Step by step: The spirit of giving walks on

By Nic Halverson

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The Treanors were inspired by their granddaughter, Caitlin, who had recently participated in America’s Shamrock Run and chose Mercy Home as her designated charity. At the beginning of the pandemic last year, Caitlin moved in with her grandparents to help with caretaking. “Caitlin has been exceptionally good to us,” Kathleen said. “She’s amazing in all the different things she does. She got John walking more than he ever did before.”

John chimed in with his Irish brogue. “She’s done some good carpentry work, too,” he said, referencing the railings Caitlin installed to help prevent him from falling.

The Treanors cherish the time they have spent with Caitlin, who accompanies her grandparents on their daily walks. Not only has she been integral to their wellbeing as a cheerleader, she has given them a new lease on life by infusing their walks with youthful celebrations of art, humor and nature.

The trio typically walks a mile down their long driveway, which Caitlin has decorated with inspirational messages and warming marks for bumps and uneven pavement. “Sometimes I make chalk drawings and pictures along the way,” Caitlin says.

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Villa of Evergreen Park is undergoing a multimillion dollar renovation to meet the needs of the community. Villa Healthcare brings a change in philosophy along with a vision and expertise to transform The Villa of Evergreen Park into one of the communities finest facilities. A place where we combine Clinical excellence with hotel like services and amenities. Our goal is to provide patients with the optimal pathway to restore health, vitality and independence to its highest level. Our clinical programs include short-term transitional care, rehabilitative care, specialized clinical programs, and limited long-term care.

The Villa At Evergreen Park 10124 South Kedzie Avenue • Evergreen Park, IL 60805 708.907.7000 vilaatevergreenpark.com
How to check for ticks and prevent Lyme Disease

With more people spending time outside during the pandemic, doctors say it is important to keep an eye out for ticks—which can transmit Lyme disease. “It’s actually good that more people are out doing things, being physically active and so forth, we just want them to be safe and want to encourage them to continue to do so,” said Alan Taege, MD, infectious disease specialist for Cleveland Clinic.

Ticks are most active during the warmer months. So, what can you do to keep those little critters off of you this summer? Dr. Taege said for starters, use tick repellent or bug spray that has “DEET” init.

It also can be helpful to wear light-colored clothes, that way it is easier to examine yourself. He said the less skin exposure, the better.

If you do find a tick on your skin, use a pair of fine-nose tweezers to remove it, but be careful not to squeeze it. If you do, Dr. Taege said you could cause bacteria from the tick to go into your bite wound.

“If you check yourself after every time you are outside and you see it early on, you’re unlikely to contract any illness from it. Because particularly Lyme disease, the tick needs to be attached almost 36 hours before it infects you,” explained Dr. Taege.

He said if you start to notice any symptoms, which include a rash, often in a bulls-eye pattern, contact your physician right away.

LYME DISEASE SYMPTOMS

EARLY SIGNS (3-30 DAYS AFTER BITE)
- Fever
- Chills
- Headache
- Fatigue

LATER SIGNS
- Facial palsy
- Irregular heartbeat
- Dizziness
- Bail’s eye

Act now for ragweed allergy relief

Many people are in the midst of spring allergy misery, but if you also wrestle with ragweed in the fall, you will want to start seeking relief now, according to Cleveland Clinic allergist Sandra Hong, MD.

“If you get really bad fall allergies, this would be the time that I would have you start seeing an allergist to get started with the ragweed therapy,” she said.

Oral immunotherapy tablets for ragweed have been available for a few years now. The tablets need to be taken about three months before your allergy season begins in order to build up immunity and lessen symptoms. They work the same way allergy shots do by giving you small doses of the allergen so your body gets used to it. When taken daily, your body will react to the allergen less, greatly reducing or eliminating symptoms.

The tiny tablets dissolve under your tongue and are taken daily prior to and during your allergy season.

“You come in for the first time. We monitor you for 30 minutes and from then on out you actually take it at home, so you don’t have to come in for a shot and you don’t have to come in to be seen by an allergist after that,” said Dr. Hong.

Oral immunotherapy tablets are also available for summer grass allergies and indoor dust mite allergies.
Q: How common are albinos?
A: People get their color from a pigment called melanin. Albinos have no melanin in their skin, hair or eyes.

Albinos suffer from albinism, a rare inherited disorder found in fewer than five people per 100,000 in the United States and Europe. Other parts of the world have a much higher rate. This disorder can occur in any race, but is most common in Caucasians.

Albinos have pale skin, pale blue or pink eyes and white hair. The disorder also produces abnormal vision and involuntary eye movements.

Albinism is one of a group of skin pigmentation disorders. Here are some of the most common ones:

- **Age spots**—The official name for age or liver spots is “lentigines” from the Latin for “lentil.” These are flat, brown with rounded edges and are larger than freckles. They are not dangerous.

  Lentigines are found most often where your skin has been exposed to the sun. They are common on the face and back of the hands. Lentigines tend to increase as we get older. They can be removed by freezing treatments or laser therapy.

- **Hemangioma**—A hemangioma is a growth made up of a bunch of tiny blood vessels. This birthmark is usually small. Most hemangiomas disappear without treatment. **Strawberry (or superficial)** hemangiomas are slightly raised. Cavernous (deep) hemangiomas are a bluish color.

