



OUR VILLAGE

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FREE

FREE

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www.OurVillageChicago.com

P.O. Box 31391,
Chicago, IL 60631

Issue 23
December 7, 2016

Christmas Around The World And Holidays Of Light

Experience the Museum of Science and Industry's beloved annual holiday tradition, now in its 75th year.

It began in 1942 with a single tree. Today, the Museum's beloved annual celebration features a four-story, floor-to-dome Grand Tree, surrounded by a forest of more than 50 trees and displays decorated by volunteers to represent the holiday traditions from cultures around the globe. On the weekends, you can enjoy live holiday performances, take-home LEGO® activities, and optional photos with Santa. It's the one-of-a-kind experience that brings a whole world of holiday joy under one roof.

Go to msichicago.org for details and to purchase tickets.
Museum of Science and Industry
5700 S. Lake Shore Dr.



See Page 3 for History

The American's Creed

I believe in the United States of America as a government of the people, by the people, for the people; whose just powers are derived from the consent of the governed, a democracy in a republic; a sovereign nation of many sovereign states; a perfect union, one and inseparable; established upon those principles of freedom, equality, justice and humanity for which American patriots sacrificed their lives and fortunes. I therefore believe it is my duty to my country to love it, to support its constitution, to obey its laws, to respect its flag, and to defend it against all enemies. (Authorized Version)

Turn to Page 3 for the History of "Our Flag"

MADE IN AMERICA

THIS YEAR THINK OUTSIDE THE BOXES AND SHOP LOCAL!

Let's All Support Our Local Merchants and Restaurants During This Holiday Season, As Well As Throughout The Year To Come!

Happy Holidays & Merry Christmas from Our Village News

TOYS FOR TOTS

Mike's Barber Shop accepting donations of new, unwrapped toys until December 23
773-775-2771 • 6680 Northwest Highway, Chicago

See Page 3 for more information

Carter-Westminster Presbyterian Church presents

Handel's Messiah Part 1

Sunday, December 11

Featuring singers from Lyric Opera of Chicago

See Page 7 for complete details

The Adler Planetarium World's Largest Snow Globe

The holidays at the Adler have begun with the return of the World's Largest Snow Globe inside the Grainger Sky Theater. After enjoying an original Adler sky show like new Planet Nine or Destination Solar System, stick around to tour the city from inside our magical "snow globe." You'll be whisked around Chicago to see famous landmarks in their holiday finery. The World's Largest Snow Globe will be running through January 1. For more information and to plan your visit, please visit: adlerplanetarium.org.

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VENISON SPECIALS All Winter Long

Community First Medical Center December Health Events



Community First Medical Center, 5645 West Addison Street, Chicago, will offer the following health events in December.

• Friday, December 9

Free Healthy Aging Program - 1:00 -2:00 p.m., Community First Medical Center, Conference Room A, 7th Floor.

This program is for individuals aged 55 and older and consists of social time, health topics and guests lectures. Come for fun and games for the annual holiday party. Registration not required.

• Thursday, December 15 and December 29

Arthritis and Total Joint Replacement – Taking the Right Steps, 10:00 – 11:00 a.m., Community First Medical Center, Community Education Room, 2nd Floor.

These free sessions will be conducted by Carleen Nunez, R.N., B.S.N., O.N.C., along with staff from rehabilitation services. Attendees will receive educational materials, get questions answered, learn what to expect from surgery and meet some professional staff. To register, please

call 773-794-4640

• Tuesday, December 13, December 20, and December 27

Learning Interventions Family Education (LIFE) – 7:00 – 8:30 p.m., Community First Medical Center, Café Conference Room, Ground Floor.

A Compassionate Recovery Education curriculum specializing in “Helping Family and Individuals Navigate the Recovery System”. This free training will provide education to family members to help them improve their personal understanding of the recovery process. To register, please call 708-536-8775.

• Wednesday, December 28

Courage to Quit Smoking - 1:00 – 2:00 p.m. Community First Medical Center, Community Education Room, 2nd Floor.

Pablo Castillo, RRT, Director, Respiratory will provide sessions on how to have enough courage to quit smoking.

History Of Chicago's Christmas Trees

Chicago's first municipal Christmas tree was lit in 1913 on Christmas Eve by Mayor Carter H. Harrison in Grant Park. The tree was a 35-foot Douglas Spruce placed on 40-foot poles and studded with smaller trees to give the appearance of a much larger tree. It was decorated with 600 multi-colored lights and topped with the Star of Bethlehem.

The first Christmas tree was a gift of an associate of Captain Herman Scheunemann and was lit in his honor. He was the captain of the Rouse Simmons, known as the “Christmas Tree Ship.” The ship was lost in a storm in Lake Michigan on November 23, 1912.

In December 1956, Chicago's Christmas tree was in fact one large tree that had been created from many smaller trees. The tree was 70 feet tall, decorated with about 4,400 lights and more than 2,000 ornaments, and was located in the Grant Park tree platform at Congress Parkway and Michigan Avenue.

The Tree Lighting Ceremony was moved to Civic Center Plaza, known today as Daley Plaza, in December 1966.

In 1982, the location was changed to State Street and Wacker Drive, but returned to Daley Plaza the following year.

In 1991, Chicago's Mayor asked the Department of Streets and Sanitation to find a large single transplantable tree to be transplanted in a city park after the holidays. The largest they could find was 35 feet tall – deemed not large enough for the plaza open space. The City of Chicago constructed a smaller version using fewer trees – a total of 17 trees standing 50 feet tall. The number of trees used to build the Chicago Christmas tree grew each year with 112 trees used in 2008 to form one large tree.

In 2009, the City of Chicago selected a single



tree, the first time since 1955. The tree was donated by the Weivoda family of Palos Heights, Illinois.

In 2010, a contest was held for the first time to select a tree and a 70-foot Spruce from McHenry, Illinois was selected by residents to shine in Daley Plaza.

In 2011, Chicago's Christmas tree was a 55-foot Colorado Spruce donated by the Spangler family of Western Springs, Illinois.

A contest was not held in 2012; submissions were sent directly to DCASE. Barbara Theiszmann and three of her grandchildren from Prospect Heights, Illinois joined Mayor Emanuel on November 20 to light the tree.

On November 4, 2013, Lucy became Chicago's 100th Anniversary Christmas tree, donated by the Moore family from Chicago's 103rd Christmas Tree was donated by Scholla Family of Wauconda, Illinois South Holland, Illinois.

The fourth time was the charm for the 57-foot Colorado blue spruce donated by Donna Atkinson from Elgin, Illinois on November 5, 2014. Donna submitted her tree for consideration the last three years before being selected this year.

Chicago's 102nd Christmas Tree was donated by the Voelker family of Northlake, Illinois. Their 63-foot Colorado Blue Spruce was selected out of 130 submissions received by the Department of Cultural Affairs and Special Events.

Chicago's 103rd Christmas Tree was donated by Scholla Family of Wauconda, Illinois, their 69 foot Norway Spruce was selected out of 120 submissions received by the Department of Cultural Affairs and Special Events. Bill Scholla, who nominated the tree, grew up on the North side of Chicago and now lives in Wauconda with his wife Margie. The Scholla family will join Santa Claus and other guests to light the tree at the annual ceremony.

Christkindlmarket Chicago AND at Naper Settlement!



Daley Plaza; 50 W Washington Street
Open Daily Nov. 18 - Dec. 24

Naper Settlement; Naperville, IL
Thursday through Sunday Nov. 25 - Dec. 24
Also open: Dec. 19 - 23

Happy Holidays From All Of Us To All Of You!



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(1-844-236-2362) toll free**



Community First Medical Center

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75 Years Ago Today – A Day That Will Live In Infamy

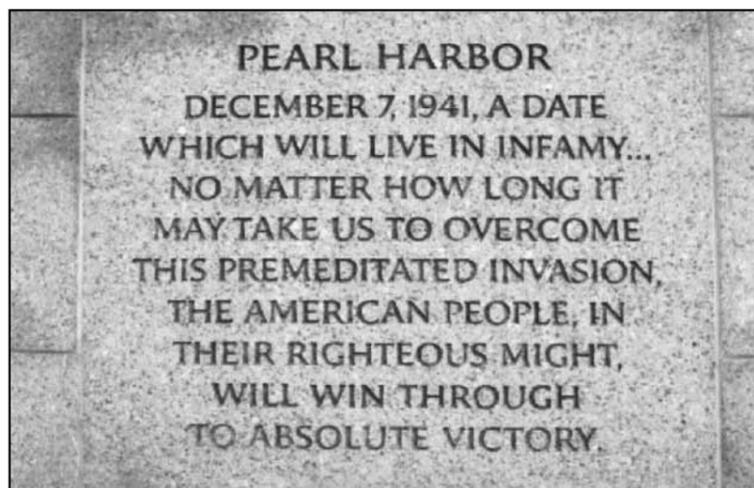
National Pearl Harbor Remembrance Day

National Pearl Harbor Remembrance Day, which is annually on December 7, commemorates the attack on Pearl Harbor, in Hawaii, during World War II. Many American service men and women lost their lives or were injured on December 7, 1941. National Pearl Harbor Remembrance Day is also referred to as Pearl Harbor Remembrance Day or Pearl Harbor Day.

