Looking back at 2016

A glance at the stories that shaped the past year, including a local nominee to the U.S. Supreme Court. Pages 4-5

Best meals 2016
50 Chicago-area chefs name the best thing they ate this year. Page 17

Love to last you a lifetime
Columnist Jackie Filossoph offers her take on the skills needed to sustain a happy marriage. Inside

Blaser: Put Ill. students first
State educators have some big challenges in getting children to perform at grade level and preparing them for success in college and beyond. Page 14

Year in review
Area high school athletic directors reflect on 2016, look ahead to 2017. Page 36
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SHOUT OUT

Joe Bruntmyer, Morton Grove Park District recreation superintendent

Joe Bruntmyer, superintendent of recreation for the Morton Grove Park District, says he isn't one to drop the ball. Bruntmyer, of Round Lake, has been on the job for seven months, after coming to Morton Grove's park district from the Vernon Hills Park District, where he spent more than 13 years supervising athletics. The husband and father of three likes hockey and football, he says.

Q: What do you like about Morton Grove?
A: I love the community and the people. I have a great staff I work with.

Q: Do you have a New Year's resolution for 2017?
A: I usually don't make New Year's resolutions. But if I had to make one, it would be to continue to grow as a professional, husband and father.

Q: What's a goal for 2017 that you'd like to share with your children?
A: I want them to be active. I try to teach them manners and respect for other people.

Q: What's the snapshot of the message that people are sharing with you about 2017?
A: Definitely peace, kindness and unity.

Q: What is there to do at the Morton Grove Park District?
A: There are always fun opportunities. For 2017, we have some fun and amazing programs and events that make it affordable for families to spend quality time together.

— Karie Angell Luc, Pioneer Press
A look at 2016 in Niles, Lincolnwood and Morton Grove

Supreme Court nominee, gun shop, Purple Hotel among most-read local stories

BY GENEVIEVE BOOKWALTER
Pioneer Press

A local nominee to the United States Supreme Court, the future of the former Purple Hotel site and a controversial proposed gun shop and range in Niles were some of the best-read stories of 2016 in Niles, Lincolnwood and Morton Grove.

Niles West High School graduate nominated for U.S. Supreme Court

President Barack Obama in March nominated Niles West High School graduate and former Lincolnwood resident Merrick Garland for the post on the United States Supreme Court left vacant by the death of Justice Antonin Scalia.

The current federal appeals court judge graduated as valedictorian, served as head of the student council and boasted an array of academic honors when he finished high school in the late 1960s.

Former classmates and neighbors remembered Garland with pride, calling him a "role model" and "a down-to-earth, humble and sweet person."

They described him as brilliant, kind, popular and successful at whatever he tried.

That ongoing success might not stretch to a tenure on the Supreme Court, though. Senate Republicans have refused to hold a hearing for Garland.

With a Republican president elected in November, the hearings might never happen.

Case dismissed against Niles gun shop, range

A judge in February dismissed an amended lawsuit trying to stop a proposed gun shop and range from opening in Niles.

The suit was filed by gun-control advocacy group People for a Safer Society, arguing the spot on Howard Street was near five schools and not an appropriate place to sell and shoot weapons.

The company 6143 Howard Partners was issued a building permit in January to open the Sportsman's Club and Firearms Training at 6143 Howard St.

The suit was initially filed in October 2014 and sought to annul a special-use permit for the gun shop and bar other gun-related businesses from opening there.

That suit was dismissed and the group filed an amended complaint in July 2015. The judge in February said he was swayed by the defendants' argument that the plaintiffs did not have proper standing to file the case as they did not own property adjoining or adjacent to the property under dispute.

Controversy continues around ex-Purple Hotel site

The dusty, barren land that once held the Purple Hotel is still vacant as Lincolnwood officials work with developers on possible alternatives for the site.

Executives from Chicago real estate investment firm Kaufman Jacobs stormed out of a Lincolnwood Village Board meeting in September, after officials criticized their redevelopment proposal.

Meanwhile village leaders say
Lincolnwood finance director: Town's 2017 levy in line with recent previous years

BY NATALIE HAYES
Pioneer Press

Lincolnwood trustees approved an increased property tax levy of less than one percent at a recent village board meeting.

The village's finance director, Robert Merkel, said the increase, which would be effective for 2017, represents about $38,000 in new annual revenue for Lincolnwood.

The 2016 tax levy of roughly $5.5 million covers about $2.7 million in general fund revenue, over $1.7 million in police pension contributions, and $1 million for the Parks and Recreation Department, which encompasses special recreation programs, officials said.

Lincolnwood, which is unique in that it does not have a park district, includes funding for its park programs in its levy. Other communities that have park districts often tax residents separately for those services.

During the past three years, the average tax increase on the portion of a resident's tax bill that is paid to the village has remained at about 1 percent, Merkel said.

Natalie Hayes is a freelancer.

A look at 2016 in Niles, Lincolnwood, Morton Grove

2016, from Previous Page

that they are looking for a development plan with the right mix of retail and commercial space with the residential units needed to ensure foot traffic.

Lincolnwood doesn't have a downtown and village officials have eyed the land for a possible town center.

Original plans, proposed by Skokie real estate developer North Capital Group, ultimately failed to gain traction.

But the new proposal in September was not the right one, village leaders said.

That plan included a 200-unit apartment complex, 10,000 square feet of retail space and a 200-room hotel on the 8.5-acre lot at Lincoln and Touhy avenues.

Village leaders wondered if the retail space would contribute enough money to the tax base and voiced concern that the hotel did not have a banquet center, among other comments from officials.

Niles senior living facility accused of allowing harassment

A Niles woman in July sued the senior living facility where she lived after allegedly suffering harassment over her sexual orientation from staff and other residents.

Lambda Legal filed the case on behalf of Marsha Wetzel against Glen Saint Andrew Living Community and its administrators. The case was filed in U.S. District Court in Chicago and alleged violations under the U.S. Fair Housing Act and state Human Rights Act.

Lambda Legal is a national legal group focused on LGBT advocacy, litigation and policy work, according to its website.

The complaint alleged that Wetzel was subjected to "persistent verbal harassment, threats, intimidation and three separate assaults, at the hands of other residents" and called "countless homophobic slurs."

Morton Grove CEO joins Lady Gaga on stage

Julie Smolyansky, CEO of Morton Grove-based Lifetime Foods, stood with pop singer Lady Gaga and a number of other sexual assault survivors on stage at the Oscars in March.

Gaga invited survivors of rape and sexual assault to join her as she performed "Til It Happens to You." She wrote the song with Diane Warren for "The Hunting Ground," a documentary about sexual assault on college campuses. It was nominated for best original song.

Smolyansky, a survivor of sexual assault, was executive producer of "The Hunting Ground."

She said she has served as an advocate for victims since she was a teenager. As a student at Niles North High School, Smolyansky helped shape curriculum to address violence in the dating scene around Chicago.
Morton Grove to pump more into pensions with 2017 fiscal budget

BY BRIAN L. COX
Pioneer Press

Morton Grove's $65 million budget for fiscal year 2017 does not include a property tax increase, but the village will still contribute an appreciable amount to its various pension funds, officials said.

"It looks excellent," Trustee Ed Ramos said about the village's spending plan.

Trustees voted unanimously at its meeting earlier this month to pass the budget, which is 2.8 percent more than the 2016 budget, said Village Administrator Ralph Czerwinski.

"It's a stable, service-oriented budget," he said. "It's consistent with prior levels of service that focuses on pension funding, economic development support and measured enhancements to support service delivery."

Hanna Sullivan, the village's finance director, credited village staff with helping ensure the new budget does not include a tax hike in the village's portion of the property tax levy.

"We're lucky that our department heads are very onboard with what we're trying to do," Sullivan said. "It makes the process a lot easier because really you're combining all these separate budgets into one large document."

The single largest village expense continues to be the police department, with its $10.4 million budget for FY '17. That amount is a 3.5 percent increase — or $242,686 — over the current one, Czerwinski said.

"They provide a high level of service," he said. "The village's second largest department expense, followed by public works budget at $2.5 million."

Czerwinski said.

The budget, approved Dec. 12, also includes spending on capital projects like road paving, water main replacement, and even money for economic development.

"We can always see room for improvement from an economic development standpoint and that's why we're constantly looking at that area," Czerwinski said. "We see many of the sites in the village that have been dormant for a while having a higher level of interest."

Brian L. Cox is a freelancer

POLICE BLOTTER

Morton Grove

CRIMINAL DAMAGE
■ Javier J. Torres Jr., 25, of the 7900 block of Kedvale Avenue, Skokie, was charged Dec. 17 with criminal damage at his residence. Torres is expected to appear in court Jan. 19.

DUl
■ Stacy Moorman, 37, of the 9100 block of North Nordica Avenue, Niles, was charged Dec. 16 with driving under the influence of alcohol on Dempster Street and Waukegan Road. Police said Moorman's vehicle struck a median and she allegedly failed sobriety tests. Moorman is scheduled to appear in court Jan. 4.

DRUGS
■ Omar M. Okab, 19, of the 5500 block of Lincoln Avenue, was cited Dec. 19 for possession of marijuana on South Park Avenue and West Frontage Road. Police said Okab was stopped for a traffic violation and was allegedly found to be in possession of marijuana.

WARRANT
■ Chrystal L. Floyd, 37, of the 9300 block of Shermer Road, was arrested Dec. 20 on an outstanding warrant out of Wheeling.

Lincolnwood

DUil
■ Juan Martinez-Ramirez, 45, of the 7900 block of Kedvale Avenue, Skokie, was charged Dec. 17 with driving under the influence of alcohol in the 6600 block of McCormick Boulevard. Police said Martinez-Ramirez was pulled over after an officer observed his vehicle crossing the traffic divider lanes, and Martinez-Ramirez allegedly failed sobriety tests. Police said 10 open beers were found in the back seat of his vehicle and in the front passenger seat. Martinez-Ramirez was also cited for illegal transportation of alcohol and improper lane use.

THEFT
■ Someone broke into a 2013 Jeep Wrangler that was parked in the 6900 block of McCormick Boulevard and removed a stereo/navigation system from the dashboard, police said. The theft was reported on Dec. 12.

A purse was reported stolen from a vehicle parked in the 3300 block of West Touhy on Dec. 16. The owner of the vehicle told police the purse had been left on the front passenger side seat. The front passenger side window was broken, police said.

■ An insurance card was reported stolen from a vehicle parked in the 6400 block of Leroy Avenue. The owner of the vehicle reported the theft on Dec. 17, and told police the contents of the glove compartment were scattered around the vehicle.

Niles

BATTERY
■ Vasily Yalovitsky, 24, of the 2800 block of North McVicker, Chicago, was charged with battery on Dec. 10 after police said he punched an employee of a bar in the 6900 block of Milwaukee Avenue. The alleged attack was captured on video, police said. Yalovitsky is scheduled to appear in court in a Jan. 6 court date.

BURGLARY
■ Jewelry and other items were reported stolen from a house in the 8300 block of Olcott Avenue during a burglary that occurred Dec. 9.

■ Jewelry was stolen during the burglary of an apartment in the 9100 block of Cumberland Avenue Dec. 9, police said.

■ A resident of the 7300 block of Waukegan Road reported finding pry marks on the door to the apartment unit and on the door to the apartment building on Dec. 10. Nothing was reported stolen from the apartment, police said.

DUI
■ Carlos Carrillo-Ortiz, 29, of the 3100 block of Patson, Des Plaines, was charged with driving under the influence on the night of Dec. 10 after police reportedly found him unconscious in the driver's seat of his running car, which was stopped in the 6600 block of Touhy Avenue. Police said his car was seen driving west in the eastbound lanes of Touhy Avenue prior to him pulling over in the parking lot.

WARRANT
■ Milan Konstantinov, 72, of the 8100 block of Dempster Street, Niles, was taken into custody on a warrant for retail theft on Dec. 9, police said. Burt's Place may open by end of January, new owners say

BY LOUISA CHU
Chicago Tribune

Burt's Place, home of the iconic caramelized crust created by late pizza master Burt Katz, may reopen by the end of January, starting with a friends-and-family soft opening, said co-owner and protege Jerry Petrow.

An open-to-the-public date will depend on final inspections, Petrow said.

Petrow and business partner John Munao bought the Morton Grove business, building and recipes from Katz, who personally chose and trained his successors before his death in April. Katz's pizza style may be familiar to Pequod's customers; he founded the original Pequod's in Morton Grove in 1971, operating it until 1985.

Katz famously required pizzas preordered because he was the sole pizza-maker and had one oven. The updated Burt's Place will have two ovens; whether preordering will be required is still TBD.

"We're stacking the two identical ovens now," said Petrow by phone. "You have to be very gentle and very strong at the same time."

Other big changes: There will now be two pizza-makers; both Petrow and business partner John Munao will make pies. Plus they're adding a small bar with three taps to the back of the dining room. "Just three or four seats," said Petrow, in a small room they discovered when they moved the oven to pour a new kitchen floor.

A beer garden will open "at the first sign of spring," he added.

But regulars will find the original booths and tables, as well as the International House of Pancakes plates that Katz and his wife Sharon used to serve generations of pizza fans. "We salvaged as many plates as we could," said Petrow. "I think we have 30 of them."

And the big question: What about the pizza? "The pizza-making is going very well," said Petrow. "If we can just fire up the three or four ovens, we hope that's the last time we ever have to shut them down completely again."

For fans who've been wondering about the delays, Petrow said a lot of work has gone into the gut rehab, requiring numerous inspections and approvals. In another unforeseen complication, the partners had to apply for a new business license because they've been closed so long.

"It's more than me and John just making dough balls," said Petrow, laughing.

Burt's Place, 8541 Ferris Ave., Morton Grove, 847-965-7997.

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Donations boost nonprofits hurt by state budget logjam

BY GENEVIEVE BOOKWALTER
Pioneer Press

Donations and interest have been up this year at two of the bigger nonprofit organizations that focus on women's issues in the near north suburbs.

Instead of celebrating, leaders are grappling with an Illinois budget impasse that has created a hole in their budgets bigger than what an uptick in donations can fill.

"People are very interested in helping out, and that's very heartwarming and rewarding," saidDenise Wolf Markham, executive director of Lifespan, a center to help victims of domestic violence, with offices in Des Plaines and Chicago. She said many people especially have asked about helping immigrant women and children.

"All that is extremely helpful," Markham said, "but no, it doesn't help us with our budget issue."

At issue is the lack of an Illinois state budget for the past 18 months, as legislators in Springfield remain gridlocked. While the budget is held up, Illinois generally is not paying bills for social services that the state typically funds. Nor is Illinois distributing much of the federal money and grants that are given to the state as a clearinghouse, nonprofit officials said.

At Life Span, Markham said, the state has reneged on a signed contract to provide social services, leaving the organization short about $400,000 to pay for services already provided. That's about 70 percent of the center's budget to provide counseling. Life Span serves about 3,000 women and children annually, officials there said.

Those problems are also affecting other nonprofit groups around Chicago and the state, said Jack Kaplan, director of public policy and advocacy for United Way of Metropolitan Chicago.

Anecdotally, individual donations are largely up among groups that help those in need, Kaplan said. He will know more specific numbers after the end of the year. But, "no way they can, in any way, make up the hole made by the state right now," he said.

In addition, the state's budget stalemate puts increasing pressure on individuals who can give, Kaplan said, and ratchets up competition between services for the available dollars.

At YWCA Evanston/North Shore, President and CEO Karen Singer said donations are noticeably up since Donald Trump won November's presidential election. For some who felt helpless after Hillary Clinton's loss, it was a way to make an impact right away in causes they cared about, she said.

Clinton's candidacy elevated the conversation of violence against women to a national stage, Singer said.

"Immediately after the election people went online" and donated, Singer said. She will have a total amount after the end of the year.

Singer said the YWCA in February plans to open a new long-term housing center for women in need in Evanston. Staff next year is expanding their financial literacy programs for women, among other services.

She said 2017 could be difficult. The YWCA depends on state and federal dollars to find more than 20 percent of its budget, with a large portion coming from the state.

"I think it's going to be a challenging year," Singer said. "I think we all have to remain engaged in protecting rights: women's rights, racial rights, civil rights."
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Lincolnwood police, trustees to consider more cameras around town

BY NATALIE HAYES
Pioneer Press

A spike in burglaries this year as reported by Lincolnwood police is prompting village officials to consider installing surveillance cameras to monitor some public areas.

Compared with the past five years when the village averaged 61 residential and commercial burglaries per year, 66 homes and businesses were burglarized during the first 11 months of 2016, according to a report from Lincolnwood Police Chief Bob LaMantia.

Vehicular burglaries have also seen an increase this year, with 68 reported to police between January and November compared with the five-year average of 62, according to the report LaMantia presented to village trustees during a committee of the whole meeting earlier this month.

"Burglaries are up this year, no doubt about it, but there's an increase all across the suburbs," LaMantia said. "Residential burglaries are of the greatest concern because it's an invasion of personal space - even if you're not home when it happens you still feel violated."

LaMantia said police have been working to curtail the crimes, including assembling a task force to collaborate with other area police departments.

The conversation about how to address the rising burglary rates continued on Dec. 20, when LaMantia and trustees weighed the pros and cons of adding additional cameras to the village's existing public video surveillance system.

The 70 cameras currently in operation are used mostly to monitor village-owned properties like the police department and public works building, the report indicated.

Additionally, cameras are commonly used in North Shore area communities to monitor places like parks, train stations and village buildings like police and fire departments, according to a study LaMantia presented that shows eight nearby communities use public surveillance in various ways.

