motored by a John Deere tractor, made a loop around a small section of the grounds, but just enough of the grounds to provide riders with a view of decorated trees, lit up animal creations and, of course, the natural wonders of winter.

“We’ve been to Chilly Fest three times,” said Loren Stillwell as she held her young daughter, Ruby, on her lap during one of the hayrides. “I can’t remember whether this is her second or her third time. We always come because the kids love everything about it so we would never miss it.”

Winter Chilly Fest began in 2006, conceived as a combination of two other events that were dropped by the Park District, Hansen said.

Spring Equinox Chilly Fest, held in weather warmer than now, and Tapestry of Lights, where lights were placed in 55 trees on the Emily Oaks grounds while a chorale ensemble sang away, merged to form Winter Chilly Fest.

Maxwell Hresk and his family came to Chilly Fest, in part because Maxwell and his classmates made animal feeders for this year’s event. He took in the surrounding grounds as he and his family enjoyed a hayride, but it was the roasting of marshmallows and making s’mores later on that he was really looking forward to.

Judy Fenderino, a seventh-grader, said she has been coming to Winter Chilly Fest for at least five years.

“It’s usually not like this,” she said, sticking out her tongue to catch a newly-fallen snowflake. “This is really winter.”

As the late afternoon sun was giving way to impending darkness, ice sculptor Dan Rebholz of World Class Ice Sculpture revved up his chainsaw and carved away until he had created an amazing frozen squirrel in only an hour.

“I’ve spent many years of practice with the chainsaw,” Rebholz said when asked how he mastered this skill. “Many blocks of ice I’ve carved. It takes a lot of repetition.”

This was only day and night one of Winter Chilly Fest. Those who worked the four hours said that 400 people may have enjoyed some or all of the offerings of the popular winter festival.

The best review of this year’s event, though, may have come from a conversation between a girl and her parents, who held her hands as they walked to the parking lot.

“Can we come back tomorrow?” she asked.

Her father answered that they were there for hours today.

“Didn’t you have your fill?” he said.

She emphatically shook her head. “No, I want to do this again. It was fun.”
NILES

Village moves forward with video gambling

BY IGOR STUDENKOV
For Sun-Times Media | @istudenkov

Video gambling in Niles got one step closer to becoming a reality on Feb. 6. The Task Force for Testimony on Video Gaming voted to recommend the approval of video gambling to the Niles Board of Trustees. It isn't clear when the village board will consider video gambling, but the officials suggested that it could happen as soon as next month.

The task force was created to collect testimony that would help the board decide whether to allow video gambling in the Village of Niles. Once the testimony was heard, it would make a recommendation to the board. Before casting its vote, the task force heard the last two testimonies.

Niles Police Chief Dean Strzelecki said that his department talked to governments of several municipalities in northeastern Illinois that decided to allow video gambling to get perspective on some of the issues that were brought up during prior hearings.

The department asked if the establishments that installed video gambling machines saw the number of customers increase. Addison, Elgin, McHenry and Rockford have seen increases. Morton Grove responded that it wasn't sure either way.

The department also looked at whether allowing video gambling attracted crime.

"None of the towns reported any increase in crime rates due to video gambling," said Strzelecki.

Strzelecki noted that the state law already requires the businesses that installed video gambling machines to install video security system. He noted that only Morton Grove went a step further and had the feed go directly to village police.

Scott Neukirch, Niles' finance director, addressed the revenue side of video gambling. He said the Finance Department estimated that video gambling would bring in $45,000 in revenue per machine, with the business keeping $15,750 and $2,500 going to Niles directly. Because businesses are allowed to install up to five video gambling machines, the department estimates that each business can earn up to $225,000 in total revenue, with up to $11,250 going to the village.

Neukirch said in the best-case scenario, if all 60 eligible businesses chose to install five machines each, the village could get $675,000 in revenue. More likely, though, he said video gambling would earn Niles between $168,000 and $506,250 in revenue.

Neukirch said all numbers were based on the assumption that each business would install five machines. Once the testimonies wrapped up, the task force's three voting members cast a unanimous "yes with conditions" vote. As task force chair James Callero explained before the vote, this means that the vote was in support of video gambling — so as its implemented under the conditions the task force recommended.

It is not clear what those conditions actually are. All task force members declined to comment.

After the meeting, Village Manager and nonvoting task force member Steven Vineziano said the task force will come up with recommendations later and submit them to Mayor Andrew Przybylo. The mayor will then bring it to the Village Board for discussion and a vote.

Niles man charged in gas station robbery

BY JENNIFER JOHNSON
jenjohnson@pioneerlocal.com | @Jen_Pioneer

A Niles man remains behind bars this week, accused of robbing a Milwaukee Avenue gas station in the village. Kevin Haufe, 39, of 7086 Franks Ave., is suspected of pointing a black handgun at a store clerk inside a gas station at 6901 N. Milwaukee Ave. and demanding money from the cash register just after 12:30 a.m., according to Niles police. Haufe allegedly threatened to shoot the clerk, a 40-year-old Norridge man, whom police say handed Haufe cash from the register.

Haufe then reportedly ran away on foot. Responding officers found Haufe in a parking lot south of the gas station in the 6800 block of Milwaukee Avenue. According to police, as the officers approached Haufe, he threw his hands up in the air and stopped walking.

Police recovered $408 in cash from Haufe, the amount stolen in the robbery, said Niles Police Sgt. Robert Tornabene. The gun Haufe allegedly used was not immediately found.

"He dumped it somewhere. We just haven't been able to locate it," Tornabene said.

The gun is believed to be a BB gun, according to police.

Haufe has been charged with felony armed robbery with a firearm. He remains in custody in Cook County Jail with bond set at $250,000, and was expected in court again Feb. 11.
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MORTON GROVE

Historical Museum looking deeper at local cultures’ origins

BY IGOR STUDENKOV
For Sun-Times Media | @istudenkov

The Morton Grove Historical Museum is gearing up for a series of exhibits aimed to recognize the many ethnic groups that make up the village community.

The series was launched out of concern that, while the museum’s current exhibits do a good job detailing the village's origins, they don’t properly represent the history of Morton Grove’s current, more diverse population.

During March, April and May, the museum will have special exhibits focusing on different ethnic groups. And while the museum plans to draw on its own collections, it is reaching out to Morton Grove residents to help fill the gaps.

Over the last forty years, Morton Grove has become increasingly diverse, welcoming immigrants from all over the world. But according to Mary Busch, the Morton Grove Historical Museum’s curator, the museum’s collection hasn’t reflected that.

“It has become so apparent that we have exhibits on our early settlers, which were largely Germans and Luxembourgers,” she said. “Then came the Irish and the Italians. It’s been decades now, and our population has really shifted with Filipino and East Indian migration. [We felt that] it was important that we start collecting stories about people who now live in Morton Grove.”

Busch said that attending Golf School District’s International Celebration of Cultures really drove home just how diverse Morton Grove has become.

The museum decided to launch a series of exhibits focusing on different ethnic groups’ history in Morton Grove. The groups that got the focus were chosen based on federally-proclaimed heritage months. During March, exhibits will deal with Morton Grove's Irish-American and Greek-American residents. During April, they will deal with Arab-American and Scottish American residents. And during May, exhibits will deal with Jewish-Americans, Haitian-Americans, Korean-Americans, Filipino-Americans and members of other ethnic groups that originally came from East Asian and South Asian counties.

The museum plans to draw on its own archives, and it has been reaching out to elected officials and organizations to help fill the collection.

“We’ve been talking to teachers from [the Morton Grove Historical Museum Educational Center] we worked with,” said Busch. “We reached out to Ed Ramos, the first Filipino village clerk. We’ve been talking to Girl Scouts, Boy Scouts, people who work in the Swedish-American Museum in Chicago. Our assistant curator will go to [Chicago’s] Irish-American Heritage Center, the Irish School of Dance.”

Busch has also been talking to owners of Morton Grove ethnic businesses.

“We had about five interviews where we met with business owners,” she said. “It was just very interesting to talk about where they come from, who they’re targeting, who they’re attracting.”

The museum is also reaching out to residents for material. The museum is looking for artifacts such as clothing, documents and photographs. It is also interested in getting residents’ accounts of their families’ histories, as well as any genealogical information they may have.

Busch said that residents can either donate items or lend them to the museum until the exhibits are over. Residents who wish to contribute items can contact Busch by either calling the museum at (847) 965-0203 or emailing her at mbusch@morton-groveparks.com.

In addition to the exhibits dealing with specific cultures, the museum plans to put together a special multicultural exhibit during March. Called “Living Together: Shoes and Shelters,” it will feature examples of shoes and shelters from various cultures. The exhibits will draw on the educational collections Morton Grove Historical Museum is borrowing from Field Museum, and residents are welcome to loan their own shoes.

Busch thinks that, ultimately, the exhibits serve an important purpose.

“We’re all American,” she said. “We bring something when we immigrate here, and it becomes a part of the American experience. I’ve been a part of it, and we think its very important that the different groups understand each other.”
St. Paul of the Cross kids heading to Washington for model city contest

BY KARIE ANGELL LC
For Sun-Times Media | @KarieAngellLuc

St. Paul of the Cross kids heading to Washington for model city contest

DiscoverE's annual Future City competition, geared for sixth-, seventh- and eighth-grade students, is held from September 2013 through February 2014. Future City is a program of DiscoverE, a consortium of professional and technical societies and major U.S. corporations.

DiscoverE works year-round to grow a dynamic engineering profession critical to public health, safety, and welfare. The foundation benefits from the expertise of volunteers and more than 100 professional societies, businesses and government agencies.

All participants were tasked with the theme of "Tomorrow's Transit: Design a way to move people in and around your city."

Tengdurborg, which means "connected city," was inspired by Iceland and takes advantage of the country's ample supply of geothermal activity. The modeling used the STEM educational values of science, technology, engineering and mathematics.

At the Feb. 15-18 competition, St. Paul of the Cross has a shot at the national grand prize of $7,500 for the team's school or after-school's STEM program and a trip to U.S. Space Camp in Huntsville, Ala.

Led by an educator and engineer mentor, students learned the basics of city planning and management by designing their virtual city using SimCity software. From there, each team built a physical model of their city using recycled materials costing no more than $100. A research essay is part of the competition.

Besides St. Paul of the Cross, two other North Shore teams were among Chicago area schools: Saints Faith, Hope & Charity Catholic School in Winnetka and St. Athanasius School in Evanston.

BATTERY
Laura Garcia, 26, of 9977 Linda Lane, unincorporated Maine Township, was charged with battery on Feb. 5 after she allegedly struck a woman in the face inside a store on the 9000 block of Golf Road. The victim, a 32-year-old Morton Grove woman, told police that Garcia accused her of talking to her boyfriend in the store. Police said Garcia admitted to becoming angry and yelling at the woman, whom she did not know, but denied striking her. She has a March 11 court date.

DISPUTE
Police were called to the 6800 block of Lyons Street on Feb. 2 when a 48-year-old woman reported that her 12-year-old son began throwing things around the house and yelling after she told him he was overweight. Police provided advice to the family.

On Feb. 3, police responded to an apartment on the 8500 block of Milwaukee Avenue after a 67-year-old man reported that he and his 50-year-old wife were arguing "because she does nothing all day except spend his money" and was calling him names. According to police, neither the man nor the woman wanted to leave the apartment, but both agreed to stay away from each other for the remainder of the night.

Police on Feb. 3 responded to a home on the 6800 block of Lexington Lane where a 41-year-old man reportedly stated that he was upset because his wife had come home after being gone for 13 days and he did not know why she had returned. The man further said that his wife had taken their children and their dog, police said. The wife agreed to leave the home for the night, according to police.

THEFT
Two men are believed to have stolen 18 sweatshirts, valued at $360, from a store on the 8300 block of Golf Road on the evening of Feb. 1. Officers also allegedly found 82 grams of cannabis, packaging material and a scale in Sanchez’s vehicle. A court date was scheduled for March 12.

Randall D. Clamana, 20, of Niles, was charged with possession of marijuana after he was arrested on Dempster and Waukegan Avenues in Morton Grove on Feb. 4. Police said he was stopped for traffic violations. Officers allegedly found 3.2 grams of cannabis in Clamana’s vehicle.

A vehicle was stolen from a parking lot on the 8900 block of Heathwood Circle between 5 and 7 a.m., Feb. 5, while the owner was removing snow in the area, police said.

HARASSMENT
A 54-year-old Park Ridge man said he was threatened by a 48-year-old employee over the phone on Feb. 3. Police said the two were involved in a dispute over the company vehicle being parked on the street and not on private property.
Field students flex dictionaries for vocabulary parade

BY JENNIFER JOHNSON
johnson@pioneerlocal.com | 815-305

They might be some of the most unusual words hiding in Webster's dictionary. But some fifth-graders at Field School in Park Ridge found them. Like hemisemidemiquaver, the 64th note in music notation, that caught Max Szul's eye. Or the short-and-simple hippomonstrosesquippedaliophobia preferred by Amelie Gahanna, a condition describing the fear of long words. (Reading that was kind of scary.)

And there were other, more commonplace words, too — everything from pagoda to pawn broker.

With the Olympic anthem playing in the background, more than 100 Field students on Feb. 6 took part in a "Vocabulary Parade," their way of celebrating the start of the 2014 Winter Games in Sochi, Russia. But instead of representing their home country, the students dressed in costumes or held up signs with words on them.

It was all part of a project aimed at helping the students expand their vocabulary, while also giving them something fun and creative to do.

The students, explained Josepha Barzowski, one of Field's fifth-grade teachers, were asked to choose three words — interesting words, words they didn't know, words that drew their attention. Then, they narrowed down their choices to one word and were told to study the definition, perfect the pronunciation and develop a costume or poster around the word's meaning in time for the Vocabulary Parade.

It turned out to be so popular that many students could be heard talking about their words outside of the classroom, asking others if they were a noun, a verb or an adjective, Barzowski said.

"A lot of creativity and thought has gone into it," she noted.

Nichole Botello admitted she doesn't know anyone who uses the Yiddish word "kvetch" in conversation, but that was entirely why she chose it.

I wanted to find a word no one has heard before," she said. "I also wanted to find something that originated from somewhere else." Botello held a stop sign that read "Stop kvetching!" and attached word bubbles to her body to demonstrate uses of the word, which means "to complain." "I hate this!" and "I want to go home!" two of the bubbles read.

Jonathan Kahn used the symbolism of a superhero to portray his word, speleology, the scientific study of caves. Kahn wore a T-shirt with the Batman logo and on his head he wore a spotlight that cave explorers use.

"It was really fun to say 'speleology," Kahn said as to why he chose the word.

Brendan Kerins glued pictures of an old computer, a 1980s boom box and a typewriter on poster board to reflect the word "obsolete," while Marko Anderson dressed in a jogging suit and hung several medals around his neck to portray "pompous."

"It describes a lot of professional athletes," Anderson said.

Ralph Lippert ran across "lovesick" while reading through all the L words in the dictionary. "I was looking in the L section, because my last name starts with L," he said.

Lippert scrawled "lovesick" across a white T-shirt, which he decorated with hearts. In his hand was a bucket — something a person with a stomach bug might need in an emergency.

"I think the kids really did a great job showing us what they can do with their creativity and with their minds," said teacher Lindsey Hejza.

In keeping with the Olympic games theme, medals were handed out to students in several different categories. The Best Adjective medal went to Marko Anderson for "pompous," Best Verb went to Gaby Gawedzki for "forsake," Best Noun went to Elena Zitis for "pagoda," Most Hilarious Word went to Michael Dwier for "gallimaufry," Most Concise Word went to Heidi Lindemann for "yew," Most Lengthy Word went to Amelie Gahanna for "hippomonstrosesquippedaliophobia," Best Gloomy Word went to Jack Hernandez for "feeble," Most Challenging Word to Pronounce went to Max Szul for "hemisemidemiquaver," and Most Ingenious Costume went to Nichole Botello for "kvetch."
A proposal to tighten East Maine School District 63's nepotism policy, which would have directly affected the School Board's vice president, was yanked at last minute before a vote Wednesday.

The revised policy would have prohibited School Board members from doing business with any company where the board member has an ownership stake. The policy would have had a direct affect on the board's vice president, who owns a bus company that has been transporting district students on special trips since 2009.

According to the district superintendent, the revision was pulled to clarify the language. The board will consider it again as early as next month.

District 63 didn't have a nepotism policy until 2012. The original policy said that any relative of any board member can't get a full-time or part-time job at the district. The policy made an exception for board members' relatives who already worked for the district. So long as they kept their jobs, the policy wouldn't apply to them.

The revised policy would have extended the prohibition to the board members themselves. And, for the first time, it would have established that the district can't do business with any company that the board member owns, or has any sort of ownership interest in.

That includes transportation providers, food services, companies the district buys supplies from, and any company that has any sort of contract with the district.

The changes would have had a direct impact on Board Vice President Simmons. Simmons is the owner of A&B Bus Service, a Franklin Park-based bus charter company. According to district's meeting minutes, the board has been regularly contracting the company for special trips since 2009. Records indicate that Simmons abstained from all votes related to his company.

Although the policy will not be retroactive, the district will discontinue use of this bus service as long as Mr. Simmons serves on the board.

Clay assured Pioneer Press that the board will consider the revision again. "It will reappear on the March agenda," he said.

The board's desire is to make it clear that board members themselves cannot do business with any company where they have a stake in.
IN MEMORIAM

Park Ridge woman made big impact on local charities

BY JENNIFER JOHNSON
jjohnson@pioneerlocal.com

As a collector of Kalo silver and pieces by artist Alfonso Iannelli, Jean McCabe fit right in with Park Ridge's Kalo Foundation and at Iannelli's home and studio, which the foundation raised money to save. It's the place where friends, family and members of the Park Ridge community will also have a chance to say their farewells.

A memorial visitation for McCabe, who died Sunday while in hospice care, will be held Thursday at Iannelli Studios, 255 N. Northwest Highway, from 3 to 8 p.m. A memorial mass will take place Friday, Feb. 14, at Mary, Seat of Wisdom Church, 920 W. Granville Ave. in Park Ridge.

Jean McCabe, with husband, Ed, in 2010. | FILE PHOTO

Jean McCabe, 83, was a longtime volunteer and supporter of charitable causes and the arts. Through the years, she served as a board member for Women in Need Growing Stronger (WINGS), the Park Ridge Youth Campus, the Kalo Foundation and the Park Ridge Community Fund. She was also active in the Girl Scouts organization and at her church, Mary, Seat of Wisdom, where she served as a minister of care, bringing communion to home-bound parishioners.

But it was WINGS that was an organization especially close to McCabe's heart. In the organization's early days, she and Ed donated a home to be used as transitional housing for women leaving abusive relationships. The residence, located in Park Ridge, is still known as the McCabe House.

"My parents have always been very sensitive to women being cared for appropriately," said Jean's daughter, Marsha Kozelka. "They used to go to antique auction places looking for Kalo silver," she explained.

"What I remember most about Jean was when we had a fundraiser on the second floor of the Pickwick Theatre and we did a 1920s theme and she came in flapper clothes," Barclay recalled.

Outside of her causes, Jean McCabe enjoyed playing competitive bridge and cooking. "She was a very creative cook," Kozelka said. "She loved cooking and she always tried new recipes. She was reading cook books until she passed away."

Jean McCabe is survived by her husband, Ed; children Kathleen McCabe (Beverly Kunze), Marsha (Robert) Kozelka, and Jan McCabe; three grandchildren and three siblings.

Memorial contributions may be given to the Kalo Foundation, 255 N. Northwest Highway, Park Ridge, Ill. 60068, or WINGS, P.O. Box 95615, Palatine, Ill. 60095.
Dear Help Squad,
I purchased a WeDeal for a facial at Pascal Pour Elle in Glencoe. I had purchased these before and received wonderful facials at Pascal—worth $100 dollars, for which I paid $50 to WeDeal. So in December, WeDeal ran the special again for Pascal, and I purchased two. My friend Debbie Shonfeld did the same. I made an appointment...and was so excited to get a facial.

Someone from the salon called me two days before and told me they were canceling my facial, and they were no longer accepting WeDeal coupons. However, I already paid $100! The Pascal employee was also extremely rude to me as if I were the wrongdoer, as well as my friend Debbie, who had a similar experience.

The person told me that WeDeal never paid them the money they owed them. I had no reply from WeDeal, but my credit card company did reimburse me. So did Debbie's. However, I feel Pascal should feel the customer is always right, as I was a client there before I bought these coupons! They treated us horrifically.

Please note—the facials I had there were wonderful and worth every penny! That's why I kept going back to WeDeal.

Gwen Post, Winnetka

Dear Gwen,
Aren't facials amazing? So relaxing and peaceful, and they make you feel beautiful! We decided to help you experience those feelings again, so we called Pascal.

We spoke with Andrea Variames, administrative assistant to Pascal Ibgui, the owner of Pascal's, who could not have been nicer or more apologetic.

"It makes me sick to my stomach that someone would treat a client like that," Variames said. "It's not acceptable, and I will bring it to Pascal's attention. Pascal would never accept treating a client like that and it's not his character to let a client go away unhappy for any situation."

Andrea took our phone number and within an hour, we got a call from Ibgui, who, just like his assistant, was very apologetic.

He explained that he invested $12,000 with WeDeal several months ago, and that he was able to retrieve his money from the company, but only after the first check bounced. He was hesitant to continue doing business with WeDeal, but he wanted to give the company a chance and wanted to take advantage of a lucrative opportunity. So he again invested $12,000, but has not received any payment from WeDeal.

On Feb. 6, the we deal.com site went dark, showing a message that said, "something has gone wrong. We've been notified and will be fixing it right away."

Ibgui said he has already honored $7,000 worth of the WeDeal certificates, which is why he tried to avoid further loss. He instructed his staff to call his WeDeal customers to explain the situation.

When Help Squad showed him Gwen's letter, he apologized for the bad behavior on the part of the employee who spoke with Gwen and Debbie.

Ibgui also agreed that it isn't his customers' fault that WeDeal isn't keeping up its end of the bargain (no pun intended).

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Ibgui also agreed that it isn't his customers' fault that WeDeal isn't keeping up its end of the bargain (no pun intended).

He instructed his staff to call his WeDeal customers to explain the situation.

When Help Squad showed him Gwen's letter, he apologized for the bad behavior on the part of the employee who spoke with Gwen and Debbie.
Use the **Stage** section to learn about local theater productions.

Get up and **go**

Your guide to the weekend and beyond

Every Thursday
OPINION

LETTER TO THE EDITOR

City squanders chances to help taxpayers

The real estate taxes keep on rising in our town. Expenses are rising as well. Park Ridge has had several chances to keep the cost of expenses down for the homeowners and we did not take advantage of these chances.

First, all of the suburbs in our area were given a chance to reap revenue from the casino in Rosemont. We elected not to do so. Do the elected officials in our community think that people in our town will not go to the casinos or support them if we do not receive revenue from the Casino?

This, I believe, was a big mistake.

Second, for years the city of Park Ridge was dry. It took a long time to finally decide that "we could enjoy revenue" from the liquor taxes collected.

We were too slow to act. We finally woke up. Liquor stores and drinking establishments surround us. People are mobile. They will go purchase what they want or eat and drink regardless of town-related sanctions.

Third, at present, there are real estate developers that want to develop property and build more one- and two-bedroom apartments than three-bedroom apartments in their development. The city wants more three-bedroom apartments. Three-bedroom apartments have a potential to cost us money to educate the children that could live in the larger apartments. More apartments, more tax revenue, less stress on the school system. What is wrong with this scenario?

All of the above are examples of our city government not looking forward. These are examples that cost us money.

We do have obligations, but not to see how more money can be saved or collected is short-sighted.

Jack Muscia
Park Ridge

Not all inequalities are created equal

One of the dangers of having a national discussion on "income inequality," which the president declared is the "defining issue of our time" in his State of the Union speech, is simply defining the phrase.

In simple terms, the phrase refers to the concentration of a nation's wealth in the bank accounts of a few. If that's the case, it's been a trend since the 1970s that seems to accelerate with every passing decade.

The phrase "income inequality" is so nebulous — a higher order of abstraction that can mean so many different things to many different people.

Is income inequality the fact that Bill Gates makes so much more for inventing Microsoft, or that Oprah makes all she does compared to the cameraman on her show?

How about the head of the Walton family making so much more than a Walmart cashier, or even the investor in Walmart stock benefiting from the work of the Sam's Club greeter?

Or is it just, why does he (point to someone) make more than me?

