Stemming the tide

Niles Stormwater Commission looks at flood projects | PAGE 6
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Niles Stormwater Commission looks at current, upcoming flood projects

BY IGOR STUDENKOV
Special for Pioneer Press | @istudenkov

During its first meeting of 2015, the Niles Stormwater Commission looked at the flood relief projects that are still in planning stages as well as the progress of the projects that have already been approved.

During the Jan. 20 meeting, Heys and Associates Inc., which provides planning services for flood relief, reported on three problem areas that it believed deserved the most attention. The areas were identified based on the consequences of flooding during the spring and summer of 2013. If the company's recommendations are followed, the areas would be part of the third round of flood mitigation projects.

The company and village staff also reported on the progress of the projects that have already been approved. The Cleveland Relief Sewer, which replaces flood-control systems in the most flood-prone areas in eastern Niles, is currently awaiting approval from the Illinois Environmental Protection Agency and the Metropolitan Water Reclamation District of Greater Chicago. Until the two agencies respond, the project timeline remains uncertain.

The Stormwater Relief Plan was developed by Heys to address flooding issues throughout Niles. It called for a number of projects that were grouped into tiers based on priority. The first round of projects, known as Tier I, addresses the most pressing issues. Two Tier I projects — the construction of new stormwater basins at Our Lady of Ransom and Maryhill Cemetery — were completed in December 2014. The remaining project — the Cleveland Relief Sewer — is ready for construction, but it needs to get the approval of both the Northern/Central Illinois Pipeline Association (NIPA) and the Metropolitan Water Reclamation District of Greater Chicago (MWRDGC).

Tier II projects, which deal with smaller, but still significant issues, have been planned, but work on them won't start until Tier I projects are completed. And Tier III projects still haven't been fully planned out.

During the Jan. 20 meeting, Heys' Vice President Jeff Wickenkamp presented the company's engineering analysis of potential Tier III improvement. The analysis listed thirteen areas that could benefit from smaller scale flood relief projects. He focused on the three projects that the company believed deserved the highest priority. He distributed a memo that described the findings in detail and summarized the highlights.

According to the memo, the first project would deal with 7700 block of Oconto Avenue, near Mulford Street. Because the area is lower than the adjacent blocks, so flood water tends to gather there. The memo proposed three options: building new relief sewer pipes, buying up and demolishing lowest-lying houses and demolishing them to make way for a retention pond, or increasing capacity of the existing sewers.

The company recommended the third option. The memo stated that, while it wouldn't address flooding issues as well as the other two, it would be cheaper to implement and wouldn't come with as many legal restrictions. Wickenkamp also told the commission that, given the extent of flooding on the block, any solution would be better than no solution at all.

"Personally, I think it would be worth it, because it's a severely flooding location," Wickenkamp said.

The second project would deal with 8000 block of Churchill Street, which is flood-prone for similar elevation-related reasons as above. The memo proposes adding a new overflow pipe to relieve the existing sewers, ensuring that the water wouldn't drain much faster. The third project would deal with stretches of Kedzie Street and Ottawa Avenue near Milwaukee Avenue. The memo proposes adding new sewer pipes and a black-flow preventer. Because Milwaukee Avenue is a state highway, the project would need to be coordinated with the Illinois Department of Transportation.

The project is estimated to cost $282,000. If the first or second options for the first project area were chosen, the costs would rise by $2.9 million or $1.2 million, respectively.

Wickenkamp also talked about the progress on the final Tier I project — the Cleveland Relief Sewer. During the Dec. 4 ceremony that marked the completion of the project, Village Manager Steve Vinesiano said the project should go up to bid sometime this spring. But according to Wickenkamp, they can't go up to bid until they know if IEPA and MWRDGC would require any changes. He argued that the village shouldn't go up to bid before it knows what changes, if any, were required.

"Professionally, it doesn't look good," said Wickenkamp. "It looks like we went to bid prematurely.

He explained that the plan was submitted to the Illinois Environmental Protection Agency in October 2014, but the state agency is yet to respond.

Stormwater Commission Chairman Joe LoVerde expressed frustration at the vagueness of the timeline. He asked Wickenkamp to at least give a general time frame for when the village would be able to put the project up to bid. LoVerde insisted that the village residents in the area the project was meant to help deserve to at least get some idea when the project is going to start.

"I don't know what to tell them," he said. "This is a serious question."

Wickenkamp reiterated that he had no way of knowing when the agencies respond, and he didn't feel comfortable suggesting a time frame that would likely not pan out. After some back and forth, LoVerde asked Wickenkamp to get back to him with the estimate later.

"Anticipate a worst-case scenario," said LoVerde. "Take your time, call me, figure it out. [Niles residents have] to hear a date that's a realistic date."
The Niles Public Library Board of Trustees unanimously approved several changes to the Internet filtering policy it adopted in November.

Before the policy was adopted, the library only put content filters on its KidSpace computers. The new policy called for the library to install content filters on all library computers, as well as on its wireless Internet network. Patrons have the right to ask to have the filters temporarily turned off if it gets in the way of legitimate research.

While the policy took effect immediately, won't technically come into force until the library actually purchases and installs the filters. During its Jan. 21 meeting, the board voted to approve the purchase filtering software and hardware from Austin, Texas-based Lightspeed Systems. It will cost the library a total of $9,000.

During the Jan. 21 meeting, library attorney Dennish Walsh suggested several small changes. He asked to change the categories of content the filter would block, taking out violence, racism and "hate," while leaving nudity and pornography in.

"It would be hard for the filtering programs to define what racism, hatred and violence is," said Walsh.

He also suggested changing the phrasing in the section of the policy that deals with what happens if the filters get in the way of legitimate research. The policy stated that the staff "has the discretion to turn off filters upon request." Walsh suggested changing the passage to "shall turn off the filters upon request."

Finally, he asked the board to change the section dealing with what would happen to patrons who are seen viewing images that "may be deemed objectionable or obscene." That includes instances when the staff or other patrons catch them viewing the images. The original policy said that it "will result result in loss of library privileges. Walsh suggested changing the word to 'may.'

Both of those changes were suggested for similar reasons. If a patron is viewing nude images for legitimate reasons, he or she is legally allowed to see them. Because some patrons may object even to images such as nude paintings, which the patron could be viewing while, for example, researching classical painters.

"This is why [the library staff] needs discretion because some patrons may find [the images] objectionable," said Walsh. "If it's a legitimate search a person is entitled to look at it."

After a brief discussion, the board unanimously approved the changes.

The board also voted to approve a vendor for the content filtering equipment. According to the staff report in that meeting, board packet, three bidders submitted proposals. The staff suggested selecting Lightspeed Systems because they placed the lowest bid. Their package included hardware filtering equipment and a five-year subscription to the filtering software. The three-year warranty was included in the price of the hardware. After that, the library would have to pay the full price to replace it.

Given that Lightspeed Systems' filtering hardware costs $5,000, the staff suggested that the library could potentially spend a total of $14,000 overall over the next five years.

According to the figures provided in the staff reports, the other two bidders submitted proposals. The staff suggested selecting Lightspeed Systems because they placed the lowest bid. Their package included hardware filtering equipment and a five-year subscription to the filtering software. The three-year warranty was included in the price of the hardware. After that, the library would have to pay the full price to replace it.

Given that Lightspeed Systems' filtering hardware costs $5,000, the staff suggested that the library could potentially spend a total of $14,000 overall over the next five years.

The report warned that none of the filters would be completely, flawlessly effective.

"It should be noted that no content filter will offer 100 percent filtering," it said. "Regardless of the solution the library purchases, patrons may still be able to access restricted content as the content filters rely on databases that categorize sites which are submitted by people voluntarily. New websites with offensive content may be viewed until such time that a particular site is added to the databases."

The board unanimously approved Lightspeed Systems' bid.
Dog day afternoon

Four-legged friends star in Lieberman Center’s canine show

Jake never saw a camera he didn’t like. He competed Jan. 25 at the Lieberman Center for Health and Rehabilitation's second annual dog show. I MIKE ISAACS/CHICAGO TRIBUNE MEDIA

BY MIKE ISAACS
misaacs@pioneerlocal.com | @SKReview_Mike

The Lieberman Center for Health and Rehabilitation didn’t wait for July or August to roll around to welcome in the dog days.

Maybe it was just that Lancelot and Phoebe, Cubbie and Reagan, Menesch, Zoe and Madison, Danny, Bernie and Jake couldn’t wait. They were the stars Sunday, Jan. 25, and their time in the limelight was not to be denied.

The popularity and success of Liebermans second annual dog show did not take staff by the same surprise as last year inaugural show. Andrea Koch, manager of Life Enrichment and Creative Arts Therapy at CJE SeniorLife, said she had the idea when she noticed how many families visit Lieberman’s residents with dogs.

"The pets bring so much joy to people," Koch said. "Some are people who can’t get out of their rooms as much or people who can’t really communicate verbally as well. To have this dog come in and interact with them — it’s just this amazing thing."

Many Lieberman residents wanted to leave their rooms Jan. 25 for the much-anticipated dog show. Nearly 60 of them including a handful of resident judges — by far the most for any event, Koch says — made a large circle, allowing the dogs and their owners plenty of room to perform in myriad contests.

There were prizes for best dressed, and a “treat-on-a-spoon” race, for best looking male and female, best trick, dog and owner look alike, for most obedient and shiest sweetheart, for biggest rascal, for best in show and people’s choice.

A few dogs, like an adorable little one named Menesch dressed in a yarmulke and pajamas matching the owner's, won multiple prizes, but mostly the honors were spread evenly among the canines. Big and small, docile and — well — "exuberant" dogs all spent time in the winner’s circle.

Emily Mysel, who works at CJE, competed with her one-and-a-half year old Menesch for the first time. "This is very therapeutic and it brings back a lot of memories for a lot of people," Mysel said. "I’m sure many of these people had dogs at one point, and it makes them happy."

Dr. Steve Mershon, a consultant at CJE SeniorLife who competed with his dog Lancelot, a large lovable Belgian sheep dog, agreed.

"Dogs are therapeutic for people of all ages," he said.

Lancelot is one of Mershon’s six dogs, chosen for the show because he is the sweetest among his lot, according to his owner. The decision paid off as the duo won the "dog and owner look-alike" contest.

"If people could be more like dogs, we’d live in a better world," he said.

Volunteer Anne Feuerstein brought curly and cuddly Dinah to the Ueberman dog show. "Look at the crowd," she said when asked about the show's popularity. "The whole room is full. People just love dogs."

These people certainly did. Before the contests even got under way, each owner introduced his or her beloved dog, walking the dog around the circle so that residents could get a look and a little petting in.

Last year’s 26 dogs created a bit of a "madhouse," Koch admitted, so she cut off contestants this year at a more manageable 20. No one barked about it, though, and there were smiles everywhere you looked.

Last year’s 26 dogs created a bit of controversy because the CEO of CJE SeniorLife ended up taking home the big prize. "He was a benevolent leader and he agreed to step down this year," Koch said, smiling. "There was no ‘Doggiegate’ this year."
District 64 leans toward making all residency checks annual

BY IGOR STUDENKOV
Special for Pioneer Press | studenkov

Park Ridge-Niles School District 64 Board of Education is preparing to require annual residency checks for all district families.

For the past three months, the board has been discussing the possibility of requiring regular residency checks for home-owning families. This was done out of concern that the current procedures allow too many families to send their kids to district schools even when they no longer live in the district. Because those families' property taxes don't go into the district, it puts the schools under financial strain.

During the Dec. 15 meeting, Superintendent Laurie Heinz proposed checking homeowners' residency once every three years. In response to board members' feedback, she presented two more options during the Jan. 26 meeting, both of which would make the checks annual. The board is expected to pick one of those options during the meeting that will be held on Feb. 23 at Washington Elementary School.

Under the current policy, District 64 does residency checks for families living in rental housing once a year. But families living in housing they own only get checked when their kids first enter one of the district schools. This means kids from families that moved out of the district could potentially keep attending.

The board first started discussing the issue in November. During the Dec. 15 meeting, Heinz presented a proposal that calls for the district to do a total of three residency checks once when children first enter the district, then at third grade, then at sixth grade.

During the Jan. 26 meeting, Heinz presented two more options. Option B called for in-person residency checks. The district would designate a week some time in April for in-person registration. The district could potentially keep attending. The third option, known as Option C, calls for the district to set up a two-week period once when children first enter the district, then at third grade, then at sixth grade.

During the Jan. 26 meeting, Heinz presented two more options. Option B called for in-person residency checks. The district would designate a week some time in April for in-person registration. The district could potentially keep attending.

At the board's request, Heinz looked at what each option would cost. The first option would cost $6,000, while Option B would cost $11,000 and Option C would cost $7,500. As Heinz explained in her report, the costs would come from overtime payments and/or payments to substitute staff that would handle regular work while the clerical staff is busy with residency checks.

When asked which option she would prefer, Heinz said that she and her fellow administrative staff members leaned toward Option B—though they would be fine with other options.

"I think, at this point, we could go either way," she said. "It would be our preference to do in-person registration."

Heinz said that she preferred that option because Dr. Ken Wallace, the Superintendent of Maine Township High School District 207, told her that, in his district's experience, it was more effective.

Board member John Heyde, who expressed reservations about residency checks in the past few meetings, remained skeptical. He asked Becky Allard, the district's former chief business official, what would happen if the district mail gets returned. Allard said that, when the district mail gets returned. Allard said that this would trigger an investigation into whether the family still lived at that address. This prompted Heyde to wonder whether there were enough families that didn't live in the district and didn't trigger any red flags to make the residency checks worthwhile.

Allard responded that, when the district has reason to suspect that a family may not be residing in the district, it hires a private investigator to look into it. Hiring a private investigator would still be more expensive than any options Heinz outlined.

"We probably spend $10,000-$15,000 a year," said Allard.

Still, she acknowledged that the district might still need to hire investigators even if more regular checks are approved.

Heyde said that he felt that the figures Heinz provided weren't enough.

"I think what's missing from the cost figures is the cost of time for 3,000 people to have to haul themselves to middle schools," he said.

Board member Vicky Lee argued in favor of Option C.

"I don't think it's an effort for a family to cobble together a couple of documents, and either drop them off or mail them," she said.

Board member Bob Johnson and Board President Anthony Borrelli spoke in favor of Option C. Board member Dan Collins said he favored whichever option was the most thorough.

SEE CHECKS, PAGE 13 »
Road rage leads to fistfight challenge, ramming

BUFFALO GROVE, Illinois — Buffalo Grove police allege that a Niles man ran down a fellow motorist with a car following an altercation.

According to the police report, Matthew H. De Cicco, 33, of 8950 W. Heathwood Circle, Niles, and another man were both stopped at a red light at about 9:30 a.m. Jan. 14 at the intersection of Milwaukee and Dundee roads.

De Cicco was allegedly talking on his mobile phone and did not see the light turn green, so the driver behind him honked at him. The driver then swerved around De Cicco's still-immobile car.

In separate statements, both men said they yelled at each other — both saying the other man started it.

Both also said that De Cicco challenged the other driver to a fight later that day at the large flagpole on the northwest corner.

De Cicco said he was only joking, but the other man felt that his challenge was genuine.

"De Cicco reported that he was not trying to fight anyone and wanted to drive home safely because he had his 18-month-old child in the back seat," the report reads.

De Cicco then followed the driver to his workplace, on the 1500 block of Barclay Boulevard. De Cicco told the police that he tailed the other man to write his license plate number down.

In the report, De Cicco said the other man parked, got out of his car and started walking aggressively toward toward his car, so he "drove quickly away since he was not sure if (the other man) had a weapon."

But the other man told the officers that when he got out of his car and crossed the lot to return to his workplace, De Cicco rammed him, cutting his left arm. De Cicco then allegedly fled, and the other man got back in his car to pursue him.

That chase ended De Cicco's parents' house, on the 23000 block of Kingston Row in Lincolnshire, where both Lincolnshire and Buffalo Grove officers responded.

"(The man)'s left arm was cut and there was fresh blood," the Buffalo Grove report reads.

Buffalo Grove officers arrested De Cicco, charging him with leaving the scene of an injury accident.

POLICE BLOTTER

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

RETAIL THEFT

Zolzaya Purevord, 34, of 4210 Williamsburg Court, Glenview, was charged with felony retail theft on Jan. 20 after she allegedly stole $974 worth of merchandise from a store on the 8500 block of Golf Road. She has a Feb. 3 court date.

BURGLARY

Coins and a stamp collection were stolen between Jan. 12 and Jan. 15 during the burglary of a condominium unit on the 6700 block of Milwaukee Avenue. There was no evidence of forced entry to the residence, police said.

THEFT

A catalytic converter was stolen off a vehicle between Jan. 12 and Jan. 15 while it was parked outside a business on the 7700 block of Merrimac Avenue.

A 35-year-old Niles man learned on Jan. 17 that several unauthorized withdrawals, totaling $7,045, had been made from his bank account since Dec. 29. Two of the withdrawals were made from ATM machines in Niles, police said.

Three people allegedly left King Spa, 809 Civic Center Drive, without paying a $245 bill on the morning of Jan. 19. An investigating was pending.
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Advocacy coalition endorses four D219 board candidates

BY NATALIE HAYES
Special for Pioneer Press.

A newly-formed alliance of parents, teachers, and taxpayers from District 219 has endorsed four of the 12 candidates running for five vacancies on the school board in this spring's municipal election.

A selection committee appointed by the Progress219 organization selected Lincolnwood educator Lateef Pariss Hussain, Skokie Chiropractor David Ko, attorney Brian Novak of Skokie, and vice president of Skokie Youth Sports, Mark Sproat.

The formation of Progress 219—an advocacy group of about 30 people who live and/or work in Niles Township School District 219—stemmed from growing concerns among what the group's president Catherine Struzynski describes as a "lack of wide communication deficiency."

Struzynski said that the group will not take sides on issues until after the election, but she did say that Progress219 plans to focus on creating better transparency and open dialogue within the school district.

"The first and foremost initiative after the election, is to see if there's a better process for community outreach," Struzynski said. She would not specifically say what suggestions Progress219 had for school administrators to increase the district's transparency.

The candidate selection committee—comprised of two teachers, two teacher's union leaders, and two community members—conducted five pre-screening interviews with all the candidates except for two who opted out—incumbent Carlton Evans and newcomer Jon Heinz of Skokie.

Ko is the only incumbent out of the five seeking reelection that were endorsed by Progress219. Ko is running for a four-year term after being appointed to a two-year term on the school board in August 2018 following the death of longtime school board member Lynda Smith.

Evans, who serves as the board secretary, is the only candidate running for the single two-year opening on the board.

Other incumbents whose names will appear on the April 7 ballot are School Board Vice President Sheri Doniger of Lincolnwood, Jeffrey Greenspan of Skokie, and retired math teacher Eileen Valfer of Skokie.

Doniger; a dentist with a practice in Lincolnwood, has served on the school board since 2003. Greenspan, an attorney, is seeking his fifth term on the board this year. Valfer has served on the school board since 2007.

Other new names that will appear on the ballot are Linda Lampert of Lincolnwood, Franklin Sacks of Lincolnwood, and Bennett Santana of Niles.

Parents find 'just say no' talk tougher as pot becomes more mainstream

BONNIE MILLER RUBIN
brubin@tribpub.com

With medical marijuana now legal in 23 states—including Illinois—and recreational use permissible in four, parents are finding it increasingly challenging to explain to teens why the drug is harmful. Despite the push for legalization, parents should actively discourage their kids from using marijuana, according to the American Academy of Pediatrics in an updated policy statement released Monday.

"It was so much easier when everything was black and white," said Carole Pilotte, of Flossmoor, a mother of three sons, ages 24, 22 and 18. "It's difficult when my kids see it as something medicinal. I feel like I've lost my leverage."

According to Dr. Seth Ammerman, lead author of the report, "We know that marijuana can be very harmful to adolescent health and development. We also know that in the last decade, the landscape has changed significantly."

In the statement, the nation's leading pediatrics organization reaffirms its decades-long opposition to the legalization of marijuana, but also for the first time recommends decriminalization. The academy, which is headquartered in Elk Grove Village, further endorses reclassifying marijuana to a less restrictive drug category, which would make it easier to study its therapeutic benefits, and acknowledges that some children with debilitating chronic diseases cannot wait for lengthy research and clinical trials before having access to medical marijuana.

Still, even with these caveats, its position is clear: "In spite of the trend of more states moving toward legalization, we're saying this is a bad idea," said Ammerman, a clinical professor in pediatrics and adolescent medicine at Stanford University. "We're saying, let's get the evidence and have a thoughtful discussion— not just go along."

The current landscape had made the way families talk about drugs tougher and more nuanced, experts say. Marijuana is no longer the sole province of stoned slackers.

Now, upstate residents are touting the financial advantages of legalized pot. Entrepreneurs are investing in cannabis-related businesses. Before last year's Super Bowl between the Seattle Seahawks and the Denver Broncos—the first between teams from two states where recreational marijuana is legal for adults—"the Today" show featured a travel expert and legalized marijuana advocate Rick Steves, who planned to serve weed alongside food at his Super Bowl party. Recreational pot is also legal for adults in Oregon, Alaska, and Washington, DC.

In Illinois, medical use legislation passed the General Assembly in 2013 and was signed into law by then-Gov. Pat Quinn. However, Quinn did not issue licenses for state cultivators and dispensaries before departing office, leaving in limbo exactly when the substance will be available to those who meet the criteria.

Regardless of what Gov. Bruce Rauner does next, the mixed messages are already here. Gail Weil, director of the Community Youth Network in Grayslake, said calls from perplexed parents have increased in the last year. "More than ever, parents need to be armed with the facts, so they can give straightforward information from reliable sources— not 'High Times.'"

A long-time anti-drug educator and social worker in Lake County, Weil frequently hears the "medical argument" contributing to a perception that marijuana is safe for all.

"I say, 'Look at blood pressure medications. It's beneficial for someone with high blood pressure, but if your blood pressure is normal, you can faint,'" she said. "According to the report, published in the February issue of Pediatrics, there remains plenty of evidence for taking a hard line against marijuana, including that it impairs memory and concentration, and lowers the odds of getting a high school diploma. Moreover, the earlier children start using any kind of substance, the more vulnerable they are to addiction."

"The brain continues to develop until the mid-20s ... and one of the last parts to develop is the prefrontal cortex, which controls judgment and decision-making," said Ammerman, noting that recent research has shown that regular or heavy teen use shows changes in brain development pathways that are not normal.

Beyond the physiological effects, there are a number of other consequences. Marijuana is illegal for minors in every state, and a conviction can disqualify a student for scholarships and internships, and otherwise derail career prospects, including with many police and fire departments— are not normal. And when her son asks about the drug, she said, "I tell him that I know what it is, and I'll tell you what it does and what it smells like, but don't even think of trying to put on something on me, " she said. "I report to the same school board every year."

"The positive news is that it allows educational and decision-making," said Ammerman, noting that recent research has shown that regular or heavy teen use shows changes in brain development pathways that are not normal.

Repercussions aside, the tone of the conversation between parents and kids depends a lot on the family, experts said. Valier Hermann sees the complexities in Los Angeles, where her 15-year-old passes medical marijuana dispensaries on the way to school and "some parents partake very liberally," she said. California is expected to put recreational use before voters next year.

Still, Hermann's antidep drug position hasn't wavered, she said. Growing up in a small town near Peoria and as a student at the University of Illinois, weed was a fixture.

"I tell them that I know what it is, what it does and what it smells like ... so don't even think of trying to put one on me," she said. "And when her son asks about the medical benefits, she has a ready reply: "Since when do you have glaucoma?"

Jeanne Barr, of Chicago, doesn't want her 15-year-old son to use drugs, she said. "We understand that if you drink that doesn't make you an alcoholic. It much rather have them making decisions in a culture of safety and trust, and representing something does not breed trust."
Board discusses policy on trustees attending events

BY IGOR STUDENKOV
Special for Pioneer Press | @studenkovi

The Niles Public Library Board of Trustees considered Wednesday, Jan. 21, whether to establish a policy regarding trustees attending events run by other organizations.

The motion was introduced by Trustee Linda Ryan during the meeting. She said that she wanted to get a sense of how the rest of the board felt about the issue. While she primarily wanted to touch upon trustees attending fundraisers by religious organizations, she also asked for other organizations to attend events in general. The board didn't make any decision one way or another, but it is expected to continue discussing the issue at the next meeting.

In an interview immediately after the meeting, Ryan told Niles Herald-Spectator that she felt that attending fundraisers for religious organizations could create issues, as it could give an appearance that the library favors one faith over another. She was also concerned about the library funds being spent to send trustees to religious events. Ryan also said she wanted all trustees to be on the same page regarding what events they should or shouldn't attend.

During the Jan. 21 meeting, Trustee Karen Dimond said she wasn't sure whether having trustees attending events by other organizations did any good. "We go to the events to network for the library," she said. "I'm not sure how much of that occurs at these events."

Dimond said she was especially wary of one type of events in particular. "I'd especially not attend events that would be considered fundraisers for other organizations," she said.

Trustee Barbara Nakanshi said she felt that trustees shouldn't attend fundraisers for religious organizations, citing a recent fundraiser for St. John Brebeuf Catholic parish as an example.

Interim Director Susan Lempke told the board that she felt the library benefits from having trustees attend events. "I do think there's a benefit to trustees being in the community," she said. "It keeps us visible, and it shows that we're supporting community organizations."

Board President Morgan Dubiel said that, while Nicholas Blase was mayor, there was a "not so secret rule" that the library board would stay away from public events. After Blase resigned following an arrest for federal corruption charges, the arrangement was relaxed.

Dubiel credited Linda Weiss, who served as the library director until last summer, with getting the library more involved with the community. "Religious organizations are part of our community, and they shouldn't be excluded," he said.

Trustees Chris Ball and Carolyn Drblin were absent during the meeting. Trustee Danette Matyas said she didn't have a preference one way or another. "I don't go to that many [events]," she said.

The board decided to continue the discussion at the next meeting.

Before the meeting wrapped up, Dubiel reiterated his opinion that the trustees should keep attending events, regardless of who hosts them. "We are members of this community, and we should engage with this community," he said. "I'd have to see us withdraw again."
Girls Scouts enjoy an ‘Arctic Adventure’

More than 300 Girl Scouts turned out for an “Arctic Adventure” event Jan. 24 in Vernon Hills, at the Girl Scouts of Greater Chicago and Northwest Indiana office.

In partnership with the Girl Scouts of Northern Illinois, the Girl Scouts of Greater Chicago and Northwest Indiana hosted the drop-in event to encourage new members and to welcome current Girl Scouts.

Admission was free to the four-hour event at 650 N. Lakeview Parkway. Patrons were asked to consider bringing a donation of winter hats or gloves.

The two hosting councils share borders and came together to provide a day of sisterhood so girls could practice winter camping skills, capture memories in a photo booth or meet CEOs from both councils.

“The purpose is to engage girls in Girl Scouting, to explore new activities so they can explore together and also to introduce new girls to Girl Scouting,” said Nancy Wright of Park Ridge, CEO of the Girl Scouts of Greater Chicago and Northwest Indiana.

While traditional activities, like camping, are still a big part of Girl Scouts, Cummings said the group also wants to make sure girls are learning basic technology skills.

“We actually build in activities with cell phones these days because there are a lot of cool apps that can be useful,” she said.

On Jan. 24, hands-on activities included swaps, a traditional Girl Scout activity that involves trading items, usually handmade.

Savannah Stevens of Green Oaks, who volunteered at a pen- guin swap table, said she believes Girl Scouts is important “because it helps a girl to grow” and learn “important skills at a young age.”

Maddy Aquino and her sister Beth Aquino of Mundelein were also volunteers, cutting long pieces of colored tape to make cheerful lanyard pins.

Maddy said she likes “to help others.”

“I feel volunteering is to help others and it gives you a good feeling,” Beth added.

Savannah Eagon, 9, of Ingle- side, said the best part of participating in Girl Scouts was bonding with a troop and having fun together.

Girl Scouts of Greater Chicago and Northwest Indiana includes more than 61,100 girls and nearly 21,000 adults in 245 communi- ties in six Illinois counties (Cook, DuPage, Grundy, Kankakee, Lake, and Will) and four Indiana coun- ties (Jasper, Lake, Newton, and Porter).
Project to slash water bills started

BY PAM DEFIGLIO
Special for Pioneer Press

With the City of Chicago’s water rates rising drastically, Morton Grove trustees took action Monday to stem the tide. They approved agreements to hire an attorney and a municipal consultant, both with experience in suburban water sourcing and delivery, to work on alternatives to getting Morton Grove’s water supply from Chicago. Morton Grove is partnering with Niles in the effort, and the two villages will share costs and benefits as they explore what Morton Grove Village Manager Ryan Horne said will be a multi-year, multi-million dollar effort to save residents money.