If village officials support a plan to add more cameras in Lincolnwood, they would be installed on public streets, officials said.

LaMantia listed high costs, including the additional manpower that would be needed to monitor the footage, as potential negatives.

"A lot of people watch 'CSI' and other (crime) shows, and while they're very entertaining, it's actually much, much more labor intensive than you think to monitor these cameras," he said. "You can record data for 24 hours, and if you know a suspect passed through the location, you have to review 24 hours worth of data to retrieve that data."

LaMantia said placing cameras mostly to monitor village-public areas currently in operation are used to monitor village's existing public video surveillance system.

"But you've still got to review all that footage, every day, every week, because you're not watching it live," LaMantia said. "You record it, you look at it."

Despite the uptick in burglaries, however, the most serious types of violent crime, as categorized by the FBI Uniform Crime Report, such as murder, sexual assault, battery and robbery, remain uncommon in Lincolnwood.

The Urban Institute's report described the decision to install public cameras as a "significant undertaking" that requires "administrators and jurisdictions to confront both financial and political challenges."

The report notes that surveillance systems have been successful in reducing crime in some major cities, but advises municipalities to consider potential pitfalls and to review how surveillance systems have fared in other towns with similar demographics, population sizes and crime rates before deciding to invest the time and funding in a camera system.

LaMantia said placing cameras "is a significant undertaking" that requires planning and a "significant expense."

"We're putting a camera near the school district and in parks, but if there's one across the street pointing right into my living room - that might not be OK with," Trustee Jeshal Patel said.

Lincolnwood trustees tabled the discussion to the next committee of the whole meeting scheduled for January.

Then, LaMantia is expected to make a recommendation to postpone the decision for at least a year.

Natalie Hayes is a freelancer.
Three school board candidates married to D64 teachers
Marital status could potentially result in legal issues, official says

BY JENNIFER JOHNSON
Pioneer Press

Three candidates running for the Park Ridge-Niles School District 64 Board of Education could have some big decisions to make regarding their participation in the next teachers contract negotiations if they are elected in April.

The candidates are each married to District 64 teachers whose salaries, benefits and other employment-related issues are covered under a contract that is developed between members of the school board and teachers union.

Personnel-related expenses make up the bulk of the district's budget.

Candidate Greg Bublitz, himself the director of student services in neighboring East Maine School District 63, is the husband of Kirsten Bublitz, a special education teacher at Carpenter School. Candidate Norman Dziedzic Jr. is married to Sonja Dziedzic, an art teacher at Emerson Middle School. Candidate Michael Schaab is the husband of Caroline Schaab, a fourth-grade teacher at Field School.

Patricia Whitten, chairwoman of the Illinois Council of School Attorneys Executive Committee, said it is not a legal conflict of interest for school board members to be married to an employee of the district they serve.

But, when it comes to contract talks and approvals, they may want to take a step back, she said.

"Even though something is not illegal, many people may look questionably on it," Whitten said. "We usually advise school board members in that position to abstain from voting on the teachers union contract."

As far as negotiations go, board members married to teachers could potentially face a legal challenge from taxpayers if they are perceived as advocating in favor of contract terms, Whitten said.

The advice of the Illinois Council of School Attorneys committee is that board members with relatives working for the school district abstain from contract talks and casting a vote on the final contract, she said.

The Code of Conduct for school board members, adopted by the board of directors of the Illinois Association of School Boards in 1976, states that board members "will avoid any conflict of interest or the appearance of impropriety which could result from [the] position, and will not use [their] board membership for personal gain or publicity."

Ben Silver, an attorney with the Elmhurst-based Citizen Advocacy Center, a government monitoring agency, agreed that membership on a school board itself is not a conflict of interest for district spouses, but "when it comes to negotiating contracts, that's when we get into a tricky situation."

"Usually, the board member will recuse themselves when they are negotiating or voting on a contract," Silver said. "The problem is, if there are three board members [with spouses covered under the contract], you'll have a substantial part of the board not voting."

The current contract with the Park Ridge Education Association extends through mid-2020, putting negotiations and possible ratification of a subsequent teachers contract within the four-year terms of candidates elected in April 2017. The school board consists of seven members.

Bublitz said he would abstain from teacher contract negotiations and voting on the contract if he is elected.

"Not every board member will be on the negotiating team anyway, so it's not like there will be a lack of representation on the board," Bublitz said. "And in voting, my first inclination would be to recuse myself if it ever comes to that."

"That's been deemed to be a conflict of interest," he said, adding that collective bargaining covers a large group of people, not just one individual.

"I think the courts have not had many instances that I've seen," Silver said. "That said, in the past, these members have recused themselves from voting in any instance that I've seen," Silver said.

Ultimately, it is up to voters to decide who they want representing them on their local school board, Silver said.

"To me, the really important thing here is that the voters know exactly what's going on and have all the information," he said. "These candidates should explain that they have spouses who are teachers and explain how they are going to handle these situations."

In addition to contracts, the board of education has also voted on disciplinary measures for teachers.

Other candidates running for four, four-year seats on the District 64 board in April are Rick Biagi, an attorney and current member of the Park Ridge Park Board; Larry Ryles, a Park Ridge mayoral candidate in 2013; Eastman Tiu, a teacher at Willowbrook High School in Villa Park; Alfred Sanchez; and Monica Wojnicki, a Franklin School PTO member and former adjunct professor of health careers at Harper College in Palatine.

Dziedzic said he does not plan to recuse himself from negotiations or voting if he is elected.

"That's been deemed to not be a conflict of interest," he said, adding that collective bargaining covers a large group of people, not just one individual.

"If there's some legal decision to the contrary, then I'd follow the law," Dziedzic said.

Dziedzic and Schaab said they were not asked by the teachers union to run for the school board.

In 2015, when Bublitz last ran for the District 64 board, the PREA president at the time said that Bublitz was a candidate union members had reached out to about running.

Silver acknowledged that, as a matter of law, spouses voting on teacher contracts "is a pretty gray area right now," as the courts have not had many opportunities to weigh in.

"In the past, these members have recused themselves from voting in any instance that I've seen," Silver said.

"The really important thing here is that the voters know exactly what's going on and have all the information," he said. "These candidates should explain that they have spouses who are teachers and explain how they are going to handle these situations."
Niles West students honored with fine arts awards

Niles West High School student Gabby Ubaldo, center in the left photo, and Niles West High School senior Jimbo Pestano, center in the right photo, both received a Fine and Applied Arts award during the Dec. 13 Niles Township High School District 219 board of education meeting. Ubaldo is pictured with members of the NTHS School District 219 board of education. Pestano is pictured with his mother and members of the board of education.
Judge Cleary appointed to subcircuit that includes Niles, Morton Grove

Pioneer Press Staff Report

The Illinois Supreme Court appointed a Glenview resident to fill a Cook County Circuit Court judicial vacancy, according to a news release from the state's highest court.

Gerald V. Cleary, who currently serves as a Cook County Circuit Court judge in the First Municipal District, was tapped to fill the vacancy in the 10th Subcircuit that came about after Judge Donald J. Suriano retired Nov. 2. Cleary's appointment comes after being recommended by Ill. Supreme Court Justice Mary Jane Theis, according to the release.

The 10th Subcircuit includes parts of the city of Chicago, Niles and Morton Grove. Cleary has overseen jury and bench trials in civil matters "and has received stellar reviews from his superiors and colleagues on the bench," the release states.

Cleary took over the post on Nov. 3 and will serve until December 2018, following the General Election that year, according to the news release.

Before he was a judge, Cleary was a civil trial attorney who litigated commercial and civil disputes for health care providers, insurance companies, municipalities, businesses, aviation and trucking carriers for over a quarter-century, according to the release.

In addition to tackling hundreds of mediations and arbitrations, Cleary also successfully litigated 25 cases to jury verdict, the release states.

Cleary has spent his entire legal career in Cook County and was a founding partner at business and litigation services firm Smith Amundsen, and most recently at his own law firm of Pappas O'Connor -- which specializes in corporate, labor, municipal and education law, according to the firm's website.

Cleary received his law degree from the Loyola University School of Law in Chicago and was admitted to the Illinois Bar in 1989.

Park Ridge welcomes Pickwick

By Jennifer Johnson

Pioneer Press

Park Ridge's new Pickwick Restaurant is up and running.

With a new logo, paint and booths, the restaurant opened Dec. 19 at 1 S. Prospect Ave. -- home to the old Pickwick Restaurant and, more recently, The Pick.

"It feels great," owner Dino Sarantopoulos said of finally being in business after several months of preparations.

The menu features appetizers like a hummus plate, cheese quesadillas and chicken tenders; five different kinds of salads; sandwiches ranging from the "Ridger's" Signature Burger -- with cheddar, bacon, red onion, mushrooms and thousand island dressing -- to a patty melt, panini, Reuben and corned beef on rye; and dinner entrees that include sirloin steak, London broil, chopped steak, chicken, charbroiled salmon and beer-battered cod.

The ground beef used for burgers comes from grass-fed cows, and chickens are raised without antibiotics and with a vegetarian diet, the menu says. The Pickwick Restaurant's hours are 6 a.m. to 9 p.m. seven days a week, Sarantopoulos said.

jjohnson@pioneerlocal.com
Skokie’s oldest church to mark 150 years

St. Peter’s sits across from Village Hall

BY MIKE ISAACS
Pioneer Press

Church leaders said the 150th anniversary of St. Peter’s United Church of Christ was too big to mark with just one celebration, so there will be a yearlong one.

No church in the area has been operating for so long, according to church leaders who will mark 2017 with monthly special anniversary events.

“It’s a huge milestone. It’s a testament to the people throughout the decades and generations,” said the Rev. Richard Lanford, pastor of the church, who has his own milestone coming up. He will soon be celebrating 25 years with the church.

Some people get the longest-standing church in Skokie confused with the other, more visible St. Peter’s Church in the heart of downtown Skokie.

St. Peter’s United Church of Christ, as opposed to St. Peter’s Catholic Church, is the one across from the library and Village Hall, the one that has been serving its members for coming up on 150 years with the church.

It’s an honor to serve here and it’s an honor to have been serving here this long,” Lanford said. “We have a great and active group of people here. We always have.”

According to the church’s own history, St. Peter’s was established May 5, 1867, as St. Peter’s Evangelical Lutheran Church by German immigrant farmers.

“It is the first church organized in what was then called Niles Center,” reads a church history document. Niles Center preceded the name Skokie.

The first building was dedicated in 1868, a church cemetery was then bought in 1880.

That building was severely damaged by lightning in 1901, and the current building – which houses the sanctuary, Memorial Room and two towers – was built and dedicated in 1903, according to documents chronicling the church’s history.

Barbara Todd, a church member since 1958, said she was “born into it” and her husband was raised in this church, she said.

“When I married him, this came with it,” she said. “I was grateful for it.”

Todd said she was a play director at Highland Park High School just before she joined the church. Since then, the church has an active youth membership, she said.

“T was grateful for it”

Todd said she was a play director at Highland Park High School just before she joined the church. Since then, the church has an active youth membership, she said.

“I was grateful for it.”

The church looks durable despite being around for so long. Leaders say a significant renovation in 1981 helped keep the church moving forward.

“The building helps,” Schneider said. “People come and see the sanctuary and love it, and they want to be here.”

The stained glass windows at St. Peter’s United are a celebrated part of the church’s history.

The stained glass windows

The stained glass windows at St. Peter’s United Church of Christ, in Skokie, believe the church’s baptismal font is from the early 1900s. The current church was built and dedicated in 1903.

The Rev. Richard Lanford, pastor of St. Peter’s United Church of Christ in Skokie, believes the church’s baptismal font is from the early 1900s. The current church was built and dedicated in 1903.

one of the most ethnically diverse villages in the state.

Regardless of these demographic changes, leaders say, the church has always worked well with other religious institutions and welcomed people of different backgrounds.

Todd said in the nearly 60 years she has been a member there have only been four ministers.

“T says something about this church,” she said.

The church anniversary kickoff event Jan. 1 is open only to members and friends, but following will be a monthly lineup of activities through the whole year including a May 6 anniversary celebration and spaghetti dinner.

“We’re still here despite everything,” Schneider said.

“We want to use every opportunity at our disposal to remind people and show people what we’re about. I can’t think of a better reason to do it than 150 years in one spot.”

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Top New Year’s resolutions are too self-centered

Notice anything unusual about these? They are the top 5 New Year’s resolutions, as reported by the Nielsen research firm. They are:
1. Stay fit and healthy
2. Lose weight
3. Spend less, save more
4. Enjoy life to the fullest
5. Spend more time with family

All of these resolutions are “me” centered, things I can do for myself to make my life better, more enjoyable.

What’s missing from this list are resolutions to help other people. There are millions of people who are homeless, abused, poor, hungry, sick, infirm. It’s just strange - and kind of depressing - that we are starting the new year with thoughts only of ourselves.

It would be nice if at least one of the actions we contemplate doing in the new year was helping to better someone else’s life. That helping others, people in need, is not one of our top New Year’s resolutions might be a symptom of where we are heading as a country and as a people.

A lot has been written about America becoming a nation of exclusionary groups, of tribes. We define who is in our tribe. Those we decide are outside our tribe are bad, not worthy of our concern or assistance or even tolerance.

Our tribe has no use for this or that religion, this or that race, this or that ethnicity.

The results of the November election only confirm this observation. We Americans prided ourselves on being a home for people of many religions, races and ethnicities. America was where the poor and persecuted could come for refuge and life. Now, we are going to build walls. Now we are deporting those who seek refuge.

The new year seems to promise these tribal tendencies - these “I’m OK you’re not” attitudes and actions will increase.

Perhaps the No. 1 resolution Americans should make for the new year is that we will not let our country devolve into a collection of hostile tribes, but remain a United States.

Paul Sassone is a freelance columnist for Pioneer Press.

Immediate action needed to put Illinois students first

A new report on the state of public school children in Illinois ought to raise the eyebrows of anyone who cares about education and the future of Illinois.

The issue: State educators have some big challenges in getting school children to perform at grade level and prepared to achieve in college and beyond.

And I don’t see anyone doing much about it beyond nibbling at the edges. It is definitely not the statewide priority it should be.

The sad facts are outlined in a new report called “Every Student Counts,” put together by the advocacy group Advance Illinois. That’s a nice title for a report and a beautiful sentiment, but as I have written about many times, not every student counts in Illinois.

The main issue facing the state is that in 43 percent of the public school districts serving Illinois children, more than half of the students come from low-income households. But it is worse than that. The Illinois state school report card tells us that just under half, or 49.9 percent, of all children attending public school in Illinois are low income.

I have no desire to make a judgment about children from low-income households. All Illinois children deserve a quality, free public education.

But research shows that it costs more to educate children from low-income households compared to their more affluent peers. Also, these same children start school behind their more affluent peers.

That can only be expected, when parents are financially stressed just to keep things together. They might not have the time or energy or resources to devote to preparing their children for school as other families do.

The report also finds that fewer low-income students are adequately prepared to go on to college and be successful in college compared to their wealthier peers.

The sad results are that fewer low-income students are adequately prepared to go on to college and be successful in college compared to their wealthier peers and those who do go on to college are less likely to gain a degree.

In short, Illinois schools are failing our most vulnerable students. Most likely, our schools are ill-prepared to handle the task before them, when half the students are from low-income households and 43 percent of school districts across the state have a majority of low-income students.

Does the state have a responsibility to spend more money and time for these children? I think the answer is obvious. You bet it does.

A quality education for children is the one way we can ensure that the luck of the draw of birth is not destiny for a child. A free, quality public education can lift a child to success. That’s the promise of America, isn’t it?

And if Illinois does not provide quality public education, what does that foretell about the future health of this state?

It’s not good. We need to take action now.

Randy Blaser is a freelance columnist for Pioneer Press.
The one resolution we all should make: put health before fitness

NICOLE RADZISZEWSKI
Mama's Gotta Move

I'm never really ready for New Year's resolutions. The concept usually sneaks up on me, somewhere between my kids' bouts with the stomach flu and my nibbling through leftover Christmas cookies.

Then every year on Dec. 30, I proclaim, "New year, new me! I’m so excited to wake up on Jan. 1 and start my new lifestyle of clean eating and KonMari organizing and drinking more water than coffee."

Ha. Actually, I’d like to shout, “Shame on you fitness industry and Pinterest people for bombarding me with photos of bikini models and vertically folded clothes! Let me be at peace with my winter weight and messy house!"

But, alas, I’ve been around long enough to know that resolutions are a big thing for many people. And I understand the urge to start the year with a fresh start, a change in habits, a shift in priorities.

Fitness-wise, you might be considering joining a gym, starting a new diet, training for your first 5K, or simply continuing to chug along with your workout regimen. I’d like to make just one request:

Put health before “fitness.”

Before you dive wholeheartedly into your New Year’s fitness agenda and a “no excuses” mentality, consider whether your actions are in the best interest of your overall health.

When you’re deciding whether to get up at 5 a.m. to work out, and you’re sleep-deprived and fighting a cold, put health before fitness.

When you’re opting between yoga and the treadmill, and deep down you know you need to breathe and stretch more than you need another run, put health before fitness.

When you claim you don’t have time to see a physical therapist about the leaking that happens when you jump, but somehow you find the time to do CrossFit, put health before fitness.

When you find yourself struggling with signs of depression, anxiety or stress and you attempt to bury them in exercise addiction, put health before fitness.

When you’re considering a restrictive diet to get the weight off, put health before fitness.

