

INDEPENDENCE PARK COMMUNITY

VOICE



NEIGHBORHOOD

Annual Alley Cleanup Date Set

Yes, it's time to give the old alleys a good cleaning as they are pretty disgusting after our strange winter. Not only will we all feel better after sprucing them up, but you get to hobnob with your neighbors and meet the new folks.

The scheduled date is Saturday, April 29, 9 a.m. to 12:00 p.m. Meet at the corner of Byron and Lawndale where there will be a cup of hot coffee and some donuts awaiting you. Plastic bags, shovels and rakes will be available for you to borrow. And thank you all for pitching in.



NEIGHBORHOOD

Free or Nearly Free Things to Do in the Neighborhood

Sue Ryan

As inflation takes a bite out of your income, you may be thinking of cutting back on spending. So what can you do in our neighborhood if you don't have a lot of spare cash (or even if you do)?

1. Sit on the 'Pat Clark' bench in the community garden (corner of Monticello and Parkview Terrace) and contemplate life's difficult questions or just make a grocery list.
2. Free your inner artist by taking a ceramics class at Athletic Field. Not free, but very reasonably priced.
3. Stroll around Independence Park and watch the various sporting events.
4. Get a cup of coffee at the Alps and sit outside and enjoy the bustle of our six corners or grab a cold drink and sit on the picnic table outside of JTs Genuine Sandwich Shop.
5. Visit a church and contemplate life's difficult questions (if you didn't do that in the community garden) or offer up prayers of gratitude.
6. Walk in our neighborhood and appreciate the birds, dogs, neighbors and nature that surround us. And while you are at it, browse the Free Little Libraries that several neighbors graciously maintain.
7. Volunteer -- oh, the possibilities - our local schools, the Independence Park Advisory Council (IPAC), Athletic Field Advisory Committee (AFAC), Three Brothers Garden, Irving Park Food Pantry, and of course, The Greater Independence Park Neighborhood Association (GIPNA).
8. Walk up to the Farmers Market Garden Center and enjoy the spring flowers, shrubs and trees awaiting their new owners.
9. Stop in the library and pick out a book, movie or music disc.
10. Invite a neighbor or two over for a porch chat.
11. Meander to the Stola Contemporary Art Gallery and enjoy the latest exhibit.
12. Color Club - Check out its website for events.
13. Take a swim in the Independence Park pool.
14. Grab a racquet and play some tennis or pickleball.
15. And when the weather warms, spread a blanket on the park grounds and take in a movie or a concert at Independence Park and Athletic Field.

Do you have something to add to this list? If so, drop us a line at newsletter@gipna.org.

SAVE THE DATE

GIPNA Annual Meeting Set for April 2

GIPNA will hold its annual meeting at the Independence Park Fieldhouse on Sunday, April 2, at 1:30 p.m. The Nominating Committee will present the slate of officer and Board of Director candidates. GIPNA invites neighborhood residents and all of our elected officials to this meeting.

The meeting will begin with a one-hour social hour, including remarks from attending elected officials, followed by a short meeting and the board election. Please consider attending this event to support the GIPNA board and mingle with our neighbors and friends.

The next GIPNA Board meetings will be Tues., Mar. 7, and Tues., April 4 at 7 p.m. Join us online via Zoom.

Meeting I.D.: 819 2958 6855, Password: GIPNA.

COMMUNITY EVENTS



MARCH

MON., MAR. 6—AFAC General Meeting and Annual Officer Election, 6:30 p.m., Athletic Field Park Fieldhouse.

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

WED., MAR. 8—CAPS Beat 1732 Meeting, 6:45 p.m., Athletic Field Park. Email CAPS.017district@chicagopolice.org to confirm the date and time.

MON., MAR. 20—IPAC Monthly Meeting, 7 p.m., Independence Park Fieldhouse.

SAT., MAR. 25—Easter Egg Hunt, 10-11 a.m., Athletic Field Park.

APRIL

SUN., APRIL 2—GIPNA Annual Meeting, 1:30 to 3:30 p.m., Independence Park Fieldhouse.

TUES., APRIL 4—GIPNA Board Meeting, 7 p.m., online Zoom Meeting ID: 819 2958 6855, Password: GIPNA.