- **Port wine stains**—Port wine stains are caused by abnormal development of blood vessels. They are flat and show up as pink, red or purple marks. Laser therapy is currently the treatment of choice for removing these stains.

- **Melasma**—Melasma, which tends to appear during pregnancy, is characterized by tan or brown patches on the face. This condition is known as “pregnancy mask.” However, men can also develop this. Melasma can be treated with prescription creams and some over-the-counter products.

- **Vitiligo**—The cause of vitiligo is unknown, but it may involve an attack by the immune system on the cells that produce melanin. Vitiligo causes smooth, white skin patches, usually on the face and the back of the hands.

  There is no cure for vitiligo. However, skin color may return spontaneously. Corticosteroid creams or phototherapy plus light-sensitizing drugs may darken the skin.

- **Birthmarks**—A baby can develop birthmarks either before being born or soon after birth. The hemangioma is one of the most common types of birthmark. Another common birthmark is the port wine stain.

  Macular stains, which appear as mild red marks, can come in two forms: angel kisses, which may appear on the forehead and eyelids, or stork bites, which will appear on the back of the neck.

  Most birthmarks are non-cancerous. Some birthmarks can pose health risks. Warning signs include: bluish discoloration of the facial skin and sometimes the white part of the eye, and spots that are bruised or bluish in color, typically appearing on buttocks.

  All moles should be monitored for bleeding, itching, color, shape or size changes.

Fred Cicetti lives in New Jersey and is a health writer with more than 40 years of experience in newspaper journalism.
to keep them going,” she said. “Words of encouragement like ‘good job’ and ‘Let’s go athletes!’” The surrounding farmland provides an ideal backdrop.

“There are horses in the fields and birds in the trees,” said Kathleen. “It’s pretty scenic.”

John agrees. “I feel great after the walk,” he said.

In fact, John and Kathleen feel so good about their new regimen that they plan to continue their walks long after their fundraiser is over.

Kathy Treanor—Caitlin’s mother—marvels at the benefits and gains she sees taking shape in her parents.

“Caitlin ended up making them happier and healthier than I’ve seen them in years,” she said. “Even their doctors have said, ‘Your dad is healthier than he’s been because of his granddaughter.’ But aside from the exercise, it’s the laughter, the poetry, and the good spirit of giving and caring together that’s boosted their health.”

John and Kathleen met nearly 70 years ago in Detroit’s close-knit Irish community. John played for Padraig Pearse, a Gaelic football team. Kathleen liked to attend the games and socialize at the Gaelic League Irish Club. Together, they embroidered the costumes in the 1952 movie The Quiet Man, starring John Wayne and Maureen O’Hara.

Once John and Kathleen established themselves in Detroit, thanks to the support of community organizations, it was important for them to return the charitable spirit that helped them find their footing in America. After learning more about Mercy Home in 1994, the Treanors have been supporters ever since.

The Treanors find strength in their faith. Every day during COVID, they have prayed for the poor, homeless, and anybody who is hurting. John says he believes in helping those in need because it keeps him on the right side of God.

“When you’re helping children, you hope they remember you when they grow up,” he said. “It feels good.”

Both John and Kathleen are happy they have been able to support Mercy Home simply by putting one foot in front of the other. But that is the way progress happens—step by step, day by day. That they have been able to witness the power and potential of their own mobility is a life-affirming lesson for us all.

Nic Halverson is a communications coordinator at Mercy Home for Boys & Girls.

Step by step: The spirit of giving walks on

Continued from page B1 ONLINE

The Treanor’s granddaughter, Caitlin, provides chalk drawings and pictures to encourage them along their walks.
Healthy Grieving

The three vital steps for grief recovery

VICTOR PARACHIN
M. Div

Sooner or later, everyone will experience the death of someone they have loved. When this happens, the result is grief—a natural but unpredictable response to the loss, which affects a person, emotionally, mentally, spiritually and physically. Here are the three vital steps for a healthy and successful grief recovery.

1. Turn to family or friends. Even those who are the type of person whose psychological style is to be self-sufficient, silent and strong, remind yourself that a season of grief is the right time to forge connections with others. Linking yourself to a trusted, valued family member or friend can lighten the burden making it easier to get through a tough day. A popular and accurate bereavement wisdom statement says: “Grief shared, grief diminished.”

2. Join a grief support group. This is an idea for those who do not want to over burden family or friends and for those who are more comfortable exploring their grief with others who are bereaved. The benefits of a grief support group are numerous and include:
   - Realizing you are not alone—One woman who attended her first grief support group later said, “Until I went to a grief group, I thought I was the only person in the world with this problem.” That insight alone provided her with a powerful feeling of relief.
   - Affordability—Unlike professional counseling, which can be expensive, grief support groups are generally free.
   - Mentoring—In a grief group, you will encounter women and men who are successfully recovering. These individuals provide you with role models and mentors for better managing your own grief.

