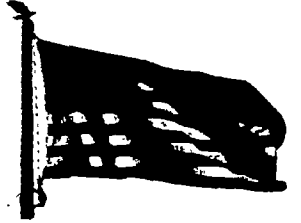


THE BUGLE



SINCE 1957

THURSDAY DECEMBER 8, 2005

VOL. 49 No. 27

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Skating Pros

BY BEN SCHNEIDER

Unprecedented in Iceland

Monday morning, Nov. 30.
The figure skating system
in Park District
Joe LoVerde said,

Story Continues...
see NILES page 7.

'Step'

Back data on Ice Arena

the questions from the
about the amount of
paid to private fig-

Story Continues...
see PARK RIDGE page 2.



George Van Geem, who will assume the post of Niles village manager next month pauses for a photo in the board room at village hall.

New Niles Manager plans to hold village course steady

Van Geem says that average resident will not know the difference

Niles Finance Director George Van Geem will step into a new role next year as the village's fifth manager, something that he believes the average resident

will not even be aware of. "I doubt if the average resident will even know the difference between the Morrissey administration and the Van Geem administration," he said

last week. "I'm stepping into a position that has a good history."

Story Continues...
see VAN GEEM page 10.

No major accidents after first area snowfall

BY TRACY YOSHIDA GRUEN
STAFF WRITER

The pretty, light, flurries that often create a festive atmosphere can also create slippery, dangerous roads.

Although there were no major accidents, local police departments did see several minor accidents on Thursday morning, Dec. 1, after a light snowfall.

In Niles, Commander Daniel Halley said that there were 10 accidents that occurred during rush hour, between 6:30 a.m. to

8:30 a.m.

"All of them were minor," said Halley. He said that the situation may have sounded worse than it was because they all happened within a short amount of time.

In Morton Grove, there were four incidents that took place on Golf Rd. and one on Waukegan Rd. Commander Brian Bolger said that they were all minor and none of them involved injuries.

Bolger said that one car fell into a ditch on Golf Rd. and the Waukegan Rd. incident

involved property damage.

In Park Ridge, there was a total of four minor accidents, with no injuries, according to Deputy Police Chief Tom Swoboda.

The local police officials took time to share their advice for safe driving during the winter snowfalls.

"It would be advisable to reduce speed," said Bolger. "Make sure your headlights are activated at or around dusk time and all windows and mirrors are clean."

Bolger also said to leave a

"longer, safer stopping distance" between cars.

"Most people look at the drivers; I watch the wheels," said Halley. He said that he looks at the hubcaps to see how fast they are spinning to determine whether a car is slowing down or not.

"Acceleration should be slow and methodical," said Halley. "Give yourself extra stopping time, don't travel as fast."

According to the Park Ridge

Story Continues...
see ACCIDENTS page 7.

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December 29, 2005 Issue
Deadline
Thursday
December 22 Noon

January 5, 2006 Issue
Deadline
Wednesday
December 29, 2005 Noon

NEWS

Police Crack Down on Milwaukee Avenue DUI

A dozen law enforcement agencies will team up to cut down impaired driving on Milwaukee Avenue two December weekends leading into the holidays starting Friday, Dec. 9.

The anti-drunk driving campaign will be conducted on 30

miles of Milwaukee Avenue (Route 21) roads all the way from Gurnee to Chicago.

Participating agencies include Buffalo Grove, Glenview, Libertyville, Lincolnshire, Niles, Prospect Heights, Riverwoods, Vernon Hills, Wheeling as well as

the Cook and Lake County Sheriff's Departments.

But officers are not just focused on drunk drivers.

The enforcement campaign was planned in conjunction with the "National Drunk and Drugged Driving" prevention month.

December was declared the '3D' prevention month in 1981.

This year's anti-impaired driving campaign has the slogan "If you catch a buzz, catch a ride — Designate a sober driver before all holiday parties."

Police also say "holiday revelers

who drink can have their choice of transportation — a designated driver or a free ride in a police car."

Statistics show the time between Thanksgiving and New Year's Day is one of the most dangerous seasons for alcohol-related fatal crashes.

PARK RIDGE:

Board members question policies

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

ure skating instructors for lessons at that facility.

All skating instructors at Oakton will now have to fill out a form detailing the who, what and when of each lesson, as well as the amount of their compensation. That information will then be entered into a computer database that will enable the district to track usage and revenue, according to Park Board President Marty Maloney.

At Oakton private ice skating instructors contract with students individually for lessons, charging an average of at least \$52 an hour, although no records were previously kept as to how much any particular instructor earned teach-

ing private lessons or, sometimes, even the identities of those instructors.

During its last two meetings, the Park Board has questioned many of the policies at the rink, including one that requires participants to register at the rink for its programs rather than at the District's headquarters, something that is unique in the Park District.

The Park Board decided to add criminal background checks of all instructors at its first meeting on the rink's policies Thursday, Nov. 17. A draft of the instructors' release for the background check, as well as licensing terms and a code of ethics, were presented last Thursday, Dec. 1. Parliamentary procedure prevented the board from taking action on them.

Park Board Member Dick Barton was supportive of the policy changes.

"This is a tax-supported facility," said Barton, "and I am uneasy about all the revenue that might

be going through it."

Maloney has said that greater transparency at the rink was particularly important because of the rink's history, referring to a 2001 incident when two employees, the former office manager and revenue facilities coordinator were arrested for stealing the proceeds of some of the rink's operations and using it to gamble at riverboats. An independent audit later discovered about \$33,000 missing from the rink from 1999 to 2001. The two agreed to serve two years on parole and paid restitution to the Park District.

"The taxpayers have no idea what's going through the rink," Maloney said. "The District needs to know, I need to know."

These statements brought an emotional outburst from Facilities Coordinator, Jimmie Santee, who perceived that the board was implicitly accusing him of stealing by raising these oversight questions. One of his duties is managing Oakton.

"[Those statements] implied that I'm stealing money from the district," Santee said at the Park Board meeting, going on to say that the district could have all the money he made from private lessons, because the skating program is about the children, not the money.

Maloney responded by saying that he intended no such accusation, but that it was important to know exactly how much money is being paid to private teachers at the rink in order to make informed decisions about the management of the facility.

Maloney wasn't alone in his concern — Commissioners Lauren Streff, Sal Raspanti, Dick Barton and Joyce Carmichael expressed concern similar to Maloney's: the lack of information, something they believed was key to making decisions on policy at the rink.

Barton said that he believed in greater transparency at the rink.

"I support President Marty Maloney in trying to get more

information," he said Monday. "As Park Board commissioners, we cannot help manage what we don't understand or know about. As stewards of the taxpayer's money and our park facilities, the Park Board commissioners must have complete information from our staff on what is transpiring at the ice arena including related activities such as private lessons."

Barton echoed Maloney in saying that board concerns about Oakton did not necessarily imply that they believed anything improper was taking place.

"We are not implying anything improper is going on," he said. "We only feel it is our elected duty to make the entire operation as transparent as possible to the park district's residents."

The new form for private teachers will greatly increase that transparency, Maloney believes.

"It's a good first step," he said. "It's a tool for us to collect information about the use of our facility."

NEWS

Cracking the case

The Bugle's Editor reports from the Niles Citizen's Police Academy

The Niles Police Department sponsors a Citizen's Police Academy each year. This year, our editor, Andrew Schneider, has joined the class and will be providing The Bugle's readers with a look at how the police department operates. Who knows, after reading this you may want to join up for next year's session!

Graduation

It is with a heavy heart that I write the last of my columns on the Niles Police Department's Citizen's Police Academy. We graduated last week in a ceremony that was attended by some of our family members, out-going Niles Village Manager Mary Kay Morrissey and Police Chief Dean Strzelecki.

In the 12-week course, I had the chance to do things that not even reporters generally do: fire

a gun, see a taser in operation, use the police training programs, dust for fingerprints and even drive a squad car (even if was only for about 10 feet). But what I appreciated most was the chance to get to know the officers behind the Niles Police Department.

My thanks to Sgt. Jim Elenz, for a fantastic job coordinating the program, to Ofc. Ron Brandt for all the debates and the frank assessment of both our professions, to Ofc. Robert



The 2005 class of the Niles Citizen's Police Academy

Tornabene for his enthusiasm and drive to make Niles a better place, to all of our instructors for their patience and to my classmates for tolerating my big mouth.

Congratulations to our class: William Axium, Leonard Colen, Mary D'Anna, Corazon Diokno, John Gaydos, Mary Ann Gaydos, Daniel Glowacki, Mayvon Gorla, Michael Gorkas, Ronald Metz and myself.

Some of them may choose to

continue their association with the police department through the CPA Alumni Association. The organization brings in CPA grads to help with major events in the village such as its annual National Night Out Against Crime. Members of the Association and some police officers have said that the alumni are a big help.

I'd like to think that I've made friends with the people in this class (I certainly hope I've made them readers). Take care

in all of your future endeavors. To you readers out there that are thinking about calling for next year's class, don't think about it, just do it.

This especially goes for Mayvon Gorla's friends who didn't join the CPA but have read this column.

If you'd like more information on the Citizen's Police Academy, contact the Niles Police Department at (847) 588-6500.

THE BUGLE

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HEALTH & FITNESS

Fit Nick

Bowl full of jelly? Not this Santa Claus

Sarah Okeson
Copley News Service

As midnight nears this Dec. 24, the world's greatest athlete is prepping to do what the laws of nature and physics deem impossible.

He will squeeze a brace over a creaky knee, roll back his shoulders and suck in the cold Arctic air.

The feat: Circle the globe in an open-air sleigh powered by eight tiny reindeer and deliver presents to billions of children. And do it in just one night. It won't be easy. It never is.

He will get blisters. He always gets blisters from gripping the reins. Dancer, for some reason, pulls to the left.

Even before he clears Poland, every part of his body will hurt: his back, his quadriceps, his size-17 feet.

He will wonder why in the world he approved 8-foot, slate-top pool tables as presents — regardless of how good anyone was.

But then he will flex his biceps and feel them balloon.

Forget about the rotund image of St. Nick that's so popular in movies and books. The real Santa Claus is buff. He has to

be.

All year long he's in training for this one night, doing Pilates, StairMaster, Tacbo. Right now, as he gets ready to leave the North Pole, elves are probably walking on his back to loosen his muscles. He usually does some visualization, too, picturing sweet landings on the steepest of rooftops.

Even so, when his sleigh takes off from the frozen tundra, Santa's palms will be sweaty.

This is bigger than the Super Bowl, the World Series, the Olympics. The hopes of so many children and the young at heart rest on his shoulders. It's time for all the mall Santas to clear out.

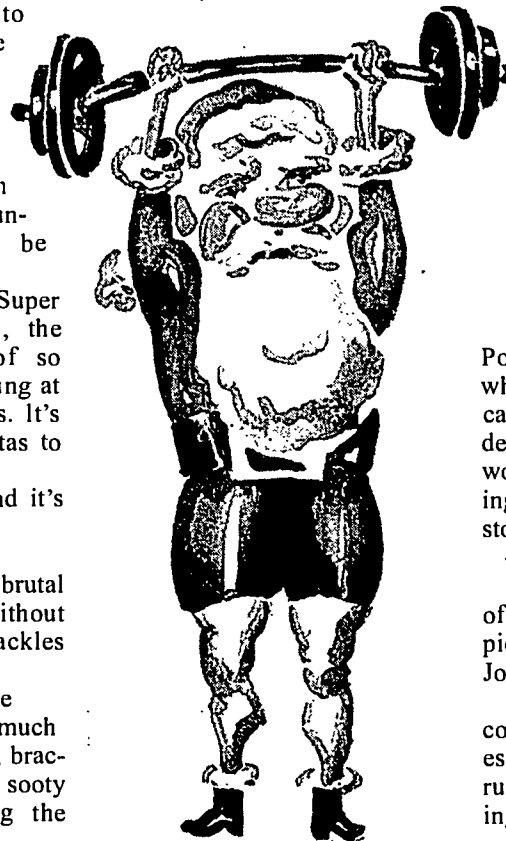
It's Christmas Eve. And it's on.

Football players absorb brutal collisions, but Santa, without any protective gear, tackles chimneys.

He can't just drop to the bottom. He'd make too much noise. So he creeps down, bracing himself against the sooty sides, the brick scraping the

palms of his hands.

Getting out of chimneys isn't easy, either. Now and then, he slips and slides back down a few feet. He can't yell out. To hold back groans, he bites the



sleeve of his red coat.

After he has done this a few hundred thousand times, the rooftops will seem steeper, the chimneys narrower, the sack heavier. The very thought of Miami makes him wince.

The humidity is tough in Miami, and he's always tempted to trade his wooly stocking cap for a headband.

The cookies and milk the children leave give him a nice burst of strength. He needs it. So do his reindeer, who tire quickly of carrots.

Santa also appreciates PowerBars or apples. That's what he eats as he trains. He can't afford to stray from his demanding regimen because the world's population keeps growing, which means adding more stops and more toys to his list.

Sometimes the responsibility of his job makes Santa think of picking up a 9-iron like Michael Jordan does these days.

Even from the sky, the golf course looks mighty inviting, especially when the Bengay runs low and Santa starts watching the clock.

One false move on Christmas Eve and look out. He could fall. And if Santa were out of commission — if he pulled a hamstring or tore a ligament — who would take toys to the world's children?

Barry Bonds couldn't do this, not even with BALCO's help. Only Santa.

Why does he do it? Not for world records, not to have a Nike swoosh planted on his sleigh, not for a big contract.

Sometimes he even asks himself why he does it, especially as Christmas Eve draws to an end and he's limping home to the North Pole, feeling even older than his 400-plus years.

But then he eases into a steamy hot tub — the elves make sure it's good and hot before he lands — and feels his big muscles relax, feels the waves of relief, closes his tired eyes. And then, right there, it hits him. He thinks of the world's children tearing into packages, eyes sparkling as on no other morning. That's it.

That's his reward.
Visit Copley News Service at www.copleynews.com.

Make fitness a routine matter

BY LESLIE WILLIAMS
COPLEY NEWS SERVICE

Whether it's to shed pounds, rehabilitate an injured muscle, relieve

stress or improve general fitness, figuring out an exercise regimen can be the biggest hurdle for new exercisers to overcome.

Chad Smith, the fitness director at Landmark Racquet & Health Club in Peoria, Ill., recommends

beginners schedule a meeting with a personal trainer before attempting to work out on their own. The trainer will work with individuals to coordinate an exercise program that will help them achieve their goal.

"We can take them in the direction they need to go," Smith said.

But before setting up an exercise program, trainers should ask what type of activity a person enjoys, like walking, running, swimming, biking or weight lifting.

Other factors taken into consideration before finalizing an exercise regimen are age, weight, fitness level and how much time the individual plans to commit to working out each week.

GETTING STARTED
Beginners should plan to exercise for 30 minutes, three times a week, with 24 hour's rest in between, Smith said.

"You want to ease into an exercise regimen," Smith said. "Some people start off gung-ho, saying 'I

have to increase my fitness level.' Those people will burn out extremely fast."

Attempting "too much, too soon," as fitness experts say, results in muscle soreness, fatigue and injuries, which can lead to negative feelings about exercise. It also could cause someone to abandon workouts.

Instead, take it slow, Smith said. Then, as the body progresses, gradually increase the typical workout to 45 minutes or add a fourth and fifth day onto the exercise program.

Always take time to stretch before and after a workout, Smith said. Walking briskly for about five minutes prior, then taking time to stretch each muscle group for another five minutes after, can help reduce muscle pain the next day.

The ultimate goal is to work out 60 minutes, three to four times a week, Smith said.

"Come in thinking it's a marathon, not a sprint," Smith

said. "It's about longevity. If you want it to work, it's got to be a lifestyle change."

WHAT TO DO
Beginner's working out to lose weight will want to incorporate more cardiovascular exercise into an exercise program, said Smith.

To drop unwanted pounds, exercise machines including the treadmill and stair machine are good places to start.

As individuals become more comfortable with working out, they can increase the difficulty level on the machines.

Another way to achieve a great cardio workout is to participate in a fitness class, which can range from low-to-high impact levels.

Swimming, PowerFlex and Pilates are good classes for beginners, said Kristi DeJard, a fitness director at Landmark. More advanced classes include spinning, TurboKick and yoga.

Story Continues... see FITNESS next page.

HEALTH & FITNESS

Natural alternatives for knee pain relief

BY JACK WILLIAMS
COPLEY NEWS SERVICE

If anything needs to come with a lifetime guarantee, it would have to be what is arguably the most fragile joint in an aging anatomy — the knee.

You twist it when you slip on a rain-slicked street. You tweak it when you overdo high-impact workouts. You tear one of its tenuous ligaments when you stretch it beyond its limits.

Is it any wonder that there are 300,000 knee replacement surgeries each year? Or that the market for anti-inflammatory drugs is estimated to be around \$100 billion per year?

With up to 70 million sufferers of osteoarthritis, and about 100 million pain relief prescriptions written annually, the search for a remedy is increasingly turning toward safe and natural alternatives.

ROUTINE:

Learn to 'keep with it'

CONTINUED FROM PREVIOUS PAGE

"The biggest thing I get is, 'Are there classes for someone like me? I haven't worked out in 10 years,'" said DeJard. "I tell them you have to go with what's convenient. What is going to fit into their day."

Lifting light weights — ranging from 3- to 8 pounds — and doing many repetitions is another way to burn fat, Smith said. Bicep curls, tricep extensions and chest presses are also good exercises.

If general fitness is an exerciser's goal, weight lifting and aerobic training are equally important, Smith said.

Along with using the cardiovascular machines, beginners will want to learn how to use weight training equipment. Each machine is designed to work different muscle groups, which improves strength, stability and mobility.

Before using the weight machines, however, trainers recommend exercisers get proper training to prevent injury.

KEEPING WITH IT
Discipline and willpower are the biggest challenges exercisers face, Smith said.

"Most people can physically work out," he said. "The hardest part of working out is the psychological aspect."

If an individual works out alone, Smith suggests taking "before and after" pictures as a way to stay motivated. Seeing the transformation in shape and appearance from exercising a few times each week should empower people to keep going.

Posting a workout regimen on the front of the refrigerator is another way to stay on track.

"That way you can see how hard you've been working," Smith said. "You'll eat something healthy and not bad."

Other beginners turn to a friend

California's Keck School of Medicine. "It looks very good."

Known as the Glucosamine/Chondroitin Arthritis Intervention Trial, or GAIT for short, the study involved a comparison between glucosamine/chondroitin and the prescription drug Celebrex.

