

INDEPENDENCE PARK COMMUNITY

VOICE



COMMUNITY

Heather Aitken, Our Best Friend

Susan Dowd and Roberta Wilk

For weeks now, since we first learned of Heather's death, walks in our beautiful neighborhood, reflections, breaths, and the very leaves on the trees speak her name.

Where to begin? Heather's roots in Vancouver with inventive, hardworking parents and three sisters? Her time in Chicago and in Independence Park where she and John created GIPNA? Her move to River North, giving her access to walking and exploring all over her beloved Chicago (and especially the Art Institute, where she was a docent for a number of years)?

Heather took her genetic gifts and developed them to the highest level, expanding their reach and depth to become accomplished in a multitude of areas—mother, gourmet cook, calligrapher, community builder and organizer, stylist, wine connoisseur, gardener, photographer.

Heather earned her degree in art after her son, Cole, was grown. She was a brilliant photographer. When Heather looked through the lens of her camera, she found beauty in



things no one else saw. Her artistry was very important to John and Heather's graphic arts company, Beat Studios.

We've known Heather and John ever since they moved into the magnificent home on Ridgeway and Byron. Then by some magical intersection of our worlds, Heather, Susan, and Roberta became "Best Friends"—a tag Heather dubbed for our 3-way texts and calls. We would text weekly, share grandkid stories and photos, and occasionally have a video chat.

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NEIGHBORHOOD

Wine & Cheese Party, December 2

Patti Kimbel

Time: 4:00 p.m.-7:00 p.m.

**Where: Color Club located at
4146 N. Elston Avenue**

**Cost: \$55 per person, \$65 per
person at the door**

Ooh la la! Say "oui" to a night in Paris with GIPNA and help us celebrate the 10th Annual Wine and Cheese Party this year! Last year, we broke a record with over 150 in attendance so don't delay your purchase. Due to rave reviews, the GIPNA board is thrilled to host the event for the second year in a row at the Color Club ballroom, located within stumbling distance at 4146 N. Elston. The owners have graciously offered to waive their rental fees to support our worthy cause. This is a perfect backdrop for mingling with neighbors old and new while sneaking in your bids on the silent auction items. We will have the return of the Neighbor's Wine Baskets and the good ol' cork game so be sure to bring your singles too!

Plan to partake in a delectable



assortment of French wines carefully selected by our resident wine connoisseur accompanied with delicious cheeses at this event. Our new neighborhood chocolatier, Katherine Anne Confections, has graciously offered to provide us with delicious chocolate truffles which will be expertly paired with our vino selections. In addition, there may be a few surprise beverages to delight your senses.

You can feel extra good while having all this fun because the total proceeds help to support the Independence Park Farmers Market and the John B. Murphy School. Plus, GIPNA is a 501(c)(3) organization so your ticket price is tax deductible minus the value of goods received (\$30). C'est bonne!

Buy your tickets now at <https://gipna.org/wineandcheese> or scan the QR code on the back page. See you on Dec 2!

The next GIPNA Board meetings will be Tues., November 7, and Tues., December 5 at 7 p.m. Join us online via Google Meets <https://meet.google.com/nkn-dcgc-tfd>. This link is also on the gipna.org website under "Events."

COMMUNITY EVENTS



NOVEMBER

MON., NOV. 6—30th Ward Night, 5-7 p.m., 5714A W. Belmont. Meet with Alderwoman Ruth Cruz to discuss problems, ideas, etc.

MON., NOV. 6—AFAC General Meeting, 6:30 p.m., Athletic Field Park.

TUES., NOV. 7—GIPNA Board Meeting, 7 p.m., <https://meet.google.com/nkn-dcgc-tfd>

WED., NOV. 8—CAPS Beat 1732 Meeting, 6:45 p.m., Athletic Field Park.

FRI., NOV. 10—Carlson Trivia Night, 7 p.m. See article on page 9.

SUN., NOV. 12—Irving Park Fine Arts Concert Series, 3 p.m. See article on page 9.

MON., NOV. 13—30th Ward Night, 5-7 p.m., 5714A W. Belmont. Meet with Alderwoman Ruth Cruz to discuss problems, ideas, etc.

MON., NOV. 13—30th Ward Night, 5-7 p.m., 5714A W. Belmont. Meet with Alderwoman Ruth Cruz to discuss problems, ideas, etc.

FRI., NOV. 17—Murphy Elementary School Community Sing, 8 a.m.

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

TUES., NOV. 21—17th District Police Station Senior Citizen Community Meeting, 11 a.m., 4650 N. Pulaski Rd. Refreshments served. Doors open at 10 a.m. Please RSVP to attend: Maryjane Parks at 312/742-4588 ext. 114 or email maryjane.parks@chicagopolice.org

TUES., NOV. 28—17th District Senior Holiday Luncheon, La Villa Restaurant, 3638 N. Pulaski Rd., 11 a.m. Please do not arrive before 10 a.m. The doors will open at 10 a.m. Lunch will be served at 11:30 a.m. Cost: \$30. RSVP: call Elise Schag 773/286-0423 or Office Maryjane Parks 312/742-4588.

MON., NOV. 27—30th Ward Night, 5-7 p.m., 5714A W. Belmont. Meet with Alderwoman Ruth Cruz to discuss problems, ideas, etc.

DECEMBER

SAT., DEC. 2—Wine/Cheese Party, 4-7 p.m., The Color Club. See article on the front page and back cover for details.

MON., DEC. 4—30th Ward Night, 5-7 p.m., 5714A W. Belmont. Meet with Alderwoman Ruth Cruz to discuss problems, ideas, etc.

TUES., DEC. 5—GIPNA Board Meeting, 7 p.m., <https://meet.google.com/nkn-dcgc-tfd>

TUES., DEC. 5—Blood drive at Disney II School. See disneyilmagnet.org for further info.

SUN., DEC. 10—Irving Park Fine Arts Concert Series, 2 p.m. See article on page 9.

MON., DEC. 11—30th Ward Night, 5-7 p.m., 5714A W. Belmont. Meet with Alderwoman Ruth Cruz to discuss problems, ideas, etc.

MON., DEC. 11—GIPNA'S Holiday Cookie Exchange, 6:30-8:30 p.m., The Cabin, 4104 N. Pulaski Ave. See article on page 4.

