

WEST WALKER WIRE

DECEMBER 2008

www.westwalker.org

Come on out and Celebrate the Holiday Season

Mark your calendar! The West Walker holiday party is December 16 at 7:30 PM at Latvian Hall. Come join us for some cheer. Enjoy the musical stylings of pianist Lori Cohen. Listen to neighborhood children tickle the ivories with holiday tunes. Chat with your neighbor. Sing a few tunes. Enjoy some holiday treats. And enter to win dinner certificates to Smoque and other neighborhood restaurants. 'Tis the season! We hope to see you!

Art In My Back Yard's Second Exhibit A Hit!

On Friday, November 14th, the Art in My Back Yard artistic series opened its second exhibit, titled *Mortal*, a contemplation of death and rebirth. More than 150 art lovers gathered the evening of the opening to sip wine and appreciate the works of the three artists chosen by the AIMBY exhibition committee. The show of painting, ceramics and sculpture by **Mel Dean Westmeyer**, **Chris Busse** and **David Dumo** offered both sober and playful takes on the theme of mortality.

The setting was a storefront space at 3959 W. Irving Park Rd., rented for four weeks by the West Walker Civic Association. Under the direction of West Walker artist **Jackie Kazarian**, the former comic book store was transformed into an impressive gallery space.

In addition to the opening, AIMBY sponsored several free events during the month-long exhibit. Artists Chris Busse and Mel Westmeyer spoke eloquently about their works in an artists talk, 14 neighborhood children created their own found object shadow boxes in a kids' workshop, and an artist's networking event was held featuring Jackie Kazarian and **Anne Mills** of the Around the Coyote Festival in Bucktown.

Continued on page 5

COMMUNITY CALENDAR

December 14 • 1:00 to 3:00 p.m.

Skate with Santa. \$2 per skater - Bring your own skates or rent a pair for \$1
Make a Holiday craft for \$1
St. Viator - 3644 North Kedvale

December 14 • 10:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m.

Local Artists Holiday Trunk Show
4056 N. Avers Ave. - contact
ssteedman@sbcglobal.net for info

December 14 • 4:00 p.m.

Fine Arts Concert, The Lutheran Choir
*Irving Park Lutheran Church
4100 N. Harding*

Through December 14

The Devil's Daughter
La Costa Theatre - 3931 N. Elston

December 16 • 7:30 p.m.

WWCA General Meeting & Holiday Party
*Latvian Community Center
4146 N. Elston Ave.*

December 17 • 7:00 p.m.

Beat 1723 CAPS Meeting
17th District Police Station, Community Room - 4650 N. Pulaski

Through December 15 • 10 a.m.

Weekly Preschool Story Time
Independence Park Branch Library - 3548 W. Irving Park

January 9, 2009 • 7:00 p.m.

Epiphany Play and festive dinner
*St. John's Episcopal Church
3857 N. Kostner Ave.*

January 18, 2009 • 5:00 p.m.

Sustainability Supper sponsored by St. John's Episcopal Church
Call 773.685.3148 for info

Tues/Wed/Thurs throughout the School Year • 3:00 p.m - 6:30 p.m.

Teacher in the Library - homework help
Independence Park Branch Library - 3548 W. Irving Park

Through April 2009

Primary Gym, for children ages 3 - 8
St. Viator - 3644 N. Kedvale

WITHIN THE WIRE...

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You can also visit our
Community Calendar online
at:
[http://westwalker.org/
calendar.html](http://westwalker.org/calendar.html)

Dear Neighbor:

You better watch out. You better not cry. You better not pout I'm telling you why. Ok. Ok. You know who's coming to town.

And it's the season of giving. It's also the season to count our blessings.

I, for one, am thankful to live in such a great neighborhood. We have lived in Lincoln Park, the DePaul area, Ravenswood Manor and St. Ben's. We have finally found our home here in West Walker. A terrific community of neighbors who work together to make our neighborhood more enjoyable, more prosperous and more secure.

I'm thankful for our fabulous ex-president, Liz Mills, who brought in more volunteers, organized committees, and has our neighborhood moving forward. I'm thankful for Beth Tigue, who writes, edits, designs and publishes our West Walker Wire. No small feat. And she always does such a great job. And thanks to all our carriers!

I'm thankful for all the volunteers who allow us to enjoy the Fall Festival, the 4th of July in the park, our annual garage sale and our Winter Social. These are wonderful events and traditions our children will remember. I'm thankful for all the volunteers who attend city meetings to make sure West Walker needs are heard and who report back to our community. I'm thankful for the arts committee, who are bringing terrific events to our neighborhood.