Morton Grove Village Finance Director Remy Navarrete said Chicago has raised its rates 70 percent since in the past four years. Chicago has raised its rates 70 percent in the past four years.

Director Remy Navarrete said Chicago has raised its rates 70 percent since in the past four years. Chicago has raised its rates 70 percent since in the past four years.

Mayor Dan Demaria was also supportive. “We're at a point in Morton Grove's history that we need to make a decision—stay with Chicago or leave,” he said. “We have to think for generations to come, what is the best source of water. With interest rates [low] and bonds and grants available, this is probably the least cost it will be for a long time.”

He also said partnering with Niles strengthens Morton Grove's position, and that the two villages have had great cooperation. Morton Grove benefits from being in a good position geographically, Horne said, in that it is relatively close to Lake Michigan.

He also described Morton Grove and Niles as a good fit to partner, since they are not only next to each other, but their water pumping stations are near each other. If a new pipeline must be constructed, there will be minimal connection distance between the two.

In addition, Morton Grove’s water contract with Chicago expires in 2018, and Niles’ expires in 2019. Skokie purchases water from Evanston, and Glenview purchases it from Wilmette. That leaves Morton Grove with four potential options, Horne said: continue to buy from Chicago, consider buying extra capacity from Glenview, join the Northwest Water Commission, which funnels Evanston water to Arlington Heights and other towns, or buy water from Wilmette.

In October, the Northwest Water Commission entered into an agreement to sell its Evanston-sourced water to Des Plaines.

With the approval of Morton Grove’s resolutions Monday, the two consultants the village contracted with are law firm Holland and Knight, and WRB LLC, the consulting firm of William Bailing, a former Buffalo Grove village manager.

Liston described Barbara Adams of Holland and Knight as an expert in the legal aspects of municipal water services. Likewise, Liston noted Bailing has overseen municipal water agreements, which villages such as Buffalo Grove and Wheeling needed decades ago to be able to grow and expand.

“We’re at a point in Morton Grove’s history that we need to make a decision—stay with Chicago or leave. We have to think for generations to come, what is the best source of water. With interest rates [low] and bonds and grants available, this is probably the least cost it will be for a long time.”

Dan Demaria,
Morton Grove Mayor
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 Essay: Maine South student attends gubernatorial inauguration

ASHLEY HAMILTON
Special for the Pioneer Press

Ashley Hamilton, a freshman at Maine South, attended the Illinois gubernatorial inauguration on Monday, Jan. 12. She wrote the following essay on her experience for the Pioneer Press.

Inauguration 2015 to me was a moment in time I will never forget.

The event started with the Air National Guard Band of the Midwest playing several songs before and during the event and they sounded amazing.

Jim Cornelison of the Chicago Blackhawks sang the national anthem, and the crowd really enjoyed it.

When it was time for Bruce Rauner to take the oath of office, I thought it was really cool how his whole family was on stage and his wife held the Bible for him. Once he took the oath, he gave a speech and I loved how he talked about education and how he wants to get schools back to how they once were, as well as get funding so that all kids get the same education, no matter where they live. He also talked about getting jobs back to Illinois, since so many have left Illinois in recent years in order to keep their businesses alive.

Once the ceremony was over, I headed to the Old State Capitol building where Governor Rauner and Lieutenant Governor Evelyn Sanguinetti were holding a meet and greet. I got the chance to ask Mrs. Sanguinetti about the one thing she would like to see changed the most while she's in office and her quote was “I would like to see more jobs become available. We want more businesses to come back to Illinois so more people will be able to find jobs in the future and make it easier for people like you as well.”

Later on in the evening, I attended the Inauguration Concert at the Convention Center, and got to enjoy listening to the legendary Buddy Guy who was superb on his guitar, eating great food from local food truck companies and then the main attraction of Toby Keith.

Bruce & his wife danced their first dance to the song, “Kiss Me Like This” as their kids stood by and watched. They looked so happy and had a great time.

The whole day was something I feel honored to be part of, and is something I will for sure never forget. I will say that being part of this and watching and listening to issues and ideas, I am more interested in learning more about politics and now see how important great leaders truly are.
Letters

Gambling in Illinois sold as fantasy with broken promises

In response to a letter posted Jan. 5 (“Video gaming industry ready to work with leaders” by Michael Gelatka, president of the Illinois Gaming Machine Operators Association).

Let’s start with calling it what it is — gambling. “Gaming” is classier, sexier, smacks of family fun, but no mistaking, the raw term is “gambling.”

One only needs to look at Atlantic City, where reckless gambling saturation resulted in massive socioeconomic and ethical fallout to communities, businesses and families. Local businesses fail, or report a 30 to 50 percent decrease in sales when money is forfeited to gambling venues, as opposed to stimulating the economy. Child welfare agencies report increases in child neglect and endangerment in the form of decreased household funds, to abandoning children at home or in parking lots to go gamble. Not far behind is increased bankruptcy, homelessness, crime and suicide.

This industry, which our government not only promotes but encourages, has built a public policy around inducing residents to gamble away their hard-earned money to fund their coffers.

The argument for job creation is certainly valid. However, consider that at last report there were roughly 7,000 part-time and full-time employees in Illinois gambling, a small number proportionally to those negatively affected by this industry, as individuals, family members or business owners. Hundreds of jobs were lost when Atlantic City casinos imploded!

Gelatka states video gambling is strictly regulated by the Illinois Gaming Board, yet they can’t find a way to protect the nearly 12,000 individuals on the self-exclusion list from the 4,600 venues available for them to now fail.

Video gambling is making a difference in our state. The broad and deep-seated collateral damage as a result of this disastrous “experiment” for many Illinoisans will be far reaching, life-altering, and in some cases, life-ending, with this addiction carrying the distinction of the highest rate of suicide. Gambling is a nightmare, sold as a fantasy with broken promises all around. It’s only a matter of time.

Melynda Litchfield
National Victims Advocate for Stop Predatory Gambling
St. Charles

We need a Marshall Plan for Education

At a recent suburban Rotary club meeting, our town’s local school superintendent gave a brief report about the new PARCC tests. PARCC stands for Partnership for Assessment for Readiness for College and Careers.

To paraphrase, it sounded like the new tests for grade-school-age children were going to be a long and grueling slog of weeklong tests and assessments. The superintendent also explained that one of the tasks for educators would be to prepare students who have always earned top grades that they might not do so well this time around.

This is coming from a great suburban district with a reputation for quality education. As I listened to the report, I kept asking myself, “What are we trying to accomplish?”

After a generation of legislation aimed at improving education, with increased tests and higher standards developed with the goal of leaving no child behind, what do we have to show for it? Not much, I’m afraid.

And then I realized, we are not even addressing the main issue facing our schools. Here it is, 60 years after Brown vs. Board of Education, the landmark Supreme Court case that outlawed segregation in public schools, and here in the Chicago area we still have legally segregated schools.

Most high performing schools are in mostly white and mostly wealthy suburbs, or are highly selective magnet schools in the city. Underperforming schools are mostly in poor, minority city neighborhoods or suburbs.

Why don’t we focus our gigantic federal effort on fixing education on those schools? We need help. We need to focus our efforts on those schools. We need a Marshall Plan for Education.”

Some schools are doing just great. They don’t need extra money or bureaucratic hoops to jump through. We should just leave them alone. But a lot of schools, especially those in poor, mostly minority neighborhoods need help. We need to focus our efforts on those schools. We need a Marshall Plan for Education.”

on the serious issues facing underperforming schools and the students who are consigned to having a 50-50 chance of graduating from the time they start kindergarten, the education bureaucracy proposes and dispenses laws and rules and regulations for everyone. Some schools are doing just great. They don’t need extra money or bureaucratic hoops to jump through. We should just leave them alone.

But a lot of schools, especially those in poor, mostly minority neighborhoods, with large minority or poor populations, need help. We need to focus our efforts on those schools. We need a Marshall Plan for Education, for schools that have been devastated by half a century of legal segregation and bad housing policy.

LET US HEAR FROM YOU

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

Keep letters to 250 words or fewer. Niles Herald-Spectator reserves the right to edit letters for length, clarity and content. All letters must be signed to be published.
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We didn’t have summer camp. We had Methodists.

Wow! Sports, science, arts — you name it, the Park District of Oak Park has a camp for it.

Kids and parents can find out what’s available at a camp open house from 4 to 7 p.m. Feb. 2 at Ridgeland Common Recreation Complex, 415 Lake St., Oak Park.

The 20-plus summer camps Oak Park serves up today is a far cry from what was available to me.

We kids were pretty much on our own for the summer. I could go where I wanted and do what I wanted, as long as I didn’t:

1. Get hit by a car.
2. Get arrested.

By far, though, the most important thing I couldn’t do was bother my Mom.

People mistakenly believe that summer is a time when moms have even more parenting to do than the rest of the year because kids are at home.

But not if mom is smart.

And my Mom was smart, indeed. She saw summer as an opportunity to have a brief vacation from her kids.

During the school year there was dressing and feeding us, PTA, Scouts and the occasional visit to the principal’s office to hear what Paul had done now.

But in the summer, school stuff was gone. Who could watch us in the summer?

The Methodists, of course. Now, we were Catholics. But the nearby Methodist church conducted a summer Bible school.

My Mom had the ecumenical idea of enrolling Mike and I in the school. We’re all God’s children, right?

I still remember one of the songs we were taught at Methodist Bible school — “The B-i-b-l-e, yes that’s the book for me. All day I stand on the word of God, the B-i-b-l-e.”

So, it was Methodism in the morning and riding my bike, playing ball, swimming, reading and rambling in the afternoon.

Worked out for everyone.

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So, it was Methodism in the morning and riding my bike, playing ball, swimming, reading and rambling in the afternoon.

Worked out for everyone. Though I still to this day feel guilty about being a Methodist under false pretenses.

Fortunately, Oak Park kids today don’t have to pretend to adopt a religion to enjoy a summer camp.

For information about available camps, go to www.pdop.org/camps.
Pick-up lines don't have to be cheesy

BY JACKIE PILOSSOPH

Ever been in this situation? You're out at a bar or restaurant and you see someone you find attractive, and whom you'd like to meet. The problem is, you don't know what you could possibly say to the person that doesn't sound rehearsed, stupid or just plain old cheesy. You fear that whatever you come up with, the person will think you are desperate or strange. So, you do nothing. He or she ends up leaving, the opportunity is missed and later that day or night, you're kicking yourself for not making a move.

Approaching someone and/or delivering an effective opening line (also known as a pick-up line, let's be honest) isn't easy. But if what you say is effective, your reward can be priceless: the beginning of an exciting, new relationship that may lead to the end of your search for Mr. or Ms. Right.

Even as a dating and relationship columnist, it's difficult for me to offer advice on how to approach someone and what to say. As outgoing friendly and full of words as I am, I turn into a complete mess when put under pressure to start a conversation with a cute guy, trust me.

So, I recruited the help of Barbie Adler, founder and president of the Chicago-based matchmaking company, Selective Search.

I first asked her why men and women have such a difficult time approaching someone they want to meet.

"Everyone has a fear of rejection and they don't want to set themselves up for failure, having their feelings hurt or being embarrassed in front of their friends," said Adler, who started Selective Search 15 years ago.

"Everyone knows all the cheesy pick-up lines and no one wants to use one because that's not who they are. They don't know how to go about it while being their authentic selves."

Here are Adler's eight tips for success when approaching a potential romantic interest:

1. Get your head out of your phone. The only reason to have your phone out during a night out with friends is if you have children who might need to reach you. Otherwise, be engaged in the evening and focus on the environment. In other words, don't be on Facebook and other social media sites, and stop texting all your other friends. It's a turn-off! Put your phone in your purse or pocket and forget about it!

2. Women: smile and be approachable. When a bunch of women go out for a girl's night, they don't realize that a large group can be intimidating and overwhelming to men. So, if you see a guy checking out your group, smile at him. Let him know it's OK to come over and say "hi." Or, what's wrong with YOU walking up to him and starting a conversation? Nothing!

3. Compliments are never out of style. But, they have to be sincere. Also, it's better to compliment shoes or a handbag or a smile versus a dress or the woman's body. It's more respectful.

4. Direct can work well. "Hi, I'm Dave, may I buy you a drink?" Simple and honest. No games.

5. Try situational humor. Let's say you're in a really long line at Starbucks and there's a cute guy in front of you. Say something funny about the line. Be friendly, witty and smart.

6. Play matchmaker for your friend. There's nothing wrong with going back to Junior High School for a few minutes by walking up to a girl and asking, "Are you single? I think you should meet my friend." Even if the person isn't single, he or she will take this as a compliment and appreciate it. If it works, you've just done Barbie's job!

7. Be both confident and sincere. This is a winning combination.

8. Don't take rejection personally. The person might be involved with someone, they might have issues that have nothing to do with you or you just might not be their type. Remember, you are someone out there's type!

In closing, I can't resist sharing these hilarious pick-up lines I found on Instagram.

I would highly suggest NOT using them!

"Is your name Wi-Fi? Cause I'm feeling a connection."

"On a scale from one to 10, you're a nine and I'm the one you need."

"If you were my homework, I'd throw you on a table and do you all night."

"Is your body from McDonald's? Cause I'm lovin' it."

"Did you get a parking ticket? Cause you've got fine written all over you."
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**PARK RIDGE**
- 263 N Northwest Hwy, Park Ridge 60068-1629: Wladyslaw Moryl sold the property to Filip Trograncic & Nevenka Trograncic for $351,500 on January 8.
- 1301 W Touhy Ave 314, Park Ridge 60068-3146: Andrew Rajchel sold the property to Ramsen Youkhana for $150,000 on January 7.
- 1700 Nilenview Ave, Park Ridge 60068-1712: Kovac Trust sold the property to Scott M Irving for $435,000 on January 8.
- 1705 Pavilion Way 505, Park Ridge 60068-1123: Rhodora A Markazi sold the property to Bannis Dalapas & Eva Dalapas for $175,000 on January 7.
- 239 E Edgemont Ln, Park Ridge 60068-2733: Edward C Uliassi sold the property to Timothy J Guzetta & Kenneth Guzetta for $320,000 on January 9.
- 2500 Archbury Ln, Park Ridge 60068-3683: Thomas M Mcalvany sold the property to Steve Kachniewicz & Haidee Kachniewicz for $144,000 on January 7.
- 422 S Vine Ave, Park Ridge 60068-5002: Linda Sherbahn sold the property to Daniel Nyhan & Ann Nyhan for $685,000 on January 8.
- 822 S Aldine Ave, Park Ridge 60068: Patlen Inc sold the property to Steve Boyack & Ken Boyack for $1,050,000 on January 8.
- 9500 N Washington St 504, Niles 60714-1165: Linda Sherbahn sold the property to Daniel Nyhan & Ann Nyhan for $665,000 on January 8.

**SCHOKIE**
- 3845 Birchwood Ave, Skokie 60076-3905: Pureza E Gucel sold the property to Miguel Perez Cambron & Cristina Perez for $249,000 on January 7.
- 4739 Greenwood St, Skokie 60076-1816: Carolyn M C Eisenhart sold the property to Mase Jukic & Jasminka Jukic for $560,000 on January 8.
- 8126 Floral Ave, Skokie 60077: Pierre Aldrich Bunag & Jazmin Jose Bunag for $280,000 on January 8.
- 822 S Aldine Ave, Park Ridge 60068: Patlen Inc sold the property to Steve Kachniewicz & Haidee Kachniewicz for $1,050,000 on January 8.
- 8251 Keeler Ave, Skokie 60076-1743: Farrar Trust sold the property to Tsegie Gezae & Kinriab A Kahsai for $225,000 on January 9.
- 8828 Niles Center Rd 208, Skokie 60077-2294: Peter Spyropoulos sold the property to Devi Prasad Pulla & Padma Dubasi for $200,000 on January 8.
- 8701 Sleeping Bear Rd, Skokie 60076-1917: Daniel Walsh sold the property to Pierre Aldrich Bunag & Jazmin Jose Bunag for $280,000 on January 8.

**NILES**
- 8323 N Oleander Ave, Niles 60714-2551: Steven V Larsen sold the property to Breanna Wietlispach for $265,000 on January 8.
- 8702 N Oketo Ave, Niles 60714-2020: Mirel Hanic sold the property to Lucille M Petrone for $318,000 on January 9.
- 8729 N National Ave, Niles 60714-2138: Nina Vilner sold the property to Genadiy Aizikovich for $183,000 on January 8.
- 9500 N Washington St 504, Niles 60714-1165: Linda Sherbahn sold the property to Daniel Nyhan & Ann Nyhan for $665,000 on January 8.

**LINCOLNWOOD**
- 6430 N Kimball Ave, Lincolnwood 60712-3814: Robert J Hein sold the property to Mostie M Erlich & Tehila S Rand for $305,000 on January 9.
- 6715 N Avers Ave, Lincolnwood 60712-2509: Jack D Frank sold the property to Adil Kolovic & Suada Kolovic for $260,000 on January 8.

**MORTON GROVE**
- 6739 Church St, Morton Grove 60053-2307: Naheed P Ali sold the property to Corrie Guynn for $238,000 on January 8.
- 7316 Arcadia St, Morton Grove 60053-1761: Ada McHugh sold the property to Perlita M Ochoa for $225,000 on January 9.

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Finding the perfect gown

Also inside:
Brides look for something ‘blue’
Popular and modern first dance songs
Brides show short wedding gowns more of the love

Helen Bradley isn't one of those women who fantasized about her wedding as a girl, so when the time came to tie the knot on the 10th tee of a golf course, she wanted to be relaxed, comfortable and economical.

A short gown was just right for her September nuptials, said the 27-year-old bank worker in Madison, Wisconsin.

"I had tried on a few long dresses and none of them felt like me. I'm a very practical person. My mom picked out the short dress from a sale rack and it's rare that I would like anything that my mom picks out," she said with a laugh.

Once the domain of older or remarrying brides, short gowns are enjoying a little more of the love, from luxury brands like Monique Lhuillier, Oscar de la Renta and Marchesa to more affordable offerings at David's Bridal, which has a bustling retail website and about 300 stores around the country.

The short looks aren't just stand-in dresses originally intended for bridesmaids or cocktail parties.

Designers are offering a greater range of shorter styles as more brides break from tradition and personalize their weddings.

"A lot of people are doing more intimate settings, so a shorter dress just feels more appropriate. If they do the big wedding, some change into a shorter dress so they can dance and have a good time," Lhuillier said.

Exactly how short is up to the bride.

There are minis, high-low hemlines (high in the front and lower in the back), knee lengths, tea lengths below the knee and so-called "transformers," where a long train or sheer skirt detaches to show off a short dress underneath.

Designer Zac Posen put his own sister in one of the convertibles — in red — for her 2004 wedding.

"Her huge train came off to become a mini and she took it off to Judy Garland's "Zing! Went the Strings of My Heart," " he said. "It covered the grandeur of the ceremony and the fun of the party."

Long gowns remain the clear majority of the $2.6 billion-a-year bridal gown market, noted Darcy Miller, editorial director for Martha Stewart's bridal site, Martha Stewart Weddings.com.

But "more and more brides seem to be seeking no-fuss, lightweight and easier silhouettes," she said. Some "want a dress they can run on the beach in or travel with to their destination wedding."

At David's Bridal, 26 of the 75 gowns launched for spring 2015 are short, said Anne Acierno, executive vice president for design, merchandising and product development.

"Pozen creates luxury short looks but also includes a few in his Truly Zac Posen collection at David's Bridal."

He said red-carpet trends influence some brides, and these days they're seeing more short, fancy dresses.

"Among high-profile brides to go short recently were fashion "it" girl Olivia Palermo and actress Cheryl Hines, who married Robert F. Kennedy Jr. last August in a strapless, white, tea-length creation by Romona Keveza."

Vera Wang makes short gowns too, in a range of pricepoints that include her White collection for David's Bridal.

"I think you should wear what you feel most beautiful and most comfortable in, and also what is most you, most individual," Wang said.

Shorter gowns are also less expensive — a huge factor for Bradley and none of them felt like me. I'm a 27-year-old bank worker in Miali-

Her September nuptials, said the bride.

"I'm an accessory person, so I knew when I saw the dress it was a blank canvas," Bradley said. "I could go out and pick the perfect necklace and the perfect shoes and you could see them."

But embellished, hand-down,

At David's Bridal, 26 of the 75 gowns launched for spring 2015 are short, a strapless dress with a satin sash from the White by Vera collection.

Romona Keveza cocktail length dress: The short looks aren't just stand-in dresses originally intended for bridesmaids or cocktail parties.

Rivini by Rita Vinieris: The Arielle, and Ostinch feather mini with peek-a-boo crystal beading dress adds a personalize touch to a wedding.

BILION short dress from Anthropologie's bridal line: Designers are offering a greater range of shorter styles as more brides break from tradition.

Words to The Associated Press
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Questions to ask before hiring your wedding photographer

Some moments are simply too important to trust to a camera phone.
Your wedding will be one of the most memorable times of your life and no one can capture it better than a professional photographer. So how do you find the right one? As you begin the interview process, here are some questions to help you determine if you've found the best photographer for your wedding.

1. Does the photographer have a gallery of wedding images you can review?
Reviewing sample work allows you to see the photographer's strengths and weaknesses — don't fool yourself, every photographer has them. You'll also be able to get an idea of their style. Are they formal with an eye for the perfect picture or do they love to capture the hidden moments when no one is looking? Look for images that you can see yourself in.
Think of three words that describe you and share those with your photographer. Every photographer has a style and reviewing their gallery can help you determine if theirs is right for you.

2. What is the photographer's working style?
Some photographers are orderly and operate like wedding planners. Others prefer to sit back and let the events of the wedding unfold. It's important that you find someone who can understand and meet your expectations. Discuss this ahead of time and ask away, so that you understand how well the photographer's working style matches yours.

3. Is the photographer available for an engagement session?
An engagement session does more than provide you with priceless images together before you get married. It's also your first opportunity to work with your photographer and develop a relationship that will allow you to be completely at ease on your big day. Use this session to confirm if the photographer is indeed the right person to capture your wedding.

4. Is your photographer full-time or a weekend freelancer?
According to Peter Furla, of Furla Studios, 1440 Waukegan Road, Glenview, a full-time photographer lives and breathes photography which is their only means of income. A full time photographer will fully concentrate on you and your wedding. You can schedule an appointment to meet at their studio and not worry about meeting someone at a coffee-shop to view samples. A freelancer has a 9-5 job and is trying to be a photographer on the weekends. Most don't have the proper insurance, back-up equipment or even a back-up photographer in case of an emergency.

5. Will the photographer create a detailed shot list?
This list will ensure no important photo is missed during the commotion and excitement of the big day. You should be able to create that list together, add to the list leading up to the day and have a copy of that list the day of. Take an honest look at what images really matter and fill your photographer in on situations he or she might need to be aware of in order to prevent awkward moments, and to ensure that he or she can get the shots that matter most.

6. What kind of lighting will be used?
Whether you have an indoor or outdoor wedding, you'll want to make sure your photographer has professional grade lighting equipment to deliver the images your wedding deserves.

7. Does the photographer have backup equipment?
You've prepared contingency plans for every other aspect of your wedding; your photographer should as well. A true professional photographer won't miss your perfect shot because of a technology issue. He or she will always bring one or two backup cameras, lenses, flashes, additional lighting equipment, extra memory cards, and batteries.

8. Does the photographer have liability insurance?
Accidents happen at weddings and if one of your guests trips over your photographer's light stand, it's good to know you both are protected. Your reception venue may even ask the photographer to submit a certificate of liability ahead of time.
Weddings are special days for couples tying the knot. But even the most carefully planned wedding requires some patience and perseverance.

For brides-to-be, finding the right gown is one element of wedding planning that calls for patience and perseverance. Trial and error is often part of the process as women look for the perfect wedding gown. Brides-to-be who have a specific style in mind may find that their dream gown doesn't always live up to expectations, while another style of dress they never imagined wearing turns out to be a stunner.

Another challenge many women face when gown shopping is that many wedding gowns are styled and geared toward women with slender figures, making the process of selecting a gown for a curvier bride a bit more difficult. But any bride, regardless of size or figure, can find the ideal dress, especially when she employs the following tips.

- **Sample sizes fit a select few.** Bridal shops carry a range of dresses but may only stock one or two sample dresses. For economy, these samples are a median size that are intended to fit as many shoppers as possible. Such gowns are usually in the neighborhood of a size 10. Most women, whether petite or plus-size, will not fit into the sample, so do not get discouraged.

- **Visit large retail chains.** Popular wedding dress chains, such as David's Bridal, may have a wider selection of sample dresses in larger sizes. Department stores as well as designers who specialize in plus-size gowns also make good resources.

- **Call bridal stores in advance to schedule your visits.** Your time is precious, so call bridal shops prior to visiting and explain to them your size and what you are looking for in a gown. This will ensure you aren't wasting your time driving to stores that can't provide what you want.

- **Select the right fabrics.** Heavier fabrics like taffeta, silk dupion and satin may conceal better than others and can be ruched to camouflage areas you want to minimize.

- **Use salespeople as a resource.** The right salesperson can make wedding shopping much easier and far more pleasant. Don't rest until you find someone who is excited to work with you and will give you his or her honest opinion and recommendations.

- **Dresses can be altered.** Every bride needs some alterations made to her dress to achieve the perfect fit. Plus-sized brides may need a few extras. A dress is unlikely to meet all of your needs right off the rack, so find a good seamstress who can alter your dress to meet your needs. Sleeves can be put on, dresses can be shortened, support can be added, and many customizations can be done to a gown post-production.

- **Find a flattering shape.** Choose a gown with a full-skirt or an A-line skirt with an empire or a dropped-waist seam that will elongate your midriff and flow away from your hips. Curvier brides typically avoid strapless gowns, as such dresses have a tendency to make a woman's shoulders and arms look wider.

- **Dont get stuck on size.** Sizes vary widely depending on the manufacturer. Wedding gowns tend to be labeled with couture sizes, which are much smaller than street sizes. A good salesperson should have a reasonable conversion chart or will choose sizes based on your measurements alone. Ignore the size on the tag and go for the gown that fits.

- **Never settle for less.** Whether it's a gown that's not flattering or a salesperson who is rude or chastises you for not being the ideal size, do not settle for anything less than a great gown and attentive service. Bridal stores compete for business, so if a given shop does not meet your expectations, don't hesitate to work with a rival store.
Popular and modern first dance songs

A couple’s first dance as man and wife is a cherished wedding tradition. While the first dance can help set a positive tone for the reception, it also can negatively impact the festivities if a poor song is chosen.

Couples may feel pressure to choose the perfect song. Yes, this is a song that the couple has selected to represent their love for each other, but it also should be one that will speak to the masses and can be thoroughly enjoyed by all.

Couples want to avoid a song that does not seem to fit with the festivities. For those couples who need a little musical inspiration, turn to many of the modern hits you’re bound to hear on the radio which may help you to shine in that first dance.

- "A Thousand Years" by Christina Perri: "Twihard" fans enjoyed this romantic song during the pivotal wedding scene between Bella Swan and Edward Cullen in the popular "Twilight" movie "Breaking Dawn." Couples looking to recreate the magic of these star-crossed lovers can embrace Perri’s delicate tone and tender lyrics.
- "All of Me" by John Legend: It's been hard to escape this popular love song by R&B artist John Legend. An ode Legend wrote to his wife, this song has quickly become a popular choice for a couple's first dance.
- "I Choose You" by Sara Bareilles: This peppy song by singer/songwriter Sara Bareilles is a good choice for couples who prefer being nontraditional. It’s faster paced and less sentimental than many other wedding songs.
- "Better Together" by Jack Johnson: Johnson is known primarily for his soft rock and acoustic guitar work blended with catchy lyrics. Also an accomplished surfer, Johnson’s work is enjoyed by many but may be especially prized by couples who want their reception to be a laid back affair full of fun and whimsy.
- "I Won’t Give Up" by Jason Mraz: Another acoustic ditty, this song has a country influence and talks about not giving up and staying in a relationship for the long haul.
- "I Don’t Dance" by Lee Brice: Speaking of country influences, couples who want a little twang in their first dances can choose Brice's breakthrough hit. Romantic lyrics about spinning his partner around in circles despite not liking to dance illustrates what one partner will do for the other when in love.

