

TAKE FLIGHT IN 2021

“ART WASHES AWAY FROM THE SOUL THE DUST OF EVERYDAY LIFE.” —Pablo Picasso

MEMBERS OF THE WEST CHICAGO CULTURAL ARTS COMMISSION are hopeful that 2021 will prove to be an inspiring year for the arts in West Chicago. As a springboard for capturing the spirit of optimism for the future, they have issued a call for art for the 2021 Art Banner Exhibit, titled *Take Flight*.

Whether literally or figuratively, ‘take flight’ is a call to action which generates a host of ideas from aviation and space to concepts of rising above the unique challenges of 2020, breaking barriers or experiencing the joy and exhilaration of a successful endeavor, just to name a few. Commission members hope the result to be a richly varied exhibit of art that takes the annual public art project to new heights of creative expression.

Jacqueline Camacho-Ruiz (Jackie), a dynamic woman versed in all aspects of the theme will jury artwork this year. Jackie is an entrepreneur, author, speaker and philanthropist. She also uses the hashtag #Pilotina to describe herself as a member of the small group of Latina sports airplane pilots in the United States. Jackie’s connection to the world of aviation, as well as her positive credo of ‘you are capable of amazing things’ that epitomizes her work with The Fig Factor, an organization which helps inspire and empower young Latinas through a leadership, motivation, and mentorship program, makes her a perfect ambassador for this year’s art banner exhibit.

For more details on how to submit artwork for consideration by the deadline of February 1, 2021, visit westchicago.org/arts.

Photo courtesy of Jackie Camacho-Ruiz



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West Chicago, IL 60185

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FROM THE *mayor*

T SURE FEELS GOOD to turn the page on 2020 and the unprecedented challenges it held for all of us.

Rather than focus on the hardships, though, I am taking this opportunity to share some hopeful information about the federal government's race for a safe, effective vaccine for COVID-19 through its initiative called Operation Warp Speed.

According to a paper published on the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) website, **hhs.gov**, the goal of Operation Warp Speed is to produce and deliver 300 million doses of the vaccine with the initial doses available by January 2021, while also focusing on therapeutics and diagnostics that will ultimately put the pan-

demic in our country's rear-view window.

Until then, let's stay optimistic and continue to do our part in prevention. Wear a mask, social distance and wash your hands frequently. We can do this together while we wait.

There is much more to learn about the COVID-19 vaccine, which hopefully will be available soon, and the CDC website **cdc.gov** is the best place to keep up with the latest information on these promising developments.

Onward, 2021.

Ruben Pineda,
Mayor

Nancy Smith,
City Clerk

Michael Guttman,
City Administrator

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RIDE DUPAGE OFFERS CURB-TO-CURB SERVICE FOR SENIORS AND PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES

ARE YOU A SENIOR CITIZEN OR HAVE A DISABILITY? Sign up for Ride DuPage this winter. Seniors and persons with disabilities can receive curb-to-curb transportation service from their homes to any location in DuPage County through the Ride DuPage program. The program transports residents by paratransit bus or

taxi for a fee of \$2 plus \$1 for each mile traveled. Service is provided 24 hours every day. Eligibility is limited to residents of West Chicago who are 65 or older, or those with an RTA reduced fare card for persons with disabilities. In order to use Ride DuPage, you must be a registered rider. To register, call John Sterrett at (630) 293-2200 x 158 or email

him at jsterrett@westchicago.org to receive an application. Pace Bus is taking all appropriate precautions during the COVID-19 pandemic to ensure the safety and well-being of its riders. For more information on what Pace is doing during the pandemic, please visit pacebus.com/news/information-about-paces-response-coronavirus-covid-19.

SCHOOL & COMMUNITY ASSISTANCE FOR RECYCLING AND COMPOSTING EDUCATION,

aka SCARCE, the award-winning environmental education non-profit dedicated to creating sustainable communities, has been a partner to West Chicago for over 25 years. The organization works closely with the West Chicago Environmental Commission and the Green Disciples of the First United Methodist Church of West Chicago. It provides support for a number of community-wide events and programs that engage and educate residents about the importance of keeping “stuff” like clothing, school and office supplies, crayons, LP records, keys, corks, eyeglasses and much more, out of landfills.

