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Next Issue:
December 16

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P.O. Box 31391,
Chicago, IL 60631

Issue 17
December 2, 2011



HOLIDAY EVENTS

See pages 5-8

“IT’S CHRISTMAS TIME IN THE CITY”

The Chicago Department of Cultural Affairs and Special Events, in partnership with the Chicago Office of Tourism and Culture Presents It’s Christmas Time in the City featuring a stellar cast of Chicago’s finest entertainers including Carla Gordon, Laura Freeman, Paul Marinaro, Tom Michael, Laury Shelly and Robert Sims under the musical direction of Beckie Menzie. This fun-filled musical romp of holiday songs includes classic favorites and humorous musical parodies to brighten the season. Admission is free.

Saturday, December 10, 2011, at 2 p.m.

Chicago Cultural Center, Claudia Cassidy Theater, 78 E. Washington St.
For more Holiday events throughout Chicago, visit www.ExploreChicago.org.

DANK HAUS
GERMAN AMERICAN
CULTURAL CENTER

Kulturkueche Cooking Class

“*Krautwickel*”
(stuffed cabbage)

1/20/12, 7:30

\$18 per person
(includes drink, recipes, and tasting)

call
773 - 561 - 9181

OR

email
dank@dankhaus.com

Maggie

Always a Lady - Forever an Inspiration

Thank you for everything. You will live in our hearts as you and your family will continue to remain in our thoughts and prayers.

From Everyone at Village Publications -
Our Loss is Heaven’s Gain

After School Matters® Founder and Chair Maggie Daley



After School Matters® is saddened beyond words by the passing of our Founder and Chair Maggie Daley. She was truly a visionary who inspired Chicago, the nation and leaders from around the world with her passion for providing teenagers with opportunities to find paths to meaningful lives.

While After School Matters has lost its leader, Chicago’s teens have lost their strongest voice and champion — a true believer in the potential of high school students if only they are offered opportunity and encouragement.

All of us at After School Matters will be forever grateful for the gift of working side-by-side with her. Her optimism, devotion and courageous spirit will live on through the accomplishments of the tens of thousands of teens whose futures are now brighter because of her boundless commitment to their lives and their potential. We will honor her legacy by continuing to dedicate ourselves to the work she loved so dearly.

70th Anniversary of Pearl Harbor

Honor the memory of the more than 2,400 Americans who died during the Japanese attack on the Pearl Harbor Naval Base in Hawaii on December 7, 1941, at a special ceremony at Oakton on Wednesday, December 7.

Sponsored by the Department of Historical and Policy Studies and Office of Veterans Coordinator, the event will feature Betsy Tolstedt, Ph.D., team leader of the Evanston Veterans Center representatives, who will speak on “Pearl Harbor: Life Changing - World Changing: The Impact of the Pearl Harbor Attacks in December 1941 and Beyond.”

The remembrance will take place at 12:30 - 2 p.m., at Oakton’s Skokie campus, 7701 North Lincoln Avenue (Room C120), and 5 - 7 p.m., at the College’s Des Plaines campus, 1600 East Golf Road (Room 1625). At the forums, Oakton students will read eyewitness accounts of the attack. The commemorations also will feature Oakton commentators Wendy Maier-Sarti, professor of history (Skokie), Jim Hold-erfield, history and political science instructor (Des Plaines), and Veteran and Work-force Specialist Vince Donahue Jr. (Des Plaines and Skokie).

ST. THECLA CHURCH

6725 WEST DEVON AVENUE, CHICAGO (773) 792-3077

Immaculate Conception of Mary
Holy Day of Obligation
Thursday, December 8th, 2011

8:30 am,
10:00 am (Mass in Polish),
noon,
6:00 pm (Mass in Polish)
7:30 pm

Liturgy of the Hours (Vespers)
Sunday, December 4, 4:00 pm
Sunday, December 11, 4:00 pm
Sunday, December 18, 4:00 pm



SALVATION ARMY COAT VOUCHER PROGRAM

Vouchers for free winter coats from the Salvation Army are available from November 7, 2011 through March 31, 2012. Vouchers are redeemable at any Salvation Army Thrift Store in the Metropolitan Chicago area for as long as supplies last. There are no eligibility requirements for this program; however, there is a limit to one coat voucher per person. Interested parties should contact Geri Silic, the Village of Lincolnwood Social Worker and Salvation Army Service Extension Representative, at 847-745-4755.



Village of Skokie Sponsors a Non-perishable Food Drive

The Village of Skokie has started an ongoing non-perishable food drive in an effort to benefit the Niles Township Food Pantry. A large food collection box is located at the main entrance of Village Hall, 5127 Oakton Street. Please consider donating non-perishable goods while purchasing a vehicle sticker, dropping of a permit application or doing other business at Village Hall.

Acceptable items include:

Boxed cereals	Canned vegetables and fruits
Canned stews, soups, pork & beans	Canned meats (tuna, chicken, etc.)
Boxed juices and milk	Pasta, rice
Peanut butter and jelly (plastic jars only)	Crackers
Pudding cups	Fruit cups, fruit bars, raisins

Glass jars and perishables items are not accepted.

For more information please contact the Human Services Division at 847/933-8208. Village Hall is open Monday through Friday from 8:30 a.m. to 5 p.m.

Alerts from Nixle

Nixle is a way for community residents to be able to receive alerts from local police and 4,600 other public safety facilities. Nixle's mission is to create safer and more informed communities throughout the country and RCC would like to pass along this information to our community.

As of today, there are over 4,600 Public Safety agencies nationwide using Nixle to send notifications such as tornado warnings, storm alerts, missing child bulletins, road closures and other local information to their communities. Through the power of text messaging, you can receive this information immediately or choose to have it sent to your inbox via email.

Registration is free, secure and can be done at nixle.com or by sending a text message with your zip code to 888777. For more information, visit nixle.com.

CJE SENIORLIFE NAMES THREE EMPLOYEES OF THE YEAR

The leadership of CJE SeniorLife recognized three Employees of the Year -- Janina Ptasznik of Des Plaines, Lloyd Kohler of Chicago and Jeanne Yelland of Chicago -- at the organization's 39th Annual Meeting, held Oct. 25, at the Weinberg Community for Senior Living in Deerfield. Nominated by their peers, Employee of the Year candidates represent those individuals who exemplify CJE's core values of respect, advocacy, compassion, intention and accountability.

CJE Employees of the Year:

Janina Ptasznik, of Des Plaines, has been with CJE SeniorLife for 12 years, working as a resident assistant in personal care at CJE's Weinberg Community for Senior Living in Deerfield since November of 1999.

Lloyd Kohler, of Chicago, has been with CJE SeniorLife for the past five and a half years as Application Analyst and Help Desk Analyst for Information Technologies, and works out of the Bernard Horwich Building in West Rogers Park.

Jeanne Yelland, of Chicago, has worked at CJE SeniorLife for nearly 15 years, starting as Date Entry Clerk in January 1997 and currently as Program Support Specialist in Community Services at the agency's main office in West Rogers Park.

"Our employees are the heart and soul of the organization," said CJE SeniorLife President/CEO Mark Weiner. "Without the dedication of staff members like Janina, Lloyd and Jeanne, we would never be able to reach out to the thousands of residents, families and community members who rely on CJE daily for vital services and programs."

CJE SeniorLife is an innovative provider of community-based and residential programs, and services for older adults throughout the Chicago area. Over the past 40 years, CJE's wide range of services has grown to include assisted living, counseling and care management, long-term skilled nursing, Alzheimer's care, home health, wellness programs and much more. CJE is a partner in serving the community, supported by the Jewish United Fund/Jewish Federation. For more information about CJE services, call 773/508-1000 or visit www.cje.net.

LINCOLNWOOD APPROVES DONATION COLLECTION BIN REGULATIONS

The Lincolnwood Village Board adopted an Ordinance on September 20, 2011 to regulate the use of donation collection bins within the Village. Collection bins are metallic containers that are used to receive donations of a variety of used items including clothing, shoes, books, and other items. The items are then sold, donated, or recycled. Collection bins are operated by both non-profit and for-profit organizations. There are currently 22 collection bins at various sites throughout the Village.

The Village Board discussed regulating collection bins at the June 2, 2011 Committee of the Whole, as residents have expressed that there are too many collection bins within the village and that they are becoming an eyesore. At that time, the Village Board directed staff to research other municipalities that have adopted collection bin regulations. Staff presented the Village Board with the findings of their research at the August 18, 2011 Committee of the Whole. After reviewing the research, the Village Board directed the Village Attorney to prepare an Ordinance regulating collection bins.

The newly adopted Ordinance states that a limit of two collection bins per property are allowed in business districts and properties belonging to religious and public institutions. All bins must exhibit the name and phone number of the bin owner, and must be annually licensed by the Village. Bins are prohibited on required parking spaces, as well as sites with no operational and/or conforming use. Collection bins are not allowed to be placed against the front façade of any building. Collection bin owners that do not comply with the newly adopted ordinance, will be required to remove their bins.

CELL PHONES FOR SOLDIERS

The Polish National Alliance, The Polish Roman Catholic Union of America, The Polish Women's Alliance, The Polish Falcons of America, along with the affiliates of the PNA, The Polish Daily News (Dziennik Zwiazkowy), WPNA 1490 am Radio, and both PNA Bank locations, are joining in the support of the "Cell Phone For Soldiers" program by having drop off boxes at their locations.

More than 150,000 troops are serving overseas and are away from their families. Cell Phones for Soldiers and the PNA, PRCUA, PFA and PWA are calling on everyone in the area to support these brave men and women by donating your unused cell phones.

Cell Phones for Soldiers was founded by teenagers Robbie and Brittany Berquist from Nowell, Massachusetts with \$21.00 of their own money. Since then, the registered 501c3 non profit organization has raised almost \$1 million dollars and distributed more than 500,000 prepaid calling cards to soldiers serving overseas. The donated phones are sent to ReCellular, which pays Cell Phones for Soldiers for each donated phone, enough to provide an hour of talk time to soldiers abroad with prepaid calling cards.