Metro Creative Connections
Brides look for ‘something blue’ — and — more in jewelry

As weddings become more and more personalized to the bride’s own tastes, blue and other colors have been making their way into the bridal picture, both in decor and in jewelry.

Sapphire blue stones are now popular, with stones set in silver and gold tone metal. Topaz stones set in gold have become popular, and rose gold metal is another color option that brides have gravitated to. These trends also influence jewelry for bridesmaids and every member of the bridal party.

While color is making news in bridal circles, pearls will always play a lead role in the world of bridal jewelry. Classic styles like single and double row chokers, often mixed with crystal, are truly classic and always appropriate for brides. But there are now many modern twists, both in design and in ways brides choose to wear pearls.

Modern brides often personalize their pearls by wearing bolder, longer styles, by mixing and layering different millimeters and by twisting, tying or knotting them. The variations are endless with a 72” white pearl rope — a staple for any bride — as well as any post-wedding wardrobe.

Crystal styles — teardrop earrings and necklaces, delicate T necklaces, chokers and bracelets in floral designs — are also beautiful and popular choices among brides. They, too, can be layered, mixed and matched with pearls.

The bottom line is that brides are more than ever expressing their personal style in every aspect of their weddings. Jewelry selection is a wonderful way to do this because it is a focal point that frames the face and will live forever in glorious photos of the memorable day.

Metro Creative Connections
Wedding invitation and postage tips

Whether a couple is planning a lavish wedding or a more low key affair, the wedding invitations are an essential part of keeping guests informed about the big day.

While couples can now share details of their wedding through email or even digital invitations, many still prefer to go the traditional route and send paper invitations. In addition to the cost of the invitations themselves, couples need to factor postage into their wedding budgets. It may not seem like much, but the cost of postage can add up quickly. Here are a few postage pointers for couples about to tie the knot.

Choose envelopes wisely. The size of your envelopes contributes to the cost of the postage necessary to mail your invitations. Postal services have specific size and shape parameters that govern postage. Envelopes that are oddly shaped or fall outside of these strict measurements are usually susceptible to additional postage charges. That’s because the envelope cannot run through standard sorting machinery and must be hand-processed.

Consider the weight. Mailings that exceed one ounce will require additional postage, even if they are in standard envelopes. Invitations, with their various components and thick card stock, typically weigh more than one ounce. Never purchase postage in advance, as you will not know what the completed invitation costs prior to mailing. Always weigh the invitation with all inserts included to get an accurate estimate of postage. Then purchase stamps accordingly.

Get to know your local postal employee. Many postal employees, especially those who work at the smaller branches, grow accustomed to seeing the same customers over and over. They can be very helpful and good resources when it comes to saving money on postage. Strike up a conversation with the person behind the counter and ask advice on the best way to mail invitations and ensure they arrive looking beautiful. Choose an off-peak time so the postal employee can give you his or her full attention and will not feel rushed by a line forming behind you. The employee may suggest hand-canceling envelopes, which means the invitation will be processed by hand rather than run through machinery to avoid damage.

Stamp the return envelope. Invitations typically include response cards that guests will send back to confirm if they will be attending the festivities. To facilitate the RSVP process, stamp the response card.

Prep invitations six to eight weeks in advance. Invitations should be mailed nearly two months prior to the wedding. This allows guests to plan and respond accordingly.

Double-check envelopes before sending. Ensure that postage is sticking well and that envelopes are well-sealed. In addition, verify that you have the most current addresses for recipients. If invitations get returned to sender, they can cost you even more time and money to resolve any issues.

Consider custom postage. The post office should carry several attractive options for wedding invitation stamps. However, you also may be able to go online and purchase custom postage that features a graphic or an uploaded image to make the invitations even more special.

Do a test run. You may want to send a complete invitation to yourself just to see how it arrives in the mail. This way you can check the level of damage and have an opportunity to make any changes, such as adding a piece of vellum to prevent ink from smudging or to place bows or adornments in another area.

Give your mail carrier a heads-up. Let your assigned mail carrier know that response cards will be on the way. They tend to be small and can get lost in among other letters and mail. A small token of gratitude, such as a gift card, for your mail carrier may ensure all of your response cards arrive.

A wedding just isn’t the same without the invitations. Make sure friends and family are well informed about the wedding by sending out invitations in advance and ensuring the proper postage will get those invites where they need to go.
How to build a wedding registry

Many once-popular wedding traditions have fallen by the wayside. But one wedding tradition that has withstood the test of time is the wedding registry. Couples about to tie the knot still build a wedding registry so their guests know what to buy them as wedding gifts. This saves guests the trouble of agonizing over what to buy the couple getting hitched and also ensures that couples won’t receive two or more of the same item.

Building a registry can be fun, as couples can act like kids in a candy store and add items they might otherwise not be able to afford. But there is a method to building a registry that can ensure the process of giving and receiving gifts is comfortable and convenient for everyone involved.

1. Choose a national chain. Many stores will allow couples to establish a registry, but it behooves couples to choose a national chain or chains for their registry. A local boutique store might sell several items you would love to have, but that store may only be accessible to guests who live nearby, and such stores may be more expensive than larger national chains that can afford to charge less for similar products. Choosing a national chain ensures all of your guests will be able to access and purchase a gift from your registry, and make those purchases without breaking the bank.

2. Choose a store with an online presence. When choosing a store for your registry, it also helps to choose a store with an online presence that’s user-friendly. Ideally, pick an online retailer you have already had positive experiences with. This not only will make it easier for your guests, but also for you should you decide to return items down the road.

3. Choose a more than one store. You also want to choose more than one store when building a registry. Some guests will prefer to shop in-store rather than online, so you want to give them some options so they don’t have to drive far and wide to find the lone brick and mortar store for your registry.

4. Visit the stores and do your homework. Though some stores allow you to develop a registry entirely online, it still helps for couples to visit the store together and build their registries in the more traditional way. Visiting a store as opposed to browsing the store website allows you to touch and feel products, which can give you a more accurate idea of their quality. In addition to seeing the products in person, read online reviews of products before putting them on your registry so you can ensure you’re getting quality items.

5. Choose items that vary in price. Many couples are sheepish about putting expensive items on their registries. That’s not surprising, as the cost of attending a wedding, especially one that features lots of out-of-town guests, can be substantial. But some guests, such as the bride and groom’s parents and siblings, may want to give a more high-end gift, so don’t be afraid to include items in a range of prices, from the inexpensive to the more costly, on your registry.

6. Don’t abandon the registry after your big day. You won’t end up getting everything you include on your registry, but that doesn’t mean you should just forget about those items that never made their way into your home. Many retailers offer couples significant discounts on items from their registries that were never purchased, and those discounts may extend for as long as a year after the big day. Revisit your registry after the wedding to see if you can find great deals on those items you never received, and continue to do so until the registry expires.

Metro Creative Connections

Time to register: Building a registry can be a fun activity for couples about to tie the knot.
When Angelina Jolie wed Brad Pitt in one of the most publicized nuptials of the 21st century, she wore a jaw-dropping silk and satin gown designed by Donatella Versace. Embroidered on her floor-length veil were colorful drawings by the couple's six children. One even read “Buttock Fatock.”

Elders sons Maddox and Pax walked Jolie down the aisle, daughters Zahara and Vivienne tossed flower petals, and daughter Shiloh and son Knox were ring-bearers. Pax baked the wedding cake.

It all sounds very Hollywood. But it’s not just Brangelina.

Many brides and grooms have children from previous relationships, and are going beyond the traditional to find ways to incorporate them into their weddings.

Yes, the kids add cuteness. But it’s often more about blending families.

“The need to create a family bond early is vital to stepparents’ success,” says Stacey James Wheeler, a California-based family dynamics researcher and author, whose wife had two daughters when they married.

Incorporated “favorite things”, have stations instead of a traditional dessert table. Feature things like Coca-Cola, Skittles, even Heinz ketchup packets.

Bobinet and her fiancé, Josh Leichter, designed wedding bands with a diamond for each of their four children.

“Our kids will be our only bridesmaids and groomsmen, setting them apart as special attendants to the wedding,” Bobinet says. “We’re inviting them to offer words of support for our partnership, so it gives them a voice and a choice in the matter.”

Instead of having a traditional procedural, event planner Sandy Sloane and her husband, Bob Coworka, danced down the aisle with their four children to the song “Love Is Strange.”

All four kids stood with them under the Jewish chuppah, or canopy, during their ceremony in Sunrise, Florida, and at the reception sang a song written by two of them.

“I gave my daughter and two bonus daughters’ necklaces that said ‘daughter,’ and my son a commemorative keepsake box,” Sloane says.

Make a grand entrance. A couple entered a reception with sparklers burning overhead. Their 4-year-old daughter loves them, and wanted to make her a priority in their nuptials, wedding planner Amanda Morris says.

while others walk their mother down the aisle.

Children also can help light a “unity candle” or participate in what’s become known as a “sand ceremony,” in which the bride, groom and children pour different-colored sand into a container to symbolize a new union.

San Francisco physician Kyra Bobinet and her fiancé, Josh Leichter, designed wedding bands with a diamond for each of their four children.

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TRANSPORTATION TIPS:

Getting to and from your wedding

Transportation can be easily overlooked when couples plan their weddings. Couples may recognize they may have to hire a car or limousine to get them to their ceremonies and then their receptions, but what happens when the limousine calls it a night?

While some couples immediately depart for their honeymoons after saying good-bye to their wedding guests, many build a day in between the wedding and honeymoon, giving them a chance to rest, take stock of their wedding gifts and finish packing. That leaves the question of how a couple will return home from the reception or get to the airport.

The best man may offer to drive the bride and groom where they need to go. But if the best man is from out of town, he may not have a chariot awaiting to escort the newly christened husband and wife to the airport.

As a result, all members of the wedding party should discuss their post-wedding travel plans in advance. Any person who will be arriving in a hired car will need to make arrangements to have their own vehicle available at the end of the wedding or be able to call a taxi or car service to get a safe ride home. Some wedding party members may decide to park a car at the reception site or a hotel the day prior to the wedding so they will have a return ride. It’s also a good idea to ask friends or family members who are not in the bridal party for a ride home.

Safety is an utmost concern after the wedding. Even if wedding party members have a car available, no one should drive when intoxicated. Couples may want to include the phone number of a local taxi service in their hotel gift bags just to be safe.

Metro Creative Connections

Wedding travel plans: Members of the wedding party should discuss their post-wedding travel plans in advance.  

When to cut the cake?

The timing of when a couple cuts the wedding cake can have a specific meaning. Long ago, the cake was usually cut at the very end of the reception and would signal to the guests that it was the end of the festivities.

Today, cutting the cake is an unspoken signal that represents that the formal wedding is nearing a close. Photographers typically go home after the cake-cutting, so a mid-reception cutting can save couples a substantial amount of money.

Metro Creative Connections

Time for cake. Cutting the wedding cake is an unspoken signal that represents that the formal wedding is nearing a close.  

The wedding showcase is Saturday, March 1 from 12:30pm to 3:30pm.  

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join us for an afternoon of elegant cuisine, premiere vendors, expert advice, raffles and more.

Wedding Showcase

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10 THINGS
YOU NEVER KNEW ABOUT CAMP

Each year, millions of children, youth and adults head to the hills, lakes, valleys and parks to participate in the time-honored tradition of camp. While most people easily conjure up images of campfires and canoes, the experience is much more. Here are 10 of the things you may not have known about camp.

10. Camp is worth its weight in gold. Research shows that first-hand experience with nature reduces stress in children and helps them better handle stress in the future. In addition to teaching campers how to be good stewards of the environment, camps teach children how to enjoy the world and take a minute to breathe deep and feel the nature, which ultimately teaches them how to de-stress the natural way.

7. Mommies and daddies do it, too. Family camp experiences — and camps for single adults, senior adults and any adult that wants to enjoy camp — are available. Adults benefit from the same sense of community, authentic relationships and self-discovery that children do.

6. Try this on for size. Camp is a great place to try new activities and hobbies. Afraid of rock walls? According to ACA research, 74 percent of campers reported that they tried new activities at camp that they were afraid to do at first. Those activities often leave lasting impressions. In the same survey, 83 percent of campers reported that they learned new activities while at camp.

SEE CAMP, PAGE 6
1. Camp builds leaders for the 21st century and beyond. Independence, resiliency, teamwork, problem-solving skills and the ability to relate to others; these are the skills tomorrow's leaders will need, and the skills camp has been adept at building for 150 years.

"Tomorrow's leaders will not be those who can type or text with lightning speed, they will be those who can have a face-to-face conversation and articulate their thoughts, ideas, and values," Smith said. "Tomorrow's leaders will be able to relate globally and find common ground with people who are vastly different from themselves: people from different backgrounds and cultures. Tomorrow's leaders will be made and educated by experiences like camp."

For information on preparing your child for camp, visit atcampparents.org. Follow ACA on Facebook and Twitter for helpful hints and camp information.

"Courtesy of the American Camp Association"
Camp instills hope, vigor into young adults with cancer

BY KIMBERLY ELSHAM
For Sun Times Media

Finding a niche in life can be tough for many young adults. Add in a bout with cancer, and it can get more complicated.

Jillian Jablonski was diagnosed with breast cancer on Christmas Day in 2009. As part of her healing process, she attended a breast cancer survivors group in her hometown of Lasle, Ill., but she felt a little out of place.

"It's women in their 70s who have already to be able to live a full life," she said. "They've had families and careers. It's really hard for me to think that I might not have that, that it might not be a reality for me. I think they see it and feel sorry for me because of that, which makes it even worse."

Lucky for Jablonski, she found First Descents, a Denver-based non-profit for young adults dealing with cancer, and connected with other young people fighting the same fight.

Since 2001, First Descents has hosted free, weeklong adventure camps nationwide for cancer fighters and survivors. Its program comprises three levels of adventure, starting with FD1 for beginners, FD2 for those on their second time out and FDX for the experienced camper looking for a big personal and physical challenge. Activities range from kayaking and rafting to mountain climbing, hiking and even surfing. The program has arranged close to 90 trips this year.

Rebekah Koenigbaumer, First Descents director of marketing, said that when the public hears about young cancer survivors, they tend to think of children.

"There are 10,000 kids are diagnosed each year in the United States," she said. "It's not only a large population, but an underserved population."

Brad Ludder, First Descents founder, watched his aunt fight breast cancer when she was 38 years old when he was 12, according to his bio on the organization's website. A professional kayaker even at that young age, he started volunteering at local pediatric cancer center by teaching the kids how to kayak. At 18, he created First Descents and targeted it to young adults, ages 18 to 39.

A "first descent" is code for a kayaker's first time out on the rapids, and the term carries meaning both in the extreme sports and also in the cancer-fighting aspect. For many who attend "camp" — as First Descents attendees refer to it — it's not only their first time trying an extreme sport, but also their debut into a new level of self-discovery.

Jablonski's first FD trip was mountain climbing in Moab, Utah, in April 2011. She was just weeks out of chemo at the time and said she loved the group dynamic of everyone cheering her on as she ascended. She attended her second climbing trip in May 2012 in California's Joshua Tree National Park and that time aimed for something tougher.

"I sought out the climbs that I knew would scare me and take me out of my comfort zone," she said. "I would look up and see the top, and remind myself to look back down and take it one step at a time. It has allowed me to do it in regular life as well."

For more information, visit www.firstdescents.org.

Whitewater kayaking: not your average cancer therapy

BY JENNIFER WILLIAMS
Special Columnist

After stepping off the plane and making my way through Portland's small airport towards the baggage claim, I had a feeling of nervousness. I had been looking forward to this trip for months, although I had no idea what or who was waiting for me once I reached my destination. Shortly after arriving at the quiet baggage claim area, I found myself face-to-face with two friendly program directors and a girl from Kansas who I learned went by the name Doomsday.

These were just a few of the many people I was to spend a week of whitewater kayaking with, thanks to First Descents, an organization that offers free week-long adventure therapy trips to young adults with cancer. Participation in their programs also means the adoption of a nickname - or a superhero alter ego. It's for privacy and helps show personality, but mostly, it's for fun. I introduced myself as Penci, a nickname chosen for of my deep love for penguins and their ability to sustain life under such harsh conditions.

It had been three-and-a-half years since I underwent brain surgery to remove most of a grade II oligodendroglioma, a brain tumor that interrupted my young adulthood at the age of 25. Since then, I've been able to camouflage my brain cancer and live a normal life with occasional doctor visits and tests.

When First Descents informed me of my acceptance to one of their camps, I felt like a kid who just found out she won a prize on a game show. I had never been whitewater kayaking, so I jumped at the chance to experience it in such a beautiful environment.

Doomsday and I were the first to arrive at our lodge in Hood River, Ore., where our volunteers — our chef, Mia Rut; our camp moms, Gage-Bear and Ultima; and our photographer, Elvis — eagerly awaited our arrival. Excitement built as the other participants arrived. After meeting our kayaking instructors that night, I started to wonder who was more excited: the participants or those hosting.

My first time down the Klickitat River in a kayak — or my first descent, as kayakers call it — was terrifying. I initially thought to myself, "What did I just get myself into? There's no way I can survive a week of this!" Faced with the challenge of class II rapids, I struggled against my own frustration from being flippin multipled times. Constant encouragement from the instructors and stories of their first rides gave me hope.

The river was unforgiving; it did not care that we had cancer nor about our age and skill level. It came at us with the same force as any other, which seemed to parallel real life. Eventually I started to embrace my surroundings, took in the beautiful scenery, listened to the river and more importantly, felt the current. When a wave came at me, I could feel when the water wanted to pull me under and I used my weight, balance and paddle to correct my kayak. "Wow, Pengi! You're doing great," said one of the program directors, Spoonberg, on our last day of kayaking.

I wasn't surprised that I missed my newly formed family the moment I returned home. However, after the first terrifying moment on the river, I never suspected that I would crave those intense rapids again. That week awakened a new strength in me, and I hope that other young adults get to gain that experience.

Later in the summer, I was given an opportunity to join in on a surfing camp in California, where I met more amazing people that I never want to forget. Now that the summer is over, I face a new challenge. As you read this, I am recovering from my second brain surgery that was commissioned because of new activity from my tumor. I have no fear because of new strengths given to me from these two amazing trips and all the people cheering me on from the sidelines. I'll be back up and running for another trip next summer.

We live in an era where a cancer diagnosis doesn't mean the end; it's just a new look on life and one giant rapid to paddle through.
PARTIES
WOOD FAMILY FOUNDATION’S WOODY’S WINTER WARM-UP
VERTIGO SKY LOUNGE’S ARCTIC WHITE NIGHTS

THE BILLIONAIRE BEHIND VIRGIN GROUP DEBUTS HIS HOTEL BRAND IN CHICAGO

Jennifer Hudson will.i.am & MORE

PLUS
WE’RE TALKING ABOUT ... GETAWAYS

Yes, Sir! RICHARD BRANSON
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HERE'S A REASON TO COME OUT OF HIBERNATION: THROUGH FEBRUARY, THE RIVER NORTH NIGHTCLUB IS OFFERING A SEASON PASS TO ITS TOP DJ SHOWS, LIKE PIERCE FULTON (JAN. 29), STAFFORD BROTHERS (FEB. 6) AND MATOMA (FEB. 18). $100, 59 W. HUBBARD; STUDIOPARISNIGHTCLUB.COM
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ONE NIGHT OF QUEEN
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SAT. MAR. 14 AT 8PM

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SAT. MAY 9 AT 1PM & 4PM

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TICKETS ON SALE NOW! For tickets go to RosemontTheatre.com or visit the box office.

THE ULTIMATE ELVIS TRIBUTE ARTIST EVENT
WHAT HAPPENS IN VEGAS...
ALL STARTED WITH THE RAT PACK!

BY THOMAS CONNORS

THIS WEEK

BELIEVE IN THE POSSIBLE
Eat Travel Rock's Kelly Rizzo and Good Day Chicago's Jake Hamilton emcee the fundraiser benefiting Charity4LIFE, which works internationally to rehabilitate street children. Enjoy passed appetizers from Chef de Cuisine Kyle Petersen and see local artists paint images of children who've benefited from the program.
Time: 6 p.m.
Place: Fulton Market Kitchen, 311 N. Sangamon
Cost: $35. For tickets, visit Charity4life.ticketfly.com/event.

NEXT WEEK

BIG GAME BIG BUCKETS
State and Lake gets into the Super Bowl spirit with a special offering. Patrons can pair five cans of beer with the spot's signature fried chicken, an organic bird that's brined overnight, twice battered and fried to order.

SAT. MAR. 14 AT 8PM
SAT. MAY 9 AT 1PM & 4PM

ONE NIGHT OF QUEEN
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**Time:** All day  
**Place:** State & Lake  
Chicago Tavern, 201 N. State  
**Cost:** $16 craft can buckets, $20 fried chicken and biscuit buckets. For reservations, call (312) 239-9502.

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**FEBRUARY 1**  
**SUPER CHILI BOWL II**  
Howells & Hood serves up a chili flight created by guest chefs from spots like Oak + Char and Tanta, plus its own executive chef, Brett Neubauer. The chefs' identities are concealed while diners vote for their favorites.  
**Time:** 3 p.m.-end of game  
**Place:** Howells & Hood, 435 N. Michigan  
**Cost:** $16. For reservations, call (312) 262-5310 or visit Opentable.com.

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**FEBRUARY 7**  
**SNOWBALL**  
The Junior Council’s 27th annual event - benefiting pediatric and adolescent HIV/AIDS programs at Lurie Children’s Hospital of Chicago - features live music, a silent auction and bites from Mon Ami Gabi, ZED451, Mercadito Fish and Siena Tavern.  
**Time:** 8 p.m.  
**Place:** Union Station, 500 W. Jackson  
**Cost:** $145. For tickets, visit Juniorcouncil.org/snowball.

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**FEBRUARY 31**  
**Giordano Dance Chicago**  
The 52-year-old troupe rolls into the Auditorium Theatre for a wide-ranging evening of work, including the world premiere of “Shirt Off My Back” from choreographer Ray Mercer, winner of Joffrey Ballet’s Choreographers of Color Award. Also on the program: an all-new version of the Pilsen-themed “Moving Sidewalks” by Assistant Artistic Director Autumn Eckman; the sultry “Feelin’ Good Sweet” from Ray Leeper (“America’s Got Talent”); and Roni Koresh’s “EXIT4.”  
**Time:** 7:30 p.m.  
**Place:** Auditorium Theatre, 50 E. Congress  
**Cost:** $27-$67. For tickets, call (800) 982-2787 or visit Auditoriumtheatre.org.

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**February 7**  
**THE NOTE-WORTHY NIGHT**  
The Second City and the Chicago Youth Symphony Orchestras come together to support the orchestras' training and education programs. Emceed by T.J. Shanoff, the event honors Northern Trust and Jim and Ginger Meyer for their support of the CYSO.  
**Time:** 6 p.m.  
**Place:** Four Seasons Hotel Chicago, 120 E. Delaware  
**Cost:** $375 general admission, $425 VIP. For tickets, call (312) 939-2207 or visit Bidpal.net/cyso.
VERTIGO SKY LOUNGE’S ARCTIC WHITE NIGHTS

The scene: On Jan. 16, Vertigo Sky Lounge at the Dana Hotel & Spa (2 W. Erie) transformed into a winter wonderland, complete with a 15-foot ice bar, frozen furniture, a shot luge and s’mores roasting over a crystallized fire pit.

The invite list: At the Splash-sponsored event, servers clad in fur hats and boots offered hors d’oeuvres and winter cocktails from Svedka Vodka — including the White Lady and a white chocolate martini — to more than 500 partygoers, who snuggled up in the secluded, igloo-like Bartender’s Booth.

— Chiara Milouifs

PHOTOS BY RAMZI DREESSEN-Splash

As James Brown crooned in '66, “This is a man’s world.” Chicago trendsetters are embracing the idea in the best way — with chic suits. Ditch boardroom blandness for a perfectly tailored blazer or an eye-catching color — we love the teal and red suits in Acne Studios’ spring collection. Amp up the sex appeal with a low-cut blouse (Topshop is our go-to for flirty bralets), and don’t be afraid to go bold — after all, you’re the one wearing the pants.
WOOD FAMILY FOUNDATION'S
WOODY'S WINTER WARM-UP

The scene: Former Cubs pitcher Kerry Wood and his wife Sarah opened the 2015 Cubs Convention weekend with their annual Woody's Winter Warm-Up fundraiser at Harry Caray's 7th Inning Stretch and Chicago Sports Museum (835 N. Michigan) Jan. 16.

The invite list: Emceed by WTMX radio personalities Eric Ferguson and Kathy Hart, the bash featured musical entertainment by the Plain White T's and DJ Matt Roan. Later, athletes, local celebrities and media mavens—including Cubs' President of Baseball Operations Theo Epstein, Chicago Fire Soccer Club's Chris Ritter and WGN Radio's Jane Monzures—served as bartenders, mixing drinks in competition for tips and challenging the more than 500 guests in the museum's interactive games.

The bottom line: A live auction—featuring an Ultimate Cubs Experience package for $12,500—raffle and silent auction helped raise more than $100,000 for “Pitch In,” an after-school mentoring program that supports students at Lawndale Community Academy. —Chiara Miloulis

Splash was the media sponsor of this event.
INTERNET ESSENTIALS FROM COMCAST'S GET SCHOOLED, GET CONNECTED CELEBRATION

The scene: Comcast, Chicago Public Schools, Chicago City of Learning and other community organizations joined A-list athletes and entertainers in honoring 3,000 Chicago public high school students for their success in the first Get Schooled, Get Connected Challenge at Malcolm X College.

The invite list: It was a star-studded event as celebs like actress/singer/songwriter Christina Milian, MTV's Sway Calloway, musician Chance the Rapper and Chicago Bears safety Ryan Mundy celebrated the students' achievements.

The bottom line: Internet Essentials presented a $100,000 check to enhance computer labs, increase Internet and Wi-Fi access and support digital literacy training in a dozen high schools and community-based organizations.

—Chiara Milionis

LUXURY ACCESSORIES VALENTINE AUCTION

LIVE & ONLINE

PREVIEW:
February 4 - 7 | 10 am - 5 pm
February 8 | 12 pm - 5 pm
Heritage Auctions | 445 Park Ave.

AUCTION:
February 9 | 1 pm
Waldorf Astoria | 301 Park Ave.
Metropolitan Suite, 18th Floor

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Hermes 35cm Shiny Amethyst Porosus Crocodile Birkin Bag with Gold Hardware
Estimate: $75,000 - $90,000
FEAR NO ART PRESENTS
THE DINNER PARTY

The scene: The Dinner Party kicked off its fourth year at City Winery (1200 W. Randolph) Jan. 12 with a pre-meal wine tasting curated by sommelier Robert Houde. Later, Chef Kevin Hickey of The Duck Inn and Bottlefork Bar & Kitchen prepared a seated dinner of dishes like oyster stew with homemade crackers and braised tallgrass beef brisket.

The invite list: Host Elysabeth Alfano welcomed 170 guests to the staged discussion, where a panel of notables — news icon Bill Kurtis, "Saturday Night Live's" Julia Sweeney and musician Nicholas Barron — discussed hot topics like their career paths and the role luck played in them, and what constitutes staying power.

The bottom line: The evening raised nearly $2,000 for The Trotter Project, which offers hands-on experience to culinary students hoping to follow in the footsteps of renowned late chef Charlie Trotter. -Chiara Milouli

Splash was the media sponsor of this event.
Will.i.am has always been a man of vision. As frontman for The Black Eyed Peas, his 2003 song "Hey Mama" was featured in the first campaign for the iPod; in 2012 his solo song "Reach for the Stars" became the first planet-to-planet music transmission when it was broadcast to Earth from the Mars rover; and two years ago, the singer/producer founded his own tech company, i.am+; dedicated to merging fashion and technology. He even dubbed the company's headquarters—a large LA compound housing engineers, coders, 3-D printers, a sound/video stage and a fashion studio—"The Future." (To illustrate: When someone asks will.i.am where he is, he responds, "I'm in the future. [Or] when we go to the club and it's time to leave, I'm like, Yo, let's J. Fox. People are like, 'What's that?' and I'm like, I'm going back to the future.")

Now the forward-thinking entrepreneur is unveiling the fruits of his digital labor: The i.amPULS, a computer on your wrist that we designed from a fashion first perspective," he says. The device, which lets wearers make and receive calls, send texts and tweets, play music and even update Facebook and Instagram, is modeled after a punk-rock cuff and Chanel bracelet, but is every bit as high-tech as a phone — it even has a voice-activated personal assistant named Aneeda. "When I tell folks that I'm doing this, I get chuckles and laughs and giggles," will.i.am says. "But when they use the device, they understand. Because unlikely people do amazing things when they apply themselves."