In the midst of a teachers strike, a wise editor once told me that everyone thinks they work hard, and everyone thinks they are underpaid.

The real questions are what is causing the concentration of wealth in the hands of fewer people and then what do we do about it?

Only 600 people can play Major League Baseball, and they get paid an exorbitant amount for it. Thousands play in the minors and get a pittance.

That's how it works. In the mid-1990s I was invited to talk to Oak Park-River Forest High School students about issues of the day. One student asked me what they should do to prepare for the global economy. I told him that first of all, when you hear the phrase "global economy" think "lower American wages."

Looking back, I should have said "fewer American jobs," or "fewer jobs that pay a living wage."

We live in an economy where labor is cheap. Today, if a job can be done anywhere, it will be done where it is cheapest. And thanks to technology, a lot of jobs can be done anywhere.

So what do we do about it?

Obviously, education is the key. We must learn to do jobs better than anyone else in the world, or invent jobs that can only be done here, or do them more cheaply.

Yet, our education system is failing those who are most likely to become victims of this "income inequality" that we seek to end.

Sometimes I wonder if the wealth that flowed so freely to create a large middle class in the 30 years or so following World War II was just an odd blip in the economic history of the nation.

LET US HEAR FROM YOU

Send your letters to the editor to News Editor Ben Meyerson at bmeyerson@pioneerlocal.com or mail to Niles Herald-Spectator, 350 N. Orleans, Chicago, IL 60654.

Keep letters to 250 words or fewer. Niles Herald-Spectator reserves the right to edit letters for length, clarity and content. All letters must be signed to be published.
Term limits a bunch of hot air

What do term limits and blimps have in common?
They're both filled with hot air.

Now that the election season is ramping up, I see that the issue of term limits for elected officials has been re-animated by at least one candidate.

And that's a pity.

Advocates for term limits usually are from the political party that is out of power.

I would wager that the candidate I hear crying for term limits would change his tune if somehow Ronald Reagan were still alive and seeking his ninth term as president. (To be candid, I would be just as happy if Franklin Delano Roosevelt were still among us and in his 21st term as President.)

But other than sour grapes and hypocrisy, term limits are a waste of breath and valuable time. The whole idea of term limits is insubstantial and is a distraction from what politicians should be doing, should be talking about.

It is impossible to tell from an official's voting record how many terms he or she has served.

Just as it is impossible to tell from how many terms an official has served what his or her voting record is.

That's because there is no necessary connection between what a legislator does and how long he or she has been doing it.

There are legislators who are incompetent and/or venal from the very first day they are elected to serve.

There are legislators who are competent and public-spirited after serving for 20 years.

And vice versa.

But a long time as a legislator might make them stale, less energetic.

Maybe.

But it can equally be argued that long-time legislators have wisdom and valuable experience.

No, it's what legislators do, and how they vote that is important.

So, as you approach the next election, don't be distracted.

Look at the important issues.

Look at the candidates' views on the important issues.

And vote for the candidates who will do what you think is right.
FEATURED HOME

BY WRAPPORTS NEWS SERVICE

7450 N. Waukegan Road,
Unit 507, Niles
Condo size: 1,550 square feet
Lot size: NA
Year built: 1995
Bedrooms: 2
Bathrooms: 2
Garage: One-car attached
Property tax: $1,761 (2012)
Exterior: Brick
School districts: Niles Elementary School District 71 and Niles Township Community High School District 219

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Luxury segment sees continued growth, new models emerging

By Andy Mikonis
For Sun-Times Media

Luxury vehicles dominated the recent Detroit International Auto Show and if you attend the Chicago Auto Show you will see plenty of examples of the strength in this surging segment.

"It's a great day for luxury," said Mike Accavitti, senior vice president of automotive operations at Acura, closing out the last major manufacturer press conference of January's North American International Auto Show in Detroit. Contenders for a piece of market share are seeking...
Chicago Auto Show
Room with a varoom 'must sees'

Kia Niro urban lifestyle concept

BY JEFF TAYLOR
For Sun-Times Media

The Chicago Auto Show will conclude on Monday, Feb. 17, but there’s still time to visit McCormick Place, where the cars are the stars and trucks often manage to find the spotlight brightest.

This year's Chicago Auto Show features vehicles on display that will be taking their bows on the road this summer and fall. A real hit was the hot new 2015 Chrysler 200 sedan. The 200 has rocketed from an also-ran status to a style leader in the mid-size sedan class with a 9-speed rotary-dial transmission, impressive technology, interior upgrades and a $21,700 starting price.

The new 2015 Cadillac ATS coupe shows that personal luxury two doors are making a comeback. Other top GM coupes include just-announced Corvette Z06 (828 hp) and Camaro Z/28. Ford has a new 50th Anniversary Ford Mustang. A four-cylinder model joins the lineup, interior is fresh and new evolutionary styling bridges the gap to next generation. Model kit maker Revell will be giving away 50th anniversary 2015 Mustang models to kids 11 and under.

On the truck side, Ford leads the show with its restyled 2015 F150. The decision to go with military-grade aluminum on the industry's best-selling vehicle drops 700 pounds to aid fuel economy. The auto show "wow" factor is embodied in the concept cars and Toyota's FT-1, Kia's Niro urban lifestyle concept and Cadillac's Elmiraj full-size coupe are the best of the bunch. Also, check out the supercar and luxury display presented by Comcast featuring the likes of McLaren, Ferrari, Bentley, Aston Martin and Rolls Royce.

AMC's popular show "The Walking Dead" is back and Hyundai shows goers with a "Zombie fighter car lot" themed area showing three Hyundais outfitted with zombie fighting accessories. Chevrolet brings a full video experience as well as the very fun Greenbrier 500's van photo activity that provides costumes and allows you to make a photo book of your show experience.

For ten consecutive years Camp Jeep has demonstrated the rugged off-road capabilities of Jeeps and this year the course is new. Toyota has a desert-themed Drive Center with 14-foot-tall hill, water-crossing, giant seasaw and various obstacles. Fully participate in ride-and-drive and Toyota's "Drive For A Cause" campaign makes a contribution to one of three charities: American Red Cross, AMVETS and FFA.

Racing and performance are big draws at the Auto Show and Ford has its Mustang acceleration dyno, along with the world's biggest interactive F150 driving simulator. The "Toyota Racing Zone," has simulators and celebrates NASCAR and NHRA involvement, Fifth-Third Bank has its NASCAR Fusion racecar along with simulators and Mazda shows off its racing involvement.

Chevrolet has Sonicas, Z/28s and the new V-6 SS sedan on display. Dodge has a 426 HEMI display, MOPAR Garage, Challengers, 300s and an SRT display with Vipers and SRT enhanced cars. If you're a "hostie" the Connected World Pavilion showcases the latest in technology services, smart phone apps and connected car info. Follow the Chicago Auto Show on social media and participate in the #CAS-Social Media Scavenger Hunt. More than 100 prizes are up for grabs during the show with a seven-night cruise grand prize.

The show wraps on Presidents Day, Monday, Feb. 17, with Family Day, a great indoor destination and place to spend a day off from work or school.

LUXURY | CONTINUED FROM COVER
to distinguish their product at the Chicago Auto Show in a changing landscape where Mercedes-Benz just broke the sub-$30,000 barrier and Kia for a spot in the luxury clique with the K900.

At the top of the heap, Rolls-Royce announced a fourth straight record breaking year. Bentley also stated the U.S., their biggest market, saw a 26 percent increase in sales over 2012, outsourcing a worldwide increase of 19 percent.

Acura's debut was the 2015 TLX Prototype. This concept car showed the styling of the upcoming mid-size sedan that will replace the TL and the TSX. The interior was not shown, though Acura promised a "reality-like experience" citing an engineering emphasis on body rigidity and chassis isolation in order to deliver a quiet ride.

Two powertrains were discussed by Acura, a 2.4-liter four-cylinder with a dual clutch transmission with torque converter, and a 3.5-liter V6 with gasoline direct injection and a nine-speed automatic. The TLX will also feature four-wheel steering.

Riding on the excitement of capturing the number one luxury brand in U.S. sales for 2013, Mercedes-Benz made news with three new production models in Detroit. Most significant was the new C-Class, traditionally their best seller worldwide. Once the entry level Benz, the new C-Class oozes upscale after the arrival of the lower-priced CLA.

The CLA's sister crossover, the GLA, appeared in high-powered AMG trim. And finally, the ultimate in opulence with a Mercedes-Benz badge, the 633-horsepower V-12 powered S600 made its world premiere.

Perhaps the best indicator for the strength of the luxury market was the number of new luxury coupes to appear in Detroit. The most striking was the Mercedes-Benz Concept S-Class Coupe, said to be a preview of next generation styling. A few automakers added some hot horsepower to the personal luxury aspect of a coupe, for their expressions of ultimate high-performance luxury cars.

Following up on the successful launch of the ATS sedan, Cadillac introduced the ATS Coupe for 2015. With a 22 percent increase in sales for the year, Cadillac is claiming the title of fastest growing full-line luxury brand. When it hits showrooms, the ATS will be Cadillac's only coupe other than the plug-in hybrid ELR and the larger CTS coupe is phased out. While recognizable using the same "Art and Science" design language, the ATS Coupe offers more conservative than the CTS coupe. A manual transmission will be offered for driving enthusiasts.

After the redesign of the 3-Series sedans and wagons, BMW introduced the replacement for the 3-Series Coupe (and convertible), which is now called the M4. So, it was no surprise to see the next step, the new M4 performance model of the 4-Series Coupe debut alongside the M3 Sedan in Detroit.

Additionally, BMW showed the new 2-Series Coupe, a slightly larger replacement for the 1-Series Coupe. This one, the M235i, was representing the new "M Performance" sub brand, which will offer sport tuned models one notch below the track purposed M cars.

Perhaps a response to the M4, Lexus rolled out the RC F, the F performance version of the new RC Coupe. A 5.0-liter V-8 with over 480 horsepower will motivate the RC F Coupe through an eight-speed transmission and torque-vectoring differential that varies drive wheel speeds to improve cornering. Like other F variants, the RC F will have unique interior and exterior treatments inspired by the Lexus LFA supercar.
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Seasonal Tax-Preparation Jobs

By Dona DeZube, Monster Finance Careers Expert

Interested in keeping money out of the government's hands? Consider a seasonal job as a tax-preparation professional. Each year, large tax-preparation firms such as H&R Block and Jackson Hewitt train and employ thousands of people to prepare tax returns in their storefront offices.

H&R Block hires 80,000 tax professionals to work from January until the end of April. Ninety percent of them have taken the company's income tax course, which is offered every September and is available in both English and Spanish, says Kathy Burlison, director of tax implementation for H&R Block. The cost varies by location, and many offices offer early-bird registration specials and weekend classes. Although the course typically runs 11 weeks, an accelerated version can be completed in less time. The entire course is 69 hours.

Jackson Hewitt's tax training course generally meets twice a week for six weeks; self-paced and instructor-facilitated online training is also available. A more advanced, professional income tax course runs nine weeks. Each Jackson Hewitt office sets its own tuition rate, which is often free. You pay only for books and supplies.

While most of the people hired for seasonal tax positions come out of training classes, taking the class won't guarantee you a job. You must be hired by a Jackson Hewitt franchise owner or H&R Block.

Flexible Schedules

Seasonal tax work appeals to stay-at-home parents, students and retirees, who often prefer hours outside the 9-to-5 workday. "The best thing about this job is the flexibility it offers," Burlison says. "We're looking for talented individuals with strong people skills who have some flexibility in their schedules, who can work days, weekends or evenings."

Many seasonal tax workers have other jobs they work year-round. For them, tax-preparation work adds a second shift during tax season, so their total workday might last 12 to 14 hours. Despite the long hours, tax preparers are retail employees, so you'll need to be easygoing and able to deal with many different personalities.

You won't have to memorize the entire tax code to do the job. "Our computer program takes care of that," promises Burlison. But you will have to keep up on the latest tax changes by taking a refresher course each fall, she adds.

H&R Block tax professionals are paid based on a commission formula. In addition to an hourly rate (average starting rate is $9 per hour), consideration is given to such factors as the number and complexity of the tax returns you prepare, as well as your length of time with the company and the additional educational credits you earn each year.

Do Your Own Thing

If you have an entrepreneurial streak, you can launch your own career as a tax professional quite easily. With a $500 investment, nearly anyone can set up an Internet site and become an online tax preparer, says John Carr, CPA. He should know, because he's president of Taxcite.com, an online tax-preparation Web site.

If you really want to succeed in the field, build up a loyal, local client base. "Tax preparation is really a personal business," Carr says. "You develop a relationship between the person [doing the taxes] and the client."

The tax-preparation business isn't heavily regulated. Only California and Oregon require tax preparers (who aren't attorneys, CPAs or IRS-enrolled agents) to register with the state, says Celeste Heritage of the California Tax Education Council. If you aren't a CPA, an attorney or an enrolled agent, you must take a 60-hour class from an approved school before you can prepare people's tax returns for pay in California.

Outside California and Oregon, you're not required to register, so you can just hang out a shingle and start preparing taxes -- assuming you can find customers.

Whether you go with a local tax-preparation firm or seek business on your own, the one thing you can be sure of is that every year, as January winds blow, 1099s will show up in mailboxes across the country. Learn to prepare taxes this fall, and you'll likely have extra cash and one more 1099 coming your way next year.
Defendants

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10-35-111-006

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Circuit Division of

The Judicial Sales Corporation, plaintiff, vs.

Property Description: 7015 North

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15W030

February 13, 2014

Pioneer Press (DC)

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The sale will be held on Thursday, February 13, 2014, at the The Judicial Sale Corporation at 24th Floor, Chicago, IL 60606.

Pioneer Press

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High School Cube News, Sun-Times Media's new high school sports website, launched this week. It's the latest evolution in Chicago area prep. sports coverage. High School Cube News integrates all the highlights and live games from HighSchoolCube.com with the comprehensive coverage formerly provided by Season Pass.

High School Cube News features school and team pages for every area high school, with live game coverage and highlights from participating schools. Now, all 32 Pioneer Press weekly publications have their very own High School Cube News sites with a hyper-local focus on your favorite teams.

Go to highschoolcubenews.com or click "SPORTS" on your local newspaper site.
Rising star and Oak Park native Aimee Garcia makes her blockbuster debut in 'RoboCop'.

FAST TRACK TO THE FUTURE

Rising star and Oak Park native Aimee Garcia makes her blockbuster debut in 'RoboCop'.

VALENTINE'S DAY GIFT GUIDE

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JAPONAIS BY MORIMOTO'S REOPENING
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Peter Pilotto for Target

The London-based line, helmed by Peter Pilotto and Christopher De Vos, just debuted its 70-piece Target collaboration, featuring dresses, swimwear and accessories in the hyper-real digital prints and vibrant color combos that have become a hallmark of the brand. Starting at $14.99, Target locations citywide; Target.com

Flowers for Dreams

Finally, flowers that feel as good to buy as to receive: The Chicago company donates 10 percent of profits to local charities (February's cause is Bright Pink). Plus, the bouquets come with free hand-delivery and are wrapped in eco-friendly burlap. Starting at $35; Flowersfordreams.com

Celeste

River North's new watering hole invites guests into its two-story, 18th century-inspired digs for a globally-infused menu. Dishes like Jidori chicken with maitake mushrooms and foie gras-onion soubise ($29) accompany cocktails like the Red Right Hand (Sailor Jerry rum, Carpano sweet vermouth, Campari and mole bitters, $10). III W. Hubbard; Celestechicago.com

A Sweet Delivery

Indulge your sweetheart's sweet tooth with the new Sugar & Champagne box from the couture candy company. The limited-edition gold package is stocked with six colorful gourmet gummy bears and a bottle of Prosecco or Chandon, hitting just the right mix of adorable and amorous. $55; Asweetdelivery.com

AT THE SHOOT

At Splash's photo shoot, "RoboCop" star Alme Garcia proved that she can rock any look, smiling for the cameras while sporting everything from jeans to cocktail dresses. Later, she paused for a few behind-the-scenes Twitter pics with photographer Mark Sacro.

CREDITS

Photographer: Mark Sacro
Style: Natalie Saldi
Makeup: Ashleigh Louer
Hair: Daven Mayeda/Celestine Agency for Rene Furterer

Shoot Coordinator: Katerina Bizios

ON THE COVER
Dress: Alpana Neeraj
Accessories: M.C.L by Matthew Campbell Laurenza, similar styles available at Neiman Marcus, 737 N. Michigan; Neimanmarcus.com

AT RIGHT
Dress: Philip Armstrong, similar styles available at Philiparmstrong.com

need to know

WHAT'S YOUR FAVORITE DATE-NIGHT RESTAURANT?

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"My husband and I love Lula Cafe. It's innovative but approachable, the wine list is stellar and it feels super neighborhood."

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"Girl's gone Great -- I never thought I would feel this passionate about green beans."

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"Tango Sf -- candlelit tables, BYOB and a lovely Argentinian atmosphere make this the perfect date spot. Grab a bottle of Malbec and make sure to ask for a spot by the window!"

Interns
Sydney Epstein
Alicia Hauge

"Tuesday nights at Chez Onello's for a Shepherd's Pie, Guinness and live Irish music."

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Founder
Michael Ferro

Splash is distributed weekly inside Sun-Times Media publications.
this week

February 11-16

- CHICAGO THEATRE WEEK

Haven’t seen a show lately? With more than 100 participating productions and partnerships with area hotels, this seven-day celebration of our theater scene, presented by the League of Chicago Theatres in partnership with Choose Chicago, is a great time to get a ticket. Offerings include Broadway in Chicago’s "Phantom of the Opera," Northlight Theatre’s "Tom Jones," and many more.

Cost: Varies by show. For tickets and hotel offers, visit ChicagotheatrewEEK.com.

February 12

- "J’AIME PARIS CABARET"

You don’t have to be a Francophile to appreciate the unmistakable romance of Gallic love songs. French Cabaret Duo sets the mood for Valentine’s Day, performing tunes made famous by Edith Piaf, Jacques Brel and...
February 14

**BEYOND THE SCORE**

The Chicago Symphony Orchestra, with conductor Nicholas McGegan and creative director Gerard McBurney, performs Haydn’s “Symphony No. 100 (Military)” (one of his so-called “London” symphonies), which explores the life of the great metropolis as it was in the 18th century.

**Time:** Friday 7:30 p.m., Sunday 3 p.m.

**Place:** Symphony Center, 220 S. Michigan

**Cost:** $24-$130. For tickets, call (312) 294-3000 or visit cso.org.

February 14

**A.W.E.: THE ART OF SENSUALITY**

The DuSable Museum of African American History hosts a Valentine’s Day edition of its A.W.E. (art, wine and entertainment) event. Sip wine while taking in an eclectic array of entertainment, including live art demos, spoken word poetry, special exhibits, aromatherapy, music and more, all designed to explore the five senses.

**Time:** 7 p.m.

**Place:** 740 E. 56th

**Cost:** $15 in advance, $20 at the door. For tickets, call (773) 947-0600 or visit Dusablemuseum.org.

February 17-March 1

**B-REAL: A LOOK INSIDE URBAN MOVEMENTS**

The Dance Center of Columbia College Chicago, partnering with the college’s School of Fine and Performing Arts and Radio Department, explores local, national and international hip-hop and house dance music with workshops, performances and conversations.

**Time:** Times and venues vary.

**Cost:** Free. For more information, call (312) 369-8330 or visit Colum.edu/dancecenter

February 20

**THE FEW INSTITUTE’S NIGHT OF BEAUTY**

Learn to look your best at this intimately informative evening, illustrating the latest in anti-aging, body shaping and beautifying technologies. A portion of all proceeds from treatments and products purchased will benefit the Few Initiative for Children.

**Time:** 6 p.m.

**Place:** 875 N. Michigan, Suite 3850

**Cost:** Free. To RSVP, email Sheila Arway of Kelz PR at sheila@kelzpr.com.

February 20-23

**THE RADIO SHOW**

Choreographer Kyle Abraham melds the closing of a favorite radio station and a family member’s struggle with Alzheimer’s and Aphasia in an eclectically-scored piece examining the breakdown of communication.

**Time:** Thursday-Saturday 7:30 p.m., Sunday 3 p.m.

**Place:** Museum of Contemporary Art, 220 E. Chicago

**Cost:** $28; MCA members $22. For tickets, call (312) 397-4010 or visit mcachicago.org.

March 6-7

**GO RED FOR WOMEN LUNCHEON**

Go Red For Women — a national initiative of the American Heart Association — welcomes supporters to this fundraising repast, chaired by Sharon O’Keefe, president of University of Chicago Medical Center.

**Time:** 10 a.m.-2 p.m.

**Place:** The Walnut Room, Macy’s, 111 N. State

**Cost:** $250. For tickets, call (312) 476-6000 or visit Chicagoapedforwomen.org.

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ELENI BOUSIS in a custom gown at the Four Seasons Chicago
KELLEY CASEY in Tadashi Shoji at the Drake
MICHAELA PARRILLO in Marchesa at the Four Seasons Chicago
SAM WILEY in a dress from Akira at the Drake
JESSICA ZWEIG in BCBG Max Azria at the Chicago Cultural Center
TANEKA TUCKER in Carmen Marc Valvo at the Museum of Science and Industry

Ladies, it’s time to lace up. The timeless fabric adds texture and femininity to your style, while its peek-a-boo nature amps up standard gala attire with a dose of sex appeal. Vibrant colors make a flirty statement, but nothing beats black lace for stark, modern glamour. On the spring runway, nobody nailed the look better than Valentino — the iconic designer channeled Renaissance regality with the delicate material in deep plum and rich teal. His modern twist on medieval mesh sends a clear message to fashionistas: There’s no better time to be straight-laced.
SHEN YUN
神韻晚會 2014

"Beautiful ... a nimble mastery."
—Chicago Tribune

“It’s great! It’s great! I love the way they work the animation in with the dancing and the music, I mean the whole thing is wonderful.”
—Bill Zwecker, Entertainment columnist for the Chicago Sun-Times

“It was inspirational and educational - a performance that I encourage everyone to see and all of us to learn from.”
—Dorothy Kane, Creator of fashion brand DKNY

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JAPANNAIS BY MORIMOTO REOPENING

N early 300 guests packed into Japonais by Morimoto (600 W. Chicago) Jan. 29 for the soft opening of the revamped sushi restaurant, now helmed by Iron Chef Masaharu Morimoto. "Check, Please!" creator David Manilow, Potbelly Chairman Bryant Keil and former Chicago Bears Rashied Davis and Jerry Azumah were among those in attendance, sipping sake and Japanese beer and visiting food stations headed by top local chefs such as Stephanie Izard, Jacob Saben and Takashi Yagihashi. After snacking on bites by Morimoto, including a 150-pound Bluefin tuna served sashimi-style, eventgoers were treated to salty caramel chocolate tarts, tofu cheesecake and green tea chocolate-covered strawberries. The food and drink-filled evening raised funds for Common Threads, an organization founded by chef Art Smith and artist Jesus Salgueiro dedicated to educating children on the importance of nutrition. — Katerina Bizios

The Sun-Times was the media sponsor of this event.

PHOTOS BY RAMZI DREESSEN
BC's "Chicago Fire" stars Jesse Spencer, Charlie Barnett and Yuri Sardarov blew out the candles at their joint birthday celebration inside butcher shop/restaurant Chop Shop's (2033 W. North) adjacent event space, 1st Ward. The Feb. 1 bash drew the actors' friends and family, as well as castmate Joe Minoso (who planned the event) and Sophia Bush and Jesse Lee Soffer of "Chicago Fire's" new spin-off "Chicago PD." Kehoe Designs created a relaxed atmosphere with oversized chairs and leather couches, where revelers lounged throughout the evening and sipped 2 Gingers Whiskey, served from a custom-built bar specially imported from Ireland and unveiled at the bash.

Joe Ahern, Sophia Bush and Jesse Lee Soffer

The Four Star Brass Band and DJ Will Galvan provided the soundtrack for the evening, and at one point, Minoso grabbed the mic and presented a West Town Bakery red-velvet cake decorated with flames, fire hydrants, fire hats and a Chicago flag to the birthday boys. No gifts were given — instead, guests donated to the 100 Club of Chicago, which provides for families of fallen police officers, firefighters and paramedics. — Katerina Bizios

SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 15, 8:00

2012 NEA Jazz Master Jack DeJohnette, celebrated saxophonist Joe Lovano, 2011 Best New Artist Grammy® Award-winner Esperanza Spalding and Argentinean pianist Leo Genovese collaborate in an all-star quartet that spans three generations of jazz greats.

