

South America Makes Right Turn



By Dr. R. Pletsch

The arrest of Venezuelan President Maduro and his wife on warrants from the United States have shown no apparent pushback. The people of Venezuela including those that are migrants in the USA do not seem to be disgruntled. Actually they were rejoicing in places like Caracas and Miami.

An article in Newsline December 16, 2025 written by Ben Solis deals with the recent Presidential election in Chile. The victor by a landslide was Jose Kast. He won the popular vote by over 16% while having victories in all 16 regions of the country. The importance of this election was that he defeated the Communist party headed by Jeanennete Jara.

The issues most mentioned were public safety and immigration enforcement. Kast had proposed border walls, deploying the military to high crime areas and deporting illegal migrants. According to a study by Universidad

Catolica, during the Communist government Chile had its highest crime rate ever. In a failed attempt to enforce equity, inflation rose to as high as 14%, and the loss of a gross national product of 2.6% a year.

The new government plans to enforce all laws and, if necessary, add 100,000 seats to their prisons. The immigrants mostly from Venezuela can return home within three months. If not, they are subject to arrest, prosecution, and then deportation or imprisonment.

The trend in South America is not only a shift to the right in Chile but in Argentina with President Milei. In Bolivia, they have ousted socialists who ruled for 20 years. In April, Ecuador re-elected a center to the right candidate Daniel Noboa. Since the right came into control, El Salvador has gone from one of the most dangerous countries in Latin America to the safest. They have even built a prison for violent offenders that the USA has actually sent prisoners.

It seems that the people who have been controlled by socialists and communists are expressing their concern that it hasn't worked there, just like if you talk to many of the people that expressed the Iron Curtain and the Bamboo Curtain did not deliver as promised. There are hundreds of websites concerning the countries mentioned in this article if you would like more details.

Mexican Museum Offers Programs



Photo provided by The National Museum of Mexican Art

The National Museum of Mexican Art, 1852 W. 19th st. has scheduled a wide range of programs for families that provides opportunity to explore the galleries while learning about Mexican art and culture.

Visit Hoy Cultura en nuestra comunidad: Ray Patlan in Chicago 1968-1975. The exhibition highlights early painting, drawings, photographs, and personal belongings.

Rieles y Raices: Traqueros in Chicago and the Midwest in the Chicag Gallery is on exhibit through April 26th.

January Youth Programs include Studio Mosaics on Saturday,

Jan. 17th from 10 to 11:30 a.m. Ages 7 to 12.

Listos para el museo: Clay Mosaics on Saturday, Jan. 17th from 12:30 to 1:30 p.m. Ages 6 and under.

Adults ages 55+ are invited to experience Viva la Vida: Mini Murals on Thursday, Jan. 22nd at 10 a.m. or 1:30 p.m. Followed by an artmaking activity. This month, we will create mini murals using a grid transfer method.

Gala de Arte will be celebrated on Friday, May 1st, at the Aon Grand Ballroom at Navy Pier.

Visit nationalmuseumofmexicanart.org for more details.

Free Days At Shedd Aquarium



Photo provided by Shedd Aquarium

Shedd Aquarium is announcing new Illinois resident free days in January and February, giving guests an opportunity to dive into aquatic environments from coral reefs to freshwater rivers.

Admission includes daily Animal Spotlights that highlight the adaptations of marine mammals, touch experiences with sturgeon and starfish, live programs with the chance to see an animal feeding and chats about sharks, penguins and more. Every visit is unique, with evolving habitats like Wonder of Water and opportunities to ask questions about aquatic life.

The Aquarium will closed to the public on Wednesday and Thursday, Jan. 21st & 22nd for annual maintenance, cleaning and projects.

Resident Free Days are Jan. 8th, 13th-20th, 27th-29th. Feb. 3rd-5th, 10th-12th, 17th-19th, 24th-26th.

Resident Free Evenings (5 to 9 p.m.) are on Tuesdays, March 3rd through June 30th.

Advance reservations for free days and evenings are recommended due to high demand. Guests can secure tickets ahead of a visit using Shedd's website sheddaquarium.org. There is a \$5 convenience fee per order for free day/evening reservations made online. You can reserve tickets at no extra cost at (312) 939-2438.

Adults must provide proof of residency in person when redeeming tickets at a discounted rate.

Adult guests can celebrate Valentine's Day beneath the waves at Shedd's first-ever Heartbeat House Party, an after-hours evening of house music, themed bites and deep-sea surprises Saturday, Feb. 14th from 7 to 11 p.m. Visit https://www.sheddaquarium.org/tickets?event_id=276.

Skate Party At McKinley Park

The Chicago Park District will present "Frozen Ocean Skate" at McKinley Park 2210 W. Pershing rd. on Friday, Jan. 16th from 6 to 8 p.m. An enchanting Under the Sea Ice Skating Party, where the rink transforms into a frosty ocean adventure! Glide across the ice with glowing jellyfish, friendly sharks, and sparkly sea creatures.

Sled assisted skating allows people of all abilities to participate. Available upon request.

Make your reservation at <https://www.chicagoparkdistrict.com/parks-facilities/ice-rinks>.

