A cautionary tale
Mother tells story of daughter's battle with heroin addiction. Page 4

PJ Newberg speaks about heroin use and opioid abuse at Niles North High School on March 22 at a Parent Advisory Council.

The leper priest
Broadcaster-singer Wayner Messmer steps back into role of Father Damien. Page 19

SPORTS
Highlight reel
Read about the Pioneer Press All-Area boys and girls basketball players and watch videos about the first-team players at chicagotribune.com/suburbs.

LIVING
Another kind of March madness
Pioneer Press relationship columnist Jackie Pilossoph offers a not-so-sweet 16 real-life things that drive people mad about their significant other. Inside
SHOUT OUT

Jim Robinson, president of Astellas Americas

Jim Robinson lived in Skokie for more than 20 years. Now living in Glenview, he will assume the position of president of Astellas Americas on April 1.

Based in Tokyo, Astellas Pharma Inc. is a global pharmaceutical research company focused on urology, oncology, infectious disease, immunology and cardiology and advancing new therapeutic areas and discovery research. The company's headquarters for the Americas (U.S., Latin America, Canada) and global development organization is based in Northbrook. The Astellas Research Institute of America (ARIA) is located at Skokie's Illinois Science + Technology Park.

Q: What will your new duties entail?
A: I will be responsible for the company's operations in North and South America.

Q: What did you do for a living before Astellas?
A: I worked in various roles at Schering-Plough Corp., which merged with Merck in 2009.

Q: What book are you currently reading and what book would you like to read next?
A: I'm reading "Immortal Diamond" by Richard Rohr.

Q: What was your first job?
A: I cut grass in the neighborhood and then worked at the Skokie Park District.

Q: As a kid, what did you want to be when you grew up?
A: A professional football player with the NFL.

Q: A movie you'd recommend?
A: "Spotlight."

Q: Any words of wisdom you live by?
A: Treat others as you would like to be treated.

Q: What song best sums up Skokie for you?
A: "My Hometown" by Bruce Springsteen.

Q: What is an interesting factoid about yourself?
A: I played rugby for 10 years with the Chicago Lions.
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Mother shares cautionary tale of daughter’s heroin addiction with Niles North parents

BY NATALIE HAYES
Pioneer Press

Heroin use and overdoses have skyrocketed in the US, and to the shock of many parents in communities like the North Shore area, the drug, as well as other opioids, have infiltrated the least likely of places — the suburbs.

At Niles North High School, principal Ryan McTague said painkiller abuse among students is now more rampant than any other drug, and kids have been caught trading or buying pills between classes.

"As a principal this is something I'm very concerned about, because (opiates) are accessible in a way we've never seen before," he said. "Sometimes we think it's in some back alley far away from here, but to kids of this generation, it's no longer seen as taboo."

McTague said he's seen a trend among students to look to pills as a way to escape reality.

"The big thing is, it's a responsive approach," said Skokie police Sgt. David Pawlak at the time. "It's not reactive once you find out you have a problem."

He told the Tribune that heroin abuse cycles through all communities.

Glenview resident PJ Newberg — who said her 21-year-old daughter has been battling a heroin addiction that started when she was a 16-year-old sophomore at Glenbrook South — has taken a mission to educate North Shore parents about the drug.

According to a 2014 Chicago Tribune report, Newberg has held presentations at the Glenview library, Northbrook library, Deerfield Village Hall and with Wilmette and Skokie police departments.

"The big thing is, it's a proactive approach," said Skokie police Sgt. David Pawlak at the time. "It's not reactive once you find out you have a problem."

He told the Tribune that heroin abuse cycles through all communities.

Speaking to a small group of parents who gathered at Niles North High School March 22 for the monthly meeting of the Parent Advisory Council, Newberg shared her story. Her daughter started using heroin with her boyfriend, a former football player at Glenbrook South who was three years older, she said.

Newberg's daughter has been in and out of rehab more than 15 times, she said, and despite multiple stints in jail, she's still using heroin.

A Roosevelt University study released in 2015 found that in Illinois, 25 percent of state-funded treatment admissions were for heroin, while nationally that figure was only 16 percent. In Chicago and the collar counties, 35 percent of those entering treatment reported heroin use as their reason for going, according to the study.

Newberg's daughter continued using, she said, even after her boyfriend died from an overdose and three of her close friends died after using heroin, all within a short period of time.

"The only thing she suddenly cared about was getting high," Newberg said. "I felt shame and fear and helplessness and I didn't know what to do."

Newberg's daughter continued using, she said, even after her boyfriend died from an overdose and three of her close friends died after using heroin, all within a short period of time.

"It's a nightmare—she was hospitalized because she has no veins left," she said.

Newberg said she doesn't know where her daughter is now.

"Days after returning to Illinois, her daughter left the hospital and was missing," she said.

Newberg's daughter continued using, she said, even after her boyfriend died from an overdose and three of her close friends died after using heroin, all within a short period of time.

"The only thing she suddenly cared about was getting high," Newberg said. "I felt shame and fear and helplessness and I didn't know what to do."

Newberg is hoping to expose what she says is the North Shore area's growing problem with heroin use with a website she started called "North Shore Secret Heroin Problem," where she lists statistics and resources for parents seeking help.

The Niles North parent council said they too are trying to stop kids from taking opioids.

McTague, talking openly about the need to prevent kids from using drugs, admitted the school district has not started pinpointing the severity of opioid and heroin abuse beyond general drug awareness efforts throughout the school district.

"We continue to educate our kids through the student services department, but targeted heroin use isn't on our radar screen," he said. "At the end of the day, this is something we want to continue talking about and make it known in our schools — there has to be a semblance of awareness."

Like other concerned parents at the Parent Advisory Council meeting, Skokie resident Gail Paskead said she was surprised to learn that the stigma surrounding heroin had changed for this generation of teenagers.

"I asked my kids and they said no, they hadn't heard of people using it," Paskead said. "But I don't think people are blind to this being a problem."

Natalie Hayes is a freelance reporter for Pioneer Press.
Woman killed when struck by open door on minivan

CHICAGO TRIBUNE

A 79-year-old Niles woman was killed March 26 when an open door of a minivan struck her after she had asked her 13-year-old grandson to help put the vehicle into gear and it accelerated in reverse, Niles police said.

According to a news release March 27 from the Niles Police Department, Kuem S. Cho died of her injuries at Advocate Lutheran General Hospital in Park Ridge. The Cook County Medical Examiner's Office said Cho died of multiple blunt-force injuries and her death was an accident.

Police were called to a parking lot in the 9200 block of Maryland Street about 9 p.m. March 26, according to the release. Police learned that Cho had given the keys to her 2005 Chrysler minivan to her grandson "to assist her in placing the vehicle into gear."

According to police reports, Cho was walking up to the driver's side door, which was open, when "the teen shifted the vehicle into reverse with his foot accidentally on the gas pedal instead of the brake pedal." The vehicle went into reverse, and the open driver's side door struck Cho.

The Niles Fire Department transported her to the hospital. As of March 27, an investigation was continuing.

POLICE BLOTTER

The following items were taken from the Niles Police Department reports. Readers are reminded that an arrest does not constitute a finding of guilt; only a court of law can make that determination.

Niles

DUI
■ Ivan Bastidas, of the 900 block of Roxbury Court, Hanover Park, was charged with driving under the influence on March 18. He was taken into custody at Milwaukee Avenue and Jonquil Terrace at 3:30 a.m. He has an April 19 court date.

DISORDERLY CONDUCT
■ Police ticketed a 41-year-old Niles woman for disorderly conduct on March 21 after she allegedly called 911 several times, but refused to say anything when an operator answered. Police said the woman admitted to making the calls because she was "bored" due to her son leaving. She "did not understand the severity of her actions," police said.

BATTERY
■ A 34-year-old maintenance worker told police that a 52-year-old tenant struck him in the head with a metal pipe on March 19 inside an apartment building on the 7900 block of Caldwell Avenue. According to police, the worker had come to change the tenant's lock when the man opened his apartment door and hit the worker. The worker took the pipe away and the tenant refused to answer the door when officers arrived, police said. An investigation was pending.

RETAIL THEFT
■ Kimberly Sansone, 40, of the 500 block of Willow, Freeport, was charged with felony retail theft on March 19 after she allegedly stole baby formula valued at $389 by hiding the cans in a baby carrier inside a store on the 6300 block of Touhy Avenue. She was given a March 29 court date.

■ Martese Petigree, 41, of the 13900 block of South Atlanta, Riverdale, was charged with retail theft on March 21 after he allegedly stole $50 worth of clothing from a store at Golf Mill Shopping Center. He has an April 19 court date.

DISTURBANCE
■ Police on March 17 were called to a pharmacy on the 9600 block of Milwaukee Avenue after a nurse reported that a 48-year-old man became "irate" that the clinic inside the store did not accept Medicaid. He reportedly left before officers arrived.

THEFT
■ A woman reported that she discovered $50 missing from her purse while attending bingo at the YMCA, 6300 Touhy Ave., on March 16.

■ A device used to help with verbal communication was reported stolen March 21 from a locker inside the YMCA, 6300 W. Touhy Ave. The device was valued at $4,500, police said.

BURGLARY
■ Jewelry was reported stolen from a home on the 6800 block of Lexington Lane during a burglary that occurred on the afternoon of March 17, police said.

■ A house on the 8500 block of Normal Avenue was entered by force and ransacked on March 22, police said. An investigation was pending.

PROPERTY DAMAGE
■ All four tires were slashed on a van parked overnight between March 17 and March 18 on the 7300 block of Milwaukee Avenue, police said.
Police respond to shots fired on east end of Skokie

Mike Isaacs
Pioneer Press

Skokie police responded to an emergency call of shots fired at 2:42 p.m. March 27 near Lawndale Avenue and Greenleaf Street, according to a statement issued by the department.

When officers arrived at the scene, they said, a male had been involved in a fight that briefly spilled into a nearby parking lot.

A short time later, Evanston police, one of the surrounding agencies initially notified about the incident, relayed to Skokie they located a vehicle that might have been involved in the incident, police said.

According to Cmdr. Joe Dugan, spokesmen for the Evanston department, officers were dispatched at 2:56 p.m. to the area of Lake Street and Fowler Avenue in Evanston after a caller reported seeing a gray Jeep with a window shattered and damage from several rounds of bullets.

The victim refused any medical attention, Dugan said. He said Skokie arranged for the Jeep to be towed and brought the man in for questioning.

Skokie police are asking anyone with information or knowledge regarding the incident to contact the department at 847-933-1TPS (8477).

Morton Grove library officials ban man with assault

By Michael Joyce
Pioneer Press

Morton Grove Public Library officials have banned a man for one year from the establishment after he was charged with assaulting a member of the library staff.

According to a Feb. 26 police report, 27-year-old William Walsh of Chicago, was being loud and belligerent in the library, and "abusing staff in general.

Walsh was charged with assault and disorderly conduct.

Police said Walsh swung his open hand at a library employee, stopping short of hitting their face. Walsh also threatened to spit on the employee, according to the report.

Before the incident in the library, police said, Walsh was shouting racial slurs at the employees of a nearby McDonald's.

The Morton Grove Library Board director has the power to ban an individual from the library for up to a year, which is the time Walsh has been banned for.

The board acknowledged that the ban may not be necessary, given the pending court case.

"Given this individual's history, I'm telling the board we will be banning him for a year," said Gray. "We've had numerous instances with him in the past several months.

Also at the March 17 board meeting, the report was postponed due to quorum, the board did run through the finance report.

Board Treasure Mark Albers says according to the cash statement this time last year stood at $1.6 million, the library now has $6,441,649 on hand, he said.

Albers described the number as "favorable," saying the library has only used 11 percent of spending budget for the year.

Michael Joyce is a freelance reporter for Pioneer Press.
Police holding man for questioning in slaying

BY DEANESE WILLIAMS-HARRIS AND MIKE ISAACS
Tribune Newspapers

A man sought in connection with the slaying of a 31-year-old woman found inside her Skokie home was arrested March 27 on the West Side.

Jermaine Powell had a warrant issued against him for a parole violation. Powell was arrested about 4:13 p.m. March 27 in the 2700 block of West Jackson Boulevard, said police. He was charged with misdemeanor criminal trespassing to property, he said.

Powell also was wanted for questioning in the slaying of his child's mother.

The victim, Catherine Benyamin, 31, had been strangled, according to an autopsy performed by the Cook County medical examiner's office. Her death was ruled a homicide.

Benyamin's body was found the morning of March 24 inside her apartment on the 8200 block of Keating Avenue in the north suburb, authorities said. Police then began a search for her 10-month-old son, Joshua Powell, and the boy's father, Jermaine Powell.

The boy was dropped off later on March 24 at a church near Halsted Street and Roosevelt Road in Chicago, police said. He was taken to a hospital for observation. Police on March 25 continued to search for Jermaine Powell, who they say matched a description of a person who was seen dropping off the boy at the church.

Skokie Police issued a statement March 28 afternoon saying it is no longer seeking the public's assistance since Powell is in custody in Chicago for an Illinois Department of Corrections parole violation.

Skokie police officer Eric Swaback said charges have not been filed against Powell in the Skokie homicide, but he will be questioned as part of the ongoing investigation.

Another conviction handed down in Rosner home-health fraud case

BY AMEET SACHDEV
Chicago Tribune

A federal investigation into a bribery scheme at a now-shuttered Skokie-based home health care business resulted in another conviction on March 22.

A federal judge found Jenette George, 62, of Chicago, guilty of two counts of accepting kickbacks for referring elderly patients to Rosner Home Healthcare, according to the U.S. attorney's office. She also was convicted of conspiracy to defraud Medicare, the government insurance program for the elderly.

George became the 11th defendant to be convicted in the Rosner home-health fraud. The others include the co-owners, physicians, nurses and marketers.

George and her attorneys could not immediately be reached for comment.

George operated Tnenej Senior Referral Agency, which provided senior citizens with referrals to home health care firms in the Chicago area, the U.S. attorney's office said. She received about $500 from Rosner for each patient she referred. At her bench trial in October, prosecutors showed undercover surveillance video of George counting cash she received from a Rosner employee who was cooperating with federal authorities.

She faces up to 15 years in prison, the U.S. attorney's office said. Her sentencing hearing is scheduled for Aug. 10.

According to the FBI, Rosner received about $13 million from Medicare between January 2008 and July 2012.

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D64 struggles to balance security upgrades with price tag

BY NATALIE HAYES
Pioneer Press

Despite security gaps identified at all eight schools in Park Ridge-Niles School District 64, only one school will get upgraded security features this summer after the school board on March 21 rejected nearly $7.1 million in bids for safety upgrades and other infrastructure work at the other schools.

The school board voted 4-2 in favor of spending approximately $1.2 million to build a secure holding vestibule to retain Washington School visitors upon first entering the building. That cost will also cover various infrastructure improvements, including fire safety upgrades, according to the school district. Board members Mark Eggemann and Tom Sotos voted against the measure and Dathan Paterno was absent from the meeting.

Despite a divided vote on how to address the need for safety upgrades across the district, board members all agreed that the cost - which had been fluctuating since talk of secured vestibules began last year - had grown out of control.

The projected costs to install new districtwide safety improvements over the summer had risen by $807,000 from the $6.9 million that was presented by District 64's construction management firm, Nicholas and Associates, at the most recent school board meeting on March 3. During that meeting, school officials had asked the firm and FGM Architects to prepare a more detailed cost analysis.

Extra costs identified by the contractors since the March 3 meeting include asbestos abatement, fire shutters in line with fire code mandates and $20,000 in “construction coordination” costs for three schools during the summer school period.

“I'm a bit taken back by the scope of the extras,” board President Anthony Borrelli said. “I have to say I'm flummoxed by this — you had the designs and you made the proposals to us, so I feel everyone knew exactly what was involved in this.”

That apprehension was shared by the majority of the school board, which rejected project costs for security and infrastructure upgrades totaling nearly $8.9 million for the other schools after board officials grappled with whether the school district should spend up to $101 million on a combination of infrastructure and security upgrades for all the schools.

The school board next voted unanimously to re-bid critical infrastructure work for Carpenter, Franklin, Roosevelt, Lincoln, Jefferson and Hendee Educational Service Center, but security modifications were put on hold until the school board finds a way to finance the proposed upgrades.

The motions for the infrastructure projects passed 6-0. Emerson and Field schools weren't included in the rebidding list because project engineers had only suggested security upgrades at those schools, and no critical infrastructure work.

A final motion made at the March 21 meeting was to approve a lengthy list of bids from individual contractors for the Washington project. It passed with the same 4-2 vote. The $1.2 million cost includes $839,138 for security upgrades and $428,120 for infrastructure work, according to the school district.

The schools' need for security upgrades was magnified early this year when the Northeastern Illinois Public Safety Training Academy in Glenview reviewed safety standards at District 64 and found none of the schools have a single control point where guests, students and staff enter the building.

“None of our buildings have that feature, and that makes administration uncomfortable,” said Luann Kolstad, chief school business official. “Once someone is buzzed in, they have full access to the staff, all the rooms, all the kids — and we don’t think that's acceptable!”

The school board will decide at an upcoming meeting (after the rebidding process) which schools will get infrastructure improvements this year.

The board has said it still plans to pursue security upgrades at the other schools, but it might not happen this summer.

Discussions regarding the district's financial options are expected to continue in coming months, with the possibility of spending up to $10 million from the existing operating fund balance, according to Bernadette Tramm, public information coordinator. The board could also vote to pay for the projects with non-referendum bonds, she said.

Board member Vicki Lee said she thought it was unacceptable for schools to be unequipped for modern safety demands.

“Based on the people I've talked to — most of who are educators — I don't know anyone who has students using a building without a secure vestibule,” Lee said.

Natalie Hayes is a freelance reporter for Pioneer Press.
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Housing crash still stings in suburbs

Recovery chances especially bleak in blue-collar areas

BY KIM JANSSEN
Chicago Tribune

Mitchell and Loria Versher say they were looking for one thing when they bought their first home in South suburban Markham: “Stability.”

They might have been better off buying swampland in Florida.

In retrospect, July 31, 2007, was a bad day to go shopping for property anywhere.

But the modest 900-square-foot Cape Cod-style home the Vershers bought that day for $137,000, on the eve of the worldwide credit crunch, has fared especially badly.

Despite being well-kept, with a neatly trimmed lawn and hedgerow outside, four bedrooms and a two-car garage, it sits across the street from an abandoned home and was listed for sale in January for just $29,500.

“After serving in Vietnam and working all my life, this just seems like a failure of justice,” said Mitchell Versher, 68, an Army vet and security guard. “We thought we were getting the American Dream and a measure of stability at this stage in our lives.”

Instead, the Vershers find themselves not so much underwater as buried in a heavy snowfall of debt and ownership.

Their situation represents only an extreme version of a financial trap in which homeowners across predominately African-American parts of the south suburbs and in pockets of mainly Latino and white ethnic suburbs just south of O'Hare International Airport continue to struggle, almost seven years after the official end of the Great Recession.

The housing crash might seem like old news, but for families left behind by the recovery, it remains a defining economic reality.

At the end of 2010, almost 31 percent of Chicago-area homeowners with a mortgage were underwater, owing more on their loans than the properties were worth, according to housing analytics firm CoreLogic. Five years later, in 2015’s fourth quarter, the percentage of underwater local homeowners was nearly 17 percent.

While the median prices of homes in suburbs across the Chicago region continue to be below the inflation-adjusted prices they commanded pre-crash — even in Winnetka, the median home sold for 29 percent less last year than in 2005 — a map of house price changes over the last decade tracks closely with racial boundaries and shows that residents of blue-collar suburbs who were less well-equipped to absorb such a huge hit to their wealth are the worst affected.

In a broad swath of 37 south suburbs from Burbank to Steger, median prices for of existing single-family homes and condominiums last year remained at least 40 percent below where they were in 2005, after inflation, according to data collected by housing research firm Metrostudy.

Though median sales prices don’t always result in a reliable like-for-like comparison, since the type of homes sold in a town can vary over time, or be so small in number that they are statistically insignificant, the monumental drops in home values in these towns are replicated in studies that control for home size and condition.

For the calculations used in this story, the Tribune minimized the volatility in the quarterly data by taking the average of each town’s quarterly median sales prices in both 2005 and 2015.