And I'm thankful for my neighbors. I can always count on them. Without even asking. Sometimes I feel like Tim from Home Improvement, talking over the fence with my neighbor. (We did however have to lower the fence so Carol could see me.)

My neighbors enjoy each other. We have impromptu pizza parties, barbeques... The kids play up and down the block in all the yards. (We particularly enjoy the Kendrick playlot.)

And lastly, my neighbors take care of each other. My sidewalks have been anonymously shoveled. (Keep that up ☺). There is always someone I can call when I need help with something. And my neighbors watch out for each other. Most recently, my neighbor Greg approached a stranger who was lurking on my porch and called the police, potentially averting a break-in.

This sense of security, friendship and compassion is very rare. So, this season, I want to thank all my neighbors and the West Walker community for making our home so special. Happy Holidays!

Dorie Westmeyer
WWCA Board
Member



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WEST WALKER CIVIC ASSOCIATION

West Walker Mission Statement

"The pursuit of the West Walker Civic Association is to make our diverse neighborhood the best it can be by securing the services, safeguards and improvements the West Walker community is entitled to have."

Celebrating more than 96 years of service to the West Walker Community

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Editor
Beth Tigue

The West Walker Wire is published monthly by the West Walker Civic Association.

All story ideas and text are due by the first of the month. Submit ideas and text to: west_walker_wire@yahoo.com. Include a phone number in case we need to follow up with you.

For information on advertising, contact Laurie Gardner at 773-866-0665 or ferrislaurea@sbcglobal.net.



2008 Environmental Wrap-up

Well, here we are almost at the holidays, and only a few weeks to go before 2008 turns into 2009!

I hope everyone has had a greener 2008, in spite of the tough economic environment.

- There have been quite a few successes in the neighborhood, this year.
- Stores are providing inexpensive tote bags so you don't have to take plastic bags. More and more organic choices have been appearing on store shelves, and I've been chatting to more and more people who are growing vegetables in their back yards, or shopping at farmers' markets. Homes have been insulated and weatherized.
- Rain barrels and composters have been installed, front lawns have been turned into flower gardens, more recycling options have been implemented, and I'm noticing more folks taking the CTA and carrying reusable water bottles instead of disposables.

All in all, I feel it has been a great year for the Environment!

One thing I have been working on is trying to reduce the amount of junk mail that has been appearing in my mailbox. This time of year it seems everyone is sending catalogs.

If you, too, are looking to lessen the load, there is a great website called Catalog Choice, that will stop your unwanted catalogs for free. You will need to register, and sign in.

For my last website of the month, for 2008, here it is: [-http://www.catalogchoice.org/dashboard](http://www.catalogchoice.org/dashboard)

Many thanks, everyone, have a Happy Holiday, and, hopefully, a prosperous New Year.

Michelle Kaicener
mkaicener@earthlink.net

CAPS Report

by Margaret McIntyre

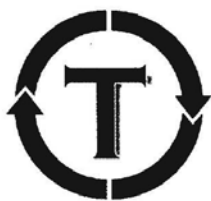
New issued raised:

- In the past, there have been noise complaints outside a business between Springfield and Pulaski on Montrose during closing time. Police had talked to the owner and things quieted down. A citizen asked Police to revisit in an effort to maintain the continual noise reductions.
- Citizens stated there is an effort under way to get the liquor store at the corner of Irving Park and Elston to stop selling malt liquor. The citizens believe the selling of malt liquor attracts the wrong element to the neighborhood.
- This month, there were two arrests in the Independence Library. This was due to alleged public disturbances outside with the alleged assailants running into the Library. Citizens asked if the Police could heighten their presence when kids are released from school.
- Officers stressed the importance of reporting disturbances to 311. Each call is assigned a tracking number. Citizens can then track the status of the calls made on the 311 website.
- The January Caps' meeting will feature a speaker on the prevention of auto theft.

Statistics by type of crime in the West Walker neighborhood October 15-November 18, 2008:

Battery (simple)	12
Assault (aggravated)	4
Criminal Damage (to property)	4
Criminal Damage (to vehicle)	3
Narcotics (cannabis).....	3
Theft over \$300	2
Theft under \$300	2
Assault (simple).....	2
Retail Theft	2
Theft (purse snatching).....	2
Criminal Trespass.....	2
Criminal Damage (defacement).....	1
Theft (from building)	1
Burglary (unlawful entry).....	1
Burglary (attempt forcible entry)	1
Robbery (aggravated).....	1
Robbery (armed)	1
Public Peace Violation (reckless conduct).....	1

CAPS (Chicago Alternative Policing Strategy) meetings for our beat are held at the 17th District in the Community Room, 4650 N. Pulaski. Meetings begin at 7:00 p.m. monthly on the 3rd Wednesday and typically last one hour. The next meeting is December 17.