Unemployment Rate, Payrolls Unchanged

The Illinois Department of Employment Security announced that the unemployment rate was 4.4 percent in November, unchanged from September, and down -0.5 percentage point from the same month, one year ago. The revised September unemployment rate was unchanged at 4.4 percent. There are no October unemployment rates for Illinois or the nation as labor force data for the month of October could not be collected from households during the federal government shutdown.

Total nonfarm payrolls were nearly unchanged over-the-month in November, down -9,700 (-0.2%) to 6,145,600. The September monthly change in payrolls was revised from -2,200 to -3,400. There was no October Illinois payroll jobs, unemployment rate news release due to the federal government shutdown. The November payroll jobs estimate and unemployment rate reflect activity for the week including the 12th.

The industry sectors with the largest monthly payroll jobs decreases included: Transportation and Utilities (-2,900), Leisure and Hospitality (-2,300), and Manufacturing (-1,600). The industry sectors with over-the-month jobs increases included: Construction (+1,600) and Private Education and Health Services (+800).

Compared to a year ago, total nonfarm payroll jobs decreased by -3,200 jobs. The industry groups with the largest jobs decreases included: Trade, Transportation and Utilities (-11,500), Leisure and Hospitality (-8,400), and Professional and Business Services (-8,300). The industry groups with the largest jobs increases included: Private Education and Health Services (+17,200), Construction (+9,300) and Information (+3,400). In November, total nonfarm payrolls were down -0.1 percent over-the-year in Illinois and up +0.6 percent in the nation.

The number of unemployed persons in November was 288,600, up +0.5% from September, and down -12.0% over the same month one year ago. The labor force decreased -0.3% from September and

-1.6% over-the-year. The unemployment rate identifies those individuals who are out of work and seeking employment. An individual who exhausts or is ineligible for benefits is still reflected in the unemployment rate if they actively seek work.

IDES helps connect jobseekers to employers who are hiring in a number of ways, including hosting and co-hosting job fairs and hiring events with statewide workforce partners, and through maintaining Illinois JobLink, the state's largest job search engine. IJL is a tool used by jobseekers to look for work, and by employers who can post open and available positions for hire and browse resumes. Recently, IJL showed 51,651 posted resumes with 65,157 jobs available. Additionally, in partnership with IDOL and DCEO, IDES published resources to assist federal employees and contractors impacted by recent terminations or deferred resignations.

Monthly 1976-2024 seasonally adjusted labor force data for Illinois, and all other states, have been revised as required by the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics. The monthly historical revisions to state labor force estimates reflect new national benchmark controls, state working-age population controls, outlier specifications, seasonal factors, as well as updated total nonfarm jobs and unemployment benefits claims inputs.

Monthly 2020-2024 seasonally adjusted nonfarm payroll employment data for Illinois have been revised. To control for potential survey error, the estimates are benchmarked annually to universal counts derived primarily from unemployment insurance tax reports.

The Illinois Department of Employment Security provides vital employment services to Illinois workers, jobseekers, and employers with resources including Job Fairs, IllinoisJobLink.com, and Workshare IL, analyzes and disseminates actionable Labor Market Information, and administers the Unemployment Insurance Program. To see the full range of services provided by IDES, and for the latest news concerning the department, visit IDES.Illinois.gov.

Grant Awards For Projects

Mayor Brandon Johnson and the Department of Planning and Development announced 58 neighborhood improvement projects to be supported through \$33 million in City development grants.

Selected through competitive application rounds involving DPD's Community Development Grant and Neighborhood Opportunity Fund programs, the projects collectively represent \$90 million in public-private neighborhood investments.

Four projects were selected to receive "pre-development" grants up to \$150,000 to support eligible design and engineering fees, among other soft costs. Local project is Atrium Thirty-Six, 3619 S. Hoyne Ave., McKinley Park. Reuse of a former church campus as a cultural and social resource center.

The building, formerly part of the deconsecrated St. Maurice Catholic Church complex, is undergoing renovations to convert its former school lunchroom into a

Hussain Graduates

Mujahid Hussain completed requirements for a Master of Science Degree in Business Analytics from Trine University at the end of the Fall 2025 semester.

Teen Winter Art Challenge



Photo provided by Chicago Public Library

"Force of Nature", 2025, ink, watercolor, fluorescent acrylic, collage, pastel, colored pencil and marker on paper, Senior Achievement Award Runner Up by Simon M

High school students between the age of 13 to 19 who live in the City of Chicago are invited to submit a portfolio of one to three original works created in the past two years, along with an artist statement by Feb. 1st.

Every applicant will have one work included in the 11th annual Teen Winter Challenge digital catalog, which will be viewable and archived online. Winners and finalists will have work included in a print catalog, which will be added to the YOUmedia Zine collection. Submissions are also eligible to win monetary prizes and an exhibition opportunity.

There is also an additional prize opportunity to have your art featured on 2026 Gamer's Universe con badges and the option to be included in Artist Alley.

Prizes include a Senior Achievement Award for high school seniors. Grand prize is a \$200 gift card; first and second runners-up: \$100 gift card.

A Young Artist Award is open to high school freshmen, sophomores and juniors. Grand prize is a \$200 gift card. First and second runners-up: \$100 gift card.

Distinction of Merit is open to all high school students. Honorable mentions (up to 19 awards) receive a \$50 gift card. Finalists will receive inclusion in the TWC print catalog which is entered into the Chicago Public Library collection.

