PARCC scores are in
See how local schools fared with the new test. Page 11

District 219's interim superintendent, Anne Roloff, discussed PARCC results at schools including Niles North High School.

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**SHOUT OUT**

Gail Schechter, activist, musician

Skokie resident Gail Schechter has led Skokie's Open Communities organization — formerly called Interfaith Housing Center of the Northern Suburbs — for years. She will be resigning at the end of the year. Pioneer Press caught up with her for a series of questions.

Q: How long have you lived in Skokie?
A: Eleven years.

Q: Where did you grow up?
A: Brooklyn and Queens.

Q: What did you want to do when you were a child?
A: I wanted to be a clarinet player like Benny Goodman.

Q: What was your first job?
A: My first job was as a babysitter. I started taking care of a toddler named Jonathan when I was 16, and then before I knew it, the mom had referred me to other moms and I was taking care of about five other children all the way up to high school graduation. I was able to purchase my clarinet when I was nearly 18 from a combination of babysitting money and a gift from my paternal grandmother.

Q: Do you have kids?
A: I have two. My daughter, Julia Sheppard, is 23 and she just graduated from Oberlin College (in Ohio), which is where I went. She was the senior class president. She spoke at graduation and actually proceeded Michelle Obama. My son, William Sheppard, is 20 and is a sophomore at Bowed College in Maine. His interest is math and physics.

Q: You're also a passionate musician. Did you hand that love off to your children?
A: I'm a pretty liberal parent in the sense that I didn't force my kids to do anything they didn't want to do. But there was one thing I said to them, and that was they both had to do something in the arts. Julia had a double major. She also did dance. My son was the trombone player.

Q: What is a movie you'd recommend?
A: I'd recommend anything from (director) Agnes Varda. I'm on an Agnes Varda kick. There is a movie everybody should see called "The Gleaners." To me, she's like the French Studs Terkel. I love "Vagabond" too.

Q: Do you have any words of wisdom?
A: Know where your passion is inside. Always do something in the arts. I say to people in stress all the time: "This, too, shall pass."

— Pioneer Press Staff

Shout Out is a weekly feature where we get to know and introduce our readers to their fellow community members and local visitors.
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Advocates ask Skokie to join gun shop fight

BY MIKE ISAACS

A group of gun-control activists that included those who have lost loved ones to gun violence, implored the Skokie Village Board Dec. 7 to do more to stop a controversial gun shop slated to open in neighboring Niles.

More than 15 speakers gave emotional testimony to the board detailing how gun violence had affected their lives. They said a gun shop just across the village border would be dangerous and hoped Skokie would join a lawsuit seeking to prevent the facility from coming to Niles.

Skokie Mayor George Van Dusen said the village, while sympathetic, is not in a position to become a plaintiff in the case. The village supports municipalities with home-rule powers having the right to set their own gun regulations, he said.

The parents of Maxwell Gadau, a Niles North High School student and Skokie resident who was shot and killed last year on the 9200 block of Kildare Avenue, addressed the board.

Patricia Gadau said she passes the place where her 17-year-old son was shot.

"I visit that site every morning on my way to work Monday through Friday," she said. "I don't know why I do it. But I'm telling you, I go there. My heart is broken. There is just a hole in my heart that will never be remedied."

Gadau told the board that should it not support legal action against the Niles shop, she fears another child in Skokie will face a similar fate.

The Niles Village Board last year approved a special-use permit allowing the Sportman's Club and Firearms Training Academy to open at 6143 Howard St. in Niles. The board later approved an extension for the special-use permit so that the facility could be built by the company 6143 Howard Partners.

For months, local gun-control activists, led by the group People For a Safer Society, have asked Skokie to sign onto their pending lawsuit against Niles. The shop slated to open at 6143 Howard.

"We cannot stand at one moment on our home rule rights to legislate gun restrictions and at the next moment, join in legal action, which at its base, is attacking home rule authority," he said. "I must emphasize that it's not the subject matter of the gun range in Niles that determined our action but the legal principle reinforced by the Supreme Court today.

That, though, did not satisfy those gathered to address the board.

"Imagine the village of Niles putting in a radioactive incinerator to deal with their garbage, and the wind from Niles brought radioactive material into Skokie," said National Gun Victims Action Council Chairman Elliot Finesman, who also lost a son to gun violence. "Would you argue that, 'Well, it's home-rule so we're not going to do anything? We'll just accept their decision?"

In October, People For A Safer Society delivered to the board petitions with hundreds of signatures opposing the Niles gun shop and advocating for Skokie to become more involved.

"We are disappointed that the mayor feels that home-rule privileges outweigh the safety of Skokie residents even though hundreds of Skokie residents implored you to protect them by joining the lawsuit," said Denyse Stoneback, president of People For a Safer Society.

No Web address...
Village Board approves modernization proposal

BY LEE V. GAINES
Pioneer Press

A plan aiming to modernize and improve service on the Niles Free Bus has rolled past its first hurdle on the way to becoming a reality after village officials approved the proposal presented by village staff and Pace Suburban Bus representatives during a board meeting Dec. 8.

The approved proposal is the result of a two-year $300,000 study initiated in 2014, said Michael Bolton, deputy executive director of strategic services for Pace. Half of the funding for the study was provided through a grant while the remaining cost was picked up by Pace, he said, with no expense to the village.

Bolton said neither the village nor Pace is expected to contribute any more money to fund the total $1.5 million annual expense of the service. The Niles Free Bus operates under an agreement with Pace; the buses are owned by Pace while the drivers are employed by the village, he said. Niles picks up $540,000 of the total cost and Pace covers the remainder, said Village Manager Steve Vinezeano in an interview following the meeting.

The objective of the modernization plan, Pace representatives said, is to improve transit access for residents and businesses, create simpler routes, improve the frequency of service, remove or reduce service in areas where ridership is low, increase overall ridership and provide for better integration between Niles Free Bus routes, Pace routes and the suburban bus company.

Village trustees appeared to be pleased with the plan that resulted from the study.

Trustee Joe Lo Verde called the proposal “terrific and efficient.”

The new plan restructures the village’s existing three Niles Free Bus routes to create a connected loop around the village, with route 410 servicing the east side of Niles and route 411 covering the west side. Under the new plan, service on both routes will run every 30 minutes beginning between 6:30 a.m. and 6:45 a.m. through 4:50 p.m. to 5 p.m. on weekdays. Service will start approximately three hours later on weekends and end a half hour earlier.

The current service, which includes routes 411, 412 and 413 begins operating later in the morning and ends later in the evening, with longer wait times between buses.

The third route, 412, will circle the northern section of the village, hitting Golf Mill Shopping Center and other retail destinations beginning at 7:30 a.m. and ending at 4:45 p.m. on weekdays, and starting at 9:30 a.m. and ending at 4:45 p.m. on weekends under the new plan. The proposal calls for earlier beginnings and endings for service than is currently offered on the route.

Route 413 will be eliminated under the new plan because of low ridership, according to the presentation provided by Pace. Other changes include reduced service to Maynard Road and limited service to Saint Andrew Life Center.

Pace representatives said they retained limited service to both stops after residents at a public hearing on the proposal held in July complained about a previous plan to eliminate the stops entirely.

A resident of Maynard Terrace, Bob Sychowski, said the bus service was part of the reason he had decided to stay in Niles, and he appreciated that service to the Maynard Road stop would continue under the new plan.

When asked by Mayor Andrew Przybylo, Bolton confirmed that Niles is the only municipality Pace services that offers a free bus system to riders.

The board of directors for the bus service company is due to consider the modernization plan at a meeting in January, Bolton said. If the plan is approved, a marketing campaign will ensure to alert riders of the changes, and the new route system and schedule will take effect sometime in the spring, he said.

Lee V. Gaines is a freelance reporter for Pioneer Press.
Class is in session starting Jan. 4 at Ida Crown Jewish Academy

BY BRIAN L. COX
Pioneer Press

Like many teenagers, Lauren Schwartz said she is looking forward to having time off of school during the upcoming winter break. But Schwartz, 16, also said she is looking forward to getting back to school on Jan. 4 because she will be returning to classes at the brand new $40 million Ida Crown Jewish Academy in Skokie.

"I really think it's a great thing because I came from a different city to come to this school and now this school is like changing throughout the generations," Schwartz said during a Dec. 13 dedication ceremony for the new school. "This is the generation I'm living in and we have a new school," Schwartz said, grinning widely.

The Ida Crown Jewish Academy is a Modern Orthodox co-educational Jewish college preparatory high school that has served the Chicago Jewish community for nearly 75 years, said Rabbi Leonard Matanky, dean at the school. The new facility will officially open on Jan. 4. In addition to more classrooms it has state-of-the-art science and technology facilities; expanded cultural arts, a library, sports and extracurricular activities; student and faculty lounges; and a central worship space to accommodate all students.

It will also house the headquarters for the Associated Talmud Torahs, the governing body for Orthodox schools and the Keshet high school, a program for students with developmental delays.

"This is a day we've been working toward for over a decade," Matanky said. He said the school might never have been built if not for the support and vision of the Crown and Goodman families. Rabbi and Mrs. Morris Esformes, the Jewish Federation and support from many individual donors who raised $40 million for the project.

"As far as I'm concerned, the sun is shining and it couldn't be more beautiful," Lester Crown told the enthusiastic crowd.

Matanky also said it is "significant" that the dedication coincided with the Jewish holiday of Hanukkah.

Hanukkah, he said, is not simply a celebration of religious freedom but is also a celebration of a dedication to the future. The school, he said, is dedicated to the cause of inspiring a new generation of Jewish men and women to build on traditions as they engage in the modern world. He also noted that a giant menorah was refurbished and moved from ICJA's old location in Chicago and erected outside of the new school.

"Superintendent Nanciann Gatta and John Heintz, who served as the district's chief legal officer and assistant superintendent of operations, stepped down in November," said he.

"The work is expected to be completed in January of this school year," said he. "The work is expected to be completed in January of this school year, with the delivery to the board of recommendations for a

District 219: Investigation to end in January

Search currently underway for superintendent

BY NATALIE HAYES
Pioneer Press

A months-long investigation occurring during the recent resignation of two top Niles Township High School District 219 administrators will end in January, according to an email from the district sent Dec. 11.

The School Board has been tight-lipped about the findings of a multi-pronged investigation that's been underway since August when the board placed on paid leave Superintendent Nanciann Gatta and John Heintz, who helped dedicate the old school.

"As far as I'm concerned, the sun is shining and it couldn't be more beautiful," Schwartz said. "I'm excited for winter break and then it will be a great day to start school again!"

Brian L. Cox is a freelance reporter for Pioneer Press.

"Considerable time and expenses have been invested in the investigatory process."

- District 219 statement

"I'm excited for winter break and then it will be a great day to start school again!"

Brian L. Cox is a freelance reporter for Pioneer Press.
Glenview man is charged in Morton Grove home burglary

BY BRIAN L. COX
Pioneer Press

Fingerprint evidence led police to a Glenview man charged on Dec. 10 with allegedly entering a Morton Grove home in September and stealing jewelry and watches, authorities said Dec. 11.

Gunter Jimenez, 35, of the 10000 block of Michael Todd Avenue in Glenview, was charged with felony residential burglary on Dec. 10 following an investigation.

Police said Zeng is a 21-year-old Xin Zeng, if she arrived, they could not find a baby and asked the woman, "They just knew she was pregnant sister was bleeding heavily.

Police and paramedics were called to a Nagle Avenue home Dec. 7 by someone who said his pregnant sister was bleeding heavily.

When paramedics arrived, they could not find a baby and asked the woman, "You're in the middle of an area where we have rapid police and fire response," Yaras said. "We have a police station and a fire station nearby. We have plenty of support out there for young mothers. It's sad. She had the opportunity to get help for herself and get care as well. There's help out there for them and they can get it."

Zeng is being held in Cook County Jail on $10 million on a charge of attempted first-degree murder.

Brian L. Cox is a freelance reporter for Pioneer Press.

Police: Woman gave birth, hid baby in plastic bag under towels

BY BRIAN L. COX
Chicago Tribune

A Morton Grove woman has been charged with attempted first-degree murder after police said she placed her newborn baby in a plastic bag and hid it under a pile of towels.

Authorities called it "an absolute miracle" that the baby, who remained hospitalized in good condition Dec. 9, survived.

Police and paramedics were called to a Nagle Avenue home Dec. 7 by someone who said his pregnant sister was bleeding heavily.

When paramedics arrived, they could not find a baby and asked the woman, "You're in the middle of an area where we have rapid police and fire response," Yaras said. "We have a police station and a fire station nearby. We have plenty of support out there for young mothers. It's sad. She had the opportunity to get help for herself and get care as well. There's help out there for them and they can get it."

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Brian L. Cox is a freelance reporter.
The following items were taken from Niles Police Department reports. An arrest does not constitute a finding of guilt.

**DRUG POSSESSION**
- Edward Hennigan, 19, of the 7100 block of Oldell, Chicago
- Jacob Peters, 20, of the 2000 block of Old Glenview Road, Wilmette
- Bryan Casper, 20, of the 1000 block of Westview Road, Rochelle, were each charged with felony possession of marijuana on the night of Dec. 8 after 332 grams of suspected marijuana was reportedly found inside their vehicle during a traffic stop in the 7700 block of Harlem Avenue. They have a Feb. 8 court date.

**THEFT**
- Danislava Dramasazova, 25, of the 500 block of Seegers, Arlington Heights, was charged with felony theft on Dec. 6 after police said she stole money from a retail store at which she was employed. She had a Dec. 15 court date.
- Cynthia Knutson-Gearheart, 21, of the 9100 block of Knight Avenue, unincorporated Maine Township, was charged with retail theft and battery on Dec. 8 after she was accused of stealing perfume and cosmetics from a store at Golf Mill Shopping Center before allegedly punching an employee in the face while she tried to run away. Two other employees were able to apprehend Knutson-Gearheart, police said. She has a Jan. 5 court date.
- Srdan Sterleman, 31, of the 1800 block of Oakton Street, Park Ridge, was charged with driving under the influence on Dec. 5. Police said Sterleman damaged the rear passenger window of a Niles squad car when he started kicking it after being taken into custody on the domestic battery charge.

**BATTERY**
- Hernandez Gonzales, 52, of the 4000 block of Lavergne, Chicago, was charged with domestic battery and criminal damage to state-supported property on Dec. 6. Police said Gonzales damaged the rear passenger window of a Niles squad car when he started kicking it after being taken into custody on the domestic battery charge.

**DUI**
- Srdan Sterleman, 31, of the 1800 block of Oakton Street, Park Ridge, was charged with driving under the influence on Dec. 5 after he was reportedly seen speeding on Oakton Street west from Milwaukee around 3 a.m.

**BURGLARY**
- An undisclosed number of electronic items were reportedly stolen from an apartment in the 7900 block of Caldwell Avenue during a burglary on Dec. 7. The resident returned home to find his front door open, police said.

**FIRE**
- A 56-year-old woman told police that her 1997 Toyota started on fire on the afternoon of Dec. 5 after she parked at Golf Mill Shopping Center. Police reported that the car was fully engulfed in flames, which were extinguished by North Maine firefighters. The cause was not immediately determined.

4 Brooklyn men charged with skimming ATMs in Skokie

**ASSAULT**
- On Dec. 4, a 29-year-old Skokie man told police that the driver of a Chevrolet SUV swerved in an attempt to hit him while he was in a parking lot crosswalk in the 5700 block of Touhy Avenue. The victim provided police with a license plate number. An investigation was pending.

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Maine East class reaches out to prisoners
Students take part in Amnesty International's Dec. 9 'Write for Rights' letter campaign

BY JENNIFER JOHNSON
Pioneer Press

Saarah Junaid has never met attorney and human rights activist Waleed Abu al-Khair. But when the Maine East High School sophomore speaks of al-Khair's imprisonment in a Saudi Arabian jail, there's a clear hint of indignation in her voice.

"He was just defending someone. He's a lawyer; he shouldn't be imprisoned for doing his job," Junaid said as she joined classmates in putting literal pen to paper in support of imprisoned people around the world.

The Dec. 9 letter-writing campaign was part of Amnesty International's Write for Rights initiative, which encourages the public to rally on behalf of men and women identified by the organization as wrongly imprisoned or victims of human rights abuses. Students were given a choice of cases and then wrote letters directly to the imprisoned person or to government officials, calling for their release.

"We believe when the governments get these letters and they are inundated by these letters, they will hopefully make a change in the way they are behaving and some of these human rights will be restored," said Maine East English teacher Krystyna Chlebek, one of the three faculty organizers of the campaign.

In the case of al-Khair, Amnesty International reports he is serving a 15-year prison sentence based on his defense of peaceful activists in Saudi Arabia, including blogger Raif Badawi, who was sentenced to 10 years in prison and 1,000 lashes for his writings.

Human Rights Watch reported in 2014 that al-Khair, founder of the Monitor of Human Rights in

"You were my voice when I had none."
- Birtukan Mideks, of Ethiopia, who was jailed for two years after protesting election results when she was the leader of her country's main opposition party.

Maine East High School students on Dec. 9 write letters to and on behalf of imprisoned people around the world as part of Amnesty International's Write for Rights 2015 campaign. The effort was part of an initiative to rally on behalf of wrongly imprisoned people.

"She's not the only one who's been through this. There are hundreds of cases going through Mexico right now," Ahmed said.

"This is just another way to raise awareness about it and it basically gets the word across, even if it's something people don't want to hear."

In her letter to Malaysian cartoonist Zulkiflee Anwar Ulhaque, whom Amnesty International says was jailed for opinions expressed on Twitter, sophomore Sumiya Fatima addressed his "right to speech." 

"I told him many people care about his rights and he deserves his freedom," she said.

Four decades of solitary confinement for a murderer, Woodfox says he did not commit "has taken a huge toll on his health," Washington said.

"Usually people think human rights issues only take place outside of the United States, but in reality they do take place in our own country too," she added.

At the same table, Sinthia Ahmed, a junior from Park Ridge, was wrapping up her letter to the attorney general of the state of Sinaloa, Mexico, on behalf of Yezenia Armenta, Amnesty International, which is seeking the release of Armenta from prison, says police officials used beatings and rape to torture a 39-year-old mother and force her into confessing to her husband's murder, even though there was no evidence she had committed the crime.

"I told him many people care about his rights and he deserves his freedom," she said.

Do these letter-writing campaigns work? Brown says there are examples shared by Amnesty International that it does.

"Amnesty does publish that several people have been released from prison or their cases are heard again," she said. "Some investigations into torture take place because of the massive awareness that is shown on an international level."

Amnesty International's website highlights five cases in which Write for Rights campaigns led to the successful release of prisoners, including Birtukan Mideksa of Ethiopia, who was sentenced to life in prison and jailed for two years after protesting election results when she was the leader of her country's main opposition party.

"You were my voice when I had none," Mideksa was quoted as writing to Amnesty International.

The public can find Amnesty International cases and learn where to send letters of support at write.amnestyusa.org.

jjohnson@pioneerlocal.com
Twitter: @Jen_Pioneer
D219 interim superintendent weighs in on PARCC scores

By Natalie Hayes
Pioneer Press

Last school year marked the end of standardized state testing when school districts across Illinois rolled out new PARCC exam testing based on the Common Core Standards. The exams tested students in math and English and language arts in third through eighth grade. High schools chose which students took the exam by selecting one or more courses instead of administering the exam to a certain grade level.

The scoring system used for the PARCC was brand new for Illinois school districts, which had to wait until the fall to learn the results from the first round of tests that were taken last spring.

PARCC-tested students were measured based on a scale of five performance levels - Level one: Did not yet meet expectations; Level two: Partially met expectations; Level three: Approached expectations; Level four: Met expectations; and Level five: Exceeded expectations.

Under PARCC’s evaluation model, students whose test results place them in levels four and five are considered to be prepared for the next grade level and on track for college.

Niles Township High School District 219's interim superintendent, Anne Roloff, explained in a phone interview how the district adjusted to the new testing system when it was administered earlier this year. The exams were given to English/language arts students at the junior level, and students in Algebra 2 during two separate testing sessions in March and April.

Q: How did PARCC testing go this year?
A: It was a little different than what we were used to because we usually plan for assessments well in advance, and we didn’t really know what we were even testing on until mid-December of 2014. That was when the Illinois State Board of Education notified us that we had a week to decide whether to test by grade level or course level. We chose Algebra 2 students and all juniors.