WED., DEC. 13—No CAPS Beat 1732 meeting in December.

MON., DEC. 18—30th Ward Night, 5-7 p.m., 5714A W. Belmont. Meet with Alderwoman Ruth Cruz to discuss problems, ideas, etc.

MON., DEC. 18—IPAC Monthly Meeting, 7 p.m., Independence Park Fieldhouse.

NOVIEMBRE

LUNES, NOV. 6—Noche del Distrito 30, de 5 a 7 p.m., 5714A W. Belmont. Reunirse con la Concejal Ruth Cruz para discutir problemas, ideas, etc.

LUNES, NOV. 6—Asamblea General de AFAC, 18:30 p.m., Parque del Campo Atlético.

MARTES, NOV. 7—Reunión de la junta directiva de GIPNA, 7 p.m., <https://meet.google.com/nkn-dcgc-tfd>

MIÉRCOLES, NOV. 8—Reunión CAPS Beat 1732, 6:45 p.m., Athletic Field Park.

VIERNES, NOV. 10—Noche de trivia de Carlson, 7 p.m. Ver artículo en la página 9.

DOM., NOV. 12—Serie de conciertos de Bellas Artes de Irving Park, 3 p.m. Ver artículo en la página 9.

LUNES, NOV. 13—Noche del Distrito 30, de 5 a 7 p.m., 5714A W. Belmont. Reunirse con la Concejal Ruth Cruz para discutir problemas, ideas, etc.

LUNES, NOV. 20—Noche del Distrito 30, de 5 a 7 p.m., 5714A W. Belmont. Reunirse con la Concejal Ruth Cruz para discutir problemas, ideas, etc.

VIERNES, NOV. 17—Canto comunitario de la Escuela Primaria Murphy, 8 a.m.

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

MARTES, NOV. 21—Reunión comunitaria para personas mayores de la comisaría de policía del distrito 17, 11 a.m., 4650 N. Pulaski Rd. Se sirven refrigerios. Las puertas se abren a las 10 a.m. Confirme su asistencia para asistir: Maryjane Estaciona al 312/742-4588 ext. 114 o envíe un correo electrónico a maryjane.parks@chicagopolice.org

MARTES, NOV. 28—Almuerzo festivo para personas mayores del distrito 17, restaurante La Villa, 3638 N. Pulaski Rd., 11 a.m. No llegue antes de las 10 a.m. Las puertas se abrirán a las 10 a.m. El almuerzo se servirá a las 11:30 a.m. Costo: \$30. Confirme su asistencia: llame a Elise Schag al 773/286-0423 o a la oficina Maryjane Parks al 312/742-4588.

LUNES, NOV. 27—Noche del Distrito 30, de 5 a 7 p.m., 5714A W. Belmont. Reunirse con la Concejal Ruth Cruz para discutir problemas, ideas, etc.

DICIEMBRE

SÁB., DIC. 2—Fiesta de vino y queso, de 4 a 7 p.m., The Color Club. Consulte el artículo de la portada y la contraportada para obtener más detalles.

LUNES, DIC. 4—Noche del Distrito 30, de 5 a 7 p.m., 5714A W. Belmont. Reunirse con la Concejal Ruth Cruz para discutir problemas, ideas, etc.

MARTES, DIC. 5—Reunión de la junta directiva de GIPNA, 7 p.m., <https://meet.google.com/nkn-dcgc-tfd>

MARTES, DIC. 5—Donación de sangre en el Colegio Disney II. Visita disneyilmagnet.org para obtener más información.

DOM., DIC. 10—Serie de conciertos de Bellas Artes de Irving Park, 2 p.m. Ver artículo en la página 9.

LUNES, DIC. 11—Noche del Distrito 30, de 5 a 7 p.m., 5714A W. Belmont. Reunirse con la Concejal Ruth Cruz para discutir problemas, ideas, etc.

LUNES, DIC. 11—Intercambio de galletas navideñas de GIPNA, de 6:30 a 8:30 p.m., The Cabin, 4104 N. Pulaski Ave. Consulte el artículo en la página 9.

MIÉRCOLES, DIC. 13—Reunión No CAPS Beat 1732 en diciembre.

LUNES, DIC. 18—Noche del Distrito 30, de 5 a 7 p.m., 5714A W. Belmont. Reunirse con la Concejal Ruth Cruz para discutir problemas, ideas, etc.

LUNES, DIC. 18—Reunión mensual del IPAC, 7 p.m., Independence Park Fieldhouse.

COLOR CLUB

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

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This communication was a stay-in-touch necessity especially after Heather and John moved to California. We called ourselves the "Six Some," who enjoyed getting



together for birthdays, the theater, the Art Institute, marching for women's rights, and getaway weekends. The Dowds and the Aitkens even took a trip to South Africa and Italy.

Then the call came from Heather that she was feeling ill. It took weeks to diagnose her acute myeloid leukemia. We watched in amazement how Heather rolled into high gear, with John, to become her own advocate. They asked questions of the medical community. They worked in sync to fight this devil. She lived PMA—positive mental attitude. And, because of her PMA, there were many victories—the major one being the stem cell transplant from Heather's sister, Wendy. This worked for 19 months, and then our courageous, beautiful friend was hospitalized in mid-August and diagnosed with GVHD (graft-versus-host-disease). The Best Friends had a running communique on practically a daily basis, and other than fatigue, Heather was interested, positive, and even joked a bit. And then on August 30, the texting ceased. Our beautiful friend left this life on September 1, 2023.

We have lost a Best Friend, and our communities have lost a kind, generous, imaginative, and magnetic woman.

INDEPENDENCE PARK COMMUNITY VOICE

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

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

Editorial: Carolyn Chandler

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For submissions for January/February 2024 Issue:

Editorial Deadline: Dec. 10, 2023

Advertising Deadline: Dec. 10, 2023

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

E-MAIL: INFO@GIPNA.ORG

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

WEBSITE: WWW.GIPNA.ORG

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

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

Join GIPNA on Facebook

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

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3800 Lawndale - Mark and Casey Watkins
3900 Lawndale - Cy Clausen
3600, 3700 Monticello - Pat Clark
3800 Monticello - Barbara Shaw
3900 Monticello - Cindy Schuch
3700 Ridgeway - Dawn and Josh Urban
3800 Ridgeway - Karen Fontanetta
3900 Ridgeway - John and Sang Kuczura
3800 Springfield - Roseann Seablom

FUN(DRAISER)

Add a Little Color to Your Front Lawn!

