

INDEPENDENCE PARK COMMUNITY

VOICE



FUNDRAISING

Raising a Toast for the Annual Wine and Cheese Party

In November, GIPNA hosted the 7th Annual Wine and Cheese Party fundraiser at the Independence Tap in support of John B. Murphy School, the Farmers Market and other worthy causes in our neighborhood.

The Independence Park community enjoyed a selection of wines, bought raffle tickets and bid on silent auction items. More importantly, neighbors new and old spent time in celebration of the past year.

Thanks to the support of the community, GIPNA was able to donate \$8,500

to Murphy School, which will go to support its music programs. Murphy School held a presentation ceremony at its Sing-along on December 20.

Money raised at the Wine and Cheese Party will also help fund neighborhood beautification projects and other worthy causes throughout the year.

We thank all our generous sponsors, both the businesses and the neighbors who were able to give items for the auction.

Special recognition goes to Jodie Bergeron for photographing the event and George Lacon, the owner of the Independence Tap.

We thank all the attendees who donated so generously to making our neighborhood the best place to live in Chicago.



The regular GIPNA Board Meeting WILL NOT BE HELD in January

COMMUNITY EVENTS



JANUARY

TUES., JAN. 7—The regular GIPNA Board Meeting **WILL NOT BE HELD** in January.

WED., JAN. 8—CAPS Beat 1732 Meeting, 7 p.m., Athletic Field Park.

MON., JAN. 13—Athletic Field Advisory Council Meeting, 6:30 p.m., Athletic Field Park; facebook.com/athleticfield.

TUES., JAN. 21—Independence Park Advisory Council, 7 p.m., Independence Park Fieldhouse, facebook.com/ipacchicago; email ipac.chicago@gmail.com to join the distribution list and get involved.

FEBRUARY

TUES., FEB. 4—GIPNA Board Meeting, 7 p.m., Independence Park Bungalow.

MON., FEB. 10—Athletic Field Advisory Council Meeting, 6:30 p.m., Athletic Field Park; facebook.com/athleticfield.

WED., FEB. 12—CAPS Beat 1732 Meeting, 7 p.m., Athletic Field Park.

TUES., FEB. 18—Independence Park Advisory Council, 7 p.m., Independence Park Fieldhouse, facebook.com/ipacchicago; email ipac.chicago@gmail.com to join the distribution list and get involved.

FRI., FEB. 21—Neighbors Night Out, 5:30 to 8:30 p.m., The Cabin at Old Irving, 4104 N. Pulaski Rd.

MARCH

TUES., MAR. 3—GIPNA Board Meeting, 7 p.m., Independence Park Bungalow.

MON., MAR. 9—Athletic Field Advisory Council Meeting, 6:30 p.m., Athletic Field Park; facebook.com/athleticfield.

WED., MAR. 11—CAPS Beat 1732 Meeting, 7 p.m., Athletic Field Park.

TUES., MAR. 17—Independence Park Advisory Council, 7 p.m., Independence Park Fieldhouse, facebook.com/ipacchicago; email ipac.chicago@gmail.com to join the distribution list and get involved.

WINTER GET-TOGETHER

Neighbors Night Out Set for February 21

Need a bit of warmth during a cold stretch of winter? Join us for a night out with your neighbors! GIPNA's annual Neighbors Night Out will be held on Friday, February 21, from 5:30 to 8:30 p.m. at a local tavern, The Cabin at Old Irving at 4104 N. Pulaski. Our Neighbors Night is the best way to break out of the monotony of winter.

The night is a very informal get-together to stretch our legs and meet up with friends instead of huddling under cover at home. Come on out to The Cabin for conversation and connecting with friends.



St. Edward School
www.stedwardschool.com



OPEN HOUSE on January 26th
10:30 am to 1:30 pm

COMMUNITY

January Open House at St. Edward School

You are invited to attend St. Edward Catholic School's biggest open house of the year on Sunday, January 26, 2020 from 10:30 – 1 p.m. in Buckley Hall (gym) of the St. Edward School campus.

Learn all about what this vibrant school and community offer Pre-K through 8th grade students. Discover how St. Edward academics out-perform in the community and how iReady instruction empowers teachers to enable students to achieve success in the classroom. Find out about the extensive fine arts programs including visual art, music and theater and explore the wide variety of extracurricular activities and athletics. We look forward to meeting you at the open house

and showcasing the complete package St. Edward has provided for 110 years.

St. Edward School is a 2017 recipient of the National Blue Ribbon. This year St. Edward School & Parish celebrate 110 years of providing a Catholic education to children in grades PK3 – 8th grade. Before and after school care is available. Applications for the 2020-21 school year are now being accepted.