GREGORY PORTER

Grammy-winning singer Gregory Porter, "the brilliant new voice of jazz" whose masterful vocals are "heavily steeped in the passion, delivery and emotion of the best classic soul men" (Huffington Post), opens the concert.
Odes to the oyster are almost as abundant as the mollusk itself — everyone from Hemingway to Casanova has weighed in on it. But whether you chalk it up to the power of suggestion, the delicacy has become synonymous with romance. So it’s appropriate that with Valentine’s Day on the horizon, two new seafood spots with a focus on oysters have opened up in Chicago. Here’s the scoop on both:

Pearl Tavern
“...the pearl is the jewel inside the oyster...” says Chris Lorenz (Brasserie Jo, Pelago), head chef at Pearl Tavern, an elegant oyster bar overlooking the Chicago River. Lorenz, who can expound upon the sea creature at length, has plenty of favorites on the regularly rotating menu, including the Marin Miyagi, a “kiwi-esque” varietal from the West Coast, and the Wianno, a sweet, plump East Coast import ($15 for six).

According to Lorenz, everything from the drinks to the atmosphere exists to serve the oysters. To offset the shellfish’s salty finish, Lorenz and owner Aldolfo Garcia (Hubbard Inn, Barn & Company) selected acidic wines and crafted cocktails like the habanero syrup-tinged Angry Mermaid ($12). The sea’s influence is equally apparent in the 1930s-inspired decor: Painted mermaids adorn the ceilings. Oysters aside, Pearl Tavern serves seafood-centric dishes like scallops topped with blood orange and sea salt ($12) and crab churros ($8), which sprung from a punchy brainstorm session between Lorenz and sous chef Sean Giordano. “We just started riffing off of each other like Coltrane and Davis,” says Lorenz. “How about a crab churro? We can use mascarpone and tarragon and blow people’s minds.”

Bow & Stern
Chef Brian Greene (The Savoy) fell hook, line and sinker for oysters as a young boy visiting his grandfather on Maine’s Chesapeake Bay. Now, he counts himself lucky to be able to prepare — and eat — them daily at West Town oyster bar Bow & Stern. “I’ve had six today already, so I’m good,” he laughs. Owners Bryan Burrow and Jay Runnfeldt (The Drawing Room, Back Room) also drew from their East Coast memories. “We wanted that New England boathouse-feel,” says Burrow. While distressed wood and heavy ropes contribute to the nautical ambiance, Bow & Stern’s team really set out to recreate the old-school oyster bar’s convivial atmosphere. “We wanted a social space where people share oysters, share stories, get loud and boisterous,” says Burrow.

To encourage diners to come together, the pair put in two wraparound bars (stocked with Midwestern brews, crisp wines and seasonal cocktails), a raw bar near the entrance and, of course, an abundance of oysters. Freshly shucked selections include the firm, briny Penn Cove ($7.75 for three) and the clean, refined Beau Soleil ($7 for three). Though much of the rest of the menu is seafood-focused, there’s also a “Land & Sea” section with mash-ups like the pork belly scallops ($26).

Visit Chicago splash.com for details on the oyster bars’ Valentine’s Day specials.

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'About Last Night' star Christopher McDonald gives us the scoop on his full-throttle 2014

BY ZAK STEMER

When Christopher McDonald walks out of Paris Club, he saunters past multiple groups of bondsmen mostly guys — who excitedly turn to their buddies and whisper, "Is that Shooter McGavin?" It's a scene that McDonald admits is repeated almost everywhere he goes. The actor has an unmistakable face, thanks to several famous roles: Lloyd Tidings in "Requiem for a Dream," Tommy Jefferson in "Harry's Law" and Shooter McGavin in "Happy Gilmore," just to name a few.

Since McDonald, 58, began acting in 1978, he hasn't stopped — he has more than 170 film, TV and voice credits under his belt, not to mention a stint on Broadway in "Lucky Guy" with Tom Hanks. But the actor is gearing up for a busy year, even by his standards: He has six projects coming out in 2014, including "A Conspiracy on Jekyll Island," which he recently spent several weeks filming in Chicago — and "About Last Night," a remake of the 1986 flick of the same name, premiering Feb. 14. Also on his docket are "Don't Worry Baby," "The Squeeze," "Soul Ties" and "Believe Me," all due out in late 2014. But McDonald isn't fazed by his jam-packed schedule. "It keeps me young, keeps my brain popping at all times," he says.

Filming "About Last Night," based on the play "Sexual Perversion in Chicago," certainly kept McDonald on his toes. In the movie — which centers around two young people (Michael Ealy and Joy Bryant) falling in love and navigating the problems in a new relationship — McDonald plays Case, Ealy's boss and surrogate father figure.

"This story is one that will go on and on," he says of the film. "Best friends trying to figure out the mind of the opposite sex. Just add alcohol, mix and let the games begin.

"Jekyll Island," due in November, gave the actor a chance to stretch an entirely different muscle: Instead of the mentor, McDonald is starring as the villain, named Del Banco. The movie follows Frank Grillo and Minnie Driver as they attempt to thwart a cyber attack, while McDonald throws obstacles their way. "[Playing the bad guy] only bothers me if people say that's all I can play, which is certainly not true," he explains. "I've certainly done the nice guys and the heroic guys. They've just never had the resonance the bad guys do for some reason."

But McDonald isn't complaining — he's grown to love playing controversial characters. "You've got carte blanche to do anything you want," he says. "You can push the limits."

Here, the prolific actor takes a rare break to relax in Chicago.
In contrast to some of its peers that rely on far-fetched reinterpretations, the reboot required little updating to stay relevant. The original 1987 movie was set in the "not-too-distant future," with wild science-fiction creations like an orbiting space station, artificial hearts and drones. But that future has finally arrived. "It's not sci-fi anymore. It's not this distant thing," says Aimee Garcia, the Chicago born-and-raised star of this year's rebooted blockbuster. So to keep in line with its theme, the new "RoboCop," set in 2028, gives us a whole new array of ideas to imagine: flying patrol cars, fully functional humanoid robots and mind control.

In the film, out Feb. 12, Garcia plays Kim, a brilliant scientist responsible for resurrecting a police officer killed in the line of duty and transforming him into the human-robot hybrid that gives the film its name. While Kim approaches the project with pure intentions (to give a second life to a fallen cop), the movie begins to spiral when it's revealed that the company she works for, OmniCorp, has more nefarious plans.

To prep for the role, Garcia went back to her roots as a Northwestern student and hit the books. Though the 35-year-old actress is most recognizable from her roles as Veronica Palmero, the ditzy, spoiled niece on George Lopez's eponymous sitcom, and as Jamie Batista, the sassy nanny in "Dexter," she's something of a scholar in real life: She graduated with three majors (journalism, economics and French) and has compared herself to Tracy Flick, Reese Witherspoon's Type-A super-student in "Election." Aside from her three majors, she also choreographed for the dance team, produced collegiate news segments and planned the campus's biggest annual philanthropic event, the Dance Marathon.

Still, playing a scientist came with some challenges for Garcia. "[Kim] is a total brainiac: She's got a Ph.D. from MIT, she's well-versed in engineering, robotics, computer programming, biology, physics and chemistry," she explains. "She's much smarter than I am, but I welcomed it because she has a mystery to her."

For "RoboCop," Garcia read up on modern robotics in health care, the military and the economy. "I have a somewhat polarized view about it," she admits. "Technology and robots can help paraplegics have a fuller life, and having robots and drones do the work of human soldiers is appealing. I think there's a benefit to trusting technology and having metal take the bullets instead of flesh and blood." That's the point where "RoboCop" poses a moral question: Where do you draw the line? "'RoboCop' is very relevant in asking, 'Do we trust robots to pull the trigger?'" Garcia says. "I think there are a lot of moral issues."

Garcia herself isn't particularly gung-ho on the high-tech lifestyle: She still calls her friends rather than texts, gets nervous when planes are on autopilot ("When you see the pilot taking a bathroom break, you've gotta wonder ...") and sends snail-mail to her dad here in Chicago. "I'm a sucker for the human connection," she laughs.
But it's her grounded mentality and the fact that she's not tweeting 24/7 that sets Garcia apart from the Hollywood crowd. "When you meet me, I'm such a Chicago girl," says the Oak Park native and Fenwick High School alum. "People are always like, 'You're so earthy!' I'm like, 'Yeah, that's because I've shoveled snow. I know what it's like to have a job.' I'm very, very Chicago that way." That's not to say that Garcia doesn't have a little West Coast edge to her. She credits her current success to her ability to turn down roles. "When I tell my parents that I'm passing on jobs to hold out for the big one, they're confused. They're like, 'You walked away from what?!' I'm always about high-risk, high-reward," she explains.

Garcia also owes her wins to her Chicago theater upbringing. "[It] was the best training ever," she remembers. After getting her start at Piven Theatre in Evanston when she was 12 ("Byrne and Joyce [Piven] were my very first acting teachers and I adore them to this day"), the actress fell into ballet, starring as Clara in "The Nutcracker" at the Arie Crown Theater, and paid her way through Northwestern by acting in McDonald's commercials alongside Michael Jordan, Sammy Sosa and Charles Barkley. "Basically acting was just a way to pay for college tuition. I was never going to act for a living," Garcia says.

It wasn't until later, when Garcia was working as a mutual funds analyst for an investment survey firm in New York, that she realized it was her passion. "After a year in New York, living in a closet in Brooklyn, I thought, 'You know what? I'm out of here. I'm going to go do what I love.'" That pick-up-and-go spirit led Garcia to LA, where it wasn't long before she landed roles on "Trauma," "George Lopez" and, most memorably, "Dexter." The show, which ended last September, had one of the most controversial finales in recent television history (websites like Vulture and Buzzfeed immediately lambasted the episode, memes exploded across the Internet and Showtime executives had to come to its defense). Without spoiling anything for latecomers, Garcia is quick to support the series's contentious swan song. "It's funny because people still talk about 'The Sopranos' ending because it was very unsettling. And despite the fact that 'Breaking Bad' was such an amazing show, no one is talking about the ending," she says. "They're talking about the ending of 'Dexter,' which I feel is a testament to how a show should end. It should be unsettling and it should open questions and it should leave you hungry and not be wrapped up in a box. I love the ending because it was so painful."

Whichever side fans take in the great "Dexter" debate, the conclusion was a lesson in originality — a rare find on today's screens. But it's that freshness and individualism that sets TV shows, movies and actors apart, and it's something Garcia has in spades. "I feel locked and loaded. I feel like I know who I am, and I know where I come from and I think that's a very powerful thing out here [in LA] where people are constantly trying to become what's popular or change who they are," says the rising star. "I credit it to the city I grew up in."

When Garcia comes back to town — something she tries to do at least three times each year — there are some places she just can't miss.

**Bub City (435 N. Clark):** "They just launched a country brunch: great biscuit sandwiches, chicken and waffles, a big Bloody Mary bar and live music."

**Au Cheval (800 W. Randolph):** "Fantastic music selection and the best burger I've ever had."

**The Green Mill (4802 N. Broadway):** "I love jazz at the Green Mill. It feels like reliving the history of Chicago."

**Merz Apothecary (4716 N. Lincoln):** "Thousands of bodycare and healthy wellness products from around the world and dozens of types of toothpastes."

**Flywheel (710 N. State):** "[I take] spinning class at Flywheel. Some of the best instructors in town!"
We turned to 4 of Chicago's loveliest couples for ideas on what to give (and get) this Valentine's Day.

**Beats by Dre:** headphones, $151.99-$449.99, Target, locations citywide. Target.com

“Getting in the mood to a sensual playlist is our idea of a romantic evening. We avoid the hassle of cords with these wireless Beats by Dre headphones. Almost as good as a 'careless whisper.'

**Omega:** His & Hers Double Eagle Co-Axial Chronograph couple watches, price available upon request. Omega boutique in The Westin, 909 N. Michigan, (312) 291-9412. Omegawatches.com

“Set aside time for two with his and hers Omega watches.”

**Fried Wellfleet oysters with tartar sauce recipe:** $45-$60 for ingredients. Dirk’s Fish and Gourmet Shop, 2070 N. Clybourn, Dirksfish.com

“Going to dinner can be romantic, but nothing says true love like making dinner together. Embrace the aphrodisiacs with this oyster recipe.”

**DanniJo:** Friday Night Brights necklace, $1,468, Dannijo.com

“Let her know how much she brightens up your day with a jewelry piece she will always remember.”

**Omega: Marni Lowback bodysuit, $148, Neiman Marcus, 737 N. Michigan, Neimanmarcus.com

“I get to wear it and he gets to enjoy it. What man doesn’t love lingerie?”

**Bond No. 9:** Park Avenue scented candle, $98, Saks Fifth Avenue, 700 N. Michigan; Saksfifthavenue.com

“We light up the night with a candle by Bond No. 9. The scent is discreet but not overly sweet with blends of lemon, chamomile, paperwhite, rose, musk, ebonywood and vanilla.”

**Nike + Fuelband SE:** $149, Niketown, 669 N. Michigan; Store.nike.com

“There’s something about releasing endorphins with your partner that puts you in a good mood.”

**What I Love About You:** by David Marshall, $14, Barnes & Noble, 1441 W. Webster, Barnesandnoble.com

“After 16 years of marriage, there’s very little we don’t know about each other. This fill-in-the-blank book by Kate and David Marshall helps us reminisce about the special times through our history.”

**Scottie & Larsa Pippen** share items sure to sweep your loved one off their feet.

**Cosabella:** Marni Lowback bodysuit, $148, Neiman Marcus, 737 N. Michigan; Neimanmarcus.com

“She brightens up your day with a jewelry piece she will always remember.”

**Nike + Fuelband SE:** $149, Niketown, 669 N. Michigan; Store.nike.com

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Floriole Cafe & Bakery: canélés, $2.75 per piece, 1220 W. Webster; Floriole.com

"Sandra and Mathieu Holi are the husband-and-wife team who run and own this establishment. I crave their canélés. It's the best in the city!"

Mariano's: cardamom, $4.38/ounce, locations citywide; Mariano's.com

"We stop at Mariano's spice shop to stock up on the wide variety of offerings, such as cardamom and curry powder, to add to our creations."

Chocolate Twist: Soy Balsamic Carmels, $12/dozen, Urbanbelly, 1400 W. Randolph; Chocolate-twist.com

"Our dear friend Kate Coffey started her own handcrafted confection business and collaborated with us on a caramel infused with our Seoul sauce. My thoughts for creating this sauce again revolve around Yvonne's personality traits: the perfect balance of sweet and salty."

Publican Quality Meats: house-made Merguez sausage, $8.99/lb., 825 W. Fulton Market; Publicanqualitymeats.com

"The Merguez sausage is one of our favorites to use when cooking at home. PQM's version is made in-house from scratch."

Urbanbelly Foods: Belly Fire Sauce, $6, Mariano's locations citywide; Mariano's.com

"I created this sauce with my wife Yvonne in mind. Yvonne likes her food spicy — just like her personality."

Garrett: popcorn, $3/gallon, 26 W. Randolph; Garrettpopcorn.com

"I'm not big on sweets, but when I have a craving, it's usually Garrett Popcorn. They offer a cayenne pepper and chili powder blend that I mix with their caramel."

Kaoritsu Shoin: $25.99, Provenance Food and Wine, 2528 N. California; Provenancefoodandwine.com

"I love sake! Provenance Food and Wine in Logan Square carries a nice variety, including a favorite Junmai Ginjo called Shoin. It's a drier style with notes of lilacs and violets."

Mindy's Hot Chocolate: 24-ounce bag of hot chocolate, $20; 12 marshmallows, $6, 1747 N. Damen; Hotchocolatechicago.com

"I drink hot chocolate all winter long. My favorite is the dark hot chocolate blend by Mindy Segal from Hot Chocolate. We always knew Mindy was an outstanding pastry chef when we were all coming up in this business together."

Rare Tea Cellar: Emperor's Tencha, $200; Rareteacellar.com

"We love to end our meal with a cup of hot tea. Rare Tea Cellar is the best — we carry their tea at all of our restaurants."

Sumi Robata Bar: appetizers start at $4, 702 N. Wells; Sumirobatabar.com

"Chef Gene Kato and his wife Jessica have created something very special and inspiring. You really get the sense that you're dining in their home, and it's the kind of food we crave on a weekly basis."

Bill Kim & Yvonne Cadiz-Kim, co-owners of Urbanbelly and BellyQ, pick the food and drinks that keep them sweet on each other.

Bill’s picks

Yvonne’s picks

Yvonne's picks

valentine’s day gift guide
valentine’s day gift guide

Man of the World magazine: subscription, $72; Manoftheworld.com
“You want your man to be hip to the latest culture, style and art. It makes him sexier.”

Lyric Opera of Chicago: ‘The Barber of Seville,’ tickets start at $20, 20 N. Upper Wacker; Lyricalopera.org
“Nothing is more romantic than an outing to the opera.”

Stubbs and Wootton: custom slippers, start at $475; Stubbsandwootton.com
“You can personalize these slippers with any motif or wording. Be playful — it’s Valentine’s Day!”

Verameat: Bunny love ring, starts at $48; Verameat.com
“A cute way to show her you love her without being cheesy.”

John Derian: Love One Another letter tray decoupage, $165; Johnderian.com
“A stylish place for her jewelry and a nice daily reminder.”

Globe-Trotter: carry-on trolley, $1,895, Barneys New York, 15 E Oak; Globetrotter1897.com
“Get the perfect suitcases for the perfect romantic getaway — perhaps up to Kohler Waters Spa in Burr Ridge, Ill.”

Patrick Demarchelier: Dior Couture, $115, Barnes & Noble, 1130 N. State; Barnesandnoble.com
“A beautiful coffee table book that every woman needs for the occasional inspiration.”

Artfully Disheveled: The Grange bow tie, $85, Artfullydisheveled.com
“Time to show her you care about how you look as much as you care about how she looks.”

Best Made: American felling axe, $300; Bestmade.co
“Because a real man chops his own wood for that cozy Valentine’s fire.”

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When it comes to romance, photographer Maria Ponce Berre & attorney and Artfully Disheveled co-founder Trey Berre relish the unexpected

MORE ONLINE
For recipes and other instructions on how to create Valentine’s Day magic, visit Chicagosplash.com
valentine’s day gift guide

SWEET STYLE

Sugar Hills Bakery founder Jacob Neminarz and Argo Tea event coordinator Theodore Venable prove that the best gifts have a personal touch.

**Jacob’s picks**

**Sugar Hills Bakery:** heart Oreo cookie pops, $1.59 each, 3252 W. Addison

"With our third Sugar Hills location opening in Chicago, we're planning on going through lots of these delicious Oreo pops, which are a hit every year!"

**CB2:** gallery frame, $399.95, 800 W. North; CB2.com

"Theo gave me this frame with a special photo of the two of us. The dimensions are perfect for that high-end gallery look."

**West Elm:** monogrammed throw, $56, 1000 W. North; Westelm.com

"Being romantic can be tricky in subzero weather. A personalized throw is the perfect solution for end-of-the-night cuddling."

**Art Institute of Chicago:** one-year membership, $90, 111 S. Michigan; Artic.edu

"When Theo and I first started dating, we would visit a different Chicago museum every weekend. Sharing this experience with your loved one is a great gift that can last long after Valentine’s Day ends."

**Theodore’s picks**

**Diptyque:** Eau du Trente-Quatre, $135 for 100 mL, 1645 N. Damen; Diptyquechicago.com

"Mix and match Diptyque’s signature scents to create a layered combination that perfectly suits that special someone."

**Smythson:** Everyday I Love You notebook, $60, Barney’s, 15 E. Oak; Smythson.com

"Function meets fashion with this adorable ‘Everyday I Love You’ notebook. Writing a heartfelt message on the inside will be a sweet reminder of your love every time they go to use it."

**Chicago Botanic Garden:** Escape to Paradise event, $125 per person, 1000 Lake Cook, Glencoe; ChicagoBotanic.org

"Skip the hassle of finding a dinner reservation and spend Valentine’s night with your significant other sipping on cocktails and previewing the Orchid Show, hosted by the Woman’s Board of the Chicago Horticultural Society."

**< Vosges Haut-Chocolat:** Petit Ensemble du Chocolat, $20, and Wine & Chocolate Tasting, price upon request, 951 W. Armitage; Vosgeschocolate.com

"Upgrade the typical Valentine’s box of chocolates with this great assortment from Vosges. And let’s face it—wine makes any gift that much better."

**< Tiffany & Co.:** engraved tie bar, $175, 730 N. Michigan; Tiffany.com

"I’m a sucker for anything that can be engraved. Tiffany’s classic tie bar with a special Valentine’s ‘Let’s Tie One On...’ personalized message will look great on your stylish beau."

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[Images of gift ideas and text descriptions related to Valentine's Day gifts from various stores and brands.]
The grand Duke

Duke Ellington and his music will never be forgotten. That’s a given. But one of his last creative efforts, "Queenie Pie," has certainly come close to being left behind. And it’s no wonder. Ellington began work on what he called his "street opera" as early as 1962, but a planned public television production never materialized, and though he continued to develop the piece, it remained unfinished when he passed away in 1974. But the music, and the story Ellington wove — in which the titular character, Harlem’s top cosmetologist, stares down a challenge from upstart Café O’Lay — has intrigued scholars, musicians and theater artists, and several productions have been mounted over the years. The latest, directed and choreographed by Ken Roht, opens this week at Chicago Opera Theater, with accompaniment provided by the Chicago Jazz Orchestra, conducted by Jeff Lindberg.

Karen Marie Richardson (left) as Queenie Pie observes Jeffrey Polk as Lil Daddy/Witch Doctor.
IN CHARACTER WITH...

Tara Summers

The 'Rake' star on charming Greg Kinnear and learning to be spontaneous

BY LIZ CROKIN

Tara Summers showed up an hour late to her first audition for Greg Kinnear's new show "Rake." She'd stopped by the wrong studio first, and she was so upset about the mishap that she'd cried off her makeup, certain she wouldn't get the job. Luckily, she was mistaken. "My nose was bright red," she laughs. "But Greg was so nice. I did my best and got the job."

On the Fox series, which premiered Jan. 23, Summers, 34, plays Leanne Zander, the "long-suffering" secretary of Keegan Deane (Kinnear), a criminal defense attorney with a messy personal life. "I have a lot of in common with the character," says Summers, whose previous jobs include stints on "Boston Legal," "Darmions" and roles in films like "Factory Girl," "What a Girl Wants" and "Alife." "We're both from England and have boyfriends who are out of town. She's very funny — she speaks her mind. She doesn't care what people think about her."

Show biz: "The show is an adaption of a show in Australia called 'Rake' as well. It's about a brilliant criminal defense attorney. He defends clients he knows are guilty, and he knows how to get them off. His personal life is a disaster. You love him, though, because he's endearing, charming and sexy. He is a bit of a train wreck. He's divorced with a kid, and uses his ex-wife as his shrink."

Role call: "This was tough, because the character exists in the Australian version of the show. I try hard not to watch and see what she did, but I ended up watching the entire series. [Ours] is a more character-driven piece."

Set stories: "Greg is so spontaneous. He likes to improvise a bit. I try as much to be in the moment, I do like to improvise — I did it a lot in college, and I took an improv class in LA. The set is so much fun. Greg is one of the nicest and most charming people to be around. It's nice to work with actors who are not egomaniacs and who are really gifted. It's quite rare."

Born this way: "When I was 4, my dad built me a little stage in the house. The kids would come over, and we'd do shows. I was the lead. There was no question that I wanted to do anything else. I went to Brown [University] in Rhode Island and I studied theater, then I went to London. I came to LA by accident and stayed. It's been incredibly kind to me since. If I acted with Meryl Streep one day, I'd die happy. That's my dream."

Watch "Rake" Thursday nights at 8 p.m. on Fox.
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Mini makeover
Michael Anthony Salon's (621 N. State) experts are taking the style reigns this Valentine's Day weekend. Start your Saturday with a haircut and manicure at the salon, and later, head out with a personal stylist to shop along Michigan Avenue. Be sure to tote along your outfit for the night — the stylist will help you choose your accessories. Feb. 15, $75, 11 a.m.-2 p.m.; Michaelanthonyspa.com

Chocolate cure
Throughout February, improve the texture and tone of your skin with a chocolate facial at Lakeview spa Absolute Precision Skin Care, then sweeten your at-home skincare routine with 15 percent off chocolate- and raspberry-based products. $50, 1421 W. Belmont; Absoluteprecisionskincare.com

Wedding bells
Macy's bridal garb moves from its State Street salon to the runway Feb. 13 for Roof on the Wit's (201 N. State) ROOF Runway Wedding Edition. Stop by to view gown and tuxedo styles by Lazaro, Tara Keely and Augusta Jones while sipping Champagne and snacking on complimentary bites. 5-7 p.m; RSVP at Facebook/roofonthewit
Tell me about your best first date experience.'