Gamer's Universe Featured Artist is open to all high school students. Submit your art to be featured on one of three convention badges for Gamer's Universe 2026. Badges will be handed out to con attendees, exhibitors, and staff.

Prize includes \$200 and a table in the 2026 Gamer's Universe artist alley (optional). Visit chipublib.org.

Heritage Museum of Asian Art



Photo provided by Heritage Museum of Asian Art

The Heritage Museum of Asian Art, 3500 S. Morgan st., (312) 842-8884, info@heritageasianart.org has interesting exhibits.

Rotating pop-up exhibitions will highlight how these traditions continue to inspire creativity.

Japanese New Year will be celebrated on Jan. 10th from 6 to 9 p.m. Enjoy Japanese whiskey and sake tastings, live calligraphy by Hekium Oda, koto music, mochi and O-zoni, and a Fukubukuro (fortune bag) exchange game.

Free Admission Museum Night on Jan. 10th from 5 to 8 p.m. The tour will start at 6 p.m. from the reception desk.

The event offers wine and appetizer.

"Obsessive Eyes" Mayumi Lake Artist Talk on Jan. 24th, 2 to 4 p.m. Join artist Mayumi Lake for an intimate artist talk exploring, her ongoing body of work spanning photography, sculpture, and installation.

Chinese Puppetry: Performance & Workshop on Jan. 31st, 3 to 5 p.m., \$15. Step into the world of Rugao rod puppetry, a 2,000 year old art form. Enjoy a vibrant performance filled with music, movement, and masterful puppet techniques.

For more information and tickets visit www.heritageasianart.org. (312) 842-8884.

Applications For DCFS Scholarship

The Illinois Department of Children and Family Services is accepting applications for the 2026 DCFS Scholarship Program. Scholarships will be awarded to current and former youth in care for the upcoming school year, with four awards reserved for the children of veterans and two awards presented to students pursuing degrees in social work in honor of Pamela Knight and Deidre Silas, two DCFS caseworkers who succumbed to injuries sustained in the line of duty.

Scholarship recipients receive up to five consecutive years of tuition and academic fee waivers if they attend a public university or community college, a monthly grant of \$1,577 to offset other expenses and a medical card. In 2025, DCFS awarded scholarships to 334 college-bound youth.

The program is available to youth who have an open DCFS case, whose cases were closed through adoption or guardianship or who aged out of care at 18 or older.

Programs At Beverly Arts

The Beverly Arts Center, 2407 W. 111th st. has scheduled Jan. 15th - 18th: CenterStage presents "The Mountain-top". Jan. 24th: Sons of Chicago: Tribute to Bruce Springsteen & Bob Seger. Jan. 30th: Second Hand News: Fleetwood Mac Tribute. Feb. 13th: Superstar - A Salute to Luther Vandross. Feb. 26th - March 1st: Centerstage presents "Newsies". March 7th: American English - Beatles Tribute.

Visit thebeverlyarts-center.com or by calling (773) 445-3838.

Waterfowl Watch At Northerly Isle

The Chicago Ornithological Society will host a Winter Waterfowl Watch at Northerly Island Park, 1521 S. Linn White dr. on Saturday, Jan. 10th from 9 a.m. to 12 noon.

During the winter, Chicago's lakefront and waterways are winter home to many birds who migrate south from their summer nesting grounds in Canada's boreal lakes and arctic. Learn about how to ID these birds, including gulls, ducks, geese, loons and more with scheduled walks, a 10 a.m. gull and waterfowl info-session (inside the Visitor Center), a bonfire with marshmallow roasting and art activities for kids.

Registration is not required for this free event. Public transportation is available to Linn White Drive via the 146 CTA bus, after that it is a 10-minute walk to the Nature Center. Paid parking is available, as are free bike racks. The paths in the natural area are not salted and my be icy, wear appropriate footwear.

Influenza Rates Climb Statewide

The Illinois Department of Public Health is urging residents to take precautions against the spread of influenza and other seasonal respiratory illnesses, as rates continue to climb. Flu activity has climbed to "Very High" in recent days, the most severe of five categories of respiratory illness activity, as defined by the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. COVID-19 rates have climbed to "Moderate" levels in Illinois.

Illinois is also reporting its first influenza death in a child this season. Nationally, there have been nine pediatric deaths due to influenza this season. During the 2024/2025 season, Illinois reported 12 pediatric deaths from influenza, 6 from RSV and 3 from COVID.

Data on seasonal respiratory illnesses is available at <https://dph.illinois.gov/> which is updated weekly.

Archer Heights Library Schedules Programs

The Archer Heights Branch Library, 5055 S. Archer has scheduled a wide range of informative programs.

ALL AGES

Technology Help is available Drop-in (first come, first served when adult librarian is on duty) or by appointment. Get help with your devices, computer questions, using online library resources (eBooks, databases, job resources).

CHILDREN

Family Story Time for children 0 to 5 and their caregivers will be held on Thursdays, Jan. 8th to 29th from 11 a.m. to 12 noon. Start your day with stories, songs and fun for the whole family.

Messy Art: Build a mobile on Monday, Jan. 5th at 6 p.m. Create a mobile with found materials inspired by artist Alexander Calder.