Will.i.am has always been the unlikely hero: He grew up in what he describes as the ghetto of LA and was raised by a single mother. In 1995, he founded The Black Eyed Peas. But his passions changed when the band met with Apple at the company's California headquarters to discuss the campaign for the iPod. "From that point, I was hooked, I was truly inspired," he says. "All I wanted to do was technology."

Things have come full circle for the techy crooner: He's a founding shareholder of Beats Electronics, which manufactures headphones and speakers and was recently purchased by Apple for more than $3 billion. But according to will.i.am, the ties between tech and tunes are stronger than people think. "Our music industry is hard-ware. RCA was the first Apple," he says, referencing the fact that the company's original product, the gramophone, is now the symbol of musical achievement. "When you get up [on the Grammy stage] and say, 'I'd like to thank my mom, thank God,' you're really holding a piece of old technology that's painted gold. That's their old product."

Will.i.am knows a thing or two about Grammys: He's won six with The Black Eyed Peas and one on his own. But he doesn't rest on his laurels; he's already eyeing the next big thing. "The next musical trend is gonna start in nightlife," he predicts. "I think people are tired of pre-baked music, of microwave-food music. All the peaks are pre-made; you've heard the song a trillion times on the Internet or on the radio. I think people are going to get thirsty for seeing digitally live music. You're still gonna have electronic instruments, but people are going to be playing it and composing it at the club."

Improvised EDM (Electronic Dance Music) might seem like a far-fetched idea, but very little is out of reach for will.i.am, who's already testing it out himself: "I've been known to dabble," he says, then laughs. "Call me will.i.dabble."
T he very first words out of Richard Branson's mouth are, "Hi, very sorry to keep you waiting." We were scheduled to talk at 8 a.m. It's 8:02, and he's calling from his private island in the British Virgin Islands (he wanted to chat early, before kite surfing). Apparently, when you're leading nearly 50,000 employees in more than 100 companies in 12 different business sectors, it's important to stick to schedule.

Then again, Branson, 64, is willing to be a little late if it's for a good reason. In 2010, he created Virgin Hotels with the goal of creating a new type of hotel and launching it within 18 months. But the Surrey, England native's compulsion for perfection outweighed his punctuality: The brand's premiere hotel in 2013 N. Wabash didn't officially open its doors until Jan. 15 — but its 250 rooms and The Commons Club restaurant are every bit as sleek as Branson promised. Two restaurants, Two Zero Three and Miss Ricky's, will open in March, and a spa and rooftop lounge will follow in April.

"The Virgin brand is a sexy brand and a fun brand," Branson says. "So if we use the Virgin brand, it's got to be different from anything that's gone before it." When it comes to the hospitality industry, that's a tall order. Branson focused his efforts on making his hotel the most user-friendly. "The vast majority of people stay — for some bizarre reason — in those big, inhospitable hotels, where you can't get a cup of tea or breakfast at 6:30 in the morning, where you have to pay for Wi-Fi, pay for room service and where water costs $8 a bottle," he explains. "We certainly won't nickel-and-dime people."

Virgin Hotels Chicago promises minibars stocked with items at street prices (water bottles are $2-$3) no cancellation of late check-out fees, free Wi-Fi and an app that lets guests order room service, adjust climate controls, make dinner reservations and valet their cars. It's a potentially risky business model, given that the hotel industry took in $2 billion in 2014 from those types of add-ons, according to ForbesLife. But Branson's never feared taking risks. Just yesterday, he tells us, he kite-surfed 20 miles between various Caribbean islands, and "I've tried to fly around the world in a balloon many times," he laughs. "Been pulled out of the water six times by helicopter."

He extends the same intrepid spirit to his business life. When he was 16, he dropped out of school to start the magazine Student. By 1968, he started Virgin as a mail-order record business before erecting his first storefront in 1971 without any venture capital. The business grew quickly: In 1972, he founded Virgin Records (which he sold 20 years later for $1 billion) and, in 1984, launched Virgin Atlantic airline. Since then, he's expanded his brand to include telecommunications (Virgin Mobile) and even commercial space travel (Virgin Galactic). In 2000, he was knighted for his contributions to entrepreneurship.

But Branson isn't an infallible business savant; he's flesh and blood, and constantly faces roadblocks (and even some failures, with ideas like Virgin Cola, Virgin Cars and Virgin Brides). "When you build a company from scratch, without any financial backing, there's a very fine line between success and failure," Branson says. "There were certainly times when we came very close to the wrong side of that line. There was one occasion, when we started Virgin Atlantic Our bank got into a complete tizzy and sent the manager to my home the day after we launched to say they were closing Virgin down. That was on a Friday. By Monday, we'd found another bank to step into their shoes."

More recently, Branson made headlines with a major setback for Virgin Galactic: The company's SpaceShipTwo rocket plane catastrophically broke apart and crashed in the Mojave Desert last October, killing the co-pilot and seriously injuring the pilot. Some viewed the tragedy as a fatal blow for the futuristic division of Virgin, but Branson is determined not to let the sacrifices be in vain — he maintains that the entire team is more motivated than ever. "We can take those kinds of knocks on the chin, pick ourselves up and brush ourselves down, and motivate our team to come out with, hopefully, something even better," he says.

Most importantly, for Branson, Virgin Group is a means to improve the world. "Anybody who finds himself in a position where he can make a difference, he has to do that," he says. In the case of Virgin Galactic, Branson said on NBC's "Today" earlier this month, "it's about giving the millions of people who want to go space the chance to go to space. ... It's about putting up massive arrays of satellites to enable the 3 billion people, for instance, who don't have mobile phones or Internet access, to get them [access].... It's about point-to-point travel in the future, in an environmentally friendly way, at a fraction of the time it takes today.

"We wouldn't want to enter a sector where we can't make a difference," he says — and he's putting his money where his mouth is. Through his Virgin Unite foundation, he's created a multitude of nonprofits, including The Elders, dedicated to going into conflict regions to resolve problems; the Carbon War Room, which works toward finding solutions to climate change; the Ocean Elders, to protect ocean species and create nature reserves; and The B Team, to encourage businesses to focus more on employees and the environment.

But more than a businessman, adventurer or philanthropist, Branson is an everyday man. Yes, he has an island — but he also has a wife, two kids and two new grandchildren (his daughter Holly just gave birth to twins) and another on the way (his son Sam's wife is expecting). "We're a very close family, but obviously they have their own partners, so we want to give them space as well. My wife has to resist wanting to be with them all the time," he laughs. "Same problems as every family."

For more information, visit Virginhotels.com
My most basic obsession is ... A notebook. I like to keep notes of every conversation, every discussion, so I don't forget things in life.

My most luxurious indulgence is ... Where I live, a beautiful little island in the Caribbean called Necker Island. It's a place where you can pull up the drawbridge and spend time with family and friends.

When I'm in Chicago ... I normally spend time at a friend's home for dinner. Hopefully [now], I'll get the friends to go along to the hotel.

My secret to success is ... to keep evolving. One of our first businesses was record shops. If we had just stuck with records, we wouldn't be in business today. The reason I've been in business [this long] is diversification and moving on with the times.
Entrepreneur and co-founder of Cedar Street Capital Jay Michael takes Splash on a globetrotting tour — and pegs the spots to see in each city.

With a very busy 2015 ahead, the end of last year felt like the perfect time to book a trip. When plans fell through with friends, I pressed on with a solo journey, and stayed up until the wee hours planning and booking stops in Berlin, Tel Aviv, Delhi, Agra and Manila. Aside from Tel Aviv (where I'd been before), these remote and seemingly random locales had one thing in common: a spot near the tip-top of my bucket list. So, with a few unfinished books to read and my not-so-secret dislike of the typical pre-planned group holiday, it was with excitement and curiosity that I embarked.

For once I put email aside and let life take the reins. I met people with less wealth than the average American, who found happiness in ways unseen stateside. I toured the slums with teenagers who thought they had won the lottery by finding a few nights of shelter. I rode in the back of trucks and saw life from a different angle than I had ever imagined. Most importantly, I came home humbled and inspired, refreshed and ready to take on 2015.

Here, I share my must-dos for each city — and personal stories from my journey — plus a few tips to help you book a trip of your own.

**1ST STOP: BERLIN**

Berlin's streets are lined with tattoos of colorful spray paint. The culture is relaxed yet rigid; conservative yet inclusive. I spent two days there, and one night met a very handsome inked man at a bar. We ended up talking and, of course, I fell madly in 'like.' When I returned, we found one another on Facebook and have stayed in touch, so I'll always have a tour guide in the city.

**Where to stay:** Soho House (approx. $200/night, Forstrasse 1 Berlin, Germany) — it's in the best location for walking the city, especially the less-touristy areas.

**How to get around:** Public transit is excellent and it's on the honor code, but don't forget to pay your ticket as the fines are high. The Uber app is a great alternative and very accessible.

**What to do:** Sip tea at hip cafés and bookshops — I especially liked Companion Coffee and The Barn Coffee Roasters — and walk through idyllic German Christmas markets.

**What to eat/drink:** There's a hidden late-night bar called Möbel Olfe. It's a very gay-friendly bar where you'll be the only tourist.
Upon landing in Tel Aviv, I made my way to nearby Holon, my late father’s hometown. I went to the apartment my father was raised in — it was broken down and dilapidated, yet so beautiful. I spent a few bittersweet hours on the front porch, remembering the stories of hardship and triumph my father once told me there, and spent the day wandering his haunts and visiting with family.

Where to stay: David InterContinental ($200-$250/night, 12 Kaufman, Tel Aviv, Israel) — it’s in the best location and has the absolute best Israeli breakfast, which is included in your rate.

What to do: Visit the Shuk Hacarmel (Carmel Market) and wander down Dizengoff Street, making sure to take detours on the small side streets — those are where I always find the most interesting spots.

What to eat: Eat a falafel from the Shuk or my favorite spot, Ratzon Falafel (the 6-shekel falafel joint). Grab dinner at one of the many new, locally sourced, chef-driven eateries throughout the city. I loved HaBasta, hidden on a small (but well-lit) side street.

I hired a well-known food blogger (Del-hifoodwalks.com) to take me around the unknown-to-tourists streets of Old Delhi, where I indulged in forbidden street food and pushed and shoved to get through the streets like a true Delhian. I taught an unsuspecting rickshaw driver how to take his first #Selfie and had the absolute time of my life — and I hadn’t even been in India 12 hours yet.

Where to stay: Leela Palace Hotel ($200-$300/night, Diplomatic Enclave, Chanakyapuri, New Delhi, India) — it’s the most opulent hotel but there are great deals on Hotels.com.

How to get around: Ride in rickshaws and tuk-tuks (basically a rickshaw with a motor) for about 30 rupees — less than $1.

What to do: Tour the local markets (Dilli Haat was my favorite), indulge in curry galore, pray at the Taj Mahal and meet with local Indian sages — but nothing can compare to spending time in the Delhi slums (see sidebar at right).

With his guide, food blogger Anubhav Sapra

THE SALAAM BAALAK TRUST

I was guided through the slums by a well-spoken and excited 17-year-old named Sabir — Sabs for short — from The Salaam Baalak Trust. Sabs lost his father early in life and his mother gave him up to an abusive uncle. At 10 years old, he ran away and embarked on a 24-hour train ride to Delhi, where he lived on the streets until being taken in by the Trust. There he found shelter, schooling, medicine and a second chance at life. Now he’s one of the teen-mentors and guides commissioned to tell his triumphant story to curious Westerners like myself. We became fast friends and spent a great deal of time discussing his dream of college in the U.S. He, and the many children at the Trust, touched my heart. Sabs and I have stayed in touch — I plan to help make sure his dream of coming to the U.S. comes true. The experience made me wonder what really inspired me to take such a trip — was I looking for time to relax, or was I searching for something much bigger than that? To find out more about the Trust, visit Salaambaalaktrust.com.
I spent the end of 2014 en route to Manila and, upon arrival, felt refreshed and ready for my final exploration. There’s no real roadmap to Manila because it’s fairly unvisited — one of its most attractive features — but the Filipino people have a true passion for showing you their ways of life. I felt a sort of soul within this cosmopolitan city that you’d expect in more rural Tibet or Myanmar.

Where to stay: The Peninsula ($180 and up/night, 1226 Makati City, Metro Manila, Philippines) is in the heart of Makati and I scored a great rate. This hotel was the leader in terms of service and amenities — the 90-minute Hilot with Ventosa massage (around $85) was one of the best massages I’ve had.

How to get around: Ride in Jeepneys (stretched, open-back Jeeps for shared transport) and use the Light Rail train system.

What to do: Meet a food blogger or professor who can take you to the areas less traveled. Eat with the locals in Quiapo and Cubao (just make sure to have a guide with you) and spend a day living like a real Filipino. Check out The Curator, a speakeasy hidden behind the back door of an unsuspecting wine shop. The founder was inspired by his one-month stint in Chicago, where he frequented spots like The Aviary, Avec and The Publican.

A ride on an open-back Jeepney in Manila

Fred’s Revolucion, a bar in Manila

PACKING
I packed and repacked and reduced and reconsidered endlessly, until I had the perfect marriage of cold-, mild- and tropical-weather outfits. I only packed two pairs of shoes — a real accomplishment in itself — and followed three main rules:

1. Every top must match every bottom.
2. If it can’t get multiple uses, it doesn’t come.
3. When in doubt, leave it behind.

TRAVEL TIPS
1. Find bloggers and local writers to show you around; there are endless resources online for each city — Withlocals.com is one of my favorites.
2. Don’t over-plan. Book flights and hotels, but let the rest fall into place as you wander each city. I used Oneworld.com to assemble my flights.
3. Book night flights when possible. You’ll save on hotels and have more daytime at your destination.
4. For longer trips, try booking a round-the-world (RTW) ticket through an airline alliance, rather than individual tickets to each city.
5. Use public transit, walk and go for runs, but stay away from tour buses.
6. Let yourself go — try things you would never normally allow yourself to.
In the 11 years since "American Idol" made her famous, Chicago native Jennifer Hudson, 33, has undergone many transformations: from South Side girl to Oscar-winning actress, from church-choir singer to Grammy winner, from Jennifer to "JHUD" (the title of her latest album). Physically, mentally and — most importantly — musically, Hudson has come into her own.

Now, with a new album and upcoming Broadway debut in "The Color Purple" later this year, she’s paying it forward to those who helped her achieve success. She recently stopped through Chicago to show her support for LGBT equality at the W Chicago Lakeshore. "[We're doing] a series of Turn It Up For Change events in every W all around the country, bringing people together to amplify the fight for marriage equality and raise funds for the Human Rights Campaign," says Anthony Ingham, North American VP of luxury and design brands for the W’s parent company, Starwood Hotels & Resorts Worldwide. "Having Jennifer and her name behind it, and her absolute passion for the LGBT community, means that we get a much broader reach for this message."

Before taking the stage for an impromptu set, the singer gave us some sound bites.

**The little things**
**BY JENNY McCARTHY**

If you've been listening to my radio show lately, you'll know I've been PMSing this past week. Now that I'm finally feeling better — thank God — I can look back and see that I was allowing myself to be annoyed by other people's behaviors. And if I feel this way, I'm sure many of you do, too. Maybe your blood pressure shoots up when you find crumbs on the counter after your kid makes lunch, or maybe it's the noise a co-worker's knuckles make when he cracks them near you.

We could nag and complain our entire lives away about the little things that annoy us, but where would that get us? There are certain habits and ways of life that people cannot change, and you shouldn't expect them to. Instead, take a look inside and ask why certain actions bother you. Often, you'll be surprised to find the cause of your annoyance is rooted in yourself. Is there something you do that you wish you didn't? A bad habit you can't break? Maybe there's a connection to whatever it is that bothers you in others. Take a deeper look.

In the meantime, when those crumbs are staring at you from the counter or you hear the popping of those knuckles, refocus your energy. Acknowledge that you're bothered, take a deep breath and move on. Don't waste precious time or feelings on the little stuff — it's not worth it.

Now it's your turn — what are some ways you deal with frustration? Tweet me @JennvMcCarthv.

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**SLEEP RESEARCH STUDY FOR PEOPLE WITH LUNG DISEASE:**

Volunteers are invited to join this study: you must be over age 45 years, have either emphysema or chronic bronchitis and difficulty falling asleep or staying asleep to qualify.

We are testing a program to improve sleep in people with lung disease. Volunteers eligible for the study will participate in 6 weekly sessions in one of four behavioral or educational programs. The programs are offered by the University of Illinois at Chicago and the Hines VA. Health evaluations include an overnight sleep study, lung function tests, two blood draws, activity monitoring and questionnaires. Compensation is provided to enrolled participants, all program activities and testing are free and free parking is provided.

For more information call Mary Kapella PhD, RN or Franco Laghi MD at (312) 996-1575, 9:30AM to 4:00PM, Monday thru Friday at the University of Illinois at Chicago, Center for Narcolepsy, Sleep & Health Research. This study is funded by the National Institutes of Health.
Party girl

Playwright David Adjmi ponders one curious queen in ‘Marie Antoinette’

BY THOMAS CONNORS

David Adjmi's plays aren't easy to peg. "Stunning" - set in the Syrian-Jewish Brooklyn neighborhood where he was raised - revolves around a stifled 16-year-old wife and her worldly African-American housekeeper; "3C" takes on the sexual coyness and cultural close-mindedness of '70s sitcom "Three's Company"; and "Marie Antoinette" - opening at Steppenwolf Feb. 5 - lets

often evoked at times when power and greed seem to rule the age. For director Robert O'Hara, "Marie Antoinette" resonates in other, more personal ways. "Marie is an outsider in the country she rules. She is confined by the protocols of the French court and by royalty itself. I understand being confined by society's rules. As a gay artist of color, I also feel the margins of what American theater usually chooses to stage, so it's exciting to have such a mind-blowing piece of writing about a larger-than-life protagonist to delve into."

More a fractured fairy tale than typical costume drama, "Marie Antoinette" leaps from facts of history to spin a free-wheeling civics lesson, shot through with sympathy for a woman struggling to inhabit the identity forced on her. "The only thing I knew about Marie Antoinette prior to our project is that she said, 'Let them eat cake,'" shares actress Alana Arenas. "Now I know that even that quote is speculation, as are many other things said about her. If you can get past what she was born into and what was expected of her, it's easier to understand her."

The play, says O'Hara, is "funny, elliptical and furious. It plays fast and loose with the 'truth' and what we as Americans think of celebrity. It takes what an audience thinks they know about this famous queen and pulls the rug out from under it. We know from the start that the French Revolution is coming and that it will be brutal and bloody, and yet we thirst throughout this play for someone to save this tragedy from the inevitable. [Adjmi] has achieved a sort of beauty in the horror of it all."

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MARRY MARKET
Discover wedding-planning paradise at the sixth annual Indie Wed Wedding Show & Market Jan. 31. The event features food tastings, live performances, models showcasing wedding fashions and more than 100 vendors. $15. 10 a.m.-4 p.m. Ravenswood Event Center, 4043 N. Ravenswood, indiewed.com

TEAMING UP
Six local retailers — including The Denim Lounge (right) and Tribeca Boutique — will offer up to 90 percent off women’s, men’s and kids’ items during the Boutique Blowout Sale Feb. 6-8. A portion of proceeds will benefit Iman Angel, which provides free one-on-one cancer support. RSVP to info@thedenimlounge.com. Friday 2-8 p.m. (with RSVP), Saturday 10 a.m.-7 p.m., Sunday 11 a.m.-4 p.m. 833 W. Armitage

FOOD INSPIRED
Macy’s Culinary Chef Council member Stephanie Izard (right) hosts a day of cooking, sampling and shopping at the department store. The Jan. 28 event will feature live demos and, with any purchase of $35 or more, attendees will receive a signed copy of Izard’s book, Girl in the Kitchen. Noon. To RSVP, call (800) 329-8667. 111 N. State; Maccys.com

BEST DRESS
Perfectly timed after an influx of holiday engagements, David’s Bridal opened its doors in Schaumburg. The new, 11,092-square-foot location includes enhanced floor space for fittings, a silhouette guide display and an exclusive accessories boutique. Woodfield Plaza, 560 E. Golf; Davidsbridal.com
Kevin Hickey continues a family legacy with a new Bridgeport restaurant

This time it's personal for Kevin Hickey. The chef spent 20 years with the Four Seasons Group and currently heads up Bottlefork Bar & Kitchen, but his newest venture with Rockit Ranch Productions is truly homemade. "I grew up down the block," he says of The Duck Inn, a supper club-style gastro-tavern in Bridgeport. He named the spot after his great grandmother's Depression-era diner, and formed a menu inspired by the original. "My mother wasn't much of a cook, so we went out to eat all the time," he recalls. "I was exposed to three main cuisines: Asian, Italian and Eastern European."

He returns to those nostalgic flavors with bar dishes like the duck fat dog ($10)—which recently won Food Network's "Top Dog" competition—and steps it up in the main dining room with the braised brisket with ricotta-filled pappardelle ($22) and rotisserie duck for two ($58).

A seasonal patio promises unique opportunities, including pizza parties, luaus, pig roasts and movie nights. "We're a destination," says Hickey, "so we figured, why not make [guests] feel at home for the night?"

Here's what else to expect at The Duck Inn:

B.Y.O.V.: Bring your own vinyl on Monday nights. The dining room is closed but the bar is open every day, and Hickey encourages patrons to take control of the tunes on the vintage record player.

Mod podge: "The place was built in 1914 and we opened in 2014, so I split the difference right down the middle and went with 1964," Hickey says of the aesthetic. Midcentury modern and space race-era design elements are seen in zany light fixtures, a Mies van der Rohe black leather bench, reproductions of Eames chairs and glassware Hickey found at local antique markets.

Sweet stuff: Save room for desserts, like the sticky toffee pudding with spiced rum cream and pure chocolate beignets with peanut butter ice cream ($9 each).

Drinking partners: Hickey and Beverage Director Brandon Phillips tapped into their networks for an exclusive beer program. They worked with Une Annee and Begyle Brewing on two exclusive beers, and have collaborations with Marz Community Brewing and Moody Tongue in the works—plus a single barrel selection from Wild Turkey and WhistlePig.

2701 S. Eleanor, (312) 724-8811; theduckinnchicago.com

Clockwise from top left: rotisserie duck for two, $58; The Duck Out cocktail, $14; the dining room; the duck fat dog, $10
Angela Wise & Alan Golightly's love story began more than two decades ago, when the two met as children in their hometown, Dallas. In 1990, “We had a brief little romance — as much as you can have as a little kid,” laughs Wise, the vice president of marketing for The Cosmopolitan of Las Vegas. The pair kept in touch on-and-off until last fall, when Wise moved back to Dallas from Chicago, where she had lived for 12 years. “Then we officially started dating as adults,” she says.

In September, Golightly, a finance manager for ResCare, proposed to Wise on a scenic trip to New Mexico’s Sierra Blanca mountain and, a few months later, surprised her again with a spontaneous idea. “He called me saying, ‘What do you think about getting married next weekend?’” she says. “I thought about it for 30 minutes and decided I really wanted to spend the rest of my life with him — and wanted to start as soon as possible.”

A week later, on Dec. 20, the couple wed in Las Vegas at the Little Church of the West (4617 S. Las Vegas) in front of a few friends, including Chicagoan Brook Jay, who lent the bride a family heirloom ring for her “something borrowed” item. Golightly surprised his bride by tucking a picture of her and her father, who passed away a few years prior, into her bouquet. “Alan is so romantic,” Wise says. “My dad was a part of the day with us, even though he wasn’t there.” —Chura Mitoulis
Loews Chicago's director of sales and marketing opens up about the upcoming luxury hotel.

**ERIK GRAZETTI**

**AGE:** 44, CLAIM-TO-FAME: Director of sales and marketing for Loews Chicago Hotel.  
**LIVES IN:** Lakeview, ROLE CALL: Right now, I'm focusing on getting the word out about the hotel. I'm successful if, the day the hotel opens, everyone wants to be there. TAKING OVER: This is Loews’ first entrance into the Chicago market in 10 years — we used to manage a property here up until 2004. It represents [Loews'] next wave of expansion. STAYING CONNECTED: Every guest room has its own Wi-Fi access point. That’s huge — in most hotels, you’re sharing Wi-Fi with 40-60 people.

**DESIGN AESTHETIC:** Chicago's Simone Deary Design Group crafted interior elements using materials the city was built upon — as well as fabrics Chicagoans wear during the winter — which you’ll see reflected throughout the building. From touches of steel and limestone in the lobby to wool and leather on the furniture, no detail was overlooked.

**ROOFTOP LOUNGING:** We’ll have the largest outdoor event space in the city for a hotel, called Streeterville Social. The area covers 9,000 square feet and [is] a place where people can sit and have a conversation under the Chicago sky.

**WINTER LODGE:** I love the cold and winter, so when people [talk about] winter getaways, to me that's Steamboat Ski Resort in Colorado. CLOSE QUARTERS: I live in a 400-square-foot apartment with my husband and absolutely love it. There’s a show on TV called “Tiny House Nation” — we literally live the tiny-house life.

Loews Chicago opens March 2. Visit Loewshotels.com or tweet #BookLoews to join a private chat room with a reservations specialist.

*BY CHIARA MILIOULIS*  
*PHOTO BY RAMZI DREESSEN*
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To the untrained eye, the new Murano looks pretty much like others of its ilk. It's a roomy, midsize CUV that shows a pleasant, nicely executed interior with soft-touch surfaces and tasteful trim. But Nissan has also included features to encourage interaction among those inside.

"This is the most social car we've ever had," says Jeremy Tucker, Nissan's vice president for marketing communications. A "communication alley" has been created: The center console was designed low and wide to encourage conversation between front and rear occupants.

The new third-generation 2015 Murano also sports arresting new exterior styling with swooping curves, a roof that seems to float over the vehicle, boomerang-shaped LED headlights and distinctive LED taillights. It's a welcome departure. The first Murano was introduced in 2003, and the second generation arrived in 2009. Both had bulbous bodies, and the second generation may have been the most disrespected vehicle in recent memory.

However, it's likely that the 2015 Nissan Murano will be respected not only for its social awakening, but for its other qualities as well. It comes in four versions with either front- or all-wheel drive. The latter adds $1,600 to the price tag and will be especially appreciated in areas with nasty weather.

Prices range from $30,445 for the base S model with front-wheel drive to $41,485 for the top-of-the-line Platinum model with all-wheel drive. Though the Murano does not compete as a luxury vehicle, the Platinum certainly does a fine impersonation with its 20-inch alloy wheels, optional panoramic sunroof, adaptive cruise control, climate-controlled front seats and heated rear seats and steering wheel.

Tested for this review was the S with AWD, a navigation system and upscale paint. The navigation package, with satellite and HD radio, was pleasantly priced at just $820, so the bottom-line total was $33,920 — less than some other well-equipped compact crossovers.

The manual-adjusting front seats wore cloth upholstery that was sturdy and comfortable. But in the all-important drive components, it was identical to the Platinum model.

All versions use a 260-horsepower V-6 engine that develops 240 pound-feet of torque. Power flows through a continuously variable automatic transmission (CVT), and the combination manages a respectable EPA city/highway/combined fuel economy rating of 21/28/24 mpg.

On the road, the Murano has a hefty feel, with solid straight-line tracking as well as somewhat numb but responsive steering in cornering. It's no sportster, but acquits itself well for a relatively large vehicle.

There are drawbacks. The center rear seating position, as usual on most vehicles, is not comfortable, and foot room is restricted by the intrusion of the front console. Bright trim around side air vents reflects in the outside mirrors.

Let the dissenters complain. Those who enjoy socializing with friends on road trips and wine tours are sure to tout the benefits of the Murano.
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NEW 2015 SUBARU FORESTER 2.5i
NEW 2015 XV CROSSTREK 2.0i
NEW 2015 SUBARU OUTBACK 2.5i

NEW 2015 SUBARUS

FINANCE on approved credit. Subject to vehicle insurance and availability. Add tax, title, license and $168.43 doc fee. *Finance on approved credit score Subject to vehicle insurance and availability. *Lease on approved credit score. Lease, 10k miles per year, 15 cents after. Lessees responsible for excess wear and early termination of lease. Option to purchase, Imp.$11,385, For $14,833. Legacy $1,1599, Cross $13,018, Outback $14,604 Gas mileage is EPA estimates. All offers end in 3 days, unless noted.

