New Year’s Eve skate

‘Midnight’ comes at 1:50 p.m. for young skaters, families at Iceland event | PAGE 6

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Healthy New Year,

Shoestring

Mommy on a

healthy new year,

PAGE 38
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IceLand celebrates the New Year with skating, games, balloons

BY IGOR STUDENKOV
Special for Pioneer Press | @istudenkov

On New Year's Eve, Niles Park District's IceLand ice skating facility rang in the new year a bit early for local kids who were too young to stay up until midnight.

The IceLand New Year's Eve skate was held between 12 and 2 p.m. at IceLand's Indoor rink. Staff held games in the rink's eastern corner, the lights were dimmed slightly and Christmas music played through the speakers, while the rink clock counted down to "midnight."

At 1:50 p.m., kids and their parents celebrated the New Year as balloons dropped from the ceiling.

By noon, families already started to crowd IceLand's lobby. As usual, it cost $8 to get in — $5 for general admission and $3 to rent the skates. But this time, every kid got a free "Happy New Year" party hat, a wreath, a noisemaker and a glow stick. While the lobby got less crowded within the next half hour, families continued coming in over the course of the next hour.

At first, families simply skated. But at 1 p.m., IceLand staff started the countdown and asked skaters to skate clockwise — the opposite of the direction most of them had been skating for the past hour.

Staff set up a play area in the eastern corner of the rink. Kids were invited to play games, which included a hula hoop contest and a competition where kids were split into teams to see which team could throw the most balls into a hula hoop placed on the ice.

As "midnight" drew closer, most kids gathered under a bag that contained the balloons. The staff asked them to take a few steps back. But as the countdown ended, the bag didn't fully open, so only some balloons spilled out. It took a few more tries to get it to open completely.

Afterward, families left the rink as it prepared to close for the rest of the year. Kids were invited to grab some free punch on the way out.

Parents praised the event, with many expressing interest in enrolling their kids and grandchildren in IceLand's classes.

Jeff Krouse, who skate IceLand as a kid, came to the New Year's Eve Skate with his son.

"I think it's awesome," he said. Krouse said that while he and his son don't come to IceLand often, he may reconsider.

Anna Kocol, who was standing at the bleachers as the rest of her family skated, also praised the event.

"This is a very good idea," she said. "[The kids] have some games, so they have fun."

If she had any complaint, she said, it was about IceLand's usual public skating hours. On Mondays-Thursdays, the indoor skating rink is only open in the morning, when kids are at school, Kocol said.

"It would be nice if they had public hours in the afternoons or evenings," said Kocol. "But otherwise, it's very nice."

Romulus Berzescu of Niles, supports his son, Nathan as he learns to skate during the New Year's Eve party at the Ice Land Ice Arena in Niles Wednesday Dec. 31, 2014. KEVIN TANAKA/CHICAGO TRIBUNE MEDIA GROUP

Skaters celebrate an early New Year's Eve party at the Ice Land Ice Arena in Niles Wednesday Dec. 31, 2014. KEVIN TANAKA/CHICAGO TRIBUNE MEDIA GROUP

Chicagoan Alex Rreckomanovic holds Onto his granddaughter, Samantha Wiviott during New Year's Eve skate at Ice Land Ice Arena in Niles Wednesday Dec. 31, 2014. KEVIN TANAKA/CHICAGO TRIBUNE MEDIA GROUP
Elections

Niles residents face choices for Village, Library, Park District boards

In April 2015, Niles residents will have a chance to change the make-up of the Village Board, Public Library Board, Park District Board and area school districts. Because the board terms are staggered, only some of each board’s seats are up for grabs. Candidates had until Dec. 22 to file their petitions. The election will take place on April 7, with early voting starting on March 23.

Three Village Board seats are up for election — the seats currently held by Trustees Joe LoVerde, Rosemary Palicki and Chris Hanusiak. Joe LoVerde is running as part of the Niles Forward Party slate, which also includes former Niles Police Chief Dean Strzelecki and Niles Ethics Board member Denise McCreery.

Palicki and Hanusiak are running as independents. In addition, according to Village Clerk Marlene Victorine, attorney David Carrabotta is running as an independent. Carrabotta is no stranger to Village Board meetings. He was one of the several residents to speak out against the original version of the Niles Tree Ordinance, and he spoke in favor of granting a special use permit to the controversial Sportman's Club gun shop and firing range during a July 2014 Plan Commission hearing.

Tony Gaudio, the Ethics Board chairman who is helping run the Niles Forward Party’s campaign, previously said its main platform is to make sure that the village moves forward with development projects and other initiatives that have launched since Mayor Andrew Przybylo took office. In a more recent statement to the press, LoVerde said that another part of the platform is spending tax revenue responsibly.

“My primary focus will be to make sure that taxpayer dollars are spent wisely,” he said. “Homeowners already pay enough in taxes. As their representatives, we must ensure that their getting what they pay for.”

Hanusiak and Palicki have voted against Przybylo's initiatives more frequently than any other trustees. Most recently, they spoke out against granting Class 6B tax credit extension to Shure Incorporated, arguing that it imposed unfair burden on the taxes of nearby properties.

Nonetheless, the two have found themselves on opposite sides of several issues most notably; they found themselves opposing sides over the Tree Ordinance and the approval of the Sportman’s Club special use permit. Under Cook County law, ballots are created so that candidate slates go on the top and independent candidates go below in the order in which they filed petitions. For trustee, the Niles Forward Party candidates will be on top in alphabetical order by last name, with Hanusiak, Palicki and Carrabotta following, respectively.

All Library Board incumbents — Board President Morgan Dubiel and Trustees Linda Ryan and Chris Ball — will be running. Three independent candidates will also be running — Pati Rozanski, Patrick Leonard and Tim Spadoni. Spadoni is the husband of Village Deputy Clerk Kathy Spadoni. According to Niles Public Library interim director Susan Lempke, Dubiel, Ryan, Ball and Rozanski filed at the same time, so the library will hold a lottery to determine their placement on the ballot. Leonard and Spadoni will have the fifth and sixth spots, respectively.

For Niles Park District, three seats are in play — two four-year seats and one two-year seat. For the four-year seats, incumbent commissioners Ray Czarnik and Patrick Byrne are running to keep their seats. They will face once challenger Chris Zalinski was appointed to serve out the remainder of Commissioner Bill Terpinas’ term on Oct. 2, 2013, after Terpinas passed away. Zalinski said he is running because he believes that while the park board has been doing a good job, it could use a fresh set of eyes.

Trunco said he is running because he believes that while the park board has been doing a good job, it could use a fresh set of eyes, new ideas, new opportunities that I may see.”
As 2015 dawns, there are a number of infrastructure projects, new initiatives and new business openings that will be unfolding throughout the village of Niles.

The village will continue to work on the Stormwater Relief Program, a series of infrastructure improvements designed to decrease flooding throughout Niles.

With stormwater basins at Our Lady of Ransom Parish and Maryhill Cemetery completed, the village is moving on to the next project. The Cleveland Relief Sewer project will build a new sewer line that will collect water from the eastern portion of Niles and deposit it into Chicago River's North Branch.

The sewer will begin near the intersection of Main Street and Oketo Avenue and continue along Monroe Avenue until it reaches Cleveland Street. It will then continue along Cleveland Street until it reaches the Cook County Forest Preserve, where it will go into the river.

Sewer pipes along Odell, Octavia, Oconto and Harlem avenues, Waukegan Road and Kenney Streets will fit into the new sewer pipes, ensuring that areas around those streets will get stormwater relief as well.

According to village officials, the Cleveland Relief Sewer project will go up for bid sometime in the spring of 2015.

This year will also see the start of another major infrastructure project. Nicor Gas company is launching a nine-year project to upgrade its infrastructure throughout Niles. According to a news release posted on the village website, this will include replacing the aging distribution pipe, upgrading transmission and natural gas storage systems, as well as replacing and refurbishing natural gas regulating stations.

At least some of the costs of those improvements will be passed on to Niles residents. According to the news release, Nicor customers will see their bills increase by an average of $0.75 per month.

This year will likely see the village government doing more to encourage arts and culture throughout Niles.

The Arts and Culture Advisory Council, which was created at the Village Board's final meeting of 2014, is expected to meet for the first time later this year. It will not only advise the Village Board on cultural issues, but also help decide how the newly created Appearance and Art Fee will be spent.

The village isn't the only public institution looking to encourage arts. The Niles Public Library will be working toward creating a digital media lab for teenage patrons.

According to Interim Director Susan Lempke, the library is still in the early stages of the planning process. But in a report to the Niles Library Board during its December meeting, she said that it would have equipment for editing video and sound files, as well as devices such as 3-D printers. Board President Morgan Dubiel also suggested adding features related to STEM education.

The creation of the media lab would be paid for using a grant the library received earlier. According to Lempke, the grant money must be spent by June 30; otherwise, the library would be required to forfeit it.

This year also promises to see some new business.

Wildwood Tavern will be operated by Mark Freedman, whose family owned Lincolnwood's Myron & Phil's steakhouse. Myron & Phil's burned down in May 2013, and while Freeman originally intended to rebuild it, he ultimately decided to start from scratch.

Wildwood Tavern will be located near the intersection of Touhy and Caldwell avenues, inside the building that used to house Christopher's Off the Bone steakhouse. Since September 2014, Freedman has been renovating the building.

According to the most recent Myron & Phil's official Facebook page, as of Nov. 12, the construction crew removed old booths and walls, installed new kitchen equipment and began the process of replacing the water-damaged floor.

In an earlier interview, Freeman indicated that Wildwood Tavern will offer grilled items, as well as salads, sandwiches, appetizers and a large selection of bottled and tap local craft beers.

When it opens, Wildwood Tavern will be the first new business opened in the Touhy Corridor since Niles unveiled its "vision" for the area.

Nearby, the abandoned buildings that housed America's Midwest Hotel until February 2013 have been demolished. As of Jan. 2, only piles of rubble remained. The village hopes to see a new business-class hotel built on the site. However, Mike Stratis, the current owner of the property, said he's keeping his options open.
Teen drinking ramifications among new laws in 2015

BY KERRY LESTER
Associated Press

Parents and guardians considering allowing their teens to host parties will be responsible for more than just the alcohol consumed in the house when the new year rolls in.

Beginning Jan. 1, parents and guardians can be fined up to $2,000 if they allow those under 21 to drink in vehicles, trailers, campers or boats under their ownership or control. And if a death occurs as a result, parents or guardians can be charged with a felony.

The legislation expands the current state law, which penalizes adults who allow underage people to drink alcohol in their homes. It was sponsored in the Senate by Julie Morrison, a Deerfield Democrat, who remembers a fatal accident in 2006 involving teenagers who were her children’s age.

Daniel Bell of Bannockburn and Ross Trace of Riverwoods, both 18, were killed after leaving a house party in Deerfield when their car slammed into a tree. Bell, the driver, had a blood-alcohol level of .126, above the .08 driving limit.

“It was one of the most horrific things that ever happened in our sleepy little town,” Morrison said.

The new law, Morrison says, “tightens up some of the loopholes” in the earlier legislation that bans adults from allowing children to drink in their homes.

Republican state Sen. Pam Althoff, who worked on the original legislation, said it became clear in recent years that law enforcement agencies “were dealing with not only the situation of teenage vehicular homicides but also many accidents that were occurring on lakes and rivers.”

The legislation, HB14745, is one of more than 200 new laws that will go into effect Jan. 1. Here are others that could have an immediate or significant impact on Illinois residents:

PREGNANCY RIGHTS
Employers must provide “reasonable accommodations” for working pregnant women unless it would impose an “undue hardship” on the business. That includes limits on manual labor, more frequent bathroom breaks and space to breastfeed. The law also says a pregnant woman can’t be forced to take a leave of absence when another accommodation is available and that an employer can’t refuse to hire a qualified applicant because of a required accommodation.

The bill is HB88.

SPEEDING
Expands legislation passed in 2013 increasing the speed limit to 70 mph on interstates to include urban areas. The earlier law kept the limit lower in Chicago and its vicinity. The bill allows the state Tollway Authority to establish higher limits in urban areas.

The bill is SB2015.

MEDICAL POT PILOT PROGRAM
Expands the medical marijuana pilot program to include children and teenagers who suffer from seizures. Rules are still under review, but young patients likely will be required to get written certification from two doctors. Parents of children with intractable epilepsy pushed for the law following publicity about a Colorado product called Charlotte’s Web, which is low in tetrahydrocannabinol (THC) levels that produce a high.

The bill is SB2363.

RURAL AMBULANCES
Ambulances in rural areas can be up-graded to the highest emergency medical technician license of any person staffing that ambulance. Sponsors say the change allows more kinds of life-saving procedures to be performed in an ambulance.

The bill is HB14523.

REPTILE TRANSFER
Bans the sale, transfer and possession of certain reptiles and amphibians taken from the wild, and creates a permit process for owning other reptiles and amphibians.

The bill is SB902.

BEER DESCRIPTION
Expands the definition of beer to include beverages brewed or fermented from malt products, specifically hard ciders.

The bill is SB1403.

BULLETPROOF VESTS
Requires law enforcement agencies to provide bulletproof vests to officers.

The bill is HB6688.

“BAN THE BOX”
Illinois becomes the fifth state to prevent private employers from checking an applicant’s criminal history until the final round of job interviews. Currently, only state agencies are banned from asking about criminal history on initial job applications.

The bill is HB6765.

GOVERNORIAL APPOINTMENTS
A new annual report requires the governor to submit background and demographic data on all of his appointments to the General Assembly.

The bill is SB229.
POLICE BLOTTER

The following incidents were listed in the official bulletin of the Niles Police Department.

RETAIL THEFT

Michael Taibleson, 27, of 2747 Fitch St., Chicago, was charged with retail theft on Dec. 22 after he allegedly stole a bar stool and pet carrier from a store on the 6100 block of Touhy Avenue. He has a Jan. 4 court date.

Janyssa Young, 20, of 339 W. Garfield, Chicago, was charged with retail theft on Dec. 22 after she allegedly stole $224 worth of merchandise from a store inside the Niles 7-Eleven store, 7450 Oakton St.

Dakin, Chicago, was charged with retail theft on Dec. 30 after she allegedly stole a shirt, leggings and hat from a store on the 8500 block of Golf Road where she was employed. She has a Jan. 14 court date.

Angeline Bello, 36, of 10425 Dearborn St., Chicago, was charged with retail theft on Dec. 26 after she allegedly stole $224 worth of cleaning products and other items valued at $34 from a store on the 8500 block of Golf Road where she was employed. She has a Jan. 14 court date.

CRIME BRIEFS

BURGLARY

A home on the 9000 block of Grace Avenue was burglarized between 2 and 6 p.m., Dec. 22, and a home on the 8400 block of Milwaukee Avenue was burglarized on Dec. 30 between 9:30 a.m. and 4:30 p.m. No further details were provided.

Man charged in November robbery of Niles 7-Eleven store

JENNIFER JOHNSON
johnson@pioneerlocal.com I @jen,pioneer

A man suspected of robbing a Niles convenience store at gunpoint last fall has been arrested.

Martell Flippins, 26, of 2258 Nichols Road, Arlington Heights, faces multiple charges of felony aggravated robbery, including the Nov. 7 robbery of the Niles 7-Eleven store, 7450 Oakton St.

Des Plaines police officers apprehended Flippins on the night of Dec. 30 after a clerk at the Mobil gas station at Mannheim Road and Howard Street reported a suspicious person hanging around the area.

"He had walked in and the clerk thought he recognized him from an earlier robbery that occurred in October," explained Des Plaines Police Cnfr Randy Akin.

Akin said the clerk waited about 40 minutes before calling police, who located the man in the parking lot of the BP Amoco gas station across the street. The man, later identified as Flippins, was appréhended by the police as he attempted to run from officers west on Howard Street, but was quickly apprehended, Akin said.

A BB gun described as a "replica pistol" was found in Flippins' pocket, police said.