3. Strengthen your spiritual side. Death and ensuing grief raise powerful, painful questions about the meaning of life. These are not abstract philosophical musings but the desire to live an authentic, vibrant, meaningful life. Tap into your spiritual side by engaging in whatever practices sustain you: regular mass attendance, participating in a retreat, reading biographies of saintly women and men. For one woman, her spiritual practice was meditation. After she and her husband became guardians of their twin grandchildren, she said, “I opted for meditation as a spiritual path to healing. Some people fill their lives with activity and noise in an effort to escape the pain of grief. I did the opposite and embraced quiet time, 15-20 minutes a day.” She quickly discovered meditation brought her many benefits such as “self-knowledge, awareness of weaknesses, awareness of strengths, understanding life purpose, setting new goals, gratefulness for life, and a sense of peace.” Today, she offers this guidance to those whose grief is fresh and raw: “Meditate in a quiet place that has no background noise. Relax your body and repeat a word or phrase. Often, I focused my meditation on one word, such as love.”

As you make your unique journey through grief, allow yourself to be guided, motivated and inspired by this insight from bereavement authority Rabbi Earl Grollman: “Grief is not a disorder, a disease or sign of weakness. It is an emotional, physical and spiritual necessity, the price you pay for love. The only cure for grief is to grieve.”

“Grief is not a disorder, a disease or sign of weakness. It is an emotional, physical and spiritual necessity, the price you pay for love. The only cure for grief is to grieve.”

Victor Parachin’s latest book, Think Like The Buddha: 108 Days of Mindfulness, was just released. Find the user-friendly, practical guide at Hohm Press (hohmpress.com).
Blueberry Apple Pie Bars

**Filling**
- 2 cups frozen blueberries
- 2 apples, cored, peeled and chopped
- ⅛ cup granulated sugar
- 1 teaspoon lemon zest
- ⅛ teaspoon ground cinnamon
- 2 tablespoons lemon juice
- 4 teaspoons cornstarch
- 1 teaspoon vanilla extract

**Crust**
- 2½ cups quick rolled oats
- 1½ cups all-purpose flour
- ⅛ cup packed brown sugar
- ⅛ teaspoon salt
- 1 teaspoon vanilla extract
- 2 cups frozen blueberries
- ½ cup granulated sugar
- 1 teaspoon lemon zest
- ¼ teaspoon salt
- 2 cups (8-ounce) shredded cheddar cheese
- 2 tablespoons yellow cornmeal
- 2 (4-ounce) cans diced green chiles
- 1 (16-ounce) jar salsa (any variety)
- 1 (10 ounce) packages of frozen chopped broccoli
- 1 can black olives, with juice, sliced
- ½ cup pepper jelly (any heat level)
- 1 cup chopped tomato
- 2 cups frozen corn
- 2 large eggs
- 2 (9-ounce) packages cream cheese, softened
- 2 Tablespoon finely chopped onion
- 1 (12 ounce) can tomato sauce
- 2 cups (4-ounce) cans diced green chiles
- 1 (16-ounce) jar salsa (any variety)
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- 2 cups frozen corn

In a large skillet set over medium heat, combine blueberries, apples, sugar, lemon zest and cinnamon; cook, stirring often, for 10 to 15 minutes or until apples are tender and sugar dissolves. Whisk together lemon juice, cornstarch and vanilla until smooth; whisk into fruit mixture. Bring to boil; cook, stirring, for 1 to 2 minutes or until thickened. Place plastic wrap directly on the surface of the mixture to prevent skin from forming; let cool completely.

Crust—Meanwhile, preheat oven to 350°F. Line 9-inch square baking pan with enough parchment paper to overhang edges; set aside.

Whisk together oats, flour, brown sugar, baking soda and salt; cut in butter with pastry blender or fingertips until mixture resembles coarse crumbs. Add in vanilla. Press half of the mixture into the prepared pan. Spread apple and blueberry filling evenly over top. Sprinkle with the remaining oat mixture, pressing lightly. Bake for 40 to 50 minutes or until crust is golden and filling is bubbling. Let cool completely on rack. Remove from pan and cut into bars.

Note: Toss ½ cup chopped pecans, almonds or walnuts with the remaining oat mixture to sprinkle over the top of the filling if desired.

**Blueberries year-round!**

**Buying fresh blueberries**
When you buy fresh blueberries, look for berries that are firm, dry, plump and smooth-skinned, with a silvery surface bloom and no leaves or stems. Size is not an indicator of maturity but color is—berries should be deep purple-blue to blue-black.

Reddish blueberries are not ripe, and will not ripen once they are picked, but you can use them in cooking. Avoid blueberries that look soft or shriveled or have any signs of mold. If you see juice stains in a container of blueberries, the fruit might be bruised.

Refrigerate fresh blueberries when you get them home, either in their original plastic pack or in a covered bowl or container. Be sure to wash your blueberries just before you start snacking and eat them within 10 days of purchase (that’s the easy part!).

**Buying frozen blueberries**
You can find pre-washed, unsweetened frozen blueberries packed in poly bags or boxes in most supermarket frozen food sections.

When you grab a bag of frozen blueberries, they should feel loose and not clumped together. They have been individually quick frozen, so you can remove a few at a time or use them in larger portions.

Store frozen blueberries in the freezerer and sprinkle them onto ice cream, yogurt and oatmeal, or pop them right in your mouth for a refreshing treat. They add a flavorful punch to burgers and are ideal for baking blueberry muffins.

