

INDEPENDENCE PARK COMMUNITY

VOICE



NEIGHBORS

An Honor Flight Takes Wings

Ellen Ryan

Ken and Roberta Wilk are staples in our neighborhood. They have lived in the same house on Avers Ave. since 1972 – save a four-year hiatus in between 1980 and 1984. In 1966, 22-year-old newly married Ken, working in a management training program at Mobil Oil, decided to join the United States Air Force during the Vietnam War. Up to then, he had never piloted an airplane. To say it was a career change is an understatement. He served on active duty for five and a half years, after which he served in the reserves for 15 years. While in the Air Force, he learned to fly and piloted airplanes all over, be it in Europe, the Philippines, Vietnam or Laos. However, none of those flights was as meaningful and gratifying as the one he took on September 16, 2021. Ken, along with 113 other veterans who served during World War II, the Korean War or the Vietnam War, boarded a chartered Honor Flight out of Midway Airport

bound to our nation’s capital. Honor flights are dedicated to honoring veterans by flying them, all-expense-paid, to Washington, D.C., for a day of honor, thanks and inspiration.

Ken was NOT disappointed. He and the other veterans arrived at Midway at 4:00 a.m. and picked up their honor flight tee-shirts and name tags. After coffee and donuts, they went through security and were met by Wayne Messmer, national anthem singer at different times for the Chicago Cubs, White Sox and Wolves. Not surprisingly, Wayne sent them off with his rendition of “The Star-Spangled

Banner.”

Once in Washington, D.C., the veterans stopped at several memorials. The Marine Corps sang “God Bless America” for them in front of the World War II Memorial and the Air Force Drill Team put on a presentation at the Air Force monument. If the veterans knew soldiers who had died in the Vietnam War, they were able to look up their names on the wall at the Vietnam War Memorial. Back at the airport, they had dinner and boarded the plane back to Chicago but were in for an unexpected treat. The familiar mail call took place.

Their names were called and they were given an envelope full of letters expressing gratitude and thanks for their service. Roberta made sure that Ken’s envelope was full of letters from family, friends and loved ones.

Ken remembers the day fondly. The veterans who returned from their service in Vietnam never fully received the recognition or appreciation that other veterans received. September 16th was Ken’s and those veterans’ day to get that recognition. The Honor Flight organizers went above the call of duty to ensure the day was perfect. Everyone on each leg of the flight was beyond kind and went out of his or her way to make this a wonderful day the veterans would never forget. Police officers, custom agents and airline employees were at the gates whether the veterans were boarding or getting off the planes, thanking them and acknowledging them for their service. Ken couldn’t compliment them enough. He was so grateful for the honor flight but we are the ones who are grateful to Ken for his service to our country.



The regular GIPNA Board Meeting WILL NOT BE HELD in January.

The February meeting will be on Tues., February 1, 7 p.m. Join us online via Zoom. Meeting I.D.: 819 2958 6855, Password: GIPNA.

COMMUNITY EVENTS



JANUARY

JAN. 1-31—Murphy Match. Go to friendsofmurphy.org/match.

TUES., JAN. 4—The regular GIPNA Board Meeting WILL NOT BE HELD in January.

MON., JAN. 10—AFAC Public Meeting, 6:30 p.m., at Athletic Field Park Fieldhouse.

WED., JAN. 12—CAPS Beat 1732 Meeting, 7 p.m., hybrid meeting with the option of in-person at Athletic Field Fieldhouse or virtual. Register in advance for webinar: https://us02web.zoom.us/webinar/register/WN_WO_NQCMDSi2ue0G3K0IW_A

TUES., JAN. 18—IPAC Monthly Meeting, 7 p.m., Independence Park.

WED., JAN. 26—Friends of Murphy (FOM) Meeting, 7 p.m. via Zoom <https://friendsofmurphy.org/events/>

FEBRUARY

TUES., FEB. 1—GIPNA Board Meeting, 7 p.m., online Zoom Meeting ID: 819 2958 6855, Password: GIPNA

WED., FEB. 9—CAPS Beat 1732 Meeting, 7 p.m., hybrid meeting with the option of in-person at Athletic Field Fieldhouse or virtual. Register in advance for webinar: https://us02web.zoom.us/webinar/register/WN_WO_NQCMDSi2ue0G3K0IW_A

MON., FEB. 14—AFAC Public Meeting, 6:30 p.m. at Athletic Field Park Fieldhouse.

TUES., FEB. 15—IPAC Monthly

Meeting, 7 p.m., Independence Park.

WED., FEB. 23—Friends of Murphy (FOM) Meeting, 7 p.m. via Zoom <https://friendsofmurphy.org/events/>

ENERO

ENE. 1-31—Partido Murphy. Vaya a friendsofmurphy.org/match.

MARTES, ENE. 4—La reunión regular de la Junta Directiva de GIPNA NO SE REALIZARÁ en Enero.

LUN., ENE. 10—Reunión pública de AFAC, 6:30 p.m. en el Athletic Field Park Fieldhouse.