WED., APRIL 12—CAPS Beat 1732 Meeting, 6:45 p.m., Athletic Field Park. Email CAPS.017district@chicagopolice.org to confirm the date and time.

MON., APRIL 17—IPAC Monthly Meeting, 7 p.m., Independence Park Fieldhouse.

SAT., APRIL 29—Annual Alley Cleanup, 9 a.m. to 12:00 p.m. Meet at the corner of Byron and Lawndale.

MARZO

LUNES, 6 DE MAR.—Reunión general de AFAC y elección anual de funcionarios, 6:30 p.m., Athletic Field Park Fieldhouse.

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

MIÉRCOLES, 8 DE MAR.—CAPS Beat 1732 Reunión, 6:45 p.m., Athletic Field Park. Envíe un correo electrónico a CAPS.017district@chicagopolice.org para

confirmar la fecha y la hora.

LUNES, 20 DE MAR.—Reunión mensual de IPAC, 7 p.m., Independence Park Fieldhouse.

SÁBADO, 25 DE MAR.—Búsqueda de huevos de Pascua, 10-11 a.m., Athletic Field Park.

ABRIL

DOMINGO 2 DE ABRIL Reunión anual de GIPNA, de 1:30 p.m. a 3:30 p.m., Independence Park Fieldhouse.

MARTES, 4 DE ABRIL Reunión de la Junta de GIPNA, 7 p.m., ID de reunión de Zoom en línea: 819 2958 6855, Contraseña: GIPNA.

MIÉRCOLES 12 DE ABRIL Reunión CAPS Beat 1732, 6:45 p.m., Athletic Field Park. Envíe un correo electrónico a CAPS.017district@chicagopolice.org para confirmar la fecha y la hora.

LUNES 17 DE ABRIL Reunión mensual de IPAC, 7 p.m., Independence Park Fieldhouse.

SÁBADO 29 DE ABRIL Limpieza anual de callejones, de 9 a.m. a 12:00 p.m. Reúnase en la esquina de Byron y Lawndale.

COLOR CLUB

Be sure to check out additional art programming and events at Color Club! www.colorclub.events/events

EDUCATION

Free Tutoring!

The Independence Branch Library is again offering homework help on Tuesdays and Thursdays, each from 3 p.m. to 6 p.m. For more information, contact the library at (312) 744-0900 or email independence@chipublib.org.

ENVIRONMENT

Want to Feel Good About Drinking Wine?

Sue Ryan

I am sure that many of us have refrained from drinking wine because we didn't know we could recycle the cork. So drink up because we now have an easy way to environmentally dispose of corks. Neighbor Al DeReu is collecting them and will take them to be recycled. So whether you have one cork or 500 (we aren't judging), you can drop them off on the front porch at either 3751 N. Lawndale or 3732 N. Monticello.

COMMUNITY

Interested in Joining a Book Club?

A few neighbors have expressed an interest in starting a book club. If you are interested in joining, send an email to newsletter@gipna.org. If there is enough interest, Anna Faford from the Independence Park Advisory Council will check to see if the meetings can take place in the fieldhouse.

NEIGHBORHOOD

Your Byline Here

The *Independence Park Community Voice* is looking for a few writers to craft stories about our neighborhood. If you are looking for a way to give back to your community and you like to write, then we need you. We are seeking writers across the neighborhood, across generations, and across interests. The commitment is one story every two months and you can choose topics which interest you. We are also searching for a new editor to start August, 2023. So if you have given up your dream of writing for *The New York Times*, but still want to put pen to paper or fingers to keyboard, then drop us a line at newsletter@gipna.org.



Individual \$10
Family \$25
Business \$15
Lifetime \$150

Join as a new member
Renew your membership
Donate to GIPNA

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: Jackie Bravo and Robin Hochstatter

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Special Contributors: Erica Dreisbach, Kelly Ferenc, Kim Laurel and her dog Andy Jack, Liz Mills, Murphy art students, Craig Shutt

Calendar Translation: Jackie Bravo

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For submissions for May/June 2023 Issue:

Editorial Deadline: April 10, 2023

Advertising Deadline: April 10, 2023

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

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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.