When your knee is killing you, but you have the urge to run just one more mile, put health before fitness.

I know every one of these women. I’ve been most of these women. So often we know our decisions are not in our bodies’ best interest, yet we continue to exploit our health in the name of “fitness.”

In the long run, it catches up to us. The pursuit of an aesthetic, of physical strength, of a constant flow of endorphins, of a PR (personal record), of the image of being fit. None of these matter if our health is in question. If we’re injured, fatigued, depressed, undernourished, anxious, sick or on the verge of one or more of these.

So by all means, go ahead and start fresh with your fitness goals. Challenge yourself. Lose the excuses. But be honest about what your body really needs this year. Put health first.

Nicole Radziszewski is a freelance columnist. She lives in River Forest and is a certified personal trainer and mother of two. Check Nicole out on Facebook at Facebook.com/mamas-gottamove.
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OPINION

12 requests of the Christmas season

ERIC SCOTT

In this season of giving, I thought I'd put a little spin on "The Twelve Days of Christmas" and put in a dozen requests that I'd like to see happen in the new year and beyond. Some of you may have similar thoughts on these "asks" and others might think otherwise. Well, here we go...

1. If you choose to do your own TV or radio commercials, please stop yelling at all of us! Yes, we can hear you just fine in our living rooms and cars. You see, it's called a microphone.

2. When driving at night, do not flip on your high beams to see better in traffic - particularly if you're driving right behind another car or coming the other way on a 2-lane road. I know you can now see us better, but we can't see anything.

3. An office etiquette tip here: If there are assorted bakery goodies for everyone on the break room table, it is not, I repeat, not OK for you to rip off the top half of the muffin for yourself and leave the bottom chunk in the wrapper for the next visitor. C'mon, who does that? We all want the muffin top, just take the whole thing.

4. And now a message to certain football game broadcast color commentators: You are not getting paid by the word! It is not necessary to fill in every waking second between plays with "analysis." Don't spend four times longer than the actual time it took for the two-yard run into a gigantic defensive tackle.

5. If you are in front of the line at Starbucks during the morning rush with 17 people behind you, it is not OK to start asking about the fat content of the breakfast sandwiches. For the sake of your health and our patience, it's quick order - quick out!

6. I have only one Facebook etiquette request. Yes, it's really great that you're at a nice restaurant or a fantastic vacation resort, but please stop posting photos of all your meals before consuming. We'll take your word for it, the menu is really good.

7. Speaking of restaurants, when you're at an "order at the counter" emporium and you ask for a cup for water instead of ordering a fountain drink - just fill the cup with water! First, if you want a real drink, just pay for it. Second, am I the only one filling the cup with water along with two lemon wedges and a packet of sugar for lemonade on the fly?

8. And hey, as long as we're talking about popular lunch places ... You are allowed only one up-sell when I'm ordering at your sandwich specialty place. If you insist on always asking if I want to add chicken to an all-veggie and humus Mediterranean sandwich, then you don't get to ask if I also want a shake or soup with that.

9. I can do an entirely separate column about cellphone use in public, but will limit it to one request here. Please end your in-store cellphone conversation before you get to the check-out counter. You come off as rude and completely obnoxious to everyone you're trying to ignore - when you're really bringing more attention to yourself.

10. After 2 months, you have to take your commercial off the air before it becomes physically irritating to watch. For example, the birds flying into the open apartment window at the end of the car commercial doesn't get any funnier when watching it for the 487th time.

11. Please, please, please stop driving with small dogs on your lap!

12. And finally, one grammar request. We need a wholesale review of when to use "is" and "are." It's not, "There's tons of stuff here," or "There is a million reasons to like this list." However, there are a million reasons why it's good to correctly talk about more than one thing.

Eric Scott is a freelance columnist for Pioneer Press.
The best thing I ate this year

Area chefs share favorites of 2016

BY VERONICA HINI
Pioneer Press

What happens when you ask 50 Chicago-area food pros to name the best thing they ate this year? You end up with a list of must-try places to keep you busy tasting all through next year. We checked in with some of Chicago's top chefs to get the scoop and we promise you'll be checking this list twice — and likely a few more times after that.

Greg Biggers
Executive Chef, Sofitel Chicago Magnificent Mile and Cafe des Architectes in Chicago

Best meal: Smoked Oyster Chowder
Restaurant: Eat Rice, 2957 W. Diversey Parkway, Chicago; www.EatFatRice.com

The skinny: "The oysters were plump and smoked flawlessly. The potatoes were cooked to perfection and the broth was super delicious with just a hint of spicy to get the blood moving."

Patrick Rhea
Owner, Dell Rhea's Chicken Basket in Willowbrook

Best meal: Perry's Famous Pork Chop
Restaurant: Perry's Steakhouse and Grille, 5 Oakbrook Center, Oak Brook; www.PerrysSteakhouse.com

The skinny: "It's what bagels, lox and cream cheese wants to be when it grows up. I could have eaten a hundred more."

Ryan Pfeiffer
Chef de Cuisine, Blackbird in Chicago

Best meal: Dungeness Crab
Restaurant: Smyth, 177 N. Ada St., Chicago; www.SmythAndTheLoyalist.com

The skinny: "I've had many excellent meals this year, so it is hard to choose just one. One that comes to mind was at Smyth — Dungeness crab with foie gras poached in seawater with scrambled kani miso. I have never had poached foie gras, nor have I even thought about it. John Shields and Nick Romero are doing some seriously awesome things at Smyth."

Julie Warbinski
Chef de Cuisine, Big Star in Chicago

Best meal: Roasted Turnips
Restaurant: Bad Hunter, 802 W. Randolph St., Chicago; www.BadHunter.com

The skinny: "Course after course was a shocker, but the pineapple was the star. When it comes out, you kinda think, 'Come on, pineapple?' but then you eat it and just realize that you are in the hands of someone way cooler than you, and you stop asking questions and just enjoy."

Paul Virant
Executive Chef and Owner, Vie Restaurant in Western Springs, Perennial Virant in Chicago and Vistro in Hinsdale

Best meal: The house-made plin filled with la tur, with a sauce of butter and thyme
Restaurant: Osteria Langhe, 2824 W. Armitage Ave., Chicago; www.OsteriaLanghe.com

The skinny: "La Tur cheese is a cow, sheep and goats milk cheese that is like Brie from the Piedmont region. It is rich and creamy with just the right amount of tang. This created a perfect filling for a sublime hand-pinched ravioli with just butter and fresh thyme."

Perry Hendrix
Chef de Cuisine, with In Chicago

Best meal: Pastrami Trout, Kimchi Schmear, Fennel Salad
Restaurant: Snaggletooth, 2819 N. Southport Ave., Chicago; www.SnaggletoothChicago.com

The skinny: "It's what bagels, lox and cream cheese wants to be when it grows up. Can't go wrong with any of the seriously delicious cured fish — the best I've had."

Fabio Viviani
Executive Chef, Siena Tavern in Chicago

Best meal: Bao to the Pork sandwich
Restaurant: Pork & Mindy's, 1623 N. Milwaukee Ave., Chicago; www.PorkAndMindy's.com

The skinny: "I tell you, the man (Jeff Mauro) gets it right when making sandwiches. He takes pork shoulder and tops off the sandwich with ingredients like cucumber and jalapeno relish and mixes it with an Asian plum sauce on a bun. Plus, you must add a side of tots."

Rick Bayless
Chef, Frontera Restaurants

Best meal: All of the pasta dishes
Restaurant: Monteverde, 1020 W. Madison St., Chicago; www.MonteverdeChicago.com

The skinny: "For me, homemade pasta is dreamy. Cook it with love, and serve it in a super-cool setting, and you have some of Chicago's greatest Italian dishes."

Rob Sidor
Executive Chef, Bohemian House in Chicago

Best meal: Bao to the Pork sandwich
Restaurant: Pork & Mindy's, 1623 N. Milwaukee Ave., Chicago; www.PorkAndMindy's.com

The skinny: "The single bite that really left me wanting more was the Quail Egg Raviolo at Schw. It's super decadent, flawlessly executed, and the egg bursts perfectly on your palate. I could have eaten a hundred more."

Sarah Grueneberg
Chef/Partner, Monteverde Restaurant in Chicago and Pastificio in Highwood

Best meal: Buttered Pipe Pasta & Clams, Green Chilli Raguout, assorted limes
Restaurant: Roister, 951 W. Fulton Market, Chicago; www.RoisterRestaurant.com

The skinny: "The texture of this dish is amazing! When they finish the pasta, they toss in finger lime and tobiko, which adds pops of texture and a fresh zing of lime."

Mark Hellyar
Chef/Partner, Momotaro in Chicago

Best meal: Tasting menu
Restaurant: Boka, 1729 N. Halsted St., Chicago; www.BokaChicago.com

The skinny: "Overall, my best meal of 2016 was a tasting menu over the summer from Chef Lee Wolen at Boka where every dish always delivers. My favorite Boka dish was delicious, but the real stand out was the roasted turnips dish with sesame, shoyu butter and crispy bacon-radish croûtons. Dan managed to turn a not-so-popular vegetable into a dish people crave and want to order."

Turn to Chefs, Page 18
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Chefs, from Page 17

Gene Kato
Chef/Owner, Surimi Robata Bar
In Chicago

Best meal: Kalbi —
Korean Barbecued Beef
Short Ribs
Restaurant: Cho Sun
OK Restaurant, 4200 N.
Lincoln Ave., Chicago;
www.ChoSunOKRestaurant.com
The skinny: “It’s always a humble pasta dish that wins me over. And, that’s just what happened during my meal at Giant. Chef Jason Vincent’s menu hits every note of taste, texture and flavors and the Bolognese course was exceptional! Rustic, rich and perfectly cooked handmade pasta shells. The portion size is just right, leaving you room to work your way through the rest of his exciting menu.”

Bill Kim
Chef, Urbanbelly, BellyQ, Belly Shack in Chicago

Best meal: Bolognese Pasta
Restaurant: Giant, 3209 W. Armitage Ave., Chicago; www.GiantRestaurant.com
The skinny: “It’s always a humble pasta dish that wins me over. And, that’s just what happened during my meal at Giant. Chef Jason Vincent’s menu hits every note of taste, texture and flavors and the Bolognese course was exceptional! Rustic, rich and perfectly cooked handmade pasta shells. The portion size is just right, leaving you room to work your way through the rest of his exciting menu.”

Leonard Hollander
Chef/Partner, Arbor in Chicago

Best meal: Chicken Pad Thai, Medium Spicy
Restaurant: Thai Aree House, 3592 N.
Milwaukee Ave., Chicago
The skinny: “It was the first dish that my 2-year-old son ever ordered in a restaurant on his own, and it was a complete grand slam. Just the right savory-ness, along with sweet, smoky, and perfectly cooked noodles. He ate most of it with chopsticks, with a couple of breaks to dance out his excitement in the aisle. I’m excited to share this one, one of my true faves!”

Fabio Capparelli
Executive Chef, Rosebud Restaurants

Best meal: Cebiche Tanta
Restaurant: Tanta Chicago, 118 W.
Grand Ave., Chicago; www.TantaChicago.com
The skinny: “My wife and I went to Tanta Chicago for our anniversary. This Peruvian restaurant really knows how to make the flavor and culture of Peru come alive. The Cebiche Tanta has scallops and shrimp with a creamy rocoto-aji amarillo sauce. The citrus taste was very balanced along with the spices. The flavors of this meal are right on with what you would eat in Peru.”

Michael Ciapciak
Owner, Bang Bang Pie & Biscuits in Chicago

Best meal: Small plates (oysters, Bing Bread, sesame leaves) and whatever the banchan or pickles of the week happen to be
Restaurant: Parachute Restaurant, 3500 N. Elston Ave., Chicago; www.ParachuteRestaurant.com
The skinny: “I likely visited Parachute the most out of any of my favorite restaurants in 2016 (Giant, La Sirena Clandestina, Mott Street, Coalfire, Lula Cafe, Honey Butter Fried Chicken) and under many different circumstances. Every visit provided something new and fresh and craveable, but I never failed to start with the decadent Bing Bread with sour cream butter; the crispy sesame leaves; bright oysters and the insane pickles or banchan which tend to vary every visit. Though it is a nationally recognized restaurant that is deserving of every accolade it has received, it is not too far from my home and for that reason acts as a neighborhood spot. The team is super welcoming and knowledgeable and the food is innovative and new yet somehow comforting and familiar at the same time.”

John Coletta
Executive Chef/Managing Partner, Quartino Ristorante & Wine Bar in Chicago

Best meal: Bucatini Carbonara
Restaurant: Nonnina, 340 N. Clark St., Chicago; www.NonninaChicago.com
The skinny “This pasta preparation was perfectly executed. The flavors were vibrant, fresh and crispy. The simplicity of this dish is often over looked and rarely executed to this level. The pasta was perfectly made and cooked to the al dente stage and then tossed with pancetta, Protected Designation of Origin (DOP) pecorino, freshly ground black pepper and topped with an organic egg yolk.”

Gale Gand
Pastry Chef/Partner, Tru, maker of Gale’s Root Beer

Best meal: Linguine and clams
Restaurant: Miramar Bistro, 301 Waukegan Ave., Highwood; www.MiramarBistro.com
The skinny: “Chef Gale Viti’s is the most delicious version of linguine and clams I’ve ever had and I’ve had a lot of them. His has fresh little neck clams just popped open, wilted spinach, and roasted grape tomatoes,

Turn to Chefs, Page 19
and perfectly cooked al dente handmade linguine, along with a garlic-y broth that should be sopped up with his stellar artisan bread basket selection. It's served in an iron casserole and is just a special occasion when it hits the table. Have it with a glass of chilled rose. I keep going back for it year after year."

Louie Alexakis
Chef/Owner, Avli Restaurant and Rotisserie in Winnetka

Best meal: Chopped Brisket Sandwich, Hand-cut Fries, Peach Cobbler
Restaurant: Smoque BBQ, 3800 N. Pulaski Road, Chicago; www.smoquebbq.com

The skinny: "BBQ is my go-to comfort food. Brisket done right is a perfect blend of tastes and textures. Smoque is my usual quick stop when I am heading to the city. If food was something you wore, it's like an old flannel shirt or a warm blanket. Add the hand-cut fries and peach cobbler and all I need is a fireplace and a good book."

Margarita Challenger
Executive Chef/Owner, GuanaJauto Contemporary Mexican & Tequila Bar in Glencoe

Best meal: Chengdu Dan Dan Noodle Soup and Shrimp and Chive Dumpling

The skinny: "The Dan Dan noodle soup is absolutely delicious. The noodles are homemade and they are tasty without being salty. The Spicy Stir Fry Noodles are great too. It's like going to my friend's Chinese home for soup. It's a small mom and pop shop but every time I've been there, it's been packed. The locals obviously know where to find great Chinese."

Rebecca Zuckerman
Pastry Chef, Seven Lions in Chicago and Terra & Vine in Evanston

Best meal: Cassoulet
Restaurant: Maude's Liquor Bar, 840 W. Randolph St., Chicago; www.maudesliquorbar.com

The skinny: "This was by far my favorite thing that I ate this year, and possibly over the past few years, because of how comforting it is. It is a traditional French dish that consists of a rich white bean stew, with tomatoes, carrots, bacon, pork belly, garlic sausage, duck confit and bone marrow all topped with toasty, sourdough bread crumbs. So yes, it is a little gluttonous, but we're going into the cold season so I feel a little better about indulging."

Michael Lachowicz
Chef, Restaurant Michael and George Trois in Winnetka

Best meal: Assorted charcuterie platter
Restaurant: Owen & Engine, 2700 N. Western Ave., Chicago; www.OwenAndEngine.com
The skinny: "Made me feel like I was back in Lyon! Beautiful textures in the forcemeats and delicious house-made accompaniments including pickled onions and perfect crusty bread. Exceptional technique and flavor."

Angelyne Canicosa
Pastry Chef, Vie in Western Springs and Vistro in Hinsdale

Best meal: Crispy pata (pork shank), beef kare kare (peanut and oxtail stew), chicken inasal (calamansi, soy and vinegar marinated, coal-grilled chicken) and more.
Restaurant: Kawayan, 4859 N. Milwaukee Ave., Chicago
The skinny: "I chose this meal because it's truly authentic Filipino homestyle cooking. It's not fussy or trying to be anything that it really isn't. Rich flavors are complemented by bright acidity. Everything is so well-balanced and satisfying. The dishes at Kawayan remind me of my grandmother's cooking and also of the simple roadside eateries you can find everywhere in the Philippines."

Brian Huston
Chef, Boitwood in Evanston

Best meal: Corned Beef Hash
Restaurant: Tre Kronor, 325 W. Foster Ave., Chicago; www.trekronorrestaurant.com
The skinny: "My wife, Christy, and I go to Tre on Monday mornings when Boitwood is closed. I've had the corned beef hash twice over the last year so I can say it's consistent and well-seasoned. The potatoes are diced fine so you could eat them with a spoon. I get it with eggs over easy and I squeeze the ceremonial orange twist over the plate to give it a little acid. I'd be hard pressed to find a better breakfast in Chicago."
A countdown and balloon drop will end a New Year's Eve Party for kids Dec. 31 in Glenview.

**FAMILY FRIENDLY**

**Games, activities, balloon drop ring in the new year**

**BY MYRNA PETLICKI**

Pioneer Press

New Year's comes 12 hours early at the Glenview Park District's Noon Year's Eve Party, 10:30 a.m.-noon Dec. 31 at Park Center, 2400 Chestnut Ave., with activities for kids of all ages.