For more information, please visit the school website at www.stedwardschool.com or call 773-736-9133.

The St. Edward campus is located at 4343 W. Sunnyside Avenue, easily accessible with close proximity to the Kennedy and Edens Expressways, walking distance from the Blue Line, Metra station and the Montrose and Cicero Avenue bus lines.

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: Greg Shea
Photography: April Bayne, Robin Hochstatter,
Design/Production: Cindy Schuch

For submissions for the March/April 2020 issue:

Editorial Deadline:

February 15, 2020

Advertising Deadline:

February 10, 2020

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

E-MAIL: GIPNMAIL@GMAIL.COM

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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COMMUNICATION

E-Blasts to GIPNA Members

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

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

COMMUNITY

Independence Library Offers Teen Recording Studio

The Independence Branch Library is opening up its recording studio to teens in 9th through 12th grade as an opportunity to learn about studio recording in the Library on the second floor.

Email independencyoumedia@gmail.com to set up a Studio Training session at the Library.

After your teen completes training, they will be able to work independently on audio production projects.

The Recording Studio is located inside the Library next to YOUmedia at 4024 N. Elston Avenue. YouMedia Open Lab will be offered on Mondays in January from 3:30-5:45 p.m.

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.

SPECIAL THANKS

Wine & Cheese Party Sponsors

GIPNA would especially like to thank the following Wine & Cheese Party sponsors:

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NAME #2

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Check here if new member, new to the neighborhood.

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E-MAIL #2

GIPNA
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(Must be 18 yrs old) Fill in this form, and send with check, payable to GIPNA, Inc. GIPNA, P. O. Box 18184 Chicago, IL 60618

Check amount enclosed:

Single \$10 Family \$20

Business \$15

Lifetime \$100 per person

Check here if a new member

Annual Dues enclosed: \$

Tax Deductible Donation for GIPNA: \$

Total of enclosed check: \$

Check if you would like to volunteer for events. (GIPNA is an all-volunteer association.)

DONATIONS

Making a Difference: GIPNA's Donations at Work

The Greater Independence Park Neighborhood Association (GIPNA) was pleased to present Dr. Christine Zelenka, principal at John B. Murphy Elementary School, with a check for \$8,500 in December.

The donation was made at the school's holiday sing-a-long in the school auditorium.

"Our neighborhood realizes the value that Murphy has in our neighborhood," Dickie Nichols, president of GIPNA, said. "We're happy that we can help out in a small way."

The funds will help Murphy to continue providing valuable resources to teachers and students at the school, including helping the school fund valued arts education.

The GIPNA board also voted to also make donations to Carlson Community Services, the Irving Park Food Pantry, Lydia Home and the Openlands conservation organization.

DONATIONS

Annual Murphy Match Raises More Than \$20,000

The Friends of Murphy raised more than \$11,000 in their annual Murphy Match fundraiser. The donations were matched by an anonymous donor and helped raise more than \$21,000 for the school.

The annual fundraiser helps fund the school's arts programming and partnerships and funds physical improvements to the school. It also helps boost school spirit and spreads the word to the community about the work of Murphy Elementary.

"We're thrilled with the success of the Murphy Match this year. The community really stepped up and you can feel the goodwill of the neighborhood throughout the school," said Amanda Guillaume, Friends of Murphy president.





COMMUNITY

The Man Behind JT's Genuine Sandwich Shop

Chris Cunningham didn't know how the neighborhood would react to the grand opening at his sandwich shop on Elston Avenue in the old Marie's Pizza location, 3970 N. Elston Ave.

Would the neighborhood embrace his crazy idea of a shop with a Midwestern flavor? Had he made a terrible miscalculation? Was it a big mistake?

He found out the answer when he opened on November 14.

"It was crazy," said Cunningham, who lives on Monticello Ave., "We got too busy for our own good."

So busy in fact that they started running out of food.

"We had to shut down two hours early."

It's been even crazier after the first day as Cunningham has been trying to catch his breath since. He's been amazed at the support from neighbors, students at Murphy Elementary and the Disney II Magnet School.

For Cunningham, it's been a dream come true. After moving

to Chicago in 2003, he worked as a line cook at McCormick and Schmick's and then at Gibson's Steakhouse. He left the workforce in 2016 to be a stay-at-home Dad after the birth of his sons, John and Tyler.

While at home with the kids, he never stopped dreaming about opening a place of his own in the neighborhood.

"I always had my eye open in the neighborhood for possible locations. When this became available, it was very convenient."

Now, the Dad walks to work and can still be home at a moment's notice if needed.