MIÉ., ENE. 12—Reunión CAPS Beat 1732, 7 p.m., reunión híbrida con la opción de en persona en el Athletic Field Fieldhouse o virtual. Regístrese con anticipación para el seminario web:

https://us02web.zoom.us/webinar/register/WN_WO_NQCMDSi2ue0G3K0IW_A

MARTES, ENE. 18—Reunión mensual de IPAC, 7 p.m., Independence Park.

MIÉ., ENE. 26—Reunión de Amigos de Murphy (FOM), 7 p.m. a través de Zoom <https://friendsofmurphy.org/events/>

FEBRERO

MARTES, FEB. 1—Reunión de la Junta Directiva de GIPNA, 7 p.m., en línea ID de la reunión de Zoom: 819 2958 6855, Contraseña: GIPNA

MIÉ., FEB. 9—Reunión CAPS Beat 1732, 7 p.m., reunión híbrida con la opción de en persona en el Athletic Field Fieldhouse o virtual. Regístrese con anticipación para el seminario web:

https://us02web.zoom.us/webinar/register/WN_WO_NQCMDSi2ue0G3K0IW_A

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PETS

On the Dog Side

Kim Laurel and her dog Andy Jack
News, views and occasional haiku from and about the Greater Independence Park Neighborhood canines and felines.

On the porch this week...a New Year's Haiku from Andy Jack
Love to the seventh
Big snugs to the eleventh
Lucky Levity

GIVING BACK

Let's Talk Turkey

We didn't think it was possible, but Bob Theo, owner of our beloved neighborhood restaurant The Alps, has found yet another way to give back to our community. Bob wanted to give away some fresh turkeys to those in need. He asked around and it didn't take long before Dickie Nichols connected him with Dr. Zelenka, principal at Murphy School. Seven families were the beneficiaries of turkeys to complete their Thanksgiving meal. Thank you, Bob, once again for your generous spirit.



INDEPENDENCE PARK COMMUNITY

VOICE

The Independence Park Community Voice is published by the Greater Independence Park Neighborhood Association (GIPNA), a 501(C)3 corporation.

This newsletter is for the Independence Park community. Please consider renewing your membership or joining GIPNA now. We need your support. Thank you.

Editorial: Sue Ryan
Photographers: Robin Hochstatter and Cindy Schuch
Staff Writers: Pat Clark, Liz Drew, Robin Hochstatter, Patti Kimbel, Rebecca Otaivora, Ellen Ryan, Sue Ryan, Gretchen Siffring
Special Contributors: Erica Dreisbach, Jenny Dreyer, Robyn Hurtig, Kim Laurel and her dog Andy Jack, Liz Mills, John Psiharis

Calendar Translation: Jackie Bravo
Design/Production: Cindy Schuch

For submissions for March/April 2022 Issue:

Editorial Deadline:
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The editorial board reserves the right to edit all submissions. Errors in advertisements are the sole responsibility of the advertiser.

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MAIL: GIPNA, P.O. BOX 18184
CHICAGO IL 60618

WEBSITE: WWW.GIPNA.ORG

The Greater Independence Park Neighborhood Association (GIPNA) is dedicated to maintaining and enhancing the quality of life in the Independence Park community by involving, informing, and encouraging people to participate in matters relating to the community, and by protecting the historical, social, cultural, and architectural character of the neighborhood.

This all-volunteer publication is made possible by the creative voices of our community and the generous support of area advertisers.

Join GIPNA on Facebook

Check out the GIPNA Facebook page for news, alerts, and conversation with your neighbors. Post your own comments to get the word out on your activities and announcements. To find the page and like it, search for GIPNA: Greater Independence Park Neighborhood Association.

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3700 Byron - Larry Gates
3800 Byron - Suzanne Edwards
3900 Byron - Roseann Seablom
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3700 Central Park - Bob Brutvan
3800, 3900 N. Central Park- Tyesin and Zayvour Youngberg
3900 Dakin - Joel Contreras
3600 Grace - Alison Benjamin
3700, 3800 Hamlin - Sharon Nichols
3900 Hamlin - Linda Lehman
3700 Irving Park Road - John Kuczura
3800 Irving Park Road - Linda Lehman
3700 Lawndale - Dorene Jordan
3800 Lawndale - Mark and Casey Watkins
3900 Lawndale - Cy Clausen
3600, 3700 Monticello - Pat Clark
3800 Monticello - Barbara Shaw
3900 Monticello - Cindy Schuch
3700 Ridgeway - Dawn and John Urban
3800 Ridgeway - Karen Fontanetta
3900 Ridgeway - John & Sang Kuczura
3800 Springfield - Roseann Seablom

COMMUNICATION

E-Blasts to GIPNA Members

All GIPNA members who have access to email should be receiving e-blasts twice a month. The emails are compiled by GIPNA and feature such news as announcements of events in the community, crime reports, and notices of meetings.

If you're a member in good standing and are not receiving the blasts, send an email to us at membership@gipna.org. We'll sign you up so that you don't miss any more neighborhood announcements.