Local Residents can support the collection drive by donating their phones thru March 1, 2012. For additional information about the Cell Phones for Soldiers program, visit their website at www.cellphonesforsoldiers.com or visit www.pna-znp.org or call the PNA at 1-773-286-0500 ext. 316 or 373.

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She's right down the street
and I always get my
appointments quickly."



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Choose a doctor with the
expertise you need and
the compassion you want.

Search online and find the
doctor who is right for you at
olr.reshealth.org/doctor.

**Our Lady
of the Resurrection
Medical Center**

Central and Addison



**Recognized
Nationally.
Caring Locally.**

We are nationally
distinguished and
five-star rated for
clinical excellence.

Bucktown – a Joy-FULL Celebration of Friendship V – A Continued Success

After 24 articles regarding “Bucktown” of the past and present as printed in OUR VILLAGE paper, and a series of requests for a possible reunion, Rev. Francis Rog, C.R. and a committee announced “A Joy-FULL Celebration of Friendship. “I expected about 20 to 30 people to attend ... and more than 200 people made reservations for the dinner at the White Eagle Restaurant” voiced the chairperson.

It was proper to have the dinner at the “White Eagle” as Vivian Przybylo Kolpak suggested the articles to Fred and Chris Gilman, editors of the newspaper.

A “Poor Man’s Free Raffle” was suggested to those who responded to the invitation. “The Poor Man’s Free Raffle” was to have the participants bring a new item (perhaps something which one would not expect to use) and valued at least \$5.00. It was to be wrapped in newspaper (no fancy paper) and tied with string or scotch tap (no fancy ribbons nor decorations). After the dinner each participant could choose a prize – for some a great surprise!

The fifth annual celebration on November 13, 2011 had a little less than 200 in attendance. “Certainly some, who attended the earlier dinners have died or are home-bound.” While a few individuals who have heard of the dinner made appearances, the greatest number who attended were residents in Bucktown in the “50’s and ‘60’s.

A call at the first dinner was to have the “Joy-FULL Celebration of Friendship” in another year. So for the next four years a celebration dinner was had. Another dinner is planned for next November, under the chairmanship of Ron and Carole Ovuchowski. Information may be obtained by calling (708) 456-0238.

Home Weatherization Workshop

Sponsored by Hollywood-North Park
Community Association & Chicago Conservation Corps
Wednesday, December 7, 2011, 7 - 8:30 pm
North Park Village Nature Center, 5801 N. Pulaski Road

Winter will be here soon. Is your home ready?
Come to this FREE workshop!

- Learn about common air leaks that waste energy.
- Get practice installing the energy-saving materials
- You’ll take home in your FREE Weatherization Kit with window plastic kit, caulk & caulk gun, weatherstripping and more!

Chicago residents only ~ Advanced registration required. For more information or to register, contact Susan Casey at scasey@hnpca.org.

Quigley Launches Online Survey to Help Local Small Businesses

Congressman Mike Quigley (IL-05) launched a new online survey aimed at providing local entrepreneurs with the support and resources they need to successfully operate and expand their businesses.

“This survey is an opportunity for small business owners in Illinois’ Fifth District to offer firsthand insight on how the government can make running a small business easier,” said Congressman Quigley. “It’s important that the government do all it can to support small businesses, which are putting our friends and family back to work, revitalizing our neighborhoods, and providing the goods and services that keep America’s economy running.”

The survey asks small business owners to identify regulations that need reforming or streamlining, as well as any issues they face that impede operations and hinder success. It is accessible online at www.quigley.house.gov/smallbizsupport.

Protecting the interests of small businesses and local entrepreneurs has been a top priority for Rep. Quigley, who cosponsored the Private Company Flexibility and Growth Act (H.R.2167) introduced by Rep. Schweikert (R-AZ) in June. This bipartisan bill makes it easier for small businesses to grow and create jobs by easing SEC regulations that require companies with 500 or more employees to publicly disclose finances, often prompting them to go public before they are ready. Under H.R. 2167, the threshold would increase to 1,000 employees.

“Small businesses are the backbone of our economy, and the government should encourage their growth and success, not hinder it. I look forward to hearing ideas from those in my district on what I can do to make that happen,” said Rep. Quigley.

ANTIQUES APPRAISAL DAY

Ever Wonder What Your Junk Is Worth? NOW Is The Time To Find Out...
ANTIQUES APPRAISAL DAY SUNDAY, JANUARY 29 2012, 2-4 PM

Meet Tom Krenek: Appraiser and Antique Store owner

*Bring your antiques and collectibles (sorry, no fine jewelry or artwork)

*Participants will be charged \$10 per item (limit of two items) and appraisals will be done on a first come, first served basis.

* All proceeds to benefit the Irving Park YMCA, “This is Y” Annual Scholarship Campaign

Irving Park YMCA 4251 W Irving Pk Rd, Chicago IL 60641 Contact Lara @ 773-326-2606 www.irvingparkymca.org

ATTENTION U S MILITARY VETERANS

American Legion Edison Park Post #541 is having a meeting on Thursday Dec. 8th starting at 7:30PM at the Edison Park Field House located at 6755 Northwest Hwy., just west of Harlem Ave. Chicago.

We are looking for new members. We’re a friendly active post with members from Chicago and suburbs. If you’ve been thinking about joining a veterans organization feel free to stop by and sit in at our meeting. This will be the last scheduled meeting of 2011.

American Legion Edison Park Post #541 members wish all of “Our Village” readers and “Our Village” staff a very Merry Christmas and Happy New Year.

For additional information please contact: Post Commander Gerald Skotzko at 773-693-3448 or Sr. Vice Commander Robert Fuggiti at 773-736-8738

Winter Overnight Parking Ban Returns Thursday, December 1st

Watch For & Obey Posted Snow Restrictions

Chicago’s Winter Overnight Parking Ban, the seasonal parking restriction for 107 miles of the city’s most critical arterial streets, will resume on Thursday, December 1, 2011, at 3 a.m. The ban will be enforced from December 1, 2011 through April 1, 2012, between the hours of 3 a.m. and 7 a.m., regardless of snow.

Drivers who ignore the overnight ban prevent these critical routes from being fully plowed and salted when it snows. During a heavy snowfall, build-ups of snow next to parked vehicles on these routes further reduces the streets capacity to handle critical traffic.

“The overnight parking ban is in place during the winter to make sure that critical routes are up and running at all hours so that emergency vehicles, buses and other traffic can get through,” said Streets & Sanitation Commissioner Thomas G. Byrne.

Violators who ignore the ban face a \$150 towing fee (minimum), a \$50 ticket and a storage fee of \$10 per day that increases over time. 215 motorists were towed for violating the first day of the ban last winter. And despite heavy news coverage of enforcement efforts, 127 motorists ignored the posted restrictions and were towed on the second day.

The permanent signage that marks the Winter Overnight Parking Ban route is posted next to signs for the 2-inch Snow Parking Ban along 107 miles of the broader 500 mile long Snow Route System. The Snow Route System was created as a result of lessons learned from massive snow storms, including the Great Blizzard of ‘67.

While the 2” Inch Snow Ban can technically be activated at any time of the year, this restriction is not activated often and is only a factor during the winter months. Motorists who violate it face ticketing and relocation to a nearby site. Motorists need to watch for and obey both restrictions.

Dempster Station Area Plan - Get Involved

The Village of Skokie has partnered with the Regional Transportation Authority and a team led by OKW Architects to prepare a Dempster Station Area Plan to create a circulation, land use, parking and development future vision for the area.

There will be a public meeting for the community to provide development ideas and input for the area on Tuesday, December 6 at 7 p.m. at Skokie Village Hall, 5127 Oakton Street .

Please visit the Official Dempster Station Area Plan web page through the link located at www.skokie.org to provide location-specific comments with an interactive mapping tool. Comment categories include community asset, development priority site, problematic intersection, public safety concerns, undesirable use, desired use/development, poor appearance and “other”. The input gained through the Dempster Area Plan web page will be used to prioritize the issues that are most important for the Village to address in the near term and in the future.

For more information about the Dempster Street Area Plan, please contact Steve Marciani, Planning Supervisor, at 847/933-8447.

State Representative, 20th District

Michael P. McAuliffe

Be Safe While Holiday Shopping and Watch for Children on Their Holiday Break While You are Driving, Especially on Slippery, Snow Covered Streets.

5515 N. East River Road
Chicago, IL 60656
Phone: 773-444-0611



Local Arts and Entertainment

BECOME A CHICAGO GREETER AND SHARE YOUR FAVORITE LOCAL SPOTS WITH VISITORS

Love your neighborhood? Show it off! Chicago Greeter is seeking friendly, enthusiastic and knowledgeable volunteers to join the program in 2012. This award-winning visitor service managed by the Chicago Office of Tourism and Culture pairs local Chicagoans with visitors looking for an insider introduction to the city. Home to a vibrant cultural scene, stunning architecture, innovative dining and destination shopping, Chicago welcomes nearly 40 million visitors annually from around the world. While for most visitors, the city's downtown is a must see, the surrounding communities have much to offer as well.

Through Chicago Greeter, volunteers share what they know and love about the city and visitors take away a truly authentic Chicago experience by discovering lesser known neighborhood gems. Potential Greeters interested in volunteering can apply at www.chicagogreeter.com/apply.

Nearly 200 Chicagoans regularly volunteer their time through the Chicago Greeter program, reaching visitors from all 50 states and over 90 different countries. Greeters highlight various neighborhoods and interests for visitors on two- to four-hour excursions. They show off their knowledge of local history, ethnic heritage, architectural highlights, culinary hotspots, public art, GLBT Chicago, family-friendly destinations and more. Each Chicago Greeter leads a group of up to six people and is matched with visitors based on interests, availability and language.