Q: What, if any, difficulties or challenges did the district have in implementing the test?
A: We did paper testing because the Netbook computers many of the students use weren't compatible with the electronic testing system. It was also hard schedule-wise, because we had to pull students out of classes for two days in March and two days in April, and it just ended up being a very complicated process. Also, some kids didn’t want to take it — a lot of students didn’t feel it had a meaning for them during their junior year of high school when they don’t have any skin in the game. In our case, we had a high percentage of students that did not take it. Forty-six percent of our students didn’t take the reading test, and 28.5 percent didn’t take math.

Q: What changes would you like to see made to the evaluation of results?
A: The results are hard to interpret and we’re not sure what the scores mean yet. We don’t know what constitutes a one versus a three and a three versus a five. We’re concerned that the scoring system is arbitrary, and we need some better definitions from ISBE and PARCC as to what they mean as far as students meeting the common core standards.

Also, the turnaround time for the results was long. We want useful and meaningful feedback to help us make a better instructional alignment, and with the long length of time we had to wait for the results, it’s difficult to plan those changes.

Q: How is the district viewing its results from this year's test, as successes or as showing more work to do?
A: There's always more work to do, and we always recognize that. But because these results are difficult to interpret, it's hard to say because they're not recognized universally by colleges like the ACT, for example. We're not certain how reflective it is of true student performance.

Q: What plans does the district have for next year's testing?
A: We're going to test freshmen English/language arts students in 2016, and students in Algebra 1 with the hope that they'll be more invested in the exam itself in order to make the necessary instructional changes, to have that information at the freshman level would be beneficial, because we can make changes earlier on instead of at the junior level when it's too late.

Natalie Hayes is a freelance reporter for Pioneer Press.

Full PARCC scores
Listing of local school districts and their scores on next page. For more PARCC information, go to www.ChicagoTribune.com.
## PARCC scores at area schools

Here are results for the Partnership for Assessment of Readiness for College and Careers (PARCC) tests administered in spring 2015. District-wide results appear in **BOLD** in gray rows. Individual schools are listed below their respective district results.

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JANUARY 10

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EXILES AND ÉMIGRÉS IN HOLLYWOOD, 1933-1950

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9603 Woods Drive, Skokie
Temperature turned up on this year's courthouse turkey drive

BY MIKE ISAACS
Pioneer Press

There was good and bad news about former Deputy Sheriff Michael Wronkowski's 21st annual turkey drive in the garage of the Skokie Courthouse — and it was the same news.

The Dec. 9 turkey drive was held in unseasonably warm weather, which was good news for those standing outside all day, but bad news for those trying to keep donated turkeys and hams cold throughout the morning and afternoon.

Last year was quite a different story. Wronkowski and his team of volunteers had to huddle at a portable heater to keep warm, but there was no need for a heater this year.

The new addition for 2015 was a cooler that Wronkowski made after he saw the weather forecast for Turkey Drive Day. He immediately stored donated turkeys and hams inside the cooler in the back of his festively decorated van.

"The weather is a real challenge so I had to do something," he said. "I don't know how well it will work."

Wronkowski had time to make the cooler because this is his first year in retirement, the first year when he hasn't worked at the courthouse. But he was welcomed back on this day so he could hold the popular turkey drive.

By late morning, Wronkowski said he was getting a good collection of donations on par with previous years. For the first time, he kept a running tote board to count donated turkeys and hams because so many people who stop by inquire, he said.

Three of Wronkowski's buddies were also on hand to help him out all day long. Wronkowski said he felt a little different holding the turkey drive this year, a little "freer" being a retiree.

Wronkowski said he was planning on wrapping up all the donations that night and dropping them off at a couple of soup kitchens that depend on them every year — just as he has done for the last 20 years.

A Skokie courthouse employee writes a donation check before handing it over to former Deputy Sheriff Michael Wronkowski, left, and his fellow team of volunteers Dec. 9 during Wronkowski's 21st holiday drive for those in need at the courthouse.

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#WeMatchHalf
Worshippers journey to Des Plaines to celebrate Our Lady of Guadalupe

BY LEE V. GAINES
Chicago Tribune

Tens of thousands traveled by foot, bicycle and car to the Maryville Academy campus in Des Plaines on Dec. 11 for the annual overnight celebration of the feast of Our Lady of Guadalupe.

Auxiliary Bishop Alberto Rojas presided over the opening Mass inside the academy’s gymnasium. A band played outside to a predominantly Latino crowd gathered near the Our Lady of Guadalupe shrine. The warm weather offered a respite for the worshippers, who in years past braved freezing temperatures to attend the mostly outdoor celebration.

The hourslong event is a family tradition, said Des Plaines resident Leticia Mancha. She said many of her relatives also volunteer at the yearly celebration and on a regular basis at the shrine.

“We don’t consider it a holiday,” Mancha said of the event. “We consider it a birthday for the Virgin Mary. It’s a party, a celebration.”

This year was a particularly special celebration for her, Mancha said: It marked the first Our Lady of Guadalupe event for her 1-year-old daughter, Valentina.

The Mass celebrated by Rojas also included a re-enactment, performed by children enrolled in Catholic programs offered by the administrators of the shrine, of the apparition of Our Lady of Guadalupe to Juan Diego, an Aztec who converted to Catholicism while he was traveling near Mexico City in December 1531.

“When the Blessed Mother appeared to Juan Diego, she told him to go to the Spanish bishop and deliver her message,” Rojas said.

Our Lady of Guadalupe, an aspect of the Virgin Mary, wanted a church built in a specific place, he said. The bishop asked for a miracle to prove the truth of Diego’s story, Rojas said. Diego returned with a bouquet of roses in the dead of winter, and when they fell from his apron an image of the Virgin was seen on the cloth, he said. Diego became the first indigenous person from the Americas to reach Roman Catholic sainthood when he was canonized in 2002.

The Basilica of Our Lady of Guadalupe in Mexico City, which the Spanish bishop ordered built, is referred to as the most visited Catholic shrine in the world.

While an estimated 150,000 to 200,000 worshippers celebrated the Dec. 12 feast day in Des Plaines, millions more honored the event in Mexico, said the Rev. Adan Sandoval, director of the Chicago Archdiocese’s Hispanic council. Sandoval celebrated the 12:30 a.m. Mass at the shrine in Des Plaines.

“For Mexicans in particular, Our Lady of Guadalupe is an icon of identity,” he said. “Even for those who don’t practice their faith, Dec. 12 is always going to be very important.”

John Smyth, former longtime executive director of Maryville Academy, opened the academy’s chapel to Our Lady of Guadalupe worshippers in 1987. In the 1990s, an outdoor shrine was built, and the event later came under the auspices of the Archdiocese of Chicago.

Sandoval said worshippers from all over Chicago and its suburbs travel to the annual celebration, and some journey from as far away as Milwaukee and Indiana.

Lee V. Gaines is a freelance reporter for the Chicago Tribune.
Hey-hey! Going once, going twice

Auction offers Cubs caller Jack Brickhouse's personal memorabilia

BY DANIEL I. DORFMAN
Pioneer Press

From a distance, a Chicagoan who grew up with Jack Brickhouse can connect with the legendary broadcaster by gazing at the Wrigley Field foul poles or walking by his bronze statue on Michigan Avenue.

But on Dec. 12, there was an opportunity to personalize that link when some of Brickhouse's memorabilia was put up for sale.

In a Highland Park strip mall just west of U.S. Route 41, people streamed by to look through an assortment of Brickhouse's possessions ranging from portraits, scorecards, books, correspondence with five U.S. presidents, autographed jerseys and a number of awards. The items were made available for purchase by Brickhouse's widow, Pat, who said after moving to Arizona she was looking to downsize.

"I have so much of my husband's memorabilia," said Pat Brickhouse, who was married to her husband for 18 years until his death in 1998. "He had so many admirers, and I thought we could share the items we had collected through the years with his fans. Now others can be part of that memory."

After coming to WGN radio in 1940 from Peoria, Brickhouse established himself in the Chicago tapestry with a 40-plus-year run as a baseball broadcaster with both the Cubs and White Sox. The National Baseball Hall of Fame — where he was enshrined in 1983 — notes he called more than 5,000 baseball games.

Pat Brickhouse reached out to Tom Krupp, a co-owner of Coy-Krupp Conducted Sales, which carries out many estate sales.

"I appreciated Jack's contributions to journalism and to sports," Krupp said. "He had saved so many things that were memorabilia of his past. Things that were significant to the history of the Cubs, White Sox and Bears."

Brickhouse also called Chicago Bears games for more than two decades and spent time behind the microphone with the Bulls, boxing and wrestling. He was also part of news coverage including political conventions, according to WGN production director Bob Vorwald.

But he made his biggest mark on the Cubs — his "Hey-hey!" catchphrase has adorned the foul poles at Wrigley Field for years.

The estate sale provided an opportunity to see what Brickhouse accumulated through the years. Among those who stopped to see what was on display was Blackhawks Executive Vice President Jay Blunk.

"Jack Brickhouse was terrific ambassador, and it is great to see his artifacts get the respect and dignity they deserve," said Blunk, who said he worked with Brickhouse years ago. "He was a warm-hearted individual (who) had an exceptional vocabulary and was well-read on many aspects of life, not just sports."

Others who came to peruse the collection included Mike Fisher of Highland Park, who said he remembered how, for the most part, Brickhouse spent his time calling baseball games that resulted in futility.

"Anyone who was with the Cubs for that long deserved a medal," Fisher said.

But like so many Chicagoans of a certain age, Fisher said Brickhouse's voice was part of his childhood.

"When I think about Jack Brickhouse, I think about all the years in the family room with my dad in front of a black-and-white TV," he said.

Paul Chenier of Hinsdale did not have the childhood connection to Brickhouse as he moved to the area in 1995 after growing up in Montreal. But he was certainly intrigued when he heard about the estate sale.

"I certainly know the legend and I am a big Cubs fan, so that is why I wanted to come out today," Chenier said.

Chenier was able to bridge his past and present — he bought an award Brickhouse received in Montreal.

Scott Nelson of Skokie was leafing through scorecards Brickhouse had from individual games at one point and wound up purchasing TV guides, a WGN paperweight and some books.

"I grew up listening to him and was a big fan," Nelson said. "These are nice things to keep."

Then there was Ellen Stolfa of Chicago, who stopped by and picked up some books, photographs and meeting notes. She was a regular listener to Brickhouse as well.

"It makes me feel very nostalgic, especially looking at the photographs with historical figures," she said.

During Brickhouse's career, he called no-hitters and All-Star games, and he was the lead announcer for the Bears' 1963 championship. He was behind the microphone for national broadcasts of five World Series, but he never got to see the Cubs win one.

Now, the Cubs are coming off a 97-win regular season campaign in 2015. And with the recent acquisition of prominent free agents, Pat Brickhouse thinks her husband would be really excited about the team's future.

"He would have been thrilled," she said. "Give them another couple of years and we might have a World Series."

Daniel I. Dorfman is a freelance reporter for Pioneer Press.
Look to what others are buying for last-minute gift ideas

Looking for last-minute gift ideas for this Christmas?
If I'm on your list, I've mentioned before that I'm OK with the classic 1956 T-Bird (I prefer red with a white top and the Continental spare) or a Chris-Craft classic wood boat with an inboard motor, minimum 18 feet.
But if you don't want to go all out for that special someone you haven't thought about until a week before Christmas, you might want to go with something that at least puts them in with the "in-crowd."
I've reviewed for you top sellers on Amazon, and here's a list you might be able to use.
When it comes to toys and games, a top Amazon seller is a game called Pie Face. Maybe you've seen it on YouTube. The object of the game is to tighten a spring-loaded handle armed with a cream pie without triggering the mechanism to throw the pie in your face. It brings out the 5-year-old in everyone.
Another top-selling item is the Contigo "West Loop" stainless steel travel mug. I spent hours looking for a good one last summer. By "good" I mean one that doesn't leak, spill or drip and keeps my beverage of choice hot. You can never have enough of those.
For the reader in the family, "Killing Reagan" by Bill O'Reilly is a top seller among biographies. If you haven't bought any of O'Reilly's "Killing" books, you might want to get this one because I think he is running out of people to kill off.
If your special someone is more into art and literature, you might want to try "Humans of New York Stories" by Brandon Stanton.
For the health conscious, the Fitbit Charge activity wristband is a big seller on Amazon. I have one, and it is about the easiest way to keep track of your physical health. I always knew I needed more sleep, and my Fitbit confirms it. When I saw the doctor wearing one, I knew this was a hot item.
For the sports enthusiast, a full set of NFL football cards is what everyone seems to want, but I was more intrigued by the Gary Sheffield autographed baseball. Really? Gary Sheffield?
Finally, a good party game is always something to have on hand for entertaining at home or family gatherings. And the most popular one this year is Cards Against Humanity, which bills itself as the "party game for horrible people."

Merry Christmas is simply all I know — memories and all

What I am doing is wishing everyone well. But it is December. And a lifetime of Christmases just comes out. It's all I know. I have decades of wonderful Christmas memories. I just can't help talking about them. And come December, I just can't help writing about them. They are the memories I have. I come from a Christian family, a Roman-Catholic family. So, when I write about my memories of a holiday in December, I write about Christmas.
Had I been born and raised Jewish, I no doubt would have written about my Hanukkah memories. Had I been born Muslim, I would have written about Ramadan past. And so on.
The only holiday experiences I can write about are those holidays I experienced. And in December, that's Christmas.
But just because I go about with Merry Christmas on my lips, don't for a minute think I subscribe to this war on Christmas paranoia that always surfaces come December.
A couple of Christmases past, a reader wrote to thank me for using the word "Christmas" in a column. She wrote that the word "Christmas" has become politically incorrect, that retailers, for instance, now use the word "holiday" instead of "Christmas."
She said I wrote with "unmitigated courage." Believe me, I'd like to take credit for unmitigated courage. But, as I said earlier, I wrote about Christmas memories because they are the only memories I have.
As for substituting the word "holiday" for "Christmas," there probably are some corporations that don't want flak from those out there who see every mention of Christmas as an attempt to either convert or humble non-Christians.
On the other hand, perhaps some people use the word "holiday" because there are other holidays in December besides Christmas.
I don't know. I have no window into people's souls.
And I'm sorry. I see no war on Christmas because Starbucks-redesigned a coffee cup.
Come on, can't we all stop snarling at each other, at least for one month?
I hope so. Because next week, I'll probably write about some favorite Christmas memory I have.
I just can't help myself.

Paul Sassone is a freelance columnist for Pioneer Press.
OPINION

Midwest’s first 4DX movie theater makes debut in Gurnee

DAN MORAN

If you’ve been holding on to your last $19.75 to watch a movie while being sprayed in the face with water and sitting in a chair that not only pitches but also rolls and heaves, you no longer have to travel to Cinemaximum Marmara Forum in Turkey or the Cinema City Langham Place in Hong Kong to live your dream.

Humble Gurnee, known as recently as the early 1970s for its obscurity, has been tapped to host “the Midwest’s first 4DX location” — and only the second such cinematic venue in America, behind another village you might have heard of called Los Angeles.

What exactly is this “4DX,” you might ask?

Short answer: Much like 3D, only with an additional D. And also with an X, which is young-people talk for “extreme.”

The longer answer is that you, the more-demanding moviegoer, sit in a densely padded seat that can be fairly described as a cross between a barber’s chair and Capt. Kirk’s command chair. When you watch a movie presented in three-dimensional format, this chair will bounce along with the proceedings, reacting to everything from violent actions to sudden outbreaks of noise to the low rumble of the Lucasfilm logo arriving on screen.

Off to the side, a rack of fans mounted on the walls will toss your hair should a windstorm sweep in. Lights will flash if the weather turns even more foul. And, yes, in front of you, nozzles embedded in the back of your fellow moviegoer’s chair will release bursts of mist — sometimes scented — as the narrative might demand.

As described by the official literature from CJ 4DPLEX, the international company behind this latest wave, 4DX is “advancing the moviegoing experience from watching a movie to almost living it.”

If you’ve been to the Shedd Aquarium in Chicago, you might have taken in the 4D experience of “Sea Monsters: A Prehistoric Adventure” or “Spongebob Squarepantys.”

If you’ve been to Disney World’s Hollywood Studios, you’ve felt Darth Vader force-pull your chair during “Star Tours.” Even here at home, Six Flags Great America had the old Space Shuttle America motion-simulator ride before it was mothballed in 2007.

At a media screening this week at the Marcus Gurnee Cinema, CJ 4DPLEX chief content officer Sung Cho was asked how those theme-park attractions differ from seeing, say, “San Andreas” or “Maze Runner: The Scorch Trials” or any of the 78 films released this year alone in 4DX.

“It’s similar, I would say, in that the principles are the same,” he said. “You’re immersing yourself into five different senses — not only what’s on the screen, but also in motion and environmental effects that you get in the movie itself.

“The big difference is that we still make sure that the movie itself is the featured player, and all the environmental and motion effects work in concert with it to give you the immersiveness. It doesn’t take away from the moviegoing experience.”

The experience provided on Dec. 10 in Gurnee was “In the Heart of the Sea,” the new Ron Howard more-or-less fact-based seafaring adventure starring Thor, a.k.a. Chris or possibly Liam Hemsworth.

What was it like to chase whales and be attacked by them in 4DX?

Often stunning.

What was it like to roll with the waves at all times, including when idling in a lifeboat?

Occasionally distracting, or at least enough to welcome the frequent returns to Nantucket.

It is fair to say that 4DX delivers its goods enough to become an option for event-style movies, like a certain little film coming up next week called “Star Wars” or something. But will the masses line up to pay concert-level prices to see something like “Alvin and the Chipmunks: The Road Trip” on a regular basis?

As with anything else in America, you’ll get what you pay for, in more ways than one. Four-dimensional ways, in this case.

danmoran@tribpub.com
Ideas for a ‘staycation’ this holiday season

AILEEN SIMONS
News and Schmooze

It’s hard to believe that we are halfway through December already!

Last column, I wrote about tips to help keep your house safe while you’re away on vacation. While many of us are looking forward to taking a trip out of town over the Christmas holiday this year, there are others (including myself) whose travel plans entail taking in the sights of downtown Chicago and some beautiful suburbs near and far — from Skokie to Rosemont and Highland Park to Libertyville.

Yes, I’m planning on a “staycation” this year, and let me tell you, there are definite perks to this plan and adventurous opportunities all around us. So, if you’re looking for some ideas to spice up your free days, here are a few that I’d like to share.

First of all, if you are thinking about heading into the city but dread the thought of driving in all of that traffic, Metra is offering something special for the holidays — an unlimited-ride $8 weekend pass for adults. Also, up to three kids ages 11 and younger can ride free with each fare-paying adult.

While we know that the amount of things to see and do in Chicago far outweigh the space I have in this column, I will point out that some of our museums and zoos do offer opportunities for free admission on select days. The Art Institute offers free admission to Illinois residents every Thursday from 5 to 8 p.m., and children younger than 14 years are always admitted free.

Also, the Chicago Children’s Museum offers a family night with free admission for all every Thursday from 5 to 8 p.m. Another great place to visit is the Lincoln Park Zoo (admission is free here, as well.) And Brookfield Zoo is offering a free general zoo admission on Tuesdays and Thursdays through Dec. 31, with free admission for military personnel daily.

If you are a winter sports lover, try heading out to MB Financial Park in Rosemont, where they have officially dubbed it “Frozemont.” Here, you will find an array of options including winter tubing down a two-story run, free outdoor ice skating, hockey games and more. Another great place for kids and adults to visit is the Chicago Botanic Garden, 1000 Lake Cook Road, Glencoe. It is featuring the popular Wonderland Express, which includes a fantastic light show, a railroad garden, trains with indoor snow and the city of Chicago in miniature. Tickets and information are available at chicagobotanic.org.

If you head north, some fun “staycation” destinations include the water park at Key Lime Cove and the Volo Auto Museum to view classic cars. Also, downtown Libertyville has a lot of great window shopping; there is a holiday window decorating contest where you can vote on your favorite window through Dec. 20. If you’re looking to stay a little closer to home, the Buffalo Grove Theater is offering an “Xbox Package” where a group of friends can reserve time to play video games on the big theater screen, before or after normal business hours.

Bring your own Wii, PlayStation or Xbox games. Pricing and other information is available at www.bgtheater.com. Also, Temple Chai Sisterhood is hosting its inaugural Christmas Day Family Bowling Event, which is open to the community, on Friday, Dec. 25, from 3 to 5 p.m. at Arlington Lanes, 3435 Kennicott, Arlington Heights. More information is available at templechai.org.