In a handful of the poorest towns — Harvey, Ford Heights, Phoenix, Riverdale, Robbins and Sawk Village — more homeowners are foreclosed upon than obtain new mortgages, a surefire recipe for vacant homes, declining tax bases and blight.

But you didn’t have to buy at or near the fall 2006 peak of the Chicago area’s housing market, or in the worst affected town, to be hurt: prices stubbornly remain below where they were 20 years ago across much of the region.

A smaller slice of the near western suburbs is similarly suffering. In Stone Park, the region’s worst-hit town, the median home sold last year for 69 percent less than it did in 2005. In Melrose Park, the median price was down 57 percent in Schiller Park, it was down 51 percent, and in Franklin Park prices fell 55 percent.

Only in one Chicago-area town, Lisle, have inflation-adjusted prices risen modestly back above their pre-recession prices, to $261,000.

“The housing market is a good reflection of the uneven recovery of the economy, overall,” and may help explain why consumer confidence lags so far behind other economic indicators, said Geoff Smith, executive director of the Institute for Housing Studies at DePaul University.

The disparity is evident in Chicago neighborhoods as well. Compared with a year ago, February median prices of nondistressed single-family homes were down 14.5 percent in McKinley Park, down 11.8 percent in Chatham, flat in Beverly, up 4.6 percent in Forest Glen and up 5.3 percent in Logan Square, according to Midwest Real Estate Data.

While boom times may have returned to a handful of hip Chicago neighborhoods and well-to-do suburbs were not so badly affected, “a good half to two-thirds of the housing market is still trying to get back to where it was, and a third is still at pre-2000 prices,” Smith said.

Given how much of most homeowners’ wealth is tied up in their homes, that’s a serious brake on the Illinois economy. But without some widespread principal reduction program for underwater homeowners of the type being considered in a more limited form by Fannie Mae and Freddie Mac, Smith said, recovery will take a “lot of patience” and “is not necessarily realistic for a lot of neighborhoods.”

John Petruszak, executive director of the South Suburban Housing Center, which helps homeowners with distressed mortgages, agreed that recovery in largely African-American south suburbs “is going to take a long time,” and that some form of debt forgiveness or other assistance for struggling homeowners is needed.

“Everybody seems to think we’ve recovered from the housing crisis, but for many communities of color that’s not the case,” Petruszak said.

Predatory lending practices in predominantly black neighborhoods and towns where residents were sold “exotic and garbage mortgages” that could quickly be packaged up and sold as securities on Wall Street led to a huge number of foreclosures between 2008 and 2011, he said.

The number of lender-mediated sales in the Chicago area — short sales and foreclosures — accounted for 26 percent of existing home sales in February, compared with more than 50 percent just two years ago, according to Midwest Real Estate Data, the local multiple listing provider. But the long-term snowball effect of so many vacant, foreclosed properties in mainly black neighborhoods was exacerbated because banks took less care of the properties they owned there than they did in largely white communities, said Petruszak, who has helped bring national discrimination cases against six lenders.

But some observers go further.

Urban planner Pete Saunders, a Naperville resident who has written on suburban issues, believes that languishing house prices are one sign that we may have passed “peak suburbia.”

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Population shrinks in Illinois, Chicago

Finances, taxes, lack of jobs cited

BY MARWA ELTAGOURI
Chicago Tribune

By almost every metric, Illinois’ population is sharply declining, largely because residents are fleeing the state. The Tribune surveyed dozens of former residents who’ve left within the last five years, and each offered their own list of reasons for doing so. Common reasons include high taxes, the state budget stalemate, crime, the unemployment rate and the weather. Census data released March 17 suggests the root of the problem is in the Chicago metropolitan area, which in 2015 saw its first population decline since at least 1990.

Chicago’s metropolitan statistical area, defined by the U.S. Census Bureau, includes the city and suburbs and extends into Wisconsin and Indiana.

The Chicago area lost an estimated 6,263 residents in 2015 — the greatest loss of any metropolitan area in the country. That puts the region’s population at 9.5 million.

While the numbers fell overall, there were some bright spots in the Chicago area: Will, Kane, McHenry and Kendall counties saw growth spurts, according to census data.

The Chicago region’s decline extended to the state. In fact, Illinois was one of just seven states to see a population dip in 2015, and had the second-greatest decline rate last year after West Virginia, census data show. While the state’s population dropped by 7,391 people in 2014, the number more than tripled in 2015, to 22,194.

Illinois has a long-standing pattern of losing residents to other states, but the loss has generally been offset by births and migration from other countries.

During the years after the economic recession of the mid-2000s, migration to those states slowed, but it’s heated up again as states in the South and West have sunnier job opportunities and affordable housing. Texas attracts the greatest number of Illinois residents, followed by Florida, Indiana, California and Arizona, according to 2013 IRS migration data.

More Illinois residents move to other Midwestern states than the number of Midwesterners moving to Illinois, said Michael Lucci, vice president of policy at the right-leaning Illinois Policy Institute. Job and business creation are simply stronger in neighboring states, he said.

Through the 1990s and 2000s, Illinois saw what demographers consider normal rates of exodus for the state, about 50,000 to 70,000 more residents moving away from the state than moving in. But in 2015, the number spiked to about 95,000, and in 2015 it reached more than 100,000 people, according to census data.

The loss of residents over the last 20 years translates to about $50 billion in lost taxable income, and about $8 billion each year in lost state and local tax revenues, Lucci said.

The main factors in Chicago’s population dip are diminished immigration, the aging of the Mexican immigrant population that bolstered the city throughout the 1990s as well as an exodus of African-Americans, experts say.

More than any other city, Chicago has depended on Mexican immigrants to balance the sluggish growth of its native-born population, said Rob Parai, a Chicago-based demographer.

After 2002, falling Mexican-born populations became a trend across the country’s major metropolitan areas. But most of those cities were able to make up for the loss with the growth of their native populations, Parai said.

Chicago couldn’t.

Some experts also attribute the decline to the city’s African-American population, in part because of historically black communities hit hard by the foreclosure crisis, making houses cheap and easy to buy for Hispanics and whites who were willing to move for a bargain.

The 2010 census reported a 17 percent drop in the city’s black population over the previous decade. That number declined an additional 4 percent through 2014, to 852,756.

Chicago residents leaving the state have cited the Chicago Public Schools’ financial crisis and the city’s red light camera controversy as motivating factors. The greatest concern, however, seems to be safety.

Chicago Tribune’s Bill Ruthhart contributed.
Northbrook discourages planned hospital

BY IRV LEAVITT
Pioneer Press

Northbrook trustees told representatives of a proposed psychiatric hospital on March 22 that they didn't want it in the village because it would put too much strain on Northbrook emergency services and at a time when demand for them is increasing due to new development.

Some trustees also said they were uncomfortable with the location of the planned Northbrook Behavioral Hospital, at 4201 Lake-Cook Road, just north of the Northbrook Montessori School.

“Can't see putting that right next to a school,” Trustee James Karagianis said.

Every Village Board member said there was a need for a psychiatric hospital in the area to handle patients in crisis. But only one trustee said he favored the 75-bed hospital proposal by US HealthVest, a New York company.

“I think on all of us it's something of a moral imperative to see how we can overcome these challenges,” Trustee Bob Israel said. “I think a need is there, and to say ‘not in my backyard’ to something like this is not something that I can do.”

Northbrook Fire Chief Jose Torres, in a Jan. 22 memo to trustees, had estimated there would be 69 to 78 annual service calls - mostly for ambulances - to the hospital, based on the experience of another US HealthVest facility, Des Plaines' Chicago Behavioral Hospital. Northbrook police reported that Des Plaines police had received 70 calls from that hospital in the second half of 2015.

Northbrook Trustee A.C. Buehler said that in about 30 years on the Village Board and Plan Commission, it was only about the fifth time that such memos actually indicated a significant impact by a proposed development. He added that the police contribution in Northbrook would likely be much higher than in Des Plaines, because Northbrook police accompany ambulances, unlike Des Plaines police.

Buehler, the head of the board's Public Safety Committee, said the location on the far northwest edge of Northbrook was a factor, because “you cannot find a more difficult or longer run for police or fire in the village.”

He said that while US HealthVest had a right to submit formal applications for zoning variations to the Plan Commission, it would likely have a tough time seeking eventual Village Board approval.

“That's your right under the code, but those types of concerns I have, bear in mind when making that determination,” Buehler said.

Current property owner Michael Nortman said he would be willing to discuss minimizing the need for emergency services and paying for some of their costs. US HealthVest Vice President Martina Sze told the board that the hospital would bring Northbrook 15 full-time jobs.

But that was before most of trustees' comments, and before Village Attorney Steve Elrod reminded them of the legal covenant put on the land when it was annexed in 1985, in the wake of a lawsuit that forced the village to allow the property to be developed, mostly for homes or offices. The covenant forbids several other uses, including medical.

Elrod told trustees that when altering the covenant, “you may exercise sole and absolute discretion.

“It's very different from zoning cases, in which you have to be reasonable.”

In a straw poll of the board, only Israel and Trustee Todd Heller said they would consider altering the covenant, with Heller saying, “You're going to have to sell me on how this hospital is not going to tax Northbrook services.”

After the meeting, Sze said, “We'll have to see” what the company's next step will be.

If the project is submitted for Plan Commission review, US HealthVest might receive more challenges. Administrators of the Montessori school, and residents of townhouses west of the hospital site, said after the meeting that they planned to fight the project because of safety concerns and possible noise from sirens.

Support for the hospital might be in evidence during public hearings, however. Nortman sent in 30 letters backing the facility from representatives of local agencies dealing with mental health issues.

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Twitter @IrVLeavitt

This 4201 Lake-Cook Road building is the proposed home of a new Northbrook psychiatric hospital. Northbrook trustees on March 22 said they were uncomfortable with the location and the strain the hospital might put on local emergency services. Proponents say the hospital would bring Northbrook 15 full-time jobs.
Dog missing for three years reunited with owner

BY NATALIE HAYES
Pioneer Press

A dog that disappeared from a family's backyard three years ago was reunited with her owner last week at a Morton Grove animal shelter after she was found wandering near Midway Airport.

Honey, a four-year-old Pekingese, was brought to Wright-Way Rescue by a good Samaritan who found the dog on March 16 as it walked around an airport parking garage trying to find warmth from the cold, according to Wright-Way employees Jason Abbas and Chris Norris.

Most animal shelters in the area had already closed for the night by the time the dog was found, but Wright-Way was still open, so the woman — who asked employees at the shelter not to use her name — drove Honey to Morton Grove, where she was reunited with her owner, Karina Garcia of Lyons.

"My phone rang, and they said 'We found your dog — do you want her back?'" Garcia recalled.

"My brother was fixing the truck in the driveway and I ran out and yelled for him to get out of my way so I could get into my car, and I just couldn't stop crying," Abbas said.

The happy reunion, Abbas said, might never have come to be if Garcia hadn't decided to microchip Honey when she bought the dog from a pet store in Lyons in 2012.

The microchip is about the size of a grain of rice and implanted into a pet's neck. The chip contains information about the pet and the owner, she said.

Abbas and Norris met Garcia near the front doors of the shelter when she arrived to pick up Honey around 8:30 p.m., and the dog bounded toward her car and jumped into the driver's seat.

"As soon as the owner pulled up, she started yelling 'Honey bunny, I missed you!' and the dog seemed to remember her," Norris said.

"It was so heartwarming to be a part of it because everyone was so happy," Abbas said.

Honey was barely one year old on Feb. 14, 2013 when Garcia believes she was stolen, she said, after she left the dog unattended in the family's fenced-in backyard for a few minutes.

The dog, which she had bought for her then 13-year-old daughter as a gift, had vanished by the time she went back outside. Heartbroken, the Garcia family filed a police report and posted fliers with Honey's photo on telephone poles and in store windows, but no one called.

"I had knitted some booties for her to wear the day she went missing," Garcia said. "I was crying for weeks and weeks."

Rumors had surfaced around town that Honey had been snatched by a coyote. Eventually, the family gave up hope, Garcia said. They planned on starting their search for a new dog on the upcoming Saturday before Honey suddenly resurfaced.

Garcia believes she was cared for because she was well-fed — a little too well fed, actually. Her body weight had more than doubled to 14 pounds.

"She's different because she likes to bite a lot now and she's more aggressive," Garcia said. "But otherwise she's still the same and she still remembers us."

Honey has shown other odd behavior during her first week back at home, Garcia said. She refused to eat dog food at first and kept jumping up on the kitchen table — a habit Garcia said she would never allow.

A visit to the veterinarian gave Honey a clean bill of health, aside from a minor ear infection, according to the family.

Natalie Hayes is a freelance reporter for Pioneer Press.
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NEWS

Todd Hall students build bench to foster positivity

BY NATALIE HAYES
Pioneer Press

Recess can sometimes be isolating for a kid who doesn't fit into a clique, so a group of students at Todd Hall in Lincolnwood took it into their hands to foster more playground positivity.

Two years ago, teacher Maureen Cook's class read an article about a concept known as the "buddy bench." The article talked about a Pennsylvania 2nd grader who in 2013 helped bring a bench to his school as a special place on the playground for kids to find comfort when they feel out of place.

A buddy bench, the article explained, is a place where kids can sit if they're feeling lonely or too shy to ask their classmates if they can join in. If another student sees someone on the bench, they're supposed to approach them and ask them to join their group.

A group of five students in Cook's class decided Todd Hall could use a buddy bench of its own, so they started working toward bringing the concept to School District 74.

"They just ran with it—they said 'we need to figure out how we can get one of those here at Todd Hall,'" Cook said.

The students—Emma Bennett, Lillian Flood, Gabriel Mandal, Brandon Pieczka, and Max Spector—wrote a proposal and started meeting with principal Ellen Shankar on a weekly basis to plan their bench project by identifying costs, choosing designs, and setting a timeline.

After summer break when their 3rd grade year began, the students presented the plan to the school board, and the school's administration offered to fund the purchase of six benches.

"They had the passion and I let them run with it," Cook said. "This group of kids was more passionate than most of my kids—they turned a small reading lesson into something bigger."

Today there are two benches at each Todd Hall and Rutledge Hall, and two more will be installed at Lincoln Hall when an ongoing construction project wraps up, according to Rutledge Hall principal Beth Carmody.

The benches look like your average, ordinary wooden bench, except for a small gold plaque in the center that reads "Buddy Bench."

School officials have told students about the bench's purpose, Carmody said, but if anyone forgets and mistakes it for a regular bench, the kids are there to remind their classmates that visitors of the buddy bench should have a purpose.

"If someone gets tired, I've seen them just lie down on the bench, but that's not why it's here," Max said. "Sometimes kids get into a group and someone ends up having no one to play with, so they can come here and someone will come up to them."

During one recent afternoon recess period at Rutledge Hall, the kids gathered on a buddy bench to discuss whether it has impacted social dynamics at the playground.

The consensus was that the bench is fulfilling its mission by helping kids become more empathetic toward their classmates, but Brandon said the buddy bench has helped him realize an important life lesson.

"I've told my friends all about it, because when you see someone who's not happy—well they should be because everyone deserves to be happy," Brandon said. "I also learned that kids are more important than money."

The buddy bench project was recently recognized by the chain restaurant Meatheads, which awarded $500 to the school district in February as part of a program to honor people who make a difference in their local communities.

Keeping in line with the buddy bench's anti-bullying message, District 74 administrators said they used the money to pay for a visit from former Harlem Globetrotter Seth Franco, who works as an anti-bullying advocate using his basketball routine as a platform to encourage kids to develop positive relationships.
Glenview temporarily lowers fees for permits filed online

Glenview trustees have lowered fees for building permits filed through electronic applications by 10 percent for the next three months to encourage users to apply for them online.

Village staff sought the discount, available in April through June, to promote a new electronic system that lets applicants file their entire application online, including any necessary paperwork.

The Village Board approved the proposal by a unanimous vote at its March 15 meeting.

"Staff is really excited about this because we really believe it will be a useful tool for our residents and customers," said Joe Kenney, community development director for Glenview.

"This is exciting," Village President Jim Patterson said.

The policy is intended to increase convenience for applicants, reduce the need for administrators and further streamline the village's permit process, Kenney said.

"Residents and customers often have to go in to the building permit counter one, two, three times," he said.

"With what we're rolling out, they will never have to come in to secure a permit, or they could limit the amount of times they have to do that."

Previously, applicants were able to apply only for permits that did not require additional paperwork, such as building plans, Kenney said.

Currently, Glenview receives an average of 3,500 permit applications each year, he said. Only about 35 are filed electronically each year, Kenney said.

Officials hope the 10 percent discount, which will be limited to a total reduction of $250 per application, will increase that number, he said.

"We want folks to try this and see what the issues are," Kenney said. "We hope the discount provides incentive for folks to use it and break the habit of coming in over the counter. For fence and roof contractors, folks that receive a lot of permits, we want to show them how easy it is."

Kenney provided the board with a demonstration of the process at the March 15 meeting.

"It has an easy popup menu, similar to other applications folks use," he said.

Contractors currently operating in Glenview are already entered into the village's electronic database and need only enter their names to generate much of the rest of the required information, Kenney said.

Trustee Paul Detlefs asked if applicants not included in the database are not licensed with the village.

"It means they have not done business here over the last six or seven years," Kenney said. "If they do not have a license, they would have to come in and get one."

Kenney completed the entire application process in a few minutes before trustees.

"It did not take too long right in front of you," he said.

"I have successfully applied for a permit. As with other online applications, I have the ability to check the application and submit."

Submission triggers an automated email providing a link the applicant can use throughout the application process to check permit status and request an inspection, Kenney said.

Applicants can also use their application portal to check comments and review needed information, he said.

"Instead of waiting for village hour and village information, folks can track and check this at home," Kenney said. "They can pay online as well."

Village staff will still be available to serve any applicants who wish to complete the process in person, he said.

Glenview plans to begin promoting the service heavily in April, Kenney said.

During the remodeling of her bathroom, Trustee Deborah Karton said, contractors told her they appreciate how easy it is to deal with Glenview in the application process.

"They like how easy is is to apply at night during off-hours," Karton said. "It's great we're making ourselves available and it's useful to them."

Phil Rockrohr is a freelance reporter for Pioneer Press.
City backs off ban of bakers

Officials previously planned to exclude farmers market bakers from outside Evanston this year

BY BOB SEIDENBERG AND LEE V. GAINES
Pioneer Press

Evanston will back off plans to exclude non-Evanston bakers from its 2016 farmers market, city officials said in an email March 22, while continuing to evaluate whether the rule should be implemented in the future.

“Evanston Parks, Recreation and Community Services Director Lawrence Hemingway has worked with the bakers and (Friends of Evanston Farmers Markets) to rescind this rule change for 2016,” City Manager Wally Bobkiewicz said in the email. “The 2016 market will have nine bakers included as vendors. Section 3-22-7 of the Evanston City Code allows bread as the only baked good to be sold at the market despite the fact that other baked goods have been regularly sold by bakers at the market.”

“Last year was the first year it was an issue. We discovered all these baked goods were coming from outside municipalties.”

— Jory Downer, owner of Bennison’s Bakery

Prior to the Tuesday reversal, more than half a dozen bakers said the initial decision by the city to bar them from setting up shop at the coming Evanston farmers market because they don’t operate brick and mortar businesses in the city would have had a devastating impact on their bottom lines and severely limit the choices available to consumers at the market.

“This change was agreed to internally by city staff in summer 2015 to be implemented in 2016 based on complaints from some Evanston-based bakers that there were too many out-of-town bakers represented at the market,” Bobkiewicz wrote.

Vikki Proctor, president of the Friends of Evanston Farmers Market nonprofit group, said she discovered last week that eight of a total of 10 bakers who had been vetted by the city and paid for licenses from the Evanston Health Department were not allowed to participate in the market, which is slated to begin May 7.

She said Bobkiewicz made the initial call to ban non-Evanston bakers from the market, which was then reversed by city officials on March 22.

“Our position is that the city’s action is wrong and violates the (farmers market) ordinance,” she said just prior to the city’s announcement. Proctor said she met with Bobkiewicz to discuss the change and with Mayor Elizabeth Tisdahl this week with hope the decision would be reversed. Following the meeting, Proctor said Tisdahl would advise Bobkiewicz and the parks and recreation director, Lawrence Hemingway, what she would like to see done.