GIPNA BOARD OF DIRECTORS

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Sharon Sears, Secretary
Alison Benjamin, Treasurer

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GIPNA BLOCK REPRESENTATIVES

3800 Avers - Candace Wayne
3600 Byron - Jackie Ropski
3700 Byron - Stephanie and Jeremy Smith
3800 Byron - Suzanne Edwards
3900 Byron - Roseann Seablom
3600 Central Park - Sharon Gilbert
3700 Central Park - Bob Brutvan
3800, 3900 N. Central Park- Joe and Annie Bailey
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 and Sang Kuczura
3800 Springfield - Roseann Seablom

FUN (DRAISER)

Add a Little Color to Your Front Lawn!

You've probably noticed the colorful GIPNA lawn signs in the neighborhood. The cost for the 12" x 18" flag is only \$20 and includes the flag stand. Go to <https://gipna.org/historic-independence-park-lawn-flags> or order online using the QR code below. Flags purchased by each Friday will be delivered to your front lawn the following weekend.



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.

Nature in the Neighborhood

David and Lorraine Antieau
Birds in Your Backyard, Part 1

When you are out and about in the neighborhood, you may notice a silver-haired man pacing the streets, binoculars in hand. That would be David Antieau, bird-watcher since 1979, and GIPNA resident since 1993. He reports that neighbors sometimes stop him to tell him about an unusual bird they've spotted in their yard, or to ask a bird-related question, and he welcomes the queries, because he always enjoys talking about birds!

Many of us probably recognize five or six species commonly seen in our yards, at Independence Park or in the surrounding blocks: robins, pigeons, sparrows, cardinals, crows, maybe mourning doves or chickadees. And, of course, we all look up when we hear the honk of Canada geese overhead! However, it might surprise you to know that Dave has a list of more than 100 different species he's seen right here in our neighborhood!

Beyond the year-round species sighted in our area, Dave notes that many less common birds visit the neighborhood during spring and fall migration. Spring migration in Chicago generally begins in late March and continues through mid-May, with the peak time being the first week of May. The earliest weeks of migration bring various blackbird species (Red-winged Blackbird, Common Grackle, Brown-headed Cowbird), along with Brown Creepers, Red-eyed Vireos and Golden-crowned Kinglets. American Robins also return, joining the overwintering

robins that are present but not always visible during the winter months. These early arrivals are followed by other species later in April, including Northern Flickers and House Wrens. Peak time in May is when we see a wide variety of warblers (a category of small birds with interesting songs) and other species making their way north to their summer breeding and feeding areas.

Some of the less common birds that have been spotted in our neighborhood during spring migration include: Scarlet Tanager and Great-crested Flycatcher.

If you are interested in getting more involved in identifying birds, Dave recommends the following comprehensive bird guides: *The Sibley Guide to Birds* by David Allen Sibley and National Geographic's *Field Guide to the Birds of North America*.

And to build your kids' interest in birds and birdwatching: National Geographic Kids *Bird Guide of North America* and Stan Tekiela's *Birding for Beginners Midwest*.

In the May/June edition of *The Voice*, we will talk more about both the common year-round and summer birds in our neighborhood!

NEIGHBORHOOD

Rats AGAIN

Sue Ryan

The last thing I want to do is to write about rats for this newsletter. But alas, I have been asked once again to say a word or two because those menacing rodents continue to be a problem. For the eighth consecutive year, Chicago has taken the top spot as the rat capital of America according to Orkin Pest Control. Based on rat

ENVIRONMENT

Recycling Resources

Pat Clark

Does it really bother you that you want to recycle more things than just those accepted in the Chicago Blue Carts and help keep so much from going into landfills or into incineration? Well, check out the free programs at terracycle.com and be absolutely amazed at how many brand name plastic bottles, wrappers, hair tools, food pouches, tools, aerosol containers, shoes, coffee bags and pods, sandals, toothpaste tubes, zip bags, and so much more can easily be collected at home and recycled. There are 168 separate categories!