RESOURCES

Important Phone Numbers

From the Office of State Senator Cristina H. Pacione-Zayas

Mental Health

Call4Calm Text Line- Text TALK to 552020 for English
Text HABLAR to 552020 for Spanish

Envision Unlimited- 773-769-2139

Kedzie Center- 773-754-0577

Rincon Family Services- 773-564-9070

Housing Assistance

Bickerdike Redevelopment Corp.- 773-227-6332

Hispanic Housing Development Corp.- 312-291-5421

Northwest Side Housing Center- 773-283-3888

Social Services

Albany Park Community Center- 773-509-5657

HANA Center- 773-583-5501

Logan Square Neighborhood Assoc.- 773-384-4370

North River Commission- 773-478-0202

Health Care

ASI Home Services- 773-278-5130

Community First Medical Center- 773-282-7000

COVID-19 Rapid Testing, North Shore Clinical- 773-570-6510

Erie Helping Hands Health Center- 312-666-3494

Oak Street Health Portage Park- 773-644-5989

Food Assistance

Chicago Hope, Inc.- 773-499-9763

Open Arms Ministry Food Distribution Center- 773-987-4677

Polish American Assoc. Pantry- 773-282-8206

Irving Park Community Food Pantry- 773-283-6296

Government Resources

Attorney General's Fraud Hotline- 1-800-386-5438

Find a Child Care Provider- 312-823-1100

IL Application for Benefits Eligibility- 1-800-843-6154

IL Department of Employment Security- 1-800-244-5631

IL Department of Public Health Hotline- 1-800-889-3931

IL Department of Aging Senior Helpline- 1-800-252-8966

COMMUNITY

Have an Idea for the Newsletter?

If you want to see something in the neighborhood highlighted or just want to provide feedback, reach out to us at newsletter@gipna.org.

The Color Club Brings a Vibrant Palette to the Neighborhood

Patti Kimbel

Color Club is bringing more than color to our neighborhood. This newly named event space is located at 4146 N. Elston. The building has an interesting and colorful history. Previously, from 1922 to 1958 it was home of the International Order of Vikings, which is a Scandinavian organization dedicated to celebrating Swedish traditions and providing charitable services to the community. Then from 1958 to 2020 it was occupied by the Chicago Latvian Association. In 2020, husband and wife Josh Dihle and Abby Monroe made the bold move to purchase the building. Josh is an Art Professor at the School of the Art Institute and also works as an artist. Abby has worked in community engagement for over 15 years and is now applying those skills at Color Club. They desire to



maintain many of the quirky and unique features of the building while renovating and updating the space for community use. Abby and Josh currently utilize the space as an artist studio and community center. They renovated the space to include artist studios with shared tool shops, a library, and other multi-purpose rooms. The second floor houses a ballroom and a smaller multi-purpose room and there is a 'tavern' space on the first floor. They have completed many cosmetic updates on the second floor with a newly installed mural completed by artist Molly Colleen O'Connell.

Color Club's tavern and ballroom space are available for booking private events and they offer a team of event specialists to help with coordinating events. Additionally, they have applied

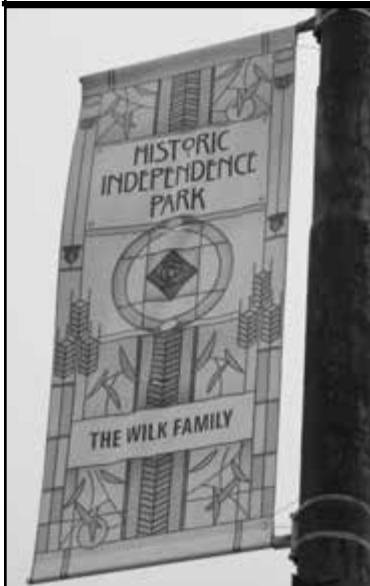
for a public place of amusement license in order to expand the use of the space. This license is still pending but they are hoping to receive approval at press time by the end of 2021. Their ultimate goal is to host theatre shows and arts-focused performances starting in 2022. They would also like to host cultural programs that would be open to the public.

During a recent tour of the building, Abby shared that her ultimate goal is to obtain an elevator for the building. She is in the beginning process of fundraising for this expensive but important renovation to ensure access to all. Abby and Josh are very excited to be new members of the Irving Park community and to infuse some art and cultural events into the neighborhood.

Currently, they have ten artists

using the studio space who work in a variety of mediums. They have a workshop available and a recently purchased kiln for artist's use. In the future, their hope is to have more art-focused events such as gallery showings and benefits to support the arts.

It was impressive to learn about their existing events and hopes for future performances and engagements. In terms of classes, Color Club hosts weekly movement classes. Taiji/Tai chi is offered on Monday and Thursday evenings and Sunday morning, Tango lessons on Wednesday nights, Ethnic Dance Chicago on Friday nights, and Embodied movement classes on Sunday mornings. Color Club is also hosting various one-time events and they are eager to continue expanding their offerings. In December, "Busy Buddhas with Buddha Belly Kids Yoga" was a free event for children ages 0-5 and their caregivers. "Yin Yoga and Sound Healing Meditation" was also held in mid-December. To join their e-newsletter for updates on events you can email to info@colorclub.events or follow on Instagram: [@colorclubarts](https://www.instagram.com/colorclubarts) and consider joining a dance class in the new year.