At this time of the year, many of our local food pantries are looking to fill their holiday wish lists for those who are in need of help. Vernon Township Food Pantry (www.vertonowns.org), WINGS domestic violence shelter (www.wingsprogram.com) and Journeys homeless shelter (www.journeysindependentliving.org) are a few of the many local programs looking for donations of nonperishable food products and household and personal items. The websites listed above offer a detailed list of items that are needed at this time.

Finally, after all of that running around, my idea of a “staycation” also entails popping some popcorn, curling up on the couch and watching a great movie or old reruns of “The Love Boat.” However you choose to spend your time off, I hope that it is filled with fun and laughter. Have a wonderful holiday!

That’s all for now, please keep in touch and send neighborhood news to Aileen Simons at Thewrite touch1@gmail.com.

Aileen Simons is a freelance columnist for Pioneer Press.

Share your suburban events on Metromix.com

1) Start at chicagotribune.com/calendar.
You will be directed to Metromix’s online calendar.

2) Create an account or sign in and share your event. Signing up with Metromix is free and you can share unlimited events.

3) Confirmation: Metromix will notify you via email when your event is posted.

Questions?
Email metromix@metromix.com
Do-It-Yourself spirit keeps tradition alive

Concert-goers reflect on 40 years of 'Messiah'

BY DOROTHY ANDRIES
Pioneer Press

Maybe Christmas would come without Handel's "Messiah," but nobody dares risk it.

Among the most spectacular of the area performances is Chicago's Do-It-Yourself Messiah, founded by the late Al Booth in 1976 and now marking its 40th anniversary. The Messiah, taking place at the Harris Theater, could have as many as 1,500 voices in its pickup choir, and the orchestra this year has 65 musicians, mostly volunteers, but peppered with professionals for the more demanding solo parts.

Wayne Benjamin of Highland Park has played in the orchestra 38 times for the holiday event. "I didn't know about it the first year, and I think there was one year when I was sick," said the cellist. Over the decades, the drive from Highland Park to rehearsals and performances has taken longer and longer. "So now every year, I ask myself whether I want to do it again," he said, "but then I remember the feeling I get when I look out and see the diversity in the audience. Families, friends together, all economic groups."

Many attendees come carrying copies of their own scores, dog-eared from the years when they sang this masterpiece with high school and university choruses. Or perhaps they bring newer ones from performances with their church choirs. Lew Brashares of Northbrook always brings spares. "I really don't sing," he said, laughing, "but I bring along 10 scores. We go in a group. We have dinner first, and last year after the performance we went over to Millennium Park. We had never seen skaters on that new winding ice ribbon. We made a night of it."

Richard Lange is a member of the Deerfield Choral Group, an informal group that sings in the Messiah every year. Lange, a teacher who is an adjunct instructor at National Louis University, sang his first "Messiah" in 1978 at Orchestra Hall.

"Getting the tickets in the mail is always an exciting moment as well as taking new members who have never gone before," Lange said, adding that it is also fun to spot well-known Illinois celebrities and politicians who are attending the event.

His favorite part of the experience, however, comes before the program even starts.

"The best is arriving early and people start to sing Christmas carols a cappella in the lobby of the theater," he said. "That's a terrific moment for all of us." Melanie Frigo of Oak Park has been a volunteer oboist in the orchestra since she was 17.

"My father, Maurice Golden, was band director at Lane Tech High School in Chicago," she explained, adding that she played in that orchestra and also studied oboe with Alex Klein, then principal oboe of the Chicago Symphony Orchestra. "The Lane Tech Orchestra played the Messiah," she said, with obvious pride.

Through the rich network of Chicago's musical world, her father met Al Booth, the founder of the Do-It-Yourself Messiah.

"Al Booth had heard a do-it-yourself performance of the work in England," Frigo said, "and he tried to duplicate what he heard there. I remember when I first played there were 21 oboes and 18 bassoons — we had a sea of double reeds!"

Trumpeter Paul Semanic, principal trumpet of the Rockford Symphony Orchestra, had a very informal "audition" for his professional role in the Messiah.

"I was a student at DePaul, and one night I went to practice in a

Do-It-Yourself-Messiah

When: 7 p.m. Dec. 21 and Dec. 22; doors open 6:15 p.m.
Where: Harris Theater for Music and Dance, 205 E. Randolph St., Chicago
Tickets: $15
Contact: 312-334-7777; www.harristheaterchicago.org
Instrumental in the group's success is its conductor, Stanley Sperber, who has headed the group for 40 years. He recalls that when he first started, the group was small and informal, with only a few regular members. Over the years, the group has grown to include thousands of participants, and now has a strong and loyal following.

Sperber said that the group's success is due in part to its welcoming atmosphere. "We want everyone to feel comfortable and welcome," he said. "We encourage people to come and participate, regardless of their musical background."

The group's repertoire includes a wide range of music, from classical compositions to popular songs. Sperber said that the group's music director, William Schumann, has done a great job of selecting pieces that are challenging but also enjoyable for the audience.

One of the group's most popular events is its annual holiday concert, which features a variety of music, including Handel's Messiah and other holiday favorites. Sperber said that the group has sold out every year for the past 20 years.

For Sperber, the most rewarding aspect of conducting the group is seeing the joy and satisfaction on the faces of the performers. "It's a great feeling to know that you're making a difference," he said. "And it's even better to see the joy on the faces of the performers, knowing that they're happy to be a part of something special."
Koehnline showcases work by African-American artists

BY MYRNA PETLICKI
Pioneer Press

There's a treasure trove of magnificent artworks in the collection of Oakton Community College's Koehnline Museum of Art — so many that the majority of them are in storage. Museum Director Nathan Harpaz, has selected a stunning sample of those works for "Gems from the Koehnline: African American Artists."

The exhibit includes linocuts by the late Chicago artist Margaret Burroughs, founder of the DuSable Museum of African American History. These were acquired in 2008 when Burroughs came to see, "Convergence: Jewish and African American Artists in Depression-Era Chicago," which included some of her works.

"She came with a roll of prints in her hand and she signed them, titled them and dated them," Harpaz related. Burroughs donated the prints to the college. The evocative pieces subtly speak of the struggles of African-Americans in this country while often being reflective of African art. The director pointed to a print called "Sleeping Boy" and observed, "You can see the despair."

"We are also showing an incredible collection of original African-American movie posters, starting in the late 1930s," Harpaz noted. These promoted shows by the African-American film industry, which evolved in New York in the '30s and '40s because black actors couldn't get work in white films. "They took the same genres as Hollywood," Harpaz reported. These included Westerns, soap operas, mysteries and comedies.

Harpaz has short clips from several films created by African-American production companies running continuously on a monitor, along with other segments related to the exhibit, including one featuring sculptor Richard Hunt, whose graphic drawings are part of the exhibit.

A bust of Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. by sculptor Egon Weiner is displayed in the exhibit. "Egon Weiner was a very prominent teacher at the School of the Art Institute of Chicago," Harpaz said. "One of his students was Richard Hunt. You'll see two generations of artists, Egon Weiner, the teacher, and Richard Hunt, one of the most famous African-American Chicago sculptors," Harpaz said.

Also featured are works by Gregory Orloff, who was not African-American but used African-American subjects in the woodcuts, etchings and lithographs he created during the Depression under the Federal Art Project, and small drawings by Joseph Delaney, another WPA artist.

Contemporary artist Joyce Owens, curator of the Galleries Program at Chicago State University, is also featured. Her boldly colored piece, that has some three-dimensional elements, shows a horizontal view of a portion of a woman at the bottom of an imaginative landscape. The artist "is searching to find out about the history of her ancestors," Harpaz explained.

"Queen of Nigeria" linocut by Margaret Burroughs

‘Gems from the Koehnline: African American Artists’

When: 10 a.m.-6 p.m. Mondays-Fridays, and 11 a.m.-4 p.m. Saturdays
Where: Oakton Community College, 1600 E. Golf Road, Des Plaines
Contact: 847-635-2633; www.oakton.edu/museum
Tic-Tac-Toe gets new look at Morton Grove Library

BY MYRNA PETLICKI
Pioneer Press

You and your children will discover a cool new way to play a classic game during Tic-Tac-Toe with Sven and Olaf, 10-10:45 a.m. or 2-2:45 p.m. Dec. 19 at Morton Grove Public Library, 6140 Lincoln Ave. Kids will create their own markers that look like the reindeer and snowman from "Frozen."

"Each kid gets five white and five brown corks that they decorate like Sven and Olaf," Head of Youth Services Courtney Schroeder said. "Usually, it takes them 20 minutes to decorate all of their corks. Then they get to play either with their parents or each other." Kids can keep their little Sven and Olafs so they can continue the "Frozen" competition at home.

Materials provided for cork decoration will include felt, markers and "little googly eyes," Schroeder said.

The event is for ages 3-13; kids under age 8 must be accompanied by a parent or caregiver.

Registration is required.
For details, call 847-929-5102 or go to www.mgpl.org.

Watch for Hawks

The Chicago Blackhawks are presenting the Ice Rink at Westfield Old Orchard in Skokie through the end of January and are planning special activities some days. The family-friendly rink, which is located next to Bloomingdale's is open 5-8 p.m. weekdays, 1-8 p.m. Saturdays and 1-5 p.m. Sundays. Skate rental is $3 and it costs $2 to skate. Skating lessons for beginners are $10.

For details, call 847-673-6800 or go to www.westfield.com/oldorchard.

Namaste!

That's what your children will say after attending Yoga for Kids, 4:30-5:15 p.m. Dec. 21 at Niles Public Library, 6960 W. Oakton St. Yoga poses and breathing techniques will be taught. Participants should bring a large bath towel and wear comfortable clothes. Caregivers must stay in the room with children in second grade or lower.

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

Another icy adventure

A-Z Entertainment, Ltd. will keep everyone moving during Public Skate DJ Night, 7-8:30 p.m. Dec. 18 at Robert Crown Center, 1701 Main St., Evanston. Admission is $8 for adults; $6 for students with ID; $3 ages 5 and under.

For details, call 847-448-8066 or go to www.cityofevanston.org.
'Friendraiser' brings in $31K for cancer patient services

Event: 6th Annual "Friendraiser"
Hosted by: Friends of Marlene, which provides supportive oncology services for patients at Northwestern Memorial Hospital
Location: Harris Family Atrium
Prentice Women's Hospital at Northwestern Memorial Hospital, Chicago
Date: Nov. 4
Attended: 136
Raised: $31,000+
Website: friendsofmarlenehp.org

RANDY BELICE/NORTHWESTERN MEDICINE PHOTOS
Kathy Dever of Chicago, left, Julie Mullins of Park Ridge

From left: Maddie Palmerson and Larry Palmerson of Glenview, Jean Ferrone of Evanston, Jim Sweeney of Chicago, Mary Beth Nowak of Elmhurst and Annie Palmerson of Glenview

From left: Maddie Palmerson of Glenview, Holly Gibout of Chicago (Vice President of Northwestern Memorial Foundation) and Annie Palmerson of Glenview

Marlann Gorman of Barrington, from left, Richard Katz of Oak Park, Beth O'Malley of Chicago

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<td>Anna Podsladio</td>
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<td>Vicleth R Nelson</td>
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<td>Wells Fargo Bank Trust</td>
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<td>910 Bee dr, # 201, Des Plaines</td>
<td>Alexander Markov &amp; Petya Markov</td>
<td>SFI 2012 I Chicago LLC</td>
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<td>1685 Mill St, # 210, Des Plaines</td>
<td>Katherine Wirtz</td>
<td>Worn J Vinishniekmaman</td>
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<td>375 S Western Ave, # 710, Des Plaines</td>
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<td>Anthony W Cozzi</td>
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<td>681 W Kathleen Dr, Des Plaines</td>
<td>Urszula Salewski &amp; Valentin Salewski</td>
<td>Karen M Templeman</td>
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<td>328 Laurel Ave, Des Plaines</td>
<td>Stefan Ivanov</td>
<td>Corey McCenery</td>
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<td>Joseph E Beaulieu</td>
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<tr>
<td>328 N 3rd Ave, Des Plaines</td>
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<td>Vinod M Parkhik</td>
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<td>830 Milford St, # 2N, Evanston</td>
<td>Nancy L Anderson</td>
<td>Thomas N Koran</td>
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<td>Lee E Robinson</td>
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<td>1316 Maple Ave, Des Plaines</td>
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<td>Paul Guebert</td>
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<td>2457 Prairie Dr, # 1C, Evanston</td>
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<td>Kimberly Kurrus</td>
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<td>1266 Elmwood Ave, # 1W, Evanston</td>
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<td>Juan Pablo Rossi</td>
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<td>611 Chicago Ave, # 102, Evanston</td>
<td>Mubina Haflavicek &amp; Adis Haflavicek</td>
<td>Thomas P Ahern</td>
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<tr>
<td>1661 Church St, Evanston</td>
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<td>Melina Gregor</td>
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<td>9068 Elway Ave, Evanston</td>
<td>Karen Louise Smith &amp; James Michael Scanlon</td>
<td>US Bank NA Trustee</td>
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<td>900 Chicago Ave, # 601, Evanston</td>
<td>David H Hough</td>
<td>Gary D Bruckner</td>
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<td>1101 Dodge Ave, # 208, Evanston</td>
<td>Jacob Samuelis &amp; Bridget Isla</td>
<td>1101 Dodge Llc</td>
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<td>1211 Main St, Evanston</td>
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<td>Tony Brisco</td>
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<td>1214 Ruge Rd, # B, Glenview</td>
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<td>Munchul Gary Jung</td>
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<td>160 Chestnut Ave, Glenview</td>
<td>Michael J Lee &amp; Jennifer M Lee</td>
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<td>1512 Pebblecreek Dr, Glenview</td>
<td>John Gillard &amp; Erin Gillard</td>
<td>Bihan James Murphy</td>
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<td>2608 Ruge Rd, Glenview</td>
<td>Anu George</td>
<td>Arifim Lakhan</td>
<td>11-12-15</td>
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This list is not intended to be a complete record of all real estate transactions. Data compiled by Record Information Services. © 2015 public-record.com.
REAL ESTATE HOMES IN YOUR AREA

VERNON HILLS
Oakmont subdivision home at Gregg Landing has four bedrooms and three baths. Home features butler's pantry off dining room and jack-and-jill bath upstairs. Dual staircases with large landing overlook the entryway. Brick and wood exterior with professional landscaping. Ensuite with oversized whirlpool and large double vanities. This is a Fannie Mae HomePath property.

Address: 1657 North Woods Way
Price: $649,900
Schools: Vernon Hills High School
Taxes: $17,708
Agent: Karin Robison/Coldwell Banker Residential Brokerage Libertyville

BUFFALO GROVE

Address: 1100 Hidden Lake Drive
Price: $445,000
Schools: Adlai Stevenson High School
Taxes: $12,365
Agent: Winfield Cohen/Keller Williams Success Realty

PARK RIDGE
Ranch on oversized lot with nearly 2,000 square feet of living space on main level. Three bedrooms, 2.5 baths. Eat-in kitchen plus formal dining room. French doors lead to living room with stone fireplace. Hardwood floors throughout. Office/den on first floor. Full finished basement with a fourth and possible fifth bedroom, which means just around 4,000 square feet of total living space. Short walk to Metra & uptown.

Address: 620 S. Fairview Ave.
Price: $474,000
Schools: Maine South High School
Taxes: $10,854
Agent: Louis Parrino/Century 21 Elm, Realtors

WILMETTE
Three bedrooms, two full baths. Walking distance to schools, train, and grocery store. Original hardwood floors throughout all but one room. First-floor master bedroom. Perfect opportunity for a developer interested in rehabbing/starting fresh with a 50x163' lot size or even a first-time home buyer willing to upgrade and make it their own. Short sale, as-is.

Address: 1724 Lake Ave.
Price: $469,900
Schools: New Trier Township High School Winnetka
Taxes: $9,137
Agent: Paul Kotz/@Properties

Listings from Homefinder.com

ARE YOU OPINIONATED?

Here's what we think: start a blog

chicagonow.com/pitch
Expect to instill the obvious. Over and over, and over again.
Dominican Republic flavors come to Downers Grove

By Judy Buchenot
Beacon-News

Making traditional favorites for holiday meals is comforting, but once in a while, it is fun to move outside of the familiar and try something different.

So if your friends are coming over to visit during the holidays, consider stepping outside of that comfort zone with an interesting new dish. Aurora resident Raquel Black has learned to embrace change.

"Many times when I go to the grocery store, I buy one new fruit or vegetable that I have never tried before and take it home. I look up how to cook it on the Internet and then try it. There are so many different foods to try," said Black.

Change has been a theme in Black's life. Both of her parents were born in the Dominican Republic but moved to Miami. Black grew up in Miami and recalls how her mother loved to cook and always wanted to open a restaurant featuring the unique food of her native country.

When Black was 16, she and her mother moved to the Dominican Republic. "It was hard to move to a Third World country. There were many things I didn't have, like electricity and hot running water. But there were many things that I did have, like a sense of family and friends who embraced you. There was a strong connection between people," Black said. "When we moved back to the States when I was 21, I remember being on the expressway and everyone being like a hurry. It is hard to explain but there are things that I miss here that I had in the Dominican Republic."

Black quickly readjusted to life in the U.S. and got busy with her plans to have a career in health care. She stepped into the corporate world and worked her way up the ladder. "It was going very well, but about 10 years ago, I started connecting with cooking."

Black began making the many wonderful Caribbean dishes that she had learned from her mother and her years living in the Dominican Republic. She revealed in being able to introduce others to the unique flavors of plantains or interesting sauces. Although she kept her day job, she began to sell her fried Yuca chips and flavor-filled Cuban sandwiches at farmers markets and festivals on the weekends.

Black wanted to keep improving her culinary skills and went looking for classes. Most culinary programs required that she attend daytime classes, but she found that College of DuPage offered evening sessions that would allow her to continue working.

She started taking classes that introduced her to restaurant techniques. "I learned that cooking in a restaurant is very different than cooking at home," she said.

As her passion and skill set for cooking increased, she knew it was time to make a change. "I would lay in bed at night dreaming of new recipes I could make. Then a friend saw a 'for lease' sign at a Downers Grove restaurant and I went and looked at it." After creating a business plan and doing extensive research, Black, 48, made the decision to open her own restaurant.

"I knew if I didn't do it right now, I would never be able to do it," Black said. She opened Caribbean Corner on Main Street in Downers Grove in September 2014.

She serves authentic Caribbean cuisine prepared with her personal passion. She creates sauces like her mojo parsley sauce, which is a combination of lime juice, olive oil, garlic, parsley, orange juice, mayonnaise and spices. She marinates pork for hours so that it simply falls apart and piles it in sandwiches dressed with Swiss cheese, honey maple ham and dill pickles.

Some sandwiches, like the jibarito, are made with slices of green plantains that are fried until soft and then mashed into flat slabs and fried again so they are similar to bread slices. She then fills them with shredded steak topped with Swiss cheese, lettuce and tomato. "It is gluten-free option, which is one of my customers really appreciate," she said.

She is frustrated by the fact that many people mistakenly view Caribbean food as spicy. "We use many spices but our cooking is not heat driven," she said.

"We use a lot of root vegetables and also garlic, peppers, onion, oregano. We also use plantains like Americans use potatoes."

Black invites everyone to come try her authentic cuisine but also challenges them to give Caribbean cuisine a try at home. She shares a recipe for skirt steak jibarito with mojo de ajo that will surely catch the attention of holiday guests. "It is easy to cut it into small pieces and serve as sliders at a party," she said.

Judy Buchenot is a freelancer.

Find more suburban cooks on Page 4.

Skirt Steak Jibarito with Mojo de Ajo

1 1/2 pounds skirt steak
2 tablespoons adobo seasoning
salt and pepper to taste
4 green plantains
12 tablespoons olive oil, divided
6 cloves garlic, finely minced
4 cups vegetable oil (for deep frying)
1 Spanish onion, juliened
2 cups shredded lettuce
1 large beefsteak tomato, thinly sliced
3 tablespoons vinegar
1 tablespoon olive oil
3 cloves garlic, minced
2 tablespoons mango chutney
1/2 teaspoon salt
2 tablespoons honey
1 tablespoon lime juice

In a large pan or fryer, heat vegetable oil to 350 degrees. While oil is heating, remove plantains from water and pat dry with paper towels being careful to remove all water. Take the steak out of the refrigerator so it will come to room temperature. Once the plantains are dry, slice in half lengthwise and carefully lower into hot oil. Fry the plantains about 3 minutes and then drain on paper towels. Place a plantain on a flat surface like a cutting board and flatten with a large plate.

2. Repeat to flatten all the plantains. Then fry the plantains a second time for about 2 minutes. Drain on paper towels, sprinkle with salt and set aside. Heat 2 tablespoons olive oil in a skillet. Add steak. Cook a few minutes on each side. Take out of pan and allow to rest.