What do people do?

On the direction of the President, the flag of the United States of America should be displayed on the homes of Americans, the White House and all United States government buildings. The flag should be flown at half-mast to honor those who died in the attack on Pearl Harbor.

Many associations, especially those linked



with Pearl Harbor survivors or those who died from the attack participate in special services to commemorate the event. Memorial services are held at venues such as the USS Arizona Memorial in Pearl Harbor. Other activities include: wreath-laying ceremonies; keynote speeches by those associated with the event; luncheons; media stories on survivors' recollections of the Pearl Harbor attack; and school activities to educate students about the attack on Pearl Harbor in relation to World War II history.

Public Life

Pearl Harbor Remembrance Day is not a federal holiday. Government offices, schools, businesses and other organizations do not close. Public transit systems run on their regular schedules.

The History Of The Stars And Stripes

The Stars and Stripes originated as a result of a resolution adopted by the Marine Committee of the Second Continental Congress at Philadelphia on June 14, 1777. The resolution read:

“Resolved, that the flag of the United States be thirteen stripes, alternate red and white; that the union be thirteen stars, white in a blue field representing a new constellation.”

The resolution gave no instruction as to how many points the stars should have, nor how the stars should be arranged on the blue union. Consequently, some flags had stars scattered on the blue field without any specific design, some arranged the stars in rows, and some in a circle. The first Navy Stars and Stripes had the stars arranged in staggered formation in alternate rows of threes and twos on a blue field. Other Stars and Stripes flags had stars arranged in alternate rows of four, five and four. Some stars had six points while others had eight.

Strong evidence indicates that Francis Hopkinson of New Jersey, a signer of the Declaration of Independence, was responsible for the stars in the U.S. flag. At the time that the flag resolution was adopted, Hopkinson was the Chairman of the Continental Navy Board's Middle Department. Hopkinson also helped design other devices for the Government including the Great Seal of the United States. For his services, Hopkinson submitted a letter to the Continental Admiralty Board asking “whether a Quarter Cask of the public Wine will not be a proper & reasonable Reward for these Labours of Fancy and a suitable Encouragement to future Exertions of a like Nature.” His request was turned down since the Congress regarded him as a public servant.

(From “Our Flag”, 1998)

Cell Phones for Soldiers

Representative D’Amico has partnered with Cell Phones For Soldiers, a nonprofit serving troops and veterans, to collect gently used cell phones for members of our military. Donated phones will be used to provide free communication services to military members so they can connect with their loved ones. Donations will be accepted starting today, May 1, 2015 to May 29, 2015 in Representative D’Amico’s public service office located at 4404 W. Lawrence Ave., Chicago, IL 60630. Office hours are 9 AM to 4:30 PM.

Governor Rauner Announces Military Holiday Card Drive with the USO of Illinois

Governor Bruce Rauner today announced the 2016 Holiday Card Drive for the Military. The drive will again be done in partnership with the United Service Organizations (USO) of Illinois.

“It is important we remember our American heroes who continue to serve in harm’s way and are unable to be with their loved ones this holiday season,” Governor Rauner said. “We are proud to be partnering with USO of Illinois again this year to help spread holiday cheer to our brave men and women overseas. A card is a simple gift that can lift spirits and remind our service members that we’re thinking of them even while they’re far from home. I encourage all Illinoisans to send holiday cards to express their gratitude and admiration for the service of Illinois’ heroes.”

Illinois citizens should send holiday cards for U.S. service members to the USO of Illinois as early as possible and thanked the USO of Illinois for helping to distribute the holiday cards to troops and for all the USO does to lift the morale and increase the well-being of our military members throughout the year.

Holiday cards will be accepted through mail delivery only from now through November 30th at the following address:

USO of Illinois

333 S. Wabash Ave., 16th Floor, Chicago, IL 60604

Maj. Gen. Richard J. Hayes Jr., the Adjutant General of the Illinois National Guard and Director of the Illinois Department of Military Affairs, thanked the USO of Illinois for its support of his Soldiers and Airmen.

The United States Postal Service recommends the following holiday mail deadlines for service members serving overseas:

Standard: As soon as possible (deadline is Nov. 7)

Space Available Mail: Nov. 25

Parcel Airlift Mail: Dec. 2

Priority Mail: Dec. 9, except for AE ZIP 093 (Iraq and Afghanistan), which is Dec. 2

First-Class Letters and Cards: Dec. 9, except for AE ZIP 093, which is Dec. 2

Priority Mail Express Military Service: Dec. 16. Service not available to AE ZIP 093.

Honor Flight Chicago – “Operation Locate A Hero” - 2017 Season Planning Underway

Honor Flight Chicago (HFC), part of the National Honor Flight Network, was founded to recognize our Veterans – most specifically our WWII Veterans with a day of Honor, Remembrance, and Celebration from a proud and grateful Nation. HFC is currently working on the 2017 season flight schedule - with projected monthly flights from Chicago Midway to Washington, DC to visit their WWII Memorial. The trip is provided at (no) cost to the Veteran.

There are approximately (21,000) WWII Veterans remaining in the Chicago area – which HFC is requesting assistance from the public to help locate these WWII Heroes.

For more information please contact Jac Charlier at jac.charlier@gmail.com or visit (www.honorflightchicago.org)

Honor Flight Chicago is a 501(c)3 non-profit organization dedicated to the mission of flying our World War II veterans to Washington DC to see the WWII Memorial built in their honor.



Join us on National Wreaths Across America Day - December 17, 2016

REMEMBER our fallen U.S. veterans.

HONOR those who serve.

TEACH your children the value of freedom.

Each December on National Wreaths Across America Day, our mission to Remember, Honor and Teach is carried out by coordinating wreath-laying ceremonies at Arlington National Cemetery, as well as over 1,100 additional locations in all 50 U.S. states, at sea, and abroad.

On National Wreaths Across America Day each December, volunteers place wreaths on individual veterans’ graves in over 1,100 locations throughout the U.S., with ceremonies at sea, and at each of the national cemeteries on foreign soil.

You can sponsor a wreath at a cemetery near you, or even volunteer with or donate to a local fundraising group.

If you don’t see a location near you, Wreaths Across America will support you in becoming a Location Coordinator for a cemetery in your area. There is no cost to become a participating location and host a WAA ceremony this December.

To find a location nearest you or to speak to someone about becoming a Location Coordinator, call 877/385-9504. When you are on the East Coast, remember to visit the “Wreaths Across America Museum” in Columbia Falls, Maine.

TOYS FOR TOTS LUNCHEON TUESDAY, DECEMBER 13 ~ 11:30 - 1:00PM

Join the Lincolnwood Chamber of Commerce as we celebrate the season, community, and the annual tradition to collect toys with the Village of Lincolnwood, Lincolnwood Police & The U.S. Marine Corps.

Wildwood Tavern, 6480 W. Touhy Avenue, Niles

Representative from the U.S. Marine Corps will be in attendance!

PLEASE bring new, unwrapped toys for any aged child.

Register and make check payable to: Lincolnwood Chamber of Commerce, 4433 W. Touhy Avenue, Lincolnwood IL 60712. RSVP/ Questions: info@lincolnwoodchamber.org or register and pay online at www.lincolnwoodchamber.org (Events calendar/Dec.13).



Edison Park Post 541 Of The American Legion



Edison Park Post 541 of the American Legion will be meeting on the 2nd and 4th Thursday of each month at the Edison Park Field House, 6755 N. Northwest Hwy, Chicago, IL 60631. The meeting will start at 7:30 P.M. and is open to all Veterans who served in any branch of the United States military services during the armed conflicts listed below.

We are also forming a Sons of the American Legion Squadron. The requirement for becoming a member is:

All male descendants, adopted sons and stepsons of members of The American Legion and such males descendants of veterans who died in service during WWI - WWII - Korean War - the Vietnam War - Lebanon Grenada - Panama and the Persian Gulf War, during the delimiting periods set forth in Article I of the National Constitution of the The American Legion or who died subsequent to their Honorable Discharge form such Service shall be eligible for membership in the Sons of the American Legion.

Visit our website at <http://amerlegion541.wix.com/americanlegion541>

Phone For Legal Advice At No Cost

The Chicago Bar Association (CBA) Lawyer Referral Service hosts Call-A-Lawyer on the third Saturday of every month from 9 a.m. to 12 p.m. Volunteer attorneys will give free legal advice over the phone to Chicagoland residents who call (312) 554-2001.

Attorneys will be available to answer general questions on a variety of legal issues including (but not limited to) bankruptcy, domestic relations, immigration, personal injury and Social Security. Callers can explain their situations to attorneys who will suggest self-help strategies to resolve their legal issues. If callers need further legal services, they will be advised to see their attorney or to contact the CBA Lawyer Referral Service.

The CBA Lawyer Referral Service is one of few bar associations in the country to meet the American Bar Association Standards for lawyer referral and approved to use its logo and slogan, “The Right Call for the Right Lawyer™.” For referral to an experienced attorney, the public can contact the CBA Lawyer Referral Service at 312-554-2001 during business hours or through the Web site at www.chicagobar.org.