LEGO Club on Monday, Jan. 26th at 6 p.m. Put your engineering skills to the test with one of our challenges or use your imagination to build your own creations. For ages 5 and up.

TWEENS & TEENS

High school students who need help with research for a school assignment can request an appointment with our Teen Librarian to review databases, printed sources and other resources. Call (312) 747-9241 to make an appointment.

Tween Tuesday, Jan. 20th, "Mini-Disco Balls" from 4 to 5 p.m. Materials and snacks will be provided. For ages 10 to 14.

Intro to 3D Embroidery, Tuesday, Jan. 13th from 4 to 5 p.m. No expe-

Sports Clinic For Veterans

The Chicago Park District will conduct a Veterans Windy Day Winter Sports Clinic at McKinley Park, 2210 W. Pershing rd. on Wednesday, Feb. 11th from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m.

An adaptive sports clinic for veterans and active-duty personnel. Athletes will have the opportunity to try: ice skating, biathlon, curling, snowshoeing, mountain biking, floor hockey and more.

Proof of service is required. Contact veterans@chicagoparkdistrict.com for more information.

Opportunity For Youth Employment

Empower Youth Career Training and Development for ages 16-24 provides the opportunity to apply to part and full-time jobs in industries such as retail, manufacturing, healthcare, and customer service.

Receive job readiness training. Secure support with alternative secondary education and job placement.

Visit Goodwill GreaterMC.org or call (773) 627-5770, weekdays from 8 a.m. to 4 p.m.

rience needed, just bring your imagination. Register online.

Teen Volunteer Hour on Tuesday, Jan. 29th from 4 to 5 p.m. Earn 1 volunteer hour while helping at your library. Grades 6-12 only.

Teacher in the Library Wednesdays from 4 to 7 p.m. and Sundays, 1:30 to 4:30 p.m.

ADULTS

Adult Book Discussion on the 4th Wednesday of the month from 1 to 2 p.m. Join us for a friendly conversation. Books are available at the circulation desk.

Craft Lab on Monday, Jan. 12th at 6 p.m. will feature "Fuse Bead Photo Frame". Saturday, Jan. 17th at 2 p.m. will create "3D Paper Village". All materials are provided. Register online.

Crime Book Club on Wednesday, Jan. 14th from 6:30 to 7:30 p.m. will discuss "Killers of a Certain Age" by Deanna Raybourn. The book club will read and discuss mystery, thriller, and true stories. Books are available at the Circulation Desk.

Adult Book Discussion on Wednesday, Jan. 28th from 1 to 2 p.m. will feature "Pride and Prejudice" by Jane Austen. Books are available at the circulation desk.

Celebrate Pride and Prejudice Day on Wednesday, Jan. 28th from 5:30 to 7:30 p.m. "Pride and Prejudice" was first published on Jan. 28th, 1813. Celebrate with a proper craft, snacks, and watching the 2005 movie starring Keira Knightly and Matthew McFayden.

Visit the reference desk for a free spice kit.

CINEMA

Join us on Sundays from 2 to 4 p.m. for films and snacks. "The Sting" (PG), Jan. 11th; "Labyrinth" (PG), Jan. 18th and "Happy Feet" (PG), family movie, Jan. 25th.

Program For Food Scrap

The City of Chicago is launching its first-ever citywide Food Scrap Drop-Off Program. Residents are welcome to drop off their household food scraps for composting at one of many locations across the city.

Composting keeps food scraps out of landfills and recycles nutrients to build healthy soils.

Visit www.ChicagoRecycles.org to register for the program and learn how it works.

Pruning Workday At McKinley Park

Openlands staff will conduct a Pruning Workday of its trees at McKinley Park on Tuesday, Jan. 27th from 9 a.m. to 12 noon. Those who wish to participate should bring a water bottle, eye protection, gloves and tools if possible. Meet by the basketball court on Pershing rd. Email jsmartinez@openlands.org to sign up.

Devices 4 Disabled Seeks Donations



Photo provided by Devices 4 The Disabled

Devices 4 The Disabled accepts used and new durable medical equipment in good condition, such as walkers, wheelchairs, scooters, hospital beds, crutches, patient lifts, rehab chairs and other mobility devices.

Donations impact individuals with disabilities, providing them with the tools they need. Financial donations and grants cover costs to collect, refurbish, and distribute the equipment.

For more information, visit www.d4d.org or call (773) 270-0346.

Illinois Celebrates Economic Milestones

Governor JB Pritzker and the Illinois Department of Commerce and Economic Opportunity re-

leased data highlighting record-breaking economic development milestones from 2025. Guided by the strategic economic growth plan, Illinois reached a record \$13 billion in incentivized investments, delivered record tourism and major milestones in key sectors, including quantum, while making continued investments in small businesses and workforce development.

Total company investments grew to a record \$13 billion. This includes Economic Development for a Growing Economy, Reimagining Energy and Vehicles, Manufacturing Illinois Chips for Real Opportunity Act, the Data Center Tax Credit Program, and the High Impact Business program.

EDGE and REV – the state's most active incentive programs, continued to drive strong results, with companies committing 2,900 new jobs and retaining 3,700 existing jobs.

