Party like it's 2019
Lincolnwood Community Center throws 'noon' year's eve bash. Page 4

More favorites from the area
Chicago food professionals name the best thing they ate this year. Page B13

The best in defense
Check out who was named to the Pioneer Press All-Area football defensive team. Page 20

Balloons drop at the conclusion of the "Noon Year's Eve Celebration" at the Lincolnwood Community Center on Dec. 31. The free event featured music and games with a DJ.

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Brian Jacobi, jazz musician and teacher

After nearly 30 years of teaching instrumental music at Lincoln Middle School in Park Ridge, Brian Jacobi is looking ahead to retirement this June.

After directing the Lincoln Jazz Band in a performance at Park Ridge City Hall recently, Jacobi, of Arlington Heights, was recognized with a city proclamation for his years of teaching, performing, and recording.

Prior to teaching at Lincoln and forming the school's Jazz Band, Jacobi was a teacher at St. John Brebeuf High School in Niles and at St. Giles School in Oak Park.

Q: How did you begin your career in music?
A: I actually had no intention of teaching. I did that. I got out of college in 1980 and pursued a performance career. I was playing with jazz bands and symphony orchestras. I studied with three members of the Chicago Symphony, I played with the Civic Orchestra of Chicago and I played with the Illinois Philharmonic Orchestra for 10 years. At the same time, I was playing with jazz bands. I played with the Bob Stone Big Band, and I recorded a vinyl album with him before CDs were out. I also recorded with Rob Parton’s JazzTech Big Band.

Q: How did you transition to teaching?
A: One of the things professional musicians do is teach private lessons. I was teaching at private schools, and I was at St. Giles in Oak Park as an adjunct brass lesson teacher when the band director left suddenly. Some parents said, “Would you take over the band program?” I said, “No, but I’ll help you out until you find somebody.” But I discovered I loved it. I loved the feedback of 50 kids in front of me making progress in music. It was 50 times more exciting than spending my own time making progress in music. It was 50 times more exciting than spending my own time in the practice room. So I went back and said, “I’ll take you up on the offer.” I was at St. Giles from about 1984 to 1988.

Q: Do you still perform in live shows?
A: I do, but I’m choosy about it. I perform more of the artistic jazz-oriented things. I have three sons who are professional jazz musicians now, and I perform with them occasionally.

Q: What are your plans after retirement?
A: I want to spend time with my wife and family, because this job can take as many hours as you choose to give it and I’m really at home. I also have a new grandson, so I plan to spend time with him. All in all, I look at my teaching career as a 30-year diversion from my professional career. I plan to go back and keep playing.

Q: In addition to trombone, what other instruments do you play?
A: My first instrument was the guitar. I still love playing guitar in all styles. It’s fun to play Led Zeppelin for the kids every once in a while!

Q: Who are your favorite jazz and rock artists?
A: My go-to for jazz would be J.J. Johnson. He is the greatest trombone player. For rock ‘n’ roll, I grew up with Led Zeppelin and the Beatles. I can’t pick a favorite (song). I love music so much, I can’t even pigeonhole one particular tune.

— Jennifer Johnson, Pioneer Press
Party like it’s 2019

Families turn out for ‘noon’ year’s eve in Lincolnwood

A family-friendly countdown to “noon” year’s eve brought kids out to the Lincolnwood Community Center on Dec. 31.

It was the first time such an event was held at the center.

“It came about as a team discussion,” said Katie Lazzara, recreation supervisor for the village of Lincolnwood. “We wanted to do something fun for the community for the New Year’s Eve holiday.”

Lazzara said more than 500 balloons would be dropped at noon. The event also was set to have playground games, a DJ and more, she said.

— Staff report

Eight-year-old, Isabella Dumitrascu won the hula hoop contest during Monday’s “Noon Year’s Eve Celebration” at the Lincolnwood Community Center, December 31, 2018. The free event featured music and games with a DJ, and concluded with a big balloon drop at noon.

One-year-old, Jennifer Qualheim dances with her grandmother, Elliana Duarte.

Two-year-old Abella Bora Delisi and her mother, Albiona Delisi during the balloon drop.
News

NILES POLICE DEPARTMENT

Officer Tom Bethscheider, Cmdr. Robert Tornabene, Family Services Director Anthony Hollenbeck, Chief of Staff Joseph Penze and Chief of Police Luis Tigera are shown at a Shop with a Cop.

'It's very rewarding': Niles police officials take part in Shop with a Cop event

BY MEGANN HORSTEAD
Pioneer Press

Niles police officials took time in December to spread some holiday season cheer to 25 children and their families.

On Dec. 9, police officers from the Niles Police Department hosted their third annual "Shop with a Cop" program. The event, by design, provided children in need with the opportunity to go shopping for holiday gifts and clothing.

"For us, it's a way for us to work with the community in a positive way," said Robert Tornabene, public information officer for the Niles Police Department. "A lot of officers volunteer their own personal time to come out here."

Tornabene said police officers choose to participate because they believe in the mission of the program. "It's a way for young people to see officers in a positive light," he said, noting that getting into trouble is, at times, the first encounter some experience with the police.

Niles Family Services identified 15 area families with a total of 25 children to participate in this year's program. Members of the Niles Police Department accompanied the children as they perused the store.

"For individual officers, some have children that are special-needs," Tornabene said. "It's very rewarding for them."

Tornabene said the event tends to spread a lot of cheer year after year. "It's always fun to watch their faces," he said. "When you see them light up, that is the most satisfying for us."

This year's event was made possible thanks, in part, to a Walmart Foundation grant in the amount of $2,500. That means each participating child received $100 to pay for the items they selected.

"It's not just toys for some of these kids," Tornabene said. "They'll pick clothing out."

This is the second year the Niles Police Department has partnered with Walmart to put on the event.

"We are in the process of trying to expand [partnerships], so that we can increase the number of youth that we impact," Tornabene said. "That a future goal of ours."

Megann Horstead is a freelance reporter for Pioneer Press.

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New Skokie health clinic opening this month

$700K project paid for by two grants

BY GENEVIEVE BOOKWALTER
Pioneer Press

Residents of Skokie and the greater Niles Township area will have another health-care provider alternative on Jan. 7, when Heartland Health Centers opens its new clinic in Skokie.

The 3,500-square foot clinic is adjacent to behavioral health services offered by Turning Point Behavioral Health Care Center, and patients will be able to take advantage of both for their physical and mental health needs, said Gordon Mayer, spokesman for Heartland.

"It's a heck of a lot more convenient to get all your care in one place," Mayer said.

The $700,000 project was paid for with a $250,000 grant from NorthShore University HealthSystem and a $450,000 grant from the North Suburban Healthcare Foundation, Mayer said.

Heartland Health Centers primarily serve Illinois patients with Medicaid, Medicare, private or no insurance, officials said. The group runs about 16 centers, Mayer said. The Skokie clinic is Heartland's first outside of the nonprofit's home base in Chicago.

Pediatrician Shaheena Ahmed, who will be practicing at the new clinic, said she looks forward to treating the diverse population living in Niles Township. A township resident herself, and a practicing Muslim born in Bahrain, Ahmed said she is excited to treat those living in her own community. She previously worked in Heartland's Chicago clinics.

While she will provide physical health care at the new Skokie clinic, Ahmed said she looks forward to referring patients next door to Turning Point to meet their mental health needs, too.

"The importance of treating mental health issues "might not be emphasized enough in our communities," Ahmed said. "It's a very old world attitude that it doesn't happen in good families."

But, Ahmed said, many families in the area have kids who were born in the United States to immigrant parents, or brought here when they were young. Those parents might not be acclimated to American culture, something that can be a unique stressor for their kids.

"It can be very overwhelming," Ahmed said. "You can't necessarily hold on to the old ways back home."

Gwenn Rausch, CEO of Heartland Health Centers, said she expects the Skokie center to grow to treat 5,000 or 6,000 visitors a year after the first couple years.

"This is really a match made in heaven," said Rausch, of the relationship between Heartland and Turning Point.

Construction on the new space began in September and took about three months, said Nicole Willis, director of operations for Heartland Health Center. She said there weren't any surprises as the work continued.

"Overall, it went very smoothly," said Willis, who oversaw the project. "I am very pleased. It's beautiful."

Rep. Jan Schakowsky, D-9th, whose district includes Skokie, was at an open house for the new center on Wednesday, Dec. 19. She said the opening is in line with the priorities of the nation.

"The issue of access to affordable, quality health care turned out to be the number one issue in the election campaign this year," Schakowsky said.

"This is not a partisan issue," she said. It's "the simple desire of the American people."
Kyun Ah Kim, 16, and Zophia Perez, 16, of St. Viator High School, sort through toiletries to be distributed to area homeless men and women through the Des Plaines Salvation Army.

Notre Dame College Prep students lead collection effort for homeless

By Jennifer Johnson

Student efforts recently aided in the collection of winter gear and toiletries for the area's homeless.

The Maine Community Youth Assistance Foundation's Youth Group again set up collection boxes at several Park Ridge locations, and two students from Notre Dame College Prep in Niles led a donation campaign at their school, said Teri Collins, director of MCYAF.

On Dec. 15, volunteers met at Maine South High School in Park Ridge to fill 66 backpacks with the donations — which included scarves, hats, books and a variety of personal care items — to be distributed to the homeless through the Salvation Army of Des Plaines.

"It was awesome," Bill Middendorp, who coordinates the Salvation Army's homeless street outreach program with his wife, Debbi, said of the collection. "It was very beneficial. These guys look forward to it all year."

Each year around Christmas, the Middendorps distribute the backpacks to area homeless adults who work as bell ringers for the Salvation Army, as well as others who live in forest preserves and on the street, the couple said.

"Just knowing that people care about them, it warms their hearts," Debbi Middendorp said. "Like the gloves warm their hands, it warms their hearts knowing people care."

The couple personally distributes food, water and coffee to the homeless throughout the year as well.

Blanket of Dreams, a Park Ridge project also led by Collins, provides blankets that are given to the area's homeless assisted by the Des Plaines Salvation Army, Debbi Middendorp said.

The recipients largely live around Des Plaines, Mount Prospect, Prospect Heights and Arlington Heights, she said.

Collins credited Notre Dame students Jesus Romero, 17, and Nathan Cyra, 16, with coordinating "90 percent" of the Christmas backpack project's donations this year.

"They took it upon themselves to do it, and they did a school-wide collection," she said.

MBD Martial Arts Academy in Des Plaines also contributed, as did some students from St. Viator High School, Collins said.

jjohnson@chicagotribune.com

Twitter @Jen_Tribune
The following items were taken from the Niles Police Department reports. An arrest does not constitute a finding of guilt.

**THEFT**

- Jesterbenson C. Oliva, 37, and Lee Ann Austin, 28, both of the 1000 block of Sanders Road, Northbrook, were each charged with retail theft on Dec. 22 after police said they stole $240 worth of merchandise — including underwear and a cellphone — from Target, Golf Mill. They were given a Jan. 11 court date.

- Isaac Ornelas, 30, of the 5400 block of West Parker Avenue, Chicago, was charged with retail theft on Dec. 23, accused of stealing $769.41 worth of merchandise from Target, Golf Mill. He was given a Jan. 11 court date.

- Erica D. Brooks, 29, of the 4900 block of West Walton Street, Chicago, was given a Jan. 11 court date.

