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TIMEOUT CHICAGO CHICAGO READER

The Chicago Diner

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VEGAN CHICAGO STYLE



Restaurant

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Intensecity

- 10 Pinup 2.0 Channeling your inner babe. By Lisa Cisneros
- 12 The Lovely Bones Jewelry that's unconventional and strangely beautiful. By Susanne Falenczyskowski and Shawna Lent
- 13 Weddings Gone Wild Millennials are choosing untraditional venues. By Elida Coseri-Portle
- 14 Game On Bored with Monopoly? Try Euro-games. By Samantha Blattner
- 15 Celebrate This! The wackiest holidays you've never heard of. By Lisa Cisneros
- 16 Local Legends You already know their faces. Now here are their stories. By Susanne Falenczykowski and Katie Robinson
- 18 Pick Me! Pick Me! Don't miss out on apple-picking season. By Julia Korol
- 19 Swap Till You Drop How to beat the high cost of vintage fashion. By Nick Tallidis
- 20 A Tale of Two Cities Milwaukee and Indianapolis are cooler than you think. By Laura Lane and Katie Robinson
- 22 Pay it Forward Volunteers receive freebies for free work. By Molly McCormack
- 23 On the House Chicago's best free pub grub (as long as you order a drink). By Susanne Falenczykowski and Jonathan Nelson









30 Om on the Range Peace out through meditation. By Laura Lane

SUMMER · FALL 2010

- 31 Up to the Challenge? Thirty days to a better body. By Samantha Blattner
- 32 Puff, Puff, Pass... We sample the latest smoking alternatives. By Elida Coseri-Portle and Nick Tallidis
- 33 Distilling the Issue Best bets for gluten-free drinks. By Samantha Blattner

SITTIN' PRETTY

35 Primping for Pennies Beauty schools make you look good for less. By Lisa Cisneros

DO IT

- 36 Salvage Style DIY projects for every budget. By Elida Coseri-Portle and Molly McCormack
- 37 They Do What's different about GLBT weddings? Not much, it turns out. By Rahel Rasu and Katie Robinson

THE MAIN COURSE

- 38 Dinner is Served Delicious recipes for warm weather. By Michelle Saltzer
- 39 Weapon of Choice Chefs reveal their fave kitchen gadgets. By Susanne Falenczykowski











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46 Community Crusade

People in communal housing share food, lodging and values. Just don't call them hippies. By Nick Tallidis

50 Breaking the Box

Chicago lost a Bauhaus treasure when it razed Michael Reese Hospital. By Julia Korol

Girls of Summer

Once outcast from a male-dominated sport, the Chicago Gems formed a league of their own.

By Shawna Lent

56 The Inconvenience

A group of artists is blurring the line between the personal and professional (and having fun doing it). By Emily Capdevielle

60 Burned

An Echo staffer shares her experience of a horrific act of violence and the journey to recovery. By Rahel Rasu

67 Caustic Epidemic

Revenge through acid throwing is a global problem, and countries are working to put a stop to the brutality. By Laura Lane

Chicago through the Eyes of Outsider Artists

Come see the places where Chicago's celebrated intuitive artists worked and lived.

By Jonathan Nelson and Susanne Falenczykowski

Aisles and aisles of "HEY, I CAN USE THAT"

The most used textbooks, academically priced software, school and art supplies, study aids, Columbia apparel & general reading books.



ON THE FIRST DAY OF CLASS, the Echo staff gathered around the table to figure out a new vision for the magazine. After many pitch meetings, bottomless cups of coffee and deadlines, we produced a magazine focused on diverse lifestyles and creative endeavors. We want our readers not just to take the stories at face value but to react and get involved.

Our IntenseCity section features fun things to do. You can celebrate Mad Hatter Day or take a day trip to Milwaukee. If you're on a tight budget, check out the stories on volunteering with benefits or finding free pub grub.

The Departments section puts the accent on living better, offering help on kicking bad habits and adopting healthy ones. Start your day with an intense workout and end it with our delicious dinner recipes.

Our features range from a photo essay on Chicago spots associated with the city's most well-known outsider artists to a poignant personal account of recovering from a criminal attack that left the victim disfigured.

We hope you find this issue thought-provoking and can incorporate a little bit of it into your life, whether it is beating that smoking habit or celebrating quirky holidays every month. But most of all: Enjoy.

> **Emily Capdevielle** & Laura Lane

> > MANAGING EDITORS





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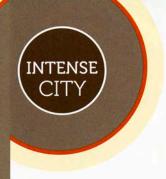
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intensecity SUMMER · FALL 2010 ∠ VAVOOM STUDIOS 10 Pinup 2.0 12 The Lovely Bones 13 Weddings Gone Wild 14 Game On 15 Celebrate This! 16 Local Legends 18 Pick Me! Pick Me! 19 Swap Till You Drop 20 A Tale of Two Cities 22 Pay it Forward 23 On the House Photo by Ana Brazaityte





By Lisa Cisneros Photos by Ana Brazaityte

PINUP

ON A WINTRY MONDAY NIGHT

in February, four girlfriends saunter through the front door of Chicago's Vavoom Pinups with enough luggage to spend a week out of the country. Purses, garment bags and suitcases are strewn on the floor next to a plethora of shoes and a clothing rack filled with polka dot dresses, cherry- and leopard-printed frocks and even a tutu.

The occasion is a photo shoot in honor of Martina Sykes' upcoming marriage. Sykes, 29, a freelance make-up artist, and her bridesmaids Jamie Dahms, 33, Katie

Degroote, 30, and Patty Boroweic, 29, are busy sorting through the accessories. In the hours to come, they will primp and strike poses reminiscent of glamour girls of a bygone age. They're here to celebrate their sexuality with the same gusto women of a previous generation displayed when they threw their room keys at Elvis.

Vavoom is part of a trend that has pinup studios proliferating around the country, from Pink Kitty Studios in Los Angeles, Colorado Springs and Dallas, to Old School Pin Ups in Seattle and Shameless Studios in New York.

According to scholars, this is just the latest incarnation of pinup culture.

"Pinup culture has gone through three distinct movements," says Maria Buszek, an assistant professor of art history at Kansas City Art Institute and author of Pinup Grrrls (Duke University Press, 2006). It began in the 19th century when photos of British burlesque queen Lydia Thompson acquired a cult following among staid Victorians. Pinup art at that time ran "a fine line between pornography and portraiture," she says.





The second wave, the golden age of pinups, was in the 20th century. Hollywood served up images of Betty Grable as a patriotic reminder of what the boys in uniform were fighting for. The current third wave, Buszek says, is pure nostalgia, whether it's Madonna paying tribute to Marilyn Monroe or Lady Gaga paying tribute to Madonna. According to Buszek, the pinup girl exists in a parallel universe to the centerfolds of Playboy and Maxim.

"[The pinup photo is] not about being naked and showing erogenous zones," says Buszek. "[It's] sexual but controlled."

For Sykes, this event was a welcome alternative to the dreaded and dated bachelorette party. "When I found out that my maid of honor, Patty, wanted to set up a shoot at Vavoom, I was really excited. I thought, 'My friends know me really well," says Sykes, a fan of burlesque.

Downstairs in the studio, Sykes and her friends are vamping it up with the help of make-up artist Heather Stratos and hair stylist Heidi McLaughlin. With emphatic red lipstick, heavy black eyeliner, tousled up-dos and splashes of tattoos, the ladies look like

rockabilly versions of Bettie Page and Tempest Storm. Vavoom co-owner and photographer Heather Stumpf coaches them by simulating poses and offering props like suitcases and hula hoops.

The transformation is a real one, says Stumpf. "When [partner Chris Popio and I] first came up with Vavoom Pinups, we thought, 'Cool, something fun and different for women to do and a total plus for ladies who are in relationships to share these pictures with their significant other[s].' But it's really become something so much more. The empowering experience that these women get from this is amazing."



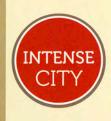
GET THE LOOK

Pinup hair is almost always coiffed and curled. Consult Casey's Elegant Musings at caseybrown.com, a retro hair and fashion blog, for detailed tutorials. Vintage Hairstyling: Retro Styles with Step-by-Step Techniques (HRST Books, 2009) by Lauren Rennells of vintagehairstyling.com provides instructions for 33 classic styles. Or head over to Tigerlilie Salon at 4755 N. Lincoln Ave., a salon that specializes in retro looks.

Red lipstick is a pinup's best friend! Matte shades are traditional, but getting the right red is essential. Pinupsart-n-style.com creator Lilly F. Elliot suggests cherry reds for those with fair skin (blue and pink undertones), fire engine reds for olive skin (green undertones) and wine reds for dark skin (gold tones). Go to totalbeauty. com for step-by-step instructions on how to apply pinup make-up from burlesque star Dita Von Teese's make-up artist Gregory Arlt.

Find the perfect attire at pinupgirlclothing.com, which has a great collection of new versions of retro clothing, shoes and accessories. You can also find similar vintage and pinup-inspired clothing and accessories at these Chicago stores: Wacky Cats, 3012 N. Lincoln Ave.; Night and Day Vintage, 2228 W. Belmont Ave.; LuLu's at the Belle Kay, 3862 N. Lincoln Ave. and Silver Moon, 1755 W. North Ave.

For true inspiration check out thepinupfiles.com, a website with more than 2,000 vintage photos, or Calendar Girl: Sweet and Sexy Pin-Ups of the Post-War Era by Max Allen Collins (Collector's Press, 2003) and Alberto Vargas: Works from the Max Vargas Collection by Reid Stewart Austin (Bulfinch Press, 2009). Or watch Bettie Page strip her way through Something Weird Video's Varietease and Teaserama. –LC



THE LOVELY By Shawna Lent and Susanne Falenczykowski Photo (left) by Sophie Goodwin

Macabre and mundane objects get a second life as wearable art

Gillion Carrara, 64, a jewelry designer for 25 years, uses bone, briar and other organic materials along with more traditional media like silver and lead crystal. Upper right: two chunky horn cuffs edged in sterling (\$1,600), sterling-accented antelope horn rings (\$500) and a set of lapel pins made of silver and mountain lion teeth (\$500).

Shop: June Blaker, Robin Richman boutique, the Modern Wing Shop of the Art Institute of Chicago and gillioncarrara.com

> As a child, Jacki Holland, 28, was fascinated by the animal bones and skull fragments she found on her father's property. These eerie artifacts are now the centerpiece of her jewelry line, Fraudulent Animals, which is not for the faint of heart. Left: deer antler necklace with gold chain (\$385).

Shop: Robin Richman boutique in Bucktown and fraudulentanimals.com

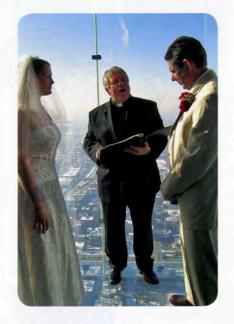
Greg Mathes, 27, mounts old keys, bones and feathers on gold chains to create one-of-a-kind necklaces. His collection, Sinew by Greg Mathes, utilizes the bric-a-brac he finds at flea markets and antique stores. Lower right: vertebra and antique button on a reclaimed oxidized chain. (Comparable pieces run \$100-\$450.)

Shop: Chicago's Habit, Highland Park's SHE Boutique and sinew.weebly.com/index.html



TOP RIGHT PHOTO BY SHARON HOOGSTRATEN | BOTTOM RIGHT PHOTO COURTESY OF GREG MATHES

INTENSE



WEDDINGS GONE WILD

Couples put their own stamp on the classic ceremony By Elida Coseri-Portle

What do a cemetery, a fast food joint and a fire truck have in common? Wedding bells. A better question is, what would grandma think?

Traditional weddings are always popular, but some couples are deciding to go against the norm by choosing unusual wedding venues. According to Ariel Meadow Stallings, author of Offbeat Bride: Creative Alternatives for Independent Brides (Seal Press, 2007), these couples want their weddings to express their relationships and personalities.

"For some couples, this can mean confirming their place in larger cultural contexts and honoring family traditions," Stallings says. "For others, this can mean expressing their individuality."

Some recent one-of-a-kind weddings in Chicago have taken place at the Metra station in Palatine, the International Museum of Surgical Science, Willis Tower, Murphy's Bleachers near Wrigley Field, U.S. Cellular Field, FAO Schwarz and Taco Bell.

Sometimes serendipity plays a part in choosing a venue. When Kevin and Shannon Mendez were told they had won a wedding at a "castle," they were unaware that it meant White Castle. In February, the couple won a local radio station's contest for a "wedding in a week," including cake, gown, tuxedo and venue courtesy of different

sponsors. When friends and family found out the wedding would take place at the fast food chain, they thought it was a joke. With an altar made of White Castle boxes and sliders as the main dish, everyone had a good time, says Kevin Mendez.

"It was a beautiful day. No matter where the location is, when two people love each other, it doesn't matter," he says.

Then there's the wedding that took place at a north side Chicago cemetery on Halloween 2009. Guests in Spiderman and werewolf costumes were in attendance as the Rev. Phil Landers wed a couple in the chapel of a Chicago cemetery where the groom's father is buried. (Landers declined to identify the location and couple for privacy reasons.)

The bride wore a white dress, but her father walked her down the aisle dressed as Dracula.

Couples on the go call the Rev. Darrell Best of Shelbyville, Ill., to wed in his chapel on wheels. Operating since 2009, this 1942 fire truck-turned-chapel comes complete with an altar, organ pipe, two wooden pews and stained glass windows.

"He always liked oldfashioned fire trucks, so we bought one with the intent of marrying couples on the ledge," says Best's wife, Lisa.

Ray Kadkhodian, a mar-

riage counselor in Arlington Heights, Ill., explains that with divorce rates just under 50 percent, couples are looking for a way to ensure their relationships will survive.