FUNDRAISING

Banner Benefactors

Pat Clark

Roberta and Ken Wilk, longtime Independence Park neighbors and volunteers par excellence, won the GIPNA street banner bid at last fall's Wine & Cheese Lawn Party. Roberta has been tirelessly instrumental in getting silent auction donations for all the

Wine & Cheese parties and Ken has always lent a helping hand wherever needed—schlepping wine boxes, helping setup at the Farmers Market, and more. And all done with his wry sense of humor.

The Wilk's banner is for their entire family, but it was decided that it was just impossible to get everyone together for a photo. Their banner is hung on Irving Park Road by Independence Park in a prominent place as it should be for Roberta and Ken.



Silver Linings During COVID

Robin Hochstatter

People initially talked about what they had done at home during the pandemic. We were all pretty task oriented in the beginning, getting so much done and getting so much watched.

Then as our home time dragged on longer than any of us anticipated, our world felt much more bleak and uncertain. Many made the transition from doing to thinking about their lives in regards to work, safety, pleasure, creativity, family and fulfillment, becoming more inwardly focused. New norms were created. We found the silver lining to this global pandemic. Some said they experienced a reset in their lives.

We appreciated our local businesses and helped to keep them going. "So many customers made a point to get take-out meals from us regularly, knowing that we were struggling. Now that we're open again, customers are still filling our dining room with their support," said Eileen Garcia of Hearth & Crust.

Many talked about how they forgot how much they loved being home. Sitting in our backyards with family and friends became our safe social space. Then when the weather turned cold, we turned to the four walls of our garages, desperate to spend time together even bundled up. "We were forced to shrink our inner circle, and I now know who I prioritize and who prioritizes me," noted neighbor Meredith Rolan. If we couldn't get together, we Zoomed. In some ways, we were

able to spend more time with long distance friends and family this way than previously. Checking in on those who lived alone became very important.

When our outside entertainment/sports were shut down, many turned to new hobbies or creative endeavors they had left behind. One person talked about her art classes online and how the group became worldwide instead of just the local artisans. The world was experiencing something awful together, but we found ways to experience joy together as well. A local photography school almost closed because its in-person classes had to be shut down. When it created live online classes, its business expanded three-fold. When classes were able to resume in person, hybrid classes were created so that you could watch the Zoom version if you couldn't be there in person.

With fewer nights out, cooking was a huge creative outlet. Some changed their eating patterns since they were not able to go to the health club. Folks who never cooked before suddenly realized that they actually enjoyed it.

Many people noted how healthy they had been with fewer colds and flu floating around. Another great reason to wear our masks.

With so many people working and schooling from home, it was pretty taxing on most families. They did learn more about each other and felt the time together was a gift. My brother-in-law talked about the gift of having 72 consecutive days with his teenage daughter while she was taking classes at home. "I never would have had that opportunity under normal circumstances. It was truly a gift we shared."

When the vaccines became available and life seemed to get safer, many of us did not want to return to our previous path. Many quit their jobs because they didn't feel safe, didn't feel they were paid enough, didn't feel the work itself was fulfilling enough, couldn't work because their children were home for school and they didn't have child care to watch over them.

Now some are finding their way back into the workforce in brand new types of work or have decided that staying at home is right for them. In the past, few had the luxury of quitting their jobs. But with the time we had, we could think through what was important and then research what might be a better fit for ourselves and our families.

What did you feel thankful for? Look for our GIPNA Facebook page and chime in on the discussion.

Who Represents Me?

If you have spent sleepless nights trying to figure out the new legislative maps for Illinois, we got help for you. Wander over to the resources link at GIPNA.org and you'll find maps showing whether Mike Quigley or Chuy Garcia is your U.S. Representative, as well as the IL State Senate boundaries between Rob Martwick or Cristina Pacione-Zaya. And you will learn that Rep. Jaime Andrade's district was pushed to the east, so the western portion of the GIPNA neighborhood is now represented by Lindsey LaPointe. As for the City Council new aldermanic map, plan on some more sleepless nights.

Looking for a Do-Good, Feel-Good Volunteer Job?

Pat Clark

John B. Murphy Elementary School is looking for neighbors who would like to help grades 3-5 children with their reading. The school has the materials. The volunteer would essentially be reading a book and asking comprehension questions. The materials provided will be at the instructional level of the child. In addition, there will be an option to do some enrichment and advanced level book clubs in the grades 3-8 via novels. The novels may be read in part or in their



entirety and then discussed.

A volunteer is required to have Level 1 volunteer status with CPS, meaning submitting an application form and having a background check. Complete volunteer program information and forms can be found at www.cps.edu/services-and-supports/parent-engagement/volunteer-programs/. The school is working on a Google form to share with options for days and times. The school's web site is www.murphy.cps.edu. For more information, call Murphy Elementary School at 773-534-5223.

COMMUNITY

Irving Park Community Food Pantry Seeks Toiletries

John Psiharis

The Pantry continues to give out a variety of personal-use items to its most in-need clients from the Take-One table in the delivery area, where clients can select items from a variety of options. Most in demand are toiletries of all types, which are difficult to keep in stock.