Bobkiewicz said the change in the market made-up “should have happened months ago because we had talked internally about it last spring ... we didn’t want to make the change during the 2015 market; we wanted to make the change during this market ... with the change in parks and rec staff, there was apparently a breakdown in communication.”

Bobkiewicz said the farmers market “isn’t really a farmers market, it’s a community market” that includes produce, baked goods, cheeses and prepared foods. He said the city’s ordinance has not evolved with the changing nature of the market.

“Upon inquiry, I learned this change in rule was not shared in a timely manner with the bakers or the Friends of the Evanston Farmers Market,” Bobkiewicz wrote in the email. “Bakers had already applied for the 2016 market and would have no ability to make other arrangements for the 2016 season when many learned of this change.”

Proctor and several bakers interviewed for this story said they believe the owners behind two Evanston bakeries, Bennison’s Bakery and Great Harvest Bread Co., urged Bobkiewicz to ban outside bakers from the annual market.

Jory Downer, owner of Bennison’s Bakery, said he and Great Harvest Bread Co. owner Dave Schaps urged city staff last year to abide by the farmers market ordinance. The ordinance states that “the sale of bread shall be allowed by vendors that are food establishments licensed by the city of Evanston.”

“Last year was the first year it was an issue,” Downer said. “We discovered all these baked goods were coming from outside municipalties.”

Downer said he isn’t opposed to outside bakers coming to the city’s market because he also attends markets outside Evanston. He said, however, some outside bakers bring “inferior products” to the market and that Evanston’s vetting process for vendors isn’t as robust as it should be.

Schaps declined to comment on the allegation he and Downer encouraged the recent change.

Dusan Katic, of Aurora-based Katic Breads, said he learned late last week of the rule change. Katic said he participated in the Evanston market four years ago. The market now makes up 20 percent of his business, he said.

“Am I really worried; it seems like a very arbitrary and capricious action,” said Terra Brockman, a former Evanston resident whose family owns and operates Henry’s Farm out of Congerville, Ill., before the announcement of the reversal. She said the farm has sold produce at the Evanston market for close to a quarter-century.

Bobkiewicz said in the March 22 email the city is left with more questions to answer before settling on a permanent stance regarding bakers in the farmers market. While considering the merits of what vendors make sense for the farmers market, he also expressed a reluctance on the part of the city to become the “pastry and pie police.”
**Strangers shouldn’t be automatic enemies**

**Paul Sassone**

Presidential campaigns have been pretty unpleasant lately. And it’s only going to get worse. All the name-calling and mudslinging of the Republican and Democratic primaries could soon be winding down. And all the name-calling and mudslinging of the general election season is about to begin. This ugly primary season has showed us how divided we are, how stupid — if not downright evil — the other candidates are. We’re angry, so the political pundits gleefully keep telling us.

So, maybe now is a good time to ponder Blanche Dubois’ famous line from “A Streetcar Named Desire,” about how she had always depended on the kindness of strangers. People don’t know aren’t just election enemies. They are people we rely on every day of our lives. We all depend on the kindness of strangers. Let me explain: While driving, we depend on the kindness of the stranger on the cross street, that we can proceed safely on the green light because he will stop on the red and not smash into us and kill or maim us.

We depend on the kindness of the stranger who sells us a TV set that it will run. We depend on the stranger walking next to us on the street that he will not punch us — or pull a gun and shoot us. We depend upon the stranger who serves us our bacon and eggs that he/she didn’t poison it. And on and on. You get my drift. There are millions of strangers who haven’t hurt us. At least not yet.

Maybe we should have a more upbeat attitude toward our friend the stranger. And perhaps that attitude could carry over to the upcoming general election.

Because, remember, we depend upon the strangers — no matter for whom they vote — but who nevertheless abide by the election results.

In some countries, people who don’t like an election’s outcome revolt and start shooting their opposition. Now, that’s really unpleasant.

Paul Sassone is a freelance columnist for Pioneer Press.

**White Sox’ Adam LaRoche situation troubling on several counts**

**Randy Blaser**

One of the great things about the great game of baseball is this: No one ever knows what’s going to happen. You could spend a lifetime watching the game and, at some point, you will see something no one has ever seen before. It may be a great catch, three home runs on nine consecutive swings or three strikeouts in an All-Star game. Or it might be some weird confluence of plays that can only happen in baseball.

This anticipation of the unexpected that can leap out at any moment during the repetitive mundane that is a nine-inning baseball game played out over a 162-game schedule makes baseball so great. Unfortunately, our beloved team on the South Side has taken the humdrum of a spring training season and turned it into one of those bizarre “I’ve never seen this before” moments. Because of this event, even casual observers were calling the team anti-family. They’re not. They’re just anti-baseball.

How else can one explain the weird saga of one Adam LaRoche, who decided to quit playing baseball and forego $13 million a year because White Sox management told him to cool it with his 14-year-old son spending so much time with the team. I know we’ve had some time now to sleep on this story, but no matter how you slice it, the issue, its resolution and the players’ reaction to it, is just creepy.

First, the event. I love my kids and try to spend as much time with them as I can. But when I’m working, they are a distraction. At work, you talk about your kids with coworkers over coffee. Your coworkers don’t strategize with them on how to break out of an oh-for slump at the plate.

Then there is the idea of a teenager in a Major League Baseball clubhouse. It should come as a surprise to no one that baseball players curse. Why put a kid in that environment? Would you give your 14-year-old a copy of “Ball Four” and tell him to have it? Case closed.

Next up, the resolution. When your boss asks you to do something at work, something that is standard practice throughout the industry, most employees acknowledge the directive and move on. Not LaRoche. He responded by saying what many want to say deep down: “Take this job and shove it.”

Don’t most people wait until they are reprimanded before quitting? Third: Player reaction. I understand the players rallying around another player. That’s what you do in baseball. You stick up for your teammate, even if it is a guy you hate, who leaves his wet shower shoes laying around the clubhouse and plays country music real loud. But here is the bizarre part. White Sox centerfielder Adam Eaton defended the whole thing by telling the press the kid is a great leader in the clubhouse.

That’s right. A grown man, a professional baseball player in the major leagues, looks to a 14-year-old kid for leadership. I don’t know what the kid could possibly be telling the White Sox players. Maybe “Go get ‘em,” or “keep at it,” or “don’t give up,” or “you can do it, kid,” or “You know, when I was in Little League, I struck out, too.”

Perhaps what the White Sox have needed to be told — at least last season — is this: “You stink at baseball.”

Randy Blaser is a freelance columnist for Pioneer Press.
FLYING UNDER THE RADAR

Why all your friends are watching ‘House of Cards’

ERIC SCOTT

With the exception of rifling through a box of Lemonheads as if they were going out of style, I’ve never really been a “binger consumer” of anything. Binge watching TV shows on streaming services for hours on end is now about as popular as breathing.

Chances are you know someone who has watched the entire new season of the Netflix series “House of Cards,” which dropped earlier this month.

Arguably, it’s the series that put Netflix on A-list viewing radar and rightly so. House of Cards is part of a rare breed of television that reaches through the screen, grabs you by the collar, pulls you up close and says, “I dare you to find something better to watch. I own your attention and you know it!”

The loud, constantly revving motorcycle engine of the series is President Frank Underwood, ultra-convincingly played by Oscar-winning actor Kevin Spacey. Now in its fourth season, the series has taken viewers through Underwood’s meteoric political rise from South Carolina congressman to Vice President and to Commander-in-Chief. Along the way, he has clawed, threatened, decimated and has even killed anyone standing in his way. I really wonder if in real life Spacey can walk onto a crowded rail platform and wait for the train to arrive without people running away in fear?

Of course, President Underwood couldn’t do it alone. Robin Wright plays the cold and conniving First Lady, Claire Underwood. As season four begins, she amp up fake exterior charm to turn husband Frank’s 2016 election campaign upside down — raising the show’s intensity level to a place higher than could be imagined.

It’s worth pointing out how confrontation in HOC context differs from run-of-the-mill mindless drive confrontations found on most reality shows. Unlike the rapid concerns showcased on the table-flipping, rose-distributing, dance teacher-erupting programming — akin to gaping at a car wreck happening in slow motion — HOC doesn’t need to yell. It’s strategic, precise and impressively direct in its ability to demonstrate how few words and minimal actions can destroy egos. Toward the end of season 3, we see President Underwood even the score with his election opponent who threatened to release damaging information about Claire. In a calm, dulcet tone over the phone, the president politely tells his opponent to contort her body into an anatomically impossible position, before looking into the camera and admitting that felt good. Definitely an “ohh!” moment.

Why is a show about politics so gripping, regardless of your political views? Because it both subtly and dramatically cuts right to the core of how we’re sometimes like to get things to go our way. In the Underwood administration, there’s little time for diplomacy or appeasing political opponents. When POTUS says jump, you already should be in mid-air or his right-hand hatcher man, actor Michael Kelly as Doug Stamper, may pay you an unwanted visit.

And while crude comments continue to come from Trump’s mouth, we can’t help but wonder why Clinton doesn’t smile more. Maybe, in fact, she’d do well to bring her voice down an octave or three.

Kinds make you wonder if this is truly 2016, doesn’t it?

Eric Scott is a freelance writer for the Pioneer Press

Keeping up appearances and other sexist distractions

Is it fair to judge Clinton on how often she smiles?

DONNA VICKROY

Headbands.
Remember them?
Remember when Hillary Clinton’s use of headbands was a topic of discussion?
Nationwide?
After she ditched them, public attention turned to her bangs and pantyhose.

Good thing in addition to that law degree and mile-long resume, the Democratic front-runner has a sense of humor.

Her Twitter bio reads: “Wife, mom, grandma, women’s rights advocate, FLOTUS, Senator, SecState, hair, pant suit aficionado, 2016 presidential candidate.”

Perhaps one day she’ll add “working on that smile.”

Meanwhile, we have Republican front-runner Donald Trump calling women bimbos, picking fights with just about everybody and describing breastfeeding women as “disturbing.”

Trump’s multiple marriages, not to mention his sexual overtures, hardly are cause of his gender or his right-hand hatcher man, actor Michael Kelly as Doug Stamper, may pay you an unwanted visit.

And while crude comments continue to come from Trump’s mouth, we can’t help but wonder why Clinton doesn’t smile more. Maybe, in fact, she’d do well to bring her voice down an octave or three.

Kinds make you wonder if this is truly 2016, doesn’t it?

Clearly, there are legitimate reasons to dislike Clinton politically, the old Democratic regime and the whole Benghazi thing among them, but the “shrillness” of her voice? Really?

Right, because Bernie Sanders doesn’t look like he’s about to blow a gasket half the time. And Trump’s encouraging rally participants to muscle a protester off the premises doesn’t seem shrill or bullying.

So, why? Why, America?
Why are we here?

The answer must be that a whole lot of people think it’s OK for a man to be mean and brutish, but it’s not OK for a woman to even come across as more serious than nice.

We all know that emotional outbursts tend to work in men’s favor. Makes them seem stronger, more serious. When a man doesn’t smile, he means business. Even when a man cries, like former Speaker of the House John Boehner, the world is impressed.

But when a woman doesn’t smile, she seems angry. When a woman cries, she seems weak. The world does not like weak women, and its judgment of them tends not to be pretty.

Regardless of which candidate you favor in this election, it’s easy to see that Clinton is being held to a “different” standard, simply because of her gender. No one’s talking about how frequently Sanders smiles or whether or not Trump should consider voice lessons, let alone manners class.

So let us imagine for just a moment a world where all presidential candidates are anonymous, but for their appearances. Voters don’t know their gender, their weight, how they work a pant suit or how often they whine, cry, pound their fists or smile.

No hairdos to distract, no clothing choices to question and no body size issues to muddy each contender’s message.

All we know about them is where they stand on the issues.
We read the platforms.
We file off questions. We analyze the answers.
And then we vote.

 Ridiculous? Not more ridiculous than some of the topics coming out of this year’s contest.

However way you lean politically, you must agree that devoting valuable energy to inconsequential things, such as one particular candidate’s appearance, is wasteful, and at a time when Americans should be embracing frugality.

There are so many pressing issues to be addressed, time really is of the essence.

Whether or not she wins this election, I do hope, like the many brave female pioneers who came before her, Clinton is able to open doors — not just to mention minds — for future women leaders.

That, at least, would be a positive to come from this highly negative election year that never seems to hit rock bottom.

Like the recent attack on candidates’ spouses. Just when you thought things couldn’t go any lower, we turn to Twitter.

Last week Donald Trump tweeted a warning to rival Ted Cruz after Trump said a racy photo of his wife, Melania, was the subject of a Cruz attack.

Trump blamed Cruz personally and warned “to spill the beans” on Cruz’s wife, Heidi.

But what next? Candidates’ pets get thrown into the ring? Are gammas off limits?

Yes, it is ridiculous. It is distracting. And it is only likely to continue.

That said, if this election comes down to a battle of the spouses, with props going to the most political savvy among them, my money’s on Clinton.

dvickroy@erlips.com
The story of Father Damien, known as the leper priest of Molokai, has fascinated Wayne Messmer since he was a child.

"I was first drawn to it in grade school," said Messmer, a singer, actor and broadcaster, well known for singing the National Anthem for Chicago sports teams. "I was taught by the Franciscan nuns. They had helped father Damien over on Molokai. They were very proud of Mother Marianne, who's now been canonized as Saint Marianne."

In the early 1990s, Messmer's interest in the work of the priest was rekindled when he discovered "Damien," a one-man play written in 1977 by Aldyth Morris. Messmer decided, "I'd like to take a stab at this because I resembled this guy." He first took on the role of Father Damien in 2002 at the Raue Center in Crystal Lake and has performed it dozens of times since, including twice in Hawaii. He will next perform the show on April 10 at Our Lady, Mother of the Church Parish on Chicago's far northwest side.

Messmer has done intensive research into the life of Father Damien, including visiting, with his wife Kathleen, the area in Kalaupapa, Molokai Hawaii where the priest toiled in the late 1800s. Messmer was astounded to discover, when he stood next to a life-sized statue of Damien, how much he resembled the priest.

"The topography of the island of Molokai is very interesting," he said. "It's an underdeveloped island -- intentionally -- no stoplights, small family restaurants. They don't want tourism. There's almost 3,000-foot cliffs and then this peninsula sticks out into the sea. That's where they literally dumped everyone that had leprosy. It was less than humane. There was no way out."

He noted that as soon as someone was diagnosed as a leper, all their possessions were taken away and they were declared dead. "They were sent off, never to be seen by their family again," he said.

Messmer was stunned that "all of it was happening in such a magnificent, paradise-like setting." He believes that Father Damien's ultimate mission was to "help these people understand that God has not forgotten them." He attended to their spiritual needs as well as building homes, providing water and food for them, and burying the dead. He cared for the people in the colony for 16 years until he died of leprosy.

"Father Damien had a personal ministry to expose a relatively modern day saint -- someone who did something so tremendously selfless," he explained.

Wayne Messmer portrays Father Damien, who cared for lepers in Hawaii, in the show "Damien."

**Wayne Messmer in 'Damien'**

**When:** 2:30-5 p.m., April 10

**Where:** Our Lady, Mother of the Church Parish, 8701 W. Lawrence Ave., Chicago

**Tickets:** $20 in advance; $25 at the door

**Contact:** 773-625-3369

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12 cabaret singers to bring Judy Garland show to life

**By Myrna Petlicki**

Fifty-five years ago Judy Garland performed a thrilling concert at Carnegie Hall that has lived on because it was recorded live. Daryl Nitz Entertainment will re-create that April 1961 concert on the Skokie Theatre stage on April 10. "Judy at Carnegie" features a dozen of Chicago's finest cabaret artists performing over 25 classic Garland tunes.

Nitz was able to create that show because around 2004 a remastered two-CD set was released that included all the songs and dialogue from that concert in order. "I figured people wanted to hear that," said Nitz, who has produced the concert three times before at Chicago venues.

The cast includes Jen Chada, Laura Freeman, Kimberly Gordon, Sophie Grimm, Ester Hana, Tecora Rogers, Jeannie Tanner, Denise Tomassello, Honey West and Melissa Young. Music director Johnny Rodgers leads a quartet that includes Mike Torti on horns, Jim Cox on bass and Phil Grateau on drums. Director Nitz and Rodgers will also sing selections from the concert.

"Judy Garland is an icon, and that Carnegie concert was wonderful," said Ester Hana, who performed in all the previous stagings of the concert. "I get to see the entertainers that I really adore that I don't get a chance to see," she said.

"But also, I know if I'm working with Daryl, it's going to be fun and a great show and I'm in good hands."

West admitted that she has a partially-selfish motive for wanting to be in the "Judy" show again. "I get to see the entertainers that I really adore that I don't get a chance to see," she said.

"But also, I know if I'm working with Daryl, it's going to be fun and a great show and I'm in good hands."

West is drawn to Garland's story. "There was a lot of struggle and tragedy in her life," the performer said, which was reflected in her performances. "She sings from her heart and beyond."

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Ester Hana

Jeannie Tanner

Honey West
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Steven Wright's lethargic vocal demeanor and nearly catatonic comedic delivery is no act. And if observing him perform his uniquely deadpan style of comedy lazily laced with non-sequiturs, one-liners and off-the-wall observations about lint over the past 37 years isn't enough proof, 30 minutes on the phone with the comic provides more than enough evidence.

"Abstract is how I think. This is how I talk," says Wright from the phone in New York City. "Comedy, not just my comedy, everyone's comedy, is from noticing the world and moving things around. There was never any, 'if I talk like this' 'if I do it like this' 'if I tell abstract jokes, it'll be different.'"

Wright brings his unclassifiable (yet often mimicked) brand of standup to the North Shore Center of the Performing Arts on April 8. Instead of topical jokes about Donald Trump, you can expect zingers like "I bought a cordless extension cord" and "It doesn't matter what temperate a room is, it's always room temperature."

"Right from the beginning I didn't talk about who the president was, I didn't talk about the popular TV shows, I didn't talk about some big news event," explains Wright. "I made up these four rules when I started in like the first six months, and one of them was to not talk about anything that was big. I don't know why. I'd rather talk about physics, the speed of light, lint, shadows, you know, stuff that's not attached to time?"

Wright was inspired to become a comedian at age 16 sitting in front of the TV watching Johnny Carson and comics he had on "The Tonight Show" like George Carlin and Richard Pryor. He started performing standup at age 23 and, as fate would have it, was discovered by a Tonight Show producer who saw Wright performing at a Chinese restaurant/comedy club in his hometown of Cambridge, Mass.

Wright recalls his 1982 appearance on "The Tonight Show" as both his career high as well as a moment of sheer terror. "I wanted to do standup and I didn't want to be up there like nobody wants to be up there but I made myself, I forced myself," he recalls. "Then I was so scared, I was so afraid, that led to why I had such a blank face because I was scared out of my mind. And then that ended up working for me."

Carson was so impressed he asked the comic to come back the next week, and Wright's career took off from there. Soon after Wright began to expand into film and television, playing small roles in dozens of movies and TV shows from "Half Baked" and "Natural Born Killers" to playing himself in "The Simpsons." Most recently, he worked as a producer on Louie C.K.'s hit FX show "Louie."

"It was amazing," says Wright of his time working on the show. "Standup, you do it all yourself. But working with [Louie C.K.], we would talk about what he was doing, we'd talk about the script, the story, we'd talk about how the filming is going, then the editing."

The 60-year-old Wright currently appears as one of the regulars at the bar where C.K.'s new show, "Horace and Pete," is set. The boundary-pushing show deals in some heavy themes for a comedy show like politics and abortion — topics Wright has spent a career steadfastly avoiding.

"It's a lot of stuff I wouldn't talk about," says Wright. "But I feel no pressure. It's kind of fun actually to be involved in these subjects that I would never really talk about on stage. It doesn't make me uncomfortable at all."
Review: ‘Butler’ makes the most of a Civil War moment

By Chris Jones
Chicago Tribune

“Butler” is, if we are being frank, a comedy about slavery, an original sin of the United States of America.