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



COMMUNITY

Heather Aitken Passes Away

Heather Aitken, longtime Independence Park friend and neighbor, passed away on Friday, September 1, in California with her husband John and son Cole holding her hands. She had been battling complications due to leukemia.

Heather was definitely a force of nature with her dazzling smile, soft Canadian voice, and easy laugh belying an incredibly strong personality and work ethic. She was president of secretary from April 2003 to June 2007, and an active board member from June 2003 to April 2013. In addition to volunteering with GIPNA, she also was the CAPS Beat Meeting Facilitator, Peer Jury Coordinator, and Court Advocate. Her hard work and obsession made the Ridgeway Block Parties an extravaganza for the kids. The block parties included pony rides, a dunk tank, and even the Jesse White Tumblers. She handled all these volunteer projects with grace, poise, and humor. Rest in peace, Heather, from the GIPNA Board and your many Independence Park friends.



COMMUNITY

Have an Idea for the Newsletter?

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

Holiday Cookie Exchange

Christopher Rose

Want to gather with friends, have a few drinks, and swap some great holiday sweets and recipes? Then join GIPNA for the first Holiday Cookie Exchange. We will rendezvous at The Cabin at 4104 N. Pulaski Road on Monday, December 11, 2023, from 6:30 to 8:30 p.m. The Cabin is opening solely for the GIPNA Cookie Exchange, so let's show them some love by purchasing a cocktail and enjoying the merriment.

You do NOT have to be a GIPNA member to attend, but you should bring a sweet treat such as cookies or candies. We ask that everyone bring 5 dozen of one sweet treat to swap.

While we will sample goodies

throughout the evening, everyone that brings a sweet treat will be provided with a goodie box to create an assortment of goodies to take home at the end of the event. If you're a major baker, and want to make two different kinds—5 dozen of each—you'll get two boxes to go home with.

If you're not bringing Grandma's extra super secret recipe, bring a copy (or copies) of your recipe so that others can photograph it or take a copy home with them. If you've got the recipe locked in a safe... we understand.

Please let us know you're coming by RSVPing at your earliest convenience at <https://tinyurl.com/GIPNACookieExchange>.

For more information regarding the exchange please email Christopher@gipna.org or Bobbie@gipna.org.

What Are Your Neighbors Grateful For?

Carolyn Chandler

This past month we ran our first neighborhood poll using the GIPNA email list. Because this issue of the Voice leads up to Thanksgiving, we wanted to know what people are grateful for in and around the neighborhood.

Many people mentioned the strong sense of community, the friendliness of the neighbors, and the lovely trees we have, which leads to more gratitude for the volunteers and leaders who helped add almost 60 more recently. There was also a lot of appreciation for the Farmers Market, which just finished up another wonderful season.

We had a great response for the poll! We can't print them all, but here are some snippets from a few of the comments shared:

The Nature

Jennifer Kotz: "I'm grateful for the trees, the landscaping, and the beauty of our neighborhood. I love nothing more than walking around and taking it in."

Amber Golob: "I am grateful for the lovely walks among the beautiful trees and architecture... there is nothing like pulling off of Elston or Irving and the feeling of peace and quiet that ensues. We are so close to the bustling city, yet it feels like a small town once you enter our neighborhood."

The People (and Pets)

Kitty Shanahan: "I am grateful, very grateful for my neighbors. I feel I could ask for help from most of them in any situation that I might have trouble handling myself. I love greeting everyone on my street as they pass my porch during

dog-walking times."

Roberta and Ken: "It's been a privilege for us as long-time residents of Independence Park to know our neighbors... we can call them friends."

Dakota: "Differences are well tolerated, and the community is organized unlike so many others. Also, the dogs. They are many, and they are wonderful!!"

Scott Dewey: "The generosity of the people, whether it's volunteering their time, donating to the latest cause, or helping each other out. Independence Park is in a class by itself."

Neighborhood Institutions/Events

April: "The people in this neighborhood who are creating strong neighborhood organizations and bringing us together. The inclusive nature of their work."

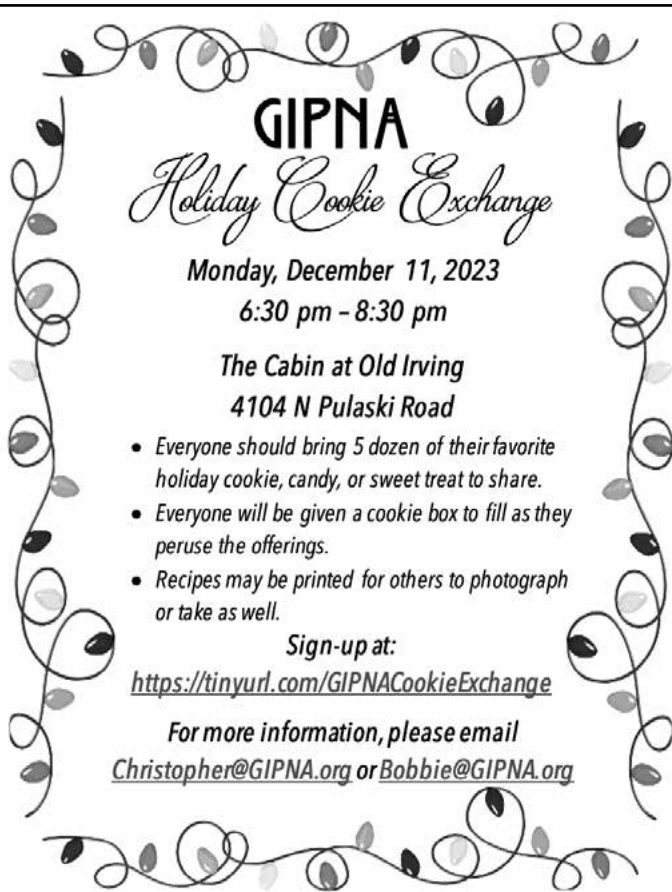
Sue: "...the Farmers Market, block parties, little libraries sprinkled throughout, J.T.'s, Alps, Buona Terra, the Voice newsletter, neighborhood book club, neighbors who volunteer to make this a great place to live, just to name a few."

