

WINDOW TO WEST CHICAGO

January/February 2010 • volume 5, number 1

The photographs in the montage are from left to right: Shabbona, Potawatomi chief; Henry Bayer, early German immigrant and businessman; Fred LeKander, Swedish-born Chicago & Northwestern engineer; Turner Town Hall, built in 1884, now the Museum; and the DuPage Airport control tower.

Visitors to City Hall will find more than the usual menu of services on their next visit. Beginning in January, a new permanent display that uses text, photographs and artifacts will invite discovery of West Chicago's early history and subsequent development.

The six panel exhibit, which has been fabricated using a unique bio-based material made from an agricultural fiber consisting of sunflower hulls, provides a capsule-sized version of a much larger story which begs further exploration at the City Museum, located at 132 Main Street. The panels, written in English and Spanish, concentrate on West Chicago's earliest history, but more recent developments are also explored.

Connections that date back to prehistoric times and contribute to the City we know today may be surprising. For instance, documentation on prehistoric Native American burial mounds dating from 600 – 1000 A.D. tell of the area's earliest inhabitants. The display includes an actual account of an early Wayne Township resident who witnessed the burial of a Potawatomi brave.

Also learn about settlement from New England to Chicago via Lake Michigan with the opening of the Erie Canal that led many into DuPage County, and subsequently

West Chicago, on foot, by horseback, wagon or stagecoach; or the historic preservation of the natural treasure that is the West Chicago Prairie, a 316 acre home to over 600 plant and animal species representing the greatest plant diversity in all of DuPage County.

Photographs, like the one pictured at the top of the page, further serve to bring West Chicago's story to life. Accompanying the text and photographs are a number of interesting artifacts, chosen with respect to their preservation needs and their stability in a display environment. They provide a glimpse of life and witness to a storied past.

Museum staff hopes the display will inspire a greater appreciation for West Chicago's rich history, and bring clarity to the question "how did we get here?" City Hall is regularly open to the public Monday – Friday, from 8:00 a.m. – 4:30 p.m. Holiday closures are noted in this publication or on the City website, www.westchicago.org.



Above: Shaving mug belonging to local painter Wesley W. Rohr; he is pictured on the mug.



Left: Ceramic plate given as a premium to customers of Herman Wolff who ran a general store on Washington Street in the early twentieth century.

KID'S CORNER

Craft Saturday Jan. 16
Craft Saturday Feb. 13
 City Museum – (630) 231-3376

Glass Painting Class Feb. 6
Ceramics Class
Construction Feb. 20
Glazing Feb. 27
 Gallery 200 – (630) 293-9550

Daddy Daughter Date Night Feb. 5
 Park District – (630) 231-9474

Lego Club Jan. 3 & 17; Feb. 7 & 21
Winter Reading Kick-off Jan. 9
Pre-School Open House Feb. 24
 Public Library – (630) 231-1552



IMPORTANT DATES

January 1 City Hall Closed
 January 15 Gallery 200 Reception
 January 16 Coffee with the Mayor

January 22 Gallery 200 Music Night
 February 5 Gallery 200 Reception
 February 20 Coffee with the Mayor
 February 20 Park District Chili Fest

From the Mayor

Despite these tough economic times, the City of West Chicago continues to be forward thinking, anticipating the return of economic development opportunities and continued growth within the City. One vital component to attracting developers to the City is our ability to provide an adequate supply of safe and affordable water. For 2009, the City operated and maintained pumping facilities that produced over 1.24 billion gallons of water, meeting all IEPA and USEPA required sampling and monitoring requirements with no violations. In addition, the City performed lead and copper monitoring on the distribution system as required by the USEPA with favorable results, which have placed the City on a reduced (3-year) monitoring schedule.

Continued growth means increased demand on City utilities. To address both present and anticipated demands for all businesses and residents of West Chicago, and to ensure proper volumes of water for fire protection purposes, the City is committed to expanding its water production capabilities and water storage facilities over the next five years.



Presently the City operates eight well stations, and we have begun drilling another deep well for water production, which is expected to be operational by September 2010. Additionally in 2011, the City plans to

drill a tenth well, boosting total water production capabilities from 7.992 million gallons per day to 11.22 million gallons per day.

Currently the City owns, operates, and maintains two elevated storage tanks (water towers) which house 750,000 gallons of water. To meet existing demands, the City has plans to construct two additional elevated storage tanks before 2014, boosting storage capabilities to nearly 3,000,000 gallons. With continued growth, a one million gallon elevated storage tank would be considered.

Other improvements related to the maintenance of the City's existing water distribution system are planned and will be implemented as necessary to continue to meet the demands of our customers and to remain in compliance with USEPA regulations.