How it works: First create a TerraCycle account and join a particular program or programs. Join as many programs as you like. Then reuse any box you have to start collecting a particular item or different boxes for different items. When your box is full, sign-in to your TerraCycle account to download and print a prepaid shipping label. Seal your box, affix the prepaid shipping label, and send it to TerraCycle for them to recycle. TerraCycle is a private U.S.-based recycling business headquartered in Trenton, NJ. It's a win-win for the Earth!

Can #6 plastics, including styrofoam, be recycled? Yes, there is a Streets and San yard at 6441 N. Ravenswood that has a special huge dumpster for #6 plastics. Make sure that your recyclable has the #6 on it.

Continued to page 5



sightings, our neighborhood is pulling its weight contributing to the infestation. It takes a village or, rather, a neighborhood to minimize the rat population.

What can you do?

1. Homeowners and tenants: inspect your garbage bins. Are they overflowing with garbage or is the lid broken? Oh, how rats love an overflowing bin. It's an entrance to a grand buffet. If you are a homeowner and need another bin, contact 311. They are free. If you are a tenant, contact your landlord

or management company to request an additional garbage bin.

2. If you occasionally have more garbage than your bins can handle, don't just cram it in and leave the lid partially open. Ask a neighbor if you can dump excess garbage in a near empty bin.
3. Pick up after your dog! Rats enjoy dog poop. Remember, if rats can't feed, they can't breed.
4. Request rodent baiting in the alley. Call 311 or submit a request online.
5. If you are a tenant and your landlord is not responsive, contact your alderperson who can send a Streets and Sanitation worker to inspect the property and inform the landlord of potential code violations if the property is not in compliance. Please be a good neighbor and do your part, so I don't have to write about this again.

Continued from page 4

I keep a big plastic bag in my basement to store the washed #6 plastics in. When it gets full, I put it in the car and combine the drive with a trip to my dentist who is up that way. It's really surprising how many #6 containers, including meat and fish trays, take-out cartons, and salad boxes accumulate.

North Park Village Recycling Station, 5801 N. Pulaski Rd., accepts cardboard and food packaging, newspapers, white paper, office paper and shredded paper, blue and green glass, clear glass (no windows, drinking glasses, nothing "treated"), and plastics #1, #2, #3, #4, #5, and #7. The recycling station is immediately to the north after you drive in from Pulaski Rd. This is run by the Resource Center, a non-profit environmental education organization, which guarantees that it will recycle over 90% of the materials that it picks up. Their website is theresourcecenterchicago.org. Since shredded paper isn't allowed in the Blue Carts, the North Park Village Recycling Station is a great place to empty out your paper shredder.

All kinds of computers, cords, cables, and lots of other electronics can be dropped off at Best Buy. Check their web site at bestbuy.com for details under Haul Away and Recycling.

You can also check out recyclingcity.org/Chicago for hints on what should and shouldn't be put in the Blue Carts. Actually, the site is pretty amusing.

Bread and produce plastic tags: Please start saving these as there will be a special box at our summer Farmers Market for collection. These tags will help buy wheelchairs for people in need through Danielle Cares for Chairs. I have a little box that I pop the tags in and it takes up so little space in the kitchen.

And thank you!

COMMUNITY

Basket Donations Needed

Craig Shutt

This month the Irving Park Food Pantry is doing its annual spring program to provide clients' children 12 years and younger with baskets prior to Easter on April 9th. We are collecting donations now for the program, which continues all month.

We are looking for donations of dollar-store plastic bucket-style Easter baskets (please don't donate other types to aid consistency), along with wrapped candies, filled (with candy or toys) plastic eggs, small toys, plush animals and other small treats. Contactless donations of items can be made using our Amazon registry.

Locally purchased donations can be taken to the Big Helpers store at 4184 N. Elston Ave. from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m., Monday through Friday or the enclosed front porch at 3833 N. Tripp Ave. at any time.

We also encourage organizations to do their own collections or create assembled baskets. If interested, contact Special Events Coordinator Craig Shutt at craigshutt@gmail.com for details or to arrange a special delivery.

Thank you to Target store manager Eadie Schettler and her crew for sponsoring two of our clients during the holiday season, providing them with gifts of clothes and toys for the family.