The group taking glucosamine/chondroitin experienced greater relief of moderate to severe knee pain than the Celebrex group.

It's important to note that daily dosages were 1500 mg of chondroitin hydrochloride and 1,200 mg of glucosamine sulfate. They were compared with 200 mg of Celebrex.

Interestingly, Celebrex was among the NSAIDS (nonsteroidal anti-inflammatory drugs) required earlier this year to add a warning to its label because of potentially fatal side effects, including heart attacks and strokes.

for motivation.

"If they can and are able to have a workout partner, most of the time they are on the same fitness level and can progress the same way," Smith said. "(Having a workout partner) makes you more responsible about working out. It will make you show up and not blow off workouts."

Enrolling in fitness classes or meeting with a personal trainer also helps get exercisers into the gym.

"You feel obligated to show up because you signed up," Smith said.

Oftentimes people are afraid to sign up for a fitness class because they won't know anyone, DeJard said.

"Don't let that stop you because you'll meet people," DeJard said. "Classes can provide motivation and the camaraderie found with your fellow classmates can make the experience enjoyable. It's neat to watch someone who was once intimidated become a regular (exerciser) and lose weight."

A 24-month trial in Europe known as GUIDE reinforced the GAIT findings. In this case, glucosamine sulfate (a different form of glucosamine than that used in the U.S. study) was more effective in relieving osteoarthritis pain than acetaminophen, commonly known as aspirin. Dosages were 1500 mg once a day for glucosamine, 1000 mg three times daily for acetaminophen or a placebo.

"Based on these results, physicians who typically recommend acetaminophen may well find their patients gain more comfort taking glucosamine sulfate," said Dr. Gabriel Herrero-Beaumont, a Spanish physician who presented the findings Nov. 15 to the annual meeting of the American College of Rheumatology in San Diego.

In some arthritis patients, the supplements can be combined with prescription drugs, Vangness said.

"If you have arthritis, I always have you take glucosamine and chondroitin," he said. "It is safe and relatively inexpensive (about \$1 to \$3 per day for recommended doses)."

That said, however, there is the issue of purity. Because all supplements aren't created equal,

it's best to look for evidence on the bottle verifying the product's purity and potency. One indication is a "USP verified" stamp, showing it has been rigorously tested to meet U.S. Pharmacopeia standards.

Absorption is another issue. Glucosamine and chondroitin are most widely available in tablet form, which may not be assimilated as well as in liquid form — at least by some people, seniors especially. Vangness, though, sees no problem with tablets.

"Once it's in the belly, it's absorbed," he said.

Used for many years in Europe, glucosamine and chondroitin became widely familiar to American consumers after publication in 1997 of Dr. Jason Theodosaki's best-selling "The Arthritis Cure."

Many active people, prone to joint inflammation, take the substances in hopes of preserving cartilage. Here, though, the evidence is less convincing.

Until a study the magnitude of GAIT comes along, let's just say that these substances may help in the repair and maintenance of cartilage.

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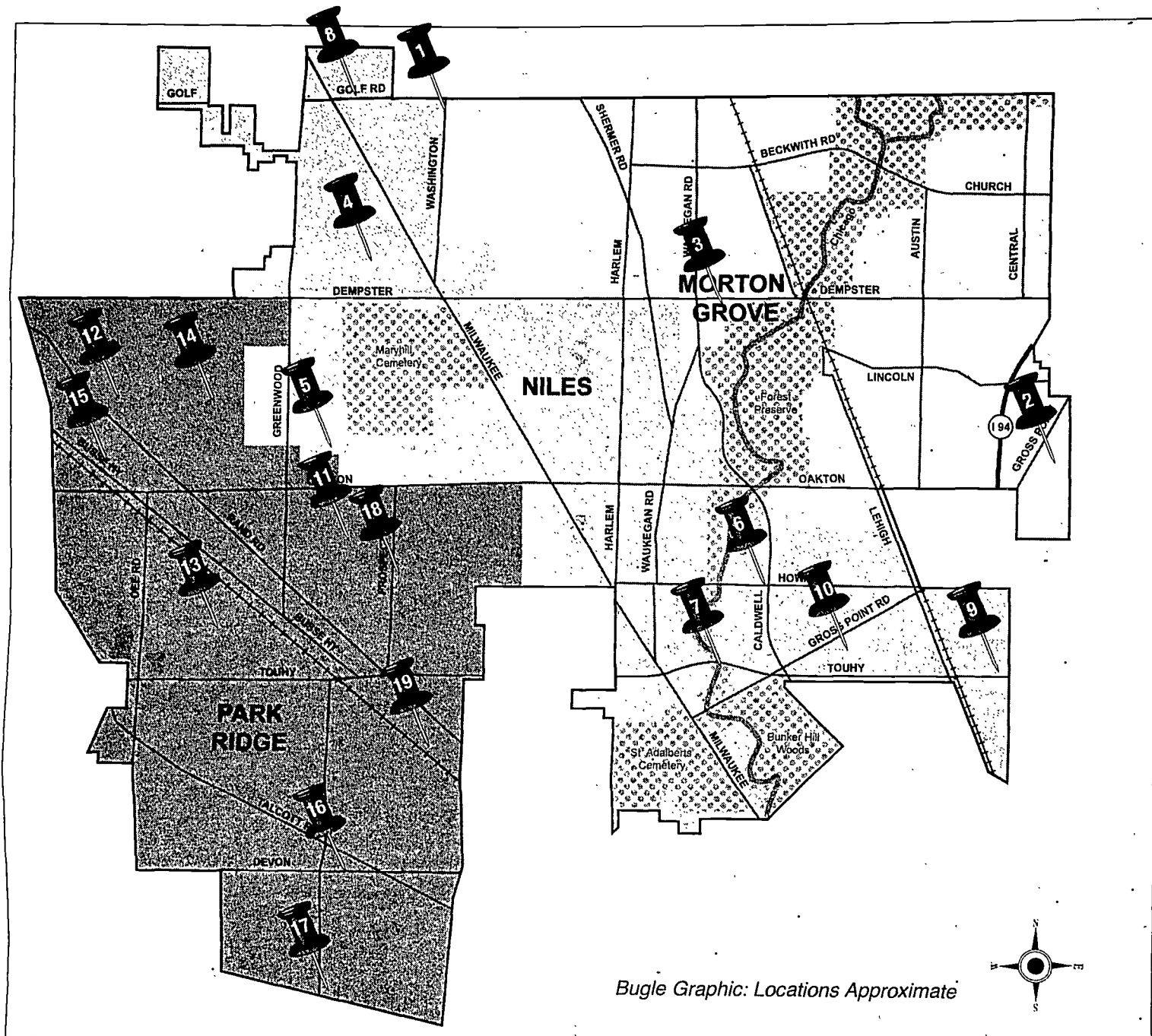
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POLICE BLOTTER



MORTON GROVE

The following was derived from the official reports of the Morton Grove Police Department for the week ending Friday, Dec. 2.

1 Boat stolen (7900 Golf)

A 32-foot power boat parked behind a strip mall was reported stolen Nov. 27. The black and red boat with thunder bolts painted on was parked behind the strip mall and covered along with a trailer. The Glenview man's boat is worth an estimated \$50,000.

2 Tree cut down, dragged down street (5500 Madison)

On Nov. 26, someone cut down a tree on village property with a saw and then dragged the tree northbound on Central to Washington and left the tree on the 8300 block of Central.

3 Locker room theft (Bally Total Fitness)

A man, 61, of Niles reported that his locker had been robbed Nov. 27 between 10:30 a.m. and

12:30 a.m. \$500 in cash, a \$7,000 check payable to him and his wallet contents and credit cards were taken.

NILES

The following was derived from the official reports of the Niles Police Department for the week ending Monday, Dec. 5.

4 School Property Damaged (Northridge Prep)

On the night of Sunday, Nov. 27, an object was hurled through an upper window of the school.

5 Dog locked in bedroom (8100 Susan Court)

A burglary was reported Nov. 28 after residents returned home to find damage to a door, a steel safe thrown on the ground and two doors and a mirror removed from their hinges. A canvas bag filled with small plastic bags and coin rolls was found in the hallway. Nothing appeared to be missing. The dog was also locked in a bedroom with the door closed.

6 Customer Disturbance (6600 Howard)

A customer of a business, 28, of Hickory Hills, threatened the employees of the business Nov. 29.

7 Traffic arrest (6700 W. Touhy)

A Chicago scrap metal collector, 57, was arrested Nov. 30 for driving on a suspended license.

8 Combo Distract Wallet Purse Grab (8200 Golf)

A woman, 57, of Skokie reported that she had her wallet taken from inside her bag while grocery shopping Nov. 29. One woman came up to her and asked her about a product distracting her so that an accomplice could swipe her wallet.

9 Retail theft (Touhy Wal-Mart)

A Chicago woman, 51, was arrested for retail theft and battery Nov. 29. She was allegedly trying to steal household cleaning supplies when she was confronted by security and swung her arms at the agent.

10 Phone harassment (Touhy YMCA)

A resident of the Touhy YMCA, 47, was arrested for harassment Nov. 26. The man allegedly called a woman, 42, eleven times making threatening and intimidating remarks.

PARK RIDGE

The following was derived from the official reports of the Morton Grove Police Department for the week ending Monday, Dec. 5.

11 Home delivered package theft (800 Edgemont)

Four packages were delivered to the victims residence and she took them into the home Monday, Nov. 28 at 10 a.m. Shortly thereafter, a black man between 20 and 25 years of age rang the doorbell and claimed the packages belong to him and were mistakenly delivered to her. The man came inside and the woman went to get a pen. When she returned to the foyer, one of the packages was gone and the man drove off in a green

car. The woman saw the other three boxes had items she did not order. Her credit card had been used to make the purchases.

12 Home burglarized (1400 N. Potter)

A home was entered by the side door and jewelry, a movie camera and a digital camera were taken.

13 Diamond watch taken from home (400 N. Seminary)

A burglar used a tool to pop open a sliding glass door of a home, entered the home and took a \$1,000 diamond watch.

14 Home entered by burglars (1900 Fenton)

A side window was broken to allow entry to a residence between Nov. 23 and Dec. 1. The dresser drawers had been rifled through and the TV and VCR were nearly removed from the home.

15 Door found open (1300 Good)

An unknown offender entered a home through a basement window and a rear sliding door was discovered open. The victim was given a missing property form.

16 Playstation, vacuum cleaner taken (800 Devon)

Someone crawled through an open apartment window Nov. 26 and took a Sony Playstation and a vacuum cleaner.

17 Table broken in fight (1900 S. Cumberland)

Two coworkers became involved in a fight over business Nov. 26. A physical confrontation caused a table to break. One of the men agreed to pay for the table.

18 Armed robber arrest (700 N. Prospect)

Four people were arrested for armed robbery Dec. 1 at 1 a.m. The armed robbery occurred in the 5800 block of Cumberland in Chicago. The four suspects were under 18 years of age. They were taken to the Park Ridge police station and then transferred to Chicago police.

19 Tree falls on cars (500 Summit)

A tree limb fell on two cars parked on the 500 block of Summit Nov. 24.

All information printed in the 'Police Blotters' is obtained from written reports of the respective police departments.

NILES:

Park District starts fees

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

"and we're going to fix it."

The measure is likely the first of its kind in the Chicago area. Most ice rinks charge instructors either a flat fee to teach private lessons or no fee.

"We're willing to live with the ramifications of the decision because it's what we believe is right."

Joe LoVerde
Niles Parks Director

The measure will bring at least an addition \$15,000 to the Park District, LoVerde believes. "We're generating revenue," he said, "but we're also tightening accountability."

That accountability will be achieved with a new sign-in procedure, something that LoVerde believed was previously flawed. "The new system will be computerized," he said. "It will tie the student to the pro."

ACCIDENTS:

Drive more slowly

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

police website, some tips for winter driving are to clean snow off of not just windows, but

LoVerde also said that under the previous administration of Iceland, there was no verification of the insurance and the background checks of the pros were not readily available.

"We are now going to validate insurance," LoVerde said. "Currently, background checks are being done, but [Skating Director] Ingrid Santee has them. We want them."

Santee did not return calls seeking comment. Skating pros have complained that LoVerde and the Park District management intends to eliminate the figure skating program, something that has been categorically denied. The pros did complain, however, that the Wednesday morning meeting did not give enough notice to pros and should not have been held during the day.

At previous Park Board meeting, skating instructors argued that the implementation of any fee would cause a mass-exodus of skating instructors and students to other rinks that do not charge fees. One instructor, Riekan Beaver, even attended last week's Park Ridge Park Board meeting held the day after the fee was implemented. "I'm looking for a new facility for myself and my 25 students," Beaver told the Park Ridge Park Board.

LoVerde said, however, that the Park District is willing to live with its decision.

"We're willing to live with the ramifications of the decision," he said, "because it's what we believe is right."

headlights, tail and brake lights, side mirrors and turn signals, never leave a car idle inside of a garage to warm up because carbon monoxide is odorless and dangerous, and drive like there are eggshells under the brakes and acceleration pedal, taking extra precaution.

Also, provide for extra driving time so you can drive slowly.

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COMMENTARY

Letters to the Editor

We are told Morton Grove is running lean

Dear Editor,

After attending the Morton Grove village board meeting on Monday night, certain things became evident. Firstly, we can probably never expect to see a meaningful reduction of taxes from this administration. This year was one of the best opportunities to lower taxes and possibly eliminate the annoying garbage tax. Instead, there will be no reductions. A token tipping fee removed from the Groot bill will just be shifted to the General Fund where we will still be paying for it.

It seems like improving the infrastructure of the village has higher priority than keeping campaign promises of lowering taxes. The administration thinks our infrastructure is on the point of collapse, as is being told to them by various village department heads. For example, the sewer pipes are very old and need expensive replacement. We actually have a separate budget for that, which is paid for out of our water bill. The other tax raising defense is to provide for natural disasters, like they happen in our village on a regular basis. This administration is bent on hanging on to every dollar they can get and spend, spend, spend. It seems like painting the police department is also a high priority item which also takes precedence over promises to reduce our taxes. Hiring expensive lawyers to negotiate our police and fire contracts is another example of overspending. The list goes on and on. The second thing obvious from this meeting is that we do not have an opposition party in Morton Grove, just

one crusading trustee, Roy Kogstad who is alone in his battle to keep spending and taxes down. The two Action party candidates are speaking with one voice with the remaining Caucus party. As much as I disagree with the Action trustees and am glad they are in the minority, I was expecting some kind of active debates on issues, and not just bashing Roy Kogstad. Thirdly, the administration seemed to have an answer to every suggestion for lowering taxes and appeared to not budge one inch. It seems like the hearing on the budget was a waste of time. Lastly, the residents who complain were accused unjustifiably of only criticizing and not coming up with solutions. Isn't that what we pay big salaries for our village administrator and lawyer to do? We are being told that our village is running lean on personnel and equipment, but I for one do not believe so.

Sherwin Dubren, Morton Grove

MG Trustees looking out for village

Dear Editor,

The main theme at a rather wild Morton Grove village board meeting Nov. 28 seemed to be the proposed 20% increase in the village portion of the taxes. Evidently, some people believe, or are led to believe, that the 20% increase is on the total tax bill. The village portion of our \$4,683 tax bill is \$668, so a 20% increase would bring it to \$802, an extra \$134. This means that if there were no other tax increases our total tax would be \$4,817 a percentage increase of 2.8% By comparison, \$2,888 or 60% goes to School Districts 219 and 67 (where we live).

The Caucus Party has been in office about eight months and inherited a five year garbage contract with Groot plus underfunded

pension plans, a worn out infrastructure and a large debt service (interest on loans). The previous administration had a different policy from that of the Caucus Party. The present board is trying to present a balanced budget that will cover present costs and put money aside for future equipment purchases and emergencies. By paying cash in the future, the interest charges can be eliminated.

It struck me that some of the speakers were rather selfish. They insisted we should not raise taxes but repair the infrastructure and keep up all services. Evidently they don't care if we have to take out loans and pass all costs on to their children and grandchildren. This is not the attitude for which Americans have been famous.

Harold G. Cohon, Morton Grove

Open letter of apology

Dear Editor,

This is an open letter of apology to all of my friends in Morton Grove.

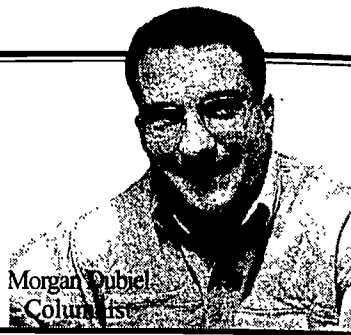
During the last village election I worked very hard for all of the candidates of the Morton Grove Caucus Party and especially for Rick Krier. I knocked on doors, made telephone calls and assured everyone I knew from Parkview Elementary School to St. John Brebeuf Parish that these guys were the real deal. I kept telling people that this was a chance to really change the way things were done in town and to have our voices heard.

My husband told me that they were all politicians and that all politicians lied. I didn't believe him and I continued to work up through election day and was overjoyed when we won.

Circumstances caused my fami-

Letters Continue... see LETTERS page 10.

Another Perspective



Morgan Dubiel
Columnist

Celebrating Christmas

U A silly debate rages currently over the celebration of Christmas. There are those who seem to think that the Christmas message is, of itself, an offense. What is that message?

On my calendar December shows three holidays, two religious and one political. Christmas celebrated by Christians, Hanukkah celebrated by Jews, and the Marxist celebration of Kwanzaa. Kwanzaa, like its political basis, is largely a failure and ignored. My Guide to Jewish Holy Days by Hayyim Schauss indicates that, "Chanukkah (Hanukkah) is observed for eight days, beginning with the 25th day of the month of Kislev. It is not one of the great Jewish festivals, and bears no aura of sanctity. No special ceremonies have been built around it. There is no cessation of work, except briefly...during the short time each evening when the Chanukkah lights burn."

That leaves Christmas as the only major religious holiday celebrated during the month of December. "Happy Holiday" is a euphemism for "Merry Christmas". Christmas and Easter are the two high holy days of Christendom. Easter celebrates the defeat of sin and resurrection of Jesus from the dead, the promise and hope that this day brings to mankind make Christmas, the celebration of the birth of Jesus Christ, a special day. It is a time of hope and joy.

Given the current desire for "tolerance" among our elite, why can't we tolerate the celebration of Christmas? Given the message of hope, love and joy inherent in the

Christmas celebration, why would someone take offense or view it as wicked? What then is the proper way to celebrate Christmas?