A Menu with a Midwestern Feel

Cunningham grew up in the Quad Cities area along the border of Illinois and Iowa and his wife, Kellie, grew up in Michigan. Creating a menu with some of their favorites from the Quad Cities, Michigan and Chicago was a no-brainer.

"I grew up eating a breaded pork tenderloin sandwich in the Quad Cities, but I could never find one here," Cunningham said.

His wife's imprint on the menu is around their Detroit-inspired Coney Island hot dog. They got the inspiration from a restaurant in downtown Detroit called the Lafayette Coney Island. The

sandwich features JT's Genuine's signature chili, cheddar cheese, sour cream and some spices. They even throw in some Fritos corn chips.

As for Chicago-inspired sandwiches and dishes, JT's Genuine serves a classic Chicago hot dog, but decided to not do an Italian Beef sandwich. Instead they serve a Skirt Steak Sandwich that they think you'll like even better.

"It's not something you're going to find somewhere else," Cunningham said. "It has skirt steak and chimichurri sauce."

Now that the sandwich shop has been open a couple months, Cunningham has been able to

reflect on what it takes to open and operate a restaurant in the neighborhood.

"It's a lot of work, but it's been rewarding," he said. "We've had customers come from all over and tell us, 'We're from Iowa and haven't been able to get a breaded pork tenderloin in a long time. I'm so glad I found it in Chicago.'"

And our neighborhood is glad Cunningham found us and decided to call it home.

Be sure to check out JT's Genuine Sandwich Shop at 3970 N. Elston Avenue or at jtsgenuine.com.





CITIZENSHIP

Clear Sidewalks Could Save You Money

Shoveling your snow and keeping the sidewalk clear in front of your house is part of being a good neighbor. It helps commuters and residents both, and contributes to the common good. It could also save you \$500—a day.

In 2015 the City Council approved fines of up to \$500 per day for failing to keep your sidewalk shoveled. In a city this strapped for cash, are you willing to risk it?

People walk to trains, buses, schools, and stores all day long, and without a wide, clear path through snow and ice, it's especially difficult for seniors, people with disabilities, and children to walk safely. What's more, the law in Chicago says that property owners and occupants are responsible for keeping sidewalks clear of snow and ice.

Some of our residents go above and beyond the call of duty, clearing not only their own sidewalks but those of the neighbors around them as well. If you can, take a look at the neighbors on either side of you and help as much as you can.

Frequently Asked Questions About Sidewalk Snow Removal

Who is responsible for clearing

the snow and ice from sidewalks? According to the Municipal Code of Chicago, "Every owner, lessee, tenant, occupant or other person having charge of any building or lot of ground abutting upon any public way or public space shall remove the snow and ice from the sidewalk..." It's everyone's responsibility to make sure the sidewalks are clear of snow and ice. We're all pedestrians, and we all benefit from having a safe, clear, and continuous path to travel.

How long do I have to clear the sidewalks? If the snow stops falling before 4 p.m. you have three hours to clear except on Sunday. If the snow stops falling after 4 p.m. or on Sunday, you have to clear before 10 a.m. on the next day.

How much snow do I need to clear to comply with the ordinance? The Municipal Code of Chicago requires individuals to clear a 5-foot wide path along the sidewalk, where conditions allow. This width allows pedestrians in wheelchairs, people with children in strollers, students walking to school, and individuals with assistive devices mobility and access.

What is the best way to remove snow from the sidewalk? Remove snow and ice along all sidewalks adjacent to your property—move snow to your yard or the parkway adjacent to your property. Don't push snow from the sidewalk into the street, and don't cover the crosswalks with snow. Keep alley entrances clear, and don't pile snow around fire hydrants.

||| GIPNA |||

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or mail in a check.

For information, send an e-mail to:
gipnamail@gmail.com

CRIME

Preventing Catalytic Converter Theft

It's the worst nightmare of a car owner: Waking up to find that your car's catalytic converter has been stolen. Unfortunately, this is becoming a familiar scene in our neighborhood and surrounding areas.

The theft itself is relatively simple to pull off. Thieves come late at night, spot a vehicle and quickly saw off the catalytic converter. The car's crucial part can be sold on the black market, but your car is damaged badly. After starting your car, you will immediately notice a loud roaring sound as if your muffler does not work. It will get even louder as you press the gas pedal.

And replacing a catalytic converter is very expensive. The part may be only a couple hundred dollars, but repairs to damage around where the part was sawed off can cost over \$1,000.

But is it possible to prevent it from happening to you?

Experts say there are a few steps you can take.