Volunteers are encouraged to personalize visits based on their own insights and experiences, while taking guests across the city on a journey that showcases its diversity as well as its walkability and user-friendly public transit system. With 77 distinct communities in Chicago, there's no limit to what visitors can discover, from rich histories to favorite traditions, and hidden treasures to local landmarks.

Have fun showcasing the city, meet new people from around the world and give back to your community. Becoming a Chicago Greeter requires no additional experience, only a passion for Chicago. Volunteers are provided with basic training and asked to volunteer at least six times a year. All interested candidates are encouraged to apply. Chicago Greeter seeks volunteers familiar with Chicago neighborhoods, especially South and Northwest Side communities like Bronzeville, Hyde Park, Pilsen, Bridgeport, Bucktown, Wicker Park and Albany Park. Candidates with foreign language skills, such as Spanish, French, German and Mandarin, as well as others, are also encouraged to apply.

A founding member of the Global Greeter network, Chicago Greeter is recognized internationally for its innovation and consistently ranked as one of the most popular programs of its kind in the world. Celebrating 10 years in 2012, Chicago Greeter has served approximately 5,500 visitors in 2011 alone. To learn

Auditions for "You're a Good Man, Charlie Brown"

The James Downing Theatre announces open auditions for its upcoming production of the heartfelt and funny musical *You're a Good Man, Charlie Brown*, directed by Kevin Reeks.

Performances will run Saturday and Sunday afternoons and evenings, February 18th through March 4th, 2012.

You're a Good Man, Charlie Brown is a fast-paced and energetic look at Charlie Brown's quest to come to terms with his own inadequacies. The show is based on Charles M. Schultz's "Peanuts" comic strip and follows Charlie Brown, Lucy, Linus and friends as they face the challenges of life, kites and ball games. Cast members should be young or appear young.

The James Downing Theatre is seeking 4 men and 2 women for the cast. Auditions will be held Sunday, December 4 and Sunday December 11 at 6:00 p.m. at the theatre's location in the Edison Park United Methodist Church, 6740 North Oliphant Avenue, Chicago. Theatre entrance is in back of church. No appointments are necessary. Please bring a current headshot and resume, if available.

Auditioners will also need to bring sheet music for a 16 or 32 bar cut of a song that shows off your voice and range. Standard Broadway music is best, but you are welcome to sing from the show. A pianist will be provided. Auditions will also include a cold reading from the script.

Rehearsals will begin in early January. This is a non-Equity production and there is no pay.

For further information, please visit our website at jamesdowningtheatre.typepad.com, or contact the director at 708-955-4536 or kevinreeks@gmail.com.

Based on The Comic Strip "Peanuts"® by Charles M. Schulz

Book, Music and Lyrics by Clark Gesner

Additional Dialogue by Michael Mayer

Additional Music and Lyrics by Andrew Lipppa

Produced by special arrangement with Tams-Witmark Music Library Inc.

The James Downing Theatre

Performing at The John Waldron Arts Center

Housed at Edison Park United Methodist Church

6740 N. Oliphant Ave, Chicago, IL 60631

E-mail: jamesdowningtheatre@gmail.com

Phone: 224-725-3696 Website: <http://jamesdowningtheatre.typepad.com>

DANK-HAUS GERMAN AMERICAN CULTURAL CENTER

4740 North Western Avenue, 5th floor, Chicago, IL 60625
773.561.9181 www.dankhaus.com

Sieben Türen Performances

Through 11 Dec

Premiere Theatre & Performance presents Botho Strauss' *Seven Doors*
Friday & Saturdays at 8:00pm, Sundays at 3:00pm. Tickets available at brownpapertickets.com. Strauss is one of Germany's most produced playwrights and one of its most prolific. The 2008 production was a US premiere, in a translation by the late Peter K. Jansen of the University of Chicago.

Deutsche Around Town

3 Dec Liederfest

St John's

Christmas Schooner

Young Goethe in Love

Ariadne auf Naxos

Heimat Films

3 Dec Ruf der Waelder

10 Dec Die Beine von Dolores

17 Dec Eine Reise ins Glueck

Nächster Film 7 Jan 2012

Free admission

Kaffee und Kuchen \$4-\$6

7TH ANNUAL POLAR ADVENTURE DAYS OFFER THREE DAYS OF WINTER FUN

The Chicago Park District presents the seventh annual Polar Adventure Days from 12 - 4 p.m. on three Saturdays, Dec. 10, Jan. 21 and Feb. 18, at Northerly Island, 1400 S. Lynn White Dr., on the Museum Campus. The program is admission free. [Click here to watch a video about Polar Adventure Days.](#)

Polar Adventure Days offer families the opportunity to explore Northerly Island and come face-to-face with live animals, engage in winter activities, watch ice sculpture carvings, and create nature-inspired crafts. Participants are encouraged to dress for the weather as events take place both outdoors and inside the visitor center.

The following features and activities will be available at Polar Adventure Days:

- Nadeau's Ice Sculpture transforms blocks of ice into magical creations.
- Various live animals will be on site to discover, such as birds of prey.
- Siberian huskies will be present and adventurers will talk about their Iditarod dog sled race experiences.
- Arts and craft tables for making nature-inspired creations.
- Free snowshoe rental for exploration of the island if there is enough snow.

Please call to confirm scheduled activities for Polar Adventure Days as activities are subject to change. For more information, call 312-742-PLAY (7529).

Limited parking is available for \$3 during Polar Adventure Days.

AN EVENING OF JAZZ FEATURING BOB LARK AND HIS ALUMNI BIG BAND

The Music Department of Niles West High School presents a special concert event at 7 p.m. on Tuesday, December 13 in the Robert L. Johnson Auditorium at Niles West High School. "An Evening of Jazz" features Bob Lark and his Alumni Big Band. Also performing is the Niles West Jazz Band directed by Ryan Adamsons. Niles West High School is located at 5701 West Oakton, Skokie. Tickets are \$5 and will be available for purchase at the door.

Bob Lark serves as the Director of Jazz Studies at DePaul University in Chicago, where he directs the university Jazz Ensemble, teaches jazz trumpet and courses in jazz pedagogy and jazz style. His Alumni Big Band is made up entirely of DePaul University alumni and faculty. The Alumni Big Band includes: Scott Burns, Marques Carroll, Ryan Cohan, Dana Hall, Ted Hogarth, Jon Irabagon, Dan Jonas, Glenn Kostur, Chris Madsen, Dominic Marino, Dan Nicholson, Mike Pinto, Joe Policastro, Michael Stryker, Craig Sunken, Vance Thompson and Brent Turney; and DePaul faculty members Tim Coffman, Kirk Garrison, Bob Rummage and Thomas Matta.

The show will include original compositions by Lark and arrangements by alumni Marino, Matta, Garrison, Pinto, as well as Joe Clark, Scott Dickinson, Ryan Adamsons and Andrew Thompson.

The Director of Bands at Niles West High School, William S. Koch, will be Master of Ceremonies. Mary Jo Papich, Fine Arts Director of District 219, was instrumental in arranging the performances. Ms. Papich, known for her avid support and leadership in jazz education, is co-founder and past president of the Jazz Education Network, an organization dedicated to building the jazz arts community by advancing education, promoting performance, and developing new audiences.

NILES NORTH PRESENTS "HOME FREE"

Niles North High School presents *Home Free*, an award-winning vocal group that mixes a cappella, humor and fun into an energizing performance for audiences of all ages at 7:30 p.m. on Tuesday, December 20 in the Auditorium at 9800 Lawler, Skokie. *Home Free* is a distinctive combination of five male vocalists that cover the expansive mix of pop, jazz, classical and country genres using only the voice and microphones for a unique and incredible sound. You will hear their amazing rendition of songs like "Brown Eyed Girl," "I Saw Her Standing There," and "Stand By Me," and their original compositions like "Life is Easier With You" or "What We're Meant to Be." As one critic said, "The group has a unique energy and innate charisma I've never seen from an a cappella group before.." Tickets are \$10 for general admission and \$5 for students. Winners of the Niles North Fine Arts Parents raffle will be announced the evening of the concert. For more information: www.nnfap.org.

HOLIDAY EVENTS

NORTH SHORE OPERA HOUR PRESENTS

"AM AHL AND THE NIGHT VISITORS"

The North Shore Opera Hour presents the celebrated Menotti opera "Amahl and the Night Visitors" on Sunday, December 11, 2011 at 3:00pm at the Skokie Theatre (7924 N. Lincoln Ave, Skokie). "Amahl and the Night Visitors" tells the story of a crippled, young shepherd boy whose life is changed forever when he sees an amazing star "as big as a window." When Amahl and his mother encounter three kings following the star in their search for a wondrous child, the result is a timeless message of how faith, charity, unselfishness love and good deeds can work miracles.

Originally produced by NBC on December 24, 1951 for NBC, "Amahl and the Night Visitors" was the debut production for the Hallmark Hall of Fame and was the first opera specifically composed for American television.

"I chose this show as a source of hope and inspiration during this holiday season," states Luis Galvez of the North Shore Opera Hour. "This show jolts us back to the one basic reality that in each and everyone of us there is goodness and love that is valued and appreciated. A miracle of self sacrifice with the most basic of gift giving. My desire is that the audience be able to experience that hope while sharing a moment of beautiful music."

"Amahl and the Night Visitors" is directed by Cynthia Zimmerman. The cast includes Bert Getz, Edson Melendez, Kristina Pappademos, and Vince Wallace.

Tickets for "Amahl and the Night Visitors" are \$20 in advance and \$25 at the door. Tickets can be purchased by calling (847) 677-7761 or online at www.skokie-theatre.com. The Skokie Theatre is located at 7924 N. Lincoln Ave, Skokie.

Light Up Ravenswood

The Ravenswood Community Council would like you to mark your calendars as Friday, Dec. 9, we will "Light up Ravenswood."