REV agreements from 2025 include Pure Lithium Corporation relocating its battery technology operations from Boston to Chicago, and electric bus company Damera Corporation pledging its first U.S. assembly plant to be located in the Greater Peoria region, which will create 90 jobs. Rivian also expanded its footprint by investing \$120 million to construct a new 1.2 million-square-foot supplier park and create 100 new jobs in Normal.

Major EDGE agreements from the last year include Cronus Chemicals LLC's \$2 billion investment to construct a new fertilizer production facility in Tuscola while creating 130 new jobs; Fortune Brands Innovations' expanded Deerfield headquarters creating 400 new jobs; Rockford Brake Manufacturing reopening a historic Rockford factory while bringing 150 jobs

Silesia opened its second U.S. facility in Huntley and Epic Pharma Solutions Inc. opened its first

U.S. facility and creating 50 new jobs in Pekin.

The \$31 million Regional Site Readiness Program is preparing sites to attract future investment and new job opportunities.

In 2025, Illinois topped the lists of major economic development rankings, including Site Selection Magazine, CNBC's Top States for Business, and more.

This fall, Governor Pritzker broke ground on PsiQuantum's facility at the Illinois Quantum and Microelectronics Park. This marked the official start to the buildout of state-of-the-art facilities that will bring the IQMP to full scale, driving billions in economic impact, creating thousands of jobs, and cementing Illinois as the nation's leader in the global race for quantum innovation.

Illinois welcomed 113 million domestic and international visitors who spent a record \$48.5 billion in 2024 - an increase of 500,000 visitors and \$1.3 billion in spending from 2023.

Illinois announced film production expenditures of \$653 million in 2024, supporting an estimates 18,200 hires (excluding extras) and \$351 million in estimated wages.

Illinois experienced another record-breaking year with export sales exceeding \$81 billion in 2024. Illinois continues to lead as the top exporting state in Midwest and the fourth largest exporting state in the U.S.

Nearly \$10 million was awarded to 47 small businesses through the Small Business Capital and Infrastructure Grant Program.

Jazz Links Jam Sessions

The Jazz Links Jam Session creates a live performance opportunity where student musicians can learn and grow. Students ages 9-19 perform with one another and mentors at the Jazz Showcase, 806 S. Plymouth ct. on Wednesday, Jan. 14th from 5 to 7 p.m. Free and open to the public.

Musicians, parents, students, siblings, and friends are all welcome to attend these free events.

Students sign up on-site, using a QR code, listing three to five tunes they can play and improvise on from memory. The jam session host calls up groups of students to perform and improvise together in front of a live audience.

For more information, visit JazzInChicago.org.

County Clerk Offers Service

Mariyana T. Spyropoulos, Clerk of the Circuit Court of Cook County provides information to Navigate the Justice System. The public can receive help on filings and court matters by contacting (312) 603-5030, Monday through Friday from 8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.

The Clerk's website cookcountycourt.com has a customer service Web Chat for general questions or assistance.

Ridge Library Plans Programs

The Garfield Ridge Branch, 6347 S. Archer, has scheduled interesting programs.

KIDS

Morning Stories for ages up to 4 are recited on the first Saturdays of each month at 10:30 a.m. Featuring a simple story, new song and familiar nursery rhyme. Playtime follows.

Stories & Songs on Wednesdays, Jan. 21st & 28th from 10:30 to 11:15 a.m. Ages 1-3.5 years. Children will listen to stories, sing songs and move to music. Play time follows.

Winter Play Days on Mondays, Jan. 12th & 26th from 10:30 to 11:30 a.m. Ages 18 months to 4 years. Kids can color, build puzzles, play with trains and cars.

TEENS

Teen Design: Vision Boards on Tuesday, Jan. 13th at 5 p.m. Decorate on 11"x14" thin poster board with your goals for 2026 using magazines, stickers, and more.

Teen Game Day: LEGO Edition, Friday, Jan. 16th at 2:45 p.m. Let your imagination run wild with creative challenges, free build time, and more!

Teen Designs: Beanies on Friday, Jan. 30th at 2:45 p.m. Use the vinyl cutter and heat transfer vinyl to customize your beanie.

ADULTS

Games People Play is scheduled for Thursdays, Jan. 15th to March 12th from 2 to 4 p.m. Bring your own games or borrow one of ours - Chess, Scrabble, UNO, Board games, cards, Pinochle, Canasta and more. On Jan. 29th, play Rummy 500 and enjoy light refreshments.

Senior Drop-In Games Saturdays, Jan. 10th to May 30th from 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. Bring a game or borrow some of ours.

"Make a Vision Board" on Saturday, Jan. 31st from 11 a.m. to 1 p.m. We'll use magazines, stickers, and quotes to create a vision board. Registration required.

Reverse Coloring for "Adults on Saturdays, Jan. 10th and 24th from 11 a.m. to 1 p.m. Reverse coloring combines traditional coloring and doodling with the pre-colored abstract pages. With just a black pen, you can create beautiful designs. Regular coloring pages and puzzles will also be available.

Planner Meet Up on Saturday, Jan. 17th from 10 a.m. to 1:30 p.m. Bring your own journal/planner, stickers, washi tape, gel pens, and anything else to create a one-of-a-kind planner.

Adult Book Discussion of "Help Wanted" by Adelle Waldman on Thursday, Jan. 8th at 6 p.m. At a big-box store in a small town in upstate New York, the members of Team Movement clock in every day at 3:55 a.m. Under the eyes of a self-absorbed and barely com-

Looking to Buy Your First Home?