Anti-Cruelty: You Can Still Help Pets Find Homes for the Holiday

2016 HOLIDAY FUND DRIVE



You can still give animals hope for a home this holiday season!

GIVE NOW

The Anti-Cruelty Society's 2016 Holiday Fund Drive is still going on, and your help is urgently needed to care for vulnerable animals. You still have time to make the holidays happier for helpless cats and dogs and help them find homes in the coming year.

Please make a generous gift today to care for animals right here in the Chicago area. Thank you and happy holidays!



You can make the holidays better for local animals!

Make a 2016 Holiday Fund Drive gift.



The Anti-Cruelty Society
157 W. Grand Avenue,
Chicago, IL 60654-7105
312.644.8338
www.anticruelty.org

Give Thanks by Sharing Your Blessings

Here at The Salvation Army, the holidays are always a busy time. This Thanksgiving, we expect to be even busier than usual, with more of our neighbors coming to us for help.

There will be families – hardworking moms and dads struggling to keep up with bills, and worried about how they'll keep food on the table and a roof over their children's heads. We'll ease their burden with the food they need, along with words of hope and encouragement.

There will be seniors - lonely, sometimes coping with illness, and often challenged to stretch a limited income far enough to cover both food and medications. We'll brighten their Christmas with nutritious

food, fellowship, and compassion.

There will also be men and women who are homeless - hurt, hungry, and almost without hope. We'll offer them food, nourish their spirits, and restore their A hope by letting them know that someone cares.

You are also someone who cares. As a compassionate person, you can make this Christmas even more meaningful – with a generous gift to The Salvation Army. By sharing your blessings with people in need, you'll honor the spirit of the holiday. What a wonderful way to give thanks! Please consider making a special Christmas gift.

Thank you, God bless you, and may you and yours enjoy a merry Christmas.

Support the 2016 Assist-A-Family Program

Please consider participating in the 2016 Skokie Assist-A-Family Program that helps Skokie families struggling with limited financial resources celebrate the winter holidays. Families receive gift cards for area businesses which they use to purchase food, household necessities and other items specific to each family member's needs and wants. Last year nearly 200 families received gift cards through the program.

Those interested in making a donation this year are asked to do so by Friday, December 2, 2016. Please make checks payable to the Village of Skokie, and add Skokie Assist-A-Family Program on the memo line. Send donations to Village of Skokie, Human Services Division, 5127 Oakton Street, Skokie, IL 60077. For further information, please contact the Human Services Division at 847-933-8208.

Drop Off Bin Locations For Non-Perishable Food

Ada's Market & Deli (front of store)
6165 N Northwest Hwy, Chicago 60631

US Bank (entry lobby)
6100 N Northwest Hwy, Chicago 60631

Roden Chicago Public Library (entry lobby)
6083 N Northwest Hwy, Chicago 60631

Merrimac Park (fieldhouse)
6343 W Irving Park Rd, Chicago 60634

First Midwest Bank (entry lobby)
7181 W Irving Park Rd, Chicago 60634

Presence Resurrection Medical Center (employee health center)
7447 W Talcott Ave, Chicago 60631



Presence Resurrection Nursing Center (reception lobby)
1001 N Greenwood Ave, Park Ridge 60068

Mather's - More Than a Café (reception lobby)
7134 W Higgins Ave, Chicago 60656

Park Ridge Farmers Market (reception tent - seasonal)
15 Prairie Ave, Park Ridge 60068

New Hope Methodist Church (Monday and Tuesday 9:30 - 11:30 am)
7115 W Hood Ave, Chicago 60631

Donate To Evanston's Holiday Food & Toy Drive

To ensure every Evanston family gets to celebrate this holiday season, Mayor Elizabeth Tisdahl encourages all community members to participate in the eighth annual Holiday Food & Toy Drive! Help local families in need by providing food, toys and financial donations through Fri., Dec. 9.

Visit our website at www.cityofevanston.org for more information.

Niles Township Food Pantry Serves Over 4,000 During November



The issue of food insecurity is a growing concern, and the Niles Township Food Pantry consistently addresses it, providing supplemental groceries to residents in need. During November the Pantry served 4,581 residents a total of 114,471 pounds of food.

Niles Township Clerk Charles Levy, who also serves as President of the Township Food Pantry Foundation stated, "In addition to the residents that received their normal food allotments, we also served complete Thanksgiving meals to 1,426 families. The generosity of donors and the work of our staff and volunteers strengthens Niles Township."

The Niles Township Food Pantry Foun-

ation, a 501 c 3 not-for-profit supports the food purchases for the Pantry, is seeking donations as it prepares to serve Pantry families during the December holiday season. Individuals or businesses that are interested in making monetary donations can visit <http://ntfpfoundation.com> or phone the Niles Township office at (847) 673-9300.

Since 1850, Niles Township Government has been dedicated to improving life for its residents. Niles Township is located in the northeast corner of Cook County. With a population of over 105,000 the Township includes the villages of Skokie, Lincolnwood and Golf, and sections of Morton Grove, Niles and Glenview.



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May the peace and joy of the holiday season lift your spirit.



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Holiday Traditions



The Christmas Pickle - Believe It Or Not

Submitted by Laurie Atkeisson

The Legend of the pickle is like many legends - only as good as the story teller's who share it. Take time to enjoy the legend (s) and start your own family legends with a Christmas Pickle on your tree.

The Legend of the Pickle -

The Christmas pickle is not really a pickle at all, it is a pickle-shaped ornament. A very old Christmas Eve tradition in Germany was to hide a pickle (ornament) deep in the branches of the family Christmas Tree. The parents hung the pickle last after all the other ornaments were in place. In the morning they knew the most observant child would receive an extra gift from St Nicholas. The first adult who finds the pickle traditionally gets good luck for the whole year. This Christmas pickle story, with a few minor variations, can be found all over the web and in print inside the glass ornament package. It says that Germans hang a pickle-shaped glass ornament on the Christmas tree hidden away so it's difficult to find. The first child to find it on Christmas morning gets a special treat or extra present.

In retrospect the real essence behind this family tradition is to take time to savor the moment with family and friends and while searching for the pickle enjoy the beauty of the tree and it's ornaments - teaching children to stop and enjoy the beauty of the season and not focus on the gifts under the tree.

Or so one of the legend goes...

A second version begins with a family story of a Bavarian-born ancestor who fought in the American Civil War. A prisoner in poor health and starving, he begged a guard for just one pickle before he died. The guard took pity on him and found a

pickle for him. The pickle by the grace of God gave him the physical and mental strength to live on.

A yet another version began in Berrien Springs, MI, and is a medieval tale of two Spanish boys traveling home from boarding school for the holidays. When they stopped at an inn for the night, the innkeeper, a mean and evil man, stuffed the boys into a pickle barrel. That evening, St Nicholas stopped at the same inn, realized the boys plight and tapped the pickle barrel with his staff, magically freeing the trapped boys.

Berrien Springs calls itself the Christmas Pickle Capital of the World. They celebrate with an annual Christmas Pickle Festival which takes place in the early part of December. The highlight of the parade is the Grand "Dill"meister who passes out fresh pickles along the parade route. You may even purchase the German glass pickle ornaments at the towns museum.

Rumor and speculation place the origin of the tradition in Germany, however few in modern-day Germany recognize or have even heard of the Christmas pickle, although my grandmother who was from Germany did have a pickle for the tree. Regardless of where it came from, the Christmas tradition survives and is a fun and great family tradition worth sharing. Ornament manufacturers continue to make the specialty ornaments and enjoy sharing this legend and its origins regardless.



Christmas Tree Care

By: Nick Urhausen,
Urhausen Greenhouses

Just because we do not sell any Christmas trees or poinsettias at Urhausen Greenhouses, as we are already growing our annuals and perennials for next spring and summer, we still receive and answer many questions about Christmas trees. As with everything in horticulture and floriculture, freshness is of the utmost importance. How "fresh" the tree which you purchase will determine how well it will look and how long it will last.

What does one mean by "fresh?" The freshness of a Christmas tree is determined by the length of time since the tree was cut and your purchase. When you purchase your tree it should look healthy and green, and few dead or brown needles should be visible. The needles should not be stiff and hard, but rather flexible and soft. It is a red flag if the needles fall off as you touch them.

Once a fresh Christmas tree is procured, keeping it fresh will depend on how much care the tree receives. Upon purchase, a fresh cut about one inch above the old base on the bottom of the tree should be made. Then the tree should be placed in a bucket of water. Make sure it is a rather large bucket as a tree may absorb almost a gallon of water the first day. Make sure you monitor the water level several times on that first day. At this time of the year you may read or hear about all kinds of additives to place in the water to preserve freshness. Most horticultural experts advocate the use of pure tap water and disavow the benefits of the so called additives.

The key to the freshness of your tree is to keep it watered and not let it dry out. The added benefit of doing this is that a well watered tree will not be a fire hazard. Use common sense when locating your tree. Don't place it near a source of heat, like a fireplace, stove, or a hot air duct. These measures promote safety and preserve freshness.