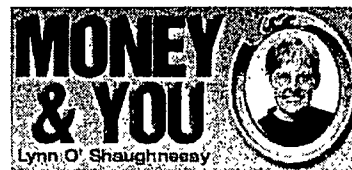
In 350 AD another Bishop of Rome, Julius I, chose December 25th as the observance of Christmas. Although modern scholars recognize Springtime as the proper birth time of Christ, which likely occurred in early April, the date we celebrate Christmas on, Dec. 25th, was not chosen randomly. During this time two great pagan celebrations occurred: The Roman Feast of Saturnalia and the Persian Mithraism then both main rivals to Christianity. The word "saturnalia" came to mean "orgy" to early Christians. To fight this debauchery and help evangelize these communities December 25th was chosen, or so it is surmised.

Many Christmas rites like Christmas trees, lights, exchanging of gifts, mistletoe, etc. are not Christian in origin, but pagan. They are fun and delightful anyway and we now associate them so closely with Christmastime that their real origins have been obscured. There is, though, one specific symbol of Christmas that is truly and uniquely Christian; the crèche, a representation of the Infant Jesus in the manger, usually surrounded by fig-

Column Continues... see DUBIEL page 10.

BUSINESS

Frugality with pizzazz if you want



Who would ever think of spreading caviar on a hot dog? Or dropping a Rolls-Royce engine into a Toyota Corolla?

Of course, this isn't remotely practical, but these sorts of upgrades - if you can call them that - are making inroads into the world of index investing, the plainest Jane of investment strategies.

Today, for instance, you can invest in a curious index that tracks 30 American food and beverage companies. You can now binge on saturated fat and invest in it, too. You can also index your way through the Rand McNally Atlas by dabbling in the stock markets of countries you'd never want to visit.

One reason why investors can wander easily down some of Wall Street's more curious back alleys is because of the emergence and popularity of exchange-traded funds. These funds can be invaluable investment tools, but if you hang out with the wrong ones or use them in inappropriate situations, your portfolio could get hijacked.

An exchange-traded fund looks and behaves very much like an index mutual fund. You could say that one's a Labrador retriever, and the other's a golden retriever. Like an index fund, an ETF holds stocks or bonds in its portfolio that replicate its underlying benchmark. An investor in the Vanguard 500 Index Fund, the nation's most popular index fund, owns shares in the 500 blue chips in the Standard & Poor's 500 Index. You'd own the identical stocks if you invested in two popular exchange-traded funds - iShares S&P 500 Index or the Standard & Poor's Depository Receipts Trust, which most people call by its abbreviation - SPDR (pronounced spider). The point of ETFs and index mutual funds is, of course, to capture the market average of whatever you want to invest in, whether that's stocks or bonds. If you index by either method, you should fare better than the vast majority of investors.

One of the most endearing traits of the exchange-traded fund is its frugality. Investing in ETFs is the equivalent of pushing a shopping cart down the aisles of a 99-cent store. Exchange-traded funds are priced far more reasonably than the average actively managed mutual fund. The annual expense ratios for ETFs dip as low as .07

percent. In contrast, the average actively managed mutual fund sports an expense ratio of roughly 1.4 percent. The pricing difference might seem like a big so-what, but it can mean the difference between retiring with seven figures versus six.

Here's one example of why ETF pricing is so desirable: Suppose you've got \$100,000 sink into the cheapest ETF and it generates 8 percent annual returns. If you sit on this investment for 20 years, it would grow to \$459,613. In contrast, the average-priced mutual fund, which is handicapped by its higher costs, would only reach \$351,571. The best index funds, by the way, are also priced cheaply, but you must beware of expensive imitators that have infiltrated the marketplace in recent years.

Investors also adore the exchange-traded funds for their built-in tax advantages. Because of the way they are structured, most ETFs are incredibly tax efficient. For example, ETFs very rarely make capital gains distributions, which are as welcome as termites and can seem just as hard to eradicate.

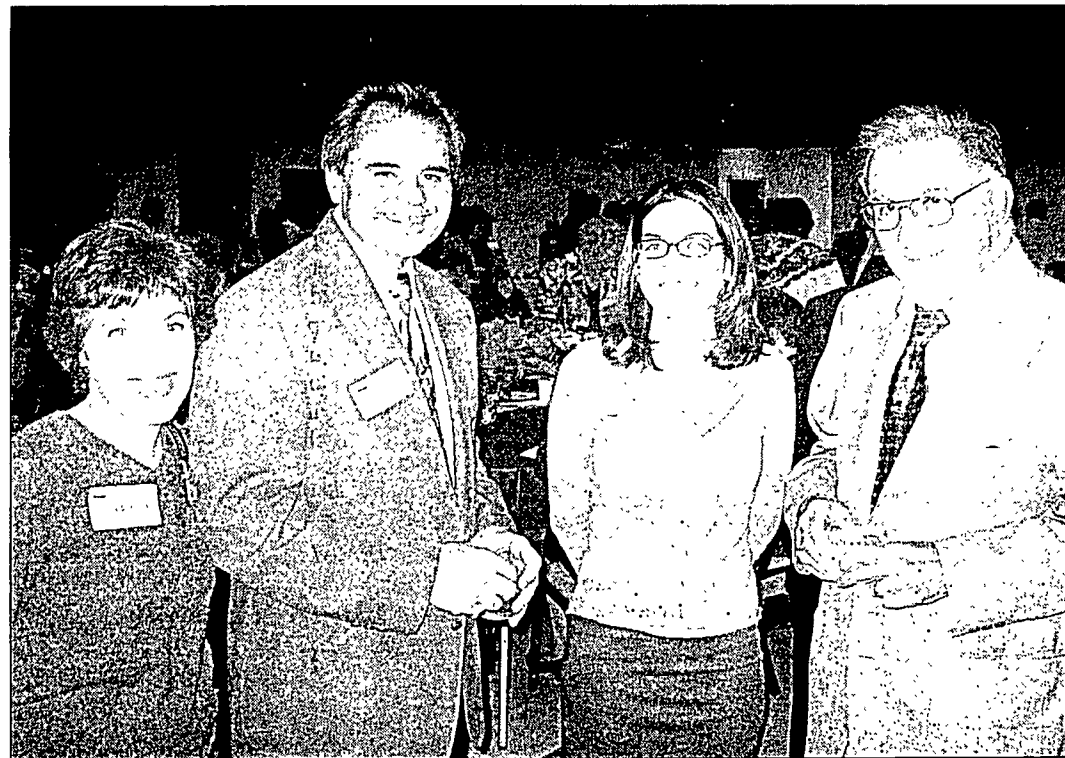
When a mutual fund distributes capital gains, hapless investors must pay taxes on this money, even though they haven't cashed in their shares. And these "gains" are strictly ephemeral. Sure, you technically get to pocket gains, but the value of your holdings are reduced by the same amount so it's a wash, except you pay taxes on this wash.

ETFs are clearly more tax efficient than your typical mutual fund, but how do they stack up with index funds? In the tax arena, conventional wisdom suggests ETFs can easily out-arm wrestle index funds. Jim Wiandt, the editor of the Journal of Indexing, however, recently explored whether he could poke holes in this conventional wisdom. He compared the tax efficiency of the SPDR, the granddaddy of all ETFs, with the average S&P 500 index mutual fund. Specially, he looked at the SPDR's capital gains distributions. If you haven't "maxed out" on your 401(k), see if your employer will allow you to make additional contributions before year-end. For 2005, you can contribute up to \$14,000 (or \$18,000 if you're over 50 years old). You typically fund your 401(k) with pre-tax dollars, so the more you contribute, the lower your taxable income.

But frankly, just looking at the tax profile of the typical index fund isn't completely fair because so much indexing cash is tied up in

Story Continues... see MONEY next page.

Niles Chamber celebrates holidays



The Niles Chamber held its annual holiday party at St. John Brebeuf's new Ministry Center last Thursday. Pictured above from left to right are Lori Strzelecki, Niles Police Chief and former Chamber President Dean Strzelecki, Niles Chamber Director Katie DiMaria and Niles Mayor Nick Blase.

BY JEFFREY CARDELLA
Special to The Bugle

PUBLIC SERVICE ADVERTISEMENT



Edward Jones

Time to Think about Year-end Tax Tips

Now that it's December, you're probably busy with family gatherings and holiday celebrations. Still, try to find some time to think about a non-holiday topic: taxes. You may have until April 17, 2006, to file your taxes. But you only have until the end of the year to make some moves that could benefit your tax situation — so you'll need to take action soon.

Here are a few suggestions to consider:

- **Maximize your retirement account contributions.** If you haven't "maxed out" on your 401(k), see if your employer will allow you to make additional contributions before year-end. For 2005, you can contribute up to \$14,000 (or \$18,000 if you're over 50 years old). You typically fund your 401(k) with pre-tax dollars, so the more you contribute, the lower your taxable income.

- **Donate appreciated securities to charities.** If you have stocks that have appreciated greatly over the years, you might want to donate some shares to charitable organizations. Suppose, for instance, that you bought shares of XYZ stock for \$250, and that they are now worth \$1,000. If you were to give these shares to a charitable group, and you are in the 28% tax bracket, you would get a \$280 tax deduction, based on the shares' current market value. Furthermore, because you are not selling the shares, you will avoid having to pay any capital gains taxes on your \$750 profit.

- **Sell your "losers."** Did any of your stocks lose value in 2005? If so, you may want to sell some of them to take the tax losses. If these losses exceeded your capital gains from selling appreciated stocks,

you can deduct up to \$3,000 (or \$1,500 for married couples filing separately) against your other income, reducing the amount on which you must pay taxes. And if you lost more than \$3,000, you can carry over the excess into subsequent years.

- **Consider buying "big-ticket" items now.** If you are planning to buy a car, boat or other expensive item, you may want to do so before the end of the year. If the total sales tax is more than your state or local income taxes, you can choose to deduct any of these taxes on your 2005 federal tax return — but this is the last year in which this benefit will be offered.

- **Defer income when possible.** If you're self-employed, defer billing until late December. If you work for a company, and you're scheduled to get a year-end bonus, see if you can put off receiving it until January.

- **Delay exercising non-qualified stock options.** You will be taxed on any non-qualified stock options you exercise, so you may want to delay exercising them until next year. (Before you make this decision, though, you'll want to evaluate the price and prospects of the stock on which you hold an option. If you hold an option too long, you will eventually be forced to exercise it: if the stock price is down at that point, you might not make much of a profit — and, in a worst-case scenario, your option could become worthless.)

If you are unsure about which of these suggestions may be appropriate for your individual situation, see your tax adviser. But don't wait too long — 2006 will be here before you know it.

JEFFREY Cardella can be reached at Edward Jones, 8141 N. Milwaukee, Niles, IL 847-470-8953

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BUSINESS

LETTERS:

An open letter from resident

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 8

ly to have to move from Morton Grove to Arlington Heights, but I still keep in touch with my many friends there. I am embarrassed and saddened by Rick Krier, Georgianne Brunner and Rita Minx breaking all of the campaign promises they made. I feel foolish

having believed them when they said they would remove the garbage tax, lower the sales tax and enforce the laws on the books. I am angry that Ms. Brunner accepted the support and help of our neighborhood and then called us bigots in private. Nothing has changed in Village government except now there are different people ignoring the residents.

My husband was right. They are politicians and politicians lie. To my friends who voted the way I asked you to, I'm sorry. To those Caucus party officials who lied to us, shame on you.

DUBIEL:

Celebrating Christmas

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 8

ures of Mary, Joseph, shepherds, animals, and the Wise Men.

The fight over the Capitol Christmas tree is silly because that tree is already just a holiday tree. The symbol for Hanukkah is a menorah, which reflects the historical miracle of that holiday. It seems to me that the proper Christian symbol for Christmas is a crèche. It reflects the true reason for the season

and the focus of Christian life, which culminates at Easter. It is the only Christmas symbol worth fighting for.

Of course, celebrating Christmas with good cheer and kindness and all the trappings of modernity do not destroy the true Christmas message summed up by Ralph Waldo Emerson: "Rings and jewels are not gifts, but apologies for gifts. The only [true] gift is a portion of thyself."

Maybe the best symbols of Christmas are we ourselves, and how we treat not only those we love, but everyone. Merry Christmas & may God bless you and yours.

Sales at Trafalgar Square in Morton Grove Surpass 50 Percent

For many homebuyers, in order to afford a new-construction home in Chicago's close-in northern suburbs they find themselves having to forgo a number of upgrades. But at Trafalgar Square, a community of 113 maintenance-free townhomes in Morton Grove by Concord Homes, the price of a home includes a desirable North Shore location plus stylish standard features. In fact, this

winning combination is one of the main reasons sales at the community have surpassed the 50 percent mark.

Located on Lincoln Avenue, just west of Austin, Trafalgar Square offers two three-level floor plans. Base-priced from \$398,490 to \$399,490, the 1,646-square-foot townhomes have two to three bedrooms, 2 baths, finished lower levels, and attached, rear-loading two-car garages.

"Ever since we started sales at Trafalgar Square, the townhomes have stood out as a great value compared to new construction in neighboring North Shore suburbs," said Leigh Nevers, vice president of marketing for Concord Homes.

Buyers can choose between two plans at Trafalgar Square — the three-bedroom Camden base-priced from \$398,490 and the two-bedroom Atwood starting at \$399,490.

VAN GEEM:

Niles prepared to meet challenges

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

Niles Mayor Nick Blase said last week that Van Geem was the best person to fill the position, citing his financial background with the village since 1992 and saying that Niles will continue to face revenue and expense challenges in the future. Van Geem will temporarily serve as both village manager and finance director.

In spite of the challenges, Van Geem believes that Niles is well-positioned.

"Niles is in a good position to fend off anything the economy sends our way," he said.

Of particular areas of the village in need of attention, Van Geem said he would prioritize.

"I'm going to run the village like I run my household," he said. "We'll prioritize and make

sure that the residents receive value for the tax dollars."

In fact, he said, if one phrase could define his tenure as village manager, he would have it be "bang for the buck."

"If I'm village manager for 20 years, that won't change," he said. "If we see a project that will return the taxpayers a good bang for their buck, we'll find a way to do it."

Among priorities for his administration, Van Geem cited the village's system of water mains, some of which are aging.

"The water main system in some areas of town is close to 100 years old," he said. "That's a system that people rely on and it has to be there."

He also praised the village's vital services, saying that the quality would not change.

"Every town should have great public works, fire and police," he said. "Niles has all three."

The recently completed Milwaukee Corridor Plan, which outlines redevelopment opportunities and a variety of traffic and

pedestrian improvements is also important, Van Geem believes, but something that will be achieved, if at all, in small segments as parcels and funding becomes available. The plan, which was mostly funded by a grant from the Regional Transportation Authority (RTA), will be presented to the village board at the end of January.

"It's very important," Van Geem said of the plan. "I'm going to work with [Assistant Village Manager Steve Vinezano] on it. We're going to look for grant money for the improvements."

Some of those could include wider, safer sidewalks on Milwaukee and strategically-located bus-turnouts to improve traffic flow during peak hours.

But Van Geem believes the village has a great team that is prepared to meet the challenges of the future.

"We have a good team in place," he said. "In fact, I'd say I'm inheriting the best group of people that any village manager ever has."

MONEY:

ETFs can be a great option

CONTINUED FROM PREVIOUS PAGE

just one fund — the Vanguard 500 Index Fund. Consequently, Wiandt also compared the cap gains distributions of the average S&P 500 index funds with the Vanguard fund. The average funds lost in another lopsided battle. What was more intriguing is what happened when the Vanguard fund and the SPDR faced off. As it turned out, the mutual fund distributed a wee bit more in capital gains, but despite this handicap, it eked out a slightly higher return than the SPDR from 1995 to 2004. The Vanguard 500 Index Fund enjoyed annual returns of 13.92 percent versus 13.83 percent. You can see Wiandt's study, "Putting the ETF

Tax Efficiency Debate to Rest," by visiting IndexUniverse at www.indexuniverse.com and clicking on the features section.

If you're an investor, the obsession with tax efficiency is going to be irrelevant if you've got all your money tied up in tax-protected retirement accounts. It's only going to matter if you've got taxable cash. Consequently, ETFs are more attractive if you're trying to shield money from Uncle Sam.

ETFs won't be a realistic option for investors who dollar-cost average. The reason is because exchange-traded funds trade like stocks. So if you want to purchase a stake, in say, iShares S&P SmallCap 600 Index, you'd have to go through a brokerage firm and pay a commission for every trade. The brokerage commissions would gnaw at your returns. For anyone feeding money into their accounts regularly, an index mutual fund is a better choice because you can invest directly with the fund family without incurring any trading

costs.

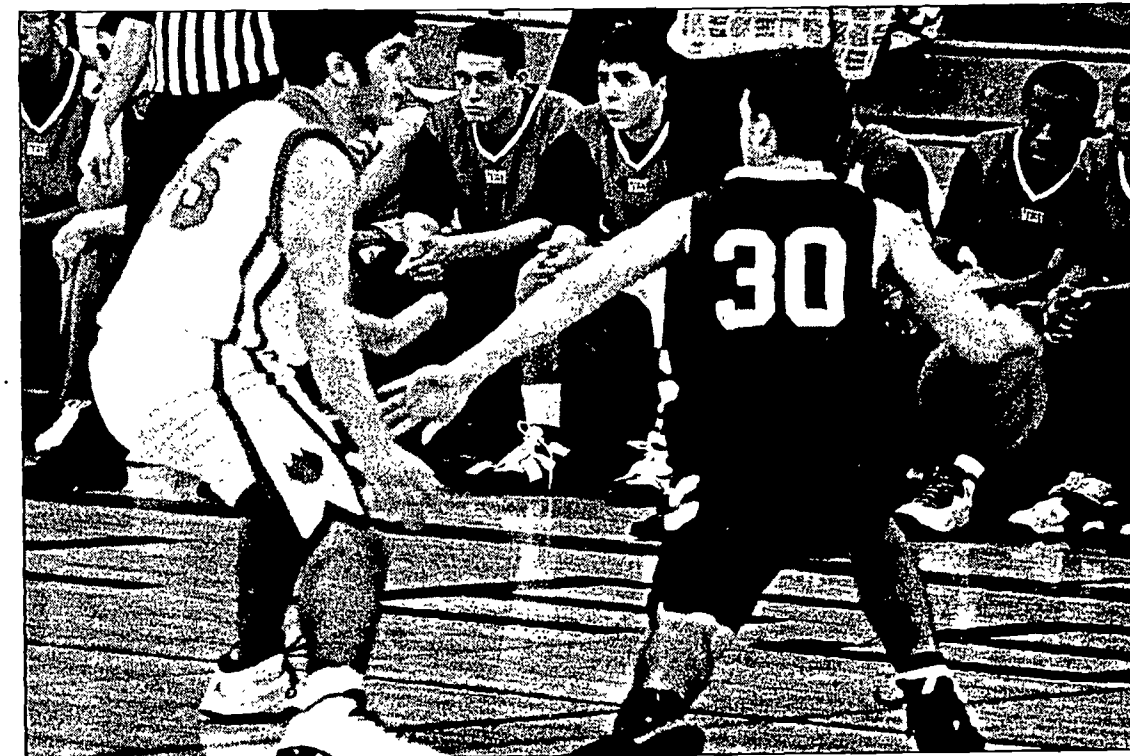
If you're looking to invest a large chunk of change, ETFs, as well as the cheapest index funds, can be a great alternative for gaining exposure to the major asset classes, such as large and small domestic stocks, foreign stocks and even bonds. What you want to avoid are all the kooky exchange-traded funds that hand investors an opportunity to chase their dumb hunches. I'd lump into this category pretty much all sector ETFs that let you invest in small slices of the market, such as industrial materials and energy, as well as ETFs devoted to individual foreign countries. Frankly, there's no compelling reason to park cash in an ETF linked to Malaysian stocks or junk food.