"In our main gym, we're going to have a couple of inflatables in one part of the gym," said Jill Bruns, manager of programs. "In another part, we'll have crafts, coloring, tattoos and face painting. In another section, we'll have a tot area for ages 4 and below where we'll have a tot inflatable, scooters, carnival games and balls."

From 10:30-noon, a DJ will play music and lead activities in the lobby.

"We'll have some handouts, including hats and noisemakers," Bruns reported. "At 11:45, we'll start moving everybody down to the main lobby. We will do the countdown at noon and then there will be a big balloon drop."

The cost is $10 per child. Kids must be accompanied by a parent.

For details, call 847-724-5670 or go to www.glenviewparks.org.

**Hap-Pea New Year**

The LMNO Peas are back in a new book by Keith Baker, "Hap-Pea All Year!" Kids will hear the story and do activities related to the book during a special storytime, 11 a.m. Dec. 31 at Barnes and Noble, 55 Old Orchard Center, Skokie.

For details, call 847-676-2230 or go to www.barnesandnoble.com.

**Party hearty**

...at the Kohl Children's Museum's New Year's Eve Bash, 8:30-11 a.m. or 12:30-3 p.m. Dec. 31 at 2100 Patriot Blvd., Glenview. Wendy & DB will perform and there will be a DJ, hat making, family photos, free hair styling from KidSnips and a Times Square-style confetti drop. Tickets are $32 per person; $22 for members; children under 12 months are free.

For details, call 847-832-6600 or go to www.kohlchildrensmuseum.org.
The most important lesson I learn from going through my divorce is that divorce is 45 percent emotions, 45 percent numbers and 10 percent legal," said Sandy Arons, founder of Arons & Associates, a Tennessee-based company that helps clients get financially smart divorces.

Image source/GETTY

Quelling separation anxiety | Divorce advice from people who survived Page 3
**Tips for hosting a low-stress New Year’s party**

**By Judy Buchenot**

Now that Christmas is over, it's time to get ready to welcome the New Year. Mandy Giba is a professional corporate events planner that has a few suggestions for putting together a New Year’s Eve party. One of the first steps is to create a guest list.

“Don’t invite more people than you have room for,” she said. “And don’t invite your friend’s ex or anything like that. Don’t let your guests bring random friends either.”

Parties need food and beverages, but they don’t need to be overwhelming.

“I like simple,” said Giba, who grew up in Aurora but now lives in Chicago. Instead of setting up an elaborate buffet, she prefers to make what she calls “large format cocktails.”

This is a cocktail mix made up by the quart rather than in individual servings. “This way you don’t have to spend the evening being a bartender,” she said.

She likes to serve the large format cocktail in a big clear glass pitcher or in a glass beverage server with a spigot. “I look on Pinterest for cocktail recipes,” she said. “I did one for a holiday party recently that was the fun wall. I pick a wall and put up streamers and balloons and other party extras are fun additions. The sillier the better,” Giba said.

“During the party, Giba likes to pull out some games. “Cards Against Humanity is fun and so is Heads Up, which is a game that is an app on your phone. Anything to get everyone talking and having fun will work.”

Giba reminds party hosts to “be flexible. It’s a party, after all.” Don’t become stressed if a tray of mini quiches gets too brown or someone spills a drink or the ice runs out early. A party does not have to be perfect to be fun.

New Year’s Eve parties can be exhausting since they need to last at least until midnight, Giba said. “If it gets to be really late and you want people to leave, just tell them. If you think it might be a problem, a good way to avoid this is to start the party at your house and plan to go to a nearby bar for the countdown to midnight. Then everyone is at the bar celebrating and you can go home when you feel ready to go and they can go home when they want to go home.”

A final word of caution about New Year’s Eve from Giba concerns drinking and driving. “Some people collect car keys upon arrival and only give them back to people who aren’t drunk. Don’t let people drive drunk. Either call Uber to get them home or drive drunk. Don’t let people drive drunk. Either call Uber to get them home or drive drunk. Don’t let people drive drunk. Either call Uber to get them home or drive drunk.”

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**Giba’s Culinary Cue**

When serving a drink from a large glass container with a spigot, an attractive idea is to put sliced fruit inside the container. However, use fruit that floats and doesn’t break apart or the fruit bits will clog up the spigot.

**Dipped Grapes**

1. Remove grapes from the stems, wash and allow to dry completely. Melt candy coating. Place a toothpick in each grape. Hold toothpick to dip grapes in the candy coating until covered, roll in peanuts and place on waxed paper to harden. For a variation, use red grapes dipped in chocolate coating and sprinkle lightly with sea salt.

**Mini mozzarella skewers**

1 cup balsamic vinegar
1 pound mozzarella pearls
2 pints cherry tomatoes
20 fresh basil leaves

1. Place balsamic vinegar in a saucepan and simmer until reduced by half. Allow to cool. Drain pearls. Wash and drain tomatoes. Wash and cut basil leaves into thirds. Skewer one mozzarella pearl, one tomato and one basil leaf piece on a toothpick. Lay on a platter. Repeat until platter is full. Drizzle with balsamic vinegar reduction when ready to serve.

**Tiropita**

1/4 pound feta
1/4 pound smooth ricotta
3 eggs
1 pound filo dough, 4-5 thin sheets
1/4 cup butter, melted

1. Mix together feta, ricotta and eggs until fairly smooth. Set aside. Remove all the sheets of filo dough from the package. Cut into long, 4-inch strips.

2. Take one sheet and brush with melted butter. Lay a second sheet on top and brush with butter. Keep remaining sheets covered so they do not dry out. Place a tablespoon of filling in one corner. Fold corner across to make a small triangle. Continue folding side to side triangle to the end of the strip. Brush with butter and place on a cookie sheet lined with waxed paper. Continue until all filling is gone. Tiropita can be made a day ahead and covered and refrigerated until ready to use.

3. Bake at 400 degrees for about 20 minutes or until golden brown. For variety, mix in a pound of cooked and drained spinach with the cheeses. Leftover filling is delicious mixed in with scrambled eggs the next morning.
Quelling separation anxiety

Divorce advice from real people who survived

By Danielle Braff
Chicago Tribune

When you're getting married, you usually have months to plan, along with a partner and plenty of wedding magazines to help.

But divorce is a lonely place, with room for one plus an attorney who charges per minute. So we rounded up divorce advice from real people who have been there, done that — and made it through to the other side, better than ever.

Here's some advice that your lawyer may not have told you.

Document everything: If you need to go to court to seek out any damages or restitution, it's essential to provide backup to support the case, said Sheri Silver, a New York-based blogger. Silver suggested saving all emails and bills. "It couldn't be easier these days to keep a file on your computer that is designated for this, and the earlier you start the better off you'll be in the event that you have to produce any evidence of some kind," Silver said.

Find a therapist: "The most important lesson I learned from going through my divorce is that divorce is not always productive," she said. "I'm not saying that it's a terrible thing, but it's really important to find someone who can help you through the process.

Think before getting an attorney: Some divorces don't go as planned, and that's okay. But if you're going to have a lawyer, you need to have a plan for how you're going to handle the situation.

Give a price to everything: Since divorce is a numbers game, you need to be very careful about the value you're putting on your property. You need to be able to justify the price you're willing to pay.

Get financial disclosures: You'll need this as early as possible to make the divorce go quickly and smoothly, Silver said. While you may be tempted to do this yourself, hand control of it over to your lawyer because it removes you from the stress and trauma of the proceedings, Silver said.

"Doing it yourself is not always productive," she said.

Divorced Girl Smiling, a divorce support website, and a freelance columnist who writes the weekly advice and dating column "Love Essentially." "When you make an impulsive decision, you suffer the consequences of saying or doing something you might not have done had you given it more thought," said Pilosop. The consequences could play out in the courtroom if you send an email in the heat of the moment and your soon-to-be-ex-spouse reads it. "My therapist was essential to me, and I didn't want people to be reading things I wrote," she said.

Engage in good coping mechanisms: When you go through a divorce, you need to figure out how to handle the decision, you suffer the consequences of saying or doing something you might not have done had you given it more thought," said Pilosop. "You have to figure out how to communicate and have a working relationship," she said.

Outsource: There are businesses out there that make the transition smoother — beyond your attorney, that help you figure out what steps to take, said Feiler, who started one of these companies herself after her own divorce. "I realized how much in need I was, and I didn't want people to feel as lost as I was," she said. If your spouse was the person who handled the bills, the paperwork and the organizing of your daily life, then find an assistant or even a local college student who can help with this to make the transition smoother until you get back on your feet, Feiler said.

Her company, Divorce Concierge Group, helps with everything from finding health insurance to selecting a real estate agent, an accountant, a new school for the kids and more. "When I created this four years ago, there was nothing like this out there, but in the last four to five years, they've become a little more available," Feiler said. You can see if there's one in your area simply by Googling your state and "divorce concierge" or asking your attorney if he or she knows of anyone who can help.

Danielle Braff is a freelancer.
MY PET WORLD

Will tooth extraction help a dog with poor teeth?

By Marc Morrone
Tribune Content Agency

Q: Please help! We love your column and need advice. Our 10-year-old dachshund has always had terrible teeth and no matter what we did (brushing, scaling at the vets, special oral sprays) nothing seemed to fix the situation and now it seems that she is in a lot of distress and is pawing at her mouth and drooling. Our vet says she needs to have every tooth extracted and this horrifies us. We wanted to know if you could advise us on any alternate solutions?
— Grace Walton, Macon, GA

A: I appreciate your kind words about me, but I am not worthy of your adulation in this matter as I am not a vet. I never went to college and I am lucky that I qualify for a library card.

However, I have had a lot of dogs with chronic dental problems pass through my hands in the last half-century and a few of them needed to have total extractions of every tooth in their mouths. I was always amazed at how happy the dogs were after the surgery. In just a few days, the dogs were happier and healthier than they were before the extraction.

Obviously a dog that does not have any more teeth cannot eat dry kibble, but they do just fine on canned food and they do not even realize their teeth are gone.

So if your vet prescribed this procedure for your dog then it is in the best interest of you and your dog. Plus, the dog will have a better quality of life as a result.

Q: I have a red betta fish named George that has been living in a little 2 gallon tank on my desk at work for the last month. I have some live plants in the tank and he has built a bubble nest around the stems that poke up out of the water. He really seems to be fixated on this nest and is always adding more bubbles to it. I was wondering if I should get him a female betta as a mate so he can make use of the nest. I know the males fight but I would imagine they do not fight with the females.
— Robert Miller, Baltimore, MD

A: You would think that getting your fish a mate would be a good thing to do but it would actually make the situation quite complicated.

First of all, the males do fight with the females. A male betta wants nothing to do with a female unless she is full of eggs and ready to breed. In that case, he would entice the female to the bubble nest and embrace her in order to stimulate her to lay the eggs that he fertilizes as she produces them. He would then grab each egg in his mouth and place them in the bubble nest with great care and deliberation. When the eggs are all laid and placed in the nest his romantic thoughts are over. The male fish would chase the female one away and kill her unless you take her out of the tank and put her in one of her own.

So now you have two tanks on your desk with a fish in each one. Then after the eggs hatch you have a lot more drama on your hands as the babies are very small and need a specially prepared food — not the betta pellets you are feeding the father.

In a few days the babies are old enough to swim on their own and then the happy little family is finished as now the dad wants nothing to do with them and does his best to drive them out of his territory and there are only so many places for a fish to hide in a 2 gallon aquarium.

My advice is that if it ain't broke then don't fix it. George will be quite happy tending to his bubble nest and most likely has no idea he is missing out on anything at all in his life.

Q: My cat must be part monkey because he uses his paws like hands and will pick up a key cat figure and put it on our counter next to the sink but he prefers the sink water and still turns on the faucet. Can you advise us if there is any way to teach him not to do it?
— Cindy Ortiz, Orlando, FL

A: This is one of those situations where the pet wins by default. You cannot do anything in the way of training the cat not to do this unless you were around it all day monitoring the situation.

I never had a cat do this but I did have a dog that learned to turn the hose spigots on outside by actually turning the handle with her mouth so that she could play in the water. Of course she did not turn off the water so we ended up with a flood in the backyard all the time.

In the end I had to have a plumber come over and change all the hose spigots to the type that you open up with a key.

So you may have to pay a visit to a plumbing supply store and get a new faucet. Once your monkey cat figures out it is game over, he will resign himself to drinking out of the fountain that you provided.

Marc Morrone has kept almost every kind of animal as a pet for the last half-century and he is happy to share his knowledge with others. Although he cannot answer every question, he will publish many of those that have a general interest. You can contact him at petexperts2@aol.com; please include your name, city and state.
Experts' post-holiday bargain-hunting tips

If you still have a little money in your pocket after Christmas — or you simply can't resist a deal — here are some creative suggestions I received from three deal-seeking experts on where to find the best post-holiday bargains.

Erin Huffstetler, editor, My Frugal Home
Lots of foods — nuts, cereals, candies, cookies — get put in special packaging for the holidays. Stores will be eager to move these items out quickly after, so watch for deep discounts. Trawl the grocery aisles for foods in holiday packaging, then use a price scanner to see if they've been marked down. Also, watch for holiday baking supplies, like chocolate chips and baking chocolate, to go on clearance.

Include thrift stores in your after-Christmas deal hunt. They get inundated with donations at the end of the year. This makes them a treasure trove in January.

If you're looking for a deal on a computer or any other big-ticket electronic item, check the open-box section at electronic and big-box stores in January. They might be selling returned items at a significant discount. Some retailers, like Best Buy and Amazon, even have an open-box or warehouse section on their websites.

Look for items that can be used for other occasions. Solid-colored wrapping paper can be used at any time, and many holiday gift sets can become birthday gifts, if you just take them out of their holiday packaging. When you see red decorations and party supplies, stock up for Valentine's Day, and when you see green decorations and party supplies, stock up for St. Patrick's Day.

Lauren Lyons Cole, money editor, Consumer Reports
Make sure to look at a store's online sales as well as its in-store sales because they're not always the same. You might get a deeper discount on a store's website. When you find an item, always do a quick search to see if you can find it cheaper online.

If you do locate a cheaper online price — whether with that merchant or another — don't be afraid to ask for a price match. Almost across the board, stores will price match because they want your business.

The day or two after Christmas is when you are going to see the deepest discounts because that's when people are returning gifts they don't want. Stores don't want you to walk out with cash, they want you to walk out with another product, hence the steep markdowns.

The Consumer Electronics Show takes place in early January every year. A lot of new products, like TVs and Apple Watches, are introduced at this conference, so around that same time, you'll start to see discounts on what will soon be the older models.

In addition to the obvious Christmas decorations and winter clothes, bath scales also wind up being a good post-holiday buy. (Who knew?!) Ben Glaser, features editor, Deal News
Clothing dominates after-Christmas sales, and that includes high-end designers. Winter apparel has to be cleared out to make way for spring lines.

Deals on activewear will be even better, as they benefit from both after-Christmas sales and fitness-related New Year's resolutions. Pair these with discounted weights and workout machines as sporting goods stores compete for shoppers aiming to get healthy in 2017.

Of course, the best time to buy Christmas decorations is Dec. 26. Pick up discounted decor like lawn inflatables and other trimmings at Home Depot, Crate & Barrel and J.C. Penney.

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

Cathy Cunningham is a freelance columnist.

CATHY CUNNINGHAM
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HELP SQUAD

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2 books to mark a bewildering year

By John Warner
Chicago Tribune

It is hard to imagine a stranger year than 2016. Who would believe 2016 if you'd described it to someone before it happened? What does fiction have to say when our nonfiction world feels so surreal? I intend for my annual Biblioracle Book Awards to be fun, a celebration of my favorite reads of the year in all of their individual, idiosyncratic glory. Last week, in Part 1 of the awards, I managed the task, but in preparing Part 2, my enthusiasm broke down. At this moment, I am hardened, bound to get a more serious point across.

I have only one award left to give before we turn the page on 2016: The Biblioracle Book of the Year. This time, it's a tie between "High Dive" by Jonathan Lee and "The Underground Railroad" by Colson Whitehead.

I have written about my admiration for both these books previously, but looking at them in the context of this very strange year, and a forbidding 2017, I see these novels as not merely good, but vital. These are works that may help us see more clearly as we navigate through our cultural turbulence.

"High Dive" is the overtly political novel of the two, as it explores the events surrounding a real-life assassination attempt on Margaret Thatcher at a Brighton resort hotel in 1984. Lee invents around the history, conjuring Dan, a young IRA operative who's tasked with planting the bomb meant to kill the prime minister. As the book unfolds, Lee shows us what drives their plot: the discontent and dislocation of people without economic hope, and who are demonized and attacked by their neighbors. The Irish "Troubles" are not directly analogous to U.S. politics, but the urge toward violence and hatred toward others with whom we should share so much feels freshly relevant.

"The Underground Railroad" is Whitehead's reckoning with our country's original sin, one we continue to pay for, but also one too many refuse to believe remains a stain on our ideals.

As we follow our heroine, the runaway Cora, journeying toward freedom, we see the violence visited on black bodies in the name of righteousness, a legacy that continues to this day.

But it is Whitehead's story of Ridgeway, the slave catcher, that should most unsettle us. The son of a blacksmith, Ridgeway finds his purpose. His father "made tools"; the son "retrieved them." Ridgeway becomes a man who owns "three fine coats" and laments when he can't use violence to practice his trade. Finding Cora, the daughter of a previous slave who escaped him, becomes his obsession and his undoing. In denying the humanity of others, he destroys his own.