"Some couples are trying to prove their relationship is memorable through their ceremony, while others use these ceremonies as a way to strengthen their bond," says Kadkhodian.

He doesn't raise an eyebrow when it comes to these unconventional ceremonies, like a recent one that took place on the ledge of Willis Tower (pictured left).

As long as the outlandish ceremony is not a distraction from major problems in the relationship, the unconventional wedding "is usually a healthy and harmless indulgence," he says.





Make new friends at a

Meetup event UMP AHEAD TO START

dice determines characters' attributes.



which players create antasy characters that



designer games







By Samantha Blattner • Illustration by Adam Hanson

IT'S WEDNESDAY NIGHT, and you need a midweek break from studying or work. You could go to a bar, but why not head over to Black Sun Games on Chicago's northwest side for a change of pace? Unlike bar culture, nobody plays it cool here. Packed into a small room at the back of the store, the gamers are too busy shouting their next move or cheering on friends as they play table top minis and role-playing games (RPGs).

Shops like Black Sun, Cat & Mouse Game Store Inc. in Bucktown and Chicagoland Games: Dice Dojo in Edgewater have sprung up around the city to sell games and give the gaming community a place to hang out. These are friendly spots where people are more than willing to show newbies the ropes. Some folks become regulars, like Cicero resident Frank Holub, an organizer of the Chicago Boardgames Meetup Group. Holub and friends spend every other Monday playing strategic Euro-games like Settlers of Catan, Carcasonne and Puerto Rico.

Why choose Euro-games? Gamers say they like them because they focus more on strategy than luck and require planning and collaboration. Unlike a game of Monopoly, in which one player knocks out opponents one by one, these games allow players to participate until the end.

"These games take more thinking," says Holub. They also appeal to collectors because "they are made of wood and look a lot nicer than American games."

WHEN TO GO

Gaming nights are held every night of the week at Black Sun Games, but participants must be at least 16 years old. Cat & Mouse Game Store Inc. reserves Tuesdays and Sundays for board games but also features tournaments throughout the week.

Dice Dojo hosts gaming nights on Wednesdays with special events and tournaments throughout the week. All ages are welcome. With more than 350 board games, this shop has the widest selection of games.

WHAT TO BRING

It's strictly BYOG—bring your own game—or buy one at Black Sun. Dice Dojo and Cat & Mouse provide games free of charge.

the wealthiest.











CELEBRATE THIS!

By Lisa Cisneros Illustrations by Shane Mahn

There is an offbeat holiday for everything and everyone. Here are some of our favorites and suggestions for celebrating them.

TEDDY BEAR PICNIC DAY

Date: July 10

Origin: Unknown, but based on the popular children's song of the same name first recorded in 1932.

They say: This is the perfect day to pack a lunch, take your children and their favorite bears to the park

and celebrate with a picnic.

We say: Buy some bears at a thrift shop, pin on nametags and arrange them around a picnic table. Creep out the other people in the park by talking to the bears really loudly. If someone asks, tell them it's a Teddy Bear flash mob.

NATIONAL UNDERWEAR DAY



Date: Aug. 5

Origin: Created by intimate apparel company Freshpair in 2003, this holiday is celebrated with an annual skivvies fashion show in Times Square.

They say: Surprise your significant other with some new, naughty or demure intimate apparel.

We say: Throw an "Underwear on the Outside of Your Clothes" party. To keep things interesting, give that instruction to only half your guests.

FORTUNE COOKIE DAY

Date: Sept. 13

Origin: Unknown, although the cookie itself first showed up in California in the early 20th century.

They say: Bake a customized batch for friends, family or classmates.

We say: For good luck, be sure to have people say "in bed" after reading their fortunes out loud. (But don't ask your parents to do it because that might be too weird.)



MAD HATTER DAY

Date: Oct. 6

Origin: Supposedly created in 1986 by some computer technicians in Boulder, Colo., Mad Hatter Day celebrates silliness in all its many forms. The Oct. 6 date comes from the 10/6 pricetag (10 shillings, six pence) on the Mad Hatter's hat. Think of it as a second April Fool's Day.



They say: Play a good-natured joke on a friend or have an Alicein-Wonderland costume party.

We say: Putting sugar in an old beau's gas tank or turning him in to the IRS is not a good-natured joke.

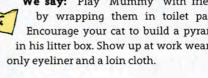
KING TUT DAY

Date: Nov. 4

Origin: This holiday celebrates the discovery of King Tutankhamen's tomb on Nov. 4, 1922. He is probably the most well-known Pharaoh of Egypt, and his tomb is the most complete ever discovered.

They say: Time for a refresher course in Egyptian history.

We say: Play "Mummy" with friends by wrapping them in toilet paper. Encourage your cat to build a pyramid in his litter box. Show up at work wearing



LETTER WRITING DAY

Date: Dec. 7

Origin: Unknown, but believed to be inspired by Japan's Letter Writing Week and Letter Writing Day.

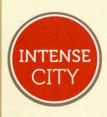
They say: Write a personal message to people you hold dear, and let them know how special they are to you.

We say: Don't forget Grandma. You'll get more in the will.









PICKME! PICKME!

Head to these applepicking hotspots

By Julia Korol Photo by Cooper Link

SAY BYE-BYE TO CITY LIFE AND

head out of town for a country getaway this fall. Apples are back in season starting in late August, so grab that friend you only tolerate because he's got a car and take a trip to an orchard. The fruit of your labor will help small farms stay in business, and eating a handpicked apple will taste twice as nice. So take these tips and hit the road:

- Check with the farm for up-to-date information on ready-to-pick varieties.
- ♣ Apples ripen from the outside of the tree toward the center, so pick the fruit hanging as far away from the trunk as you can. Place—don't toss—your apples into the basket. Keep in mind that apples with stems last longer.
- Many orchards charge by the peck, which is a quarter of a bushel and slightly more than 10 pounds.
- ★ If picking for a pie, aim for a mix of sweet and tart apples like the Jonathan (September) or the Jonagold (mid-October), to avoid a sugar rush. But if you've got an insatiable sweet tooth, don't miss the Northern Spy (October) and Empire (November).

& Editors' Picks &

APPLE HOLLER

5006 S. Sylvania Ave. Sturtevant, Wis.

Varieties: 26

Season: August through October Don't miss: Lunch or dinner is served with themed entertainment

at the Red Barn Theatre Price: \$40 per half bushel

COUNTY LINE ORCHARD

200 S. County Line Road Hobart, Ind.

Varieties: 20

Season: Sept. 4 through

October, every day 9 a.m.-6 p.m.

Don't miss: The beehives

and tractor rides
Price: \$1.65 per pound

ELEGANT FARMER

1545 N. Main St. Mukwonago, Wis.

Varieties: 12

Season: Sept. 11 through Oct. 30 on Saturdays and Sundays only Don't miss: Apple pie baked

in a paper bag

Price: \$22 per half bushel

KUIPERS' FAMILY FARM

1N318 Watson Road Maple Park, Ill.

Varieties: 25

Season: Aug. 29 through October on weekends

Don't miss: The hay ride and the popular apple cider doughnuts Price: \$7.50 for a quarter peck

of apples







SWAPTILL YOU DROP

The refashion movement makes its mark on Chicago with an event for trading and restyling vintage finds

By Nick Tallidis • Photo by Anthony King

"FOR A TOTAL THRIFT STORE junkie, this is heaven," says 19-year-old Jackie Bohnur, who is stitching a skirt out of old silk ties. She is surrounded by tables filled with cast-off clothing, threads, buttons and ribbons that several hundred people hunt through during the two days of Swap-O-Rama-Rama. It's the Rolls Royce of swap meets, featuring a row of industrial sewing machines for personalizing one's finds and a fashion show for modeling these impromptu creations.

The festivities began the previous evening on Friday, March 19, with a showing of work by Chicago's young eco-fashion designers including Amalia Buisson, Sarah Marguier and Annie Novotny. Models strutted down the catwalk—actually, the stage of the Waldorf School's auditorium in Rogers Park—accompanied by live music.

Swap-O-Rama-Rama typically includes DIY workshops with everything you need to make a fashion creation. Don't fret if you're missing the buttons or jewels to finish your garment. The craft stations include button-making, embroidery, jewelry, knitting and fabric art. Help is also available for learning such skills as handbag making and natural dyeing. The admission of \$30 covers everything; individual events are prorated.

Swap-O-Rama-Rama was the brainchild of Wendy Tremayne, who in 2000 decided to live a year without spending money to escape the ever-tightening grips of consumerism. She wasn't looking to create a multi national phenomenon—she just needed some new threads. Since then, local groups have organized more than 100 Swap-O-Rama-Ramas in 50 different cities.

Katie Hawkey Swindler, whom Tremayne calls a "Swap-O-Rama-Rama rock star," organized Chicago's 2008 and 2010 swaps, skipping last year to plan her wedding. She sees the event as "an idea that is especially appealing at this time, when people are looking for ways to reduce spending without reducing quality of life."

Equal parts political, economical and ecological, the event is an outgrowth of the ReFashion movement, which promotes reusing and revamping old, useless clothing and items. "This takes the form of lifestyle changes, changes in the way we look at waste and consumption and also inner changes, namely the shift from being an ignorant consumer, a selector of things, to a creator filled with knowledge," Tremayne says.

Sam Connon, 54, who has attended both local swaps, is a fan with but one complaint: The swaps are too short. After fashioning a patchwork purse from several pairs of beaten-up jeans, she digs through a pile of clothes hoping to come by some fbral bed sheets for a new summer dress for her granddaughter.

The Swap-O-Rama-Rama title is available to anyone interested in holding an event, as long as it is not for profit. Headquarters will help local organizers secure sewing machines and silk-screen equipment, provide promotional materials and train volunteers.

Hawkey Swindler believes attendees leave with more than a new garment, acquiring increased self-sufficiency, a better understanding of the goods we take advantage of and a connection with other ReFashion-istas. For more information, see Swap-O-Rama-Rama Chicago on Facebook.



ATALE OF By Laura Lane and Katie Robinson TWO CTTES



Indianapolis and Milwaukee boast world-class art collections, lushly landscaped walking paths, historic sites and charming eateries only a few hours from Chicago. We've planned a day to remember in each city for under \$100, including gas.

Milwaukee

Culture

Famed for its Santiago Calatrava-designed "wings" on its exterior, the **Milwaukee Art Museum** (top right), 700 N. Art Museum Drive, has a wide-ranging collection that includes Haitian art, 19th century German art and 20th century works. Don't miss the decorative arts section for fantastic, ornate living room sets spanning centuries. Admission is \$12 or \$10 for students. For a more adventurous afternoon, **Discovery World at Pier Wisconsin**, 500 N. Harbor Drive, has exhibits that simulate what it's like to fly a plane, tour a nuclear reactor and explore outer space. Admission isn't out of this world at \$16.95 or \$9.95 for students.



Dining

Honeypie (left), 2643 S. Kinnickinnic Ave., is a local favorite for breakfast fare and also noted for its interesting sandwiches like the Duck BLT and the vegetarian Composter as well as its decadent desserts. For dinner, try Stack'd Burger Bar, 170 S. 1st St. Build your own burger for as little as \$8 or choose a hand-crafted combo like The Gobbler turkey burger. It has great veggie and gluten-free options too.



History

Although Joseph Schlitz
Brewery, the home of
"the beer that made Milwaukee famous," is no
longer around, MillerCoors, 4251 W. State
St., offers free tours,
and they'll let you
mail a Miller postcard
to anywhere in the
world free of charge.

The Lakefront Brewery (above),

1872 Commerce St., offers a \$6 tour that includes four beers and a free souvenir pint glass. If you're looking for something more family-friendly, head to the **Milwaukee County Historical Society**, 910 N. Old World St., for an eclectic mix of art and artifacts that take you back to the city's origins. The society's clock collection, featuring clocks donated by Milwaukee's first families, showcases design styles of the past two centuries.

Outdoors

Follow the 10-block-long **Riverwalk** for a view of downtown Milwaukee. You'll experience the perfect mix of nature and urban life as you follow the river. Enjoy the public art, which includes a statue of Milwaukee icon Fonzie from *Happy Days*. If the Brewers are in season, take in a game at **Miller Park**, 1 Brewers Way, a great way to spend a day with the locals. The cheapest seats cost as little as \$10 depending on who is playing that day. –*KR*





Indianapolis

History

Step back in time with a visit to the historic **President Benjamin Harrison Home** (left), 1230 N. Delaware St., in all its red brick, Italian villa-styled glory. Be sure to view the Regi-



naphone—the great granddaddy of iPods—and a Civil War-era letter from Abraham Lincoln to Harrison. The tour is \$8 and runs daily every half hour. Don't miss the Soldiers and Sailors Monument (above), 100 Monument Circle, a majestic limestone obelisk built in 1901 and surrounded by fountains and statuary commemorating war and peace. Take the elevator to the observation deck for \$2 (or climb the 330 steps for free) for a breathtaking panoramic view of the city at sunset.

Culture

Saddle up and mosey over to the **Eiteljorg Museum of American Indians and Western Art** (right), 500 W. Washington St. Showcasing Native American and Western art, cul-



ture and history, it's the only museum of its kind in the Midwest. From the intricately carved totem poles to the Frederic Remington bronze sculptures of cowboys on horseback, you'll get a taste of what it was like to live in the Wild West. Admission is \$5 for students and \$8 for adults. Another must-see is the **Indianapolis Art Museum**, 4000 Michigan Road, famous for its collection of J.M.W. Turner watercolors, American impressionists and Asian and African textiles. Admission is free.

Outdoors

Take a stroll down the 24-mile Indianapolis Canal Walk (below) behind the museums

as you head back downtown. You'll see a sculpture gallery, a clock that runs on steam and brightly painted murals along the way. The **Indianapolis Zoo**, 1200 W. Washington St., lets you get up-close and personal with dolphins inside a water tank, or you can watch elephants paint mini-masterpieces. Admission is \$14.50; check the zoo's website for operating hours, as they differ from month to month.