- Anthony R. Codd, 67, of the 9000 block of Ross, 5750 W. Touhy Ave., police said. According to police, Codd was found slumped over the steering wheel of his car, which was stopped near the intersection of Milwaukee and Touhy avenues at 7:37 a.m. Police said Codd was in a "confused state" and 0.8 grams of suspected cocaine, as well as a bag with the words "stay high" written on it, were found inside his car. He was taken to Advocate Lutheran General Hospital in Park Ridge. Court information was not included.

- Lazaro Espino, 24, of the 4500 block of North Central Park Avenue, Chicago, was involved in a crash near Milwaukee Avenue and Ballard Road. He was given a July 17 court date.

**DRUGS**

- Joey Manzano, 40, of the 2200 block of Nichols Road, Arlington Heights, was charged with possession of methamphetamine and possession of drug paraphernalia on the night of Dec. 23 during a theft investigation at Golf Mill, police said. He was given a Jan. 11 court date.

**DUI**

- Julie A. Breen, 52, of the 1000 block of West Lawrence Avenue, Chicago, was charged with driving under the influence on the night of Dec. 23, police said. According to police, Breen was found sleeping behind the wheel of her car, which was parked outside Walgreens, 8001 N. Milwaukee Ave. She was given a Jan. 24 court date.

- Anthony R. Codd, 67, of the 9000 block of Capitol Drive, unincorporated Maine Township, was charged with aggravated driving under the influence, possession of a controlled substance and driving with a suspended or revoked license on the morning of Dec. 25, police said. According to police, Codd was found slumped over the steering wheel of his car, which was stopped near the intersection of Milwaukee and Touhy avenues at 7:37 a.m. Police said Codd was in a "confused state" and 0.8 grams of suspected cocaine, as well as a bag with the words "stay high" written on it, were found inside his car. He was taken to Advocate Lutheran General Hospital in Park Ridge. Court information was not included.

- Lazaro Espino, 24, of the 4500 block of North Central Park Avenue, Chicago, was involved in a crash near Milwaukee Avenue and Ballard Road. He was given a July 17 court date.

**PUBLIC INTOXICATION**

- A 56-year-old homeless man was ticketed for public intoxication on Dec. 22 after he was reportedly found sleeping on the floor of a restroom at CVS, 9640 N. Milwaukee Ave., and he was ticketed for public intoxication.

**THEFT**

- An unknown man stole an undisclosed amount of merchandise from Target, Golf Mill, on Dec. 20 when he went through the self check-out lane and failed to pay for any of the items, police said.

- A resident of the 8600 block of National Avenue reported his semi-automatic handgun missing from his home on Dec. 21, police said.

- An unknown man allegedly stole a $1,000 cellphone from a display at Sprint, Golf Mill, on the night of Dec. 21.

- A man attempted to purchase items at Fresh Farms, 8203 W. Golf Road, using a counterfeit $100 bill on the night of Dec. 21, police said. He reportedly fled the store after saying he was going to his car to get a different method of payment.

- Two unknown women stole between $400 and $600 worth of clothing from Old Navy, 8315 W. Golf Road, on Dec 21, police said.

- A man reported his cellphone was stolen Dec. 23 after he left it on a bench at Ross, 5750 W. Touhy Ave.

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‘I want to make this community safer’

Widow of Niles man struck by car seeks changes following tragedy

BY JENNIFER JOHNSON
Pioneer Press

Mary Potwora says she wants to forgive the driver who fatally struck her husband as he was walking home last week in Niles. But there are questions to which she still needs answers.

“I have to show him or her that I forgive them. But I have to know what happened,” she said. “I don’t want to believe they deliberately ran into him. I don’t think a human being could deliberately kill another human being like that.”

Niles police said Potwora’s husband, Michael, 72, was crossing Greenwood Avenue at Betty Terrace shortly before 6:30 p.m. on Dec. 27 when he was hit by a car heading north on Greenwood in the curb lane.

Initially, police reported Potwora had been struck by a “white pickup or sport utility vehicle” that had fled the scene after it struck from behind by another car, but the following day, the police department acknowledged that investigators had determined this was not true.

The vehicle that actually struck the man was described as a gray 2016 Jeep Patriot, and the driver remained at the scene and has been identified, police said.

As of Monday, Dec. 31, no charges had been filed in connection with the crash, said Detective Sergeant Tony Scipione. No additional information on why police were initially investigating the fatality as a hit-and-run was released.

Mary Potwora suggested the driver may not have initially been honest with authorities because he or she was afraid.

“That person didn’t tell the truth out of fear,” she said. “Put yourself in his or her place. Imagine what was going through their mind.”

Mary Potwora said her husband was returning home from a nearby Hallmark store on Dempster Street when he was killed. The couple lived about a block east of the intersection where the collision occurred, and Michael typically took walks in the neighborhood, always crossing Greenwood at Betty Terrace, Mary Potwora said.

There are no crosswalk markings or traffic signals on Greenwood at this location, which is something Mary said she would like to see changed — anything, she said, to improve safety for pedestrians.

“I want to make this community safer for people,” she said. “I want to make a difference in somebody else’s life so they don’t have to go through the pain and sorrow I’m going through.”

Mary said she met Michael through a friend 18 years ago, but they didn’t marry until last August.

“He had the time of his life,” Mary Potwora recalled. “He loved to walk on the beach and sit in the sand, which he never had the chance to do.”

For more than 40 years, Michael Potwora worked for the U.S. Postal Service’s distribution center at O’Hare Airport, retiring about nine years ago, Mary Potwora said. He was also involved in his church, attending Our Lady of Rosary Niles, St. Juliana in Edison Park and Immaculate Conception in Norwood Park over the years, his widow said.

“He loved people,” Mary Potwora said. “He was a people person.”

Michael was returning home after purchasing a card for his church pastor when he was struck, Mary said.

“God called him home that day,” she said. “It wouldn’t have mattered where he was.”

A funeral service for Michael Potwora is scheduled for Jan. 3 at 10 a.m. at Immaculate Conception Church, 7211 W. Talcott Road in Chicago. Interment will follow at St. Adalbert Cemetery in Niles.

Mary Potwora said she wants her husband to be remembered as the religious and caring person that he was. She also has a message for others in the wake of her husband’s death.

“Slow down,” she said. “Life is too short.”

Forest preserve police probe claims of poison

BY MEGANN HORSTEAD
Pioneer Press

Police with the Forest Preserves of Cook County were investigating after a social media post this week suggested there were reports of treats laced with rat poison found on a trail in Morton Grove, according to a forest preserves spokesman.

Carl Vogel, spokesman for the Forest Preserves of Cook County, said officials conducting an investigation “weren’t able to find anything, no indication.”

“They talked with some folks along the route, as well, walking their dogs,” Vogel said. “Nobody has seen anything.”

“I hate to call it an incident because we’ve found no evidence of that,” Vogel said. “We first heard about it through social media on Monday evening.”

Police said there are no open cases pending about incidents of this type, and no reports of injured animals.

“We take it very seriously,” Vogel said. “We’ve been investigating it.”

Anyone with concerns or information can contact the Forest Preserves of Cook County Police Department at its non-emergency line at 708-771-1001.

- Megann Horstead is a freelance reporter for Pioneer Press.

Police: Convenience store clerk thwarts Christmas Day robbery

A Niles convenience store worker stopped a Christmas Day robbery by waving a stick at the suspect and ordering him to leave the business, authorities said.

According to Niles police, a man dressed in black clothing entered the 7-Eleven, 7450 W. Oakton St., shortly before 6 a.m. on Dec. 25, and, after two other customers left the business, approached the employee at the counter while holding an object described as “possibly a spoon or a knife.”

The man allegedly made "stabbing gestures" with the object, while exclaiming "Money! Money!" police said.

The employee grabbed a wooden stick from under the counter and demanded the man leave the store, which he did, police said.

According to police, the man was last seen heading east from the 7-Eleven parking lot toward Osceola Avenue. Nothing was reported stolen from the store.

- Jennifer Johnson, Pioneer Press
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OPINION

‘Adversity’ just latest buzzword in sports

Adversity.
You are hearing this word a lot lately, if you are a regular viewer of TV sports networks. Maybe it's just me, but that word has been peppered more in the flavor of coaches' and athletes' press conferences than the hottest Italian beef sandwich you can find.

Beware, both may spark a case of nausea if you consume them too quickly.

But let's focus on adversity being the top press-conference buzzword of coaches and athletes who use it to characterize any situation that is not 100 percent positive.

Any time a pro or college team starts playing poorly, loses a star athlete to injury, players and coaches to suspension, or suddenly has some barrier pop out of the ground that halts their regular routine, you guessed it... they declare they are "facing adversity."

The pre- and post-game drivel during press conferences, usually from the coach, typically sounds something like this, "Because our quarterback is out of action while he recovers from a severe case of the hiccups, our team is facing adversity."

"We must overcome this adversity and stay focused while our leader on defense deals with the adversity of not being able to bark out a play call without sounding like a cackling goose. Have I mentioned adversity enough, yet?"

Unfortunately, that word also is being misused quite a bit in sports circles when describing much more serious circumstances, such as a coach or player being suspended for unethical behavior or covering up illegal actions.

Instead of the focus being on the individual and addressing help that he or others close to him may need, the podium statement often circles back to how the team is dealing with "off-the-field issues."

In a more recent and infamous case of a tone-deaf "adversity" response to a serious issue, one major college football program pushed its then acting head coach up to the podium microphone to tell the press how his team was dealing with "adversity."

Never mind the regular head coach was suspended by the university for getting caught in a lie over what he knew regarding a domestic violence situation involving another member of his staff, the acting head coach chose to talk about the "adversity" the team had to overcome by not having their regular head coach for their first three games of the season.

Really, was it the team dealing with adversity in that situation?

Adversity is defined by Dictionary.com as, "Adverse or unfavorable fortune or fate; a condition marked by misfortune, calamity or distress."

Remember when "making bad choices" was the big catchphrase for players and coaches when telling reporters about bad behavior on and off the field?

Now, it’s clear that "adversity" is at the top of the talking points list on page one of the pro athlete media training guide.

Although NBA hall-of-famer Charles Barkley once famously said in a TV commercial that "athletes are not role models," you know some kids will borrow the "adversity" line they hear on ESPN's SportsCenter and apply it in their own lives.

I'm sure there are some grade school teachers who've already heard excuses such as, "I'm sorry Ms. Crabtree but when my dog ate my math homework, I faced tremendous adversity and I'm trying to stay focused!"

There may be a few parents still recovering from dinner table discussions with their kids who declare, "Although I did not get the holiday gifts that I really, really wanted, I know I have to overcome this adversity and convince you to get me an Xbox for my birthday!"

Maybe Dictionary.com's definition of adversity should put the period at the end of the word, "misfortune"?

There's certainly enough "calamity" and "distress" going on in the world far outside of sports to have those situations merely summarized as phases of "adversity."

Eric Scott is a freelance columnist for Pioneer Press.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

We want to hear from you! Send your letters to the editor to suburbanletters@tribpub.com. Letters should not exceed 250 words and should include your name, phone number and address (only your name and town will be published).
Want an autographed baseball? You might have to settle for a couple squiggles.

Randy Blaser

An old friend of mine had a boyhood hobby that couldn't be done today.

As a boy, and a big baseball fan, he would collect autographs of the star players of his time.

It was easy back then. He would first collect pictures of his favorite stars out of baseball magazines, like Sports Illustrated. When his favorite players' teams were in town to play the White Sox or the Cubs, he would seek them out to get their autographs.