Lynn O'Shaughnessy is the author of "The Retirement Bible" and "The Investing Bible." She can be reached at LynnOShaughnessy@cox.net. Visit Copley News Service at www.copleynews.com.

SPORTS

Wolves prevail over Vikings

Niles West defeats Niles North 58-51



#55 Lenny Khizickia (left) guards #30 Andrew Martinez during the District 219 crossover match-up.

BY ALI BHANPURI
SPORTS CONTRIBUTOR

The stands were packed, and the fans were thunderous during last Saturday's District 219 rivalry game between the Niles West Wolves (3-2) and Niles North Vikings (1-5). Despite strong efforts from both teams, the Wolves prevailed when the final buzzer sounded, with a 58-51 victory.

With a rivalry comes jeers and taunts from the crowds, but no player had to deal with more badgering than senior guard Michael Majerczyk. After shooting an air ball in the first half, the Viking crowd viewed him as fresh meat for the picking. However, Majerczyk ended with the last laugh as he drained a three-pointer with 4:08 remaining in the game to put the Wolves up by six.

"It felt really good to make that shot, because the crowd was on my back the entire game," said Majerczyk who finished with 16 points. "It was even better since it was against our rivals. If we lost we'd hear about it the entire year."

The Wolves followed Majerczyk's clutch shooting with impressive performances at the free throw line. The Vikings were in the bonus with over three minutes remaining, allowing the Wolves to score 11 points on 14 attempts during this span.

The game was tied 40-40 with six and a half minutes left in the fourth quarter after the Vikings notched five straight points. However, the Wolves clasped down defensively, dominating the boards and refusing to let the Vikings score cheap baskets. After

a six-point run, it was smooth sailing for the Wolves.

The Wolves were successful in their attempts to control the 6'5" standout center, Nick Williams, to only ten points.

"We wanted to shut down Williams as much as we could," said Wolves head coach Josh Grant. "Lance [Williams] and Steve [Parmer] did a good job defending him the entire game."

The Wolves were led by senior forward Victor Colon who scored a game-high 23 points from all over the court. When needed Colon stepped behind the arch and nailed critical three's to keep the Wolves ahead, but most of his action came in the paint where his strength became a key factor.

"We wanted to establish Victor down low and ride his shoulders as far as we could," Grant said. "He really matured tonight, getting after it early in the game."

Senior Frank Theodorakis started and played most of the game for the Wolves after seeing limited action last year. Although not as strong as Colon, the 6'6" center scored eight points and hustled for every loose ball. His forceful play was contagious, leading his teammates to become more aggressive defensively and on the offensive boards.

Following suit, junior guard Lenny Khizickia, who also played free safety for the Wolves this past season, brought his football skills onto the court with a commanding defensive effort.

Both teams play away from home tomorrow evening, as the Wolves take on the Evanston Wildkats and the Vikings look to earn another victory against Maine West.

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SPORTS

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Boys Basketball

Maine East @ Deerfield	6 p.m.
Niles West @ Evanston	7:30 p.m.
Glenbrook South @ Maine South	7:30 p.m.
Notre Dame @ St. Patrick	7:30 p.m.

Boys Swimming

Maine East @ Niles West	5 p.m.
Maine South @ Maine West	5 p.m.

Girls Gymnastics

Maine East @ Wheeling	6:30 p.m.
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Girls Basketball

Maine East @ Deerfield	7:30 p.m.
Evanston @ Niles West	7 p.m.
Maine South @ Glenbrook South	7:30 p.m.

Wrestling

Highland Park @ Maine East	7:30 p.m.
Evanston @ Niles West	6 p.m.
Maine South @ Waukegan	6 p.m.
St. Viator, Marion Catholic @ Notre Dame	5:15 p.m.

Saturday, December 10, 2005

Boys Swimming

Niles West @ St. Patrick Relays	12 p.m.
Maine East @ Zion Benton	12 p.m.
Maine South @ Shamrock Relays	1 p.m.

Boys Bowling

Notre Dame @ Freeport	11:30 a.m.
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Girls Gymnastics

Niles West @ Spartan Classic	12 p.m.
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Wrestling

Mundelein and Reavis @ Niles West	10 a.m.
Notre Dame @ Hoffman Estates	9 a.m.

Niles North, Riverside, Leyden, Lake View and Ridgewood @ Maine East	9 a.m.
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Maine East Demons fall to Evanston

BY ALI BHANPURI
SPORTS CONTRIBUTOR

The Maine East Demons were 1-4 going into their first Central Suburban League North contest this past Tuesday at home against Niles North. Before breaking into CSL North play, the Demons fell last Friday 73-61 in a conference crossover match-up at Evanston.

The male Wildkits (2-3) implemented a full court press from the opening tip-off, rattling the Demons' composure. Unable to pass the ball effectively, the Demons committed several turnovers throughout the game, crippling any attempts to make scoring runs.

"We were soft with our passes and impatient," said Demons head coach Roy Wasielewski of the team's struggle with the press.

The Demons are full of height, with three players at least 6'5" tall.

Each of them saw playing time after the youngest of the three, junior Robert Wojciechowski, picked up two fouls in the first 42 seconds.

"Robert has a tendency to pick up cheap fouls," Wasielewski said. "With Jimmy [Andriotis] and Robert in foul trouble we were forced to disrupt our rotation."

Even with the three trees down in the paint, Wasielewski feels that they are still a bit soft inside.

"They are all talented players, but they have yet to establish an inside presence," he said. "We need to be tougher and more aggressive defensively and with rebounding."

Picking up the slack for the Demons under the basket was senior forward Jerry Lewis who scored 13 and hustled for rebounds at both ends of the court.

After forging an early comeback from a 10-0 deficit, the Demons scored seven unanswered points to help pull ahead 16-14 at the end of the first quarter. However, the

Wildkits were relentless, and outscored the Demons 21 to 14 in the second, taking a commanding 37-28 lead.

The game was temporarily delayed with 1:44 remaining in the third quarter when a fight broke out in the Evanston crowd. Although the removal of the fans may have somewhat quieted the crowd, it did not quiet the Wildkits' offense, which took a 14-point lead and never looked back.

Leading the way for the Wildkits was junior F. Eric Hilbringer who scored 21 points, even though his minutes were limited due to foul trouble.

Despite the poor passing, the Demons found a true scorer in junior guard Dan Narso, who finished the game with 21 points. Narso was able to drive to the basket and separate from defenders to help put points on the scoreboard.

The boys will travel to Deerfield tomorrow for their second CSL North game at 6 p.m.

NBA's Jim Les returns to Notre Dame

He went from Notre Dame, to the NBA, back to Notre Dame, with a lot of playing time and hard work in between.

Jim Les, the head coach of the Bradley University Braves, a former NBA basketball player and a 1981 graduate of Notre Dame High School gave the school a phone call and asked if they could use their gym to practice for a game against Loyola University because the Loyola gym was unavailable to use. On Tuesday, Nov. 29, the Notre Dame High School gym transformed into a practice gym for the Braves.

"I've known the family for probably 35 years," said Tony Kozole, alumni director at NDHS. Kozole explained how he received a phone call from Les and how it was nice to have him back at the school. Les said that it was a great experience to be back at NDHS.

Les is from Niles and attended St. John Brebeuf and NDHS. Les

spent several hours practicing his shot in the Notre Dame High School gym and eventually made it to the NBA. He debuted in the NBA with the Utah Jazz, and then played with the Los Angeles Clippers, then the Sacramento Kings, and finally finished off his NBA career in Atlanta.

During the team's practice, Les had the opportunity to talk to some prospective eighth grade students, many of them who were from St. Mary of the Woods. They were visiting the school for a shadowing program. Les talked about how Notre Dame was much more than college preparation, but it was also life preparation as well. Les believes the school produces "first class" students.

At Notre Dame, Les received all-conference, all-area and honorable mention and all-state honors in basketball.

Kozole said that he was Jim's track coach and he also had Jim's older brother, Tommy, who played basketball and baseball at Notre Dame. He also knew, Gary, his other brother.

Since his high school days, Les has received many awards and recognitions, such as the Frances Pomeroy Naismith Hall Award, for the nation's best player under six feet tall. In 1998, he earned a place in the Bradley Athletic Hall of Fame, he is enshrined in the Illinois Basketball Coaches association Hall of Fame and the Greater Peoria Sports Hall of Fame.

CATHOLIC WOMEN'S BOWLING LEAGUE
Bowled Wednesday, November 30, 2005

	Points Won	Points Lost
Classic Bowl	53	24
NorthSide Community Bank	38	39
Skaja Terrace Funeral Home	38	39
Candlelight Jewelers	36	41
Niles Dairy Queen	36	41
Bielinski and Bono Dental	30	47

High Series/High Games

Helma Drag	489/169
Janet Trozzo	479/194
Linda Fahey	175
Jan Repel	173
Angie Strazzante	170
Millie Kroll	168
Mary Johnson	166
Lois MacAdam	161

SCHOOLS

Maine East Fine Arts to Host Winter Concert

The Fine Arts Department of Maine East High School will present its annual Winter Concert on Sunday, December 11 at 2:00 p.m. in the Maine East Auditorium, 2601 W. Dempster Street.

The concert, entitled "The Spirit of the Season," will include performances by the Symphonic Band, Concert Band, Chorus, Mixed Chorus, Concert Choir, Chamber Choir, and Symphonic Orchestra. In addition student artwork and photography will be on display in the auditorium lobby.

Marking the diversity of Maine East, the program will include a wide variety of cultural and seasonal music including "A Home

Alone Christmas" "Sleigh Ride," "Bashana Haba'ah," "Winter" from Vivaldi's The Four Seasons, and "Spirit of the Season" from The Polar Express.

To conclude the concert, there will be a presentation of fifty-six National Flags that represent the birth nations of current Maine East students. Audience members will be asked to join in by lending their voices to a performance of "America the Beautiful" with the combined Orchestra and Choirs. Admission is free and the public is encouraged to attend.

For more information, please contact Edward Eubank, Fine Arts Department Chair at 847-692-8498.

Golf Middle School names first quarter honor roll students

Golf Scholar

Sara Berebitsky, Justin Braddy, Melanie Chan, Justine Choe, Julia Choi, Emma Ciborowski, Giana Civito, Lara Dababneh, Tiffany Ebeling, Jennifer Frake, Athanasia Giannetas, Rebecca Gilbert, Evan Goldstein, Derek Hardin, Zachary Hess, Marvin Hartoun, Benjamin Jakupi, Zainab Khan, Maciej Kowalkowski, Anjali Lakha, Michelle Leong, Dale Lim, Shannon Mascarenhas, Daina Mathew, Rachel Mathies, Monika Maxouris, Daniel Miranda, Lauren Nelson, Alex Nieves, Coranne Randstrom, Kristin Reichert, Timothy Reichert, Ilse Santos, Michelle Scaunas, Zain Siddiqui, Michelle Tanaka, Sofiya Tepitskaya, Willard Tesorero, Taniya Tomy, Vivien Tran, Dominique Watson and Blake Whitehouse.

High Honor Roll

Abraar Ahmed, Kristiene Alonzo, Maria Acosta, Benjamin Ammer, Daniel Ammer, Anthony Anton, Nicole Arceo, Holly Betke, Ryan Bote, Maygan Braddy, Will Braubach, Vi-Vien Bui, Allison Bunag, Brandon Chan, Diane Choe, Hannyl Choi, Marissa Christie, Matt Curtis, Tricia Dacpano, Pearlane DeGuzman, Shaun De Guzman, David Dickson, Fred Dickson, Eva Dubovoy, Ernie Enriquez, Kayleen Enriquez, Rey Fregoso, Talia Gil, Joe Hancock, Matthew Ibrahim, Ayana Jamal, Charmaine John, Stacy Joseph, Nida Khan, Sarah Khan, Sarwar Khan, Kaitlin Karlin, Joy Kim, Michael

Kirk, Carly Knepper, Edward Ko, Glen Ko, Bartosz Krupa, Jaclyn Lochner, Samuel Luo, J. R. Luzod, Sebastian Marin, Paja Mehta, Brett Nagle, Mohammed Noormohammed, Joseph Oliveri, Janki Patel, Reena Patel, Janet Perez, Sonali Patel, David Payken, Jonass Placitis, Brittany Reilly, Jessica Rojas, Justin Ruderman, Brandon Sandy, Bijan Sharifi, Naveen Siddiqui, Jamie Steffens, Abraham Thomas, Tom Valente, Yuliya Yukhvidina and Gardenia Zozan.

Honor Roll

Marc Acoba, Nicole Antkowiak, Shana Ariaz, Timothy Bianchi, Joseph Blank, Samantha Blank, William Burge, Lucian Ceh, Jeremy Calimag, Jessica Choi, Justin Choi, Samantha Cuya, Chris Dalstrom, Loren Dutca, Brittany Ebeling, April Eom, Richard Eom, Artur Freitas, Nancy Garcia, Julia Gertsman, Alex Glisovic, Heather Greenenwald, Saagar Gupta, Ref Hoxha, Nida Iqbal, Jaimy John, Kasey Karlin, Nicole Kidder, Yu Mee Kim, Justin Koo, Stephanie Kost, Daniel Lazzar, Alexander Levin, Evan Lipsky, John Martin, Alexandru Matache, Adam Moniger, Adam Nieves, Nahrain Odisho, Taylor Olander, Lindsey Pankow, Nitesh Patel, Nicole Pena, Ado Penava, Jenny Randstrom, Jacqueline Roti, Samantha Roti, Kelsey Schwert, Susan Shaba, Dessie Stathopoulos, Frederick Sund, Matthew Sund, Danielle Tolchin, Martyna Tos, Nicole Walsh, Marissa Weiler and Lena Zouzani.



Grateful for Grandparents

Last month, students at St. Juliana School and their grandparents had a special celebration. St. Juliana Church honored grandparents for their devotion to their families, especially their grandchildren.

At 1:00 P.M. that afternoon all the children of St. Juliana School and their grandparents gathered for a Mass dedicated to Grandparents. Following the liturgy, there was a reception hosted by the Mothers' Club in the Ahearn Activity Center. Students brought their grandparents to their classrooms to see displays of their school work and to meet their teachers. The Thanksgiving season is a time to count our blessings. The students of St. Juliana School counted their grandparents as one of their most precious blessings!

D64 wins 'bright apple' award for 11th year

For the eleventh consecutive year, Park Ridge-Niles School Dist. 64 is once again chosen as one of 92 school districts in the state to be awarded with the 2005 Bright Red Apple Award of excellence by School Search.

This year, 886 school districts in Illinois were considered for this award.

"They look at a variety of fac-

tors," said Diane Betts, asst. superintendent for curriculum at Dist. 64.

The five areas that they base their selections on are academic performance, such as the ISAT test scores, pupil/teacher ratio, expenditure per pupil, education level of teachers and average teacher salary. Dist. 64 came up strong in all five categories.

School Search is an independ-

ent firm that provides comparative school district information for real estate professionals, corporations, homebuilders, attorneys, libraries, relocating families and legislators.

Betts said that she knows that realtors utilize the information when describing what type of school districts are in a specific area.

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CHRISTMAS 2005 SIGNED, SEALED, DELIVERED

By Molly Parker
Copley News Service

They may deliver in rain, sleet or hail, but the U.S. Postal Service can't do a thing with your mail until you stamp and seal it for delivery.

Mail officials are suggesting that you mail any packages early

if you want to ensure your letters and boxes full of holiday cheer will arrive by Christmas Day to destinations within the United States.

"Traditionally, the week prior to Christmas everyone realizes, 'Oh my gosh, it's here,' and the Monday prior is almost always our busiest mailing day," said Michael Clark, manager of finance for the U.S. Postal Service's Peoria, Ill., branch.

In the span between Christmas and New Year's, more than 20 billion cards, letters and packages will be shipped across the country and overseas, he said.

To ensure your mail reaches an out-of-town destination by Christmas, the Postal Service offers first-class mail, priority mail and express mail.

"Of course, if you're mailing in the local area, that's a lot different than if you're mailing (out of state)," Clark said.

For all mail, Clark said following a few simple mailing rules can

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HOW TO KEEP THOSE CARDS AND LETTERS ROLLING IN

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for you and others as the Postal Service attempts to deliver your packages with care. Those include not sending odd-shaped objects in first-class envelopes. Items

such as pens or earrings can tear up the machines and then tear up other people's mail. Most often that mail is rejected and sent back to you for repackaging.

Instead, when sending bulky items, use a padded envelope, which can be purchased at the post office.

Clark also recommended making sure your packages are fastened securely.

"Don't use Scotch tape to mail a package across the country," he

said.

Inside your package, put a list of the things you are sending, as well as your address and that of the intended recipient. If your box falls apart during delivery, the post office will be more likely to reassemble it.

Do not send cash. Sending a check or money order is safer and easier to recover if lost.

Do not put odd-shaped items, such as pens or earrings, in first-class envelopes. Your mail will likely be rejected and sent back to you. Use a padded envelope instead.