The information in this article is correct, however as a fellow consumer of Christmas trees it is becoming more and more difficult to find a fresh tree. Many years I have purchased a tree and followed all these guidelines only to be met with frustration. One sign that you have a stale tree is when the tree will not absorb any water after you place it in the bucket of water. Another is when the needles drop only a few days after the tree is placed inside your home. So, I guess it is important to ask the merchants selling trees when the trees were cut.

From all of us at Urhausen Greenhouses we wish everyone a Happy and Healthy Holiday Season.

Urhausen Greenhouses, Inc. is located at 6973 N. East Prairie Road in Lincolnwood. Phone: 847-675-1573, www.urhausengreenhouses.com



CHICAGO PARK DISTRICT

Polar Adventure Days

Sponsored by Clif Kid

— NORTHERLY ISLAND —

Saturday • December 10 • January 21 • February 25 • Noon — 4pm

Northerly Island at 1521 S. Linn White Drive, on the Museum Campus.

Parking is available for \$3, cash only.

It's winter in Chicago - come out and enjoy it!

Have fun while enjoying all the wonders of nature.

- Tour the new Northerly Island Natural Area during winter
- See Siberian huskies, wolves and other live animals
- Encounter birds of prey from Flint Creek Wildlife Rehabilitation
- Explore the island on snowshoes (if there's snow)
 - Make nature-inspired winter craft
- Sip hot cocoa while strolling across the prairie
- Raffle prizes and giveaways provided by Coca-Cola

For more information: Visit www.chicagoparkdistrict.com or call 312.742.7529 or 312.747.2001 (TTY)

City of Chicago, Rahm Emanuel, Mayor
Chicago Park District Board of Commissioners
Michael P. Kelly, General Superintendent & CEO





Holiday Traditions



How did it get so late so soon? Its night before its afternoon. December is here before its June. My goodness how the time has flown. How did it get so late so soon?
—Dr. Seuss

Oh, how the year moves so quickly. Before we seem to notice, it's December, the close of another year. With our minds on the impending Christmas Season gatherings, we rush around in preparation for special occasions with family, friends and even fellow workers and associates. There seems to be something ironic about wanting to spend time with everyone we know and not having the time to



make it all happen. With all of that, December is a very special time of the year.

Don't cry because it's over, smile because it happened.
—Dr. Seuss

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Kick Off the Holiday Season at the Downtown Evanston Tree Lighting

On Friday, December 9, Downtown Evanston will kick-off the holiday season with the Tree Lighting celebration at Fountain Square. Get family, friends and coworkers together to spend a joyous evening in downtown Evanston.

Make your way to Fountain Square at 4:45pm to enjoy a performance by the Evanston Children's Choir at 5:00pm and then welcome Santa and Mrs. Claus as they come down Sherman Avenue on an Evanston fire truck. At 5:30 pm help countdown to flip the switch and light up the tree in Fountain Square! After the tree lighting, enjoy a music and theatre performance by WaaMu, Northwestern University's oldest musical theatre production, and meet special guests Chicago Cubs mascot Clark and Chicago White Sox mascot Southpaw!

Breakfast with Santa: Resurrection College Prep High

The Resurrection Alumnae Association presents: Breakfast with Santa, 9 a.m.-11:30 a.m. Saturday, Dec. 10, at Resurrection College Prep High School, 7500 W. Talcott Ave., Chicago. Includes Breakfast with Santa, face painting, Christmas arts and crafts and a theater production by Resurrection High School drama students. Children can have their photos taken with Santa and each child will receive a special gift. Tickets are \$10 per person in advance; \$12 per person at the door. For more information, contact Kristin at (773) 777-6616, Ext. 140 or keven@reshs.org; tickets at www.reshs.org.



Holiday Safety Tips

- Leave various lights on throughout your home.
- Ask your neighbors to watch your house if you are going to be gone for long periods of time.
- Don't use shortcuts through alleys, take well lit and traveled areas.
- If you carry a purse, keep it close to your body with the clasp nearest you.
- If possible, use a small purse or wallet which may be carried inside your pocket.
- Never allow yourself to be distracted when opening your purse.
- Wallets and checkbooks should be carried in an inside pocket.
- Cash should be carried in a front pants pocket.
- Take only the cash and credit cards you will be using.
- Do not display large amounts of cash.
- Never leave your purse in your shopping cart unattended.
- Transfer all valuables to the trunk of your auto.
- Never leave anything in plain view in your auto.
- Park as close to your destination as possible.
- Close and lock all of your windows and doors.
- Never carry your keys in your purse. If you are the victim of a purse snatching, the offenders have your identification with your address on it, along with your keys. Keep your keys in your pocket.
- Do not put your purse on hooks or handles in public restrooms.
- When returning to your home or auto, have your keys in your hand ready to open the door. Use your panic or alarm button.

Submitted by State Representative Michael P. McAuliffe

Senior Polka Association-North Christmas Party

SUNDAY,
DECEMBER 18, 2016

Lone Tree Manor,
7730 N. Milwaukee Niles, IL
ENTERTAINMENT
PROVIDED BY:
Jimmy Kilian and Honky Chicago

Entry: 12:00 PM | Dinner: 1:00 PM
Music: 2:00-5:00pm | Cash Bar
Admission: \$38.00
Please contact: Richard Kula,
847- 823-6358



Immaculate Conception Church

Deepen your Advent with Simbang Gabi
A Filipino Tradition

Thursday, December 15th • 5:30pm - Carols • 6:00pm - Mass

First Day of Novena Masses in Preparation
for the Birth of our Savior

Let us hang our "parol" (lantern) to light His way
as we pray for His coming!

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Holiday Traditions



Spectacular Christkindlmarket Chicago Returning To Daley Plaza



The Christkindlmarket Chicago returns to downtown Chicago on November 18th, 2016 and invites all visitors to enjoy one of the most enchanting atmospheres in Chicago during the holiday season. Recognized as one of the top holiday markets in the U.S. by Travel + Leisure magazine, Christkindlmarket Chicago transforms Daley Plaza into a magical picturesque European Christmas village filled with candy cane striped wooden huts and twinkling lights that harkens back to the traditional holiday market in Nuremberg, Germany.

Since 1996 German American Services, Inc., a subsidiary of the German American Chamber of Commerce of the Midwest, has hosted one of the largest traditional Christmas markets outside of Europe. More than 65% of the vendors travel from Germany to Chicago each year to share their fine wares and holiday traditions. With free admission, the Christkindlmarket Chicago attracts over an estimated million visitors each year from around the Chicagoland area, nation, and the world. The Christkindlmarket Chicago is host to nearly 60 vendors boasting one-of-a-kind offerings that are destined to become treasured gifts for loved ones of all ages. The traditional wooden huts are filled with a wonderland of fine gifts including hand-made holiday ornaments, nutcrackers, cuckoo-clocks, beer steins, wooden toys, jewelry, wood carvings, and European sweets and treats. The market also has various heated walk-in cabins that offer a cozy place to take time and shop for unique gifts. The Grand Timber House and Festival Tent provide visitors a place to warm up, sit down, and enjoy delicious food and drinks such as specialty sausages, potato pancakes, schnitzel, Stollen, and pretzels. Guests can also quench their thirst with a refreshing imported German beer or warm up with a cup of Glühwein (hot spiced wine), which is served in the popular collectable souvenir mug.

Throughout the 37-day event, the Christkindlmarket hosts live entertainment and performances including school groups, professional singers, dance groups and much more. On weekends, the roaming Alpine Brass band with its festive German holiday music is sure to stir and awaken the spirit of the season in all. Special events include appearances by the Christkind (the namesake and symbol of the market) the annual Children's Lantern Parade, Theatre day and much more! One of the most popular events is the daily Advent Calendar. Starting December 1st, one lucky visitor each day gets to help us count-down until Christmas Eve and win a gift from one of the market's special vendors.

The popular "Kinder Club" boasts fun activities geared towards the youngest visitors. Children and the young-at-heart can go on a scavenger hunt to explore the market, interact with the vendors, and learn more about German holiday traditions. Collect an ornamental paper crown and the Christkindlmarket Passport activity book, which includes coloring pages, riddles and much more.

The Christkindlmarket Chicago 2016 is the perfect destination to get into the spirit of the holiday season, whether through an evening out with family and friends or a get-together with co-workers. The market offers the chance to plan holiday gatherings with reserved tables and food and beverage packages ranging from individual family tables up to 100 guests. Whether enjoying a "Stammtisch", which means small get-together with friends, or a full tent reception, the Christkindlmarket is the perfect place to celebrate the season.

For more information, please contact us and visit the official website at www.christkindlmarket.com.