He'd wait after the game near the team bus and try to get them heading from the clubhouse. Some players would sign, others wouldn't. But more often than not, he got what he wanted.

Even as late as the 1980s it was possible to greet a player heading onto the team bus. A different friend of mine once nearly got into a fight with a Detroit Tiger bencher because he demanded to see Alan Trammel as the Tigers were heading out after besting the White Sox in a doubleheader. (Remember those?)

Amway, my autograph-seeking friend gathered quite the collection over the years.

He knew that I once played third base in high school and admired Brooks Robinson, the slick field third baseman for the Baltimore Orioles. Imagine my surprise one year when he gave me an autographed picture of Brooks for Christmas. I still have it and you can clearly read Brooks' name scrawled across the photo in that easy to read style of a straight up-and-down signature.

He gave another good friend a picture of Mickey Mantle to Reggie Jackson, when you see the signature of those stars on a baseball or program you can recognize it. You know who signed that ball.

It is a little bit different today. You see an autograph on a baseball of one of today's stars and you'll be lucky to know who signed it, unless you were there to witness the act.

There is a baseball card shop near my house and they often have top local players come and do autograph sessions. One day I saw that former White Sox pitcher and now Red Sox star Chris Sale was going to give autographs. My son was a big fan, so I decided to take him to get a signature.

Sale was patient as he signed the baseball and allowed me to take a picture of them together. And when I looked at the ball, I could hardly read the name of the pitching star.

I've since noticed that's how it goes with today's stars. The autographs of the likes of Miguel Cabrera, Mike Trout and Manny Machado are pretty much illegible.

They are hardly autographs at all. They are more like a series of squiggles followed by a line. A capital letter or two might be recognizable, but that's about it. Most of the time, the autograph is really a set of initials connected with a swirl or two.

We all know why this is so. The art of cursive writing has largely gone away, no longer taught to a generation of students.

Two of my three children have such awful handwriting that unless they hand me the birthday card, I can't recognize who it is from.

Thankfully, some schools have realized cursive handwriting needs to be taught again. They see it not as some old, out-of-date art form, but as a very necessary skill to function in society.

Everyone still has to sign checks. And a few have baseballs to sign.

Randy Blaser is a freelance columnist.
MIKE ROYKO TELLS IT LIKE IT IS IN
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Homeless want more than a meal, clothing

Jackie Pilossoph
Love Essentially

Every Monday evening at 5:30 p.m., Ann Barrett of Wilmette loads up her car with shoes, pants, sweaters, hoodies, sweatshirts, jackets, and jeans - donations that have been collected over the past week.

Then, Barrett, along with four other North Shore residents - Deacon Sandy Rex, Mike Murphy, Lauren Marwil and Steve Ford - head downtown to Lower Wacker Drive to feed, clothe and offer emotional support to approximately 80 homeless men and women.

"We have relationships with most of these people and we know them by name," said Barrett, an interior designer and mom of four. "They are desperate and lonely, and so whether it's just connecting by calling them by name and looking them in the eyes or engaging in a conversation or listening, it's comforting for them."

The group are volunteers for CUMALI (Chicago Urban Ministries & Life Intervention), an organization that focuses on the most vulnerable homeless - those who have established lives on the street as opposed to seeking shelter or other assistance.

"Many have mental illnesses or addictions, so sometimes the connections are tough, but some are just down on their luck, have lost jobs or have ailments that have prevented them from being able to work," Barrett said. "They're profoundly sad, and extremely grateful for our presence."

Here's how the mission works. Every Monday, volunteers pick up food donations from River's Casino in Rosemont during the day. The meals are taken to a Chicago church where they are stored for a few hours and then heated up and packed into approximately 80 individual containers before being picked up again and taken to Lower Wacker. Along with the meals, the recipients are also given hot chocolate, soup and socks. Barrett said the distribution route, which starts at Columbus Drive and ends up by the Lyric Opera building, takes approximately two hours.

"The whole experience is about being present and having a connection," she said. "It's about us being there every week. It's a community, and they look forward to seeing us. Even more than a hot meal, they're interested in conversation."

I found out about CUMALI through a friend in my community who is consistently soliciting clothing donations for the organization via Facebook and email. I was incredibly moved not just by the beauty of the material donations, but by the time and efforts made by the volunteers.

I asked Barrett if there are ever nights she just doesn't feel like facing heavy rush-hour traffic and going to Lower Wacker, especially in freezing temperatures and snow.

"Sometimes I don't feel like going, but once I'm there, I'm never sorry I went," she said. "This is a huge problem in our society, and people don't want to think about it. What we are doing is a small thing, but if everyone did just a small thing, it would make a huge difference."

According to the National Alliance to End Homelessness, there are almost 11,000 people homeless on a given night in Illinois, which is 8.4 per 10,000 people.

It's easy not to think about the homeless, especially if you live in the suburbs and you don't see people on the streets holding up signs and asking for money, or tents set up under bridges.

The holidays and the New Year are such wonderful times to feel gratitude and love for all we have, but also to give back. The impact we can all make on the lives of others, even with the slightest effort, is significant.

I am personally donating the money I get paid for this week's Love Essentially to CUMALI. If you are interested in donating cash, clothing, coats or shoes, please contact Church of the Holy Comforter, 222 Kenilworth Ave. in Kenilworth.

May God bless and care for the homeless.

Jackie Pilossoph is a freelance columnist for Chicago Tribune Media Group.
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10 Things You Might Not Know About Nearly Everything

contains a plethora of tidbits and trivia that will appeal to everyone, from history buffs to sports fans to foodies. From lighthearted topics such as misspellings and extreme eating, to serious subjects such as WWII and prison, this book leaves readers brighter and wittier than ever before.

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PERSONS OF THE YEAR:
Honored by *Time* Magazine

BY MARK MCCLAIN | EDITED BY STANLEY NEWMAN

---

**ACROSS**

1. Alabama city
6. Court reporter, for short
11. Chocolate shape
14. Jockey's concern
18. Diva's performances
19. Fallen angel
20. Field of expertise
22. Throw with force
23. Only British Prime Minister (1940, 1949)

68. Only three-time honoree (1932, 1934, 1941)
72. Nimble
74. Primatologist Fossey
75. "Photo" sessions
76. Alluring
77. Frat letter
78. Try out, informally
79. Necklace holder
81. Occupy pleasantly
85. Belgian diamond center
87. Only American-born woman (1936)
90. Post-joke query
91. Bland writing
92. Picasso's homeland
93. Elucidations, briefly
94. Youngest woman (1952)
98. Pic purchased at a parlor
99. Lloyd Webber musical
100. Casablanca character
101. Expression uttered weekly
104. Interjection of indifference
106. Reference updated annually
110. Road runners
112. Acknowledge, in a way
116. Taken to court
117. First and youngest (1927)
122. Matured
123. Casino ball game
124. All portrayer
125. Raucoous noise
126. Typically one-name family members
127. Procedure
128. Samsung's headquarters

**DOWN**

1. Toothed tool
2. The Emerald Isle
3. Manufacturer's assortment
4. Render pulpy
5. Prefix for physics
6. Phasing-out
7. Delicacy of demeanor
8. Cultural spirit
9. Micronesian nation
10. Freeway access
11. Grump's grunt
12. Wall bracket shapes
13. Chapel structure
14. Day trip
15. Decides on
16. Gator kin
17. Wall bracket shapes
18. Groundhog
19. Autobahn vehicle
20. Broll or bake
21. TV news hour
22. Tampa tackles, for short
23. Advil alternative
24. Toothed tool
25. Nimble
26. Feeling remorse
27. Water _ (dental gadget)
28. Annapolis sch.
29. Mushy
30. Student hurdle
31. Bus ancestor
32. Group of pundits
33. Hold up
34. Seat of government
35. Down for some short
36. Labor Dept. grp.
37. Opposite of ja
38. Skill at speaking
40. "Give it up!"
41. Water _ (dental gadget)
42. French diarist
44. Consultant's customer
45. Type of girder
46. Feeling remorse
49. Connects logically
50. City near Düsseldorf

51. By assent
52. "Who's there?" reply
53. Group of pundits
54. Western wine region
55. Winning streak, so to speak
56. Deserves
57. Advisor alternative
58. Houseful fuel
59. Working for
60. Cut corners
61. Story spreader
62. Part of 39 Across
63. "Not... watch!"
64. "No benevolent boss"
65. Small-scale people mover
66. "Who's there?" reply
67. Page number, in printer lingo
68. "Give it up!"
69. Son of 9 Across
70. Gems from Australia
71. Student hurdle
72. Bus ancestor
73. Group of pundits
74. Hold up
75. Seat of government
76. Students, pl.
77. Grum's grunt
78. Annapolis sch.
79. Mushy
80. "Who's there?" reply
81. Take to court
82. 1949)
83. "No benevolent boss"
84. Wife of Charlie Diamond
85. Joey's concern
86. "Where there's smoke..."
87. Adept expert
88. Burma neighbor, a while back
89. Aim (to)
90. "Who's there?" reply
91. "Who's there?" reply
92. "Who's there?" reply
93. "Who's there?" reply
94. "Who's there?" reply
95. "Who's there?" reply
96. "Who's there?" reply
97. Unenthusiastic assent
98. "Who's there?" reply
99. "Who's there?" reply
100. "Who's there?" reply
101. "Who's there?" reply
102. "Who's there?" reply
103. "Who's there?" reply
104. "Who's there?" reply
105. "Who's there?" reply
106. "Who's there?" reply
107. Racing sled
108. Congregate
109. "Who's there?" reply
110. "Who's there?" reply
111. "Who's there?" reply
112. "Who's there?" reply
113. "Who's there?" reply
114. "Who's there?" reply
115. "Who's there?" reply
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119. "Who's there?" reply
120. "Who's there?" reply
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123. "Who's there?" reply
124. "Who's there?" reply
125. "Who's there?" reply
126. "Who's there?" reply
127. "Who's there?" reply
128. "Who's there?" reply
129. "Who's there?" reply
130. "Who's there?" reply

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

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Words</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A. Old muppet 85 57 26 99 118 140 35</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B. Another old muppet 10 78 93 129 154 113 49</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C. 'Birthplace of oil industry' 53 54 42 60 82 150 111 119 138 18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D. Skedaddles 59 108 125 130 151 38 80 7 17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>E. Movie on and off USS Reluctant 84 55 121 140 56 98</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>F. Rope soled footwear 13 91 2 155 72 106 131 70 25 171 46</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>G. Cavaradossi's sweetheart 122 20 110 87 64</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>H. Sap 2 wds. 43 134 170 62 159 3 76 28 88</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I. Site of Minos' palace 11 83 163 147 50 32 67</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Name Game

ACROSS
1  Deeply engrossed
5   Soaks flax
9   TX tycoon
13  Separated
15  Alda or Bates
16  Canadian prov.
17  Saltpeter
18  Girl's name begins a Bohemian spa?
20  Airplane runway, for short
22  CA valley
23  Amarind
24  Containing one of the halogens
26  All Baba's Open
28  Conceals
31  Harrison
32  Starter for mony or monetary
33  Greek letter
35  Globetrotter
37  Meadowlark
39  Mosque priest
41  Shuts with force
43  Beverage
44  Philanthropist
46  In the midst of
48  Former capital of Serbia
49  Minister, for short
51  Enjoyable
53  Fabled sailor
56  Warren and Weaver
57  One, in Bonn
58  Miscalculates
60  Unicellular alga
63  Girl's name begins truthfully?
66  Cubic meter
67  Once again
68  Cinder follower
69  Afghan city
70  What's in a __?
71  Garden pest
72  Auld Lang