The Greater Southwest Development Corp., 2601 W. 63rd st. will conduct a First Time Homebuyers Class on Saturday, Jan. 24th from 9 a.m. to 2 p.m.

Participants will learn about: The home buying process, How to get qualified, Down payment assistance programs, Financing options and The closing process.

Register at greater-southwest.org or call (773) 436-1000.

petent boss, they empty the days truck of merchandise, stock the shelves, and scatter before customers arrive. Feb. 19th topic is "The Husbands" by Holly Gramazio.

Southwest Home Equity Assurance Program on Tuesday, Jan. 20th at 6 p.m. They offer low- or no-interest loans for fixing up your home, and can help make sure your home sells for a fair price. They also work to support taxpayer, by providing helpful services and saving you money.

"Games People Play" on Thursdays, Jan. 15th to March 12th; and Sundays, March 22nd and 29th. Join us for some fun games and conversation. We'll kick things off with Scrabble and Yahtzee. Jan. 29th - Rummy 500, light refreshments.

FAMILIES

The Artist's Studio at the Library will present "Quilting 101" for ages 6 & up on Saturdays, Jan. 17th & 24th; Feb. 7th & 21st and March 7th from 11 a.m. to 12 p.m. Children and their parents will create a fabric and paper patchwork piece inspired by quilts from the Art Institute of Chicago. Families are welcome to attend multiple sessions and are encouraged to leave their project at the library to be put on display.

Register for events at chipublib.org/events.

Chicago Artopia Opens Season

Chicago Artopia announces a new series full of music, film and dance. The 2025-26 season marks the debut of the International Guitar Series, featuring three extraordinary performances:

Leonela Alejandro (Puerto Rico), 2024 GFA winner; Grisha Goryachev (Russia) flamenco performance and Duo Chinoiserie (China) musical fusion of classical guitar and Chinese guzheng.

The new series will include a film screening and Tango performance. Mark your calendars for these free community events at the Balzekas Museum of Lithuanian Culture, 6500 S. Pulaski.

On Sunday, Feb. 22nd at 3 p.m., Grisha Goryachev (Russia) International Guitar Series, Flamenco Guitar; Sunday, May 29th at 3 p.m. Duo Chinoiserie (China) International Guitar Series - Guitar & Guzheng; and Sunday, May 3rd at 3 p.m. Tango 21 Dance Theater.

For more information, visit chicagoartopia.com.

MLK Jr. Event



Photo provided by Cook County Forest Preserve

The Forest Preserves of Cook County will conduct a MLK Jr. Day of Service at Dan Ryan Woods Pavilion, 87th & Western on Monday, Jan. 19th from 10 a.m. to 1 p.m. Join an afternoon of crafts, cocoa, and a clothing drive. Register at Kelvin.Boyd@cookcountyl.gov.

Back of the Yards Schedules Programs

The Back of the Yards Branch Library, 2111 W. 47th st. has scheduled the following events.

ADULTS

A Stitch in Time Crochet Club on Tuesday, Jan. 20th from 6 to 7 p.m. We have yarn and crochet hooks to share. Bring your own project or start one based on one of our ideas.

Adult Book Club will discuss the ABC mystery selection on Thursday, Jan. 15th from 6 to 7 p.m. Title is available in English and Spanish.

Film Screening of "Stardust" (2007) on Friday, Jan. 28th from 10 a.m. to 12 p.m. Tristan hopes to win the heart of his beautiful, but shallow love, Victoria. He promises to recover a star that fell somewhere beyond the stony Wall that sets between the mundane England and the fantasy kingdom of Stormhold. © Universal Studios - 127 Minutes - MPAA Rating: PG-13

TEENS

Teen Winter Art Making on Thursdays, Jan. 8th to 29th from 3:30 to 5 p.m. Use our supplies and space as your studio for the Winter Art Challenge.

Yoga Class At Ryan Woods

The Forest Preserves of Cook County will conduct "Wellness in the Woods: Yoga" at Dan Ryan Woods Pavilion, 87th & Western on Saturday, Jan. 10th from 11 a.m. to 12 noon.

Join us for a free 45-minute class focused on building stability, flexibility, and relaxation through the practices of breathwork, mindful movement, and meditation.

Come dressed in active wear with your yoga mat. The class will be held indoors. Search fdpcc.com.

CHILDREN

Bilingual Story Time, Saturdays, through Jan. 31st from 11 a.m. to 12 p.m. We'll share songs, rhymes and books, plus craft activities in English and Spanish. For ages 0 to 5 and their caregivers.

Chess Club on Mondays, Jan. 12th and 26th from 3:30 to 4:30 p.m. All levels of players are welcome, for ages 8 to 17.

Science Connections on Wednesdays, Jan. 14th & 28th from 4 to 5 p.m. Join Ms. Corina and Ms. Maria for STEM (science, technology, engineering, or math) activities. Kids 6 to 13 years.

Visit chipublib.org to register.

Gamer's Universe Showdown Series

YOUmedia will conduct the Gamer's Universe Showdown Series at the Harold Washington Library Center, 400 S. State st. on Saturday, Jan. 31st from 11 a.m. to 4 p.m.