If you send a card in an odd-shaped envelope, remember that it costs 12 cents extra to do so. Most cards indicated whether extra postage is

required, but if you forget, the recipient may end up being asked to pay the extra postage.

Write, type, or print the complete address neatly.

Always use a complete return address.

Make sure you're using the ZIP code. If you don't know it, don't guess. Go to www.usps.com to find ZIP codes and locate post offices -- and any other place that sells stamps in your area, like grocery stores or ATMs.

The only addresses on packages for mailing should be the delivery and return addresses.

Remove batteries from toys. Wrap and place them next to the toys in the mailing box. If you are mailing framed pictures, disassemble and wrap the frame and glass separately.

For questions regarding express mail or priority mail, call (800) 222-1811. For all other post office information, call (800) 275-8777 (ASK-USPS).

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advised a little patience as millions of pieces of mail roam the countryside this holiday season. Postal employees are doing "everything we can to protect your stuff," Clark said.

Though Santa Claus may be able to traverse the world in only one night and swoop down chimneys by simply touching his nose, postal employees are, after all, only human.

TIPS FROM THE MAIL ROOM

When sending a package, make sure the box is properly secured. Use a sturdy box, strong tape and, if sending fragile items, proper cushioning. Do not use string or twine to put the box

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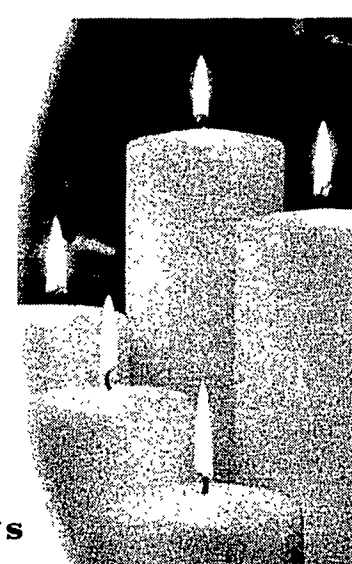
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COMMUNITY ANNOUNCEMENTS

Advocate Lutheran General Hospital implements comprehensive recycling campaign

A comprehensive recycling campaign has been implemented at Advocate Lutheran General Hospital that encourages staff, physicians, patients and visitors to be environmentally sensitive while they are on the hospital campus and its offsite facilities.

Since the campaign was introduced six months ago, the results have been impressive. To date, Lutheran General has saved the equivalent of 3,624 trees, 1,482,310 gallons of water, 98,707 gallons of oil, and 652 yards of landfill through its recycling efforts.

The initiative is linked to Lutheran General Hospital's pursuit of Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED) certification from the U.S. Green Building Council for its planned 192-room, eight-story bed replacement tower, which will open on campus in 2009.

Lutheran General would be the first hospital in Illinois -- and one of only three in the nation -- to achieve this demanding national standard that assures environmental responsiveness, resource efficiency and community sensitivity in the creation of high performance health care surroundings for patients.

Although a recycling program only had to be activated in the bed tower to obtain LEED certification for that structure, Lutheran General President Bruce C. Campbell challenged hospital leadership to implement an aggressive effort that encompassed the entire campus and its offsite locations.

"Advocate Lutheran General Hospital is a nationally recognized leader in health care, and also is committed to setting the standard for providing that care in environmentally sensitive and energy efficient surroundings that protect our resources and quality of life," said Campbell.

A hospital task force was formed earlier this year to design and implement Lutheran General Hospital's recycling program. Representatives from a cross-section of departments are involved including environmental services, purchasing, environment of care, patient safety, construction,

facilities, infection control, food and nutrition, and public relations. The hospital's other sites, including its Patient Resource Center, Cancer Care Center, Cardiovascular Risk Reduction Center, children's day care centers and older adult services, also actively participate in the initiative.

Steve Ritter, director of patient operations and chairman of the hospital's recycling task force, said, "A lot of the task force's involvement and energy is rooted in the belief that this is the right thing to do, and one way all of us can work together to put the hospital's value of stewardship in action."

The first phase of the initiative was launched in June, during the week of World Environment Day, with a focus on increased participation in the hospital's paper and cardboard recycling effort. A "Do Recycle/Don't Recycle" display was created to show associates what paper products were suitable for recycling, and free desktop recycling bins and paper recycling containers were distributed to all staff members and departments.

This was followed by a coffee mug rollout designed to reduce Styrofoam and paper cup use, lids and cardboard coffee sleeve waste. Associates who bought stainless steel refillable coffee mugs received a free cup of coffee with the mug plus a 10-cent discount on every future purchase of the brew at the hospital's cafe or grille. Several hundred mugs were sold, and the committee now plans to launch a similar initiative for those who prefer soft drinks.

Next came the hospital cafeteria's conversion to china dinnerware and silverware to reduce the use of disposable plastic plates and utensils. Cafeteria staff members wore "Are You Dining In?" buttons to remind associates to use non-disposables. The hospital's kitchen also utilized pulper equipment to produce less general landfill waste volume.

Implementation of aluminum and steel can, plastic and glass recycling occurred in time for America Recycles Day (November 15). "Commingled" recycling bins (containers that handle several products at

once) were distributed to hospital units, departments, and public areas at Lutheran General to encourage everyone at the hospital to participate in the effort.

The hospital also created a recycling website that associates can log onto to learn more about recyclable materials and the campaign.

Ritter said hospital associates have had positive reactions to the recycling emphasis. "Prior to this initiative, some staff members were disappointed that their home recycling programs were more comprehensive

than the hospital recycling effort. They've expressed relief that we're focusing on being a more environmentally conscious institution."

"We Can Do More" is the current theme for Lutheran General's recycling campaign. Ritter pointed out, "Waste Management, the hospital's waste hauler, continues to meet with representatives from environmental services, food and nutrition, pharmacy, medical supply and infection control to identify additional opportunities and best practices that we can undertake."

Niles Park District's Winter Wonderland Camp

Plans are underway for Winter Wonderland Camp. Campers will participate in a variety of activities including Crafts, Sports, Games and Ice Skating. This camp is designed so you can sign up for one, two or all days. PLEASE REGISTER EARLY!

Who: 5-12 years
When: 12/19, 12/20, 12/21, 12/22, 12/23, 12/26, 12/27, 12/28, 12/29, 12/30
Time/Location: 8:00 a.m. Grennan Heights Drop Off (8255 Oketo)
5:00 p.m. IceLand Pick Up (8435 Ballard Road)
Fee: Resident \$30/day; Non-Resident \$35/day

Please register at Howard Leisure Center, 6676 W. Howard Street or Call (847) 967-6633 for more information.

CHICAGO CIRCLE CHOIR PRESENTS: "Come Celebrate Christmas"

A Concert of English and Polish Christmas Carols & Songs
Sunday, December 11, 2005 at 4:00 pm
Prelude Music at 3:45 pm
ALL SAINTS CATHEDRAL
9201 W. Higgins Road
Chicago, IL 60631
For more information, please contact Dolores Urban 847-635-8952



Adelia's Closet Offers Free Jewelry-making Classes

Bead and jewelry-making store promises to satisfy passion for beading

Adelia's Closet at 6354 W. Gunnison Street in Chicago is offering all of their beginning beading classes for free for the remainder of the year. Shop owners Luz Lee and Jay Johnson opened the doors on September 24th. "We're so thrilled to be joining Chicago's Jefferson Park area with our beautiful bead and jewelry-making store," says Luz, managing partner of Adelia's Closet, "A Great Place to Bead." "We have been looking for the perfect location for some time. We're excited to be able to bring a bead store to this Northwest neighborhood. There are so many people interested in beading and we're very excited in teaching and introducing others the wonderful world of beads." Keeping with this excitement we want to encourage all who are interested in jewelry-making to come and visit us, take as many free classes as you'd like.

Adelia's Closet offers a full range of beads, semi-precious stones, Swarovski crystals, lampwork beads by nationally recognized artists, Czech glass beads, pendants, dichroic glass, charms and a large assortment of beading and jewelry-making supplies. Along with the beads, we offer a collection of sterling silver jewelry for those looking for gifts, gift certificates and affordable repair services.

Adelia's owners have put much thought into making the store comfortable for everyone. "We have tables where you can sit, relax and use our tools to make some jewelry. Husbands and boyfriends shouldn't be worried, if I can do it, everyone can," says Jay.

Adelia's Closet is located at the intersection of Nagle and Gunnison Streets across the street from Butera Market, one mile south of the Kennedy Expressway. If coming by the L, take the Blue Line to Jefferson Park, and then the 81W Lawrence bus. The bus stops at our front door.

Adelia's Closet is open seven days a week, Monday through Friday 10 a.m. to 6 p.m. and Thursday until 7 p.m., Saturday 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. and Sunday 10 a.m. to 4 p.m.

For more information or shop directions, please call 773-631-6614 or visit us on the Web at www.agreatplacetobead.com

EDWARD JONES HOSTS VIDEO PRESENTATION

Estate planning isn't just about taxes and probate. It's about planning your life so you're in control and your family is protected. Join us for a free video presentation exclusively at Edward Jones offices. Make the tough decisions now, so your family won't have to later.

The broadcast is scheduled for 10:30am, 5:30pm or 7:30pm Tuesday, December 13th at the offices: 7627 N. Milwaukee Avenue, between Oakton and Howard in Niles. For free admission to the program, call investment representative Nick Katsoolias at 847-663-1650. But hurry -- seating is limited.

Edward Jones, one of the only major financial-services firms providing advice to individual investors exclusively, currently serves more than 6 million clients. The firm offers its clients a variety of investments, including certificates of deposit, taxable and non-taxable bonds, stocks and mutual funds.

The largest firm in the nation in terms of branch offices, Edward Jones currently has more than 9,000 offices in the U.S. and through its affiliates, in Canada and the United Kingdom.

The Edward Jones interactive Website is located at www.edwardjones.com.

SENIORS

Volunteers needed for AARP tax aide program in Niles

Niles Senior News

NSC Highlights

For a detailed description of programs & activities or to ask about membership requirements, please check the Naturally Active Program Guides or call the Niles Senior Center at 588-8420. Visit us online at www.vniles.com. Pre-registration is required for most programs. Call for more info. Niles Senior Center will be closed Thursday and

DECEMBER REGISTRATION

Drop off registration for programs and classes listed in the December Naturally Active were due at the Center Friday, December 2. Walk-in Registrations for programs with openings began Wednesday, December 7th

HELP FOR HOLIDAY STRESS

While the holidays are a time known for family gatherings and traditions, they can also be a time

when older adults are faced with change and challenge. Changes in health situations can limit mobility and make it harder to carry on with previous traditions. Coping with the holidays can be especially challenging for people who have lost spouses or other cherished friends and family members. Expecting to feel joyous during the holidays may not be realistic if you are dealing with a changing family, illness, or loss. If you are feeling overwhelmed by holiday stress or are concerned about a friend in the community, please call Bev Wessels 847 588-8420).

CARBON MONOXIDE APPOINTMENTS

Volunteers are currently calling members to schedule appointments for the annual Carbon Monoxide and Natural Gas Testing. To schedule an appointment, please call the Carbon Monoxide Hot Line (847 588-8480). This free service is provided by the Community Development Dept of the Village of Niles.

TOYS FOR TOTS COLLECTION AT CENTER

The Niles Senior Center will be a collection site for the U.S. Marine Corp Reserve Toys for Tots Drive. We can accept ONLY brand new, UNWRAPPED toys -- NO STUFFED ANIMALS, please. Toys can be dropped off between 8:30AM and 5:00PM, November 7th thru December 20th. The Niles Fire Department will also be collecting toy donations thru December 23.

WINTER COMPUTER CLASSES OFFERS NEW CLASSES

Following is a list of the classes set to begin in January. A full description can be found in the December Naturally Active Program Guide. Some classes have prerequisites. For information about Computer Classes, please contact Jaymi Ostman at 847 588-8420.

PRE-INTRO TO COMPUTERS (for those who have no computer experience) Begins Jan.3
INTRO TO COMPUTERS Begins January 9th
HOW TO GET STARTED SELLING ON E-BAY Begins January 10th

INTERNET (How to browse and surf the net) begins Jan. 13th
MICROSOFT WORD II begins Jan. 17th
ONLINE BANKING PRESENTATION (One Session) January 26th
MICROSOFT EXCEL Begins January 30th

CASH DASH at the Center

A representative from the State Treasurer's Office will visit the Senior Center on Thursday, December 8th from 10:00AM to 2:00PM to search people's names on the Cash Dash database to see if the State of IL owes you any money. Unclaimed property is generally property that has been "untouched" for more than five years. This might include security savings and checking accounts, uncashed checks, money orders and gift certificates, unclaimed wages, safe deposit box contents etc.

VOLUNTEERS ARE NEEDED AARP-Tax-Aide Program

We are looking for volunteers for the upcoming tax session. This program is administered by AARP

in cooperation with the IRS. It is the nation's largest free volunteer run tax counseling and preparation service offered to low and middle income taxpayers. If you are interested in learning how to become a Tax-Aide volunteer, please call MaryAnn (847 588-8420). Free training is provided.

PRE NEW YEAR'S EVE PARTY, Thursday, December 29th 5:00-10:00PM \$17

Join us as we ring in the New Year (a little early)! The evening will begin with a delicious meal featuring a Spinach and Strawberry Salad, Chicken Breast Marsalla with Mushroom Sauce, Roasted Potatoes and dessert. Then get ready for a special treat as The Breeze takes the stage for your listening and dancing pleasure.

TRIP: ST. PETER & the VATICAN: LEGACY OF THE POPES, Thursday, February 16, 2006 8:00AM - 5:00 PM Milwaukee, \$60.00

We're off to Milwaukee to explore

Story Continues... see NILES SENIORS next page.

Assessor appeal program with MaineStreamers

Maine Township Senior News

Maine Township's MaineStreamers Offer New Winter Programs and Trips for Seniors

The Maine Township MaineStreamers program offers a variety of opportunities for residents 55 and older. Membership is

free and includes a subscription to the monthly newsletter that details all activities for the upcoming month. All activities take place at Maine Township Town Hall, 1700 Ballard Rd., Park Ridge, unless otherwise noted. For further information on membership or programs, call MaineStreamers at 1-847-297-2510.

ASSESSOR APPEAL PROGRAM

Assessor Rueckert invites taxpayers not currently on the Senior Freeze to attend an assessment

appeal seminar on Wed., Dec. 7th at Maine Township Hall. Cook County Board of Review Commissioner Maureen Murphy will conduct an Out-Reach Seminar. Registration begins at 6:15 p.m. The seminar will teach homeowners how to determine if they are over-assessed. Attendees should bring their tax bill.

"MEDICARE D" PROGRAM
Monday, December 12
Added session: 1:30 p.m. to 2:30 p.m.

Presenter: Kris Sadur.
Area Agency on Aging
No Charge - Registration Required
Kris will discuss the changes in the Medicare Prescription Drug Program that will start in 2006. Making a decision can be difficult so learn all the facts at this informative program.

MEN'S GROUP HOLIDAY PARTY
Tuesday, December 13
11:30 a.m. to 1:30 p.m.

Story Continues... see MT SENIORS next page.

SENIOR CITIZENS

Shampoo & Set ... \$5.00
Haircut ... \$5.00
Everyday Except Sunday
Sr. Men's Clipper
Styling ... \$3.00 & Up
Men's Reg. Hair
Styling ... \$5.00 & Up

IN HOME HAIR CARE
MANICURE & PEDICURE TOGETHER \$16.00 & UP

FREDERICK'S COIFFURES
5391 N. MILWAUKEE AVE.
CHICAGO, IL
(773) 631-0574

FREE Family Night at the Pickwick 'White Christmas' to Benefit Maine Township Food Pantry

Wunder Studios Performing Arts Conservatory is sponsoring a free family event at the Pickwick Theater of Tuesday, December 13 at 6:30 p.m. The evening features a free screening of Irving Berlin's 1954 holiday classic "White Christmas" starring Bing Crosby, Danny Kaye, Rosemary Clooney, and Vera-Ellen. The screening will be preceded by live music, free prizes, and an old-fashioned holiday sing-along accompanied by the Pickwick's mighty Wurlitzer organ.

"It will be a wonderful, family friendly event," says Michael

Barrette, director of Wunder Studios. "There is no charge for admission, but we are encouraging people to bring non-perishable goods to donate to the Maine Township Emergency Food Pantry." The Food Pantry, which began in 1981, provides food on an emergency basis to persons living in the greater Maine Township area. This holiday season the pantry expects to supply over 150 boxes of food, which will go help to feed over 300 individuals.

The event is sponsored by Wunder Studios, which opened

this past September in the Pickwick Building. It offers expert music instruction in instruments including piano, guitar, drums, brass, woodwinds, and voice. Wunder Studios also features Musikgarten classes for infants, toddlers, and pre-schoolers and group classes in musical theatre, acting, guitar, and drums for ages five and up.

For further information on the free family event visit www.wunderstudios.com or contact Michael Barrette at 847/685-2030 or michael@wunderstudios.com.

State Senator Axley holds free senior health fair

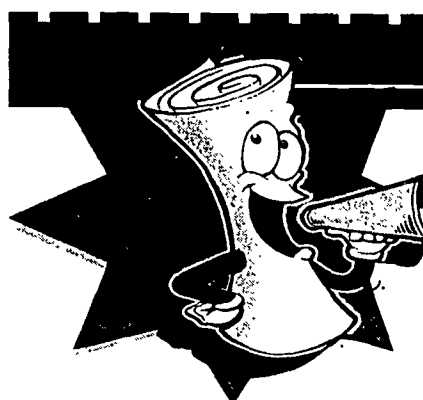
State Senator Cheryl Axley (R-33rd) will hold a free senior health fair on Friday, Dec. 9 from 9 a.m. to noon at the Al Hattendorf Community Center, 225 East Elk Grove Blvd. in Elk Grove Village.

More than 30 health care professionals and government agencies will participate in this event. Senator Axley hopes to help seniors live happier and healthier lives.

The activities at the fair include free blood pressure, glaucoma, hearing, glucose, spinal and vision screening, as well as video oroscopy, body fat analysis and photo identification.

Participants will also receive free information on topics such as nutrition, pain management, Alzheimers assisted living and hearing assistance.

The 33rd district covers parts of Niles, Des Plaines, Elk Grove, Park Ridge, Rosemont, Arlington Heights, Chicago, Mt. Prospect, Norridge, Schaumburg and Rolling Meadows.