According to Des Plaines police, Flippins said he went to the Mobil gas station on the night of Dec. 30 with the intention of robbing it. He also alleged to have robbed two other Des Plaines businesses: Pantry Plus, at 699 S. Wolf Road, on Oct. 21, and 7-Eleven, 2579 Ballard Road, on Nov. 7.

It was just before 3 a.m. on Nov. 7 that the Niles 7-Eleven store was robbed of an undisclosed amount of cash by a man wearing a black scarf over the lower portion of his face. Following the incident, police released a surveillance image of the robber.

Flippins is also a suspect in robberies that occurred at two Mobil gas stations in Arlington Heights and a Mobil gas station in Glenview, police said.

Glenview police said Monday they were still investigating the Mobil robbery in their village and had not filed any charges in connection with the case.

Akin said Flippins is believed to have used two different BB guns in the robberies. In addition to cash, he stole cigarettes, cigars and prepaid phone cards, Akin said.

According to Des Plaines police, Flippins was charged with five counts of felony aggravated robbery. He remains behind bars in Cook County Jail this week, with bond set at $150,000. His next court appearance is scheduled for Jan. 27.

According to the Cook County State's Attorney's Office, at the time of his arrest Flippins was on probation after pleading guilty to a misdemeanor domestic battery charge in June. He also served time in Indiana for fraud and aggravated battery, according to the Indiana Department of Corrections.

Pioneer Press reporter Todd Shields contributed to this report.
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Niles Plan Commission signs off on swimming school

IGOR STUDENKOV
Special for Pioneer Press / @studenkov

The Niles Plan Commission unanimously approved a special use permit for Foss Swim School, a Midwestern chain that offers swimming lessons for kids and adults.

The school will be located at Four Flags Shopping Center, 8299 Golf Road. The space was most recently home to Archiver’s scrapbooking supplies store. It is expected to open seven days a week, between 10 a.m. and 7 p.m.

Now that the Plan Commission approved it, the school will need to receive final approval from the Niles Village Board. According to Bruce Sylvester, Niles’ senior planner, the board is expected to look at it during its Jan. 27 meeting. If the approval is granted, the school hopes to open by fall 2015.

Foss Swim School has been in business since 1993. It primarily offers lessons for kids ages 3-13. The school started expanding into Chicagoland.

Today, the school has locations in Highland Park, South Barrington, Libertyville and Chicago’s Lakeview neighborhood.

Jon Foss, CEO of Foss Swim School, said there are several reasons why he chose Four Flags for a location.

“We looked at the Niles-Park Ridge-Glenview area and found that it’s a five-mile area where there isn’t a business quite like ours,” he said. “It’s near two major roads - Milwaukee Avenue and Golf Road. And there’s a good cross-section of businesses in the mall.”

Foss also said that the swimming school has a good relationship with Inland Real Estate Corporation, which owns Four Flags, so their property was a natural choice for the Niles location.

Like any other private educational facility, the swim school must apply for a special use permit. The Plan Commission considered its application during the Jan 5 meeting.

In a report to the commission, Sylvester recommended that it approve the permit. He indicated that the swim school would need 50 parking spaces. The mall parking lot already has 28 parking spaces, and Sylvester recommended giving them 25 parking credits just to be on the safe side.

Nonetheless, several commissioners expressed concerns that there wouldn’t be enough parking. Sylvester responded that Four Flags has a variety of businesses, and that variety keeps the parking lots from getting too crowded.

“It is my belief that mixing types of businesses minimizes the chance that people will be coming at the same time,” he said.

When questioned by the commission, Foss said that he had his concerns about parking, but they’ve since been mollified.

“I’ve been [at the site] 12 times now, and I’ve never been able to find a parking spot,” he said. “If I was near [the currently under construction Fresh Farms grocery store], I would be worried, but I don’t think that’s going to be a problem.”

Dean Lee, director of construction and maintenance at Inland Real Estate, told the commission that his company doesn’t have any concerns about parking, either.

Commissioner Angelo Troiani expressed concerns about security.

Earlier during the meeting, Foss told the commission that the school wouldn’t have locker rooms, rather, it would have smaller changing rooms that families could use. Foss explained that the school tried conventional locker rooms, but found that there were issues when, for example, fathers came in with their daughters.

Troiani said that he was worried that this arrangement would leave personal belongings unsecured.

“We haven’t had thefts in our facilities for the last three years,” Foss replied. “Every family has to check in at the front desk. After a few weeks, our staff knows who everyone is.”

He added that three to four staffers are placed at the front desk to address security issues if the need arises.

Foss told the commission that he hopes the school will be a major draw for Four Flags.

“We want to get people to come to the mall,” he said. “Swimming lessons is something you can’t get online.”

Fifth annual Pizza Wars planned for Jan. 15

NATALIE HAYES
Special for Pioneer Press

School District 219 in Skokie may be reputed for the diverse nationalities and ethnic backgrounds served by Niles North and Niles West High Schools, but a single event that takes place each January brings everyone together to bond over the common love of one thing — great pizza.

Now in its fifth year, the highly-anticipated annual Pizza Wars event brings together at least 10 restaurants and hundreds of people under one roof for a night of pizza-eating that supports the District 219 Foundation.

With more than 800 people expected to attend the Jan. 15 event and contribute to a goal of raising more than $10,000, “Pizza Wars V” is the District 219 Foundation’s most lucrative fundraiser of the year.

During the past four years, the event has so far raised about $25,000 to help supplement learning and college-focused initiatives for about 1,850 students who fall into the low-income bracket.

Money raised by the District 219 Foundation supports high school students who qualify for the school district’s free or reduced-price lunch program, or 37 percent of the total student body with Niles North and Niles West High Schools combined, according to Alyse Burman of the District 219 Foundation.

“It’s a unique way to be able to taste all the great pizzas from the community in one place,” Burman said. “Not only do people have a great time, but they’re also helping people in need at the same time.”

The long-running success of Pizza Wars relies on a collaboration of the whole Niles Township community — businesses, residents, and local politicians alike.

Each restaurant owner who participates donates up to 30 pizzas, and guests pay an entrance fee that grants them an all-access pass to a one-night pizza-eating frenzy.

And continuing a tradition that began last year, the mayors of Lincolnwood, Morton Grove, Niles, and Skokie will engage in a heated, nail-biting pizza-eating contest.

The four mayors will have five minutes to down as much cheese pizza as possible, and the winner will take home the bragging rights as the fastest-eating mayor in Niles Township.

After the mayoral showdown, guests will dig in and have a chance to sample all of the different pizzas from thin crust to deep-dish. At the end of the night, attendees will cast one vote for their favorite pizzeria.

But only one restaurant will take home the title of “best pizza.” Village Inn Pizza has won Pizza Wars during the past two years, but the downtown Skokie-based restaurant will face fresh competition this year with three new restaurants set to join the Pizza Wars mix.

Goode and Fresh of Glenview, Kappy’s Restaurant & Pancake House of Morton Grove, and Tommy’s on Waukegan will all join the Pizza Wars lineup this year.

Returning pizzerias include Father & Son Italian Kitchen, Jet’s Pizza, Lou Mahnatt’s, OrganicLife, Village Inn, and Wa-Pa-Getti’s.

Tickets to Pizza Wars are $12 when purchased in advance, and $15 at the door. To buy tickets through the District 219 Foundation website, go to http://219foundation.org/.

Pizza Wars will be held from 6 to 9 p.m. in the main gym at Niles North High School, 9500 Lawler Ave., Skokie.
A wake was scheduled to be held Wednesday for former state Rep. Rosemary Mulligan, who died last week at the age of 73.

Visitation was scheduled for 4 to 9 p.m. at Oehler Funeral Home, 2099 Miner St. in Des Plaines. Funeral services were private.

Mulligan, a Republican from Des Plaines, served Park Ridge and surrounding areas in the Illinois General Assembly from 1993 to 2013. She died Dec. 30 after months of failing health, family said.

“She was a great leader, especially in our district,” said state Rep. Marty Moylan, the Democrat who succeeded Mulligan.

“She was also a great leader in women’s rights, especially in our district, which was very conservative.”

Moylan also credited Mulligan for her work on health care issues. Among the legislative committees she served on were Health Care Availability Access and Medicaid Reform.

“She was always making sure budgets weren’t cut,” Moylan said.

Park Ridge City Clerk Betty Henneman, who participated with Mulligan in functions through the Park Ridge League of Women Voters and considered her a friend, called Mulligan a “very loyal and very persuasive legislator.”

“I think she worked very hard for the causes she championed,” Henneman said. “She didn’t give up easily. She kept going back to the people she had to convince.”

House GOP Minority Leader Jim Durkin told the Illinois Observer he was sorry to hear of Mulligan’s passing.

“Rosemary was a fierce advocate of women’s health issues and protector of our most vulnerable citizens,” Durkin said. “Rosemary took the time to really understand the state budget, and she was never afraid to ask the tough questions on behalf of Illinois taxpayers. She was a passionate fighter for her district and all families in Illinois during her 20 years as a legislator. She will be missed.”

Mulligan opted not to run for another term in 2013 after her nominating petitions were challenged and the Illinois House Republican Organization opted to back another Republican candidate. Instead, she threw her support behind Moylan, a Democrat, which unnerved the local Republican party.

Mulligan also served as Maine Township Republican Committeewoman from 2010 to 2014.

Rosemary Mulligan is survived by her children, Matthew (Christena) Bonaguidi and Daniel Bonaguidi; grandchildren Sophia and Isabelle; brother Stephen (Marilyn) Granzyk; and goddaughter Patricia Richey.

Memorials may be made to Park Ridge-based Avenues to Independence, 515 Busse Highway.
New Tasty Pup owner welcomes challenge

BY JENNIFER JOHNSON
johnson@pioneerlocal.com I @jen_pioneer

Javier Tapia didn't plan on spending his retirement running a hot dog restaurant.

After more than 30 years working as a warehouse supervisor, the long-time Franklin Park resident was pondering a move to someplace warm — Arizona, maybe.

But ultimately, it was his grandchildren who had the final say.

Learning that running a fast-food restaurant was a dream of teenagers Chrystian and Carlos, Tapia decided that coming out of retirement to help them get started on their future might be something to consider. While searching the Internet for small, established restaurants that were for sale, Tapia came across Uptown Park Ridge's Tasty Pup.

"I looked at others, too, but then I came to his location and said, 'This is small enough for me to start. I think this is doable,'" he said.

After running Tasty Pup for six years at 49 S. Summit Ave., owners Luis and Pamela Del Valle sold the eatery to Tapia in December. Before coming to Park Ridge, they operated Tasty Pup on Harlem Avenue, just south of Northwest Highway, on Chicago's far northwest side.

The Del Valles could not be reached for comment.

Tapia says Tasty Pup customers can continue to find the Vienna beef hot dogs and gyros that they have come to known. But he is also planning an expansion of the menu to feature authentic Mexican tacos and burritos that come from family recipes.

"I want to bring my flavor to this place and hopefully it will be welcome," Tapia said. A possible name change for the restaurant is also being considered.

As it was with the Del Valles, running Tasty Pup will be a family endeavor. Tapia is currently assisted by his wife, Maria, and will be joined by his sister Marta Galvan when Mexican dishes are added. His grown children, Chrystian and Jessica, as well as the grandchildren who inspired his acquisition of the business, will also help out, he said.

Tapia admits that restaurant ownership has been, at times, overwhelming, but he says he's received support from many Tasty Pup regulars.

"I think Park Ridge is a great little town. The people are very friendly here," he said. "I feel very welcome."

Tapia said he's always enjoyed interacting with others, which led to his involvement in counseling at-risk teens with west suburban-based Youth Outreach Services during the 1990s. He is also a former youth soccer coach for the Franklin Park Thunder.

Today, Tapia's sole attention is on his new business.

"You have to be committed to do the best you can in this environment," he said. "It's very different [from my last job], but I welcome the challenge."

Maine Township senior leader receives state award

JENNIFER JOHNSON
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Mary Swanson, director of Maine Township's MaineStreamers senior program, was the recent recipient of a 2014 Mind, Body, Spirit Award from the Association of Illinois Senior Centers.

The awards are given to recognize individuals who have made an "outstanding commitment to meeting the needs of seniors," according to the association, which provides education and advocacy for those involved in senior services.

Swanson is a member of the Association of Illinois Senior Centers Governing Council. As director of MaineStreamers, her department serves more than 4,000 local seniors who participate in recreational and educational programming.
Maine Township passes flat tax levy

BY JENNIFER JOHNSON
jjohnson@pioneerlocal.com

Maine Township Board recently passed a property tax levy that shows no increase over the previous year.

The 2014 levy, approved by the board on Nov. 25, totals nearly $5.4 million, roughly the same amount that was levied in 2013, according to records.

The bulk of the levy - $4.3 million - goes into the general town fund. Of that amount, $2.8 million is used for personnel and other expenses within the offices of administration, assessor, clerk and emergency management.

MaineStay Youth and Family Services, which provides counseling and other support services, will receive $664,498, while adult and senior services will receive $369,129.

The township's general assistance department will receive $1.04 million, with $406,868 of that amount going toward personnel costs.

The 2014 levy shows a small increase over the 2012 levy, which was $5.387 million.

In a statement from the township, Supervisor Carol Teschky credited conservative spending on a consistent basis for the flat tax levy.

Busines

Pickwick Tailoring closes after 35 years

NATALIE HAYES
Special for Pioneer Press

The landmark Pickwick Theatre building lost a longtime staple this week with the closing of Pickwick Tailoring, a business that opened more than three decades ago in downtown Park Ridge.

Owner Frank Pappas permanently closed the doors of his shop at 5 S. Prospect Ave. on Dec. 29.

Pappas declined a request to talk about why he closed, but he likely decided to retire, according to Dino Vlahakis, owner of the Pickwick building.

"Frank said he was getting older and he decided it was time to retire," Vlahakis said.

Transportation factoring company Saint John Capital will take over the lease next year when it expands its office next door at 3 S. Prospect Ave., Vlahakis said.

"(Saint John Capital) has about 20 employees in the building and they needed more space," he said.

Ruling out a rent increase as a possible reason for Pappas leaving, Vlahakis said he hasn't raised the rent on the storefront space for several years, and that Pappas paid his rent on a "month-to-month handshake deal."

Longtime customer of Pickwick Tailoring Rob Ramoeka said in an email that he became friends with the tailor over the years and described Pappas as having a "heart of gold."

"It's sad to see a longtime business and the fabric of our community vanish," Ramoeka said. "He watched many Park Ridge residents literally grow up to become adults."
Stepping Up

Park Ridge hospital volunteer still greeting patients at 90

JENNIFER JOHNSON
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After working two jobs for more than 30 years, LaVerne Pecka wasn't quite ready to retire when she reached her mid-60s.

Looking for a way to keep busy when she wasn't traveling the globe, Pecka drove to Lutheran General Hospital in Park Ridge and inquired about volunteer work.

"When I retired, I thought, 'I'm not for playing card games,'" Pecka, of Des Plaines, said. "I wanted to do something worthwhile with my life."

Pecka was put to work escorting patients and visitors around Lutheran General in wheelchairs. The hospital was smaller back then, she acknowledges, and wheeling new mothers and their babies down to the front lobby once they had been discharged was especially enjoyable.

"You can have a bunch of grouchy people in an elevator, but you bring in a baby and they're all smiles. The whole world changes," Pecka said.

Twenty-four years later, and now 90 years old, Pecka is still a familiar face at the hospital, greeting visitors at the main information desk, registering patients for surgery and directing people where they need to go.

"It's just the idea of being with people," Pecka said of why she enjoys coming to the hospital every Monday and Tuesday morning. "I don't think I could stay here and be stagnant. I have to be on the move, doing something."

Pecka volunteers 13 hours each week, beginning her day at the front desk at 5:30 a.m.

"She has over 13,000 hours of service, the equivalent of six years of a full-time job," said Sonja Vojcic, hospital spokeswoman.

The work, Pecka says, seems "more intense" these days, as more patients seek help navigating an ever-changing and expanding hospital campus.