This was an easy one for me: Over some bright and beautiful sushi, there was lots of sincere eye contact and talk about New Age thinking. You know that feeling you get when someone is sincerely listening to you and actually understanding what it is you're trying to say? It's a very comfortable, very easy feeling of just knowing, which is not a common feeling to attain on a first date.

When we moved on to talk of spirituality and how important it was to each of us, I knew there was going to be a heavy makeout session after the heavy hamachi, tuna and albacore eating session. And sure enough, there was — and the night was followed by a second, a third and a fourth amazing date.

I loved reading all about your incredible first-date experiences too. Thanks for sharing them with me!

Read Jenny's blog at ChicagoSplash.com.

Introducing Butterfly.

A new kind of discreet protection for ABL.

New Butterfly Body Liners fit comfortably and discreetly in the buttocks, providing secure protection from accidental bowel leakage (ABL). Consumer studies show that women who use Butterfly feel more confident and protected going about their day. That's because with its absorbent core, odor shield and stay-fast wings, Butterfly adheres securely and invisibly in the buttocks, giving you a new kind of protection you can count on.

real estate

English cottage

Nestled on wooded grounds, ivy-covered 970 Verda in Lake Forest boasts Gatsbyesque details, including original millwork, vintage bathtubs and a 1920s reflecting pond. "This home maintains the character and charm of bygone eras, with modern conveniences," says Baird and Warner broker Dow Molsbee (847-373-7133). Updates to the four-bedroom, 3,680-square-foot cottage, with a $675,000 ask, include heated stone floors and a new kitchen. For flowers beyond Valentine's Day, rendezvous in the enclosed garden room.

Italian getaway

After falling in love with Italy, one couple turned their favorite vacation destination into their permanent home — without leaving Naperville. They built a 6,100-square-foot "villa" at 240 W. Spring, replete with rustic stucco, a bell tower and courtyard for outdoor entertaining. Listed for $3,275,000, the four-bedroom ups the romance with a wood-burning pizza oven and barrel-vaulted wine cellar—inspired by an enoteca in Montepulciano, no less. "It's a passionate home. When you walk in it, you are transported to Italy," says Coldwell Banker broker Gall Niermeyer (630-430-1835).

LOVE NESTS

These homes are where the heart is, thanks to romantic amenities

Pied-a-terre

For a suburbanite looking for a romantic city escape, it doesn't get better than the Ritz-Carlton Residences at 118 E. Erie. The condo building boasts a staff trained by the eponymous luxury hotel to offer five-star service, including running errands, stocking the refrigerator (with sweets, no doubt) or making reservations. Especially dreamy is 14M, the one-bedroom unit with an ask of $2.5 million, which is flush with dormered windows. Bonus: "The master bedroom offers a charming recessed balcony that is probably one the most romantic outdoor spaces in the city," says Coldwell Banker broker Jane Shawkey (312-504-5055).

Oenophile co-op

The owner of 1242 N. Lake Shore's unit 3S transformed the roomy Butler's Pantry into a 500-bottle wine storage. So it's not surprising that he's selling the 1955-square-foot two-bedroom, listed at $1,275,000, to move to Napa Valley. Romantic spaces with luxe finishes include the living room with fireplace and formal dining room — big enough for 20, yet perfect for two. (Call Prudential Rubloff broker Colette Connelly at 773-719-0714.)
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FAST TRACK TO THE FUTURE

Rising star and Oak Park native Aimee Garcia makes her blockbuster debut in ‘RoboCop’

VALENTINE’S DAY GIFT GUIDE
TASTE MAKERS
PEOPLE WHO GET FOOD GET IT HERE

- Rick & Ashley Ortiz
Owners of Antique Taco
Get an insider’s look at how Rick and Ashley shop at marianos.com

MARIANO’S
shop well. eat well. live well."
The London-based line, helmed by Peter Pilotto and Christopher De Vos, just debuted its 70-piece Target collaboration, featuring dresses, swimwear and accessories in the hyper-real digital prints and vibrant color combos that have become a hallmark of the brand. Starting at $14.99, Target locations citywide; Target.com

CREDITS
Photographer Mark Sacro
Stylist Natalie Saldi
Makeup Ashleigh Louer
Hair: Daven Mayeda/Celestine
Agency for Pene Furterer

ON THE COVER
Dress: Alpana N..raJ
Accessories: M.C.L by Matthew Campbell Laurenza, similar styles available at Neiman Marcus, 737 N. Michigan; Neimanmarcus.com

AT RIGHT

Flowers for Dreams
Finally, flowers that feel as good to buy as to receive. The Chicago company donates 10 percent of profits to local charities (February's cause is Bright Pink). Plus, the bouquets come with free hand-delivery and are wrapped in eco-friendly burlap. Starting at $35:
Flowersfordreams.com

Celeste
River North's new watering hole invites guests into its two-story, 18th century-inspired digs for a globally-infused menu. Dishes like Jidori chicken with maitake mushrooms and foie gras-onion soubise ($29) accompany cocktails like the Red Right Hand (Sailor Jerry rum, Carpano sweet vermouth, Campan and mole bitters, $10). 111 W. Hubbard; Celestechicago.com

A Sweet Delivery
Indulge your sweetheart's sweet tooth with the new Sugar & Champagne box from the couture candy company. The limited-edition gold package is stocked with six colorful gourmet gummy bears and a bottle of Prosecco or Chandon, hitting just the right mix of adorable and amorous. $55; Asweetdelivery.com

AT THE SHOOT
At Splash's photo shoot, "RoboCop" star Aimee Garcia proved that she can rock any look, smiling for the cameras while sporting everything from jeans to cocktail dresses. Later, she paused for a few behind-the-scenes Twitter pics with photographer Mark Sacro.

CREDITS
Photographer: Mark Sacro
Stylist: Natalie Saldi
Makeup: Ashleigh Louer
Hair: Daven Mayeda/Celestine
Agency for Rene Furterer
February 12
**AN EVENING WITH THE CHICAGO BULLS**
Honoring John W. Rogers, Jr., Chairman, CEO and Chief Investment Officer of Ariel Investments, the team's 25th annual gala supporting Chicago Bulls Charities is emceed by Tim Meadows and features performances by comedian Hannibal Buress and musical act Rev Run and DJ Ruckus.
Time: 6 p.m.
Place: United Center, 1901 W. Madison
Cost: $400. For tickets, visit Bulls.com/EWCB.

February 11-16
**CHICAGO THEATRE WEEK**
Haven't seen a show lately? With more than 100 participating productions and partnerships with area hotels, this seven-day celebration of our theater scene, presented by the League of Chicago Theatres in partnership with Choose Chicago, is a great time to get a ticket. Offerings include Broadway in Chicago's "Phantom of the Opera," Northlight Theatre's "Tom Jones" and many more.
Cost: Varies by show. For tickets and hotel offers, visit Chicagotheatreweek.com.

February 12
**J'AIME PARIS CABARET**
You don't have to be a Francophile to appreciate the unmistakable romance of Gallic love songs. French Cabaret Duo sets the mood for Valentine's Day, performing tunes made famous by Edith Piaf, Jacques Brel and
Charles Trenet.
**Time:** 7:30 p.m.
**Place:** Driehaus Museum, 40 E. Erie
**Cost:** $50; members, $45. For tickets, visit Driehausmuseum.org.

February 14
**BEYOND THE SCORE**
The Chicago Symphony Orchestra, with conductor Nicholas McGegan and creative director Gerard McBurney, performs Haydn’s “Symphony No. 100 (Military)” (one of his so-called “London” symphonies), which explores the life of the great metropolis as it was in the 18th century.
**Time:** Friday 7:30 p.m., Sunday 3 p.m.
**Place:** Symphony Center, 220 S. Michigan
**Cost:** $24-$130. For tickets, call (312) 294-3000 or visit CSO.org.

February 14
**A.W.E.: THE ART OF SENSUALITY**
The DuSable Museum of African American History hosts a Valentine’s Day edition of its A.W.E. (art, wine and entertainment) event. Sip wine while taking in an eclectic array of entertainment, including live art demos, spoken word poetry, special exhibits, aromatherapy, music and more, all designed to explore the five senses.
**Time:** 7 p.m.
**Place:** 740 E. 56th
**Cost:** $15 in advance, $20 at the door. For tickets, call (773) 947-0600 or visit DuSablemuseum.org.

February 17-March 1
**'B-REAL: A LOOK INSIDE URBAN MOVEMENTS'**
The Dance Center of Columbia College Chicago, partnering with the college’s School of Fine and Performing Arts and Radio Department, explores local, national and international hip-hop and house dance music with workshops, performances and conversations.
**Time:** Times and venues vary.
**Cost:** Free. For more information, call (312) 369-8330 or visit Colum.edu/dancecenter

February 20
**THE FEW INSTITUTE’S NIGHT OF BEAUTY**
Learn to look your best at this intimately informative evening, illustrating the latest in anti-aging, body shaping and beautifying technologies. A portion of all proceeds from treatments and products purchased will benefit the Few Initiative for Children.
**Time:** 6 p.m.
**Place:** 875 N. Michigan, Suite 3850
**Cost:** Free. To RSVP, email Sheila Arway of Kelz PR at Sheila@kelzpr.com.

February 20-23
**‘THE RADIO SHOW’**
Choreographer Kyle Abramham melds the closing of a favorite radio station and a family member’s struggle with Alzheimer’s and Aphasia in an eclectically-scored piece examining the breakdown of communication.
**Time:** Thursday-Saturday 7:30 p.m., Sunday 3 p.m.
**Place:** Museum of Contemporary Art, 220 E. Chicago
**Cost:** $28; MCA members $22. For tickets, call (312) 397-4010 or visit Mca.org.

February 21
**GO RED FOR WOMEN LUNCHEON**
Go Red For Women — a national initiative of the American Heart Association — welcomes supporters to this fundraising repast, chaired by Sharon O’Keefe, president of University of Chicago Medical Center.
**Time:** 10 a.m.-2 p.m.
**Place:** The Walnut Room, Macy’s, 111 N. State
**Cost:** $250. For tickets, call (312) 476-6624 or visit Chicagooredforwomen.org.

February 21
**‘THIS IS NOT A CURE FOR CANCER’**
Collaboraction Theatre Company’s Artistic Director Anthony Moseley ups the group’s commitment to exploring critical social issues and engendering dialogue with a piece based on his own experience of his father’s fight with cancer.
**Place:** Flat Iron Arts Building, 1579 N. Milwaukee
**Cost:** $10-$30. For tickets, call (312) 226-9633 or visit Collaborationaction.org.
LACE EFFECT

ELENI BOUSIS in a custom gown at the Four Seasons Chicago
KELLEY CASEY in Tadashi Shoji at the Drake
MICHAELA PARRILLO in Marchesa at the Four Seasons Chicago
SAM WILEY in Akira at the Drake
JESSICA ZWEIG in BCBG Max Azria at the Chicago Cultural Center
TANEKA TUCKER in Carmen Marc Valvo at the Museum of Science and Industry

Ladies, it's time to lace up. The timeless fabric adds texture and femininity to your style, while its peek-a-boo nature amps up standard gala attire with a dose of sex appeal. Vibrant colors make a flirty statement, but nothing beats black lace for stark, modern glamour. On the spring runway, nobody nailed the look better than Valentino — the iconic designer channeled Renaissance regality with the delicate material in deep plum and rich teal. His modern twist on medieval mesh sends a clear message to fashionistas: There's no better time to be straight-laced.
Raw Talent

Nearly 300 guests packed into Japonais by Morimoto (600 W. Chicago) Jan. 29 for the soft opening of the revamped sushi restaurant, now helmed by Iron Chef Masaharu Morimoto. “Check, Please!” creator David Manilow, Potbelly Chairman Bryant Keil and former Chicago Bear Rashied Davis and Jerry Azumah were among those in attendance, sipping sake and Japanese beer and visiting food stations headed by top local chefs such as Stephanie Izard, Jacob Saben and Takashi Yagihashi. After snacking on bites by Morimoto, including a 150-pound Bluefin tuna served sashimi-style, eventgoers were treated to salty caramel chocolate tarts, tofu cheesecake and green tea chocolate-covered strawberries. The food and drink-filled evening raised funds for Common Threads, an organization founded by chef Art Smith and artist Jesus Salgueiro dedicated to educating children on the importance of nutrition. — Katerina Bizios The Sun-Times was the media sponsor of this event.
BC's "Chicago Fire" stars Jesse Spencer, Charlie Barnett and Yuri Sardarov blew out the candles at their joint birthday celebration inside butcher shop/restaurant Chop Shop's (2033 W. North) adjacent event space, 1st Ward. The Feb. 1 bash drew the actors' friends and family, as well as castmate Joe Minoso (who planned the event) and Sophia Bush and Jesse Lee Soffer of "Chicago Fire's" new spin-off "Chicago PD." Kehoe Designs created a relaxed atmosphere with oversized chairs and leather couches, where revelers lounged throughout the evening and sipped 2 Gingers Whiskey, served from a custom-built bar specially imported from Ireland and unveiled at the bash.

The Four Star Brass Band and DJ Will Galvan provided the soundtrack for the evening, and at one point, Minoso grabbed the mic and presented a West Town Bakery red-velvet cake decorated with flames, fire hydrants, fire hats and a Chicago flag to the birthday boys. No gifts were given — instead, guests donated to the 100 Club of Chicago, which provides for families of fallen police officers, firefighters and paramedics. — Katerina Bizios

SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 15, 8:00

2012 NEA Jazz Master Jack DeJohnette, celebrated saxophonist Joe Lovano, 2011 Best New Artist Grammy® Award-winner Esperanza Spalding and Argentinean pianist Leo Genovese collaborate in an all-star quartet that spans three generations of jazz greats.

GREGORY PORTER

Grammy-winning singer Gregory Porter, "the brilliant new voice of jazz" whose masterful vocals are "heavily steeped in the passion, delivery and emotion of the best classic soul men" (Huffington Post), opens the concert.

SYMPHONY CENTER PRESENTS
Jazz Series 312-294-3000 • CSO.ORG

Artists, prices and programs subject to change.

The SCP Jazz series is sponsored by BMO Harris Bank.
Odes to the oyster are almost as abundant as the mollusk itself — everyone from Hemingway to Casanova has weighed in on it. But whether you chalk up its aphrodisiacal reputation to science or the power of suggestion, the delicacy has become synonymous with romance. So it's appropriate that with Valentine's Day on the horizon, two new seafood spots with a focus on oysters have opened up in Chicago. Here's the scoop on both:

Pearl Tavern

“The pearl is the jewel inside the oyster; we wanted to be the jewel inside the Loop,” says Chris Lorenz (Brasserie Jo, Pelago), head chef at Pearl Tavern, an elegant oyster bar overlooking the Chicago River. Lorenz, who can expound on the sea creature at length, has plenty of favorites on the regularly rotating menu, including the Marin Miyagi, “a kiwi-esque” varietal from the West Coast, and the Wianno, a sweet, plump East Coast import ($15 for six).

According to Lorenz, everything from the drinks to the atmosphere exists to serve the oysters. To offset the shellfish's salty finish, Lorenz and owner Aldolfo Garcia (Hubbard Inn, Barn & Company) selected acidic wines and crafted cocktails like the habanero syrup-tinged Angry Mermaid ($12). The sea's influence is equally apparent in the 1930s-inspired decor: Painted mermaids adorn the ceilings.

Oysters aside, Pearl Tavern serves seafood-centric dishes like scallops topped with blood orange and sea salt ($12) and crab churros ($8), which sprung from a punchy brainstorm session between Lorenz and sous chef Sean Giordano. “We just started riffing off of each other like Coltrane and Davis,” says Lorenz. “It turned into, ‘How about a crab churro? We can use mascarpone and tarragon and blow people’s minds.’”

180 N. Wacker, (312) 629-1030; Pearltavern.com

Bow & Stern

Chef Brian Greene (The Savoy) fell hook, line and sinker for oysters as a young boy visiting his grandfather on Maine's Chesapeake Bay. Now, he counts himself lucky to be able to prepare — and eat — them daily at West Town oyster bar Bow & Stern. “I’ve had six today already, so I’m good,” he laughs.

Owners Bryan Burrow and Jay Runnfeldt (The Drawing Room, Back Room) also drew from their East Coast memories. “We wanted that New England boathouse-feel,” says Burrow. While distressed wood and heavy ropes contribute to the nautical ambiance, Bow & Stern's team really set out to recreate the old-school oyster bar's convivial atmosphere. “We wanted a social space where people share oysters, share stories, get loud and boisterous,” says Burrow.

To encourage diners to come together, the pair put in two wraparound bars (stocked with Midwestern brews, crisp wines and seasonal cocktails), a raw bar near the entrance and, of course, an abundance of oysters. Freshly shucked selections include the firm, briny Penn Cove ($7.75 for three) and the clean, refined Beau Soleil ($7 for three). Though much of the rest of the menu is seafood-focused, there's also a “Land & Sea” section with mash-ups like the pork belly scallops ($26).

1371 W Chicago, (312) 988-0644; Bowandsternoysterbar.com
Christopher McDonald gives us the scoop on his full-throttle 2014

BY ZAK STEMER

When Christopher McDonald walks out of Paris Club, he summits past multiple groups of basementers — mostly guys — who excitedly turn to their buddies and mouth, “Is that Shooter McGavin?” It’s a scene that McDonald admits is repeated almost everywhere he goes. The actor has an unmistakable face, thanks to several very famous roles: Tappy Tibbons in “Requiem for a Dream,” Tommy Jefferson on “Harry’s Law” and Shooter McGavin in “Happy Gilmore,” just to name a few.

Since McDonald, 58, began acting in 1978, he hasn’t stopped — he has more than 170 film, TV and voice credits under his belt, not to mention a stint on Broadway in “Lucky Guy” with Tom Hanks. But the actor is gearing up for a busy year, even by his standards. He has six projects coming out in 2014, including “A Conspiracy on Jekyll Island” — which he recently spent several weeks filming in Chicago — and “About Last Night,” a remake of the 1986 flick of the same name, premiering Feb. 14. Also on his docket are “Don’t Worry Baby,” “The Squeeze,” “Soul Ties” and “Relieve Me,” all due out in late 2014. But McDonald isn’t fazed by his jam-packed schedule. “I like to be challenged,” he says. “It keeps me young, keeps my brain popping at all times.”

Filming “About Last Night,” based on the play “Sexual Perversion in Chicago,” certainly kept McDonald on his toes. In the movie — which centers around two young people (Michael Ealy and Joel Bryant) falling in love and navigating the problems in a new relationship — McDonald plays Casey, Ealy’s boss and surrogate father figure. “This story is one that will go on and on,” he says of the film. “Best friends trying to figure out the mind of the opposite sex. Just add alcohol, mix and let the games begin.”

“Jekyll Island,” due in November, gave the actor a chance to stretch an entirely different muscle: Instead of the mentor, McDonald is starring as the villain, named Del Banco. The movie follows Frank Grillo and Minnie Driver as they attempt to thwart a cyber attack, while McDonald throws obstacles their way.

“Playing the bad guy only bothers me in that people say that’s all I can play, which is certainly not true,” he explains. “I’ve certainly done the nice guys and the heroic guys. They’ve just never had the resonance the bad guys do for some reason.” But McDonald isn’t complaining — he’s grown to love playing controversial characters. “You’ve got carte blanche to do anything you want,” he says. “You can push the limits.”

Here, the prolific actor takes a rare break to relax in Chicago.
with all the flack thrown at Hollywood for its lack of originality — please see last year’s revivals and reimaginings of “Hansel and Gretel,” “Superman” and “The Great Gatsby” — it seems inevitable that “RoboCop,” the ’80s-born franchise that spurred two sequels, two TV shows and heaps of merchandise, would be given the reboot.

But maybe that’s not a bad idea.

In contrast to some of its peers that rely on far-fetched reinterpretations, the robo-redux required little updating to stay relevant. The original 1987 movie was set in the “not-too-distant future,” with wild science-fiction creations like an orbiting space station, artificial hearts and drones. But that future has finally arrived. “It’s not sci-fi anymore. It’s not this distant thing,” says Aimee Garcia, the Chicago born-and-raised star of this year’s rebooted blockbuster. So to keep in line with its theme, the new “RoboCop,” set in 2028, gives us a whole new array of ideas to imagine: flying patrol cars, fully functional humanoid robots and mind control.

In the film, out Feb. 12, Garcia plays Kim, a brilliant scientist responsible for resurrecting a police officer killed in the line of duty and transforming him into the human-robot hybrid that gives the film its name. While Kim approaches the project with pure intentions (to give a second life to a fallen cop), the movie begins to spiral when it’s revealed that the company she works for, OmniCorp, has more nefarious plans.

To prep for the role, Garcia went back to her roots as a Northwestern student and hit the books. Though the 35-year-old actress is most recognizable from her roles as Veronica Palmero, the ditzy, spoiled niece on George Lopez eponymous sitcom, and as Jarnie Batista, the sassy nanny in “Dexter,” she’s something of a scholar in real life: She graduated with three majors (journalism, economics and French) and has compared herself to Tracy Flick, Reese Witherspoon’s Type-A super-student in “Election.” Aside from her three majors, she also choreographed for the dance team, produced collegiate news segments and planned the campus’s biggest annual philanthropic event, the Dance Marathon.

Still, playing a scientist came with some challenges for Garcia. “[Kim] is a total brainiac: She’s got a Ph.D. from MIT, she’s well-versed in engineering, robotics, computer programming, biology, physics and chemistry,” she explains. “She’s much smarter than I am, but I welcomed it because she has a mystery to her.”

For “RoboCop,” Garcia read up on modern robotics in health care, the military and the economy. “I have a somewhat polarized view about it,” she admits. “Technology and robotics can help paraplegics have a fuller life, and having robots and drones do the work of human soldiers is appealing. I think there’s a benefit to trusting technology and having metal take the bullets instead of flesh and blood.” That’s the point where “RoboCop” poses a moral question: Where do you draw the line? “RoboCop is very relevant in asking, ‘Do we trust robots to pull the trigger?’ Garcia says. “I think there are a lot of moral issues.”

Garcia herself isn’t particularly gung-ho on the high-tech lifestyle: She still calls her friends rather than texts, gets nervous when planes are on autopilot (“When you see the pilot taking a bathroom break, you’ve gotta wonder ...”) and sends snail-mail to her dad here in Chicago. “I’m a sucker for the human connection,” she laughs.
But it's her grounded mentality and the fact that she's not tweeting 24/7 that sets Garcia apart from the Hollywood crowd. "When you meet me, I'm such a Chicago girl," says the Oak Park native and Fenwick High School alum. "People are always like, 'You're so earthy!' I'm like, 'Yeah, that's because I've shoveled snow. I know what it's like to have a job.' I'm very, very Chicago that way." That's not to say that Garcia doesn't have a little West Coast edge to her. She credits her current success to her ability to turn down roles. "When I tell my parents that I'm passing on jobs to hold out for the big one, they're confused. They're like, 'You walked away from what?!' I'm always about high-risk, high-reward," she explains.

Garcia also owes her wins to her Chicago theater upbringing. "[It] was the best training ever," she remembers. After getting her start at Piven Theatre in Evanston when she was 12 ("Byrne and Joyce [Piven] were my very first acting teachers and I adore them to this day"), the actress fell into ballet, starring as Clara in "The Nutcracker" at the Arie Crown Theater, and paid her way through Northwestern by acting in McDonald's commercials alongside Michael Jordan, Sammy Sosa and Charles Barkley. "Basically acting was just a way to pay for college tuition. I was never going to act for a living," Garcia says.

It wasn't until later, when Garcia was working as a mutual funds analyst for an investment survey firm in New York, that she realized it was her passion. "After a year in New York, living in a closet in Brooklyn, I thought, 'You know what? I'm out of here. I'm going to go do what I love,'" Garcia says.