The City of West Chicago is committed to providing excellent water to its customers and we are striving to provide the best quality of water in all of DuPage County, while remaining competitive with our water rates.



BITE-SIZED NEWS & TIPS

Cash Dash: You may be among the millions of people, businesses and heirs who have cash or valuables owed to you in the State of Illinois. To find out, simply search the Cash Dash database at www.cashdash.net.

Winter Reminders: *Holiday tree pick-up* takes place on regularly scheduled garbage days the weeks of January 2 & January 11, 2010; there is a **parking ban** on all streets after a two-inch snowfall until the street has been completely plowed.

Residential Rental Unit: City Ordinance requires an annual inspection and license. If you have any questions or need additional information, please contact the Community Development Department at (630) 293-2200 x141.

Text Messaging Ban: Governor Pat Quinn recently signed a bill that bans motorists from sending text messages while driving in Illinois. Additionally, the governor signed legislation that makes it illegal to talk on a cell phone while driving through a highway construction zone or school speed zone. The new laws go into effect on January 1, 2010.

Commission Vacancies: Make a difference in your community, and meet like-minded people. Consider public service as a volunteer on one of the City's commissions. There are currently two vacancies on the Cultural Arts Commission and three on the Environmental Commission. Those interested should contact City Hall at (630) 293-2200 x170 for more information.



Coyote Information

Each year the City of West Chicago receives numerous calls about coyote sightings, and sometimes sadly, the reports of domestic pets being lost to the natural instincts of this wildlife predator. The best way for the community to handle the presence of urban coyotes is through proactive measures that limit their attraction to residential backyards and accessibility to small companion animals. Residents are advised to keep the ground clear of pet and wild animal feed, and never leave a small pet unattended outside. Education is a big piece to understanding how to live harmoniously with coyotes and other wildlife species, and a good source of information is the Illinois Department of Natural Resources website, www.dnr.state.il.us.

CULTURE

Museum Winter Schedule

The City Museum, located 132 Main Street, will reduce its Saturday hours for the months of January and February. The Museum galleries will be open on Craft Saturdays only, January 16, 2010 and February 13, 2010 from 11:00 a.m. – 3:00 p.m. Weekday hours for the galleries will remain the same on Tuesday – Friday from 10:30 a.m. – 3:30 p.m. Staff is available Monday – Friday from 8:00 a.m. – 4:30 p.m. The **January 16th craft** will involve making Chinese lanterns in celebration of the new year; and on **February 13th** children are invited to make a log cabin to commemorate Abraham Lincoln's birthday. The activities are free and are offered from 11:00 a.m. – 3:00 p.m.

It's not too late to submit artwork for the **2010 Community Banner Competition**. This year's theme is **"Animals"**. Details including banner submission specifications and judging criteria may be found at www.westchicago.org in the Public Art section under

Museum and Arts. An informational session is scheduled for Saturday, January 16, 2010 at 11:30 a.m. at the City Museum to assist artists with the submission process. The submission deadline is February 1, 2010.

Resident and arts champion **Fredericka Howard** will be honored by the Illinois Humanities Council on Monday, February 1, 2010 with a Studs Terkel Humanities Service



Award. Howard's list of accomplishments spans more than a decade. She was an original volunteer on the West Chicago Cultural Arts Commission when it was formed in 1993. She went on to serve as chairman from 1999-2007, and remained on the Commission until April of 2008. Under Howard's leadership, a grant was secured through the Illinois Arts Council to design and create a mural in the historic downtown area. She also established the Lou Ransom Scholarship, created the annual Fine Arts Fiesta at Railroad Days and was a founding member of Gallery 200. The award will be presented at the City Council meeting at 7:00 p.m.

Commemorative

ornaments featuring the West Chicago Tastee Freez have sold out after brisk sales. This newest edition to a series of ornaments started in 1997 celebrates the traditional seasonal walk-up ice cream stand built in 1955 which is located at 130 Fremont Street and which has become a West Chicago icon of old-fashioned fun and quality. The ornament has been reordered and will be available for purchase at the City Museum or City Hall in late February 2010.



The Cultural Arts Commission will continue to exhibit local artists' artwork in the public hallway at City Hall, 475 Main Street. The featured artist for January, February and March is resident **Mark Fortman**. He is a self-taught artist, who works in pen and ink. Several of his drawings of local scenes have been selected as People's Choice winners at the annual Fine Arts Fiesta.



Samantha Weibler will be one of the musicians performing at Gallery 200 on January 22, 2010.

GALLERY 200, 200 Main Street • (630) 293-9550

Thursday and Friday 12:00 - 8:00 p.m. Saturday and Sunday 12:00 - 4:00 p.m.