3. In the same pan, add two tablespoons of olive oil and sauté onions until tender. Remove from oil and set aside. Toassemble the sandwich, take a flattened plantain slice and top with one-fourth of the steak. Add about 2 tablespoons mojo de ajo. Top with sautéed onion, tomato and shredded lettuce. Place another flattened plantain slice on top and serve. Makes four sandwiches or can be cut into smaller slider-style sandwiches.

Mojo de Ajo

In a large pan or fryer, heat vegetable oil to 350 degrees. While oil is heating, remove plantains from water and pat dry with paper towels being careful to remove all water. Take the steak out of the refrigerator so it will come to room temperature. Once the plantains are dry, slice in half lengthwise and carefully lower into hot oil. Fry the plantains about 3 minutes and then drain on paper towels. Place a plantain on a flat surface like a cutting board and flatten with a large plate.

2. Repeat to flatten all the plantains. Then fry the plantains a second time for about 2 minutes. Drain on paper towels, sprinkle with salt and set aside. Heat 2 tablespoons olive oil in a skillet. Add steak. Cook a few minutes on each side. Take out of pan and allow to rest.

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Judy Buchenot is a freelancer.
By Veronica Hinke
Pioneer Press

Christmas is here, and one of the abiding pop culture symbols of the season, the "A Charlie Brown Christmas" TV special, is celebrating its 50th anniversary. The special first aired on Dec. 9, 1965, on CBS.

"Growing up I was definitely a fan," said David Levine, chocolatier and owner of Illinois Nut & Candy in Skokie. "I used to love watching the holiday specials. Several years ago, we took the kids to the Museum of Science and Industry to see the Peanuts exhibit. As much as they enjoyed it, they had no frame of reference for any of the characters, while I really got a kick out of it."

At Levine's candy shop, where the air is dense with the powerful whiffs of chocolate, freshly molded menorahs, dreidels and other symbols of Hanukkah dry in long lines late, freshly molded menorahs, dreidels and dense with the powerful whiffs of chocolate. While I really got a kick out of it."

Yet another holiday treat with a Peanuts connection is popcorn. Margarita Challenger, owner of Guanajuato in Glencoe, suggests adding a little color to a string of popcorn for the tree with another of Charlie Brown's favorite ingredients: jelly beans. After all, they were on the dinner table in the iconic Charlie Brown holiday meal.

To make the popcorn strands, Challenger uses a long needle, thin yarn, a bag of colorful jelly beans and a bag of popcorn. First, she threads a kernel of popcorn and then a jelly bean and then she continues alternating each until its long enough to use.

"Just string together the jelly beans and the popcorn, so the strand is white and colorful," she said.

Challenger also turns popcorn into "snowballs," by mixing popcorn and her homemade caramel sauce.

Simple recipes like these are a fun and easy way to celebrate the season.
Mother-daughter charity group spreads love

By Judy Buchenot
Naperville Sun

Christmas is a season when magical things seem to happen through acts of generosity and goodwill.

The flurry of activity in Maureen Thomas' Naperville kitchen was filled with this holiday energy last week as seven mother and daughter teams worked to make cookies.

Snickers' wrappers flew off miniature candles, rolls of dough filled cookie sheets and saltine crackers were turned into toffee while everyone worked and laughed together.

"I washed my hands," shouted Naperville teen Julia Tung, and immediately the other daughters chimed in with their hand washing status to appease their mothers' concerns. Tray after tray went into the oven, filling the room with the aroma of butter, chocolate and peanut butter. Huge bags of flour and big bowls of dough filled the island in the kitchen ready for new batches to be created.

It would be easy to mistake these cookies as simple holiday sweets, but they were far more significant than that. These cookies were the result of mothers and daughters joining together to bring a little happiness into the children and their families at Almost Home Kids, a Naperville facility providing transitional care in a home-like setting to children with complicated health needs.

This cookie-making day was just one of many projects taken on by mother and teen daughters who are part of the National Charity League of Greater Naperville. The philanthropic group has partnered with 16 different organizations to do everything from delivering meals on wheels to the elderly to assembling 3,600 glow sticks for the Naperville electric light parade.

Maureen Thomas and Shauna James found the local chapter of the national organization after Thomas read about the focus of the group in a magazine.

"It sounded like Junior League meets Girl Scouts," Thomas said.

Kim and Fiona McCarter, from left, and Caroline and Allison Brock work together to make a simple toffee cookie that uses saltine crackers as a base during a National Charity League of Greater Naperville evening of cookie baking. The cookies will be given to families and children at Almost Home Kids.

"Shauna had been in a chapter with her mom when she was growing up in Texas so she was familiar with the group. I realized that I was raising my daughter by doing drop-offs," referring to the seemingly endless trips to take her daughter to dance lessons, sports and other activities. "She was learning valuable things but there was no time for her to be with me."

She felt that the National Charity League would provide her with the opportunity to have meaningful activities with her daughter that would help establish good values, pass along traditions and support her growth of leadership skills.

The Naperville chapter started meeting in 2012 and currently has 160 members. Most of the mothers echoed Naperville mom Karen Campbell who said "it is getting in the car early in the morning with a daughter who might be surly and then volunteering together. Then afterward hearing about how much fun it was and about all of the other things in her life. It is meaningful time with your daughter."

Another Naperville mom, Allison Brock, added, "it is also amazing how much moms can grow too. Being part of the NCL (National Charity League) pushes you out of your comfort zone and makes you try new things. I would have never stepped up to be president in the past."

Volunteering with their daughters is definitely a bonus, said the moms.

"I've done lots of volunteering over the years, but this is the best because it is doing something with my daughter," Maureen Thomas said.

The organization is designed to be a six-year experience for girls in grades 7 through 12. However, girls may join through their freshman year. The Naperville chapter is accepting members through Jan. 31. Mothers and daughters interested in joining can visit greaternaperville.nationalcharityleague.org for more information.

The moms and daughters successfully put together the holiday cookie trays that featured one of the group's favorite simple recipes for toffee cookies that starts with saltine crackers and requires just six minutes in the oven. They share their recipe for three of their favorite cookies for others to try this holiday season.

Judy Buchenot is a freelancer.

Toffee Cookies

48 saltine crackers
1 cup butter
1 cup sugar
12 ounces semi-sweet chocolate chips
1/2 cup chopped almond or peanuts (optional)
1. Lay crackers in a single layer on a jelly roll pan. Melt butter and sugar together in a saucepan over medium heat. Pour evenly over saltines. Bake at 400 degrees for six minutes until bubbly and slightly golden. Melt chocolate chips. Spread evenly over saltines. Sprinkle with nuts if desired. Place in freezer to allow chocolate to harden. When chocolate is set, break into pieces.

Cranberry white chocolate shortbread

2 cups butter, softened
1 cup sugar
4 cups flour
6 ounces white chocolate
1/2 cups dried cranberries
1. Beat butter and sugar with electric mixer on medium speed until light and fluffy. Add flour and mix well. Chop chocolate into small chunks. Add chocolate and cranberries to mixture and stir to mix. Drop rounded tablespoons of dough onto ungreased cookie sheets. Flatten each mound of dough slightly. Bake at 350 degrees for 10 to 14 minutes or until lightly browned. Remove from oven and allow to cool for five minutes. Take cookies off sheets and place on wire racks to finish cooling.

Santa Surprises

1 cup butter
1 cup creamy peanut butter
1 cup light brown sugar
1 cup sugar
2 eggs
1 teaspoon vanilla
3 1/2 cups flour
1 teaspoon baking soda
1/2 teaspoon salt
24 Snickers miniatures
chocolate for drizzling
1. Combine butter, peanut butter, and sugars in a mixer until light and fluffy. Add eggs and vanilla and combine. Mix in flour, baking soda and salt. Cover dough and refrigerate for two to three hours. Unwrap Snickers miniatures. Scoop about one tablespoon of dough and flatten. Place Snickers in the center of dough and encase the dough around the candy in a ball. Repeat.

2. Place on greased cookie sheets. Bake at 325 degrees for 10 to 12 minutes. Remove from cookie sheets and cool on wire racks. Drizzle cookies with chocolate if desired.

The National Charity League of Greater Naperville's Culinary Cue

When drizzling cookies with chocolate during December, make use of the "outdoor refrigerator." Place cookies in a covered container and set outdoors to help the chocolate set quickly.
Daily Offers doesn't deliver, neither does PayPal plan

Dear Help Squad,
I need help securing a $96 refund for items ordered through dailyoffers.com. I have included some of my back-and-forth communication with Daily Offers since July. I also have more than a half-dozen emails to PayPal as I was trying to file a claim through its supposed buyer protection plan. However, Daily Offers tells PayPal the items were delivered, so PayPal won't file a dispute.

I questioned this seller at the beginning (forgot the all-important rule: buyer beware!), however, I thought by using PayPal, that secured me. Boy was I wrong! I don't know who is scamming me more, Daily Offers or PayPal. I can tell you once this dispute is settled, I will no longer be a PayPal customer.

Sheila, Countryside

I wanted clarification on PayPal's buyer protection plan and found a PayPal media relations contact to help me out. I received the following reply from Leroy: "Thank you for forwarding this - I will forward your inquiry to the appropriate individual." About 24 hours later, Leroy emailed me again to say, "In regards to (Sheila), our support staff reached out to her yesterday to address the situation."

Sheila said PayPal had called and "PayPal is issuing me a full refund." Oddly, the following was the statement provided by Leroy on behalf of PayPal: "PayPal Buyer Protection Program gives buyers the chance to retrieve funds should something go wrong. This includes situations when the purchase was not delivered, arrived in a bad condition, was not as described or was fake. PayPal users have 180 days to report about the issue. More information regarding PayPal Buyer Protection Plan can be found online at PayPal.com.

PayPal's buyer protection division had denied Sheila's claim, stating that proof of delivery had been provided by the seller. When I asked twice for clarification on this point, I received no response from Leroy.

While Sheila most definitely received her $96 refund as a result of Leroy's intervention, absent more details from PayPal, I still couldn't figure out what was going on. I began by clicking the URL provided by Sheila. Nothing. Then I reread all of Sheila's Daily Offers emails. Initially, the company identified itself as Daily Offers Mall at dailyoffersmall.com. Later, the emails referenced Daily Offers Store at dailyoffers-store.com. The former link didn't work, while the latter took me to a third site called dailyoffersshop.com. Sheila informed me, "Towards the end I couldn't even get to dailyoffersmall.com any longer. The web page was unavailable."

I then decided to investigate Daily Offers' shipper, ICAN Postal Service. The company's website contains photos of non-American-style delivery trucks and metric weights and measures. The site also states: "ICAN Postal Service recently joined the Singapore Post Group of companies and aims to be United States's No. 1 e-commerce courier service, delivering exceptional customer experience."

On top of all this, Daily Offers was making the following assertions in its emails to Sheila:

"Your order will be delivered in the very near future. We upgrade your order free of charge and dispatch it by express post. Your order will be delivered within 3 days."

"I've initiated refund of your payment. Our finance department will process this request within 10 working days and you will be refunded in full."

While admitting delivery errors and promising a refund in its correspondence with Sheila, Daily Offers was at the same time providing PayPal with "evidence" of delivery. It's a shame that Sheila had to contact Help Squad to bring this to PayPal's attention, but she did finally receive the refund she was due.

Send your questions to HelpSquad@pioneerlocal.com.

Cathy Cunningham is a freelance columnist for Pioneer Press.

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Chicago Jewish Day School
Chicago Shor Congregation
CJE Senior Life
Hebrew Theological College
Hillel Torah North Suburban Day School
Illinois Holocaust Museum and Education Center
Jewish Child and Family Services
Jewish Federation of Metropolitan Chicago
North Shore Congregation Israel
North Suburban Synagogue Beth El
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To create your Jewish legacy, contact Naomi Shapiro:
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Your legacy matters
Test-tube puppies ‘adorable, cute’

Cornell lab’s effort is first successful IVF

By Sue Manning
Associated Press

LOS ANGELES — A team of veterinarians, scientists and lab workers gathered around a surrogate hound and watched her give birth to seven half-pound puppies, the first dogs ever conceived in a test tube.

“We each took a puppy and rubbed it with a little towel and when it started to squiggle and cry, we knew we had success,” said Dr. Alexander Travis, who runs the lab at the Baker Institute for Animal Health at Cornell University’s College of Veterinary Medicine in Ithaca, NY.

“Their eyes were closed. They were just adorable, cute, with smooshed-in faces. We checked them to make sure they looked normal and were all breathing,” he said.

The puppies born July 10 are a mix of beagle, Labrador and cocker spaniel and are now healthy 5-month-olds, Travis said. All but one female were adopted. She’s being kept by the lab to have her own litter.

The lab kept track of the puppies by painting their nails with different color polish. Travis adopted two, still known by their nail polish names, Red and Green.

In vitro fertilization, the process of fertilizing an egg with sperm outside the body, is widely used to assist human reproduction these days. The first human birth from IVF took place in 1978. But IVF efforts with dogs repeatedly failed until now, according to Dr. Pierre Comizzoli, a reproductive physiologist for the Smithsonian Conservation Biology Institute in Front Royal, Virginia, which works with Cornell.

“The biology of the dog is really, really different than humans,” Comizzoli said. Dog pregnancies last only two months and females go into heat just once or twice a year, releasing immature eggs instead of mature eggs needed for IVF.

An earlier experiment at Cornell helped pave the way. In 2013 at Cornell, Klondike became the first puppy born from a frozen embryo. Klondike’s beagle mother was fertilized using artificial insemination. Her embryos were collected, frozen and implanted in Klondike’s surrogate mother.

Comizzoli described the birth of the seven puppies “as a huge breakthrough.”

A paper describing the Cornell litter as “the first live births from in vitro fertilized embryos in the dog” appeared Tuesday in the PLOS ONE journal. The lead author, Smithsonian Conservation Biology Institute doctoral fellow Jennifer Nagashima, said IVF technology in dogs could prove useful in conserving endangered species.

PET OF THE WEEK

McKenzie is a beautiful Rottweiler/boxer mix who loves to cuddle. She is approximately 4 years old and came to NAHS all the way from Oklahoma. She gets along well with most other dogs, so long as they are as playful and energetic as she is. She would also have just as much fun playing fetch with a tennis ball all day long. McKenzie is too energetic for cats, and children should be at least 8 years old because she is quite strong. McKenzie could benefit from obedience training and with her being as smart as she is, she’ll pick commands up in no time.

For more information, visit www.napervilleareahumane society.org.

chicagotribune.com/pets

Visit us daily for the latest pet and animal news from the suburbs, city and beyond, plus:

- Our adoptable animals blog featuring photos and descriptions of Chicagoland pets in need of homes.
- Our suburban and city pet events calendar
- Photo galleries, videos, more
It's every girl's definition of bliss. You meet a guy and within a couple of weeks you find yourself in a new romantic relationship that makes you feel like you're sitting on a beach with the sun in your face and not a care in the world. Everything with him is picture perfect. You've been waiting for this man all your life.

However, bliss has a price. Because the relationship seems so perfect, and because they feel they have a lot to lose should things end, it's natural for people to experience fear and vulnerability in serious relationships. While these emotions are understandable — even healthy, they can unleash two things that lurk at the edges of every relationship: jealousy and insecurity. If these two things come up excessively, it can cause big problems.

Several years ago, I was on a romantic Saturday night dinner date with a guy I'd been seeing for several months. We sat down at a table in the back of the restaurant and three minutes later, an extremely attractive single mom sat down next to us with her two young children. Why this woman chose this restaurant on this night at this late time is beyond comprehension, but I won't judge. Still, it's kind of like, would you take your toddlers to Morton's on a Saturday night at 9 p.m.?

Anyhow, she kept staring at my date and smiling, and I found myself seething with jealousy. The ultimate move was when she bent down to pick up a napkin her child dropped on the floor, revealing her fire engine-red thong. That was it for me. I stormed out of the place like a psychopath.

What I remember so clearly was that I felt very insecure, and I let myself believe that Ms. Cougar was prettier and skinnier than me. What I realize now is, so what if she was? I should have been more self-confident, more secure in the relationship, and had faith that my boyfriend was not interested.

Everyone has insecurities. We are our own worst critics when looking in the mirror. So, when people get into a blissful relationship that they cherish so dearly, insecurities and jealous tendencies can come raging out like a lion let out of a cage.

How do you cope with jealousy and insecurity? By realizing the things you do and don't have control over. No one can predict the future or the person they are dating. But, what you do have complete control over is you.

Here are four things you can do to minimize jealousy and insecurity in your relationship:

1. Exercise regularly and eat healthy. Staying in shape is great for both physical and mental health. Countless benefits of hitting the gym and the juice bar include improved sleep, minimizing mood swings, weight loss, improved immune system, cardiovascular health and better self-confidence.

2. Dress well and keep yourself beautiful. Looking well groomed and put together not only makes it obvious that you care, but when you feel pretty, you give off a confident and self-assured attitude that doesn't happen when you're wearing yoga pants and your hair is in a ponytail.

3. Do things to facilitate self-love. Volunteer work, acts of kindness, showing love to your friends and family, and staying well read and educated are all ways to precipitate liking and loving yourself. And when you love who you are, others love you too. That includes your spouse.

4. Have faith. Believe in him or her and the strength of what the two of you have. Don't doubt it and don't play the "what if" game — what if he loses interest? What if he gets back together with his ex-girlfriend? Have the confidence and belief that things will work out.

Remember, every man or woman, no matter how happy, content and committed he or she is in a relationship, will look at other people. Haven't you ever seen a gorgeous man walking down the street and stopped to check him out? Does that make you a cheater? Nope. Looking is OK, in fact it's healthy. Only acting on it is cheating.

Also, there is nothing sexier to both men and women than self-assurance, confidence, seeing that your spouse has faith in you and the relationship, and not wavering.

Dealing with jealousy and insecurity isn't easy, but with strength, sensibility, independence and trust, those feelings can become almost non-existent. If you think about it, there's nothing to be jealous of or insecure about if you have faith and confidence that the person you are with is just as "in" as you are.
**ROUNDUP | AUDIOBOOKS**

**Finale: A Novel of the Reagan Years**
By Thomas Mallon, narrated by Christopher Lane, Blackstone Audio Inc., 1937,
download $24.97, CD $39.95
President Reagan steps off the plane in Iceland for an arms summit wearing a white coat, “as if he’d arrived in Reykjavik to perform surgery on the world.” At home, an always-keen Nancy grows anxious. Her astrologer assured her of a “stupendous” outcome for Ronnie’s trip. Then stepdaughter Maureen confided that Reagan asked for his daughter to pray for him. Maureen’s prayers have her worried. “Would they interfere, like some sort of radio jamming” with the astrological predictions? Thomas Mallon’s “Finale: A Novel of the Reagan Years,” is full of the ever-unknownable president. Narrator Christopher Lane, with some 200 titles to his credit, makes the most of this field in a must-listen performance. “Finale” takes place during a pivotal period in the Reagan presidency. The Soviet Union is shifting, and the Iran-Contra scandal is about to break. Many of the players here will be familiar to anyone with an ear cocked to the news in 1986-87, including three presidents, stars Kitty Carlisle and Bette Davis, and a cast of less recognizable but still known voices. That’s a challenge for a narrator: listeners know what these people sound like. Yet without becoming a mimic, Lane reproduces the familiar cadences convincingly. His presidents are good. His stars, starry. Even Raisa Gorbachev rings true. But maybe the most delightful duet of author and narrator comes in the character of Nancy’s confidant, a presidential library model, “Oooh...Great idea,” or a presidential library model, “Oooh...Great building,” is to bring the man to life again. As Merv might have said, Oooh...Great fun.

**Slaughterhouse-Five**
By Kurt Vonnegut, narrated by James Franco, Audible Studios, $13, download $17.95 (unavailable in CD)
Audible.com, which has been part of retail giant Amazon since 2008, began engaging Hollywood stars to record classic literature in 2012. It’s an understandable move. We love celebrities. We follow their ups and downs, their marriages and divorces. Their deaths. They’re our mortal gods. So it’s good marketing to ask the gods to read to us. But if you want great narration, the stars don’t predict where to find it. People who are vivid on screen won’t necessarily add much to a reading, and James Franco does not in his narration of “Slaughterhouse-Five.”
The Kurt Vonnegut novel about Army chaplain’s assistant Billy Pilgrim, who, like the author, was a prisoner of war and witnessed the firebombing of Dresden, was first published in 1969. There have been several star narrations since. In 1970 Donald Sutherland recorded it. I haven’t heard it. In 1999, another one I haven’t heard. And you can listen to the author read it on Spotify. For free. With that kind of background, one wonders why Franco grumbled along in vocal fry territory – that, I’m running-out-of-oxygen creaky vibration at sentence ends. The good news is, the story holds up to even a less-than-inspiring reading. It’s as powerful today as it was a generation ago. But, for the very best narrations, don’t let the stars be your guide. Focus on craft.