Join us at 5:30 p.m. as the event will take place on the corner of Damen and Leland and we'll swing into the holidays with our Christmas tree lighting. The North Park Elementary Glee Club will help kick start the holidays with its sounds of the season and enjoy some hot chocolate together.

Businesses interested in advertising for specials that weekend either online or in print, please email sheila@ravenswoodcommunity.org.

BREAKFAST WITH SANTA

The Resurrection College Prep High School Alumnae Association presents Breakfast with Santa on Saturday, December 10, 2011 from 9 am to 11:30 am (breakfast is served from 9-10:30 am). All are welcome to enjoy breakfast with Santa, face painting, a theater production by Res drama students and Christmas arts and crafts. Children and families can have their photos taken with Santa and each child will receive a special gift from Santa.

Tickets for Breakfast with Santa will be available for \$8 per child in advance, \$9 per child at the door, and \$6 per adult. Reservations are encouraged to secure a space. Tickets may be purchased from the Resurrection website at www.reshs.org or by contacting Stefanie Thorpe at 773.775.6616 Ext. 127 or sthorpe@reshs.org.

Resurrection College Prep High School, located at 7500 West Talcott Avenue in Chicago, is the largest all-girls Catholic, Christian college preparatory high school on the north side of Chicago. Since its founding in 1922, Resurrection has graduated over 13,000 alumnae. For more information about Resurrection College Prep High School, call 773.775.6616 Ext 129 or visit www.reshs.org.

PROJECT ONWARD HOSTS HOLIDAY SALE AND PORTRAIT SLAM!

Just in time for the holiday season, Project Onward offers a one-stop shop for unique, uncommon gifts at their two-day Holiday Sale and Portrait Slam! Friday, December 9 from noon - 5 p.m. and Saturday, December 10 from 10 a.m. - 4 p.m. at the Chicago Cultural Center, 78 E. Washington Street. A program of the Chicago Department of Cultural Affairs and Special Events, presented in partnership with the Chicago Office of Tourism and Culture, Project Onward is dedicated to the creative growth of artists with mental and developmental disabilities.

For more information call 312.744.8032 or email info@projectonward.org.

Sherlock Holmes and the Case of the Christmas Goose

Raven Theater presents a live, radio-style presentation of Sherlock Holmes and the Case of the Christmas Goose by Michael Menendian and John Weagly, adapted from one of the most popular of Arthur Conan Doyle's Sherlock Holmes stories, "The Adventure of the Blue Carbuncle." This delightful holiday mystery features Ian Novak and Frederick Harris in definitive performances as the famous detective and his ally Dr. Watson. The story concerns the disappearance of a gem called the Blue Carbuncle, which has been hidden inside a Christmas goose. Stolen from the Countess of Morcar, the jewel's trail leads Holmes and Watson all over wintry London and to a surprising conclusion. This holiday treat comes complete with live musical accompaniment, humorous commercials, and an audience sing-a-long.

Performances run December 16 thru 18 at Raven Theatre's East Stage, 6157 N. Clark. Tickets and information are available at www.raventheatre.com or 773-338-2177.

WAITING or PREPARING FOR CHRISTMAS

by Rev. Francis S. Rog, C.R.

Catholics – and most Christians – begin the season of Advent (four weeks before Christmas). At the same time most people are WAITING for Christmas from Black Friday: see the great number of newspaper pages filled with pre-Christmas sales – sales for anything and everything. Some stores were opened from midnight or 3 a.m. ... and people were WAITING.

This followed with cyber Monday sales.

Is this the season to SHOP for CHRISTMAS?

Some wait to see the Nativity scene erected in the church or at its front lawn ... the Christ in the stable ... in the straw ... in a feeding trough.

But this is a reminder of that first Christmas Day ... yet Christ is present with us today!

How did Christmas Day become a day to exchange presents? Perhaps the custom of St. Nicholas (Santa Claus ... December 6th) and his generosity brought about the hanging of a "Christmas" sock and the children WAITING with joy for a sock full of candies and other "goodies." (Some might remember that some parents jokingly threatened: "If you didn't behave your sock might be filled with coal.")

But to PREPARE for Christmas is not the purchase of presents ... but rather a realization of how we as individuals COMPROMISED this Christ in us! How we have HALF-HEARTEDLY seen Christ in the "least of our brothers and sisters."

Remember the words of Sacred Scripture: "I was hungry ... thirsty ... naked ... homeless ... sick ... in prison ... and you cared for me." "What you did to the least of my brothers and sisters you did to me."

Advent – PREPARING for Christ's coming – is a time to remove the obstacles that keep us from being ENTHUSIASTIC in our faith, from being SELF-CENTERED ... omitting our love for others of family and neighbors.

Advent is a good time to consider how MATERIALISTIC we are – tying ourselves to possessions (more and bigger).

While we might "give up" candy, movies and the Internet, smoking, alcohol, not eating to loss weight, vulgarity, we might add St. Paul's admonition regarding immorality ... impurity ... enmity ... jealousy ... hostility ... greed ... laziness ... thoughtlessness ... compromise faith and love.

And perhaps for many of us ... the life of being "TOO BUSY."

But that leaves us empty – unless we consider the positive Pauline words: generosity ... zeal ... courage ... gentleness ... support to the suffering ... the sick ... the poor ... the lonely ... the rejected ... even the confused ... and the proud.

Simply the courage to burn and be thoroughly spent in love as we consider God's gift to us: He touched you and me that we might touch others ... even when it hurts ... to enter the place of another's pains ... to share in others' brokenness ... confusion ... fear ... anguish.

Gods' gift to each of us is to Heal ... TO BRING peace ... AND IN humility TO ACCEPT God's gift of our lives and talents, as we can reach out to others.

We bring HOPE through our talents ... time ... treasure. And so we are not better when someone is not grateful ... not jealous that someone is better off ... not to revenge a wrong ... not to feel undue disappointment.

Our gift of welcome: not only to our own relatives ... but to consider the needy ... the loveless ... the marginalized.

Our gift of availability ... to the elderly ... to the young ... to walk with someone who physically, mentally, or spiritually needs you.

Our gift of listening ... with compassion ... respect ... in a sense to suffer with another.

Our gift of fidelity ... understanding ... tolerance ... forgiveness.

Advent is a fresh turning to Christ ... not waiting to see the nativity crib ... but to see Christ in the downtrodden.

So to have a richer fullness of our Christian existence ... an exuberant joy in what we believe.

Let Christ be in you and me ... it will be a MERRIER Christmas.

Mitchell Museum to Host Native Arts Holiday Bazaar December 3-4

Native American artists from throughout the Chicago area and beyond will offer authentic, handmade, traditional and contemporary art and craft items at the Mitchell Museum of the American Indian's annual Native Arts Holiday Bazaar on Saturday, December 3, 2011, from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m., and Sunday, December 4, from noon to 4 p.m. The bazaar will take place in the Mitchell Museum's 3009 Central Street building, next door to the Evanston museum.

Native exhibitors will be selling work ranging from pencil and charcoal drawings, jewelry, and beadwork, to pottery, blankets, and clothing such as moccasins, ribbon shirts, and ribbon dresses. Vendors retain all proceeds from their sales.

More than a dozen exhibitors are expected, including artists who are Cherokee, Dakota, Ho-Chunk, Menominee, Navajo, and Oneida, among others.

A number of artists and crafts people will give presentations about their work during the two-day event and will demonstrate their techniques.

The Mitchell Museum shop also offers authentic Native-made items throughout the year. Adult admission to the bazaar is \$5 and includes admission to the museum, located at 3001 Central St. Admission is free for Mitchell Museum members.

For information, phone (847) 475-1030. On the Net: www.mitchellmuseum.org.

HOLIDAY EVENTS



Mike's Barber Shop

accepting donations of new, unwrapped toys until December 23

773-775-2771 • 6680 Northwest Highway, Chicago

Toys for Tots Dropoff

The Toys for Tots drive is underway, sponsored by the U.S. Marine Corps Reserve. RCC is one of several area dropoff locations for Toys for Tots so please drop any donations off to our office at 1756 W. Wilson. The office is open Monday-Friday from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. RCC will be collecting toys until Friday, Dec. 16. For more information, visit www.toysfortots.org.

LINCOLNWOOD TOYS FOR TOTS

The Lincolnwood Police Department and U.S. Marine Corps are sponsoring the "Toys for Tots" Holiday Program. Please help make the holiday a season to remember for those less fortunate by donating new, unwrapped toys for distribution to children in need. Toys can be dropped off at the following locations:

- Lincolnwood Police Department or Village Hall, 6900 N. Lincoln Ave.
- Republic Bank, 4433 W. Touhy Ave.
- Liberty Bank for Savings, 6666 N. Lincoln Ave.
- Lincolnwood Library, 4000 W. Pratt Ave.

The Toys for Tots program will run from November 1 through December 14. If you have any questions please call the Lincolnwood Police Department at (847)673-2167.

Holiday Spectacular Christkindlmarket Chicago Celebrates 16 Years

Nestled in between Chicago's downtown sky scrapers, Daley Plaza is aglow with twinkling lights and filled with red and white striped huts during the holiday season. The Christkindlmarket Chicago returns to the heart of the Windy City for the fifteenth year starting on November 23 and is open daily until December 24, 2011.

Since 1996, the German American Chamber of Commerce of the Midwest has been hosting the largest traditional Christmas market outside of Germany in Chicago. More than 65% of the vendors travel all the way from Germany to participate in this cultural event. Visitors will have plenty of opportunity to not only practice their German but to learn more about German culture, without having to travel far. With free admission, it comes as no surprise that this event is frequented by thousands of individuals and families from the greater Chicago metropolitan area, the nation and around the world, every season.

