

# News-Star / Booster

A Lerner Community Newspaper

## Patrick Butler: Booster shots

Mell refutes recent rumors of retirement

Despite any rumors (published or otherwise) that have been making the rounds lately, Ald. Richard Mell (33rd) says he has no intention of retiring any time soon.

"There's still too much I need to get done," including the Kedzie Avenue/Irving Park Road redevelopment project and setting the future direction of the International Paper Co. property at Addison Street and Kimball Avenue, said Mell, who with 23 years' aldermanic service now shares the City Council's No. 4 seniority slot with Eugene Schuler of the neighboring 47th Ward.

Mell once confided to about 50 of his closest confidantes at a 33rd Ward Advisory Council meeting that he seriously considered packing it in a few years ago when the ward boundaries were redrawn and he "inherited" a host of problems (ranging from gangs to bad buildings) that he thought he had already solved.

But, he added, the ward has since become one of the "hottest" real-estate areas in the city, if not the entire country, leaving Mell with so much unfinished business he says he's going to run for at least another term — and probably many more.

Political projects and plans

What's the difference between Santa Claus and a local lawmaker?

All Old St. Nick has to do is deliver the gifts on Christmas Eve, then head back to the North Pole for a long winter's nap.

Federal and state representatives don't get any such breaks, even during so-called "recesses."

U.S. Rep. Rod Blagojevich (D-5th), for example, spent much of his summer trying to get the House Appropriations Committee to approve funding for a six-year-long renovation of the turn-of-the-century Ravenswood CTA line that would include lengthening station platforms to accommodate eight-car trains. He just recently returned with \$2 million in start-up money for what he promises will be "a new day" for Brown Line riders, according to a news released.

Meanwhile, state Rep. John Fritchey, who took over Blagojevich's old 33rd District seat in the Illinois General Assembly, recently got a \$35,000 grant for the Lathrop Community Music Center, which released its first CD last month. The 13-year-old school plans to use the state grant to enhance its existing programs and create a musical computer lab and resource library at the Church of the Good News, 2156 W. Wellington Ave.

Hopefully, one of the works on file there will be Fritchey's own get-out-the-vote rap, performed by local talent Dead Lock. Fritchey would like to see his "Vote 1998" — which won first prize in a contest sponsored by Ald. Walter Burnett (27th) — performed as a public-service announcement this fall by local radio stations.

Fritchey also got an \$80,000 state grant for the Uhlich Children's Home at 3737 N. Mozart Ave. The 129-year-old child-care center will use the money for its HomeWorks parent-education and support program, said Tom Vanden Berk, Uhlich's president and executive director.

## Pantry needs support and wheels

Needed: A new or used van to replace the beater the Lake View Pantry has been using for the past eight years. The aging vehicle has logged more than 90,000 miles picking up 7,000 pounds of food every week (despite having been broadsided on her 10th day on the job.) Cash donations can be sent to the pantry c/o 3212 N. Broadway, Chicago, IL 60657. Call Director Gary Garland at (773) 525-1777 for more information. The pantry serves more than 12,000 needy local residents every year.

The times they are a-changin'

Caravan Beads has moved from 3350 N. Paulina St. to new digs on the corner of Roscoe Street and Lincoln Avenue.°.°.°. Everything you ever wanted to know about sexual harassment but were afraid to ask will be covered at a Thursday, Aug. 4, Lake View Chamber of Commerce seminar at the Wild Onion, 3500 N. Lincoln Ave. The class will include a quiz to see if you're complying with the seemingly ever-changing case law on the subject. Call (773) 472-7171 for reservations.

## War between the states redux

Latest news from the front!!! Word has just reached us that Sgt. Jim Soensis listed among the fallen at Gettysburg. Again! The Ravenswood Industrial Council director, an avid Civil War re-enactor, joined an estimated 30,000 participants (including a contingent of make-believe ``women of the town plying their avocation") in recreating the pivotal battle over the July 4 weekend. Soens was ``wounded" twice during the three-day re-enactment. A few years ago, he actually did suffer a real hand injury from a Reb bayonet on that same battlefield Ä and has a bill from the local hospital to prove it!

Neighborhood notes

Condolences to former Lake View Citizens Council President Wayne Krause on the recent death of his mother, and to the family of 1962 Lake View Kiwanis Club President Ralph Hastings, who died recently at age 82.

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