To alleviate these shortages, we are asking for donations (or drives) of basic toiletry items: toothbrushes and toothpaste, deodorant, body wash, shampoo,



razors and shaving cream. Other popular items are large sizes of diapers (#5 and #6), adult diapers, sunscreen, washcloths, men's white crew socks, lip balm, even children's books.

Donations can be dropped off at the Big Helpers store at 4184 N. Elston Ave. from 10 to 4 p.m. Monday through Friday. We appreciate your help to fill this ongoing need!

Thank you to everyone who



donated to our holiday programs, in which we provided the makings of a holiday meal to all clients both for Thanksgiving and the holiday season. We also gave stockings of toys and goodies to clients' children up to 12 years old in December. Donations to help for these programs can still be made via PayPal at www.irvingparkfoodpantry.org or via check to Irving Park Food Pantry, 4256 N. Ridgeway Ave., Chicago,

IL 60618.

Every other week, Carolina Godoy of CaptionCall comes to the Pantry to provide information and set up service for clients (or anyone) who has hearing problems when on a phone call. The phones provide large, easy-to-read text of the conversation or voice mails and works like a regular phone. The phone, delivery, installation and training are free to those with hearing loss through the federally funded Americans with Disabilities Act (and paid for by a tax on your phone bill). For details, call Carolina at 224-284-1862, email her at cgodoyquirk@captioncall.com or visit www.captioncall.com

Thank you for all your support in helping us meet our mission of being "Neighbors Helping Neighbors!"

COMMUNITY

News from Carlson Community Services

Liz Mills

Happy New Year from Carlson Community Services!

In 2021 we celebrated the resumption of our in-person concert series and the re-opening of our after-school program, now in its 15th year. We have a few spots available for Murphy students. Program staff members pick up students from school and walk them to Irving Park Lutheran Church's gym located at 4057 N. Harding Ave. Staff are fully vaccinated and students and staff are masked except when eating. Tuition is based on household income; tuition assistance is available. For more information contact Rebecca

Haneberg at mapdirector@carlsoncommunityservices.org or 773-972-0469.

We harvested 450 lbs. of vegetables from our community garden for the Irving Park Food Pantry. Thank you to everyone who volunteered, donated or participated in an event. We couldn't have done it without you!

Free Concert 2/13/22

The Irving Park Fine Arts Committee will present Beatriz Helguera-Snow, piano, and Andrew Snow, cello, in the third concert of its 2021-2022 season on Sunday, February 13th at 2:00 p.m. The concert will be held at Irving Park Lutheran Church, 4100 N. Harding Ave. The concert is free, but donations are always welcome!

A native of Mexico City, Beatriz Helguera-Snow is an active recitalist, chamber musician and a member of the Chicago Philharmonic Chamber Players. Born in Chicago, Andrew



Snow is co-founder of Chicago Panamerican Ensemble, member of Chicago Sinfonietta, and the Chicago Philharmonic.

The concert will feature the music of Mexico, Argentina, and Spain. The date of the concert is subject to change -- please check our website or Facebook page for status updates. The church is spacious, so there is plenty of room to social distance. Masks are required.

Carlson Community Services

connects the Irving Park community with programs that enrich lives through education, culture and service. For more information, visit carlsoncommunityservices.org or contact Liz Mills at 773-398-6766 or lizmills@carlsoncommunityservices.org. Follow us on Facebook or sign up for our newsletters at carlsoncommunityservices.org if you'd like to stay informed about all that is happening!

SCHOOLS

Alessandro Volta Elementary School- Dual Language Program, Part 2

Rebecca Otalvora

In the last edition of the *Voice*, I published an interview with Ms. Carrillo, a Pre-K instructor in the dual-language program at Alessandro Volta Elementary School in Albany Park. This piece is a continuation of that article. I interviewed Mrs. Flores and have translated her responses here.

Q. How many students are typically in the dual language Pre-K program?

A. We have two Pre-K classrooms that serve 20 students. Currently both classrooms have 16 students each, but this number may increase.

Q. In your experience, what is the biggest benefit of two-language education for children?

A. There are many benefits of obtaining an education in two languages and students being fully bilingual, but the greatest benefit is that people who master two languages have more opportunities in the labor field.

Q. What are some of the challenges children face when learning a new language?

A. At first, when children are immersed in an environment where their first language is not spoken, it can be frustrating. At the same time they're learning to develop more capacity in their brains to absorb and categorize the second language.

Q. We all know that working with young children can be exhausting and certainly isn't without it's challenges. So, tell me what's your favorite part of working with this age group?

A. My favorite part of working with preschoolers is observing how they acquire and develop

language, social-emotional, motor, and cognitive skills.

Q. Is there anything else you would like to share with the community and parents who are considering different schools to enroll their children or regarding Volta in general?

A. I recommend that you explore the different programs available in different schools and if you're convinced that dual language education is what you want for your children, take the opportunity that Volta school provides in this community.

For more information about Volta's Dual Language Program contact the school at 773-534-5080.