That pick-up-and-go spirit led Garcia to LA, where it wasn't long before she landed roles on "Trauma," "George Lopez" and, most memorably, "Dexter." The show, which ended last September, had one of the most controversial finales in recent television history (websites like Vulture and Buzzfeed immediately lambasted the episode, memes exploded across the Internet and Showtime executives had to come to its defense). Without spoiling anything for latecomers, Garcia is quick to support the series's contentious swan song. "It's funny because people still talk about 'The Sopranos' ending because it was very unsettling. And despite the fact that 'Breaking Bad' was such an amazing show, no one is talking about the ending," she says. "They're talking about the ending of 'Dexter,' which I feel is a testament to how a show should end. It should be unsettling and it should open questions and it should leave you hungry and not be wrapped up in a box. I love the ending because it was so painful."

Whichever side fans take in the great "Dexter" debate, the conclusion was a lesson in originality — a rare find on today's screens. But it's that freshness and individualism that sets TV shows, movies and actors apart, and it's something Garcia has in spades. "I feel locked and loaded. I feel like I know who I am, and I know where I come from and I think that's a very powerful thing out here [in LA] where people are constantly trying to become what's popular or change who they are," says the rising star. "I credit it to the city I grew up in."

When Garcia comes back to town — something she tries to do at least three times each year — there are some places she just can't miss.

**Bub City (435 N. Clark):** "They just launched a country brunch: great biscuit sandwiches, chicken and waffles, a big Bloody Mary bar and live music."

**Au Cheval (800 W. Randolph):** "Fantastic music selection and the best burger I've ever had."

**The Green Mill (4802 N. Broadway):** "I love jazz at the Green Mill. It feels like reliving the history of Chicago."

**Merz Apothecary (4716 N. Lincoln):** "Thousands of bodycare and health/wellness products from around the world and dozens of types of toothpastes."

**Flywheel (710 N. State):** "I take] spin class at Flywheel. Some of the best instructors in town!"
THE HEART WANTS

We turned to 4 of Chicago's loveliest couples for ideas on what to give (and get) this Valentine's Day.

Beats by Dre: headphones, $151.99-$449.99, Target locations citywide; Target.com

"Getting in the mood to a sensual playlist is our idea of a romantic evening. We avoid the hassle of cords with these wireless Beats by Dre headphones. Almost as good as a 'careless whisper.'"

Omega: His & Hers Double Eagle Co-Axial Chronograph couple watches, price available upon request, Omega boutique in The Westin, 909 N. Michigan, (312) 291-9412; Omega watches.com

"Set aside time for two with his and hers Omega watches."

DanniJo: Friday Night Brights necklace, $1,468; Dannijo.com

"Let her know how much she brightens up your day with a jewelry piece she will always remember."

> Cosabella: Mami Lowback bodysuit, $148, Neiman Marcus, 737 N. Michigan; Neimanmarcus.com

"I get to wear it and he gets to enjoy it. What man doesn't love lingerie?"

Fried Wellfleet oysters with tartar sauce recipe: $45-$60 for ingredients, Dirk's Fish and Gourmet Shop, 2070 N. Clybourn; Dirksfish.com

"Going to dinner can be romantic, but nothing says true love like making dinner together. Embrace the aphrodisiacs with this oyster recipe."

True Romance

Scottie & Larsa Pippen share items sure to sweep your loved one off their feet

Bond No. 9: Park Avenue scented candle, $98, Saks Fifth Avenue, 700 N. Michigan; Saksfifthavenue.com

"We light up the night with a candle by Bond No. 9. The scent is discreet but not overly sweet with blends of lemon, chamomile, paperwhite, rose, musk, ebonywood and vanilla."

What I Love About You by David Marshall, $14, Barnes & Noble, 1441 W. Webster; Barnesandnoble.com

"After 16 years of marriage, there's very little we don't know about each other. This fill-in-the-blank book by Kate and David Marshall helps us reminisce about the special times through our history."
Fioriole Cafe & Bakery: canelé, $2.75 per piece, 1220 W. Webster; Floriole.com

“Sandra and Mathieu Holl are the husband-and-wife team who run and own this establishment. I crave their canelé. It’s the best in the city!”

Mariano’s: cardamom, $4.38/ounce, locations citywide; Marianos.com

“We stop at Mariano’s spice shop to stock up on the wide variety of offerings, such as cardamom and curry powder, to add to our creations.”

Chocotate Twist: Soy Balsamic Caramels, $12/dozen, Urbanbelly, 1400 W. Randolph; Chocolate-twist.com

“Our dear friend Kate Coffey started her own handcrafted confection business and collaborated with us on a caramel infused with our Seoul sauce. My thoughts for creating this sauce again revolve around Yvonne’s personality traits: the perfect balance of sweet and salty.”

Publican Quality Meats: house-made Merguez sausage, $8.99/lb., 825 W. Fulton Market; Publicanqualitymeats.com

“The Merguez sausage is one of our favorites to use when cooking at home. PQM’s version is made in-house from scratch.”

Urbanbelly Foods: Belly Fire Sauce, $6, Mariano’s locations citywide; Marianos.com

“I created this sauce with my wife Yvonne in mind. Yvonne likes her food spicy — just like her personality!”

Garrett: popcorn, $3/gallon, 26 W. Randolph; Garrettpopcorn.com

“I’m not big on sweets, but when I have a craving, it’s usually Garrett Popcorn. They offer a cayenne pepper and chili powder blend that I mix with their caramel.”

Kaoritsuru Shoin: $25.99, Provenance Food and Wine, 2528 N. California; Provenancefoodandwine.com

“I love sake! Provenance Food and Wine in Logan Square carries a nice variety, including a favorite Junmai Ginjo called Shoin. It’s a drier style with notes of lilacs and violets.”

Mindy’s Hot Chocolate: 24-ounce bag of hot chocolate, $20; 12 marshmallows, $6, 1147 N. Damen; Hotchocolatechicago.com

“I drink hot chocolate all winter long. My favorite is the dark hot chocolate blend by Mindy Segal from Hot Chocolate. We always knew Mindy was an outstanding pastry chef when we were all coming up in this business together.”

Rare Tea Cellar: Emperor’s Tencha, $200; Rareteacellar.com

“We love to end our meal with a cup of hot tea. Rare Tea Cellar is the best — we carry their tea at all of our restaurants.”

Sumi Robata Bar: appetizers start at $4, 702 N. Wells; Sumirobatabar.com

“Chef Gene Kato and his wife Jessica have created something very special and inspiring. You really get the sense that you’re dining in their home, and it’s the kind of food we crave on a weekly basis.”
valentine's day gift guide

Man of the World magazine: subscription, $72; Manoftheworld.com
"You want your man to be hip to the latest culture, style and art. It makes him sexier."

Lyric Opera of Chicago: 'The Barber of Seville,' tickets start at $20, 20 N. Upper Wacker; Lyricalopera.org
"Nothing is more romantic than an outing to the opera."

Verameat: Bunny love ring, starts at $48; Verameat.com
"A cute way to show her you love her without being cheesy."

John Derian: Love One Another letter tray decoupage, $165; Johnderian.com
"A stylish place for her jewelry and a nice daily reminder."

Stubbs and Wootton: custom slippers, start at $475; Stubbsandwootton.com
"You can personalize these slippers with any motif or wording. Be playful — it's Valentine's Day!"

Patrick Demarchelier: Dior Couture, $115, Barnes & Noble, 1130 N. State; Barnesandnoble.com
"A beautiful coffee table book that every woman needs for the occasional inspiration."

Globe Trotter: carry-on trolley, $1,995; Barneys New York, 15 E. Oak, Globetrotter189.com
"Get the perfect suitcase for the perfect romantic getaway — perhaps up to Kohler Waters Spa in Bun Ridge, Ill."

Artfully Disheveled: The Grange bow tie, $85; Artfullydisheveled.com
"Time to show her you care about how you look as much as you care about how she looks."

Patrick Demarchelier: Olor Couture, $115, Barnes & Noble, 1130 N. State; Barnesandnoble.com
"A beautiful coffee table book that every woman needs for the occasional inspiration."

When it comes to romance, photographer Marla Ponce Berre & attorney and Artfully Disheveled co-founder Trey Berre relish the unexpected.

Best Made: American felling axe, $300; Bestmadeco.com
"Because a real man chops his own wood for that cozy Valentine's fire."

Best Made: American felling axe, $300; Bestmadeco.com
"Because a real man chops his own wood for that cozy Valentine's fire."

MORE ONLINE
For recipes and other instructions on how to create Valentine's Day magic, visit Chicagosplash.com
valentine's day gift guide

SWEET STYLE

Sugar Hills Bakery founder Jacob Neminarz and Argo Tea event coordinator Theodore Venable prove that the best gifts have a personal touch.

Sugar Hills Bakery: heart Oreo cookie pops, $1.59 each, 3252 W. Addison

"With our third Sugar Hills location opening in Chicago, we're planning on going through lots of these delicious Oreo pops, which are a hit every year!"

Jacob's picks

West Elm: monogrammed throw, $56, 1000 W. North, Westelm.com

"Being romantic can be tricky in subzero weather. A personalized throw is the perfect solution for end-of-the-night cuddling!"

Theodore's picks

CB2: gallery frame, $399.95, 800 W. North; CB2.com

"Theo gave me this frame with a special photo of the two of us. The dimensions are perfect for that high-end gallery look."

Art Institute of Chicago: one-year membership, $90, 111 S. Michigan; Artic.edu

"When Theo and I first started dating, we would visit a different Chicago museum every weekend. Sharing this experience with your loved one is a great gift that can last long after Valentine's Day ends."

West Elm: monogrammed throw, $56, 1000 W. North, Westelm.com

"Mix and match Diptyque's signature scents to create a layered combination that perfectly suits that special someone."

Diptyque: Eau du Trente-Quatre, $135 for 100 mL, 1645 N. Damen, Diptyqueparis.com

"Function meets fashion with this adorable 'Everyday I Love You' notebook. Writing a heartfelt message on the inside will be a sweet reminder of your love every time they go to use it!"

Smythson: "Everyday I Love You" notebook, $60, Barney's, 15 E Oak, Smythson.com

"Sugar Hills Bakery founder Jacob Neminarz and Argo Tea event coordinator Theodore Venable prove that the best gifts have a personal touch.

Chicago Botanic Garden: Escape to Paradise event, $125 per person, 1000 Lake Cook, Glencoe; Chicagobotanic.org

"Skip the hassle of finding a dinner reservation and spend Valentine's night with your significant other sipping on cocktails and previewing the Orchid Show, hosted by the Woman's Board of the Chicago Horticultural Society."

Chicago Botanic Garden: Escape to Paradise event, $125 per person, 1000 Lake Cook, Glencoe; Chicagobotanic.org

"When Theo and I first started dating, we would visit a different Chicago museum every weekend. Sharing this experience with your loved one is a great gift that can last long after Valentine's Day ends."

< Vosges Haut-Chocolat: Petit Ensemble du Chocolat, $20, and Wine & Chocolate Tasting, price upon request, 951 W. Armitage; Vosgeschocolate.com

"Upgrade the typical Valentine's box of chocolates with this great assortment from Vosges. And let's face it — wine makes any gift that much better."

< Tiffany & Co.: engraved tie bar, $175, 730 N. Michigan; Tiffany.com

"I'm a sucker for anything that can be engraved. Tiffany's classic tie bar with a special Valentine's 'Let's Tie One On' personalized message will look great on your stylish beau."

< Tiffany & Co.: engraved tie bar, $175, 730 N. Michigan; Tiffany.com

"I'm a sucker for anything that can be engraved. Tiffany's classic tie bar with a special Valentine's 'Let's Tie One On' personalized message will look great on your stylish beau."
The grand Duke

Duke Ellington and his music will never be forgotten. That's a given. But one of his last creative efforts, "Queenie Pie," has certainly come close to being left behind. And it's no wonder. Ellington began work on what he called his "street opera" as early as 1962, but a planned public television production never materialized, and though he continued to develop the piece, it remained unfinished when he passed away in 1974. But the music, and the story Ellington wove — in which the titular character, Harlem's top cosmetologist, stares down a challenge from upstart Café O'Lay — has intrigued scholars, musicians and theater artists, and several productions have been mounted over the years. The latest, directed and choreographed by Ken Roht, opens this week at Chicago Opera Theater, with accompaniment provided by the Chicago Jazz Orchestra, conducted by Jeff Lindberg.

Any number of artistic works have been left unfinished by their makers and then completed by others (Borodin's "Prince Igor" and Berg's "Lulu" offer operatic examples.) But, as Roht admits, it's not an easy task. "I had trepidations, afraid that I might not be able to find a way into the piece," he says. "I didn't respond to the narrator character as a structural device, and the order of the songs, some of them only 15 seconds long, was really confusing to me."

Roht eliminated several characters to streamline the story, and re-ordered some of the songs. Perhaps most significantly, he labored to bring out what he perceived to be the core of Ellington's scenario. "What seemed to be inherent, but under-explored, were the hints of intraracial colorism in the piece," he says. "As soon as I was sure the project could go in this direction, I was very confident I could make a pretty significant rewrite that kept the important elements of the original libretto. 'Queenie Pie' is an exciting and poignant musical about two strong African-American women, both deeply affected by societal biases due to their particular skin colors, who overcome their damages in order to find humility and come to a deeper understanding of themselves and each other."

Karen Marie Richardson (left) as Queenie Pie observes Jeffrey Polk as Lil Daddy/Witch Doctor.
Tara Summers showed up an hour late to her first audition for Greg Kinnear’s new show “Rake.” She’d stepped by the wrong studio first, and she was so upset about the mishap that she cried off her makeup, certain she wouldn’t get the job. Luckily, she was mistaken. “My nose was bright red,” she laughs. “But Greg was so nice. I did my best and got the job.”

On the Fox series, which premiered Jan. 23, Summers, 34, plays Leanne Zander, a criminal defense attorney with a messy personal life. “I have a lot in common with the character,” says Summers, whose previous jobs include stints on “Boston Legal,” “Damages” and roles in films like “Factory Girl,” “What a Girl Wants” and “Alfie.” “We’re both from England and have boyfriends who are out of town. She’s very funny — she speaks her mind. She doesn’t care what people think about her.”

Show biz: “The show is an adaption of a show in Australia called ‘Rake’ as well. It’s about a brilliant criminal defense attorney. He defends clients he knows are guilty, and he knows how to get them off. His personal life is a disaster. You love him, though, because he’s endearing, charming and sexy. He is a bit of a train wreck. He’s divorced with a kid, and uses his ex-wife as his shrink.”

Role call: “This was tough, because the character exists in the Australian version of the show. I tried hard not to watch and see what she did, but I ended up watching the entire series. [Ours] is a more old-fashioned character-driven piece.”

Set stories: “Greg is so spontaneous. He likes to improvise a bit. I try as much as to be in the moment. I do like to improvise — I did it in college, and I took an improv class in LA. The set is so much fun. Greg is one of the nicest and most charming people to be around. It’s nice to work with actors who are not egomaniacs who are really gifted. It’s quite rare.”

Born this way: “[When] I was 4, my dad built me a little stage in the house. The kids would come over, and we’d do shows. I was the lead. There was no question that I wanted to do anything else. I went to Brown [University] in Rhode Island and I studied theater; then I went to London. I came to LA by accident and stayed. It’s been incredibly kind to me since. If I acted with Meryl Streep one day, I’d die happy. That’s my dream.”

Watch “Rake” Thursday nights at 8 p.m. on Fox.
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ROOF Runway Wedding Edition. Stop
by to view gown and tuxedo styles by
Lazaro, Tara Keely and Augusta Jones
while sipping Champagne and snack-
ing on complimentary bites. 5-7 p.m;
RSVP at Facebook/roofonthewit

Mini makeover
Michael Anthony Salon’s (621 N. State)
experts are taking the style reigns this
Valentine’s Day weekend. Start your
Saturday with a haircut and manicure
at the salon, and later, head out with a
personal stylist to shop along Michigan
Avenue. Be sure to tote along your
outfit for the night — the stylist will
help you choose your accessories. Feb.
15, $75, 11 a.m.-2 p.m.; Michaelantho-
nyspa.com

Chocolate cure
Throughout February, improve the
texture and tone of your skin with
a chocolate facial at Lakeview spa
Absolute Precision Skin Care, then
sweeten your at-home skincare rou-
tine with 15 percent off chocolate- and
raspberry-based products. $50, 1421
W. Belmont; Absoluteprecision
skincare.com

Eminence Raspberry Pore Refin-
ing Masque, available at Absolute
Precision Skin Care for $48
This was an easy one for me. Over some bright and beautiful sushi, there was lots of sincere eye contact and talk about New Age thinking. You know that feeling you get when someone is sincerely listening to you and actually understanding what it is you’re trying to say? It’s a very comforting, very easy feeling of just knowing, which is not a common feeling to attain on a first date.

When we moved on to talk of spirituality and how important it was to each of us, I knew there was going to be a heavy makeout session after the heavy hamachi, tuna and albacore eating session. And sure enough, there was—and the night was followed by a second, a third and a fourth amazing date. ...

I loved reading all about your incredible first-date experiences too. Thanks for sharing them with me!

Read Jenny’s blog at Chicago Splash.com.

Tricia Cushing: He picked me up, opened the car door, took me to dinner, opened doors, pulled out the chair and ordered for me. Love him forever.

Marla Lara: I was recently divorced and hadn’t danced in over 20 yrs. He took me dancing and reminded me how much I had really missed it.

Martin Chen: It lasted about 24 hours! We ate, walked, talked, laughed, short road trip, more eating, drinking and laughing. It was awesome!

Lauren Igaravides: drinking, talking, eating, drinking, talking. best company I have ever had. Simple as that.

Craig G. Martin: I went on a first date, and it never ended.

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- Anita, age 65

Butterfly wouldn’t be possible without the many women who inspired it. Anita is an actual Butterfly user and has been compensated for her appearance here.

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III PROPERTY TRANSFERS
BY WRAPPORTS NEWS SERVICE

EDITOR'S NOTE: Content appears as it is provided in public records.

Niles
8506 W North Terrace: Pawel Wszelaki and Marta Wszelaki to OJ Consult Property Mgmt LLC for $262,000 on Dec. 23

Morton Grove
6415 Dempster St: Imagine Property 777 LLC to Grv Morton for $1,400,000 on Dec. 26

Park Ridge
928 W Crescent Ave: Clyde A Walter Ill and Joan Walter to Steven William Loeb and Kathleen Anne Loeb for $470,000 on Dec. 24
2013 Glenview Ave: David J Fitzpatrick and Eileen M Fitzpatrick to Kara Lauren Ross and Adam P Groblewski for $475,000 on Dec. 23

Rosemont
5622 W Higgins Road, #26: Patricia Contreras to William C Anderson for $86,000 on Dec. 23

Glennview
322 Nellie Court: de la Vega Rafael to Dimitra Harisis for $330,000 on Dec. 24
5164 W 51st St: Robert Hines and Joyce Hines to Peter and Karen McDonald for $1,050,000 on Dec. 24

Norridge
4600 N Ozark Ave: Right Residential LLC-Series 4 to Marianne F Vitullo for $325,000 on Dec. 23

Des Plaines
8940 W Church St: Steven Yellen and Sherwin Yellen to Karim S Ebrahim for $170,000 on Dec. 27

Evanston
9530 Harding Ave: Daryl C Fieene Trust, Daryl C Fieene Trust, C Fieene Daryl Trust, Lawrence J Panaro Trust, Lawrence J Panaro Trust and J Panaro Lawrence Trust to John T Blix and Cheryl J Blix for $785,000 on Dec. 24

Kenilworth
333 Richmond Road: William P Sutter Jr and Katherine A Sutter to John C Mullen for $1,500,000 on Dec. 24

Winnetka
745 Cherry St. #745: Carol Doleary and Carol A Kane to Alan E Simon and Marsha A Simon for $225,000 on Dec. 24

Mount Prospect
1534 N River W Court, #1: Kurt W Nichols and Mami B Nichols to Sung Seo for $95,000 on Dec. 24

Chicago
7239 W Greenleaf Ave: Sugrue Builder LLC to Kevin A Stanula and Teresa D Stanula for $650,000 on Dec. 27
6874 N Northwest Highway: Edward J Sutoris and Karen A Sutoris to North-northwest Highway III LLC for $1,269,000 on Dec. 24

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Wednesday, Feb 12
Thursday, Feb 13
Friday, Feb 14
Monday, Feb 17

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Submit Your Event
To submit an event for consideration in print, visit www.pioneerlocal.com/submit-content and click the "Events" tab on the left side of the screen. Please submit the event no later than 10 days before the desired publication date.

Saturday, Feb. 15
Free Computer & Internet Safety for Beginners Class
10 a.m.: Computer security expert and owner of local tech company FireLogic, Derrick Wondra will present a free two-hour interactive lecture on how to stay safe in today's digital world. Registration required. Niles Public Library District, 6960 W. Oakton St., Niles. Call 847-663-1234.

Anime & Manga Club
2 p.m.: Watch and discuss anime and manga, then build fandom-inspired treats and crafts. Niles Public Library District, 6960 W. Oakton St., Niles. Call 847-663-1234.

Family Science Saturday
2 p.m.: Science activities for the whole family. Niles Public Library District, 6960 W. Oakton St., Niles. Call 847-663-1234.

Wednesday, Feb. 19
Book Discussion
1 p.m.: A discussion on "Beautiful Ruins" by Jess Walt. Niles Public Library District, 6960 W. Oakton St., Niles. Call 847-663-1234.

Big Kids Story Time
1:30 p.m.: Stories, songs, creative dramatics and other fun activities for children ages 4 to 6. Niles Public Library District, 6960 W. Oakton St., Niles. Call 847-663-1234.

Thursday, Feb. 20
Niles Songwriters' Group
7 p.m.: Singers and songwriters share work and give helpful feedback. Niles Public Library District, 6960 W. Oakton St., Niles. Call 847-663-1234.

Friday, Feb. 21
Rise and Shine Story Time
10 a.m.: A 30-minute story time for children ages 2 to 5. Niles Public Library District, 6960 W. Oakton St., Niles. Call 847-663-1234.

Park Board of Commissioners
6 p.m.: Meets on the third Tuesday of the month. Howard Leisure Center, 6676 W. Howard St., Niles.

Family Story Time
7 p.m.: Stories, songs and activities for families with children ages 2 to 6. Attendees are welcome to wear pajamas. Niles Public Library District, 6960 W. Oakton St., Niles. Call 847-663-1234.

Happening Nearby
Thursday, Feb. 13
Thursday Morning Book Discussion
10 a.m.: The group discusses "Flight Behavior" by Barbara Kingsolver. Park Ridge Public Library, 20 S. Prospect Ave., Park Ridge. Call 847-825-3123.

Story Time for 3s

Art Institute
10:30 a.m.: Join the Maine-Niles Association of Special Recreation for a trip to the Art institute of Chicago. Cost of admission is included in the program fee. Attendees should bring money for lunch at McKinlock Court and souvenirs. Maine-Niles Association of Special Recreation, 6820 W. Dempster St., Morton Grove. Call 847-966-5522. $5-$14.

Friday, Feb. 14
Job Seeker Workshop
9:30 a.m.: Volunteers from the Illinois Worknet Center will teach job search techniques, including skills and important points for resumes and cover letters. Park Ridge Public Library, 20 S. Prospect Ave., Park Ridge. Call 847-720-3245.

Woo Read
11 a.m.: Babies up to 24 months are invited for stories, songs and fingerplays. Older siblings are welcome. Morton Grove Public Library, 6140 Lincoln Ave., Morton Grove. Call 847-965-4220.

Twitter
1 p.m.: Learn how to stay connected with this free service. Mother's, 734 W. Higgins Ave., Chicago. Call 773-774-4804. $10-$20.

Chorus
1 p.m.: Join Park Ridge Senior Center chorus for an afternoon of singing. Park Ridge Senior Center, 100 S. Western Ave., Park Ridge. Call 847-692-3597. $5-$10 per month.

Fun with Fondue
3 p.m.: Enjoy Italian, Swiss and French fondues during a discussion about the history of the dish. Also enjoy Chocolate fondue to celebrate Valentine's Day. Mother's, 734 W. Higgins Ave., Chicago. Call 773-774-4804. $8-$10.

Kicks Flicks: 'Cloudy With a Chance of Meatballs 2'
4 p.m.: A screening of the 2013 animated film about an inventor who must leave his new post to
address the problems with his infamous machine that creates food-animal hybrids. 95 minutes. Morton Grove Public Library, 6140 Lincoln Ave., Morton Grove.