DOWN
1  Rave's partner
2  Samoan port
3  Girl's name begins an aristocrat?
4  Quaver
5  Lamb's dad
6  Spirit
7  Balboa, 1962 Curtis film
8  Concealed rifleman
9  Prohibit
10  Place for stamps
11  Aver
12  Infamous marquis
14  Swapped
19  Artist's need
21  Quotes
25  Statue nook
27  Hewing tools
28  Egypt's Port
29  Saint
30  L775 Act
34  Soap plant
36  Girl's name begins a monk's home?
37  Norse god
38  Noted cartoonist
40  Poetic A.M.
42  Golf great
45  Renaissance fiddle
47  Flashy
50  Deviates
52  Candidate lists
53  Italian city
54  Legal term
55  Waggish
57  Novelist Hunter
59  Navigator of the Enterprise
61  Algerian port
62  Limiting mark
64  Wonderment
65  Droop

Last week's answers appear on the last page of Puzzle Island © 2018 Creators News Service.
Calling Forth

BY GARY LARSON
EDITED BY RICH NORRIS AND JOYCE NICHOLS LEWIS

ACROSS
1 Close to closed
5 Salad veggie
11 Its "M" stands for "Motoren"
14 Battie
18 Ashton's spouse
19 2002 "Friends" Emmy winner
21 French monarch
22 Barbarian
23 Off-season at a nudist camp?
25 Stock female roles
27 Caribbean getaway
28 Dollhouse Christmas decoration?
30 Reveal, poetically
31 Sale limitation word
32 Early Indo-European
33 Hot
36 Abandon
38 Silver and gold
43 Defrost in the microwave?
45 Cubes for cooking
48 Longtime Dolphins coach
49 Reggae's...Kamoze
50 Ham, to Noah
51 Two, for most folks?
53 English critic
55 Soft drink brand
57 Elevator innovator
58 Cartridge holder
59 Colorful blocks
60 Worker in a garden
62 Capital south of Vienna
65 German title
68 Aha moment sensation?
69 Appliance maker
70...One vodka brand
71 Lucrative, contractually
72 VW hatchback
73 Friend of Pythias
76...As Time Goes By pianist
78...Woods to live by
80 Former #1 LPGA golfer Lorena
81 Goes after
83 Evade
85 One of the Baldwins
86 Hurting
87 John in London
88 Garlicky sauce
89 Chewed persistently
90 Separately
91 Price tag?
92 Cloth for a man's garment
93 Gewürz
94 Military title
95...1934
96...1924
97...1965
98 Asian celebration
99 Welcome
100 They may empty in a brawl
102 Actress Plummer
104 NATO alphabet letter after Romeo
107 Rainbow-like
108 Barnaby
109...After romeo
111 Bangers partner
112 Gym site
113 Skier's aid
114 Put in a position
115 Sym pathetic
116 Done in Verdun
117..."Suicide Squad"
118...Crisis in "Martha"
119 Dudley Do-Right's org.
120 savory
126...Norwegian god
127...elevated
128...Vitamin
129...importance
130...F.D.R.
131...Volkswagen

DOWN
1 Gremlins and Pacers
2 Abandon at the altar
3 Heaps
4 Filthy quarters
5 Kournikova of tennis
6 Air travel
7 Quarters
8 Novel ending?
9 Mushroom stems
10 Went deep at the park
11 Pipe material
12 Bank contents
13 Early American home
14 Ready to serve
15 Contents of the mariner
16 Be a bundle of nerves
17 Radio host John
18 Society page word
19 Optimist
20 The "E" in E. & J.
21 Gallo
22 Strapped-on accessory
23 Keepsake
24...The ref.
25 Coffee table
26...the eye
27...The eye
28...the eye
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36...The eye
37...The eye
38...The eye
39...The eye
40 Jam ingredients
41...The eye
42...The eye
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124...The eye
125...The eye
126...The eye
127...The eye
128...The eye
129...The eye
130...The eye
131...The eye

Jumble
Unscramble the six Jumbles, one letter per square, to form six words. Then arrange the circled letters to form the surprise answer, as suggested by this cartoon.

Sudoku
Complete the grid so each row, column and 3-by-3 box in bold borders contains every digit 1 to 9.

Last week's answers appear on the next page

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This week's answers appear on the next page

By David L. Hoyt and Jeff Knurek. © 2018 Tribune Content Agency, LLC. All rights reserved.
Year of reading, year of worry

Yet 2018 was marked by hope and joy

BY JOHN WARNER
Chicago Tribune

2018 comes to a close and it's time to take stock of the year that was.

I have no grand plan for this space. Each week I sit down and assess what's on my mind regarding the world of books and reading (broadly defined) and then do my best to flesh out that notion for the benefit and entertainment of the reading audience.

I think of each column as the start of a conversation, so reflecting on the past 12 months reveals preoccupations I may not have been entirely aware of at the time.

What have I been up to?

I kicked 2018 off with a column in which I vowed to read more books, because 2017 had knocked me off my stride and I recognized the loss in my life when I wasn't reading as much. I made sure to set aside at least 30 minutes every day for reading not related to anything for work, just reading to read. I marked in my online calendar each day I was successful.


One of my preoccupations of the year was arguing that we must protect important parts of the book ecosystem, like university presses whose funding is under threat, or independent bookstores trying to survive as real estate gets pricier.

I also argued that readers must be protected from a different kind of threat: Sean Penn's terrible, horrible, no good, very bad "novel," "Bob Honey Who Just Do Stuff."

I put my cheerleader hat on for bookstores with titles stocked to the sky (like the Lake Forest Book Store), for kids being allowed to read freely (even if something seems like a stretch) and for teachers to be given the autonomy necessary to work with students as the individual humans we know them to be.

I strongly advocated for the practice of tsundoku, acquiring more books than you will ever have time to read, while also strongly cautioning against the design trend of displaying one's books spine-in to give a monochromatic color effect.

This is an abomination on par with Penn's "novel."

In May, in the span of a week, we said farewell to two giants with complicated legacies: Tom Wolfe and Philip Roth.

I also took the time to remember two of my all-time favorites, whose voices I thought we could use today, Molly Ivins and Erma Bombeck.

I feel as though I spend a lot of my day worried, about the present, about the future, about the world at large and about my community closer to home. These past couple of years, so much feels so scarce, so precarious, even as we're told that we're living in times of abundance.

But looking at what I wanted to talk about with you folks, I see some measure of worry, but also equal parts of hope and joy. The mere act of having a chance to spend some portion of my week thinking about books and reading, bookstores and readers, too, seems to have decidedly positive effects on my overall worldview.

It's even better when I declared that in another life I want to return as a bookstore cat, and a handful of people wrote to me to say, "Me too!"

So let me finish this reflection with a thank you to the readers who are always there and a vital part of the conversation. I'm going to keep going as long as they let me.

I hope your 2018 finishes strong and your 2019 starts even better.

John Warner is the author of "Why They Can't Write: Killing the Five-Paragraph Essay and Other Necessities."

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This is your brain on solitude

Why alone time is what you need - now

A solitary walk or moment of rest can pay off in better relationships and better brain functioning.

BY CINDY DAMPIER
Chicago Tribune

The holidays are full of great moments, if we're lucky. And one of the greatest is the moment you realize that, yes, it really is all over with. Dinner is eaten, presents are opened, guests have gone home and you can feel that delicate, delicious lag — time, unaccounted for, stretches like a dog in the sunshine.

You're alone at last. “Holidays are all about togetherness,” says Suzanne Degges-White, “and it’s wonderful — people are piling into your house, you’re talking and being together and doing the things we love to do because we're human. But we also need to retreat, and there's nothing wrong with it. We need to carve out solitude; we need to find it.”

Degges-White, a psychology professor at Northern Illinois University, says that the need for alone time is as present and prevalent as ever — even though satisfying that need has gotten more confusing in modern society. The constant use of technology has caused growing concern over social isolation and lack of human interaction. Yet, it also has fostered a sense of endless, limitless connectivity. We are isolated, yet we are always on. “Even though we may think of it as mindless entertainment, we’re using our brains constantly,” says Degges-White.

Which is why being alone with a tiny glowing screen might remove you from the company of others, but it doesn’t feel the same as a walk in the woods. When it comes to the alone time your brain is asking for, phone time doesn’t count.

“Our brains were not meant to function at this high level that we insist on all the time,” Degges-White says. “We feel like we’re multitasking, but really we’re just constantly putting our brains into overdrive.” And brains, of course, are ancient machines that were not built to function that way. “The brain, unlike our devices, can’t be plugged into power and recharged. And sometimes I wonder when we are supposed to get our own processing, our own backing up done? Technology is great, but human evolution hasn’t caught up yet. We need a chance to rest.”

Downtime for the brain has concrete benefits: Studies have shown that kids who attend tech-free camps get better at recognizing facial cues in others after logging device-free time. And research on early adolescents who spent some time in solitude showed an improved emotional state afterward. That means that taking a breather to be by yourself, without tech ties, will actually make you better at being with the people in your life.

Alone time also improves other brain functions, including decision-making and creativity, Degges-White says. “You can’t make good decisions if you don’t ever give yourself time to reflect.” And “if you’re constantly engaged in the world, it’s harder to make space for those moments of genius.”

Luckily, getting the alone time you need isn’t as hard as it may sound, even in our inherently busy world.

Start thinking of alone time as a need, just like food and water. You’re not asking for a treat, you’re maintaining your brain. I mean, you don’t need to bargain with yourself or others to brush your teeth every day, right? A little solitude is like brushing your brain: “It allows you to clear out all the stuff you don’t need.”

If alone time makes you antsy, get moving. “It helps to move the body,” says Degges-White. “It sounds so new-agey but it really does bring the mind and body into sync.” She recommends (podcast-free) walking or yoga poses to give your body something to do while your mind floats free. If you’re using a trip to the gym as alone time, Degges-White recommends you skip the TV and other distractions, and let your mind tune in to what your body is doing. Or just tune out entirely.

Take alone time where you find it. We’re not all Thoreau, so if a forest walk isn’t in your cards, keep your eyes open for your own solitary moments. Even moments that we think of as “waiting” can function as quiet time if we recognize them as such. “After the birth of my third child,” says Degges-White, “I considered a trip to the dentist for a teeth cleaning a gift to myself. I was shocked at how I would feel, sitting in the waiting room, and I realized it’s because no one is asking anything of me.” Feeling that you are where you are supposed to be, yet momentarily at rest, can be freeing. “And once you experience that secret pleasure, you want it again.”

A good friend and I once admitted to each other that we can find near-perfect happiness cruising the grocery store, alone, late at night or early in the morning. Sometimes, I can hear those empty aisles calling, “You’re alone! You can sneak in ways to do something with yourself,” Degges-White says, “and there’s nothing healthier.”

cdampier@chicagotribune.com
More food pros name best dish eaten this year

BY VERONICA HINKE
Pioneer Press

What's the best meal you ate out in the Chicago area in 2018?
We asked Chicago food pros to name their absolute favorite. This is the second of a two-part story on the chefs' recommendations.