There is also a growing number of patients and visitors who have difficulty speaking English, requiring Pecka or another member of the front desk staff to find a translator, whether it’s someone on the hospital staff or an operator from a language service.

Pecka has also been involved in fundraising efforts at the hospital through participation on the Service League Board. Some of this work involved candy, book and ornament sales.

"We were fundamental in remodeling the entire ambulatory section," she said.

Before Lutheran General, Pecka divided her work life between the corporate world of General Electric and retail environment of a Marshall Field’s department store. At GE, she worked in various departments, including human resource, advertising and sales, before wrapping up her career at secretary to the vice president of engineering.

Friends she made at Marshall Field’s, now Macy’s, still get together each week for lunch.

"We said, 'If we retire, we can’t lose touch," Pecka said.

In addition to her volunteer work, Pecka fills her retirement years with travel. Among the places around the globe that she has visited are Australia, New Zealand, Israel, Italy, Germany and even Alaska. Ireland, she says, was her favorite place to travel.

Outside of two hip replacements (in 2009 and 2012) and a surgery to have her tonsils removed at age 12, Pecka says she has been "blessed" with good health, though she admits her globetrotting days are over. She still drives to and from work each day and also participates in events with Maine Township’s MaineStreamears social club for seniors.

On her 90th birthday this past December, Lutheran General staff threw Pecka a surprise party, complete with a cake and 140 birthday cards from various employees, some of whom she’d never even met. Many of the cards came in the mail.

"My postman, when he knew I was home, said, 'LaVerne, you better come down because I can’t put anymore in your mailbox,'" Pecka recalled with a laugh. "I even got a birthday card from him!"

Stepping Up is a series of stories about volunteers in the Park Ridge area.
Opinion

Letters

Video gaming industry ready to work with leaders

As we head into 2015, some major changes are on the way for our state government. The video gaming industry is ready to work with our new leaders to support our neighborhoods and rebuild our economy.

The industry is doing its part to help get Illinois on track. There are more than 18,600 video gaming machines operating in nearly 4,600 locations around the state. Those machines produced nearly $160 million in state and local tax revenue in 2014 through October.

Those dollars are supporting thousands of local jobs, helping local governments to shore up their budgets and providing critical money for the state's capital construction program.

This is local entertainment that draws people to bars, restaurants and fraternal organizations and provides hope to so many business owners hurt in recent years by the economic downturn. Video gaming is strictly regulated by the Illinois Gaming Board, and our industry made up of responsible small businesses is proud of the progress since video gaming began in fall 2012.

The Illinois Gaming Machine Operators Association and our partners in the Support Main Street Illinois Coalition look forward to educating our new elected officials on how video gaming is making a difference for our state and to working together to keep more entertainment money for local benefit.

Michael Gelatka
President
Illinois Gaming Machine Operators Association

The perfect motto for the 2014 Bears is ... whatever

BY RANDY BLASER

As 2014 came to an end, the ineptitude of the Chicago Bears, that storied franchise of the NFL, was all over the airwaves and on our TV screens.

They finished the season with a 5-11 record, which was not the worst finish in football. That indignity belonged to the Tampa Bay Buccaneers and the Tennessee Titans, who both finished 2-14.

And this year's Bears team didn't even set the mark for worst finish ever. That title goes to the 1969 team, which finished 1-13. That team was so bad that it eventually lost the coin toss to see who would have the first pick in the 1970 draft, the Bears or the also 1-13 Pittsburgh Steelers.

The Steelers drafted Terry Bradshaw while the Bears traded their No. 2 pick to the Green Bay Packers for four washed-up players, and the rest is history.

But the parlor game, or should we say, sports bar game or sports radio talk show game, of the day remains: which was the worst Bears team ever? The 1969 dud or this year's 5-11 underachievers?

It's hard to say, mainly because of the differences in the times and the nature of the NFL. For instance, home games were blacked out in Chicago in 1969, so we fans who didn't have tickets only saw half the indignities that today's fans must endure.

But there are odd similarities. Both teams were coached by so-called offensive geniuses. Jim Dooley coached the 1969 team and Marc Trestman guided today's boobs. Unfortunately for Dooley, his offensive weapons were a one-legged Gale Sayers who would soon retire, and flame-thrower Bobby Douglass who threw the ball as hard as he could whether it was for five yards or 50.

Today's Bears feature an all-pro running back, potential all-pro receivers and a brooding quarterback who might never grow up.

I got to see a 1969 game in person, thanks to my grandfather's season tickets in the upper deck at Wrigley Field. I remember it well. The Bears lost to the L.A. Rams, who finished the season 11-3, in a 9-7 snoozer. Sayers scored the only touchdown, but it was obvious to my youthful eyes that he wasn't the same Sayers.

There were other close games that year — a 13-7 loss to the Lions and a 24-21 loss to the Baltimore Colts — and Sayers gained 1,000 yards rushing, but his longest was only 28 yards.

For all its ineptitude, it seemed that 1-13 team played as hard as it could. But nothing could go right for them.

Brian Piccolo played his final season and would die six months after the season's end.

This Bears team, however, seemed not to try at all. Winning a game was more of an accident than an achievement.

So which is worse? The bad team that gives its all and is still bad? Or is it the talent-filled squad that shrugs its shoulders and says "whatever," after another error-plagued loss?

I think the 2014 Bears take the title.
DEATH. RELIGION. SEX.

Heavy subjects are made lighter when authors, comedians, artists, musicians - such as Smashing Pumpkin's Billy Corgan and others share personal stories and insights into life's prodigious questions.

Americans should suspend their approach to charity

Remember the Hidden Cash craze of last summer?

Sure you do: Bored rich people across America hid cash and egged on the non-rich to run all over trying to find the loot.

Oh, there was some pretense about giving the found money to charity. But from what I saw, most finders were keepers.

I was reminded of this while reading an article about suspended coffee, something which began in Naples, Italy, approximately five years ago.

Apparently Italians are madder for coffee than Americans. Ninety percent of adult Italians drink coffee, the article stated, and there is one coffee bar for every 490 Italians.

So, going without coffee is a hardship in Italy.

Spontaneously, people began paying for two cups of coffee but only drinking one. They "suspended" receiving the second cup, and with the help of the coffee bar the second cup of coffee was given to someone who couldn't afford to pay.

Participating coffee bars would provide a receptacle for depositing receipts or display the receipts in the window.

But the people there have more needs than coffee.

People are hungry. The idea of "suspending" spread in Italy to food. Restaurants began suspending pizzas, sandwiches and other food items.

And since people hunger for more than food and drink, bookstores began suspending so the needy could have nourishment for the mind.

I like this Italian way of helping much better than the American Hidden Cash craze.

"Suspending" has its advocates here in America, but already American cynicism is raising its head. I read some sneers on the Internet:

• How can we be sure poor people will claim the coffee?
• How can we expect computerized coffee chains to keep track of all this?

I don't know. Italians manage to do it. Seems worth a try.

It sure beats watching sweaty, greedy folks this summer rummaging through garbage looking for Hidden Cash.

I'll take my humanity and generosity Italian-style.
Try the dance floor in search for love, romance

Love Essentially

One of the biggest challenges in a marriage is maintaining a healthy romantic relationship. In other words, how do you keep the fire burning?

While dinner dates, movies and trips are all great ways for couples to reconnect, I recently discovered something that is sure to bring romance, butterflies, and even youth back into a marriage: Ballroom dance!

It all started last summer when Help Squad columnist Cathy Cunningham asked me to be a participant in Dancing With the Local Stars, the Glenview Education Foundation benefit she is co-chairing, which is taking place this March.

My gut reaction was to burst out laughing and ask, 'Are you saying you want me to dance? Me? With two left feet and hip arthritis?" But after some thought, I decided to embark on this crazy challenge. So, two months ago, I began rehearsing with my dance partner, Nikita Malyeyev, a professional dancer and dance instructor at Deer Park's Center for Ballroom & Dance.

The first few times were rough. Let's just say that the mambo and cha-cha didn't exactly come easy to me. I wondered what the heck I just got myself into, and was hanging onto hope that I would become worthy of my new gold dance sandals.

Then, one day, the steps began to click, and I started gliding around the dance floor almost effortlessly. Well, that's how it feels, anyhow. In my head I'm Deborah Kerr in "The King and I," but based on the videos I've seen of myself, my form definitely needs work.

The bottom line: I'm addicted! Not only do I enjoy the exercise, but I love the challenge of mastering the choreography and the sense of accomplishment in overcoming my dance insecurity.

There's a certain mood that dancing puts me in, even on days when life's problems seem overwhelming. Dancing makes me feel light and young and pretty and sexy, which is something Malyeyev said he sees almost daily by his clients.

"This is a place where you can just let go and enjoy yourself, without work or any form of stress," he said. "People watch 'Dancing With the Stars,' and they think they can never have that, but they can."

Ukraine-born Malyeyev, who has been dancing since he was 6 and teaching for several years, said he's seen countless couples benefit from learning to dance together.

"Instead of just sitting with each other on a date, you are interacting with the other person on a level you've never been on before," Malyeyev said. "Men feel more leading and in charge, and women feel protected and feminine as they have someone leading them. It's very traditional."

Sandra and Michael Berman, of Long Grove, have been dancing together for six years, and are usually at the studio while we are rehearsing.

"Dancing creates a close bond and a unity that sometimes leaves when the kids are older and in college, and you might not feel like you have much in common," said Sandra Berman.

Unlike my case, Malyeyev said many men and women pick up dance after only one lesson, and that it helps couples understand each other.

"Every couple has problems, and dance doesn't solve them, but it makes them more manageable," he said. "It becomes an outlet and a part of their lives."

"We've always been close, but this has made us closer," Sandra Berman said. "It's like being on a date. When we are dancing, we feel connected."

To learn more about Center for Ballroom & Dance: Ballroomanddance.com. To get tickets to the Glenview Education Foundation's Dancing With the Local Stars, an event that also includes a performance by Mommy on a Shoestring columnist Beth Engelman, visit the foundation website at ge34.org.
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Blockbuster or flop? The Movie Review section has the scoop.

Get up and go

Your guide to the weekend and beyond

Every Thursday
III PROPERTY TRANSFERS

NORRIDGE
4617 N Thatcher Ave, Norridge 60706-4348: Magdalena Lis sold the property to Joseph Devito for $280,000 on December 15.

4853 N Redwood Dr, Norridge 60706-3116: Aneta Pescatore sold the property to Yakub M Patel & Bibi Y Patel for $775,000 on December 17.

8295 W Argyle St, Norridge 60706-3065: Hildegard Seidel Estate sold the property to Patricia Lena rl & Katarzyna Lenart for $245,000 on December 12.

8312 W Coral Dr, Norridge 60706-4352: Josephine Miodkowski Estate sold the property to Richard L Golebiowski for $240,000 on December 12.

PARK RIDGE
1012 N Hamlin Ave, Park Ridge 60068-1933: Ziegler Trust sold the property to Toniaz Kamyk & Mieczyslaw Kamyk for $239,500 on December 12.

1111 S Home Ave, Park Ridge 60068-4333: Stephen A Szaflarski sold the property to Laura W Cook for $380,000 on December 11.

1431 Carol St, Park Ridge 60068-1205: Peter J Krebbiel sold the property to Beth B Zoller for $389,500 on December 15.

1809 S Fairview Ave, Park Ridge 60068-5217: National Residential Nominee S sold the property to Marco Aviles & Jennifer Zagorski for $305,000 on December 17.

2030 N 77th Ct, Elmwood Park 60707-3624: Ellen Wilkie sold the property to Steven Richard Taylor & Caitlin Gabrielle Callahan for $259,000 on December 17.

2130 N 73rd Ave, Elmwood Park 60707-3105: Us Bank Na Trustee sold the property to Kelly Aarstad & Ryan Graham for $180,000 on December 15.

2424 N 76th Ct, Elmwood Park 60707-2542: Duwayne A Hughes sold the property to Marcos Nieves & Melissa Nieves for $163,000 on December 17.

E&I relationship advice

WANT OUR DATING ADVICE?

Contact our relationship expert, Jackie Pillo, at Jackie@loveessentially.com. We'll keep it confidential.
NILES

MONDAY, JAN. 12

Baby Time
11 a.m.: A short program of stories, songs, rhymes and playtime for children 2 and younger with a caregiver. Niles Public Library District, 6660 W. Oakton St., Niles. Call 847-663-1234.

TUESDAY, JAN. 13

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

HAPPENING NEARBY

THURSDAY, JAN. 8

Free Adult Literacy Classes: Registration for winter/spring sessions
9:15 a.m.: A unique opportunity for native and non-native English speakers to improve their reading and writing skills. A small, friendly group, led by a teacher and volunteer tutors meets twice weekly. Classes are conducted by Oakton Community College in the Glenview Library's Community Room West, Tuesdays and Thursdays, Jan. 13-May 19. Call 847-635-1426 for details. Glenview Public Library, 1930 Glenview Road, Glenview.

Writers of the Future
4:30 p.m.: Want to be an author? Come to the kid’s writing group to share one’s stories and learn about creative writing! Grades 4-6. Eisenhower Public Library, 4813 N. Oketo Ave., Harwood Heights. Call 708-867-7828.

Preschool and Child Care Fair
6 p.m.: The best way to explore the many nearby childcare options. Meet teachers, directors, and providers. Collect brochures, lesson plans, and general information explaining school and care programs. Just drop in. Snow date is Monday, Jan. 12. Glenview Public Library, 1930 Glenview Road, Glenview. Call 847-729-7500.

iPod & iPhone Workshops: Getting Started
7 p.m.: Learn the external features, buttons and apps. Bring one’s iPod or iPhone to this interactive workshop presented by The MacMentor, Geoff Horwitz. Devices must be charged and in working order. Limit 20. Registration and Glenview Library card required. Register at glenviewpl.org/register, 847-729-7500 Ext. 7700, or the Reference Services Desk. Glenview Public Library, 1930 Glenview Road, Glenview.

Crime Scene Science
7 p.m.: For Kindergarten through eighth grades.

SUBMIT YOUR EVENT

To submit an event for consideration in print, visit www.glenviewpl.com/submit-event 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.

Registration required. Children 8 years and under must be accompanied by an adult. For attempting to solve the mysterious case of "The Great Cat Capers". Using different tools - including fingerprinting, DNA analysis, restoration of a broken window, and making a casting of a footprint - come along for a fun and illuminating journey with plenty of twists and turns - with an ending which may surprise. Lincolnwood Public Library, 4000 W. Pratt Ave., Lincolnwood. Call 847-677-5277 Ext. 232.

Illinois Quilters Meeting
7 p.m.: Illinois Quilters Inc., meets at Beth Hillel Congregation for their meeting. Doors open at 6:30 p.m. for sign-ups, library and socializing. This month’s speaker is Amy Welsh from Blue Underground. Her topic is "Color Confidence." Guests welcome. For more information, visit http://www.illinoisquiltersinc.org. Beth Hillel Congregation, 3220 Big Tree Lane, Wilmette. Call 847-450-9777. $5.

FRIDAY, JAN. 9

Duplicate Bridge
9 a.m.: The senior center offers a friendly bridge game every Friday morning. Park Ridge Senior Center, 100 S. Western Ave., Park Ridge. Call 847-692-5627.

Share the Warmth
9 a.m.: Volunteers wanted. Join a group of warm, friendly, supportive women (men welcome) to share the warmth of the season. The event no later than 10 days before the desired publication date.

5Rhythms Dance - A Moving Meditation
7:30 p.m.: Come and explore the 5Rhythms Dance - a movement meditation. No experience necessary. Bring a yoga mat, wear comfortable clothes, and open your heart. Call 847-692-5627.

Healthy Aging
1 p.m.: Offered on the second Friday of each month. Topics include shingles, sepsis, pacemakers and more. Registration is required. Our Lady of the Resurrection Medical Center, 5645 W. Addison St., Chicago. Call 877-737-4636.

Game Night! (Ages 13-18)

Drop-in Chess Club
7 p.m.: Learn and play chess with a friendly, knowledgeable chess master. Bring a chessboard if possible. Up to grade 8.