Dining

For sustenance, try **Harry and Izzy's**, 153 S. Illinois St., for dinner. The vibe is relaxed but swanky, so wear something nicer

than a hoodie. For less than \$30, you can get a calamari appetizer and the vegetarian linguine as an entrée. For dessert, get your chocolate fix at **Chocolate Café**, 20 N. Meridian St., known for its mouthwatering truffles and chewy chocolate fudge. -LL

Curious about where to shop, play and stay? Check out our suggestions at echomagazine.wordpress.com.





When you're itching to get out of the house but can't afford much more than a brisk walk in the park, consider these volunteer gigs that reward you for a day's work with free food, entertainment and educational opportunities.

Green City Market 1750 N. Clark St.

The gig: The city's premier organic farmers market needs helpers for its information booths, chef demos, children's programs and more.

The hours: Wednesdays and Saturdays, 7 a.m.-1 p.m.

The payback: Free admission to special events and discounts and freebies from participating vendors such as Sur La Table, which provides a 20 percent discount and an eco-friendly tote.

Don't forget: Volunteers can receive a 50 percent discount on a GCM membership, normally \$50.

CONTACT: GCMVOLUNTEERS@GMAIL.COM 773.880.1266

Genesis Growers at the Green City Market and Oak Park Farmer's Market at Lake Street and Elmwood Avenue

The gig: Genesis Growers, a community-supported agricultural co-op, needs volunteers to sell produce and other products at the markets.

The hours: Wednesdays and Saturdays from April through December, 7 a.m.-1:30 p.m.

The payback: For every hour you work, you'll receive a \$9 credit toward individual purchases or a co-op share redeemable in regular deliveries of produce.

Don't forget: If you have a green thumb and can travel to St. Anne, Ill., consider helping out at Genesis Growers' 20-acre farm. The \$9 credit plan applies here as well.

CONTACT: GENESISGROWERS@COMCAST.NET 815.953.1512

PAY IT FORWARD

Volunteering can fill your fridge, your wallet and your heart

By Molly McCormack • Illustration by Shane Mahn

Adler Planetarium 1300 S. Lake Shore Drive

The gig: The Planetarium needs guides for the Space Visualization Lab, school tours and special events.

The hours: Monday through Friday, 10 a.m.-4 p.m.; Saturday and Sunday, 10 a.m.-4:30 p.m.

The payback: Free admission to the planetarium, discounted entrance fees for family and friends, a 20 percent discount at the Adler's signature restaurant Galileo and invitations to workshops. There is also a training session that provides astronomy education.

Don't forget: You're expected to work at least three hours each month.

CONTACT: VOLUNTEER@ADLERPLANETARIUM.ORG 312.542.2411

The Goodman Theatre 17 N. Dearborn St.

The gig: The Goodman needs ushers to take tickets and help patrons find their seats.

The hours: Tuesday through Sunday evenings; matinees on Thursdays, Saturdays and Sundays

The payback: Volunteers watch the performance for free after guests are seated.

Don't forget: The supply of ushers always exceeds the demand, so be sure to contact Goodman early in the season.

CONTACT: USHERING@GOODMANTHEATRE.ORG 312.443.3808

The Chicago Architecture Foundation 224 S. Michigan Ave.

The gig: The Foundation needs docents to conduct architectural walking tours.

The hours: Daily, 10 a.m.-2 p.m.

The payback: You receive a graduate-level prep course in Chicago architecture.

Don't forget: This is a major time commitment. Docent classes are held one full day a week over a six-month period. New guides are expected to give 39 one-hour tours a year. Applications for 2011 slots are due Oct. 15, 2010.

CONTACT: VOLUNTEER@ARCHITECTURE.ORG 312.922.3432



ONTHEHOUSE

Chicago nightlife can be expensive, but eating dinner doesn't have to be. We've rounded up seven bars in the city that offer complimentary dining when you order drinks.

An offshoot of a popular NYC bar, Wicker Park's **Crocodile** provides a free Margherita pizza for one with the purchase of any drink. Enjoy the hip, urban atmosphere with brick walls and reptile-inspired decor.

1540 N. MILWAUKEE AVE. SPECIALS—5:30 P.M.-2 A.M.

Enjoy a free buffet and trivia night at the family-owned **Burwood Tap** in Lincoln Park. Come early for snacks like pizza bread and meatballs. Take a break between trivia rounds to play some pool and nibble on the bountiful free popcorn.

724 W. WRIGHTWOOD AVE.
SPECIALS—8:30-10 P.M.



Grab some free finger food at **Finn McCool's** on the Gold Coast. This Irish sports bar —a frequent stop for young professionals on their way home from work—offers veggie trays, salad, nachos and wings for snacking.

15 W. DIVISION ST.
SPECIALS—4-7 P.M.

Big Chicks in Uptown has a cozy diner feel. Its free buffet offers comfort food ranging from macaroni salad and pulled pork sandwiches to chili and burgers with a one-drink minimum required.

5024 N. Sheridan Road Specials—4-6 p.m. MOND/

EDNESDA

FRIDAY

SUND

By Susanne Falenczykowski and Jonathan Nelson Illustration by Jonathan Nelson



JESDA

The Map Room is a café by day, bar by night. Tuesday is International Night with a free buffet of ethnic cuisine from a different country every week. A two-drink minimum is required.

1949 N. HOYNE AVE.

SPECIALS—7 P.M.-2 A.M.

HURSDA

McGee's Tavern and Grille in the heart of Lincoln Park offers a free buffet every Thursday, ranging from make-your-own tacos to fried chicken. Call first—the buffet isn't offered during special events like live band performances.

950 W. WEBSTER AVE. Specials—6-8 p.m.

ATURDAY

Cleo's Bar and Grill in Ukrainian Village has an upbeat, urban feel with graffiti walls and good tunes. A one-drink minimum buys access to an appetizer buffet with goodies such as quesadillas and pizza.

1935 W. CHICAGO AVE. SPECIALS—11 P.M.-1 A.M.







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OM ON THE RANGE By Laura Lane Illustration by Jeff Harvey

When you meditate, inner peace is never more than five minutes away

WHEN YOU THINK OF TOOLS, you probably think of hammers, saws and screwdrivers. Meditation is a tool as well, but it's used to create a mental and physical state of calm, tuning the mind into the true self, says Jennifer Kim of Chicago's Peace School.

Meditation yields immediate benefits and more subtle ones, according to Ali Arzeni, 23. "At first I found it was a really nice break in my day," says Arzeni. "The more I've done it, though, the more I've noticed the way it has benefited me... [It's also] reduced stress and helps me sleep better. Overall I've gained more focus."

Best of all, it requires no equipment or training, and you can do it anywhere at any time. You can meditate by simply focusing on breathing faster to energize or more slowly to calm yourself. You can silently repeat a mantra. A popular one is "close your eyes, clear your heart and let it go." Or you can use visualizations such as imagining a ball of positive light traveling through your body with each breath.

Kim's advice is to start small and aim for five minutes or less several times a week, gradually building up to about 20 minutes daily.

Step 1

Go to a quiet place where you won't get distracted. This can be anywhere. Keep the music off so you won't follow along.

Step 2

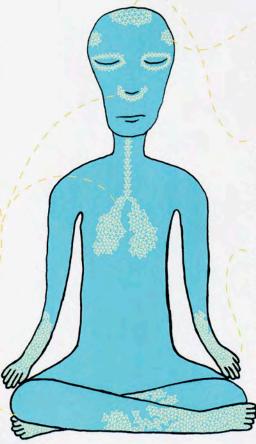
Sit cross-legged on the floor. If that is uncomfortable, prop a pillow behind your back. Your hands should be resting on your lap.

Step 3

Close your eyes. This will help you stay focused. Be sure not to fall asleep!

Step 4

Let your breath flow in and out naturally. Breathe in through your nose, and let the air fill your lungs. Then let your breath out, emptying your lungs.



Step 5

Your mind may start to drift. Just be aware of your thoughts as they pass and bring your concentration back to your breath.

Step 6

Incorporate a mantra. You can use the Peace School's technique called "peace breathing." Breathe in "world." Breathe out "peace."

Step 7

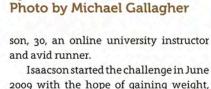
You'll know intuitively when you're ready to stop meditating. When you are done, wiggle your fingers and toes before stretching your body and opening your eyes.

CHECK OUT

learningmeditation.com for some guided meditations. Or go to iTunes and download Jesse and Jeane Stern's The Meditation Podcast for free.

UP TO THE CHALLENGE?

Try these extreme workouts and see big results



By Samantha Blattner



BEFORE I BEGAN my yoga challenge, I was notorious among family and friends for my clumsiness and lack of flexibility. I smoked, was out of shape and had never done yoga in my life. Yoga was for spiritual health freaks hyped up on meditation and a vegan diet, I thought, and I couldn't touch my toes without bending my knees.

Then, on Feb. 28, I nervously embarked on a 30-day Bikram yoga challenge. For the bargain price of \$40, I committed to spending 90 minutes a day for the next month at Bikram Yoga Naperville.

The Bikram routine consists of 26 traditional yoga poses and two breathing exercises in a room heated to 105 degrees. The heat is supposed to warm up the muscles, encourage sweating and detoxification and improve strength and flexibility.

I decided to do it partly out of curiosity and partly to see if I had what it takes to complete a fitness challenge. Plus, it was nice to think that I'd be in peak condition right in time for summer. It turns out that I'm not alone in that train of thought.

If the barrage of infomercials on P9oX, a 9o-day challenge, and Insanity, a 6o-day regimen, are any indication, it would seem that more and more people are taking on athletic challenges. In both of these, you take "before and after" photos in your skivvies, document your weight and measurements and perform different types of exercises—aerobic and strength-training—for about an hour a day. Both programs offer workout videos, a diet plan, online support and other amenities.

These are tough workouts promising dramatic transformations, but not everyone does it for that reason. "I honestly just saw the infomercial and said, 'What the heck. I'll give it a shot," says Dan Isaac-

Isaacson started the challenge in June 2009 with the hope of gaining weight, a task his running had always made difficult. Isaacson stuck with it and went from 136 pounds to 151. He still does the program daily. According to Isaacson, the hardest part of the challenge was sticking with the high-protein diet. "My

diet is horrible; it consists of spaghetti

and popsicles."

"For me, the hardest part is doing each workout correctly," says Kellen Alexander, 25, an improv comic who was in his seventh week of the challenge in late April. Even though Alexander makes fun of his physique ("I have the body of an Olsen twin circa How the West Was Fun"), he is seeing progress: "Just give me a pink Speedo and a little more time, and my beach body will be complete."

A Bikram challenge, which increases flexibility rather than muscle mass, calls for a different kind of endurance. During the first week, my head hurt and my body had never been twisted and pulled so hard, especially at such sweltering temperatures. It was grueling, but I kept at it. I could feel my body cleansing itself as I went to the bathroom 10 times as often as usual. My muscles eventually stopped aching, and my skin started glowing. All that sweat was washing away the dead skin on my body.

Slowly, it got easier to spend 90 minutes in the heat. By day 20, I was able to move past the beginner stage of each pose, and reaching my toes was a piece of cake. At the end, I felt better both physically and mentally. Even though I only lost a couple of pounds, I was toned and in shape.

DISTILLING THE ISSUE

How to stay gluten-free while drinking

"I'LL TAKE A Rum and Coke please!"

Come out with me next weekend, and you will hear me shouting this phrase at the bartender every time I see the bottom of my glass. I'll look at your colorful, fruity drink or crisp, imported beer with envious eyes as I fill up on carbonation and rum because, as a person with Celiac disease, my drink choices are limited and risky.

Celiac disease is an autoimmune digestive disease that affects 3 million Americans and causes damage to the small intestine when gluten—a protein found in wheat, barley, rye and malt—is ingested. In the two years since I was diagnosed with Celiac disease, the number of new gluten-free food products in stores has increased from 700 in 2007 to 1,081 in 2009, according to Joanna Gueller, a spokesperson for Mintel, a marketing research firm. But besides a few brands of beer, the alcohol industry hasn't kept up with the growing glutenfree trend.

WEIGHING THE RISK

Distillation was supposed to be the answer because many liquor companies and even some dietitians say that the process eliminates gluten particles

from the beverage. If you want to remain 100 percent risk free, Mary Schluckebier, executive director of the Celiac Sprue Association, recommends avoiding liquors that have come in contact with wheat or barley rye. While distillation breaks the gluten down into almost undetectable molecules, it doesn't eliminate them, she says.

Furthermore, many spirit companies don't test their products for gluten, notes distiller Derek Kassebaum from North Shore Distillery in Lake Bluff, Ill. "Unless the base grain is known not to contain gluten, the company is not going to make



By Samantha Blattner Illustration by Katherine Fisher

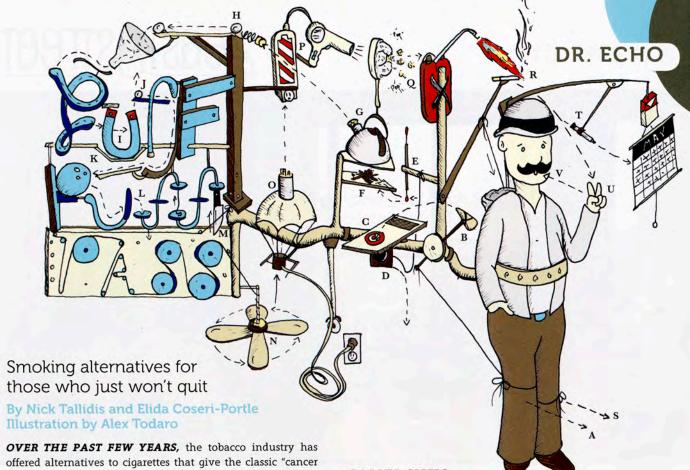
the claim [that they're gluten-free]," says Kassebaum.