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SENIORS

Diabetes screenings cancelled at Morton Grove Senior Center

Morton Grove Senior News

"LET'S DO LUNCH"

Come visit the "Lunch Bunch" any Monday through Friday at the Morton Grove Senior Center. Reservations are required and can be made by calling 847/967-6876. Lunch is served at 11:45 a.m. but the Center opens at 9 a.m. where many come in for bingo, cards, camaraderie, crafts, games, health screenings, quiet reading, seminars and just plain fun. The following special "Lunch Bunch" events are coming up:

Park View School Chorus on Thursday, Dec. 15. Lunch will be Turkey Breast with Stuffing and Gravy.

Hot Chocolate Deluxe on Friday, Dec. 16. Lunch will be Home Style Chili.

Molloy School Pennies on Thursday, Dec. 22. Lunch will be Chicken Cacciatore with Rotini.

New Years Eve Party with Tim

Burr at 12:30 p.m. on Thursday, Dec. 29. Lunch will be Beef Pot Roast.

The lunch cost is a \$2.75 to \$3 donation. For more information about the menu or transportation call the Morton Grove "Lunch Bunch."

SENIOR CENTER MEMBERSHIP

There are over 400 Members in the Morton Grove Senior Center. In 2005 Members enjoyed the "Country Western Hoe Down" complete with barbecued chicken wings, square dancing and good old-fashioned fun. Each year the Center plans a special event that will bring out smiles, warm fellowship and knee-slapping professional entertainment. "The Country Western party was so nice and so wonderful, I wish we could do it every month," commented one Member.

The Village of Morton Grove Seniortrun Buses will provide well over 8,000 passenger rides in 2005. The majority of these riders are those who join the Senior Center at the annual rate in order to benefit from unlimited free passage on the

Seniortrun. Those who do not have or can no longer operate a motor vehicle can use the Seniortrun for medical appointments, grocery shopping, banking or activities at the Senior Center. Other benefits to Senior Center Membership include: free use of the Senior Center Library computers, free Diabetes Screenings, delivery of the Seniors in Morton Grove and Travelin' Times newsletters, plus a 15% discount on all trips and classes emanating from the Senior Center. "Of course I'll sign-up to be a Member. I'll take the discount," are words often heard at the Reception Desk. Membership rates will not change for 2006. They are: \$15 for an individual resident, \$25 for a resident married couple, \$25 for an individual non-resident, and \$40 for a non-resident married couple.

In order to renew a Membership (or register for the first time), just stop by the Senior Center starting Monday, Dec. 19 from 9 a.m. to 12 noon. For more information

call the Morton Grove Senior Center at 847/470-5223.

VISUALLY IMPAIRED MOTIVATORS

The Morton Grove Visually Impaired Motivators is a low vision support group for seniors with macular degeneration and other degenerative eye diseases and their families. Their next meeting will be at 9:45 a.m. on Tuesday, Dec. 20 in the Morton Grove Senior Center. They discuss everyday problems of living with low vision and possible solutions, exchange ideas on the latest technology and assistance devices available, and share what has worked for them individually. For more information please call Richard Englund at 847/965-8517.

"PROTECT YOURSELF FROM I.D. THEFT" LECTURE

A representative from State Treasurer Judy Barr Topinka's Office will be at the Morton Grove Senior Center at 1:30 p.m. on Wednesday, Dec. 21 to describe how seniors can protect themselves from Identification Theft. Different types of I.D.

Theft will be discussed as well as how thieves operate and the various techniques seniors can use to avoid becoming a victim. Please register for this free lecture by calling the Morton Grove Senior Center at 847/470-5223.

DIABETES SCREENINGS CANCELLED

The Morton Grove Senior Center's regularly scheduled Diabetes Screening on Tuesday, Dec. 27 has been cancelled. For more information contact the Morton Grove Senior Hot Line by calling 847/470-5223.

"HAPPY NEW YEAR!!"

Ring in the New Year at the Morton Grove Senior Center on Thursday, Dec. 29! Singer Tim Burr will entertain and delight seniors with songs old and new—all upbeat and sing-along starting at 12:30 p.m. Please register for this wonderful free show by calling the Morton Grove Senior Center at 847/470-5223. Before the show, can enjoy a delicious lunch with the Lunch Bunch! For lunch reservations, please call 847/967-6876.

Christmas Open House Set at Summit Square

Families are invited to attend a Christmas Open House with Santa on Saturday, Dec. 17 from 8 - 11 a.m. at the Summit Square Retirement & Assisted Living Residence, 10 N. Summit Ave., Park Ridge. There is no charge and a complimentary brunch is included.

Children will get a chance to visit with Santa, tour his Workshop and marvel at his gingerbread version of Uptown Park Ridge. The first 50 children to visit the Workshop will be able to select a gift from the Toy Tree.

Local schools and scouting organizations are decorating Christmas trees with their own themes. Those trees will be displayed during the holidays at Summit Square. Those attending the Open House will be able to vote on their favorite tree. The winning school class or scout troop will win a catered celebration party compliments of Summit Square.

A breakfast brunch will be served starting from 8 a.m. through 11 a.m. No reservations are needed.

Guests are encouraged to bring gloves, scarves and/or hats for the Salvation Army Mitten Tree.

Participating organizations to date are St. Juliana School, Cub Scout Pack 201 from Roosevelt School, Mary Seat of Wisdom School of Religion, a 5th grade class from Mary Seat of Wisdom, Angel Town's second grade class, Park Ridge Montessori, and a third grade from St. Paul of the Cross.

NI SENIORS:

CONTINUED FROM PREVIOUS PAGE

than 390 objects in their historical context. Lunch features a choice of entrees (check at Senior Center). Tickets are now on sale to Members of the Niles Senior Center (through the Drop Off on December 2nd and Walk-In Registration beginning Wednesday, December 7th). Non-residents may check for ticket availability beginning Wednesday, January 18th. Check-in at the Senior Center will be 8:00AM; return time is estimated at 5:00PM.

the 2,000 year history of the papacy and see important historical objects, precious liturgical items, rare documents and spectacular works of art - A once-in-a-lifetime opportunity to view the Vatican's extraordinary collections of art and historical objects, many that have never been on public view. The exhibition immerses visitors in rich architectural settings presents more

INCOME TAX COUNSELORS NEEDED

We are currently recruiting interested volunteers to assist our MainStreamers and Low-income Township residents in completing simple Income Tax Forms. If you have experience in filling out Income Tax forms and have 4 hours available per week starting in February through April we need you! Training is provided. If interested contact Mary Swanson at 1-847-297-2510.

MEDICARE PART D PRESCRIPTION DRUG COVERAGE

Maine Township has trained staff to assist you with the Medicare

Cost: \$13 members/\$15 guests. Don't miss THE event of the year...join us as we celebrate the Holidays together! Ludmyla Turkalo will perform holiday tunes as you arrive. Then choose between Prime Rib or White Fish. Each entrée will be served with Caesar Salad, Double Baked Potato, Broccoli, Cauliflower & Carrots Medley and Peach Melba for Dessert. We will be entertained with music, comedy and dancing by Bob Marcy and his "Spirit of Christmas Show." Table prizes will be raffled off to top this event! Please note, there will be NO Bingo at this month's luncheon! Reservations and cancellations must be received by Monday, December 5th, absolutely no exceptions!

Part D Prescription Drug program. For an appointment call Maine Township at 1-847-297-2510 #236. Please note that all Circuit Breaker Recipients MUST apply for this coverage to remain eligible for the Circuit Breaker benefits.

Day Trips

The following Day Trips are currently on sale. In order to sign up for a Day Trip you must first sign up to be a member and then, a reservation form will be sent to you. To become a member call the MainStreamers at 1-847-297-2510 and ask for an application. All Day Trip departs from the State of Illinois Building, 9511 Harrison St. in Des Plaines.

"DEFENDING THE CAVEMAN" TRIP

Lakeshore Theatre, Chicago Sunday, January 15

11:45 a.m. to 5:30 p.m.

\$75 members/\$80 guests

Before you laugh uncontrollably enjoy lunch at Buca Di Beppo, which specializes in Southern Italian food. Our lunch includes a Caesar Salad, Chicken Parmigiana, Spaghetti Aglio Olio, Vegetable and Tiramisu for Dessert!

Rob Becker's Defending the Caveman is described as Broadway's smash comedy about men & women...you will enjoy this production in main floor seats. So get out of your cave and enjoy a day out!

MT SENIORS: Income tax counselors needed

CONTINUED FROM PREVIOUS PAGE

No Charge this month only! Lunch Provided Registration Required

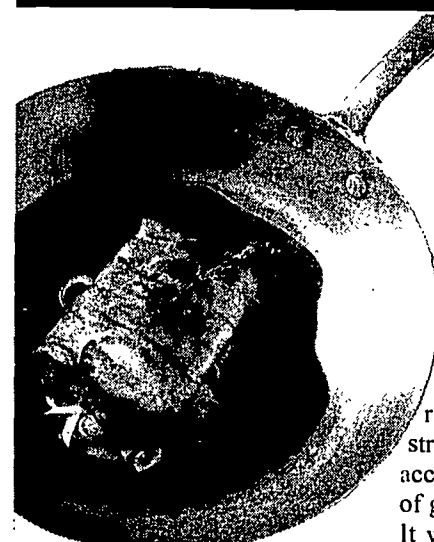
Enjoy lunch together as we socialize...then you can enjoy "Legends" by Jeanine, who will entertain you with an electrifying and energetic show...you won't want to miss this fun-filled day! gain...we mean table top races, for your enjoyment. Win prizes by selecting the lucky horse. We will also enjoy a game of Whammo.

SOCIAL ISSUES

"Becoming Less of a Target" Thursday, December 15 1:30 p.m. to 2:30 p.m. Presenter: Cook County Sheriffs No Charge - Registration Required Officer Lazano will discuss safe ways to make yourself less of a target. No crime is 100% stoppable but some can be prevented.

"A SPARKLING HOLIDAY" LUNCHEON

Sunday, December 11 Doors Open: 11 a.m. Lunch Served: 12 noon Chateau Ritz, 9100 Milwaukee, Niles



RON JAMES
Copley News Service

THE CHEF

He's a chef's chef. Just the mention of his first name, Daniel, to any chef or foodie worth their salt and you will get a knowing look - one that appreciates that you are speaking of a master.

That master chef is Daniel Boulud, the chef-owner of some of the country's finest restaurants and author of five cookbooks. He has traveled far from his beginnings on his family's farm near Lyon, France. On the farm he worked in rhythm with the seasons, picking apricots, harvesting leeks and cabbages, and making sausage with his parents.

"You could taste every vegetable so well," he said. "We were doing it without the awareness to make it a big business. We could wait for the zucchini to

ripen; we could wait for the strawberries. We didn't have to accelerate or modify the process of growing; nature was doing it." It was Boulud's keen awareness of fresh seasonal produce and his grandmother's home cooking that set the stage for a stunning culinary career.

After being nominated as a candidate for best cooking apprentice in France, Boulud trained under some of the finest chefs of Europe, including Roger Verge, Georges Blanc and Michel Guérard.

Following two years in some of the finest kitchens in Copenhagen, he made his way to Washington, D.C., to work as chef to the European Commission. He soon moved to New York, where he opened the Polo Lounge at the Westbury Hotel and later Le Regence at the Hotel Plaza Athenee. From 1986 to 1992, Boulud served as executive chef at New York's Le Cirque, a time when the restaurant was regularly one of the most highly rated in the country.

With his reputation made, Boulud opened his much-herald-

LIFE
PERFECT PAIRINGS

Crisp sea bass swims well in Barolo Sauce with Oregon pinot noir



ed restaurant, DANIEL, on Manhattan's Upper East Side in 1993. Just one year following its opening, DANIEL was ranked as "one of the 10 best restaurants in the world" by the International Herald Tribune. More successful restaurant openings followed.

Boulud's latest venture is the Daniel Boulud Brasserie, which opened in April 2005 at the Wynn Las Vegas Resort and Country Club.

In his book "Letters to a Young Chef" (Basic Books, \$22.50), Boulud talks about why anyone would want to be a chef: "It has been a tasty life. The love of food and the obsession over tastes, ingredients, and techniques are the dedicated cook's source of strength."

Boulud's obsession has earned countless awards including "Chef of the Year" in October 1999 from Bon Appetit, and "Outstanding Chef of the Year" in 1994, and "Best Chef: New York City" in 1992 from the Beard Foundation.

THE DISH

"Paul Bocuse's Rouget en

Ecailles de Pomme de Terre inspired this exquisite dish of tender fish fillets wrapped in a crisp crust of sliced potatoes," said Boulud. "But since those beautifully briny red mullets from the Mediterranean are rarely available in this country, I suggest sea bass, which makes a superb substitute."

"For the sauce, I chose Barolo wine; one of the best wines of Piemonte (Italy), in honor of Sirio Maccioni, the owner of Le Cirque restaurant. I was duly flattered when Chef Bocuse sent the chefs from his restaurant at Epcot Center in Florida to Le Cirque to learn my adaptation of his recipe."

This is one of Boulud's signature dishes and will soon celebrate its 20th anniversary on his menu. He amusingly calls this most successful dish his "fish and chips."

"The dish's contrast in texture, flavor and color have made it a

lasting success," he said. "While it requires technical dexterity to get it just right, the fact that it centers on four simple ingredients - sea bass, Idaho potatoes, leeks and red wine - is a testament to its deceptive simplicity." The dish can be assembled up to one hour ahead of time. Keep it refrigerated before cooking and serving. Although the original dish called for Barolo wine sauce, Boulud's current recipe in his kitchens now uses a syrah wine as a foundation for the sauce. The wine sauce is reduced to a mere two tablespoons of liquid before cream and butter is added and should ultimately yield the eight tablespoons called for in plating the dish.

THE WINE

DANIEL's sommelier, Philippe Marchal, has served many wines

CONTINUED
PERFECT PAIRINGS...Next Page

THE RECIPE

CRISP PAUPIETTE OF SEA BASS IN BAROLO SAUCE
Crisp Paupiette of Sea Bass:
4 (7-ounce) skinless sea bass, skinned, bones set aside for sauce (see note)

Salt and freshly ground black pepper, to taste
3 sprigs fresh thyme (1 sprig, leaves only, chopped, and 2 sprigs halved, for garnish)

2 very large baking potatoes, peeled
3 tablespoons unsalted butter (divided use)

Minced chives, for garnish
Barolo Sauce:
1 tablespoon extra-virgin olive oil
1/2 cup shallots, peeled and chopped

1/2 cup white mushrooms, caps only, sliced
1/2 sprig fresh thyme
1 cup unsalted chicken stock
1 bottle (750 ml) of Barolo wine or other good red cooking wine

1 tablespoon heavy cream
8 tablespoons (1 stick) unsalted butter
Pinch of sugar

Salt and freshly ground pepper, to taste
1 tablespoon minced chives
Leeks:

2 tablespoons unsalted butter
2 leeks, white part only, thinly sliced

Salt and freshly ground pepper, to taste
Yields 4 servings.

To prepare Crisp Paupiette of Sea Bass: Using sharp knife, trim each fillet to make them as rectangular as possible (about 5x2 inches). Season fillets with salt and pepper, to taste, and 2 teaspoons chopped thyme. Using knife, shape each potato lengthwise by cutting off rounded outer flesh to form 4 rectangular blocks. Do not cut off ends of potatoes. Cut each potato lengthwise into very thin, long slices with vegetable slicer or mandoline. Each potato should yield about 16 slices (8 slices are needed to wrap a fish fillet). Do not rinse potato slices as their starch will help wrapped slices stick together.

Toss potato slices in 1 tablespoon of melted butter and a pinch of salt. Place 10x10-inch piece of parchment paper on counter. Choose 8 potato slices of approximately equal length. Place fish fillet horizontally at top of parchment paper so you can match length of potato wrap to length of fillet.

Place 1st slice of potato perpendicular to fillet, starting on left side. Place 2nd slice overlapping 1st-one about 3/8 inch from left edge. Continue overlapping potato slices until you have covered an area equal to length of fillet. Center fillet horizontally on potato wrap and fold edges of potatoes over fillet to enclose it entirely. Repeat process

for remaining fillets and potato slices and refrigerate.

Preheat oven to 425 F. Melt remaining 2 tablespoons butter in large, nonstick pan over high heat. Add paupiettes and saute until golden brown, about 3 to 5 minutes per side. If fish is very thick, finish cooking in oven for 4 to 5 minutes. To prepare Barolo Sauce: Heat oil in pot over high heat. Add reserved sea bass bones, shallots, mushrooms and thyme sprig, and cook for 8 to 10 minutes while stirring often.

Add chicken stock, bring to a boil, and cook until completely reduced. Add Barolo wine, bring to a boil, and reduce by 1/2. Using mesh strainer, remove and discard fish bones. Reduce sauce to 2 tablespoons. Add heavy cream, stir, and bring to a boil over low heat. Whisk in butter, sugar, and salt and pepper, to taste. Strain sauce through fine mesh strainer. If sauce is too thick, add a little water to thin it.

To prepare leeks: Melt butter in pan over medium heat. Add leeks and sweat until soft, about 4 minutes. Season with salt and pepper, to taste.

To serve: Place bed of warm leeks in middle of each of 4 warm plates; and ladle about 2 tablespoons of warm Barolo Sauce around each bed of leeks. Place sea bass on top of leeks. Garnish with 1/2 sprig of thyme and minced chives sprinkled on plate. Serve immediately.

ARIE CROWN THEATER PRESENTS
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&
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LIFE

CONTINUED FROM
PERFECT PAIRINGS...Next Page

with this dish over the years. He suggests a wine with good fruit and body enough to hold up to the rich wine sauce, but not so heavy that it overpowers the sea bass. He suggests a 2003 Cristom Mt. Jefferson Pinot Noir, which has the elegance and the power to work very nicely with this dish.

"The pinots from the Willamette Valley in Oregon are a bit heavier in style and that holds up well with the rich sauce," Marchal said. "Its fruit forwardness contrasts nicely with the savory flavors of the fish and potatoes."

The Mt. Jefferson pinot noir is made of a blend of grapes from nine vineyard sites, all within the Willamette Valley. Thirty-nine percent of the fruit comes from the 56-acre Cristom estate vineyard. The winery prides itself on its Old World winemaking techniques - using 30 percent whole clusters, native yeast fermentation, and gentle and minimal handling in the winemaking process.