Join us for Gamer's Universe Showdown Series, our monthly esports celebration leading up to the 2026 edition of Gamer's Universe.

The Chicago Teen Gamer's Guild will run monthly tournaments showcasing a variety of competitive games.

SquidWest will host Splatton 3 locals. Participants must bring their switch, copy of the game, headset, and controller.

A variety of free-play stations will feature competitive and non-competitive games.

Registration is not required for any of the tournaments or activities.

All ages and skill levels are welcome.

Mario Kart 8 Tournament begins at 12 p.m., and a 2nd tournament will start at 2 p.m.

Splatton 3 will run through the day.

Calling all Chicago artists!

INDIVIDUAL ARTISTS PROGRAM

Apply for a 2026 Individual Artist Program (IAP) grant to support your work or artistic practice.

Application deadline: January 15, 2026 at noon CT

ChicagoCulturalGrants.org



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McKinley Library Schedules Programs

The McKinley Park Branch Library, 1915 W. 35th st. has scheduled interesting and informative programs. Hours are: Monday and Wednesday, 12 to 8 p.m.; Tuesday and Thursday, 10 a.m. to 6 p.m.; Friday and Saturday, 9 am. to 5 p.m. Sunday, 1 to 5 p.m.

KIDS & FAMILIES

Little Learners Story Time, ages 0 to 5, on Fridays, through Jan. 30th from 10:30 to 11:30 a.m. Join us for songs, movements, stories and Play time.

Family Nintendo Switch, ages 8+ on Sunday, Jan. 18th from 1 to 3 p.m. Choose from our collection of games, like Mario Kart and Minecraft. Parents/ caregivers must be present for kids under 13.

LEGO Club for ages 6 to 13 will feature "Snowflakes" on Thursday, Jan. 8th and "Fidget Spinner" on Jan. 22nd,

Metra Sponsors Safety Contest

Metra has launched its 19th annual Safety Contest on the theme, "Rail Safety is not a Game". The competition is open to students in grades K through 12 throughout the six-county northeast Illinois region. Both hand-drawn and digitally created entries are eligible.

First-place winners will receive a \$500 Amazon gift card, and their winning artwork will be featured in Metra's 2027 safety calendar and on Metra's Saturday/Sunday/ Holiday Day Passes. In addition, a People's Choice contest will be held with 11 regional winners of a public vote receiving a \$500 Amazon gift card. The school with the most submissions will also receive \$500 in gifts and prizes.

Entries must be received by 11:59 p.m. on March 29th, 2026. Winners will be notified via email the week of April 17th. First-place winners will be invited to the Metra Board meeting on June 17th to be recognized for their achievements.

For contest rules and information on how to submit an entry, visit metra.com/safety-competition.

Open Studios At Bridgeport Art Ctr.



Provided by Bridgeport Art Center

The Bridgeport Art Center, 1200 W. 35th st. will conduct 3rd Fridays Open Studio on Jan. 23rd from 6 to 10 p.m. Attendees will explore various art studios, interact with local artists, and witness their works in progress. Reserve tickets for free at bridgeportart.com

Be sure to explore the other floors of the Art Center and discover the studios and workshops of

Brighton Park Library Schedules Programs

The Brighton Park Branch Library, 4314 S. Archer has scheduled engaging programs. Hours are Monday and Wednesday 10 a.m. to 6 p.m.; Tuesday and Thursday noon to 8 p.m.; Friday and Saturday 9 a.m. to 5 p.m.; Sunday 1 to 5 p.m.

The Southwest Collective community box is available for patrons to take or leave toiletries and non-perishable food items.

Toddler Story Time, ages 18 months to 3 yrs on Mondays at 11 a.m.

Middle School Gaming for 5th to 8th graders on Mondays at 4:30 p.m.

Family Story Time for ages 2 to 6 years on Tuesdays at 6:30 p.m.

Baby Story Time for ages to 18 months on

Valentine's Dance At West Lawn

The Chicago Park District will conduct a Valentine's Dance at West Lawn Park, 4233 W. 65th st. on Friday, Feb. 13th from 6 to 8 p.m.

Children must be accompanied by a parent or guardian. Must register in advance at chicagoparkdistrict.com.

Chinatown Library Schedules Programs

The Chinatown Branch Library, 2100 S. Wentworth ave. has scheduled interesting programs.

Family Story Time on Thursdays through Feb. 5th, Feb. 19th through March 26th from 10:30 to 11:30 a.m. Support your child's pre-literacy skills through songs, stories and play. For ages to 5 and their caregivers.

Tween Time: Perler Beads on Thursday, Jan. 8th from 4 to 5 p.m. Create your own fusion bead design to take home. For ages 9 to 13.

Multilingual Playgroup on Fridays Jan. 9th & 23rd, Feb. 6th & 20th and March 6th & 20th from 9:30 a.m. to 10:30 a.m. For children who speak Mandarin or Cantonese Chinese. For ages to 5 and their caregivers.

ESL: English Conversation Circle for ages 18+ on Saturday, Jan. 10th from 11 a.m. to 12 p.m. English conversation practice with other English learners.

Book Swap for ages 18+ Sunday, Jan. 11th from 1:30 to 3 p.m. Participants will write a few lines about the book they brought (up to 3), browse the collected books, and then talk with others.