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EvansontSubaru.com 1-888-858-4089

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$2,995 due at signing.

NO SECURITY DEPOSIT! 36 month lease.

$2,995 due at signing.

NO SECURITY DEPOSIT! 36 month lease.

NEW 2015 SUBARU TRIBECA 2.0i
NEW 2015 SUBARU FORESTER 2.5i
NEW 2015 SUBARU IMPREZA 2.0i
NEW 2015 SUBARU LEGACY 2.5i
NEW 2015 SUBARU FORESTER 2.5i
NEW 2015 SUBARU XV CROSSTREK 2.0i
NEW 2015 SUBARU OUTBACK 2.5i

NO SECURITY DEPOSIT! 36 month lease.

$2,995 due at signing.

NO SECURITY DEPOSIT! 36 month lease.

$2,995 due at signing.
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NEW DEALS!

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LYNCH PRICE
$13,565

2015 CHEVROLET SONIC LS SEDAN
STK # K15225  MSRP: $15,070
LYNCH PRICE
$12,295

2015 CHEVROLET EQUINOX LS FWD
STK # K15175  MSRP: $26,995
LYNCH PRICE
$19,415

2015 CHEVROLET MALIBU 1LS
STK # K15250  MSRP: $23,490
LYNCH PRICE
$16,595

2015 CHEVROLET SILVERADO 1500 REG CAB LONG BOX 4WD
STK # K14470  MSRP: $31,170
LYNCH PRICE
$25,995

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Sales Hours: Mon-Fri 9-9 • Sat 9-5
www.LynchChevroletOfKenosha.com

We Speak
Spanish,
Greek,
Polish
## New GMC Vehicles

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Model</th>
<th>Price</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2013 GMC ACADIA</td>
<td>$27,990</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2013 GMC SIERRA</td>
<td>$20,990</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2013 GMC TERRAIN</td>
<td>$20,990</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

## New Buick Vehicles

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Model</th>
<th>Price</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2014 BUICK ENCORE</td>
<td>$20,990</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2014 BUICK ENCRAVE</td>
<td>$33,990</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

## New Cadillac Vehicles

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Model</th>
<th>Price</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2014 CADILLAC ATS</td>
<td>$45,531</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2014 CADILLAC SRX</td>
<td>$39,900</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

## New Hybrid Vehicles

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Model</th>
<th>Price</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2013 Honda Civic</td>
<td>$11,990</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2013 Toyota Camry</td>
<td>$11,990</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2013 Acura TL</td>
<td>$14,990</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

## Used Car Manager Specials

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Model</th>
<th>Price</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2012 HYUNDAI ACCENT</td>
<td>$11,990</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2014 HYUNDAI ELANTRA</td>
<td>$13,490</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2013 HYUNDAI SONATA</td>
<td>$13,490</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

## Used Vehicle Pricing

- 2013 Hyundai Accent: $11,990
- 2014 Hyundai Elantra: $13,490
- 2013 Hyundai Sonata: $13,490

## Additional Information

- All vehicles subject to prior sales. Offers to qualified buyers. + Off MSRP on select new models. ^ May not be actual selling price within trade area. + On select models, see dealer for details. Dealer will not honor pricing errors in this ad. All offers end 3 days after pub.
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With Wheelchair Motorized Power Lift Ramp

at Sherman Dodge, just because you have special needs doesn't mean you don't have options...

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We Will Drive One to You and Demonstrate It Right at Your Door!

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$500 MILITARY APPRECIATION OFFER!
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0.9% APR FINANCING AVAILABLE!

$500 COLLEGE GRADUATE BONUS!
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CIVIC LX 4DR
Automatic, Stk#H33589
LEASE FOR $159 for 36 mos*
$999 down plus 1st mo. payment, tax, title, lic. and doc fee due at lease signing

2015 Honda
ACCORD LX 4DR
Automatic, Stk#H33392
LEASE FOR $179 for 36 mos*
$999 down plus 1st mo. payment, tax, title, lic. and doc fee due at lease signing

2015 Honda
CR-V LX AWD
Automatic, Stk#H33735
LEASE FOR $239 for 39 mos*
$999 down plus 1st mo. payment, tax, title, lic. and doc fee due at lease signing

2015 Honda
PILOT LX 4WD
Stk#H34061
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SHOP ONLINE @ muller-honda.com

WE WANT YOUR TRADE-IN!

+ $500 For Military and College offers must go towards a down payment or cap cost reduction for the lease or purchase of a new 2014 or 2015 Honda vehicle. Must finance thru HFS. Military appreciation exp. 3-31-15. College grad bonus exp. 3-31-15. Must be a current owner of a 2003 or newer Honda Pilot. $1000 must go toward cap cost or down payment. See dealer for details. *Based on closed end leases for 36 months (15 CR-V for 36 mos.), For well qualified lessees with approved credit. All manufacturer's incentives applied. 12k allowable miles per year. $15 over on Accord, Civic and CR-V. $20 over on Pilot. Residuals: 2015 Civic $12,048, 2015 CR-V $16,510, 2015 Accord $13,880, 2015 Pilot $18,088. Additional options extra. Lessee is responsible for excess wear/tear, maintenance and insurance. Subject to early termination penalty. ^0.9% APR financing on select models to qualified buyers with approved credit. Not available with any previous offers. Dealer will not honor errors in this advertisement. Valid 3 days from publication.

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Digital Marketing Manager

Check out openings on Monster to find Online Community Manager jobs in your area.

According to PayScale, the average salary for an Online Community Manager is $31,118 per year, with a reported salary range of $20,277 to $70,183 annually.

Social Media Manager

When Twitter came onto the scene in 2006, not many people thought it was going to affect business. Flash-forward to 2015, and Twitter, not to mention Facebook, Google Plus, Tumblr, Instagram, are all integral to the success of a modern business. Companies have also quickly realized they need to take their social profiles seriously and hire pros that know how to get content trending as well as prevent any potential social media disasters. Much of the job revolves around developing brand awareness for a business and getting followers, while also maintaining the brand's image.

Social media managers need to be sure to balance work and personal life, since social media is a round-the-clock business. It’s a job that might sound like fun and games, but there is a lot more to it than simply sending out Tweets and writing Facebook posts. You will need a keen awareness for trends as well as a sensitivity to know when its right - or not - to post something.

According to PayScale, the average salary for a social media manager is $45,717 per year, with a reported salary range of $26,252 to $70,190 per year.

Check out openings on Monster to find Social Media Manager jobs in your area.

Communications Specialist

A communications specialist focuses on internal and external communications via press releases, email blasts, and marketing events. As a communications specialist you might hold press conferences, field questions from journalists, and manage online content for the company. It’s a fast paced job that might require longer hours because when situations arise, sometimes they need immediate attention.

To become a communications specialist you will need at least a bachelor's degree in communications, journalism, marketing, or a related field. You also need a strong background in computers including Microsoft Office as well as the popular social media platforms.

According to PayScale, the average salary for a communications specialist is $47,077 per year, with a reported salary range of $33,683 to $70,814 per year.

Check out openings on Monster to find communication specialist jobs in your area.

Online Community Manager

An online community manager has similar tasks to a social media manager, but generally the job focuses on a company’s clients and customers. The job involves working closely with clients and customers, and you may be required to field questions and inquiries. You will also need to be responsible for monitoring the social media platforms of your company to ensure the company’s brand is presented appropriately.

It's a highly face-to-face job, so it's best suited for someone with strong customer service background and who doesn't mind spending time reassuring clients and customers that their needs are being met.

While you may not be required to have a bachelor's degree, it will help your chances if you have a degree in marketing or communications. You will also want to be familiar with analytics, since part of the job will require you to track the success of online campaigns and interactions.

According to PayScale, the average salary for an online community manager is $47,796 per year, with a reported salary range of $31,118 to $70,800 annually.

Check out openings on Monster to find Online Community Manager jobs in your area.

Digital Marketing Manager

If you are creative and innovative and love technology, you might want to consider becoming a digital strategist.

As a digital strategist you will be responsible for helping your company develop its long-term strategies for digital products and services. It can be a hectic job depending on the project, and it requires analyzing large amounts of data to determine the best strategy to market products. In order to come up with these strategies, you will need to understand market trends and have your finger on the pulse of competitors and understand their products and services. You will also need to create reports, edit and update content or images, share videos, manage your company's web presence, and identify new communities for marketing efforts.

In order to become a digital strategist, you will need at least a bachelor's degree in marketing, communications, or a related field. While it can be an entry-level position, you might want to ensure you have some internships and experience working in digital media before applying. You will also need a working knowledge of search engine optimization, search engine marketing, and Microsoft applications.

According to PayScale, the average salary for a digital strategist is $62,615 per year, with a reported salary range of $40,953 to $113,500 annually.

Check out openings on Monster to find Digital Strategist jobs in your area.

Blogger

When you think of a blogger, you probably imagine someone who is self-employed, but that is not always the case. A number of companies have realized the benefits of having a blog for its brand, and they are typically in search of qualified individuals to maintain and update the content. As a blogger for a company you will be responsible for editing and proofreading all posts and ensure they follow brand guidelines and styles. Using SEO, metadata, and keywords, you will write posts that come up in search engines and drive traffic to the website.

In order to become a blogger, you will need experience writing and editing, and most companies will probably prefer you have a bachelor's degree in English or journalism.

According to PayScale, the average salary for a blogger is $37,059 per year, with a reported salary range of $20,277 to $70,183 annually.

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2014’s Best Places to Work.

Methodist Hospitals is recognized as a great place to work by the Chicago Tribune, which cited our organization as one of the region’s Top 100 Workplaces. Just as important is the fact that we are recognized as such by our employees, whose positive feedback and opinions are the primary criteria for this award. Would you like to feel just as enthusiastic about your workplace? We’re seeking the area’s most passionate, talented nursing professionals. Come to our Nursing Open House Hiring Event for an onsite interview — and make 2015 your best yet.

NURSING OPEN HOUSE HIRING EVENT

Friday, January 30 • 9 am - noon and 1 pm - 4 pm

Southlake Campus Auditorium • 7010 S. Broadway, Matteson, IL

Registration will be required. To RSVP: 708-252-1666

Please be prepared for an onsite interview, bring copies of your resume, and dress for success.

We are seeking experienced nursing professionals to staff our team with:

REGISTERED NURSES

ER • Surgery • ICU • Med/Surg • Resource Float Pool • Podiatry

NURSE MANAGERS

CLINICAL NURSE SPECIALISTS

NURSE EDUCATORS

Methodist Hospitals offers competitive compensation and benefits. We hope to see you at our Open House Hiring Event, if you can’t make it, please visit our website for more information or to apply, go to: methodistnorthpark.com/nursing-snm.

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Any potential owner should call

26th (there is no warranty in this ad. Any potential owner should check with their own insurance. Property Office at Exon Park, 708-860-0225. If you do not receive a message outside of normal hours, call 773-283-4100)

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NOTICE OF PUBLIC HEARING AND AVAILABILITY OF CDBG ACTION PLAN

The Village of Skokie will be conducting a public hearing to receive citizen comments and approve the 2015-2019 CDBG Action Plan of the City of Skokie. The Plan is a Consolidated Plan/Consolidated for fiscal years 2015-2019. The Plan will address the status of the city's current economic conditions and needs in the areas of housing, community development, financial assistance, and economic development.

The hearing will be held in the Village Hall at 1511 N. Oakton St., Skokie, Illinois, on the 10th floor, Monday, May 11, 2015, at 6:30 p.m.

The hearing will be conducted in the Village Hall Council Chambers and will be open to the public for the purpose of making public comments on the draft consolidated plan for the fiscal years 2015-2019.

The Village will be adopting the CDBG Action Plan as the Consolidated Plan for the fiscal year 2015-2019. The Consolidated Plan for the city is available for public review at the Village Hall during regular business hours of the Village Hall.

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In compliance with U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) regulations, the Village of Skokie has prepared a Consolidated Plan and an Action Plan for the Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) program, and any interested persons are invited to attend the hearing and make written comments.

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- 5.1 Megapixel HD Video
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If LeBron James leaves the Cavaliers — again — where would that rank among the all-time worst events in Cleveland sports history?

— Joe T., Cleveland, Ohio

LeBron leaving Cleveland — again — would rank right behind Art Modell moving the Browns to Baltimore in 1996. Fool me once, shame on you. Fool me twice, shame on me, you know? But no city has more painful moments than Cleveland. Michael Jordan had "The Shot" over the Cavs in 1989. John Elway had "The Drive" to beat the Browns in ’87. Earnest Byner’s AFC title game fumble in ’88 and Jose Mesa’s World Series Game 7 blown save in ’97 also cut deep. But even if LeBron leaves, Cleveland still has Johnny Manziel. Too soon?

How much money do Americans spend on fantasy football each season?

— Jay G., Long Island, N.Y.

According to the Fantasy Sports Trade Association, roughly $15 billion is spent on fantasy football annually. To put that number in perspective, the NFL’s annual revenue is around $10 billion. How can fantasy bring in more money than the actual sport? Well, 32 million Americans spend an average of $467 per season on their favorite virtual hobby.

Is Rory McIlroy the next Tiger Woods? By that, I mean are his off-course exploits going to derail his golf game?

— Tim F., Ponte Vedra Beach, Fla.

First things first, McIlroy is a 25-year-old bachelor — not a married man, as Tiger was during his scandal. But McIlroy has been taking advantage of his single status since breaking off his engagement with tennis star Caroline Wozniacki. McIlroy has been linked with model Nadia Forde and PGA employee Erica Stoll. Still, his game with the ladies shouldn’t have any impact with his game on the course; McIlroy is a four-time major champion who is a Masters Tournament win away from a career grand slam.

WHAT STATES CAN BOAST THE MOST FORMER HEISMAN TROPHY WINNERS?

WHAT STATES HAVE YET TO WIN COLLEGE FOOTBALL’S MOST PRESTIGIOUS AWARD?

— Joe K., Boston, Mass.

This year, Marcus Mariota became the first Heisman Trophy winner from Hawaii. California (14), Ohio (10) and Texas (9) have had the most hometown heroes raise the Heisman hardware. In all, 26 states have at least one winner. To avoid the home-state confusion of players like Tim Tebow — who was born in the Philippines but raised in Florida — the state in which each Heisman Trophy winner played his high school football was used to determine our state-by-state breakdown.
Advance Release:
Order Your New U.S. 2015 Silver Dollars Now!

Millions of people collect the American Eagle Silver Dollar. In fact it's been the country's most popular Silver Dollar for over two decades. Try as they might, that makes it a very hard "secret" to keep quiet. And right now, many of those same people are lining up to secure the brand new 2015 U.S. Eagle Silver Dollars - placing their advance orders now to ensure that they get America's newest Silver Dollar just as soon as the coins are released by the U.S. Mint in January. Today, you can graduate to the front of that line by reserving your very own 2015 American Eagle Silver Dollars - in stunning Brilliant Uncirculated condition — before millions of others beat you to it.

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By calling today, you can reserve some of the very first brand new Brilliant Uncirculated 2015 American Eagle Silver Dollars ever released. Your reservation and price will be locked in, and your stunning new Silver Dollars will be shipped to you just as soon as the U.S. Mint releases the coins in January.

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SUPER BOWL XLIX: SEATTLE VS. NEW ENGLAND
Feb. 1, 2015 (NBC, 6:30 EST) | University of Phoenix Stadium (Glendale, Ariz.)

SEATTLE SEAHAWKS

Owner: Paul Allen
62, Microsoft co-founder, bought Seahawks for $194 million in 1997, worth an estimated $1.3 billion in 2014 (per Forbes)

Famous Seahawks fans
Macklemore, 12th Man, Joel McHale

X-Factor
"Legion of Boom" secondary, led by Richard Sherman, Earl Thomas and Kam Chancellor

Regular Season Stats

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
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<tr>
<td>Scoring Offense</td>
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<td>Total Defense</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Turnover Margin</td>
<td>4th</td>
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</table>

Preseason odds to win Super Bowl XLIX: 6-1

Russell Wilson, QB
Super Bowl stats: 1-0 record; 18-of-25 (72 percent) for 206 yards, two TDs, zero INTs, zero sacks, three rushes for 26 yards

NEW ENGLAND PATRIOTS

Preseason odds to win Super Bowl XLIX: 8-1

Patriots' Super Bowl record: 3-4
Lost Super Bowl XX (46-10 vs. Bears)
Lost Super Bowl XXXI (35-21 vs. Packers)
Won Super Bowl XXXVI (20-17 vs. Rams)
Won Super Bowl XXXVIII (32-29 vs. Panthers)
Won Super Bowl XXXIX (24-21 vs. Eagles)
Lost Super Bowl XLII (17-14 vs. Giants)
Lost Super Bowl XLVI (21-17 vs. Giants)

Season Turning Point
The 41-14 blowout loss at Kansas City on "Monday Night Football" on Sept. 29. The Pats won 10 of their next 11 after that.

TOM BRADY
Super Bowl stats: 3-2 record; two-time MVP; Super Bowls XXXVI and XXXVIII; 127-of-197 (64.5 percent) for 1,277 yards, nine TDs, two INTs, two fumbles lost, 10 sacks for 71 lost yards

Owner: Robert Kraft
73, The Kraft Group CEO/Chairman, bought Patriots for $172 million in 1994, worth an estimated $2.6 billion in 2014 (per Forbes)

FAMOUS PATRIOT FANS
Gisele Bundchen, Mark Wahlberg, Matt Damon

Cover by AP/Philadelphia Inquirer (Rajeev Motin). Art by Patrick Thompson. Colin/what/Alan/Brandon Decker. Art Direction: Peter David. }
“WHO SAYS DIAMONDS ARE A GIRL’S BEST FRIEND?”

THE AMERICAN BEAUTY BY HENRY

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CALIBER .22LR

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RAPID FIRE with SUPER BOWL MVPs

We spoke with five former Super Bowl MVPs to get their take on winning one of the NFL's most coveted awards in the NFL's biggest game. Here's what they had to say...

BY MATT McCUE

JOE NAMATH
QB, New York Jets

BIO: Super Bowl III MVP and fundraiser for the Joe Namath Neurological Research Center in Jupiter, Fla., which develops brain research initiatives

Do you remember when during the postgame celebration that you learned you had been named the Super Bowl MVP? Things were different back then, and I didn't know about winning the MVP for a while. It might have been the following week while going up to Jacksonville for an all-star game. I honest to God don't remember.

Did you get any kind of bonus for winning the MVP? I got a souped-up Dodge Charger that I gave to my mother. I remember going back to my hometown to see her and she was quite the sight behind the steering wheel. I let her drive me downtown one time and I was so nervous about riding with her. After that, I asked her if she would let me drive.

I've got to ask about the "Guarantee." I made the statement because I was fed up and tired of hearing what the other team was going to do. I didn't think about it making the media, and the next day I took a beating from my head coach (Weeb Ewbank) at practice. He was angry and asked if I realized what I had done. I said, "No sir." He said, "Look what you've done. You've given them ammunition, something for their bulletin board." I told Coach that it was his fault, that he gave me that confidence (laughs).

STEVE YOUNG
QB, San Francisco 49ers

Super Bowl XXIX MVP and brand ambassador for Van Heusen, whose suits he wears on air as an ESPN football analyst

Did you go to Disney World?
It's not metaphorical when you say you're going to Disney World. You're going, and you're going tomorrow. I was there alone at the time. I don't remember riding the rides, but I loved being there.

Did you get anything besides a trophy? I got a car from Buick, and I guess I could tell the truth: I traded my Buick in for a big truck that I still have.

Where do you keep your MVP trophy?
I believe it is at my alma mater BYU's athletic Hall of Fame. It is either there or at the 49ers Hall of Fame. I'm not sure which one.

Who do you think had the greatest Super Bowl MVP performance in history?
I remember the Super Bowl performances that I watched and tried to emulate. In 1987, Phil Simms completed almost every pass. (Editor's note: Simms completed 22 of 25 passes in Super Bowl XXI, including 10 in a row.)

continued on page 11

MARK RYPIEN
QB, Washington Redskins

Super Bowl XXVI MVP and executive director of the Rypien Foundation, which helps families with children battling cancer

When you think back to Super Bowl XXVI, what's your first memory?
I remember being up at 4 a.m. on Super Bowl Sunday and we didn't play until 5 p.m. I went downstairs at 5 a.m. for breakfast and there were about 10 of my teammates going through the same thing.

Where do you keep your MVP trophy today?
In a case at our airport here in Spokane, Wash. (where Rypien resides), along with a display about the Rypien Foundation and the good work that we are doing.

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ELIQUIS® (apixaban) is a prescription medicine used to reduce the risk of stroke and blood clots in people who have atrial fibrillation, a type of irregular heartbeat, not caused by a heart valve problem.

IMPORTANT SAFETY INFORMATION:

- Do not stop taking ELIQUIS for atrial fibrillation without talking to the doctor who prescribed it for you. Stopping ELIQUIS increases your risk of having a stroke. ELIQUIS may need to be stopped, prior to surgery or a medical or dental procedure. Your doctor will tell you when you should stop taking ELIQUIS and when you may start taking it again. If you have to stop taking ELIQUIS, your doctor may prescribe another medicine to help prevent a blood clot from forming.

- ELIQUIS can cause bleeding, which can be serious, and rarely may lead to death.

- You may have a higher risk of bleeding if you take ELIQUIS and take other medicines that increase your risk of bleeding, such as aspirin, NSAIDs, warfarin (COUMADIN®), heparin, SSRIs or SNRIs, and other blood thinners. Tell your doctor about all medicines, vitamins and supplements you take. While taking ELIQUIS, you may bruise more easily and it may take longer than usual for any bleeding to stop.

- Get medical help right away if you have any of these signs or symptoms of bleeding:
  - unexpected bleeding, or bleeding that lasts a long time, such as unusual bleeding from the gums; nosebleeds that happen often, or menstrual or vaginal bleeding that is heavier than normal
  - bleeding that is severe or you cannot control
  - red, pink, or brown urine; red or black stools (looks like tar)
  - coughing up or vomiting blood or vomit that looks like coffee grounds
  - unexpected pain, swelling, or joint pain; headaches, feeling dizzy or weak

- ELIQUIS is not for patients with artificial heart valves.

- Spinal or epidural blood clots (hematoma). People who take ELIQUIS, and have medicine injected into their spinal and epidural area, or have a spinal puncture have a risk of forming a blood clot that can cause long-term or permanent loss of the ability to move (paralysis).
I was taking warfarin. But ELIQUIS was a better find.

I TAKE ELIQUIS® (apixaban) FOR 3 GOOD REASONS:

1. ELIQUIS reduced the risk of stroke better than warfarin.
2. ELIQUIS had less major bleeding than warfarin.
3. Unlike warfarin, there’s no routine blood testing.

ELIQUIS and other blood thinners increase the risk of bleeding which can be serious, and rarely may lead to death.

Ask your doctor if ELIQUIS is right for you.

This risk is higher if, an epidural catheter is placed in your back to give you certain medicine, you take NSAIDs or blood thinners, you have a history of difficult or repeated epidural or spinal punctures. Tell your doctor right away if you have tingling, numbness, or muscle weakness, especially in your legs and feet.

- Before you take ELIQUIS, tell your doctor if you have: kidney or liver problems, any other medical condition, or ever had bleeding problems. Tell your doctor if you are pregnant or breastfeeding, or plan to become pregnant or breastfeed.

- Do not take ELIQUIS if you currently have certain types of abnormal bleeding or have had a serious allergic reaction to ELIQUIS. A reaction to ELIQUIS can cause hives, rash, itching, and possibly trouble breathing. Get medical help right away if you have sudden chest pain or chest tightness, have sudden swelling of your face or tongue, have trouble breathing, wheezing, or feeling dizzy or faint.

You are encouraged to report negative side effects of prescription drugs to the FDA. Visit www.fda.gov/medwatch, or call 1-800-FDA-1088.

Please see additional Important Product Information on the adjacent page.

Individual results may vary.

Visit ELIQUIS.COM or call 1-855-ELIQUI5

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What Is the most important information I should know about ELIQUIS® (apixaban)?

For people taking ELIQUIS for atrial fibrillation:
- Do not stop taking ELIQUIS without talking to the doctor who prescribed it for you. Stopping ELIQUIS increases your risk of having a stroke. ELIQUIS may need to be stopped, prior to surgery or a medical or dental procedure. Your doctor will tell you when you should stop taking ELIQUIS and when you may start taking it again. If you have to stop taking ELIQUIS, your doctor may prescribe another medicine to help prevent a blood clot from forming.
- ELIQUIS can cause bleeding which can be serious, and rarely may lead to death. This is because ELIQUIS is a blood thinner medicine that reduces blood clotting.
- You may have a higher risk of bleeding if you take ELIQUIS and take other medicines that increase your risk of bleeding, such as aspirin, nonsteroidal anti-inflammatory drugs (called NSAIIDs), warfarin (COUMADIN®), heparin, selective serotonin reuptake inhibitors (SSRIs) or serotonin norepinephrine reuptake inhibitors (SNRIs), and other medicines to help prevent or treat blood clots.
- Tell your doctor if you take any of these medicines. Ask your doctor or pharmacist if you are not sure if your medicine is one listed above.

While taking ELIQUIS:
- you may bruise more easily
- it may take longer than usual for any bleeding to stop
- Call your doctor or get medical help right away if you have any of these signs or symptoms of bleeding when taking ELIQUIS:
  - unexpected bleeding, or bleeding that lasts longer than usual, such as:
    - unusual bleeding from the gums
    - nosebleeds that happen often
    - menstrual bleeding or vaginal bleeding that is heavier than normal
    - bleeding that is severe or you cannot control
    - red, pink, or brown urine
    - red or black stools (looks like tar)
    - cough up blood or blood clots
    - vomit blood or your vomit looks like coffee grounds
    - unexpected pain, swelling, or joint pain
    - headaches, feeling dizzy or weak
- ELIQUIS is not for patients with artificial heart valves.

Spinal or epidural blood clots (hematoma).
- People who take a blood thinner medicine (anticoagulant) like ELIQUIS, and have medicine injected into their spinal and epidural area, or have a spinal puncture have a risk of forming a blood clot that can cause long-term or permanent loss of the ability to move (paralysis). Your risk of developing a spinal or epidural blood clot is higher if:
  - a thin tube called an epidural catheter is placed in your back to give you certain medicine
  - you take NSAIDs or a medicine to prevent blood from clotting
  - you have a history of difficult or repeated epidural or spinal punctures
  - you have a history of problems with your spine or have had surgery on your spine
- If you take ELIQUIS (apixaban) and receive spinal anesthesia or have a spinal puncture, your doctor should watch you closely for symptoms of spinal or epidural blood clots or bleeding. Tell your doctor right away if you have tingling, numbness, or muscle weakness, especially in your legs and feet.

What is ELIQUIS?
- ELIQUIS is a prescription medicine used to:
  - reduce the risk of stroke and blood clots in people who have atrial fibrillation.
  - reduce the risk of forming a blood clot in the legs and lungs of people who have just had hip or knee replacement surgery.
  - treat blood clots in the veins of your legs (deep vein thrombosis) or lungs (pulmonary embolism), and reduce the risk of them occurring again.
  - It is not known if ELIQUIS is safe and effective in children.

Who should not take ELIQUIS?
- Do not take ELIQUIS if you:
  - currently have certain types of abnormal bleeding
  - have had a serious allergic reaction to ELIQUIS.
  - Ask your doctor if you are not sure

What should I tell my doctor before taking ELIQUIS?
- Before you take ELIQUIS, tell your doctor if you:
  - have kidney or liver problems
  - have any other medical condition
  - have ever had bleeding problems
  - are pregnant or plan to become pregnant. It is not known if ELIQUIS will harm your unborn baby
  - are breastfeeding or plan to breastfeed. It is not known if ELIQUIS passes into your breast milk. You and your doctor should decide if you will take ELIQUIS or breastfeed. You should not do both
- Tell all of your doctors and dentists that you are taking ELIQUIS. They should talk to the doctor who prescribed ELIQUIS for you, before you have any surgery, medical or dental procedure.

Tell your doctor about all the medicines you take, including prescription and over-the-counter medicines, vitamins, and herbal supplements. Some of your other medicines may affect the way ELIQUIS (apixaban) works. Certain medicines may increase your risk of bleeding or stroke when taken with ELIQUIS.