We have been failing to see all citizens as fully human since our earliest days. We have elected a man who appealed to and emboldened the worst elements of our society. His victory is part of a continuum, not a sudden reversal of progress.

Perhaps these books can help us see more clearly the damage we collectively carry.

John Warner's most recent book is "Tough Day for the Army."

Book recommendations from the Biblioracle

John Warner tells you what to read next based on the last five books you've read.

1. "Rabbit at Rest" by John Updike
2. "The Nix" by Nathan Hill
3. "Lonesome Dove" by Larry McMurtry
4. "Straight Man" by Richard Russo

"Atlas Obscura" would get my "coffee-table book of the year" award. In the other books, I see an impulse toward characters wrestling with different approaches to manhood as well as a bent toward comedy, which brings to mind the very funny and profane "Home Land" by Sam Lipsyte.

1. "Truly Madly Guilty" by Liane Moriarty
2. "The Girl on the Train" by Paula Hawkins
3. "Night School" by Lee Child
4. "The Andy Cohen Diaries" by Andy Cohen
5. "11/22/63" by Stephen King

Can't do much better for suspense than Tana French's Dublin Murder Squad series. "The Trespasser" is the latest installment.

1. "Commonwealth" by Ann Patchett
2. "When Breath Becomes Air" by Paul Kalanithi
3. "The Giver" by Lois Lowry
4. "Lab Girl" by Hope Jahren
5. "State of Wonder" by Ann Patchett

For my last recommendation of 2016, I'm going with a novel that asks us to consider questions of faith and life's meaning. I found it to be a balm. "Gilead" by Marilynne Robinson.

What should you read?

For a recommendation, send a list of the last five books you read to printersrow@chicagotribune.com. Write "Biblioracle" in the subject line.
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.

Clues

Across
1. Tea or apple carrier
2. Street, in Seville
3. Issue forth
4. Regan's dad
5. Long, and namesakes
6. Like Mr. Apley
7. Met highlight
8. Franklin or Maude
9. Bauxite and galena
10. U. of Michigan player
11. Docks
12. Jason's vessel
13. Express disapproval
14. Suggested umbrella
15. Sham
16. What the Knave of Hearts did
17. Spa adjunct
18. Something to lend
19. Containers
20. Fetters
21. — spumante
22. Lodge member
23. Very wet
24. A Shaw
25. Missouri college
26. Furze

Down
1. Feline feature
2. Dynamics preceder
3. Complain bitterly
4. Hardships
5. Fee
6. TV adjunct
7. Slant
8. Old ___, CT
9. Curry letter
10. Abelard's lady, in Soho
11. Hoaxes
12. Way, for Cato
13. Hardy girl
14. Very wet
15. A Shaw
16. Missouri college
17. Furze
18. Express disapproval
19. Suggested umbrella
20. Sham
21. What the Knave of Hearts did
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24. A Shaw
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Animal Talk

BY CHARLES PRESTON

Across

1. Votre
2. Crescent
3. Bean
4. Third Reich gait
5. Go bad
6. Ruffle
7. Mahjong piece
8. Leave shore
9. Came up
10. Catch-all phrase
11. Bohemian
12. __ trap
13. Caveat

Down

1. Feline feature
2. Dynamics preceder
3. Complain bitterly
4. Hardships
5. Fee
6. TV adjunct
7. Slant
8. Old ___, CT
9. Curry letter
10. Abelard's lady, in Soho
11. Hoaxes
12. Way, for Cato
13. Hardy girl
14. Perry's creator
15. Cordage fiber
16. Layers
17. Elevator shoe?
18. Formal evening dress
19. Aches
20. Mr. Vallee
21. Composer Erik
22. Pennsylvania port
23. Agnes and Joan, e.g.
24. Indicator
25. South African
26. Halted
27. Eschew
28. First-rate
29. Somewhat ill
30. Blow
31. At __ ends
32. Projected Pelion topper
33. Bellow
34. John Irving protagonist
35. Woodwind
36. Late Belgradian
37. Verve
38. Hide
39. Thos. Dorsey's brother

Last week's answers appear on the last page of Puzzle Island © 2016 Creators News Service.
3 things that sustain a happy marriage

I figured out a long time ago that it is impossible to know from the outside looking in what someone else's marriage is really like. Some couples I have met over the years appear really happy together while others might seem icy toward each other. There are couples that bicker a lot, couples that appear to be passionate for one another, couples that seem like best friends, couples that seem disconnected, couples that seem business-like, and of course couples that seem picture perfect.

I have seen marriages I thought were blissfully happy end in divorce. I have known couples that made me wonder how the heck they ended up together who are still going strong after decades. All this has made me realize no one except for the two people in the marriage know why it works or why it doesn't. And, those two people are the only two people who matter in this regard. As a divorced woman, I can offer what I have learned about what makes a marriage work, both because of my failed marriage, as well as my romantic relationships that have followed.

Most people assume the biggest element needed to stay together is love. I could not disagree more. Is love important? Of course. But, there are three things I believe trump love when it comes to the success of a marriage or long-term relationship:

1. **Trust**
   
   In truly grounded relationships, neither person is insecure about the other person's commitment. Both people have faith they can rely on the other. They believe in each other professionally, as well in the other's ability to make good decisions and maintain high standards and values. The couple acts as a team, and each is confident that the other has his or her back.

2. **Respect**
   
   It is very difficult to love someone if you lack respect for that person. On the other hand, if you admire your spouse professionally and personally, and you have an appreciation for the way he or she chooses to live life, it drives attraction, passion and an interest in staying connected. Ask yourself: Do I value my spouse? Am I proud of him or her? Do I have a high opinion of him or her? If you answered yes to these, I would guess you and your spouse are pretty darn happy together.

3. **Likability**
   
   Perhaps the most important aspect of being happy in a relationship is liking your spouse. People think they are supposed to get married to someone they truly love. While I agree loving your spouse is important, liking the person is 10 times more essential to a solid marriage. Liking someone means wanting to spend a lot of time with them, having similar interests, and realizing that person bring out the best in you - that you actually like yourself when you are with that person.

   Love and passion and sex and caring about someone are all important in sustaining a happy marriage. However, trust, respect and likability mean so much more because they equate to an authentic connection. In fact, trust, respect and likability are what drive love and passion and sex.

   When you trust, respect and like someone, love becomes the byproduct and you want to love them with all of your heart.

   If you feel you are lacking trust or respect or likability you once had in your relationship, it is not impossible to get those feelings back. Therapy, open communication and most importantly the desire to get the relationship back on track can all serve as paths to reconnecting and developing a better relationship than ever.

   Here is a great example of how trust, respect and likability have sustained long-term love. Over a decade ago when I first moved here, I happened to notice a married couple with two young children. They were swimming in our community pool, and hugging and kissing and laughing together. They seemed so happy and in love at the time.

   Since then, the family has become good friends of mine. The parents appear to be more in love than ever. I asked them both: "What are three things that sustain happiness in a marriage?" I wanted to see if they shared my philosophy and if they would say "Trust, respect and likability." The wife's answer was, "true love, togetherness, passion, patience, communication and friendship." The husband's answer: "Three things? My wife, my wife, my wife."

   Jackie Pilossoph is a freelance columnist.

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ASK THE DOCTORS

Weighing the benefits of omega-3 fatty acids

By Dr. Robert Ashley

Dear Doctor: I have been taking fish oil capsules daily over the last five years. Is there any benefit in doing this?

Dear Reader: The short answer is "maybe." Scientists have shown that societies with higher fish intake have lower rates of heart disease. The belief is that this benefit comes from fish oil. Fish oil contains substances known as long-chain fatty acids (omega-3 fatty acids), specifically DHA, EPA and EPA, with many health benefits. These fatty acids help lower blood triglyceride levels; lower blood pressure; by 1.5 to 4 points); and have an ability to help the heart relax so that blood flows more easily into its chambers. Furthermore, the omega-3 fatty acids in fish oil have also been linked to a slightly slower heart rate and to a decrease in inflammation.

Small studies have shown that fish oil may be linked to a slight reduction in the formation of plaque in the arteries that supply the heart, but evidence of its ability to reduce the rates of heart attack hasn't been as robust or as statistically significant.

One fish oil finding that was indeed statistically significant was from a large study published in the Journal of the American Medical Association in 2006. That study linked fish oil intake of 250 milligrams per day to a 36 percent reduction in rates of sudden cardiac death. That amount -- 250 mg of fish oil -- equals 1 to 2 servings of fish per week.

One other property that fish oil may have is an ability to reduce electrical excitability of the heart. That reduced excitability may decrease the heart's chances of going into an abnormal rhythm, which can lead to death. Furthermore, among people who have had a heart attack, 1 gram of fish oil per day has been linked to a significant decrease in death rates. The benefits of fish oil have been seen as early as four months after a heart attack and even as late as 36 months after a heart attack. Again, this appears to be related to fish oil's potential protective effect against abnormal heart rhythms after a heart attack.

Fish oil hasn't been shown to decrease the chance of a stroke. Nor has it been shown to decrease the risk or incidence of cancer. In fact, some studies have shown a correlation between fish oil and prostate cancer, but other studies have failed to support that connection.

In summary, fish oil does appear to decrease the chance of sudden cardiac death, but you don't need to take capsules to see this benefit. Eating fish twice a week can do that.

Before you turn to eating tuna fish from a can, keep in mind that tuna has much less omega-3 fatty acids than Atlantic salmon, mackerel or herring. If you don't care for fish, taking 1 gram of a fish oil supplement twice a week will likely yield a benefit. If you've had a heart attack, consider taking 1 gram of fish oil a day.

Robert Ashley, M.D., is an internist and assistant professor of medicine at the University of California, Los Angeles.

Send your questions to askthedocs@mednet.ucla.edu, or write: Ask the Doctors, c/o Media Relations, UCLA Health, 924 Westwood Blvd., Suite 350, Los Angeles, CA, 90095.

PEOPLE'S PHARMACY

Home remedies may provide relief for ugly, itchy warts

By Joe Graedon and Teresa Graedon

Q: My 6-year-old granddaughter has warts. The doctor said to leave them alone, as they will go away in a year or two.

The problem is they spread, maybe because they blister and seep. Is there anything we can use to rid her of these ugly, itchy warts?

A: The doctor is right that warts often go away on their own, especially in children. Most people don't want to wait a couple of years, though.

Here are some of our favorite wart remedies:

■ Cut a piece of banana peel the size of the wart and tape it over the wart, with the fleshy inner side of the peel on the skin. Change it daily.
■ Apply a few drops of castor oil to the wart, cover with a bandage and reaply daily.
■ Cover the warts with duct tape cut to size. Replace the duct tape after several days.
■ Rub the warts with lemon juice or vinegar several times a day.
■ If all else fails, ask the doctor if it would be OK to use cimetidine (Tagamet). One mother reported that her 7-year-old son suffered with more than 20 warts for over two years. Nothing worked. Then she gave him Tagamet twice a day. Within a month, most of the warts were gone.

Q: I cannot understand why health professionals refuse to consider home remedies. It's all about chemistry, be it developed in the lab or in the form of a home remedy.

A: Migraine hangover comes from the pill or the condiment? It is the last phase of a severe migraine.

The usual recommendations are rest and hydration. Many people also indulge in comfort food. We guess the combination of caffeine and sugar from your Coke and chocolate provide the pick-me-up you describe. Some migraineurs find, however, that chocolate triggers migraines.

Q: There is something in cherries that makes them good for gout.

A: Tart cherries lower levels of uric acid, which contributes to a gout attack.

In their column, Joe and Teresa Graedon answer letters from readers. Send questions to them via www.peoplespharmacy.com.

Warts often go away on their own, but various home remedies purportedly help to get rid of them.

SOME EXAMPLES OF THE FISH OIL PRODUCTS WHICH CONTAIN OMEGA-3 FATTY ACIDS THAT DR. JUDY BOWMAN OF PFEIFFER TREATMENT CENTER IN WARRENVILLE HAS BEEN RECOMMENDING TO HER PATIENTS, INCLUDING HEART ATTACK SURVIVORS.

Some examples of the fish oil products which contain omega-3 fatty acids that Dr. Judy Bowman of Pfeiffer Treatment Center in Warrenville has been recommending to her patients, including heart attack survivors.

Robert Ashely, M.D., is an internist and assistant professor of medicine at the University of California, Los Angeles.

Send your questions to askthedocs@mednet.ucla.edu, or write: Ask the Doctors, c/o Media Relations, UCLA Health, 924 Westwood Blvd., Suite 350, Los Angeles, CA, 90095.
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Add style with trendy tile

By Lindsey M. Roberts
The Washington Post

It's time to take a look at tile. While a full-kitchen remodel might set you back a few years of savings, a smart mini-rehab might involve only painting cabinets, replacing appliances and installing a stunning tile backsplash or flooring:

"Tile is an easier splurge," said designer Kelly Emerson of Maryland's Aidan Design. "Tile is hundreds of dollars; very rarely is it thousands of dollars."

And tile trends tend to hang around for a while, so you can feel good about getting your money's worth. Today, they reflect larger design trends — such as graphic patterns — as well as advanced technology, which is letting individual tiles get bigger and thinner without compromising their strength.

We spoke with Emerson, Samantha Klickna of Case Design/Remodeling and DeeDee Gundberg, director of product development for Ann Sacks, to determine which trends are worth following.

Wooden wonders: "Wood planks are trending because they are durable, maintenance-free alternatives to wood," Klickna said. "They add depth and dimension to any space. They also give you the opportunity to have a wood effect in a wet area: bathrooms."

Emerson likes the Weathered Wood field tile in a large hex ($7.41 per square foot, www.architecturalceramics.com). With a wood look, she said, "you can choose a matte or a polish to change the vibe of the tile. It might have a rustic appearance, but if you select a polished finish and apply it to a wall, it becomes a very polished look."

There are many varieties of woodlike finishes available today. The Tile Shop's 8-by-24-inch Fronda Perla faux-wood floor tile ($4.99 per square foot, www.tileshop.com) has a rustic look.

Pratt & Larson's Textured Field tile is a subway tile with a twist for $37.50 per square foot.


Huge hexagons: Gundberg has been watching tile companies come out with larger sizes of the classic hexagon shape each year. At first, 16 by 16 inches was the new size. Then it was 18 by 18 or 24 by 24, she said. Recently, she has seen tile as big as 45 by 45. "It just keeps getting bigger and bigger," she said. Much of this is driven by technological advances allowing for thinner, larger tile.

Traditional hex tile is beautiful but replicable. Popham Design's Hex Artichoke ($29 per square foot, www.pophamdesign.com), however, is at once funky, modern, retro, graphic and classy.

Saigon Hexagon by Artistic Tile is Emerson's pick for a fun, large hexagonal tile ($11 per square foot, www.artistictile.com). It's inspired by the French Provincial style and comes in three patterns and three muted colors.

Chic cement: There is a general trend toward organic materials in the design industry, Gundberg said. That includes oxidized metals, chunky ceramics, textiles, natural woods — and, in a big way, cement tile. "This is purely about the aesthetic and the materiality of concrete," she said.

Cle Tile is known for its artisanal encaustic cement tiles as well as its collaborations with designers. The 8-by-8-inch Star ceramic tile ($29 per square foot, www.poprattandlarson.com) can come out with larger sizes of the classic hexagon shape each year.

Bright in Kelly green ($14.49 per square foot, www.cletile.com) marries traditional and modern. "Look at the space as a whole and make sure that you're not going overboard on color and pattern," Klickna said. "It's OK to be bold with one or two of your selections, but it has to be in moderation."

Subway with a twist: Subway tiles are as classic as you get. But homeowners and designers are getting adventurous, choosing long, exaggerated sizes or colored tiles. They're even choosing contrasting grout, something that used to be a no-no but that Gundberg is seeing more often. Subway tile comes at all price points too — from simple, white porcelain for $2 or $3 a square foot to high-end glass or hand-glazed styles. Arrange a simple, budget-friendly option in a herringbone pattern with contrasting grout to give it a higher-end look.

"Undulating and surface-textured ceramics will never go out of style," Emerson said. She likes Pratt & Larson's Textured Field tile ($37.50 per square foot, www.prpattandlarson.com).

Shades of blue: Everything from deep navy to blue-greens such as peacock is trending. Klickna and Emerson use Walker Zanger's Cafe tiles (from $9.85 per square foot, www.walkzerzanger.com), which come in three field sizes, four trim sizes and eight colors, in their projects. The tile is handmade for the Los Angeles company. "Tile is something that the homeowner can appreciate and something that a guest can appreciate. It brings warmth into a space," Emerson said. Merola Tile's Hybrid Blue ($5.60 per square foot, www.homedepot.com), at 7 1/4 by 23 1/2 inches, has a bold, geometric pattern in muted colors.

Patterns with pizzazz: "You expect your furniture to be the statement or the paint color, but you don't as often see decorative, stunning tile as the center of the room," Gundberg said. "When it's done in the right way, it's really effective."

And nothing stands out more than a strong pattern. Gundberg is primarily seeing big, bold patterns inspired by Moroccan and French designs moving from backsplash mosaics to the floor. Moroccan patterns can be found at high and low prices. Overstock's Amlo Circle handmade cement and granite floor and wall tile is $104.99 for a pack of 12 8-by-8-inch tiles (about $20 per square foot, www.overstock.com).

Lindsey M. Roberts is a freelancer.
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Listed on Nov. 8, 2016
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Agent: Christie Baines of Jameson Sotheby's Intl Realty, 847-875-8049

At press time, this home was still for sale.