**SATURDAY, FEB. 15**

**Blood Sugar Accu-Chek Screening**  
9 a.m.: Mather’s, 7134 W. Higgins Ave., Chicago. Call 773-774-4804.

**American Red Cross Babysitting Training**  
9 a.m.: Learn how to act in an emergency, prevent accidents, play with and supervise children of different ages and more. Come to class with a pen, pad of paper and a baby-like doll. Please bring a lunch. For ages 11 to 15. Maine Park Leisure Center, 2701 W. Sibley St., Park Ridge. Call 847-692-5127. $60-$95.

**Great Discoveries Beyond Google**  
10 a.m.: Class teaches attendees about online resources available at the library. Park Ridge Public Library, 20 S. Prospect Ave., Park Ridge. Call 847-825-3123.

**Photoshop Drop-in Lab**  
10 a.m.: Come to this open lab to work on editing and restoring your digital photos using Photoshop Elements 10; an instructor will assist and share tips on using the program. Bring photos on a flash drive or in print; a scanner will be available for digitizing print photos. Call 847-929-5101 or visit www.mgpl.org for more information. Morton Grove Public Library, 6140 Lincoln Ave., Morton Grove. $60-$95.

**ACT Prep Exam**  
11 a.m.: Take a free ACT practice exam. Scores will be provided before you leave. Calculators are not provided. Park Ridge Public Library, 20 S. Prospect Ave., Park Ridge. Call 847-825-3123.

**Love of the Club; 65th Anniversary Celebration of Niles Township Toastmasters Club**  

**Mailable Art**  
2 p.m.: Attendees can create a piece of art to mail to a loved one. Mather’s, 7134 W. Higgins Ave., Chicago. Call 773-774-4804. $12 suggested donation.

**MONDAY, FEB. 17**

**Aquatic Adventure**  
9 a.m.: Join the Maine-Niles Association of Special Recreation for a trip to the Shedd Aquarium in Chicago to learn about the Caribbean Reef, Waters of the World and Amazon Rising exhibits. Participants should bring a sack lunch. For ages 6 to 22. Maine-Niles Association of Special Recreation, 6820 W. Dempster St., Morton Grove. Call 847-966-5522. $20-$50.

**Teddy Bear Time**  
9:30 a.m.: Stories, songs and finger plays for children ages 12 to 24 months with an adult. Siblings welcome. Park Ridge Public Library, 20 S. Prospect Ave., Park Ridge. Call 847-825-3123.

**Harmonious Horizons**  
10:20 a.m.: A family music class that includes singing, dancing and playing instruments. For children ages 5 and younger with a caregiver. A second class is available at 11 a.m. Park Ridge Public Library, 20 S. Prospect Ave., Park Ridge. Call 847-825-3123.

**MGPL Kids: Game On!**  
1 p.m.: Challenge friends in “Super Smash Bros.” and “Mario Kart” on the Wii or play against them in driving or volleyball on the Xbox Kinect before school starts. Children under age 8 must be accompanied by a caregiver. Call 847-929-5102 or visit www.mgpl.org/kids for more information. Morton Grove Public Library, 6140 Lincoln Ave., Morton Grove. Call 847-825-3123.

**The Romantic Violin of Fritz Kreisler**  
1 p.m.: Composer Jim Kendros explores the melodies of one of the greatest violinists. North Shore Senior Center, 6140 Dempster St., Morton Grove. Call 847-784-6030. $8-$11.

**Story Time for All Ages**  
1:30 p.m.: Stories, songs and finger plays for the whole family. Park Ridge Public Library, 20 S. Prospect Ave., Park Ridge. Call 847-825-3123.

**Jingo**  
4 p.m.: Play Bingo with pictures. For all ages. Park Ridge Public Library, 20 S. Prospect Ave., Park Ridge. Call 847-825-3123.
For auto news and reviews visit ToDrive.com

EDITOR'S NOTE: Content appears as it is provided in public records. To see all Niles and building permits, visit niles suntimes.com.

1. **Single family - remodel**
   - Address: 7740 N. Oconto Ave., Niles
   - Issue date: Nov. 1
   - Permit cost: $535
   - Construction cost: $16,000

2. **Garage - new**
   - Address: 7919 N. Harlem Ave., Niles
   - Issue date: Oct. 31
   - Permit cost: $330
   - Construction cost: $24,999

3. **Fire protection**
   - Address: 7000 W. Touhy Ave., Niles
   - Issue date: Nov. 1
   - Permit cost: $260
   - Construction cost: $40

4. **Flood control**
   - Address: 6826 W. Cherry Ave., Niles
   - Issue date: Oct. 31
   - Permit cost: $97
   - Construction cost: $6,900

5. **Furnace and air conditioning**
   - Address: 8650 N. Oconto Ave., Niles
   - Issue date: Nov. 1
   - Permit cost: $147
   - Construction cost: $2,784

6. **Alarm**
   - Address: 6935 N. Milwaukee Ave., Niles
   - Issue date: Oct. 28
   - Permit cost: $100
   - Construction cost: $22,350

7. **Fire protection**
   - Address: 6440 W. Howard St., Niles
   - Issue date: Nov. 1
   - Permit cost: $160
   - Construction cost: $19,580

8. **Electrical service**
   - Address: 8213 N. Newcastle Ave., Niles
   - Issue date: Nov. 1
   - Permit cost: $40
   - Construction cost: $1,200

9. **Fire protection**
   - Address: 7420 N. Croname Road, Niles
   - Issue date: Oct. 29
   - Permit cost: $75
   - Construction cost: $10,400

10. **Generator**
    - Address: 6299 W. Howard St., Unit E, Niles
    - Issue date: Oct. 30
    - Permit cost: $145
    - Construction cost: $48,780

11. **Flood control**
    - Address: 735 East Ave., Niles
    - Issue date: Nov. 1
    - Permit cost: $150
    - Construction cost: $8,650

12. **Electrical service**
    - Address: 8250 N. Oketo Ave., Niles
    - Issue date: Nov. 1
    - Permit cost: $40
    - Construction cost: $1,400
From the first moment you first walk through the door, it's clear WINGS Resale Store isn't an average resale store. In every section, a large poster hands above the merchandise, telling shoppers that their purchase will make a difference. Other signs inform shoppers that the proceeds from the sales will be used to help victims of domestic violence. And as they look through the shelves, customers may find smaller, subtler signs.

"Do you feel safe at home?" one sign asks. "Do you need help? Call WINGS' 24-hour hotline."

The WINGS Resale Store is one of the three resale stores run by the Palatine-based Women In Need of Growing Stronger Program, or WINGS. In addition to providing shelter for homeless and abused women and their children, the organization works to help them find jobs, housing and whatever resources they need to lead successful lives. The resale stores help provide funding for WINGS' programs and offer a convenient way to turn in donations. And, with the Christmas season coming up, the stores are looking for volunteers — and donated presents they can give to kids.

According to Robin Bergbreiter, WINGS' Director of Resale Operations, the organization always needed donations. Most of the women it served arrived with nothing. They needed clothes, shoes, furniture, toys for kids. Because donations tended to be generous, WINGS was rarely short of what it needed. But it also accumulated items it didn't need. Setting up a resale store gave it a chance to unload some items and generate funds they could put back into the program.

The first store opened in Palatine nine years ago. In 2006, WINGS decided to open a second resale store in Niles. "[We chose Niles] to give us a presence in another area in Northwest suburbs," said Bergbreiter. "By positioning ourselves in Niles, we were able to reach more customers and donors."

"The Niles store offers a wide variety of clothing and shoes for men, women and children, as well cooking supplies, furniture, home furnishings, books, music, movies and even decorations. Bergbreiter said many customers particularly like store's selection of women's clothing. Everything in the store comes from donations. Donors can drop off smaller items at the store's front desk between 10 a.m. and 5 p.m. Monday through Saturday and 11 a.m. to 5 p.m. on Sunday. WINGS can pick up larger items for free."

Once items are donated, the staff checks the stores' inventory to see if another store is running short of that particular item. If another store doesn't need it, it stays on location. WINGS' clients get first pick of any donations — everything else goes on sale. While WINGS welcomes all donations, there are some things that are especially in demand. "Clothing is always needed, so you'd need to set up a home," said Bergbreiter. WINGS is particularly interested in summer clothing. "Oftentimes, people forget that, in the summer, our clients and children of our clients can't wear winter boots," said Bergbreiter.

There are also items WINGS can't take. "We don't take slipper sofas, cribs or yard play sets, because they might be recalled," said Bergbreiter. "We can't take used mattresses, but actual bed frames are fine. We can't take encyclopedias and textbooks — we can't really sell those things, and clients don't need them."

The store is almost entirely volunteer-operated, and it's constantly looking for more. "We always need great volunteers," said Bergbreiter. "[The commitment] is about four hours a week. We're really flexible."

She also encourages Niles residents interested in volunteering to check out WINGS program's website for other volunteer opportunities.

All Bergbreiter asks is that donors would take the gift donations seriously. "The best thing to keep in mind — if it's something you'd give to your sister, we'd want it," she said. "[Our clients] deserve to have the best we can give them."
Super Bowl party raises $20,700 for Misericordia

ANNUAL SUPER BOWL FUNDRAISER
Benefiting: Misericordia Home
Location: Zia's Trattoria, Chicago
Date: Feb. 2
Attended: 150
Raised: $21,700

1. Beth and Bob McDarragh of Park Ridge; 2. Jay Crowley (from left), Gus Nicoopoulos, Karen Nicoopoulos, Susan Berleth, Linda Berleth and Traci Zimmermann, all of Park Ridge; 3. Kevin Connolly of Chicago (from left), John Tortorella of Park Ridge, Mary Kay and Joe Calabrese, owners of Zia's Trattoria and of Park Ridge and Father Jack Claire of Misericordia; 4. Steve Gaughan of Park Ridge; 5. Cindy Coggin (left) and Leanne Alvizu, both of Park Ridge

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Song choices make guests feel special
Anne Kuzmanich and Jeff Walker

BY HEATHER DORNECKER
Contributing writer

After finding each other on dating site eHarmony in 2011, Anne Kuzmanich and Jeff Walker went on three dates and said “I love you” within the first week of dating.

“We just knew it was meant to be,” she said. “I canceled my membership right away, and he did the same.”

Anne is from Darien and works at the Walgreens Corporate office in Northbrook. Jeff, formerly of Carol Stream, works at the Wells Fargo Regional Office in Lincolnshire and has been the assistant football coach at Ridgewood High School in Norridge for the past six years.

The La Grange Park residents married Oct. 19 at St. Mary Catholic Church in Evanston, the parish they attended while they lived in the area as Jeff pursued his master’s degree at Northwestern University.

“Father Greg Sakowicz was a very special part of our wedding day. People said it was the most beautiful and touching ceremony they have ever been to,” Anne said.

Anne’s friend and bridesmaid Jeannie Griggs sang “Ave Maria.” After Anne and Jeff were pronounced husband and wife, a bagpiper played “Scotland the Brave,” a memorable moment for Anne as she had dreamed of having a bagpiper play at her wedding. The bagpiper was a gift from Jeff’s dad, Martin.

The reception was at the East Bank Club in Chicago. Cocktail hour and hors d’oeuvres were enjoyed on a terrace on the Chicago River with the French soundtrack to “Midnight in Paris” playing in the background.

The couple handpicked every song played at the reception. They wanted to make sure everyone heard their favorite songs — from their older guests to their flower girl and ring bearer.

“Everyone had an absolute blast. The dance floor was packed all night. People said it was the best wedding they ever went to because of the music,” Anne said.

Their first dance was to Kip Moore’s “Hey Pretty Girl,” a country song they knew they’d dance to the minute they heard the words.

Because Jeff is a huge sports fan, the bridesmaids entered to the Chicago Blackhawks’ goal song, “Chelsea Dagger.” They were led by the ring bearer, who wore Blackhawks gear. The groomsmen, led by the flower girl shaking Chicago Bears pom poms, walked out to the Bears’ fight song, “Bear Down, Chicago Bears.”
Andrea Johnsen & Jeffrey Franckowiak
Mr. and Mrs. Frank Johnsen of Park Ridge are pleased to announce the engagement of their daughter Andrea to Jeffrey, son of Lenore Franckowiak of Park Ridge and Dennis Frankowiak of McHenry. Andrea earned a political science degree from DePaul University in 2006 and a master’s in special education from National Louis University in 2010. She is a program supervisor at Have Dreams, an autism resource organization. Jeffrey graduated from the University of Colorado in 2004 with a degree in civil engineering. He is the owner of Gym Class Personal Training in Park Ridge. A 2014 wedding will take place at Architectural Artifacts in Chicago.

PHOTO PROVIDED

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Get up and go

Your guide to the weekend and beyond

Every Thursday

Use the Stage section to learn about local theater productions.
Spending time at camp, day or overnight, is a brilliant way for children to develop, become inspired, make friendships, learn independence and have a fun experience over the summer.

Daytime camp readiness

Attending camp for a set amount of hours during the day is a smart way to introduce young children to the idea of camp. MCCAW YMCA Children's Center in Evanston enrolls children as young as three in their summer camp program.

“At this age, most children are interested in having social interactions with other children and show readiness for participating in cooperative play,” said early childhood manager Luba Dimitrova. “For some children, this might be the first experience in a group setting and we approach them with a lot of care and attention on their first days. The teachers are prepared to help them separate from the parents by redirecting them to activities set up in the classroom as well as by providing loving interactions.”

Dimitrova suggests that, in order to ease separation at drop-off, parents should establish a consistent routine—place backpack in the locker, give a hug, say goodbye, etc. In addition, she advises parents to allow for enough time so that the child does not feel rushed through the routine. Parents should remain calm because kids can pick up on anxiety.

Eileen Prendergast, youth and family programs director at the Chicago Botanic Garden, said: “Tell your child the schedule for the day: ‘You’ll be dropped off, we’ll meet your teacher and new friends, you’ll do a fun activity in the garden, have a snack and you’ll be picked up before lunch and then you can tell me all about your day!’ We would also welcome parents to bring their child to the garden to see it and become familiar with it prior to the first day.”

First-time campers with social difficulties

Participating in camp for the first time is often an intimidating prospect for children and more so for those with social language or social emotional challenges. One camp strives to provide an enriching experience for kids that might need a little extra attention: One in A Hundred Summer Camp.

Mara Lane M.S., CCC/SLP camp director at One In A Hundred Summer Camp, suggests that in addition to visiting the camp ahead of time and meeting your child's pro-
Whee: A McGaw YMCA Camp Echo camper gets upon waterskis for the very first time. SUPPLIED PHOTO

Spective counselors, parents should also take a bunch of photographs of the camp to help their child become familiar and comfortable with what's to come. Initiating frequent conversations about camp the week before the start date is also helpful.

"Ask the camp if they have a video showing the campers participating in different activities that the child can preview," said Lane. "Sometimes a picture is worth a thousand words."

Sleep-away adventurers

Sending your child to camp for an extended period of time might seem like a worrisome notion for parents of first-timers, especially if the site isn't nearby, but some signs clearly point to overnight camp readiness. To ease your apprehension, ask yourself these questions: Has your child been begging you to attend camp away from home? Does your child make friends easily? Are you ready to let your child go?

"There is no magical age that makes a camper ready," said Meredith Stevens, program director at Camp Echo, MCGAW YMCA. "Some children are ready in second grade and others aren't ready until late middle school. It really does vary from child to child. Often times the most homesick campers are the ones that didn't really want to go in the first place, but their parents sort of pushed them into it."

To be better prepared, check to see if the camp has an information night for parents and campers, which would be an excellent way to set expectations and interact with staff members. Parents might also be able to tour the camp prior to signing up to check it out and make sure it's a good fit, especially if your child has special needs—dietary, emotional, behavioral, physical, etc. Also, read all materials that camps provide to learn about specific details. For example, many camps, Camp Echo included, will include your child with their group of friends, if requested.

"If this will be the first time away from home, the child should practice a few short overnights away from mom and dad," Stevens said. "This can be helpful for parents too. We see a lot of camper-sick parents each summer: parents that miss their children way more than their children miss them."

Cityscape: MCGAW YMCA campers take field trips to the zoo. SUPPLIED PHOTO

Art: One in a Hundred Summer Camp camper shows off the mascot created for his group. SUPPLIED PHOTO

Nature museum with grandparents: "There is no magical age that makes a camper ready," said Meredith Stevens, program director at Camp Echo, MCGAW YMCA. SUPPLIED PHOTO

Beach day: "For some children this might be the first experience in a group setting and we approach them with a lot of care and attention on their first days," said Luba Dimitrova, early childhood manager at MCGAW YMCA Children's Center. SUPPLIED PHOTO

Up from here: A cabin group at McGaw YMCA Camp Echo participates on The Wall, a low ropes element on the team elements course. SUPPLIED PHOTO
Technology at camp

BY NIKI PAPAK
Banner Day Camp

Spring is right around the corner. Before we know it, summer camp will be in full swing. Camps are busy creating groups, scheduling activities and preparing for your camper's arrival. Before long, you will be putting your camper on the bus and sending them to camp for a summer of play, fun, friendship and learning. Technology has become a great tool for camps and camp families to prepare for the camp season, stay connected throughout the summer and keep parents informed of happenings throughout the year.

Many families use online enrollment tools to register their children for camp. This is just the starting point of how camps use technology to get ready for the camp season. As summer draws closer, many camps will ask you to fill out group requests, health forms and lunch menus online. Some camps even allow you to make payments over the web. Not sure if your camp is using technology yet? Check out their website or call the camp office to find out.

The use of technology by camps has also allowed for greater opportunities for communication between parents and camp throughout the summer. Parents can read online newsletters, send and receive emails and look at camp pictures allowing them experience the joy of camp from afar. Photo websites allow camps to post photo galleries. It's a simple process to log in and create your own account to be able to see your camper's photos.

Many camps will stay connected throughout the summer and school year using social media like Facebook and Twitter. You can check out your camp on these sites to find the latest news on enrollment, camp activities and off-season events. Facebook is a great social media platform to find out about last minute schedule changes, weather updates and parent visiting days. Be sure to become a Facebook fan and like the camps that your children attend. You can also use Facebook and Twitter to connect with other parents in the community and can be great resources to explore current parenting topics.

Technology has helped to make preparing for camp and staying connected with the camp community much more simple. Be sure to log on this summer and make the most of your camp experience.

Become a Facebook fan and like the camps that your children attend. You can also use Facebook and Twitter to connect with other parents in the community and can be great resources to explore current parenting topics.

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Theater kids shine at the Metropolis Performing Arts Centre

BY WENDY ALTSCHULER
For Sun-Times Media

Located in downtown Arlington Heights, the Metropolis Performing Arts Centre (MPAC), which consists of a 350-seat theater, a ballroom, four classrooms and 13 music studios, has been entertaining and nurturing members of the community and beyond since 2000. The theater hosts more than 300 performances per season, and the School of the Performing Arts educates and inspires more than 2,500 students. The numbers don't lie; the MPAC has a major impact on the local environment as well as the Chicagoland theater community.

"By offering a wide variety of programs through both our school and our theatre, we really hope that everyone in Arlington Heights can find a way to enjoy the arts," said marketing director, Hollis Sienkiewicz. "We also strive to make the arts accessible for everyone. To us, that means keeping ticket prices low, offering scholarships for our classes, partnering with other community organizations and creating outreach programs that bring the arts to individuals with special needs."

The arts, Sienkiewicz said, teach children valuable life skills such as teamwork, confidence, empathy and communication, which are all vital lessons.

"The best part is, kids often don't realize they're learning these things - they're just having a blast putting on a show," Sienkiewicz said.

During the summer, kids are invited to put on a full production, which allows students to obtain a well-rounded theater experience. Kids have the opportunity to participate in all aspects of the show - auditions, casting, rehearsals, set and costume design and much more. Four different camps, divided by age groups, are available each summer: Little Lights Up! for ages 4-5, Lights Up! for grades 1-3, Curtains Up! for grades 4-8 and a High School Performance Experience.

"Our students learn how to interact on and off stage, with their cast mates; how to make wise and creative character decisions, to really bring their role to life, and how to perform for a live audience," Sienkiewicz said.

Last year, the summer camp presented six full productions and four showcase performances, such as: Guys and Dolls Jr., Seussical Jr. and Disney's 101 Dalmatians Kids.

"We strive to have a welcoming and encouraging environment in all of our camps and classes, and as a result, we often see new friendships blossom and creativity and imagination flourish," Sienkiewicz said.

For more information on the Metropolis Performing Arts Centre or the School of the Performing Arts, visit www.metropolisarts.com.
2014 SUMMER CAMPS

BANNER DAY CAMP
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Parents call Banner "transformative" - a safe place to make new friends, accept challenges and develop self-esteem in a nurturing, positive camp setting. Large pavilions, an air-conditioned dining hall and multi-purpose rooms make it easy to enjoy camp in any weather. Days begin with door-to-door bus transportation. Professional-level specialists lead swim instruction, sports, arts, music and adventure programs. Preschool-age specialists create success for children as young as 3 years old. Beginning in kindergarten, campers choose activities providing high-level instruction in the areas they love. An unparalleled camper-to-counselor ratio -- an average of one staff member for every three to four campers -- assures that each child receives personalized attention.

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Camps that focus on physical activities — such as sports or the performing arts — aren’t just centered on skills and drills. These camps offer not only fun and fitness but also emotional and developmental benefits as well.

By name alone, Legacy Sports Camps in Oak Park might sound traditional, but its summer multi-sports camps are anything but.

“We try to avoid a standard routine of just repeating the same activities over and over,” said Dan Kane, Legacy Sports Camp director. “Custom games and sports build anticipation for campers each day they arrive at Legacy since it never feels canned.”

Though the activities may vary, one lesson is a common thread at the camp. “We always have a word of the day that we emphasize throughout each session, as well. Campers and coaches share short stories about an experience they have had with teamwork or responsibility. We emphasize and value this character-building dimension of our program as it helps the campers relate and connect to our staff while fostering positive relationships from positive role models,” Kane said.

On the performing arts side of physical camps, the Northbrook Park District offers theatre workshops for children. These workshops focus on the elements of creating a musical, and everyone who registers receives a part in the play.

“Much of the physical activity [in these workshops] involves dance, which offers exercise and can reduce stress, improve relaxation, strengthen muscles, improve posture and help control weight,” said Erin McDonald, assistant manager of performing arts at Northbrook Park District. “Dance also provides an activity for children who do not consider themselves athletic or might be hesitant to try something new.”

The performing arts — acting, singing and dancing — offer emotional and developmental benefits by boosting confidence, creativity, communication and self-discipline. Interactions during rehearsals for the plays can double as rehearsals for life experiences.

“Developmentally speaking, we have seen children in our program overcome extreme shyness and blossoms with confidence as they took their turn in the spotlight. Students who are quiet in school or uneasy socially can step into a loud character and be someone completely different onstage,” McDonald said.

Game On! Sports Camp 4 Girls in Lake Forest and Chicago offers a mix of traditional and non-traditional sports as well as creative activities. This program emphasizes physical development from two important perspectives: self-recognition of improvements and boosted self-image, said Barb Lazarus, Game On! Sports Camp 4 Girls owner. “Every camper, whether a beginner/recreational or elite athlete, will feel improvement when it comes to the core skills behind all the different sports we play,” she said.

Campers therefore develop the confidence to play, and learn that there is pride in “playing like a girl.”

All campers engage in age-appropriate and fun fitness challenges or even team-based art projects that teach and reinforce the importance and reward of having a “solid” body.

“No matter the size or shape, we educate campers on how a healthy lifestyle, including being active and attention to nutrition, leads to feeling good about themselves,” Lazarus said. “The result is improved self-esteem that translates into better performance on the fields and in every day life.”

For more information on the camps in this article:

Legacy Sports Camp — legacysportscamp.com
Northbrook Park District — nbparks.org
Game On! Sports Camp 4 Girls — gameonsportscamp.com
5 questions: Bravo Performing Arts Academy in Oak Park

BY KIMBERLY ELSHAM VAVRICK
For Sun-Times Media

Bravo Performing Arts Camp in Oak Park is celebrating its 12th year this June. Here’s a Q&A with Tina Reynolds, Bravo’s artistic director and program manager, to describe this successful and popular summer option for kids. The summer program is scheduled for June 9 through July 13.

1. WHAT IS THE CAMP’S MISSION?

The Bravo Performing Arts Academy is an intense musical theater experience designed to hone the vocal, acting and dance skills of students who have the desire, discipline and passion for musical theater. Full-book musicals are taught and performed in only 20 days. BPA is open to students in grades 4-9.