Dave Madlener: "I am grateful for my church, St. Edwards. The parish is so welcoming and the priests give thoughtful homilies. There are many activities to be involved with."

Anonymous: "I love how neighbors are always activating the playground and the green through play! Speaking of play, I'm grateful for Stay N Play Cafe and how warm and welcoming everyone who works there is."

Stephen B: "I'm grateful for having a strong sense of community tied to our shared resources (especially park and library) and supported through our active neighborhood associations. My spouse and I love the Sunday Farmers Market!"

Thank you to everyone who shared in the poll! We'll be running another one for our next issue, which will cover January and February. Though it seems a long way away now, Winter is Coming. So take a moment to share



GIPNA
Holiday Cookie Exchange

Monday, December 11, 2023
6:30 pm - 8:30 pm

The Cabin at Old Irving
4104 N Pulaski Road

- Everyone should bring 5 dozen of their favorite holiday cookie, candy, or sweet treat to share.
- Everyone will be given a cookie box to fill as they peruse the offerings.
- Recipes may be printed for others to photograph or take as well.

Sign-up at:
<https://tinyurl.com/GIPNACookieExchange>

For more information, please email
Christopher@GIPNA.org or Bobbie@GIPNA.org

the answer to this question now, or sometime before December 10:

What traditions do you have around the neighborhood that bring you joy during the long Chicago winter?

Is it hot cocoa at a cafe? A certain neighborhood event? A favorite snowy stroll? Let us know by using the QR code below or visiting this link: <https://tinyurl.com/3m23c2x6>



NEIGHBORHOOD

Bright Yellow Banners!

Dickie Nichols

Thank you to the four new GIPNA Street banner sponsors:

The Alps

Buona Terra Restaurant

Patrick, Stephanie, and Ella Rose Adalind

3600-3700 Monticello Neighbors

If you're interested in sponsoring a street banner to help beautify our neighborhood, please go to GIPNA.org and click on "Street Banners" to order your own personalized banner.



NEIGHBORHOOD

Kickball Crowns New Victors

Sue Ryan

Team Monticello came up short in its bid to defend its kickball title on September 9 at Independence Park. After defeating The Electors (State Rep Lindsey LaPointe and teammates), Team Monticello fell to Megan Mathias Law Office which was crowned Kickball Champions for 2023. Stellar pitching from Megan, combined with some powerhouse kicking and strong defense from teammates contributed to the win. Team Lawndale-Hamlin showed grit but had to settle for fourth place, though Ben Morris brought on cheers with a homerun to right field.

It was a picture-perfect day: sunny skies, temps in the low 70s, and neighbors out cheering for one another to win... or perhaps to lose. Much of the fun was neighbors getting to know one another, especially for the combination Lawndale-Hamlin Team (many of whom met one another for the first time).

Amy Mastroianni had the idea for a kickball tournament three years ago and as with most volunteer organizations, the

person who suggests something generally is rewarded with being the designated lead. Amy recruited players, secured the fields, coordinated sponsorships, ordered the t-shirts, promoted the event, and organized volunteers. A huge thank you to Amy for making the Third Annual Kickball Tournament a success.

As always, a huge thanks goes to Chris Cunningham, owner of J.T.'s Genuine Sandwich Shop, and Golden Leaf Liquors for being the primary sponsors of the event. LA Fitness provided each member of the winning team with a one month pass to its clubs, and Big League Burgers and Chicken Works and Salad Company donated gift certificates.

Funds raised go toward the Farmers Market and maintenance of the community gardens. If you weren't able to play this year, come join next year and experience the fun and perhaps take home some bragging rights.



NEIGHBORHOOD

Thank You, GIPNA Members

Last month was membership month, a time when many neighbors join GIPNA or renew their memberships. We are grateful to everyone who supports our neighborhood activities by becoming members

or by donating to the association. Because of people like you, we're able to do things like hold the Farmers Market, maintain our neighborhood gardens, and provide a printed "thank you" in this very newsletter!

If your name wasn't listed in the last issue as a "member in good standing" and you think it should have been, please send a message to membership@gipna.org.

If you missed renewing or would like to donate to GIPNA, go to gipna.org/membership or scan the QR code below. You don't have to wait until next September. We're glad to have your support any time you can give it!



Sharon Sears Finds Gold

Ellen Ryan

Who says sports competitions end in one's 30s or early 40s? Certainly not Lawndale neighbor Sharon Sears! Born and raised in Missouri, Sharon loved sports and was a three letter winner all through high school playing volleyball, track and basketball. She stopped playing basketball her senior year only because she was asked to try out for the Junior National Volleyball team. She was going to be on the swim team but just happened to break the school's shot put record so, oh well, she chose track over swimming.

Sharon excelled in track and volleyball and went to the state meet several times for track. During the 1982 season, she had the longest shot put throw of anyone in Missouri and took third place in shot put shot at the state meet. She was also elected to the first team all-conference for volleyball.

Sharon went to University of Kansas to study architecture and was the only female freshman walk-on who made the Kansas women's volleyball team. Though she loved her time as a college D1 athlete, KU's demanding architecture program required so much of her time she stopped playing D1 volleyball after two years.

Upon graduating in 1987, Sharon beelined up to Chicago as she believed it would be a better place for a woman in architecture and, not surprisingly, fell in love with the city. For the next several decades, Sharon's biggest social activity was volleyball: beach volleyball doubles in the summer



and indoors 6's during the winter. She cherished the camaraderie and friendships.

While at a volleyball tournament, another team asked her to join them at the Huntsman World Senior games in Utah for volleyball and she said "why not?" She discovered these games have competitions in a wide array of sports. This was her introduction to senior meets all over the country, which are run much like the Olympics.

Sharon now competes in field events against people her own age in the National Senior Games as well as the U.S. Track and Field meets and the State Games of America. She throws the shot put, the discus, the javelin, the hammer, the weight, the super weight and the softball. She routinely does strength training and practices her throwing at Lane Tech's throwing field. She travels around the country—from Utah to Michigan to Nevada to Wisconsin to Florida—to attend these meets.