Gale Gand
Pastry Chef, Author, Teacher, James Beard Award Winner
Best Meal: Korean Barbecue

The Skinny: "It was Halloween night and our twins are finally old enough to trick or treat with their friends without an adult accompanying them. So my husband and I went out to dinner to celebrate. This interactive dinner was just the adventure we wanted. You cook your own meat and onions in stages on a hot plate and eat it as it's ready, either pork belly or beef short ribs. So delicious and interesting, with different combinations of garnishes like pickled garlic leaves, shredded scallions, kimchi, sliced daikon radish, etc. to build each bite, and myriad sauces to apply and dip into. Great with some Makegeolli, a cloudy rice wine."

Christopher Teixeira
Executive Pastry Chef and Operating Partner, The Fifty/50 Restaurant Group in Chicago
Best Meal: Neck Bone Gravy, Fried Pig Ear Salad, Goat Cheese and Beets, Pork Shoulder and Nutella Doughnut

The Skinny: "The menu selection is interesting and there is something for everyone. The flavors and textures that are put into each dish are thought out and never disappoint. Paired with great service and a great wine list, there really isn't anything more needed."

Mark Grosz
Chef/Owner, Oceanaire in Evanston
Best Meal: Cheeseburger
Restaurant: Red Hot Ranch, 3057 N. Ashland Ave., Chicago, 773-661-9377

The Skinny: "Best thing I ate in 2018 was, yes, a cheeseburger! At Red Hot Ranch on Ashland in Chicago the cheeseburgers resemble an In-N-Out Burger. I just got back from L.A.—my kids and I agree it's better. Fries by far too. Get the double with special house sauce. Extra bonus for us nocturnal chefs: Open 'til 4 a.m.'"

Paul Caravelli
Chef Consultant/Chef du Cuisine The Stained Glass/Chef du Cellar in Evanston
Best Meal: Roast Ducks/Soup Dumplings; a variety of sides and always something new to try

The Skinny: "I've taken Ina Pinkney out to SunWah BBQ for her birthday/Chinese New Year every year for the last three years. So those meals are super-memorable because I love her dearly. Ina does the ordering. She'll ask for a couple roast ducks and then all sorts of sides come along with it."

Alpana Singh
Terra and Vine in Evanston
Best Meal: A Bangkok Bowl
Restaurant: Lunch Room at Space 519, 200 E. Chestnut St., Chicago, 312-751-1519, www.Space519.com/pages/thelunchroom

The Skinny: "It's a fried rice bowl but with all the flavors of an authentic Pad Thai: umami from the fish sauce, heat from the chili paste, and spiciness from the ginger. Absolutely delicious, comforting and crave-worthy."

John Durning
Chef/Owner, Pizzeria DeVille and Burnies Uptown in Libertyville
Best Meal: Fried Chicken Special/Burgers/Brunch

The Skinny: "Rich Labriola started as a baker, and you can tell because dough is everything on a pizza. This deep dish has a mozzarella crust that looks as if it's burnt, but is a caramelized edge that is addictive. It's the finishing bite that will leave you dreaming about it!"

Pan Hompluem
Owner, Lowcountry in Chicago
Best Meal: Sloppy Thai Chicken Basil over Rice; Beefy Korean Bahn Mi

The Skinny: "My best meal in 2018 isn't a fancy Michelin-starred fine dining experience — rather it's something that is so approachable but made with so much love. Chicago Lunchbox started out as a successful food truck, but now is a small store front in the financial district. CLBX is making some of the best-tasting Asian soul food in the form of either banh mi or rice box. Just wow."

Fabio Viviani
Executive Chef & Partner, DineAmic Group in Chicago
Best Meal: Grilled Octopus Tacos

The Skinny: "A favorite dish I ate this year goes against my heritage, but it has to be Chef Kataju Tanabe's tacos at Barrio. This guy knows how to make Mexican food and even though I've tried them all, my favorite one is his Grilled Octopus Tacos. He mixes together jalapenos, garlic crema and sea salt potato crisps. They taste like no other fish tacos I've had before. I'm telling you, some of the best in the city. Although I love his food, I make sure whatever dish I get, NO CILANTRO on any of it!"

Joe Fontana
Chef/Owner, Fry the Cooper in Elmhurst and Oak Lawn
Best Meal: Sausage Deep Dish Pizza

The Skinny: "Rich Labriola started as a baker, and you can tell because dough is everything on a pizza. This deep dish has a mozzarella crust that looks as if it's burnt, but is a caramelized edge that is addictive. It's the finishing bite that will leave you dreaming about it!"

Zeeesha Shah
Chef/Owner, Superkhana International and Biscuit Man in Chicago
Best Meal: Mushroom Tacos; House Tortillas

The Skinny: "I had lunch at Bien Trucha over the summer. It was the day after my wedding, so spirits were high and energy was very low! Everything we had was seasoned perfectly, including the drinks which were so balanced we didn't notice how many we were drinking! We had almost every taco they offered, really loved the mushrooms. I particularly loved the house tortillas, so soft and perfect. The service was particularly well balanced between available and scarce."

Veronica Hinke is a freelance reporter for Pioneer Press.
WHAT TO DO COMMUNITY CALENDAR

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

Thursday, Jan. 3

"La Rosa Blanca" - David Gonzalez Performance: Through his award-winning storytelling, music and poetry, David Gonzalez guides a fascinating and compelling journey into his Latino/a culture. Drawing on Cuban/Puerto Rican roots, he traces the terrain of contemporary social and cultural issues, while celebrating to the value of multiculturism in American society. Visit the website or call the Box Office. 7:30 p.m. Thursday, Metropolis Performing Arts Centre, 111 W. Campbell St., Arlington Heights, $30, 847-577-2121.

Barrington Breakfast Rotary Club: We are a Rotary Club of local men and women who meet weekly for breakfast, fellowship and community and international service. We also discuss local and global topics, as well as issues relevant to the practice and promotion of Rotary ideals in our personal and business lives. 7 a.m. Thursday, The Garlands of Barrington, 1000 Garlands Lane, Barrington, $10, 847-304-1996.

Drop-in Tech Help at Lake Forest Library: Drop into the Lake Forest Library between 2 and 4 p.m. each day to get basic technology questions answered. While librarians can show attendees how to download eBooks, use their iPhone or tablet, create Google Docs, and similar techie tasks, remember that librarians cannot fix computer hardware problems or download software for you. 2 p.m. Thursday, Lake Forest Library, 360 E. Deeptham Road, Lake Forest.

Teens and Youth SMART Recovery: LEAD hosts this addiction recovery program available to youth ages 14-17 to help overcome unhealthy habits (drinking and drug usage), or behaviors (eating and gaming issues). SMART Recovery is judgment-free, promoting self-help and choice to achieve a healthy, positive and balanced lifestyle. The 4-Step Program assists individuals in all stages of recovery by: (1) building and maintaining motivation; (2) coping with urges; (3) managing thoughts, feelings, and behaviors; and (4) living a balanced life. 5:30 p.m. Thursday, Gorton Community Center, 400 E. Illinois Road, Lake Forest, free, 847-295-9075.

Caregiver Support Group: You may feel isolated or overwhelmed as you care for a family member or friend. Join others to share, interact and learn from each other in a safe, supportive environ-
Zumba Fitness Class: Licensed Zumba instructors lead this fun class that is suitable for all levels. Drummers play live. Wear comfortable shoes and bring water and a towel. Punch card or drop in. More information at the website or call. 8:30 a.m. Saturday, JCS Lutz Family Center, 800 Clavey Road, Highland Park, Punch card or drop in, 312-961-8484.

Backdated: John Lennon Tribute and Jay Goepnner Band - 7 p.m. opener: The Jay Goepnner Band; 8 p.m.: Backdated - A Loving Tribute to John Lennon. 8 p.m. Saturday, 210 Live, 210 Green Bay Road, Highwood, $15-$20 a person, 847-433-0304.

Book to Movie: "Tuck Everlasting": Those ages 10-18 will watch the movie version of "Tuck Everlasting" then discuss how the book was turned into a movie. Join to share what you like and don't like about the film adaptation. 2 p.m. Saturday, Lake Forest Library, 360 E. Deerpath Road, Lake Forest, free.

Piecemakers Quilting Ministry: Piecemakers Quilting Ministry meets at St. Peter United Church of Christ. This sew-in takes place from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. All quilters are welcome and they teach for those who wish to learn. Bring your supplies, your sewing machine, your willing hands, a sack lunch and join in this fellowship. They create quilts for Safe Place. For more information, call the church office or visit the website. 9 a.m. Saturday, St. Peter United Church of Christ, 47 Church St., Lake Zurich, free, 847-438-6441.

Improvosed Family Friendly Comedy: Hilarious improvised comedy every Saturday night. Audience suggestions make every show a unique, fun experience. Fun for the whole family, 7:30 p.m. Saturday, Improv Playhouse Theater, 736 Milwaukee Ave., Libertyville, $5 students, $10 advance, $20 at the door.

New Year, New You Dance-a-thon: There's no party like a Zumba and WERQ party. Park View Fitness' three fitness dance instructors are teaming up to bring attendees a 90-minute class. First time fitness dancers are welcome and experienced participants are encouraged to bring their friends. Feel free to celebrate the new year by wearing festive accessories. This is for ages 14 and older; ages 12-13 with an adult. 9:30 a.m. Saturday, Dunbar Recreation Center, 888 Dunbar Road, Mundelein, $10 for Park View members; $15 nonmembers, 847-388-5430.

Lego Club: Lego Club meets at 3 p.m. Feb. 2, 16 and 23; and at 1 p.m. Feb. 4 at the library. Legos are provided for children and parents to enjoy, and all ages are welcome. 1 p.m. Saturday, North Chicago Public Library, 2100 Argonne Drive, North Chicago, free, 847-689-0125.

Sunday, Jan. 6

Skip Griparis' "The Guys Who Gave Us Rock" presentation: Celebrate Rock's evolution through the '40s, '50s and '60s with the powerhouse singer, guitarist, comedian and impressionist. Laugh, learn and rock with Skip Griparis' 100 voices and the great hits from Muddy Waters and Elvis, to Franki Valli and The Beatles and beyond. Visit the website or call the Office Box. 3 p.m. Sunday, Metropolis Performing Arts Centre, 111 W. Campbell St., Arlington Heights, tickets $30, stage tables $35, 847-577-2121.

Joan Hickey Trio at 210 Live: Joan Hickey Trio 5:30 p.m.; Judy Night Trio 8 p.m. $10 cover, two drink or entree minimum. Judy is joined by Justin Kramer and Jackson Jay Kidder for a night of jazz standards and pop-jazz arrangements. 5:30 p.m. Sunday, 210 Live, 210 Green Bay Road, Highwood, $10 per person, 847-433-0304.

Teen Study Sunday: Make the Kaskan Room at the Library your go-to study spot. Perfect for teens looking for a quiet space to do homework and work on group projects, with convenient access to books and online resources. Now featuring snacks, 1 p.m. Sunday, Lake Forest Library, 360 E. Deerpath Road, Lake Forest, free.

"Adventures on The High Seas" - Movie Showing: Escape from winter with a movie about a boat on the high seas. Today's movie, "In the Heart of the Sea," is a recounting of the sinking of a New England whaling ship by a giant whale in 1820, an experience that later inspired the great novel "Moby Dick." This film is rated PG-13, and is part of the A Deep Freeze Read event. Learn more at deepfreezeread.org. 2 p.m. Sunday, Lake Forest Library, 360 E. Deerpath Road, Lake Forest, free.