Vendor tables shine with an abundance of one-of-a-kind treasures that are destined to become gifts for young and old, family and friends. Holiday ornaments of all shapes and sizes, Nutcrackers, cuckoo clocks, beer steins, wooden and plush toys, jewelry, wood carvings and European chocolates are just a few of the items for sale from 50 vendors. While you admire the gifts and goodies, the smell of simmering sweets and savory treats wafts through the air. German delicacies, such as Bratwurst, potato pancakes, and Schnitzel are sizzling at all corners as the aroma of Stollen, Strudel, pretzels, and roasted nuts seize your senses. Visitors can quench their thirst with a refreshing imported German beer or warm up with a cup of Gluehwein (hot spiced wine) which is served in a red anniversary souvenir boot-mug.

The holiday spirit will be stirred and awakened by the sounds and activities occurring at the market. Special events are scheduled throughout the duration of the Market. They will include singing, music, dancing and special appearances by the authentic Christkind from Nuremberg, Germany as well as the annual Children's Lantern Parade. Several walk-in cabins offer a warm place to shop for unique gifts, whereas the Lufthansa Festival Tent and the Timber House provide a place to relax, warm up, enjoy your goodies and meet with friends.

The market will be open daily from 11am to 8pm Sunday through Thursday, and from 11am to 9pm on Fridays and Saturdays. On Thursday November 24, and Saturday December 24, the market's hours will be from 11am to 4pm. For further information please visit the official Christkindlmarket website at www.christkindlmarket.com or call us at (312)494-2175. Admission is always FREE!

Light the Night Hanukkah Concert by Even Sh'Siyah

Bring in the Hanukkah season with the music of Evën Sh'Siyah. From the moment they take the stage, the souls of the Allman Brothers harmonize with the ancient Israelite prophets as their soaring voices bring the heavens to Earth and their rhythms reveal that which is hidden. Evën Sh'Siyah's grooves echo Lynard Skynard and Grateful Dead with Hebrew and English lyrics for a sound that's "Gefilte Phish." They're the Way Jews Rock. <http://www.kfarcenter.org/events/> 8pm (7pm doors) Sunday, December 18th, Schubas, 3159 N. Southport, Chicago \$10 advance / \$15 door (21+ show)

Holiday House Tour and Craft Boutique

The Norwood Park Historical Society hosts holiday events December 1 - 4, 2011. Visit Victoria's Craft Boutique for hand-made gifts, and attend the Holiday House Tour to see five magnificent neighborhood homes.

For additional information about the Norwood Park Historical Society Victoria's Craft Boutique or Holiday House Tour please call 773-631-4633 or visit www.norwoodparkhistoricalsociety.org.

THE CHICAGO PUBLIC LIBRARY PRESENTS HOLIDAY CONCERT SERIES

Chicago Public Library kicks off the holiday season with the 2011 Holiday Concert Series on November 30 and continues through December. The free lunchtime holiday concerts feature performances by some of the phenomenal children's and high school choirs from the Chicagoland area. As an additional treat, performances by the Chicago Bar Associations' talented CBA Symphony Orchestra and CBA Chorus, as well as the Chicago Gay Men's Chorus also are scheduled.

All of the concerts are held at 12:00 p.m., in the Grand Lobby of the Harold Washington Library Center, 400 S. State Street:

SOUNDS OF OUR CITY 2011 HOLIDAY CONCERTS

Tuesday, December 6

Lincoln Park High School Chamber Singers with Tim Cooper, Director

Tuesday, December 13

McCutcheon Elementary School Chorus with Thelma Fitzgerald, Director

Thursday, December 15

The Chicago Bar Association Symphony Orchestra with David Katz, Musical Director and Conductor and The Chicago Bar Association Chorus with Rebecca Patterson, Chorus Director

Friday, December 16

Schurz High School Advanced Mixed Chorus with Anna Ljubcic, Director

For more information, please visit the website at chicagopubliclibrary.org or call the Chicago Public Library Press Office at (312) 747-4050.

LIVE MUSIC FROM THE 70'S
The Mirabell Restaurant Presents
BACK THEN!
Saturday, December 31
8:00pm
NEW YEAR'S EVE!
Make Your Reservations TODAY!
Mirabell Restaurant
3454 W Addison, Chicago
773.463.1962
Eat, drink and be German.
www.mirabellrestaurant.com

HOLIDAY EVENTS

CELEBRATE THE 2011 HOLIDAY SEASON IN THE PARKS

The Chicago Park District hosts numerous holiday events this winter such as breakfast with Santa, rollerskating with Santa, chocolate house making and much more. For the schedule of holiday events, click here, or call 312-742-PLAY.

Holiday highlights this winter include:

Winter Flower and Train Show Saturday, Nov. 26- Sunday, Jan. 8, 2012

Lincoln Park Conservatory, 2391 N. Stockton Dr., 312-742-7736. 9 a.m. - 5 p.m. daily All ages, admission free. Several model trains, including an old-fashioned steam engine, freight train and trolley, wind their way through a miniature village set in a field of vibrant red, delicate white and soft pink poinsettias. The village, comprised entirely of natural materials including willow, spruce and birch woods, features a variety of Chicago-style homes and famous buildings such as the neighborhood bungalow, Chicago Theater and Chicago Water Tower Place.

Ice Skating Saturday, Nov. 26 - Sunday, Feb. 26, weather permitting

Various locations and times; Please note that schedules and fees are subject to change. Contact the individual ice rinks, call 312-742-PLAY or visit www.chicagoparkdistrict.com. The Chicago Park District operates 10 ice rinks. Hours and skate rental prices vary. Please note there is an admission fee at The Rink at Wrigley and at McFetridge Sports Center in California Park, an indoor rink that is open year round except August. All other rinks offer free admission. Concessions are available at select rinks. Rink rental is also available for special events and parties; contact the rink manager.

Do It Yourself Nutcracker, Sunday, Dec. 4, 3 p.m. Indian Boundary Park & Cultural Center, 2500 W. Lunt Ave., 773-764-0338, All ages, admission free. Audience members star in this holiday classic dancing alongside the cultural center students and professional dancers.

Dinner with Santa Friday, Dec. 9, 6 p.m. Eugene Field Park, 5100 N. Ridgeway Ave., 773-478-9744, All ages. \$10 per person, must purchase tickets in advance; limited seating. Join Santa for dinner and enjoy live entertainment, a craft project and a sing-along.

Breakfast with Santa, Saturday, Dec. 10, 10 a.m.-1 p.m. United Club at Soldier Field, 1410 S. Museum Campus Dr. Admission is \$55 for adults, \$25 for children ages 3-12, and free for children under 3 years of age. Reservations are required and are available by calling 312-235-7162 or emailing sfspecialevents@dncinc.com. Enjoy a lavish brunch during one of the few times when the United Club's fine dining is open to the public. Santa and his elves will be on hand and families can bring an ornament to decorate the stadium's tree.

Chocolate House Making Workshop Saturday, Dec. 10, 12-2 p.m. Shabbona Park, 6935 W. Addison St., 773-685-6205, All ages. \$20 per house, pre-registration is recommended. Parents and children get their creativity flowing as they create a holiday house out of 16 ounces of chocolate.

Dinner with Santa Thursday, Dec. 15, 6-8 p.m. Norwood Park, 5801 N. Natoma Ave., 773-631-4893, All ages; admission \$11. Enjoy dinner, entertainment, arts and crafts, games for the kids and take photos with Santa.

Roller Skate with Santa Friday, Dec. 16, 6:30-8:30 p.m. Margate Park, 4921 N. Marine Dr., 312-742-7522, All ages; admission \$5. Come out for a night of roller skating in the park's gymnasium. Fee includes hot dog, beverage, popcorn and limited skate rental.

Chocolate House Making Workshop Saturday, Dec. 17, 10 a.m. - 12 p.m. and 12:30-2:30 p.m. Eugene Field Park, 5100 N. Ridgeway Ave., 773-478-9744, All ages. \$28 per house, must register in advance. Parents and children get their creativity flowing

as they create a holiday chocolate house out of delicious ingredients.

Holiday Concert & Tea Party Wednesday, Dec. 21, 12 p.m. Lincoln Park Cultural Center, 2045 N. Lincoln Park West, 312-742-7726, For seniors, admission free. Seniors enjoy a sing-along concert and tea party.

Celebrate the Start of the Winter Season at North Park Village Nature Center

The Chicago Park District's North Park Village Nature Center, 5801 N. Pulaski Rd., welcomes winter with a special annual event, the Winter Solstice Festival, which celebrates the change in season on Saturday, December 17 from 6 p.m. to 9 p.m. Admission is free for all ages. No registration is necessary.

The Winter Solstice Festival is a delightful opportunity to explore the North Park Village Nature Preserve during the evening hours. The festival includes walks along the nature trails lit by luminaries, a visit with critters from Big Run Wolf Ranch, seasonal music and chestnuts roasted on an open fire. Guests can help create edible holiday ornaments for the animals that make the Nature Center their home.

For a list of great nature-inspired events and programs at North Park Village Nature Center, go to www.chicagoparkdistrict.com or contact (312) 744-5472 or TTY/TDD (312) 744-3586.



CELEBRATE THE HOLIDAYS ON SUNDAY ~ DEC. 11TH



FROM 1:00 UNTIL 5:00 PM

SANTA WILL BE AT THE WHITE EAGLE IN NILES

The White Eagle will be offering a very special holiday dinner party for all Chicago area clubs, organizations & senior groups. Come celebrate the season with family and friends in a festive Atmosphere at an affordable price.