**CHICAGOLAND BEST-SELLERS**

1. “Between the World and Me” by Ta-Nehisi Coates (Spiegel & Grau, $24).
4. “My Brilliant Friend” by Elena Ferrante (Europa, $17).
5. “Euphoria” by Lily King (Grove, $16).

Participating bookstores: Barbara’s Bookstores (Chicago), The Book Cellar (Chicago), Seminary Co-op Bookstore and 57th Street Books (Chicago), Anderson’s Bookshop (Naperville), The Book Stall at Chestnut Court (Winnetka), Women & Children First Bookstore (Chicago), The Book Table (Oak Park), The Bookstore (Glen Ellyn), The Book Bin (Northbrook).

**NEW IN PAPERBACK**

**Empire of Cotton: A Global History**
By Sven Beckert, Vintage, 615 pages, $17.95
A finalist for the Pulitzer Prize for History, “Empire of Cotton” explores the history of cotton and its crucial role in the development of modern capitalism. Beckert examines how the constant struggle over cotton between slaves and plantation owners, merchants and politicians, and workers and factory owners ushered in a revolution in the manufacturing industry.

**Stalin: Volume I: Paradoxes of Power, 1878-1928**
By Stephen Kotkin, Penguin, 494 pages, $25
The first volume of Kotkin’s biography of Josef Stalin looks at the Soviet leader’s early and personal life, his role in the Bolshevik Revolution and his eventual control of the Soviet Union, starting in 1922. Kotkin examines Stalin’s personality and his actions in the context of the fall of Imperial Russia.

**Girl In a Band: A Memoir**
By Kim Gordon, Dey Street, 288 pages, $14.9
The founding member of Sonic Youth reflects on her life, art and music career. Gordon discusses her California youth in the 1960s and 70s, moving to New York, her life in the visual arts, forming Sonic Youth, and her nearly 20-year marriage to Thurston Moore.

**The Skeleton Road: A Novel**
By Val McDermid, Grove, 430 pages, $15
As they demolish an unused Victorian Gothic building in Edinburgh, builders come across a skeletal remains hidden in the building’s pinnacle. When it turns out the remains may belong to someone from the former Yugoslavia, cold case detective Karen Pirie must dig deep into the history of the Balkans, war crimes, and how justice is administered.

**License to Quill: A Novel**
By Jacopo della Quercia, St. Martin’s Griffin, 375 pages, $16.99
William Shakespeare and Christopher Marlowe are playwrights by day who carefully weave clues about their secret agent careers into their works. When an assassination attempt on King James I fails, the rivalry between playwright-secret agents heats up, and the mysterious origins of Shakespeare’s “Macbeth” come to the forefront.

—Jeremy Mikula
My Fare Ladies: Sweet ladies all

BY S.N. | EDITED BY STANLEY NEWMAN

For interactive puzzles and games go to chicagotribune.com/games

Across
1. Procter & Gamble rival
6. Quick cut
10. Letters on spacesuits
14. What “candy” starts with
19. Telegraph inventor
20. Director Wemtümuller
21. Flash of inspiration
22. Earth tone
23. Fruity dessert
25. Sweet tangerine
27. After the buzzer
28. Chalet’s evening activities
30. “No fooling!”
31. Daredevil Knievel
32. Without delay
33. Hayride seat
35. Indefinite amount
36. John Wayne film of ’70
38. Body art, for short
40. Quaint hotels
42. Luis Obispo, CA
43. Prefix meaning “billionth”
45. Snack cake brand
51. Jamaican music
52. Earlier, in poems
54. Guffaws
55. Hospital’s prepping place
58. Membership fees
61. Cabernet grape
62. By-laws, for short
63. Menlo Park middle name
64. Morning talk-show host
65. Search software
66. MPG monitor
67. Non-alcoholic cocktail
70. Soil-shaping tool
71. Beckon
73. French 101 verb
74. Deftly done
75. Rebecca’s home
76. Beekeeper’s concern
77. Title for Conan Doyle
78. Harbor hauler
79. Passes quickly
80. Volunteer’s offer
81. Hasbro’s major competitor
82. Source of some salt
83. French dessert
84. “Inside” information
90. Opposite of COD
93. Cuban money
94. Top-drawer
96. Brewery product
98. Ruckus
100. Suffcient space
104. Mac eschewer
106. First name of two moonwalkers
107. Ties, as a score
109. Dweller
111. Quite a lot
112. Fruity frozen dessert
113. Tigger’s creator
114. Shortbread brand
116. Listlessness
117. Gritty film genre
118. Lake adjoining Cleveland
119. Fists, so to speak
120. German industrial city

Down
1. Slow walkers
2. Czech region
3. Used as a blackboard
4. Also
5. Cash in Tokyo
6. Considered overnight
7. Explosive, for short
8. Key concept in criminal law
9. Human Resources’ ranges
10. Minor damage
11. Spontaneous comment
12. Lay eyes on
13. Tigger’s creator
14. Fine-tune
15. Take the role of
16. Massive mammal
17. Backpack material
18. Largest Greek island
24. Nursery rhyme opener
26. Make revisions to
29. Become permanent
34. Be indisposed
37. Working in a mess hall
38. “Cut that out!”
39. Tranquill
44. Bodies of work
46. British coin
47. Swedish tennis great
48. South Pacific tune
49. Steel mill delivery
50. Thinks much of
51. Nautical signal
52. As it happens
53. Math class
54. Do over, as walls
55. Part of France’s motto
56. Middle of the sixth century
58. Wrote with a template
60. Mundane
61. Lose solidity
62. Sporty car roofs
63. Nautical signal
64. Sandwich bread
65. Soda pop flavors
67. Most-nominated Oscar performer
68. Type list
69. Furry foot
72. Genie’s home
75. Ft. Lauderdale locale
77. Wrote with a template
78. Middle of the sixth century
79. Know somehow
80. Volunteer’s offer
82. Sporty car roofs
83. Athens’ ancient enemy
84. Conical dwelling
85. Top Chef appliances
87. Animal park
88. Contribution
89. Hockey opportunity
90. Second-rate boxer
91. Party consultant
92. Most crowded
93. South Pacific tune
94. Top-drawer
95. Novelist Welty
97. Dine at a diner
98. Conical dwelling
99. Top Chef appliances
100. Senior members
101. Exactly when expected
102. Boss man
103. Typography
104. Hungarian writer
105. Typographer’s flourish
106. Potato chip
107. Dine at a diner
108. Tibia’s place
110. Cobs with kernels
111. Maua —
115. Tooth pro’s deg.
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Notice of Sale

The Mortgagee, the mortgagee's attorney, or the court-appointed servicer will conduct the sale of the property described as follows:

**Date and Time:**
- November 22, 2015, at 10:00 AM

**Location:**
- 6301 NORTH AVENUE, Morton, Illinois 60053, property index No. 10-17-402-039-0000, Vol. 0115. The real estate is improved with a single family residence. The judgment amount is $130,415.00, equal to the amount of tax assessed against said real estate, as currently assessed, and is offered for sale without any representation as to condition of the property. The property is subject to any judgment liens, taxes, special assessments, or special fees required by the Condominium Property Act, 765 ILCS 605/9, 11, and 14.5. If this property is a condominium unit which is subject to the Condominium Property Act, 765 ILCS 605/9, 11, and 14.5, the real estate is subject to general real estate taxes, special assessments, or special fees required by the Condominium Property Act, 765 ILCS 605/9, 11, and 14.5, and any amounts owed to the condominium association, including common charges or assessments.

**Proceeds:**
- The balance, including the Judicial sale fee for Abandoned Residential Property, shall be paid to the highest bidder, but no fee shall be paid to the mortgagee. If the mortgagee's claim is confirmed, the balance shall be paid to the highest bidder. If the mortgagee's claim is not confirmed, the balance shall be distributed among the lien holders, as determined by the court.

**Condition:**
- The property is sold “as is” and in its current condition. The court reserves the right to refuse any bid and may withdraw the sale at any time prior to the confirmation.

**Rights:**
- You have the right to remain in possession of the property for 30 days after the entry of an order of possession, in accordance with Section 15-1701.1 of the IL-REO Act. If the property is a condominium unit, you have the right to remain in possession for 30 days after the entry of an order of possession. If the property is a condominium unit, you have the right to remain in possession for 30 days after the entry of an order of possession, in accordance with Section 15-1701.1 of the IL-REO Act. If the property is a condominium unit, you have the right to remain in possession for 30 days after the entry of an order of possession, in accordance with Section 15-1701.1 of the IL-REO Act.

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December 1, 2015. Individuals wanting to review Ibis Annual Statement of Affairs should contact:

Copies of the detailed Annual Statement of Affairs for the Fiscal Year Ending June 30, 2015 will be available for public inspection in the school district's joint agreement administrative office by December 1, 2015. Individuals wanting to review this Annual Statement of Affairs should contact:

School District/Joint Agreement Name

Federal Sources

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<th>School District/Joint Agreement Name</th>
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<th>Postal Code</th>
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<th>State Sources</th>
<th>Federal Sources</th>
<th>Other Sources/Uses of Funds</th>
<th>Beginning Fund Balances - July 1, 2014</th>
<th>Ending Fund Balances - June 30, 2015</th>
<th>Differences in Fund Balances</th>
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| ANNUAL STATEMENT OF AFFAIRS SUMMARY FOR FISCAL YEAR ENDING JUNE 30, 2015

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Parenting 101:
Expect to install the obvious.
Over and over, and over again.

By Stacey Gill
The Washington Post

Parenting is a strange endeavor. Without any instruction, testing or training, we are thrust into a foreign land and entrusted to take on the most challenging and consequential work of our lives. I knew from the beginning I would occasionally fail, but I hoped that more often than not I would meet with success. With my role as my children’s primary teacher, I was prepared for the many lessons that lay ahead. At least the usual occasional failures, but I hoped that knew from the beginning I would

How clothing must be changed daily. Wearing the same outfit two consecutive days in a row is not condoned by civilized society and will result in merciless mockery. Please know that if you choose this route, I wash my hands of the entire situation.

How changing underwear is not optional. I thought humans were born with the knowledge that new outfit equals new underwear — that this knowledge is what set us apart from other species. This, too, turns out to be a learned behavior, one that must be reinforced vociferously and repeatedly for it to be fully internalized.

How boots with shorts is not an acceptable look. I don’t care if Ariana Grande’s mother lets her do it.

How to exit the shower. What seems fairly self-evident is apparently in need of a detailed set of instructions for children to successfully complete the task. So I decided to create a step-by-step guide: First, open the curtain on the side of the tub before which a bathmat has been placed. Next, step onto the bathmat. Finally, towel dry. You are now ready to move on to the dressing phase.

How bathing is a good. Especially after a visit to the McDonald’s ball pit or swimming in the town pool or attending middle school gym class. Counter to your opinion, it is not a form of punishment. And smelling won’t win you any friends.

How to make toast. Again, I’ve created another step-by-step guide to help encourage success. First, take out the bread. Next, place slice in the toaster. Finally, push down button. When the lever pops back up, you have toast.

How I have no special extrasensory powers in determining the weather. I feel the same exact weather conditions you do

How to drive. Unless one has a valid driver’s license and at least 20 years of driving experience.

How hands have to be washed. With soap. Especially after using the bathroom. Or it doesn’t count. I’m talking about after the kids have seemingly mastered this hard-won lesson.

How the instructions on the box of macaroni and cheese are there for a reason. That reason is to show you how to make it. If you don’t know how much butter to add, ask the box. Not me.

How the utensils placed next to dinner plates are intended for use. They are not merely decorative.

How the temperature dips below zero, jackets are required. It’s just the law. Similarly, when you feel cold, clothing will help.

Alternately, how when it’s 90 degrees out with 100 percent humidity, flannel pajamas are not appropriate.

How when riding in the car, driving advice is not welcome. Unless one has a valid driver’s license and at least 20 years of driving experience.

How when the temperature reaches the freezing point, it is not a time to use the car to dry the dog.

Stacey Gill is the mastermind behind the humor blog One Funny Motha and co-author of “I Still Just Want to Pee Alone,” the third book in The New York Times best-selling series. Find her on Facebook, Pinterest and Twitter.
Good timing: College grads to enter strong job market

CAROLYN BIGDA
Getting Started

This spring, students graduating from college will have more to look forward to than the end of exams and term papers. They can also expect a strong job market.

According to a survey by the Collegiate Employment Research Institute at Michigan State University, hiring of new grads is expected to jump 15 percent this year. The survey, which asked employers about their recruitment plans for the 2015-16 academic year, is based on responses from more than 4,720 firms.

“We’re seeing hiring rates that resemble the really strong job markets of past years,” said Philip Gardner, director of the Collegiate Employment Research Institute. He noted that hiring has improved annually since the 2007-08 school year, but that recruitment has really ramped up in the last three years.

“We’ve needed it,” Gardner said, pointing out that hiring must increase by 5 to 7 percent annually, “just to soak up new grads, never mind the students who graduated during the recession and may still be looking for suitable work.”

If you’re preparing to graduate in the spring, here’s what to expect.

Hiring is up throughout the country.

“There’s not one region that’s lagging,” Gardner said.

However, in some areas recruitment is off the charts. So-called super hirers — companies that plan to increase their hiring by more than 100 percent — are mostly in Virginia and California, followed by Michigan, Wisconsin and Texas.

“California and the D.C. metro area are home to power players in the job market right now,” Gardner said, such as technology firms, and companies in the aerospace, consulting and manufacturing industries.

Most sectors are hiring.

In most cases, it doesn’t matter what career you want to pursue. Job growth is strong across industries too.

Take construction. In the aftermath of the 2007-08 recession, jobs for recent graduates all but disappeared in construction. But this year, hiring of grads with an associate’s degree is expected to climb by 37 percent in the industry. For graduates with a bachelor’s degree, recruitment is projected to jump 19 percent.

Other industries that could experience big hiring gains include automotive, health care, technology and professional services, such as accounting and marketing.

“One of the best pieces of news is that everyone is benefiting from the stronger job market, with the exception of big banks that are still sorting things out after the financial crisis,” Gardner said.

“There’s not just one sector that’s going crazy.”

Still, while it will likely be easier to find a job this year, don’t expect to earn a fat paycheck than last year’s college graduates.

According to CERI, 61 percent of companies plan to keep starting salaries at the same level as last year. Among employers that will raise wages, the median increase will be 3 percent.

Another 7 percent of companies will offer signing bonuses. Before the recession, 17 percent offered such bonuses to new college graduates.

“I’m surprised there’s not more wage pressure because competition for good job candidates is getting tough,” Gardner said. “But it’s just not there yet.”

Internships are key.

Recruitment on college campuses is already in full swing, but internships are still one of the best paths to landing a gig after graduation.

According to CERI, 96 percent of employers use their internship programs, along with summer and co-op jobs, as a source for finding new hires.

“Building an internship pool is still a top strategy for companies, big or small,” Gardner said. “So if you’re a student and you haven’t done an internship, summer job or co-op (job) yet, it’s time to get on it.”

Divorce, remarriage affect your Social Security benefits

JANET KIDD STEWART
The Journey

Q. I am 64 and work full time. I plan to claim Social Security benefits at 70. My ex-husband is 66, and we were married for 19 years. I remarried at 61. Am I entitled to some of my ex-husband’s benefits? Am I eligible for my current husband’s? Can I claim spousal benefits on my ex-husband’s record now and hold off on mine until age 70?

A. Generally, a subsequent remarriage takes away the ability to collect divorced spousal benefits, said Robin Brevton, vice president of client services at Social Security Solutions Inc. There are very limited exceptions. You could consider claiming a spousal benefit on your current husband’s work record when you reach full retirement age, letting you later switch to benefits on your own record at age 70, if that benefit would be higher after those four years of delayed retirement credits, Brevton said.

“Take construction. In the aftermath of the 2007-08 recession, jobs for recent graduates all but disappeared in construction. But this year, hiring of grads with an associate’s degree is expected to climb by 37 percent in the industry. For graduates with a bachelor’s degree, recruitment is projected to jump 19 percent.”

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“Building an internship pool is still a top strategy for companies, big or small,” Gardner said. “So if you’re a student and you haven’t done an internship, summer job or co-op (job) yet, it’s time to get on it.”

congressional budget amendment killed off this strategy for anyone younger than 62 at the end of 2015. Also be aware that because you remarried after age 60, you may be entitled to divorced widow’s benefits when your first husband dies, so that could potentially affect your benefit calculation.

Q. My wife and I are in our late 70s, own a condo and have a little over $500,000 in assets, jointly owned in a revocable living trust. Nine months ago, my wife was diagnosed with Alzheimer's and seems to be deteriorating. My daughter suggested I change ownership of some assets so that, in the event my wife is institutionalized, I wouldn't be left destitute. I'm familiar with Medicaid, Munson said. The National Academy of Elder Law Attorneys and the National Elder Law Foundation maintain member directories, and the latter certifies elder-law attorneys. Generally, however, you'll want to learn your state's current exemption amount for assets that can be retained by the "community" spouse (you) and still allow for your wife to qualify for Medicaid, Munson said.

The home you live in, a car and personal items are typically exempt assets as well, he said, so decide if there are home improvements or a mortgage payoff that makes sense for your situation. And if there are remaining assets, you might look into a so-called Medicaid-compliant annuity, which could pay you income during your life in order to meet your own expenses and not thrust you onto public assistance as well, Munson said.

Finally, he said, make sure you and the attorney plan for what would happen to your assets if you die first and your wife is on Medicaid.

Share your journey to or through retirement or pose a question at journey@janetkiddstewart.com.
An extra boost to save for cars, homes

Concept aimed at social media generation

By Susan Tompor
Detroit Free Press

Saving for a goal used to involve stuffing coins into a giant jar, opening a bank account or buying U.S. savings bonds.

Now a Detroit-based start-up is tempting millennials to treat building savings a lot like keeping up with friends via Facebook or Instagram. What about turning to a new "social savings platform" to add to your down payment for a car or house?

Could friends and family like you have enough to add an extra $25, $50 or $100 to your online account?

To make the idea more appealing, BoostUp gets companies to "boost" your savings with added deals and promotions. Offers now include allowing you to set aside at least $750 in a savings platform to add to your down payment for a car or house.

"You can see that John Doe contributed $10 to his friend's car," Simonov said. "It is convenient. No need to send a check or drive 10 miles to meet the person." It's also possible that someone who gets money from friends, family or strangers for a down payment could be more likely to buckle down to reach the bigger goal, such as actually buying a house or a new car.

Elijah Lawson, 25, who lives in Pontiac, Mich., said he and his fiance, Miko Suga, 24, are considering setting up a BoostUp account to build a bigger down payment for their first home. They plan to marry next August and hope to find a home in Royal Oak, Mich.

Lawson has a variety of jobs, including working at Home Depot and writing for the Ohio-based Columbus Craft Beer Consortium website about craft beers. His fiance is working as a resident at a local hospital and plans to work in family medicine.

They are saving for their first home on their own but they are tempted by the idea of being able to turn to family and friends, too.

"We have a solid group of friends and family," Lawson said. "We're all really close. We have a lot of people who we know will help us."

Unlike a certificate of deposit or mutual fund, you're not building any interest or return on investment by letting money sit in the BoostUp account. No interest is paid on BoostUp savings.

John Morgan, CEO of BoostUp, said the site is geared to work with younger consumers who often struggle to obtain a down payment for a first home or car. And this concept allows savers to track their progress online.

"The concept of matching someone's savings is not new," Morgan said, noting that his own parents encouraged him to work as a teen by offering to match some of his money to buy his first car.

Mom and dad, naturally, can contribute to your account. If you want, you can ask strangers or anyone to contribute.

"If they want to post it on Facebook, share it on Twitter or anywhere else, then family, friends or strangers can give to them through their public BoostUp page — just like any crowdfunding site," Morgan said.

"Do you need another iTunes gift card?" Morgan asked.

The accounts work best, he said, when someone knows they're going to buy a car or need a down payment for a home in the next six months to a year or so. And the extra boosts help if you are aiming to buy a certain car or work with a specific lender or real estate agent participating in the program.

Morgan said BoostUp is paid by the partners the company works with — such as through marketing fees, platform usage fees and/or success fees.