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Church Chatter and On The Go

The Shrine of Our Lady of Pompeii
Moving on With Grace: A Spiritual Journey for Those Grieving Death of a Spouse
Sat., June 12, 2021, 9–noon. This is the first live pilgrimage to occur at the Shrine of Our Lady of Pompeii (1224 W. Lexington St., Chicago) in 14 months. It will not be available virtually due to the sensitivity of content. Check in, and coffee will occur at 8:30 a.m. This event will be a morning of spiritual comfort, engaging community and hope through prayer, presentation and discussion. The speaker will be Ann Florian, a nationally recognized speaker, teacher, and retreat director who uses her personal experience, advanced education, and knowledge from over 30 years of parish liturgy and bereavement ministries for her engaging and dynamic presentation. Paid registration of $20 due by Wed., June 9. Register with your name, email and phone number at 312-421-3757 or email mps@ourladyofpompeii.org

St. John the Baptist Run For Life 2021
Waterleaf Women’s Center Sat., July 31, 2021, 8 a.m. 5K Run and 2.2 mile Walk. All proceeds and sponsorships benefit Waterleaf Women’s Center. Registration link: raceroster.com/30549 or on-site (St. John the Baptist Church, 05223 Church St., Winfield) beginning on raceday at 6:30 a.m. Water stations along the course, snacks at the end. Free performance T-shirt if registered by July 1. More information, please Christine Kania 630-532-7813 or Christine.kania@gmail.com.

Knights of Columbus 5573
Community Blood Drive Mon., June 14, 3–7:30 p.m. All are invited to come and participate at St. Mary Immaculate Church, 15629 S. Route 59, Plainfield. Appointments encouraged, walk-ins welcome. Photo ID and masks are required. All donors receive a Versiti umbrella. Every blood donation saves up to 3 lives! Call Rich at 815-254-7078 to set up appointment or sign up online at versiti.org/l.

St. John the Baptist Run For Life 2021
Waterleaf Women’s Center Sat., July 31, 2021, 8 a.m. 5K Run and 2.2 mile Walk. All proceeds and sponsorships benefit Waterleaf Women’s Center. Registration link: raceroster.com/30549 or on-site (St. John the Baptist Church, 05223 Church St., Winfield) beginning on raceday at 6:30 a.m. Water stations along the course, snacks at the end. Free performance T-shirt if registered by July 1. More information, please Christine Kania 630-532-7813 or Christine.kania@gmail.com.

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St. Francis of Christ the King
Alvernia Manor Senior Living 25th Annual Golf on the Hill Mon., Aug. 2, 2021, 8 a.m. All golfers invited to join us for raffles, contests, and prizes—including the World Famous “Beat the Nun”. Golfing at Ruffled Feathers Golf Course in Lemon benefits St. Francis and Alvernia Manor. Check-in, coffee and pastries, putting contest begins at 6:30 a.m. Shotgun start at (scramble format) at 8 a.m. The cost is $175.00 for golf, cart, 2 adult beverages, lunch, and golfer goodie bag. We are seeking sponsors and golfers! COVID-19 guidelines will be in place and mailed to golfers in advance. For more information, contact Carrie Peters at 630-257-7844 ext. 223 or carriepeeters2@abcglobal.net.

Ballroom and Disco Dancing Melody Ballroom
Wed., 1–3 p.m. Melody Ballroom (7905 Ogden Ave.) is open for ballroom dancing every Wednesday afternoon. On the third Friday and Saturday of the month, dancers are invited from 7–10 p.m. Admission to each dance is $15. Please dress to impress! For more information, visit floating-on-a-melody.com.

BrightSide Theatre and Naperville Park District
“Summer in the Parks: The Music of Rodgers & Hammerstein” Wed., June 30, July 21 and Aug. 11, 2021, 7 p.m. Brightside Theatre is partnering with the Naperville Park District to share music from Broadway’s best with residents and guests on three Wednesday evenings free of charge this summer. Naperville’s only professional theatre will bring a new program to the parks located at Wagner Family Pavilion, 3109 Cedar Glade Drive, Naperville. For more information, visit brightsidetheatre.com.
Healthy Pets

How can my pet have stress-free veterinary visits?

Fortunately for our pet’s physical and mental health—and ours—there is a shift toward low-stress veterinary care. Not only does stress negatively affect pets and create psychological trauma, it also can be so severe that test results are skewed, and the immune system is weakened. Follow these steps to calm fears and turn your furry friend into a pet who loves the vet.

Practice handling your pet

Two of the biggest challenges veterinary professionals face are a pet’s feet and ears. Many pets don’t approve of these body parts being manipulated, and often they strongly object to being handled by a stranger. Begin by pairing potentially unpleasant handling with delicious, high-value treats. Train your dog to give you his paw for nail trims or have your cat or dog focus on a whipped-cream cone while you clean her ears. Creating a positive association with the handling of these two tricky areas will vastly increase your pet’s quality of life by reducing the struggle and fear commonly associated with nail trims and ear cleanings.