SCHOOLS

Murphy Updates

Gretchen Shiffring

Murphy 7th Graders Hosted a People's Museum

In Social Studies, 7th grade students have deeply engaged in learning and reflecting on themselves, the importance of telling their stories, representation, and museum ethics.

Their culminating activity was to create a special exhibit that showcases a personal/family artifact that reflects and responds to the question, "What do I care about?" "What is important to me?" "How do I want to represent my community and myself?"

On December 6, the students hosted a People's Museum to display their work. Here are a few photos from the event.



Murphy Match, December 15 - January 31

Very generous Murphy School supporters have agreed to match every dollar we can raise between Dec. 15th – Jan. 31st up to \$10,000, so we have a chance to turn \$10,000 into \$20,000 for Murphy School!

All money raised goes toward supporting the needs of the school, building improvements, arts partnerships, and spreading the word about our school spirit, so giving through this matching gift challenge doubles your gift and your direct impact on Murphy School and our students!

EVERY donation is significant and appreciated in working toward the \$10,000 goal. Make your donation today at friendsofmurphy.org and watch what happens when we all work together.

Thank you so much for your support!



Murphy to Host COVID Vaccine Events

- **Loyola LUMC Mobile Unit:** Tuesdays, 1/4/22 and 1/25/22
- **CIMPAR Mobil Unit:** Wednesdays, 1/5/22 and 1/26/22

These events will take place at Murphy School and are open to the public. Walk-ins are welcome as long as supplies last. Children, Adult, and Booster COVID-19 vaccines will be available.

Call Murphy Elementary School at 773-534-5223 for more information.

A Magical Evening

Pat Clark

The 8th Annual Wine & Cheese Party was a bit different this year as it was held in Patti Kimbel's and Scott Dewey's yard on a cool October evening. In fact, it was billed as the Wine & Cheese Lawn Party. About 50 vaccinated guests enjoyed charcuterie from Hearth & Crust, our local fine dining place. Restaurant owner Eileen Garcia, who admitted she loves to talk with a microphone, described the different wines that guests could taste. She also prepared the charcuterie, which was resplendent in black boxes. Delicious skewers of prosciutto, cheeses, grape tomatoes, and olives were tucked into Halloween-themed cellophane bags. Peeking out of the boxes were two pieces of delicious cornbread seasoned with rosemary. Nuts and other savories were in the bottom of each box. Delicious bags of sweets were also thoroughly enjoyed.

The Silent Auction offered such a variety of goods: gift certificates to restaurants or for a massage, party rooms in the Independence Park fieldhouse, jewelry, artwork, and pottery. Generous neighbors and local businesses contributed all the items.

Thank you to our sponsors for helping contribute to the evening. They were Senator Rob Martwick, Representative Lindsey LaPointe, Doggie Dojo, Representative Jaime Andrade and Wintrust Bank.

The decorating committee strung little lights everywhere that gave the event that magical feeling. Tables and chairs were tucked into corners of the garden for easy conversations. Fire pits warmed faces and hands. And, of course, thank you to all the volunteers who helped move and set up tables and chairs from the Independence Park bungalow storage room, hung signs, artfully placed pumpkins and gourds, and served wine to the guests.

An especially warm thank you to Patti and Scott for hosting this spectacular evening.

St. Edward School Open House

Jenny Dwyer

St. Edward School January 30, 2022, Open House, 10:30 a.m. to 1 p.m .

Register to attend the open house on our school website, www.stedwardschool.com

Plan to attend St. Edward Catholic School's biggest open house of the year in the Dominican Learning Center (gym), 4447 N. Lowell, on the St. Edward School campus.

At St. Edward School, we recognize the importance of developing the whole child through rigorous academics, creative arts, including music, theater and visual art, physical activity and sports, and our Catholic faith that honors the unique gifts and talents of each of our students. Our graduates attend their choice of Catholic high schools and select enrollment public high schools and continue to contribute to their communities through service and leadership.

Our early childhood learning programs prepare our 3- and 4-year-olds by incorporating the academic, emotional, social, physical and spiritual needs to nurture and teach the whole child and encourage qualities needed for life-long learning.

Please register to attend the open house at www.stedwardschool.com. We look forward to meeting you at the open house and sharing all there is to offer that St. Edward School has provided for 112 years.

Mark your calendar for these upcoming Community Events that benefit St. Ed's and give you a night off from cooking! Thank you for your support!

Portillo's, Tuesday, January 11, 5:00 p.m. to 8:00 p.m. 7308 W. Lawrence Ave., Harwood Heights

Mention St. Edward School when ordering or provide the flyer (retrieve on the St. Edward School website under Community Days).

Moretti's, Wednesday, February 9, all day 6727 N. Olmstead Ave., Chicago

Mention St. Edward School when ordering.

BRGRBELLY, Tuesday, February 22 5739 W. Irving Park Road, Chicago

Mention St. Edward School when ordering for dine in/ carryout.

St. Edward School celebrates 112 years of providing a Catholic education to children in grades PK3 – 8th grade. You can contact office@stedwardschool.com to schedule an in-person tour or individual Zoom tour with our principal. St. Edward School is a 2017 National Blue Ribbon Exemplary High Performing School. For more information, please visit our website at www.stedwardschool.com or call the office at 773-736-9133 to learn more about our outstanding academic programs and extended care.