Why does she do it? She is always working for a personal best but, more significantly, she has found a wonderful community around the country which supports one another, cheers each other on, socializes together and stays in touch via social media. Okay, so how good is Sharon? You tell me. The medal count, so far anyway, for the aforementioned categories is as follows:

Gold medals: 58

Silver medals: 49

Bronze medals: 18

She has also won a gold medal and holds the record for both the 25k and 5k senior cycling contests. Sharon is a great example that hard work (and truth be told - probably some innate strength) pays off. She will continue to compete as long as she is physically able. There are people in their 80s, 90s and even 100s attending these meets. It's a whole world about which this author had no idea. So, if you are inclined, check it out. The rewards seem bountiful!

CRIME PREVENTION

Arrgh, 'Tis the Season of Porch Piracy

Carolyn Chandler

As we get into the months of giving, many of us will be stepping up our online purchases. And where there be packages, there may be pirates.

Porch pirates are people who steal packages off of people's porches or doorsteps in the hopes of scoring some great piece of tech or other valuable. They may be strolling through the neighborhood and scanning for boxes, or following delivery trucks to see where the drivers are dropping things off. Either way, they may find an opportunity to snatch and run.

This could happen in a moment and is hard to prevent completely, but here are a few things you can do to help reduce the chance that your gift becomes loot.

Use Package Lockers or Alternative Locations

Consider having packages delivered to secured lockers

offered by services like Amazon Locker or UPS Access Point. For example, Amazon offers lockers like one next to the Independence Park bungalow, one at the 7-11 at 3800 N. Kedzie, or one at Family Dollar at 3411 W. Addison St. There are also lockers at many Whole Foods. These lockers are mainly for small packages and may fill up quickly, but it's worth looking at the option at checkout.



You may also be able to set delivery to your workplace. Some employers are pretty flexible, especially if you're not having mattresses delivered!

Break the Line of Sight

Consider how visible your packages might be to someone walking by the house. You may be able to double up on decorations and make some inconspicuous places for packages to go. You can then provide specific delivery instructions to the carrier, asking them to leave packages behind a large potted plant or piece of furniture. Large holiday decorations also provide some protection from a wandering eye. Those blow up turkeys and snowmen are good for so many things!

If you order small and valuable items year round, consider using products like package lockboxes, which can be bolted to your porch to secure your deliveries until you can retrieve them. Some mailboxes

have secure compartments for small packages.

Adjust Your Delivery Options

Check to see if your carrier or retailer will let you sign up for delivery alerts and notifications. This way, you'll know exactly when your package is delivered. You may also have the ability to require a signature confirmation, if you know someone can be home to receive it.

Practice Good Porch Security

Leaving porch lights on helps deter crime around the neighborhood and is a good practice in general. Additional motion sensing devices are also flags for potential pirates, such as lights that come on when someone steps onto the porch or side walkway.

A camera from a security system or a Ring doorbell may help you monitor for deliveries, and also may catch a crime in action. Unfortunately many porch pirates have learned to shield their faces as they pilfer, but at least you'll learn what happened to your package and have an idea on how to prevent it next time.

Make a Pact with Neighbors

Build strong relationships with your neighbors and agree to look out for each other's packages. You can also offer to collect packages for each other when one neighbor is away. If you have a neighbor who is often home, you may even be able to arrange for them to receive packages on your behalf, in exchange for a nice homemade holiday pie.

Hopefully these tips help your porch remain un-pillaged this holiday season. If you still lose your loot and need a little comic relief with a side of revenge, head to YouTube and watch this former NASA engineer use a glitter bomb (with fart spray) to frustrate porch pirates: tinyurl.com/4fy78u85.

TREES

Fall Tree Planting Day with Openlands

Lorraine Antieau

What do you get when you combine 85 awesome volunteers with the fabulous Openlands team for a tree planting event? On September 30th, we had the chance to find out!

To add to the fun, we spiced it up with perfect weather and an impressive turnout of our elected officials and staff who showed up with their digging clothes on, and together we created a truly memorable day, with almost 60 newly planted parkway trees to show for our efforts!

Following on the heels of GIPNA's very successful 2022 planting of 42 trees with Openlands, GIPNA and AFAC neighbors came out in force for this joint project to continue improving the tree canopy in our neighborhood.

A huge thank you to:

- Openlands, whose Tree Planters Grants offer free parkway trees to neighborhoods in Chicago who gather together at least 10 neighbor volunteers to host young native trees in their parkways
- Tom Ebeling, Openlands Community Arborist, and his team of dedicated arborists and arborist apprentices, who facilitated the planting with enthusiasm and know-how, teaching and encouraging along the way
- Openlands Tree Keepers, led by GIPNA's own Al DeReu, a cadre of trained tree volunteers whose passion for trees keeps them showing up at community

events to plant, mulch, prune, and educate

- GIPNA and its Board, always supportive of our community when it comes to tree projects and in so many other events that benefit our neighborhood!
 - AFAC and Council President Dennis Puhr, who eagerly joined this year's project, adding a geographic expansion to last year's planting efforts, along with new energy and enthusiasm, technical expertise and volunteers
 - Our elected officials, for showing up and getting dirty in the name of trees
 - Every volunteer who signed up and showed up to help make our neighborhood greener, healthier, and more beautiful. Special shout-out to Alicia Messenger, biology teacher at Disney II High School, and her Zoology Club students, who eagerly planted five new trees at the school
 - Last, but not least, to each person last year and this who volunteered to take care of a tree in your parkway. Because of you we have 100 new trees in our community!
- When you are out and about in the neighborhood,

welcome these new young residents to our streets. The newly planted trees you notice may look a little ragged this fall and next year. Transplantation is a traumatic event for a tree, and recovery takes time, but with faithful watering by our volunteers, they will begin to grow and contribute to the tree canopy in our community for years to come!



WHY DO WE NEED MORE TREES IN THE 30TH WARD?

Cooling Effect

Trees provide shade and reduce the urban heat island effect, where cities experience higher temperatures than surrounding rural areas due to the abundance of concrete and asphalt. This cooling effect helps make Chicago more livable, especially during hot summer months.

Beautification

Trees enhance the visual appeal of cities and create green spaces where people can relax and enjoy nature.