How should I take ELIQUIS?
- Take ELIQUIS exactly as prescribed by your doctor. Take ELIQUIS twice every day with or without food, and do not change your dose or stop taking it unless your doctor tells you to. If you miss a dose of ELIQUIS, take it as soon as you remember, and do not take more than one dose at the same time. Do not run out of ELIQUIS. Refill your prescription before you run out. When leaving the hospital following hip or knee replacement, be sure that you will have ELIQUIS available to avoid missing any doses. If you are taking ELIQUIS for atrial fibrillation, stopping ELIQUIS may increase your risk of having a stroke.

What are the possible side effects of ELIQUIS?
- See “What is the most important information I should know about ELIQUIS?”
- ELIQUIS can cause a skin rash or severe allergic reaction. Call your doctor or get medical help right away if you have any of the following symptoms:
  - chest pain or tightness
  - swelling of your face or tongue
  - trouble breathing or wheezing
  - feeling dizzy or faint
- Tell your doctor if you have any side effect that bothers you or that does not go away. These are not all of the possible side effects of ELIQUIS. For more information, ask your doctor or pharmacist.
- Call your doctor for medical advice about side effects. You may report side effects to FDA at 1-800-FDA-1088.
- This is a brief summary of the most important information about ELIQUIS. For more information, talk with your doctor or pharmacist, call 1-855-ELIQUIS (1-855-354-7847), or go to www.ELIQUIS.com.

Manufactured by:
Bristol-Myers Squibb Company
Princeton, New Jersey 08543 USA

Marketed by:
Bristol-Myers Squibb Company
Princeton, New Jersey 08543 USA
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New York, New York 10017 USA

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Bristol-Myers Squibb
Pfizer
Rapid Fire with Super Bowl MVPs

Larry Brown
CB, Dallas Cowboys

Super Bowl XXX MVP and radio personality on The Dallas Cowboys Radio Network

Were you surprised that you were named the Super Bowl MVP?
I was heading to the locker room and didn’t think about winning the MVP until somebody told me that I got it.

Did you go to Disney World?
I got snubbed on Disney World. They chose Emmitt Smith instead. There have only been three or four times when the MVP has been passed over for another player to go to Disney World. And no one called to say I didn’t get chosen. That’s the business.

Did you get anything besides a trophy?
Ford was the game sponsor and I got a Taurus.

Roger Staubach
QB, Dallas Cowboys

Super Bowl VI MVP and executive chairman of JLL Real Estate in Texas

How did becoming the Super Bowl MVP impact your life? Seeing the Cowboys get rid of that stigma of not being able to win the Super Bowl really meant a lot to the team and Coach (Tom) Landry. I looked at winning the Super Bowl as more important than winning the Super Bowl MVP.

Where do you keep your MVP trophy? There really wasn’t a trophy then. I got a football that has “MVP of the Super Bowl” and it’s in my office at home.

Where does the award rank among your all-time accomplishments? My first year of varsity football at Navy we beat Army and that was a huge deal because everything all year is “Beat Army.” Winning that game and winning Super Bowl VI were the highlights of my career.

Did you get anything else for winning MVP? I got a Dodge Charger, but we had three kids, so I asked if I could trade my Dodge Charger in for a station wagon. All of the sudden that made news. Even Don Rickles joked about it on TV.

If you hadn’t won MVP, which of your teammates was most deserving? Our defense completely shut down the Dolphins, and Cornell Green could have gotten the MVP for defending Paul Warfield. You’re supposed to vote for the one game, but I think I ended up with a few votes because of our 10-game winning streak.

Prop Comedy
Super Bowl betting — and prop bets, in particular — attract sharks and suckers alike. Those who can’t afford a $4.5-million, 30-second commercial spot on NBC’s telecast or a $3,000 nosebleed seat at University of Phoenix Stadium but do have enough lunch money to wager on Super Sunday can let a few bucks ride on a variety of fun bets. Here are a few fast facts to ensure that your wager is smart money.

National Anthem Duration
Francis Scott Key’s “The Star-Spangled Banner” has range, so to speak. Here’s a reference of recent history, including Alicia Keys’ record time of 2:36, which topped Natalie Cole’s oft-criticized previous mark of 2:32.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Duration</th>
<th>Name</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2:36</td>
<td>Alicia Keys (SB XLVII)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1:53</td>
<td>Renee Fleming (Super Bowl XLVIII)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1:54</td>
<td>Christina Aguilera (SB XLV)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1:54</td>
<td>Jordin Sparks (SB XLII)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1:53</td>
<td>Kelly Clarkson (SB XLVI)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1:47</td>
<td>Carrie Underwood (SB XLIV)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2:10</td>
<td>Jennifer Hudson (SB XLIII)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1:53</td>
<td>Billy Joel (SB XLI)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Coin Toss Results
"Tails never fails" did the trick for the Seahawks last year. But heads was on a five consecutive Super Bowl run prior to that. And while heads vs. tails is a tie, NFC teams have won twice as many coin tosses as their AFC counterparts.

Gatorade Shower Color
Traditionally, the winning coach gets an ice bucket of Gatorade dumped over him by way of an ambush. That’s not always the case, however. Bill Belichick has three Super Bowl wins but only one Gatorade bath on his résumé. The key to making a splash is guessing what color liquid it will be. Since 2000, this is how the color wheel has spun:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Color</th>
<th>Teams</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Clear</td>
<td>Giants, Colts, Steelers, Patriots</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Orange</td>
<td>Seahawks, Packers, Saints</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No Shower</td>
<td>Ravens, Patriots twice</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Purple</td>
<td>Giants, Buccaneers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yellow</td>
<td>Steelers, Ravens</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
BY MATT McCUE

BIG HANDS DON'T GUARANTEE LARGE PAYOUTS
"I've seen a lot of money lost with a hand like a King/Queen because, once the big money starts going in, the opponent usually has a hand that dominates it. When I say, 'dominate,' I mean that someone might have an Ace/King or Ace/Queen; therefore, they have one of your cards and a card over your other one."

GET THE RIGHT VALUE FROM YOUR HAND
"There is no specific hand to go 'all in' on because, even if you have the most powerful hand possible, you may be more concerned about getting paid off. If you bet too much, you'll make your opponents fold."

REVIEW GAME TAPE
"Reading other people at the table is not easy, but every person out there can improve their reading abilities. I would advise someone to watch videos of players without the sound and try to guess what they have based on the way they are acting. To practice, pull up a YouTube video and do this for 10 minutes at your house."

EMPLOY SMOKE AND MIRRORS
"If you bet 10 times over five hours of play and nobody calls you, then you have to start adding some bluffs. If you get called, they will see you bluffing, which will get you future action. And, if you can get away with a bluff, you're winning money."

DITCH THE HATS, SHADES AND HEADPHONES
"I don't think that all that stuff helps. People want to go and have a nice social experience. But if people know when you are weak and when you are strong, then go ahead and put sunglasses on."

HOW TO WIN AT POKER
Getting together with your buddies (or strangers) for a night of poker can be a lot of fun. But it's considerably more enjoyable when you're staring down at a huge stack of chips at the end of the night.

To elevate your game, we asked World Series of Poker (WSOP) Hall of Famer Phil Hellmuth — winner of 13 WSOP bracelets — to teach us how to dominate at his favorite parlor game, Texas Hold 'em.

KNOW WHEN TO FOLD 'EM
"Going for broke on every hand is a horrible strategy. A lot of times you'll have the second- or third-best hand and you're going to get called by the best hand."

SKILL TRUMPS LUCK
"A bad player will never beat a good player if they play 10 hours, no matter how much luck is involved. In 1986, the Supreme Court ruled that poker players can pay taxes as a business because the game is a game of skill."

PRACTICE, PRACTICE, PRACTICE
"The more experience you have, the better. Some of the online poker players have played more hands in six months than I have in my lifetime. ... You can pick up a lot of experience quickly if you're playing online poker."

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For millions of Americans, lower back pain is a common occurrence. We asked Los Angeles Dodgers strength and conditioning coach Brandon McDaniel for his best advice on keeping the aches and pains at bay.

**Maximize Gluteus**

"The stronger you make your glutes (butt), the better you'll be at bending over to pick things up without hurting your back," McDaniel says. "I'll start a rookie with goblet squats or kettlebell deadlifts." Once mastered, move up to barbells with heavier weight.

**Medicine Ball**

"Medicine ball chest passes and med ball slams" both force your core to tighten and adjust to the weight as you catch and throw it.

**More Core**

Your core works as a support structure for your lower back. "Planks, side planks and glute bridges are all good for strengthening your core." Warm up for your workouts with three rounds of one minute each of those exercises to get your core ready to work.

**No Heavy Machinery**

If your back is sore, don't attempt to "strengthen" it by using the back extension machine at your gym. "That machine will likely just break it down more."

**Loosen Up**

If you're sore from yesterday's workout, go through a thorough warm-up. "Go through a dynamic movement, hit the foam roller, stretch and warm up thoroughly," McDaniel says.
CHEESY DOES IT
Fritos Jalapeño Cheddar Dip. Intended to be served piping hot, this multi-purpose cheese sauce has enough jalapeño spice to jump start a plate of tortilla chips or a chili dog begging for ooey-gooey cheesy spiciness.

COWBOY UP
Pace Black Bean Dip. A new offering from the folks who made picante famous, this Southwest-style bean dip has a smooth consistency and delivers just enough of a tasty garlic kick. Perfect for nachos.

CREAM OF THE CROP
Tostitos Creamy Spinach Dip. Served hot or cold, this creamy blend packs a flavorful punch and goes with just about anything. Chips beware, with this dip around someone might actually eat off the vegetable tray.

OOH LA LA
Lay’s French Onion Dip. This take on a classic dip walks a fine line by offering just enough of that zesty onion flavor without being so pungent and overpowering that no one wants to talk to you.

On Super Bowl Sunday, football fans will consume roughly 20 million pounds of chips — of both the potato and tortilla variety. But what’s a chip without dip? We decided to run a supermarket sweep on the best dips money can buy. Open the jars and get ready to refill the chips, your party will love these dips.

I challenge you to take a pie in the face for the cause you care about.

Download the We365 app for free

Each download helps give goats to provide income to families in developing countries.
IMPORTANT INFORMATION ABOUT SYMBICORT

Please read this summary carefully and then ask your doctor about SYMBICORT.

No advertisement can provide all the information needed to determine if a drug is right for you or take the place of careful discussions with your health care provider. Only your health care provider has the training to weigh the risks and benefits of a prescription drug.

WHAT IS THE MOST IMPORTANT INFORMATION I SHOULD KNOW ABOUT SYMBICORT?

People with asthma who take long-acting beta,-agonist (LABA) medicines, such as formoterol (one of the medicines in SYMBICORT), have an increased risk of death from asthma problems. It is not known whether budesonide, the other medicine in SYMBICORT, reduces the risk of death from asthma problems seen with formoterol.

SYMBICORT should be used only if your health care provider decides that your asthma is not well controlled with a long-term asthma control medicine, such as an inhaled corticosteroid, or that your asthma is severe enough to begin treatment with SYMBICORT.

Talk with your health care provider about this risk and the benefits of treating your asthma with SYMBICORT.

If you are taking SYMBICORT, see your health care provider if your asthma does not improve or gets worse. It is important that your health care provider assess your asthma control on a regular basis. Your doctor will decide if it is possible for you to stop taking SYMBICORT and start taking a long-term asthma control medicine without loss of asthma control.

Get emergency medical care if:
- breathing problems worsen quickly, and
- you use your rescue inhaler medicine, but it does not relieve your breathing problems.

Children and adolescents who take LABA medicines may be at increased risk of being hospitalized for asthma problems.

WHAT IS SYMBICORT?

SYMBICORT is an inhaled prescription medicine used for asthma and chronic obstructive pulmonary disease (COPD). It contains two medicines:
- Budesonide (the same medicine found in Pulmicort RespHaler), an inhaled corticosteroid, helps to decrease inflammation in the lungs. Inflammation in the lungs can lead to asthma symptoms.
- Formoterol (the same medicine found in Foradil Aerosol), a LABA medicine, is used in patients with COPD and asthma to help the muscles in the airways relax and prevent asthma symptoms, such as wheezing and shortness of breath. These symptoms can happen when the muscles in the airways tighten. This makes it hard to breathe, which, in severe cases, can cause breathing to stop completely if not treated right away.

SYMBICORT is used for asthma and chronic obstructive pulmonary disease as follows:

- Asthma
- COPD

SYMBICORT is used to control symptoms of asthma and prevent symptoms such as wheezing in adults and children ages 12 and older.

WHO SHOULD NOT USE SYMBICORT?

Do not use SYMBICORT if you have asthma or COPD and you are allergic to any of the ingredients in SYMBICORT.

WHAT SHOULD I TELL MY HEALTH CARE PROVIDER BEFORE USING SYMBICORT?

Tell your health care provider about all of your health conditions, including:
- heart problems
- high blood pressure
- seizures
- thyroid problems
- diabetes
- liver problems
- osteoporosis
- an immune system problem
- eye problems such as increased pressure in the eye, glaucoma, or cataracts
- allergic to any medicines
- exposure to chicken pox or measles
- pregnant or planning to become pregnant
- breastfeeding

DO NOT USE SYMBICORT unless your health care provider has taught you how to use it and you understand everything. Ask your health care provider or pharmacist if you have any questions.

Use SYMBICORT exactly as prescribed. Do not use SYMBICORT more often than prescribed. SYMBICORT comes in two strengths for asthma: 60/4.5 mcg and 160/4.5 mcg. Your health care provider will prescribe the strength that is best for you. SYMBICORT 160/4.5 mcg is the approved dosage for COPD.

SYMBICORT should be taken every day as 2 puffs in the morning and 2 puffs in the evening.

If you have asthma, rinse your mouth with water and spit the water out after each dose (2 puffs) of SYMBICORT. This will help reduce the chance of getting a fungus infection (thrush) in the mouth and throat.

Do not spray SYMBICORT in your eyes. If you accidentally get SYMBICORT in your eyes, rinse your eyes with water. If redness or irritation persists, call your health care provider.

Do not change or stop any medicines used to control or treat your breathing problems. Your health care provider will change your medications as needed.

While you are using SYMBICORT 2 times each day, do not use other medicines that contain a long-acting beta,-agonist (LABA) for any reason. Ask your health care provider or pharmacist if any of your other medicines are LABA medicines.

SYMBICORT does not relieve sudden symptoms. Always have a rescue inhaler medicine with you to treat sudden symptoms. If you do not have a rescue inhaler, call your health care provider to have one prescribed for you.

WHAT MEDICATIONS SHOULD I NOT TAKE WHILE USING SYMBICORT?

While you are using SYMBICORT, do not use other medicines that contain a long-acting beta,-agonist (LABA) for any reason, such as:
- Seretide Diskus [(salmeterol xinafoate inhalation powder)
- Advair Diskus or Advair HFA (fluticasone propionate and salmeterol)
- Formoterol-containing products such as Foradil Aerolizer, Browera®, or Performatm®

WHAT ARE THE POSSIBLE SIDE EFFECTS WITH SYMBICORT?

SYMBICORT can cause serious side effects:

- Increased risk of pneumonia and other lower respiratory tract infections if you have COPD. Call your health care provider if you notice any of these symptoms: increase in mucus production, change in mucus color, fever, chills, increased cough, increased breathing problems.
- Serious allergic reactions including rash, hives, swelling of the face, mouth, and tongue, and breathing problems. Call your health care provider if any of these symptoms occur.
- Immune system effects and a higher chance for infections.
- Asthma exacerbation—a condition in which the asthma symptoms do not improve or get worse despite taking your medicine.
- Cardiorenal and central nervous system effects of LABAs, such as chest pain, increased blood pressure, fast or irregular heartbeat, tremor, or nervousness.
- Increased wheezing right after taking SYMBICORT.
- Eye problems, including glaucoma and cataracts. You should have regular eye exams while using SYMBICORT.
- Osteoporosis. People at risk for increased bone loss may have a greater risk with SYMBICORT.
- Showed growth in children. As a result, growth should be carefully monitored.
- Swelling of your blood vessels. This can happen in people with asthma.
- Decreases in blood potassium levels and increases in blood sugar levels.

WHAT ARE COMMON SIDE EFFECTS OF SYMBICORT?

Patients with Asthma

- Sore throat, headache, upper respiratory tract infection, flu in the mouth and throat.

Patients with COPD

- Throat irritation, upper respiratory tract infection, fever.

These are not all the side effects with SYMBICORT. Ask your health care provider or pharmacist for more information.

NOTE: This summary provides important information about SYMBICORT. For more information, please ask your doctor or health care provider.

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Inhalation Aerosol

AstraZeneca
For patients 12 years and older whose asthma is not well controlled on a long-term asthma medicine or whose disease severity warrants

**IMPORTANT INFORMATION ABOUT SYMBICORT**

Important Safety Information About SYMBICORT

SYMBICORT contains formoterol, a long-acting beta-adrenergic agonist (LABA). LABA medicines such as formoterol increase the risk of death from asthma problems. It is not known whether budesonide, the other medicine in SYMBICORT, reduces the risk of death from asthma problems seen with formoterol.

- Call your health care provider if breathing problems worsen over time while using SYMBICORT. You may need different treatment.
- Get emergency medical care if:
  - Breathing problems worsen quickly, and
  - You use your rescue inhaler medicine, but it does not relieve your breathing problems

SYMBICORT should be used only if your health care provider decides that your asthma is not well controlled with a long-term asthma control medicine, such as an inhaled corticosteroid, or that your asthma is severe enough to begin treatment with SYMBICORT.

If you are taking SYMBICORT, see your health care provider if your asthma does not improve or gets worse. It is important that your health care provider assess your asthma control on a regular basis. Your doctor will decide if it is possible for you to stop taking SYMBICORT and start taking a long-term asthma control medicine without loss of asthma control.

Children and adolescents who take LABA medicines may have an increased risk of being hospitalized for asthma problems.

SYMBICORT does not replace rescue inhalers for sudden symptoms.

Be sure to tell your health care provider about all your health conditions, including heart conditions or high blood pressure, and all medicines you may be taking. Some patients taking SYMBICORT may experience increased blood pressure, heart rate, or change in heart rhythm.

Do not use SYMBICORT more often than prescribed. While taking SYMBICORT, never use another medicine containing a LABA for any reason. Ask your health care provider or pharmacist if any of your other medicines are LABA medicines.

SYMBICORT can cause serious side effects, including:

- Pneumonia and other lower respiratory tract infections. People with COPD may have a higher chance of pneumonia. Call your doctor if you notice any of the following symptoms: change in amount or color of mucus, fever, chills, increased cough, or increased breathing problems

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A MODEL CAMPER

On the circus and self-esteem

BY MIRINDA LEA JAMES
Special Columnist

F or a fun alternative to a traditional summer camp experience, consider sending your child to CirkEsteem Camp, located at 4730 N. Sheridan Road in Chicago.

The mission of CirkEsteem is to improve the campers' self-esteem and interpersonal communication skills using fun and interactive circus activities such as juggling, clowning, acrobatics, trapeze, tight rope walking, aerial arts etc. Students are allowed to work at their own pace in an interactive hands-on environment. The camp provides a supportive and challenging environment to learn these fun circus activities and to develop self-confidence and a sense of their personal potential.

The summer camp and the classes offered by CirkEsteem are open to children ages 5 and up. Enrolment is open. Receive a 10-percent early-bird discount if you register by March 15. In 2015, camp will be held Monday - Friday from 9 a.m. - 3 p.m. Weekly sessions will be held from June 22 - Aug. 14. Before and after care are available.

Children who attend this weeklong program will have the opportunity to show off their newly acquired circus performing skills to their family and friends during a show at the end of the week. Campers are given the opportunity to play with different outfits and props during their performance preparation in order to better express themselves and what they have learned during the week. CirkEsteem provides opportunities for children who are beginners and learning circus for the first time, as well as advanced students wanting to perfect their circus abilities.

For more information, call 847-205-0274 or visit keshet.org.

Circus Reads, which enhances the students' literacy by allowing them to participate in projects and games to develop their reading, writing, and public speaking skills. Circus Arts, which includes clowning and physical comedy, unicycling and performance troop preparation; and the popular tumbling and trampoline. All of these classes, as well as the summer camp, support CirkEsteem's central mission of strengthening the children's personal confidence and self-esteem in a challenging, supportive and fun atmosphere.

To view the details of CirkEsteem and to read testimonials about how the summer camp program positively influenced previous campers, visit cirkesteem.org or call (312) 731-4242.
Be healthy and happy at camp this summer

BY NIKI PAPAK
Banner Day Camp

These long, cold winter days sometimes make it difficult to focus on the fun of camp that awaits us every summer. A great camp is more than just fun and games. Camp provides a tremendous opportunity for children to begin laying the foundation for a healthy and happy lifestyle. Camp does more than just form a bridge between the school years. A summer spent playing, laughing, growing and learning can be the catalyst for a lifetime of happiness and success for your children.

Camp provides a unique opportunity to enjoy and explore a wide variety of physical activities. Traditional sports like baseball, soccer, basketball and football, provide campers an engaging opportunity to learn and play. In addition, campers gain exposure to sports and activities that they might otherwise not have experienced, such as high ropes, pioneering or kayaking.

Daily swimming provides campers with a chance for physical development as well as a valuable life skill. Playgrounds and creative play areas allow campers to exercise their bodies as well as their imaginations. This sort of play is essential to the development of healthy, well-adjusted children. Through increased physical activity, children will build stronger, healthier bodies and an appreciation for an active lifestyle, which will in turn help set the stage for a healthier and happier adulthood. Camp provides a refreshing change from the rigors of the school year to focus on just playing and the enjoyment that comes from being outdoors.

A traditional outdoor camp setting imparts a sense of adventure and offers the freedom and opportunity to explore our natural environment. Too often, suburban sprawl confines us to small, self-contained play areas like a neighborhood park. Camp empowers children to disconnect from the TV or gaming platform and to reconnect and enjoy the expansive, natural beauty that once surrounded us. From the simple exploration of a muddy creek bed in search of animal tracks to racing down a zipline through the trees, camp provides an opportunity to unplug from the day to day grind and over-programming that has percolated down to our children. Outdoor experiences like these afford a remarkable opportunity to add a sense of wonder and awe back to play.

Camp offers all this in an environment that encourages and strengthens friendship, team building and the ability to grow while having fun. The spirit of joy and laughter that resonates through a campground, as well as permeates a child's memory, represents the most fitting tribute to any summer spent at camp. It is no surprise that children frequently attend camp with their friends. What is perhaps more surprising is the number and depth of relationships with which children emerge from camp. Lifelong friendships are forged and cemented at camp every summer. That ability to make new friends represents an enduring skill that will continue to pay dividends through college and beyond. Every summer, campers grow so close to their counselors that the joy of the summer is always punctuated by the realization of how much they will miss their counselor; at least they will see them back at camp next year.

Editor: Tammy Matthews
Design: Meghan Merda

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Explorers clinic introduces tennis to toddlers

BY ANDY FRYE

The Chicago-based Midtown Athletic Clubs knows it's never too early to introduce the game to the next generation of tennis enthusiasts, particularly little ones. Tennis Explorers is geared specifically to introducing three- and four-year-olds to tennis. This a one-of-a-kind program at Midtown, a national leader in tennis for 40 some years, is offered at its clubs in Chicago, Bannockburn, Palatine and Willowbrook locations. Visit midtown.com/tennis-explorers for schedules and registration information for each location.

The Tennis Explorer's program is a fun, creative way for toddlers to develop their motor skills. By using play and imagination, the program blends physical activities with storytelling in an on-court environment.

The 10-week program consists of 45-minute classes that include participation with a parent or caregiver. Club membership is not required. Children can learn tennis with a child-appropriate, 17-inch racket on a court with a shorter net using a ball, called a red ball, which is lighter with less bounce. "There's a different approach to teaching children," said Mike Mahoney, general manager and senior vice president of Midtown's Chicago club. "We've designed the program to give children the chance to develop motor skills, balance and coordination in an environment they can relate to."

Right-sized rackets and smaller courts are one thing; however, the aim is also to not only be physically active but also socially interactive. During each of the 10 weeks, the instructor and children talk about other countries. One week, it's England, France and Italy. The next, they will learn about countries in Africa, Asia and the Western Hemisphere. The purpose is to teach children to think and talk about other cultures and the places that both tennis and a good education can take them. After each lesson, the kids get a new stamp in their Tennis Explorers passport. Participants will also receive a kid-sized traveling backpack designed by Wilson Sporting Goods.

Developed by an early-child-education specialist, Tennis Explorers hones in on promoting hand-eye coordination, footwork and locomotion. Drills largely consist of throwing, catching and rolling the ball as well as classic kid fun such as running, jumping and skipping exercises. Meanwhile, children gain composure on control body position and posture, while boosting their interaction with the people and their social environment. Lessons also work in learning about letters, numbers, colors and shapes.

Mahoney and Midtown think that getting kids involved early can provide that spark that will ignite a lifelong love affair with the game, while also pairing sports and recreation with a love of learning.

"We teach this kind of program first and foremost to have fun. But tennis has been other programs, in European countries, that teach with right-sized rackets, and child appropriate sized settings," Mahoney said. "It's like a Little League twice. Not only do children learn better skills better. An age appropriate tennis environment also catapults them toward greater success."
**NILES**

**TUESDAY, FEB. 17**

**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. 29**

**Winter Reading Program: Hot Reads for Cold Nights**
9 a.m.: The Winter Reading Program now in progress. The more one reads, the greater one's chances to win weekly prizes of gift cards to the Glenview Grind or the grand prize—a specially designed themed gift basket. Stop by the Reader Services Desk to fill out an entry slip for each book read in January and rate your book on a scale of hot to cold. Can’t make it to the Library to submit your entry? Enter online at glenviewpl.org/booksE-books beginning Jan. 4. Open to Glenview Library adults and high school teens. A special thanks to the Glenview Grind for being the sponsor. Program ends on Jan. 31. Glenview Public Library, 1930 Glenview Road, Glenview. Call 847-729-7500.

**Humanities Discussion**
10:15 a.m.: The group meets each Thursday to discuss some of the classics. Park Ridge Senior Center, 100 S. Western Ave., Park Ridge. Call 847-692-5127.

**NEW! GenealogyBank**
2 p.m.: Discover how to search for historical newspapers with the GenealogyBank database. 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. Call 847-729-7500.

**Lyric Opera of Chicago Lecture Series: Tannhauser**

**Friday Night Live**
6 p.m.: Friday Night Live Club is a fun and safe club designed for students in fourth and fifth grades. Each month is themed with live DJ. Everyone is guaranteed to have a blast! Pre-register or pay if needed. Bring lunch. Gatherings often last until 2 or 3 p.m. North Shore Senior Center, 11640 N. Reserve Road, Northfield. Call 847-784-8000.

**Duplicate Bridge**
9 a.m.: The senior center offers a friendly bridge group every Friday morning. Park Ridge Senior Center, 100 S. Western Ave., Park Ridge. Call 847-692-5127.

**SATURDAY, JAN. 31**

**Snowshoe Ramble to Lake County**
9 a.m.: Snowshoe the trails at Daniel Wright Woods near Mettawa, exploring through woodlands and along the DesPlaines River. Snowshoe or hike at this Lake County Forest Preserve as conditions permit. Dress in layers and wear warm, sturdy hiking boots. Trail snacks, snowshoes, and transportation by van are provided. Please note, lunch at a local restaurant is not included in the fee. Ages 18+. Emily Oaks Nature Center, 4550 Brummel St., Skokie. Call 847-677-7001. $32 Skokie resident, $40 non-resident.

**Indoor Farmers’ Market**
9 a.m.: Come buy local frozen berries, meats, cheeses, a variety of winter vegetables, baked goods, preserves, soups and much more. Link cards accepted, including matching Double Value incentive! A children’s activity table provided by the Glenview New Church School. The Glenview New Church, 74 Park Dr., Glenview. Call 847-862-4073.

**Shabbat Children’s Program**
7 a.m.: Shabbat in Shabbat Kids Club can enjoy a program that includes diving, interactive games, a healthy snack and stories. Lubavitch Chabad of Skokie, 4059 Dempster St., Skokie. Call 847-677-1770.

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

**Family Art & Adventure: Parent/Child class**
10 a.m.: Now the whole family can enjoy creative exploration together. Support your child’s creativity in an open, playful atmosphere where adventurous use of materials is encouraged. Taught by Jan Elfenstein who has been making art fun for children the last thirty years! Great for kids of all ages.