Labeling liquor for allergens would help. Food products are subject to the 2006 Food Allergen Labeling and Consumer Protection Act, which requires nutrition labels on food to state clearly if the product contains any of what the FDA calls the eight major food allergies: soy, fish, shellfish, milk, eggs, tree nuts, peanuts and wheat. Liquor, however, has been excluded because it doesn't fall under FDA jurisdiction but is regulated by the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives. Thus, liquor manufacturers don't have to list every ingredient in the product, says Schluckebier.

They do have to meet exacting standards on what their beverages must contain to be labeled as whiskey, gin and so on. The ATF requires distillers of liquors like vodka and gin to identify the liquors' food sources on the label. For example, for a spirit to be labeled as rum, it must be derived from sugar cane, sugar cane syrup or sugar cane molasses. So, it's always smart to read the label.

SAFE ALTERNATIVES

Wine lovers will be happy to know that the Celiac Sprue Association considers all wine to be gluten-free. Rum and tequila are also safe options when you're faced with a long list of mixed drinks at a restaurant or bar. However, it's important to make sure the brand you're drinking is pure because added flavoring sometimes contains gluten. If you prefer to stay away from the hard stuff, gluten-free beer is a good choice but not yet a staple of most bars. These beers most commonly substitute sorghum and buckwheat for wheat. Some brands to try are Bard's Tale or Redbridge beer.



offered alternatives to cigarettes that give the classic "cancer stick" a run for its money with varying degrees of success. Here's the result of Echo's taste test.

HERBAL ECSTASY CIGARETTES

Available in Mild, Regular, Menthol and Reds, these tobaccofree and nicotine-free cigarettes claim to have an exotic, herblike taste and aroma. Ingredients consists of herbs such as damiana, wild lettuce, catnip, passion flower and skull cap.

Cost: \$6

The Verdict: If cows smoked, they'd probably choose Ecstasy cigarettes. But since grazing on grass is not our thing, we'll pass.Our verdict on the Menthol version was that it was a poor replacement for the real thing.

ELECTRONIC CIGARETTES

Blu Cig is one of several electronic cigarettes on the market. This device has a rechargeable battery and replaceable cartridge equivalent to 15 cigarettes. The cartridge contains water, propylene glycol, nicotine and one of five flavors: Magnificent Menthol, Classic Tobacco, Java Jolt, Vivid Vanilla and Cherry Crush. Smoking in public places is allowed with e-cigarettes, as they emit nothing but water vapor.

Cost: \$60 for device, \$2 for refill cartridges

The Verdict: Beyond looking badass, the electronic cigarette is a pretty decent smoking alternative. The flavor is nice—kind of like inhaling the steam from a hot mocha latte—and it provides the satisfaction of puffing. Though Blu Cig claims to be free from tar and tobacco, the FDA stated in January 2010 that electronic cigarettes have yet to be proven safe.

CAMELSNUS

This smokeless tobacco was introduced last year as an alternative to moist snuff, which requires spitting. Be forewarned as Snus carries the risk of mouth cancer. This refrigerated product offers smokers 15 pouches of pasteurized tobacco. The flavors come in Original, Spice and Frost.

Cost: \$4

The Verdict: Feel that tingle? Yeah, it does burn a little. Despite that, Snus isn't half bad. Pop one in wherever—a family picnic, the doctor's office—and you've got a fun little secret. While discretion and portability may be Snus' main draws, the effect and flavor are also satisfying for the average smoker, even though the health risk is troubling.

CAMEL STICKS

Part of a new line of dissolvable tobacco, Camel Sticks contain 3.1 milligrams of nicotine per stick, compared to the average one milligram of nicotine in a cigarette. They come 10 sticks to a package and in one flavor—Mellow.

Cost: \$4.50

The Verdict: Part of Camel's line of edible tobacco products dubbed by critics as "tobacco candy," these skinny, twisted tobacco sticks melt in your mouth, and not in a good way. Bite off a chunk, let it sit in your mouth and, POOF, it magically disappears. The taste is fine, a little bit spicy and a whole lot of artificial sweetness. The nicotine is enough to keep you from grabbing for your pack, but still, where the hell did it go? Exercise caution around kids, as this tobacco product could be mistaken for candy.

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PRIMPING Echo goes back to school for thrifty beauty remedies FOR PENNIES By Lisa Cisneros Illustration by Katherine Fisher

COSMETOLOGY SCHOOLS offer a wide range of services at discounted prices, but there's a catch: You don't know if you're getting someone at the head of the class or a potential beauty school dropout. A team of Echo-ites volunteered for head-to-toe treatments with generally positive results except for what came to be known as the purple polish disaster—a two-hour experiment in terror. With professional manicures available for \$10, we'll pass this one up.

Signature Facial Pivot Point Academy

3901 W. Irving Park Road

Price: \$35

Treatment time: Walk-in, 80 minutes Corners cut: Facilities are clean and tidy but

hardly the lap of luxury.

This is one of Chicago's best-kept secrets! As soon as you enter,

you fill out a questionnaire on skin conditions and allergies. Then, your aesthetician explains the best treatment for you. Our facial included extractions, exfoliations, multiple toners, a firming cream and a repair cream, all by Dermalogica. We were given a recovery mask and an eye and lip treatment as unexpected freebies, but everyone gets a shoulder massage gratis.

Make-up Application Aveda Institute 2828 N. Clark St.

Price: \$15 for an application,

\$20 for a lesson

Treatment time: Scheduled appointment, 90 minutes

Corners cut: None that we observed.

Sure, you could go to the MAC counter for a complimentary makeover, but

it's so much nicer to have an artist's undivided attention in pleasant facilities. All products are by Aveda, and, while we were very pleased with our evening look, we wouldn't mind coming back for a more neutral, daytime look. As a nice touch, we had a hand in choosing the color palette.

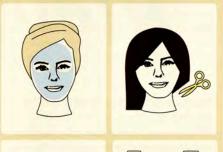
Haircut Paul Mitchell the School 1225 S. Halsted St.

Price: \$12 for Phase 1 student, \$17 for Phase 2 student

Treatment time: Walk-in, 90 minutes Corners cut: Salon is hip and trendy, but our stylist was fazed by our faux hawk.

Echo's only male guinea pig opted to pay the additional \$5 for a

more experienced student stylist. While the shampoo and head massage were impeccable, the stylist was less than confident in executing a faux hawk and received help from a capable supervisor. It was a mellow take on the classic cut and definitely ok for a job interview. But since our usual stylist charges \$20, we're not sure we'd do it again.







Massage Cortiva Institute 17 N. State St.

Price: \$30 per hour

Treatment time: Scheduled appointment, 60 minutes

Corners cut: Our massage student's hesitancy undercut the spa experience.

Cortiva gets points for discounting massage rates by 60 percent and

providing immaculate facilities with heated tables. Our instructor asked all the right questions about what ailed us and relieved some of the pain in our knees. The only drawback was that she worked more slowly than an experienced masseuse. But at these prices, we're not complaining.

SALVAGE STYLE

By Elida Coseri-Portle and Molly McCormack Photo by Cooper Link

TABITHA HERALD LONG, owner of Island Girl Salvage in Elk Grove Village, Ill., and Chicago furniture designer Randall Kramer have made careers out of repurposing discards into contemporary furnishings. Here are their quick and easy projects for DIY-ers.

The find: TRANSOM WINDOWS are narrow rectangular windows placed over doors of late 19th century homes to admit light.

Available at: Flea markets and salvage shops. Prices start at around \$75 depending on how ornate the glass is.

Use: Suspended from the ceiling as window valances or room dividers, or hung on the wall as art.

How to: Drill holes and screw in eyehooks at the top of the transom window frame; attach to hooks in ceiling or picture window if you're using it as a valance.

Tip: Check out the Smith Museum of Stained Glass at Navy Pier for the most stunning examples and a wide variety of styles, suggests Long.

The find: ANTIQUE GLASS LAMP SHADES

Available at: Thrift shops and garage sales in art deco, art nouveau and mission styles.

Use: Inverted as candle holders to illuminate a dining table or outdoor buffet. "It's better than anything purchased at a party store," says Long.

How to: Place the votive inside glass globe and light it.

Tip: Mix and match different styles for an eclectic touch.



The find: LOUVERED WOOD CLOSET SHUTTERS

Available at: Garage sales, alleys or brand new at home supply stores for \$20-\$40. **Use:** Horizontally as an architectural

headboard over a queen- or king-size bed, suggests Kramer.

How to: Sand and paint with water-based enamel; attach all four corners to walls with anchors.

Tip: This is more of a wall treatment than a true headboard so add foam bolsters or wedges for comfort.

The find: PVC PIPES

Available at: Home supply stores for approximately \$13 for a 10-foot piece of pipe (enough for 10 bottle holders).

Use: To outfit a shelf or nook for your wine collection.

How to: Cut pipe in one-foot sections with hack saw and stack horizontally; insert bottles.

Tip: Home supply stores have a wide selection of metal pipe. They'll cut it for free upon request, notes Kramer.

The find: WROUGHT IRON

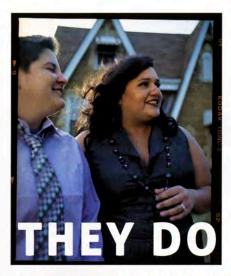
Available at: Salvage shops

Use: In multiple ways. Gates and railings make great wall art or headboards. Use smaller sections as trivets, bookends and art. Antique iron hooks can be attached to wood strips and hung as coat racks.

How to: Cover with polyurethane to seal in chipped finish. Check home stores for mounting kits. The average kit is \$10.

Tip: Check with the landlord before mounting a heavy piece on the wall.







Out of the closet and into the chapel By Rahel Rasu and Katie Robinson • Photo by Zack Sabin

PLANNING A WEDDING comes with its fair share of headaches, but it's an especially unique challenge for gay and lesbian couples.

LOCATION Even though an Iowa marriage isn't legally recognized in Illinois, some local couples are still crossing state lines to get married, making both a political and personal statement. Chicagoans Stacy Jacobs and Melissa Johns arranged to marry both in Iowa and Chicago because they wanted their marriage to be legal somewhere, even if it is not in their home state, says Johns.

According to the Iowa Department of Public Health, nearly 2,000 samesex marriages were conducted in the first year of legalization. Consequently, the larger cities—Des Moines and Iowa City—offer a relatively wide range of facilities.

Couples marrying in Chicago can choose from a number of churches that host weddings and commitment ceremonies. Berwyn residents Beatrice Cruz and Nydia Sahagun were wed at Oak Park's First United Church in October 2009. Chicago churches that perform same-sex ceremonies include Hyde Park Union Church, Church of Our Savior and Holy Trinity Lutheran Church. While Broadway United Methodist Church does not host weddings, its ministers perform ceremonies outside the church.

ATTIRE Finding the right attire is less of a problem for men than for women. "We both wore white," notes Brent Holman-Gomez who married Luis Holman-Gomez in 2001. Women like Cruz who seek nontraditional attire soon find out that there are few makers of tuxedos for women. Cruz was able to find a photo of a suit online that she had custom made, while others buy garments and have them extensively retailored. Two local shops that will do this sort of work are Dame Couture in Evanston and Haj Designs, Inc. in Chicago.

DETAILS There's not an over abundance of same-sex wedding planners in Chicago, and for many couples, gay and straight, it's simply too expensive to hire someone to plan an event. As a result, many same-sex weddings are hands-on affairs. Johns and Jacobs chose to limit their guest list and turn to DIY projects whenever they could. Their guestbook was homemade, as were the centerpieces.

The trade-off of a DIY wedding is that couples get to create a more intimate experience, but they have a whole slew of other things to worry about. To curb this problem, Cruz and Sahagun used a planning book and spreadsheet to stay organized. They also recruited friends and family to help them with their wedding. Sahagun's cousin took over the details they didn't have time to cover, like the all-important floral arrangements.

Cruz and Sahagun say they tried to stay as relaxed as possible to enjoy the big day. Sahagun, who admits to being high-strung, says she didn't get stressed until the wedding started and the flowers still hadn't arrived. When they showed up—15 minutes late—they were not what she asked for.

"My mom looked at me," says Sahagun. "And she's like, 'Let it go. You can't change it, so let it go." •••

RESOURCES

- Queerlywed.com is a website started by Jacobs and Johns. It links to vendors from around the world and provides tips on planning same-sex weddings.
- •Gayweddings.com lists Chicago-area vendors of everything you need to plan a wedding.
- •Soyoureengayged.com has blogs, lists of national vendors and a section that commemorates past weddings.

DINNER IS SERVED

Impress your guests with these scrumptious and simple recipes

By Michelle Saltzer Photo by Andrew Herner

AS THE SUMMER HEATS UP, you and your friends may be looking for refreshing and delicious ways to cool down. So whip up a couple of mint juleps for a cocktail, and follow with zesty Andalusian gazpacho and tequila lime shrimp. For dessert, try the delicious and sweet orange-pineapple granita. Your friends will think you're the next Top Chef!

MINTJULEP (Serves two)

Ingredients:

12-16 mint leaves 2 tablespoons sugar Crushed ice 2 1/2 ounces bourbon Mint for garnish

Simple syrup:

- 1 cup water
- 1 cup sugar

Method: Combine 1 cup sugar and water in a small saucepan over medium high heat. Cook for two minutes until sugar is dissolved. Cool before using.

Put mint leaves and 2 tablespoons sugar in the bottom of a tall glass. With the handle of a wooden spoon. crush the leaves to extract flavor. Fill the glass with crushed ice, and pour in the bourbon. Top with a splash of simple syrup. Using a long-handled spoon, gently agitate-don't stirto chill and mix the drink. Garnish with mint leaves.