Health

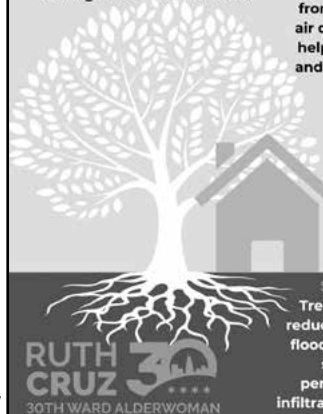
Green spaces have a positive impact on mental health and well-being! Trees filter out pollutants and particulate matter from the air, leading to improved air quality in urban areas. This can help reduce respiratory problems and improve overall public health.

Biodiversity

Trees provide habitat for a variety of wildlife, including birds, insects, and small mammals. Planting diverse tree species can support urban biodiversity and contribute to the overall health of ecosystems.

Stormwater Management

Trees can absorb rainwater and reduce runoff, which helps prevent flooding in urban areas. Their root systems also improve soil permeability, allowing water to infiltrate the ground more effectively.



RUTH CRUZ
30TH WARD ALDERWOMAN

Putting an End to Idling

This article was originally printed in the November/December 2021 newsletter. It is being republished as a reminder to why you shouldn't let your car idle.

There seems to be an increase in people who are sitting (and often scrolling) in their idling cars. This behavior has been prevalent throughout the neighborhood and around the city, as well as in parking lots and parking garages. As inconsequential as it may seem, the U.S. Department of Energy (DOE) published a short paper on Energy Efficiency and Renewable Energy, and addressed the downsides of letting your car idle.

Check this out! According to the DOE, "Idling reduces your vehicle's fuel economy, costs you money, and creates pollution. Idling for more than 10 seconds uses more fuel and produces more emissions that contribute to smog and climate change than stopping and restarting your engine does."

Good news! If you drive a car that was made after 1980, you don't need to "warm it up," even in the winter! It's actually bad for your car's engine to idle. According to Firestone Complete Autocare, "Manufacturers maintain that cars with modern fuel injection systems can be driven immediately on startup, no need to warm them up first."

And according to the DOE, "In today's vehicles, driving the vehicle helps the engine reach its ideal operating temperature faster than idling it. The catalytic converter, which reduces

emissions, operates much sooner if the car is driven. Even on the coldest days, most manufacturers recommend avoiding idling and driving off gently after running the vehicle for about 30 seconds. Not only will the engine warm up faster by being "at work," but the car's interior will warm up more quickly as well."

Every two minutes of idling is equal to one mile of driving, according to lturnitoff.com. That adds up in miles per gallon. Perhaps you've noticed more and more cars with the stop-start system that automatically shuts off the engine when the vehicle is at rest, or at a stop light or stuck in traffic. The purpose of this system is to cut both fuel use and eliminate idle emissions.

I'm breathing easier already. Oh, wait, about that. Guess what? DOE also cited that "poor air quality can contribute to asthma and other ailments, and children's lungs are more susceptible to damage than adults' lungs are." Therefore, it's especially important for caregivers waiting to pick up schoolchildren to minimize idling, because vehicle emissions are more concentrated near the ground, where children breathe."

The City of Chicago has an ordinance in place that prohibits diesel vehicles over 8,000 lbs. from idling for more than 3 minutes. Emergency vehicles are exempt. The ordinance does not cover non-diesel vehicles under 8,000 lbs. So even though it's not illegal for you to sit in your idling car, it just makes sense not to for so many reasons.

Pantry's Preps for Holiday Programs

John Psiharis

Volunteers at the Irving Park Food Pantry are preparing for our special holiday programs for clients. In November, clients can receive their regular monthly food on November 1, 8, 14, or 29. A full Thanksgiving meal with all the trimmings will be distributed on November 14 and 15. The pantry will be closed on November 22.

In December, regular food distributions will be held on December 6, 12, and 13. Holiday food will be distributed on December 12 and 20. The pantry will be closed on December 27 and January 3 and re-open on Tuesday, January 9. We also will be providing a stocking of age-appropriate gifts and goodies to all clients' children 12 years old and younger.

If you would like to contribute to these programs, monetary donations can be made via PayPal at www.irvingparkfoodpantry.org or via a check to Irving Park Food

Pantry, 4256 N. Ridgeway Ave., Chicago, IL 60618. You can mark your donation for either Holiday Food or Holiday Gifts if you prefer.

You also can donate selected toys via our Amazon registry using the QR code on this page. Please do not donate other toys.

Meanwhile, our annual coat drive continues until November 8, and we are providing clients with new and gently used winter coats. They can still be accepted through November 6, as can hats, scarves, mittens and other cold-weather gear. Please do not donate sweaters, sweatshirts, boots or other clothing. Please take any donations to Big Helpers, 4184 N. Elston Ave. from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. from Monday through Friday or the front porch at 4731 Kiona Ave. anytime.

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



News from Carlson Community Services

Liz Mills

Golf Outing Thanks



Thanks to the golfers, hole sponsors, and helpers who made Carlson Community Services' 2023 Golf Outing a success! Golfers enjoyed a beautiful day at Edgebrook Golf Course, had loads of fun and helped us raise over \$3,600 for Carlson programs. Carlson Board Member Jose Garcia's foursome came in first place with an impressive 8-under par score. Pizza and beef sandwiches from Leona's were served at the course's picnic grove following 18 holes.

Thanks to our 20 generous hole and contest sponsors, including Pastor Erin Bouman, Fishguy Market, Attorney Michael Jordan, Leona's Irving Park, Paddy Mac's, Pulaski Elston Business Association, Tripp VRBO in Irving Park, West Walker Civic Association and Wintrust Bank, Mayfair. Proceeds of the event benefit Carlson's after-school program, community garden and free concert series. Sincere thanks to the many Carlson board members and volunteers who solicited hole sponsors, golfed and helped with the event!

Carlson's Trivia Night Friday, November 10

Mark your calendar for Carlson Community Services' 14th in-person Trivia Night Friday, November 10 at 7 p.m. Trivia Night benefits Carlson's after-school program, community garden and free concert series. Teams of 8 can purchase a table for \$280 (\$320 after Nov. 6). Wine, beer and soda will be sold at the bar. Bring your own snacks! Teams compete for a \$200 cash prize and bragging rights!

Trivia Night takes place at the Irving Park Lutheran Church gym, 4057 N. Harding Ave. The event is open to adults 21 and over. For more information, or to register your team, visit carlsoncommunityservices.org/events/.