Time to Dig Out Your Snow Shovels

'Tis the season for the annual PSA reminding residents to keep sidewalks clear of snow, slush and ice. Be a good neighbor and shovel as soon as you can after it snows. If you have neighbors who are unable to clear their path for whatever reason, pay it forward and shovel their walks. They will be appreciative as will others who won't slip and fall while walking around the neighborhood. If you are going out of town, ask someone to shovel while you're away. AJ Holub will shovel for a reasonable rate. He is in high school, so his availability is after school and on the weekends. You can call or text him at 773-297-4389. Greenwise Organic Lawn Care also offers snow removal services. For more information go to <https://www.iamgreenwise.com/snow-removal>.

Be a Good Dog Owner and Neighbor

A neighbor who lives in the short block of 3700 N. Hamlin reports that a growing number of people, both neighbors and people who come from other areas, are letting their dogs poop in the lot on the southwest corner of Hamlin and Grace. And they are not picking up the poop, which attracts rats. Rats eat dog poop! These thoughtless dog owners also let their unleashed dogs run, which is illegal. Be a good neighbor and clean up after your dog and keep it on its leash.

How to Create Winter Interest in Your Garden

Robyn Hurtig

In the heat of summer, I start to lose my love of the garden. It's too hot to do the work, and I'm mostly focused on keeping the perennials from dying as we suffer through drought-like conditions. Sometimes, the effort of watering takes up all the time I have for gardening.

My love of the garden comes back in the fall as temperatures cool, and I begin to fill in those empty spots. That's when I start to lament its lack of color and worry that the garden will be especially boring in the winter.

Now, it's too cold to play in the garden, so I fantasize about curling up with some hot tea and plant books. I'm determined that this year I'll research my plants and order them. I promise myself that I won't, I will not go to the garden center on the first nice spring day and buy up a bunch of plants that are colorful and beautiful, just because they are catching my eye. I will have a plan. I will!

I'm thinking about what I love to look at all year long and when winter is most bleak, what I'd like to see in my garden as I stare out the windows—beautiful tree bark, reds and blues, waving grasses and evergreens top my list. Read on for a short list of favorites that you can try in your garden.

Have You Checked Out Exfoliating Bark?

Maybe you haven't given much thought to exfoliating bark, but I love looking at tree bark on my slow dog walks. It's filled with

colors that change as the light changes. Why not add a specimen to your yard?

River Birch (*Betula nigra*)

The River birch is both native and spectacular with its large seeds that attract birds and beneficial insects and its exfoliating bark that ranges from reddish-brown to pinkish tan. It's a large tree that grows easily in most conditions, except for high alkaline soils.



Seven-Son Flower (*Heptacodium miconiodes*)

This is one of those well-kept secrets. It's a gorgeous flowering tree (or shrub) that's part of the honeysuckle family and related to forsythia and viburnum. Say no more, right? It might be hard to find, but you can bet you'd be the only house on your block with one. It will delight you all season long with creamy white flowers in the early summer, fruit in the fall, and its final performance is the exfoliating bark in the winter.



Red Berries and Twigs for Splashes of Color

Love a splash of red in your landscape? So does Gannon, one of our landscape designers. Here are his favorite winter interest plants that fill the red bill.

Winterberry Shrub (*Ilex verticillata*)

The winterberry shrub grows from 6-9 feet and provides bright red berries that are a great food source for birds. Keep in mind, you need both male and female plants to get the fruit. The summer foliage is glossy dark green that turns yellow in the fall. It grows well in sun to partial shade and in moist, well-drained



soil, so might be a perfect specimen for your rain garden.

Don't Forget About Native Grasses to Add Movement

Grasses next to evergreens are especially beautiful, and what I like most about grasses in my winter garden is that they move with the wind, adding more interest. And, as importantly, they provide birds with a welcoming home for both food and shelter.

Blue adds its own excitement to the winter palette and the bluestem family offers short and tall native grass options.

Little Bluestem (*Schizachyrium scoparium*) and Big Bluestem (*Andropogon gerardii*)

Little bluestem is a purplish-bronzy ornamental grass blooming from August through February. It's low maintenance, tolerating all kinds of soil conditions. Besides the color it provides, its beauty gets magnified with its upright stems throughout winter when some other grasses tend to flatten out.

Big bluestem sometimes reaches up to 8 feet including the seedheads. In early spring, stems and leaves emerge with a darker blue-green color that lighten to a brighter green with red tinges during the growing season. In fall, it's known for the beautiful bronze to reddish leaf display that gently fades to tannish colored winter stems, which like the little bluestem, typically remain upright to retain a vertical element throughout winter.

Editor's note: For more ideas on winter landscaping see Robyn's full article at GIPNA.org/newsletter.