Children ages 8 and under must be accompanied by a parent. Glenview Public Library, 1930 Glenview Road, Glenview. Call 847-729-7500.

Regina Dominican Entrance Exam
8 a.m.: All students should arrive by 7:45 a.m. and enter through the school’s Student Entrance for this Class of 2019 Entrance Exam. Bring two #2 pencils. Calculators are not permitted. Anyone requesting extended time should submit proper documentation to the Office of Admissions by Jan. 6. Scholarships awarded only to students who test at Regina Dominican on testing date. Financial aid and course selection preference given to those students who test at the school. For more information, contact Admissions Director, 847-256-7660 Ext. 223 or pfuentez@rdhs.org. Regina Dominican High School, 701 Locust Road, Wilmette. Call 847-256-7660. $25 cash or check made payable to Regina Dominican required.

Mock the Movie: Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles
7 p.m.: For grades 8-12. Registration required. Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles becomes interactive with MovChat. As the movie plays, test one's knowledge and thoughts to appear on screen for everyone else to see. Bring one's phone and sense of humor! (PG-I3, I hr. 41 min.) Lincolnwood Public Library, 4000 W. Pratt Ave., Lincolnwood. Call 847-677-5277 x232.

5Rhythms Dance - A Moving Meditation
7:30 p.m.: Come and explore the 5Rhythms Dance - a movement meditation. No experience necessary. Bring a yoga mat, wear comfortable clothes, and open your heart. Call 847-692-5627.

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Drop-in Chess Club
7 p.m.: Learn and play chess with a friendly, knowledgeable chess master. Bring a chessboard if possible. Up to grade 8.

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**CALENDAR**

**From Previous Page**

**Feel Good Party**
9:15 a.m.: Get moving in the Master Fitness Class until 10:15 a.m. which includes functional warm-up, yoga, moves from MixedFit, body weight and strength exercises, and barre-inspired exercises. Enjoy snacks from Whole Foods and a massage from Vive Therapeutic Massage. Feet Can Feel Good offered from 10 a.m.-11 a.m. with Tina Christie, an Accelerated Physical Therapist and Community Center fitness extraordinaire, on site for consultation and to review how one’s feet can feel good - fitness starts at your feet! Park Ridge Community Center, 1515 W. Touhy Ave., Park Ridge. Call 847-692-5129.

**Skokie Art Guild**
9:30 a.m.: The group offers figure drawing workshops every Saturday. There are five models but no instructor. Devonshire Cultural Center, 4400 Greenwood St., Skokie. Call 847-673-4450. $20 per session; $12 for guild members.

**Homebrewing Club: Brew Day**
10 a.m.: The Homebrewing Club will meet to brew some delicious beer! Stay tuned for what’s on tap. Only those who attend the brew in January will be allowed to participate in the bottling in February. Restricted to patrons aged 21 or older. Elmwood Park Public Library, 1 W. Conti Parkway, Elmwood Park. Call 708-453-7645.

**Twenty-first Star Chapter NSDR January 2015 General Meeting**
11:30 a.m.: The Twenty-first Star Chapter of the National Society of the Daughters of the American Revolution have a luncheon served at noon with a meeting and program to follow. Hostesses for the day are: Ronda Lang, Deborah Domain, Sharon Bollinger, and Nancy Ruscitti, Chairman. Chapter Regent, Sheila Aszling, announces Mr. Craig Allen Cleve discusses his book, “The Green Hornet Streetcar Disaster.” Any woman 18 years or older, regardless of race, religion, or ethnic background, who can prove lineal descent from a patriot of the American Revolution, is eligible for membership. Contact Dorothy Wilson at 847-328-6946 for further details. Park Ridge Country Club, 636 N. Prospect Ave., Park Ridge. $21.50.

**FUSE: Studio**

**Lego Day**
2 p.m.: A Kid’s World Favorite! Come and create with the library’s Lego bricks. When finished, photographs of one’s creations taken for the library’s Facebook page. Space is limited, so sign up early. Ages 4-12. Eisenhower Public Library, 4613 N. Oketo Ave., Harwood Heights. Call 708-867-7828.

**Circuit Central: Make Cool Stuff with Electronics**

**Middle School Open Gym and Swim**
7 p.m.: This Saturday night social for sixth - eighth grades includes a DJ, inflatables, open gym, swimming, wall ball, ping pong, and racquetball. Snacks and pop are available for purchase. No admittance after 7:30 p.m. Pick up is at 9 p.m. Participants are not allowed to walk home without a parent note. Register online at www.prparks.org. Park Ridge Community Center, 1515 W. Touhy Ave., Park Ridge. Call 847-692-5129. $5 at the door.

**Winter Outing to Starved Rock**
7 a.m.: Starved Rock State Park near Utica, Illinois is a winter wonderland with frozen waterfalls, sandstone bluffs topped with snow, and Bald Eagles feeding in the open waters of the Illinois River! Spend the day hiking the moderate to challenging park trails and enjoying the spectacular vistas, deep canyons, and ice-sculpted cascades. A satisfying brunch served in the rustic Starved Rock Lodge is included in the trip fee. Transportation is by van. Winter clothing and hiking boots are required. Depending upon weather conditions, the trails may be snow or ice covered. Ages 18+. Emily Oaks Nature Center, 4650 Brummel St., Skokie. Call 847-677-7001. $52 Skokie resident, $65 non-resident.

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Frustrated Xfinity customer wants installation damage repaired

HELP SQUAD
BY CATHY CUNNINGHAM

I need your assistance with this dispute. In June I called Xfinity. I wanted the company to be my new Internet provider. Xfinity sent a technician to install the Internet cable. Seems to me the person they sent was not well trained. When drilling into one of my basement walls, the technician drilled through the wall, resulting in three holes in the tiles of my shower on the other side. I called the company to let them know about the damage. A few weeks later they sent someone to patch the holes, but all the technician did was fill the holes with acrylic latex caulk. Of course it looks terrible!

I cannot believe a company that makes billions of dollars a year cannot replace the tiles. Instead they did a cheap repair. I have been trying to resolve this problem, calling the company several times, but Xfinity never returns my calls. This case is closed for them.

I hope you can help me to resolve this dispute with Xfinity, since I believe they are liable for replacing the tiles with the drilled holes. The only thing I want is for the company to send somebody to replace the tiles. I just want my shower's tiles the way they were before the damage!

Thank you for your help,
David, Skokie

Help Squad made a call to Comcast Customer Service. From there we were transferred to the Xfinity Internet department. The customer service rep with whom we initially spoke noted that an escalation had been assigned to David's request for his tile repairs — in July. As far as we could tell, this escalation resulted in the squirting of some caulk into the holes that ran from his shower to the room on the other side. A solution of sorts — after all it prevented those on the other side of the wall from getting wet. However, this was hardly a case of getting the damaged property back to its original state.

The CSR understood the caulk was not an acceptable solution and checked with her manager to make the replacement of David's tiles an emergency escalation. She then went on to explain that a normal escalation takes 66-120 days to resolve (wow!), and emergency escalations are completed within 66 days (wow again!). However, for this situation we would be put in touch with Comcast's Customer Solutions Department and David's repairs would be addressed more promptly.

Help Squad was then transferred to Customer Solutions for an "expedited" emergency escalation (our phrase, not theirs). A damage claim ticket was opened and we were told that David's issue would be addressed in the next 24-48 hours.

Forty-eight hours passed, and ... no call from Comcast. So Help Squad reached out to Comcast's director of communications to inquire if he could look into David's situation. This request seemed to nudge things along. That day David received a call from a Comcast Customer Care representative who apologized for the damage, offered David a month of free service and scheduled replacement of his tiles for the next day.

David reported that the director of operations from Xfinity's installation company personally came to his home to view the damage, and his tiles were replaced that evening. The director told David that the contract had been cancelled with the subcontractor responsible for his installation as Comcast had received other similar complaints.

Explained Comcast spokesperson Joe Trost, "Our technicians do their very best, but sometimes ... they make mistakes too. We're happy this situation was resolved [for David], and look forward to serving him ... for years to come."

David had this to say following the repair: "The contractor came to my house last night to replace the tiles. The repair was done to my complete satisfaction. Help Squad is helping to protect consumer rights, and I know without your help a lot of these issues would never be resolved. Thanks for my Christmas gift!"

Need help?

Did a utilities company overcharge you? Did a boutique deny your request for a return? Are you the victim of fraudulent business practices? Is someone just exhibiting bad business behavior? Let Help Squad make the call for you. Send your letters, your complaints, your injustices and your story ideas to HelpSquad@pioneerlocal.com and we will be happy to help you.
Global outdoor leader Columbia Sportswear Company has opened a new branded store at Oakbrook Center. The new location offers an extensive range of Columbia Sportswear Company's innovative outerwear, apparel and footwear.

Local BrightStar Care owners, Jesse and Monica Del Angel, were recently recognized at the BrightStar Care national conference as distinguished recipients of the company's Customer Satisfaction Award.

Real Estate brokers with the Elmhurst Office of Coldwell Banker Residential Brokerage are proud to announce the addition of Corey Eldridge to their team. Eldridge is a life-long Chicagoland resident. With a strong background in sales, Corey is known for going above and beyond what is expected to help people and secure long lasting relationships.

DuPage Medical Group on Jan. 5 opened its Hinsdale Immediate Care Center. Located in Suite 110 of DMG's building at 40 S. Clay Street in Hinsdale, the Center will be staffed by board-certified Emergency Medicine physicians and will offer immediate care services and ancillary testing.


Kimberly Sumrak, P.E., civil engineer, recently joined Hanson Professional Services Inc.'s Chicago regional office. She will assist with the firm's roadway work, including interstates, state highways and local government projects.
"Fresh" is the word that Claudia Bongiovanni uses to describe the new Blooming Nails, the Glenview nail salon that recently changed ownership and in the process, underwent several changes.

"It's updated with décor that feels more open and bright," said Bongiovanni, a longtime client whose jewelry store, Raphael Jewelers, is located next door.

But in addition to a complete makeover that includes a very different layout, cheery yellow paint, new light fixtures and other warm touches, owners Rose Choc and sister Lia Choc changed most of the salon's suppliers and invested in a high-end sterilization machine.

"We have many new nail products, lotions and polishes, and all of our tools are now sterilized after one use," said Lia Choc. "It's very important to us to be clean and have everything sanitized."

Both Lia and Rose worked as nail technicians at Blooming Nails over a decade ago. Each left to work at other salons on the North Shore.

When a friend told them that Stella Lim, the previous owner of Blooming Nails, was looking to sell the salon and retire, it was a perfect opportunity. "They have always had a heart for this store," said Paige Yun, Rose's daughter, who is the salon's business manager. "They both learned here, so when the store was available, they knew it was their time."

One thing the sisters did not change was the staff, who they said have an excellent reputation.

"It's really wonderful to see the familiar faces who have always worked here," Bongiovanni said. "We have known them for years and they are wonderful at what they do."

"It's a whole new look — comfortable and up-to-date, but I'm happy to see the staff is still here," said Ginny Kelly of Northbrook, who has been a client of the salon for 20 years. "They have always been great."

Diane Christiansen of Glenview has been a client for several years.

"My stylist, Sarah, has been doing my nails for close to four years and she is really the best," said Christiansen. "Now, not only does she greet me with a kind smile, but the new owners know my name and greet me kindly as well."

Blooming Nails offers manicures, pedicures, spa manicures and spa pedicures, no chip manicures, and waxing services. The salon is open seven days a week.

"My mom and my aunt have always had a huge passion for nails, and have been in the business since I was a baby," Yun said. "They have always wanted their own store and it's been everything they expected. The Glenview community is wonderful."

"I have always loved my visits to Blooming Nails, and just when I thought that things couldn't get much better, the new owners arrived," Christiansen said.

"They have always had a heart for this store. They both learned here, so when the store was available, they knew it was their time," said the salon's business manager, Paige Yun, of her mom, Rose, left, and aunt Lia.

BLOOMING NAILS
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With new ownership, Blooming Nails underwent a complete makeover that includes a very different layout, cheery yellow paint, new light fixtures and other warm touches.
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VW refines best-selling Jetta

BY SUE MEAD
Motor Matters

Not resting on its laurels, Volkswagen redesigns the exterior of its top-selling Jetta for 2015, giving it new front and rear styling. The German automaker also updates the interior and adds a number of refinements and upgrades, including enhanced content, better fuel economy and a new diesel engine.

Also new are available driver assistance systems such as a rearview camera system and blind-spot monitoring with rear-traffic alert on select trims. A new limited-edition 1.8T Sport trim level gets a sport suspension, front sport seats, navigation, rear-view camera, rear spoiler, two-tone 17-inch wheels, fog lights and VW Car-Net connected car features.

The sedan's wheelbase is 104.4 inches, which, when combined with a wide-mouthed grille and coupe-like looks, gives the five-passenger Jetta the appearance of a curve-hugging sports car. Trapezoidal headlamps and black grille slats add elegance, while the redesigned radiator grille wears three cross fins.

Optional Bi-Xenon headlights (with adaptive front lights that can swivel up to 15 degrees to help you see in turns) have a distinctive design; each daytime running light is formed by 15 LEDs arranged in an L-shaped string alongside and beneath the Xenon modules.

Inside is a roomy and comfortable layout. The rear seat splits and folds 60/40 and can be ordered with a pass-through to accommodate longer items; the trunk has 15.5 cubic feet of cargo space.

Jetta has three choices of four-cylinder gasoline engines, a 1.4-liter turbocharged hybrid and a new 2.0-liter turbocharged TDI Clean Diesel engine boasting 150 horsepower and 236 pound-feet of torque.

We recently drove all of the Jetta models, but concentrated on the 2015 Jetta TDI SEL trim, with a starting price of $27,510 powered by VW's all-new diesel platform. One of the most fuel-efficient engines in its class, it boasts 10 horsepower more than the engine it replaces.

The fuel economy is impressive: The manual transmission gets an EPA-estimated fuel economy of 31/46 mpg (city/highway), which allows it to travel some 450 miles between fuel stops.

We drove it over a course of mixed terrain that included winding, twisty country two-lanes and four-lane highways. We noted the attractive interior with quality materials, the updated gauge cluster and the good ergonomics of this midsize compact. It feels larger inside than many of its competitors.

The driving dynamics stand out. Linear steering, strong brakes and a supple suspension give the Jetta a comfortable and road-holding ride in general and a sports-performance ride in tight corners.

The quiet engine makes it easy to forget you're motoring a diesel, and the throttle tuning makes it easy to remember you're in a German-engineered compact sedan designed not simply for fuel economy but also for great driving dynamics.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Model</th>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Color</th>
<th>Features</th>
<th>Price</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Nissan Sierra SE 4x4</td>
<td>2015</td>
<td>Black</td>
<td>Automatic, Back-up Camera, Bluetooth, Cruise</td>
<td>$5,995</td>
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<tr>
<td>Honda CR-V LX AWD</td>
<td>2004</td>
<td>Blue</td>
<td>Automatic, Back-up Camera, Bluetooth, USB</td>
<td>$2995</td>
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<tr>
<td>Toyota Corolla LE</td>
<td>2004</td>
<td>Red</td>
<td>Automatic, Heated Seats, Bluetooth, VDC</td>
<td>$13,995</td>
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<td>Hyundai Sonata Hybrid</td>
<td>2009</td>
<td>Silver</td>
<td>Automatic, Back-up Camera, Bluetooth, VDC</td>
<td>$22,995</td>
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<tr>
<td>Acura TSX</td>
<td>2006</td>
<td>White</td>
<td>Automatic, All Wheel Drive, Bluetooth, VDC</td>
<td>$35,995</td>
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<tr>
<td>Toyota Camry LE</td>
<td>2005</td>
<td>Gray</td>
<td>Automatic, All Wheel Drive, Blue, VDC</td>
<td>$29,995</td>
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<tr>
<td>Ford F-150 XLT</td>
<td>2012</td>
<td>Green</td>
<td>All-Wheel-Drive, Bluetooth, VDC</td>
<td>$39,995</td>
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<tr>
<td>Chevrolet Aveo RS</td>
<td>2004</td>
<td>Black</td>
<td>Automatic, Heated Seats, VDC, alloys</td>
<td>$14,950</td>
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<tr>
<td>Hyundai Sonata GLS</td>
<td>2006</td>
<td>Blue</td>
<td>Automatic, Back-up Camera, Bluetooth, USB</td>
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<tr>
<td>Mazda 3</td>
<td>2012</td>
<td>White</td>
<td>Automatic, Heated Seats, Bluetooth, VDC</td>
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<tr>
<td>Subaru Outback</td>
<td>2016</td>
<td>Red</td>
<td>Automatic, Heated Seats, Bluetooth, VDC</td>
<td>$34,995</td>
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<tr>
<td>Subaru Crosstrek</td>
<td>2014</td>
<td>Silver</td>
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<tr>
<td>Subaru Tribeca / BRZ</td>
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<td>Freestyle Storage, Moonroof, Leather, Gray</td>
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<tr>
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<td>Subaru Legacy 2.5i</td>
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<td>Subaru Outback 2.5i</td>
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<td>Black</td>
<td>Automatic, Heated Seats, Bluetooth, VDC</td>
<td>$27,995</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
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Seven Easy Resolutions to Improve your Recruitment Strategies

By: Jon Picoult

As you develop your recruitment strategies for the year ahead, consider this idea: give applicants a pleasant surprise.