The notion sounds offensive absurd in the extract, but the focus of the playwright, Richard Strand, is on the genuinely absurd, if ultimately judicious, machinations of one Benjamin Franklin Butler, a general in the Union Army who was largely responsible for formulating the legal notion of slaves being defined as contraband.

In 1861, Butler, played in Northlight Theatre's production by Greg Vinkler, found himself commanding Fort Monroe in the battleground state of Virginia. Three asylum-seeking slaves from nearby Norfolk County, which was Confederate territory, made their way to Fort Monroe, presenting Butler with an ethical dilemma. Having been a lawyer on civilian street, and a Union officer for about 30 seconds, he took seriously the legal obligation to return property to its rightful owner, as required by the Fugitive Slave Act of 1850. But then, of course, that meant either A), likely returning a man to his death or B), assuming that man would be allowed to live, returning a man who would then be forced to try to kill Union soldiers. Neither was ethically satisfying to Butler.

So Butler's wily mind came up with notion of walking contraband — a dehumanizing term, most certainly, but also one that likely saved the lives of Shepard Mallory, Frank Baker and James Townsend, the three slaves who found themselves so defined. Some historians would go further, assigning to Butler and his legal mind a central role in the end of slavery in America.

Only one of the slaves, Mallory, played by Tosin Morohunfola, is actually in Strand's play, perhaps because the author was mindful of regional theaters and cast sizes, but also likely because Strand conceived the drama as a debate between Mallory, a smart and literate man who knew how to work on the margins, and Butler, no fool either. He adds in one Lt. Kelly (the very amusing Nate Burger) as the third military wheel who brings these very different men together, and he also includes Maj. John Baytop Cary (Tim Monsjion), the Confederate officer who shows up at Fort Monroe to get his slaves back.

We all know how the war ended. So at no point in “Butler” are you thinking that Mallory is headed back South. So the appeal of this Civil War play, mostly comes from feeling superior to Cary (Monsjion happily plays into this) while siding with Butler and Mallory and enjoying their complicated verbal dance.

“Butler” is no “Hamilton.” I wouldn't say that Strand fully fleshes out all the complexities of his title character, or the slave who changed the world, and although Vinkler is funny and honest, he's a bit too professorial and diffident for a historical figure who was very close to President Abraham Lincoln and regarded by some peers as that great man's equal when it came to political strategizing and campaigning.

But Vinkler’s wacky sherry-sipping guy always is fun in director Stuart Carden's fast-moving Northlight production, and he's well matched with Morohunfola, playing a realist who actually has to lead his man by the nose to come up with his own salvation — and, well, change the course of history.

Northlight Theatre’s ‘Butler’
When: Through April 17
Where: North Shore Center for the Arts, 9501 Skokie Blvd., Skokie
Tickets: $25-$79
Information: 847-673-6300; www.northlight.org
‘Wild Kratts Live’ shenanigans comes to Rosemont Theatre

BY MYRNA PETLICKI
Pioneer Press

Little kids are big fans of the animated PBS Kids television show, “Wild Kratts.” They can watch the adventures of the real life Martin and Chris Kratt in “Wild Kratts Live,” 1 p.m. or 4:30 p.m. April 10 at Rosemont Theatre, 5400 N. River Road, Rosemont.

As usual, the Kratts will be saving animals in, “To the Creature Rescue!” The Kratt Brothers will don their Creature Power Suits to retrieve their favorite invention from a comic villain in order to keep the animals of the world safe. In the process, there will be pratfalls galore but kids will also learn some interesting facts about animals.

The Kratts are known for their silliness but there’s a serious message behind this show and the television series. Their not-for-profit Kratt Brothers Creature Hero Society has created nature reserves to protect critical wildlife habitats.

So this show is about safeguarding endangered animals as well as entertaining and educating. Tickets are $27.75-$97.75. For details, call 847-671-5100 or go to www.rosemont.com/theatre

Inward bound

A little girl’s feelings about changes in her life are explored in the acclaimed animated film, “Inside Out.” It will be screened at 1:30 p.m. April 2 at the Skokie Public Library, 5215 Oakton St. Afterwards, Turning Point Behavioral Health Care Center will lead a discussion for parents while children work on a craft project.

For details, call 847-673-7774 or go to www.skokielibrary.info.

Pay attention to this dimension!

Kids will learn how to use the free online software Tinkercad during 3D Printing for Families, 6-7 p.m. April 7 at Niles Public Library, 6960 Oakton St. The event is for kids in kindergarten and up and their families. Children under 13 must be accompanied by an adult. Registration is required.

For details, call 847-692-3359 or go to www.prparks.org.

Outdoor treat with Pete

Join the Storywalk StoryMob, 11 a.m. April 9 at Little Bear Garden in Gallery Park, 2001 Patriot Blvd., Glenview. You will take a hike as you read the tale of “Pete the Cat and His Magic Sunglasses.”

For details, call 847-729-7500 or go to www.glenviewparks.org.
Benefit raises $215,000 for Avenues to Independence

Event: ‘A Night in Old Havana’ Love Affair Gala
Benefiting: Avenues to Independence, Park Ridge, which provides homes, jobs, and social opportunities to hundreds of adults with disabilities
Location: Loew’s Chicago O’Hare Hotel, Rosemont
Date: Feb. 20
Attended: 350
Raised: $215,000
Website: www.avenuestoindependence.org

Nadine Henich of Niles, from left, Jill Smith and Shlomo Bar-Sheshet of Skokie

Avenues’ Executive Director Robert Okazaki and his wife, Judy, of Barrington

Brian Murphy of Melrose Park, from left, Alice Murphy of River Forest, and Nancy Malik of Arlington Heights

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HURRY BEFORE IT'S GONE!

When to cut family ties

Breaking up with a relative may be hard to do, but sometimes it's for the best.
Here’s something to do with all that leftover ham

Plano cook repurposes Easter dinner staples

By Judy Buchenot
The Beacon-News

Now that Easter is over, it is time to do something with that basket of hard boiled eggs and the enormous platter of leftover ham filling up all the available space in your refrigerator.

Hilary Hawkinson, a Plano resident and East Aurora High School teacher, enjoys cooking and has recipes that are ideal ways to repurpose those Easter leftovers. Although she loves to cook, Hawkinson doesn’t always have time to pull out the pots and pans after a full day of teaching.

“I try to cook in bulk,” she said. She often makes a large batch meal that she packages and freezes to eat in the weeks to come.

One of her go-to recipes is ham and corn chowder. Although it is a perfect way to use up leftover ham, it can also be made using a ham steak.

“It is one of those recipes that actually tastes better the next day,” she said. She often doubles the recipe and then places single servings in Ziploc bags. After freezing them flat, she can stack the bags in the freezer.

Her recipe includes cinnamon and turmeric.

“I like to add cinnamon to this chowder because it brings out the sweet, smoky flavor,” she said. “I also like to add turmeric mainly because it is good for you. Turmeric doesn’t change the flavor a lot but it helps improve your brain function, so I add it to things.”

Since the soup can be made in advance, Hawkinson says it is a great dish to serve at parties.

“Everyone who tries it really loves it,” she said.

For people who are getting tired of using those hard boiled eggs for traditional mayo and mustard deviled eggs, Hawkinson suggests kicking things up a notch with her bacon and Serrano pepper filled deviled eggs that include a few drops of hot sauce for excitement.

Hilary Hawkinsen adds corn to a batch of her ham and corn chowder, a great crowd-pleasing meal.

Hilary’s Culinary Cue
When cooking any type of meat from chicken to pork, add some vegetable broth which will keep the meat moist and add great flavor.

“Eggs and mayonnaise kind of soften the heat. It doesn’t hit you at first but you taste it later,” she said.

To make these devilish eggs, Hawkinson mixes the yolks from a dozen hard boiled eggs with a cup of mayonnaise, 1/4 teaspoon ground mustard, 1/8 teaspoon sugar. She folds in six slices of bacon that have been fried crisp and crumbled along with two Serrano peppers that have been seeded and chopped. For the final touch, she adds a few drops of hot sauce.

“My favorite is Ghost Pepper,” she said. The mixture is scooped back into the egg white halves, sprinkled with paprika and turmeric and then is ready to serve.

Hawkinson has been trying to expand her culinary skills into the great outdoors since she got engaged to Jake Stott, who she calls “an adventure guy.” Last summer, the couple went canoeing in the Boundary Waters Wilderness in Minnesota.

“It is amazing how long a day becomes when you don’t have all the things you usually do in it. There were no outside lights there. No sounds from cars. It was really different,” said Hawkinson.

Although they were far from fast food, the couple ate very well. Steaks were on the menu the first night with leftover steak and eggs the next day.

They also made an interesting sausage and quinoa stew that can be completely prepared in one pot.

“It was really good and so easy to do,” said Hawkinson. The recipe calls for hard apple cider but can be made with regular apple cider.

“I have used both kale and spinach in the recipe,” she said. “Either works but kale has to be chopped really fine. I like spinach better.” The recipe makes a small amount that can feed three to four people which reduces leftovers. The recipe is also a quick and easy meal that can be made at home as well as on the trail.

Hawkinson shares her recipes for ham and corn chowder and sausage and quinoa one pot for others to try.

Judy Buchenot is a freelance writer.

Ham and Corn Chowder

Makes six to eight servings. Can be doubled.

- 2 tablespoons butter
- 3 thick-cut slices of bacon
- 1/2 cup white wine
- 1 medium yellow onion
- 2 cloves garlic
- 1 pound ham steak
- 3-4 cups water
- 3/4 teaspoons rice vinegar
- 3/4 teaspoon ground mustard
- 1/2 teaspoon sugar
- 1 tablespoon chopped fresh sage
- 1 teaspoon paprika

1. Melt the butter in a two-quart pot over medium heat. Cut bacon into small pieces and place in the pot. Cook until bacon is rendered. Add white wine and scrape bits of bacon from bottom of the pot.
2. Peel and chop onion and add to the pot. Mince or press garlic and add to the pot. Cook and stir for two to three minutes.
3. While it is cooking, cube ham and drain cans of corn. Add ham and corn and cook while stirring for two to three minutes. Cut potatoes into cubes. Add cubed potatoes, cream cheese and canned soup. Stir well.
4. Reduce heat to low. Add herbs de Provence, bullion cubes, bay leaves, salt and pepper. Stir and add enough water to get desired thickness.
5. Cover and simmer for one hour. After 30 minutes, taste and adjust seasonings. About five minutes before soup is done cooking, add cinnamon and turmeric if desired.

Sausage and Quinoa One Pot

Makes three to four servings.

- 1 pound smoked sausage or kielbasa
- 1 yellow onion
- 2 tablespoons chopped fresh sage
- 1 cup quinoa
- 1 cup hard cider
- 1/2 cup dried cranberries
- 1 teaspoon salt
- 1/4 cup water
- 2 cups chopped and packed kale or spinach

1. Cube sausage. Peel and chop onion. Place sausage, onion and sage in a large pot and cook over medium heat for 10 minutes or until lightly browned.
2. Rinse and drain quinoa. Add to pot with cider, cranberries, salt and water. Bring to a boil. Cover and reduce heat to medium low. Simmer until liquid is absorbed, about 25 to 30 minutes.
3. Stir in kale or spinach. Cover and allow to sit off heat for five minutes. Stir to fluff up mixture before serving.
When to cut family ties

Breaking up with a relative may be hard to do, but sometimes it's for the best

By Tamekia Reece
Prevention Magazine

As the song goes, breaking up is hard to do. Especially when the person you're kicking to the curb isn't a love interest or pal but a family member. Sure, we all have daydreams about finally telling off our overbearing mother-in-law or blocking an annoying aunt's phone number. But actually working up the nerve to do so? Not easy.

"Growing up, we all hear 'blood is thicker than water,' and when all else fails, you'll always have your family," which instills the message that family ties aren't supposed to be broken," says Jamye Waxman, author of "How to Break Up With Anyone: Letting Go of Friends, Family, and Everyone In-Between." Add to that, she says, women tend to get put into roles of martyr and savior, the one who is supposed to sacrifice and make peace, which makes it even more challenging to break up with a relative.

Still, sometimes saying goodbye is for the best. Stressful relationships, including those with relatives, can increase the risk of high blood pressure, weaken your immune system, cause headaches and stomachaches, lead to sleep problems, lower self-esteem, and cause depression and anxiety. So ditching that toxic family member can be good for your health (if you need another excuse). Here's what to do when you're thinking about unraveling the ties that bind.

Generally, when a family relationship ends, it's on the heels of a huge blowup - a heated argument, one too many critical remarks or a tiff over an unpaid loan. Before you write off a relative, cool down. Don't make impulsive, hasty decisions about something you'll regret, says Steven J. Hanley, a clinical psychologist in Southfield, Mich. A better choice, he says, is to take a breather, let it all sink in and then decide how you want to proceed.

If a relationship has you so stressed or angry that it's having a negative effect on other parts of your life, like your job performance or sleep habits, it may be time to walk away.

Take some time to think about why you're considering ending it. Is whatever that has pushed you to the limit something new? Or has the behavior been ongoing for a while? In addition to the downsides, are there any positives to the relationship? If so, do they outweigh the bad? Will ending the relationship with this person affect the ones you have with other family members?

Deciding if a relationship is worth keeping or not can be tough, but here are some signs that it's time to call it quits.

- There's a conflict. Any physical, verbal or emotional abuse is reason to terminate the relationship immediately. Don't worry about any possible fallout from others in the family. Your safety and well-being are what's most important.
- It's affecting other areas of your life. If the situation has you so stressed or angry that it's having a negative effect on other parts of your life, like your job performance or sleep habits, it may be time to walk away.

- Your interactions are mostly negative. All relationships have ups and downs, but if your dealings are negative more often than not - your sister criticizes you, nitpicks or starts an argument every time you're in her presence - it's time to check out.
- The relationship is one-sided. Healthy relationships are a balance of give and take. If your cousin calls only to borrow money or vent about her problems but never reciprocates, she may be using you (or not being a good friend, at least).
- It's affecting your immediate family. Hanley says if maintaining the relationship is harmful to your spouse or children - for instance, your mom clearly favors one of your children while neglecting others - you may need to take a step back for your family's sake.
- There's substance abuse or criminal behavior. Yes, family support is important when someone is battling addiction; however, that doesn't mean that you have to allow the substance abuse to have a negative impact on your own life. The same goes for any criminal behavior. Don't let a relative's misdeeds put you or your family at risk.

"Even though you may think the other person is the problem, it takes two to tango," Waxman says. Step back and look at some of your own actions too. For instance, do you always assume your dad is going to say something negative, which causes you to go on the defensive (and he, in turn, to do the same)? Or is it possible that your younger sister goes against everything you say because she feels you treat her like a child? Once you have clarity and see things you could possibly do differently, you may realize it's possible to salvage the relationship.

Sometimes, despite our best efforts, a relationship is unsalvageable or we don't want to repair it. Unless there's abuse (or you're ending things with a second cousin you only see once a year at the family reunion), you should have a conversation when giving someone the boot. Yes, it's easier to fade away, but that doesn't allow closure for either of you. Also, if you try the route where you keep saying you're busy until the person gets the hint, that can cause even more resentment to build because you may feel as though you're being forced to be, says Mark Goulston, a clinical psychiatrist and author of "Talking to Crazy: How to Deal with the Irrational and Impossible People in Your Life."

Fortunately, the "it's over" conversation doesn't have to be long or dramatic. It can be a five-minute conversation in which you say, "I've realized our actions together have not been healthy. I don't want to do this anymore," says Waxman. Answer any questions but don't get reeled back in.

If the person gets overly accusatory or starts acting crazy, don't let the situation escalate. Goulston advises saying, "Why don't we stop the conversation here." Then end it.

Breaking up with a family member can be freeing, but it also causes a lot of emotional upheaval. It's normal to feel anger, guilt, resentment and loneliness.

"You're sort of mourning the loss of someone that, presumably, you loved or felt loved by, or wanted to feel loved by, which can be very tough," Hanley says. Look for sources of support. Talk to your spouse or a trusted friend (not family members, at least) about what you're feeling or join a support group. If you're having difficulty working through the harm the relationship caused or coping with the dissolution of the relationship, Hanley recommends seeking professional help.
Your cat is a lot deeper than you think

By Karin Bruillard
The Washington Post

What's better than an online personality test? An online cat personality test.

Researchers in Australia are now administering them, and they've found something interesting: Cats are not too different from us.

Many psychologists subscribe to the theory that all people have five broad personality traits, known as the “Big Five”: extroversion, agreeableness, openness to experience, conscientiousness and neuroticism. And cats, the team at the University of South Australia has found, have their own Big Five.

They drew this conclusion after administering personality tests to about 2,800 domestic cats in Australia and New Zealand. Needless to say, the tests were completed by the felines' owners, who ranked their pets on a scale of 1 to 7 for each of 52 behaviors and traits, including “clumsy,” “reckless” and “vocal.”

By aggregating the responses about those micro-traits, a computer analysis revealed five broad feline personality dimensions, and it gave the cats scores for each one. Three of the “Feline Five” traits correspond to those in humans, said Philip Roetman, who leads “citizen science” projects for the university, including the cat research.

Here are the Feline Five:

**Skittishness:** This one's akin to neuroticism in people. Cats that earned high skittishness scores are more anxious and fearful; calm and trusting cats had low scores.

**Outgoingness:** This is the equivalent of extroversion in humans. Highly outgoing cats are curious and active; those with low scores are aimless and “quitting” according to the test.

**Dominance:** This one belongs just to felines. Cats that are bullying and aggressive to their peers got high scores; cats that are friendly and submissive to other felines scored low.

**Spontaneity:** Another one that's cat-specific. High scores indicate impulsive, erratic cats; low scores went to predictable, constrained cats.

**Friendliness:** This is akin to agreeableness in people. Highly friendly cats tend to be affectionate, while those with low scores are solitary and irritable.

Previous research using feline personality tests focused on wild and shelter cats, but the Australia study is the first to analyze personality test results from a large number of domestic cats. Most of the participants fell somewhere in the middle for each trait, Roetman said.

Older cats tended to be slightly more dominant and less outgoing than younger ones, Roetman said. But there were no significant variations between genders, or between cats in New Zealand and Australia.

And most important to Roetman, the results revealed no major personality differences between indoor and outdoor cats. He said that finding could be helpful in cat “management,” which is a huge topic in Australia, where politicians have declared “war” on the predatory feral cats they accuse of driving out native species.

Some Australians worry that keeping their cats inside will negatively affect their personalities, Roetman said. But most cats rank as typical whether they’re behind closed doors or roaming the streets, which is “really good news for people who keep their cats indoors,” he said. “The research suggests that it’s actually OK to cats.”

Cat owners received charts showing where their cat fell on the spectrum for each trait and suggestions about how to interpret them. Highly skittish cats would benefit from hiding spots at home, it might note, and cats with low spontaneity scores “may enjoy routine.”

“What I've found talking to cat owners about these results is that they intuitively make sense,” Roetman said.

The study is only open to cats in South Australia at the moment. But there's good news for U.S. cat lovers who like online personality tests (and we assume there must be a decent overlap): Researchers in North Carolina are planning to expand the study to include American cats, Roetman said.

Highly outgoing cats are curious and active according to an Australian study that identified five feline traits.

Catarina is everything you could ask for in an office assistant. She greets people when they walk in, checks over your emails, and will even answer the phone! She is generally pretty calm, but when the mood strikes, she likes to chase little mouse toys. Catarina doesn’t mind some other cats, but is not a big fan of dogs. Children in her new home should be at least 8 years old.

For more information, visit Catarina at the Naperville Area Humane Society or online at napervilleareahumanesociety.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
Dear Help Squad,

I am another customer of Rosen (now Muller) Honda who was told I would get a reimbursement of my service contract (purchased in July 2009 when I purchased the car) if I did not use it. I called in May 2015 and someone told me they would get back with me, however I have not heard anything. Now I am told that they are not responsible. My contract was for 72 months, 75,000 miles. I have 23,700 miles. I paid $1,100 for this contract.