**BABY SIGNS®: Family Sign, Say & Play®**
11 a.m.: Pre-readers learn sign language with their families — new vocabulary, songs, and play activities each month. Led by Jamie Stevens, ASL interpreter and certified Baby Signs® instructor. Ages birth-5. Just drop in. Glenview Public Library, 1930 Glenview Road, Glenview. Call 847-729-7500 ext. 7900.

**LEGO® Robotics Workshop**
2:30 p.m.: Staff from C & A Robot Factory guide teams step-by-step in building and then using computer software to animate their LEGO® creations. Grade 5-8. Registration is required and preference is given to Glenview Library cardholders. Register at glenviewpl.org/register, 847-729-7500 Ext. 7900, or the Youth Services Desk. Glenview Public Library, 1930 Glenview Road, Glenview.

**Strike Out Hunger**
6 p.m.: Heartland Heath Outreach (HHO) is hosting its 18th annual Strike Out Hunger bowling fundraiser. The event will raise funds for HHO’s Vital Bridges Center on Chronic Care program. This fundraising-favorite typically welcomes more than 100 guests and is the result of a combined effort of the 9 tow Bowling League, River Rand Bowl and HHO. At Strike Out Hunger, guests bowl three games in teams of six and enjoy a light dinner and snacks while grooving to music by DJ Jim Stubblefield. Guests will have the opportunity to enter two raffles, featuring three grand prizes and goodies. Individual tickets are $40 or $200 for a team of six and are available online at http://action.heartlandalliance.org/site/Calendar?id=105481&view=Detail. River Rand Bowl, 191 S. River Road, Des Plaines. Call 773-271-5140. $40-$200.

**Owl Moon Fireside**
6 p.m.: Hear the delightful story, "Owl Moon," about a young girl who goes owling with her father in winter, and learn how to "who, whoo" like Great Horned Owls searching for a mate. Attendees will be heading outdoors to call to the owls, so dress for the weather. The fireside concludes with hot chocolate and a look at owl pellets. Ages 3+. Emily Oaks Nature Center, 4550 Brummel St., Skokie. Call 847-677-7001. $5.

**New Trier Booster Bash, catch the Green Team spirit!**
7:30 p.m.: The New Trier Booster Club hosts their annual fundraising event. The Bash takes place at Fields Land Rover’s new showroom and lasts...
Skokie: Invaded But Not Conquered
2 p.m. Registration required. In 1977 Skokie was shaken to its core when a small group of neo-Nazis tried to march there. This attracted national and international attention, leading to landmark legal cases. The American Nazi Party's application for a parade permit was denied by a federal judge in Chicago.

Fields Land Rover Northfield, 670 Frontage Road, Northfield. $80-$100.

MCPL Kids: Monday Morning Playgroup
10:30 a.m. Drop-in play time for preschoolers with a parent or caregiver to introduce young children to the library in a low-key, unstructured session. Call 847-929-5002 or visit www.mcpl.org for more information. Morton Grove Public Library, 6140 Lincoln Ave., Morton Grove. Free.

Science Night
6 p.m. Can a large, fuzzy brown rodent really predict the weather? Have fun with the family while learning about groundhogs, shadows, and meet Wildwood Nature Center's groundhog cousins - the prairie dogs! Register online at www.prparks.org. Wildwood Nature Center, 529 Forestview Ave., Park Ridge. Call 847-692-3570. $12 per family.

Yarn Gang
4 p.m. Kids in grades one and up are invited to try their hand at knitting, crocheting or other yarn crafts. Morton Grove Public Library, 6140 Lincoln Ave., Morton Grove. Call 847-965-4220.

Jewish Soul Care Sampler
6:30 p.m. Beth Hillel Congregation B'nai Emunah presents "Jewish Soul Care Sampler" a mid-winter micro retreat for the soul. Rabbi Heather Altman, a Yoga Alliance registered yoga teacher will lead classes at 6:30 p.m. on Feb. 2, 9 and 23. Call for information. Beth Hillel Congregation, 3220 Big Tree Lane, Wilmette. Call 847-256-1213. $10 per person per session.

CANDIDATE SPOTLIGHT

Do you feel ignored, ripped off or taken advantage of?

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This weekly column is geared up to provide consumer tips and stories that help readers solve issues with businesses.

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La-Z-Boy customer can’t get comfy with return policy

HELP SQUAD
BY CATHY CUNNINGHAM

DEAR HELP SQUAD,

I’m hoping you might be able to help me in my fight with La-Z-Boy over the purchase of a recliner. I have had over three months’ worth of interaction with “Customer Care.” I really don’t know what to do next. PLEASE, PLEASE help me return this chair that now sits unused in my living room. I am simply exhausted!

Pam, Huntley

Help Squad asked Pam to provide more information on the issue she was experiencing with her new recliner. In response, Pam sent a very detailed log documenting every interaction she had had with La-Z-Boy from the chair’s purchase on Aug. 8, to La-Z-Boy’s several attempts at repair, to her complete exasperation on Dec. 23, following several requests for a full refund.

Below is a summary of her saga:
• 8/8/14 Pam ordered “the chair of her dreams,” a leather Pinnacle Power Recliner XR+, for $2024.29.
• 9/17/14 The chair was delivered. Immediately after sitting in the chair, Pam was “horrified by how badly it hurt my back. It felt like a brick in my lumbar area!” She was told by the store there was nothing they could do; La-Z-Boy Customer Care would have to schedule a technician to come out.
• 10/1/14 A technician from Advantage came to Pam’s home, looked at the chair without sitting in it, took pictures and stated it met company standards.
• 10/8/14 Customer Care called and said there was nothing wrong with the chair. Pam asked for a refund and was denied. Following a lengthy conversation, Pam was told she would receive a new back cushion.
• 10/20/14 Pam received, not a new back cushion, but two large bags of stuffing that required another visit from Advantage to remove and replace the seat back’s inners.
• 11/3/14 Upon replacing the stuffing, the Advantage technician informed Pam there had been several complaints about this particular recliner. For a short time the new stuffing provided Pam some relief from her recliner’s “brick-like” lumbar support, but within two weeks the cushion compacted.
• 11/17/14 Pam called Customer Care again, and again Advantage was scheduled for a house call. Said Pam, “By now I felt like I was in the movie ‘Groundhog Day!’”
• 12/12/14 No call or visit from Advantage. Resulted from Pam’s Nov. 17 call to Customer Care. Pam was furious. She contacted a Customer Care manager and demanded a full refund. She asked, “What does La-Z-Boy’s motto ‘Live Life Comfortably’ mean?”

According to Pam, the manager responded, “Ma’am, we do not guarantee comfort.” An Advantage technician arrived that afternoon to inspect and sit in the recliner. He agreed the chair was not comfortable.
• 12/19/14 A La-Z-Boy Customer Care representative called Pam after receiving Advantage’s report. Pam was told her chair was up to code. Pam expressed her expletive-sprinkled disbelief and was asked by Customer Care if she would like a manager to call her back.

As of Jan. 15, 2015, Pam still had not heard from a La-Z-Boy manager. On Jan. 16, Help Squad called La-Z-Boy Customer Care and was immediately referred to Amy Hellesbyck, manager of brand marketing and public relations. Help Squad explained Pam’s situation to Amy and forwarded Pam’s detailed call log.

The next morning Help Squad received the following email: “I’ve worked with our escalation team to address this matter. [T]he team will be contacting the customer today to pick up the chair and issue a full refund. We believe this will help resolve the issue!”

Pam was thrilled! But then ... the scheduled pick-up day came and went with no pick-up.

The next morning Help Squad got back in touch with Amy. She very quickly looked into the situation and less than four hours later the chair was picked up. By that evening a full refund had been posted to Pam’s credit card.

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.

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Get up and go

Your guide to the weekend and beyond

Every Thursday

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Lived in Morton Grove in 60s-70s?
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WORLD HONEYMOON MYSTERY

In late 1960s a young couple got married, flew to Tokyo, purchased the truck and drove around the world for two years, settling in Morton Grove afterwards (that's what we've gathered so far)

If you know anything about it or know someone who might know - please contact us!

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Thomas W. Begg Jr. of Indian Head Park, director of security life safety for the AON Center in Chicago, was awarded the Security Professional of the Year Award by the Building Owners & Managers Association of Chicago. Begg has been employed at the AON Center for more than 10 years.

Des Plaines Office Equipment has joined the M-Files Corporation Partner Program. As an M-Files partner, Des Plaines Office Equipment joins more than 975 other partners in more than 80 countries.

The Chicago advertising industry honored David Selby, president of Schafer Condon Carter, with the Chicago Advertising Federation Silver Medal award for his career and community accomplishments on Jan. 22 at a gala luncheon in Chicago.

John L. D'Angelo Jr., vice president of engineering and facilities operations at New York-Presbyterian Hospital, has been named the new vice president for facilities at Northwestern University, effective Feb. 16. D’Angelo will be responsible for the development and management of the Evanston and Chicago campuses and will play an advisory, high-level, oversight role for the Doha campus in Qatar.

He was chosen after a national search to succeed former Vice President Ron Nayler.

First Bank & Trust is honored to announce that two of its top executives — Senior Vice President of Commercial Banking Michael Corr and Vice President of Banking and Branch Manager David Putrus — both recently began terms as presidents of the Evanston and Skokie chambers of commerce, respectively.

Lake Zurich resident, long-time Comcast employee and project management and process improvement expert Wendy Liu has been named vice president of Customer Experience for Comcast’s Greater Chicago.
SNOW LEOPARDS

Brookfield Zoo animal spotlight

BY BROOKFIELD ZOO

Pioneer Press features one (or more) of Brookfield Zoo's animals each month with some background information about the animal, its species, its family and its connection to the zoo. This month is the snow leopard, which lives in The Fragile Kingdom exhibit.

Q: Tell us a little bit about the snow leopards at Brookfield Zoo.
A: In the wild, snow leopards live in a range that extends across 12 countries in Central Asia, from Eastern Afghanistan and Uzbekistan, northeast through China and Mongolia to Southern Russia and south to Northern India, Bhutan and Nepal. Despite their extensive range, there are only about 6,500 left in the wild. They have been considered endangered since the mid 1980s.

The Chicago Zoological Society, which manages Brookfield Zoo, participates in the Association of Zoos and Aquariums Snow Leopard Species Survival Plan and is home to a breeding pair. Male Sabu was born at the Cape May Zoo on May 10, 2010. Female Sarani, born Oct. 13, 2011, hails from Tautphaus Park Zoo. They both arrived at Brookfield Zoo in October 2011. Sabu and Sarani have one male offspring named Everest. He was born on June 13, 2013, and now lives at Lincoln Children's Zoo in Nebraska, where it is expected he will also breed.

Q: How agile are snow leopards?
A: Snow leopards occasionally run up to 40 miles per hour in short bursts. However, the steep mountainous terrain requires jumping and climbing to a greater extent. They can jump up to 45 feet by leaping and ricocheting off the sheer rocky landscape.

Q: How do snow leopards stay warm in the mountains of Asia?
A: Their long, dense fur is suited to their high altitude environment. They also have a built-in blanket in their long and fluffy tail, and their paws have a cushion of hair that increases the surface area and act like insulating snowshoes. A snow leopard's nose functions as a built-in heat exchanger. The large nasal cavity helps heat up the chilly air before it reaches the lungs. Their fur is a soft gray and cream color with dark brown or black splotches. It helps them blend in with their snowy, rocky environment. Their natural camouflage keeps them hidden from both predators and prey.

Q: How is the snow leopard population doing in the wild?
A: Unfortunately, their beauty has added to their endangerment. During the 1920s as many as a thousand snow leopards were killed yearly for their fur, a number that has greatly declined due to wildlife protection. Many are still poached for their fur and for bones used as a traditional medicine. Additionally, their habitat has significantly decreased due to agricultural expansion. In agricultural areas, snow leopards hunt and kill livestock, causing farmers and ranchers to kill them in response.

Creating corrals for protecting livestock and supporting handicraft sources for alternate income are ongoing conservation strategies. The Chicago Zoological Society also administers the Chicago Board of Trade Endangered Species Fund, which has funded research projects focused on snow leopard conservation.

Q: Anything else that you want to say about these cats?
A: Snow leopards are elusive and solitary animals. Field researchers will often only see evidence of their communication with each other — scraped ground, scratched trees, shed fur, urine and feces all carrying messages to each other. Camera trapping and fecal analysis have become important tools for studying these rare cats. Snow leopards are also the only large cats that do not roar, although they do hiss, mew, growl, wail, and chuff. Chuffing is a friendly greeting — a soft airy vocalization.

To learn more about the snow leopards and the other animals at Brookfield Zoo, go to www.CZS.org or like Brookfield Zoo on Facebook at www.facebook.com/BrookfieldZoo.
Event: On Jan. 17, the day President Obama announced that a delegation from the White House would be flying to Oświęcim, Poland, to attend the 70th anniversary of the liberation of concentration camp Auschwitz-Birkenau, a local benefit offered a commemoration a bit closer to home.

Andriy and Liliya Dikin, refugees from the former Soviet Union and current Riverwoods residents, opened their home to acclaimed musicians Yana Reznik, Ani Gogova and Arkadiy Bodner to perform a benefit concert for the Illinois Holocaust Museum & Education Center and nearly 100 guests.

Cause célèbre: Among the attendees was Frizie Fritzshall of Buffalo Grove, president of Skokie's IHMEC and a survivor of Auschwitz-Birkenau.

"I was among the children that were freed 70 years ago and to me the memories are still fresh," said Fritzshall.

The evening's proceeds support the IHMEC's upcoming fine art exhibit, "Through Soviet Jewish Eyes: Photography, War and the Holocaust," which opens Feb. 22.

Created in collaboration with the Russian-speaking community of Chicago, the exhibit represents the Soviet perspective of the Holocaust with images depicting the events that took place before, during and after World War II.

"When we heard that the Holocaust Museum was considering bringing an exhibit that (showed) the tragedy of the war and the Holocaust as seen by Soviet Jews, we knew that it is a story that everyone should have the opportunity to witness," said Andriy Dikin.

Jessica Lindholm of Park Ridge, assistant director of development IHMEC, noted that this will be the first time that an exhibit is offered in both English and Russian.

"This is what we do at the Illinois Holocaust Museum. We try to show what happened yesterday so it doesn't happen again tomorrow," said Fritzshall.

CAUSE & EVENT

GIFT THEATRE GALA
Benefiting: The Gift Theatre, Jefferson Park
Honoring: Chef Art Smith, Total Gift Award
Location: Chicago Cultural Center

Attended: 250+
Raised: $70,000
Date: Nov. 20
Website: thegifttheatre.org

Debra Lessin of Chicago, Alexandra Main of Glenview, Gift Theatre ensemble member, and Catherine Dunlap of Old Norwood Park

Get your event in Trend in 2015

Have a fundraiser, charity event or nonprofit news to share? Email pionertrend@gmail.com for guidelines on submitting preview information and photos for Trend.

40% OFF!!! Big Game Sunday
ONE DAY Anniversary Sale
Celebrate 4 Decades with
40% off all needlepoint canvases!
Sunday, February 1, 11:00 a.m. – 4:00 p.m.

The Canvasback

1747 Orchard Lane • Northfield • (847) 446-4244
www.canvasback-needlepoint.com
Nearly 30 people gathered at the South Park Recreation Center on Jan. 9 to enjoy some of Jean Dietsch's incredible cooking and celebrate the tenth anniversary of the Park Ridge Community Emergency Response Team — better known as CERT.

CERT is a program that equips citizens with the tools they need to respond to emergency situations in their communities, helping to protect themselves, their families and others when professional emergency responders are not immediately available. Communities throughout the country have their own CERT teams.

Park Ridge Police Officer Michael Luehr and Fire Chief Jeff Sorensen brought CERT to Park Ridge at a time when the town seemed to be faced with more flooding than it knew how to handle.

"It was like a 100-year-flood was happening every three years in Park Ridge," Luehr recalled in front of the evening's gathering.

PRCERT has since become indispensable to Park Ridge residents and emergency responders in all types of situations. Members have been deployed to help search for missing persons, control traffic for big local events, escort pedestrians safely across flooded areas, assess flood damage, sandbag, assist with road closures and more.

CERT members smiled at Luehr's words with closed mouths, as they enjoyed slices of a big "thank you" cake, among many of the other tasty delights Dietsch laid out.

Including Dietsch, 12 attendees received awards recognizing their ten years of dedicated service to the program: John and Diane Anto, Dave Donovan, Cynthia Kijek, Earl Roth, Juanita and Ted Sigg, Joe Swee-ney, Anthony Tripp, Gary Warner and Tom Wilson.

"It's not 'if,' it's 'when,'" said CERT Director Phil Falson, recalling a saying often heard from people involved in CERT. "When you look at nine earthquakes in 24 hours in Texas this past week ... a dozen tornadoses that came through Illinois in November of 2013, you need to be ready."
THURSDAY-SUNDAY

OUR SALE is now majorly ON SALE

SAVE 60%-80%

WHEN YOU TAKE AN EXTRA 50% OFF*

almost all permanently reduced Women's, Men's and Kids' Fashion, Women's Handbags, Intimates, Fashion Accessories and Jewelry.

Total savings off original prices.

Don't miss the biggest markdowns of the season on fashion & accessories!

Enjoy the best of Loyalist: Thursday - Sunday, open a Bloomingdale's account and take an extra 15% off almost any purchase you make that day and the following day.
The many aspects of love will be explored through song when Artemis Singers presents, “Loves Lost, Loves Found” at the Ethical Humanist Society in Skokie on Feb. 6 and 7.

Midge Stocker, vice president of the lesbian feminist chorus which was founded in 1980, is one of the musical directors of the upcoming show. “One of the things that makes Artemis different from other choruses is that we have multiple musical directors for any given concert,” she noted. Another thing that makes the chorus unique is that all the members are encouraged to participate in song selection for the concerts.

Stocker said that she’s sung with the chorus for 25 years because, “I really love the kinds of music that we sing, which is music written or arranged by women. It’s lots of different styles — everything from Madrigals to pop tunes.”

For the upcoming concert, Stocker will direct two pieces. “One is a medley,” she said. “The main tune of it is ‘Rumour Has It.’ The words and music are by Adele Adkins and Ryan Tedder.” Stocker is also music-directing “Heaven Unfolding” by Andrea Ramsey.

Skokie resident Stephanie Larenas has been the piano accompanist for the chorus for 15 years. She joined because her aunt is a long-time member.

“I was in high school and they needed an accompanist,” Larenas said. “I was really excited to drop in. Once I joined, l couldn’t let go.”

Larenas has been playing piano since she was six. She added playing trumpet to her musical accomplishments in fourth grade and guitar in high school.

The pianist is excited about the upcoming concert. “When they talk about loves lost and loves found, I think a lot of people immediately go to the love you have for your partner or your spouse,” Larenas said. “I love that this concert is really going to highlight music that could be about family, it could be about a situation in life that is no longer true.”

One of Larenas’ favorite selections at the concert is “Lullaby.” “It was actually my recommendation,” she noted. “It makes me think of my daughter.”

Larenas admitted, “I’m going to be in tears because it reminds me of my kid.”

This is Lynda Elimon’s second year with the chorus. She taught music for the Chicago Public Schools for “decades,” Elimon laughingly revealed. She has been composing music since she was 21.

Elimon gets emotional when she discusses, “There is Hope,” the uplifting piece that she wrote and will direct at the concert.

“I have believed in equality for a long time,” the composer asserted. “I was like this in the ’70s, where I thought everybody should be treated equally. In time, my daughter told me she was a lesbian. This was okay with me. She is married and her wife is wonderful. I’m so happy for them because they’re so happy. I have written several songs that were very much inspired by them and now, ultimately, by Artemis.”

In the selection she wrote for “Loves Lost, Loves Found,” Elimon said, her message is that, “There is hope, not just because it’s the year of equality marriage. But there’s hope because all people can love each other in the open.”
A remark that British producer Cameron Mackintosh made to Stephen Sondheim is what led Jessica Redish to first encounter Rodgers & Hammerstein's rarely performed 1947 musical "Allegro."

Redish, a choreographer and founding artistic director of The Music Theatre Company in Highland Park, was reading Sondheim's mammoth 2010 compendium "Finishing the Hat," when she came upon a line which puzzled her.

Sondheim wrote: "Cameron Mackintosh, astute producer of 'Side by Side by Sondheim,' once said to me that I've spent my life trying to find the second act of 'Allegro.'" What was "Allegro"? Redish wondered. Why was this Broadway musical, written by 20th-century masters of the form, so little known? It was Rodgers and Hammerstein's third collaboration, following the phenomenal success of "Oklahoma!" and "Carousel." After "Allegro" they would go on to write more memorable blockbusters including "South Pacific," "The King and I," and "The Sound of Music," all of which continue to be produced today.

Redish's curiosity prompted research into the obscure show and in the fall of 2012 she presented an evening at Roosevelt University titled "Exploring Allegro." "We wanted to find out what they were trying to accomplish with that show," she said.

Enter Scotty Arnold, a musical theater writer living in New York. He and Redish met in New York City and at some point, he mentioned "Allegro." "We bonded right away and we began collaborating on a project early last year."

The result, conceived and directed by Redish, and written by Arnold, is titled "Oscar & Richard & Joe." Joe is the protagonist in the musical about a small-town doctor who achieves success in the big city but longs to practice the healing arts back in his hometown. The show is just an hour long and will be performed one night only, Jan. 31, in Ravinia's Bennett Gordon Hall.

"It is a very experimental musical with no sets," Redish said. "It has a Greek chorus speaking, a mother coming back from the dead, and at one point even the voice of God."

The current Ravinia placement of "Oscar & Richard & Joe" on its BGH Classic series came about when Redish spoke to Welz Kauffman, the festival's president and CEO. "Jessica has a long association with Ravinia going back to our Sondheim productions," said Kauffman. "She creates real electricity, and it's beyond exciting to witness a vivacious young artist riffing on the forgotten work of two giants."

The program will include theatrical footnotes on the show's history and legacy, and key moments and songs from this rarely-produced gem.
Dragtastic: Marriott’s ‘La Cage’ embraces family values and fierceness

BY CATIE SULLIVAN
For Pioneer Press

We’re born naked. The rest is drag.
RuPaul made that astute observation just a few years ago, but the gals of “La Cage aux Folles” have been embodying the sentiment since the show debuted in 1983.

“The show does focus a lot on spectacle and illusion,” says Joe Leonardo, who directs the tale of Saint Tropez drag queens through March 22 at Lincolnshire’s Marriott Theatre.

“But all that spectacle,” Leonardo adds, “is about learning to love yourself, and loving and taking the people who are your family.”

“La Cage” follows the love story of gay nightclub owner Georges (David Hess) and his longtime partner, the club’s star Albin (Park Ridge’s Gene Weygandt). The piece celebrates the transformative power of mascara and the devotion of loved ones as it follows the farce and drama that follow when Albin and Georges’ straight son becomes engaged to a young woman with an ultra-conservative father.

The story requires Weygandt to morph from a tear-streaked, heartbroken man to a glittering, self-empowered woman — posing as Georges’ “wife” — in under three minutes, in full view of the audience, while belting out “I Am What I Am,” one of the most roof-raising power ballads ever to grace a musical theater stage. Weygandt’s initiation into gender-bending started at a Payless shoe store in Toronto, where he was playing the Wizard in “Wicked.”

“I went in on one of our days off and bought a pair of size 11,000 pumps,” he says. “One of my ‘Wicked’ cast mates was a professional drag queen. So he’d help me practice walking like a lady backstage. I’d say I got an equal amount of catcalls and snickers.”

At 52 and with a theater career that stretches back almost 30 years, Weygandt is no stranger to creating charismatic, believable characters. “La Cage,” however, presents a special challenge.

“I’ve got two minutes and 40 seconds to transform during ‘I Am What I Am,’” he says. The song ends with him as the fiercely glamorous Zaza, ready to strut his stuff before the world.

Things have changed since “La Cage” opened during the height of the Reagan Administration. But thirty-some years’ worth of progress hasn’t dimmed the show’s relevence, notes Hess.

“There’s still a huge amount of judgment,” Hess says. “That message of love and understanding? That will always be valid.” So will the show’s amazing score, hilarious book and eye-popping production numbers — the last propelled by “The Cagelles,” the infamous dancers in a club where you might run into your mistress and your boyfriend and your wife all in the same night.

In the regular old real world, Weygandt’s shoe store experience indicated an atmosphere where non-traditional gender roles elicit more shrugs than arrests. As he paraded around Payless in his Size 11,000 pumps, “nobody batted an eye,” says Weygandt.

“Although I don’t think there will ever be much suspense as to whether I’m a girl or not,” he concludes.
Family Friendly

Miss Jamie from the Farm brings her musical show to the Lincolnwood Library on Feb. 5.

Sing like a farmhand at Miss Jamie's Farm Music Show

BY MYRNA PETLICKI
For Pioneer Press

Children, ages 3-8, will be moo-ving and grooving at Miss Jamie's Farm Music Show, 7-8 p.m. Thursday, Feb. 5 at Lincolnwood Public Library, 4000 W. Pratt Ave.

“It's very interactive,” Miss Jamie said. The program begins with a reading from the “Miss Jamie's Farm” book, followed by farm games and new and familiar farm songs.

“I lead the kids on a magical adventure around the farm with the help of my puppets,” the performer said. “We learn about healthy eating and exercise for different farm animals.” Children are magically transformed into farm animals.

“At the end, they can become Forever Farmhands who vow to protect and preserve farms throughout the land,” Miss Jamie said. “We try to give them empathy for the animals on the farm and make sure that they know pesticide-free is best for the honeybees. The kids don't really know that they’re learning because they're having fun dancing and shaking their shaker eggs.”

For details, call (847) 692-5127 or go to www.prparks.org.

PRACTICE MAKES PERFECT

Hopefully, your children will be inspired to practice their musical instruments more after attending a Young Steinway Concert, 3-4:15 p.m. Sunday, Feb. 1 at Skokie Public Library, 6216 Oakton St. The young performers featured are members of Piano Trio Royale and the Perreault Duo.

For details, call (847) 673-7774 or go to www.skokielibrary.info.

SLEIGH THE OLD-FASHIONED WAY

Belgian draft horses will pull your sleigh at Winter Fun: Sleigh Ride & Sledding, 8:30 a.m.-2 p.m. Saturday, Jan. 31 in scenic Harvard. The family event, for ages 3 and up, departs from the Maine Park Leisure Center, 2701 W. Sibley St., Park Ridge. Kids are encouraged to bring a sled to use on a junior sledding hill. There will be a lunch stop. Cost is $19 per person; participants pay for their own lunch.

For details, call (847) 673-5277 or go to lincolnwoodlibrary.org.

HAVE A HEART

Kids can create cards at Drop-In Craft: Make Your Own Valentines, 2-4 p.m. Sunday, Feb. 1 at Morton Grove Public Library, 6140 Lincoln Ave. Kids under 8 must be accompanied by an adult.

For details, call (847) 965-4220 or go to www.mgpl.org.

AIM HIGH

Fantastic Lego displays should inspire young builders during Lego Day! 10 a.m.-4 p.m. Saturday, Jan. 31 at Niles Public Library, 6960 Oakton St. Bring your kids anytime and watch them get creative.

For details, call (847) 663-1234 or go to www.nileslibrary.org.
Super Bowl seafood showdown: 

New England clam chowder meets Seattle salmon

SEATTLE SEAHAWKS
SALMON SANDWICH
(4 whole sandwiches or 8 half servings)

For the Rouille:
2 red peppers, roasted, peeled and chopped
3 garlic cloves
1 tablespoon honey
1 teaspoon balsamic vinegar
3/4 cup light mayonnaise
1 tablespoon chopped tarragon

For the Salmon:
4 6-ounce wild salmon fillets, skin removed
2 tablespoons flour
2 teaspoons chopped tarragon
Salt and pepper

For the Sandwich:
4 whole wheat baguettes, split lengthwise and grilled
8 slices bacon, cooked and broken into large chunks
Sliced tomato
Sliced red onion

Arugula

To prepare the rouille, combine the red peppers, garlic, honey, vinegar and mayonnaise in a food processor. Process until mixture is smooth. Fold in the tarragon by hand, season with salt and pepper, and set aside.

To cook the salmon fillets, heat a nonstick skillet over high heat until very hot. While the pan heats, season the salmon with salt, pepper and tarragon on the non-skinn side. Dust the same side of the fish with the flour. Add a small amount of oil to the hot pan and swirl to coat. Add the salmon, flour side down, to the hot pan and sear undisturbed for 4 minutes. Flip the fish, reduce the heat to medium and cook for 3 minutes.

Spread the rouille on the baguette and top with bacon, tomato, red onion, and the hot salmon fillets.