How can something so simple be effective, you ask?

When you deliver the unexpected in the hiring process, it makes a powerful impression on job applicants. It creates positive memories that set your company apart from competing employers, helping you attract top talent.

Of course, you’ve got to nail some fundamentals in order for this recruitment strategy to work. Even the most delightful surprises can’t make up for basic shortcomings in the career opportunity you’re offering — for example, a very uncompetitive salary and benefits package or an unsafe work environment.

However, if you’ve got those table stakes covered, then pleasant surprises can give you the edge you need to win the war for talent.

In the context of business interactions, just what is a pleasant surprise? It’s something that you do, say, or deliver that is unexpected, positive and memorable relative to competitors. Often, it can be a small gesture, but one that speaks volumes about your business values.

Start with Solid Recruiting Practices

Ask job seekers what constitutes a pleasant surprise and they’ll probably cite things like an employment application that’s easy to complete, a job description that’s clear and informative, or a recruiter who returns phone calls.

Those might seem like basics, rather than pleasant surprises. Yet so many businesses disregard the quality of their applicant experience — when candidates come across a company that consistently delivers on these fundamentals, they take notice.

I’ve addressed this concept in previous recruiting articles and videos. However, you can’t expect your applicants to fall into your lap! If you’ve got those table stakes covered, then pleasant surprises can make the difference between winning and losing.

Impress Applicants with Pleasant Surprises

That complement is about not just nailing the basics, but delivering something more. So in 2012, when you’re trying to recruit great hires, consider surprising your job applicants by applying these ideas:

Make eye contact and smile — from 10 feet away. In our smartphone-addicted culture, it’s rare that people make eye contact with one another, let alone do it from a distance.

When a job applicant walks into your store or approaches a reception desk, and is greeted by a heats up, smiling face, it’s unusual and striking. It sends a refreshing message that applicants don’t often receive: you’re important to me and you have my attention.

Offer VIP greetings. Many employers may not realize it, but they frequently treat job applicants with disrespect (e.g., unreturned phone calls). Turn that to your advantage by treating applicants (especially your finalists) like VIPs. When calling them to schedule a final interview, turn the conversation into more than a robotic calendaring exercise. Mention how excited everyone is to meet them, and how glad you are that they’ll be paying you a visit. Apply the same approach when the applicant arrives onsite. Don’t treat them like a number or shuffle them around like a piece of paper — focus on making them feel welcome.

Anticipate needs. Part of making the applicant feel welcome is anticipating their personal needs.

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If this property is a condominium unit, the purchaser will receive a certificate of title to the condominium unit. The certificate of title will be issued after confirmation of the sale. The certificate of title will be issued in the name of the purchaser and the purchaser will be required to obtain a new mortgage, if necessary.

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<td>Red Velvet or Chocolate Covered Strawberry Milkshakes</td>
<td>5.99</td>
<td>Available through February 22, 2015. Must be purchased with any sandwich or fries.</td>
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<td>Steak 'n Shake Meal</td>
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<td>Cajun Double Steakburger 'n Fries</td>
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<td>Free Reg Drink or Tea</td>
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<td>Western BBQ 'n Bacon Double Steakburger 'n Fries</td>
<td>3.99</td>
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<td>2.99</td>
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<td>Chili 5-Way</td>
<td>3.99</td>
<td>Available through February 22, 2015. Must be purchased with any sandwich or fries.</td>
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<td>Western BBQ 'n Bacon Classic Footlong</td>
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NO PURCHASE NECESSARY TO ENTER OR WIN. Open only to legal residents of the 50 U.S. & DC, 18+ in AL & NE, 21+ in MS. Void where prohibited. Sweepstakes ends 12:00:00 p.m. CT on 3/31/15. Subject to the Official Rules available at www.post-it.com/color. Sponsor: Post-it® Brand, St. Paul, MN.
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Discover Blistex

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SAVE $1.00
When you buy TWO (2) Fisher Snack Nut items of any variety, 4oz. or larger.
COUPON NOT SUBJECT TO DOUBLING
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SAVE $1.00
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$5,000.00 for the life of someone you choose.

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$5,000.00 A WEEK “FOREVER”

MT BE

YES, I WANT TO WIN ON FEBRUARY 27TH!

Hurry - respond ASAP. IT’S ABSOLUTELY FREE!

OFFICIAL RULES: ALL PRIZES GUARANTEED TO BE AWARDED AS OFFERED. NO PURCHASE OR PAYMENT NECESSARY TO WIN. VOID WHERE PROHIBITED. A prize of $5,000.00 A Week - Forever will be paid to the winner (and thereafter to one other natural person designated by the winner) if the timely returned winning entry for our February 27th SuperPrize comes from this promotion. Award subject to verification of identity and eligibility. Winner must sign an Affidavit of Eligibility within 30 days or alternate winner will be selected. Principals and employees of PCH and their immediate families are not eligible. Board of Judges’ decisions are final. Bulk entries will not be accepted. Acceptance of prize constitutes permission to use winner and secondary recipient’s name and photograph for promotional purposes. Subject to complete Official Rules available at website or mail address provided. Entry must be received by 2/27.

SWEETESTACT: Giveaway No. 3080: End Date: 2/27/15; Est. Odds of Winning: 1 in 1,300,000,000. You Have Not Yet Won. All Entries Have the Same Chance of Winning. We don’t know who the winner is Enter For Free. You can’t have to buy anything to enter. Enter As Often As You Like. You may submit additional entries by writing to the address provided. Each entry request must be mailed separately. Buying Won’t Help You Win. Your chances of winning are the same as someone who buys something.

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- Ready in minutes.

Pick up a bag for your big game party!

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- Flame-broiled to perfection.
- Ready in minutes.

Find us in your grocer's freezer.

5 minute BBQ Bean Dip
Cook Time: 5 minutes
Serving Size: 4 cups

Ingredients:
- 2 cans (15.5oz) Brooks® Chili Beans
- 1/2 cup Open Pit® Hickory BBQ Sauce
- El Restaurante® Tortilla Chips

Directions:
- Drain Brooks® Chili Beans
- Mix Brooks® and Open Pit® in blender
- Blend until smooth

More recipes at Brooksbeans.com

SAVE 40¢
off any TWO (2) cans of BROOKS® CHILI BEANS

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Save $1.00 on any ONE (1) Glade® Wax Melts refill (excluding Warmer)

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Buy one Glade® PlugIns® Scented Oil refill, get a PlugIns® Scented Oil warmer FREE (Up to $1.50 value)

CONSUMER: Limit one coupon per purchase. Cannot be combined with any other coupon. Good only in the USA on purchase of one item listed. Any other use constitutes fraud. Void if transferred, sold, or auctioned. To pay with this coupon, visit a retailer near you. RETAILER: On the coupon, the purchase price may be less than the retail price for the same item. Cash value 1/100.

MANUFACTURER'S COUPON EXPIRES FEBRUARY 7, 2015

Save $2.00 on any TWO (2) Glade® products (excluding 8 oz. Sprays and Solids)

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Save $2.00 on any ONE (1) Glade® Automatic Spray starter kit

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MANUFACTURERS COUPON  EXPIRES FEBRUARY 7, 2015

Save $150 on any ONE (1) Glade® PlugIns® Scented Oil twin or TWO (2) single refills

CONSUMER: Limit one coupon per purchase. Cannot be combined with any other coupon. Good only in the USA on purchase of individual indicated. Any other use constitutes fraud, and may result in prosecution. Save only as indicated. Cash value 1/10 of 1 cent.

0046500-137333

Buy one Glade® Wax Melts Warmer, get a Glade® Wax Melts refill FREE (Up to $3.49 value)

CONSUMER: Limit one coupon per purchase. Cannot be combined with any other coupon. Good only in the USA on purchase of individual indicated. Any other use constitutes fraud, and may result in prosecution. Save only as indicated. Cash value 1/10 of 1 cent.

0046500-137331

Save $100 on any ONE (1) Glade® Jar Candle

CONSUMER: Limit one coupon per purchase. Cannot be combined with any other coupon. Good only in the USA on purchase of individual indicated. Any other use constitutes fraud and may result in prosecution. Cash value 1/10 of 1 cent.

0046500-137335

MANUFACTURERS COUPON  EXPIRES FEBRUARY 7, 2015

Save $150 on any ONE (1) Glade® Automatic Spray refill or Sense & Spray® twin refill

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MANUFACTURERS COUPON  EXPIRES FEBRUARY 7, 2015

Save $100 on any ONE (1) Glade® Jar Candle

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MANUFACTURERS COUPON  EXPIRES FEBRUARY 7, 2015

Save $100 on any ONE (1) Glade® Jar Candle

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0046500-137331

MANUFACTURERS COUPON  EXPIRES FEBRUARY 7, 2015

Save $150 on any ONE (1) Glade® PlugIns® Scented Oil twin or TWO (2) single refills

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Buy one Glade® Wax Melts Warmer, get a Glade® Wax Melts refill FREE (Up to $3.49 value)

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MANUFACTURERS COUPON  EXPIRES FEBRUARY 7, 2015

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Buy one Glade® Wax Melts Warmer, get a Glade® Wax Melts refill FREE (Up to $3.49 value)

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REFERENCE: 1. Bausch and Lomb data on file. 2. A total of 324 eye care practitioners asked Clear Care patients to use PeroxiClear® for at least 7 days resulting in 1,447 responses to an online survey. The results of this survey question are accurate at a 95% confidence-level ± 3% points.

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TO SIGN UP, VISIT GENESEETHEATRE.COM/SIGNUP
Sweet Home Chicago raises $955,000 for WINGS

The event: Sweet construction was in high gear in the grand ballroom of Chicago's Four Seasons Hotel as more than 200 youngsters, age two and up, took matters (and cookies) into their own hands to build their dream gingerbread houses at the 11th annual WINGS' Sweet Home Chicago on Dec. 14.

More than 460 guests visited with Santa and Mrs. Claus, petted docile K-9 Comfort Dogs from Lutheran Church Charities, and listened to carols by Robert Healy school students and live music by Ralph's World. The family affair is a favorite holiday destination and the city's largest brunch fundraiser benefitting women and children affected by domestic violence.

Cause célèbre: "We are thrilled to support this cause," said event co-chairman Anna Brown of Barrington Hills. "It is always good to do something that serves people who really could use some help and some cheer at this time of year."

Since 2005, WINGS' suburban safe house has provided nearly 86,000 nights of shelter to 3,400 women and children. Sweet Home Chicago funds WINGS' operating expenses for 10 months.

A portion of the proceeds will also go toward the construction of WINGS Metro, the organization's newest shelter currently under construction on the southwest side of Chicago. The city's 112 beds available for victims of domestic violence fall far short of the need demonstrated by the 500 daily distress calls to Chicago police. When it opens, WINGS Metro will be the city's first new domestic violence shelter in 10 years.

"I believe in WINGS and I believe in what they do," said Meghan Norton of Barrington Hills, event co-chairman. "Especially around the holidays, providing a safe haven for families and children is so important."

Bottom line: The benefit raised an unprecedented $955,000, bringing the proceeds from Sweet Home Chicago to a total of $6.9 million since 2004.


PHOTOS BY LEE LITAS/ FOR PIONEER PRESS
Spertus program explores issues of sex trafficking

Sex trafficking is a form of modern-day slavery that exists throughout the U.S. and globally. The International Labor Organization estimates that there currently are 4.5 million people trapped in forced sexual exploitation worldwide.

On Sunday, Jan. 11, a number of local Jewish organizations will come together to present a special program designed to bring the issue of sex trafficking to the attention of our community. The program will be held at 2 p.m. at Spertus Institute for Jewish Learning and Leadership, 610 S. Michigan Ave., Chicago.

Titled "Fighting Sex Trafficking: The Jewish Community Takes a Stand," the program is presented by Spertus in partnership with the National Council of Jewish Women Chicago North Shore Section and the newly formed Jewish Coalition Against Sex Trafficking.

Kaethe Morris Hoffer, executive director of the Chicago Alliance Against Sexual Exploitation, will moderate a panel to include Rabbi Rachel Bregman, CAASE Educator Caleb Probst, and a member of the Cook County Sheriff's Police Department.

As part of this program, the film "DEMAND" will be shown. This documentary: made in conjunction with an investigation by Shared Hope International of the commercial sex trade in the U.S., Japan, and Jamaica — reveals the impact of buyer demand on sex trafficking. It captures the hard reality of the women and children victimized by the sex trade.

The program will be followed by a reception, with advocacy organizations available to answer questions and share with attendees ways to effectively aid sex trafficking victims and take action against those who profit from sexual exploitation.

Get your event in Trend

Have a philanthropic cause or event, or a party to share? Email Deborah Hoppe at dhoppe@pioneerlocal.com. She can send you guidelines for submitting information for Trend.
AIDS Foundation's World of Chocolate gala a sweet success

BY LEE A. LITAS
For the Pioneer Press

The Event: More than 1,100 chocolate fans got to indulge their sweet fantasies at Chicago's Union Station on Dec. 4, sampling the edible creations prepared by 22 top Chicago chocolatiers, chefs and caterers for the 13th annual World of Chocolate gala benefitting the AIDS Foundation of Chicago.

Founded in 1985 by community activists and physicians, AFC collaborates with community organizations to develop and improve HIV/AIDS services, fund and coordinate prevention, care, and advocacy projects and champion effective, compassionate HIV/AIDS policy.

Cause célèbre: “World of Chocolate is one of the most festive events of the season and it’s also (a time to) recognize that there is still much to do to address the epidemic,” said Jill Allread of Oak Park, event co-chairman and a 20-year supporter.

While AIDS was once considered a “gay” disease, Allread explained that the AIDS epidemic has moved past that stage; past the stage of being considered a disease of people of color; and even past the notion that it is a disease affecting only certain socioeconomic classes. “This disease crosses all those borders,” said Allread.

There are approximately 1,000 new HIV cases in Illinois each year, and some 1.2 million people are living with HIV across the country. AFC provides 8,000 HIV tests annually, offers housing to 750 people living with HIV, and each year provides case management to 5,000 individuals affected with HIV.

“One of the biggest myths that we need to dispel about AIDS today is that HIV is over as an epidemic,” said John Peller of Chicago, AFC president/CEO. “People with HIV today are often the most marginalized and that’s the population that we are going to impact most tonight.”

Bottom line: The event raised approximately $134,000 in support of AFC’s advocacy and policy work to affect their vision of seeing an AIDS-free generation.

For more information, visit aidschicago.org.
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#WeMatchHalf
New ensembles, lots of Beethoven at Winter Chamber fest

BY DOROTHY ANDRIES
For Pioneer Press

Northwestern University's 19th annual Winter Chamber Music Festival includes two new-to-NU ensembles and the violinist who set off a tsunami of praise when she soloed with the Chicago Symphony Orchestra recently. Beethoven's chamber works also will receive special attention in the concerts, all held at Pick-Staiger Concert Hall in Evanston Jan. 9 to 25.