I faxed the contract and the letter verifying I did not (use) the warranty to (attorney) Steve Bloomberg (Rosen's registered agent). He stated I did not have the paper that said the warranty would be refunded, so he may not be able to refund my money. I couldn't find that letter, however. I have been duped and purchased a warranty under false pretenses for $1,100. Oswald, Mundelein

I received the above correspondence from Oswald in November 2015. Over the course of three months, Oswald (without my involvement) provided documentation each time Bloom once requested it. Unfortunately, the one piece he was missing was the signed Purchase Price Reimbursement Guarantee (evidence of which, ironically, is not listed as one of the five requirements for obtaining a refund). When it became clear that Rosen was not going to provide Oswald his refund, I decided to reach out to Bloomberg directly.

In response to my inquiry, Bloomberg informed me: “I requested that a former employee of my client (Rosen Motor Sales) search the files of prior vehicle sales and was advised that they could not locate this particular file. I have no explanation as to why…”

Five days later, following several email exchanges, Bloomberg concluded: “Without the written contract as to reimbursement, no payment will be made.” At that point, I reached out to Zeigler Auto Group CFO Dan Scheid, with whom I had spoken about a separate Rosen reimbursement quagmire in October. Zeigler purchased Rosen’s Gurnee Nissan dealership in September 2014.

Said Scheid: “I believe we covered one that we are still chasing Rosen for. I’m not surprised (Muller is) having issues for the same reasons we had issues with Rosen.”

Shortly thereafter, Bloomberg called to say: “(When you publicized the issue concerning Rosen, it could have created a lot of people wanting this reimbursement … and I have to be diligent on behalf of my client).” Granted, this was possible. (Why some customers were offered reimbursement guarantees while others were not is another question.) In this particular case, however, Bloomberg’s argument didn’t hold water.

Oswald began contacting the former Rosen Honda a full five months before anything appeared in Help Squad, and he was clearly aware of the guarantee’s terms at that time. This seemed to point to two possibilities: 1) The salesperson provided Oswald the Purchase Price Reimbursement Guarantee – a signed copy of which would be in Rosen’s files, or 2) Oswald was orally informed he would get his money back if he bought the service contract and didn’t use it. Either way, there would have been no reason for Oswald to decline the offer.

Bloomberg admitted it was possible Oswald had been orally presented the guarantee, stating: “This is a fraud action. This is not a contract action… (Oswald) can pursue any legal remedy he wishes.”

Lessons learned: 1) Always get it in writing. 2) Service contracts on new cars can be redundant to manufacturer’s warranties and should be considered relative to the manufacturer’s warranty.

Need help? Send your questions, complaints, injustices and column ideas to HelpSquad@pioneerlocal.com.

Cathy Cunningham is a freelance columnist for Pioneer Press.

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Northwestern University School of Law - 375 East Chicago Ave - Chicago

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Not in God's Name: Confronting Religious Violence
By Rabbi Jonathan Sacks, Schocken, 320 pages, $28.95

"When religion turns men into murderers, God weeps."

So begins this urgent and authoritative exploration of the roots of religious violence from Rabbi Jonathan Sacks, one of the world's great contemporary theologians, chief rabbi of the United Hebrew Congregations of the Commonwealth from 1991 to 2013.

From Sacks' first gut-wrenching sentence, the reader has a solid sense that what follows are the deeply thought, carefully weighed words of an impeccable scholar. His reading of the Hebrew Bible is astute, illuminating layers of meaning too often missed.

Sacks traces the secularization of the last four centuries and lays bare the misreadings of the Bible that have led not only to the horrors of anti-Semitism and the Holocaust, but to atrocities across the globe, all fought blasphemously — and sinfully — in the name of God.

What will save us, writes Sacks, is a Theology of the Other, the extraordinary exercise of empathy that allows humans to imagine how it is to be the Stranger, the Victim, the Disenfranchised. Could there be a more urgent imperative than to begin to understand Sacks' definition of faith, "God's call to see his trace in the face of the Other"?

It's not every day that the reader can so deeply trust the scholarship of the trail guide. Sacks is a clear-eyed and compelling illuminator, and his is a methodical deconstruction that routs out flawed understandings of the Bible, one that drives us emphatically toward hope, toward a theology that lets go of hate.

"It is our task," Sacks writes, "to be a blessing to the world." And then he points the way.

Felicity: Poems
By Mary Oliver, Penguin, 96 pages, $24.95

If you, like Emily Dickinson, for instance, find your religion in plain-spoken words that emerge from the everyday, then Mary Oliver's latest collection of poetry, titled simply "Felicity," might knock you to your knees, or make your reading nook feel suddenly like a prayer pew.

There's this line a few pages in, at the bottom of a poem titled, "Moments":

"There is nothing more pathetic than caution / when headlong might save a life, / even, possibly, your own."

Or this, from "The World I Live In":

"I'll just / tell you this: / only if there are angels in your head will you / ever, possibly, see one."

And this, from "Leaves and Blossoms Along the Way":

"God, or the gods, are invisible, quite / understandable. But holiness is visible, / entirely." Oliver might be called "America's best-selling poet," but there's power in her accessibility and in her capacity to draw the reader into her meditative practice of paying attention, seeing the sacred and revealing the otherwise overlooked. Hers is the poetry — and prayer — of life lived through a lens that sees what most of us miss. And therein lies what makes her work's holiness visible, entirely.

NEW IN PAPERBACK

Dead Wake: The Last Crossing of the Lusitania
By Erik Larson, Broadway, 454 pages, $17

Larson details the events leading up to the May 7, 1915, sinking of the Lusitania as it embarked on a New York-to-Liverpool journey, switching narratives between the British luxury liner captained by William Thomas Turner and the German Unterseeboot-20 captained by Walter Schwieger. Larson reveals also how British intelligence secretly tracked the U-20 but told no one.

The Reason I Jump
By Naoki Higashida, translated by K.A. Yoshida and David Mitchell, 167 pages, $15

Subtitled "The Inner Voice of a Thirteen-Year-Old Boy with Autism," "The Reason I Jump" is a memoir written by a Japanese boy who was diagnosed with autism at age 5, giving an insight into the way the mind of an autistic child thinks, feels and responds to situations.

Sweet as Sin
By Susan Benjamin, Prometheus, 320 pages, $18

Benjamin details the history of candy, reaching as far back as the ancient Egyptian har- vesting of the marshmallow plant to the modern, mass-produced and niche candy of today. Benjamin offers fun facts throughout the history of candy, such as the many uses of chocolate and the invention of the chewing gum industry.

— Jeremy Mikula
Wise Women: Reaching the same conclusions

BY S.N. | Edited by Stanley Newman

Across
1 Measure off
6 "Show Me" (15 Across tune)
11 Pastel shade
15 Swedish singing group
19 Present one's case
20 Sci-fi staple
21 Winning streaks
22 Sheltered waters
23 Victorian Era actress
25 Pop singer superstar
27 Remarks
28 Tenth of a thou
29 Conditional release
30 Essence of some sushi
31 Moves a bit
32 Diamond tactic
33 Pressing
35 Eliot Ness nemesis
36 Not overly vocal
39 Ten times CCV
41 Nautical course
42 Gondolas' routes
43 Tenor saxophone
44 Throw off nautical course
45 Ten times CCV
49 Enticement
50 Term of endearment
53 Stewart's Daily
55 Groundbreaker
57 Matches
58 Person in servitude
59 Letters on tachs
60 One of the environmental Three R's
61 Talk nonstop

62 Every other hurricane
63 "Goldfinger" singer
65 Whopper of a tale
66 NL West team
67 Casual shirts
68 At an angle
69 Bunch of buffaloes
70 Bylaw, for short
71 Storage rental
72 __ Adventures in Wonderland
73 Bygone bird
74 Big name in eggs
75 Hilary Swank biopic
76 Mythical river
77 Speak to sharply
78 Danced at Carnival, quite possibly
79 Cherbourg's region
80 Wasa sub at the office
81 Back to the Future moment
82 Modest comment
83 1993 Peace Nobelist
84 Half a figure eight
85 Far from convinced
86 Had a conference
87 Contingency measure
88 Church's region
89-be-coming
90 Pedometer
91 Prez on a penny
92 Biblical preposition
93__To the Future hero
94 Before now
95 Unconcerned
96 Scotia's__Castle
discount
97 Hungarian__
98 Lager descriptor
99__Ancestor of "D'oh!"
100__American Buffalo playwright

60 Bad, as butter
63 Egg on
64 "Greatest Show" surname
69 Multitude
72 Lager descriptor
73 Two-fisted
75 Member of the board
76 February birthstone
77 Hungarian composer
78 Brewery product
79 See 83 Down
80 With 82 Down, Sondheim revue
83__Persian ruler
85 Old photo tints
86 Dollywood host
87__Composer of "My Heart Will Go On"
91__The__Highwayman" poet
92__Rotoliller part
96__Visibly amazed
97__Ancestor of "D'oh!"
98__Hearty enjoyment
99__Drunken beer
100__Peering pair
101__Drizzly
102__Putin's 1980s employer
103__Tolkien creature

Last week's answers appear on the last page of Puzzle Island

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Quote-Acrostic

1. Define clues, writing in Words column over numbered dashes.
2. Transfer letters to numbered squares in diagram.
3. When pattern is completed, quotation can be read left to right. The first letters of the filled-in words reading down form an acrostic yielding the speaker's name and the topic of the quotation.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Clues</th>
<th>Words</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A. Verbally</td>
<td>119 24 90 79 111 136 60</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B. &quot;That's too</td>
<td>17 105 133 64</td>
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<tr>
<td>C. Forgetful</td>
<td>29 145 21 129 94 137 77</td>
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<tr>
<td>D. Precede in</td>
<td>130 110 16 2 49 161 139 101</td>
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<tr>
<td>E. Bitter</td>
<td>61 153 131 38 121</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>F. Wallow</td>
<td>86 98 56 154 67 6 141 34</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>G. Jackie</td>
<td>123 150 12 134 28 51</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Robinson of</td>
<td>46 155 104 76 4 95</td>
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<tr>
<td>H. Requisite</td>
<td>118 109 81 8 152 53 36</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I. Common DC</td>
<td>80 116 126 18 42 7 146 96</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

J. Brawl        20 59 87 72 127 157
K. Cinch; 2 wds. 163 128 33 78 26 112 14 93
L. Overview     99 32 84 70 122 45 135 155 166
M. Shawnee chief 10 22 107 44 35 124 54 140
N. Track for    50 13 156 40 132 92 120 1 31
O. Baseball's   58 142 23 41 82 66 100
P. Supervised   91 11 57 74 39 151 138 48
Q. Hardly       102 47 63 149 80 25 117 160
R. Novice       85 19 5 15 37 143 97 164 71 115
S. Unity        43 68 62 162 75 103 144
T. Crude and     69 108 88 52 113 148 158 27
rough          U. Indian          147 125 65
Ocean          30 114 73 89 55 159 9
islands         |

Last week's answers appear on the last page of Puzzle Island

Famous Figures

BY CHARLES PRESTON

Across
1  Watery defense
5  Weight unit
10 Booted
14 ___ mater
15 Electrical terminal
16 Popular sandwich
17 Famous Italian
20 Actress Myrna
21 Track event
22 Poker stakes
23 Dowries
24 River deposit
26 Watery
29 Natural resources
32 Oriental prince: var.
33 TV test film
34 Mutineer
36 Building beam
37 Large couch
38 Element
39 Conducted
40 Silver seeker
41 Desire
42 Portrays
44 Swiss abode
45 Pub orders
46 Close

24 ___ system
25 Shackle
26 Leave the harbor
27 Imprint in the memory
28 English novelist
29 Basketball teams
30 ___ by combat
31 Play tennis
33 Capacity units
35 Vegetable
37 Decorated cubes
40 ___ the Pooh
creator
41 Agitate violently
43 Louisiana county
44 Carriage
46 Small amounts
47 LA's health hazard
48 Biblical miracle village
49 Miracles
50 Hollywood notable
51 Greek portico
52 At the summit
53 Diamonds
55 Behind
56 Born
57 Hardwood

Down
1 Shopping center
2 Bread spread
3 Chinese island
4 Color
5 Proofreading marks
6 Mighty mountains
7 Square
8 Do arithmetic
9 Beverage
10 Limits
11 Search
12 Formerly
13 Platform
18 French love
19 Butler
23 Active person

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March madness not the only thing driving people mad

I don't know too many men who seemingly aren't spending every free minute they have these days watching the NCAA tournament. Putting aside the fact that early upsets messed up anyone's chance to win their bracket contests and pools, the games really are exciting and fun to watch.

But some women say March Madness is driving them mad! The idea for this column stemmed from a friend of mine who told me she is tired of cleaning up pizza boxes, bags of chips and beer cans from her living room, and that the NCAA tournament is maddeningly frustrating.

I asked a few hundred men and women on social media: What drives you mad about your spouse? Now remember, something really wonderful can cause madness, too, which is why I specifically added that it can be positive or negative.

In honor of the NCAA Sweet 16, here are 16 responses I got:

1. The thing that drives me crazy about my spouse is that I get more respect in daily conversations with good friends than with him. The derisive attitude can be a negative in a marriage. It's easy to be less than respectful to a spouse but it takes toll on the relationship.

2. She makes me handle all difficult conversations, confrontations and negotiations, even though research shows women get better results in almost all of these situations (except for car repairs).

3. He is so, so messy! He leaves clothes everywhere and is a borderline hoarder. But, he is also very loving and a great parent.

4. It's maddening when you get mad at your spouse and then they turn around and get angry with you for being mad. WTF?

5. She has bad personal hygiene and smokes.

6. She overreacts to conversations and we end up in a fight. It's almost always over nothing.

7. He always gets up a few minutes before I do, so when I get up and go into the bathroom to brush my teeth, he has my toothbrush laid out for me with the toothpaste already on it. It is a daily reminder of what a thoughtful person he truly is.

8. She blames me for lack of sex when it's really her who always says she's not in the mood.

9. My wife never dresses, does her hair or wears makeup when we go out. When I mention it, she just says, "We've been married for over 30 years. Too bad!"

10. He seems to believe that toilet tissue and paper towels replenish themselves.

11. She always says or does what she thinks is expected of her instead of being honest about what she wants.

12. His chest hair is so sexy that every time I see him without a shirt on, I go crazy.

13. It's the way he treats our daughters. He spoils them in a good way that hopefully will give them a high standard and great understanding of how a boyfriend/husband should treat them.

14. She thinks I know what she is thinking without telling me, like I'm a mind reader.

15. She blames me over and over. She says she will forgive and forget, but it never happens.

16. My boyfriend is a good man. He is the kindest and best human being I have ever known.

What I found disturbing was, with almost 100 responses there were only a few positive comments. Does that mean that in long-term relationships, people drive each other crazy? Maybe. That said, a little madness doesn't mean the relationship isn't working or that the couple isn't happy.

What most people don't realize is if you care enough to open the lines of communication, you might be surprised at what your spouse is willing to change.

The key to successful communication is in the delivery. No. I might change her situation by sitting her husband down and with calm and kindness in her voice, say, “I love you and I appreciate you, but sometimes you don't talk to me with the respect I feel. I deserve and it is upsetting. It makes me sad and frustrated, and I am hurting.”

No. 6 is failing to realize that maybe his wife's issues aren't a big deal for him, but they are significant to her. With more open-mindedness, their fights might become more infrequent.

I can't resist telling Nos. 7, 13 and 16 that they are with keepers! In other words, their relationships sound like slam dunks.

Jackie Pilossoph is a freelance columnist for Pioneer Press.
Sleep laboratory testing can reveal sleep apnea

A man sleeps wearing a sleep apnea mask.

Dr. Anthony Komaroff
Ask Doctor K

Dear Doctor K: My doctor thinks I may have sleep apnea, and he wants me to go to a sleep lab to be tested. What will happen during the testing?

Dear Reader: Sleep apnea is a serious health condition in which breathing stops or becomes shallower. In the most common form, obstructive sleep apnea, the tongue or throat tissues temporarily and repeatedly block the flow of air in and out of your lungs. This can happen hundreds of times each night. Laboratory sleep tests are the most reliable way to diagnose this problem.

When you spend the night in a sleep laboratory, you'll wear your own nighttime clothes, and you can use a pillow from home. You can take your regular medications, but the clinicians will need to know what they are. The lab usually provides a regular bed in a private room with a bathroom attached. The room is kept as quiet as possible.

A technician will first set up the sleep-monitoring equipment. Then you'll be left alone to relax until bedtime. Throughout the night, laboratory staff will monitor you from a nearby control room. Procedures used to diagnose sleep apnea usually include a test called polysomnography, as well as audio and video recording.

Polysomnography: In this procedure, small electrodes and other sensors are pasted on specific parts of your body to take a variety of readings during the night. Some things they may track include your brain waves, muscle tension, eye movements, airflow, heart rate and rhythm, breathing, and the amount of oxygen in your blood.

The readings are collected on a printout called a polysomnogram. This is analyzed by a technician and physician.

If a breathing problem is detected early on during testing, you may be awakened and given treatment during the second half of the night. This allows the sleep experts to monitor how well the treatment works for you. Sometimes this process requires two nights.

Audio and video recording: Audio equipment may be used to record snoring, talking during sleep or other sounds. A video may also be taken to compare with the polysomnogram.

This may show, for example, that you snore (a sign of sleep apnea) only when in a certain position, as when you're lying on your back instead of on your side or stomach.

The American Academy of Sleep Medicine has a listing of more than 2,500 accredited sleep disorder centers and more than 5,600 board-certified sleep specialists. Staying overnight in a sleep laboratory usually costs between $800 and $1,500. In advance of the test, ask your health insurance company if it will pay for the test. Reimbursement varies, and may depend on your diagnosis.

If not properly diagnosed and treated, sleep apnea can cause problems with a person's mood and ability to think clearly. These, in turn, can cause serious problems both at work and at home. In addition, by interrupting your sleep, sleep apnea may increase the risk of obesity, diabetes and other diseases.

Sleep laboratory testing is a painless procedure, and I wouldn't hesitate to have the testing done.

Dr. Komaroff is a physician and professor at Harvard Medical School. To send questions, go to AskDoctorK.com, or write: Ask Doctor K, 10 Shattuck St., Second Floor, Boston, MA 02118.
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**Growing trend:**

**Hot plants for 2016**

By Beth Botts
Tribune Newpapers

Gotta have it! That's what many gardeners say when they see the word “new” on a plant. And that's why breeders introduce so many varieties each year.

There's no guarantee that a new plant is better; it may just be an excuse to label something “new.” Still, it’s fun to try a new plant or two every year. It’s always possible that you’ll be one of the first to grow a plant that turns out to be a classic.

Here are some promising new plants for 2016 (or maybe new-to-you plants or plants that make for good news). Some of these plants will be widely available in garden centers and online; others are just breaking into the market. It's not possible for us to know which plants retailers will be selling this spring. So if you see a plant you've just got to have, ask at your local garden center if it's going to be available there or if you can order it.

Beth Botts is a freelance writer.

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**Big Bloomer**

'Berry Awesome' hybrid rose mallow (Hibiscus x 'Berry Awesome') is a shrub that will light up a garden all summer long with huge lavender-pink ruffled flowers the size of salad plates. Though the blooms look tropical, the 4-foot-tall upright shrub is a hybrid derived from North American species. It will need full sun. Shrub, Zones 4 to 9; from the Spring Meadow Nursery Summerific series and introduced by Proven Winners (provenwinners.com).

**Monarch News**

The delightful news this spring is that monarch butterfly populations are starting to increase after years of decline. They depend on native milkweeds for their annual migration, so while we enjoy new plants, let’s keep planting species such as common milkweed (Asclepias syriaca), butterfly weed (Asclepias tuberosa) and swamp milkweed (Asclepias incarnata). Milkweeds feed monarch caterpillars and provide nectar to many kinds of butterflies.

---

If you're up to try something new, why not try this cabbage relative? It's odd enough to be edgy, but really quite delicious. 'Konan' kohlrabi is a new hybrid variety from Bejo Seeds, with a fat, bulbous stem that grows up to 6 inches in diameter and upright foliage. It would be dramatic in a container, and the bulb can be sliced thinly for salads or cooked. Cool-season annual; 'Konan' is a 2016 winner in the All-America Selections trial program (all-americaselections.org).

Peachy Keen shrub rose (Rose 'Radgor') will have pink blooms with yellow centers from late spring until frost on a mounded 3-foot-tall plant. From Bill Radler of Milwaukee, who also bred the Knock Out rose, it has proved to have outstanding disease resistance. Shrub, zones 5 to 8; introduced by Star Roses and Plants (starrosesandplants.com).