Parkinson's Exercise Class: In these weekly Parkinson's exercise classes, participants learn more about the overall benefits of physical activity. Classes are led by a licensed occupational therapist with Paxxon Healthcare Services. To RSVP or for more information, call Susan Kocanda at 847-537-5000 or write to skocanda@belmontvillegle.com. 1:30 p.m. Tuesday, Belmont Village, Buffalo Grove, 300 McHenry Road, Buffalo Grove, free, 847-537-5000.

Trivia Night at Buffo's Restaurant: Bring family and friends every Monday night for a fun trivia night. Live host, great prizes and free to play. 7 p.m. Monday, Buffo's, 431 Sheridan Road, Highwood, free, 847-432-0303.

Trivia Night at Buffo's Restaurant: Take your chance to win gift cards for free beer and more. 7:30 p.m. Tuesday, Church Street Trivia with Amy. Get together your smartest friends and come to the tap room for your chance to win gift cards for free beer and more. 7:30 p.m. Tuesday, Church Street Brewing Co., 1480 Industrial Drive, Itasca, free.

Writing an Effective Resume: Learn how to produce an effective resume that will get the attention of employers by targeting the position for which you are applying, highlighting your accomplishments, and showing the value you bring to the table. This is presented by John Strauss, former senior principal at Accenture. Individual follow-up will be available by appointment for CRC members who attend this session. 6:30 p.m. Tuesday, Career Resource Center, 40 E. Old Mill Road, Lake Forest, Free for CRC members; $20 nonmembers, 847-295-5626.

Parkinson's Exercise Class: In these weekly Parkinson's exercise classes, participants learn more about the overall benefits of physical activity. Classes are led by a licensed occupational therapist with Paxxon Healthcare Services. To RSVP or for more information, call Susan Kocanda at 847-537-5000 or write to skocanda@belmontvillegle.com. 1:30 p.m. Tuesday, Belmont Village, Buffalo Grove, 300 McHenry Road, Buffalo Grove, free, 847-537-5000.

Trivia Tuesday: Come out to Church Street every Tuesday around 7:30 p.m. for Church Street Trivia with Amy. Get together your smartest friends and come to the tap room for your chance to win gift cards for free beer and more. 7:30 p.m. Tuesday, Church Street Brewing Co., 1480 Industrial Drive, Itasca, free.

Lake Bluff Women's Club: Audience with Queen Victoria: This is a Royal Invitation to meet Queen Victoria presented by The LBWC, a local philanthropic organization, non-political, non-denominational. They regularly meet from noon to 2 p.m. the second Tuesday of each month (October–April). Enjoy a catered luncheon and January's presentation, "An Audience with Queen Victoria." This is a costumed interpre-
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Calendar, from Page 15

Earthmother - Live at 210: Earthmother is coming to 210 Live in Highwood for Steal Your Face Wednesdays. Josy Rosales: vocals and guitar; Trevor Mooney: bass; Zack Weinstein: vocals and drums. 7 p.m. Wednesday, 210 Live, 210 Green Bay Road, Highwood, $5 per person, 847-433-0304.

Books and Beyond: "Snowflake Bentley": Read this month's selected book and join to share your thoughts. Activities and refreshments are also part of the fun. Visit the children's library to check out this month's book, which is "Snowflake Bentley" by Jacqueline Martin. 4 p.m. Wednesday, Lake Forest Library, 360 E. Deerpath Road, Lake Forest, free.

Taxes and Your Small Business: Learn which deductions apply to you, best practices for record-keeping and what to expect from tax reforms. Yolanda Ruiz with the IRS reviews all the information small business owners need for tax season. This program is free and open to all, but registration is required either online at the website, by calling 224-543-1485, or in person at any service desk in the library. 6:30 p.m. Wednesday, Vernon Area Public Library District, 300 Olde Half Day Road, Lincolnshire, free, 847-634-3650.

Wednesday Team Trivia: Join in every Wednesday for this trivia night. You may win prizes playing Themed Trivia. There is a limit of 10 people maximum per team. 8 p.m. Wednesday, Snuggery McHenry, 801 N. River Road, McHenry, free, 815-578-9600.

Thursday, Jan. 10

Barrington Breakfast Rotary Club: We are a Rotary Club of local men and women who meet weekly for breakfast, fellowship and community and international service. 7 a.m. Jan. 10, The Garlands of Barrington, 1000 Garlands Lane, Barrington, $10, 847-304-1996.

Lake Forest Country Day School Open House: Lake Forest Country Day School Open House offers an opportunity to tour the campus, speak with teachers and students, observe classes in session, and meet families from the LFCDS community. Visit the website or call the Admission Office. 9:15 a.m. Jan. 10, Lake Forest Country Day School, 145 S. Green Bay Road, Lake Forest, free, 847-615-6151.

Teen and Youth SMART Recovery: LEAD hosts this addiction recovery program available to youth ages 14-22 to help overcome unhealthy habits (drinking and drug usage), or behaviors (eating and gaming issues). SMART Recovery is judgement-free, promoting self-help and choice to achieve a healthy, positive and balanced lifestyle. The 4-Step Program assists individuals in all stages of recovery by: (1) building and maintaining motivation; (2) coping with urges; (3) managing thoughts, feelings and behaviors; and (4) living a balanced life. 5:30 p.m. Jan. 10, Gorton Community Center, 400 E. Illinois Road, Lake Forest, free, 847-295-9075.

Country With a Little Ballroom: Enjoy a mini lesson and open dance for all styles. 7 p.m. Jan. 10, Dress Up & Dance, 206 Terrace Drive, Mundelein, $12.

Drew Lynch - the Chicago Improv Headliner: In 2015, Drew Lynch captured the hearts of America with his Golden Buzzer performance on Season 10 of "America's Got Talent." Since then, Drew has guest-starred on IFC's "Maron" and landed his late night debut on "Conan," and more. 7:30 p.m. Jan. 10, 8 p.m. and 10:15 p.m. Jan. 11, 7 and 9:15 p.m. Jan. 12. The Chicago Improv, 5 Woodfield Mall, Schaumburg, $22, 847-240-2001.

"Hooray For Bollywood - Let's Dance": Join in for an interactive Bollywood Dance workshop delivered by local dance guru Deepthi Chiruvuri from Bolly DanceFit. By the end of this program, participants will know how to strut some of their own Bollywood dance moves. Register at webres.cooklib.org. 6:30 p.m. Jan. 10, Cook Memorial Public Library - Aspen Drive, 701 Aspen Drive, Vernon Hills, free, 847-362-2330.

Route 66 Art Show by Artists on the Bluff: From traditional to contemporary, guests can experience something new, something old, something familiar and something out of the ordinary, such as "Painting On Water" by Amy Lee Segami, "Once In A Blue Moon." During the reception, you can meet several artists, spend an evening of fine arts, stories, and conversations. 5:30 p.m. Jan. 11, The Gallery, 202 E. Wisconsin Ave., Lake Forest, free, 847-836-2330.

LinkedIn - Building the Profile: LinkedIn is an essential tool in today's job market. Learn the important elements of building your profile. This is presented by Ernie Katko, U-Connect, Social Media Consultant and LinkedIn trainer. 10:30 a.m. Jan. 11, Career Resource Center, 40 E. Old Mill Road, Lake Forest, Free for CRC members; $20 nonmembers, 847-295-5626.

Have an event to submit? Go to www.ChicagoTribune.com/Events
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<td>743 Meadow Ln, Libertyville</td>
<td>Dale E Rudow &amp; Laura L Rudow</td>
<td>Matthew J Holden</td>
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<td>Miroslaw Kline</td>
<td>Henryk Tarasza</td>
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This list is not intended to be a complete record of all real estate transactions. Data compiled by Record Information Services. T 630-557-1000 F public-record.com
'Obsessed with Notre Dame'

Chicago pipeline strong as Irish prep for bowl

BY PATRICK M. O'CONNELL
Chicago Tribune

SOUTH BEND, IND. - The drive from downtown Chicago to the heart of the University of Notre Dame campus takes less than two hours on most weekdays. On a gray, blustery day last week, lake-effect flurries pounded the windshield during the quick jaunt east on the Indiana Toll Road before the golden dome of the administration came into view, glistening despite the gloom.

The campus was nearly empty, the students long gone for holiday break, meaning the Brennan family bench outside the Jordan Hall of Science was empty.

The bench, a few steps away from the Knute Rockne statue outside the north entrance to Notre Dame Stadium, honors three generations of family members who graduated from Notre Dame with a small plaque. Memorials and remembrances are a common site throughout the historical campus. Many of those families, like most of the Brennan family, hail from the Chicago area.

"It's such a unique pull when you're there, and a lot of that comes back to football," said Drew Brennan, at 41 the youngest of the seven members of his family to attend Notre Dame. Brennan, whose father, grandfather, two uncles and two cousins also received their diplomas from the university, said he grew up around Saturday morning tailgates on campus, throwing the football around the quad while his family grilled bratwurst.

"A lot of it is also the education, but also the Catholic church, too," said Brennan, who now lives in Glen Ellyn. "To this day, I'm obsessed with Notre Dame."

As the Fighting Irish football team prepares to play Clemson in Saturday's College Football Playoff semifinal, thousands of alums in Chicago and the suburbs will be tuning in to see if Notre Dame can upset the Tigers to advance to the championship game. They will be joined by countless other Irish fans who have never set foot in one of the university's classrooms but are drawn by the history and mystique of one of college football's most successful programs.

Notre Dame has had strong ties with Chicago and northern Illinois for decades. The city and suburbs' large Catholic population provides a strong link, but the university's reputation as one of the best colleges in the country is a draw for both parochial and public students. The Chicago-area pipeline also exists, in part, because many high school students want to attend a school within a 200-mile radius of home, admissions officials and college counselors said, far enough away from parents and the structure of prep college life but not too far that it's a hassle to travel home on weekends.

"People either love them or hate them, so it can be easy to talk about," said Brennan, who sometimes uses his ties to Notre Dame on sales pitches to potential clients for his technology company or during interactions on the road to break the ice. The football team's absence from the playoffs for several years before this year's appearance has cooled the anti-ND sentiment, Brennan surmises, but the Irish's recent resurgence has rekindled some of the spirit - everyone knows Notre Dame.

Although plenty of other Big Ten fans will be rolling their eyes or actively cheering against the Yankees of college football, Notre Dame will have the backing of 4,000 active members of the Notre Dame Club of Chicago, and likely triple that number in regular fans just in Chicago and Cook County alone. Club President Katie McCoy estimates 20 percent of the group's members are "legacy" alums - they have a parent or a family member who also attended Notre Dame.

"It doesn't hurt you being from Chicago when applying to Notre Dame, but he said while admissions offices strive for a geographically diverse student body, including students from both the East and West coasts as well as overseas, having Chicago roots doesn't mean a student is any less likely to be accepted.

"It doesn't hurt you being from Chicago and applying to Notre Dame," Bishop said.

Suburban draw for team

The football team, in many ways, is representative of a cross section of the Chicago area's ties to the
They hail from here, but all hail Notre Dame

Legacy, from Page 14

university. Fourteen football players are from the Chicago suburbs, and one player, freshman Houston Griffith, is from Chicago but attended IMG Academy in Florida, according to the roster. The Irish have players from Neuqua Valley, Nazareth, Hinsdale South, Hinsdale Central, Fenwick, Loyola Academy, Cary-Grove, New Trier, Warren, Bolingbrook, Marist, St. Viator and Providence Catholic high schools.