ANDALUSIAN GAZPACHO

(Serves two)

Ingredients:

3-inch piece of french bread, crust removed

- 2 cloves of garlic
- 2 teaspoons salt
- 2 tablespoons sherry vinegar
- 1 teaspoon sugar
- 1/4 teaspoon cumin (optional)
- 2 1/2 pounds ripe or canned Roma tomatoes, quartered
- 1/2 cup extra virgin olive oil

Garnish: Finely chopped red and green bell peppers

Method: Dip bread in 1/2 cup of water for one minute; squeeze dry.

Chop garlic and add to blender with half of tomatoes, salt, bread, vinegar, sugar and cumin. Process until tomatoes are finely chopped. Add rest of tomatoes at slow speed. When finely chopped, slowly stream in oil, blending until smooth.

Force soup through a sieve or strainer.

Transfer soup to a glass container: cover and chill for three hours. Serve cold. Season with salt and vinegar, and top with garnish.

TEQUILA LIME SHRIMP (Serves two)

Ingredients:

1 1/2 pounds medium or large shrimp, peeled and de-veined

Marinade:

1/4 cup olive oil

1/2 cup tequila

1/2 cup lime juice

1/4 teaspoon paprika (sweet Hungarian or smoked)

1/4 teaspoon garlic powder

1 tablespoon honey

Salt and pepper

Garnish:

1/2 cup finely chopped red onion 1/2 cup chopped cilantro Lime wedges

Method: In a large bowl, combine all marinade ingredients. Adjust seasonings before adding shrimp. Add shrimp, coat thoroughly, cover and refrigerate for at least one hour or until ready to use.

Heat a skillet or grill to medium high heat. Cook shrimp two to three minutes per side, flipping only once.

Toss immediately with more lime juice, red onion and cilantro.

ORANGE PINEAPPLE GRANITA (Serves two)

Ingredients:

2 oranges

1/2 cup fresh squeezed orange juice

1/2 cup pineapple juice

1/4 cup water

1/8 cup sugar

1/8 cup orange liqueur (such as Cointreau)

Method: Cut the tops off each orange and scoop out the pulp for later use. Discard tops and freeze empty orange shells.

Using a fine mesh strainer, press the pulp into juice until oranges yield half a cup. Add pineapple juice.

In a small saucepan, bring sugar and water to a boil. Once sugar is completely dissolved, remove from heat and allow to cool for a few minutes. Add juices and orange liqueur. Pour the mixture into a shallow glass dish and place level in the freezer for two to three hours. Mix gently with a fork every 20 minutes until it forms ice crystals and thickens. Frequent mixing will keep the granita from freezing into a solid block.

Once fully frozen, scoop granita into reserved orange shells. Keep in the freezer until ready to serve.

WEAPON OF CHOICE By Susanne Falenczykowski

What tools do Chicago's top chefs and foodies rely on in their home kitchens?

Jo Kaucher, co-owner and chef at the Chicago Diner and author of the Chicago Diner Cookbook (Book Publishing Co., 2002) Pick: Cusinart burr mill coffee grinder Why: "It's great for grinding flax seeds and herbs, and there's nothing like a fresh grind."



Peter Rios, owner and executive pastry chef of Alliance Bakery and Cafe and a contestant on the Food Network's *Chocolate Challenge* **Pick**: KitchenAid Immersion Blender **Why:** "I can make a quick smoothie, froth eggs for the perfect omelet and puree a mix for a smooth sauce or soup." (And you can use it as a portable electric whisk.)

Gale Gand, executive pastry chef of Chicago restaurant Tru and former host of the Food Network's *Sweet Dreams Pick:* Microplane Grater *Why:* "I use it for cheese, lemon and orange zest, and even for grating garlic sometimes."



Kevin Pang, food critic for the Chicago Tribune and host of The Cheeseburger Show Pick: Weber Kettle grill Why: "I use my Weber Kettle Grill at least once a week—grilling, smoking, barbecuing anything that'll sit on the grates. And that's pretty much everything."

Todd Stein, executive chef of Cibo Matto restaurant **Pick:** Vita-Mix blender **Why:** "There is no better blender out there; it makes the smoothest purees." (It also makes ice cream, soups and juices.)





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Installation view of Sharon Lockhart's On Kawara: Whole and Paris, 1964–95.

Museum of Contemporary Art, Tokyo, January 24–April 5, 1998, 1998. Collection

Museum of Contemporary Art, Chicago, Bernice and Kenneth Newberger

Fund. © 1998 Sharon Lockhart



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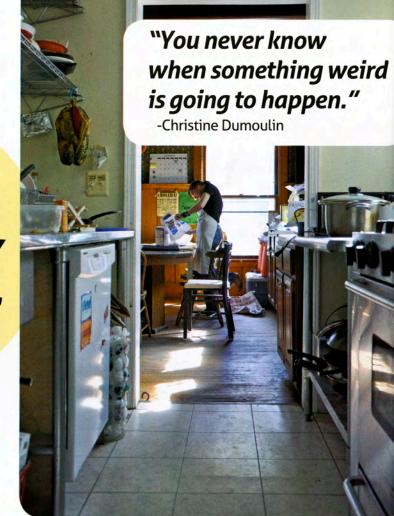


features WINTER · SPRING 2010 NYALOK AKAY, STONE SOUP CO-OP 46 Community Crusade 50 Breaking the Box 52 Girls of Summer 56 The Inconvenience **64** Chicago Through the Ey of Outsider Artists Photo by Cooper Link 45

Tearing Down the Commune Walls

COMMUNITY CRUSADE

By Nick Tallidis Photos by Cooper Link





"It's a great way to learn how to live independently without losing a supportive community."

-Anne Carter

TWENTY-ODD PEOPLE representing different co-ops in the Chicago area have gathered at the Stone Soup Cooperative's house in Uptown to attend a meeting of the Chicago Network of Intentional Communities. The first order of business is breaking bread. The guests dive into the vegetarian smorgasbord, which includes such treats as dolmathes, pita, cookies, pasta, and mixed fruits and veggies. There are chairs and tables, but no one's sitting, probably because they don't want to miss out on seconds or thirds. It's like any family gathering except those present are not actually related but part of a movement. It's not hard to guess what that movement is. Between chews and satisfied murmurs, one word is uttered over and over: community.

At a time when some of us feel a greater allegiance to virtual communities than to physical ones, intentional communities are the antithesis of that insularity. They're also the modern-day counterpart of what used to be called communes, but don't use this term in front of intentional community advocates. They are trying to distance themselves from the damning C-word with its associations

of sex, drugs and rock 'n' roll. Today's intentional communities are tightly organized and governed—so much so that they've formed a national group, the Fellowship for Intentional Communities, to provide support and advocacy. FIC currently has 1,660 registered communities listed in the United States. Illinois boasts 38. Of those, 27 are here in Chicago.

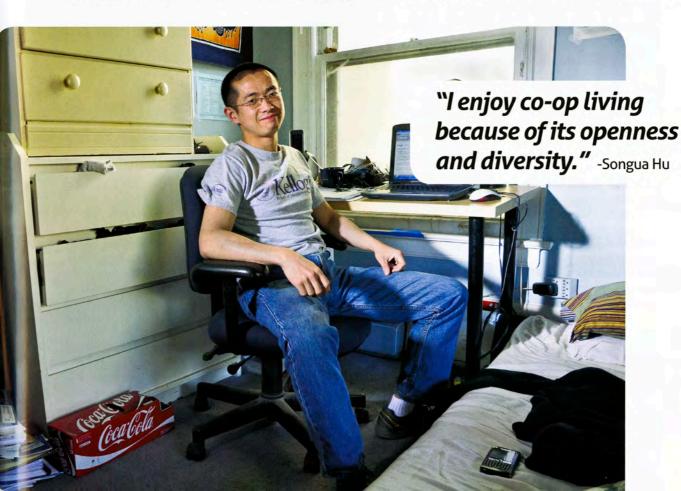
Urban intentional communities often come in the form of cooperative housing or co-housing, an increasingly attractive alternative to apartment living and student housing due to their affordability and sustainability. Local co-houses, such as Stone Soup co-ops in Uptown and McKinley Park, Evanston's Mosaic Communities, the Qumbya co-ops in Hyde Park or The Waterside co-op in Rogers Park, are scattered throughout Chicago. "It's a section of the movement that's really growing," explains Tony Sirna, FIC board member and web designer.

It's hard to miss the Mosaic house's massive tan brick façade with its road-bike and hula-hoop littered porch, a hangout for the house's 14 residents. The front door opens onto a wall completely covered in coloring book art and random magazine

tear-outs. In the center is a white sign with black lettering that reads "Hippies Use Side Door." It's their way of poking fun at a stereotype that "does not fit us at all," says resident Michael Gsovski, sitting in the house's cluttered dining room.

"There are a lot of things that are being done in this society that require thousands of people and a substantial task base. So now the idea is rather than withdrawing from society, change it from within. Work with it," says Gsovski, a graduate student at Northwestern. He believes, however, the failures of the commune era were an incredibly important step in the right direction.

While most of these communes vanished, a number survive to this day. Among them, Twin Oaks Intentional Community in rural Louisa County, Va. stands tall. Currently home to about 100 members, Twin Oaks has been around since 1967. Sick of the United States' escalating involvement in the Vietnam War and the racial and sexual politics that plagued the country, Kat Kinkade, along with her husband, teenage daughter and five others, moved to the 450-acre farm to create a





utopian society in the spirit of the Walden II community from Harvard psychologist B.F. Skinner's novel of the same name. While the Walden II template didn't last, the community did.

A key to its success may be that the currency at Twin Oaks is work, not money. Members are provided a package deal that includes housing and assorted amenities, food, healthcare and even personal spending money in exchange for about 42 hours of work per week for the community or one of its businesses, Twin Oaks Tofu, Twin Oaks Hammock or Twin Oaks Indexing. The community is fully self-sustainable and nearly self-sufficient—residents grow 75 percent of their food and produce most of their own power.

Members are chosen carefully. Twin Oaks puts prospective residents through a three-week trial run and a six-month provisional period before granting them full membership. Chicago's co-houses follow this model, too. Prospective members attend house dinners before interviewing with the group and longtime residents. A unanimous vote is required for membership to be extended.

At the April meeting of representatives of Chicago's intentional communities, attendees were most interested in exchanging information on the best ways to recruit, screen and integrate new members. They shared tips on how to advertise, create diversity and turn people down without turning them off to intentional communities.

"The key," says David Arfa, who has worked as membership coordinator for Stone Soup Ashland, "is getting people to actually walk through the door so they can get a sense of what cooperative living is. I think a lot of people come into it not knowing much of anything at all."

Emily Raymond, a Northwestern student, admits that she didn't know what to expect when she applied to live in the Mosaic Communities. "I thought it was gonna be real hippie, you know, peace and love and drum circles," says Raymond. She doesn't see herself as the stereotypical co-oper—she confesses to having a mild shopping addiction and spending her tax return on make-up—but is enjoying living there. "I was surprised how practical it is to live in a co-op. It's been nothing but a positive experience."

It's hard not to be taken aback by the organization and efficiency of these communities. Don't underestimate the power of a well-managed chore chart (a co-op must), but that's only the beginning, as each house is essentially its own government with a long list of responsibilities that must be met.

House meetings are held every Sunday at the Bowers House of the Qumbya Cooperative. Members gather at the dining room table after their Sunday group dinner and proceed to act out democracy in its purest form. Issues ranging from reimbursement for purchasing rope to bush removal to community involvement are debated and brought to a vote. Aside from the usual sighs and cross-table stare-downs, the week's meetings go smoothly, and decisions are made. The U.S. Senate could learn a thing or two.

"Communities can take a monastic or missionary approach," says Andrew Cone, a Bowers House resident. Cone, a tutor and co-owner of Open Produce in Hyde Park, shares the house with 20 others. Like him, they are not people attempting to hide from the world; they are teachers, bakers, architects and baristas. "We can live apart from society or become an active force in it," he says. What seems to make the most sense is a combination of the two.

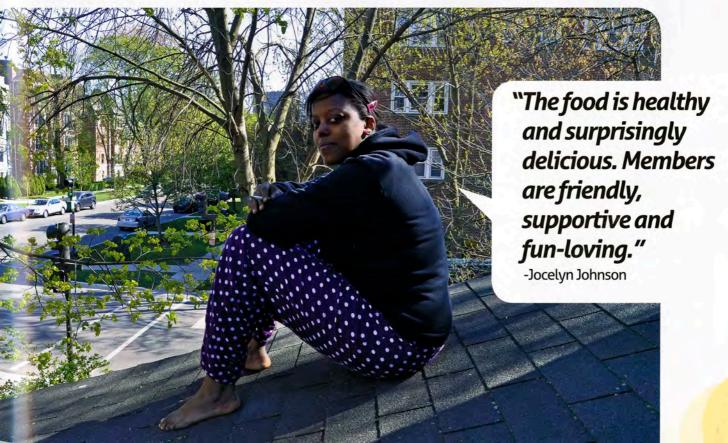
The co-ops have gone about this in a number of ways. Mosaic Communities opens its doors to the general public for communal meals a few times a week. The Waterside Co-op is home to the Waters School media lab, where 7th and 8th grade students produce environmental video projects. The Stone Soup Co-op, whose mission statement is social justice and joy,

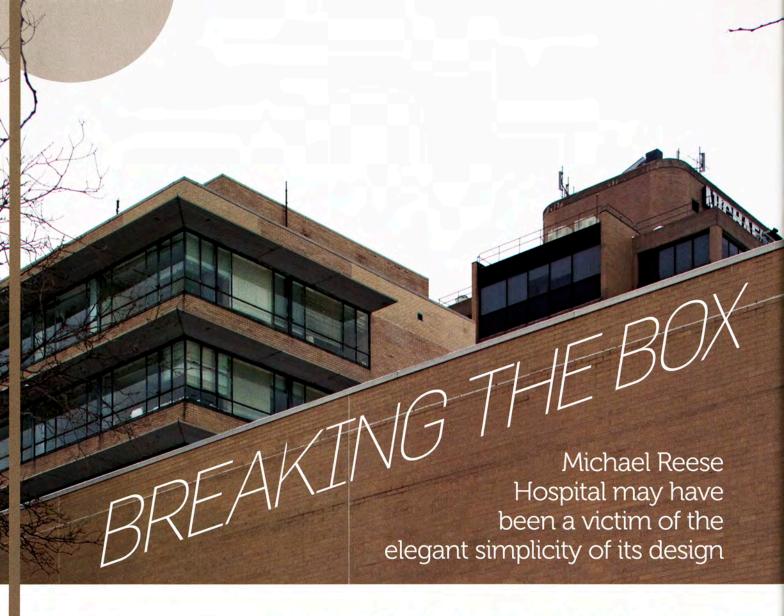
is involved in several projects aimed at fulfilling this mission in neighborhoods across the city.