Winemaker's notes: "This deep garnet-colored pinot noir has an exotic, rich nose that includes black currants, licorice, cinnamon and hints of a dying rose. The intensity of the fruit continues on the palate with lots of ripe blackberries, plums and currants along with some cedar and oolong tea."

"Throughout this multifaceted wine, there is an underlying backbone of savory tannin and acid that holds the whole thing together, even as it evolves in the glass over several hours. This is a very complex wine that begs for food and will surely improve for many years with additional aging."

Cristom Vineyards, www.cristomwines.com.

"Cooking with Daniel Boulud" by Daniel Boulud (Random House, \$25).

Note: Have your butcher or fishmonger fillet the sea bass and reserve the bones for you. - -

Ron James welcomes comments and suggestions. E-mail him at ron-james@perfectpairings.us. Listen to his "Gourmet Club" radio show and see archives of previous columns at www.perfectpairings.us.

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IN FASHION

Holiday style in 10 minutes

SHARON MOSLEY
Copley News Service

If there's one thing everyone is short of this time of year, it's time - especially when you're trying to get dressed for a party.

"You are stacking events like a true, high-society socialite," says Lloyd Boston, author of the new "Before You Put That On" (Simon and Schuster, 2005) and style expert for NBC's "Today" show. "Even if you're just making the holiday rounds to see family, attending middle school concerts and chatting up your better half's tipsy boss at the annual holiday soiree, wearing the right clothes helps to make all of these functions a bit less taxing, and a whole lot less burdensome."

After all, aren't we supposed to be having fun?

Here's Boston's minute-by-minute, step-by-step plan to get you ready for that holiday party before you can say "No more jingle bell earrings, please."

MINUTES 1-2

Snatch a pale solid sweater that has just a little sex appeal - like an off-the-shoulder white or camel cashmere or a merino wool sleeveless turtleneck.

MINUTES 3-4

Jump into a dark tailored bottom to ground it. A black pencil or A-line skirt, black suit trousers, or even a fun wool wrap skirt that hits the floor.

MINUTES 5-6

Keep warm in stylish boots that hit the knee and go with any of the above. Black leather pointed-toe boots, or even a black equestrian riding boot for a twist!

MINUTES 7-8

Select just one over-the-top accessory that says "bling!" A metallic belt that dangles low, a pair of oversized chandelier earrings or a chunky vintage brooch.

MINUTES 9-10

Go for flawless skin by using an all-in-one foundation/powder. Add shimmer to your eyes but nowhere else. A holiday lip (for many, it's classic red) and mascara, and hit the starry night like you just fell from on high!

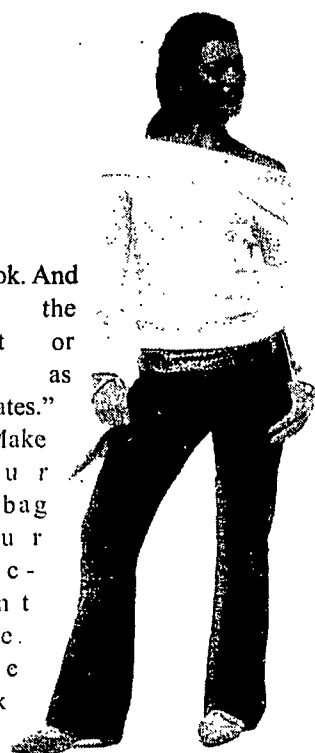
Some other fast holiday fashion tips from Boston:

- Kissing Santa is better than wearing him on a sweater. "If you have one of these in your closet, there is no need to toss it," says Boston. "Just wear it for an audience of those 12 and under for maximum compliments."
- The retro elegance of real fur adds instant cachet to the most basic pieces of dress attire, he says. But if you choose to wear faux fur, it too can add glamour to holiday outfits. "Either way, something warm and fuzzy can give you high style."
- Instead of always jumping into that same old little black dress, try renting a tuxedo. "The trick is renting only the jacket and pants," says Boston. "No need for anything else. You can add your own sparkly shell or tank, or even just a low-cut camisole for a sex-

ier look. And work the jacket or pants as separates."

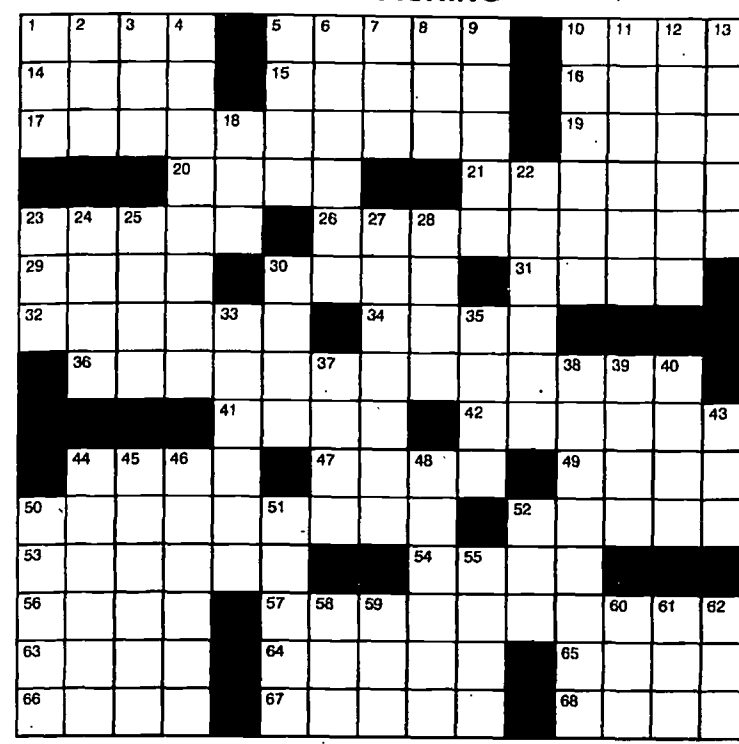
- Make your handbag your statement piece. "The trick is to pair your signature bag of the day with something subtle or opposite that will allow it to shine on its own stage," says Boston. "Let all eyes go to your bag first." And for the holidays? "Be certain that you have an evening clutch on stand-by."
- And you might replace a few of those "old" holiday standbys: Instead of holiday icon earrings, wear vintage crystal clusters; instead of holiday-themed necklaces, try a red coral one with a black or white top; replace holiday hair ornaments with black lacquered chopsticks and yes, those holiday theme sweaters - instead try shining in a metallic sweater in silver or gold. Santa will surely spot you in a crowd!

Sharon Mosley is a former fashion editor of the Arkansas Gazette in Little Rock and executive director of the Fashion Editors and Reporters Association. © Copley News Service Visit Copley News Service at www.copleynews.com.



LIFE

GONE FISHING



COPLEY NEWS SERVICE

By Charles Preston

Be the first to send in the answers to this week's crossword puzzle and your name will be listed in next week's Bugle.

This Week's Winner is...
Lorraine Truskolaski

Send your answers to the editor: Andrew Schneider
Fax: 847.588.1911
E-mail: editor@buglenewspapers.com

ACROSS

- 1 PBS host Alan
- 5 Pretoria prime minister, twice
- 10 Precursor to duke or bishop
- 14 Winter wear
- 15 Mountain fortress
- 16 Sport of princes
- 17 Fortification slope
- 19 German/Polish border river
- 20 Middling
- 21 Straggler's position
- 23 Notre Dame coach Lou
- 26 Back talk
- 29 Vissi d'arte, e.g.
- 30 Fox or turkey step
- 31 Littlest of the Little Women
- 32 Legendary Italian director/actor
- 34 Artists' inspiration
- 36 Nautical splicing tools
- 41 Controversial apple spray
- 42 Emphatic typeface
- 44 Sometimes follows A
- 47 Actor Brad
- 49 Place for memories
- 50 Auspicious
- 52 Cashew relative
- 53 Grand Tour locale
- 54 Snack between meals
- 56 Sometimes follows C
- 57 Envoy's superior
- 63 Head, in Le Havre
- 64 Mock
- 65 Yahoo
- 66 Scorch
- 67 Waste maker
- 68 Genus Capra

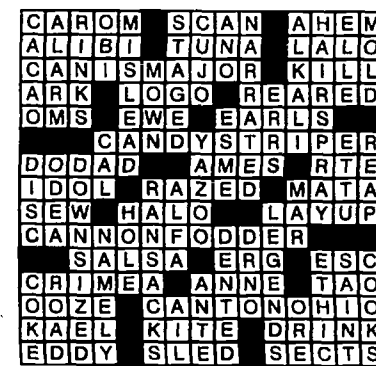
DOWN

- 1 Dazzle
- 2 Opener to Alamos
- 3 "What's up, ___?"
- 4 Sim, of St. Trinian's
- 5 Suckers
- 6 Biography
- 7 Cult follower
- 8 10th anniversary gift
- 9 Scrap
- 10 Highest point
- 11 Chinchilla, for one
- 12 Hands and teeth do it
- 13 Tartar's golden group
- 18 Ms. Russell, to friends?
- 22 Even if
- 23 I've ___ it!
- 24 City near Provo
- 25 Actress Kudrow
- 27 Ruling on some legal claims
- 28 NHL's Grimson and Barnes
- 30 Beginning of the end
- 33 Get quiet
- 35 Meat turner
- 37 Valley of vines
- 38 Botswana mirage site
- 39 Dash
- 40 Express praise
- 43 Every co. has one
- 44 Head warmer?
- 45 Corrigenda
- 46 Expiator
- 48 Renter
- 50 Jazz events
- 51 Below, poetically
- 52 Pub. submissions

- 55 Bone prefix
- 58 Broncos' Tanuvasa
- 59 Crosstown, at times
- 60 Make a knight
- 61 UK award
- 62 Tyrannosaurus ___

Last Week's Puzzle Answers

CAN OPENERS



COPLEY NEWS SERVICE

Are you overdue for...

- mammogram
- minor surgery
- lab test
- bone density scan
- pain management services
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- diagnostic exams, including MRI, CT, ultrasound and PET scans
- physical exam
- colonoscopy
- diagnostic exam
- physical therapy

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BUGLE KIDS

By J.R. Rose-Copley News Service

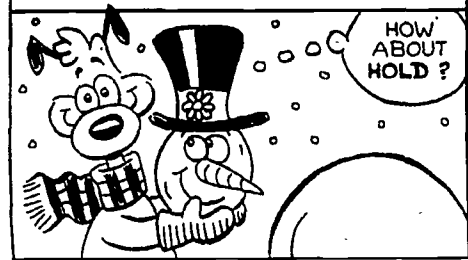
DRAW IT!

DRAW A HEAD ON THIS SNOWMAN...

HELP!!
I'VE LOST
MY HEAD!!



GIVE ME 5 RHYMES FOR COLD...

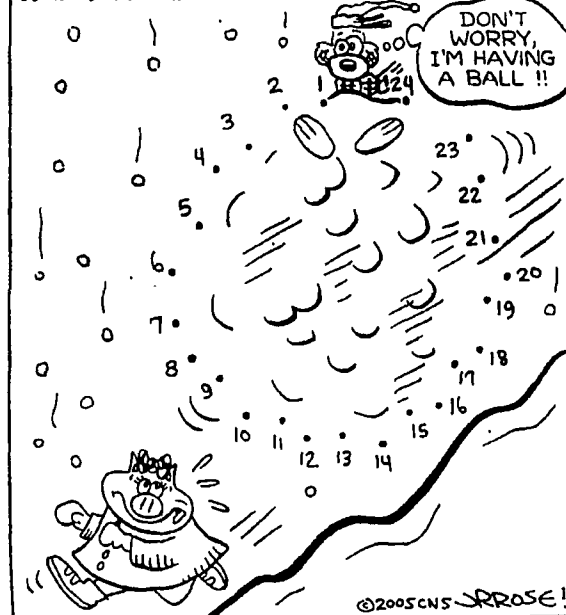


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WHAT DO SNOWMEN EAT FOR LUNCH?



Grammar Matters

by Patty Gibbons Saunier

Dear Grammar Matters:

We need to know the answers to the following questions that are always coming up in our office.

1. Is a comma needed in the date January, 2006?
2. Do you use a comma in a company name that has an ampersand? Is it Kellogg, Kellogg, & Myers?
3. Do you need to use a colon when a list follows? Example: Your resume should include: your objective, previous job experience, professional organizations, etc.

Do I need a colon before this list?



Answers:
1. No comma is needed when the day is not given. Use a comma when the month, day and year are given. January 6, 2006. Otherwise, it is just January 2006.
2. An ampersand is a punctuation mark that represents the conjunction and.
3. Do not use a colon following a verb or a preposition, even if a vertical or horizontal list follows it.
Therefore, there is no need to use a comma.

Nature Newswatch

Week of Dec. 11-17, 2005

Beachhead battles

Lumbering ashore after months at sea, bull elephant seals arrive with attitude on their breeding beaches. Fierce and bloody fights erupt over claims to areas where the females are likely to show later.

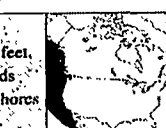


The preliminary competition among the males in December establishes a hierarchy in which the most dominant enjoy the greatest access to the females as they arrive. Inflating their trunk-like snouts with blood pressure and muscular action, the bulls bellow among themselves while clamoring for prospective mates.

Not that the females are immediately responsive to all their showy bluster, for shortly after they arrive in January, they give birth to single pups conceived during last winter's go-round. Only after the pups are weaned four weeks later will they be receptive to the bulls' pressing concerns. By March, most adults will have left the rookery, although their newly independent offspring may linger a month longer.

Northern elephant seal
Mitroina angustirostris Bulls: up to 18 feet,
5,000 pounds; cows up to 10 feet, 1,500 pounds
Habitat: open ocean, island and mainland shores
www.naturenewswatch.com

by Tim Herd © 2005



REAL ESTATE

DECOR SCORE Kitchen makeovers are hot topic nowadays

ROSE BENNETT GILBERT
Copley News Service

Q: Our kitchen is really small. No work island and low ceilings, not quite 8 feet. We are budgeting for a makeover in the spring. Meanwhile, I'm trying to collect good ideas to discuss with our remodeler. So please share any tips you may have.

A: Better yet, we'll pick the brains of an inspired professional kitchen designer, Melissa Siebold of Canterbury Design, who reorganized and opened up the small kitchen we show here. It, too, had low ceilings and limited floor space, plus, it would have to serve two avid cooks who enjoy playing amateur chef together.

To gain actual square footage, Siebold opened up an adjacent laundry room and turned it into a butler's pantry, where she could install a second sink. Then she took out the original kitchen pantry and wall ovens, replacing them with a 4-foot-square peninsula that offers much-needed counter space and also houses the microwave-convection oven.

Most dramatic and inspired, the designer had the low (8-foot) ceiling peeled off to reveal the joists. Painted white with bead-board installed between the joists, the ceiling gains both visual height and the country character the homeowners wanted. More bead-board accents the cabinetry (by Wood-Mode), and more country flavor comes in the Gothic-arched window now installed over the original kitchen sink.

The palette is neutral and natural, with the white cabinets, 2-inch-thick honed marble countertops, and hardwood floors, over

which that gleaming copper range hood casts a rich glow.

FYI, helpful hints and kitchen makeover how-tos are today's hot topic in home remodeling. Some of the many good sources you can check out for your idea collection include: www.wood-mode.com,

more than traditional TVs with the same size screen, warns Susan Dountas of Sauder, a manufacturer of ready-to-assemble home theaters and entertainment armatures.

Dountas cautions that it's "more important than ever before to

where they give a special glow to both the room and the homeowner.

Hand-screened wallpapers, decorative finishes and furniture, glorious fabrics and important accessories, handmade in the Alpha Workshops offer a helping hand to people living with HIV/AIDS. By teaching them the skills to make such decorative products, the workshop is providing life-saving jobs to the artisans, and remarkable, hand-made items for interior design projects. Just one example: New York designer Jamie Drake, whose clients include Mayor Michael Bloomberg's several private homes, also used Alpha Workshops handcrafts in the refurbishment of historic Gracie

Mansion in Manhattan.

Celebrating its 10th anniversary this year, the workshops are the brain- and heart-child of executive director Kenneth L. Wampler.

To see more home furnishings and learn how to acquire them for your own rooms, click on www.alphaworkshops.org. Rose Bennett Gilbert is the co-author of "Hampton Style" and associate editor of Country Decorating Ideas. Please send your questions to her at Copley News Service, P.O. Box 120190, San Diego, CA 92112-0190, or online at copleysd@copleynews.com.

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www.nkba.com and www.superkitchen.com.

Q: My husband is lusting after a super-big TV screen. We'll have to make room for a new entertainment center in the family room, and I want something antique, like an armoire or large bookcase. Is it logical to try to fit one of the new TVs in an antique?

A: You have a lot of variables to factor in here and not just the size of some of the new and huge TVs, which can have screens from 30 to 42 inches. The weight of today's TVs is also a major consideration. Sets with flat and wide screen technology weigh far

know the weight limit of an entertainment center or television stand before you try to marry it to your new TV." That goes for antique pieces, too. Sauder offers a guide to choosing the right piece that may help you determine if your antique is up to the job: click on "Entertainment Furniture" at www.sauder.com.

Want to beautify your home and do a beautiful thing for others in the process?

Furnishings from the Alpha Workshops in New York City are showing up in show houses and decorating projects by top interior designers across the country,

HOME ZONE Marmoleum could floor you

LINDA PESCATORE
Copley News Service

Linoleum is making a comeback. Actually, it never left. Forbo Flooring Inc. of Hazleton, Pa., has been making the natural floor covering for commercial use since 1978, and its European factories have been operating for more than 100 years. Forbo entered the U.S. consumer market a few years ago with Marmoleum, which it calls "seriously fun floors." Many modern floors and glues contain questionable ingredients, such as lead, chlorine and formaldehyde. Marmoleum is made from natural, biodegradable materials. It is resistant to dander, bacteria and dust mites, making it a good choice for allergy sufferers.

Linoleum is made from oxidized linseed oil combined with rosins and other raw materials, such as limestone or wood. The materials form linoleum granules, which Forbo then presses onto jute backing to form Marmoleum. The process is energy-efficient and ecologically sensitive, using no heavy metals or harsh additives and produc-

CONTINUED TO
HOME ZONE...Page 25

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REAL ESTATE

A GREENER VIEW

'Tis the season for poinsettias, the Christmas flower

GARDEN TIP

Poinsettias that go the distance

To better the odds that this most popular holiday plant will make it through the season, consider these options:

CHOOSE WISELY

■ Shop at a florist, greenhouse or nursery for plants that are of high-quality, a newer variety or atypically sized. High quality plants have dark green leaves from the top all the way to the bottom. Skip plants that look dry, have bracts (a specialized leaf seen as the colorful part of a poinsettia) with dried and dead edges, have lower leaves that are turning yellow or fall off with a tug.