For groups between 10 & 100 we will provide:

- A customized dining area for your special group. - within a beautiful banquet room
- A 12 item buffet with a theme of "12 Days of Christmas" FROM 2:00 TIL 4:00, Featuring three meats, carving station, salads, pastas, vegetables, potatoes, assorted Pierogi and a *lavish sweet table*. (breads, butter, coffee & hot tea included)
- Holiday linens and fresh floral centerpieces. - taken home by 1 lucky winner.
- Entertainment - D.J. and vocalist ... And**SANTA CLAUS !!!**
- Light caroling with sheet music.
- Cash Bar.
- An extravagantly decorated lobby - *The White Eagle Christmas Wonderland* - for your enjoyment and picture taking.
- Extra tables for your groups' needs - grab bags / raffles.
- Christmas party favors for everyone



ALL for ONLY \$25.00 per person

Tax & Tip already included - no additional charges

CONTACT White Eagle at 847-647-0660 and ask for JOIN IN party reservations. RESERVATION BY - Dec. 6th. Payment by Dec. 8th. -----If the count changes (due to sickness) the ticket will be refunded.

JOIN IN !!! on this fun filled afternoon



HOLIDAY EVENTS

POLISH NATIONAL ALLIANCE SEEKS DONATIONS OF TOYS FOR CHILDREN AT CHRISTMAS

Paul C. Odrobina, Vice President of the Polish National Alliance (PNA) announces that the PNA, Alliance Printers & Publishers and PNA Bank will be accepting donations of new unwrapped toys and games or monetary donations for local needy children at Christmas for our annual "Toys For Kids At Christmas" drive.

There are collection boxes in the lobbies of the Polish National Alliance Home Office located at 6100 North Cicero Avenue, Chicago, Illinois, Alliance Printers & Publishers, located at 5711 N. Milwaukee Avenue, Chicago, Illinois and both PNA Bank Locations 7840 N. Milwaukee Avenue, Niles, Illinois and 4800 S. Pulaski Avenue in Chicago, Illinois for the toy donations until Tuesday, December 13, 2011. After the deadline, the donated toys for the children will be delivered to the Swedish Covenant Hospital Childrens Care Wing in time for Christmas.

Monetary donations will be collected from Vice President Odrobina's Office, where the money will go to purchase additional toys and gifts for the children in the name of the donor.

For additional information, please call the Polish National Alliance at 1-773-286-0500 ext. 316. or visit the PNA Website at www.pna-znp.org

SNOWSHOE & CROSSCOUNTRY SKI AT NORTHERLY ISLAND

This winter season enjoy Northerly Island, 1400 S. Lynn White Dr., by snowshoeing and/or cross country skiing during select dates Saturdays and Sundays beginning December 2, 2011 through February 26, 2012 from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. There must be at least three inches of snow.

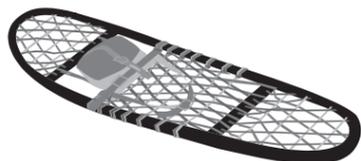
Families can circle the 91- acre peninsula on their snowshoes or cross country skis. While circling the island look for winter birds, winter native animals, or enjoy the incredible view of Chicago's skyline! Participants can also enjoy a good old fashioned snowball fight, build a snowman or two and take a break from the cold weather by warming up inside the field house.

During the following dates Northerly Island will have snowshoeing and cross country skiing available:

- December 2, 17, 18
- January 7, 8, 14, 15, 22, 28, 29
- February 4, 5, 11, 12, 19, 25, 26

Dates are subject to change.

Equipment is available to check out for \$5 for two hours of skiing and trekking at the Northerly Island field house. Snowshoes and cross country skis are checked out on a first come, first served basis. Please remember to bring a valid ID. If you have your own cross country skis or snowshoes, it is free to ski and trek around the island! For more information call (312) 745.2910.



Anti-Cruelty Society

For more info on The Anti-Cruelty Society and our adoption process, please visit our website www.anticruelty.org or call (312) 644-8338.

Holiday Happenings Supporting the Animals

Happy holidays from The Anti-Cruelty Society! Stop by the following events to get you and your pet into the holiday spirit! Click here for a complete detailed list of the following events. Also, don't forget to check out our store for some holiday gifts!

*PETSMART PHOTOS WITH SANTA

2221 Oakton Street, Evanston &
6655 W. Grand, Chicago

Saturday, December 3 & Sunday, December 4, 11am-4pm

WORKING THROUGH PET LOSS

The Anti-Cruelty Society's Education & Training Center, Mullane Auditorium, 169 W. Grand Avenue, Chicago.

Wednesday, December 7 and 21st from 6:30 – 8:30 p.m.

This open group is dedicated to working through the emotional rollercoaster than can occur when we lose a beloved pet.

*HERE COMES SANTA PAWS

The Hotel Allegro, 171 W. Randolph St, Chicago

Saturday, December 10 and Sunday, December 11, 10 a.m. – 2 p.m.

Santa Paws has arrived, inviting you and your four-legged friends to sleigh by Hotel Allegro for Christmas cookies, hot chocolate, and other furry merriment.

*THE JAZZ NATIVITY, PET BLESSING AND HOLIDAY SHOPPING

St. Luke Church, 1500 W. Belmont, Chicago

Saturday, December 10, 3 p.m. – 6 p.m.

The Chicago JazzMASS Ensemble will perform jazz arrangements of traditional Christmas hymns. Bring your dog for a pet blessing, and join in the holiday fun.

CHICAGO CULTURAL CENTER DANCES THIS DECEMBER

From tiny dancers to seasoned choreographers, December brings fun dance events for the entire family to the Chicago Cultural Center, 78 E. Washington Street. Presented by the Chicago Department of Cultural Affairs and Special Events (DCASE), in partnership with the Chicago Office of Tourism and Culture (COTC), all of the following dance events are open to the public.

For more information on events at the Chicago Cultural Center, visit www.ChicagoCulturalCenter.org, follow us on Twitter (@ExploreChicago) or "Like" our Facebook page: facebook.com/ChicagoCulturalCenter.

Dancing With Class: "Dance Off" for CPS Schools

Thursday, December 8 at 6 p.m. Sidney R. Yates Gallery, Chicago Cultural Center Free

May I Have This Dance, Inc. presents a dance competition featuring elementary school kids from the Chicagoland area. Children in grades four to six have immersed themselves in Dancing With Class, a program that uses dance as a medium to build teamwork and communication skills, as well as personal character and self-esteem. This is the fifth year of the Dancing with Class "Dance-Off" event at the Chicago Cultural Center. Featuring several rounds of competition in Merengue, Swing, Waltz, Tango and Salsa, the competition culminates in an Overall Team Champion.



DanceBridge Showcase: New Works-in-Progress

Thursday, December 8 at 6 p.m. 1st Floor Dance Studio, Chicago Cultural Center Pay-what-you-can; Suggested \$5 Donation

The public is invited to the final DanceBridge showcase performance, featuring new works-in-progress developed by professional dancers during the 2011 Fall DanceBridge session. There will be an opportunity for audience feedback after the showcase.

Ni'Ja Whitson presents "Awakening (A series of starts)," a piece inspired by unfinished marble sculptures created by Michelangelo (C1516-1519). Choreographers Annie Maurer and Millie Kapp will present "A Face on the Doorway." Taking turns guiding rehearsals and being in the role of "outside eye," Maurer and Kapp created a work composed of significant fragments woven together, resulting in an unhinged story that slips in and out of meaning and nonsense.

Admission to the showcase is pay-what-you-can (\$5 suggested donation). Reservations are not required, but encouraged. For reservations and more information, visit www.dcatheater.org or call the Chicago Cultural Center Ticket Office at 312.742.8497.

DanceBridge is an initiative presented by DCASE, in partnership with COTC, to support Chicago's professional dance artists and choreographers. Each session, two to three choreographers or dance companies are selected to receive free rehearsal space over a 12-week period at the Chicago Cultural Center's Dance Studio to develop a new and engaging work.

Public programs, exhibitions, and related educational programming presented at the Chicago Cultural Center by the Chicago Department of Cultural Affairs and Special Events in partnership with the Chicago Office of Tourism and Culture are partially supported by a grant from the Illinois Arts Council, a state agency. Transportation support is provided by United Airlines, The Official Airline of the Chicago Cultural Center. Lawry's The Prime Rib is the restaurant sponsor of Chicago Cultural Center exhibitions. Chicago Cultural Center concert pianos are generously provided by Steinway of Chicago,

James Downing Theatre Presents: Parish Craft Show

A comedy by Sue Mrotek Opening: December 2, 2011

Running: December 2 - December 11, 2011. Time: Fridays and Saturdays 7:30pm, Saturdays and Sundays 1:30pm. Location: James Downing Theatre, The Edison Park United Methodist Church, 6740 N. Oliphant, Lower Level, Chicago

Tickets: General Admission \$15.00, Students/Seniors \$10.00

Reservations online at Brown Paper Tickets or by calling 224-725-3696, email jamesdowningtheatre@gmail.com www.jamesdowningtheatre.typepad.com

Chicago-James Downing Theatre proudly presents Parish Craft Show, a comedy by Sue Mrotek. As the lights go up, the stage is set for the parish craft show where Sue Mrotek is reuniting with her co-star, Liliana Mitchell from Parish Play to reenact their St. Gabriel Finance Committee roles as two devoted parishioners on opposite sides of the pew. With Lombard resident Mary Oskroba debuts as a meddling neighboring vendor, the trio portray the well meaning but comedic characters at a parish craft show. Other cast members include Mark Kroon of Des Plaines, Diane Kumpf of Mt. Prospect, and Gloria Fields of Mt. Prospect. Parish Craft Show is directed by Dave Downing of Park Ridge with Technical Director Steve Kedzierski.

The James Downing Theatre is a program of the Edison Park United Methodist Church and this play is being presented as the annual fundraiser to help support future theatre productions.

LOCAL SCHOOLS & YOUTH EVENTS

RESURRECTION'S OUTSTANDING FALL ATHLETES



Members of the Resurrection 2011 Volleyball Team at the Resurrection Fall Athletic Banquet: (left to right) Melissa Gotsch, Anastasia Marchiori, Christine Janci, Alexa Krogstad and Shannon Callahan.