Schedule appointments according to your pet’s fear

When scheduling your anxious pet’s appointment, ask for the earliest time slot. Routine appointments can run long, emergencies are squeezed in, and sometimes you and your stressed pet end up waiting in a packed waiting room before being shown to a quiet exam room. The earliest time slot allows you to avoid the chaos of a jam-packed waiting room. If this is not feasible, call the hospital when you arrive and ask the client care representative if you can wait with your pet in the car until an exam room is open.

The carrier is a cat’s friend, not foe

Most cats only see the carrier come out when it’s time to visit the vet. This negative association ensures the carrier is seen as a harbringer of doom, leading to a major struggle to get your cat inside scratch-free. To avoid this association, leave the carrier out at all times, treating it as the deliverer of delicious snacks instead. Routinely throw a few high-value kitty treats into the carrier, leaving the door propped open. Your cat will sniff out the goodies and learn to associate good things with the box of doom. Line the carrier with a cozy blanket sprinkled with Feliway spray and add a soft toy or two to make your cat feel comfortable and secure while traveling.

Drop by with your pet for “happy visits”

Does your pet only visit the vet for vaccinations or when she’s sick? If so, it’s no wonder she associates a trip to the clinic with being poked and prodded by strangers. Stop by for a few happy, treat-filled visits with no needles. Load up on your pet’s favorite snacks and let the veterinary team offer them to your pet. Soon your furry friend will be excited to visit the veterinarian.

Calm your fear first, then your pet’s

Our pets are remarkably in-tune with our feelings and emotions. If you are nervous about a veterinary visit, your pet will pick up on that and also become anxious. Project a calm demeanor, speak in a soft, soothing voice—no high-pitched, squeaky baby talk—and try to avoid excessive petting. Your pet will pick up on your calming cues and relax if you do.

Come as a hungry pet, leave happy

A hungry pet will be more treat-motivated, allowing your veterinary team to provide your pet’s favorite treat as a tasty distraction. Skip breakfast the morning of your appointment and bring treats you know your pet loves to reward her for good behavior.

Ask the veterinarian for help

Some pets become so fearful when visiting the veterinarian that they need anti-anxiety medication. Many pets benefit from a mild sedative, especially for such scary situations as nail trims and ear cleanings, but others may need additional medication. Ask your veterinarian for recommendations other than medication that will reduce your pet’s anxiety, such as compression wraps, pheromone sprays, essential oils, or calming supplements.

As well as searching for Fear Free veterinary professionals, choose your pet’s veterinary team based on the highest standards of care. Use our AAHF-accredited hospital locator to find the perfect team for your beloved companion. Your pet will change from fearful to fear-free and learn to love her veterinary team.

From aahf.org.
Your guide to the Chicago Riverwalk

Located on the south bank of the Chicago River, the award-winning, pedestrian-friendly Chicago Riverwalk stretches 1.25 miles from Lake Shore Drive to Lake Street. Along the way you will discover intimate coves, breezy cafes, wineries and bars, public art, monuments, museums, and a boathouse on the Riverwalk. Experience all the things to do and see on the Chicago Riverwalk.

Food and drink
Savoring fine wines on a riverfront patio, going island style under light-strewn shade trees, devouring gastropub fare with a tantalizing craft cocktail—and all with views of the Chicago River. One popular spot is City Winery Chicago, which brings the tropical vibes, The Northman Beer & Cider Garden offers locally made ciders, and a new Community Marketplace features women- and minority-owned vendors from all over the city. There are so many food and drink options on the Riverwalk. Take a stroll and check them all out.

Boat tours
You cannot visit the Riverwalk without getting out on the water. Generally running May through October, take your pick from glass-enclosed Odyssey Chicago River Cruises; the Chicago Architecture Foundation River Cruise aboard Chicago’s First Lady; Mercury, Chicago’s Skyline Cruiseline, Shoreline Sightseeing, and Wendella Sightseeing. A couple of unique boat tour options include Island Party Hut Charters, Chicago Cycleboats, and the eco-conscious Chicago Electric Boat Company.

Urban recreation
Head to Urban Kayaks, where you can hop in a kayak and paddle down the calm waters of the Chicago River. They offer kayak rentals and guided tours of the Riverwalk’s skyscraper canyon, no kayaking experience required.

You can also fish for free from The Jetty, one of six coves that comprise the Riverwalk (make sure you get an Illinois fishing license before you go). Or watch mallards, ring-billed and herring gulls, rock pigeons, American robins, European ring-billed and herring gulls, rock starlings, and Peregrine falcons on an Audubon Great Lakes’ walk. If biking is your thing, rent a Divvy, Chicago’s bike share program. Find the closest Divvy kiosk located just one block from the Chicago Riverwalk at 300 N. Stetson Ave. Alternatively, Bike and Roll Chicago has a fleet of recreation bikes, professional transportation bikes, and kids’ equipment for rent on the Chicago Riverwalk at 316 N. Wabash Ave. and at Millennium Park. Note: Some sections of the Riverwalk are for pedestrians only.

Museums
Fittingly, the Chicago Architecture Center is located at One Illinois Center in a building designed by modernist genius Ludwig Mies van der Rohe. The CAC is a gateway to discovering Chicago’s architectural legacy. The center offers over 85 docent-led tours, as well as exciting programs and innovative interactive exhibits, including the engaging Skylab Exhibits and Building Tall exhibit.