A new ornamental onion, Allium x 'Windy City', has whimsical lavender balls of bloom in summer. It's a compact plant for full sun, just 15 to 18 inches high, and like other alliums it’s drought tolerant and deer resistant. It has a burdensome trademark name: Sweet Alliums Lavender Lollipop ornamental onion. Perennial, zones 4 to 9; introduced by breeder Brent Horvath of Intrinsic Perennial Gardens and released through HGTV Home Gardens (hgtvhomeplants.com).

The Baby Boomer hybrid tomato (Solanum lycopersicum 'Baby Boomer') is a new hybrid variety bred to have an extra-large crop of cherry tomatoes. It’s a determinant variety, so it will bear all its fruits over a period of a few weeks. More bushy than viney, it would be a good plant for a large container, but still will require caging. Tender annual, available from Burpee Home gardens (burpee.com).

---

Old plants can be treasures too. For example, consider planting Mexican tuberose (Polianthes tuberosa) in a container this year. It was domesticated by the Aztecs and introduced to Europe in 1530; now it's believed to be extinct in the wild, surviving only in gardens. The plants will grow stalks up to 6 feet tall topped with fragrant, exotic white blooms. Plan to pot up the tubers and give them several weeks' head start indoors before moving them outdoors in late May. Tender bulb; from Old House gardens (oldhousegardens.com).

Perfect for a container or a small garden, this is an extra-compact hybrid version of coneflower, with abundant flowers over a long season. The blooms are the color of orange sherbet when they open and age to raspberry pink. Perennial, zones 4 to 9; introduced by Plants Nouveau (plantsnouveau.com) and available from Jung Seed (jungseed.com).
Address: 1034 Pontiac Rd. in Wilmette
Asking price: $1,200,000
Listed on Feb. 27, 2016

This all-brick home has 4+ bedrooms, 4.1 baths and is situated on a tree-lined street in Indian Hill. Enter through courtyard and foyer to a large formal living room, formal sunlit dining room, expansive cook's kitchen with island, adjacent family room with fireplace and private, rear yard. The second floor offers three new bedrooms including a master suite with walk-in closet, sitting room and cathedral ceiling in quiet master bedroom. Third-floor retreat has office area or optional 5th bedroom. Finished basement, fenced-in yard and 2-car garage.

Agent: Frank Capitanini of Coldwell Banker Residential, 847-652-2312

At press time, this home was still available for sale.
We know your favorite spot better than your spouse

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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ADDRESS</th>
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<td>Adrian Soltsev &amp; Lula Soltsev</td>
<td>FirstMerit Bank Na</td>
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<td>100 N Heritage Dr, Arlington Heights</td>
<td>James K Upshaw</td>
<td>Weiss Trust</td>
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<td>Michael E Hill &amp; Emily Hill</td>
<td>Arlp Beo &amp; Llc</td>
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This list is not intended to be a complete record of all real estate transactions.
LIBERTYVILLE

Three bedrooms, 2.5 baths. Living room features bay window with adjacent dining room. Eat-in kitchen overlooks family room, wood-burning fireplace, sliders to patio and backyard, most of which is fenced. Large outdoor shed. Located in High School District 128. Near shopping, restaurants, schools and main transportation arteries.

Address: 1030 Rosewood Terrace
Price: $320,000
Schools: Libertyville High School
Taxes: $9,036
Agent: Linda Vyborny/Coldwell Banker Residential Brokerage Libertyville

VERNON HILLS

Four bedrooms, 2.5 baths. Hardwood flooring, custom millwork, updated bathrooms and kitchen with cabinetry with crown uppers, granite counters, stainless steel appliances and sliding glass door leading to the patio. Lower level includes a family room, laundry room and a door leading to the attached garage. New roof, furnace, windows, hot water tank, siding, appliances, washer & dryer.

Address: 10 Bedford Drive
Price: $389,000
Schools: Vernon Hills High School
Taxes: $7,752
Agent: Leslie McDonnell/RE/MAX Suburban

WINNETKA

Four bedrooms, 2.5 baths. Move-in ready home with recent kitchen renovation including Amish cabinets. First floor has flexible floor plan. Kitchen opens up to either dining or family room. Fenced yard, two-car brick garage. Near lake, train, park, playground and downtown shopping.

Address: 256 Woodlawn Ave.
Price: $929,000
Schools: New Trier Township High School Winnetka
Taxes: $13,390
Agent: Caponi And Karabas Team/Coldwell Banker Residential Brokerage Winnetka

ARLINGTON HEIGHTS

Three bedroom, 2.5 baths. Updated kitchen with stainless steel appliances, hardwood countertops, walk-in pantry, island and breakfast bar. Full basement, private backyard with custom brick paver patio. Close to restaurants, shopping, schools, train and parks.

Address: 110 S. Belmont Ave.
Price: $499,925
Schools: Prospect High School
Taxes: $7,741
Agent: Maria Del Boccio/Coldwell Banker Residential Brokerage

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Thursday, March 31

Shemekia Copeland: 8 p.m., Thursday, SPACE, 1245 Chicago Ave., Evanston, $22-$42, 847-492-8860

Project Space: Curatorial Vision Series: The Art Center invites three curatorial practice students from the School of the Art Institute to present an exhibition and public programming that engages audiences in meaningful ways while fostering the Art Center's relationship to its community. Young curators are selected during the spring/summer of 2015. 10 a.m. Daily, Evanston Art Center, 177 Central St., Evanston, free, 847-475-5300

Connecting Cultures: 40 Years at the Mitchell Museum: The exhibit celebrates four decades of thought-provoking exhibits, lectures and performances through photographs and memorabilia. There is also a dazzling display of 45 objects donated by key collectors and Native artists who have presented at the museum. 10 a.m. Daily, Mitchell Museum of the American Indian, 2001 Central St., Evanston, $3 children, seniors; $5 adults; Tribal Members Free, 847-475-1030

Matisyahu in Concert and Conversation: An acoustic musical performance by acclaimed, Grammy-nominated Reggae, hip-hop and rock artist Matisyahu and a discussion about his artistic and Jewish journeys. 7 p.m. Thursday, Pick-Staiger Concert Hall, Northwestern University, 50 Arts Circle Drive, Evanston, Public $10, NU student, $5, 847-467-4000

Arcadia: 7:30 p.m., Thursday, Friday and Tuesday and Wednesday, 3 and 7:30 p.m., Saturday; 2 and 6 p.m. Sunday, Writers Theater, 325 Tudor Court, Glencoe, $35-$70, 847-242-6000

Proof: The story is about Catherine, a troubled young woman, who has spent years caring for her brilliant but unstable father, a famous mathematician. How much of her father's madness or genius will she inherit? 8 p.m. Thursday-Saturday, 3 p.m. Sunday, Olive Lamp Theater, 1723 Glenview Road, Glenview, $35, 847-834-0738

Spring Break Make-It and Take-It: Children, with parents or caregivers, are invited to stop by to create a travel-inspired craft to take home. 10 a.m. Thursday, Glenview Public Library, 1930 Glenview Road, Glenview, free, 847-729-7500

Internet Essentials: Learn about browsers, search engines, basic vocabulary, searching strategies and finding your way around a website in this hands-on class. A Glenview Library card is required to register by calling or going to the website. 2 p.m. Thursday, Glenview Public Library, 1930 Glenview Road, Glenview, free, 847-729-7500

A New Slant on the Old West: Karen Barrie, artist, blends her artistic talents and professional training into a multifaceted career as an author, freelance writer and healthcare consultant. Karen's western series is inspired by girlhood TV Westerns and grown-up cowgirl days on ranch vacations. 9 a.m. Daily, Glenview Public Library, 1930 Glenview Road, Glenview, free, 847-729-7500

Adult literacy classes: spring session: For native and non-native English speakers to improve their reading and writing skills. A small, friendly group led by a teacher and volunteer tutors. 9:30 a.m. Thursday and Tuesday, Glenview Public Library, 1930 Glenview Road, Glenview, free, 847-729-7500

Spring Break Craft Closet Blowout (grades K-8): Please...we need your help to clean out the craft supply closet and cabinets. Bring your creativity and see what you can make out with the assorted supplies and different materials... 7 p.m. Thursday, Glenview Public Library, 1930 Glenview Road, Glenview, free, 847-729-7500

Introduction to Word 2010: This is a hands-on workshop to format, proof, print and save documents. The prerequisite is that attendees must be experienced and comfortable with computer, keyboard and mouse. 7 p.m. Thursday, Morton Grove Public Library, 6140 Lincoln Ave., Morton Grove, free, 847-929-5090

Family Film: Labyrinth: The movie is about 15-year-old Sarah, who must reach the center of an enormous, otherworldly maze to rescue her infant brother who has been kidnapped by Jareth, the Goblin King. The cast includes: David Bowie and Jennifer Connelly. 2 p.m. Thursday, Morton Grove Public Library, 6140 Lincoln Ave., Morton Grove, free, 847-929-5090

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.

Thursday and Tuesday, Niles Public Library, 6960 W. Oakton St., Niles, free, 847-663-1234

Super sweet science: Find out what makes sour candy so sour, analyze the colors that make candies bright, harness the gassy power of Pop Rocks and more. 2 p.m. Thursday, Niles Public Library, 6960 W. Oakton St., Niles, free, 847-663-1234

Crafternoons: We'll be making recycled T-shirt crafts and friendship bracelets. For grades 3-8. 2 p.m. Thursday, Northbrook Public Library, 1201 Cedar Lane, Northbrook, free, 847-272-6224

Wee Play (Birth to 24 Months): Music, rhymes, giggles and books for the caregiver and baby. 10 and 11 a.m. Thursday, Northbrook Public Library, 1201 Cedar Lane, Northbrook, free, 847-272-6224

Total Memory Workout: This is a unique and innovative educational series designed to enhance every day memory in cognitively intact adults of all ages... 6:30 p.m. Thursday, Bernard Weinger JCC, 300 Revere Drive, Northbrook, $59 for six weeks, 224-406-9257

Tai Chi: Practice the ancient, healing art of Tai Chi, which is the practice of controlled, relaxed body movements... 10 a.m. Thursday, North Shore Senior Center, 161 Northfield Road, Northfield, $75 NSSC members; $89 non-members, 847-784-6030

Poetry Sharing Circle: Do you enjoy poetry? This small group reads poetry aloud, sharing poems each has written as well as published poems and is open to poets of all skill levels. Center membership is required to participate. 1 p.m. Thursday, North Shore Senior Center, 161 Northfield Road, Northfield, free, 847-784-6030

The New American Political Map: This workshop delves into the political map of the American region, offering a unique perspective on the diverse political landscape found within the United States. 1 p.m. Thursday, Bernard Weinger JCC, 300 Revere Drive, Northbrook, $59 for six weeks, 224-406-9257

Apple's iPad: An Overview: Find out how to organize your iPad and use basic apps for browsing, email, calendars, books, photos and more. Discover what applications (apps) are standard and learn how to download both free or fee-based apps using your wireless connection. 1 p.m. Thursday, North Shore Senior Center, 161 Northfield Road, Northfield, $25 member, $30 non-member, 847-784-6030

Queen Elizabeth II: Rarely granting interviews, Queen Elizabeth is a symbol, a paradox, a mystery and a source of great pride for many in Great Britain. Barry sheds light on her public achievements as well as her private character. 1 p.m., Thursday, North Shore Senior Center, 161 Northfield Road, Northfield, $10 member, $13 non-member, 847-784-6030

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. Thursday, Park Ridge Community Church, 100 S. Courtland Ave., Park Ridge, free, 847-823-3164

Silver Screen 101: For those who would like to make a movie, come join this class, where participants come away with a three to five minute short film project. Learn what a writer, a director, a director of photography and many other key positions contribute to the movie making process. 6 p.m. Thursday, Park Ridge Park District-Centennial Activity Center, 100 S. Western Ave., Park Ridge, $100, 847-692-3597

Legends of Laughter II: The Comedy Teams Film Series: This 10-film series showcases the great movie comedy teams of the 1930s, '40s and '50s. 7 p.m. Thursday, Park Ridge Public Library, 20 S. Prospect Ave., Park Ridge, free, 847-720-3209

Free Movie: Woman In Gold: This is the true story of a woman's fight to regain art stolen from her family by the Nazis. The movie is open to the public and free popcorn is always available. Featuring the award-winning Helen Mirren, as Maria Altman, the movie tells the step-by-step legal effort to regain the famous "Portrait of Adele Bloch-Bauer." 7:30 p.m. Thursday, Ezra Habonim, The Niles Township Jewish Congregation, 4500 Dempster St., Skokie, free, 847-675-4141

Butler: 7:30 p.m., Thursday, 8 p.m. Friday, 2:30 and 6 p.m. Saturday, 2:30

Turn to Calendar, Next Page
Equipment Auction
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Friday, April 1

Chicago Doo Wop Dreams: Music, Chicago, Live brings their hit show “Chicago Doo Wop Dreams” to the historic Leela Arts Center in Des Plaines for a limited run beginning Friday, Feb. 19, 7:30 p.m. Friday, Leela Arts Center, 620 Lee St., Des Plaines. Tickets are $15 to $25, 800-888-3066

Aolfe O’Donovan: 8 p.m. Friday, SPACE, 1245 Chicago Ave., Evanston, $15-$30, 847-492-8860

Opera Idol "Junior" Competition: Opera Idol "Junior" invites young, aspiring singers to showcase their talent and compete for a $500 scholarship to apply toward tuition for the CAMP VOICE for Teens, directed by opera star Sherrill Milnes, or toward continued vocal studies of winner's choosing. 7:30 p.m. Friday, The Merion, 1611 Chicago Ave., Evanston, free, 847-570-7895

The Misanthrope: With its fierce argument between conformity and non-conformity, Moliere's masterpiece is reworked in this blistering contemporary version by Martin Crimp. Set in modern London, the writing is cool sharp and ferociously funny as the world of theatre is scrutinized. 8 p.m. Friday-Saturday, 3 p.m. Sunday, Piccolo Theatre, 600 Main St., Evanston, $15-$27, 847-424-0089

Glenview Credit Union's Money Jar Guessing Game: Test your Money Smart skills at the Youth Services Desk by guessing how many pennies are in the jar. The closest guess, without going over, wins it all. 9 a.m. Friday, Glenview Public Library, 1930 Glenview Road, Glenview, free, 847-729-7500

Pixeilated Self-Portraits Grades K-8: Create an 8-bit version of yourself. 1 p.m. Friday, Glenview Public Library, 1930 Glenview Road, Glenview, free, 847-729-7500

Spring Break Pixeilated Self-Portraits (Grades K-8): Create an 8-bit version of yourself. 1 p.m. Friday, Glenview Public Library, 1930 Glenview Rd., Glenview, free, 847-729-7500

PARKinson Wellness Recovery Brain-Body Training: Brain-Body Training/"PWR! is Parkinson-specific exercise, scientifically designed to target symptoms of PD. It includes boxing training for endurance, agility and stability. 10 a.m. Friday, Monday and Wednesday, Glenview Park Center, 2400 Chestnut Ave., Glenview, $10-$15, 847-502-0630

Ninth Annual Low Vision Fair: Featured speaker Dr. Jack Cohen, Illinois Retina Associates, S.C., speaks about new developments in macular degeneration. Also on hand are screenings, along with diabetic retinopathy and glaucoma screenings. 1 p.m. Friday, The East Wing Glenview Senior Center, 2400 Chestnut Ave., Glenview, free, 847-729-7500

DIY Teen craft: magnetic poetry chalkboards: Celebrate National Poetry Month by creating a magnetic poetry set. Use a magnetic chalkboard, special paint and printer and words to make your own portable poems. 3:30 p.m. Friday, Morton Grove Public Library, 6140 Lincoln Ave., Morton Grove, free, 847-929-5090

Harvey: A whimsical middle-aged man in thought by his family to be insane due to his insistence that he has an invisible six-foot rabbit for a best friend, but he may be wiser than anyone knows. 2 p.m. Friday, Morton Grove Public Library, 6140 Lincoln Ave., Morton Grove, free, 847-929-5090

Gentle Yoga: Yoga instructor Olga Rudiak leads a series of yoga sessions for improved physical strength, relaxation and mental clarity. Exercises are done in a chair or standing not on the floor. 9:30 and 11 a.m. Friday, Northbrook Public Library, 1201 Cedar Lane, Northbrook, free, 847-272-6224

Parisian Salon Concert - Ann and Ron Surace: "Pinocchio" Chamber Opera for two pianos and two voices is performed. The songs and music are composed by Ron Surace and performed and sung by Ann and Ron Surace. 7:30 p.m. Friday, Northbrook Public Library, 1201 Cedar Lane, Northbrook, free, 847-272-6224

Great Decisions in Foreign Policy: Gary Midkiff facilitates this discussion group that meets every other week to explore in-depth the topics featured in the year’s Great Decisions Briefing Book, including: the Middle East, the rise of ISIS, the future of Kurdistan, migration, the Korea, the United Nations, climate change, and Cuba and the U.S. 9:30 a.m. Friday, North Shore Senior Center, 161 Northfield Road, Northfield, $59 NSSC member, $115 non-member, 847-784-6030

Tai Chi for Arthritis and Chronic Conditions: Tai Chi is a gentle, low impact approach to fitness that can help ease the pain and stiffness of arthritis, increase flexibility, muscle strength, heart and lung activity, posture and help balance to prevent falls. Enjoy the class at your own pace standing or seated. Register in advance and note, no class takes place on March 25. 1:30 p.m. Friday, Morton Grove Public Library, 1201 Cedar Lane, Morton Grove, free, 847-272-6224

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

Tal Chi for Arthritis and Chronic Conditions: Tai Chi is a gentle, low impact approach to fitness that can help ease the pain and stiffness of arthritis, increase flexibility, muscle strength, heart and lung activity, posture and help balance to prevent falls. Enjoy the class at your own pace standing or seated. Register in advance and note, no class takes place on March 25. 1:30 p.m. Friday, Morton Grove Public Library, 1201 Cedar Lane, Morton Grove, free, 847-692-5127

Joe Steiner Recent Work Art Gallery Opening: Come to this opening reception for figurative painter Joe Steiner, held until 9 p.m. Steiner, a Skokie resident. His subjects are primarily people from the area surrounding his studio, which is located in Chicago's West Ridge neighborhood. 6 p.m. Friday, Nixie Gallery, 7925 N. Lincoln Ave., Skokie, free, 847-367-3686

Friday Funnies at the Wilmette Theatre: This monthly comedy series hosted by media veteran and author Jennifer Weigel, features several comedic talents. Come laugh with some of Chicago's hottest local comedians. 8 p.m. Friday, Wilmette Theatre, 1122 Central Ave., Wilmette, $15; 2 for $25, 847-251-7424

Scholar in Residence: Rabbi Sharon Brous is the guest Scholar-in-Residence. Rabbi Brous has been recognized as one of the nation's leading rabbis by Newsweek/The Daily Beast and among the 50 most influential American Jews by The Forward. 6 p.m. Friday; 9:30 a.m. and 1 p.m. Saturday, Beth Hillel Congregation B'nai Emunah, 3220 Big Tree Lane, Wilmette, Dinner fees: $25 adults; $18 children 12 and under, 847-356-1213

Saturday, April 2

All Around the House Quilt Show at Fischer Farm: A fun weekend with amazing quilts of all sizes, colors, and ages (some antique). The barn will be full of items for sale, including books, patterns, and fabric. 10 a.m. Saturday, Fischer Farm, 16W680 Old Grande Ave., Bensenville, $4 for 18 and older, $1 for 5-17, 630-834-3182

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 and above all, have a good time with those at all levels and ages. 9:30 a.m. Saturday, Des Plaines Public Library, 1501 Ellinwood St., Des Plaines, free, 847-827-5551

KIMOCK: 8 p.m. Saturday, SPACE, 1245 Chicago Ave., Evanston, $30-$50, 847-492-8860

FUSE: Studio: Drop in with friends to wire LEDs, compose a ringtone, build an amp, mix chemicals to make gel beads, navigate a robot obstacle course and more. For grades six to 12. Saturday, Evanston Public Library, 1703 Orrington Ave., Evanston, free, 847-448-8600