Chicago Christkindlmarket Location

On Daley Plaza in the Chicago Loop (on Washington, between Dearborn and Clark street)

Dates & Times of the Christkindlmarket Chicago: Friday, November 18 – Saturday, December 24

- Sundays - Thursdays 11am – 8pm
- Fridays & Saturdays 11am – 9pm
- Special Hours: Christmas Eve 11am - 4pm



The Famed Christkindlmarket Chicago to Open Second Location at Naper Settlement in 2016. A beloved holiday tradition is coming to Naper Settlement in Naperville. The Christkindlmarket Naperville will offer people who live in the western suburbs a chance to experience a traditional German holiday market with all of the sights, sounds and magic as well as delicious smells and treats, wonderful handmade ornaments and gifts. Traditional wooden huts will be filled with one-of-a-kind gifts including woodcarvings and delicious German delicacies harkening back

to the original Christkindlesmarkt in Nuremberg, Germany, which began in 1545. The Christkindlmarket Naperville will open on Friday, Nov. 25 and on 21 select days in November and December it will transform the village square at Naper Settlement into a picturesque marketplace.

The Christkindlmarket Naperville joins the Christkindlmarket Chicago this holiday season. Since its inception in 1996, the Christkindlmarket Chicago has become a holiday staple for Chicagoans and visitors alike. The market, organized by German American Events, LLC., a subsidiary of the German American Chamber of Commerce of the Midwest, Inc., is one of the largest and most authentic of its kind outside of Europe.

For more info, please contact us and visit the official website at www.christkindlmarket.com.

Holidays are Bustling at Resurrection College Prep High School

Christmas Fine Arts Performances

Christmas Drama Showcase

featuring Resurrection Drama students

Friday, December 9, 2016 • Little Theatre at 7 pm

Christmas Dance Showcase

featuring the Resurrection Orchestris

Wednesday, December 14, 2016 • Little Theatre at 7 pm

All Events are at Resurrection College Prep

7500 West Talcott, Chicago 60656 • 773.775.6616 Ext 110 for more information



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Lindsay Metzger, mezzo
Leo Radosavljevic, bass

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Holiday Traditions



Tree Trimming: Popcorn and Cranberry Garland

Submitted by Laurie Atkeisson

Decorating a Christmas tree usually involves spools of electric Christmas lights, store-bought and homemade ornaments, with a star or angel resting at the top. Yet these traditions are a result of modern conveniences. When Christmas Trees first rose to prominence in the United States, they were often decorated with fruits and other items. From this, a tradition of stringing popcorn and cranberries into a garland that wrapped around the tree was born.

So the question is – why was fruit originally put on the tree? Here’s a little Christmas tree history.

Before Christianity became the dominant religion in Europe, many pagan rituals involved having a live evergreen tree or branch in the home. The reasons varied and included wishes of prosperity and luck with the harvest. In medieval Germany (around 1500), full pine trees were brought into the home to celebrate the Name Day of Adam and Eve (December 24th). The families would decorate the tree with apples in honor of the two. These trees were called “Paradise Trees,” in reference to where Adam and Eve met.

Over time, Paradise Trees evolved into Christmas trees, a tradition mostly only celebrated in Germany. In the 18th and 19th centuries when many Germans immigrated to the United States, they would sometimes bring the tradition with them. However it was viewed as a foreign custom and didn’t quite catch on in America. That is until Christmas 1848.

The Queen of England, Queen Victoria was married to a German, Prince Albert. In the winter of 1848, Queen Victoria asked to have a Christmas tree put up for

the holiday as it was something Prince Albert had as a child for Christmas. Soon the story of the Royal Christmas Tree was published in the newspapers with an illustration depicting the tree in the palace, and the tradition spread throughout Europe and over to North America.

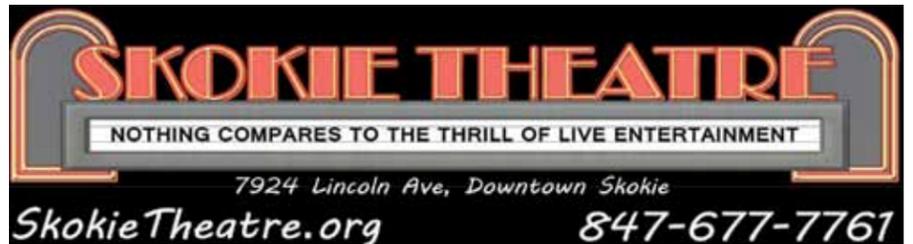
So again, how did popcorn end up on our Christmas trees? While its origins are not completely known, the art of stringing popcorn on a tree most likely came from the fact that when Christmas trees first became widespread, people didn’t have much to decorate them with. They borrowed from the German tradition of putting fruit on the trees and because cranberries are harvested through November, it’s most likely that they were strung with popcorn as they were still in season.

It seems very practical in the sense that citizens living in the New England area would have access to both in abundance.

Corn grows readily all over the area and Cranberries grown in Massachusetts were likely used as a source for both food as well as a source of dye for cloth. Natives Americans also valued them as a form of medicine.

Also keep in mind that during the solstice, cranberries might have brightened your home with color that might not otherwise be present in a decorative way.

Today, many people purchase artificial popcorn wreaths while some families still thread twine or dental floss through popcorn and cranberries to make a holiday garland. It is common practice to make garlands with real cranberries and popcorn to string on outside evergreens to give birds, squirrels, and other wild life a treat for the holidays!



Holiday Magic

By Wayne Mell, Artistic Director

Everyone calls the holidays magical for many reasons. From colored lights, to gifts, to reunions with friends and family. But in each of these cases, magic is just a metaphor. When Skokie Theatre talks about magical holidays, we mean real magic.

It starts on December 17, when Trent James brings his comedy / magic show called Pure Lies to Skokie Theatre. When he was 17, he was one of six magicians chosen to represent North America in the World Championship of Magic F.I.S.M., held in Summer 2015 in Italy. Now, by the ripe old age of 19, he has performed across the country, from New York to Las Vegas. He has received top awards from both The International Brotherhood of Magicians and The Society of American Magicians, as well as being the youngest recipient of The Milbourne Christopher Award (Past winners Included David Copperfield, Penn and Teller).

Trent’s high-energy performance combines mind boggling magic with gut-busting humor that has earned rave reviews in seventeen states, and his unique sleight of hand magic and hip vibe come together to form an unforgettable thrill ride.

See for yourself. Visit SkokieTheatre.org/purelies.html and view a clip of Trent in action. Or just click the button to buy tickets and see for yourself. Tickets are only \$20, and this is a family friendly show you’ll want to bring the entire family to see.

For our next trick, we’re going to make your kids disappear. Not really, but we will give you somewhere to take them that week before New Year’s when the schools are closed.

Magician Sean Masterson returns to Skokie Theatre with his Magic Matinee on Wednesday December 28 at 1:30 pm. Sean is a perennial favorite at Skokie Theatre, and entertains audiences annually with his theatrical magic show that combines sleight-of-hand illusions with skilled storytelling. It’s a highly visual magic show that appeals to a multi-generational audience and includes much participation.

Chris Jones from the Chicago Tribune says that Sean is “a fine close-up magician, a warm performer, and it’s hard to figure out how he does what he does.”

Tickets for Magic Matinee are only \$12. It’s a wonderful way to entertain an otherwise house-bound family.

Tickets or information on all of our events can be found at SkokieTheatre.org, or by calling our box office at 847-677-7761.

Come share the magic of the holidays.



Actress Emily Zimolman
Photo by Guy Rhodes
Logo © Tribune Content Agency, LLC

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“A Theater Review”

“The Last Wife”

TimeLine Theatre
615 W Wellington Ave
Chicago, Illinois

Reviewed by Richard A. Eisenhardt

“The Last Wife” is the second play of the TimeLineTheatre season that is opening at their home theatre.

The show is being directed by Nick Bowling, who has won seven Jeff Awards for his direction. He has a strong cast of eight actors who are Steve Pickering, Anji White, Paola Sanchez-Abreu, Nate Santana, Caroline Hefferman, Peyton Shaffer, Matthew Abraham and Chinguun Sergelen.

The play is by Kate Hennig and had its world premiere at the Stratford Festival in Canada.

The play is about a feminist, Katherine Parr, who is the sixth wife of King Henry VIII. The play is a timely examination of politics, sex and women’s rights. King Henry is in the strong hands of Steve Pickering. You’ll find Katherine has started an illicit affair, inherited three children and launched a political career at the head of the country, alongside a husband as well known for his insanity as his brutality. She knows this is not the time to lose her head. The play takes the characters out of the 16th century and throws them into the here and now.

You might note that Henry had six wives and Katherine is the only one to survive him.

“The Last Wife” runs through December 18th. For theatre performances, theatre times and reservations call 773-281-8463 or visit their website at www.timelinetheatre.com. Tickets are \$38 - \$46 - \$51.

-- Three Stars --



Holiday Traditions



Free, Free, Free! Chicago Arts + Events

Caroling at Cloud Gate

Fridays, November 25, December 2, 9, & 16, 6-7pm
Cloud Gate aka "The Bean" at Millennium Park

Bundle up and get ready to belt out some holiday classics at these festive events that are part concert, part sing-along as local Chicago choral groups lead hundreds of celebrants in song. Santa Claus will join the crowd beforehand, and after the music, head a few steps away to take a spin on the McCormick Tribune ice rink.