Arfa, who has lived in intentional communities in Seattle and Chicago, is glad to see the local movement coming into its own. National groups like FIC and North American Students of Cooperation have solidified the movement on a national level, providing education, resources, local and national gatherings and, in some cases, financial support to developing communities.

He says the Chicago Network of Intentional Communities, which was formed about a year ago, will give the co-opers "much needed face-to-face time" to discuss the issues most important to their movement. In addition to quarterly meetings, the network has established its web presence with chicagoco-op.net and a listserv allowing communities to share news and keep up to date with one another.

"Every group is unique and different, and yet they all share a set of common challenges," says FIC's Sirna. "There's a lot that communities can learn from each other, and there's a lot of people interested in community that can learn from intentional communities."





By Julia Korol Photos by David Schallio

THE 37-ACRE COMPLEX of buildings known as Michael Reese Hospital on the near South Side is well on its way to becoming a pile of rubble. Demolition on the city-owned property began in October 2009. Two buildings have been spared: Main Reese, the administrative building erected in 1905, and Singer Pavilion, built in 1950.

Singer is the lone survivor of eight MRH buildings designed by Walter Gropius,

the father of Bauhaus. They represent "one of [his] most outstanding and vast projects," according to the Gropius in Chicago Coalition, which was formed to save Reese from the wrecking ball.

In the end, nothing could save Michael Reese: not the Chicago Landmarks Commission, which denied the buildings landmark status in November 2009; not the fact that it was a Bauhaus design; not the failure of Chicago to win the 2016 Summer Olympics, which would have necessitated building an Olympic Village on the site.

The battle to save Reese has been covered extensively by the *Chicago Tribune's* Pulitzer Prize winning architecture critic Blair Kamin and others. Yet most Chicagoans are not only unaware of the demolition but probably never

appreciated the artistry of the hospital's design. Why? Local architects have a theory: The buildings were the prototype of mid-century modern design, which was both a blessing and a curse.

"These buildings have the disadvantage of being exactly the kind of buildings that current architecture is still rebelling against," says Tim Wittman, former member of the Chicago Landmarks Commission and art and architecture history professor at Columbia College Chicago and the School of the Art Institute. The curves and sculptural forms of today's hotshot skyscrapers, like the Aqua at Waterside Drive and North Columbus Drive, are still about thinking outside the very box that Gropius and his colleage Ludwig Mies van der Rohe trademarked. "A lot of architects like

these buildings," says Kamin. "But a lot of lay people look at them. They see glass and they see brick and they think they're cold and they think they're ugly."

By contrast, the Beaux Arts ornamentation of the original Cook County Hospital, built in 1914, made it easier for people to see its historical value. The plainness of Reese made it a harder sell. "I always liken modern architecture to some great performer who can walk onto a stage with a bare bulb and a microphone and entertain an audience for three hours," says Jonathan Fine, executive director of Preservation Chicago. "You've got to be pretty interesting because there's no costumes, and there's no scenery, and there are no dancing girls that can come in and distract you from the imperfections of your architecture."

Ironically, modernism is often described as forbidding, unwelcoming and anti-human. But Gropius cared deeply about how people functioned in his designs. The hospital's unorthodox planning was meant to emphasize its patients' needs by closing off streets to create a grouping of buildings called a "Super Block," Kamin says. These buildings turned inward on themselves, facing intricate internal courtyards designed by lauded landscape architects Hideo Sasaki and Lester Collins. Tucked comfortably in the heart of the space, they were designed to create tranquil environments conducive to healing. This was certainly innovative in a city built on a traditional grid, where, as Kamin explains, buildings traditionally face public streets.

Each of Gropius' Reese buildings featured some surprising experiment in architecture.

He took particular care in choosing soothing color schemes in the Singer Pavilion, the hospital's psychiatric unit, to allow filtered, natural light in the building. Bars on windows were replaced with double panes of glass and



TWO VIEWS OF THE NOW

DEMOLISHED KAPLAN PAVILLION

doors opening onto the green space, which restricted the patients without trapping them. Instead of functioning as a mere container for patients, nurses and doctors, the hospital was designed to aid in the recovery process.

The visually striking power plant was designed as an homage to Mies van der Rohe's IIT campus just a few blocks away. The laundry building featured a stair tower that jutted out from the building, making the placement of the stairs obvious by today's standards but revolutionary in 1948, Fine says. And the Kaplan Pavilion was solar-oriented before anyone was talking about solar in anything other than a small, residential building. The south-facing patient room took advantage of the natural light and lake views, and the building featured Gropius's signature slatted sunshades.

Preservationist Fine is struck by the irony that the Modern Wing of the Art Institute was winning plaudits while the battle over Michael Reese raged on 20 blocks south. The wings' sunshades pay tribute to the Gropius style, now lost to the ages. "Not to knock Renzo Piano, but we had it," says Fine. "The origin was there and it was being bulldozed at the very same time."

•RISE AND FALL•

1881 Michael Reese Hospital opens its doors. It fills the void left in Jewish hospital care within the city after the Hebrew Relief Association's hospital burned down in the Great Chicago Fire. The heirs of Michael Reese, a Jewish immigrant from Bavaria, request that the new hospital treat everyone.

1950 The hospital reaches out to Walter Gropius to assist in the planning of an urban renewal project focused on expanding and improving the hospital and its surroundings. The new hospital is a bustling teaching institution, where the first infant incubator and first successful polio vaccine are developed.

1990 Financial troubles plague the non-profit hospital, and Humana takes over.

1998 Envision Hospital Corp. purchases MRH and pumps in millions of dollars in assistance.

2008 MRH declares Chapter 11 bankruptcy and finally closes its doors.

2009 Chicago Public Building Commission awards a contract to demolish MRH to build the Olympic Village.



MHHASARA

For these Chicago women, baseball diamonds are a girl's best friend

By Shawna Lent Photos by Lenny Gilmore

I FELL IN LOVE WITH BASEBALL at a young age. I learned how to catch and throw after spending days in the backyard with my dad and joined the T-Ball team when I was six years old. No doubt my father planted the seed, but it proved to be a sport that, despite my age, I knew I wouldn't be able to get enough of.

I remember one afternoon at a ball field behind a local junior high when the stands were packed with parents shouting encouragement to their mini-mes. I stepped up to the plate and, before I was even able to take my first swing, a booming voice shouted from the dugout, "Don't worry, she's just a girl"—as if my gender was somehow associated with inferiority. There were giggles and hushed cackling coming from the sidelines, but no one batted an eye. After all, I was just a girl, and those nine faces staring back at me were not.

I creamed the ball into right-center field anyway, almost as a form of payback, and the outfielders were left scrambling. I later made the All-Star team and was the only girl on the squad. Though it was just T-Ball—and the talent pool at that level is questionable at best—it was still an accomplishment and an indication that I was on a level playing field with my male counterparts.

Flash forward: I have 14 years of softball experience under my belt, but any knowledge I've picked up about baseball stems only from being a fan. This seems to be an experience all too familiar to young women.

Actually, while the history of the sport leads us to believe that it's an impenetrable boy's club, women's involvement in baseball dates back to the 1800s. That may surprise people who saw A League of Their Own and assume that women only played in the '40s when major leaguers were fighting in World War II. But the story didn't start there, and it certainly won't end there. In fact, there's a league right here in our backyard that's doing its best to reverse the trend.

Here in Chicago, baseball is synonymous with the Cubs and the White Sox. But the Windy City is also home to a women's baseball league, the Chicago Gems, which was founded in 2002 and now serves as the parent organization to the Chicago Women's Baseball League. Created in 2008 to give women of all levels of experience the chance to play baseball, the league consists of four teams: the Comets, Riveters, Skyline and Turtle Rocks.

All four teams practice together on the weekends at locations, indoors and outdoors, throughout Chicago.

On this particular Saturday in March, the players are practicing at the Bridgeview Sports Dome. Baseball bags and equipment consume the floor, with bats, helmets and gloves scattered throughout. Only 14 women are in attendance, which isn't even enough to form two teams, and they spend the first 20 minutes warming up their arms and playing catch on the fake grass. Sporting workout gear and knee-high socks, some represent their favorite teams by wearing Cubs and White Sox jerseys.

The age range is drastic—from 14 to mid-40s—and it's a clear sign that there aren't enough women in the sport to des-



ignate specific age groups. Christine Devane, president of the league, explains that women's baseball is a small community nationwide that's still struggling to gain its footing.

During warm-ups, most throws make it on the fly, some bounce and others can only be described as a health hazard to the spectators.

"Heads up!" someone shouts in the distance. I look over in time to see a baseball flying toward my head, but it bounces off the leg of my chair before I can even react.

"If you're female, and you walk in the door, you're sent to the softball line."

This isn't an unusual sight at one of their practices because most of the women on the team come from softball backgrounds, and getting used to the smaller ball is an adjustment in and of itself.

"Sometimes it lands on somebody's foot, and sometimes it sails over their heads," says Devane. "It's all sort of a crapshoot. But eventually you get used to it."

Devane, who plays infield, spent her formative years playing T-Ball—where

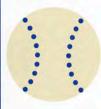
she was the only girl on her team—and softball before eventually switching to rugby in college. The hardest adjustment she was forced to make was the size of the ball and the distance between the bases. But she's been in the league for three years now, and at practice she switches back and forth between second and third base with comfortable ease.

After warm-ups, the women split up into two groups—seven for outfield drills and seven for infield. They spend the next hour taking ground balls, simulating situations with runners on base and call-

ing the fly balls in the outfield so a collision doesn't occur.

Comets pitcher and first baseman Joelle Balfe takes her position on the right side of the infield, cracking jokes and fielding

grounders. Balfe, 42, doesn't come from an organized baseball or softball background. About six years ago, in an effort to learn how to hit a baseball, she began searching the Internet for local batting cages, stumbled upon the Chicago Gems website and started attending its workouts. At the time, the Chicago Women's Baseball League had yet to be founded, and there were about a dozen players on the Gems.



"We couldn't believe we had found each other," she says. "We got together it seemed like every night, either the whole group or some part of the group, just to throw the ball or hit the batting cages, or have a practice."

Balfe and the rest of the players separate into two teams and put together a makeshift scrimmage. A coach sits on a bucket of baseballs behind some netting and tosses pitches to the batter. She grounds out to second. The next woman up hits one down the left-field line that should be an out, but instead it goes through the third baseman's legs, and she ends up with a double. The next batter has a lot of pop and smacks the ball into centerfield for what should be a double, but her legs don't carry her fast enough, and she's out at second base.

"Does this look like the most intimidating group of athletes you've ever seen? I mean, I don't think so," Balfe jokes. "Most people are just excited that we're going to brunch after this."

It's a harmless throwaway joke, but it also sums up the problem with women's baseball leagues. The talent level in the group is mixed. No cuts are made, and therefore not everyone on the field is the best of the best. There's no question that it's a good thing to get women on the diamond and open the game up to them, but from a grassroots level, it also hinders the main goals: taking women in baseball seriously and recognizing there are females in the game who are as good or better than some males.

The problem is, of course, that the sport lacks a feeder system for women, which makes it almost impossible to develop girls who can compete at a high level and remain an integral part of the game. This is evident in the sheer lack of girls who play in high schools. According to participation data from the National Federation of State High School Associations, in 2008-2009 (the most recent data available), there were no girls playing baseball in Illinois high schools. John Kovach,



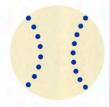
president and director of South Bend Blue Sox Women's Baseball, contends that the data is incorrect, based on his personal database of female high school players across the country. While Illinois allows girls to play baseball, an overwhelming majority of them join the softball team because "it's a comparable sport," according to Illinois High School Association equality specialist Sue Hinrichsen.

Kovach has done surveys of youth sports organizations and has found that "if you're female, and you walk in the door, you're sent to the softball line." This mentality is so engrained in our collective psyche that almost no one questions it.

The fact is that baseball and softball are two entirely different sports and have been recognized as such by the United States Olympic Committee, the International Olympic Committee and others. The differences are evident in almost every aspect of the game, be it the dimensions of the field, the rules, the equipment or the strategies.

These disparities are apparent when it comes to pitching, particularly considering the vastly different pitching mechanics between softball and baseball—with the former throwing underhand and the latter overhand. Not surprisingly, the Chicago Women's Baseball League isn't equipped with enough pitching depth, and it's one of the main reasons why the four teams only play seven innings instead of the usual nine. The league would like to rectify this by building up the skill levels of the players to become more competitive, but it lacks the resources.





"It's recruiting, it's resources, it's access to fields," says Balfe, explaining why the team is still struggling to find open field space for the 2010 season. "The men's leagues have these fields all wrapped up in contracts that go for years and years."