Since our first Trivia Night in 2009, neighbors and friends have been putting their heads together to benefit Carlson's neighborhood programs. It's a great night out...get your team together now!

Irving Park Fine Arts Committee Presents Jazz Pianist Marianne Kim, November 12, 3 p.m.; Mariachi Holiday Concert December 10, 2 p.m.

The first concert of the Irving Park Fine Art Concert Series' 30th season kicks off on Sunday November 12th. The concert features pianist Marianne Kim in a program titled "Sunday Afternoon Jazz." Kim is a Chicago-based composer, pianist, organist,



and harpsichordist. She has been recognized for her vibrant performances and compositions in a wide diversity of musical styles, including classical, jazz, Broadway musicals, R&B, gospel and traditional and contemporary church music. Kim will be accompanied by a bassist and guitarist.

The concert will be held at Irving Park Lutheran Church at 3 p.m. (Note later start time.) The concert is free, but donations may be made to support future programming. Additional concerts in the season include Mariachi Monumental de Mexico on December 10; Alicia Berneche in a solo recital February 11; and clarinetist Matthew Beck on May 5. These concerts will be at 2 p.m. at Irving Park Lutheran Church, 4100 N. Harding Ave.

The Irving Park Fine Arts Concert Series, now in its 30th season, was founded in 1994 by Roger Bingaman, Director of Music at Irving Park Lutheran Church. The intent of the series is to bring high quality, professional music to the northwest side of Chicago, free of charge.

Carlson Community Services connects the Irving Park community with programs that enrich lives through education, culture and service. For more information, visit carlsoncommunityservices.org or contact Liz Mills at 773/398-6766 or lizmills@carlsoncommunityservices.org.



Welcome to Wiggly World

Greg Shea

For Angie Villacis and Vince Gentile, opening a pet business made too much sense. And the location in Independence Park seemed to be calling their names. As dog owners living in the Mayfair neighborhood, they continually noticed how many dogs lived in the area and how few places were catering to their needs.

"We just weren't seeing a lot of places to take our dogs," Gentile said. "It seemed like an area really in need of a place. The idea started as an idea based on our backgrounds, then seeing the dogs in the area."

The kicker was moving into the neighborhood and seeing the location at 3918 N. Elston Avenue.

"It just made too much sense," Gentile said.

And as a dog walker herself, Angie was perfectly suited to being a business owner. She worked for a dog walking company before forming her own dog-walking business. Vince, her boyfriend, worked in retail management. The pairing of skill-sets and the location seemed to be a match made in heaven. It seemed, shall we say, out of this Wiggly World.

"We're busy, but we're so excited to have our business up and running in this area," Villacis said. "We're excited to meet all the dogs in the neighborhood."

And judging by the number of dogs roaming around Wiggly World on a weekday afternoon, the neighborhood is excited as well.

If you are interested in Wiggly World's daycare or boarding services, visit their website at www.wigglyworldpethotel.com or call 773/394-1631.

Dormant Season Gardening

April Bayne

As the growing season winds down, it's important to prepare your garden for the next growing season. I know we are often looking forward to a rest as much as the plants are, but there are some enjoyable tasks that will get you outdoors to make sure next year's garden is spectacular.

Lawn

If you only fertilize your lawn once during the growing season, fall is the time to do it. The fall formula is designed to feed the roots of the grass so that the lawn will have a strong root system going into next spring.

If weeds are a problem, there are fall fertilizer formulas with weed control so you can take care of the weeds and feeding at the same time. Remember to make sure the lawn is wet before you apply weed control so it sticks to the weed leaves.

If you are planning to overseed your lawn this fall, apply weed control 2-3 weeks before you apply seed. If using fertilizer only, that can be applied at the same time as seed. Because it rains more in fall, it's a great time to overseed. I try to check the weather for a week that predicts rain multiple days so that I don't need to water daily until the seed germinates.

Shrubs

Once the leaves have fallen, it is a good time to inspect shrubs. Take some time to look at individual shrubs and small trees. Look for crossing branches, ones that have grown out of line with the form of the shrub, and evidence of insect damage. Always cut just above an outward facing

bud or back to a branch collar. Do not leave stubs when removing branches as that is an entry point for insects and diseases. If insects have been a problem, this is a good time to apply horticultural oil to branches.

Pruning

It is easier to see if the tree or shrub has crossing branches and to decide which one needs to be removed to make the plant more attractive and eliminate the rubbing that might let insects or diseases enter the plant. Take your time to decide how far back to cut a branch and how much of the plant will be affected by the cut.

You can make heading cuts to bring branches back to a point where they make the plant more attractive or remove flower heads like hydrangeas. Hydrangeas and some other flowers can be dried. Harvest these flowers and grasses at the time you enjoy them most and make small bunches to hang upside down in a dark place.

If air circulation within the shrub is a problem, take out a few small branches that are growing into the center of the plant, cutting back to an outward facing bud.

I enjoy pruning evergreens and shrubs like dogwoods when I'm ready to make holiday arrangements. I decide if dried flowers and grasses are appropriate for the arrangement. I review any items I saved from the previous year's arrangements. I decide if the arrangement will be used indoors or outdoors, select a pot or appropriate size, and decide if I need to purchase additional items for my arrangement.

Shake heavy snow from evergreens after a heavy storm. It may help to wrap bungee cords around upright arborvitae in winter to keep them upright, but shake off the snow if they lean

over. They will right themselves.

Perennials

Leaving some seed heads in the garden vs. tidiness is an issue. Seed heads supply birds and other animals with food during migration and during the cold months when much of the garden is dormant. Deciding how much to clean up is an individual preference.

Early fall is a great time to divide and transplant perennials. You should get this done about six weeks before a frost so the plants have time to get their roots established. Water them in when planting. It should rain enough so that you don't need to water and cooler temperatures will reduce evaporation.

Fall is a great time to add bulbs and corms to your garden before the soil freezes. Bulbs should be firm like onions.

Vegetables

After harvesting the last of your vegetable garden, consider planting a cover crop to improve the soil for next season. This can be tilled under next spring to add organic matter to the soil.

Soil/Compost/Mulch

A lot of insects overwinter in the leaf litter in your garden. Clean up and dispose of leaves around plants with insect or disease problems. If the leaves from trees in your garden are affected with disease, remove and dispose of those as well.