McCormick Tribune Ice Rink

Millennium Park, 201 E. Randolph

November 18 - March 5 (weather permitting), Hours Vary

The McCormick Tribune Ice Rink in Millennium park will kick off the winter season on Friday, November 18 (weather permitting). The rink will open to the public at noon and remain open through Sunday, March 5, 2017.

Santa Claus House in Millennium Park

November 18 - December 18

Millennium Park, Chase Promenade (northeast corner)

Santa's Midwest headquarters will open to children of all ages. They can inquire whether they have made his "nice" list, make gift requests and take photos. There is no charge to visit Santa, but you must take your own photos with your camera or smartphone.

Art Institute of Chicago

111 S. Michigan Ave.

Admission to the Art Institute of Chicago is free to Illinois residents every Thursday evening from 5-8pm. Additionally children under age 14 are always free and the public can enjoy the following museum areas free of charge: The Ryan Education Center in the Modern Wing, as well as all programs for families and children within the center, the North and South Gardens (accessible from Michigan Avenue), the Nichols Bridgeway and the Bluhm Family Terrace on the 3rd floor of the west pavilion of the Modern Wing are.

In addition, The Art Institute participates in the Museums for All program which offers LINK and WIC cardholders free general admission to the museum. Present your card along with a valid photo ID to receive free access for you and your family.

Holidays in Millennium Park

Through Early January

Celebrate the season in the most iconic of Chicago settings. Enjoy the 103rd City of Chicago Christmas Tree and tell Santa what's on your wish list (open Saturdays & Sundays, noon-6pm, through December 18). And on Friday evenings, through December 16, local choral groups will lead holiday favorites in concert sing-alongs. More information at cityofchicago.org/holiday.

DECEMBER 2016

"Free, Free, Free!" is a new e-newsletter and website that provides a monthly curated list of free programs, events and activities happening throughout the city in our libraries, museums, cultural centers and parks. DCASE is excited to work with our partners to aggregate this information to better serve the public. It is our hope to eliminate barriers to programming by showcasing cultural activities that are downtown and out in the neighborhoods and welcoming residents to participate in these free events and programs across the City.

We encourage you to express your culture through the arts and take advantage of the many opportunities the City of Chicago provides you to engage, create and participate!

Give the "Gift of Health, Wellness and Family Fun"

Have you ever considered "Plant Based Cooking Lessons" or a "Group Panting Party"? There is always a "Cheese Tasting Class" or a "Botanical Garden Membership".

Because we live in one of the World's most exciting and versatile Cities, what about giving your Family a "Staycation Adventure" and explore all the wonders of Chicago Land.

Just a few thoughts for the personal "who has everything"!!

Happy Holidays from Village Publications

"Seasonal Selfie"

Hang a selfie on the tree or send one to someone you love. These Selfie Ornaments can be personalized with namesake T-shirts and features that make them look just like yourself. \$17, personalcreations.com.

OUR VILLAGE & STREET LEVEL

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The Adler Planetarium Events and Programs

This holiday season, the Adler Planetarium is making our corner of the Universe a little merrier with a variety of seasonal activities, free days and special events.

Pop-up Programs, Extended Hours

For the week of December 26-January 1, the Adler Planetarium will be partnering with organizations around the city to bring guests fun, hands-on "pop-up programs" including experiments and STEM-focused activities for all ages. And, everyone can enjoy the fun for a little bit longer with extended hours at the Adler this week, 9:30 am-6:00 pm

Adler After Dark

Celebrate the season of light and dark on December 15, with Adler After Dark: Lights Out! Exclusively for adults 21+, guests will enjoy special programs on starlight and auroras, dark sky conservation, and more! Experience the play between dark and light around the museum in a special after-hours, glow-in-the-dark scavenger hunt; chill out with a warm mug of their favorite winter concoction over some jazzy holiday favorites; and enjoy our award-winning view of the Chicago skyline. And for one night only, guests can check out a full-dome sky show from the European Southern Observatory aptly titled, Dark that follows the journey to discover the elusive nature of dark matter.

'Scopes in the City

Can't make it to the Adler, but want to check out some cool things in the night sky? Adler astronomers and educa-

tors are bringing the museum—and the Universe—a little closer to you! With 'Scopes in the City, Adler astronomers and staff lead free telescope observing programs in Chicago neighborhoods. Depending on the dates, times and locations of the 'Scopes in the City events, attendees may be able to observe the Sun, Moon, Jupiter, and more! Their next event will be on December 12, at Gompers Park from 5-6 pm.

On December 20, 'Scopes in the City will be joining MCA Studio's "The Longest Night," to celebrate the winter solstice and will be free with admission from 6-8 pm.

All 'Scopes in the City events are weather permitting, so please check Twitter @AdlerPlanet for updates.

Milestones in Space Exploration

In November, we celebrated the 50th anniversary of Gemini 12. Each Gemini spacecraft had an interior volume of approximately 80 cubic feet—about the same amount of space as the front seat of a car. The astronauts, Captain James A. Lovell, Jr. and Colonel Edwin E. "Buzz" Aldrin Jr., PhD, were in space for just under four days inside these tight quarters. Visit Mission Moon to see the real Gemini 12 craft and learn about this historic journey. You can learn about other space journeys as well like humanity's final steps on the Moon during the Apollo 17 mission, which marks its 44th anniversary on December 7. For more information and to plan your visit, please visit: adlerplanetarium.org.

Cost of Twelve Days of Christmas Gifts

By Joe Mandak

The slow recovery of the U.S. economy is continuing to keep the cost of Christmas — or at least the gifts listed in "The Twelve Days of Christmas" — from spiraling out of control.

The price of two turtle doves jumped from \$290 to \$375 this year, but nine of the other 12 gifts listed in the carol stayed the same price or became cheaper, including a partridge in a pear tree, according to the 33rd annual PNC Wealth Management Christmas Price Index released Thursday.

As a result, the overall cost of the gifts listed in the song increased 0.7 percent to \$34,363, up \$233 from last year's total of \$34,131.

PNC Financial Services Group releases the price index each year as a whimsical way of tracking inflation.

Besides the turtle doves, only the cost of 11 pipers piping and 12 drummers drumming — both up 2.8 percent — increased.

Thomas Melcher, chief investment officer for PNC Asset Management Group, said the increasing wages of drummers and pipers could signal a march toward higher wages for a broader range of workers in 2017. He said he wouldn't be surprised to see increases coming for the eight maids-a-milking, nine ladies dancing and 10 lords-a-leaping.

"There are some underlying inflationary pressures that seem to be building," Melcher said.

The price of five gold rings, as tracked by PNC, hasn't gone up in three years, even though the price of gold as a commodity has.

"At a certain point, the end product should begin to reflect the price appreciation of the commodity," Melcher said.

PNC calculates the prices from sources including retailers, bird hatcheries

and two Philadelphia dance groups, the Pennsylvania Ballet and Philadanco.

The cost of buying the same gifts online is \$44,603 this year, up 2.2 percent from \$43,627 last year. But Melcher cautioned that's largely because it costs more to transport animals and performers — 10 lords-a-leaping cost \$5,509 in-person, but \$13,373 online because of transportation costs — than the cost of the items themselves.

"In most instances, it's cheaper to shop online," Melcher said. "I've never personally shipped a swan, but I imagine it's not the cheapest endeavor in the world."

A buyer who purchased all the gifts each time they are mentioned in the song would spend \$156,507, up \$1,100 from last year.

The full set of prices for purchasing the gifts from a bricks-and-mortar business, not online, is:

- Partridge, \$20; last year: \$25
- Pear tree, \$190; last year: same
- Two turtle doves, \$375; last year: \$290
- Three French hens, \$182; last year: same
- Four calling birds (canaries), \$600; last year: same
- Five gold rings, \$750; last year: same
- Six geese-a-laying, \$360; last year: same
- Seven swans a-swimming, \$13,125; last year: same
- Eight maids a-milking, \$58; last year: same
- Nine ladies dancing (per performance), \$7,553; last year: same
- 10 lords a-leaping (per performance), \$5,509; last year: same
- 11 pipers piping (per performance), \$2,708; last year: \$2,635
- 12 drummers drumming (per performance), \$2,934; last year: \$2,855

Gifts to Benefit Minor Children



Chester M. Przybylo

Each year, the IRS excludes from the gift tax certain gifts, including:

- Gifts to a U.S. citizen spouse;
- Gifts up to \$14,000 annually to any individual; and
- Direct payments to an educational provider for tuition or to a medical provider for medical care

When it comes to your minor children, grandchildren, or other important minors in your life, a few considerations must be addressed. They may not possess the legal capacity to receive gifts quite yet and few have the maturity to handle the money. There are a few ways to provide these gifts so that the gifts benefit and protect the minor child while also serving as the tax benefit you intended.

A Crummey trust requires a present interest. This means that the beneficiary (in this case a minor) must be granted the right to use and benefit from the gift in order for the gift to qualify for the "present interest" annual exclusion. First, this trust provides that when property is given to the trust, the beneficiary must have the right to withdraw the gift for at least 30 days. If the 30 days pass and the beneficiary has not withdrawn the gifted property, it then remains in the trust under the original terms of the agreement.