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Update on The Stripp Joynt

This article was compiled from reports by area residents and documents acquired from the Dept. of Administrative Hearings.

Note: This company has, apparently, shortened its name. It originally opened as the Stripp Joynt of Evanston, LLC in 2007. During the summer of 2008 it became The Stripp Joynt.

Last year on November 14, 2007, The Stripp Joynt at 4172-76 N. Elston Ave. was allowed to resume stripping paint and spraying finishes by signing an Agreed Administrative Order with the City of Chicago Department of Environment regarding maintenance and safety. This was required after a fire occurred at the facility on August 30, 2007. Since November 14, 2007, area residents have made numerous complaints to the Department of Environment and the 39th Ward office about strong chemical odors coming from this business.

On May 12, 2008, The Stripp Joynt of Evanston, LLC, received a ticket for violating **City Ordinance 7-28-080 Nuisance in connection with business**. The ticket was issued by the Dept. of Environment and states: *"Respondent caused odor nuisance by not properly maintaining its spray booth."* A separate report by the environmental engineer who wrote the ticket states three violations of the Agreed Administrative Order with the City of Chicago Dept. of Environment were found: *"1) Stripping of doors was being done outside the stripping tank. 2) Spray booth filters were laden with particulate matter. I tapped on one of the filters and cakes of dust cascaded down to the floor. 3) Pressure gauge was functional but was not used as an indicator of when to change filters in the booth."* The ticket required the owner to make a mandatory appearance for an Administrative Hearing on June 19, 2008, at 400 W. Superior St. On that date, the owner appeared and made a motion for a continuance, which was granted. A new hearing date was set for August 14, 2008.

Meanwhile, on July 14, 2008, The Stripp Joynt received another ticket from the Dept. of Environment for violating two city ordinances, **7-28-080 Nuisance in connection with business and 11-4-630 Atmospheric pollution prohibited**. The ticket states: *"Respondent caused or allowed noxious organic odors to pollute atmosphere. Respondent caused a health nuisance with release of noxious organic odors."* Excerpts from the report of the environmental engineer who issued the ticket state: *"Upon arrival to the site I immediately detected strong, foul paint and lacquer chemical odor along Avers St. At this time, my eyes began to tear up and slight burning sensation was felt in my nose ... The entire atmosphere along Avers Ave. was saturated with paint and lacquer chemical odors. The odors detected were excessively noxious."* This ticket required the owner to make a mandatory appearance for an Administrative Hearing on August 28, 2008.

On August 14, 2008, the continued hearing for the first ticket of May 12, 2008, was held. The owner appeared and pleaded liable. A "liable plea" is the term used for a guilty plea in the administrative hearing system. He was fined \$400 plus court costs.

The hearing for the second ticket of July 14, 2008, took place on August 28, 2008. The owner appeared and made a motion for a continuance, stating that he needed time to get a lawyer. The motion was granted and a new hearing date of October 23, 2008, was set. On October 22, 2008, neighbors were notified that they would be needed to testify at the hearing. Three area residents were able to attend and they met with a city attorney before the hearing was to begin. However, the owner of the Stripp Joynt failed to appear and no attorney was there to represent him. Therefore, testimony from residents was not needed. The Dept. of Administrative Hearings found him liable by default and ordered the maximum fine on each of the two counts, a total of \$2,000 plus court costs. On October 30, 2008, the owner of the Stripp Joynt filed a Motion to Set-Aside Default. Such motions are allowed if made within 21 days of the default and a good cause for missing the hearing is stated under oath. The owner's reason was *"Did not receive notice."* A new date of November 20, 2008, was set to hear the motion and, if it was accepted, to have an immediate hearing on the violations. The owner appeared on November 20, 2008, without an attorney. The Motion to Set-Aside Default was granted, and he subsequently pleaded liable to both counts. He was ordered to pay a fine of \$500 for each count, a total of \$1,000 plus court costs.

In early September 2008, the Stripp Joynt replaced the exhaust stack on the roof of their building with one that is more than twice the height of the old stack. Residents near this business have been affected by chemical odors since it was installed and it may also cause odors to be dispersed to other areas of the neighborhood.