The recent success of the football team has a minimal effect on the applicant pool, Bishop said.

"The success of the team creates a lot of excitement, but, quite frankly, things don't shift on the basis of the success of the team," he said. Like the now-established success of the Duke University men's basketball team, Notre Dame's football reputation has long since been cemented. Bishop said that in speaking with others in the admissions circuit, many point to Gonzaga University's recent run as an elite basketball team, Marquette University's basketball success and Boston College's football prowess in the 1980s as examples of schools where success on the court or the field boosted the school's reputation with noticeable effect on the academic applicant pool.

McCoy said the alumni club is about evenly split between alumni who grew up in and around Chicago and then returned after graduation, and transplants who grew up in other parts of the country and now live in the Chicago area. A winning football team, she said, helps a little bit with fundraising and paid membership, but she pointed to more macroeconomic factors (membership was down during the recession) as playing a more significant role than gridiron glory. Still, anytime a big-name football personality is booked for a fundraising event (see: Hall of Fame coach Lou Holtz and current coach Brian Kelly), ticket purchases and attendance soar.

Catholic pipeline

Providence Catholic in the Joliet area has sent eight students to Notre Dame since 2014, including Miles Boykin, one of the Irish's wide receivers. "The football connection has created even more of an interest among our students," said Providence college counselor Frank Palmasani, but the university is usually held in high regard, and even the most academically successful students realize it's going to be tough for them to receive a Notre Dame acceptance letter. "Students know the challenges of the whole process of applying and getting admitted."

For many families, Notre Dame is their top Catholic university choice, said Ed Dutmers, Providence's advancement director.

The situation is similar at St. Viator in Arlington Heights, where tight end Cole Kmet, a two-sport athlete who also plays baseball for the Irish, went to high school. Students are drawn to Notre Dame by its college choice, said Ed Dutmers, Providence's advancement director.

"The unique points are the combination of faith life and dorm life, that's a factor a lot of our students are aware of," Dutmers said.

In a typical year, about 10 percent of St. Viator students apply to Notre Dame, Dutmers said. "For any one college to receive that percentage of applicants, I'd deem it to be pretty popular," she said. But even students who never consider applying to the university often wear Fighting Irish apparel to school and cheer for the school's sports teams.

Bishop, the admissions officer at Notre Dame, said students are often attracted to the school's sense of family and its focus on service, in addition to top-flight academics. He hopes students come to Notre Dame not just to become smarter, "but to become self-knowing, self-loving and then to put that to use in helping others."

Drew Brennan said that when it came time for him to decide on a college, he narrowed his choice to the family legacy and Miami University in Ohio, where his older sister decided to attend. He received his acceptance letter to Notre Dame, then decided to wait about a week before making his decision.

"My dad was very emotional," Brennan said. "It was a special moment for me."
Here's what will mess with your commute in 2019

BY MARY WISNIEWSKI
Chicago Tribune

Chicago-area commuters in 2019 will see plenty of road construction — from the closed Chicago Avenue bridge and ongoing repairs on the Jane Byrne Interchange to rebuilding on the Central Tri-State Tollway.

What they won’t see is fare hikes on public transit. The CTA, Metra and Pace all agreed to hold off on fare increases this year.

The region also can look forward to wrangling in the state legislature over the possibility of the first new capital infrastructure bill in 10 years. Transit agency heads and road builders have been banging the drum in favor of new funding, and they hope for results from the new governor, J.B. Pritzker.

Transit

Transit riders will see some new stations, new service and new train cars in 2019.

On the CTA, officials plan to finish the $50 million renovation of the Garfield Green Line station early next year. Also on the Green Line, the CTA will begin building a new Damen Avenue stop.

The agency also plans to begin renovations on three of the oldest and grimmest stations on the subway system — the Grand, Chicago and Division stations on the Blue Line to O’Hare. The new Belmont Blue Line station should get done in 2019, as well as bus station renovation at the Jefferson Park station.

The big job for the CTA will be the $2.1 billion Red-Purple Line Modernization Project. Pre-construction work, such as demolishing buildings and utility work, started in 2018. The start of major construction is expected next fall, though the whole project will not be finished until 2025.

The Illinois Department of Transportation will keep working on the seemingly interminable Jane Byrne Interchange project into 2022.

The project involves a flyover that will carry Brown Line trains over Red and Purple line tracks north of Belmont Avenue, and the rebuilding of century-old track and stations.

Metra will continue implementation of its $400 million federally mandated positive train control by 2020.

Pace riders will see service cuts on some suburban routes. The suburban bus service also plans to launch the Milwaukee Avenue Pulse Line, high-frequency service that will run between the CTA’s Jefferson Park Blue Line station and the Golf Mill Shopping Center in Niles.

Illinois Tollway

On the Illinois Tollway, work will wrap up on a two-year project to rebuild and widen part of Interstate 88 between Interstate 290 and the York Road Toll Plaza.

Design and advance work will continue for the new Interstate 490 Tollway, planned as part of western access to O’Hare International Airport. Initial construction will begin on the 490 interchange at Illinois Route 390 with work between Illinois Route 390 and York Road, according to the Tollway. Work will continue on interchanges connecting I-490 to the Tri-State Tollway (Interstate 294) and the Jane Addams Memorial Tollway (Interstate 90).

The Tollway also will continue reconstruction work of the Edens Spur (Interstate 94) Tollway, and rebuilding and widening the Central Tri-State at the north end between Balmoral Avenue and Wolf Road in Franklin Park.

New Tollway projects will include the Illinois Route 23 interchange project on I-90 in Marengo, and the Illinois Route 47 interchange project in Sugar Grove.

State and Chicago roads

The Illinois Department of Transportation will continue work on the seemingly interminable Jane Byrne Interchange project, which will continue into 2022.

IDOT officials say that motorists will see more of the same type of construction delays on the complex project in 2019, while more disruptions will come in 2020, when a major ramp will need to be closed. This is the ramp from the inbound Eisenhower Expressway to the northbound Kennedy Expressway, which sees 26,000 cars a day.

The transportation song quiz will return next week.

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The end of the calendar year remains a historically good time for discounts, even if overall new-car incentives are down for 2018.

Tyson Jominy, head of J.D. Power and Associates' data consultancy, says, "The week between Christmas and New Year's has seen the highest new-car incentives of the year for four of the past five years. And two days in particular should see a lot of activity in 2018.

Due to the calendar, we have two very strong-selling days to end the year — Saturdays, which are always the strongest-selling days of the week, on Dec. 29, combined with Monday, New Year's Eve, [which is always among the top-selling days of the year]," Jominy stated in an email. "As we head into the period, it is important to note that incentives are still likely to be down overall for the industry versus last year. However, excellent deals can still be found on specific models.

End-of-year deals should be bountiful as dealers look to sell the last of the outgoing 2018 model year. As of Dec. 19, that year still accounts for roughly a third of all new-car inventory on Cars.com. For six brands in particular, more than 45 percent of new inventory remains 2018:

- Honda: 62.5 percent
- Audi: 56.7 percent
- Ford: 39.2 percent
- Mitsubishi: 32.6 percent
- Jeep: 48.2 percent

Dealers from those brands should want to clear out the old, especially considering those models' 2018 calendar-year run ended on Dec. 2. And with 192 days to sell on dealer lots in November — much longer than the 38-day average for

By Kelsey Mays
Cars.com

2019 models. If you shop the brands above, there's a good chance you'll find dealers motivated to move the metal.

By contrast, dealers selling Subaru, Acura and Infiniti are almost all the way into the 2019 model year, with less than 10 percent of inventory still comprising the 2018 model year. That could signal fewer deals from those brands.

Which cars have the highest cash discounts? Here are a few.

### SUVs

#### 2019 Chevrolet Equinox:
Parent company GM is offering employee pricing on select models, including the Equinox. In the automaker's advertised example — a well-equipped Equinox Premier that sells for around $40,000 — total discounts amounted to some $6,000 if you finance with GM. Those who finance elsewhere or pay cash are still eligible for employee pricing, but total discounts will be lower, a spokeswoman for the automaker told Cars.com. Discounts are also variable depending on trim level, so lower trims are likely to have smaller incentives. And employee pricing doesn't apply to the Equinox's base trim, called ISM. Deals expire Jan. 2.

#### 2018 Ford EcoSport:
$1,750 to $3,650 off, depending on region, though select markets, including California, have substantially lower discounts. Discount financing varies widely, too. We found 84-month rates from 2.9 percent all the way up to 7.9 percent, depending on region. That said, the 2018 EcoSport should be easy to find, as it accounted for nearly all new dealer inventory as of Dec. 19. Deals expire Jan. 2.

#### 2018 Hyundai Tucson:
$3,000 to $5,500 off, depending on trim, or 0.9 percent financing for up to 60 months plus $1,000 off. Persistent shoppers should be able to hunt down a 2018 model as they still accounted for about a third of new Tucson inventory as of Dec. 19. Deals expire Jan. 2.

#### 2019 Kia Sorento:
$2,000 to $3,500 off, depending on trim, or zero percent financing for up to 60 months plus $500 in some regions. Offers expire Jan. 2.

#### 2018 Nissan Murano:
$4,000 to $5,250 off, depending on region. In some areas, a small portion of that comes only on upper trim levels. Alternately, discount financing on the Murano amounts to zero percent for up to 60 months plus $2,000 to $2,750, region depending. The updated 2019 Murano is just around the corner, but as of Dec. 19, Nissan dealers are still full of 2018 models.

#### 2018-19 Nissan Rogue:
$1,000 to $3,500 off the 2018 model or $1,000 to $2,500 off the 2019 model, both depending on region, plus $500 more if you finance at standard rates through Nissan. Alternately, discount financing amounts to zero percent for up to 60 months with $500 off. Offers expire Jan. 2.

### Sedans and hatchbacks

#### 2018 Chevrolet Cruze:
Employee discounts knock some $5,400 off GM's advertised example — a Cruze Premier priced around $30,000 — for those who finance through the automaker. Finance elsewhere, pay cash or choose a lower trim level, and your discounts are likely to be lower, albeit still substantial enough to consider. You should easily find qualifying examples, as the 2018 model year accounts for about two-thirds of new Malibu inventory as of Dec. 19. The discount expires Jan. 2 and doesn't apply to the base trim, called IVL.

#### 2018 Ford Focus:
$2,500 to $5,000 off, depending on trim level and region. Alternately, discount financing amounts to 2.9 percent for 84 months. Offers exclude the Focus Electric and high-performance Focus RS. You should have no trouble finding the others, however. With the Focus' global redesign axed for U.S. showrooms, the 2018 model year is the nameplate's final stateside example.
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FIRST TEAM AND SECOND TEAM

BY BOB NARANG, STEVE REAVEN
Pioneer Press

FIRST-TEAM DEFENSE

Aidan Cruickshank
School: Hinsdale Central
Year: Senior
Position: Safety
Accolades: All-conference, team MVP
Key stats: School's all-time leader in tackles. Made more than 100 tackles as a junior and repeated the feat as a senior.

Armoni Dixon
School: Loyola
Year: Senior
Position: Linebacker
Accolades: All-conference, Committed to Tulane.
Key stats: Made 86 tackles, including a team-high 18 tackles for loss, with seven sacks and nine quarterback hurries.

Luke Dwyer
School: Lake Zurich
Year: Senior
Position: Linebacker
Key stats: Made 66 tackles, including eight tackles for loss, with four sacks and two interceptions, both of which he returned for touchdowns.