Of course, car companies, retailers and others have long offered credit cards that help you build reward points that can cut the cost of their products, too.

But Morgan said millennials are more of an "online generation" and can find this approach appealing, especially since some aversions to traditional banks after the financial crisis.

"We're not looking to replace the bank," he said. In July, BoostUp offered a home-buying platform that allows real estate professionals nationwide a chance to connect with active home buyers and make getting a down payment easier.

"Housing, we feel, has a bigger upside because you can't purchase a home without a down payment, and it's the biggest obstacle for first-time home buyers," Morgan said.

Bob Walters, chief economist for Quicken, said millennials are likely to be a huge driving force for the housing market over the next few decades.

That extra $750 could be meaningful, Walters said, especially since many first-time home buyers are in the market for a home that costs around $90,000 to $150,000.

They might also qualify for other programs, including those from the Federal Housing Administration.

Brokers and real estate agents that partner with BoostUp get a customized landing page that can boost traffic. Real estate agents only have to pay their "boost" after the closing of a home purchase. The real estate agent, of course, connects with new leads that could lead them to sell more homes.

Michelle Coleman, 28, who is a real estate agent at ReMax Classic in Bloomfield Hills, Mich., is taking part in the online platform as a way to build business with millennials.

She's offering a dollar-for-dollar match on up to $500 in savings toward a down payment for those who save through BoostUp.

Coleman sees the separate, dedicated account as a way to really commit to saving for a new home.

Otherwise, she said, it's too easy to transfer money out of savings into checking and spend it on regular bills or impulse purchases. Plus, she said, she can see millennials taking an interest in this kind of online savings platform.

"You have things like GoFundMe," Coleman said. "You see it for charities. Someone wants to take a trip."

Why not ask someone to contribute to your down payment for a house as a birthday gift? Coleman asked. She's told one of her friends who's house shopping to do just that.
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Please stop sleep-bragging

Donald Trump's recent sleep statements highlight a broader issue

By Nara Schoenberg
Chicago Tribune

Your average American is unlikely to brag about, say, smoking a pack of cigarettes a day, eating his weight in red meat or downing a fifth of gin for breakfast.

But bragging about sleep deprivation?

Yep, that's a thing.

Despite studies showing links with diabetes, high blood pressure and weight gain, sleeping just a few hours a night was a badge of honor long before Donald Trump's repeated — and very flattering — public comments on his own ability to get by on three or four hours. In Springfield recently, he touted this trait, saying, "I have a great temperament for success. You know, I'm saying, "I have a great temperament for success."

The problem, experts say, is that very few of us — in the realm of 1 percent — can actually flourish on just a few hours of sleep a night, and sleep-bragging makes what for most of us is an unhealthy practice seem more desirable.

"It sets a precedent," Dr. Raj Dasgupta, a fellow of the American Academy of Sleep Medicine and an assistant professor at the University of Southern California, says of sleep-bragging. "If people feel they can work harder or achieve more by sleeping less, then they're opening themselves up to sleep deprivation."

"And the consequences of sleep deprivation? People who are sleep deprived have a higher rate of diabetes, a higher rate of high blood pressure. And let me say this: High blood pressure? That's the most common risk factor for heart disease in our country.

Diabetes? The deadliest risk factor for heart disease. And both are seen in patients who are sleep deprived."

Studies show that some people truly can do well on just four hours of sleep a night, but Kat Duffy, author of "The Secret Life of Sleep," says you're probably not one of them. Maybe 1 percent of us are truly genetically predisposed short-sleepers, she says. More people are sleep braggars.

Duffy says that the sleep deprived miss out on REM sleep, in which we do emotional processing. They tend to be more irritable, less cooperative, more impulsive, more likely to blame others than the sleep satisfied, she says. They may also have difficulty listening.

"It's scary to think of someone like that making big decisions," she says.

There's also a Catch-22: if you're sleep-deprived, it may be hard to get more sleep because your judgment may be affected. Think of the times you blew a diet at night or stayed up late watching TV you didn't even like. It may, similarly, be hard to make yourself go to bed on time when you're already over-tired, Duffy says.

Dasgupta and Duffy both point toward a deep-seated bias in our culture toward sleeping less.

Studies show that some people may, similarly, be hard to make yourself go to bed on time when

Donald Trump is not alone in bragging about how little sleep he needs, but why is sleep deprivation something people brag about?


Don't use some medications past their expiration date

DR. ANTHONY KOMAROFF
Ask Doctor K

Dear Doctor K: Sometimes the pills in my medicine cabinet reach the expiration date. Do I really need to throw them out? They can be expensive.

Dear Reader: The two questions to ask about pills that are past their expiration date are: Do they lose their strength, and do they become toxic or harmful?

There is little evidence that outdated medications become toxic or harmful. However, some drugs do lose their potency, or effectiveness, over time. The most notable is nitroglycerin, which should be replaced every six months. The epinephrine in EpiPens also loses its potency past its expiration date. You absolutely do not want to take the risk of needing a nitroglycerin pill to treat sudden heart pain — and having the pill not work. Likewise with EpiPens to stop a severe allergic reaction.

In addition, liquid drugs are less stable than tablets or powders. Liquid drugs include oral suspensions and solutions and injectable products. As a general rule, I would get a fresh refill of liquid drugs when they pass their expiration date.

Most drugs, however, retain their strength past their expiration dates. In one study, for example, researchers tested 96 different drugs stored in their original containers. They found that more than three-quarters of these drugs would remain stable for nearly five years beyond their expiration dates. And a study of two anti-influenza drugs found that these drugs remained fully active after 25 years of storage.

Drug companies generally give their products an expiration date two to three years from the date they're manufactured. Then, your pharmacist labels your bottle with an expiration date that's usually one year from the day your prescription is filled. So the expiration date you see on your pill bottle is usually sooner than the expiration date the drug company has assigned your pills.

Expiration dates shouldn't really matter with a medicine to treat a temporary problem — like taking an antibiotic for strep throat, for example. You should have swallowed the last medicine long before its expiration date.

And expiration dates shouldn't matter for a medicine that you are supposed to take regularly for a chronic problem, such as to keep your blood pressure normal. If you are taking the medicine as prescribed, it should never have an expiration date that already has passed.

In fact, expiration dates should be an issue only when you have a medicine for a recurring temporary problem. I'm thinking of a strong pain pill for back pain that flares up from time to time, for example, or an antibiotic for a recurrent urinary tract infection.

Always keep your drugs in a cool, dry place in their original containers. And toss out medications you no longer need. Their presence in your medicine cabinet can be confusing and could cause you accidentally to take the wrong pill.
Custom-built Crystal Lake home with pool: $970,000

ADDRESS: 5809 E. Hillside Road in Crystal Lake
ASKING PRICE: $970,000
Listed on June 17
This custom-built all-brick home in Crystal Lake features an in-ground swimming pool, elegant woodwork and eco-conscious, no-VOC wood flooring. The grand entryway features a water wall and custom wood-paneled walls. The home was built with abundant natural light in mind, executed by high ceilings in the living room and windows in the fully furnished lower level. Four-car garage and deck with views of Sterne's Woods Park.
Agent: Ronee Chenault of Redfin, 847-807-1959
At press time this home was still for sale.

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John Francona loves his living space. “Lots of people comment that it has no artwork. It doesn’t need it,” he says.

Francona renovated the kitchen about nine years ago, doubling its size. "I’m not much of a cook. I like what it looks like," he said, smiling.

The counters are oak butcher block painted black. “When they look bad, you paint them.”

The architect did all the work himself, using the gutted kitchen as his workspace.

“It was awful,” he admitted.

He didn’t make the same mistake several years later, when he renovated the master bathroom and large dressing room. He chose the subway and hexagonal tile but was skeptical when his contractor suggested a walk-in, curbless shower. It works perfectly and has one unique feature — controls on the opposite wall so the user doesn’t get wet until he wants to.

“It’s something I learned, one of my tricks,” he said.

This 1894 grocery store is his third renovation. He began with a 1920s house, followed by a 1909 house.

“I think I’m done,” he said.

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COMMUNITY CALENDAR

Listings are subject to change. Please call the venue in advance.

Thursday, Dec. 17

*Christmas Bingo*: Help Comedienne Vicky Quade save a local parish by playing along with her in an evening of bingo where attendees have a chance to win prizes. Family friendly. 7:30 p.m. Thursday, Leela Arts Center, 620 Lee St., Des Plaines, $20-$30, 847-220-2919

Des Plaines Art Guild Show: Immerse yourself in the beauty of the paint strokes and the soul of a photographer. Featured artists include Beverly Beckman, Dolores Kenney, Stan Kotsch, Kathy Passi, Liz Pawlik, Rhonda Popko, Dee Schuster, Thelma Spain, Willard Strasser, John Taylor, and Elaine Tejcek. 10 a.m. daily, closed Saturdays and Mondays, 1 p.m. Sunday, Des Plaines History Center, 781 Pearson St., Des Plaines, free, 847-391-5399

Meghan Linsey and Sarah Potenza: 7:30 p.m. Thursday, SPACE, 1245 Chicago Ave., Evanston, $18-$30, 847-492-8860

Found Live Music Every Thursday: The Josh Rzepka jazz trio performs. 6:30 p.m. Thursdays, Found Kitchen & Social House, 1631 Chicago Ave., Evanston, free, 847-868-8945

Winter Arts and Crafts Expo: The 13th annual expo features original, handmade arts and crafts by over 100 selected artisans, featuring original, handmade works of jewelry, ceramics, fiber, metal, glass, painting, photography, mixed-media and more. 10 a.m. daily, Evanston Art Center, 1717 Central St., Evanston, free, 847-475-1030

Valli Produce Evanston Holiday Food Drive: The first annual food drive in partnership with WLS-FM and local schools. Donations of non-perishable items can be made at Valli Produce Evanston in the name of participating local schools. 7 a.m. daily, Valli Produce, 1910 W. Dempster St., Evanston, free, 847-866-6100

All My Relations: A Seneca History: In collaboration with visual artist and dancer Rosy Simas (Seneca), this exhibit introduces the history of the Seneca culture through milestones in the lives of Simas and her relations. It features traditional and modern Seneca artifacts, which span various generations. 11 a.m. daily, Mitchell Museum of the American Indian, 3001 Central St., Evanston, Free-$5, $10-$12 for talk, 847-475-1030

Native Haute Couture: The exhibit celebrates the history of Native American high fashion from pre-contact to today. 10 a.m. daily, Mitchell Museum of the American Indian, 3001 Central St., Evanston, free, 847-475-1030

Sights of Evanston art exhibition: Enjoy a visual art exhibition featuring works by over 10 artists. 3 p.m. daily, Noyes Cultural Arts Center, 927 Noyes St., Evanston, free, 847-571-3858

Material View Art Cloth exhibit and opening reception: Showcasing work by members of the Art Cloth Network, a nationwide organization of professional textile artists. 10 a.m. daily, Noyes Cultural Arts Center, 927 Noyes St., Evanston, free, 847-571-3858

Wonderland Express: The annual festive event features 750,000 outdoor lights and an indoor exhibition where garden-scale trains wind past miniature replicas of Chicago-area landmarks nestled amid holiday-themed plants. 10 a.m. Thursday, Chicago Botanic Garden, 1000 Lake Cook Road, Glencoe, $12 adults, $10 children ages 3 to 12 and seniors ages 62 and older, 847-835-5440

Study for Finals Week (Grades 9-12): Meeting rooms will be open for individual or group drop-in study. Stop by the Information Desk for study locations. 5 p.m. Thursday, Glencoe Public Library, 1930 Glenview Road, Glencoe, free, 847-729-7500

Spark Park for Kindergarten through 2nd Grade: This month we’ll be experimenting with the science of color theory and creating lava lamps. For children aged 2 through 5. Call to register. 4:30 p.m. Thursday, Glencoe Public Library, 1930 Glenview Road, Glencoe, free, 847-729-7500

Books n' Bites: Kids in grades 6-8 can join a casual, fun book discussion on “Counting by 7s,” by Holly Goldberg Sloan. 4 p.m. Thursday, Lincolnwood Public Library, 4000 W Pratt Ave., Lincolnwood, free, 847-779-5277

Everybody Move: This six-week session is for ages birth through two years with a caregiver. Registration is required. Weekly attendance is required. 9:30 a.m. Thursday, Lincolnwood Public Library, 4000 W Pratt Ave., Lincolnwood, free, 847-677-5277

Hot Ticket: “Rickle and the Flash”: A rock-n-roll musician gives up her dream of stardom and returns home to make things right with her family. 2 p.m. and 6:30 p.m. Thursday, Morton Grove Public Library, 6140 Lincoln Ave., Morton Grove, free, 847-965-4220

Wonder Ground Open Lab: Look, touch, tinker and play with an intriguing array of science-oriented curiosities in this new space designed especially for kids. The Wonder Ground is a STEAM playground for kids. 4 p.m. Thursdays and Tuesdays, Niles Public Library, 6960 W Oakton St., Niles, free, 847-663-1234

White Christmas: A Holiday Songbook with Dr. Fischman: Dr. Fischman ignites the Holiday Spirit as he sets down the snowy road of American Christmas music in this engaging seasonal sing-along program. 10:30 a.m. Thursday, Niles Public Library, 6960 W Oakton St., Niles, free, 847-663-1234

Movies In the Underground: The Return of the Jedi: Prepare for release of Star Wars Episode VI: Pizza will be served during intermission. 4 p.m. Thursday, Niles Public Library, 6960 W Oakton St., Niles, free, 847-663-1234

Park Ridge Fly Tying Club Meetings: Demonstrations of fly tying are performed by an experienced demonstrator. The members have an opportunity to tie the same pattern using tools and materials provided by the club. 7 p.m. Thursdays, Park Ridge Community Church, 100 S. Courtland Ave., Park Ridge, free, 847-823-3164

Chair Yoga: Increase your flexibility, strength and balance in this class. 10:30 a.m. Thursday, Park Ridge Park District Centennial Activity Center, 100 S. Western Ave., Park Ridge, $76 member, $84 guest, 847-692-3597

Save A Star’s Drug Disposal Program: Save a Star Drug Awareness Foundation’s Drug Disposal Program box is in the lobby of the Park Ridge Police Department. Accepted are: prescription medications, all over-the-counter and pet medications, vitamins, liquids and creams. Thursday, Park Ridge Police Department, 200 Vine Avenue, Park Ridge, free, 847-579-3300 ext. 146

Michael Palascik: The local comedian, as seen on “Letterman” and “Leno,” headlines a stand-up showcase. Featuring John Reeb. 8 p.m. Thursday; 8 p.m. and 10:30 p.m. Friday; 7 p.m. and 9:30 p.m. Saturday, Zanies Rosemont, 5437 Park Place, Rosemont, $22-$25 plus a donation of canned goods and dry food products to fill the shelves of the Niles Township Food Pantry. These foods are to be given to the hungry in the community. Daily, Walgreens, 3945 W. Dempster St., Skokie, free, 847-675-4141

Brush with Nature Art Exhibition: Plein air painters display their artworks inside the gallery. 10 a.m. Daily, Emily Oaks Nature Center, 4650 Brummel St, Skokie, free, 847-674-1500

Skokie Photographic Society: All levels of photographic skill are welcome. 7:30 p.m. Thursday, Skokie Village Hall, 5127 Oakton St., Skokie, free, 847-677-3324

Cathy Glickman In Life Of The Party Interrupted: Dynamic singer Cathy Glickman makes her Skokie Theatre debut in an autobiographical romp through Glickman’s life as she follows her heart, giving up the microscope for the microphone midway through life. She is accompanied by Becky Menzie. 8 p.m. Thursday, Skokie Theatre, 7924 N. Lincoln Ave., Skokie, $25, 847-677-7761

Special Exhibition Three Years, Eight Months, and Twenty Days: The Cambodian Atrocities and the Search for Justice: Learn about the Cambodian genocide and the current trials to bring the perpetrators to justice, 40 years later. 10 a.m. daily, Illinois Holocaust Museum and Education Center, 9603 Woods Drive, Skokie, free, 847-967-4835

Alliance Francaise du North Shore Cafe-Conversation du Soir: Meet fellow Francophones for relaxed conversation in French. Look for individuals gathered at tables in the main dining area. Listening in French is encouraged; all levels welcome. 6 p.m. Thursday, Panera Bread, 1199 Wilmette Ave., Wilmette, free, 847-328-9516

Wilmette Fiber Arts Group: Sponsored by the Wilmette Public Library, this group of people interested in all aspects of fiber arts: knitting, crocheting, needlepoint, etc. All interested in meeting friendly people with similar interests are welcome to spend the two hours doing individual projects in companionable discussions. 10 a.m. Thursdays, Panera Bread, 1199 Wilmette Ave., Wilmette, free, 847-328-9516

Alliance Francaise Cours de Conversation: The winter session is a weekly intermediate through advanced level immersion class for members only to expand their vocabulary and brush up on grammar and pronunciation. The class discusses current events and reads articles of general interest to Francophiles. 7 p.m. Thursdays, St John’s Church, 1235 Wilmette Ave., Wilmette, $164, 847-328-9516

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**Polyglots Toastmasters meeting:**
Polyglots is the only Toastmasters International Club in the United States that conducts its meetings in German. If you speak German or want to keep it fresh or improve it, visit this club. This is not a language school, but a place where you can speak and listen to German. 9 a.m. Saturday, Des Plaines Public Library, 1501 Ellinwood St., Des Plaines, free, 847-827-5551

**Diy teen craft:**
Including DIY ornaments and holiday-themed glass etching. 4 p.m. Friday, Morton Grove Public Library, 6140 Lincoln Ave., Morton Grove, free, 847-965-4220

**Gentle Yoga:**
Exercises are done in a chair or standing not on the floor. 9:30 a.m. and 11 a.m. Fridays, Northbrook Public Library, 1201 Cedar Lane, Northbrook, free, 847-272-6224

**Share The Warmth:**
Join a group of warm, friendly, supportive women (men welcome) to prepare one-of-a-kind fleece blankets for chemo patients. Add a crocheted edge to fleece and send free blankets to new adult chemotherapy patients. A basic crochet stitch can be taught if needed. 9 a.m. Fridays, North Shore Senior Center, 161 Northfield Road, Northfield, free, 847-293-6755

**Duplicate Bridge:**
9 a.m. Fridays, Park Ridge Senior Center, 100 S. Western Ave, Park Ridge, free, 847-692-5127

**Rudolph the Red-Nosed Reindeer:**
The Musical: The cast of this musical brings new energy to the classic story and dialogue, while irresistible and lovable puppets help showcase the original charm of the television show's stop-motion effects. The story tells the tale of a young Rudolph who, because of the appearance of his bright, shining nose, is ostracized from the reindeer games in Christmas-town. 7 p.m. Friday, 11 a.m. and 2 p.m. Saturday, Rosemont Theater, 5400 N. River Road, Rosemont, $29.50-

**Immanuel Lutheran Church Winter Market:**
8 a.m. Saturday, Immanuel Lutheran Church, 616 Lake St., Evanston, $15 adult advance, $20 at the door, 847-521-6434

**Corollis Holiday Concert:**
Holiday a cappella concert featuring works by Bibiland, Lauridsen, Chilcott, Gjeilo, Vaughan Williams, Applebaum and others. 7:30 p.m. Sunday, St. Luke's Episcopal Church, 930 Hinman Ave., Evanston, $20; $10 for under 18, 847-869-0223

**OLY Saturday:**
Adult Comedy every Saturday night hosted by Comedy legends Tony Schlueter and Mark Simons. National Headliners with movie and television credits on stage. 9 p.m. Saturdays, Chicago's Home of Chicken & Waffles, 2424 W. Dempster St., Evanston, $15 adult advance; $20 at the door, 847-521-6434

**Signature Entertainment Presents:**
Missy Vladi for ages 3 and up: Miss Vladi will share stories in Russian. Make a craft, too. Just drop in. 1:30 p.m. Saturday, Glenview Public Library, 1703 Orrington Ave., Evanston, free, 847-448-8600

**Russian Storytime with Miss Vladi:**
For ages 3 and up; Miss Vladi will share stories in Russian. Make a craft, too. Just drop in. 1:30 p.m. Saturday, Glenview Public Library, 1703 Orrington Ave., Evanston, free, 847-448-8600

**Immanuel Lutheran Church Winter Market:**
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**Fandom Club:**
Gather with fellow fans to discuss your pop culture favorites, make fan art and eat themed food. Each meeting will feature different fandoms, but all are welcome. Vote for future fandoms at the January meeting. 2 p.m. Saturday, Niles Public Library, 6960 W. Oakton St., Niles, free, 847-663-1234

**Anime and Manga Club:**
Gather with fellow fans to watch and discuss anime and manga, draw fan art, make cosplay costumes. 2 p.m. Saturday, Niles Public Library, 6960 W. Oakton St., Niles, free, 847-663-1234

**Open Tinker Lab (for all ages):**
No registration is required, so all ages are welcome to just drop in. The library pulls out all of their tinker and tech toys for learning, experimenting and playing. Also, enjoy a variety of their tech stuff like the 3D Printer, Arduino micro-controllers, Cubeelets, Sphere, Ozobots, Raspberry Pi kits, Snap Circuits and MaKey MaKey. 2 p.m. Saturday, Northbrook Public Library, 121 Cedar Lane, Northbrook, free, 847-272-6224

**“Star Wars Episode 7” Saint Patrick Music Dept. Fundraiser:** We are selling tickets to see “Star Wars Episode VII: The Force Awakens.” Proceeds will support the St. Patrick Music Department's trip to Los Angeles and San Diego in March. Tickets include popcorn and a drink: a 10 a.m. Saturday, Pickwick Theatre, 5 S. Prospect Ave., Park Ridge, $10, 847-625-5800

**Krampus and St. Nicholas Visit:**
Hofbrauhaus Chicago: Visitors can solidify their spot on the “nice” or “naughty” list at Hofbrauhaus Chicago this season with a little help from German holiday folklore icons St. Nicholas and his devilish companion Krampus. Derived from Germanic folklore, Krampus is a beast-like creature said to punish those that are naughty throughout the year. 6 p.m. Saturday, Hofbrauhaus Chicago, 5500 Park Place, Rosemont, free, 847-671-2739

**Shout Section Big Band Holiday Concert:**
Shout Section Big Band is a full-sized jazz orchestra comprised of up-and-coming performers and veteran musicians. 7:30 p.m. Saturday, Skokie Theatre, 7924 N. Lincoln Ave., Skokie, $10-$25, 847-677-7761

**Preserving Survivor Stories:**
Ask Holocaust Survivor Pinchas Gutter any question you would like, and “natural language” technology software will respond as if Pinchas were in the room. 10:30 a.m. Saturdays, Illinois Holocaust Museum and Education Center, 9603 Woods Drive, Skokie, free, 847-967-4800

Turn to Calendar, Next Page
Mary, Seat of Wisdom Catholic Church
920 W. Granville at Cumberland in Park Ridge

Thursday, December 24th - Christmas Eve:
Early Evening Masses at 3:00 and 5:00 p.m.
11:00 p.m. Solemn Mass of Christmas
(Preceded by a special program at 10:30 p.m.)