The Junior Bravo Academy is designed for students that may be new to the stage and have the desire to learn more about musical theater. This level offers intimate training in music, dance and acting. Junior shows are taught and performed in only 15 days. JBA is open to students in grades 4-7.

2. HOW IS IT SET UP?

We have auditions March 6-8 at Brooks Middle School, 525 S. Kenilworth, in Oak Park. BPA is not looking for the most talented kids, we encourage those that may be new to the stage and have the desire to learn more about musical theater. The camp offers intensive training in music, dance and acting. Junior shows are taught and performed in only 15 days. BPA is open to students in grades 4-9.

3. WHAT’S NEW THIS YEAR?

We are thrilled to be piloting the first-ever junior adaptation of the “James and the Giant Peach” musical. Along with dance, acting, singing, improvisation and stage crew, we also offer incredible classes in prop and costume building, theatrical makeup design, film and a directing class for our budding directors.

4. WHAT WILL KIDS LEARN AND GET OUT OF THE CAMP?

Each summer, we receive dozens of emails and notes from parents astounded that we were able to get such enthusiasm and passion out of their kids.

We have a team of passionate, dedicated, creative, inspiring directors and teachers that all feel strongly that the stage is a place for kids to think, question and change. In fact, we use the productions and content we perform as a way for kids to explore social issues and themes. It’s really one of the most effective ways to communicate about the human experience and choices.

Contact information and more details about Bravo can be found at www.op97.org/bravo.

Winnie-the-Pooh: The Bravo Performing Arts Academy is an intense musical theater experience that hones vocal, acting and dance skills. [SUPPLIED PHOTO]

Peter Pan: Auditions are March 6-8 at Brooks Middle School in Oak Park. Students should prepare a short song and monologue. [SUPPLIED PHOTO]

Little Mermaid: The camp environment and variety of shows encourages kids to take risks, have fun, build self-esteem, gain confidence. [SUPPLIED PHOTO]
Recreational Tennis and Sports Camp
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Offered to those 4 - 16 years of age looking to learn the game of tennis as well as play golf and swim. Half day and Full day options available. Sign up for 1 - 10 weeks. Full day campers will provide their own lunch.

Recreational Tennis Camp is the tennis ONLY portion of the above camp program. Registering for this option will give you tennis only and no other sport option.

Bonus offer for the above camps: Register for a minimum of 4 weeks within the 10 week period and receive a FREE tennis racquet ($110 value!).

High Performance Tennis Camp
(At Glenbrook North and Glenbrook South High School Courts)
Offered to kids looking to build their tennis skills toward USTA Tournament Training and high school competition status. Much of the focus is on stroke production, foot work, match play, strategy instruction, and competition. Available half day or full day option. Sign up for 1 - 10 weeks.

Like us on Facebook and receive 5% discount off your camp cost.
TOP 5
Managing Editor Jennifer Thomas' picks for this week.

1. Enjoy Italian, Swiss and French fondues during a discussion about the history of the dish at 3 p.m. Feb. 14 at Mather's restaurant, 7134 W. Higgins Ave., Chicago. Call (773) 774-4804.

2. Fear City Chicago Haunted House and Battle Royale Laser Tag are teaming up for a Valentine's Zombie Massacre Bash from 7 p.m. to midnight Feb. 15 at 8240 N. Austin Ave., Morton Grove. The event includes laser tag, a DJ and a cash bar. Fearcitychicago.com.


4. The Chicago Philharmonic performs "Romantic Romantic Remic: Wagner, Mahler, Lully, and Strauss" at 3 p.m. Feb. 16 at Nichols Concert Hall, 1450 Chicago Ave., Evanston. Call (312) 957-0000 or see Chicagophilharmonic.org.

5. Tommy Castro and the Painkillers (pictured) celebrate the release of their new album, "The Devil You Know," at 7:30 p.m. Feb. 16 at Space, 1245 Chicago Ave., Evanston. EvanstonSpace.com.

BY MYRNA PETLICKI
For Sun-Times Media

THEODOS DANCE CHICAGO: WINTER CONCERT 2014
North Shore Center for the Performing Arts, 9501 Skokie Blvd., Skokie
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(847) 673-6300; northshorecenter.org

A new work by Thodos Dance Chicago is a collaboration with Studio Gang architects, who created the Nature Boardwalk at Lincoln Park Zoo. PHOTO BY KATIE GRAVES

Dance, architecture team up for new Thodos project

BY MYRNA PETLICKI
For Sun-Times Media

Theoretically, dance and architecture have a couple of common elements. They both deal with form and function. Evanston native Melissa Thodos, founder and artistic director of Thodos Dance Chicago, has found a way to actually blend the two arts. Her company has been working with Jeanne Gang and principal of Studio Gang Architects, to develop a dance number that will premiere at Thodos' Winter Concert 2014, Saturday, Feb. 22 at the North Shore Center for the Performing Arts in Skokie.

"As an artist and in the context of the creative mission on my company, which really embraces creative thought and creative development, I'm always searching for new ways to work," Thodos explained. "Collaborations are a wonderful way to go because anyone that I work with brings something wonderful and new and fresh to the table."

Thodos knew that Gang, who served on Thodos' Board of Directors for a time, was a lover of dance, so it seemed like a natural collaboration.

"Jeanne presented to me a concept in physics that has been intriguing her for a while," Thodos related. That concept, being developed by physicist Sidney Nagel and the Nagel Group at the University of Chicago, is called jamming. It involves creating vacuum-supported membrane structures with load-bearing properties.

Thodos and Gang both brought their artistic teams to the University of Chicago to learn more about this process. Then they began developing the joint project.

Gang's group visited Thodos' dance studio to meet the dancers and see how their bodies moved. Thodos' group visited the Gang studio to view the prototypes of the structures they were creating for the dancers to perform around.

"Everything that's being done for this work is dictated by this wonderful new idea in physics that we're presenting together," Thodos said. At press time, the full-company piece had not yet been named.

The show will also include the world premiere of a work by choreographer Lucas Grandall of Hubbard Street Dance Chicago, "Panem Nestrum Quoditiam" ("Our Daily Bread") by guest choreographer Ahmad Simmons, and "A Light in the Dark," the story of Helen Keller and Anne Sullivan, a story ballet that was co-choreographed by Thodos and Broadway legend Ann Reinking.

"A Light in the Dark," which was the subject of the documentary, "Shine," was first presented by the company last year. Company member Alissa Tollefson dances the role of Anne Sullivan.

"It's based on the movie, 'The Miracle Worker,'" Tollefson reported. "There are 11 scenes that we chose to do. Unlike our previous story ballet, 'The White City,' there is some dialogue, and there's more acting. It's a more intimate story ballet where you can really get to know the characters."

As part of the piece, the company does "disability awareness through the 'Touch Tour' before the show," Tollefson said. "People who are visually impaired can come on the stage and feel the props and the set pieces and the costumes. During the performance, we have somebody in the audience do a spoken dialogue of what's happening onstage."
Laughter are on the ladies in female ‘Odd Couple’

BY MYRNA PETLICKI
For Sun-Times Media

Friendships can be tested when two close buddies become roommates. That’s especially true if one is a neatnik and the other a slob.

That’s the situation Florence Unger (Ruth Altschul) and Olive Madison (Gayle Starr) face in Neil Simon’s “The Odd Couple: Female Version” at Skokie’s Devonshire Playhouse.

“Florence is a little bit neurotic. She’s a control freak,” said Altschul. “She’s very calculated and deliberate with everything — the opposite of spontaneous.”

Actor Starr is a big fan of her character Olive. “I think she’s really, really funny,” Starr said. “She’s got a great sense of humor. She’s got a big heart. She is creative, trusting and a really good friend, but she’s a total slob.”

Living together requires making accommodations. Without giving anything away, both characters undergo changes through the course of the play. “She learns her lesson by the end,” Altschul reveals of Florence. “She changes a little bit, just like Olive changes.”

The role of Florence is a comfortable fit for Altschul. “I don’t think I’m quite as neurotic as Florence but I definitely have some of those traits,” the actor laughingly admitted. She particularly enjoys playing the character because, “She’s so intense. It’s really fun to let go and get crazy.”

Starr is getting in touch with her inner Olive. “I feel like I also have a good sense of humor. I try to be a good friend, I try to be generous,” she said, laughingly adding, “I could be quite a bit neater.”

Overseeing the ups and downs of Florence’s and Olive’s friendship is director Danon Dastugue.

Dastugue noted that she cast Starr as Olive because, “There’s a comic timing to Neil Simon’s characters and she had it. Afterwards, she told me, ‘I’ve been waiting all my life to play this role.’”

The director has equal praise for Altschul. “Ruth was almost the only person who got this role,” Dastugue related. “I think it’s easier to play a smart-talking, laid-back, sloppy person than it is a neurotic neat person. She really got all the nuances of this character at the audition.”

The two actors are convinced that audiences will enjoy seeing this play as much as they’re enjoying being in it. “Neil Simon is a genius,” Altschul declared. “His plays are hilarious.”

She is a fan of the original “Odd Couple,” but is convinced that, “the female version is almost funnier than the male version.”

“I haven’t done Neil Simon since high school,” Starr noted. “I think he’s a brilliant writer. Every line is interesting and funny, and there’s so much heart in this work. It’s really refreshing to do a piece that’s so well written.”

Dastugue is happy that she chose to direct this play. “It’s extremely funny,” she said. “I really like Neil Simon a lot. I’ve done a lot of his shows — I’ve either directed them or been in them. I think his comedy is amazing, and it’s very well-liked by audiences.”
Your family can munch delicious snacks, take a carriage ride and explore the world of science — all for free — at WinterFest, noon-3 p.m. Saturday, Feb. 15 at Cube Park in Westfield Old Orchard, Skokie.

"The Museum of Science and Industry is going to be bringing some hands-on science activities for children, and adults can also participate," said publicist Isabella Palmer. "We'll have a s'mores and hot chocolate bar, a photo booth and a live DJ.

"The only thing that isn't free is the skating rink that has been open all winter," Palmer added. "We'll have Skates, the Chicago Wolves' mascot, there." It costs $1 to use the rink and $3 to rent skates.

In addition, families can enjoy ice sculptures in Cube Park and near several retail stores. "Brooks Brothers is going to do a giant bow tie and C.D. Peacock's going to do a giant engagement ring," Palmer revealed.

For details, call (847) 677-7761 or go to www.mortongrovepl.org.

**CREATURES FEATURED**

Kids will view live reptiles up close and learn about them at Science Alliance: Reptomania, 4-5 p.m. Monday, Feb. 17 at Skokie Public Library, 5215 Oakton St. Free tickets will be available at 3:30 p.m. that day.

For details, call (847) 965-4220 or go to www.skokiepl.org.
Reproducing genius in ‘Tim’s Vermeer’

BY BRUCE INGRAM
Film Critic

Scholars and connoisseurs have wondered for several centuries how the painter Johannes Vermeer managed to make his works seemingly glow from within while achieving virtual photorealistic detail long before photography was invented.

Well, it turns out to have been done with mirrors—a combination of lenses and mirrors to be more precise—if you accept the hypothesis that’s painstakingly demonstrated in the fascinating documentary “Tim’s Vermeer.”

That’s Tim Jenison, by the way, a multi-millionaire software designer and amateur inventor. His background in video imaging (he created the Video Toaster and Lightwave 3D) made him wonder if Vermeer, in addition to being an artist of genius, might have been a fellow “tinkerer” and “geek” who used technology to make beautiful images.

Jenison became even more curious after reading two 2001 books, one by the painter David Hockney and one by the architect Philip Steadman, proposing that Vermeer used a camera obscura (all the rage in the 17th century) as an assist. The proposition outraged many in the art world who saw it as a suggestion that Vermeer, considered by some to be the greatest painter who ever lived, was a cheat.

So he decided to learn how it might have been done. He did, too, though it’s important to emphasize that word “might.”

It would be wrong to give too much away, since part of the fun of “Tim’s Vermeer” is watching him figure it out, a process involving more than one dead end.

The goal he set for himself was to recreate Vermeer’s masterpiece, “The Music Lesson.” That involved duplicating the room and setting Vermeer used in the painting in a San Antonio warehouse, and building, with an assist from his own 3D imaging software, many of the furnishings himself, including an ornate 17th-century harpsichord.

In all, Jenison, a man of impassive, gray-bearded countenance and dry sense of humor, devoted five years of his life to this project, an endeavor he compares at one point to “watching paint dry.”

On the whole, however, “Tim’s Vermeer” is a mind-boggling marvel that’s consistently involving as you watch Jenison overcome each new challenge. It helps that Jenison’s friend Penn Jillette is on hand to liven things up as observer and narrator, while Jillette’s comedy-magic partner Teller makes his directorial debut.

So, what does it mean when, after painting for 180 days, Jenison completes a far-better-than-reasonable facsimile of “The Music Lesson”? Does it lessen Vermeer’s artistic greatness?

It’s hard to imagine anyone would think so. For one thing, while Jenison’s painting is an extraordinary reproduction, no one would suggest it could pass as a Vermeer. Something, some indefinable x-factor, is missing.

Or maybe it’s not so indefinable. As Jillette says, before Jenison’s experiment, Vermeer seemed “an unfathomable genius.” Now, if you find Jenison’s evidence convincing, he’s still a genius, but a fathomable one.

\[\text{MOVIE REVIEW}\]

A brush with greatness: Penn Jillette and Tim Jenison in ‘Tim’s Vermeer’}

\[\text{STAGED READING}\]

Saturday, May 3, 8 p.m.
Sunday, May 4, 2 p.m.

How do you survive when your child is gone? David Lindsay-Abaire’s Pulitzer Prize-winning script and Tony Award-nominated play takes us down the rabbit hole to explore the depths of grief and loss as parents Becca and Howie seek a way up, out, and toward each other.

\[\text{SIX PIANO ENSEMBLE}\]

Saturday, April 26, 8 p.m.
Sunday, April 27, 3 p.m.

After playing to standing ovations last fall at the University of Wisconsin, the Ensemble brings its musical virtuosity home to Oakton. Under the baton of maestra Glenna Sprague, the Ensemble showcases classical, ragtime, symphonic and popular music—and the group’s rich, layered sound is comparable to an orchestra. A reception will follow the concerts.

\[\text{ROMEO AND JULIET}\]

March 6 - 16

Shakespeare’s most famous and frequently performed play, Romeo and Juliet, has been translated into more than 40 languages, permeating every aspect of popular culture. This stylized and modern telling of the world’s greatest love story, set along the banks of the Adige River on the Ponte Pietra, slicing Verona into east and west, pulls the characters and audience into a whirlwind of energy, words, and violence.
Cassoulets go beyond borders, but not without beans

BY VERONICA HINDE
For Sun-Times Media

Is it a casserole or a cassoulet? By definition, it's not a casserole if it doesn't have beans. And the most devout cassoulet lovers even insist on the right kind of beans — typically Tarbais, large, white beans common in Tarbes, Toulouse, Carcassonne and other towns in the southern Languedoc region of France where the cassoulet originated. Tiny, light green-colored, kidney-shaped Flageolet beans are worthy alternatives.

Michael Lachowicz, chef and owner of Restaurant Michael in Winnetka, imports cans of flageolet beans from southern France. "I'm a purist," he says. "I use exactly what you would see in a cassoulet in Toulouse."

A traditional cassoulet consists of a base layer of beans that have been cooked in tomato purée and beef broth. Duck confit or lamb meat, carrots and other vegetables can be blended in. The cassoulet is then covered with a thick layer of breadcrumbs and baked for a few minutes.

"There's a lot of nostalgia attached to this dish," Lachowicz explained. "Cassoulets are indigenous to southern France and they are driven by ingredients of the region."

The baked cassoulet is usually crowned with iconic meats of the region, like garlicky Toulouse pork sausage. At Bistro Bordeaux in Evanston, Executive Chef Michael Gottlieb makes sausages and duck confit from scratch, daily.

"This stuff is so good; it falls apart and I'm not even doing anything," he said, pulling the meat from the bone of a duck leg that soaked on the stove in a kettle of duck fat.

Gottlieb adds a special treat to the top of his cassoulet: he lays a shank of crispy pork belly, braised that morning, alongside a sliced Toulouse pork sausage. The sausage is spread across the top of a blanket of breadcrumbs made from brioche and blended with duck cracklings that have been ground to a powder-like consistency.

More and more chefs are putting their personal spins on cassoulet. "There are so many possible variations — duck, lobster, vegetarian," said Nadia Tilkian, Executive Chef at Waterleaf at the College of DuPage in Glen Ellyn. Her cassoulet reflects her Mediterranean heritage. Her father is originally from Lebanon. She cooks white beans slowly with tomatoes, olive oil, garlic, herbs, bay leaf and white wine. But she also includes eggplant and zucchini. "It is similar to the dishes I grew up eating," she said. "It just takes me back to my childhood."

CASSOULET (SERVES 4-6)

**Braised Flagelolet Beans**

I pound raw flagelolet beans soaked in beef broth, covered overnight
1/2 pound slab bacon, medium diced
1 whole head of garlic, split
1 large carrot, peeled
2 stalks celery
1 medium sized onion, peeled
5 bay leaves
1 sachet of 1 tablespoon black peppercorns, I bunch thyme, I sprig rosemary
2 cups tomato purée
1 gallon beef broth

Render bacon until browned, 8-10 minutes. Add carrot, onion, celery, whole garlic. Add soaked beans. Add bay and sachet. Simmer until beans are tender. Strain, and reserve cooking liquid but discard vegetables.

**Braised Crispy Pork Belly**

2 pounds raw pork belly
1 pound salt
1/2 pound sugar
2 tablespoons coriander, toasted
2 tablespoons black peppercorns, toasted
2 tablespoons star anise, toasted
1 tablespoon fennel seed, toasted
1 tablespoon allspice, toasted
2 quarts beef broth

Coarsely grind all spices with spice grinder. Mix salt, sugar and spices. Pack pork belly with cure mixture. Wrap in plastic, tightly. Set in refrigerator for 12-24 hours. The next day, rinse off cure, and pat dry.

Bring beef stock, a small bunch of thyme and one sprig of rosemary to a boil. Place pork belly into baking dish, and add hot stock. Cover and bake for three hours at 300 degrees. Remove. Let cool slightly, and wrap tight in plastic wrap and weight down with a heavy object.

**Duck Confit**

4-6 duck legs
3 cups cure (same as pork belly)
2 quarts rendered duck fat (ideal)
1/2 pound of pork back fat, cut into one-inch cubes
2 tablespoons allspice, toasted
2 tablespoons black peppercorn, toasted
4 allspice berries, ground
1/2 cup Cognac
4 cloves garlic
2 tablespoons star anise, toasted
3 cups brioche breadcrumbs

Liberally season duck legs on both sides. Poach in salted water until internal temp is 150 degrees. Remove from water and chill in refrigerator.

**Toulouse Pork Sausage**

2 pounds of fresh pork shoulder, cut into one-inch cubes
1/2 pound of pork back fat, cut into one-inch cubes
2 cups small carrots/blanched and shocked

Per each individual casserole dish, heat five ounces of beans in three ounces of the bean cooking liquid with tomato and stock. Per each casserole dish, add three ounces of shredded duck and 5-8 small carrots.

Sear Toulouse sausage on all sides and roast in 350-degree oven until hot. In the same pan as the sausage, make sure that the beans aren't too dry. Top with brioche bread crumbs. Bake in a 350-degree oven for five minutes or until bread is nicely toasted.

Slice sausage, arrange in dish and top with the crispy pork belly.

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Executive Chef Michael Gottlieb stirs a pot of Flagelolet beans over the stovetop at Bistro Bordeaux in Evanston. The beans will be the base for Gottlieb's traditional cassoulet.
Valentine's Day Lunch
Noon: Call 773-775-6071 for more information. Norwood Park Senior Center, 5011 N. Atoma St., Chicago.

Travel Film
2 p.m.: Enjoy a family-friendly movie traveling through a different part of the world. Call 847-825-3123 to find out what movie will be playing this week. Park Ridge Public Library, 20 S. Prospect Ave., Park Ridge.

Concert: Laura Freeman and Bockie Monzie
7 p.m.: Celebrate Valentine's Day with a musical performance by the cabaret duo. Park Ridge Public Library, 20 S. Prospect Ave., Park Ridge. Call 847-825-3123.

Dodie Maxwell
8 p.m.: The comedian, who recently appeared on "The Late Late Show with Craig Ferguson," performs. $22 and a minimum of two food or drink purchases. Zanies Comedy Night Club Rosemont, 5437 Park Place, Rosemont.

Leaving No Child Inside: Backyard Birds
2 p.m.: Families and children are invited to the Ecology Center to learn about outdoor activity that encourages outdoor activity during the winter. Afterward, participants have time to explore the outdoors with the new craft. Evanston Ecology Center, 2024 McCormick Blvd., Evanston. Call 847-446-8266.$5.

Midsummer Moonlight Madness
4 p.m.: A family show, produced by the GT Skokie Young Artists. Gorilla Tango Skokie, 7924 Lincoln Ave., Skokie. Call 847-677-7661.$12.

Moonlight Night Hike
6:30 p.m.: Gather with friends under the moon for a night hike through the Ladd Arboretum. The night includes crafts, stories, songs and s'mores. Attendees should dress for the weather. For ages 5 and older. Registration required. Evanston Ecology Center, 2024 McCormick Blvd., Evanston. Call 847-446-8266.

Heather McDonald
7 p.m.: The comedian, who's a full-time writer and story producer on "Chelsea Lately," performs. Additional performance at 9:30 p.m. $25 and a minimum of two food or drink purchases. Zanies Comedy Night Club Rosemont, 5437 Park Place, Rosemont.

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GO CALENDAR

TUESDAY, FEB. 18

Family Story Time
7 p.m.: Stories, songs and activities for families with children ages 2 to 6. Attendees are welcome to wear pajamas.
Niles Public Library District, 6960 W. Oakton St., Niles. Call 847-663-1234.

Vince Martin and Russ Williamson
8 p.m.: The comedians perform. $22
and a minimum of two food or drink purchases. Zanies Comedy Night Club Rosemont, 5437 Park Place, Rosemont.

THURSDAY, FEB. 20

Chamber After Hours
5:30 p.m.: A networking event for the Lincolnwood, Sauganash and Edgewater Chambers of Commerce. Nil Tap, 5734 N. Elston Ave., Chicago.

SUNDAY, FEB. 23

Film & Discussion: Ahead of Time: The Extraordinary Journey of Ruth Gruber
1:30 p.m.: A screening of the documentary about the foreign correspondent and photojournalist, followed by a discussion with the film's executive producer and Ruth Gruber herself, via Skype.
Excelsior Hall, 5605 Lincoln Ave., Morton Grove. Call 847-929-5101 or visit www.mgpl.org to learn more. Morton Grove Public Library, 6140 Lincoln Ave., Morton Grove.

Film: 'Watchtower'
2 p.m.: A man and a woman seek refuge from the world: Nihat at a remote forest fire tower, Seher in her room at a rural bus station. When their lives collide, each has to fight their battle of conscience before the other.

WEDNESDAY, FEB. 19

Critic's Choice
1 p.m.: The group watches the movie and discusses the book "Alice in Wonderland" by Lewis Carroll.
Niles Public Library District, 6960 W. Oakton St., Niles. Call 847-663-1234.

Thordos Dance Chicago
3 p.m.: A polarized, futuristic world. 109

Lincolnwood Chamber Orchestra
Orchestra performs 'Moonlight and More,' featuring works by Schumann, Mozart, Dvorak and Vivaldi.
The program also includes a screening of the short silent film "Moonlight," inspired by Beethoven's "Moonlight Sonata." Gorilla Tango Skokie, 7924 Lincoln Ave., Skokie. Call 224-456-2399. $25.

SIXTY'S'TYLES
7 p.m.: Participants will compete in teams of up to four, and the winning team will win a gift certificate donated by the Bringer Inn. For more information or to register, go to calendar.mgpl.org or call 847-929-5101. Bringer Inn, 6230 W. Higgins Ave., Lincolnwood. Call 773-774-4804.

Snow Girls'
2 p.m.: The all-female youth ensemble presents a production about a group of girls who are snowed into a school auditorium.

Pub Trivia Night
7 p.m.: Participants will compete in teams of up to four, and the winning team will win a gift certificate donated by the Bringer Inn. For more information or to register, go to calendar.mgpl.org or call 847-929-5101. Bringer Inn, 6230 W. Higgins Ave., Lincolnwood. Call 773-774-4804.