The five-story McCormick Bridgehouse & Chicago River Museum celebrates Chicago’s famed moveable bridges and gives you the opportunity to peek inside a historic landmark bridgehouse. At river level, you can view the massive gears that move Chicago’s famous bridges up and down. As you ascend, you will learn about Chicago’s history on the Chicago River. Once at the very top, you will be treated to magnificent 360-degree views of the city. You can also take tower tours, view the moveable bridges in action during a bridge lift viewing or breakfast, and sign up for other special tours.

Public art
The Chicago Riverwalk is a 1.25-mile urban canvas, where you will see permanent and rotating public art by some of today’s leading artists. New additions include a mural celebrating 100 years of Art Deco by artist Kate Lynn Lewis and portraits of Chicagoans by street muralist Dond Fret.

Also take a stroll to Ellen Lanyon’s Riverwalk Gateway. It is a 27-foot-long trellised walkway that links the Chicago Riverwalk with the lakefront with ceramic panels depicting the rise of Chicago and the significance of the river to the city. Then wander over to Carolyn Ottmers’ Allium, a 10-foot-tall aluminum flower between Columbus Drive and Lake Shore Drive. It is one in a series of three sculptures, collectively called Equilibrium, that pay homage to Chicago’s native plants.

If you are looking for a tranquil spot for a timeout from the bustling city, stop by the Vietnam Veteran’s Memorial Plaza. The monument here commemorates the men and women across America who lost their lives in the Vietnam War. It is one of the largest memorials in the nation outside of Washington, D.C. Art on theMART is the Riverwalk’s crown jewel. It is the largest digital art projection in the world.
Entertainment About Town

Chicago Symphony, Ravinia, Grant Park Festival return

By Joseph Cunniff

Culture lovers rejoice! Chicago’s fabulous cultural scene is returning to live performances.

The Chicago Symphony Orchestra is returning to Symphony Center with up-to-date safety measures. How grand to hear one of the world’s greatest orchestras again at the treasured hall. A series of well-balanced programs were clearly designed to display many attributes of the famed ensemble.

First, Michael Mulcahy was born in Sydney, Australia, and appointed to the CSO trombone section in 1989. He also conducts, lectures and appears as a soloist worldwide. He led the CSO in imaginative American program Aaron Copland’s famously brassy “Fanfare for the Common Man,” Samuel Barber’s 20th-century interpretation of a Bach chorale, and music influenced by jazz and film by Leonard Bernstein, Gunther Schuller, and Michael Tilson Thomas.

Another creatively crafted program was led by former CSO Georg Solti Conducting Apprentice Erina Yashima, including two “Novelettes” by Samuel Coleridge-Taylor, Schubert’s charming Symphony No. 5, Hungarian composer Zoltan Kodaly’s zesty “Dances of Galanta,” and “Strum” by newly appointed CSO Mead Composer-in-Residence Jessie Montgomery.

Amsterdam-born maestro Edo de Waart, 79, conducts all over the world. He leads the CSO June 10, 11, 12 and 13 in a program including Wagner’s Siegfried Idyll and Mozart’s Symphony No. 40. Visit cso.org or call 312-294-3000.

Next, the CSO will return to its sylvan summer home of Ravinia. There will be 15 programs July 9–Aug. 15. They will be led by Marin Alsop, stepping into the role of chief conductor and curator for first time. Guest conductors will include James Conlon and Pinchas Zukerman, and soloists will include violinist Joshua Bell and soprano Larisa Martinez.

Each concert will have 50 players and no chorus. Everything will be outside; no concerts in the Ravinia theater. Opening night will see Alsop leading Joan Tower’s “Fanfare for the Uncommon Woman No. 1,” Mozart’s Piano Concerto No. 23 with pianist Jorge Federico Osorio, and Beethoven’s Symphony No. 7. Visit ravinia.org or call 847-266-5100.

The beloved Grant Park Music Festival will return starting July 2 with an Independence Day salute including a lot of American music plus Tchaikovsky’s “1812 Overture.” So many people have been longing for the return of Ravinia and Grant Park! Up-to-date safety measures will be observed, and conductor Carlos Kalmar will return to lead the Grant Park Symphony through Aug. 21. Concerts are free and will be presented Wed., Fri., and Sat. evenings at 6:30 p.m. Run time will be 90 minutes, with no intermission.

Although the seating capacity is usually 11,000, as of this writing a 25 percent audience cap will mean only 3,000 will be allowed at each performance. For free passes to the Independence Day concert, you may visit gpmf.org or call 312-742-7647 starting at 10 a.m. on June 30. For a complete schedule visit gpmf.org. The concerts will also be broadcast on WFMT, 98.7 FM and at wfmt.com/listen.

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Chicago Shakespeare Theater on Navy Pier is planning to return to live performances with Shakespeare’s joyous comedy As You Like It in October.

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By Joseph Cunniff

BUCKET LIST

Visit chicagoshakes.com or call 312-595-5600.