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FRIENDS OF MARLENE HELPS SUPPORT CANCER PATIENTS

Catherine Dunlap of Old Norwood Park, host committee member, left, and Francine Pepitone of Chicago, co-founder, were among 135 attendees at the Fall Fundraiser hosted on Nov. 9 by Friends of Marlene that will aid all patients served by the Supportive Oncology Program at the Robert H. Lurie Comprehensive Cancer Center of Northwestern University. The event, held in the Harris Family Atrium of Prentice Women's Hospital, Chicago, raised $25,000 for oncology patient services. More at friendsofmarlene.org.

BLACKHAWKS HOST BLOOD DRIVE

Adam Qates of Morton Grove, right, was among the donors who came out to the Blackhawks / LifeSource Blood Drive at the Westin O'Hare in Rosemont on Dec. 10. His kids Corey and Haley joined him for a photo with Blackhawks mascot Tommy Hawk. More on blood donation at lifesource.org.

OAKTON’S EMPTY BOWLS RAISES $26,000

Guests chose their lunch dishes from a selection of handmade bowls during the Empty Bowls fundraiser on Dec. 3 at Oakton Community College in Des Plaines. The event, sponsored by the Oakton Ceramics Club, raised over $26,000 for local food pantries. Participants bought their bowls, had them filled with hot soup and enjoyed music by Patchouli. Donations to Empty Bowls will continue to be accepted at oaktone.edu/giving by selecting “Donate” and entering “Empty Bowls.” More at oaktone.edu.

CALABRESE HEADS PUBLICITY CLUB OF CHICAGO

Dominic Calabrese, right, accepts the Pub Clubber Award from outgoing president Tim Frisbie at the Dec. 14 board meeting of the Publicity Club of Chicago. Calabrese, of Norwood Park, is the new president of the Publicity Club of Chicago, and was honored for contributions to the organization. He is senior vice president of public relations at The Chicago Lighthouse and an adjunct faculty member at Columbia College Chicago.

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**HOME REMEDIES**

**Take a few precautions to ward off colds and flu**

**BY STEPHANIE FEGY**

**Angie's List**

In the midst of cold and flu season, you're often greeted with sniffles and sneezes everywhere you go. Washing your hands and stocking up on orange juice are great starting points, but there's more you can do at home to decrease your chances of falling ill. Take these steps to keep yourself and your family in good health.

**Sanitize products**

Ideally, cleaning your home helps to kill germs, but this isn't the case if you're using dirty supplies. Opt for disposable mop pads, for a greener solution, sanitize mop heads at high temperatures before reusing them. Wash your dishcloths regularly. University of Florida researchers found that microwaving a wet sponge for two minutes kills or inactivates 99 percent of living pathogens in the sponge.

**Wash bedding**

Wash your pillow cases and sheets in hot water once a week, and use your hottest dryer setting. Be sure to wash your hands after dealing with soiled linens. Wash any soiled and furniture covers as well.

**Clean office**

If your desk is covered in a film of dust and last year's tax files, it's time to purge and disinfect. Don't forget to clean your computer keyboard and any mobile devices, which are the perfect hosts for household germs.

**Humidify home**

Humidifiers help alleviate dry nasal passages for easier breathing. However, they can breed bacteria. Clean humidifiers regularly or consider natural humidifying techniques.
Recliner revamp: Modern versions are sleeker, stylish

BY MEGAN BUEGGER
The Washington Post

Say goodbye to the dad chair. Today's recliners are slimmer, smarter and more stylish than ever. Even La-Z-Boy, the 90-year-old brand whose name is synonymous with classic recliners, has updated its product line over the years. In 2010, the company hired Brooke Shields as its celebrity spokeswoman to target women ages 35 to 54 and to distance itself from a decades-long association with grandpas, couch potatoes and frat boys who love the lever-lifting footrests and roly-poly cushions.

"I call it Bubba," Faith Phillips, the company's vice president of retail store experience, said of the iconic chair. "We love Bubba, and we won't stop making Bubba, but we wanted to offer more." 

The commercials have been successful: A La-Z-Boy spokeswoman said the company saw three years of double-digit same-store sales growth coinciding with its launch. So last year, the company developed a new retail strategy that's perhaps where the strategy behind La-Z-Boy's new showroom comes into play. By opening up shop in trendy neighborhoods, the company lets customers see firsthand how recliners have evolved. The Midtown low-profile recliner (from $1,199, www.la-z-boy.com) is 33 1/2 inches wide.

"Clients who ask for recliners are usually older folks who want a place to kick back and have the space to accommodate a big chair and a big ottoman," she said. "Younger people in their 30s and 40s are all about small spaces, less stuff, cleaner decor. They're cool with the single center ottoman."

They also may not have the "sentimental attachment" to recliners that their parents do, she said, which means brands can't count on that as a draw. But that's perhaps where the change in La-Z-Boy's new showrooms comes into play. By opening up shop in trendy neighborhoods, the company lets customers see firsthand how recliners have evolved. The Midtown low-profile recliner (from $1,199, www.la-z-boy.com) is 33 1/2 inches wide and has less resemblance to earlier counterparts.

Other companies have followed suit and are selling recliners in sleeker silhouettes and modern fabrics. IKEA's Muren recliner ($299, www.ikea.com) is understated, with a strip of piping on the trim, and could easily be spiced up with a bright throw pillow or fur throw. Room & Board's Wynd recliner ($1,799-$2,699, www.roomandboard.com) is impressively narrow at 30 inches wide.

For a more on-trend design, consider the company's Dalton recliner ($1,699-$2,999), which sits on wooden legs (or aluminum, if you prefer) and has a midcentury modern look, or Crate & Barrel's Torino velvet recliner ($1,499, www.crateandbarrel.com).

Most recliners need at least a foot between the chair and the wall to allow adequate space to recline, but that's changing too. In September, West Elm debuted its first power recliner, the Henry ($999, www.westelm.com), which glides the seat forward into a horizontal position and lowers the back without significantly changing the chair back's original position.

To keep up with such technical advances, companies are developing battery packs to allow you to float a power recliner in the middle of a room without cords. Needless to say, most modern recliners ditched the lever a long time ago.

"So long as it doesn't scream recliner, I like them," Taylor said. "It's hard to argue with wanting to put your feet up."
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Evanston Encore Chorale Holiday Concert: This public performance presented by The Encore group offers holiday music, including familiar carols, Christmas spirituals, the world premiere of a new Chanukah piece by artistic director Jonathan Miller, and a rollicking Puerto Rican holiday favorite. Amy Wurtz is the accompanist. 3 p.m. Thursday, Three Crowns Park Retirement Home, 2233 McDaniell Ave., Evanston, free, 847-328-8700.

“Die Fledermaus (The Bat)”: One of music theater's most beloved works is Johann Strauss’ ode to champagne and indiscretion. Husband and wife meet at a party neither is supposed to be attending — and he unwittingly woos his disguised mate. 8 p.m. Thursday, 8 p.m. Saturday, 2 p.m. Sunday, Cahn Auditorium, 600 Emerson St., Evanston, $34-$96, 847-920-5360.

Master Class: Fabric/Rope Drop Analysis: Designed for the intermediate student, this workshop with Charlie Faraday provides an introduction to the study of drops on fabric or rope. Why drops work, how they work, and what can go wrong are studied in detail. 9 a.m. Tuesdays-Fridays, Actors Gymnasium, 927 Noyes St., Evanston, $50, 847-328-2795.

Winter Wonderland Express: Family Hanukkah Celebration: Bring your kids and grandkids to celebrate with the Winter Wonderland Express at the Chicago Botanic Garden. Not only will you be dancing and singing to a festive hour of Klezmer and Hanukkah-themed music, but you'll also be able to visit the Winter Wonderland Express exhibit at the Chicago Botanic Gardens. 

Age of the Dinosaurs: Located above the children's play area, “Age of the Dinosaurs” features incredibly lifelike moving and roaring exhibits about Jurassic family life. Interactive remote control a robotic skeleton, build a dinosaur, dig for fossils, and more. 10 a.m. Thursday, 10 a.m. Friday, 10 a.m. Saturday, Northbrook Court, 2036 Northbrook Court, Northbrook, $6 general admission, 847-621-7861.

Karaokes: Enjoy some great pizza and sing a tune or two. 7 p.m. Thursdays, Perry’s Pizza and Ribs, 711 Devon Ave., Park Ridge, free, 847-823-4422.

Skating In the Park: The park's outdoor skating rink is free. Skate rentals are $8. 11 a.m.

Glenview Ice Center Winter Carnival: The Winter Carnival at Glenview Ice Center runs through Jan. 8 and features: daily family public skate sessions, two charity hockey games, hockey/figure skating lessons and much more. Some events are free and several require pre-registration. Pick up a complete schedule after Thanksgiving at the Glenview Ice Center or online at glenviewicecenter.org. For more information, please call. 9 a.m. daily, Glenview Ice Center, 1851 Landwehr Road, Glenview, free, 847-724-5670.

Winter Art Show Call for Student Submissions: Artwork submissions are being accepted through Jan. 25 for this Winter Art Show in February. All students who participated in a Park Center Visual Arts class for fall or winter sessions are eligible to submit one of their favorite pieces for the show. For more information please see your instructor. The Winter Art Show preview night for family and friends is Friday, Feb. 3, from 6-8 p.m. Art will be on display and open to the public throughout February. Glenview Park Center, 2400 Chestnut Ave., Glenview, free, 847-724-5670.

Winter Wonderland Express: Family Hanukkah Celebration: Visit the Winter Art Show preview night for family and friends. 9 a.m. Thursday-Sunday, Emily Oak Nature Center, 4650 Brummel St., Skokie, free, 847-674-1500.

Hanukkah Booth at Westfield Old Orchard: Show your Jewish pride. Visit the Hanukkah booth at Westfield Old Orchard Mall. Enjoy Hanukkah activities, entertainment, kosher refreshments, Jewish holiday spirit and lighting of the Menorah. 10 a.m. Thursday-Sunday, Westfield Old Orchard, 4999 Old Orchard Center, Skokie, free, 847-677-3770.

Free Menorah lighting kit available: Lubavitch Chabad of Skokie is again providing free menorah lighting kits for this Hanukkah season. To receive your kit, call or contact us via the website. 9 a.m. Thursday-Saturday, Lubavitch Chabad of Skokie, 4059 Dempster St., Skokie, free, 847-677-1770.

Brush with Nature 2016 exhibiton: Come to enjoy the artworks on display. Local artists include: Adrienne Aaronson, Stephanie Rose Bird, Tiger Lily Cross, Jan Flapan, Steve Johnson, Mary Longe, Debra Nichols, Fred Polito, Naomi Pollak, Amanda Roman and Ray Vlcek. 8 a.m. Thursday-Sunday, Emil Oaks Nature Center, 4650 Brummel St., Skokie, free, 847-674-1500.

Free Walking Clinic: Learn to get the most benefit out of walking as exercise in Gillson Park. A certified personal trainer teaches the class, which includes a warm-up, stretching, inclines, steps, balance and coordination. All fitness levels welcome. 5:30 p.m. Mondays and Thursdays, Gillson Park, Lake Ave & Michigan Ave., Wilmette, free, 847-251-6834.

Kidzone Winter Break Academy: Topgolf's Winter Break Academy is an exciting four-day program that offers junior golfers everything they need to learn about golf: on hitting, putting and full swing, as well as rules and etiquette. Each Academy is designed and taught by Golf Teaching Professionals. 9 a.m. Thursday, Topgolf Wood Dale, 699 W. Thorndale Ave., Wood Dale, $99, 630-595-4653.

Friday Night Meltdowns: This is a great night out for teens to join in an awesome skate and dance party. A DJ plays today's hits and disco lighting shines on the ice throughout the night. Call for more information. 8:15 p.m. Fridays, Glenview Ice Center, 1851 Landwehr Road, Glenview, $8 per person, $4 for rental skates, 847-724-5670.

Freezin' Fridays During Winter Carnival: Drop the kids off and finish your holiday shopping while they play broomball, ice skate, make craft projects and meet new friends. Lunch is provided. The fee is $50 per child if registered by 6 p.m., Friday, Dec. 18. Walk-ins are welcome on a space available basis for $60 per child. Freezin' Fridays is part of the Winter Carnival. 9 a.m. Friday, Glenview Ice Center, 1851 Landwehr Road, Glenview, $50 pre-registered, 847-724-5670.

Hogwarts Potions for Grades 3-6: Is it magic? Is it science? Join us as we investigate to find out. Best assured, Professor Snape won’t be leading the program. (This is Harry Potter-related, if you did not know.) Please register at glenviewpl.org/register or 847-729-7500. 2 p.m. Friday, Glenview Public Library, 1930 Glenview Road, Glenview, free, 847-729-7500.

Share The Warmth: Volunteers wanted — Join a group of warm, friendly, supportive women (men welcome) to prepare one-of-a-kind fleece blankets for chemo patients. Add a crocheted edge to fleece and send free blankets to new adult chemotherapy patients. A basic crochet stitch can be taught if needed. Bring lunch. Attendees often gather until 2 or 3 p.m. Donations are welcome to this 501(c)3 non-profit organization. 9 a.m. Fridays, North Shore Senior Center, 161 Northfield Road, Northfield, free, 847-293-6755.

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

Reaction NYE 2016: Reaction NYE Dec. 30 lineup: Flume - Anderson.Paak and the Free Nationals - Dillon Francis - Danny Brown - Mr. Carmack - Noname - Kweli Collins and many more. The Dec. 31 lineup: Zeds Dead - Gucci Mane - Tchami - Manic Focus - Bondax - Smino - Emily Nichols and many more. 5 p.m. Friday and Saturday, Donald E. Stephens Convention Center, 5555 N. River Road, Rosemont, $69 plus, 312-833-9331.

Saturday, Dec. 31

Lucinda Williams with her band
Bulka 6:10 p.m. Saturday, SPACE, 1245 Chicago Ave., Evanston, $85-$250, 847-492-8860.
New Year's Eve with the Jeannie Tanner Quartet: The Jeannie Tanner Quartet performs New Year's Eve at Pete Miller's in Evanston. The music featured includes jazz standards, the Great American Songbook, Ms. Tanner's original songs and crowd favorites. (The Jeannie Tanner Duo perform 4:30-8 p.m. For more information, go to www.jeannietanner.com. 4:30 & 9 p.m. Saturday, Pete Miller's Seafood & Prime Steak, 1557 Sherman Ave., Evanston, free, 847-328-6399.

Overeaters Anonymous: Overeaters Anonymous meets Saturdays. Newcomer meeting on the last Saturday of the month. No dues, fees or weigh-ins. For information, call Hannah. 9 a.m. Saturdays, St. Matthews Episcopal Church, 2120 Lincoln St., Evanston, free, 773-996-0669.

Signature Entertainment Presents: LOL Saturday: Adult Comedy every Saturday night hosted by Comedy legend Tony Scafield and Mark Simmons. National headliners with movie and television credits on stage. 9 p.m. Saturdays, Chicago's Home of Chicken & Waffles, 2424 W. Dempster St., Evanston, $15 adult advance, $20 at the door, 847-821-6342.

Animal Arts and Seasonal Stories: "Animal Arts & Seasonal Stories" are recommended for children ages 5 and up, but there is no minimum age requirement. Activities are offered at varying levels of difficulty and interest to engage the entire family. An adult must accompany participants. 10:30 a.m. Saturdays and Sundays, Mitchell Museum of the American Indian, 3001 Central St., Evanston, $3 kids, $5 adults, 847-475-1030.

New Year's Eve Celebration: Celebrate with Roots, Rock and Blues music with the talented and always entertaining Madman Band (10 p.m. to 1 a.m.). Enjoy a free champagne toast at Midnight, delicious food, fine drinks and great company. A special New Year's Eve Dinner is served from 4 to 10 p.m. and our late night menu will be available until midnight. The bar is open until 2 a.m. No Cover. The Celtic Knot Public House, 626 Church St., Evanston, free, 847-864-1679.

Family New Year's Eve Party: Join in a fun event for everyone in the family, on and off the ice. Some activities include Balloon Twister from 5:30-7 p.m. and a New Year's Eve Kiddie Toast at 7 p.m. New Year's Freeze is part of the Winter Carnival. 5 p.m. Saturday, Glenview Ice Center, 1851 Landwehr Road, Glenview, free, 847-724-6570.

Wendy and DB at New Year's Eve Bash: Wendy & DB love to get kids singing, wigging, jumping, dancing and having a great time. This performance is part of Kohl Children's Museum's New Year's Eve Bash, which also features family activities and fun like a giant clown and a balloon drop. $32 per person, $22 for members. 5 early bird discount if purchased before Dec. 24. 8:30 a.m. Saturday, 12:30 p.m. Saturday, Kohl Children's Museum, 2100 Patriot Blvd., Glenview, $32; $22 members; $5 early bird discount, 847-832-8600.

Happy Noon Year's Eve Party: If you can't make it until midnight, come celebrate the "Noon Year" instead. Enjoy bounce inflatables, a creative craft area, fun face painting and an open play area in the main gym. End the morning festivities with a massive balloon drop in the main lobby at noon. This is for children ages 3-9 years and a parent does not need to register but must accompany their child to this event. 10:30 a.m. Saturday, Glenview Park Center, 2400 Chestnut Ave., Glenview, $10 per child, 847-724-5670.

Restaurant Michael's New Year's Eve Celebration: The New Year's Eve dinner will feature three course selections including the Roasted Filet of Beef Tenderloin & Truffle Mousse "En Bernaise" with a Pinot Noir Sauce as well as several first course selections including the Roasted Filet of Beef, 1557 Sherman Ave., Evanston, 847-480-2327.