Family Game Day on Mondays, Jan. 12th & 26th, Feb. 9th & 23rd and March 9th & 23rd from 4 to 5 p.m.

Family STEAM Day: Sled Challenge for ages 6 to 13 on Thursday, Jan. 15th from 4 to 5 p.m. Craft materials will be

Tax Rate Changes As Of Jan. 2026

In accordance with the City Council's passage of the 2026 Revenue Ordinance on December 20, 2025, the following tax changes will be effective on January 1, 2026, unless otherwise noted below:

Personal Property Lease Transaction Tax. The rate of the tax shall be 15% of the lease or rental price for all leases.

Motor Vehicle Lessor Tax. The rate of the tax imposed upon the privilege of leasing motor vehicles within the city on a daily or weekly basis shall be \$0.50 per vehicle per rental period specified in the lease agreement.

Boat Mooring Tax. The rate of the tax imposed shall be 23.25% of the mooring or docking fee. The rate of tax assessed to a not-for-profit corporation, as defined by 805 ILCS 105/101.80, shall be 7.00% of the mooring or docking fee.

Checkout Bag Tax. The tax shall be imposed at the rate of fifteen cents (\$0.15) per checkout bag sold or used in the City.

Every store that remits or pays the tax shall be eligible to retain one cent (\$0.01) per checkout bag sold or used, resulting in a net remittance or payment of fourteen cents (\$0.14) per checkout bag sold or used.

A wholesaler receiving such remittance or payment from a store shall be required to remit to the Department only the net amount of fourteen cents (\$0.14) per checkout bag sold or used.

Ground Transportation Tax TNP Congestion Zones Surcharge – effective date: Jan. 6th, 2026. For ground transportation vehicles used in the City to provide transportation network service by transportation network drivers:

For every single ride, an additional \$1.50 per vehicle per ride accepted for every such ride that includes a pickup or drop-off, or both, in a newly defined "Congestion Zone". This shall apply 7 days a week from 6:00 a.m. to 10:00 p.m.

For every shared ride, an additional \$0.60 per vehicle per ride accepted for every such ride that includes a pickup or drop-off, or both, in a newly defined "Congestion Zone". This shall apply only on weekdays (M-F) from 6:00 a.m. to 10:00 p.m.

Social Media Amusement Tax. The tax is imposed on social media businesses that collect consumer data on more than 100,000 Chicago consumers in a calendar year, based on the number of Chicago consumers from whom a social media platform business collects consumer data within a

Map Fest At Newberry Library



Photo provided by Newberry Library

The Newberry Library, 60 W. Walton will feature "All About Maps!" on Saturday, Jan. 24th from 12 to 3 p.m.

Celebrate with collection presentations, hands-on activities, tours, a mini used book sale, and so much more at this open house event.

View extraordinary maps and related items from our collections and have your questions answered by expert librarians and curators.

Learn from our map curator about how to find and enjoy materials in

our collection from 12 to 12:30 p.m.

Make your own map-inspired art through collage and papermaking in Ruggles Hall from 1 to 3 p.m.

Visit our latest exhibitions, "Mapping Outside the Lines" and "From Page to Pixel: Discovering the Digital Newberry."

Join a docent-led building tour to learn about the library's nearly 140-year history.

Shop our used book sale, which offers literary treasures at low prices. Visit newberry.org

Gage Park Library Schedules Programs

The Gage Park Branch Library, 2807 W. 55th st., has scheduled exciting programs for all ages. Hours are Monday and Wednesday 10 a.m. to 6 p.m., Tuesday and Thursday 12 p.m. to 8 p.m., Friday and Saturday 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. and Sunday 1 to 5 p.m. Call (312) 747-0032 or visit www.chipublib.org for more information and to register for the following programs.

CHILDREN
Afterschool Fun on Thursdays, March 19th from Jan. 18th from 4 to 5 p.m. Listen to music, play board games, do puzzles or enjoy the weekly craft.

Popcorn Reading on Thursdays, Jan 22nd, Feb. 5th to 19th, March 5th to 19th from 5 to 6 p.m. Practice your reading skills at our read aloud group. Snacks are provided. For ages 6 and up.

Childcare For Ages 2 to 5

Metropolitan Family Services provides childcare for children ages 2 to 5 year on weekdays at Midway Children's Center, 3215 W. 63rd st.

Eligibility requirements include children must be 2 years old before Sept. 1st of current year for Early Head Start. Must be 3 years old before Sept. 1st of current year for Head Start.

Family must be within the federal poverty income guidelines. Parents must work at least 25 hours a week or attend school full-time.

SNAP recipients qualify for Head Start & Early Headstart. Call (773) 884-2350 for application requirements.

Rock & Roll Hall of Fame

The Illinois Rock and Roll Museum on "Route 66 nomination process for 2026 Hall of Fame inductees is open until Jan. 12th. You are invited to nominate your favorite artist, performer, songwriter, radio station, DJ, and / or record label.

Performance nominees must have their first commercial release at least 20 years ago, and must also have national or international recognition, radio airplay and significant number of sales.

DJ's, Radio Stations, Record Labels, and Record Companies must have been in business at least 20 years.

Must have a tie to Illinois such as: Born in, - Started their career in, - Based in or Recorded in.

Visit roadtorock.org/lets-rock/hall-of-fame to make your nomination.



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