You may be able to weld your catalytic converter to your car body frame at a local muffler shop. Or you could install a lock on your catalytic converter. Several local shops will install a tool called a CatClamp to your converter. It retails for around \$150 with installation at a local mechanic costing slightly more.

Another option would be to have a auto repair shop etch your vehicle's Vehicle Identification Number (VIN) or license plate number on the part to make it traceable for potential re-sale deterrence.

The greatest deterrence is catching the thieves that have been robbing catalytic converters around the north side of Chicago for the last several years. Participation in community policing meetings is always recommended. Our neighborhood's CAPS meeting is held on the second Wednesday of every month at the Athletic Field Park Fieldhouse, 3546 W. Addison Street, in the 2nd Floor Community Room from 7-8 p.m.

opera for all!

TALENTED NEIGHBOR

Opera for All

Disney II Magnet High School is now in its second year of offering a course in collaboration with Opera for All (OFA), a non-profit organization whose mission is to inspire students to understand the art of opera by participating in it, both in production and in performance. We are fortunate to have Opera for All at both Disney II's campuses, Kedvale (elementary) and Lawndale (high school). At Lawndale, our Opera for All class is led by OFA teaching artist, Veronica Raufer, and Disney II's very own Choral Director, Madison Marino.

Disney II's 46 beginning choir students are the lucky beneficiaries of the Opera for All program this year, which is made possible through the fundraising efforts of

Disney II's parent group, the Disney II Educational Foundation. These freshmen meet weekly with their Opera for All teaching artist and Ms. Marino, who brings years of choral performance with her to this role including performances at Symphony Center, Northshore Center for the Performing Arts, and as a member of the Roosevelt University Alumni Chorus.

During class, the teachers guide students through the stages of creating, producing, and performing their own live musical stage production. Many students in the class may never have seen an opera or professional stage production, so the instruction begins with a basic introduction to script writing, including genre, plot and setting, before they continue on to dissecting a plot, writing scenes, and completing the script. The program then moves to the

music composition phase of their production, which is facilitated by a visiting composer. The composer, who attends class over a period of weeks, works with the students to develop the music around the lyrics provided by the students. Throughout the process, the composer works hard to make sure to incorporate the feelings and tone the students hope to convey through their lyrics. It is the ultimate collaborative experience.

Once the opera is written and composed, the students move on to preparing the visual arts side of the performance, which includes designing and painting the sets! This is always a fun and creative time. A choreographer also visits to help stage the characters

movement as well as a large group dance number. Students are then offered the opportunity to audition for a part in the production. Not every student aspires to be on stage, so those who do not perform in the production are taught the basics of stage production and serve as stage crew for the show. Ultimately every student in class has some part to play when their opera is performed.

This year, Disney II is so excited to offer the Opera for All performance to our community of students, teachers, families, and neighbors. We will host a one-night-only performance on May 1, 2020. Visit Disney II's website at www.disneyiimaget.org for more information.



Independence Parka

by erica dreisbach



indyparka



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Saturday, January 25 • 2:30-4:30pm

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

**Special Early Childhood Open House*
February 12 • 9:00 to 10:00 am**

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

**2020-2021
Application for Admissions**
forms are available online and in the school office

Please feel free to contact Marge Tiritilli with any questions or to schedule a personal tour.
4140 W. Addison St., Chicago, IL 60641 • 773-545-2173 • mtiritilli@stviatorchicago.org
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OPEN HOUSE on January 26th 10:30 am to 1:30 pm

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- LEARN all about what this vibrant school and community offer Pre-K through 8th grade students.
- DISCOVER how St. Edward academics outperform in the community and how iReady instruction empowers teachers to enable students to achieve success in the classroom.
- FIND OUT about the extensive fine arts programs including visual art, music and theater and explore the wide variety of extracurricular activities and athletics.

We look forward to meeting you at the open house and showcasing the complete package St. Edward has provided for 110 years. Mass is at 9:30 and the Open House will start right afterwards in the gym.

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GIPNA Membership: What Does Your \$10 Buy?

Community-building activities and events

Independence Park Farmers Market

School Fundraisers

Community Gardens

Craft Fairs

Garage Sales

Alley Cleanups

Gourmet Pancake Breakfasts

The Independence Park Community *VOICE* Newsletter

E-Blasts, Announcements, and Alerts

A Voice with the 45th Ward

Support for Local Charities

Great neighborhoods don't just happen—a great neighborhood comes from a great deal of work and commitment. The events and services that make Independence Park the hidden jewel of the Northwest Side require time and money. Our wonderful volunteers give their time, and GIPNA membership helps provide the money. Please join GIPNA to make 2020 the best year yet, and if you're already a member, please renew.