Pinning the New Year at Pinstripes Northbrook: Enjoy champagne, music, boce, bowling and two balloon drops (including one at 8 p.m. for children) to ring in the new year. 7 p.m. Saturday, Pinstripes, 1150 Willow Road, Northbrook. No cover, menu items vary, 847-480-2322.

Kick Off New Year's Eve Early at Prairie Grass Cafe: Have big plans for New Year's Eve? Come to Prairie Grass Cafe early to start the night out right. Fuel up for NYE festivities with delicious food from its regular la carte menu from 5 p.m. to 8:30. Learn more about this at the event website. 5 p.m. Saturday, Prairie Grass Cafe, 610 Skokie Blvd., Northbrook, free, 847-205-4433.

New Year's Eve with Bub City and Joe's Live: Feast on Bub City's Southern BBQ dinner buffet, enjoy tasty premium libations and dig into a late-night breakfast all while taking in Joe's Live performance of Rod Tuffcurls and the Bench Press. Bonus: There will be a confetti blast at midnight and revelers' NYE tickets are good for $10 off brunch the next day at Bub City 9 p.m. Saturday, Bub City, 5441 Park Place, Rosemont, Menu Pricing Varies, 847-261-0399.

New Year's Eve at Hofbrauhaus Chicago: To ring in the New Year, Hofbrauhaus Chicago hosts two New Year's Eve celebrations at their Haus Saturday from 2 p.m. until 2 a.m. Hofbrauhaus Chicago presents a friendly "Munich-style" celebration with a magic show. At 5 p.m., there will be a toast to Germany's New Year with a complimentary glass of champagne or sparkling wine for the little ones and a parade. At the stroke of midnight there will be a champagne proost for 2017 along with a spectacular fireworks display. 2 p.m. Saturday, Hofbrauhaus Chicago, 5500 Park Place, Rosemont, free, 847-671-2739.

Ring in the New Year with Jeff Dunham: Comedian/ventriloquist Jeff Dunham, along with his cast of hilarious characters have embarked on the second leg of their "Perfectly Unbalanced" International Tour. The show is packed with new surprises and old favorites. 3 p.m. Saturday, Allstate Arena, 6200 Mannheim Road, Rosemont, free, 800-745-3000.

Preserving Survivor Stories: Ask Holocaust Survivor Pinchas Gutter any question you would like, and "natural language" technology software will respond as if Pinchas were in the room. 10:30 a.m. Saturdays, Illinois Holocaust Museum and Education Center, 9063 Woods Drive, Skokie, free, 847-967-4800.

New Year's Day Service: The Holy Name of our Lord Jesus Christ 10:15 a.m. Sung Eucharist with hymns and sermon. (Note: no 8:30 a.m. service this day). 10:15 a.m. Sunday, Saint Giles Episcopal Church, 3025 Walters Ave., Northbrook, free, 847-372-6622.

New Year's Day Bub City: Dive into any number of options from our classic Southern menu, like the Fried Chicken & Waffles or Beef Brisket Benedict. The famous build-your-own Bloody Mary Bar will be open, and as always, enjoy the best selection around of country music. 10 a.m. Sunday, Bub City, 5441 Park Place, Rosemont, prices vary, 847-261-0399.

Monday, Jan. 2

The Mudflapps live every Monday: The Mudflapps sing and play their hearts out every Monday in the pub from 8 p.m. until 1 a.m. Food and drink served late. 8 p.m. Monday, The Celtic Knot Public House, 626 Church St., Evanston, free, 847-864-1679.

Knitting Roundtable for Adults: Ronnie Rund, an expert knitter, shows attendees how to knit or how to solve knitting challenges. Bring one's current project(s) and needles. 2 p.m. Monday, Morton Grove Public Library, 6140 Lincoln Ave., Morton Grove, free, 847-994-4200.

MGFL 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. Call Turn to Calendar, Next Page
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.

Ballroom Dance Classes: Come enjoy a basic ballroom dance class at 6:45 p.m. and an intermediate class at 7:45 p.m. These classes were formerly held at the Highland Park Moose Lodge which has been sold. 6:45 p.m. Monday, Bernard Weinger JCC, 300 Revere Drive, Northbrook, $10 per person per class, 847-757-2227.

Let's Talk @ Lunch: Turn to Calendar, Next Page

Rotary Club of Evanston Livehouse: This community leadership group meets on the first Monday of every month. 7:30 a.m. Monday, Park Ridge Senior Center, 100 S. Western Ave., Park Ridge, free, 847-692-3597.

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

Tuesday, Jan. 3

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Money Matters Discussion: The group meets on the first Monday of every month. 7:30 a.m. Monday, Park Ridge Senior Center, 100 S. Western Ave., Park Ridge, free, 847-692-3597.

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

Tuesday, Jan. 3

Let's Talk @ Lunch: At this drop-in program, participants can talk through the issue of racism, and practice honest conversation skills by looking at our own experiences in light of what we're learning about how racism affects us all. 1:30 p.m. Tuesday, YoFresh Yogurt Cafe, 635 Chicago Ave., Evanston, free, 847-864-8445.

Beginning Square Dance Classes: Have fun and learn to square dance; beginner lessons are sponsored by the Glenview Square Dance Club and Glenview Park District. No experience necessary. No partner required. Dress casually. 7:30 p.m. Tuesday, Glenview Park Center, 2400 Chestnut Ave., Glenview, free; first lesson; Registration for 9-week session $46/$54, 847-724-5670.

Niles Metropolitan Chorus J.S. Bach's "St. John Passion": Rehearsal days take place beginning Jan. 3 from 7 to 9 p.m. every week on Tuesdays prior to the performance. Their spring concert of J.S. Bach's "St. John Passion" is presented on April 2 at 3 p.m. 7 p.m. Tuesday, St. John Brebeuf Parish Church, 8307 N. Harlem Ave., Niles, free, 702-806-8421.

YMCA Summer Camp Job Fair: The North Suburban YMCA invites current high school seniors and college students to learn about counseling and unit lead positions with the Y's popular summer day camp programs. Meet camp management and submit your application for a summer job you'll love. Download the application at NSYMCA.org. For more information, call 1 p.m. Tuesday, North Suburban YMCA, 2705 Techny Road, Northbrook, free, 847-272-7250.

Winter Break Art Clinic Paint a Ceramic Piece: Take an art break during Winter Break. Drop by the North Suburban YMCA and paint a ceramic piece to take home. All ages are welcome. There are limited quantities available. For more information, call 11 a.m. Tuesday, North Suburban YMCA, 2705 Techny Road, Northbrook, $10 per piece, 847-272-7250.

Lehrhaus Confirmation Class: Post Bar/Bat Mitzvah teenagers are invited to participate in this program, which teaches young people how to utilize Jewish resources when faced with making a decision. This is a fascinating three-year program. 7 p.m. Tuesday, Ezra Habonim, The Niles Township Jewish Congregation, 4500 Dempster St., Skokie, $420 for entire year plus book fees, 847-675-4141.

Wednesday, Jan. 4

Live Music Wednesdays with the Josh Rzepka Trio: Hear the music of Dizzy Gillespie, Charlie Parker, Thelonious Monk and other classics of the era played by the Josh Rzepka Bebop trio. Reservations can be made online or by calling. 6:30 p.m. Wednesday, Found Kitchen & Social House, 1631 Chicago Ave., Evanston, free, 847-868-8945.

Open Mic Night in Evanston: Hosted by Daniel Fiddler. Sign-up begins at 8 p.m. Wednesday, The Celtic Knot Public House, 626 Church St., Evanston, no cover, 847-864-1679.

Knitting Circle: If you want to learn to knit or are working on a knitting or crochet project, come drop-in. Share tips, show off your work and converse with fellow needle arts enthusiasts. 11 a.m. Wednesday, Lincolnwood Public Library, 4000 W. Pratt Ave., Lincolnwood, free, 847-677-5277.

Winter Break Art Clinic Canvas Board Painting: Take an art break during Winter Break. Drop by the North Suburban YMCA and create a canvas board painting with guidance from a Y art instructor. All materials are provided and all ages are welcome. For more information, call 4 p.m. Wednesday, North Suburban YMCA, 2705 Techny Road, Northbrook, $10 per project, 847-272-7250.

Knitting Studio and Workshop: Each Wednesday afternoon, Certified Knitting Instructor Mary Stackmann provides personalized instruction, answers any questions about knitting and perhaps gets you started on a new project. Bring your supplies or project in progress. Brush up on your skills, learn new techniques, or just spend an afternoon knitting with others. 1:30 p.m. Wednesday, North Shore Senior Center, 161 Northfield Road, Northfield, free, 847-784-6606.

Picture Bingo: School's out, so join us for picture bingo. Learn new words and earn golden tickets for each bingo you receive. Golden tickets will be redeemable for a small prize. 11 a.m. Wednesday, North Park Public Library, 20 S. Prospect Ave., Park Ridge, free, 847-825-3123.

North Park Community Emergency Response Team Class: The City of North Park hosts this class Feb. 3 through March 16 on Wednesday nights until approximately 10 p.m. Interested persons should contact Phil Falcon, Director Park Ridge CERT, who can be reached at parkridgecert@gmail.com or by calling: 6:30 p.m. Wednesday, Park Ridge Public Works Center, 400 Busse Highway, Park Ridge, free, 847-774-4231.

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

Thursday, Jan. 5

Northbrook Symphony Orchestra Pre-Concert Lecture: Musicologist Jim Kendros discusses and performs excerpts from the upcoming concert by the Northbrook Symphony Orchestra in this exclusive talk. 7 p.m. Jan. 5, Northbrook Public Library, 1201 Cedar Lane, Northbrook, free, 847-272-6224.

German Stammtisch: The group meets on the first and third Thursday of each month in the community center to practice German and learn about Ger-

Friday, Jan. 6


The Village of Glenview: My, How We've Grown: The Village of Glenview was incorporated on June 20, 1899, with a population of 250 adults. Today the village population exceeds 46,000. How did it change from a farming community to the robust village of today? Join past president and current volunteer librarian Beverly Dawson from the Glenview History Center to learn about the village's remarkable growth and development. 1 p.m. Jan. 6, Glenview Public Library, 1930 Glenview Road, Glenview, free, 847-729-7500.

Shabbat B'Yachad Service and Dinner: The dinner is at 6 p.m., family friendly service at 6:45 p.m. Join welcoming Shabbat with music and dance, a Shabbat story, and more. Special blessings for those celebrating birthdays. Bring yourselves, your children, your grandchildren, grandparents, aunts, uncles, friends and neighbors. 6 p.m. Jan. 6, Congregation Beth Shalom, 3433 Walters Ave., Northbrook, $25 immediate family; $10 per adult, 847-498-4100.

Shabbat with a Twist: Join for Shabbat with a Twist, now twice a month) at 11 a.m. Families with children up to Pre-K join the clergy for challah making, stories, and songs and other fun projects. Children twist their own challah to take home to bake. All are welcome. 11 a.m. Jan. 6, Congregation Beth Shalom, 3433 Walters Ave., Northbrook, free, 847-498-4100.

Park Ridge Alumnae Panhellenic Club: Join the club for lunch and a "Sweet Treats and Tasting" cooking class. Turn to Calendar, Next Page
Saturday, Jan. 7

Polyglots Toastmasters meeting: 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 where you can speak and listen to German. For the current location, as sometimes they meet at places other than the Des Plaines Library. 9:30 a.m. Jan. 7, Des Plaines Public Library, 1501 Ellinwood St., Des Plaines, free, 847-827-5551.


Signature Entertainment Presents: LOL Saturday: Adult Comedy every Saturday night hosted by Comedy legends Tony Sclufield and Mark Simmons. National Headliners with movie and television credits on stage. 9 p.m. Jan. 7, Chicago's Home of Chicken & Waffles, 2424 W. Dempster St., Evanston, $15 adult advance; $20 at the door, 847-521-6434.

Restoration Work Day: Help the restoration team remove invasive plants to make way for native prairie grasses. Seasonal activities include brush cutting, weed removal and seed collection. Bring work gloves if you have them. 9 a.m. Jan. 7, Kent Fuller Air Station Prairie/The Tyner Center, 2400 Compass Road, Glenview, free, 847-724-5670.

Snowy Science and Arctic Art with Extraordinary Kids: This is for ages 2 to 6 with family to explore snow, winter, and the Arctic while having fun with art and science. This is co-sponsored by The Glen Town Center. Register at theglentowncenter.com, 10:30 a.m. Jan. 7, The Book Market at Hangar One, 2651 Navy Blvd., Glenview, free, 847-904-7304.


Sunday, Jan. 8

Music Institute's Instrument Petting Zoo: There is free admission on this Musical Petting Zoos and Registration Day at Evanston East Campus. Come try out the instruments at their musical “petting” zoos. Enjoy discounts, door prizes, demos and more. 2 p.m. Jan. 8, Evanston East Campus, Music Institute of Chicago, 1490 Chicago Ave., Evanston, free, 847-905-1500.

New Orford String Quartet: The New Orford String Quartet perform Claude Debussy's String Quartet in G Minor, Uriel Vanchestein's "Les veuves" and Ludwig van Beethoven's String Quartet No. 12 in E-flat Major. 7:30 p.m. Jan. 8, Pick-Staiger Concert Hall, Northwestern University, 50 Arts Circle Drive, Evanston, $10 - $30, 847-467-4000.

Do Not Submit: A Storytelling Open Mic: Local event that is pressure free night for storytellers from zero to decades of experience to connect, share stories, and hone their craft. 5:30 p.m. Jan. 8, The Celtic Knot Public House, 626 Church St., Evanston, free, 847-864-1679.

In Good Spirits Chicago's Graceland Cemetery: This is the place for Chicago's Gilded Age movers and shakers to spend eternity. Landscape historian Barbara Geiger explains how this special burial ground came to be, how it relates to the city's history, and how the story of its founding and design unfolded. Co-sponsored by the Glenview Gardeners. Please register at glenviewpl.org/register or by calling. 2 p.m. Jan. 8, Glenview Public Library, 1930 Glenview Road, Glenview, free, 847-729-7500.


Make an event to submit? Go to chicagotribune.com/calendar
NOW PLAYING

“Rogue One: A Star Wars Story” ★★★
PG-13, 2:13, action/adventure
“Rogue One,” the tale of a controversial Death Star and those who loathe it, operates as a prequel to the 1977 movie that became a flexible, malleable religion (with ray guns!) to millions. The new movie is a little bit “Guardians of the Galaxy,” a little bit “Dirty Dozen” in its mass wartime slaughter and a pretty good time once it gets going. “Rogue One” takes its name from the U-shaped spaceship whisking Alliance fighters to the tropical planet Scarif for the big showdown against Empire forces. The movie’s pretty violent. Deliberately, director Gareth Edwards’ effort is rough around the edges, hectic in its cross-cutting but increasingly effective as kinetic cinema. — Michael Phillips

“Moana” ★★★
PG, 1:53, animated
Featuring songs by “Hamilton” creator Lin-Manuel Miranda, the new animated musical adventure “Moana” is bright, busy, enjoyable and progressive. Moana, voiced by Hawaiian actress Auli’i Cravalho, is the daughter of a Pacific Islands chieftain. She must get in touch with her seafaring ancestry and leave her island, Motunui, on a long journey. After a brush with death, she washes ashore on a small island where she meets the Polynesian demigod Maui, voiced by Dwayne Johnson. The score’s signature power ballad, “How Far I’ll Go,” may well take its rightful place alongside “Frozen’s” big hit, “Let It Go,” in the female-empowerment earworm department. — M.P.

“Office Christmas Party” ★★ ½
R, 1:45, comedy
When it comes to big, brassy studio comedies, a filmmaker can do worse than to gather the brightest, funniest stars, situate them in an odd, yet relatable situation and let ‘em rip. That’s exactly what directors Josh Gordon and Will Speck do with “Office Christmas Party,” the delightfully debauched holiday desecration we need this year. The greatest strength of “Office Christmas Party” is its casting. If you’ve got fabulous weirdos Kate McKinnon and T.J. Miller in lead roles, there are bound to be more than enough laughs. “Office Christmas Party” delights in a grotesque carnival of the worst behavior and still has its heart firmly in the right place. — Katie Walsh

“Collateral Beauty” ★
PG-13, 1:37, drama
“Collateral Beauty” should win some kind of award for Best Execution of a Truly Dreadful Concept. Chock-a-block with magnetic movie stars, and shot beautifully by talented cinematographer Maryse Alberti, it looks like an important and meaningful film. That’s all smoke and mirrors. Will Smith plays Howard, an advertising executive who enters a downward spiral after the death of his child. He attempts to cope with his loss through angry bicycling and writing letters to love, time and death. For all of its faux-deep gesturing, “Collateral Beauty” is much more shallow nonsense than anything else. — M.P.

“Fantastic Beasts and Where to Find Them” ★★★
PG-13, 2:13, action/adventure
In handsome, generally diverting fashion, “Fantastic Beasts and Where to Find Them,” directed by Potter alum David Yates and adapted by J.K. Rowling from her 2001 book, takes us not to Hogwarts but to 1920s America. Eddie Redmayne, costumed like the winner of a Jazz Age “Doctor Who” contest, plays shy, sweet Newt Scamander, a “magizoologist” by training and a Hogwarts-bred wizard who devotes his life to the care and feeding of a wide variety of beasties. Potter fans will likely enjoy this first of a planned quintet of “Fantastic Beasts” outings. — M.P.