Run your mower over clean leaves to break them up a little and then rake them onto the beds as a mulch for the plants to protect them from the harsh winter and to let them compost in place. Fall is a good time to add compost or mulch to garden beds. I like to do this to cover the leaves and add additional protection for the winter.

If weeds have been a problem in your planting beds, a bit of lasagna gardening might be in order. Place cardboard, multiple sheets of newspaper, brown wrapping paper, etc. over the weeds. Make sure to overlap the paper and wrap the base of shrubs and trees. Wet or place rocks to weight it down and cover with leaves, mulch or compost. The paper will decompose and you can plant through it. This will deprive the weeds of light and should encourage them to die off. I use this treatment with heavy cardboard on paths. It keeps paths weed free for about 3 years.

A compost pile consists of brown and green matter. It's an opportunity to recycle garden and kitchen waste. Brown matter can be fallen leaves, cardboard, plain paper, eggshells. Green matter can be green plants and leaves, grass clippings and produce. Since there is more precipitation and cooler weather in fall/winter, the pile will stay moist. You will also have a place to recycle produce in your refrigerator that is beyond use. In the spring, you may have some compost ready to spread around your garden. If not, turn the pile, remove items like branches that are not likely to compost. You will be on your way to having compost a little later in spring.

In March, clean up perennials and grasses, trim out brown (dead) stems of roses, big leaf hydrangeas, etc and lightly rake the garden beds to remove winter debris, twigs, leaves and trimmings. Prune trees and shrubs if needed. If you are adding plants, be sure to rake the mulch a foot or two aside for reuse. Overseed the lawn and fertilize if needed. Enjoy the bulbs you planted last fall and the beginning of a new gardening season.

Teamwork at Its Best: Celebrating Murphy Elementary School's Dynamic Community Groups

Katie Kobeszka

In the heart of Independence Park lies Murphy Elementary School. Murphy is supported by five groups that help it thrive. If you are anything like me, you may be confused at first about what each group does to help enhance Murphy school. Whether

you have kids who attend or not, understanding and potentially getting involved in the success of our neighborhood school is a great way to continue enhancing our neighborhood and fostering a sense of togetherness within the community.

Want a sneak peek at the cool things happening each month? Everyone is welcome and invited to attend Community Sing! The next two will be held on October 31, 8:00 a.m., and November 17, 8:00 a.m.

Want more details about the five groups? Keep reading:

1. Murphy School Parent-Teacher Organization (PTO)

Picture this: the school buzzing with excitement during the Book

Fair, Murphy Garden Week, and all the fun dances. Who's making it happen? Our incredible parents and caregivers forming the Murphy PTO! The PTO helps to raise funds to support the students through classroom needs like field trips and much needed supplies. Interested in more? Follow them @JBMurphyPTO and email murphyschoolspto@gmail.com

2. Friends of Murphy (FOM)

Now, let's talk about the powerhouse that is FOM. Made up of parents, teachers, staff, and community rockstars, FOM is all about making Murphy the best place to be. Their fundraising game is strong—over \$50,000 raised for the school! And what do they do with all that moolah? Everything awesome, from gym upgrades to supporting arts programs. Community member—looking at you! It truly takes a village as we foster the growth of this next generation. The biggest fundraiser of the year, Murphy Match, will be starting soon with a Hot Cocoa kickoff after-school on Giving Tuesday on November 28. Follow @fomurphy look up friendsofmurphy.org or reach out to murphyschoolpto@gmail.com

3. Murphy Local School Council (LSC)

Guess who's got a seat at the table for big decisions? It's the Murphy Local School Council! Teachers, parents, and community members unite here, making sure our kids get the best education. Those that make up the LSC are elected representatives voted by none other than you! It's the only group that you need to be elected to have a "seat at the table" however EVERYONE is welcome to come, learn, and share during the public participation time. Join the

once a month meetings to help ideas flow, connect with others, and chip in to make Murphy even better. Meetings are the third Tuesday of each month. Guess what?! You can even join from the comfort of home thanks to technology. See Murphy.cps.edu calendar for meeting calendar. Elections will be coming up in the spring.

4. Bilingual Advisory Council (BAC)

Diversity rocks at Murphy, and the Bilingual Advisory Council is living proof. They empower parents of English Learners, making sure everyone's voices are heard. This is a standing subcommittee of the LSC. Their main goals? Boosting leadership skills and advocating for our English Learners. Feels like this is your area of strength or have bilingual skills to share? Message jgonzalez-k@cps.edu.

5. Parent Advisory Council (PAC)

Last but not least, we've got the PAC squad. All parents and caregivers are welcome to join! They are like the Avengers of education, advising the principal on how to best use those Title 1 Federal Education funds. They're all about empowering parents and caregivers with know-how and support to help our kids reach for the stars. Reach out to murphy-pac@googlegroups.com

These five groups are the dream team, embodying unity, collaboration, and a whole lot of heart. The more the merrier when it comes to helping to keep making Murphy Elementary School the vibrant, engaging, and wonderful place it is.

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Independence Parka

by erica dreisbach



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GIPNA

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- Hot Water Heaters
- Tankless Water Heaters
- Garbage Disposals
- Clogged Drains
- Ejector/Sump Pumps
- Battery Backup Systems
- Low Water Pressure Problems
- Water Booster Pumps
- Gas Line Installation & Leak Repairs
- Rehab & Custom Shower Systems
- Sewer Power Rodding
- Sewer camera

vanguardplumbing@gmail.com

www.vanguardplumbingandsewer.com

Ooh La La!

Travel with us to **France** for the

10th Annual GIPNA

Wine & Cheese Party

Saturday, December 2, 2023

4 pm to 7 pm

COLOR CLUB

**2nd Floor Ballroom
4146 North Elston Avenue
Chicago, IL 60618**

Tickets are available at GIPNA.ORG

GIPNA

THE GREATER INDEPENDENCE PARK
NEIGHBORHOOD ASSOCIATION

Family Lifetime: \$300

\$55 per ticket

Ticket price includes all wine & charcuterie.

\$65 per ticket at the door



*All proceeds to benefit the Independence Park Farmers Market and John B. Murphy School.
GIPNA is a 501(c)(3) organization. Ticket price is tax deductible minus the value of goods received (\$30).*