Check Out the App, Then Check Out a Book

Sue Ryan

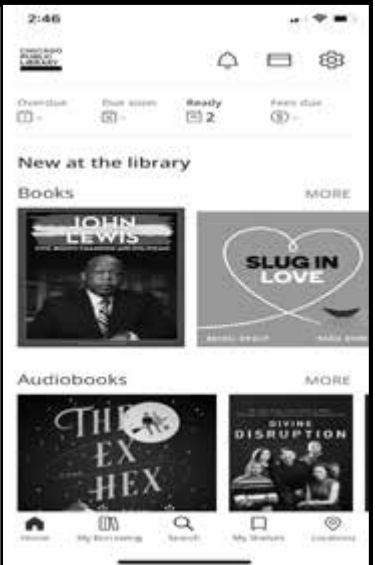
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and it is disheartening when I am 157th in the queue. If I really need the book pronto, I buy it and think of it as a means to support writers.

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Did you spot the five mistakes in the title? Whether you delight or grimace in catching typos in our newsletter, we need your eyes on the GIPNA Voice before it goes to the printer. We are a small dedicated staff, but don't always catch everything. Please consider volunteering two to three hours,

six times a year to help proof the newsletter in its final version. If you have always wanted to yield a red pen, now's your chance. The only requirement is to read each article carefully. Bonus: You get to read the latest issue before anyone else. Want to help? Contact newsletter@gipna.org.

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Kindergarten Diaries

Liz Drew

Since we moved to Independence Park in 2017, we have been getting to know Murphy Elementary and looking forward to the day we could walk our daughter Irene to school. Like our library and parks, Murphy is an incredible public resource that makes our community stronger. Luckily for us, our experience as a new Murphy family started just as everyone returned to in-person learning in the fall of 2021. As I write this in December, Irene's class is on the second round of remote learning after a student tested positive for COVID-19, giving us even more sympathy for the families, teachers, and support staff that were remote throughout the entire last school year. The silver lining of our brief adventures with Google classroom—especially as new parents—was seeing Irene's incredibly talented teachers at work and getting a glimpse of her daily routines and new friends. A surefire mood lifter is hearing a group of 5-year-olds respond to the prompt, "Does anyone have something kind to say about a friend today?"

We feel confident Principal Zelenka and her team are doing everything they can to keep the school safe and open. We observe other parents and caregivers consistently wearing masks at drop-off and pick-up, and the school regularly shares information and resources on vaccines, including organizing vaccine events at the school, and encourages weekly testing.

Irene is now fully vaccinated and wearing a mask is second nature to her and her classmates at this point.

Murphy worked hard all summer to prepare new families and welcome us into the community with several opportunities for orientations and tours. We met the kindergarten teachers in advance and even did a dry run of drop-off for the first day. I continue to be deeply impressed and inspired by the kind, thoughtful, and collaborative approach I've seen from other parents. Irene has been thriving. We have noticed in a few short months how much more confident she is, eagerly greeting teachers and other students, showing us all her favorite spots on the playground, and hooting like a Murphy owl.

As a household with two working parents, we are getting into the rhythm of adjusting our family schedule around the CPS calendar. The YMCA aftercare program has been wonderful for us, and Murphy makes it easy for us by hosting that on-site and helping get Irene from other Murphy after school activities—like this fall's Thursday's Latinx art class which Irene loved—to aftercare. We also took advantage of the YMCA's School Days Out program, which made it possible for us to work on the days off in November. In the spirit of paying forward all the guidance we've gotten from other parents, it's not too early to start thinking about summer camp registration!

It feels like we are entering a whole new era as parents, and we could not be more grateful to be a part of the Murphy community as we embark on this journey.



|||GIPNA|||

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by erica dreisbach

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Jaime ANDRADE

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My staff and I are here to serve you and our community. We encourage you to reach out with your thoughts about issues that we face together. If you need assistance with constituent services, please let us know and we will work to the fullest extent of the abilities of this office. Please share your ideas on ways we can improve our community and state.

District Office Info

3007 W. Irving Park Rd, Suite A-Front Office

Chicago, IL 60618

Call us at, (773) 267-2880

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Admissions Events

Saturday, January 29 • 2:30-4:30pm

Visit our school and celebrated, newly remodeled, gym. Meet faculty, staff and parents who will be available to answer all your questions.

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We are inviting all parents and children who are interested in preschool 3 and 4 year old programs to visit our special 'Learn With Us' day. You can talk to teachers and observe while your child interacts with current students and activities. RSVP Required
 *Tours for all other grades will also be available

**2022-2023
 Application for Admissions**
 forms are available online and in the school office

Please feel free to contact Marge Tirilli with any questions or to schedule a personal tour.
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Your sponsorship of \$350 covers the cost of the banner printing, installation, and personalized inscription of your choice. If the price is a bit steep for your household consider pooling your funds with neighbors or make it a block effort. Perhaps Monticello can recapture bragging rights against Ridgeway after its stinging kickball loss.

Your banner would be installed in the spring of 2022 and guaranteed to remain for 5 years. Your contribution will also be acknowledged in an upcoming issue of the Independence Park Community *Voice*.

To support this project, go to GIPNA.org or scan the QR code where you can complete the application and payment for your personalized banner! Don't delay! The deadline is February 28, 2022.