If you smell strong, chemical paint and lacquer odors, please call the Dept. of Environment Hotline at 312 744-7672 or 311 to make a complaint.

Art In My Back Yard's Second Exhibit A Hit!

Continued from Page 1

Thanks to the many organizations, individual donors and volunteers who made Art In My Back Yard: *Mortal* a reality. The West Walker Civic Association is grateful for your contribution!

Organizations:

- Architectural Artifacts
- Irving Park Carlson Ministries
- The Marx Foundation
- Greater Independence Park Neighborhood Association
- The Legend Group

Exhibition Committee:

- Heather Aitken
- Tim Burke
- Shawn Hazen
- Jackie Kazarian
- Pete Lekousis
- Mary Lou Zelazny

Volunteers:

- Allison Benjamin
- Chris Busse
- Pat Clark
- Peter Cunningham
- Roberta de Oliveira
- David Dumo
- Bob Huston and the bluegrass musicians
- Mike Kolasinski
- Valentine and Tony Judge
- Jackie Kazarian
- Liz & Steve Mills
- Anne Mills
- Chris Novak
- Lynda Olander
- Anne Puotinen
- Andrea Terry & Eddie Torrez
- Mel Westmeyer
- Joyce Winer
- Johanna Zorn



The works of Chris Busse (ceramics), David Dumo (mixed media) and Mel Dean Westmeyer (painting) were exhibited in the second AIMBY show, titled *Mortal*.

Approximately 150 art lovers enjoyed the opening night in AIMBY's temporary gallery at 3959 W. Irving Park Road. The storefront was formerly a comic book store and has been vacant for several years.



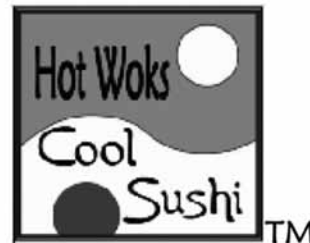
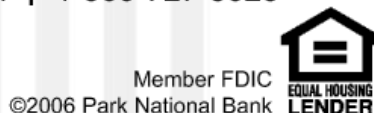
An unidentified arts patron (from left), Steve Mills, Robert de Oliveira, art educator and Mel Westmeyer, artist, enjoyed the opening night event.

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Dear Friends and Neighbors,

December is a time for celebration and family but more importantly it's a time to remember that it's not the things you get but the memories you make that last a lifetime. By the way, it has not escaped me that this is paid advertising ...so go to Hot Woks Cool Sushi and start making some memories!

P.S. Great news! We were the featured restaurant in the daily Red Eye newspaper on November 13, 2008. The article can also be found on Metromix.com. The article says we're helping to put Irving Park on the map but believe me, we know Irving Park is putting us on the map.

Happy Holidays!

Noom & Lois

Office Report: 39th Ward

Are you entitled to a refund on your property taxes? You may be, if you haven't been taking all the exemptions to which you are eligible. Currently, you can still file for refunds on your 2007, 2006, 2005 and 2004 taxes.

Take a look at your Second Installment tax bills to see what exemptions you have received. The right side of the bill lists different kinds of exemptions, and if you received the exemption, it will show how much it saved you. If you received the Long-Time Homeowners Exemption, the Disabled Persons' Homeowners' Exemption, the Disabled Veterans' Homeowners' Exemption, or the Returning Veterans' Homeowners' Exemption, there will be an asterisk next to the Homeowners' Exemption line.

Here are the main exemptions:

- Homeowners' Exemption
- Senior Exemption (65 or older)
- Senior Freeze
- Long-Time Homeowners' Exemption (for those who have owned their homes ten years or more)
- Disabled Persons Homeowners' Exemption
- Disabled Veterans Homeowners' Exemption
- Returning Veterans Homeowners' Exemption

Note that you cannot take both the Senior Freeze and the Longtime Homeowners' Exemption. If you qualify for both, the Senior Freeze is generally the better deal. Also, the Longtime Homeowners' Exemption, the Disabled Persons Homeowners' Exemption, the Disabled Veterans Homeowners' Exemption and the Returning Veterans Homeowners' Exemption are new to the 2007 property tax code.

You will find more information about property tax exemptions at www.cookcountyassessor.com. If you would like assistance applying for property tax exemptions, feel free to contact Jonathan in my 39th Ward Public Service Office at 773-736-5594.

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Sincerely, Margaret Laurino, Alderman, 39th Ward

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Margaret Laurino
Alderman
39th Ward

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