The Resurrection College Prep High School Bandits celebrated the success of the fall sports season at the 2011-12 Fall Athletic Banquet on November 9, 2011 in the Resurrection Café. Individual teams and players in the Cross Country, Golf, Swimming, Tennis and Volleyball programs at Resurrection were recognized for their athletic and academic accomplishments.

Cross Country - Varsity Cross Country awards included the following: Hannah Witczak '14 (60631) - MVP; Abigail Witczak '12 (60631) - Coaches Award; Theresa Ghiloni '12 (60706) - Spirit; and Jessica Smith '12 (60646) - Sportsmanship. JV Cross Country awards included the following: Kelsey O'Brien '15 (60056) - MVP; Kelly Kohl '15 (60056) - Coaches Award; Megan Cunningham '13 (60631) - Spirit; and Emily Toomey '14 (60631) - Sportsmanship. Special congratulations to Hannah Witczak '14, who qualified for the 2A State Championship in Peoria.

Golf - Varsity Golf awards included the following: Kathleen Burke '12 (60631) - MVP; Geena Fritzmann '12 (60656) - Coaches Award; Colleen Koepke '12 (60634) - Spirit; and Nicole Raia '12 (60646) - Sportsmanship. JV Golf awards included the following: Lauren King '14 (60631) - MVP; Allison Coonley '15 (60631) - Coaches Award; Keeli James '13 (60626) - Spirit; and Cailin Murphy '13 (60646) - Sportsmanship. Kathleen Burke '12 (60631) and Geena Fritzmann '12 (60656) qualified for Sectionals!

Swimming - Varsity Swimming awards included the following: Kelly Taylor '13 (60631) - MVP; Alexandra Gartner '12 (60630) - Coaches Award; AnnMarie Biancalana '13 (60631) - Spirit; Margaret Blume '13 (60625) - Sportsmanship. JV Swimming awards included the following: Vanessa Moreno '13 (60634) - MVP; Megan Madl '14 (60656) - Coaches Award; Kelly Henahan '15 (60646) - Spirit; and Victoria Ramos '13 (60634) - Sportsmanship.

Tennis - The Varsity Tennis team was named the 2011 GCAC White Division Tennis Champions and Kelly Lechowski '12 (60706) was named GCAC Player of the Year. Individual awards included the following: Kelly Lechowski '12 (60706) - MVP; Krista Marubio '12 (60631) - Coaches Award; Jenny Pawelski '12 (60631) - Spirit; and Jocelyn Kainer '12 (60631) - Sportsmanship. JV Tennis awards included the following: Theresa Breen '14 (60631) - MVP; Marisa Villasenor '14 (60656) - Coaches Award; Rachel Kasprzyk '14 (60631) - Spirit; and Jessica Flores '14 (60656) - Sportsmanship.

Volleyball - Varsity Volleyball awards to individual players included the following: Christine Janci '12 (60631) - MVP; Molly Powers '12 (60631) - Coaches Award; Melissa Gotsch '12 (60631) - Spirit; Alexa Krogstad '12 (60631) - Sportsmanship. JV Volleyball awards included the following: Alexandra O'Hehir '14 (60631) - MVP; Melissa Anderson '14 (60714) - Coaches Award; Vivian Kadus '14 (60634) - Spirit; and Rachel O'Donnell '14 (60630) - Sportsmanship. Freshman Volleyball awards for A team included the following: Jillian Davis '15 (60631) - MVP; Marie Fiorito '15 (60631) - Coaches Award; Alexandria Mangano '15 (60656) - Spirit; and Katie O'Grady '15 (60631) - Sportsmanship. Awards for B team included the following: Andrea Romano '15 (60656) - MVP; Kayla Buschnyj '15 (60630) - Coaches Award; Sara Korhonen '15 (60656) - Spirit; and Gianna LaSusa '15 (60656) - Sportsmanship.

Resurrection College Prep High School, located at 7500 West Talcott Avenue in Chicago, is the largest all-girls Catholic, Christian college preparatory high school on the north side of Chicago. Since its founding in 1922, Resurrection has graduated over 13,000 alumnae. For information about Resurrection please visit the website at www.reshs.org or call 773.775.6616 Ext 129.

Mitchell Museum to Offer Holiday Craft Workshops For Kids

The Mitchell Museum of the American Indian in Evanston will offer its popular Kids Craft Morning weekend workshops with a new twist in December. Kids can make holiday- and winter-themed projects suitable as decorations and gifts -- a first for the program.

The seasonal projects will include making God's eyes of festive, holiday-colored yarns, ornamented with pompoms. Kids can make beaded key chains in a variety of designs including a winter snowflake. They can choose beads of Christmas red and green, or winter white and blue, or any combination. To usher in winter's arrival, participants can build small-scale models of Arctic inuksuit, sculptural stone monuments and landmarks erected by Inuit people of the Far North. Kids will use craft stones, to be glued together and mounted on a wood base.

All three of the special projects will be available at each workshop.

December workshop dates and times are as follows:

- | | |
|------------------------------|---------------------------------|
| -- December 3, 11 a.m.-noon | -- December 4, 12:30-1:30 p.m. |
| -- December 10, 11 a.m.-noon | -- December 11, 12:30-1:30 p.m. |
| -- December 17, 11 a.m.-noon | -- December 18, 12:30-1:30 p.m. |

The museum offers coloring projects and other simple craft activities on request at the workshops.

Offered year-round, the museum's Kids Craft workshops are designed to introduce children to Native cultures of the U.S. and Canada, which are the focus of the Mitchell Museum's collections and exhibits.

Mitchell staffers and volunteers lead the informal, one-hour sessions where children learn to construct simple versions of traditional Native American objects using everyday craft materials. Workshop participants have the opportunity to view authentic examples of Native crafts from the Mitchell's collection and illustrations of Native designs as models for their projects.

Kids Craft Morning activities are recommended for children ages 5 and up, but there is no minimum age requirement. Participants must be accompanied by an adult. No pre-registration is necessary.

Admission to Kids Craft Morning workshops is included with museum admission, which is \$5 for adults and \$3 for seniors, students, teachers (with valid school ID), and children. Admission is free for Mitchell members and tribal members.

The independent, nonprofit Mitchell Museum is at 3001 Central St., Evanston. For information, phone (847) 475-1030. On the Net: <http://www.mitchellmuseum.org>.

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A required three part training will be held at the Skokie Campus on January 5th, 10th & February 11th.



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Chester M. Przybylo

When asked how people want their assets divided after they are gone, some people have definite opinions, while others are less certain. Not only do people differ in the level of their uncertainty concerning how to divvy up their assets, they even differ in what factors are important in making the decision.

In June 2007, *Money* magazine released a reader poll concerning various financial issues. The following percentages of respondents ranked each factor as very important:

Dividing the estate equally among your children: 69%

How responsible each child is about money: 37%

How helpful each child has been to you: 29%

How close you are to each child: 22%

How much money each child has: 22%

How many children of their own each child has: 19%

How much you like each child's spouse: 10%

37% said it can be reasonable to disinherit a child.

Another item of indecision for many people is the choice of decision makers: Trustee, Personal Representative, Guardian, and Agents under powers of attorney. For each of these positions, it is important to name people whose decision-making ability you trust. You may be tempted to name all your children or siblings to avoid hurting anyone's feelings. However, naming a large number of people to serve together in the same role invites family disharmony and chaos. For example, if property in the Trust is to be sold and you have seven Trustees, many of whom may be out of town, it would be a logistical nightmare to route paperwork all around the country. Typically, things work more smoothly if you limit the number of people in any given role. Besides, having a job thrust upon them may be something many would just as soon avoid.

Regardless of what factors are important to you, a qualified estate planning attorney can help you achieve your goals. For example, if you are concerned about your child's ability to manage finances, the money can be left in a Trust which will prevent him or her from accessing the funds without the permission of a person whom you designate, the Trustee. If you do not like your child's spouse and are concerned he or she might divorce your child and take some of the inheritance you leave your child, you can leave your assets in a "Divorce Protection Trust." Such a Trust keeps the assets separate from marital assets. Therefore, it minimizes the risk of the assets ending up in the hands of the child's future ex-spouse.

A qualified estate planning attorney can help you achieve your goals while paving the way for your family's continued success and harmony after you are gone.

Chester M. Przybylo has been elected to the Board of Governors of the prestigious American Academy of Estate Planning Attorneys and has been engaged in the practice of law for the last 40 years. To register for an upcoming seminar, call the 24 hour reservation hotline at 1-800-638-7878 or register online at www.PlanOurEstate.com.

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Social Security Expands Compassionate Allowances Conditions

By Andrew Salata, Social Security Public Affairs

Michael J. Astrue, Commissioner of Social Security, announced 13 new Compassionate Allowances conditions involving the immune system and neurological disorders. The Compassionate Allowances program fast-tracks disability decisions to ensure that Americans with the most serious disabilities receive their benefit decisions within days instead of months or years. Commissioner Astrue made the announcement during his remarks at the U.S. Conference on Rare Diseases and Orphan Products in Washington, D.C.

"Social Security handles more than three million disability applications each year and we need to keep innovating and making our work more efficient," Commissioner Astrue said. "With our Compassionate Allowances program, we quickly approved disability benefits for more than 60,000 people with severe disabilities in the past fiscal year. We have made significant improvements, but we can always do more."

The Compassionate Allowances initiative identifies claims where the nature of the applicant's disease or condition clearly meets the statutory standard for disability. With the help of sophisticated new information technology, the agency can quickly identify potential Compassionate Allowances and then quickly make decisions.

Social Security launched the Compassionate Allowances program in 2008 with a list of 50 diseases and conditions. The announcement of 13 new conditions, effective in December, will increase the total number of Compassionate Allowances conditions to 113. The conditions include certain cancers, adult brain disorders, a number of rare genetic disorders of children, early-onset Alzheimer's disease, idiopathic pulmonary fibrosis, and other disorders.