Ecology Center Winter Market: Learn about the benefits of eating fresh and locally grown foods. Shop for a variety of seasonal and artisan products. 9 a.m. Saturday, Ladd Arboretum, 2024 McCormick Blvd., Evanston, free, 847-448-8045

Overeaters Anonymous: Overeaters Anonymous meets Saturdays. Newcomer meeting on the last Saturday of the month. No dues, fees or weigh-ins. 9 a.m. Saturday, St Matthews Episcopal Church, Wilmette, free

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CALENDAR

An adult must accompany children. Activities are offered at varying levels of difficulty and interest to engage the entire family. A family activity: 6:30 p.m. Thursday, McCormick Camera Museum, 500 E Paul St, Evanston, $3 kids, $5 adults, 847-475-1030

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. Saturday, Illinois Holocaust Museum and Education Center, 9603 Woods Drive, Skokie, free, 847-967-4800

Sunday, April 3

**Jeffrey Fouchault** With Dusty Heart. 7 p.m. Sunday, SPACE, 1245 Chicago Ave., Evanston, $15-$25, 847-492-8860

**Triumph and Transcendence:** Chicago’s own Lincoln Trio display their exquisite artistry of the works of Tchaikovsky, “Symphony No. 6,” Beethoven: “Triple Concerto”; Earnest: “Chasing the Sun.” 7 p.m. Sunday, Pick-Staiger Concert Hall, Northwestern University, 50 Arts Circle Drive, Evanston, $25-$75; $10 student tickets available, 312-957-0000

**John Williams’ Sunday music session:** 3 p.m. Sunday, The Celtic Knot Public House, 626 Church St., Evanston, free, 847-864-1679

**Old Town Family Jam: Animal Socialization:** The Northbrook Public Library and the Old Town School of Folk Music welcome Animal Socialization. Wiggle, bounce and clap during this show that celebrates the animal world with music, puppetry and joy. 3 p.m. Sunday, Northbrook Public Library, 1201 Cedar Lane, Northbrook, free, 847-272-6224

**Laughing Matters: The Life and Laughs of Carol Burnett:** Take a stroll into that famous little circle of light as Hilary Ann Feldman, guiding you on a tour of Carol Burnett’s life and laughs. 2 p.m. Sunday, Skokie Theatre, 7924 N. Lincoln Ave., Skokie, $22, 847-677-7761

**Kids’ Art Workshop: Renaissance Superheroes:** Kids ages 9 to 12, will learn the art and architecture of four famous Renaissance artists and name- sakes of the Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles, as well as create their own inspired masterpieces. 2 p.m. Sunday, Wilmette Historical Museum, 609 Ridge Road, Wilmette, $5 for members, $10 nonmembers, 847-953-7666

**Monday, April 4**

**Blue Mondays:** Featuring Mississippi Heat. 8 p.m. Monday, SPACE, 1245 Chicago Ave., Evanston, $8, 847-942-8860

**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-West Branch, 226 Central St., Evanston, free, 847-448-8600

**Live Bluegrass, Roots and Folk:** Every Monday in the pub, The Mudflaps perform. 8 p.m. Monday, The Celtic Knot Public House, 626 Church St., Evanston, free, 847-864-1679

**hoopla, MyMediaMail and Zinio Individual Appointments:** Meet with trained Library staff for a 45-minute one-on-one session and learn how to download e-books, audiobooks, magazines, movies, TV shows or music to your portable device. 10 a.m. Monday, Glenview Public Library, 1930 Glenview Road, Glenview, free, 847-729-7500

**Page Turners: “The Husband’s Secret,” by Liane Moriarty. 1 p.m. Monday, Glenview Public Library, 1930 Glenview Road, Glenview, free, 847-729-7500

**Tech Talk:** Join this Internet user discussion group, a monthly Q&A for exploring websites, apps, social media, online searching, and the library’s electronic resources. Bring your mobile device with you to learn how to access library resources on the go. 7 p.m. Monday, Glenview Public Library, 1930 Glenview Road, Glenview, free, 847-729-7500

**Knitting Roundtable for Adults:** Ronnie Bund, an expert knitter, shows attendees how to knit or how to solve knitting challenges. Bring one’s own project(s) and needles. 2 p.m. Monday, Morton Grove Public Library, 6140 Lincoln Ave., Morton Grove, free, 847-965-4220

**MGPL Kids: Monday Morning Playgroup:** Drop-in play time for preschoolers with a parent or caregiver to introduce young children to the library in a low-key, unstructured session. 10:30 a.m. Monday, Morton Grove Public Library, 6140 Lincoln Ave., Morton Grove, free, 847-965-4220

**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

**Monday Movers:** Enjoy a morning at the Library’s Story Corner with your little one. For walkers up to 24 months of age. 10:30 a.m. Monday, Northbrook Public Library, 1201 Cedar Lane, Northbrook, free, 847-272-6224

**Munch a Bunch of Books:** Listen to new books, munch on a snack and have fun with activities and crafts. 4 p.m. Monday, Northbrook Public Library, 1201 Cedar Lane, Northbrook, free, 847-272-6224

**Ballroom Dance Classes:** Monday evening dance classes: Basic Class at 6:45 p.m., Intermediate class at 7:45 p.m. Monday, Bernard Weinger JCC, 300 Revere Drive, Northbrook, $10 per class, 847-757-2227

**Floral Arrangements:** Learn about the favorite blooms, tips and tricks with a demonstration from the store’s floral experts. Participants get to try their hand at arranging colorful blossoms and then take home their arrangement to brighten the day. 1 p.m. Monday, Whole Foods Market, 840 Willow Road, Northbrook, $30 member; $40 non-member, 847-784-6030

**Tips for Android Phone Users:** Confused about your Android phone? Attend this workshop to do more on your phone with less frustration. Learn the top 10 tips and tricks, and the four annoy- ing features you should switch off. Finally, we will cover the top applications for older adults. 10 a.m. Monday, North Shore Senior Center, 161 Northfield Road, Northfield, $15 nsc member; $20 non-member, 847-784-6030

**Drawing Lines In the Sand: The Making of the Middle East** After WWI and the fall of the Ottoman Empire, the Allies had to decide how to divide up the Ottoman lands. What were the driving forces in the decision-making process? How did those decisions impact us today in the continuing wars in the Middle East? And what does that mean for us and the rest of the world in the future? Joyce Witt will explore

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**Tuesday, April 5**

**Andy Kindler:** 8 p.m. Tuesday, SPACE, 1245 Chicago Ave., Evanston, $12-$18, 847-492-8860

**Mission Impossible: Rogue Nation:** Ethan Hunt and his teammates reunite for this pulse-pounding sequel, in which they attempt to take down a secret international organization known as the Syndicate - highly skilled ex-IMF agents who are intent on bringing down their former outfit. 11:30 a.m. Tuesday, Morton Grove Public Library, 6140 Lincoln Ave., Morton Grove, free, 847-929-5090

**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, 847-929-5090

**ACT study cafe:** Study for the ACT with others, 4 p.m. Tuesday, Morton Grove Public Library, 6140 Lincoln Ave., Morton Grove, free, 847-929-5090

**TEDxNorthbrook Library The Power of Youth:** View the screening of three pre-recorded TED Talks and have a discussion afterward. Video presenters include: Child prodigy Adora Svitak, “What Adults Can Learn from Kids,” blogger and fashion icon Tavi Gevinson, “A Teen Just Trying to Figure It Out,” teen activist McKenna Pope, “Want to Be an Activist? Start with Your Toys,” and architect Takaharu Tezuka, “The Best Kindergarten You’ve Ever Seen.” 7 p.m. Tuesday, Northbrook Public Library, 1201 Cedar Lane, Northbrook, free, 847-272-6224

**Wednesday, April 6**

**Chicago Bigcommerce User Group (eCommerce):** Bigcommerce is an eCommerce Software product designed to allow merchants to sell online. This meetup at their corporate office is for users of Bigcommerce to get to know one another and for local businesses who are looking to sell products online meet with other retail merchants and discuss Bigcommerce. Food and beverages are provided. 6:30 p.m. Wednesday, Americaneagle.com, Inc., 2600 S River Road, Des Plaines, free, 847-699-0300

**Sarah Neufeld, The Ridge with Eartheater:** 8 p.m. Wednesday, SPACE, 1245 Chicago Ave., Evanston, $15-$25, 847-492-8860

**Civic Center Book Talks: Cozy Mysteries:** Let’s skip all the gore and violence and be charmed and entertained by cozy mysteries featuring a rich variety of settings and themes. 1 p.m. Wednesday, Morton Grove Civic Center, 6140 Dempster St., Morton Grove, free, 847-929-5090

**MGPL writers workshop:** This workshop is for writers who want to share their works in progress and support other writers in drafting, revising and finishing manuscripts, essay poems or any other type of writing. 7 p.m. Wednesday, Morton Grove Public Library, 6140 Lincoln Ave., Morton Grove, free, 847-929-5090

**Magic Class:** Children can learn an assortment of fascinating tricks from the Magic Team of Gary Kantor to amaze family and friends with cards, ropes, coins and mindreading. Each child (ages 5-12) receives a magic kit to take home, 6:45 p.m. Wednesday, Northbrook Park District Leisure Center, 3323 Walters Ave., Northbrook, $20 Northbrook Park District residents, $25 non-residents, 847-291-2995

**Beginning Bridge Classes:** This series of lessons with a certified Bridge Master is for those who have never played bridge or haven’t done so in a long time, and have forgotten how to bid and play. 12:30 p.m. Wednesday, Park Ridge Park District- Centennial Activity Center, 100 S. Western Ave., Park Ridge, $79, 847-692-3597

Have an event to submit? Go to chicagotribune.com/calendar

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Now playing

“Zootopia” ★★★
PG-13, 1:48, animated
Somehow, Disney has managed to pull off a hard-boiled police procedural thriller about political corruption starring an adorable, large-eyed bunny. Judy Hopps (Ginnifer Goodwin) is a plucky bunny who sets her sights on life in the big city of Zootopia, making the world a better place as a police officer. In Zootopia, the predators and prey are civilized, clothes-wearing city dwellers. Judy throws herself headlong into an investigation of missing mammals, specifically one Emmet Otterton, with the aid of wise-cracking fox Nick (Jason Bateman). One of the strongest messages is about discrimination and not judging someone by a stereotype like “sly fox” or “dumb bunny.” — Katie Walsh

“The Divergent Series: Allegiant” ★½
PG-13, 2:00, Action
You know how it is. A franchise must eat and make hay while the sun shines and the customers still give a rip. So here we are with the third installment in “The Divergent Series,” from the thin-to-begin-with Veronica Roth trilogy set in post-apocalyptic dystopian rathole Chicago. It’s a pretty dull picture, I must say, because it’s my duty to say it. Tris is once again portrayed by Shailene Woodley; Theo James has perfected his sullen glower as Four, who is so much more than a number to Tris. The only wild card remains Miles Teller, stuck in supporting-underminer duty but extracting a laugh or two simply by turning his boredom with the material into sly commentary. — Michael Phillips

“Miracles From Heaven” ★★½
PG, 1:49, drama
“Miracles From Heaven” is based on a true story. Jennifer Garner is Christy Beam, mother to Anna (Kylie Rogers), who suffers from a debilitating, incurable intestinal disorder. One day Anna is climbing a tree and falls, headfirst, 30 feet inside the dead tree trunk. When firefighters pull her out, not only is she unharmed, but she’s miraculously cured. Garner is compelling as the dedicated mom questioning everything she believes while fighting for her daughter’s life, and young Rogers gives an impressive performance as Anna struggling to maintain her sunny outlook while coping with pain and suffering. — K.W.

“10 Cloverfield Lane” ★★★
PG-13, 1:43, drama
After surviving a terrible car crash, Michelle (Mary Elizabeth Winstead) awakens with an IV in her arm and her leg chained to the wall. Her abductor/captor Howard (played by John Goodman) claims to be her savior. In his fully furnished underground lair, this paranoid survivalist has also confined a handyman neighbor (John Gallagher Jr.). Howard claims that there’s been an attack, either by the Russians or space invaders, and the air outside is no longer breathable. Goodman’s very good, taking care of job one, which is to keep us guessing at Howard’s intentions. Winstead is even better. — M.P

“Deadpool” ★★½
R, 1:48, comedy
“Deadpool” is a movie about an unkillable wisenheimer who never shuts up. Showcasing a character born in a 1991 Marvel Comics “New Mutants” installment, the routine revenge fantasy positions itself as the outsider Marvel franchise wannabe. Early on, Wade Wilson, played by Ryan Reynolds, learns he has late-stage cancer and hooks up with a sadistic scientist who subjects him to a series of torture sequences. He’s immortal and the cancer’s gone. But so is his face and skin, and the sociopath Deadpool is born. But at least Reynolds is entertaining. — M.P
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Millennials start their engines

Young adults in U.S. are finally buying cars in big numbers, reshaping industry

BY DEE-ANN DURBIN
Associated Press

DETROIT — Millennials were once a source of panic in the auto industry. Dubbed the "go nowhere" generation, they weren't getting driver's licenses, never mind buying cars. Headlines declared it was "The End of Car Culture." New data suggest at least some of that worry was misplaced. Millennials, especially the oldest ones, these days are buying cars in big numbers. They just had a late start.

Now the largest generation in the U.S., millennials bought 4 million cars and trucks in the U.S. last year, second only to baby boomers, according to J.D. Power's Power Information Network, which defines millennials as those between 21 and 38 in 2015. Millennials' share of the new-car market jumped to 28 percent. In the country's biggest car market, California, millennials outpaced boomers for the first time, industry watchers say it's been hard to get a read on millennials because the generation is big and diverse, ranging from recent college graduates to settled-down suburbanites.

Automakers were also unsure about the impact of new transportation choices, like Zipcar and Uber, which helped millennials delay car buying. But as they got jobs and started families, millennials headed into car dealerships just like previous generations.

"This whole idea that they're not going to need cars is absolutely ridiculous," said Steven Szakaly, the chief economist for the National Automobile Dealers Association. "The new-car buyer age is just happening much later."

It's a very different story from 2010, when millennials, who make up about 30 percent of the population, bought just 17 percent of new cars. Auto executives wondered aloud if the trend would be permanent. In 2011, a University of Michigan study showed a steady decline in the number of young people getting their driver's licenses. In 1983, the survey found, 87 percent of 19-year-olds had a license. By 2010, that had fallen to 69 percent. Millennials told the study's authors that they were too busy to get licenses and were happy to hitch rides from others.

But there was more to the story. The advent of graduated licensing laws, which make teens practice driving in stages before granting a full license, was one reason millennials were getting their licenses later. An even bigger reason? The economy.

For many millennials, the Great Recession hit just as they were getting their first job or graduating from college. By 2010, millennials' unemployment rate reached 13 percent, four percentage points higher than the national average, according to a report by the White House Council of Economic Advisers. For teens, things were even worse. The teen unemployment rate rose from 15 percent to 26 percent between 2006 and 2012. Millennials' unemployment rate has improved to about 8 percent. Add low interest rates and low gas prices to the mix, and the car market suddenly looks more enticing to young buyers.

Lucy Mueller, 26, of Los Angeles, bought her first car, a slightly used 2015 Fiat 500, last summer. Millennials purchased 4 million cars and trucks last year, second only to baby boomers.

"Now that I have a car, it's almost bewildering to me. I feel like a grown-up," said Mueller, a project manager and video producer for financial software maker Intuit.

Several things kept Mueller out of the car market. She didn't have a credit card until a year ago; without any credit history, financing a car would have been difficult. Also, like many recession-weary millennials, Mueller wanted to avoid accruing debt, so she saved enough for a substantial down payment.

Szakaly says it will take millennials another four to five years to match the spending power of boomers. According to government data, the median household income for people ages 25-34 is $54,243. For those ages 55-64, it's more than $60,000. In addition, the average 25-year-old has more than $20,000 in student debt, according to Goldman Sachs. That's enough to buy a new Kia Optima sedan.

Bret Hyde, a cameraman with Access Hollywood in New York, waited until he was 37 to buy his first car. He and his wife used to rent Zipcars or take buses to visit friends and family. It was tiresome and expensive, he said, but there wasn't much parking in their old neighborhood.

After moving to a new neighborhood and renting a garage last spring, the couple bought a 2015 Nissan Rogue SUV.

Sheryl Connelly, a futurist with Ford Motor Co. who studies buying trends, said even as millennials start buying cars in bigger numbers, their attitudes are different than previous generations. Owning a car and getting a driver's license aren't the milestones they once were, and that may be a permanent change.

"The sense of freedom and independence that used to come with getting a vehicle has been arguably displaced by the cellphone," she said.

Automakers have taken note. They're improving in-car technology to make it easier for young drivers to stay connected to their friends and music while they're driving. They're forming partnerships with ride- and car-sharing services and conducting mobility experiments of their own. And they're ditching things that don't appeal to millennials. Toyota Motor Corp. is axing its youth-oriented Scion brand, for example, after finding that millennials prefer the Toyota brand.

"Millennials are going to be the main generation we will cater to as an industry," said John Humphrey, J.D. Power's senior vice president of global automotive operations.
Q&A: Iowa State’s Abdel Nader

BY BOB NARANG
Pioneer Press

Iowa State redshirt senior Abdel Nader had a non-stop parade of cameras and reporters visit him during a 15-minute media session on Thursday, March 24, at the United Center.

Nader is a former standout at Niles North and the Cyclones men’s basketball team (23-12) advanced to the Sweet 16 of the NCAA Tournament. They lost to Virginia 84-71 on Friday, March 25, at the United Center in Chicago.

The 6-foot-6 starting forward was the third-leading scorer for the Cyclones, averaging 12.9 points and 5.0 rebounds per game and he has made 52 3-pointers. Nader was a starter in all of Iowa State’s games this season. Amid the crush of reporters, Nader talked with Pioneer Press about his career at Iowa State, Northern Illinois and Niles North, where he averaged 23.8 points, 8.6 rebounds and 2.8 assists during his senior year. Nader also played at Maine East.

Q: How much does it mean to you having your family watch you play at the United Center?
A: It means so much to me to come back here. It’s amazing to be in Chicago. It’s a great feeling to be here among my family and friends and people I’ve grown up around.

Q: What’s your sister, Sheri, like as a fan?
A: She’s my best friend and is big-time in my life. I don’t know if I would be here without her because she raised me. It’s a great feeling to have her here.

Q: Who is a better dancer between Fred Hoiberg or Steve Prohm?
A: That’s a tough one. Both are pretty bad, but I will go with Fred.

Q: A lot of people say this is the best Iowa State team ever, do you agree with that?
A: I wouldn’t disagree with that. We have embraced this season and are taking advantage of every season.

Q: How much fun are you having?
A: I’m having so much fun and am very loose and enjoying this opportunity.

Q: What was it like shooting at the United Center today?
A: It was amazing, especially growing up in this area and being able to watch guys like Derrick Rose and Jimmy Butler. This is the house that Michael (Jordan) built. I have never played here. Anyone who says they have played here, it certainly is a big deal.

Q: How strange is it to be playing in the NCAA tournament after what you experienced at Northern Illinois. You won just five games in her your freshman season at NIU?
A: I’m glad to be here, but I’m focused at the task at hand and winning.

Q: What did you learn from your experience at Northern Illinois?
A: I had to grow up. I touched down on campus at NIU when I was 17 years old. I’m 22 now. I learned a lot and how to be a man and things like that. It’s been a journey.

Q: What was your fondest memory from your days at Niles North High School?
A: Going to the Elite Eight in my senior year and just going there. I was driving around the city Wednesday and just remembering times I had growing up and it was just amazing.

Q: What did you learn playing basketball at Niles North?
A: I was pretty good at basketball (laughing a lot). Coach (Glenn) Olson was a big-time influence in my life, a father figure for me. He means a lot to me.

Q: If you have the time, what restaurant are you most looking forward to eating at in Chicago?
A: Definitely Portillo’s. That’s my spot. I think I’m going to get something after it, probably an Italian Beef and a hot dog.