If, however, the beneficiary does not heed your wishes and opts to withdraw the funds, you can stipulate that you'll never make another deposit. Often, this is enough to ensure a withdrawal is not made and, of course, it's legal.

You may also add more than one beneficiary to the Crummey Trust. For example; if you have three beneficiaries, you can add the allowable maximum of \$14,000 for each for a trust total of \$42,000. If one of the beneficiaries has a need for the entire balance, the money can be used specifically for that one beneficiary. Remember the amount which can be gifted under the annual exclusion is adjusted for inflation and may change from the current \$14,000.

Another option is to establish a Section 2503(c) Trust. With this trust, a gift is made to the trust for the benefit of the child. You specify the terms, provided a portion of the gift is available for use for the child while still a minor. Any unused funds can be used in any way the individual sees fit. Typically, the minor has the right to withdraw the funds upon reaching the age of 21.

If the minor dies before reaching legal age, the trust goes to the individual's estate or otherwise dispersed per that individual's direction. Unlike the Crummey Trust, the Section 2503(c) Trust is set up for just one person.

With a bit of guidance, gifting efforts for the children and grandchildren in your life offers flexibility for both you and the recipient. A qualified estate planning attorney can provide guidance as you go about determining which trusts best suit your needs and help accomplish your goals.

Happy Holidays from Chester M. Przybylo and his Staff.

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 45 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.

Are you a Teen that likes to help out your neighbors? Join the Skokie TeenLink Program!

If you're a teen who likes to assist neighbors and friends in their time of need, then the Skokie TeenLink Program is for you. The program is a database list of Skokie teens that are available to do outside yard work, including snow shoveling, which is provided to Skokie residents upon request. Teens are paid for their service by the resident they assist and it is a great start to a résumé.

Many residents who request the TeenLink list are unable to do physical outdoor yardwork themselves, are unable to afford the cost of a professional contractor or only need assistance once in a while. The TeenLink list provides contact information for Skokie teens including the name, phone number, email address and address of the teen, days of availability, type of work they are willing to do and their expected rate of pay. Residents receive the list by mail or email.

Skokie teens, sign up for the Skokie TeenLink now! Applications and additional information are available at www.skokie.org or by contacting the Village Manager's office at 847/933-8257.

Kiwanis Of Ravenswood



The Kiwanis Club of Ravenswood meets at Noon every 2nd & 4th Thursday (with some exceptions) at the Hilltop Restaurant, NW corner of California & Foster Avenues, Chicago. Plenty of FREE PARKING is available in the lot west of the restaurant, on the north side. To confirm the meeting dates please call Maria Bappert at 773-728-8127. Thank you.

Important change: Kiwanis International sent out an email announcing that they are changing their name to KIWANIS CHILDREN'S FUND. According to this message, this new name better conveys the purpose of the organization, "we serve the children," and describes how funds are raised to support Kiwanis initiatives.

Logan Square Boys & Girls Club Christmas Party & Children's Fund

Christmas Party of the Logan Square Boys & Girls Club which will take place on December 22. If you are able to attend, please call John at 773-342-8800.

The Kiwanis Club Of Ravenswood Wishes Everyone A Blessed Christmas, As Well As Good Health, Happiness, Joy And Peace In The New Year.

Box Tops For Education

For a number of years now the Kiwanis Club of Ravenswood has collected Box Tops for Education as one of its service projects. We drop them off at the Queen of Angels Church or School. Each Box Top is worth a dime, so if we do not collect them, it's like throwing out money. With the help of parents, parishioners and the community, a lot of Box Tops have been collected over the years. The money which was earned this way – more than \$8,000.00 – was used to upgrade the School Library, which benefited all of the students. In case you are not familiar with this project, Box Tops can be found on products such as Mott's Apple Sauce, Glad Ziplock Bags, Boise Cascade, Copy Paper, General Mills Cereals, Kleenex boxes, etc. Campbell Soups used to also have them, but have discontinued the program a number of months ago. So we encourage all our readers to save Box Tops for Education.

Check with your local Parochial or Public School to see if they collect them. You'll be surprised how they add up.

Maria Bappert,
President, Kiwanis Club of Ravenswood

Many Cook County Pension Funds Have More Retirees Collecting Than Workers Paying in, Pappas Says

About one-fourth of governments with pension funds across Cook County have more retirees collecting from the funds than workers paying into them, Cook County Treasurer Maria Pappas said today.

Cook County's major taxing districts annually report their key financial data to the Treasurer's Office under the county's Debt Disclosure Ordinance, authored by Pappas.

The Treasurer said the DDO figures show that 130 of the 549 taxing districts report more retirees collect pensions than active workers contribute to the funds – presumably for a future in which they begin collecting their own pensions.

"More retirees collecting than workers contributing presents a funding challenge to local governments struggling to keep pension funds solvent," Pappas said.

In remarks prepared for an address to the City Club of Chicago, Pappas noted that pension funds have three major sources of

funding: Payments from the government which employs the workers, payroll deductions from the workers, and interest money from investments.

Pappas said early retirement programs and cutbacks have reduced the number of workers contributing to pension funds, while failure by some governments to contribute fully and sagging interest returns on investments have added to bad financial consequences on the funds.

"When one of these financial sources diminishes, the other two struggle to provide the money the fund needs to send pension checks to retirees," Pappas said. "When retirees outnumber workers, a fund may have to tap its investment money to write checks, further reducing its resources.

"Therefore, governments must keep an eye on this imbalance and act to provide sufficient financial resources to their pension funds," Pappas said.

Evanston/Skokie Valley Metropolitan Family Services - Giving Hope And Opportunity To Families

With your help last year Metropolitan served more than 53,000 individuals and families in the Chicago area, helping them become more self-sufficient and strengthening family bonds. Learn more about our organization by visiting our website, metrofamily.org.

St. Thecla Seniors Meetings

St. Thecla Seniors located at 6725 W. Devon meet at 11:30 a.m. on the first and third Thursdays of the month in the Queen of Peace room. There is a short meeting followed by sweet rolls and coffee. Bingo and cards are played. We have parties!!! Please join us as you may like us! For information, please call Joanie at 312/608-4092.

Norwood Park Seniors Club

at 5801 N Natoma Chicago meet the second and fourth Thursday of the month. We play pinochle and baingo, have parties on special occasions. Meetings start at 10:30 with coffee and a sweet roll. Call Joan at 773-774-7075.

How to Book a Free AFSP IL Speaker

American Foundation for Suicide Prevention, Illinois Chapter speakers are available to speak for free thanks to the generosity of our walkers, donors, and volunteers. To request a free AFSP Illinois volunteer speaker at your company, organization, club, religious center, meeting or other group complete the simple form at www.AFSPILSpeaker.org. For free AFSP materials and resources thanks to the generosity of Walkers like you go to www.AFSPMaterials.org. To donate to support AFSP go to www.Chicagowalk.org.

*If you are in crisis, call the National Suicide Prevention Lifeline at:
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Evanston's "The Nutcracker on Ice" Returns with Four Performances in December

The Nutcracker on Ice, Robert Crown Community Center's beloved winter ice show, will celebrate its 42nd year entertaining families with four performances this holiday season.

Two matinees and two evening performances of the special holiday show, performed by Robert Crown Center ice skating school students and competitive figure skaters, will be held the weekend of December 16-18, 2016. Show times are Friday, December 16 at 7:30 p.m.; Saturday, December 17 at 2:30 p.m. and 7:30 p.m.; and Sunday, December 18 at 2:30 p.m.

The Nutcracker on Ice features hundreds of skaters of all ages telling the familiar tale of Clara and her musical holiday adventures. Exquisite costumes,

Tchaikovsky's familiar music, and exciting special effects bring the characters to life, making this the perfect family show to spread the holiday spirit.

Tickets are \$9 for general seating and \$10 for reserved seating. Group discounts are available. General and reserved tickets may be purchased in advance at Robert Crown Center or at the door, as well as by phone with a major credit card at 847-448-8258. General seating tickets also are available online at www.cityofevanston.org/crown.

Robert Crown Community Center and Ice Complex is located at 1701 Main St., Evanston. For more information, please call/text 847-448-4311. For convenience, you may call 311 directly while in Evanston.

Watch the Food Network's upcoming episodes of Coast-To-Coast Chow featuring Harry Kempf, owner, operator and chef of the Chicago Brauhaus.



Chicago Park District Ice Rinks To Open Friday, November 25

The Chicago Park District ice ribbon at Maggie Daley Park, and the Chicago Blackhawks ice rinks at parks citywide, will open for the season Friday, November 25, weather permitting.

Patrons can visit Maggie Daley's skating ribbon, 337 E. Randolph St., rent skates (or bring their own) and enjoy an amazing view of Chicago's skyline, while skating laps on rolling hills twice the length of a normal ice rink.

Admission to the Skating Ribbon is free. Skate rental is available for those who do not own skates, Monday through Thursday (excluding holiday periods) for \$12. Rental is available on weekends and holiday periods for \$14.