NEW ENGLAND PATRIOTS
CLAM CHOWDER
(8-10 servings)

3 bacon slices, diced
1 tablespoon butter
3 celery stalks, halved lengthwise and chopped
1 medium onion, chopped
3 garlic cloves, minced
2 teaspoons kosher salt
1 teaspoon coarse pepper
1/4 cup flour
2 cups chicken stock
1/2 cup clam juice
2, 10-ounce cans baby clams with juice
bay leaf
2 thyme sprigs
2 medium russet potatoes, unpeeled, scrubbed clean and diced into 1/2-inch cubes
1 cup heavy cream
1 dozen littleneck clams, scrubbed clean

Cook the bacon in a medium stockpot over medium-high heat until brown and crispy. Remove the bacon from the pot with a slotted spoon, drain on paper towels and reserve. Add the butter to the bacon drippings in the pot and melt over medium-high heat. When the foam subsides, add the celery and onion to the pot, season with the salt and pepper. Reduce heat to medium and cook, stirring occasionally, until the vegetables begin to soften (about 10 minutes). Add the garlic to the pot and cook until just fragrant (about 30 seconds). Add the flour to the vegetables and mix well. Gradually add the chicken stock to the pot, whisking constantly, until soup is smooth and begins to thicken. Add the clam juice, clams, bay leaf and thyme sprigs and bring to a boil. Add the potatoes and simmer until soup thickens slightly and potatoes are tender (about 30 minutes). Add the cream and adjust seasoning. Bring to a boil, reduce heat and simmer for 5 more minutes.

After adding the cream to the soup, prepare to steam the littleneck clams. Add water to a high-sided skillet to a depth of 1 inch. Bring to a boil and add the clams. Cover the pot and allow to steam for several minutes. Remove clams as they open. Discard any that remain unopened after 10 minutes.

Garnish with the steamed clams, bacon bits, chives and crackers and serve.

BY MELISSA ELSMO
OUT OF MEL'S KITCHEN

While I adore whipping up traditional dishes like hearty chili or spicy chicken wings for a regular game day, Super Bowl fare deserves a bit of special attention.

Millions of folks are set to tune in as the Seattle Seahawks and the New England Patriots duke it out for the NFL Championship this Sunday. Super Bowl XLIX is a bicoastal battle and my seafood-inspired menu brings out the flavors of these opposing regions in delicious fashion.

This seafood smackdown first honors the Patriots with a hearty New England clam chowder. My version comes together with ease by making use of pantry stable clams and clam juice with a finishing flourish of steamed fresh clams.

The Pacific Northwest is known for its abundance of fresh fish and this ode to the Seattle Seahawks takes a run-off-the-mill BLT and transforms it into a celebration of salmon.

No matter which team takes home the trophy on Sunday, this duo of Super Bowl-themed dishes will score a touchdown with your game-day guests!
Community of Congregations Annual Dinner
6:30 p.m.: Hear from Prevail and Dominican University about the impact of poverty on so many people including those in the community. Space is limited so reserve one's place today by contacting Katie Avalos at oprcc@gmail.com or 312-560-3988. $15 free-will offering to help defray the cost of the dinner. St. Edmund Parish, 188 S. Oak Park Ave., Oak Park. Call 312-560-3988.

Annual "Concert for Africa"
6 p.m.: Northbrook School District 28's PTO again sponsors an annual "Concert for Africa." Money raised, supports schools for orphans in a slum outside of Nairobi, Kenya. The group is hoping to raise the last $20,000 needed to complete a high school for the female orphans, so they can complete their education and learn valuable career skills. From 6 p.m. to 6:30 p.m. pizza, and a bake sale offered. This concert/fund-raiser event features several student bands as well as Out of Control, one of Chicago's premier party bands. The student bands include The Jacob Denenberg Band, featuring students from Glenbrook North; Skydeck, featuring students from Wood Oaks Junior High School; Chapter I, featuring students from Mt. Prospect, Buffalo Grove, and Palatine; and Camus, featuring Hannah Godnik of Glenbrook North. The bands perform from 6:45 p.m. to 6:30 p.m. in the small gym. Any community member who wishes to donate to the foundation can do so online at www.fredoutafoundation.org or send a check made out to "The Fred Ouda Foundation" to Fred Ouda Foundation, c/o School District 28, 1475 Maple Avenue, Northbrook, IL 60062. For more information, see the District 28 website, www.northbrook28.net, Northbrook Junior High School, 1475 Maple Ave., Northbrook. $10 at door and $8 in advance by visiting brownpapertickets.com.

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tickets are available on-line at www.evanstonsymphony.org or by calling 847-864-8804. Children's tickets are only available by calling 847-864-8804. Pick-Staiger Concert Hall, 50 Arts Circle Drive, Evanston.

**Monday, Feb. 2**

**Luther College Nordic Choir 2015 Midwest Tour**

7:30 p.m.: Luther College Nordic Choir presents a concert at Grace Lutheran Church. Conducted by Dr. Allen Higttower, the choir performs sacred choral works, including Ave Verum Corpus by Byrd, Singet dem Herr nein neues Lied by J.S. Bach and When David Heard by Eric Whitacre. Grace Lutheran Church, 7300 Division St., River Forest. Call 708-366-6900. $20 Adults; $10 Students.

**Wednesday, Feb. 4**

**Lunch and Bingo**

10 a.m.: Enjoy a game of bingo and lunch. Come early for coffee and conversation. Fee includes lunch from a local restaurant or caterer. Morton Grove Senior Center, 6140 Dempster St., Morton Grove. Call 847-663-3070. $20 Adults; $10 Students.

**Taste Memories: Recipes for Life and Breakfast**

7 p.m.: Registration required. Ina Pinkney, author of Taste Memories: Recipes for Life and Breakfast, will present her journey "from Brooklyn to Breakfast," including her struggles with polio, divorce, career in the food business. Stick around after the presentation for a book signing and a taste of Ina Pinkney's famous coffee cake. Lincolnwood Public Library, 4000 W. Pratt Ave., Lincolnwood. Call 847-677-9277 x232.

**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.

**Thursday, Feb. 5**

**Illinois Quilters Meeting, February 5, 2015**

7:15 p.m.: Illinois Quilters Inc. meets at Beth Hillel Congregation, 3220 Big Tree Lane, Wilmette. Doors open at 6:30 p.m. for sign-ups, library and socializing. This month's program is "Story of a girl with a checkered past and a future in pieces," featuring speaker Teri Tope. Guests welcome. Tope also leads workshops on Friday, Feb. 6 and Saturday, Feb. 7. For reservations or information, call Beth Hillel Congregation, 3220 Big Tree Lane, Wilmette. Call 847-480-9777. $5.
Film Clips

BY BRUCE INGRAM  
Film Critic

OPENING FRIDAY

BLACK OR WHITE
Rated PG-13 for brief strong language, thematic material involving drug use and drinking, and for a fight
Stars: Kevin Costner, Octavia Spencer, Anthony Mackie
A little girl (Jillian Estell) becomes the subject of a custody battle between her grandfather (Costner) and her paternal grandmother (Spencer). Mike Binder ("The Upside of Anger," "Reign Over Me") wrote and directed the drama.

BLACK SEA
Rated R for language throughout, some graphic images and violence
Stars: Jude Law, Scoot McNairy, Jodie Whittaker
A submarine captain (Law) and his crew search the Black Sea for a sunken submarine rumored to be filled with gold. Kevin Macdonald ("The Last King of Scotland") directed the thriller.

THE LOFT
Rated R for sexual content, nudity, bloody violence, language and some drug use
Stars: Karl Urban, James Marsden, Isabel Lucas, Robert Wisdom, Rachael Taylor
Five men's lives are complicated when a woman is murdered in the apartment they maintain to conduct affairs. Erik Van Looy ("The Memory of a Killer") directed the thriller.

MOMMY
★★★ 1/2
Rated R for language throughout, sexual references and some violence
Stars: Anne Dorval, Suzanne Clément, Antoine-Olivier Pilon
The emotional extremes of this exceedingly intense domestic drama can be harrowing (exhilarating too, from time to time), but "Mommy" is nonetheless a cinematic dazzler — well worth a look if you have the fortitude. Dorval ("I Killed My Mother") is extraordinary as a blue-collar mom struggling to cope with her violently disturbed 15-year-old son (Pilon) when he's released from an institution — with the help of a neighbor (Clément) who has issues of his own. Winner of the Jury Prize at last year's Cannes Film Festival.

RED ARMY
Rated PG for thematic material and language
Stars: Scotty Bowman, Vyacheslav Fetisov, Anatoli Karpov
The story of the rise and fall of the most successful dynasty in sports history — the Red Army hockey team — is told against the backdrop of radical changes in the Soviet Union. Gabe Polsky ("The Motel Life") directed the documentary.

WILD CARD
Rated R for strong violence, language and some sexuality/nudity
Stars: Jason Statham, Stanley Tucci, Michael Angarano, Sofia Vergara
A Las Vegas bodyguard (Statham) takes on the mob after avenging the beating of a friend. Simon West ("The Expendables 2") directed the actioner from a script by William ("Butch Cassidy and the Sundance Kid") Goldman.

STILL PLAYING

PADDINGTON
★★★ 1/2
Rated PG for mild action and rude humor
Stars: Hugh Bonneville, Nicole Kidman, Ben Whishaw, Sally Hawkins, Peter Capaldi
Remarkably old-fashioned considering the advanced technology required to make it, the sweet, whimsical, frequently funny "Paddington" is a children's movie that's easy to savor, even if you're not in its diminutive target audience. The walking, talking, slapstick-prone computer-generated teddy bear comes to live-action London in search of a home and finds an initially unpromising match in the eccentric Brown family — as well as a taxidermy-crazed museum director (Kidman) who wants to stuff him for an exhibit. A bit too scary, perhaps, for very young kids, but otherwise an all-around delight.

THE BOY NEXT DOOR
★ 1/2
Rated R for violence, sexual content/nudity and language
Stars: Jennifer Lopez, Ryan Guzman, John Corbett
Sure, it's sleazy, trashy, tawdry, gruesomely violent and ridiculously idiotic, but you have to give this unapologetically awful erotic thriller credit for one thing — it ain't dull. Jennifer Lopez runs into gender-reversed "Fatal Attraction" troubles as Claire, a middle-aged, marital-troubled single mom who falls for the hunky charm of the high school boy next door (Guzman, who's 25 and looks it) — who soon transitions to full-tilt insane homicidal stalker mode.

Showtimes

Jude Law stars in "Black Sea."
Movie times are effective Friday, Jan. 30, through Thursday, Feb. 5. Please note that theater schedules are subject to change.

CENTURY 12 EVANSTON/CINEARTS 6 AND XD
1715 Maple Ave.
Evanston
(847) 491-9751
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
(606) 804-2234
www.pickwicktheatre.com
Contact theater for showtimes.

The Amazing Praybeyt Benjamin
Fri 1-4:30-7-9:30; Sat-Sun 2-4:30-7-9:30; Mon-Thu 4:30-7-9:20
Song One (PG-13)
Fri 4-6:30-8-45; Sat-Sun 1-4-6:30-8-45; Mon-Thu 4-6:30-8-45
Paddington (PG)
Fri-Sun 1-3:30-6-8:15; Mon-Thu 4-6:30-8-15
American Sniper (R)
Fri-Sun 1-3:30-5-8; Mon-Thu 5-8

ROSEMONT 18
9701 Bryn Mawr Ave.
Rosemont
(847) 447-1030
www.amctheatres.com
Contact theater for showtimes.

ROSEMONT PREMIER
9701 Bryn Mawr Ave.
Rosemont
(847) 447-1030
www.muvico.com
Contact theater for showtimes.

REGAL GARDENS STADIUM 1-6
4999 Old Orchard Center
Skokie
(847) 673-4037
www.regmovies.com
Contact theater for showtimes.

REGAL GARDENS 7-13
4999 Old Orchard Center
Skokie
(847) 674-0184
www.regmovies.com
Contact theater for showtimes.

AMC SHOWPLACE VILLAGE CROSSING 18
7000 Carpenter Road
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(888) AMC-4FUN
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MANILOW
ONE LAST TIME!

SPECIAL GUEST
DAVE KOZ

THE PERFECT VALENTINE’S DAY GIFT!

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furniture, mattresses, rugs & so much more...

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Kremen, Harriet
(née Berdaline Lepgold) in Milwaukee, Wisconsin. Beloved daughter of Gordon Lepgold (Manny Gordon) and Margaret Warschauer Lepgold (Gordon); loving wife for 58 wonderful years of Norman Kremen; cherished mother of Gary Alan and Julie Lynn Kremen of California; proud grandmother of Isaac Micah and Ethan Julian Kremen; fond sister of the late Jack Lepgold and his children; and sister-in-law of the late Dorothy and the late Harold Diamond and their children; devoted friend of many and volunteer treasurer of Ketura Hadassah.

Services were held at Chicago Jewish Funerals. Interment Westlawn. Donations in Harriet's memory would be appreciated; send to: Hadassah, 60 Revere Dr., Suite 800, Northbrook, IL 60062. Arrangements by Chicago Jewish Funerals - Skokie Chapel, 847-229-8822, www.cjfinfo.com.
NILES WEST

Wolves ramp up defensive intensity to beat Titans

Switch to 3-2 zone in second half confounds Glenbrook South

BY BRIAN DE LOS SANTOS
Special to the Tribune, @B_DelosSantos

SKOKIE — During the first two quarters of the Niles West boys basketball team's game against Glenbrook South, it appeared the Wolves were in for a long night. The Titans' 6-6 Jimmy Martinelli attacked Niles West down low, en route to 12 points in the first half.

But the second half of the Central Suburban South game was a much different story. Niles West used a stout defensive effort to hold Glenbrook South to 3-for-27 shooting en route to a 54-40 win on Friday.

"Defensively, we just got a little smarter," Niles West coach Bob Williams said. "I thought that defense was really the key."

It sure was. The Wolves switched to what Williams called a 3-2 zone defense to start the third quarter. He said the Wolves have used it a bit in the past two or so games, but it was something Glenbrook South coach Ben Widner said he hadn't seen on film.

When asked what the difference was for the Titans in the second half, a baffled Widner didn't know how to answer.

"If I could tell you, the ball would have gone in the basket," Widner said. "Three-for-27 is a tough number to overcome."

For the Wolves, offense wasn't a problem. Especially in the first half. Sophomore Octavius Parker II played well, going 5-for-8 from the field, including 3-for-5 from three, en route to 13 points in the first two quarters. With just over three minutes left in the second, he had 14 of Niles West's 16 points. He finished with a team-high 19 points.

"It was my teammates," Parker said. "They were finding me for open shots, coach was running plays for me and I was able to hit them."
NOTRE DAME
Hot-shooting Dons dominate Corsairs early

By Tim Froehlig
Special to the Tribune, @TFroehlig

MUNDELEIN — The Notre Dame boys basketball team's 74-61 East Suburban Catholic road win over Carmel was an example of why the future looks so bright for the Dons.

Notre Dame stormed out to a 15-2 lead on Friday night in the game's first four minutes, but it was how they did it that was attention-grabbing. The Dons used strong post moves, efficient outside shooting outstanding passing and easy transition baskets to send Carmel a strong message from the outset.

The Dons shot a blazing 76.9 percent (10-for-13) from the field during the first quarter, and shot better than 50 percent for the game.

"We haven't fared too well in Carmel's gym in the past, so I thought it was imperative we got off to a good start," Notre Dame coach Tom Les said. "Our guys came out focused and determined, with a sense of urgency."

The Dons' lead ballooned to as many as 24 points twice in the third quarter, thanks in large part to the inside game of 6-5 junior forward Animar Becar. Becar (26 points, seven rebounds) made his first seven shot attempts, dominated the paint, and looked unstoppable at times.

"I think it helped we had a little bit of a size advantage, but I don't say that to take anything away from Carmel," Becar said. "Our guys came out focused and determined, with a sense of urgency."

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"I think it helped we had a little bit of a size advantage, but I don't say that to take anything away from Carmel," Becar said. "Our guys came out focused and determined, with a sense of urgency."

Becar consistently drew double-teams in the lane, which opened things up for 6-2 senior guard Joe Mooney, who also finished with 26 points and seven rebounds. Mooney made 10 of his first 11 shots, which included three three-pointers. One early in the second quarter was from well-beyond NBA range.

"That's what happens when I have teammates who share the ball so well," said Mooney, 5-for-6 from the foul line. "The way we've been moving and sharing the basketball has been a huge factor in our success this season. Everyone's attacking the basket and playing aggressive, and that's how you win games."

The Dons improved to 17-4 overall, and 4-0 in the ESCC, with the win.

"We play a nine-game division schedule, so we still have our work cut out for us if we hope to win a conference championship," Les said. "There are no easy games in our conference. On any given night, any team can win games."

Notre Dame's Jeameril Wilson pulls down a rebound against Lake Park on Dec. 27. (GEORGE SCHMIDT/CHICAGO TRIBUNE MEDIA GROUP)

"We have a really good basketball team two years ago when we went 24-6," Les said. "The difference with this year's team compared to that one is this year we have a ton of guys who are big who can also score at the offensive end. It gives us so much versatility, and as a coach, so many options."

"You've got Ammar at 6-5 giving people fits, but we've also got underclassmen like [6-7 junior center] Anthony D'Avanzo, and [6-5 sophomore] Jeameril Wilson and [6-4 junior] Lucas Simon at the guard positions. When you have that combination of size and skill, and kids who want to play team basketball, it becomes that much more fun to watch and coach."

The Dons have proven they're for real, having taken Lake County powerhouse Lake Forest to overtime before losing, and also losing by four to an outstanding Hinsdale Central team.

"My one main concern is our defense," Les said. "We've proven we can play with some of the top teams in the area, but we can't have lapses like we had tonight when we let Carmel kind of pull closer late in the game. If we continue to work harder on defense the rest of the season, this team could really go places."

Western Illinois verbal commit C.J. Duff scored a team-high 23 points for the Corsairs (9-12, 0-4), while Shareif Bailey had 15.

"Our guys gave a tremendous effort out there tonight," Carmel coach Zack Ryan said. "We're a young team that's a little undersized though, but we'll continue to get better."

ABOVE: Notre Dame's Jeameril Wilson pulls down a rebound against Lake Park on Dec. 27. (GEORGE SCHMIDT/CHICAGO TRIBUNE MEDIA GROUP)

LEFT: At 6-4, Lucas Simon gives Notre Dame good size at the guard position. (MARK UKENN/CHICAGO TRIBUNE MEDIA GROUP)
Kahen’s selfless act helps Spartans advance

Notre Dame surpasses 6,000 pins, advances to state for second straight year

BY MATT HARNES
mharness@tribpub.com, @harnesspreps

GLendale Heights — Corey Kahen showed what it means to be a team leader at the Immaculate Conception boys bowling sectional tournament.

Without his best stuff at the Brunswick Zone on Saturday, Glenbrook North’s top bowler pulled himself out for the sixth and final game because he said he didn’t want to hurt the Spartans’ chances of qualifying for the state tournament.

Kahen’s selfless move enabled Glenbrook North to roll its second-best score of the day with 1,008 pinfalls, and the Spartans finished fifth as a team with 5,960. The top six teams advanced to the this weekend’s state tournament at St. Clair Bowl in O’Fallon. The top seven individuals not already on qualifying teams also automatically advanced.

“He told me I could take him out if needed,” Glenbrook North coach Todd Rubin said. “He had hit a wall, and he thought that it was best for the team. His teammates respected him for that.”

Kahen, a senior who carries a 215 average and was a sectional champion as a junior, said it was difficult decision for him. He had rolled a 224, 155, 205, 157 and 148 in the first five games for a 178 average. Senior Jory Nathan came in and rolled a 168 in Kahen’s place.

“I’ve never had to do that before,” Kahen said of removing himself from a competition. “I’ve always been one of the stronger guys on the team, but I was really, really struggling. I did what I thought I needed to do for us to move on.”

Kahen said he was proud of how his teammates picked him up Saturday. Junior Nick Arcangeletti led the Spartans with 1,299 pins to place 10th. Junior Patrick Mulhern, the regional champion a week earlier, finished 21st with 1,255 pinfalls. Senior Calvin Oh (1,191) and senior Jonah Fialkow (1,158) also posted solid six-game scores.

“It was a collective effort Saturday,” Rubin said. “We had a bunch of guys put up good scores.”

A four-year varsity bowler, Kahen will be making his third trip to the state tournament. He went with the Glenbrook North team as a sophomore and qualified as an individual last season.

“I would not be where I am without my teammates,” Kahen said. “I mean, Pat’s 1,488 at regionals. What can you say about that? Nick, Pat, Calvin, Jonah, Jory [on Saturday]. Those are the kind of teammates you want to have on your side.”

Notre Dame

The Dons bowled their best six-game series of the season on Saturday with a 6,119 to take third at the Immaculate Conception Sectional, and coach Billy Kerber said the “best is yet to come.”

Notre Dame beat its regional score by 205 pins, and Kerber said he couldn’t remember the last time the Dons scored better than 6,000.

Junior Tom Ochal paced Notre Dame with 1,386 pins and finished third as an individual. Juniors Charlie Allen (1,253), Paolo Fridman (1,211) and Matt Voss (987) also were major contributors Saturday.

“Both Tom and Charlie had unreal days,” Kerber said of the pair that averages better than 200 pins a game for the season. “They have been our most consistent this season and have anchored our team.”

This is the second season in a row the Dons have qualified for the state tournament.

“We were feeling good all day,” Kerber said of the sectional tournament. “We never were in danger of not making it. If we continue our current trend, that would be fantastic.”

Notes

Niles North junior Romario Gayle missed out on advancing as an individual qualifier on Saturday by rolling a 1,249 to place 25th. The seventh and final automatic spot went to North Grand’s Gabriel Perez, who bowed a 1,271. Reavis senior Jason Barrios (1,269) also advanced as an at-large qualifier.

... Other local individuals at the sectional included Niles North junior Tyler Milbrandt (66th, 1,134), Niles North junior Steven Garth (77th, L18), Loyola senior Trevor Rahifs (83rd, 1,091), New Trier senior Will Delva (88th, 1,069) and New Trier sophomore Kalani Rmnoe (90th, 1,067).
New territory

Vikings find themselves in unfamiliar role atop conference standings

BY ERIC VAN DRIL
Special to the Tribune, @VanDrilSports

SKOKIE — With three conference games remaining, the Niles North girls basketball team is the favorite to win the Central Suburban North.

The Vikings blew out Maine East 51-34 on Friday night to improve to 6-1 in the conference. They are currently a game ahead of Maine West in the standings, and they have Glenbrook North, Deerfield and Highland Park — a trio they've already beaten this year — left on the schedule.

Being atop the Central Suburban North is a role foreign to each Viking, but Niles North is embracing it.

"I told the kids that it's a privilege to be in this position," Vikings coach Dan Paxson said. "Kienya [Jones] has been here four years and we've never been in the position where we're leading the charge. We talk about playing like we're in charge and playing like a good team — doing the little things that good teams do."

Niles North (15-7) did that against the Blue Demons. The Vikings brought energy from the opening tip and led 22-7 at the end of the first quarter.

Jones, who's the squad's best player, was the catalyst. The 5-10 senior forward had 11 points and four rebounds during a first quarter in which she was very aggressive — especially in the paint.

"We expect her to come out on fire and with energy, like she [did]," Paxson said.

Jones only scored four points after the first quarter, but her assertiveness in the first quarter set the tone for the rest of the team.

"It's just a carryover from practice," Paxson said. "She's very vocal in practice. She's a real social kid — even off the court. That's just her personality, so her voice, her tone really sets the tone for the rest of the team."

When asked what it will take to win a CSL North title, Paxson and Jones rattled off a number of different things. Energy will be vital for the talented Vikings, Paxson said. Jones added that limiting turnovers, finishing strong in the lane and continuing to get to the free-throw line are all important.

But there are also things away from the court that Jones is trying to make sure her team understands, like getting enough sleep.

"They always want to do team bondings and have sleepovers before games. I'm just like, 'We need rest because we'll all stay up,' " Jones said. "Like [Friday], they probably want to have team bonding, but we have Loyola in the morning. So it's like, 'Let's stay focused. Do you want to be conference champions? Because champions don't have sleepovers and stay out all night.' "

ABOVE: Niles North's Alyssa Brand drives between Maine East's Leslie Christiansen (left) and Olivia Herbog during their basketball game in Skokie on Friday.

RIGHT: Niles North's Carolyn Dwyer drives to the basket during Friday's home game against Maine East. I PHOTOS BY TIM ROYLE FOR CHICAGO TRIBUNE MEDIA GROUP
Niles North's Kienya Jones (21) drives past Maine East's Leslie Christiansen (left) and Olivia Hertogs during Friday's game in Skokie. Niles North beat Maine East 51-34.

BY NICK BULLOCK
Special to the Tribune, @PioneerPress

Washington & Lee men's cross country runner Mark Gensburg was recently named to the Old Dominion Athletic Conference fall sportsmanship team.

The Barrington graduate led the Generals to a third-place finish at the ODAC Championship. His time of 29 minutes, 12 seconds was good for 34th place. He then turned in a 75th-place finish at the NCAA South/Southeast Regional meet, helping Washington & Lee finish seventh as a team.

Local athletes David Heflin and Andrew Paras and the Wisconsin-River Falls men's hockey team defeated host Wisconsin-Stevens Point 4-3 on Jan. 17. After a blazing start to the season, the Falcons ranked No. 3 in the Jan. 19 U.S. College Hockey Online poll, stumbled a bit in January. But the victory against Stevens Point improved River Falls to 14-2-1 on the season and 3-1-0 in the Wisconsin Intercollegiate Athletic Conference. Stevens Point, with the help of sophomore goalie and Northbrook native Cody Von Rueden, also is strong at 12-4-0, 3-1-0, after the loss. Stevens Point was ranked No. 6 in the Jan 19 USCHO poll.

Heflin is a sophomore goalie from Mundelein. Paras, a sophomore defenseman from Barrington, has played in six games this season.

Glenbrook North's Jodi Marver, a senior guard for the Knox College women's basketball team, recently was named the school's Performer of the Week after she helped snap her team's long losing streak against Midwest Conference rival Ripon College on Jan. 3 in Ripon, Wisconsin. Marver scored a game-high 22 points, including 10 from the free-throw line, in 18 minutes as Knox won 74-60 to beat Ripon for the first time since Nov. 30, 2007.

Marver's teammate Erin Orr, an Oak Park-River Forest alumna, contributed seven points and four rebounds in 14 minutes off the bench. Through the Prairie Fire's first 15 games, Marver ranked first on the team in scoring (13.6 points per game), assists (3.3 per game), and free throws attempted (86) and made (79). She also averaged 3.9 rebounds and 1.7 steals per game and is one of three players to start all 15 games.

Orr had averaged 6.7 points and a team-high 5.9 rebounds per game, through 15 games.

Have a suggestion for the College Roundup?
Email Nick Bullock at bullockpioneerpress@gmail.com.
Notre Dame's Bob Hoenig is excited about the spare he picked up during the Immaculate Conception boys bowling sectional tournament at the Brunswick Zone in Glendale Heights on Saturday. (JON LANOHAM/CHICAGO TRIBUNE MEDIA GROUP)
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With new NFL rules favoring the offense in general and the passing game in particular, it's no surprise that the 2014 season saw its share of 50-point games and 30-point victory margins. But the largest margin of victory ever in an NFL game occurred way back on Dec. 8, 1940, when Chicago destroyed Washington 73-0 in believe it or not, the league championship game. By the way, one reason lopsided scores didn't hurt TV ratings just might be the pervasive popularity of fantasy football. It's estimated that Americans spent approximately $11 billion on fantasy leagues in 2014.

The NBA has a new star. More than a month into the 2014-15 season, Anthony Davis of the New Orleans Pelicans ranked in the league's top 10 in points, rebounds, field goal percentage, blocks and steals. His Player Efficiency Rating was 33.3, which would be the highest ever if he ended the season at that measure. And in a preseason poll of the league's GMs, LeBron James was voted the player they would select first if starting a franchise, but Davis was tied with Kevin Durant for second.

Speaking of Anthony Davis, basketball fans might recall that he was the No. 1 overall pick in the 2012 NBA draft out of Kentucky, where he led the Wildcats to the NCAA championship under Coach John Calipari. How committed is Calipari to his job? Here's a clue: In late 2014, not only did Calipari resort to wishing his daughter a happy birthday via Twitter — but he did so on the wrong day.

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