Jake Gonzalez
School: Loyola
Year: Senior
Position: Safety
Accolades: All-conference. Named to Class 8A all-state team. Committed to Penn.
Key stats: Made a team-high 135 tackles with five pass breakups and two interceptions. He's Loyola's all-time leader with 355 tackles.

Antonio Hardaway
School: St. Joseph
Year: Senior
Position: Defensive line
Accolades: All-conference
Key stats: Made 78 tackles, including 31 tackles for loss, with 12 sacks.

Zane Heemsoth
School: York
Year: Senior
Position: Linebacker
Accolades: All-conference
Key stats: Made 110 tackles, including six tackles for loss, with two forced fumbles.

Rylee Mills
School: Lake Forest
Year: Junior
Position: Defensive line
Accolades: All-conference
Key stats: Made 47 tackles, including 10 tackles for loss, with five sacks and five quarterback hurries.

Izaiah Ruffin
School: Oak Park-River Forest
Year: Senior

SECOND-TEAM DEFENSE

Maema Njongmeta
School: Stevenson
Year: Senior
Position: Linebacker
Accolades: All-conference. Committed to Purdue.
Key stats: Made 86 tackles with two interceptions and one forced fumble.

Khalil Saunders
School: Maine South
Year: Senior
Position: Defensive back
Accolades: All-conference. Named to Class 7A all-state team.
Key stats: Made 64 tackles, including two tackles for loss, with three interceptions.

Patrick Carden
School: Notre Dame
Year: Senior
Position: Linebacker
Accolades: All-conference. Defensive team MVP.
Key stats: Made 81 tackles, including eight tackles for loss, with two forced fumbles and one interception.

Sean Jacobs
School: Buffalo Grove
Year: Senior
Position: Linebacker
Accolades: All-conference
Key stats: Made 132 tackles, including nine tackles for loss.

Sean Kelly
School: Hinsdale Central
Year: Senior
Position: Linebacker
Accolades: Committed to Air Force.
Key stats: Made 55 tackles, including 15 tackles for loss, with six sacks.

Austin Le Page
School: Lake Zurich
Year: Senior
Position: Defensive back
Accolades: All-conference
Key stats: Made 32 tackles with three interceptions and three pass breakups. He is the Bears' all-time interceptions leader with 13.

Nate Pedraza
School: Rolling Meadows
Year: Junior
Position: Defensive line
Accolades: All-conference. Named to Class 7A all-state team.
Key stats: Made 58 tackles, including 8.5 tackles for loss, with four sacks and two pass breakups.

Khalil Saunders
School: IC Catholic
Year: Senior
Position: Defensive back
Accolades: All-conference. Named to All-Conference and CSL South Co-Defensive Player of the Year.
Key stats: Made 15 tackles for loss with nine sacks.

Jonny Halvorsen
School: Hersey
Year: Senior
Position: Defensive line
Accolades: All-conference. Named to Class 4A all-state team.
Key stats: Made 64 tackles, including two tackles for loss, with three interceptions and one fumble recovery.

Bob Narang and Steve Reaven are freelance reporters for Pioneer Press.
Maine South's John Gardiner (32) tries to block a shot from Lincoln Park's Tahir Thompson (10) during the first round of the Hinsdale Central Holiday Classic on Dec. 26, 2018.

Gardiner emerges as a consistent contributor for Maine South

**BY STEVE REAVENT**

Pioneer Press

Though John Gardiner has a last name that's quite familiar to Maine South basketball fans, his game was mostly a mystery until a few weeks ago.

But now, a month-plus into his senior season, the days of anonymity are in the past.

Buoyed by a strong offseason and the remnants of a late growth spurt, the 6-foot-5 forward has emerged as a vital piece in the Hawks' rotation. He's making a name for himself on the court.

"It's definitely nice being able to show what I can do," Gardiner said. "I just try to do all the things my team needs me to do."

Two other Gardiners have brought a touch of family to the Hawks this season. First came his older brother, Joe Gardiner, a standout guard who graduated in 2016. Now a junior at DePaul, he's in his second season as an assistant coach for the Hawks.

Next came the brothers' cousin, Tommy Gardiner, a top player on last year's squad who is now a walk-on at Marquette.

And John Gardiner's sister, Kalina Gardiner, also goes to Marquette and is on the cross country and track teams.

The Gardiner basketball bloodlines also spread to the Hawks' girls program, as Joe and John Gardiner's twin younger sisters, Niamh and Nicole, are both starters.

"There's a lot of us around," John Gardiner said of his family. "Knowing how good my brother and cousin were helped me to keep improving." And he's become a better player because of the direct influence of both.

Back-up his cousin as a junior gave John Gardiner a front-row seat as he learned about being tough in the paint and how to be an effective leader.

And John Gardiner routinely receives postgame pointers from his older brother. The two often watch film together.

"I always tell him, 'Don't back down to anyone,'" Joe Gardiner said. "They play in a tough conference, so boxing out and doing the little things is important. He plays his role really well."

With returning players Essam Hamwi and Fil Bulatovic serving as the top two scoring options, Gardiner has carved out a role where he can make an impact in a variety of other ways. Heading into the holidays, he was the Hawks' best player at drawing an offensive foul, making the extra pass and limiting turnovers.

His production also shows up in the boxscore, such as in Maine South's 46-43 loss to Lincoln Park on Dec. 26 in the opening round of the Hinsdale Central Holiday Classic. He joined Hamwi and Bulatovic in double figures with 11 points. He was 4-for-5 from the field, and he was fouled on his only miss. He made the subsequent free throws.

Another vivid illustration of his importance was that he never departed the game after being whistled for his fourth foul.

"His value comes from his consistency," coach Tony Lavorato said. "A lot of what he does isn't on our website or on Twitter, but he's definitely become a key contributor."

Steve Reaven is a freelance reporter for Pioneer Press.

**Twitter @Pioneer_Press**
Meet your nominees!

It is time to meet your January Athlete of the Month challenge nominees! Go to chicagotribune.com/suburbs/athletes on Jan. 17 to find out who our expert panel of judges have selected to be the Athlete of the Month. Winners will be featured in print and online, receive a commemorative plaque, and his or her school will receive $500, presented by Country Financial.

Name: Aquan Smart
Year in school: Junior
School: Niles North
Sport: Basketball
Position: Guard
Highlights: Averaged 14.2 points, 6.2 rebounds and 2.2 assists. Scored 25 points against Notre Dame.
Quote: “Aquan has really stepped up his game this year,” Niles North coach Glenn Olson said. “There is a lot of pressure on him being the only returning starter, but he has done a great job leading our team.”

Name: Sam Galanopoulos
Year in school: Senior
School: Niles West
Sport: Basketball
Position: Point guard
Highlights: Averaged 14.6, 3.6 rebounds, 4.0 assists and 2.0 steals. Scored 24 points against Maine South on Dec. 14.
Quote: “Sam has a tremendous work ethic and been a great leader for us this year,” Niles West coach Kyle Braheny said. “He sets the tone with how hard he plays and makes others have to match his effort.”

Name: Hannah Schilling
Year in school: Senior
School: Maine South
Sport: Basketball
Position: Point guard
Highlights: Averaged 7.3 points, 4.2 rebounds, 4.2 assists and 2 steals per game. She had nine points, four rebounds, four assists and three steals in win over Batavia on Dec. 1.
Quote: “Hannah is truly one of those players that every coach would want on their team,” Maine South coach Jeffrey Hamann said. “She has an intense competitive drive that allows her to make game-changing plays when our team needs it the most.”

The entire Carleton men's soccer community including families, alumni, coaches, and players are thrilled for Mark and Marco. Carleton coach Bob Carlson said in a school release. “The well-earned awards are a credit to their terrific individual talent and outstanding performances this fall. Marco and Mark also understand that their success is built on the team's success, and they excitedly share these honors with the entire program.”

Evanston alum Roth earns All-American soccer honors

By Bob Narang
Pioneer Press

Evanston alumnus Mark Roth earned a significant distinction for his play for the Carleton College (Minn.) men's soccer team this season.

The senior defender was named to the United Soccer Coaches All-American second team. Roth had already earned USC All-North Regional First Team honors.

A total of 49 players from across the country earned a spot on the USC's first, second and third teams.

Teammate Marco da Cunha also was named to the second team.

Roth and da Cunha are the fourth and fifth Carleton men’s soccer players to earn All-American honors, and it was the first time in program history that two players received that distinction in the same season.

"The entire Carleton men’s soccer community including families, alumni, coaches, and players are thrilled for Mark and Marco,” Carleton coach Bob Carlson said in a school release. "The well-earned awards are a credit to their terrific individual talent and outstanding performances this fall. Marco and Mark also understand that their success is built on the team's success, and they excitedly share these honors with the entire program."

Roth helped anchor one of the stingiest defenses in all of college soccer. The Knights recorded 12 shutouts, the most in their NCAA region and 12th across all of Division III.

Roth also tallied eight assists to finish fifth among Division III defenders. He scored his first four college goals this season and was named the Minnesota Intercollegiate Athletic Conference Player of the Year.

Love a consensus All-American

Football is king in the Love household this month.

Nazareth senior wide receiver Michael Love recently was named the Pioneer Press 2018 Football Player of the Year. His older brother, Julian Love, added to his long list of accolades in college.

Julian Love, a junior cornerback at Notre Dame, was a consensus All-American. He was named to four of the five official All-American teams. Through 12 games, Love has recorded 51 tackles, 15 pass-breakups, one interception, three fumble recoveries and a defensive touchdown. Notre Dame has had 34 unanimous All-American selections in program history, and Love came very close to being the 35th.

The No. 3 Irish (12-0) will play No. 2 Clemson (13-0) in the Cotton Bowl on Dec. 29 in Arlington, Texas, in a College Football Playoff semifinal.

Cashaw rounding into form

Former Stevenson star guard Connor Cashaw is starting to play key minutes for Creighton.

After transferring from Rice, the senior guard has averaged 2.2 points in 12 games this season.

He has come off the bench in 11 games and tallied a team-high seven rebounds in a 110-60 win against Creighton on Thursday.

"How about a suggestion for College Notes? Email Bob Narang at bobnarang@yahoo.com."

Bob Narang is a freelance reporter for Pioneer Press.

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Morton Grove...New Listing! Rare Offer/Opportunity to own this 7 room Brick Ranch on Huge 59' Lot with Attached Garage!! Hardwood floors throughout, 3 nice sized bedrooms, large living room and separate “L” shaped dining room. Main floor Family room with sliding glass door to large yard with patio. Double closets. Fenced yard. Need some Paint/Polish/Updates=Great Potential and Price! Great Location near Park, Schools and Pool. Convenient to Old Orchard Shopping, I/94 and O’Hare. Priced to sell quick! Will not last long, Don't miss out on this Great Opportunity!! $219,900

**A TRUE 10++ HOME!!**
Niles...Quality built 9 room brick Ranch has been meticulously maintained! Hardwood floors, huge living room & separate formal dining room. Large eat-in kitchen with Granite counters, updated cabinets and spacious eating area overlooking private balcony. 3 spacious bedrooms & 3 full baths(including master bath). Full finished basement with 2nd kitchen with new appliances, Rec/Family room with gas fireplace & wet bar perfect for hosting parties. Ample storage in basement and abundant closet space. 2 car garage. Nice yard with patio! Ask $393,900