The first of the festival's three weekends of music will open with the Canada-based New Orford String Quartet on Friday, Jan. 9 and the Dogma Chamber Orchestra from Germany on Sunday, Jan. 11. This will be Dogma's United States debut and the first time that the New Orford has played in the Chicago area.

Dutch violinist Simone Lamsma, who just last June won thunderous applause in Orchestra Hall when she debuted with the Chicago Symphony Orchestra in Benjamin Britten's Violin Concerto, will be the star attraction Sunday, Jan. 18. She has been praised for her "distinct voice, maturity, technical brilliance and heartfelt musicianship."

The program includes a String Trio by Beethoven and Mendelssohn's Violin Sonata in F Major, composed in 1838 but only discovered by violinist Yehudi Menuhin in 1963. It concludes with a String Sextet by Brahms, which Lamsma will perform along with five members of the Chicago Symphony Orchestra.

"We have some familiar groups as well," said festival founder Blair Milton, violist with the Chicago Symphony Orchestra and a faculty member at Northwestern for three decades. "The Dover Quartet is coming back the second year in a row on Sunday, Jan. 25."

Milton has also invited back festival favorite, the Lincoln String Quartet, all members of the Chicago Symphony Orchestra, playing an all-Beethoven program Friday, Jan. 16. Eleven Northwestern faculty members, including Milton, will be featured Friday, Jan. 23 with two works by Beethoven on the program: his Piano Trio, Opus 1, No. 1 from 1786 and Septet from Opus 20 published in 1802.

In fact, the founder observed, this year's Winter Chamber Music Festival has the highest concentration of music by one composer — Beethoven — than any past festival with the exception of the very first, when the program honored the 100th anniversary of the death of Johannes Brahms.

"I am delighted with this focus on Beethoven," Milton declared. "Beethoven's Opus 132 is second to none.

In fact, both the first note of the festival and the last will be by Beethoven. The series opens Jan. 9 with the New Orford String Quartet playing Beethoven's String Quartet No. 11, Op. 95, premiered in 1814. And the Dover concludes the final program on Jan.

WINTER CHAMBER MUSIC FESTIVAL
Pick-Staiger Concert Hall, Northwestern University, 50 Arts Circle Drive, Evanston
Concerts 7:30 p.m. Jan. 9, 11, 16, 18, 23 and 25
Tickets $22-$26; $10 for students with valid IDs; subscriptions $125, $51 students.
Available at Pick-Staiger box office, (847) 467-4000 or www.pickstaiger.org
Information at (847) 491-5441 or visit www.pickstaiger.org
25 with the composer's String Quartet, Opus 59, No. 3, the final of the "Razumovsky" quartets, written in 1806.

The New Orford was established in 2009. Its name comes from Canada's prestigious Orford String Quartet, which was founded in 1965 and disbanded in 1991, after more than 2,000 concerts on six continents. "The original Orford is part of our identity," declared New Orford cellist Brian Manker, who is an American. His New Orford colleagues are violinists Jonathan Crow, concertmaster of the Toronto Symphony Orchestra, Andrew Wan, concertmaster of the Montreal Symphony Orchestra, and prize-winning violist Eric Nowlin.

"If I do say so myself, the Orford is a terrific quartet," he said, "but we are still a little bit of a secret, especially in the States. We're trying to change that."

The Dogma Chamber Orchestra has never performed in the United States though it crossed the Atlantic once to play in Brazil. It popped up on the international radar, however, as a result of its award-winning recordings. "We have just won the prestigious Echo Klassik Award 2014 for the best Symphonic Recording of the Year 20th/21st century music for our Shostakovich album," declared Mikhail Gurevitch, concertmaster and artistic director of the ensemble, in reply to email questions. This is the group's second Echo Klassik. The first was for the CD "American Stringbook."

"The Dogma Chamber Orchestra, in presenting its music, does not serve up an ingratiating, galloping aesthetic," Gurevitch explained, "but unveils the intellectual and emotional content of the music from a modern viewpoint, and conveys this to the audience in as captivating a way as possible — that is Dogma's unique style."

Despite the rigorous CSO schedule and his commitment to teaching, Milton keeps up with the ever-changing world of chamber music. He is also tuned into the international scene and never stops planning for future festivals. "Groups know us and are happy to play with us," he said. "In 2016 we'll have a group from the Netherlands."

Milton's mix of performers and the substantial programs are pleasing audiences, and concerts are often sold out.

"People have told me for years that they delay going south until the Winter Chamber Music Festival is over," he declared with obvious satisfaction. "That's a pretty good endorsement."
Eddy ‘The Chief’ Clearwater concert marks 80th birthday

BY MYRNA PETUCKI
For Pioneer Press

Eddy “The Chief” Clearwater

Even without donning the ornate Native-American headdress that earned him the nickname, “The Chief,” Eddy Clearwater cuts a striking figure. The blues guitar legend was impeccably-dressed — including a hat and an assortment of bling — when we chatted in the living room of his warmly-decorated Skokie home.

Clearwater is admired in Skokie — where they proclaimed Nov. 5, 2007, Eddy “The Chief” Clearwater Day — but he is equally famous across the United States and in the countries he has toured, including Russia, Japan, China and France, among others.

He is celebrating his 80th birthday with a concert on Friday, Jan. 9 at S.P.A.C.E. in Evanston. That was the setting of a sold-out 79th birthday celebration last year at which he recorded his live album “Soul Funky.”

Clearwater first performed professionally at the age of 15. He wasn’t thinking about the longevity of his career back then. “I was just doing what I like to do,” he said. “You get caught up in the passion of it.”

That passion is evident in every track of “Soul Funky,” which includes such mesmerizing selections as “Hypnotized” and “Good Times are Coming,” both of which were written by Clearwater, as are eight of the 12 songs on the CD.

His writing process varies, Clearwater indicated. “Sometimes the music comes first and sometimes it’s the words,” he said. “Sometimes I’ll get an idea for a song from a riff that I’m playing on the guitar and, all of a sudden, some lyrics will come to me.”

Other times, almost anything can inspire a lyric. “It could be something that you may say today during our conversation,” Clearwater joked.

He estimated that he has written between 200 and 300 songs.

Clearwater has toured extensively. An unforgettable trip was his return to his hometown of Macon, Mississippi, in 2008 to be honored on Eddie Clearwater Day. He hadn’t been back there since he left at the age of 15. “It felt odd because I remembered where the theater used to be that I used to go to when it was totally segregated, where the blacks had to sit on one floor and the whites upstairs,” Clearwater said.

In 2008, Macon “felt like a whole different world,” Clearwater said.

Clearwater still finds joy in performing, after being at it for 65 years. He said what keeps him going is “the energy of the people. That’s what motivates me.”

Clearwater promises that there will be some surprise guests at the concert. The show will also be a surprise. “It’s pretty spontaneous,” he revealed, although he will be playing selections from “Soul Funky.”

He is looking forward to his birthday concert and connecting with that audience. “I don’t just go to play for people,” Clearwater said. “I go and play to be a part of them.”
Families can sample pizza from 10 local restaurants, cheer on a pizza-eating contest and cast their votes at Pizza Wars V at Niles North High School on Jan. 15.

Community favorites compete in Pizza Wars V

BY MYRNA PETLICKI
For Pioneer Press

You can treat your kids to their favorite dinner and help other children at the same time by attending Pizza Wars V, 6-9 p.m. Thursday, Jan. 15 at the Niles North High School main gymnasium, 9800 Lawler Ave., Skokie.

Ten local pizza restaurants will compete for the title of 2015 winner, including the 2014 champion, Village Inn Pizzeria. Your family will sample pizzas provided by the contenders and vote for your favorite.

Ten local pizza restaurants will compete for the title of 2015 winner, including the 2014 champion, Village Inn Pizzeria. Your family will sample pizzas provided by the contenders and vote for your favorite.

Money raised will benefit the District 219 Education Foundation, providing assistance for needy children in Skokie, Morton Grove, Lincolnwood, Niles and Golf.

One highlight of the event is a pizza eating contest between Skokie Mayor George Van Dusen, Morton Grove Mayor Daniel DiMaria, Lincolnwood Mayor Jerry Turry and Niles Mayor Andrew Przybylo. They'll compete to see who can down the most pizza in five minutes.

Student bands from Niles North and Niles West High Schools will perform.

Tickets for Pizza Wars V are $12 in advance, $15 at the door.

For details, call (847) 968-1200 or go to www.mortongroveparks.com.

MAKING MEMORIES

Fathers and their little girls will have Sweet Moments at Lincolnwood Parks and Recreation Department’s Daddy Daughter Dance, 6-9 p.m. Friday, Feb. 6 at Monastero’s Ristorante, 3935 W. Devon Ave. They’ll enjoy dinner, dancing, DJ-led games and a candy buffet. The cost through Jan. 16 is $65 per couple, $20 per additional daughter for residents; $80 and $25 for nonresidents. After Jan. 16, it’s $75, $25, $90 and $30.

For details, call (847) 677-9740 or go to www.lincolnwoodil.org.

NICHOLS IS HAND-Y

Mark Nichols will share four different kinds of puppetry from around the world at the Second Sunday Family Program: The Wonderful World of Puppets, 2-2:45 p.m. Jan. 11 at Niles Public Library, 6960 Oakton St. Pick up tickets in KidSpace starting at 1:30 p.m. performance day.

For details, call (847) 663-1234 or go to www.nileslibrary.org.

MOVING TO MUSIC

The natural connection between music and movement will be fostered for kids up to age 5, with a caregiver, when the Music Institute of Chicago presents Musikgarten, 10:30-11 a.m. and 11:30 a.m.-noon Monday, Jan. 12 at Skokie Public Library, 2215 Oakton St. Registration is required.

For details, call (847) 673-7774 or go to www.skokielibrary.info.
Healthy New Year, healthy new you

It's a new year, and it's time to start thinking about those resolutions we just made. For me, that means revising old habits such as eating and serving too much processed food. Although I have the best of intentions, the craziness of school schedules, sports activities and an influx of holiday gatherings have resulted in too many store-bought, stick-in-the-microwave meals. Sure, frozen pancakes and microwave pizza are convenient, but as my family struggles to fight off yet another cold, I can't help but wonder if changing our diet might indeed improve our health. Does eating less processed foods really make a difference? To coach me through this process, I consulted Kelly Brown, Certified Holistic Health Counselor and founder of Healthyforachange.com.

As a busy mother of two, Brown knows it's hard to create healthy meals that taste good and are relatively easy to make. She also knows that for many of us, the food world is confusing with its multitude of diet options that might sound good, but are not practical for a growing family. That's why Brown is committed to helping families make healthier choices with simple strategies and easy recipes.

According to Brown, one of the best ways to improve your family's diet is by serving them nutrient-rich "superfoods" as much as possible. One of the easiest places to add these foods is a smoothie. After all, smoothies require just a few ingredients, a decent blender and about 5 minutes of your time. Brown offers a few of her favorite recipes for boosting nutrition in smoothies.

**Blueberry Almond Kale Smoothie**

![Photo by Kelly K. Brown](image)

The star of this smoothie is the antioxidant-rich blueberry, which is high in fiber and low in sugar. In a recent study, the consumption of blueberries has shown to help increase brainpower, improving memory and cognitive functioning. (Source: [http://www.scientificamerican.com/article/your-brain-on-blueberries/](http://www.scientificamerican.com/article/your-brain-on-blueberries/))

**You need:**
- ½ Cup organic frozen blueberries
- 1 Cup baby kale (loosely packed)
- 1 Tablespoon almond or peanut butter
- 1 Tablespoon flaxseed and 1 Scoop Amazing Grass Green Superfood Berry Powder
- 2-4 Ice cubes

**Directions:**
1. Fill blender with ingredients.
2. Blend until smooth.
3. Serve immediately.

**Chocolate Mint Chip Superfood Smoothie**

Your family might think you are joking when you serve them this sweet smoothie for breakfast. But trust me, this smoothie is no joke, considering it contains raw cocoa nibs, which may help improve cardiovascular health, boost collagen, build strong bones and naturally elevate mood and energy.

**You need:**
- 2 Cups frozen spinach
- 2 Cups frozen bananas
- ½ Frozen banana
- 1 Tablespoon mint leaves
- 2 Tablespoons raw cacao nibs
- 2 Tablespoons fresh mint leaves (packed)
- 1 Scoop Amazing Grass Green Superfood Chocolate Powder
- ¼ Teaspoon chlorella or spirulina powder

**Directions:**
1. Fill blender with ingredients.
2. Blend until smooth.
3. Serve immediately.

Want more healthy eating tips? Visit [Mommyonashoestring.com](http://Mommyonashoestring.com) for Kelly Brown's list of "superfoods" and an easy to print out shopping list for these recipes.
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.

Winter Documentary Series: Buena Vista Social Club
Noon: Keep warm every Friday afternoon this January with the Documentary Film Series. This week, view "The Buena Vista Social Club" a profile of a group of legendary Cuban musicians, brought out of retirement to record a new album and eventually perform at Carnegie Hall. Eisenhower Public Library, 4013 N. Oketo Ave., Harwood Heights. Call 708-867-7828.

Classic Film Series: Arsenic and Old Lace
1 p.m.: On his wedding day, a drama critic learns that his beloved aunts are homicidal maniacs, and that insanity runs in his family. Directed by Frank Capra, starring Cary Grant and Priscilla Lane. Film historian Ralph Amelio leads a discussion following the movie. Eisenhower Public Library, 463 N. Oketo Ave., Harwood Heights. Call 708-867-7828.

Mega Movie Jamae Nights
6 p.m.: Hey kids, come dressed in your favorite pjs and enjoy an evening of fun! Play games, enjoy a fun snack, and watch a "G/PG" rated movie on the inflatable movie screen in the gym. This is a great opportunity for parents to enjoy a quiet evening to themselves. Ages: 4-9 Register online at www.pprparks.org. Maine Park Leisure Center, 2701 W.-Sibley St., Park Ridge. Call 847-692-5127. $15 Resident / $27 Non-Resident.

Friday Family Flicks
6 p.m.: Join in each month to watch a family-friendly movie. This month’s movie is "Planes: Fire & Rescue" (Rated PG). Refreshments available. Franklin Park Public Library, 10311 Grand Ave., Franklin Park. Call 847-455-6016.

After-Hours Series: Concert by the Flutitarians
7 p.m.: Celebrate the re-opening of the Baxter Room with a concert of mixed styles of flute and piano music performed by Richard Slack on piano and Joyce Oakes and MSGP Library Director Debra Stombres on flute. Morton Grove Public Library, 6400 Lincoln Ave., Morton Grove. Call 847-929-5101.

Mock the Movie: Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles
7 p.m.: For grades 5-12. Registration required. Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles becomes interactive with MovChat! As the movie plays, text one’s jokes and thoughts to appear on screen for everyone else to read. Bring one’s phone... and sense of humor! (PG-13, 1 hr. 41 min.) Lincolnwood Public Library, 4000 W. Pratt Ave., Lincolnwood. Call 847-677-5277 x232.

Elmhurst Artists' Guild Winter Member Show Reception
7 p.m.: Elmhurst Artists' Guild members from Chicago and many western suburbs are exhibiting recent works. Prizes are awarded during this artists' reception, free and open to the public, in the gallery until 9 p.m. The Guild's Winter Member Show is held in the EAG gallery from Jan. 6 through Jan. 16. Admission to the EAG gallery and the museum is free all day Fridays. The exhibition can be viewed during regular Museum hours, Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday and Saturday from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m., Friday from 10 a.m. to 8 p.m. and Sunday from noon to 5 p.m. Regular Museum admission for adults is $6, seniors and students $3, and children under 5, free. Elmhurst Art Museum, 150 S. Cottage Hill Ave., Elmhurst. Call 630-279-1400.