Thank you to Jet's Pizza, 3951 N. Kimball Ave., and co-owners Dan O'Donohue and Bryan Gilbert for helping our hard-working Tuesday night volunteers kick off the year in January with free pizza after we closed for the night. The selection



included a range of toppings so everyone could get their favorite or try something new.

Thank you to The Period Collective, a Chicago-based nonprofit organization that provides period products to low-income individuals in the area. TPC has made several donations of cases of feminine-hygiene products, including pads, tampons, liners, wipes, incontinence products, cups, and

other products.

Thank you to Joe and Melissa Basilone, owners of Perkolator Coffee, 6032 W. Irving Park Rd., for donating coffee during the holiday season to keep our volunteers warm and energetic!

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

Irving Park Community Food Pantry

4256 N. Ridgeway Ave.

Chicago, IL 60618

773/283-6296

e-mail: info@irvingparkfoodpantry.org

Web: www.irvingparkfoodpantry.org



Enjoying Our Library? Thank Roberta Bole

Ellen Ryan

Next time you walk into our amazing Independence Branch Library, send a wave of thanks west to Roberta Bole in West Walker. That's because she was extremely instrumental in our neighborhood finally getting a new library in 2019.

Roberta is passionate about libraries. The library was her sanctuary when growing up in Logan Square. Her family was not well off but every week her parents took her to the library. She enthusiastically checked out books, the reading of which allowed her to escape to many different worlds. She was a very good student and the first person in her family to not only graduate from college but to attain a master's degree. She is currently an adjunct psychology professor at City Colleges of Chicago. She attributes these successes to reading scads of library books growing up. This experience informed her strongly held opinion that access to books can be life changing and that every community needs a thriving library. In addition, not every person in this neighborhood has internet and/or computers which are now available at most libraries.

The Independence Branch Library first opened in 1913 in our very own Independence Park Fieldhouse. It moved west of Pulaski and then to what is now the Keller Martial Arts building where Roberta took her kids when they were young. It was very small

so the library moved to a double storefront on Irving Park, east of Central Park Avenue in 1995. However, that space was old and poorly maintained.

Roberta would visit surrounding new libraries such as Edgebrook or Austin-Irving. Though happy for these communities, she wanted the same for our neighborhood which, for more than 100 years, never had a stand-alone new library. So, in about 1997, Roberta started attending the monthly Chicago Library Board (Board) meetings held at branches all over the city to advocate for a new library for us. People in the neighborhood said she was crazy - there would never be the money for a new library. Undeterred, she attended meetings every month for THIRTEEN YEARS! That's 156 meetings! It wasn't just her efforts that helped get a new library. Roberta reached out to the alderpersons and state representatives for the various neighborhoods in our area but it was Roberta who doggedly attended those meetings. At each and every one of the meetings' public comment times, she would ask for a new library. She always came fortified with persuasive arguments - we had the highest participation in the kids' summer reading programs, some of the best circulation

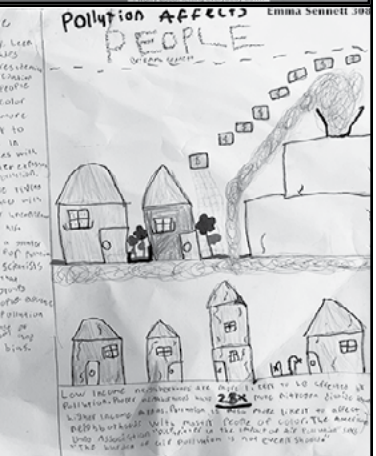
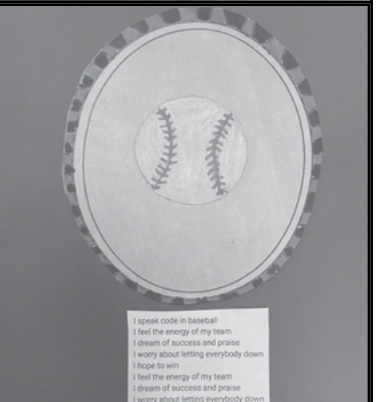
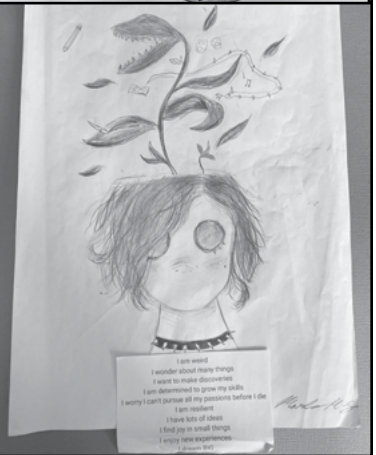
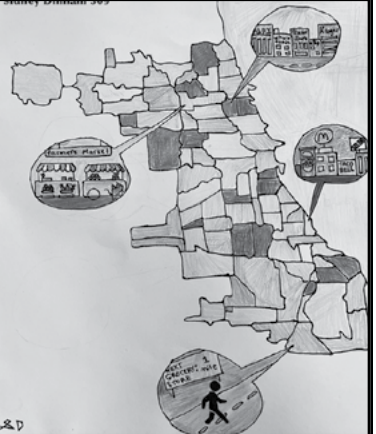
numbers in the entire city, successful story times, art exhibitions, partnerships between the library and the schools and a vibrant community paying lots of high taxes. She was always met with polite responses to the effect of "we are working on other projects at this time". But she persevered.