Joseph Cunniff is a Chicago-based arts writer.
More reasons to ‘Meet Me in St. Louis’

By Katy Koontz

St. Louis got its nickname as the Gateway to the West when this busy city on the Mississippi River was seen as an ideal jumping off point for settlers headed west in the 1800s. Modern-day visitors, however, can easily find all sorts of entertaining adventures while staying well within the city limits.

The fun begins downtown at the historic—and recently refurbished—St. Louis Union Station, once one of the largest and busiest railway stations in the world. The station, which began operation in 1894 but saw its last train depart in 1978, has retained many of its elegant historic features. The Grand Hall, for example, still has its original terrazzo floor, green glazed terracotta bricks, and stained-glass windows.

The station’s $70 million upgrade includes a host of new attractions, the two biggest of which opened in 2019. The 75,000-square-foot St. Louis Aquarium recreates the aquatic environment of local streams and rivers as well as the ocean in six galleries (the largest of which is the aptly named Shark Canyon). The St. Louis Wheel is a 200-foot-tall observation-style Ferris wheel. Each of its 42 enclosed gondolas seats up to eight people and makes between three and four rotations during the 15-minute ride.

Union Station’s other new offerings include a carousel, an 18-hole miniature golf course, a ropes course and a mirror maze like the one from the 1904 World’s Fair. The Grand Hall now offers a 3D music and light show that is projected across its 65-foot vaulted ceiling each evening on the hour. In addition, a nightly fire and light show synchronized to music is presented regularly in the train shed’s lake.

Also receiving a bit of a spit and polish recently is the iconic St. Louis Gateway Arch and its surrounding 91-acre park. The 630-foot-tall, gleaming, stainless-steel structure is the world’s tallest arch, as well as the tallest man-made monument in the Western Hemisphere. Built in 1965 and opened to the public two years later, the arch features a tram that takes visitors to the top for an unforgettable view. The $380 million refurbishment completed in 2018 included an expansion of the Gateway Arch museum and a new café. The museum celebrates this genre as the foundation of all American music. The interactive exhibits even offer a chance to create your own blues masterpiece (including writing lyrics and mixing piano, harmonica, and guitar music in a sound booth).

The World Chess Hall of Fame, created in the 1980s, ended up in downtown St. Louis 10 years ago. The exhibits explore the history of the game and detail its impact on arts and culture. When the museum opened, it featured what was then the world’s largest chess piece sitting outside the entrance. When the sculpture was bested a few years later by the efforts of a village in Belgium, the St. Louis chess community rallied to create an even larger 20-foot-tall, five-ton, hand-carved, mahogany king, installed in 2018.

The five-year-old National Blues Museum has added yet another new note to downtown. The museum celebrates this genre as the foundation of all American music. The interactive exhibits even offer a chance to create your own blues masterpiece (including writing lyrics and mixing piano, harmonica, and guitar music in a sound booth).

Another superlative standout in this city are the mosaics gracing the Cathedral Basilica of Saint Louis. The Romanesque Revival building, with its Byzantine interior, dates from the early 1900s. The mosaics here cover 83,000 square feet, making them one of the world’s largest mosaic creations. They were fashioned from 41.5 million glass tiles in 7,000 colors, a project begun in 1912 and not completed until 1988.

For more information on St. Louis, visit explorestlouis.com.

By Katy Koontz

See KOONTZ on next page

The 75,000-square-foot St. Louis Aquarium is one of the new attractions at Union Station in St. Louis. Photo credit: Explore St. Louis

A $380 million refurbishment at the St. Louis Gateway Arch and its surrounding 91-acre park included an expansion of the Gateway Arch museum and a new café. Photo credit: Explore St. Louis
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For more information on St. Louis, visit explorestlouis.com.
Asun Diaz welcomes travelers to the fern-filled patio of her historic palace/home in the heart of Toledo, Spain, where a fountain still bubbles in the Moorish tradition. Archaeologists have traced the home’s oldest construction back to the Muslim-era 9th century. Later owners added on through the 17th century.

By Betsa Marsh

No one can leave Spain without scooping into a warm, rice-y dish of paella. But how about being on that first sizzle of olive oil?

The Evocarte tour company offers a new home-visit experience in Toledo that takes you right into the exotic house of Asun Diaz, now known as Casa Palacio Rincon de la Catedral bed and breakfast. You’re welcome to stir the onions, peppers and rice in the expansive kitchen retrofitted into the medieval stone house, huddled next to Toledo’s lavish cathedral.

The four-story building was once home to the cathedral dean, and frescoes from his private chapel remain in the master bedroom; biblical quotes ring the walls. The house reflects Toledo’s 2,500-year layered history of Muslim, Jewish and Christian cultures.

Step inside and a traditional Moorish fountain bubbles up from the fern-filled patio. One Muslim-era keyhole arch reaches back to the 9th century, now matched with new carved wooden doors from Morocco.

Diaz invites our lunch group of travelers through the arches to a long kitchen table of cheese, wine and the best Spanish omelet I have ever tasted—potatoes, onions and eggs rich with good olive oil.

Let’s nibble some homegrown figs, olives, Marcona almonds and heritage cherry tomatoes. Who cares about anything more?