Oscar Party
5 p.m.: Professor Ron Falzone leads this Oscar celebration featuring clips and reviews of this year's top films and personalities. Attendees can also participate in Oscar contests and enjoy a movie snack.
This is a BYOB event. Mather's, 7134 W. Higgins Ave., Chicago. Call 773-774-4804. $10 suggested donation.
FILM CLIPS

OPENING FRIDAY

ABOUT LAST NIGHT
Rated R for sexual content, language and brief drug use
Stars: Kevin Hart, Michael Ealy, Regina Hall, Joy Bryant
Two couples struggle to make the transition from casual affairs to relationships.
Steve Pink ("Hot Tub Time Machine," "High Fidelity") directed this remake of the 1986 romantic comedy.

ENDLESS LOVE
Rated PG-13 for sexual content, brief partial nudity, some language and teen partying
Stars: Alex Pettyfer, Gabriella Wilde, Bruce Greenwood, Joely Richardson
A rich girl and her wrong-side-of-the-tracks boyfriend (Wilde, Pettyfer) fall in love despite the disapproval of her parents.
Shana Festa ("Country Strong") co-wrote and directed the romance.

ROBOCOP
Rated PG-13 for intense sequences of action including frenetic gun violence throughout, brief strong language, sensuality and some drug material
Stars: Joel Kinnaman, Gary Oldman, Michael Keaton, Abbie Cornish, Jackie Earle Haley
After being killed in the line of duty, a policeman is brought back to life as a crime-fighting cyborg. Jose Padilha ("Elite Squad") directed the remake of the 1987 sci-fi hit.

WINTER'S TALE
Rated PG-13 for violence and some sensuality
Stars: Colin Farrell, Jessica Brown Findlay, Russell Crowe, William Hurt
While robbing a house, a burglar (Farrell) falls in love with a young woman (Findlay) who dies in his arms — then, after learning he has the gift of reincarnation, determines to bring her back to life. Akiva Goldsman ("The Da Vinci Code") wrote and directed the romance.

THE LEGO MOVIE
Rated PG for mild action and rude humor
Stars: Chris Pratt, Elizabeth Banks, Will Arnett
An ordinary Lego minifigure (Pratt), mistakenly believed to be the great Master Builder, is recruited to join a mission to prevent an evil tyrant from gobbling the universe together.
Phil Lord and Christopher Miller ("Cloudy with a Chance of Meatballs") directed the animated comedy.

THE MONUMENTS MEN
Rated PG-13 for some images of war violence and historical smoking
Stars: George Clooney, Matt Damon, Bill Murray, John Goodman, Cate Blanchett
A special squad of art historians during World War II attempt to save stolen art treasures from the Nazis. Clooney stars, co-wrote and directed the drama.

VAMPIRE ACADEMY
Rated PG-13 for violence, bloody images, sexual content and language
Stars: Zoey Deutch, Lucy Fry, Joely Richardson, Gabriel Byrne
A half-human/half-vampire teenager (Deutch) trains at a special high school to become a protector of benign mortal vampires who live peacefully with humans.
Mark Waters ("Mr. Popper's Penguins") directed the action comedy.

LABOR DAY
★★ 1/2
Rated PG-13 for thematic material, brief violence and sexuality
Stars: Kate Winslet, Josh Brolin, Gattlin Griffith
Part Lifetime Channel-romance and part home-invasion thriller, "Labor Day" makes a case for true love tending to turn up when you least suspect it — and being more than a little crazy. How crazy are we talking? How about a single mom (Winslet) falling for the escaped convict (Brolin) who has taken her prisoner and accepting him as a replacement husband and father over the course of a Labor Day weekend? A trifle bizarre, no? Even more so considering that "Labor Day" comes from Oscar-nominated writer/director Jason Reitman ("Up in the Air," "Juno," "Young Adult").
Chicago Shakespeare’s Sondheim double bill hailed one of the “entertainment highlights of 2014.”

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music by
JULIE STYNIE
lyrics by
STEPHEN SONDHEIM
directed by
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entry production originally directed and choreographed by
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SHOWTIMES

Matt Damon and Cate Blanchett star in “The Monuments Men.” (COLUMBIA PICTURES PHOTO)

Movie times are effective Friday, Feb. 14, through Thursday, Feb. 20. Please note that theater schedules are subject to change.

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Valentine's Dining and Gift Guide

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HOROSCOPES: FEBRUARY 19 — FEBRUARY 25

ARIES (March 21 to April 19) Try to say as little as possible about the work you’re doing through the end of the month. Then you can make your announcement and accept your plaudits.

TAURUS (April 20 to May 20) You face a more difficult challenge than you expected. But with that strong Taurusian determination, you should be able to deal with it successfully by week’s end.

GEMINI (May 21 to June 20) Before you act on your “feelings” about that upcoming decision, it might be wise to do a little fact-checking first. You could be very much surprised by what you don’t find.

CANCER (June 21 to July 22) A recent workplace success can open some doors that previously were closed to you. Expect to receive some important news from a longtime friend.

LEO (July 23 to August 22) Put your wounded pride aside and do what you must to heal that misunderstanding before it takes on an irreversible turn and leaves you regretting the loss.

VIRGO (August 23 to September 22) This could help keep problems from creating more confusion. One way to kick a less-than-active relative for advice on a personal matter.

LIBRA (September 23 to October 22) Getting out of an obligation you didn’t really want to take on can be tricky. An honest explanation of the circumstances can help.

SCORPIO (October 23 to November 21) Use your Scorpion logic to push for a no-nonsense approach to a perplexing situation. This could help keep problems from creating more confusion.

SAGITTARIUS (November 22 to December 21) A friend’s problem might take more time than you want to give. But staying with it once again proves the depth of your friendship and loyalty.

CAPRICORN (December 22 to January 19) The Sea Goat can benefit from an extra dose of self-confidence to unsettle your detractors, giving you the advantage of putting on a strong presentation.

AQUARIUS (January 20 to February 18) You might want to ask a friend or relative for advice on a personal matter. But be careful not to give away information you might wish you had kept secret.

PISCES (February 19 to March 20) Use the weekend for a creativity break to help restore your spiritual energy. Once that’s done, you’ll be back and more than ready to tackle any challenges.
**My Chevrolet Camaro Z28**

By Mike Berzins of Niles

Since I was a kid I always had the need for speed. I grew up cruising to car shows and wrenching for long hours in the garage. My pride and joy is my 1998 Chevrolet Camaro Z28. I purchased the Camaro in 2006 in Carbondale, where I was studying at Southern Illinois University, working toward my bachelor’s degree in automotive technology. At first look the car was very clean but pretty average for a stock, unmodified Camaro with 120,000 miles on it. What made this car very special to me is it was what we in the drag-racing world consider a “stripper.” This means the car pretty much had no factory options. While the car was disassembled I started to think about safety and installed a roll cage, racing seats, and five-point racing harnesses. Once the car was reassembled I began a complete rebuild of the car. The engine, transmission, rear axle, everything was removed. I upgraded the factory rear differential, which was a weak link to a GM 12-bolt. The factory transmission was another weak point, so that came out and was replaced with a GM 4L80E out of a Chevy box truck. For the new power plant I started with an iron block 5.OL out of a new Chevrolet Silverado, added all-forged internals and topped it off with cylinder heads built for the boost. Since none of these parts was meant to fit into a Camaro it took an extreme amount of fabrication to get everything to work properly.

For the next couple of years I continued modifications to the car, including a different torque converter, gear ratio, exhaust system and intake. I then added a rebuild, adding a performance camshaft and cylinder head porting. But, of course, this wasn’t good enough.

After all the cruising, grudge racing and weekend trips to the drag strip I realized I was tired of filling up nitrous bottles every week. A few supporting modifications, including a fuel system capable of supporting 1500hp the old Camaro Z28 was ready to roar into life.

It has been a long road, but I’m glad I did it. My Chevrolet Camaro Z28 is a car I love.
Niles residents chose Toyota more often than any other auto brand when purchasing cars in September. Toyota topped the sales charts with 39 of the 251 total sales (all car brands) to Niles residents. A total of 18 new Toyota vehicles and 21 used Toyota vehicles made up the 39 overall Toyota sales in the month.

Ford, which accounted for a total of 38 sales, was the second most popular car brand sold to Niles residents in September. A total of 22 pre-owned vehicles and 16 new vehicles comprised the overall total of 38 Ford purchases in September. Nissan ranked third on the September list of most popular car brands sold to Niles residents, totaling 22 sales — nine new and 13 used.

All told, Niles residents bought 251 cars and trucks in the month of September (all brands) — 109 new vehicles and 142 used vehicles. Toyota was the most popular brand bought new (18 purchases) by residents. Ford and Nissan came in second and third, respectively, in the new car sales category, with 16 and nine sales.

Ford led the way in the used sales category with 22 total sales in the month. Toyota and Nissan also made a good showing in pre-owned sales, with 21 and 18 sales, respectively.

In September, 68 percent of purchases by Niles residents came through a local dealer, while 32 percent were private party transactions. Golf Mill Ford was the top dealer to Niles residents in September with 15 total sales. Other popular dealerships for Niles residents in the month included Bredemann Toyota, Star Nissan and O'Hare Hyundai.
Niles West graduate prepares for spring training with boxing, muay thai and yoga

By Matt Harness

George Kontos said he plans to be in midseason pitching shape when he reports to spring training with the San Francisco Giants today.

After participating in the same off-season program for a fourth consecutive time, the 28-year-old right-handed reliever knows what to expect from his body.

"I will be ready to rock and roll, and that will give me an advantage," said the Lincolnwood native and 2005 graduate of Niles West. "I won't have to iron out the kinks."

Along with his pitching program, the 6-foot-3 Kontos combines traditional exercises with alternative disciplines.

After taking October off to rest, Kontos went back to work Nov. 1, 2013. A typical week included three days of lifting weights at Illinois-Chicago, one day of boxing at BOX Evanston and one day of muay thai at New Breed Training Center in Niles. Kontos also mixed in yoga to "keep everything loose."

Kontos started his throwing workouts on Dec. 1, 2013, at Northwestern, where he played in college. He threw between three and five days a week, graduating from long toss to bullpen sessions to batting practice to simulated games.

"It's full steam ahead for me in the off-season," said Kontos, who made 52 appearances for the Giants in 2013, going 2-2 with a 4.39 ERA. "We really get after it.

Kontos said he added the boxing and muay thai as a way to shake up his training routines, and he's a believer in the benefits of both for baseball.

"Boxing is good conditioning for the shoulders and is good for cardio," he said. "Muay thai has a lot of kicking and kneeing, so it's good for my lower body. It's good for my hip flexors, which are important to pitching."

Kontos performs muay thai under the instruction of another Niles West alumnus, Nick Mitria, a 1997 graduate and a former baseball player for the Wolves.

"More and more athletes are shifting toward mixed martial arts as a way to train," Mitria said. "It's great for your balance and coordination."

Mitria said muay thai is a natural discipline for pitchers.

"The power generated to throw a fastball and kick is similar," he said. "Both start from the ground."

Kontos, who made his major-league debut in 2011 with the New York Yankees and won a World Series with the Giants in 2012, said he always is looking to gain an edge with his off-season regime.

"It's all about the individual," Kontos said. "Everybody is different, and everybody learns to figure out what programs are best for you."
NILES WEST

Fung focused on final chance
Wolves senior trying to reach state meet for first time in floor exercise

BY ERIC VAN DRUL
For Sun-Times Media, @VanDnlSports

LINCOLNSHIRE — Niles West senior Valerie Fung's goal for the end of the girls gymnastics season is to make it to the state meet. It's a goal shared by many gymnasts across the state, and one Fung was .675 points away from accomplishing it at the state meet. It's a goal shared by many gymnasts across the state, and one Fung was .675 points away from accomplishing it at the state meet. Valerie Fung's goal for the end of the girls gymnastics season is to make it to the state meet.

Coming up short a year ago has served as motivation, Fung said. She spends nearly three hours practicing after school on most days, and she loses her body after practice to deal with the physical toll one takes during a gymnastics season.

Then, when Fung goes home, she sits down, watches recordings of her old routines and searches for points.

"I'm always picking things apart with my coaches — figuring out where I need to point my toes, where I could add different tenths and ways I can improve my routine," Fung said. "In the end, it's for the same common goal" of making it to state.

Fung's final attempt at qualifying for the state meet will come today at the Niles North Sectional. Her 8.675 on floor was good for fifth at the Stevenson Regional.

"It was like, 'Yeah, try it over the summer. That's what it's for,'" Kyra VanDoren said. "She has some skills that I'd really like to do sometime."

"I always watch her do it. She's really good at it. I think it's a good thing entering the offseason."

"I can really get a lot of ideas from her. The VanDorens established themselves as Niles North's two best all-arounders this season, and they lived up to that billing at the regional. Kaylie VanDoren was 10th in the all-around (31.500) and Kyra VanDoren was 13th (30.575). Freshman Mia Guzina and sophomore Zoe Lukas also were in the Vikings' regional lineup.

The VanDorens are a big part of the future of Niles North gymnastics. Coach Jacqueline Parat said their exposure at the regional to skilled gymnasts such as Webb, Glenbrook South freshman all-arounder Hannah Hartley and Stevenson junior Alyssa Weisberg, the defending state balance beam champion, was a good thing entering the offseason.

"Coming to this meet, they see harder skills and it kind of gives them an eye opener, like, 'All right, I need to work harder,' and it kind of pushes them," Parat said. "They're even more excited to go into summer and it gives them good ideas. One of the girls on floor on another team tonight did a Strug, and they were like, 'Do you think I could do that?'"

"It gives them ideas of what they can work on to make their routines better for next year."

The Vikings finished fourth at the Stevenson Regional with 121.900 points. They didn't advance anyone to the Niles North Sectional.

Susan Arcus said. "It was exactly what she wanted, and we were really thrilled."

Fung was able to land all of her tricks and avoid major deductions on floor at the regional. She said her floor routine was in the top half of her scores this season, but it will likely have to be cleaner at the sectional in order for her to advance to state.

"We're really, really pleased with her floor and her beam," Niles West coach Mike Williams said.

Seven gymnasts entered in the Niles North Sectional posted a floor exercise score of 9.3 or higher at regionals. Last year, the at-large cutoff for state on floor was 9.175.

Fung has likely spent this week focusing on how to get to that level.
Banner season

With a win Friday the Blue Demons will win conference, be recognized in fieldhouse

BY ERIC VAN DRIEL
For Sun-Times Media, @VanDrielsports

PARK RIDGE — By almost all metrics, this year’s Maine East girls basketball team could become the best in school history.

Never before have the Blue Demons won more than 17 games in a season, Maine East coach Karol Hanusiak said. A 55-44 victory over Highland Park on Friday improved the Blue Demons’ record to 17-6.

Never before had a Maine East squad finished in the top-half of its conference, according to Hanusiak. The Blue Demons, who are currently 8-1 in the CSL North, will win a conference title if they defeat Maine West in Park Ridge on Friday night. Maine West, which is also 8-1 in conference, beat the Blue Demons 47-26 on Jan. 10.

Maine East has already accomplished so much this season, yet its two primary goals — to win a banner and break the school’s wins record — have yet to be reached.

Earning a banner, which has a royal blue background and white lettering, “would mean the world,” said senior center Shaylee Sloan.

“They’ve been just locked in because they want to win a banner really bad,” Hanusiak added. “This group of seniors especially want to walk out of here saying, ‘We did what nobody else before us was able to do.’

A team can earn a banner at Maine East by winning a conference title or by reaching certain levels of the state series. Winning a regional title leads to a banner at Maine East, and so too does capturing a sectional title.

Maine East doesn’t have an especially storied athletic history, and evidence of that hangs in the school’s fieldhouse. The most recent banner was earned by the Blue Demons’ boys soccer team, which captured a regional title in 2011.

The scarcity of the school’s athletic accomplishments would make winning a banner this year that much more special.

“We practice in the fieldhouse and we’re surrounded by [the banners] every single day,” Maine East sophomore guard Janelle Alba Garner said. “We look up there and [realize] we can do so much for our school. It’s right in front of us. It’s so in reach, we just have to get the work done.”

Maine East has put itself in position to achieve its two biggest goals in the final weeks of the season. A showdown against Maine West will serve as an opportunity to both set the program’s wins record and capture its first conference title.

Maine East then begins postseason play with a game against Niles North, the No. 9 seed in the Class 4A Maine East Sectional, on Tuesday. The No. 7-seeded Blue Demons caught an unlucky break in the playoff seeding when they were placed in the New Trier Regional with New Trier, the sectional’s No. 1 seed. Resurrection, the sectional’s No. 8 seed, will host its own regional, which features No. 2 Evanston.

The Trevians (23-2 coming into the week), who feature 6-foot-3 standout Jeannie Boehm, beat Maine East 54-23 on Dec. 16, 2013.

Although Maine East will likely have to defeat two teams it lost to earlier this season to win a banner, the Blue Demons aren’t daunted.

“I don’t see why we can’t have the conference banner or a regional banner,” Maine East senior guard Elanta Slowek said. “We can even go as far as sectionals. We can do it if we set our mind to it.”
NOTRE DAME

Learning on the job

Matchup with Ulis could pay dividends for Dons sophomore point guard

BY DAN SHALIN

NILES — Notre Dame sophomore Lucas Simon said he considered the 62-50 loss to Marian Catholic another lesson in his basketball education.

The 6-foot-4, 185-pound point guard had the opportunity Friday to face Marian Catholic's All-American senior point guard Tyler Ulis, who has signed with Kentucky.

Simon, who is playing his first year of varsity ball, finished with four points, four rebounds and two steals. The Chicago native protected the ball well for much of the game, but he had a couple of fourth-quarter turnovers, which Dons coach Tom Les said may have been due to fatigue.

Simon also found himself guarding Ulis at times during the evening as Notre Dame switched between zone and man-to-man defenses. The 5-10 Ulis finished with 27 points, though Marian Catholic coach Mike Taylor described his star's contribution as a quiet 27.

All of it was part of the learning process, according to Simon.

"Tyler Ulis, a McDonald's All-American and me as a sophomore playing against competition like that, it's really going to help me learn from my mistakes. Things like: how to guard better, how to handle the ball better, how to set guys up. Down the road, it's really going to help me be an overall better player," Simon said.

When the season began, Les talked about Simon being his team's primary playmaker. Junior Joe Mooney also plays some point.

Simon and the Dons, who start three sophomores and a junior, remain a work in progress. But Les said his point guard brings a lot to the table.

"He's getting better. He has a long way to go," Les said. "We'll evaluate him after the season is over. But I've never had a point guard that big. He has good size and he does a nice job."

Simon said genetics suggest he might grow an inch or two.

"My size is a huge advantage," he said. "I'm still trying to get better with the ball and get stronger. I know I have a lot of weaknesses, but I'm trying to become a better shooter. With my size, I can shoot over guys. Playing against smaller point guards, as I get stronger, I want to take them in the post. I can be a lot more versatile than I am now."

In Les, Simon has a coach who knows how to play the point guard position. Les starred at the point for Notre Dame in the late 1960s and early 1970s, and then went on to break the all-time assist record at Bradley. He currently sits sixth on the Braves' all-time list.

Les said his own history is the reason he's so demanding of Simon.

"He's a little bit kind of like my idol," Simon said of Les. "I know all about him. He's an alum from Notre Dame, played at Bradley and was amazing with the ball. He has really high expectations for me to pretty much run the show and be a point guard."

NOTRE DAME's Lucas Simon dribbles past Marian Catholic's Ki-Jana Crawford during Friday's game in Niles. Simon is in his first varsity season and has emerged as his team's primary point guard.

THE SKINNY

Senior Tyler Ulis scored 19 of his game-high 27 points in the second half — including nine during the Spartans' decisive fourth-quarter run — as Marian Catholic defeated Notre Dame in an ESCC boys basketball contest Friday in Niles. Notre Dame, which starts three sophomores, led by as many as 11 in the first quarter and hung around until midway through the fourth when the senior-laden Spartans pulled away.

TURNING POINT

The Dons cut the Marian Catholic lead to 46-44 with 4:15 remaining in the game. But the Kentucky-bound Ulis countered with a 3-pointer, which began a 12-2 Marian Catholic (19-2 overall, 5-0 conference) spurt.

THE STAR

Ulis started a bit slow offensively, but ended up scoring 4 points above his 23 points-per-game average. He finished 8-for-17 from the field and 4-for-9 from 3-point range. He also dished out five assists.

BY THE NUMBERS

Marian Catholic senior Josh Cohn was his team's second-leading scorer, getting all 10 of his points in the second quarter. In the third quarter, Marian Catholic trailed by four when senior guard Ki-Jana Crawford left the court with a sprained finger. His replacement, junior Christopher Austin, scored his team's next eight points as the visitors regained the lead. Crawford later returned. Notre Dame (11-12, 3-3) was led by sophomore forward Ammar Becar (17 points, 10 rebounds). Dons senior Pat Dillon had 11 first-half points, hitting three shots from behind the arc. However, he was held without a field goal in the second half. He finished with 13 points.
Setting an example

Magloire embraces his role as Niles West's leader

PAGE 58

Niles West's Romeo Magloire (left) tries to gain control of the ball in front of Buffalo Grove's Hans Haller during their game in Skokie on Saturday afternoon. KEVIN TANAKA/FOR SUN-TIMES MEDIA

Visit tiny.cc/Olympics2014 for the latest news about area athletes competing at the Winter Olympics.
A final postscript to the 2013 college football season: Duke University had a breakout campaign, playing in the ACC title game and going to the Chick-Hi-A Bowl. But the Blue Devils lost both games, in part because they had to face back-to-back Heisman Trophy winners - Florida State's Jameis Winston and Texas A&M's Johnny Manziel. Unprecedented of course, right? Wrong. Just three years prior, in 2010, LSU faced Alabama's Mark Ingram and Auburn's Cam Newton in consecutive weeks.

I.. Are you one of the rare hoops fans who predicted Damian Lillard's success in the NBA? In the middle of the 2013-14 season, the iron man point guard had the Portland Trail Blazers among the league's elite teams. Incredibly, in 2012-13, as a first-year player out of Weber State, Lillard led the NBA in playing time with 3,167 minutes on the court, almost 40 per game. The last rookie to top the league in that category was Elvin Hayes way back in 1969-69, with an amazing 3,695 minutes for the old San Diego Rockets.

If you're trying to predict who will be playing in the 2014 NHL finals, don't count on two Original Six teams, even though it happened in 2013 when the Chicago beat Boston. Before that, the last time two of the Original Six franchises squared off for the Stanley Cup was in 1979, when Montreal defeated the New York Rangers. The legendary Scotty Bowman was GM of that Canadiens team. His son, Stan, was six years old at the time. Ironically, Stan was GM of the Blackhawks when they took home the Cup in 2013.

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SPRING TRAVEL BASKETBALL TRYOUTS

BOYS 3RD-8TH GRADE (MAINE EAST HIGH SCHOOL)
FEBRUARY 23, 2014 - 7:00-8:30PM
FEBRUARY 26, 2014 - 7:00-8:30PM

GIRLS 3RD-8TH GRADE
MARCH 2, 2014 - 6:30-7:30PM (MAINE EAST HIGH SCHOOL)
MARCH 4, 2014 - 6:30-8:00PM (GOLF MIDDLE SCHOOL IN MORTON GROVE)
HIGH SCHOOL TRYOUTS (MAINE EAST HIGH SCHOOL)
MARCH 9, 2014 - 15U, 6:00-7:30PM, 16U AND 17U 7:30-9:00PM;
MARCH 11, 2014 - 15U 6:00-7:30PM, 16U AND 17U 7:30-9:00PM

Maine East High School
2601 W. Dempster Street
Park Ridge, IL 60068
Golf Middle School
9401 Waukegan Road
Morton Grove, IL 60053

SPRING FEE: $750 (INCLUDES CUSTOM UNIFORM, BACKPACK, T-SHIRT, SHOOTING SHIRT, SOCKS, 5 TOURNAMENTS AND 2 PRACTICES PER WEEK)
THERE IS A $20 TRYOUT FEE WHICH WILL BE APPLIED TO A PLAYER'S SPRING TRAVEL FEE.

TO REGISTER PLEASE VISIT OUR WEBSITE AND CLICK "SPRING TRAVEL"

IF YOU HAVE ANY QUESTIONS PLEASE CONTACT AARON, LONDON
847.804.7799 OR AARON@ILLINOISOLDSCCHOOL.NET
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