5Rhythms Dance - A moving meditation
7:30 p.m.: Come and explore the 5Rhythms Dance. No experience necessary and "you cannot do it wrong." Check out 5Rhythms.com. First class free. Ample street parking. Foster Street Dance, 915 Foster St. (next to the Purple line Foster stop). Evanston. Call 847-893-0250. Free.

5Rhythms Dance - A moving meditation
7:30 p.m.: Come and explore the 5Rhythms Dance - a movement meditation. No experience necessary. You cannot do it wrong. Check out 5Rhythms.com. First class free. Ample street parking. Foster Street Dance, 915 Foster St. (next to the Purple line Foster stop). Evanston. Call 847-893-0250. $15; $10 students and seniors.

Creative Creatures
9 a.m.: School-aged children are invited to join Miss Dana for a different art project each week. A variety of materials will be available to participants. Drop in for crafting at any time. Benesville Community Library, 200 S. Church Road, Benesville. Call 630-766-4642.

Winter Carnival
11 a.m.: The award-winning Winter Carnival with horse-drawn trolley rides, ice sculpting and a dog sled demonstration. The free family event also offers a snow-shoe obstacle course, human spheres, carnival games, DJ music and a bonfire with s'mores. All ages are welcome. Red's Garden Center, Sunset Foods and Sarpino's Pizzeria are event partners. For more information, visit nbparks.org or call 847-291-3995. Meadowbrook Park, 1479 Maple Ave., Northbrook.

Foreign Film Forum
2 p.m.: Head to the library for a free viewing of a foreign film on the big screen. Screenings are held on the second Saturday afternoon of each month. Visit the website, www.nlflib.org, for upcoming film title information. River Forest Public Library, 735 Lathrop Ave., River Forest. Call 708-369-5205.

Havdallah, Dinner & Movie
5:30 p.m.: Join discussion leader Reid Schultz to review the film, "The Flat," by Director Arnon Goldenberg. Watch the movie, enjoy dinner, and Havdallah. RSVP by Jan. 5 to 847-498-4100, ext. 46 or email dfriedman@BethShalomNB.org. Congregation Beth Shalom, 3433 Walters Ave., Northbrook. $15 members, $20 nonmembers.

Ecstatic Dance
6:30 p.m.: Sunday until 7:30 p.m. The 5Rhythms community is a 21st century collective unbound by history, culture, race, religion, gender or politics. "We are bound by the beat, following our feet on a dancing path to freedom. We are committed to inspiring and serving the community." Community Sanctuary, 9045 Monroe Ave., Brookfield. $10 drop in.

Handicrafters
10 a.m.: Held every Friday at 10 a.m. Park Ridge Senior Center, 100 S. Western Ave., Park Ridge. Call 847-692-5127.

Friday Flicks
2 p.m.: Join in each month to watch a newly released movie. This month’s movie is "The Hundred Foot Journey" (Rated PG), starring Helen Mirren and produced by Steven Spielberg and Oprah Winfrey, this uplift- ing story bristles with flavor, passion and heart. It’s a celebration of triumph over exile as these two worlds collide and one young man tries to find the comfort one young man tries to find the comfort...SEE GO CALENDAR, NEXT PAGE »
**GO CALENDAR**

of home in every pot — wherever he may be. Rated PG. (Audio Description involves the accessibility of the visual images of theater, television, movies, and other art forms for people who are blind, have low vision, or who are otherwise visually impaired.) The Chicago Lighthouse North, 222 Waukegan Road, Glenview. Call 847-510-6200.

**Fiction Book Club**

7 p.m.: Watching "84 Charing Cross Road," starring Anne Bancroft and Anthony Hopkins and discussing the book by Helene Hanft. Pick up one's copy of the book at the Circulation Desk starting a month before the discussion date. Registration is required. Franklin Park Public Library, 10311 Grand Ave., Franklin Park. Call 847-455-5016.

**Trivia Night**

8 p.m.: Winners receive gift cards. Specials include $4 Budweiser products and 60-cent wings. Buffalo Wild Wings, 7020 Carpenter Road, Skokie. Call 847-329-9333.

**TUESDAY, JAN. 13**

Men's Club

9:30 a.m.: The group meets the first two Tuesdays of each month for breakfast. Park Ridge Senior Center, 100 S. Western Ave., Park Ridge. $2.

5Rhythms Dance - A Moving Meditation

7:30 p.m.: Come and explore the 5Rhythms Dance - a movement meditation. No experience necessary. You cannot do it wrong. Check out 5Rhythms.com. First class free. Ample parking. Radiant Days, 1400 Greenleaf (At Wesley), Evanston. Call 847-969-0825. $15; $10 students and seniors.

The Tuesday Ten' Showcase

8 p.m.: A mix of 10 headliners, including rising stars and surprise guests, perform stand-up. $10 and the purchase of at least two food or drink items. Zanies Comedy Night Club Rosemont, 5437 Waukegan Road, Glenview. Call 847-626-2000. Advance tickets $12 per person; $15 per person at the door.

**WEDNESDAY, JAN. 14**

Lunch and Bingo

10 a.m.: Enjoy a home of bingo and lunch. Come early for coffee and conversation. Fee includes lunch from a local restaurant or caterer. Bingo cards 50 cents each. Registration is required. North Shore Senior Center, 6140 Dempster St., Morton Grove. Call 847-794-6030. $6 members, $8 nonmembers.

Natural Gas

8 p.m.: The improvisational group takes a suggestion from the audience and turns it into a show. The Gift Theatre, 4802 N. Milwaukee Ave., Chicago. Call 773-283-7071. $5.

Lecture: Tosca by G. Puccini

10 a.m.: Enjoy the free preview lecture of G. Puccini's Tosca, given by Lyric Opera lecturer Kip Kelley. Wilmette Public Library, 1424 Wilmette Ave., Wilmette. Call 847-347-4383.

**THURSDAY, JAN. 15**

Pizza Wars V

6 p.m.: The fifth annual Pizza Wars takes place in the school's main gymnasium to benefit the District 219 Education Foundation. Register at www.219foundation.org. Sponsorship opportunities are available. West High School, 9800 Lawler Ave., Skokie. Call 847-347-4383.

Lyric Opera of Chicago Lecture Series: Tosca by Giacomo Puccini

7 p.m.: Tales of intrigue, love, and death from the Lyric Opera season. Moderated by Lyric Opera docents. Register at glenviewpl.org/register, 847-729-7500 or at the Reader Services Desk. Glenview Public Library, 1930 Glenview Road, Glenview.
Film Clips

BY BRUCE INGRAM
Film Crit

OPENING FRIDAY

PREDESTINATION
Rated R for violence, some sexuality, nudity and language.
Stars: Ethan Hawke, Sarah Snook, Noah Taylor
On his final assignment, a time-traveling special agent (Hawke) tries to capture the only criminal who has successfully eluded him in the past. Michael and Peter Spierig (“Daybreakers”) directed the sci-fi adventure.

TAKEN 3
Rated PG-13 for intense sequences of violence and action, and for brief strong language.
Stars: Liam Neeson, Maggie Grace, Farkle Janssen, Forest Whittaker
After being framed for the murder of his wife, an ex-CIA operative (Neeson) goes on a rampage to bring the true killer to justice, while being chased by the FBI and the CIA. Director Olivier Megaton (“Taken 2”) returns for the third installment of the action-adventure series.

THE WORLD MADE STRAIGHT ★★
Rated R for language including sexual references, drug content and violence.
Stars: Noah Wyle, Jeremy Irvine, Minka Kelly, Steve Earle
A long-simmering blood feud fails to come to a boil in this moody, brooding and sloo-o-o-o-o-owly meandering coming of age story. After running afoul of a backwoods drug lord, a hillbilly teenager (Jeremy Irvine of “War Horse,” remodeled with rebel T-shirt and squirrelly facial hair) takes refuge with a passive intellectual drug dealer with a guilty secret involving a Civil War massacre of the boy’s ancestors. Unfortunately, the nominal hero (“E.R.” star Wyle, looking moustful and unconvincingly macho) is entirely outclassed by the nominal bad-guy, played with soft-spoken but palpable menace by American singer-songwriter Steve Earle.

STILL PLAYING

THE WOMAN IN BLACK 2: ANGEL OF DEATH
Rated PG-13 for some disturbing and frightening images, and for thematic elements.
Stars: Helen McCrory, Jeremy Irvine, Phoebe Fox, Leanne Best
London children relocated to a country estate during World War II discover they’re sharing space with a very unhappy ghost lady (Best). Tom Harper (“The Scouting Book for Boys”) directed the horror.

AMERICAN SNIPER
Rated R for strong and disturbing war violence, and language throughout including some sexual references.
Stars: Bradley Cooper, Sienna Miller, Luke Grimes
Somewhere inside this surprisingly flat, simplistic and contrived war drama, there’s a fascinating story about an extraordinary man with a tragic fate that really deserves to be told. Unfortunately, director Clint Eastwood seems to have decided that sketching it in broad outline is good enough. After a promising opening, this biodrama about Iraq war sniper Chris Kyle (an impressive performance by Cooper) takes on all the excitement of a turkey shoot as Kyle picks off a record number of enemy combatants, despite an attempt to goose things with the invention of an equally talented sniper for the other side.

ANNE ★★
Rated PG for some mild language and rude humor.
Stars: Jamie Foxx, Quvenzhane Wallis, Cameron Diaz
With its updated concept and promising cast, the new “Anne” seemed like a reasonably good bet — until the singing started. With a couple of exceptions, the iconic musical numbers from the perennial Broadway favorite are barely recognizable here, thanks to over-produced, lifeless, hip-hop flavored arrangements by pop singer-songwriter Sia. There are a few modest laughs here and there as heartwarming-needy cell-phone magnate (Foxx) takes on lovable orphan Annie (Wallis, Oscar-nominated for “Beasts of the Southern Wild”) to boost his New York City mayoral campaign, but the sentiment falls as flat as the songs.

LEVITIANS
Rated R for language and some sexual-ity-graphic nudity.
Stars: Alexsey Serebyakov, Roman Madyanov, Vladimir Vdovichenkov
In modern Russia, a family man (Serebyakov) being threatened by the corrupt mayor of his town (Madyanov), turns to an old army friend turned Moscow attorney (Vdovichenkov) for assistance. Andrey Zvyagintsev directed the drama, winner of the Best Screenplay award at last year’s Cannes festival.

Showtimes

A world of trouble: Minka Kelly, Steve Earle and Noah Wyle in “The World Made Straight.”

Movie times are effective Friday, Jan. 9, through Thursday, Jan. 15. Please note that theater schedules are subject to change.

CENTURY 12 EVANSTON/CINEARTS 6 AND XD
175 Maple Ave.
Evanston
(847) 481-9761
www.cinemark.com
Contact theater for showtimes.

AMC SHOWPLACE NILES 12
301 Golf Mill Center
Niles
(888) AMC-4FUN
www.amctheatres.com
Contact theater for showtimes.

PICKWICK THEATRE
5 S. Prospect Ave.
Park Ridge
(847) 604-2234
www.pickwicktheatre.com
Contact theater for showtimes.

ROSEMONT 18
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Rosemont
(847) 447-1030
www.muvico.com
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6626 N. Oliphant Ave. Chicago, IL  
(Across park from Edison Park Metro)  
773.631.9131, www.edisonparkchurch.com  
Sunday, 4:30 pm - Evensong  
Sunday, 8:00 am - Traditions  
Sunday, 9:15 am - Spirit Bridge  
Sunday, 10:30 am - New Song  
Sunday School - 9:30 AM  
773.631.9131, www.edisonparkchurch.com  
| **United in Faith Lutheran Church**  
6525 W. Irving Park Road  
773-283-2326 • www.unitedfaithl.org  
Sunday  
8:30 AM Traditional Worship  
9:30 AM Sunday School  
10:30 AM Praise & Worship Service  
Tuesday - 7:00 PM Bible Study  
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Nursery service for younger children  
8:45 am Confirmation classes for 8th grade  
9:00 am High School  
Adult Education Bible Study Sunday 11:30 am  
Adult Education Bible Study Thursdays 6:30 pm  
“Open Forum” Adult Learning First Thursday  
every month 6:30 pm  
www.parkridgepresby.org  
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Mr. Aaron Hiqashi Dir. of Youth & Family Ministries  
Mrs. Amy Schaezelein Sunday School Dir.  
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9233 Shermer Rd., Morton Grove  
Sunday Worship & Sunday School - 10 AM  
http://www.mgccpresbyterian.org/  
Handicap Accessible  
Pastor Elizabeth Jones  
| **St. Luke’s Christian Community Church**  
9233 Shermer Rd., Morton Grove  
Sunday Worship & Sunday School - 10 AM  
http://www.stlukesc.org/  
Handicap Accessible  
Pastor Elizabeth Jones  
| **Zion Lutheran Church**  
8600 W Lawrence Avenue  
Norrige, IL 60706  
(708) 453-3514  
Rev. Luther John Bajus, Pastor  
Sunday Worship 8:30 am  
Holy Communion 3rd & 5th Sunday  
Early Communion - 1st Sunday 9:00 am  
Sunday School - 10:30 am  
Adult Bible Study - 10:45 am  
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Nursery service for younger children  
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9:30 AM Sunday School  
10:30 AM Praise & Worship Service  
Tuesday - 7:00 PM Bible Study  
Rev. Dr. Michael D. Sparby, Sr. Pastor  
Carole Edwards, Associate in Ministry  
Matt Haider, Worship / Music  
Michael Lyda, Children/Youth/Family  
| **Morton Grove Community Church**  
Presbyterian Church (USA)  
8944 Austin Ave., Morton Grove  
(847) 647-2982  
www.mgccpresbyterian.org  
Sunday Worship 10AM  
Fellowship 11AM  
Rev. Lolly Dominski  
Rev. Bunny Hughes  
Handicapped Accessible  
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| **Willow Creek Community Church**  
North Shore Campus  
315 Waukegan Road  
847-441-6599  
Sunday Services: 8:30, 10 & 11:30am  
Promisedland (Infants-Gr5): 8:30, 10 & 11:30am  
Elevate (Grades 6-8): 10 & 11:30am  
Impact (Grades 9-12): 6pm  
For more information visit www.WillowNorthShore.org  
| **Norridge’s United Church of Christ**  
4435 Oakton, Skokie (847) 677-3330  
www.beneshalom.org  
Open Forum’ Adult Learning First Thursday  
every month 6:30 pm  
| **St. Peter’s United Church of Christ**  
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www.stpeteruscskokie.org  
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<td>Ezra-Habonim, the Niles Township Jewish Congregation</td>
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<td>Minyon: Mon. &amp; Thurs. 8:00 AM Kabbala Shabbos-Sept. to June 7:00 PM</td>
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<td>Calvary Redemption Center</td>
<td>Saturday 8:30 AM Followed by Kiddush</td>
<td>Sat &amp; Sun 6PM Religious School Tues &amp; Sat</td>
<td>Cantor Benjamin Warschawski</td>
<td>Shabbat Service – Saturdays 9:30 AM</td>
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<td>847-674-1100</td>
<td>4040 Main Street, Skokie, Illinois</td>
<td>Cantor Benjamin Warschawski</td>
<td>Cantor Pavel Roytman</td>
<td>Followed by Kiddush</td>
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<td>Kehillat Shalom An Egalitarian Conservative Congregation</td>
<td>Lay Led Shabbat Service, 9:45AM</td>
<td>Devar Emet Messianic Synagogue</td>
<td>Rabbi Annie Tucker</td>
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A Memorial Remembrance Book is located at the following cemetery offices:

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- ST. ADALBERT
- ASCENSION
- HOLY SEPULCHRE
- ST. BENEDICT *
- ASSUMPTION
- MARYHILL
- ST. CASIMIR
- CALVARY
- MOUNT OLIVET *
- ST. JOSEPH
- (Evanston)
- QUEEN OF HEAVEN
- ST. MARY
- GOOD SHEPHERD
- RESURRECTION
- ST. MICHAEL

(* BOOK IS LOCATED AT ST. CASIMIR)

Paradise, Shirley Rose
(nee Rosen) 92, longtime Skokie community leader, passed away peacefully December 27, 2014. Beloved wife of 72 years to Morton Paradise, devoted mother of Mitchell, Ken (Linda Patterson), and Randy (Jane) Paradise; proud grandmother of Jason, Gavin (Jessica), Jacob, Deborah, and Jonathan; great-grandmother of Kiana. Shirley Paradise was born in Chicago, the daughter of Isidore and Fanny Rosen. She was a graduate of Marshall High School, class of '39. She and her husband, Mort, moved to The Village of Skokie in the winter of 1949, when it was still mostly prairie. They were each an integral part of the Village’s civic and Jewish life from that day forward. Shirley was President of the PTA for every school that her three sons attended. She was a Den Mother when they were Cub Scouts, and she walked house to house in Skokie collecting for the Red Feather and the Community Chest. For years, well past her 80th birthday, she volunteered at East Prairie school. She was an avid Mah Jongg player, playing with the same group of women for 40 years. Although plagued with a progressive dementia in her last years, she never lost her sense of humor or joy for life, or her undying devotion to all Chicago sports teams, especially her beloved Cubs.