Devane echoes the statements about recruiting and says there's more work to be done.

"We'd like to have more instruction; we'd like to have more players," she says. "We'd like to have more money to get more instruction and get the word out to more players."

Despite their rare presence on baseball fields across the country, women who want to play do exist; they're just not represented in the sport for a variety of reasons. The idea that softball is for girls and baseball is for boys continues into adulthood.

Fortunately, the Chicago Women's Baseball League hasn't bought into this myth. At their second outdoor practice of the season, the women are warming

up on the turf field behind Senn High School. The practice today is geared toward fielding and baserunning, and the women spend a good portion of the time playing infield, doing a variety of throwing drills and getting some tips from their coach on secondary leads and a pitcher's pick-off move.

that since the Chicago Gems started in 2002, it has expanded from half a dozen women to four teams, and that has to count for something.

It's not clear how far the Chicago Women's Baseball League will go, or whether it will be able to become more competitive and recruit more players

"We got together every night just to throw the ball, hit the batting cages, or have a practice."

The group is even smaller this time—just 12 women—and even as I remember that there are multiple teams in the league and more where these women came from, I still go back to what Devane told me about women's baseball being a very small community. The upside is

in the coming years. And, at the risk of getting all "I am woman, hear me roar" on you, nobody knows how far women can go in this game unless they're given a shot. At the very least, maybe some girls won't have to be the only ones on their T-Ball teams.



By Emily Capdevielle
Photos by Brandon Newman

The Inconvenience Gallery is an experiment in collective living and artistic collaboration



THEY CALL THEIR MAIN hangout "the Hive"—a central space where only the residents of The Inconvenience, a multimedia gallery, are permitted. Mary Williamson, an artist and actor, works diligently on the poster for the upcoming theater fest Strapped, while others walk in and out of the room working on their laptops. Musician John Cicora serenades those present with his guitar. The walls of the Hive are adorned with art pieces from past events, including a dream catcher dangling from the ceiling, as well as an assortment of bike tires left by previous tenants. The front area—one of the only rooms that allows natural light to fbw into the space—houses a makeshift stage for theatrical performances like Strapped, an exploration of the depressed economy in music, dance and visual art, held in March.

With five pet cats sauntering around and lounging on the furniture, The Inconvenience isn't your average art gallery. For one thing, the works range from dance and theatrical performances to abstract paintings and photography, tickling all the senses. What makes the gallery unique, however, is that the artists live on the premises, erasing the boundaries between their personal and professional lives.

The gallery was founded in August 2008 when Walter Briggs, Chris Chmelik, John Holt and Nic Jones decided to create a space that could house a multiplicity of arts under one roof. After finding a 6,300-square-foot loft on Lincoln Avenue in west Lakeview, they came up with the idea of locating the gallery within their living space, and Jones came up with the name, The Inconvenience. Residents Missi Davis and Williamson joined shortly after, and six others soon followed.

The most recent addition is Sam Deutsch, a puppeteer, who moved in last April. All the members are in their 20s and either students or graduates of DePaul University, Columbia College Chicago or Roosevelt University.

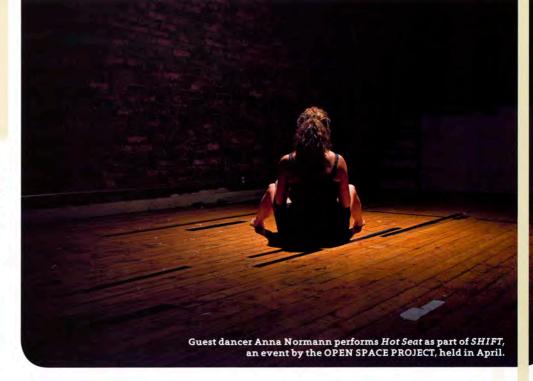
"The group that we have now...has found their way to the space and headed toward the same mission [and] same goals; we're all like-minded here," says resident Ryan Bourque.

Every month the group presents an event that combines live performances with visual media. The performance space holds a maximum of 350 people, and many of the events have been filled to capacity, which is quite an achievement, considering they publicize the events mainly by word of mouth. The shows usually get started around 11 p.m. and last until 3 a.m., which suits their night owl following. According to Williamson, they haven't received a complaint from their neighbors, many of whom are also in creative professions.

"We pride ourselves on including different forms of art in every event," says resident Missi Davis, an actor and theater artist. "If it is a gallery, we add live music; if it is a festival of short plays, we collect artwork made specifically for the theme. We transform our space to the needs of the event, allowing our audiences to experience a whole world rather than just an art piece."

All of the artists are multidisciplinary, regardless of their formal training, says Williamson. But their age and lack of exposure can be a barrier to finding an audience through conventional channels, she adds. "We know we're young, and we know we're just starting out doing stuff, but I think youth has a fresh idea for a scene. I don't mean to be ageist or anything, but it's new. It's all new."

"We transform our space to the needs of the event, allowing our audiences to experience a whole world rather than just an art piece."



REMEMBER THE MOMENT you met your new roommate? You hoped he or she wouldn't scarf down all your food or leave underwear on the fbor. Well, it's no different for members of The Inconvenience, who live in a space with more people than the Brady Bunch. Their bedrooms are drywall cubicles fanning off the central Hive area. There's also a kitchen and one bathroom shared by all the residents. "To live here, you have to make some sacrifices, and privacy is one of them," says Williamson.

Because almost all the gallery members hold part-time jobs or do temp work, their schedules seldom coincide. According to Chmelik, a member of the Chicago Shakespeare Theater, "it's kind of funny. Depending on certain schedules, people start to pair up for two to four months, spend time together and then rotate. It's like a constant summer camp cycle."



Chmelik believes that even though living with so many people can be claustrophobic, it is a "breeding ground for creativity." The atmosphere is democratic, and there is no hint of chauvinism even though the men outnumber the women nine to two. That may be because Davis could take out any one of the quys in a match, jokes Williamson.

"They're all pretty smelly, girly boys" she says. "But another part of it is you just have to keep a sense of humor." That's easy enough for her because of her background in the improv/comedy business that, she says, is also male-dominated. Still, Williamson does admit to wanting to strangle her roommates at times, but in a "loving, caring way."

The monthly rent of \$5,000 is a great motivator for all of them to get along. "If one person drops out, all of a sudden the rent becomes unmanageable for everybody," says Williamson.

Occasionally, someone will have a hard time making rent, and will get a temporary bailout. Luckily, the residents have pulled their fair share, and they've never had to throw anyone out.

"We're all poor to a certain extent; no one in this house is living off a trust fund," says Gus Menary, who has done a lot of directing and PR work for the events. There are infrequent meetings, mainly for planning shows, and the only rules really are to respect everyone's food stash and pay rent. "We cherish our food," emphasizes Menary.

It's also common courtesy to clean the sink if you shave your beard and replace the toilet paper when necessary, Menary points out. Overall, it's a relationship like any other, he says. "It all boils down to proper communication between everyone in the house and respect of everyone's ideas."

"We're all poor to a certain extent; no one in this house is living off a trust fund."

PRODUCTIONS LIKE STRAPPED are no small feat for the group. The gallery members have to work around each other's schedules to rehearse, mount a production and recruit outside artists to participate in the event. Strapped is one of the group's most ambitious events to date, having taken nearly six months of planning and several weeks of promotion. The festival, scheduled to run for five nights, features works by a variety of playwrights, like resident Ike Holter, whose work, The Greatest Depression, explores the current economic climate.

In May 2009, the group staged *See.Music.Move.Word.*, which included art, music, dance and theater on three different stages. The program describes it as being "Lollapalooza without the tribal tattoos and Pitchfork without the bandanas."

Earlier that year, the gallery presented *Post Traumatic*, its first theatrical event. Themed around surrealism and suspense, it consisted of four plays held over two nights. One play, *Children of Boyztown*, written by Holter with music composed by Bourque, was about a pair of "good ole boys" from Indiana who get lost in Chicago's Pride Parade. *Make your Visit as Inconspicuous as Possible*, written by Mark Mason, a non-resident, revolved around a visit by a police officer.

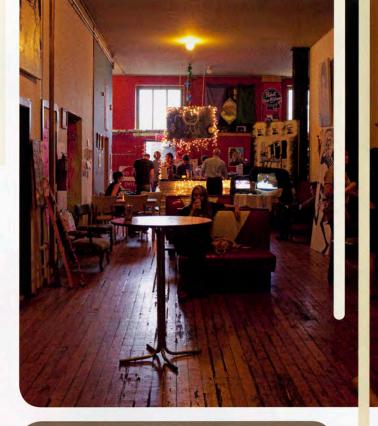
The artists also make their space available to other performance groups, as they did in April when they showcased THE OPEN SPACE PROJECT, a modern dance troupe. They also collaborate with other residents in their building, which includes a recording studio.

"Instead of borrowing a cup of sugar, we have neighbors that can help us fix an amp," says Menary.

The events have never been reviewed by critics, but the sold-out shows and warm response from the audience are gratifying to all involved. Even so, some members of the audience aren't always good guests. On one occasion, the gallery members found a hole in the wall, presumably kicked in by a guest. Another time, they found racial slurs on the bathroom walls. Their solution? Paint the walls with chalkboard paint so any offensive comments can be erased.

That's the kind of ingenuity that's come to characterize the group, along with interdependence and a shared vision that might include seeking non-profit status, according to Briggs.

"Really, we can't do anything at this place without each other," Chmelik says. "When someone is hanging work, someone else is mopping the fbor; when someone is mopping the fbor, someone else is sending e-mails or calling people or setting lights. It's fantastically empowering knowing that everyone has your back on so many levels." (To find out about upcoming events, check The Inconvenience/ Facebook.)



LAW AND ORDER: Special Artist's Unit

Artists who've opened underground galleries often run afoul of the law only to be fined or shut down. Marci Rolnik, legal director of Chicago's Lawyers for the Creative Arts offers these tips to prevent this from happening.

- Zoning You've got a zoning problem if you're operating a business in an area reserved for residential use.
 To find out if you're in compliance, check the City of Chicago's Zoning and Land Use Planning website or call the main office of Zoning and Land Use Planning at 312.744.5777.
- Business License Consult an attorney to see if a
 business license is required for your endeavor. If you
 manufacture goods, offer a service or recruit clients
 on your premises, you will probably need one even
 if no profit is being made.
- Liability Insurance You can be sued for injuries to property and guests on your premises, so make sure you have adequate insurance coverage.
- Liquor License One isn't required if refreshments are free, but you're still responsible for any injuries your intoxicated guests might receive on the premises. The safest course is not to serve alcohol at all. – EC



HOW DO YOU REMEMBER the most horrible experience of your life? In my mind's eye, I see a team of doctors and nurses walking out of the hospital room. None of them had told me anything. I guess they didn't have to. I saw it in their faces. One nurse grimaced and looked away, shaking her head when I asked for a mirror. No one wanted to let me see my face.

When my parents walked into the room, I started crying again. My father had one foot in the door when he saw my face. I heard him scream before he fainted in the hospital hallway. My uncles, also crying and unable to look at me, bent to pick him up. My mother, a nurse, walked over to me.

"Are you in pain?" she asked.

I shook my head no; I had been given morphine.

"Where is your doctor?" my mother asked.

My mother found my chart and started looking for answers. My dad woke up in one of the chairs in the room and started screaming. He couldn't look at me without crying. It was my turn to look away. Every time I saw his face, I felt the scream rise in my throat. Finally, I had to make my parents leave. I couldn't take the terrified looks on their faces. But as soon as my friends walked into my room, I screamed loud enough for a few nurses to peek in. Eventually one nurse made the bed next to me, where my friends spent the night. They were there every time I woke up screaming in fear.

I had been scalded with a corrosive fluid, covering my face in second- and third-degree burns. It happened in September 2007 when I was living at home in California with my parents after a failed marriage. I was leaving my night class at community college and walking to my car with a classmate.

Two men waited for me in the parking lot. One followed at a distance. He was dressed in all black, with the hood of his sweater pulled low over his head. The other ran out from behind a car, also wearing all black. The second man grabbed my shoulder and turned me around. I saw his face for a moment, before he spilled a thick liquid into my eyes.

My eyes burned instantly. Soon, my whole face felt like it was on fire. The pain grew more intense. My classmate screamed, and I could hear her crying. I swung blindly and hit something hard. I heard a thud and then a gurgling sound below as the fluid spilled onto the ground. The sound stopped and I felt more pouring. Neither one of the men said a word, but my classmate kept screaming for help. Then I heard their footsteps as the two ran off. An ambulance came and took me to the hospital.

My hospital stay lasted three days. There really was nothing the doctors could do. They kept telling me to "wait and see how your face will heal." I had no idea what that meant. I left the hospital with antibacterial ointment and a prescription for Vicodin and returned to my parent's house, where I had been living for seven months following my divorce.

My mom changed my dressings, and my dad shaved my head to help the burns heal. I didn't know how the skin on my face would look after it grew back. The doctors weren't sure either. My dad was at every medical appointment. I woke up many mornings and found him in my room with tears in his eyes.

"You look better," he said.

"Do I? No more burnt barbeque chicken?" (It was my joke for how I looked. He hated it.)

"Stop it. Get up; I made breakfast."

I made a complaint to the police, but the investigators couldn't find my attackers. I'll never be able to confirm if it was an act of random violence or a vendetta by someone unknown. I decided to just let it go and focus on things I could control.

plastic surgery. The surgeon removed large scars on my chin and both cheeks by performing a Z-plasty, which avoided the need for skin grafts. I was fortunate that a victims' restitution fund paid for most of the expenses, although I still have medical bills.

I tried to avoid mirrors but couldn't. So burnt and bald, I would stare at my face and wonder what I was going to look like.