Last fall, a West Chicago Pumpkin Collection event contributed to a haul of 159 tons of pumpkins collected from 49 sites. The pumpkins were diverted from landfills and instead sent for compost and enrichment of Illinois soil. A Cease the Grease event yielded 364 gallons of vegetable cooking oil from various local communities to be recycled into biodiesel that burns cleaner than conventional diesel fuel, as well as preventing clogged pipes in homes and streets. This year, SCARCE hopes to introduce several new programs to West Chicago.

Literacy at the Laundromat is a bi-lingual outreach initiative to promote literacy about environmental practices to

The City is proud to work with the many organizations which do amazing things for our community and will spotlight them throughout the year. If you know of one such organization, please let us know at rmackey@westchicago.org.

COMMUNITY PARTNER PROFILE: SCARCE



youngsters when visiting the laundromat. Small bookcases or baskets will house all the books and reading materials. A pilot program launched at three locations in Addison, IL met with great success. Also on the horizon for West Chicago is the Storm Drain Medallion project. Many people are unaware that water from storm drains is not filtered or treated before being released into local waterways. Volunteers lead small-scale projects to place educational medallions or markers on the curbs of storm drains to

help prevent illegal dumping of waste. Sign up for the free monthly E-Newsletter and stay informed about upcoming events and becoming involved by visiting scarce.org.

Dates TO REMEMBER

January 1 City Hall Closed

January 4 - 15 Christmas Tree Collection

Through January 17 Holidays Lights Recycling

February 1 Deadline for Community Banner Art

March 14 Daylight Saving Begins

SNOW GUIDELINES

It's a safe bet that snow is headed our way this winter. Please remember that you cannot:

- Park, or allow any vehicle to remain, on a public street on which there is an accumulation of two or more inches of snow;
- Deposit any snow into a City street, alley or public way; and
- If possible, wait until the street is completely plowed before cleaning off a driveway. For more information on the City's policy on snow removal, visit westchicago.org and search Snow Removal.





Art by Marita Valdizan

CREATIVE COPING STRATEGIES SAW US THROUGH 2020



Art by Margaret Bucholz



Art by Britta Renwick

WHILE COVID-19 TOOK CENTER STAGE LAST YEAR disrupting our work lives, our ability to gather at places of worship, our social interactions, recreational pursuits, school activities, and holiday gatherings, there were some unexpected gains which left us stronger, more grounded and self-reliant. We learned new ways of coping with adversity and managing the stress of our lives after feeling upended.

COVID-19 required us to think outside the box, work together for the needs of many in the community who found themselves hungry, without a job, or in need of medical services. Community partners came together to provide services and uplift spirits, and we survived.

Through it all, some were even able to find comfort in the return to a simpler, home-based lifestyle, which brought family members closer through renewing the ritual of eating meals gathered around the table together, playing board games,

or learning new online skills. Many residents discovered their own creativity through a project of the West Chicago Cultural Arts Commission, and provided hope and positivity through the ancient art form of Japanese Haiku. Over 100 Haiku yard signs installed throughout town celebrated the little everyday miracles of our natural world.

An art exhibit succinctly named **2020** combines the work of artists Margaret Bucholz, Marge Hall, Judi Horsley, Kathi Kuchler, Britta Renwick, Sue Tripp, and Marita Valdizan at Gallery 200, 103 West Washington Street, from January through February 2021. The exhibit explores the artists' journey through a difficult time and provides a glimpse of the pandemic through their art.

The one thing all of the artwork in **2020** has in common is that it was produced during the year of the 2020 pandemic, a year none of us are likely to forget.

There will be no opening reception,

“Some of the pieces were made by artists to help them cope with their fears, pain and uncertainty during these unprecedented and worrisome times...some of the art was produced to show that there is always beauty, even during dark times...and some of the art just plain came to be because making art makes the artist feel better.”

—Britta Renwick

but those wishing to visit Gallery 200 and view the art in person may do so on Fridays, 2:00 p.m. to 6:00 p.m. or on Saturdays, 10:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m. Physical distancing and facemasks are required. There will also be a virtual gallery of the exhibit at gallery200.org.

Special events went virtual last year with City staff developing alternate forms of community engagement through online activities that kept the spirit of beloved events like Blooming Fest, West Chicago Food Fest, and Frosty Fest alive. While we hope to return to our special event calendar in 2021, the City will follow the guidelines of local, State and federal health officials. Stay in touch by following westchicago.org.



*Seasons turn, colors change
Family, friends, and neighbors
Keep our hopes alive*

—Haiku by Becky Hall