Holiday Cookies: Prize-winning Family Recipes from the Chicago Tribune contains more than 100 recipes and mouthwatering photos of winning cookies from nearly three decades of the newspaper’s annual Holiday Cookie Contest. From Sparkly Oatmeal Cookies to Coffee Toffee, the book captures generations of beloved family recipes.
Breihan, Janet Carol
Janet Carol Breihan, age 77, passed away December 18, 2016. Beloved wife of William, loving mom to Kurt (Debbie), Eric, Joan (Tom) Haas, and David (Lorena); dear grandma to Amy, Nina, Andrew, and Rebecca. Services are private.

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Include a photo of your loved one.

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Your choices are rear-wheel drive, front-wheel drive, all-wheel drive and four-wheel drive. The only thing these layouts have in common is the word "drive." Which type of driveline layout is best for winter driving?

**Rear-wheel drive:** Although it is making a comeback, particularly with muscle cars, RWD is the minority. The engine is in the front of the car driving the wheels at the rear. The RWD system is heavier and takes up more space than FWD. The engine usually is installed longitudinally (north-south in car jargon). The transmission is mounted directly behind the engine and a drive shaft couples it to the rear axle where the differential converts the axial rotation and delivers torque to the wheels.

This layout is popular with high-performance cars because the weight distribution is a bit more balanced than front-wheel drive and rear wheels, where most of the weight is directly over the drive wheels. Assertive drivers prefer the handling characteristics of RWD, which also can handle more torque.

The major downside of RWD includes poor handling in slippery conditions. Less weight over the drive wheels can make them lose traction and slide sideways. This condition, called oversteer, ultimately makes the car to fishtail. This is also the situation where the rubber that becomes worn out as the wheels rotate. Rear-wheel drive is a good choice. Unless there is a heavy snowfall, reducing ground clearance, FWD will get you where you need to go on paved roads.

**Front-wheel drive:** FWD may be the better choice for most drivers. The motor usually is mounted in a transverse orientation (east-west). The rotation of the engine and drive wheels are parallel. The transmission is directly to the engine and the differential is combined in the same housing; often called a transaxle. A big advantage is its compact size. FWD systems provide good traction when accelerating in slippery conditions with plenty of weight pressing down on the drive wheels.

It is not without drawbacks. The front wheels must do all of the work; they provide both turning and acceleration. With most of the mass up front, cornering and performance may suffer in slick conditions. Turning the steering wheel may not provide enough control and the car will try to continue on a straight path. This is called plowing.

For most motorists, front-wheel drive is a good choice. Unless there is a heavy snowfall, reducing ground clearance, FWD will get you where you need to go on paved roads.

**All-wheel drive:** All-wheel drive solves some of the issues associated with FWD and RWD cars. Vehicles equipped with all-wheel drive transmit power to all four wheels, or in some cases, to individual wheels. On many cars, minivans and light-duty crossover SUVs, all-wheel drive is optional if not standard. Unlike trucks with four-wheel drive, AWD systems need no operator input to function. AWD systems can even bias the power to the front or rear wheels depending on traction conditions.

AWD is an excellent option for motorists living in the Snow Belt states. All-season tires may be all you need. AWD even improves handling on dry roads, but is not designed to be taken off-road.

The downsides include a higher insurance premium and reduced fuel economy. AWD cars are typically more fuel efficient than FWD cars, mostly due to added weight.

**Four-wheel drive:** Four-wheel-drive systems are typically found in pickup trucks and SUVs. Unlike automatic AWD systems, the driver must usually select the 4WD mode. Trucks used to have an additional lever to engage the power-takeoff in high or low 4WD range. Electric switches now handle the task for operator ease.

4WD systems are good for dealing with very deep snow and for off-road driving. The low range makes it possible to crawl over boulders, up steep hills and through thick mud. Truck-type 4WD is the choice for drivers who live in remote or rural areas where roads are not plowed regularly.

4WD systems basically run in 2WD mode, just as a rear-wheel-drive vehicle. They suffer the same traction issues too. The 4WD function must be disengaged when driving on dry, paved roads as it may damage the 4WD system components.

4WD systems add considerable extra weight, which hurts fuel economy. Although all-wheel-drive and four-wheel-drive setups may get you through snow, they will not magically help you stop. Be aware of black ice, especially at intersections where snow and slush are constantly melting and refreezing.

Another misconception is that AWD and 4WD vehicles produce more traction. They don’t. They can only supply torque to more of the wheels. Only tires provide traction. And then, only a tiny footprint about the size of a playing card actually touches the ground.

In any vehicle, no matter its drive system, will stop better because of it. If you hit the brakes, the drive system is instantly out of the equation. According to experts, this is the most common operator error in winter driving.

**Winter tires:** Winter tires used to be called snow tires, for a very good reason. Today, winter tires are steadily improving over regular and even all-season tires. They go beyond improved performance in snow.

Those who live in the South, who find snowfall a novelty, won’t need winter tires. Residents of transition states will easily get by with all-season tires. These tires are often designated M+S for mud and snow. Motorists in the Snow Belt would be wise to get winter tires.

Winter tires have a softer rubber compound that remains more pliable providing more grip when cold. The tread blocks also are designed to dig into snow and then spit it back out as the wheels rotate. Then there are the sipes. Sipes are razor-thin slits in the rubber that become thousands of micro-pumps to deliver traction on ice.

There is plenty of winter weather to come and it is not too late to get your winter tires. When you do, make sure to get four tires for maximum safety and performance.

Bob Weber is the Motor-mouth columnist.

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**Image:** DON'T TREAD LIGHTLY: RWD, FWD, AWD, 4WD and snow tires — what's the difference, and which is best? (Massimo Calonorte/Getty)

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Retightening of lug nuts required for new wheels

Q: Whenever I have wheel or tire work done, the shop always makes a note on the repair order to return after 50-100 miles to have the lug nuts retightened. Is this necessary or are the tire dealers just covering their butts in case of a screw-up? It is hard to believe that lug nuts properly tightened with a torque wrench would work loose. If they did, why wouldn't they work loose again in the next 50-100 miles? Wouldn't continually checking them be ludicrous?

A: Only new wheels (or wheel studs) need to be retightened after 50-100 miles. Compression of the wheel's metal or elongation of the new studs could occur. This would happen only once. By the way, when the nuts are retightened, the wheels should be cool and the nuts loosened and then torqued to the manufacturer's specification. As to whether your tire dealer is covering his butt is a question we are not prepared to answer.

Q: I own a 2001 Dodge Ram Van. I have had to replace the resistor block that controls the heater and air conditioning blower five times. In all my years of driving, I only had to replace this resistor once, and that was on a 1973 Dodge Dart. The three resistor coils look fine. However, there is another component that is not a resistor and I am wondering if that is what fails. Although it is the same size as a resistor, it does not look like a resistor because there are no colored bands on it. Is this some kind of fuse?

A: A: Mercedes-Benz's published statements say, “Diesel fuel with up to B5 biodiesel content according to ULSD (ultra low sulfur diesel) specification ASTM D975 meets Mercedes-Benz approved fuel standards and will not void coverage under the Mercedes-Benz New Vehicle Limited Warranty.” Diesel fuels between B6 and B20 or higher pose risks of engine and fuel system damage, and are not approved by Mercedes-Benz. Please refer to the following recommendations to help avoid engine and fuel system damage:

- Do not use diesel fuel with biodiesel content greater than 20%.
- Do not use fuels approved by Mercedes-Benz due to the risk of severe engine damage.
- Use fuels that are not approved by Mercedes-Benz because of the expense of engine damage.
- Replace the motor the next time you have to replace the battery.

Send questions along with name and town to Motormouth, Rides, Chicago Tribune, 435 N. Michigan Ave., Fourth Floor, Chicago, IL 60611 or motormouth.trib@verizon.net.

Kia Soul turbo boosts power

The 2017 Kia Soul Turbo Exclaim adds another variation to the tall hatch's lineup.

BY ANDY MIKONIS
Chicago Tribune

The 2017 Kia Soul Turbo Exclaim adds another variation to the tall hatch's lineup, featuring a new 1.6-liter turbocharged engine and seven-speed dual-clutch transmission. For the car spotter's guide it can be distinguished by 18-inch alloy wheels, some red trim and chrome dual exhaust tips.

The Soul Exclaim tester wore its sporty touches well. A snappy “Inferno Red” paint job helped. It is actually a fine metallic, only discernible when the sun hits it straight on.

As its boxy shape implies, the Soul is roomy inside for its small footprint. The optional panoramic sunroof does cut into interior volume a bit, but you won't miss it. You will miss mounting points for a roof rack, however, and $1,000 from your bank account. Leg room for the front occupants is generous, though at the expense of rear passengers if you roll too far back. In that position, there is enough room to fold down the split rear seat backs for hauling larger items. There's 18.8 cubic feet in the very back with the seats up, with a removable hard cover to keep your cargo concealed.

Niceties on the tester such as heated rear seats are courtesy of this highest trim level, while an extra $3,000 for the optional technology package will offer some things useful and some silly. Blind spot rear detection is useful, but the illuminated rings on the speakers that you can set for “mood” lighting or to pulse with the music can be silly fun.

The instrument panel is really well-executed. The displays have nice graphics and a soothing font. Plus it all matches, unlike some of the competitors. Hard buttons and one knob for the HVAC are intuitive.
Saying goodbye to 2016, hello to 2017

A look back at the big events in area high school sports

By Dan Shalin and Eli Herschkovich

To put the past year of local high school sports in perspective and to get a preview of the new year, Pioneer Press independently interviewed four area athletic directors — Niles West's Kendall Griffin, Niles North's Brett Bildstein, Maine East's Steve Schanz and Notre Dame's Mike Hennessey — and asked them each the same seven questions. Bildstein is in his first academic year with the Vikings. The best answers follow:

Q: What was the highlight for your athletic programs this calendar year?

Griffin: The girls volleyball team making it downstate (in Class 4A) for the first time in history. Their fourth-place finish was their best ever and they had the most wins (28) in program history. We had a sophomore in Natalia Pehar who was all-area and she'll come back to do more big things.

Schanz: It had to be our (varsity) football team winning their first game since 2013 in the first game of the year against Schurz. (Maine East won one game in 2014 via forfeit.) There was a fourth-down play, and our long snapper was hurt. Since we couldn't really punt, we threw just a fly pattern down the sideline. The kid caught it, which pretty much sealed the deal. You could see the team and I cheering for him on the sidelines. I honestly don't think they really knew how to celebrate the win. They didn't really know who to hug or whatever. But it was great to see coach (Scott) Smith's hard work pay off. There's a lot more to measuring success than wins and losses, but I was really hoping they'd get at least a victory this year. When the celebration happened and Smith was doused with water, I literally just took a step back and watched.

Hennessey: The basketball team's run to the (Class 4A) supersectional, and the (supersectional game) at Northwestern. Those kids played some great basketball (during the season) and the atmosphere at the supersectional was great. Even though they were not able to pull it off (a 65-62 loss to Curie), it was a great scene with so much of our student body there and (getting into the game).

Q: What was one team that stood out in 2016?

Griffin: If you're looking at the spring, it would have to be boys gymnastics, who were 2016 state champions. They exceeded expectations and made an amazing run and everything came together at the tail end there at Hinsdale Central at the state meet. (Coah) Adrian Batista is a Niles West grad and has had a long time in the program. And we had a state champion in the all-around in Dalai Jamiyankhuu.

Bildstein: The coed varsity cheer team finished third in the IHSA state competitive cheer series. Having that level of state success is pretty incredible. It's the first time (they've had a top-three finish) and we have a big banner in the gym (commemorating it).

Q: Who was one athlete who surpassed expectations on the field or in the classroom, and why?

Griffin: Well there is Dalai (who has graduated). But if you want to talk about the kids currently with us, football player Matt Galanopoulos, was a three-time all-conference selection. He was a wide receiver, running back, kick returner, punt returner and defensive back. Golfer Amanda Lee is a great student-athlete. She has great grades and was our first ever qualifier for state in (girls) golf. She finished her career as our most decorated girls golfer ever.

Schanz: There were a couple
since two of our own had qualified for the state swim meet in freshmen Alyssa Klug and sophomore Anabelle Delgadillo. (Delgadillo) was in the athletes with disabilities one, and Alyssa qualified for the 100 and 50 freestyle. (Klug) was coming back from injury, and we weren't exactly sure if she would qualify or not. She ended up hitting the mark in two events, so that was exciting. Anabelle was in three events. I was up in the rafters and just smiling. That was the first time since I've been here (June 2013) that we've had someone in the state meet. It was also the first time since 2009 that we've had someone qualify, and that was Natalia Bialecka, who's now our assistant coach.

Hennessey: (Current Dayton football player and 2016 graduate) Tim Simon was probably one of the best athletes we’ve had here at Notre Dame. I'd really rate him in the top 10 (ever). I don't like to say who is better, but he is somebody you'd want everyone else to watch and model themselves after. In (football), he was an all-area selection, an academic all-stater, team MVP and captain. (In baseball), he played center field, pitched, was the leadoff hitter and was a leader like he had been the previous calendar year for me in football (where he was a wide receiver, defensive back and kicker).

Q: Who was one coach who went above and beyond this year?

Bildstein: Boys soccer coach Filip Cezovic. He's a player-centric coach and they have great team chemistry. The soccer team went and supported just about every other fall sport and (took part) in booster club fundraisers. They are the most engaged team in the school. Aside from that, (Cezovic) is a great motivator and Xs and Os soccer coach. He does all the little things you would want in a coach, and it shows in what his team does for the school.

Schanz: Jeff Bishop has done a great job of getting our (boys) soccer program in a position that is really set up for success in the future. All three levels were very competitive this year, especially our freshmen boys, who only had one loss. We had over 100 kids try out too, so we had to make a lot of cuts this year. That's always heartbreaking, but it's a sign that your program is going in the right direction. Coach Bishop did a great job of working his tail off in the offseason and during the regular season to really get that program going.

Hennessey: Steve Jankowski is our head tennis coach and (co-head) swimming coach, and he does a great job taking care of both sports. The tennis team is doing as well as they've done in the last 10 or 15 years and that's due to Steve's hard work. With swimming, the numbers we have out there (are impressive) for a school without a pool. You need people like (Jankowski) in the department, they make the whole program vibrant.

Q: Looking back on 2016, is there anything that you wish would have gone differently within the program?

Bildstein: I think the big thing for our coaches has just been an abundance of change. You can't prevent change, but sometimes it's easier when changes are smaller. We got a new principal (James Edwards), new superintendent (Steven Isonye) and new AD (Bildstein arrived late in the summer). Not that those are bad things by any measure, but it's a lot for people to process.

Q: When you look ahead to 2017, what is your athletic program's New Year's resolution?

Griffin: I think at Niles West, we're now at a point where we can expect to compete with anybody in the state. We play in the CSL South, which we feel rivals any conference in the state. We're willing to take on anybody and now going forward (our resolution) is to see that consistent level of excellence. I feel like out of the 28 (sports) programs we have, we're in a place where we can compete in all, and at the highest level in the state. We fully expect to push that envelope.

Schanz: Never be satisfied. We always want to get better. We didn't win a conference championship this year, but by far, it was our best overall athletic year in the standings. We're getting to the point we're competitive in almost every sport now. That's my own mantra too. I want to be a better AD in 2017 and years after. I've also been participating in at least one practice in every sport, like I'm an athlete. In football, I've put all the gear on, and I attempted to do a practice with the girls swimming team. I'm not much of a swimmer, though. To see, firsthand, how hard they work has been an eye-opener for me.

Hennessey: We want to sustain success. In order to do that, we have to work hard. It's easy to say, but not as easy to accomplish. That's why we've been a successful program: Our coaches stress hard work and we talk about it in school on a daily basis with our guys, whether it's in athletics or academics.

Q: What are you most looking forward to about your school's athletics next year?

Bildstein: We have a couple of individuals: (junior) Michelle Baccala, who finished fourth in the state in (Class AA) tennis and boys diver Max Royzen, who has a chance to do some damage at state (in February). (Royzen) has improved every year as state going from 10th (as a freshman) to fifth (sophomore) and third (junior).

Notre Dame's Anthony D'Avanzo blocks Curie's Devin Gage during the Class 4A Northwestern Supersectional. (David Banks/Chicago Tribune)

Teammate, I would say boys basketball. The team is fairly young, but if we're talking timeline, where will they be by this time next year? It will be fun watching that growth.

Schanz: We've got some tremendous athletes, who I'm looking forward to seeing in the spring. The incredible Michael Boduch, one of our star volleyball players, will be fun to watch. Antoine Kelly, who's a future star in the making at pitcher for our baseball team, should be good as well. Our softball team is very young, and they're poised to be even better this year. The spring will be a fun time to see a lot of growth in some of our sports that just wasn't there a number of years ago.

Hennessey: Our soccer team has really (improved) leaps and bounds the last two or three years. (Coach) Mike Smith has great numbers for two straight years and they've won (a game) in the state playoffs. I think it's the program that has made the most significant strides. They have a great staff, many of whom, like (Smith), are alums, and they've come back to help big time.

Dan Shalhin and Eli Hershkovitch are freelance reporters for Pioneer Press.

Twitter @Pioneer_Press
Niles West's Natalia Pehar passes the ball during the Class 4A volleyball third-place match on Nov. 12.

BRIAN O'MAHONEY/LAKE COUNTY NEWS-SUN

A SWEET '16

Area athletic directors recap the year in high schools sports. Inside
Root for them on and off the court

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