Friday, December 25th
Christmas Day
8:00, 9:30 and 11:00 a.m.
No 7 p.m. today

Friday, January 1st
Solemnity of Mary, Mother of God
Thursday, Vigil Mass at 5 p.m.
Friday Masses 9:30 and 11:00 a.m.

Come Celebrate Christmas Eve with Park Ridge Presbyterian Church!
All are invited!

5pm Family Service featuring a special children's message
10:30pm Christmas Concert feature a harp trio, choral music, and organ music
11pm Traditional Christmas Eve Candlelight Service

Please visit www.parkridgepresby.org/christmaseve for more information.

Mary, Seat of Wisdom Catholic Church
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Monday, Dec. 21

The Historic Holiday Express Train: Climb aboard the Black Chicago Gravel Steam Locomotive. Settle in for "The Polar Express" on this historic train at Veterans Park. Passengers will also enjoy hot chocolate, cookies and popcorn. Advance registration required. 6:30 p.m. Monday-Tuesday, Fischer Farm, 16W680 Old Grand Ave., Bensenville, $5, 630-766-7015

Book Babies: Songs, games, story time and free play for babies ages 2 and younger with a caregiver. 10:15 a.m. Monday, Evanston Public Library - North Branch, 2026 Central St., Evanston, free, 847-448-8600

Live Bluegrass, Roots and Folk: The MudflapUppers perform. 8 p.m. Monday, The Celtic Knot Public House, 626 Church St., Evanston, free, 847-864-1679

Winter Camp at the Actors Gymnasium: Each day begins with a warm-up, followed by training and workshops in circus, drama and movement. Students learn circus and aerial skills. Session A: Dec. 21-23 (9 a.m.-4 p.m.) No camp Dec. 24 & 25 Session B: Dec. 28-30 (9 a.m.-4 p.m.) No camp Dec. 31 & Jan. 1. Actors Gymnasium, 927 Noyes St., Evanston, $399 for two sessions; $225 for one session; $75 Single day, 847-328-2795

Winter Break Camp at Wonderland Express: Children in Kindergarten through fifth grade can engage in exciting hands-on indoor and outdoor activities while discovering the Garden in winter. They'll investigate weather, explore seasonal adaptations of plants and animals, enjoy a visit to the Wonderland Express holiday exhibit and delve into art. Preregistration is required. 9:30 a.m. Monday-Wednesday, Chicago Botanic Garden, 1000 Lake Cook Road, Glencoe, $60-$75 per day, 847-835-5440

Hot Chocolate with Mrs. Claus at Wonderland Express: Enjoy hot chocolate, cookies, a visit with Mrs. Claus and the Wonderland Express exhibit. 11 a.m. and 1 p.m. Monday, Chicago Botanic Garden, 1000 Lake Cook Road, Glencoe, $10-$20 plus parking, 847-835-5440

Word 2010: formatting and images: 2 p.m. Monday, Glenview Public Library, 1930 Glenview Road, Glenview, free, 847-729-7500

Staycation Make It & Take It: Children, with parents or caregivers, stop by during the designated hours and create a winter-themed craft to take home. Just drop in. 10 a.m. Monday, Glenview Public Library, 1930 Glenview Road, Glenview, free, 847-729-7500

Staycation Family Game Central: We have Wii, PS3 and Xbox 360 consoles. Just drop in. 4:30 p.m. and 6:30 p.m. Tuesday, Glenview Public Library, 1930 Glenview Road, Glenview, free, 847-729-7500

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

Yoga for Kids: Stretch, Bend, Breathe: Kids ages four through eight can learn yoga poses and breathing techniques. Bring a large bath towel or yoga mat and wear comfortable clothes. 4:30 p.m. Monday, Morton Grove Public Library, 6140 Lincoln Ave., Morton Grove, free, 847-965-4220

Minecraft for Younger Kids: Players should be experienced or ready to learn independently and must be accompanied by a caregiver, Grades K-2 only. 1:30 p.m. Monday, Niles Public Library, 6960 W. Oakton St., Niles, free, 847-663-1234

Minecraft for Younger Kids: Players should be experienced or ready to learn independently and must be accompanied by a caregiver, Grades K-2 only. 1:30 p.m. Monday, Niles Public Library, 6960 W. Oakton St., Niles, free, 847-663-1234

Exploring Grief: 7 p.m. Monday, Kenilworth Union Church, 211 Kenilworth Ave., Wilmette, free, 847-251-4272

Tuesday, Dec. 22

Rotary Club of Evanston Light-house: 7:15 a.m. Tuesday, Hilton Garden Inn Chicago North Shore/Evanston, 1818 Maple Ave, Evanston, free

Winter Break DIY Kids' Crafts: Make a Native American-inspired craft. 10 a.m. daily during holiday break, Mitchell Museum of the American Indian, 3001 Central St., Evanston, $3 adults; $3 Kids, 847-475-1030

Irish music session: 7 p.m. Tuesday, The Celtic Knot Public House, 626 Church St., Evanston, free, 847-864-1679

Tuesdays Morning Music: Garden visitors can enjoy free hour-long meditative music performances. 10 a.m. Tuesday, Chicago Botanic Garden, 1000 Lake Cook Road, Glencoe, free, 847-835-5440

CJ senior life counseling: CJ SeniorLife resource specialists provide counseling to adults 60 and over. 9:30 a.m. Tuesday, Glenview Public Library, 1930 Glenview Road, Glenview, free, 847-729-7500

Friendship Club: Holiday Party with Live Music (grades 4-8) Trained Friendship Ambassadors (grades 4-12) host fun and engaging events where everyone feels welcome. 1:30 p.m. Tuesday, Glenview Public Library, 1930 Glenview Road, Glenview, free, 847-729-7500

MGPL Kids: Listen Up: Drop-in story and play time for preschoolers with a parent or caregiver. 4:45 p.m. Tuesday, Morton Grove Public Library, 6140 Lincoln Ave., Morton Grove, free, 847-929-5102

Maker Lab for Teens: 3D Printing: Learn and practice the basics of 3D design. 2 p.m. Tuesday, Niles Public Library, 6960 W. Oakton St., Niles, free, 847-663-1234

Camera Club: 10 a.m. Tuesday, Park Ridge Senior Center, 100 S. Western Ave., Park Ridge, free, 847-692-3597

Life Transitions Group: Support group for those who have been widowed for one to four years. 7 p.m. Tuesday, Park Ridge Nonprofit Center, 720 Garden St., $5, 847-720-4170

Turn to Calendar, Next Page
Get stories by the week and hour

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NILES HERALD-SPECTATOR

niles heraldspectator.com
Wednesday, Dec. 23

Live Music with the Josh Pzepka Trio: 6:30 p.m. Wednesday, Found Kitchen & Social House, 1631 Chicago Ave., Evanston, free, 847-868-8945

Preschool Story Time: Stories and songs for children ages 3-5 and a caregiver. 10:30 a.m. Wednesday, Evanston Public Library, 1703 Orrington Ave., Evanston, free, 847-448-8610

Marjorie Prime: 3 p.m. Wednesday, 7:30 p.m. Dec. 26, Writers Theatre, 664 Vernon Ave., Glencoe, $20-$70, 847-242-6000

Chess Club: Whether you're a skilled player looking for a challenge or a beginner interested in learning new skills, all are welcome. Chess sets and clocks provided. No registration is required. 7 p.m. Wednesday, Northbrook Public Library, 1201 Cedar Lane, Northbrook, free, 847-272-6224

Classics on Wednesday Film Series: Free weekly screening of classic films at the Northbrook Public Library. 1 p.m. and 7:30 p.m. Wednesday, Northbrook Public Library, 1201 Cedar Lane, Northbrook, free, 847-272-6224

Bingo, Pizza and an Ugly Sweater Contest: Treat yourself to holiday cheer and hot slices of cheese, sausage and veggie pizza. Afterwards, play several games of bingo. 12:30 p.m. Wednesday, Park Ridge Park District - Central Activity Center, 100 S. Western Ave., Park Ridge, $8 member, $10 guest, 847-692-3597

Jingle Jammy Holiday Jam: Featuring DJ Speed, party favors, prizes, giveaways, and the grand prize: Deadmaus/Skrillex concert tickets. 10:30 p.m. Wednesday, Adobe Gila's, 5455 Park Place #2, Rosemont, free, 312-731-7213

Senior High Youth Group: For all youth grades 9 to 12 to enjoy fun and friendship while engaging in meaningful discussions and service learning opportunities. The evening starts with a tasty dinner. 6:45 p.m. Wednesday, First Congregational Church of Wilmette, 1125 Wilmette Ave., Wilmette, free, 847-251-6660

Thursday, Dec. 24

Christmas Eve: There is no sermon. 4:30 p.m. Dec. 24, St. Giles Episcopal Church, 3025 Walters Ave., Northbrook, free, 847-272-6622

Christmas Eve Service: At 11 p.m., there is a Solemn Choral Eucharist with choir, hymns, and sermon. Incense is used. 10:30 p.m. Dec. 24, St. Giles Episcopal Church, 3025 Walters Ave., Northbrook, free, 847-272-6622


Friday, Dec. 25

Christmas Day Service: Reflective Rite I spoken celebration of the Holy Eucharist. 10:15 a.m. Dec. 25, St. Giles Episcopal Church, 3025 Walters Ave., Northbrook, free, 847-272-6622

Saturday, Dec. 26

Mud Morganfield: 8 p.m. Dec. 26, SPACE, 1245 Chicago Ave., Evanston, $15-$27, 847-492-8860

“Guys and Dolls”: 2 p.m. Dec. 26, Cahn Auditorium, 600 Emerson St., Evanston, start at $34, 847-920-5360

Family Movie: “Minions”: 2 p.m. Dec. 26, Niles Public Library, 6960 W. Oakton St., Niles, free, 847-663-1234

“She, Streisand and Me, Monet”: Barbra Streisand impersonator Michelle Monet presents her one-woman show. 8 p.m. Dec. 26, Skokie Theatre, 7924 N. Lincoln Ave., Skokie, $25, 847-677-7761

Kohl Children's Museum: Chagall for Children Traveling Exhibit: For those two through 12 years old. The hands-on activities encourage visiting children and their families to explore and work with specific art principles. 9 a.m. Dec. 26, Winnetka Community House, 620 Lincoln Ave., Winnetka, free, 847-881-9316

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MOVIES

“Creed” ★★★ ½
PG-13, 2:12, drama
Nobody went to the first “Rocky” in 1976 for the finesse of the filmmaking. They went for the underdog rooting, for Rocky and Adrian, for the unexpected sweetness, for the redemption angle, for the reconstituted boxing movie cliches that tasted not new but newish. It was simply time for “Rocky,” written by and starring Sylvester Stallone. So, “Creed,” a seventh “Rocky” movie? Apollo Creed, Rocky’s old nemesis turned best friend, had a son who grows up a fighter in the Los Angeles foster care system? Moves to Philly, connects with Rocky, who’s tending the restaurant and still wearing that hat? Rocky trains him for a big fight? “Creed” is easily the best “Rocky” movie since “Rocky.” — Michael Phillips

“The Good Dinosaur” ★ ★
PG, 1:40, animation
Work by multiple writers was cobbled together for this story of a world where the meteor that hit the Earth and wiped out all dinosaurs actually missed. The dinosaurs have evolved to the point where they live in houses, plant crops and herd bison. For some reason, humans have only progressed slightly more than canines. Production was halted early in the process of making “The Good Dinosaur” because it had some dinosaur-sized problems. Peter Sohn was brought in as the new director, and he started the process over two years ago. The second attempt ends up so flat it would have been smart to scrap it and try a third time. — Rick Bentley

“The Hunger Games: Mockingjay — Part 2” ★★ ½
PG-13, 2:17, sci-fi
“The Hunger Games: Mockingjay — Part 2” brings the four-film saga of Katniss Everdeen and her revolutionary war to a dutiful, fairly satisfying if undeniably attenuated conclusion. In the first and best “Hunger Games” film four years ago, Jennifer Lawrence was like Peggy Sawyer, the Allentown, Pa., hoofer in “42nd Street.” With bow, arrow and hawklike gaze of destiny, she went out there a youngster, but she had to come back a star, and she did. Put another way, Lawrence brought home the bacon and fried it up in a pan. In “Mockingjay 2,” it’s more a case of her saving the movie’s bacon, period. — MP

“Spectre” ★★★
PG-13, 2:30, action
“Spectre” is a good Bond movie. It’s also the longest Bond movie in existence, clocking in at just under 2 1/2 hours. This time, Ian Fleming’s well-dressed assassin changes clothes from Mexico City to Rome, from London to the Austrian mountains, from Tangier back to London, where terrorists-entrepreneurs carrying the familiar handle of Spectre are doing dirty work on a large scale. Of the Daniel Craig 007s, director Sam Mendes’ follow-up to “Skyfall” is not quite up to “Skyfall” or my favorite, “Casino Royale.” But it’s a considerably better evil-quelling instruction manual than “Quantum of Solace.” — M.P

“Krampus” ★
PG-13, 1:38, horror
He sees you when you’re sleeping. He knows when you’re awake. He’s got horns, hooves and an army of sinister elves, and his name sounds like a bad case of abdominal bloating. He is Krampus, the evil, twisted “shadow” of Santa Claus, and he has plenty of pain and destruction to rain down on one unlucky family that’s lost the Christmas spirit in this divertingly spooky lump of cinematic coal. — Justin Chang
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Collector vehicle market fueled by love and money

BY CASEY WILLIAMS
Tribune Newspapers

"For love or money" may be a phrase as old as capitalism, but it actually applies to the resurgence of collector car market, where record-breaking valuations have fueled a hobby best known as a labor of love.

"Our bidder registrations are up 20 percent this year," said Donnie Gould, president of Auctions America. "In years past, we saw a 5 percent gain. There's an increase in new people enjoying the hobby. With volatility in the stock market and money earning nothing in the bank, enthusiasts are spending their money on cars and enjoying them."

The collector car world was rocked last year when a 1971 Plymouth Hemi Cuda four-speed convertible, one of only 11 made, fetched a record $3.5 million at a Mecum Auction in Seattle.

As exceptional as that Cuda class is — one of finite supply and growing demand — most classic car investments bleed on the balance sheet to reap dividends in happiness.

It's personal

Finding a winner is personal. You may find yourself behind the wheel of a large automobile, and you may ask yourself, "What's the investment potential? Does it matter? Where would I store it? How would I maintain it? Am I out of my mind?"

These were the questions I considered in the purchase of a 1987 Mercedes-Benz 560SL.

I turned to collector Lou Secari, president of Carolina Muscle Cars Inc., at the Auburn Fall Collector Car Weekend in Auburn, Ind., to determine why collectors buy what they buy.

Secari's collection focuses on midcentury American cars and includes a 1953 Cadillac Eldorado, 1957 Pontiac GTO and 1967 Corvette 427. His favorite is the '67 Vette. "Some are museum quality, but I prefer the ones I can drive," Secari said. "They are investments to me. Appreciation is the best part of the hobby. Buy an 80-point car, take it to 90 points, then drive it!"

Collectors tend to fall in one of two categories: those who buy because they love cars and those who expect to make a profit, Secari said both.

"It has to be a good investment, without a doubt," Secari said. "But you have to love what you collect. The market for cars is more stable; people feel the collector car market is stable. There are not many investments that appreciate and that you can have fun with too."

What advice would he give to collectors?

"Do your research; buy cars that are well-documented," Secari said. "Look for models less common, more rare, because they create a better investment."

Next generation

With such a limited supply of muscle cars and rare exotics, analysts question whether the market can continue to grow.

A story titled "America's Once Magical — Now Mundane — Love Affair With Cars," posted Sept. 2 in The Washington Post, questions the future of collector cars with the aging of Generations X and Y. It mentions that only half of today's drivers get their licenses by age 18 and that car culture is "an old guy's game."

According to Hagerty, 58 percent of the 5 million collector cars in the U.S. are owned by baby boomers, with a median age for collector car owners of 56. Boomers prefer to collect muscle cars that hark back to their youth. The same could be said of the next generation.

"Look at kids involved in tuner cars — a different type of auto but still a passion," Gould said. "As they go through life, their businesses become stable, they have a home, more money ... we'll see the next generation of collectors."

It's no surprise what Gen Xers are starting to collect. The biggest increases in searches on Hagerty's Valuation Tools Search involve the BMW M3, Acura NSX and Mercedes-Benz 560SL — icons of Gen Xers' youth. My garage includes a 1989 Corvette that first tugged my heart when a buddy's dad bought one in my freshman year of high school.

"In the last two to three years, it's been Porsche, Mercedes, Ferrari and also great American classics," Gould said. "All the guys who watched 'Miami Vice,' with Ferrari Testarossa posters on their walls, are getting serious. They have a house, family and can now go out and get the car they dreamed about as teenagers. There's a finite number of those cars."

Investment values will shift. Cars that meant a lot to baby boomers — '57 Chevys, '55 T-Birds and American muscle cars — may have peaked. There will never be a substitute for their style and power, but younger generations will covet the '80s and '90s cars to which they have emotional attachments.

Expert advice

Beyond the emotional attachment, knowing how you plan to use the car will help determine its worth.

"Do some research about the car you like," Gould said. "Know if you want to tour it in or just drive it to the local ice cream. Have support locally to keep the car maintained well."

Even in excellent condition, old cars require constant maintenance to retain their value and remain road-worthy. Seals leak, starters fail to start, fuel pumps quit pumping, paint ages, transmissions need to be rebuilt, engines get overhauled and electrical systems malfunction. And these things will happen on tour in the middle of a rainstorm.

Car and Driver contributor Jamie Kitman offers these points: Buy what you like. Buy the best there is. Mechanical repairs are preferable to rust repairs. Buy original. Don't be cheap. Don't expect to make money on old cars.

"Keep it indoors. Make sure all safety equipment works. Drive your car."

I didn't get the 560SL, which I'll probably regret in 10 years. It was a one-owner car with 45,000 miles. But, besides the Vette, I have a '95 Mercedes C-Class that was my grandmother's. My two-car garage is full, and I can't stand to part with either. Owning a second Mercedes would also stretch the budget. I'm satisfied.