A Memorial service will be held at 3:30 p.m. on January 11th at Temple Judea Mizpah, 8610 Niles Center Rd., Skokie.


Kristmann, Conrad S.
Age 90, died peacefully on December 31, 2014 in Naples, Florida. A Park Ridge resident for 62 years, he was married for over 50 years to Dorothy Schmidt Kristmann who died in June 2004.

He was the beloved father of Mary and Kurt (Deborah) Kristmann and the devoted grandfather to Christine Yovu, Catherine Kartman, Conrad J. Kristmann and Joanna Kristmann. He was the adoring great-grandfather of Evelyn Yovu.

A veteran of World War II and graduate of University of Illinois, a registered architect and member of the American Institute of Architects. An avid golfer and longtime member of Park Ridge Country Club, card player, boatman and sailor, he led his life with humor and enthusiasm and never looked back.

Visitation Wednesday, January 7 from 4:00 p.m. to 9:00 p.m. at Nelson Funeral Home, 820 W. Taicott, Park Ridge. Funeral services Thursday 10:00 a.m. at the funeral home. Interment Town of Maine.

In lieu of flowers, please direct memorial contributions to American Red Cross, 2200 W. Harrison St., Chicago 60612 or USO of Illinois, 333 S. Wabash, 16th Floor, Chicago 60604.

For more information 847-823-5122 or www.nelsonfunerals.com.
Vanderporten, April
(nee Arany) 65, of Lincolnwood, passed away December 30, 2014. Beloved wife of Bruce; loving mother of Kevin (Susan) and Steven (Caidi, fiancé); dearest sister of Lawrence (Ruth Ann) Arany; fond aunt of Michael (Julia) and Thomas (Kara) Arany and great-aunt of Avery; devoted friend of many.

April earned a masters degree in nursing, was an avid volunteer and a cherished member of her community. She enjoyed traveling, gardening and the theater. Her warmth and kindness will be greatly missed by everyone she touched.

Funeral Saturday, January 3rd, 10:00 a.m. at Smith-Corcoran Funeral Home, 6150 N. Cicero Ave., Chicago. Visitation Friday, 4:00 - 9:00 p.m. Info., 773-736-3833 or visit April’s memorial at www.smithcorcoran.com.

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Funeral Homes
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847-998-3400

General Information Concerning The Death Notice Page
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- An in memoriam or card of thanks may be placed using the same information above.
- The deadline for placing a death notice, in memoriam or card of thanks, is Monday at 5:00 pm. Photos must be submitted by Monday at 2:00pm.
- The death notice department is staffed from 8:30 am to 5:00 pm Monday through Saturday and 9:00 am to 5:00 pm on Sunday.
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This weekly column is geared up to provide consumer tips and stories that help readers solve issues with businesses.

To submit a complaint for consideration, email HelpSquad@PioneerLocal.com with as much detail about your complaint as possible.
ACROSS
1 Japanese verse
2 Vivid white gem
10 Memo opening
14 "Eight Is Enough"
19 Game show announcer
20 Novelist
21 Have a ball
22 Feelthy firm
23 Comedy that should have named WC Fields?
26 Big town, in Italian
27 Scornfully "T"
28 With 106, parked it, so to speak
29 Televisers
30 Modus
33 Novel that should have been sung by B.B. King?
35 Horo. parts
36 Some pizzas
38 Purge
39 Romantic comedy that should have starred B.D. Wong?
40OPPOSING STARS
6 Milky white
7 Muscular
10 Drama that should have starred E.G. Marshall?
13 Michael of "Superbad"
14 L.A.
18 Novels
21 Have a ball
22 Feelthy firm
23 Comedy that should have named WC Fields?
26 Big town, in Italian
27 Scornfully "T"
28 With 106, parked it, so to speak
29 Televisers
30 Modus
33 Novel that should have been sung by B.B. King?
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36 Some pizzas
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39 Romantic comedy that should have starred B.D. Wong?
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HOROSCOPES: JANUARY 14 — JANUARY 20

ARIES (March 21 to April 19) Use that Arian charm to help make a difficult workplace transition easier for everyone. News about a long-awaited decision can be confusing.

TAURUS (April 20 to May 20) Although you might well be tempted to be more extravagant than you should be at this time, you’ll let your sensible instinct guide you toward moderation.

GEMINI (May 21 to June 20) An opportunity for travel could come with some problems regarding travel companions and other matters. Be sure you read all the fine print before booking.

CANCER (June 21 to July 22) Make an effort to complete your usual workplace tasks before volunteering for extra duty. Scrabbling to catch up later on could create some resentment among your colleagues.

LEO (July 23 to August 22) A financial matter could have you rethinking your current spending plans. You might want to recheck your budget to see where you can cut back on expenses.

VIRGO (August 23 to September 22) One way to make your case for that promotion you’re hoping for might be to put your planning skills to work in helping to shape up a project that got out of hand.

LIBRA (September 23 to October 22) Be careful about “experts” who have no solid business background. Seek advice on enhancing your business prospects from sources with good success records.

SCORPIO (October 23 to November 21) Standing up to support a colleague’s viewpoint — even if it’s unpopular — can be difficult if you feel outnumbered. But you’ll win plaudits for your honesty and courage.

BY KING FEATURES SYNDICATE INC.

SAGITTARIUS (November 22 to December 21) While progress continues on resolving that recurring problem, you might feel like it’s taking too long. Things always need to develop at their own pace.

CAPRICORN (December 22 to January 19) Someone close might have a financial problem and seek your advice. If you do decide to get involved, insist on seeing everything relevant to the situation.

AQUARIUS (January 20 to February 18) A personal matter takes an interesting turn. The question is, do you want to follow the new path or stick with the old way? The answer is, keep it moving forward.

PISCES (February 19 to March 20) Moving into a new career is a big step. Check that offer carefully with someone who has been there, done that, and has the facts you’ll need to help you make your decision.
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Chicago Tribune
Evanston’s Varua returns to form after tearing ACL

Maine South waiting for full lineup to get healthy

BY MATT HARNESS

EVANSTON — When Emily Varua landed a one-and-one-half twist during her routine on the floor exercise, she couldn’t help but exhale and be excited on Saturday. It was the first time the Evanston senior had tried such a trick in competition since she tore the ACL in her right knee while competing on the floor exercise in a 2013 meet.

“I did it,” Varua said. “I was nervous, but I am very happy about how I did.”

Varua, who wore a bulky brace throughout the meet, scored an 8.550 on the floor to place eighth at her team’s home invitational. She also was eighth in the all-around after totaling 33.500 points. Varua took ninth after every meet, scored an 8.550 on the floor to help but exhale and be excited on Saturday.

“I still am a little sore, and I have to ice it after every meet,” she said. “But it feels really good to be back.”

Evanston finished fourth at the eight-team meet with 123.900 points.

After the meet it was announced that longtime Wildkits coach Chester Jones is retiring at the end of the school year. Saturday’s meet, the Brinkworth/Munch Invitational, will be renamed the Chester Jones Invitational next season.

Glencross South

Despite being off since Dec. 15, the Titans showed few signs of rust at Evanston, taking second place with 136.975 points. New Trier won the team title with a 137.900. Maine South took first at Maine South waiting for full lineup to get healthy.

It’s more than a month into the season, and the Hawks still haven’t had their full lineup for a meet, according to coach Tessa Robinson.

But that hasn’t stopped Maine South from performing at a high level. Saturday at Evanston, the Hawks placed third with 134.050 points, finishing behind New Trier and Glencross South. One week earlier, Maine South took first at Maine West’s invitational.

“We have a talented group,” Robinson said. “We are mostly freshmen and sophomores, so there’s a lot of potential there, too. But with injuries and illnesses we haven’t been able to see what we can really do.”

Senior Lauryn Rotonda and sophomore Sara Ignoffo, both starters, missed Evanston’s meet because of illnesses. Rotonda competes on the floor and beam while Ignoffo is an all-rounder.

Maine South

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Maine South was led by sophomore Alyssa Chiovaro on Saturday. She was fourth in the all-around (35.575), fourth on the vault (8.750) and fourth on the beam (8.950).

“It was a good performance [Saturday],” Robinson said. “When everybody is in and healthy, I think we are capable of scoring in the high 138s. We hope to be there by the end of January.”

Loyola

Junior Claire Sullivan, the Ramblers’ lone gymnast, finished second in the all-around with 35.875 points. She was second on the floor (9.350), third on the vault (9.325), third on bars (8.850) and ninth on beam (8.550).

Niles North

Sophomore Kaylie VanDoren and freshman Athena Xidis helped the Vikings to sixth place with a 115.200. VanDoren was fourth in the all-around (9.100), and Xidis followed in 15th (29.250). VanDoren had the team’s best finish by taking 12th on vault with an 8.600.

Niles West

Sophomore Karina Marin led the Wolves at Evanston by placing 11th in the all-around at 31.200. Her top performance came on the floor, where she took 13th with an 8.300. Niles West totaled 114.200 points to take seventh as a team.
Mededovic hopes to continue basketball career in college

BY ERIC VAN DRIL
Special to the Tribune, @VanDrilSports

SKOKIE — Like many highly-regarded female basketball players in Bosnia and Herzegovina, Ilma Mededovic encountered a crossroads when she considered her future.

Universities in Bosnia and Herzegovina — where Mededovic was part of the country's national team — aren't like colleges in the United States. They don't have women's basketball teams, which Mededovic said forces basketball players to pick between going to college and continuing their careers with a professional team.

Mededovic didn't want to choose one option over the other, so she moved to the United States so she could have both.

"Obviously basketball is a passion of mine. I love it," Mededovic said. "But I still have to look at my future. I can't play basketball my whole life."

Mededovic has been enrolled at Niles West since the spring semester of 2014. She lives with her aunt and uncle, and her sister is on an academic scholarship at the Illinois Institute of Technology in Chicago. Her parents still live in Sarajevo.

On the court, Mededovic has been a big asset to the Wolves this season.

She comes from a different basketball background than her teammates and that shows in many ways. For one, she had to learn all five positions when she was growing up.

That's provided Niles West with a diverse, 5-11 player who can play in the post and handle the ball.

Mededovic has spent the majority of her time this year at guard, where her smooth mid-range game and ability to get to the rim have made the Wolves' offense more dangerous.

"She's got a lot of talent," Niles West coach Tony Konsewicz said. "She really knows how to use her body going to the basket against bigger defenders. She absolutely reminds me of a Toni Kukoc type; Toni will never beat you on the first step, but he'll use his body to get to the basket. And if you leave her open, she'll hit some shots."

It's been evident that Mededovic learned the game in Europe in other ways, too. She attacks the basket differently, sometimes cradling the ball to protect it when she drives. She also uses a Euro step. The Euro step has become popular in the NBA later, but it is very rarely used by female high school basketball players.

Mededovic was whistled for traveling often during Niles West's first games of the year because of that Euro step, Konsewicz said, but she adjusted. She said she went on the IHSA's website and studied the rulebook. Her turnovers have decreased as a result.

Mededovic also has a team-first approach when she plays.

"She doesn't play for herself," Niles West senior Julia Easter said. "She plays for the team. She's not just looking to score, she's looking for assists and she helps on [defense]."

Mededovic added: "Honestly, I would rather my teammates score than me because that's how I am. But when I have to step it up, I step it up."

As her lone season at Niles West has unfolded, Mededovic has been working to find somewhere to play in college. She said she's been in regular contact with Northern Illinois, Stony Brook (New York) and Angelo State (Texas). She said she hopes to get a paycheck as soon as possible.

Getting exposure has been hard because of when Mededovic moved to the United States. Most of the bigger schools have already recruited and signed their high school seniors and have shifted their focus to recruiting younger players.

Although that's the case, Konsewicz is convinced a smaller school will get a bargain in Mededovic.

Illinois women's basketball coach Matt Bollant saw Mededovic score 20 points against New Trier earlier this year, and his feedback was in line with Konsewicz's opinion.

"He was at the game watching New Trier girls," Konsewicz said of Bollant. "He called me after the game and said, 'I don't think she's a Big Ten player,' but his buddy coaches at Indiana Wesleyan and [Bollant] was like, 'She would totally fit into my system. She impressed the crap out of me.'"
Anthony Zagorov hit his growth spurt, he said. "And I really wouldn't mind because it would be by so much."

"When we first started out - like the first couple years - he would kill me," Anthony Zagorov said. "Anthony Zagorov is more of a freestyler and a backstroker, while Michael Zagorov is good in the butterfly and breaststroke. Their ability to swim different types of events has helped Niles North early in the year."

"They're both very diverse. They're pretty well disciplined in all the strokes. They push each other, they said, and that's helped them grow into swimmers who have contributed in different areas for the Vikings."

"They're a great addition," Orlove said. "They're both very diverse. They're pretty well disciplined in all the strokes." Zagorov twins bring diverse skills to Vikings swim team

HIGHLAND PARK — Anthony and Michael Zagorov’s swimming careers began as anything but competitive.

The twin brothers’ first exposure to the sport came in swimming lessons when they were 7 or 8 years old, Michael Zagorov said.

Their relationship evolved into one that’s competitive both in meets and in practices, yet the Niles North freshmen developed that mentality at different points.

"When we first started out — like the first couple years — he would kill me," Anthony Zagorov said. "And I really wouldn’t mind because it would be by so much."

That’s no longer true, and it hasn’t been since Anthony Zagorov hit his growth spurt, he said.

Now, they can swim similar times in most strokes. They push each other, they said, and that’s helped them grow into swimmers who have contributed in different areas for the Vikings.

Anthony Zagorov is more of a freestyler and a backstroker, while Michael Zagorov is good in the butterfly and breaststroke. Their ability to swim different types of events has helped Niles North early in the year.

"It's also provided Vikings coach Seth Orlove flexibility when he's crafting his lineup. "They're a great addition," Orlove said. "They're both very diverse. They're pretty well disciplined in all the strokes."

Anthony Zagorov began his varsity career early in the year.

"They're both very diverse. They're pretty well disciplined in all the strokes."

Anthony Zagorov began his varsity career early in the year. Michael Zagorov didn’t swim against Niles West due to an illness, but he finished first in the 100 breaststroke (1:07.16) to contribute in Niles North’s win against the Hawks.

The Zagorovs represent two promising pieces of a young core for the Vikings, who Orlove said have more freshmen and sophomores than juniors and seniors this year. They’re part of a talented freshmen class that also includes Jared Brown and Jeremiah Limson.

The makeup of the team has called on freshmen to contribute immediately.

"There are a lot of freshmen, which means good things for the future for our team," Michael Zagorov said. "We're trying to achieve a lot of things with this team because we're young. It's been helpful for me because they're freshmen, [and] so am I. It's not like they're all older boys. They're going through the same thing like me and my brother."
Niles North's Jared Brown swims the 150-yard freestyle during the Don Davis Invite on Dec. 30 in Highland Park. BRIANOMAHONEYFORCHICAGOTRIBUNE
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