Bob Narang is a freelance reporter for Pioneer Press.
KAITLIN AYLWARD
F, Trinity, Sr.
Key stats: 16.9 ppg, 8.5 rpg
College: St. Francis (Illinois)

Calling card: A tough inside enforcer despite being an undersized post player at 6-feet, Aylward did most of the dirty work in the paint for the Blazers. Her superior footwork and ability to find good post position kept opposing defenses honest, opening up the outside for teammate Annie McKenna to shoot perimeter jumpers. Her ability to handle tougher players inside on the defensive end and score inside or grab offensive rebounds was a key element in Trinity's run to the Class 4A state semifinals.

"Kaitlin was the rock of our team this year," Trinity coach Mike Valente said. "She anchored the post and was a leader to the younger kids and was our most consistent player. She dominated girls a lot bigger than her. She had a lot to do with how successful we were this year."

Season highlight: Aylward said her favorite memory this season was beating Montini 60-53 in overtime in the Class 4A Hoffman Estates Supersectional. Aylward scored 20 points and grabbed six rebounds in the win.

"When we beat Montini for the second time this season to finally get downstate for my first time ever was amazing," she said. "Since it was my last year, all I wanted to do was get downstate, and to be able to have done that was just amazing."

—Bob Narang

LIZ SATTER
F, Loyola, Sr.
Key stats: 17.0 ppg, 7.9 rpg, 1.2 apg, 1.0 spg, 54 3-pointers
College: Pennsylvania

Calling card: While Satter stands 6-foot-2, she was one of the best outside shooters in the area. That's what separates Satter from other players, according to Loyola coach Jeremy Schoenecker.

Satter's 54 3-pointers were the most on the Ramblers, and she shot 36.1 percent from beyond the arc. Satter said her youth coaches would put her in the post due to her height, but Schoenecker recognized her versatility after she transferred to Loyola from New Trier before her sophomore year.

"She's what you call a stretch four, someone who can play inside and outside," Schoenecker said. "Liz makes it very tough on teams. She creates a lot of matchup nightmares for opponents, especially because she shoots the ball so well. She's really a rare combination."

Season highlight: Even though it was a loss, Satter said her best game came in a 56-50 loss to Evanston on the road on Dec. 22. She shot 7-for-14 from the field, including 2-for-5 on 3-pointers, to score a team-high 22 points. She also added nine rebounds.

"I think that was one of the games that I really showcased all of the things I can do on the court," she said. "It showed I have an all-around game, not someone who can just score inside or just rebound. I played with a lot of energy that game."

—Matt Harness

INSTANT REPLAY Go to chicagotribune.com/suburbs to check out highlight packages and video interviews with the men and women who coached our All-Area Boys and Girls Basketball First Team players.
ANNE MCKENNA

G, Trinity, Sr.
Key stats: 14 ppg, 5 apg, 2.5 spg
College: Dartmouth
Calling card: The 5-foot-5 McKenna, a four-year starter, was the ideal point guard in Trinity's offense. The Blazers often relied on McKenna to break full-court pressure defenses, and she deftly handled the duties despite the Blazers playing a tough schedule against talented, guard-based offenses. Her intelligence allowed her to understand the gaps in a defense and her court vision opened up the offense for the underclassmen.

"The great thing about Annie is that she makes everybody on the court better," Trinity coach Mike Valente said. "That's a complete point guard. Her court vision is phenomenal. She's like having a coach on the court. Her basketball IQ is off the charts. Her steadiness and consistency made us the team that we are."

Favorite memory: After losing to Homewood-Flossmoor in overtime in a Class 4A supersectional last season, Trinity defeated Montini for the second time this season at the Hoffman Estates Supersectional to end a 10-year state drought for the Blazers. McKenna made all 10 of her free-throw attempts in overtime to finish with 20 points against the Broncos.

"My favorite memory of this season is winning supersectionals and advancing to state," McKenna said. "It has always been my goal to compete for a state championship. This was the furthest the school has gone in history, and it was an experience that I will never forget."

—Bob Narang

MEGAN TALBOT

C, Barrington, Sr.
Key stats: 13 ppg, 87 FT%, 63 3P%
College: Illinois State
Calling card: The 6-foot-2 Talbot knew she'd be the object of her opponents' focus all season, but she still managed to produce in multiple ways. Talbot reached double digits in points and rebounds in 11 of 26 games this year.

In particular, rebounding became Talbot's defining strength over the course of her four-year career. Talbot finished with 920 total rebounds, third-best in Barrington girls basketball history. "I think rebounding has been the biggest mark she's left on the program," Barrington coach Babbi Barreiro said. "We've had a few pretty great basketball players come through our program, so that's a pretty nice statistic to have behind her name.

Season highlight: Talbot finished with 950 points in her career, a number she reached in part because she developed a 3-point shot. She said she remembers a game against Maine South at Buffalo Grove's Thanksgiving tournament as a turning point. Talbot found herself with the ball in the left corner, just beyond the 3-point line.

She fired a shot.

"It went in. I surprised myself," Talbot said. "The team was like, 'Did she just hit a 3?' From the get-go I had more confidence and shot better than in previous years."

—Jon J. Kerr

SECOND TEAM

GEORGE M. WILCOX
Pioneer Press

Frannie Corrigan
F, Lyons, Sr.
Key stats: 11.0 ppg, 5.0 rpg, 1.6 apg
College: Illinois State

Sydney Kopp
G, Hinsdale South, Sr.
Key stats: 25.7 ppg, 5.6 rpg, 3.6 spg, 3.3 apg
College: Undecided

Maia Marshall
G, St. Joseph, So.
Key stats: 17.0 ppg, 2.4 rpg, 1.3 apg
College: Undecided

Carie Weinman
G, Glenbrook South, Jr.
Key stats: 15.6 ppg, 3.2 apg, 4.2 spg
College: Undecided

Leighah-Amori Wool
G-F, Evanston, Jr.
Key stats: 13.8 ppg, 5.8 rpg, 2.2 apg, 1.9 spg
College: Undecided
New Trier senior Jeanie Boehm, a 6-foot-3 forward and Harvard recruit, was a four-year varsity starter and two-time selection to the Illinois Basketball Coaches Association's Class 3A/4A first team. Her highest honor came when she was named to this year's McDonald's All-American team. Boehm finished her career with 1,872 points and 1,169 rebounds. She helped the Trevians to their fourth consecutive Class 4A regional title this season.

Pioneer Press sports writer Matt Harness covered a wide range of topics with Boehm, the suburban publication's girls basketball player of the year.

Q: You were recognized at the March 7 Chicago Bulls game for your selection to the McDonald's All-American team. Was that one of your more amazing basketball moments?
A: They had us on the (United Center) court before the game for a picture. That was really cool. I have been to plenty of Bulls games, but I had never been on the floor until that day. It's something I will always remember.

Q: You played varsity basketball for four years at New Trier. What would your advice be to an incoming freshman girl who wants to play basketball in the program?
A: You can expect it to be tough. Practices are not always easy, especially in the preseason. Be prepared to work your hardest and push yourself. But be prepared to be a lot better player when you are done. I would also tell them to make the most out of every opportunity they get, whether it's in a practice, a summer league game or high school game. It's going to go by really fast.

Q: Who were some of your favorite players to play against while at New Trier?
A: My freshman year I got to play two games against (Maine South graduate and DePaul junior) Jacqui Grant and three games against (Evanston graduate and Arkansas junior) Alecia Cooley. I only got to play against them for one season, but it was great to get that chance. I will also say Glenbrook South (senior) Caitlin Morrison was a tough one to play against. I know her from AAU basketball and we are friends, but I always hated to play her. She was long and tough.

Q: What was the hardest road game, year in and year out?
A: Definitely Evanston. Their gym is very unique because the floor is removed from the seats. It was not easy to play there. They always had a ton of screaming fans and always a good team. It was never that much fun. But when I look back on it, I will be glad I got that chance.

Q: Describe your relationship with New Trier's Gates Gym. It's almost like a second home to you.
A: I don't even know where to begin. I mean, I grew up watching my brothers play in that gym. Peter (Boehm) was on varsity when I was 5 years old. I also saw Jack (Boehm) and Connor (Boehm) play there. When you're young, those varsity players seem like celebrities to you. That gym was
New Trier’s Jeannie Boehm (23) smiles as she hugs teammate Haley Greer after a win over Stevenson on Dec. 30.

Boehm, from Previous Page

such a big part of my youth. I really liked the homey, old-fashioned feel of it, too.

Q: Which college or professional player do you admire the most?
A: I would have to say (Golden State Warriors guard) Steph Curry, even though he doesn’t play my position. It’s just awesome watching him play. He’s so fun. He makes handling the ball and shooting 3-pointers from halfcourt look so easy.

Q: Who is your favorite pro team?
A: Even though I like Steph, the Bulls are my team.

Q: Your parents both went to Harvard Business School and your brother, Peter, played basketball at Harvard. Do you feel like it will be an easier transition for you because of your familiarity with the Cambridge campus?
A: For sure. Between visiting Peter at Harvard and watching Connor, who played at Dartmouth, play games at Harvard, it does kind of feel like I know it, kind of like a second home. I do feel comfortable there, and it’s a big reason why I chose to go there. I know Harvard Square well and how to get around Harvard Yard, where the freshmen live.

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Q: What do you plan on studying in college?
A: Economics. I am taking two math classes and an AP economics class right now, and those classes should get me prepared to be an economics major. I know that makes me sound super nerdy, but I enjoy math a lot. Peter was an economics major at Harvard, so I’ve talked to him about it. I don’t know exactly what I want to do with it, but I’d like to do something with marketing. That would be pretty cool.

Quick hits

Q: Favorite bands?

Q: What was your pregame meal?
A: My mom made me apples and peanut butter before every game for four years. She would always have it ready for me at the house before I left. I don’t know what it was about that combination, but it worked.

Q: Do you have a favorite piece of clothing?
A: Probably my Harvard sweatshirt. I got it a few years ago, maybe Peter got it for me, but it’s been washed so many times that it’s soft and falling apart.

Q: Favorite shoe company?
A: Definitely Nike. My AAU team used adidas, and I didn’t like them. Nikes are the best.

Q: Favorite TV show?
A: “Keeping Up with the Kardashians.”

Q: Favorite movie?
A: I really like the “Hunger Games” movies.

that gym was such a big part of my youth. I really liked the homey, old-fashioned feel of it, too.”
—Jeannie Boehm, on New Trier’s Gates Gym

Jeannie Boehm
F, New Trier, Sr.
Key stats: 19.9 ppg, 10.7 rpg, 3.4 bpg, 2.3 apg, 1.6 spg
College: Harvard
Calling card: What impresses New Trier coach Teri Rodgers the most about the 6-foot-3 Boehm — Pioneer Press’ All-Area Girls Basketball Player of the Year — is her ability to affect the game at both ends of the floor.

“Sometimes, people forget how phenomenal of a defensive player she is,” Rodgers said. “She rebounds. She blocks shots, but she also changes shots. She changes the way people play against us. That’s a rare quality for a high school player.”

In 31 games, Boehm had 19 games in which she scored at least 10 points and grabbed 10 rebounds, including 10 games in which she had at least 20 points and 10 rebounds. On the defensive end, Boehm had at least five blocked shots in seven games.

Season highlight: Boehm scored a season-best 35 points, shooting 15-for-21 from the floor, to go with 20 rebounds and seven blocks in a 71-57 win over Springfield (Mass.) Central on Dec. 19 in the Nike Tournament of Champions in Phoenix.

“It was game that I played well on offense and defense,” Boehm said. “It was one of those games where my shots were falling. There had been a stretch of games where they weren’t falling, so I was due for a game like that.”

—Matt Harness
BOYS FIRST TEAM

NOJEL EASTERN

G, Evanston, Jr.
Key stats: 14.9 ppg, 6.5 rpg, 4 apg, 2 bpg, 2 spg
College: Undecided
Calling card: A three-year varsity starter and one of the state's top recruits for the Class of 2017, Eastern is a talent rarely seen at the high school level.

The 6-foot-6 point guard is a skilled ball-handler and shooter on the perimeter, but he's big enough to battle in the post, too. Eastern's inside-outside game also extends to the defensive end of the floor. Evanston coach Mike Ellis said that Eastern's versatility is what sets him apart from his peers.

"With his knowledge and feel for the game, coupled with his vast skill set, Nojel does what is required for our team to have success every single game out," Ellis said. "One night, we may need him to step up his scoring against a specific matchup. Another night, we may need him to get his teammates involved. With his size, he also gives us a presence on the boards. His all-around game and style of play allow us to game plan for a multitude of paces and schemes."

Season highlight: Eastern saved his best game for Evanston's biggest rival. In a 53-39 win on the road against New Trier on Feb. 5, he put up 25 points, nine rebounds and seven assists. The victory clinched the Central Suburban South championship for the Wildkits.

"When Nojel gets into a rhythm like that, he's almost impossible to stop," Ellis said.

—Matt Harness

NICK RAKOCEVIC

C, St. Joseph, Sr.
Key stats: 19.8 ppg, 14.4 rpg, 4 blocks per game
College: Undecided
Calling card: At 6-foot-11, Rakocevic was often the tallest player on the court, helping him become a force on the offensive and defensive boards.

Rakocevic's ability to extend offensive possessions with rebounds or putback baskets gave his younger teammates freedom to attempt more shots.

With long arms and a tendency to stay near the paint, Rakocevic averaged 14.4 rebounds per game. He had 11 offensive rebounds over the team's two games at the Class 3A state finals.

"Nick did a great job leading us back to state," coach Gene Pingatore said. "We had such a young team and he put them on his back."

Favorite memory: Rakocevic said his fondest memory of his senior season was St. Joseph's 59-55 win over Fenwick in the Class 3A Westinghouse Sectional final. The Friars defeated the Chargers by double figures in two regular-season games.

"People were saying we had no chance of beating them and would be blown out," Rakocevic said. "I said something on Twitter, too. I was confident in my team and myself. When we won that game, obviously winning (another) state championship would be great, but for me, that was the game."

—Bob Narang

FILM STUDY

Ever wonder what makes our All-Area Boys and Girls Basketball First Team players the best in their sport? We have video breakdowns of each player's greatest strengths at chicagotribune.com/suburbs.
JUSTIN SMITH
F, Stevenson, Jr.
Key stats: 19 ppg, 9 rpg, 1 bpg
College: Undecided

Calling card: After spending his sophomore season in a supporting role to Jalen Brunson and Connor Cashaw on Stevenson's Class 4A state champion team, the 6-foot-7 Smith was the focal point of the Patriots this season.

The increased role enabled Smith to show off his well-rounded game, and he became one of the state's top players in the Class of 2017.

"Justin is just so versatile," Stevenson coach Pat Ambrose said. "He can shoot, attack, defend, pass and certainly rebound. His intelligence and skill set are very high, so he can do so, so much. He dominated games this year on both ends."

Season highlight: Smith signaled his status as a big-time player in an 80-69 come-from-behind win over Downers South on Jan. 16 at Wheaton Warrenville South. He scored 32 points, shooting 12-for-17 from the field, and had 12 rebounds and three blocked shots. Among his highlights were three dunks and two 3-pointers.

"I took it upon myself to get us back into the game," Smith said. "This was one of the first times I felt like I needed to take over to ensure us a win. That set the tone for the rest of the season."

-Matt Harness

BARRET BENSON
C, Hinsdale South, Sr.
Key stats: 20 ppg, 11 rpg
College: Northwestern

Calling card: A varsity player for all four years, the 6-foot-10 Benson excelled with a throwback low-post game, Hinsdale South coach Brett Moore said.

"He's one of a kind, a true five man," Moore said. "He was a big man who could dominate the low block. Sometimes, it was hard for him to show off all he could do down there because he constantly faced double- and triple-teams."

Moore said Benson had the skills to play on the perimeter but chose to play the post for the sake of the Hornets.

"He made us better by staying around the rim and not forcing himself to the outside," Moore said. "He could have. We would not have been the same team we were this season without him on the inside."

Favorite memory: Benson was proud of winning a program-best 22 games in addition to capturing Hinsdale South's first Class 4A regional championship since the 1998-99 season.

"To have an extended postseason and make some history my senior year was a great feeling," he said.

-Matt Harness
This year, senior point guard Mike Smith and his teammates lifted the Fenwick boys basketball team to heights it hadn't experienced since the late 1990s.

The Friars matched a school record with 28 wins. They won the Chicago Catholic League's regular season and tournament titles, defeated Simeon in one of the best games of the 2015-16 season and reached a Class 3A sectional final.

Smith, the Pioneer Press All-Area Boys Basketball Player of the Year, was a major reason why. The 5-foot-9 point guard finished second to Morgan Park senior Charlie Moore in voting for Illinois Mr. Basketball. Smith, a Burr Ridge resident, ended his career with more than 1,800 career points — second-most in school history behind Corey Maggette, who played 14 years in the NBA.

Pioneer Press freelance sports reporter Eric Van Dril caught up with Smith on Monday, March 28. They discussed Smith's recent commitment to Columbia, his NBA aspirations and more.

Q: After losing to St. Joseph in the sectional final, how much time passed before you got back into the gym?
A: The next day, I trained. The next day I just went into the gym for three hours and trained (by myself at Burr Ridge Middle School). I was upset, but I've got to just look at it like, 'We did so much for Fenwick' — our whole team. I left it all on the court versus St. Joe's. But I just felt like, 'I have no time to waste because I want to do something special at Columbia next year. There's no time to sit here and sob and think about what we could have done better.' So the next day, I went to the gym for about three hours and worked out. The next day, I worked out again. Now I'm on spring break, and my parents told me, 'No more basketball. Don't even touch a basketball,' down here in Florida.

Just have fun and enjoy your time because as soon as you come back, you're going to go right back to basketball because you have to go back to Columbia like a month after school is over. You have to be ready! If I really want to play in the NBA, or play overseas, I'm going to have to work hard. And I'm already a hard worker.

Q: What was school like this year at Fenwick? You guys had such a great season. Did students, teachers and administrators consistently come up to you and talk basketball? What was it like to be the star player at Fenwick?
A: It was actually a great feeling. ... The time after we lost (to St. Joseph), that Monday, everybody, all the teachers were like, 'You've done so much.' I got at least 100

"Usually every person that meets Mike (Smith) will remember that first meeting," Fenwick assistant coach Staunton Peck said in a video interview. "He's very engaging, smiling, charismatic." To see the interview, and videos about the other All-Area Boys and Girls Basketball First Team players, visit chicagotribune.com/suburbs.
Fenwick's Mike Smith, center, celebrates with coach Rick Malnati after he scored 38 points in the Friars' win over Simeon on Jan. 18 in Oak Park.

Mike Smith
G, Fenwick, Sr.
Key stats: 19.3 ppg, 4.3 apg, 2.9 rpg, 42.3 3P%
College: Columbia
Calling card: Because of his exceptional quickness, Smith - the Pioneer Press All-Area Boys Basketball Player of the Year - has an answer for almost anything, offensively.

If a defender plays him tight, Smith, at 5-foot-9, can blow by him and get into the lane. If a defender respects his speed and plays off him, Smith - a 42-percent shooter from behind the arc as a senior - can knock down a 3-pointer.

"A lot of people don't understand when you're small, it's harder to be guarded," Smith said. "You look at Tyler Ulis at Kentucky. It's just really hard for people to guard him. (Boston Celtics guard) Isaiah Thomas is an All-Star, and he's (5-9). It's so hard to guard somebody so quick, and (Ulis and Thomas) are able to shoot, get to the rim and pass the ball."

Smith, who won the Tony Lawless Award as the top player in the Chicago Catholic League North, can do all of those things.

"Watch his speed and quickness in the full court," Fenwick assistant coach Staunton Peck said. "He is a one-man fast break."

Favorite memory: The Friars accomplished so much during Smith's senior season, but a 71-68 victory against Simeon on Jan. 18 is a game that still stands out. Smith had 38 points that day.

"I think if you asked most of the people that were there that day - there were alumni that hadn't been to a game in 10 years at Fenwick, they came back to Simeon that day - they would say that win for Fenwick was one of the greatest wins they've ever had," Peck said. "And most of them would say Mike Smith's performance against Simeon that day was one of the most impressive performances they've ever seen by a Fenwick athlete."

-Eric Van Dril
Jeannie Boehm and Mike Smith lead the Pioneer Press All-Area Girls and Boys Basketball Teams. Inside
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