All in, should you buy for love or money?

"Love, absolutely," Gould said. "The best collector-car investment is something that puts a smile on your face. Make an investment in pleasure first and foremost. If it earns a profit down the road, that's your bonus."

Casey Williams is an automotive freelance writer.
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Resolve air bag light issue

A reader asks if the air bag light in his 2006 Cadillac Escalade should be repaired.

**Q:** Shortly after buying my 2006 Cadillac Escalade pickup, the air bag light went on. The dealer corrected it for me at no charge. About a year ago, I had the same problem. The dealer will not correct the problem unless I pay a steep hourly charge, since my warranty has expired. Am I in danger by driving the truck?

**A:** You are in danger of crash, so get the problem fixed.

**Q:** I recently purchased a 2011 Lexus GS350 with four-wheel drive. It says to use high octane gas, but one or two salesmen said regular was OK. There are 55,000 miles on the car. Is regular OK?

**A:** A: Numerous readers alerted us to the problem. The link is www.puregas.org. We regret the inconvenience.

**Q:** I have a 1989 Ford Ranger STX with factory striping. Can I remove the striping? I want to ready the truck for painting.

**A:** B.F., Allentown, Pa.

**A:** Yes, you can remove the striping tape. It takes a little patience and a heat gun (or hair dryer). The job will be much easier if you use a scraper equipped with a plastic razor blade. Plastic razor blades look just like regular single-edge blades but are made of plastic that is about the hardness of your fingernails. With care, you can warm up the tape and scrape it off. Otherwise, you will have to peel it off, so be careful you don't get burned. You may have to remove some residual adhesive, but that's easy with a solvent.

**Q:** The link provided in a recent column appears to be out of date or broken. I would love to find straightforward gasoline or even E10 gas for my 1962 Thunderbird. Hopefully, someone will provide an updated link.

**A:** Numerous readers alerted us to the problem. The link is www.puregas.org. We regret the inconvenience.

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Meet the winner!

Barrington Wade, Niles North senior

Niles North senior running back and Iowa recruit Barrington Wade Jr. is the Central Athlete of the Month after a standout senior season. He led the Vikings to the state quarterfinals for the first time in program history and finished with 2,045 rushing yards and 17 touchdowns. He averaged 8.9 yards per carry.

CORRECTION

The Pioneer Press All-Area Boys Soccer First Team in last week’s paper included the wrong photo with the bio of Libertyville’s Nate Edmunds (left). The picture in last week’s paper was a photo of Ryan Wittenbrink, not Edmunds.

CHICAGOTRIBUNE.COM/ATHLETES
Skokie resident Willie Knierim has scored four goals and registered six assists in 20 games with the USHL's Dubuque Fighting Saints this season.

"My mom spent a couple days crying, but she understands I needed to do this to get where I wanted to go," said Willie Knierim, who previously played for the Chicago Mission program. "She's proud of me where I am right at now."

Theresa Knierim, Willie Knierim's father Bill, and sister Brittany Knierim are proud of their son. Willie Knierim moved away from home after two years of high school at Niles North to play for the Dubuque Fighting Saints of the United States Hockey League, which is considered one of the top junior leagues in the world. The USHL had 37 players selected in the 2015 NHL draft.

Willie Knierim's departure at such an early age was especially difficult on his mother, Theresa Knierim. It would be even harder if he was playing further away than Dubuque, Iowa. His family attends all of his home games and some road games.

"I'll tell you what, their first Stanley Cup I was over at a friend's house and they won it and I was just in awe," said Knierim, who is from Skokie. "Ever since then, I wanted it so bad. I wanted to make it to the NHL and raise that Stanley Cup over my head. It's been a dream ever since I was a little kid, but that's when I knew I really wanted it."

Knierim said, "I'll tell you what, their first Stanley Cup I was over at a friend's house and they won it and I was just in awe."}

"It seems like another life," his older sister Brittany Knierim said. Willie Knierim and his family have had to sacrifice in order for him to progress and gain exposure in the sport. Willie Knierim moved away from home after two years of high school at Niles North in order for him to play for the Dubuque Fighting Saints of the United States Hockey League, which is considered one of the top junior leagues in the world. The USHL had 37 players selected in the 2015 NHL draft.

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Maine East's John Yousef (right) wrestles Carmel's Riley Palm on Dec. 12 in Park Ridge.

Maine East coaches help Yousef bounce back

By Eric Van Dril
Pioneer Press

Maine East wrestler John Yousef began this season with 15 straight victories. In doing so, Yousef established himself as one of the top 106-pounders in Class 3A. The senior was ranked No. 11 in Class 3A by www.illinoismatmen.com entering the week.

When he loses, he can get down on himself - like at the Maine East Quad on Dec. 12. Yousef was leading 4-3 in the third period when Carmel freshman Riley Palm scored four points and won by 7-4 decision.

"It was stupid," Yousef said. "It wasn't me."

Yousef typically takes losing hard, he said. That was true in the aftermath of his match against Palm. Yousef didn't have time to sulk, however, and he couldn't allow it to affect his next match. Yousef earned one point for an escape in the first period. Silva earned one point for an escape in the second period. He led 1-0 at the start of the third.

Yousef didn't panic at that juncture of the match. He stayed steady and confident.

Yousef earned one point for an escape to tie the score in the first half of the third period, but he still had to take down a wrestler who showed good positioning and quickness.

Yousef eventually did just that observing and adjusting.

"I had to really focus on his shots, because he did a fake shot to tie up, and he would just get on his knees," Yousef said.

"From there, I had to really snap and go to my re-shots. That's the only way [to score] against him. He had a good stance and motion, so I had to just re-shoot off of his shots. That's how I took him down."

Yousef took down Silva with about 30 seconds remaining in the third period. He used his strength to stay on top of Silva to clinch a 3-1 decision, and ensure that he rebounded from a disappointing defeat with a quality victory.

The comeback win can be traced to Yousef's intelligence, but also the positive message he received from Maine East's coaches.

"My coaches really have to enforce in my head, 'Hey, you just have to get over it. You can't let one match determine the rest of your year.' " Yousef said. "I give [the credit] all to them, because they help me out, bouncing back."

Eric Van Dril is a freelance reporter for Pioneer Press.

Twitter @VanDrilSports
MUNDELEIN HOLIDAY CLASSIC GUIDE

Upsets are likely in Mundelein

BY TIM FROEHLIG | Pioneer Press

Suggested itinerary

Niles West vs. Lake Zurich, 10:30 a.m. Dec. 21
This showdown is one of the more intriguing first-round matchups. It will test how awake two underrated clubs are early in the morning after the long weekend. The battle-tested Bears come from the North Suburban Lake, while the Wolves hail from the Central Suburban South. Both guard-oriented teams are on the rise, have played difficult schedules thus far. Don't be surprised if this turns into an up-tempo, high-scoring affair.

Vernon Hills vs. Lake Park, 6:30 p.m. Dec. 21
These teams have had their share of ups and downs this season, and both have talented - if streaky - younger players. The winner here has a legitimate chance at making a run to the semifinals or beyond. "The neat thing about this tournament is you get to see a lot of teams from outside the area you wouldn't normally see," Vernon Hills coach Paul Breitner said. "It makes for some fun, unpredictable matchups."

Quarterfinal, 5 p.m. Dec. 22
There's a strong possibility this becomes a second-round showdown between Grant and Libertyville. Grant's first-year coach Kathie Swanson coached Libertyville's girls until 2012. Current Wildcats coach Greg Pedersen, meanwhile, won his first two North Suburban Lake games this season by an average of 24 points. Grab the popcorn. "Kathie's got her team playing some excellent basketball," Pedersen said. Swanson said she has "the utmost respect for Pedersen and his staff."

Schedule
(Note: This is the winner's bracket only)

Monday, Dec. 21
Game 1: Grayslake North vs. Hoffman Estates, 9 a.m.
Game 2: Niles West vs. Lake Zurich, 10:30 a.m.
Game 3: Grant vs. Cary-Grove, noon
Game 4: Libertyville vs. Streamwood, 1:30 p.m.
Game 5: Rockford-Auburn vs. Nazareth, 3:30 p.m.
Game 6: Prairie Ridge vs. Mundelein, 5 p.m.
Game 7: Vernon Hills vs. Lake Park, 6:30 p.m.
Game 8: Conant vs. Highland Park, 8 p.m.

Tuesday, Dec. 22
Quarterfinals
Game 13: Game 1 winner vs. Game 2 winner, 3:30 p.m.
Game 14: Game 3 winner vs. Game 4 winner, 5 p.m.
Game 15: Game 5 winner vs. Game 6 winner, 6:30 p.m.
Game 16: Game 7 winner vs. Game 8 winner, 8 p.m.

Wednesday, Dec. 23
Semifinals
Game 23: Game 13 winner vs. Game 14 winner, 6:30 p.m.
Game 24: Game 15 winner vs. Game 16 winner, 8 p.m.

Saturday, Dec. 26
Championship
Game 23 winner vs. Game 24 winner, 8 p.m.

Turn to Classic, Next Page

Libertyville's Claire Keefe surveys the court during a game against Lake Forest on Feb. 5 of last season.
Don't miss
Vernon Hills freshmen Dakiya Daniels and Kayla Caudle

The 5-foot-8 Daniels is the younger sister of former Minnesota Vikings and Notre Dame wide receiver Da'Varis Daniels and the daughter of Philip Daniels, who played in the NFL for Chicago, Seattle and Washington. Caudle, a 5-11 forward, is a feisty, physical player who isn't afraid of contact in the lane and shows strong fundamentals while boxing out. The pair offer a glimpse of the Cougars' bright future.

The team that has a breakout
Each year, this tournament seems to include a few teams who've struggled early in the season but surprise some of the favorites. Niles West has a handful of single-digit losses and could catch teams off-guard. Highland Park and Nazareth are also among the teams in the Pioneer Press coverage area that hope to play spoiler. Keep an eye on Prairie Ridge, Grayslake North and Rockford Auburn as well. Those three have as good a chance as any team to make a deep run. Cary-Grove is off to a slow start, but has historically fared well in this event.

Quality guard play
Lake Zurich's Abby Pirron, Mundelein's Kendall Wald and Amy Richards, Grayslake North's Sidney Lovitsch, Grant's Jasmine Sangster, Vernon Hills' Becky Bahmann and Nazareth's Abby Shannon and Laila Rodriguez all have quality ballhandling skills, shooting touch and know how to attack the basket. "I don't think there's one clear-cut favorite this year out of the 16 teams," said Conant coach Deirdre Naughton, who played college basketball at DePaul and Wake Forest. "We look at this tournament as a challenge, and an opportunity to grow. The talent level at the guard position is spread pretty evenly."

In depth
Last year's champion, Conant, will be without senior guard Nireet Dhillon, who is out for the season with a fractured patella. In last year's title-game victory over Vernon Hills, Dhillon sank five threes en route to a career-high 25 points. "It's gonna be difficult to practice the week of the tournament because the school only has two gyms. Mundelein's annual Thanksgiving tournament will continue," he said.

"If you polled 10 coaches, I bet you'd probably get 10 different responses about who they think will win this tournament this year. And the records of some of the teams are deceiving. There could be a sub-.500 team that wins it all just because they've played such a difficult schedule."

—Grant coach Kathie Swanson

Area attraction
Bill's Pizza & Pub, 624 South Lake St., Mundelein

Opened in 1957 in what was originally a garage, Bill's has evolved into a can't-miss spot just a few miles from Mundelein High School. Its Northwoods-inspired theme is decidedly old-school, and it boasts a selection of 10 specialty pizzas, plus the option to build your own. They also offer gluten-free pizzas. For the adults, there's a fully stocked bar. In addition to pizza, they offer a wide array of appetizers, sandwiches, salads and desserts. Bill's is open until 11 p.m. on weekends and until midnight Friday-Sunday. It has a rating of 4.6 out of 5 stars among 800-plus diners on its Facebook page.

Tim Froehlig is a freelance reporter for Pioneer Press.
WHEELING HARDWOOD CLASSIC GUIDE

Notre Dame, Niles North, Deerfield headline tourney field

BY ERIC VAN DRIL
Pioneer Press

Suggested itinerary

Niles North vs. Vernon Hills, 10:30 a.m. Monday, Dec. 21

The Vikings have started the season red hot. They entered the week 7-1, despite losing four starters from last year’s team. The name familiar to those who attend the Wheeling Hardwood Classic annually is Crishawn Cook, a senior guard. Cook does a variety of things for Niles North — score, rebound, defend and distribute — and he’s been a key reason for the Vikings’ early-season success. Vernon Hills has experienced nearly a complete turnover from last year’s team. The Cougars must limit their turnovers against Niles North’s high-pressure defense in order to pull off an upset.

Notre Dame vs. Dundee-Crown, 12:15 p.m. Monday, Dec. 21

The Dons enter the Wheeling Hardwood Classic as the favorites. They’re the tournament’s highest-ranked team by the Chicago Tribune — No. 10 in the poll released Monday, Dec. 7 — and feature four starters from last year’s team that finished second at the tournament to Lake Park. Notre Dame also will likely be the tournament’s biggest team, with a slew of players who are 6-foot-5 or taller. A potential second-round matchup against Waukegan is enticing.

Waukegan vs. Buffalo Grove, 2 p.m. Monday, Dec. 21

It wouldn’t be a surprise to see Niles North make a deep run at the tournament. Seeing Waukegan make one would be a little bit more surprising, but it’s very possible. The Bulldogs have a talented roster that includes junior Carson Newsome and three promising freshmen — Bryan Brown, Jordan Brown and JatYdn Brown, who aren’t related — who could return Waukegan back to prominence in the coming years. Buffalo Grove has the experience and shooting ability to pull off an upset of the Bulldogs, however.

Wheeling vs. Deerfield, 7:15 p.m. Monday, Dec. 21

Deerfield, like Niles North, had to replace four out of its five starters from last season, but it has done so seamlessly. The Warriors began the week with a 7-1 record. They are led by guard Jordan Baun, who is a multi-faceted player that committed to the University of Chicago prior to his senior season.

Don’t miss

Glenbrook South senior forward Jimmy Martineili

Martinielli will be one of the most versatile players in the Wheeling Hardwood Classic. He can score, rebound, defend multiple positions and shoot from the outside.

Libertyville sophomore guard Drew Peterson

Peterson scored 21 points against Marian Central on Thursday, Dec. 3. He poured in 27 points in a win against Hersey on Saturday, Dec. 12.

Buffalo Grove’s growth

Last season, the Bison were among the youngest teams in the Wheeling Hardwood Classic. They began the tournament with a 33-point loss to Notre Dame, but finished 2-2 overall — including a one-point loss to Waukegan and a two-point win over Glenbrook South. Many of the players who contributed last year are expected to play at Wheeling this year, including junior guard Collin Dekorsi, senior forward Joey Pinkidis, senior forward Hans Haller and junior guard Colin Calcagno.

In depth

Last year’s Wheeling Hardwood Classic was considered a down year for the tournament, with the exodus of Loyola and St. Viator in previous years. Last year’s field proved to be better than most expected, however. After upsetting Notre Dame in the Wheeling Hardwood Classic’s championship game, Lake Park advanced to a Class 4A supersectional. Vernon Hills won the North Suburban Prairie. Deerfield won the Central Suburban North. The Dons went undefeated in the East Suburban Catholic. Notre Dame also put a scare into eventual Class 4A state champion Stevenson before falling 78-77 in the sectional semifinals.

This year’s field, on paper, appears stronger. Deerfield and Niles North have emerged as two of the strongest teams in the Central Suburban North. Fremd was 8-1 entering the week. Waukegan is on the rise, with Ron Ashlaw back at the helm of a program that has a promising core group. Notre Dame is a main attraction in the tournament. The tournament opens with a couple questions:

Will any team come out of nowhere and win the tournament like Lake Park did a year ago? And which team, or teams, will use the Wheeling Hardwood Classic to elevate itself to a higher level for the second half of the season?

Area attraction

Pita Inn, 122 S. Elmhurst Road, Wheeling

One of Chicagoland’s top options for Middle Eastern and Mediterranean food, Pita Inn in Wheeling is located a little over a mile from Wheeling High School. Pita Inn features tried-and-true classics, like its falafel sandwich, as well as a variety of lunch specials and tasty entrees. It’s a perfect option for a pre- or post-tournament meal.

Eric Van Dril is a freelance reporter for Pioneer Press.

Twitter @VanDrilSports
Area teams looking to shake off slow starts

By Matt Harness
Pioneer Press

Suggested itinerary

Leyden vs Maine East, 1:30 p.m. Tuesday, Dec. 22 (Mahoney Court)

The Blue Demons (4-4) are no pushover. They nearly knocked off Central Suburban North leader Maine West last week, leading by eight points late in the third quarter before losing 63-50 on Tuesday, Dec. 8.

"We're playing hard basketball, real aggressive basketball, just not smart basketball," Maine East coach Karol Hanusiak said. "But what we are not doing well is so easily corrected, so I am happy where we are."

As of Friday, Dec. 11, every one of Leyden's four wins came in nonconference games.

Regina vs Glenbrook North, 1:30 p.m. Tuesday, Dec. 22 (Cahill Gym)

Regina has only two wins coming into the week.

"We are going through a learning curve right now," Regina coach Kerry Durham said. "We already are a lot better fundamentally than we were at the beginning of the season."

The Spartans lost their first eight games of the season before beating Highland Park 60-44 on Friday, Dec. 11.

Don't miss

Maine East senior Janelle Alba Garner and junior Lauryn Alba Garner

These are two of the more exciting players at the tournament. The sister guards both earned all-Central Suburban North honors last season and are on their way to more postseason awards this season, according to Maine East coach Karol Hanusiak.

"I am not sure I have coached kids that play any harder than they do," Hanusiak said. "We are lucky they play for Maine East."

Hanusiak moved Lauryn Alba Garner to point guard full time this season to allow Janelle Alba Garner more freedom on the offensive end. In a 60-34 win at Highland Park on Friday, Dec. 4, Janelle Alba Garner scored 20 points and Lauryn Alba Garner finished with 19 points.

"The joke last year was if Lauryn had a good game, then Janelle didn't," Hanusiak said. "It's nice to see both are clicking during the same games this year. They've been a great combo."

Leyden senior Gianna Grande

This is Grande's third season on varsity and second as a starter. The guard is one of the team's best offensive players, which is a role she has grown into this season.

Leyden coach Stephanie Kuzmanic said Grande can finish in the lane and hit perimeter shots.

"Her confidence is up this year," Kuzmanic said. "She really believes in herself and in her ability this year."

Regina sophomore Kelly French

Regina coach Kerry Durham convinced French to put club volleyball on hold to play basketball this winter, and the decision seems to be mutually beneficial.

French is a starting guard and leads the team in scoring.

"I've known about her since grade school because her older sister [Erin French] played for me," Durham said. "She's been a pleasant surprise for us."

Elmwood Park coach Kelly Guide

In her first season at the helm, Guide is looking to surpass last season's five wins. While the Tigers entered this week 1-3, players such as senior forward Angel Matos-Avila and junior point guard Analise Hernandez lend hope. Matos-Avila and Hernandez are the team's best defenders, according to Guide, while Hernandez is a leader on the offense end.

In depth

After two Class 3A regional titles and 57 wins in the last three seasons, fifth-year Regina coach Kerry Durham admitted this is a rebuilding season for the Panthers.

Regina, which entered the week 2-6, returned one starter — junior guard Colleen Palmer — and has no seniors.

"We are very, very young," said Durham, who has four sophomores and three freshmen on the roster. "We are putting the pieces together right now and trying to be competitive."

Freshman guard Kaitlan Byrne and sophomore guard Kelly French join three juniors in the starting lineup.

"I see the potential in this group," Durham said. "I can't wait to see how we look next year."

Area attraction

Mitsuwa Marketplace, 100 E. Algonquin Road, Arlington Heights

Located less than five miles from St. Viator, Mitsuwa Marketplace is the headquarters of Asian fast food in the northwest suburbs. The place to go at the food mall is Santouka, a raved-about ramen shop, lauded by Chicago food star Bill Kim, chef at bellyQ in the West Loop.

mharness@pioneerlocal.com

Twitter @harnesspreps
Travel season

Heading out to see some holiday basketball this year? Pioneer Press is your guide.

Notre Dame's Lucas Simon passes the ball past Evanston's Dylan Mulvihill, left, and Chris Hamil on Nov. 27 in Chicago. Notre Dame is the favorite entering the Wheeling Hardwood Classic.

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