In 2015, a fire at an adjoining storefront caused extensive smoke and water damage to the Independence Branch Library. The community wanted a new library, not a rebuild of that space. Representative Andrade made and distributed signs and people were fired up but it looked like the Board was going to settle for a rebuild. However, it ultimately rejected the space and, better yet, decided against yet another storefront space. At last, it was our turn to have a brand spanking new library, which opened in January of 2019. And what an amazing space it is! Would the Board have made the same decision without Roberta's persistence? I kind of doubt it. There were two other people who, like Roberta, persistently attended the Board meetings for years, asking for a library for their neighborhoods. Like Roberta, they both got their new libraries. All I know is that from now on, I will always think of and thank Roberta every time I set foot in our most awesome library.



Marge Laurino, Rahm Emanuel, and Roberta Bole

Murphy Student Artwork



Carlson Community Services Updates

Liz Mills

Irving Park Fine Arts Committee Presents A Tribute to Sondheim March 26th, Fermi String Quartet April 30th.

The Irving Park Fine Arts Committee is pleased to present A Tribute to Sondheim on Sunday, March 26th at 2:00 p.m. (rescheduled from November). The concert will honor the late composer and lyricist Stephen Sondheim, who passed away in November 2021. Credited with reinventing the American musical, Sondheim's works include beloved musicals *Into the Woods*, *A Little Night Music*, *Sweeney Todd*, *Company*, and *Sunday in the Park with George*. The concert will feature noted vocalists Stephanie Stockstill, Rachel Klippel, Christopher Richard and Lazaro Estrada, accompanied by pianist Roger Bingaman. Both well-known and lesser-known songs from the Sondheim catalog will be featured. The concert is rescheduled from its original date in November.

On Sunday, April 30th, the Fine Arts Committee will present The Fermi String Quartet. The Quartet is an ensemble of four highly experienced Chicago musicians, formed in 2018 to honor Beethoven's 250th anniversary. In addition to their work together as a quartet, these talented artists have performed internationally and with some of America's most important professional orchestras and chamber ensembles. Since 2021, the FSQ has been in residence at the Southern Illinois



Music Festival, presenting master classes and performances, as well as performing in the Festival Orchestra. The quartet name is in tribute to Dr. Enrico Fermi, who first split the atom at the University of Chicago. Fermi String Quartet members include violinists Linda Veleckis Nussbaum and Nina Saito, violist Jessica Lipon and cellist William Cernota.

Both concerts will be held at 2 p.m. at Irving Park Lutheran Church, 4100 N. Harding Ave. The concerts are free, but donations to support future programming are gladly accepted. The Irving Park Fine Arts Committee, now in its 29th season, was created by Roger Bingaman, Director of Music at Irving Park Lutheran Church. The intent of the series is to bring high quality, professional music to the northwest side of Chicago, free of charge.

Space available at MAP!