Having my parents hover over me and being stuck in the house started taking its toll. I decided to leave home. I left California for the Midwest where my cousin was living and enrolled at Columbia College Chicago. I chose Journalism as my major, but I hope to eventually go to law school, a goal I've had since childhood.

On my first day of class, I still had big blue stitches in my face from the surgery. If anyone asked, I would stick to my story of being in a car accident. Sometimes I said motorcycle. It was more fun. Because my surgeon was back home and I was in Chicago, I had to remove the stitches myself. I cried with relief when it was done. It was one of the first signs that the ordeal was behind me.

I had been in therapy previously but re-entered it to understand what had happened to me and learn how to find a true sense of confidence. I'm still working on this.

"Life is practice," my therapist says to me. This isn't a story that ends with me walking into the sunset. My attackers were people I had never seen before, so for a while, I was scared of everyone. I enrolled in a martial arts class, and that helped. I also hated sleep, because that meant nightmares. But I told myself it would pass, and it did.

Even though I will live with this for my entire life, I continue to grow stronger. I've started dating again, and people compliment me on my looks, just as they did before the accident. I've learned an important truth about myself: Though I was lucky enough to have family and friends who continue to support me, I am responsible for my own healing. •••







ACID THROWING is an extremely damaging act of violence—both physically and emotionally—that is a worldwide problem, particularly in places like Bangladesh, Afghanistan and Cambodia. From the beginning of 2010 through April, there have been at least three attacks in the U.S. alone.

In the 1980s, acid throwing became epidemic throughout Asia, explains Valentine Moghadam, director of women's studies at Purdue University. Around that time, the phenomenon started gaining the attention of women's rights groups because men are usually the perpetrators. The attacks typically occur when a man becomes upset with a woman who is not interested in him.

"The man feels spurned," says Moghadam. "And he thinks that 'if I can't have her, then no one can."

These attacks also target women who exhibit independence of some sort. In the 1980s, attacks against women factory workers in Bangladesh spiked, says Moghadam. In 2008, Taliban militants sprayed acid at girls on their way to school.

"The fact that these girls had the audacity to leave home to go to school is just too much for these men to take," says Moghadam. "It's an indication [of] male entitlement and male privilege. Women have to be subordinate."

In 2009, there were 115 acid attacks in Bangladesh, according to the Acid Survivors Foundation in that country, which keeps annual statistics. Roughly 68 percent of the victims were female while 32 percent were male. The most common reasons for the attacks were disputes about land, property and money. There were also 13 instances of women being attacked because of marital disputes, and nine due to refusal of marriage or sex. Attacks in Bangladesh have been declining since 2002, when 367 incidents were recorded.

TRAUMA AND PROSECUTION

Nitric and sulphuric acid are the two most commonly used substances, causing damage so extensive that the skin and sometimes bone start to melt. If the acid gets into the victim's eyes, eyesight is often lost. "The disfigurement is dreadful," says Moghadam. "It is extremely cruel and brutal."

Hospitals are equipped to handle these burns, but plastic surgery is hard to come by because the attacks usually happen in low-income areas. Sadly, victims are often hidden away because they or their families are embarrassed. Not many women prosecute their attackers because they fear police will be unsympathetic, notes Moghadam.

Some women do seek prosecution, often with the assistance of women's rights groups. The usual penalty is jail or a fine, but in a case reported by CNN in early 2009, a man from Tehran, Iran, was sentenced to be blinded with a drop of acid in each eye. Human rights advocates criticized this sentence.

Slowly but surely countries are starting to develop strong laws to help end these brutal attacks. In 2002, Bangladesh introduced the death penalty for throwing acid. The country also posed strict restrictions on the sale of acid. In 2009, the Acid Control and Acid Crime Prevention Act was introduced in Pakistan and was still being debated as of April.



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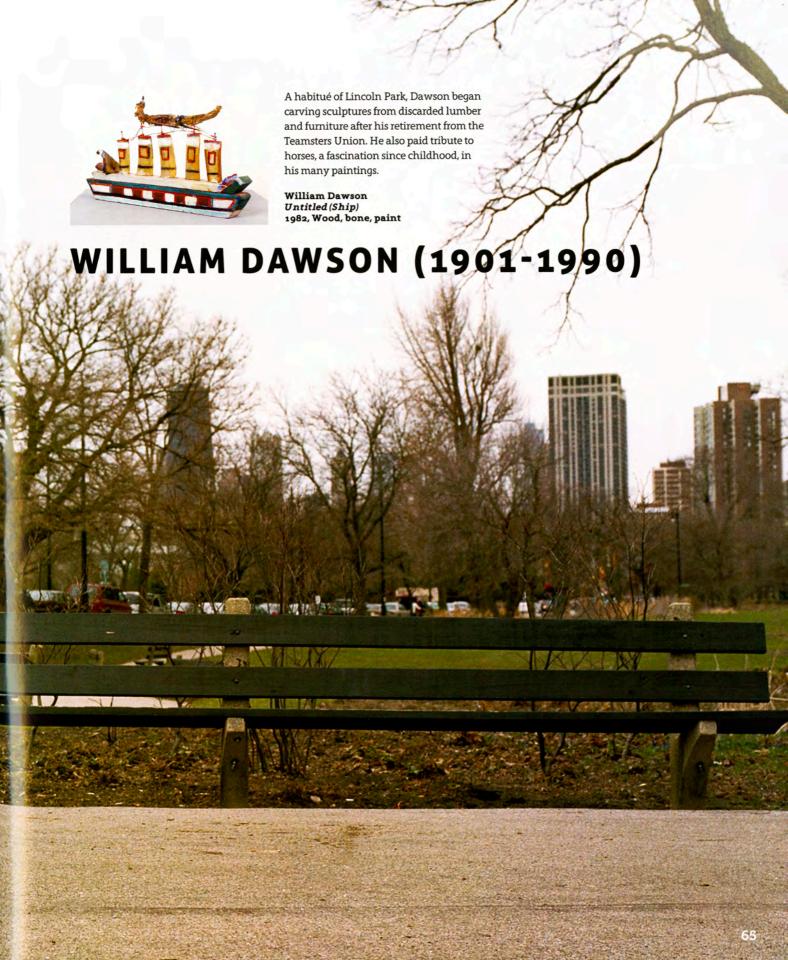
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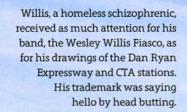


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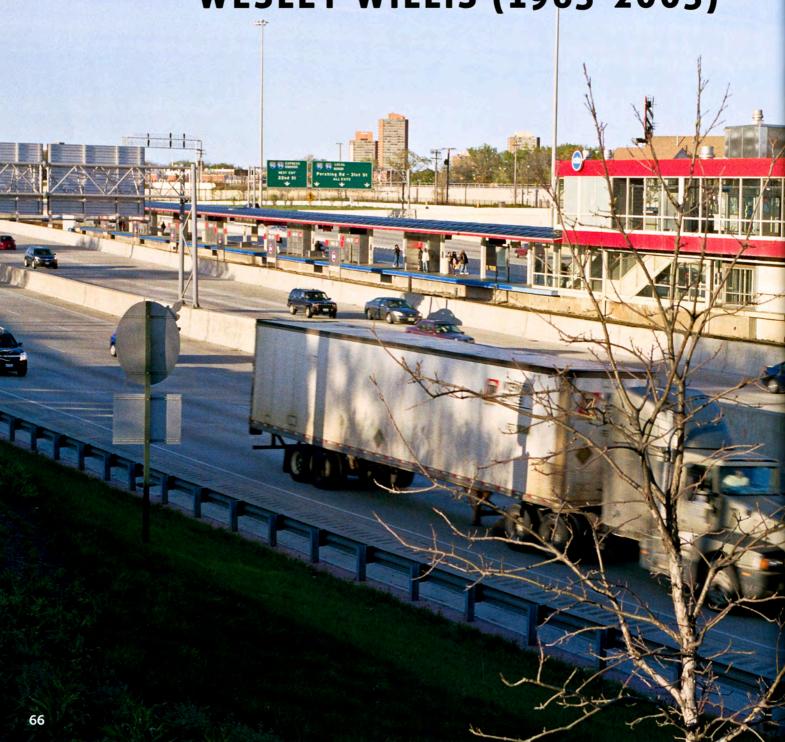




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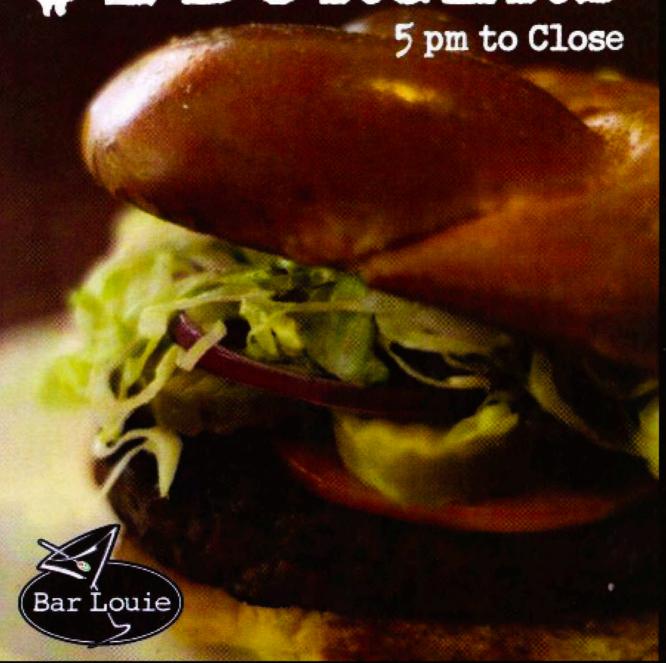
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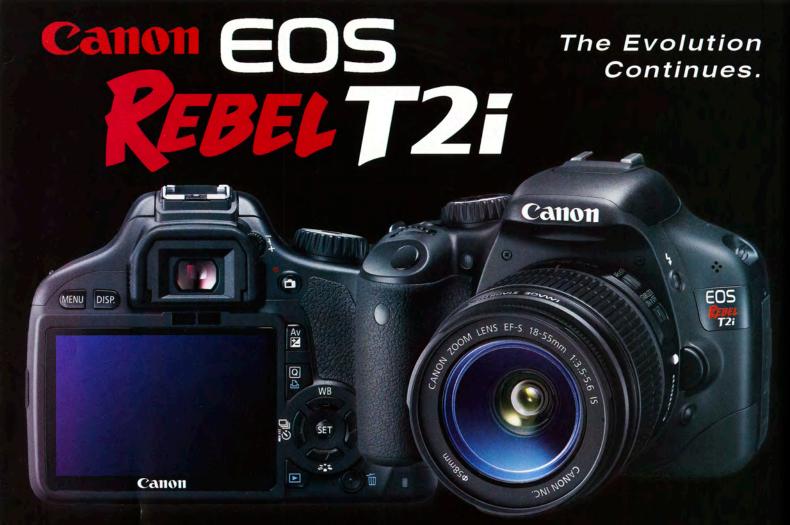
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What's the best advice anyone ever gave you



I Was dating a beautiful redhead, and my mom told me I needed to marry her. We've been married 16 years now.

2

Whenever You Have a Chance to Play Maryin Gaye, Play
Maryin Gaye.

4

BELIEVE IN 70UPSELF AND MEVER GIVE UP.

5

3

Trust your gut. Bottom Line:

1F Something doesn't FEEL

6

Right, It probably ISN't.

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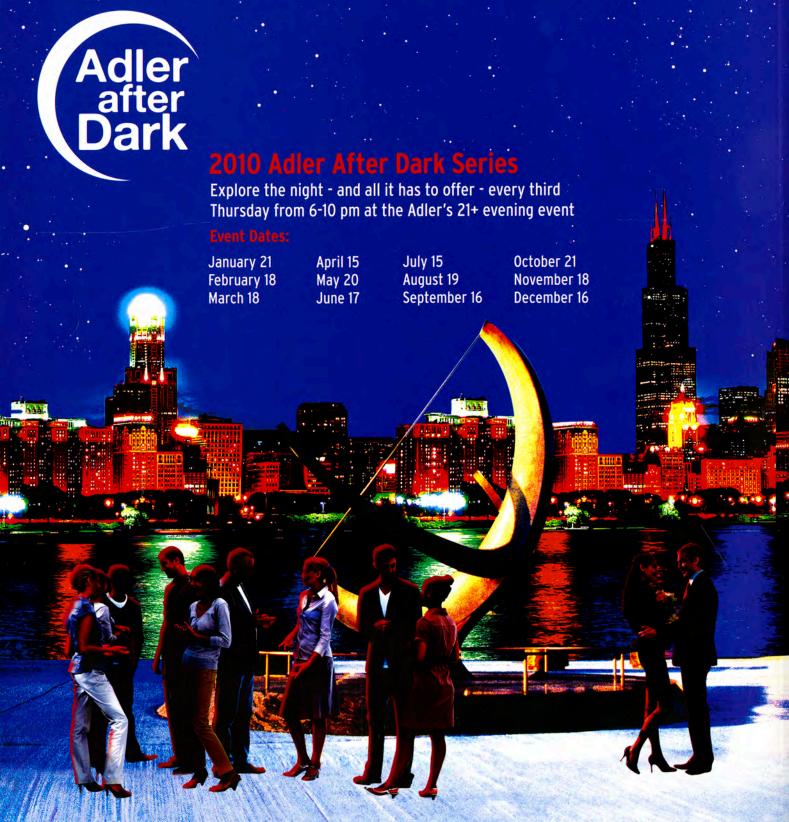
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- 2. BILL ADEE, Vice President of Digital Development and Operations, Chicago Tribune
- 3. ALEX KOTLOWITZ, author, There Are No Children Here (Anchor, 1992) and other works
- LIN BREHMER, DJ, WXRT Radio
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- 7. KATRIN VERCLAS, co-founder and editor of Mobile Active, a mobile network for social change
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