This year, in response to customer feedback, visitors will be able to purchase "Fast Passes". The "Fast Passes", which cost \$35 for one person, include free admission to the ribbon, skate and locker rental and the ability to skip the line. There will also be a \$90 "Fast Pass" for two skaters and comes with two collectable Maggie Daley Park beverage tumblers. Passes will be available beginning in December and in limited quantities during peak hours.

"The Chicago Park District is always excited to open a new season of skating at Maggie Daley Park" said Park District Superintendent and CEO Michael Kelly. "The ribbon is a great place where families can come and skate while enjoying the beautiful skyline of Chicago."

Events returning to the skate ribbon include the annual Skate with Santa and the Ugly Sweater Skate. The Ugly Sweater Skate, taking place December 10, encourages visitors to skate in their favorite holi-

day sweater. Participants will be entered in a raffle to win holiday prizes. On December 17, visitors can come skate with Santa around the ribbon. Children ages 2-16 can come enjoy a skate with Santa, play games and take photos in the field house. Children must be registered in advanced. To register please visit the Park District website.

Chicago Blackhawk Neighborhood ice rinks

The Chicago Park District will also open its seven neighborhood Blackhawks outdoor ice rinks November 25, weather permitting. Please contact individual parks for ice rink hours of operation. Locations include:

Riis Park, 6100 W. Fullerton Ave., 312-746-5363

Rowan Park, 11546 S. Avenue L, 773-646-3180

Warren Park, 6601 N. Western Ave., 773-262-6314

Skating is free for children and teens 17 and younger and \$5 for adults. Skate rental is \$6 for children and teens and \$4 for adults.

The Chicago Park District's Blackhawk rinks will enjoy free Blackhawk skating clinics and Silver Skates competitions on the following days:

Silver Skate Competitions

Rowan Park, January 10

Riis Park, January 18

Warren Park, January 19

Blackhawks Hockey Clinics

Riis Park, February 4

Warren Park, January 7, 11 and 14

For more information about the Chicago Park District and its ice rinks please visit www.chicagoparkdistrict.com.

Holiday Safety Tips Regarding Children and Food Safety

The holidays are an exciting time of year for children and families. To help ensure they have a safe holiday season, here are just a few tips from the Skokie Fire and Police Departments as published in the American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP) regarding toy, food and visiting safety:

Toy Safety

- Select toys to suit the age, abilities, skills and interest level of the intended child. Toys too advanced may pose safety hazards for younger children.
- Keep batteries and magnets away from young children and call your health care provider immediately if your child swallows one.
- Children under age eight can choke or suffocate on uninflated or broken balloons. Remove strings and ribbons from toys before giving them to young children.
- Watch for pull toys with strings that are more than 12 inches in length.
- Parents should store toys in a designated location, such as on a shelf or in a toy chest, and keep older kids' toys away from young children.

Food Safety

- Wash your hands frequently, and make sure your children do the same.
- Bacteria are often present in raw foods. Fully cook meats and poultry, and thoroughly wash raw vegetables and fruits.
- Be sure to keep hot liquids and foods away from the edges of counters and tables, where they can be easily knocked over by a young child's exploring hands.
- Never put a spoon used to taste food back into food without washing it.
- Always thaw meat in the refrigerator, never on the countertop.
- Foods that require refrigeration should never be left at room temperature for more than two hours.

Happy Visiting

- Remember that the homes you visit may not be childproofed. Keep an eye out for danger spots and clean up immediately after a holiday party.
- Keep a list with all of the important phone numbers you or babysitters are likely to need in case of an emergency. Include the police and fire department, your pediatrician and the national Poison Help Line, 1-800-222-1222.
- Maintaining your child's usual routines, including sleep schedules and timing of naps, can help you and your child enjoy the holidays and reduce stress.

For more information or additional safety tips please contact the Skokie Health Department at 847/933-8252 or visit www.skokie.org.

Village Holiday Cooking

Tamales

Submitted by Laurie Atkeisson

Forget the fruitcake and nix the nog. In Texas, it wouldn't be Christmas without tamales.

While shoppers from Washington to Maine swarmed the malls the day after Thanksgiving, many Texans were lining up to order — or make — Christmas Eve tamales. The corn masa-and-meat bundles — individually wrapped in corn husks and then steamed — are part of the traditional Mexican celebration of las posadas, which commemorates Mary and Joseph's search for shelter before the birth of Jesus.

Rhett Rushing, folklorist at San Antonio's Institute of Texan Cultures, said tamales have been traditional Christmas Eve fare for centuries because they're portable, easy to store and inexpensive to make for large gatherings.

Through the years, the preparation of the labor-intensive food became a social event, called a tamalada, as womenfolk from ranches across Mexico and what's now the American Southwest gathered to prepare the Christmas Eve feast.

A LATINO STAPLE

Historians speculate the creation of tamales dates to 8,000 to 5,000 B.C. Tamales were served at great Aztec banquets and in the streets and homes of the Americas long before the arrival of the Europeans. Tamales were actually some of the original "fast food," since their corn husk wrappers kept them warm and made them easy to carry.

The tamal has evolved over the years and versions still vary from town to town in Mexico and South America, where some use banana leaves instead of corn husks.

But the basic is the same — a corn masa is spread on a leaf wrapper, filled with meat or another dish, wrapped up tight and steamed or boiled.

Despite how they are made or what they are filled with, tamales symbolize more than just a meal to Latino families.

Although tamales can be made year-round, they became a dish saved for special occasions such as Christmas or large family gatherings when a 'tamalada' is held. That's because of all the time and work it takes to make them.

In a tamalada, each family member takes on a different task to prepare the tamales and the older generations share their skills and tradition with the younger generation. Several books and stories have been written of the tradition of making tamales and the joint effort it takes from families to make them.

When you talk about tamales, the plural of the word is, of course, "tamales." But a single one isn't a tamale, it's a tamal! If you want to show off a bit of your knowledge of Mexican culture, it's good to use the right --and rarely used-- word for a single tamal!

Volunteer to be a VITA Literacy/ESL Tutor at Oakton Community College.

Help adults learn to read and/or speak English. Learn about methods and materials especially suited for tutoring individuals new to the U.S. or American-born residents who need help improving their English language skills.

Required four-part training at the Skokie Campus:

Thursday, January 12, 5:00 - 8:45 p.m.

Tuesday, January 17, 5:00 - 8:45 p.m.

Saturday, February 11, 1:00 - 4:00 p.m.

Saturday, February 25, 1:00 - 3:30 p.m.



Call 847.635.1426 for information about Winter/Spring classes.



7701 N. Lincoln Avenue,
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Entrance Exam

Saturday, January 14, 2017 ~ 8:00 am to noon

Shadow Days

8th grade girls ~ Shadow Days available on select days.

7th grade girls ~ "Experience Res" Day on Friday, February 10, 2017.

Entrance Exam details, more information or to register for a shadow experience, visit www.reshs.org or call 773.775.6616 Ext 129.

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St. Paul Lutheran Church

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11:00PM Candlelight Service

**Christmas Day Worship
December 25**
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Sat. 4:00pm - 4:45pm - in English & Polish
Sun. 11:15am in Polish before the 11:45am Mass

Christmas Eve Family Mass at 4:00pm
Christmas Solemn Night Mass at 10:00pm
Christmas Day in English 8:00am & 10:00am

(Midnight-Polish)
Bożonarodzeniowa Pasterka 12:00 am (po polsku)
Koledowanie zaczyna się o 11:45pm (11:45 Polish) Msza "wieta Bożonarodzeniowa 25 Grudnia o 11:45am (po polsku)

Immaculate Conception Church
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(773) 775-3833

MASS SCHEDULE

CHRISTMAS EVE SATURDAY, DECEMBER 24	CHRISTMAS DAY SUNDAY, DECEMBER 25
4:00 P.M. THE VIGIL MASS CHORISTERS, YOUTH CANTORS & HANDBELL/ CHIMES ENSEMBLE, CONTEMPORARY SETTINGS OF TRADITIONAL HYMNS	7:30 A.M. TRADITIONAL HYMNS FOR CANTOR AND CONGREGATION 9:30 A.M. ADULT CHOIR 11:15 A.M. ADULT HANDBELL ENSEMBLE AND KEYBOARD
12 MIDNIGHT THE SOLEMN MASS DURING THE NIGHT SCHUBERT MASS IN G MAJOR, GUSTAV HOLST / IN THE BLEAK MIDWINTER, STILLE NACHT / SILENT NIGHT AS ARRANGED BY RICHARD PROULX, ADULT CHOIR SINGING TRADITIONAL CHRISTMAS CLASSICS WITH STRING QUARTET	SOLEMNITY OF MARY, MOTHER OF GOD SATURDAY, DECEMBER 31 5:00 P.M.
CHRISTMAS PRELUDE MUSIC BEGINS AT 11:30 P.M. CONCERTO GROSSO IN G MINOR "FATTO PER LA NOTTE DI NATALE", Op.6 No.8 "CHRISTMAS CONCERTO FOR STRINGS AND HARPSICHORD"	SUNDAY, JANUARY 1 7:30, 9:30 AND 11:15 A.M.