But there is paella to cook, and Diaz and her friends and family line up traveler volunteers to stir and taste. Our expert is Mercedes Barato, chef/owner of the Encomienda Restaurant near Ciudad Real, south of Toledo. Barato pours the first oil, and the giant, propane-heated pan crackles satisfyingly.

First, onions, then peppers, garlic and even mushrooms, a bold addition that might make traditional paella chefs from Valencia faint away. But this is free-styling paella, in Toledo, and anything goes, enrobed with saffron-spiked olive oil. Today’s theme is seafood, with shrimp, clams and scallops, catered to the tastes and food sensitivities of the group. Evocarte tailors the menu with the home cooks after each reservation is made.

The prepared lunch unfolds on the penthouse floor, around a long table topped by embroidered linens and tucked into an alcove whose windows look out to the edges of Toledo. Step outside onto the terrace and the cathedral tower buddies up to your right, so close it seems almost touchable. The cathedral dean, all those centuries ago, lived over the shop.

Diaz pairs the creamy paella with a crisp salad, bejeweled with pomegranate seeds. The local Ercavio rose flows, pink with Tempranillo grape skins.

For dessert? Every grandmother’s waste-not want-not trick: torrijas. The recipe is close to French toast, with day-old bread dipped in egg, fried and topped with a slab of sugar and cinnamon. By the time you snap through the crust with your spoon, add a bit of raisin-nut ice cream and fresh strawberries, you’re almost part of the family.

Do you truly want to move in? Asun rents three B&B rooms, decorated richly with saris, silver-foiled walls and velvet bedspreads.

Toledo’s city archaeologist oversaw any structural changes to this heritage building, since all of Toledo’s Old Town is a UNESCO World Heritage Site. Buildings older than 100 years must be vetted by the archaeologist before the architect can move on with any conversion project.

Even within these constraints, Diaz’s exotic sense of style reigns, and travelers can enjoy her taste both at the table and throughout her home.

Pop next door to Toledo’s grand cathedral

The heart of Catholic Spain beats inside this vast space, with its five-story gilded altar and Queen Isabella’s processionional monstrance, crafted of 37 pounds of solid gold. A trace of incense entwines every surface.

Christian soldiers under Alfonso VI routed the Moors from Toledo in 1085, and locals moved in quickly to Christianize the Muslims’ largest mosque. In 1226, the mosque came down and today’s Gothic cathedral is a place to pace yourself or be swamped by the grandeur. Maybe it’s time to look just for the mermaid carved in the walnut choir stall.

Centuries later, the Transparente altarpiece, while sculptural angel stands during long services. A trace of incense entwines every surface.

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SCARAB  PAST
HARBOR  ELATE
ARMOIRE  GOFER
LEEN  TEETANG
PER  NADES  RED
KAVA  SAP  PIT
CUD  RIO
PARLO  PISA
PAN  STARE  ABA
ATOP  EGO  ALBS
WILDER  BUDGIES
OISY  ASIANS
CGX  GENRES

SUDOKU PUZZLE on page 14

DOWN & ACROSS PUZZLE on page 15
Join centuries-old dining tradition in Toledo home

For dessert? Torrijas, day-old bread dipped in egg, fried and topped with a slab of sugar and cinnamon. Raisin-nut ice cream plus fresh strawberries and kiwi send the dish out of bounds. Betsa Marsh photo

cathedral was begun on its footprint. This swap would play across Spain as the Christian Reconquest unfolded during 780 years of war.

The cathedral is a place to pace yourself or be swamped by the grandeur. Maybe it’s time to look just for the mermaid carved in the walnut choir stall misericords, a little covert chair for priests who had to stand during long services. Centuries later, the mermaid still fluffs her long hair, a warning about vanity.

Or maybe it’s time just to stare up into the skylight, a brainstorm to let morning sun beam onto the Transparente altarpiece, while sculptural angel arms jut out into the open air.

Toledo continues as a Catholic center, within an Old Town secured for the future as a UNESCO World Heritage Site.

When You Go

Evocarte curates cultural experiences in Toledo and other major Spanish cities, visit evocarte.com/. Casa Palacio Rincon de la Catedral bed and breakfast is in the heart of historic Toledo. Visit rincondelacatedral.es/en/hotel-breakfast.

Toledo is 42 miles southwest of Madrid, an hour’s drive or 30-minute ride on the high-speed AVE train. Visit renfe.com/

For information on Toledo, visit spain.info/.

Travel journalist Betsa Marsh has reported from more than 100 countries on seven continents. She is the Lowell Thomas Travel Journalism Award Winner and the past president of the Society of American Travel Writers.

Here are 5 things you can do to avoid a Coronavirus scam:

- Ignore offers for vaccinations and home test kits.
  Scammers are selling products to treat or prevent COVID-19 without proof that they work.

- Hang up on robocalls.
  Scammers use illegal sales call to get your money and your personal information.

- Watch out for phishing emails and text messages.
  Don’t click on links in emails or texts you didn’t expect.

- Research before you donate.
  Don’t let anyone rush you into making a donation. Get tips on donating wisely at ftc.gov/charity.

- Stay in the know.
  Go to ftc.gov/coronavirus for the latest information on scams. Sign up to get FTC’s alerts at ftc.gov/subscribe.

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