WATERING

■ Keep the soil evenly damp and away from heat-generating appliances (TV, computer, refrigerator).

oven, etc.), which will shorten its flowering lifetime. A dry plant will begin losing leaves.

INSECTS

■ Before you buy, check your home for the most troublesome insects to control: white flies and spider mites. Should they be spotted, wash them off with a pyrethrum-based insecticide or malathion.

Make sure leaves are free from white flies and mites.

ENVIRONMENT

■ Do not expose the plant to near-freezing temperatures, drafts or direct sunlight.

Look for healthy, developing bracts which appear to be healthy against the plant's dark green leaves.

Copley News Service / Pete Chenard

JEFF RUGG
Copley News Service

The flower most connected with Christmas is the poinsettia. Florists do a lot of research on their products and their customers; they know that if you only buy flowers once a year, your purchase will be a poinsettia.

Eighty percent of poinsettias purchased are by women. Most are college-educated and have moderate incomes. The more money they make, the more poinsettias they will buy. The poinsettia's popularity is growing with senior citizens and declining in the younger age groups. Slightly less than half the poinsettias are given away.

Poinsettias are beautiful plants that come in many sizes, from a 4-inch plant that can be worn as a corsage to 6-foot trees.

A survey of poinsettia growers shows they produce about 80 percent red ones, but a survey of purchases found the red ones go home at about a 50 percent rate. People like the newer colors.

This fall, poinsettia breeders are testing 109 varieties at three universities as part of a trial program. Some of the new ones come in a variety of purple, blue and green hues, as well as the older orange, speckled and striped colors available in recent years.

It takes several years of testing to bring any flowers to market and there are many red cultivars of poinsettia, but the consumer sees little difference in them. Since the small, 6-inch potted plant is seen as a loss leader by many retailers, they will not spend much money on them. Because of the low profit margin on poinsettias, many growers are not growing them anymore.

If you want high-quality new varieties or different sizes of

plants, you will have to shop at a florist, greenhouse or nursery, not at the grocery or hardware store. Poinsettias provide a bright focal point indoors when the landscape is so drab outdoors. The colorful part of a poinsettia is a specialized leaf called the bract. The real flowers are found in yellow and red clusters at the end of the branch.

When choosing a blooming poinsettia, look for the following characteristics: Good quality plants have dark green leaves all the way to the bottom, no dead spots on the leaves, and true flowers that are just starting to bloom. If the yellow powder-like pollen is dispersed and dried up, or if the true flowers are dried up, skip that plant. If any of the bracts have dried and dead edges, skip that plant, too. If the lower leaves are turning yellow or fall off, green, with just a slight tug, go to the next plant. If you turn over a leaf and it is covered with small white insects, do not buy it.

A problem with some new poinsettia cultivars is that they are brittle and lose branches easily. Look for plants with vertical stems and few horizontal ones, especially if it is going to be taken home in a paper sleeve. Some growers install a plastic ring on the pot that supports the branches about 5 inches above the pot rim. Speaking of paper sleeves, don't buy a plant that has been sitting in the sleeve for a few days, as the lower leaves will begin falling off from lack of sunlight.

Plan for the right day to buy your plant. Do not expose the plant to near-freezing temperatures while taking the plant from the store or leaving it in the car while doing more shopping. Once home, don't expose the plant to drafts of any kind - especially plants on the floor - or to direct sunlight.

Keep the soil evenly damp all the time. Check the plant daily at first, until you determine how much water it will need; big plants and pots with several plants use a lot of water. They prefer temperatures from 65 to 75; cooler temperatures makes the flowers last longer. Putting it near a heat-generating appliance (TV, photocopier, etc.) will shorten its flowering lifetime.

If it dries out, it will begin losing leaves. If it is overwatered or left to sit in water, the roots will die, then the whole plant will die. Poinsettias are members of the spurge family. They contain a milky sap that can cause a rash, but the flowers and bracts are not poisonous, as many people believe. They are native to Mexico and Central America, where they grow as shrubs to more than 6 feet tall. The Aztecs cultivated them hundreds of years ago.

In the 1800s, the United States' first ambassador to Mexico was Joel Poinsett. He was also a botanist, and he brought the plants that now bear his name to his greenhouse in South Carolina. Until recently, poinsettias were finicky when brought home. They would lose their bracts at the slightest change in temperature or watering. Taking them home on a cold day could do them in. The new ones have much longer-lasting bracts, sometimes even until spring.

Although poinsettias are easy to grow in a greenhouse, they can have problems. Any crop that is grown in large quantities can have insect or disease outbreaks. The worst insects to control in your home are white fly and spider mites. Both are pests on poinsettias, and you should look for them before you buy the plant. Do not use insecticidal soaps on poinsettias; it is more likely to kill the plant than the pests. Spider mites can be washed off with water from the shower. White flies can be controlled with a pyrethrum-based insecticide or malathion.

Several other plants make great indoor decorations in the winter. Try cyclamen, azaleas, hydrangea, miniature rose, orchids, African violets, anthurium and any others that your florist recommends. There should be no reason you do not enjoy fresh flowers all winter long.

E-mail questions to Jeff Rugg at info@greenview.com.
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REAL ESTATE

CONTINUED FROM
HOME ZONE...Page 23

ing little waste. Marmoleum comes in sheets and tiles, which are installed with solvent-free adhesives, but Marmoleum click panels snap into place without glue, so they can be walked on immediately.

What makes Marmoleum fun is the variety of colors and patterns that it can inspire. Check out the company's Web site, www.themarmoleumstore.com, for some wild checkerboards, bold color blocks, wandering vines and even some trompe l'oeil area rugs. Neutrals are available, of course, but if you want a red embossed crocodile pattern, you can have it.

Depending on the condition of your subfloor and the intricacy of the design you order, Marmoleum can be installed for between \$4.50 and \$9 per square foot. The click option retails for about \$5-\$6 per square foot for

materials only. Forbo guarantees its residential flooring against defects and excessive wear and water damage for 25 years. To find a dealer or for more information call (866) MARMOLEUM.

Other manufacturers of natural linoleum floors include Armstrong (www.armstrong.com), Torlys (www.torlys.com) and Domco (www.domco.com). And do make sure that you're looking at genuine, all-natural linoleum when shopping. The word has inaccurately been used for all kinds of sheet flooring, including vinyl. Keep in mind that rubber- or latex-backed mats are not compatible with linoleum floors, because an antioxidant chemical used in the backing can stain the flooring.

IKEA'S IDEAS FOR HOLIDAY STYLE

Ikea, that popular purveyor of Scandinavian style with

small price tags, has put together some nice pieces to decorate your dining room for the holidays - whatever holiday your family celebrates.

They have a wide selection of ornaments and accessories for a traditional Christmas on Dec. 25; blue, white and silver for a happy Hanukkah, from Dec. 25 to Jan. 1; black, green, orange and red settings for a festive seven-day Kwanzaa celebration, beginning Dec. 26; and red and white to ring in the Chinese New Year on Jan. 29. Most of the items they've used are not holiday-spe-



CONTINUED TO
HOME ZONE...Next Page

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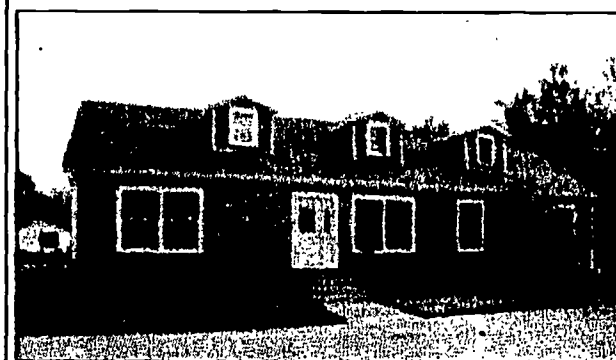
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HOME IDEAS

CONTINUED FROM
HOME ZONE...Page 25

cific and can be used year-round.

Ikea's prices let you have a merry holiday and still have funds left for your gift list. You can set up a Chinese New Year spread on a low coffee table that retails for just \$39.99, decked with white porcelain bowls, just \$2.99 each. Dress up your Christmas table with a \$29.99 steel chandelier overhead, \$2.99 hand-woven red cotton place mats and \$5.99 lantern-style tea-light holders in assorted colors, including red, green and white. Blue glassware is perfect for a sparkly table during the Jewish Festival of Lights; a glass bowl is just \$2.99, drinking glasses are \$2.49 apiece. A colorful Kwanzaa table can include their banana leaf place mats, \$4.50 each, earthenware bowls for \$2.49 each and a 29-inch-high bouquet made of dried plants for just \$3.99. Visit an Ikea store to see their holiday tables on display, or visit the company's Web site, www.ikea.com.

SPRUCING UP

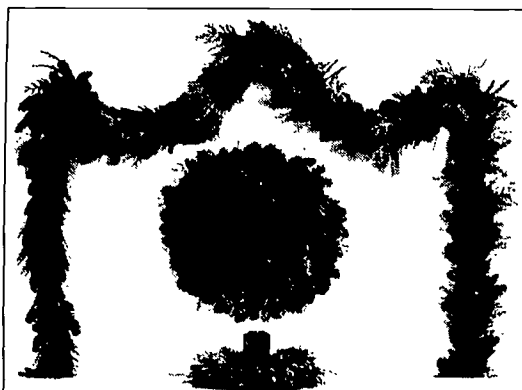
If you're pining for the fresh aroma of evergreens to fill your home with holiday spirit, order some instant Christmas cheer from ProFlowers. Their Deck the Halls package includes a fresh evergreen wreath with a large red bow, a centerpiece with a 6-inch red candle and a 20-foot garland, all made from fragrant noble fir, cedar and pine, lodgepole pine cones and sprinkled with faux red berries, all for \$99.98.

The company has a nice selection of Christmas flowers, too, with most priced between \$29.99 and \$39.99, including Santa's Boots, a cute pair of poinsettias sitting in a pair of red and white rubber boots. One of my favorites is Holiday Tulips, a bouquet of brilliant red, white and pink tulips - a rare treat during wintertime - and it's just \$29.99.

ProFlowers claims to provide flowers that are five to nine days fresher than what is available locally. They unconditionally guarantee their arrangements to stay fresh for seven days. To order, call (800) PROFLOWERS or visit www.proflowers.com. Linda Pescatore is an editor with Copley News Service and a former magazine writer and newspaper editor.

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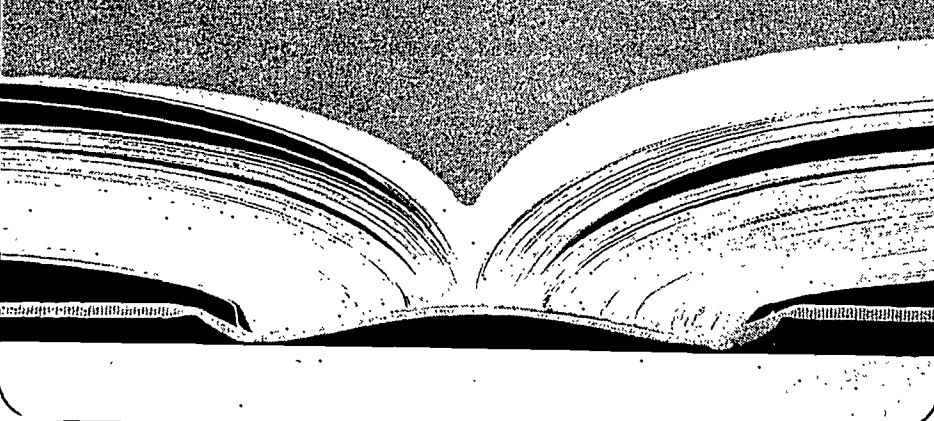
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AUTO SCENE

Third-generation Miata Will put a smile on your face

MARK MAYNARD
Copley News Service

I don't see how any work can get done by anybody who buys a Miata - new or used.

I was out of the office more than I was in on a recent week testing the 2006 Mazda MX-5 Miata. Any excuse to go for a ride... And every time I test a Miata, the "phenomenon" reoccurs. I get in and drop the top. After a few blocks of shifting gears, the Miata grin comes back. I turn-up the radio volume and start moving to the tunes. If I start out with a frown, it soon turns around. This isn't a car, it's a lifestyle. "Yeah, you wear it," said one owner who has autocrossed his '99.

Yet Miata ownership isn't about what you are being seen in. It's how the world looks through the windshield - like everything's gonna be all right. It's that Miata magic and, somehow, Mazda hasn't screwed it up after 16 years. The 2006 model is the third generation and it's all new.

This car charmed the United States when it debuted in 1989, and it is remarkable that every generation since has gotten a bit better. The designers, engineers and marketers have worked to preserve the sweet spot to this little icon.

As the car has evolved, it has gotten larger and more expensive, and Mazda stakes out a broad price range with five models.

The base Club Spec model starts at just less than \$21,000 and goes up by \$1,000 increments for the MX-5 and Touring models, which come with a 5-speed manual transmission (no automatic option), a 170-horsepower, 2.0-liter four-cylinder and

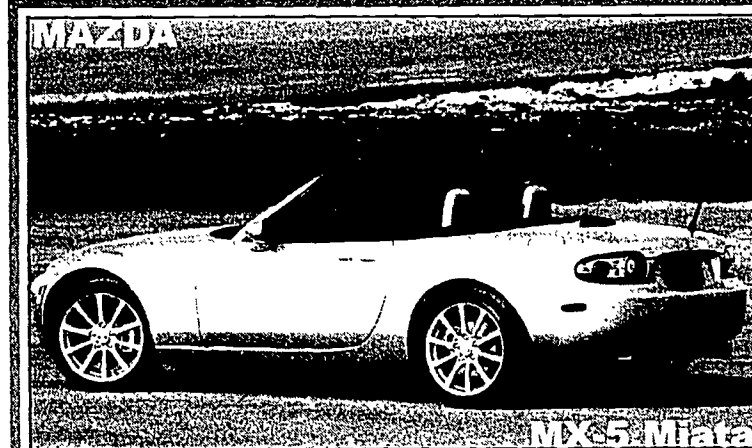
16-inch wheels.

The Sport (\$23,495), Grand Touring (\$24,995) and Third Generation Limited Edition (\$27,260) come with a six-speed manual, the same engine and 17-inch wheels. A six-speed sport automatic transmission with manual shift mode adds \$1,100.

Today's test car, a Grand Touring with manual shift, had an as-tested price of \$25,495 and was up-fitted with the Suspension Package (\$500),

Dimensionally, the hood is more rounded and a bit shorter. And the top's been recontoured and refolded. The new Z-fold function still drops with one-hand effort, and it locks into place and - this is so slick - integrates as a tonneau cover. It goes back into place without a big grunt and snort.

And it's so easy to enjoy the open air. In the cool of the mornings, I'd leave the windows up and crank the heat.



which added Bilstein shocks, limited-slip differential and a stiffer ride. And stiffer does not mean harsher.

The third-generation car is an inch and a half longer and wider, a half inch taller than last year's model and packaged on a wheelbase that is 2 1/2 inches longer.

The size allows more elbow room and seat travel. The extended wheelbase helps highway ride quality. It's not as choppy.

New exterior bulges and fender flares give a contemporary hot-shot appearance that might bring more sales from males, but it shouldn't repel any of the car's appeal to either sex, young and old.

In afternoons, the windows go down and the hat comes out.

Air flow with the top down is smoother than before, and a small flip-up windscreen helps to trim buffeting. With the windows up and the top down, conversations can be held at comfortable levels, hats are not whipped off by unruly gusts (as long as your head isn't over the windshield header) and the seven-speaker Bose audio system can be enjoyed loud without distortion.

Making the car bigger didn't make it much heavier, just 22 pounds. Weight-saving aluminum is used in the hood, deck lid, engine frame, suspension parts and rear brake calipers.

The 2.0-liter engine is a generous upgrade from last year's 1.8-liter engine. Acceleration is quick with plenty of pulling power right off the line. But it's not so powerful that it obliterates the pleasure of car and driver working through the gears, listening to the engine and feeling the suspension load and unload. And dual exhaust tips are a good visual.

The limited-slip differential in the suspension upgrade really helps the back end stick when you dive into a corner then roll on the power. No more fishtailing and tire squealing. Well, not too much tire squealing, which is part of the fun. Balance front to rear is 50/50 at the curb.

Put a fist on the stubby shifter and you can pivot joystick-style through the gears, never missing a shift. The new six-speed manual transmission has ultra-short throws, triple-cone synchronizers that ease shift effort, and low-friction bushings and a guide plate for shifting precision.

And there's a whole lot of shifting going on with the six speeds to manage the power. Fortunately, there's enough torque that you can cruise as slow as 12 to 15 mph in third gear without bogging the engine. And even at 65 mph in sixth gear, there's a tug of power for passing. The engine spins a little fast, but you don't hear it with the top down.

The longer wheelbase - even with the stiffer suspension - really helps the quality of the interstate ride, which was pretty harsh on the early cars.

The interior is snug, but it seems about right for multi-mile comfort. The driving position seems more upright than before, but easily suits a 6-foot-2-inch driver. Chrome, silver and leather mix tastefully, particular-

ly with the up-level saddle leather in the Grand Touring model.

It might be nice to have some padding on the hard shell on the center console, which doubles as the sliding cover to dual cup holders. My elbow was feeling it after about 175 miles on the interstate.

Storage places are useful, including another cup holder in each door panel, locking glove box, a locking box that holds 10 CDs between the seat backs and a small box for sunglasses or a cell phone on the driver's side at the base of the instrument panel.

Mazda dumped the spare tire in favor of a "puncture repair kit," a move that added space and saved weight. The trunk floor now has a "well" about the size of a case of small water bottles that helps keep items, such as grocery bags or a briefcase, secure as the driver zips home. That was a great idea, especially when the first-generation car's trunk could barely hold a bikini and no beach chair.

The worst fit of the redesign is an attempt to rename the car MX-5. For those of us who have followed along with each generation, this car can only be the Miata. When the coupe version comes along, let it be the MX-5.

This Miata's nearly perfect, but to be safe let's call it "ideal." Mazda is already planning the next-generation car, so perfection could still be a few years off.

Mark Maynard is driving in cyberspace at mark.maynard@uniontrib.com. Visit Copley News Service at www.copleynews.com.



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