Carlson Community Services' after-school program, the Magic After-School Place (MAP) has a few open spots for neighborhood students. In its 16th year of

providing high quality, affordable after-school care for children attending Murphy and Belding Schools, MAP is a great destination for neighborhood kids after school. Our income-based tuition structure makes MAP a valuable partner for working families who need a safe place for their children after school. Equally important, children receive homework help and tutoring, play group games and enjoy social time with friends. Every Wednesday the students participate in a different special activity – cooking, crafts, science experiments and art instruction. Program space is generously donated by Irving Park Lutheran

Church, helping us do this important work in our community. MAP meets from 3:00 to 6:00 p.m. each day CPS is in session at the IPLC gym located at Harding and Belle Plaine. For more information and to enroll your child, contact Rebecca Haneberg at mapdirector@carlsoncommunityservices.org or visit carlsoncommunityservices.org.

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.



Support Chicago Refugees

Kelly Ferenc

Looking for ways to help refugees, but not sure where to start? The Refugee Community Connection (RCC) is an all-volunteer Chicago-based group who recognizes that resettlement agencies are completely overwhelmed, and seeks to ease the transition for refugees.

The RCC strives to meet

refugees' basic needs including furniture, bedding, kitchenware, computers, phones, appliances, clothing/footwear, cleaning supplies, toiletries/diapers, and groceries (as needed).

RCC "Free Stores" collect, sort, and organize items for refugees to shop for free (by appointment). Volunteers are needed to staff stores, deliver donations, give donations, form Welcome Groups and much more. To learn more, visit the RCC Facebook group

<https://www.facebook.com/groups/152284822064409>

Stay and Play Cafe Is More Than a Restaurant

Emilija Novitovic

Are you looking for a restaurant where you can choose from a large selection of board games, enjoy authentic Puerto Rican food, and share quality time with your family and friends? Your hosts Juan and Yesenia Maldonado at Stay and Play have created just the place. Stay and Play has a reasonably priced menu that includes vegan and vegetarian options, kid-friendly choices, and authentic Puerto Rican fare.

Appetizers include Caribbean Chicken Wings, The Jibaritos Trio (plantain sandwiches), and Stuffed Tostones (plantain cups with meat or vegetable filling). There is a sandwich selection that includes the Tripleta (a sandwich with three kinds of meat), the Cubano (ham, roasted pork, swiss cheese), and a Steak and Onion sandwich. The restaurant also



serves cocktails, mocktails, and local craft beer. You can sip a Cuba Libre, Mojito, or Begyle Blond Ale, while snacking on the Boricua Charcuterie Board (two kinds of cheese, pasta de guava, salchichon, and fruit), and strategize your next board game move.

Proprietors Juan and Yesenia Maldonado have transformed the former Independence Tap bar at 3932 W. Irving Park Road into a bright, modern, streamlined space. Floor-to-ceiling windows face Irving Park Road, white-washed brick walls and colorful murals frame highly organized shelving units that house a curated collection of over 500 board games. There are games for all ages ranging from Dominos to the cult classic Dungeons and Dragons. There are the old standbys such as

Monopoly and Scrabble, but also a wide array of newer, and lesser known games.

Unsure which game to play? Want to try something new? The restaurant servers are also game guides. They can make suggestions based on your preferences and explain how to play most of the games. If you like to pre-plan, Juan, who is a former software engineer, has designed an informative and visually engaging catalog of the games on the restaurant's website. On the website you can filter the games by age, range of difficulty, number of players, and duration of time the game takes to play.

Stay and Play is the culmination of the Maldonado family's long-standing interest, and passion for

board games. Juan and Yesenia have been actively involved in the Chicago Northside Board Game Friends Meetup for the past 3 years, a group that has approximately 300 members. They are warm and gracious hosts, excited to share the convivial ambiance of their unique restaurant venture.

Juan Maldonado explained, "Folks come in never having played more than Monopoly or Scrabble and they are wowed by the opportunities. We are a family-oriented venue, and we want to be a neighborhood resource. We are a place for people to gather. We are not focused on fast turnover of tables. We mean it when we say Stay and Play." For more information, head to <https://stayandplay-gamecafe.com>.



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Independence Parka

by erica dreisbach

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For other questions, please email dickie.nichols@GIPNA.ORG