The agency announced a small grant program for graduate students that will help Social Security improve its list and has recently awarded an approximately \$1.8 million grant over a five-year period to Policy Research, Incorporated (PRI) through the Disability Determination Process Small Grant Program. This new program aims to improve the disability process through innovative research by graduate students who will receive small stipends for their work. In addition, the agency recently streamlined its online disability application for people who have a condition on the Compassionate Allowances list.

For more information on the Compassionate Allowances initiative, please visit www.socialsecurity.gov/compassionateallowances.

CJE SENIORLIFE SUPPORT GROUPS AND PROGRAMS FOR SENIORS

CJE SeniorLife offers support groups on a wide variety of topics of interest to seniors and their families. Fees vary according to the program and individual circumstances and some groups may be partially covered by Medicare and supplemental insurance. For information or to join a group, call CJE SeniorLife at 773/508-1000.

Scrabble Club

For word lovers and game players of all levels. Learn the classic game of Scrabble or get tips to sharpen your skills, with instructor and tournament director Joe Cortese. Meets every Wednesday, 11 a.m., Bernard Horwich Building, 3003 W. Touhy Ave. Chicago.

There is no charge. For more information, call 773/508-1000.

Monthly meeting dates: Dec. 7, 14, 21 and 28

Holocaust Survivors - Coffee and Conversation

Meets every Monday and Thursdays throughout the month. Sponsored by Jewish Child and Family Services (JCFS) and CJE SeniorLife. Mondays from 2 to 3:30 p.m., at Illinois Holocaust Museum and Education Center,

9603 Woods Drive, Skokie. Sponsored by JCFS and CJE SeniorLife.

Monthly meeting dates: Dec. 5, 12 and 19

There is no charge. To register, call 847/568-5100.

On Thursdays, from 2 to 3:30 p.m., at JCFS Joy F. Knapp Center, 3145 W. Pratt Blvd., Chicago

Monthly meeting dates: Dec. 1, 8, 15, 22 and 29

There is no charge. For more information, call 847/568-5100

Living Life Through Loss: A Drop-In Bereavement Support Group

Meets every Wednesday, from 1:30 to 3 p.m., at CJE SeniorLife, 3003 W. Touhy Ave., Chicago

Monthly meeting dates: Dec. 7, 14, 21 and 28

Any adult over the age of 60 who has lost a loved one in the past three years is encouraged to attend. There is a \$5 fee for each session. For more information, call 773/508-1129. Sponsored by CJE SeniorLife and the Jewish Healing Network.

Making Connections: Seniors with Adult Children with Disabilities

Meets first and third Tuesday of every month. Offers families an opportunity to connect, share experiences and learn about benefits and community resources. Sponsored by CJE's Linkages Program. Those interested in attending must register in advance by calling 773/508-1694. Bernard Horwich Building, 3003 W. Touhy Ave., Chicago,

11 a.m. to noon. Monthly meeting dates: Dec. 6 and 20

“A Theater Review”

“White Christmas”
Marriott Theatre
10 Marriott Drive
Lincolnshire, Illinois

Reviewed by Richard A. Eisenhardt

It's always nice to see one of the old-fashioned musicals. The Marriott's production of "White Christmas" is far better than the touring one I last saw.

The show has a book by David Ives and Paul Blake but the songs all belong to Irving Berlin.

While I'm familiar with the songs I wonder how many under the age of forty remember many of the songs.

Rod Thomas has the role of Bob Wallace that Bing Crosby had in both versions of the show and Andrew Lupp has the role of Phil Davis, a role that Fred Astaire had and later Danny Kaye. Bob and Phil are song and dance men and meet the two girls Betty, played by Stephani Binetti, and her sister Judy played by Tammy Mader. Phil falls in love with Judy and hopes to match Betty up with Bob.

Marc Robin has directed and choreographed the show. Robin is top-drawer and got his start in Chicago but has made a name for himself from the east-midwest and west coast with his direction.

The show offers audiences such songs as the title tune, besides "I Love a Piano," "Count Your Blessings," "Let Me Sing and I'm Happy," "Sisters" and "How Deep is the Ocean" to name just a few.

It's always great to see Alene Robertson on stage. She is a fantastic actress and one of Chicago's best known belters in the way of Ethel Merman. She has a flair for comedy and you'll roar at her antics as Martha who helps run the Columbia Inn in Vermont for General Waverly played by David Lively. Mr. Lively makes a perfect General who the boys first encounter back in 1944 on the western front during World War II.

You'll howl at Michael Weber's performance of Mike Nolty as he is trying to put together the show and cast for the General as well as Broadway.

The show has many outstanding performers like Anne Gunn, Bernie Yvon, Matt Raffery, Michael Aaron Lindner, Ericka Mac, Johanna McKenzie Miller and Buddy Reeder to name a few.

The General is in debt as is our current economy. Vermont IRS a problem as there is no snow. Due to a misunderstanding, Bob and Betty have a misunderstanding.

As with all the old time shows and movies from the past and for the holidays you can't help but come out singing the songs and feeling happy.

The actress playing the General's granddaughter is played by Madison Gloria Olszewski and her alternate is Kate Wild. Gloria is in seventh grade and Kate is twelve years old. The one on opening night and I'm sure her alternate are both "star born."

The singing and dancing are superb but Tammy Mader and Andrew Lupp are refreshing with their dance routines and Michael Mahler's musical direction can't be beat.

Marriott, you have a major hit on your hands this holiday season. It's a fast-moving two and a half hours.

"White Christmas" runs through January 1st. For performance days – show times – and reservations call 847-634-0200. Ticket prices range from \$41 to \$49.

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December 3 • 12:00pm & 3:00pm The Boogers

December 3 • 8:00pm Listen Up!

December 4 • 2:00pm John Van Keulen in THE 2ND ANNUAL Merry & Gay (The Holiday Show)

December 4 • 7:00pm Rocking for Limmud

December 7 • 1:30pm Tony Bernard's CHRISTMAS MELODIES

December 9 • 8:00pm Traveler's Dream / A Celtic Midwinter Celebration

December 10 • 12:00pm & 3:00pm The Singing Scientist Show starring Mr.

Nicky

December 10 • 8:00pm Las Guitarras de España (The Guitars of Spain) with Special Guest, Chiara Mangiameli present "An Evening of Spanish Music and Dance"

December 11 • 3:00pm Amahl and the Night Visitors

December 11 • 7:00pm Greater Chicago Jewish Festival: Ruby Harris

December 14 • 1:30pm Jack Miuccio's THE MOST BEAUTIFUL TIME OF THE YEAR

December 16 • 8:00pm The Cavernbeat

December 17 • 8:00pm Diva – Holiday Show

December 18 • 2:00pm A Harmonica Hanukkah with Corky Siegel!

December 18 • 7:00pm Catherine O'Connell

December 21 • 1:30pm Jack Miuccio's HOME FOR THE HOLIDAYS

December 24 • 8:00pm & 10:00pm Caryn Bark Kosher Style Comedy

Village Cooking Corner

CHRISTMAS WITH A GREEK FLAVOR

By Anastasia E. Weaver

While Easter is the most important holiday of Greek Orthodox throughout the world, Christmas is certainly a close second. Both are celebrated with much religious service attendance and with the flavor of favorite Greek foods laden on festive holiday tables which includes an assortment of pastries to enhance the meal of family and friends.

Of course, Roasted Lamb and Potatoes is a favorite on most Greek holiday tables, but Pastitsio is a close second to appear on that same table. It is certainly one of our family favorites. While it is a labor of love, it will certainly get you many rave reviews. Kali Orexi! Bon Appetit!

PASTITSIO

2 lbs., Ground Beef (use Sirloin)

1 onion, chopped

1 tablespoon, chopped Italian Parsley

2 cloves, Garlic, minced

1 tsp., Cinnamon

½ tsp., Nutmeg

1 8 ounce can, Tomato Sauce (I use No Salt Added)

½ cup of White Wine

butter (I use unsalted butter)

olive oil

salt and pepper to taste

1 lb of MISKOS Macaroni #3 *

3 eggs, beaten

Grated Cheese (I use Mitzithra * - if not available use Parmesan)

6 cups of Bechamel Sauce - which follows Pastitsio Recipe

Bechamel Sauce

Although this basic White Sauce is attributed to the French it can be traced to Ancient Greek cookery.

4 to 5 cups of hot milk

3 tbsp. All Purpose Flour

½ cup of Butter

Salt and White Pepper

Melt the butter in a pan, add flour and stir until smooth. Lower heat and then gradually add the hot milk, stirring constantly until it thickens. Season with salt and white pepper and add ½ tsp. Cinnamon.

Preheat oven to 350 degrees. In 4 tbsp. butter and 1 tbsp. Olive Oil saute ground meat along with the chopped onion, minced garlic and parsley. Crumble meat as you go along with a fork When no more pink is visible add cinnamon, nutmeg, salt and pepper and tomato sauce. Simmer for 30 minutes; remove from fire. In large pot of boiling water cook the macaroni as directed on the package. When cooked drain and rinse macaroni and place in a bowl. Add 1/4 lb of melted butter, beaten eggs and a generous sprinkling of grated cheese to the macaroni and mix well. Spread half of the macaroni mixture in a 9x13x2 pan which has been greased with olive oil. Spread the meat sauce over the first layer of macaroni and sprinkle with grated cheese; top with the balance of the macaroni. Pour prepared Bechamel Sauce over the top layer of macaroni and sprinkle lavishly with grated cheese; dot with butter and sprinkle delicately across the entire top with a little cinnamon. Bake 1 hour in preheated 350 degree oven. Cool and cut into 3 inch pieces. Arrange on a platter and serve!

*Miskos Macaroni #3 and Mitzithra Cheese can be found in Greek Specialty Food Stores like Marketplace on Oakton in Skokie or Northeastern Fruit and Garden Center on Lincoln & Peterson, Chicago.

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