Gallery 200 adds a new element to its already exciting art line-up – **evenings devoted to live, local music**. Debuting the concept last October, performances by Old Toby (Colin and Emily York), Kristine Marie Miller and Mandy Rakow drew a nice crowd and prompted an encore event scheduled for Friday, January 22, 2010 from 7:00 – 9:00 p.m. Among the musicians performing popular and original music will be West Chicago resident Sam Weibler. Free refreshments will be provided and all are welcome. Any musicians who are interested in being a part of this or future events, should contact Mandy Rakow at rakowarts@gmail.com.

Also in January, featured artist **Lois Easley** introduces Gallery visitors to her work in watercolor, acrylic and mixed media. Easley has studied with some of the area's finest teachers including Jennifer Hereth at College of DuPage, and Marge Hall and Bill Gant from the DuPage Art League. She also took many classes with the late Wayne Atkinson. Her work has evolved from the traditional florals and master copies to computer art and graphic design. She admits to being fascinated with typography and the history of print. Her **Opening Reception on January 15, 2010 from 6:00 – 9:00 p.m.** will also feature the stirring music of professional guitarist Kevin Brown, a recent graduate of the Wheaton College Conservatory of Music.



Artwork by Lois Easley

Graphic artist **Uwe 'OOVA' Gsedl** is no stranger to the West Chicago art scene. His active involvement in the community includes contributing his design talents to support numerous special events, serving on the Board of the West Chicago Chamber of Commerce and Industry, designing the Sesquicentennial logo for the City of West Chicago, starting the West Chicago Sister Cities partnership with Taufkirchen (Vils), Bavaria, Germany and contributing a design to the 2009 Community Banner Art project. Uwe, who founded OOVA FOTOGRAFIE, has his own studio in town. His photographic specialty is in female portraits and model portfolios, as well as fashion photography. Meet Uwe Gsedl at an **Opening Reception on Friday, February 5, 2010 from 6:00 – 9:00 p.m.** His work will be at Gallery 200 through the month of February.



Photography by Uwe 'OOVA' Gsedl

Downtown Buzz

West Chicago Blooming Fest celebrates a milestone this year. The downtown garden event is ten years old and “growing” strong. Crafters are wanted for this perennial favorite, scheduled for Saturday, May 16, 2010 from 9:00 a.m. – 3:00 p.m. All types of handicrafts are sought, especially garden-related items. Additionally, art in the form of photography, sculpture and jewelry is wanted. For more information, please contact Krista Coltrin at City Hall at (630) 293-2200 x135 or visit www.westchicago.org for a vendor registration form.

Planning for **2010 downtown beautification** is underway! Volunteer members of the Cultural Arts Commission and City staff are working together to create another vibrant streetscape

that combines natural beauty with artistic impact in a program called **Banners & Baskets**. Increased numbers of people heading downtown to enjoy dining, cultural or recreational venues such as the City Museum, Gallery 200 and the Fitness Station, and special events signal a renewed energy and enthusiasm for the “historic heart” of our community. The image of downtown reflects the perceived health of the overall community. The City’s business partners are invited to make a donation of \$20 to the Banners and Baskets Project and overall downtown beautification efforts.



The City would like to thank all the organizations that worked so hard to create another wonderful **Frosty Fest**. Congratulations to the 2009 Favorite Things essay contest winners: **Mariana Gomez Duran** from Wegner School ; **Matt Dupasquier** from St. Mary’s School and **Leslie Cortes** from

Pioneer School. Also, three cheers for **Drew Rukavina** from St. Charles for having the closest guess of the number of lights on the holiday tree – 3,800. The contest was designed to increase awareness for the importance of participating in the 2010 Census count. A slideshow with highlights from Frosty Fest and the Mayor’s visits to winning student classrooms may be found at www.westchicago.org in the Community Events section.



IT'S IN OUR HANDS



Mayor Kwasman visits Gary School where the Frosty Fest essay contest sparks a long list of hometown favorites.

Numbers to Know

Fire Administration (630) 231-2123
Fire Emergency 911
Police Administration . . . (630) 293-2222
Police Response 911

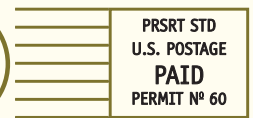
City Administration
 City Hall (630) 293-2200
 Michael B. Kwasman, *Mayor*
 Nancy Smith, *City Clerk*
 Don Earley, *City Treasurer*
 Michael Guttman, *City Administrator*



Window to West Chicago is published six times a year by the City of West Chicago. It is designed to keep our residents informed about city government, services and events. Check out www.westchicago.org for more information.

CITY COUNCIL

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