

Walk pushes people to get out of 'comfort zones'

Speakers urge attendees to embrace diversity at Community Unity event

By DIANE MOCA
Naperville Sun

Nearly 200 people braved the 25-degree temperature Sunday to march in support of religious and cultural freedom and tolerance.

The Community Unity Walk started at Naperville's Fredenhagen Park and ended at Naperville Central High School, where several people spoke on issues of diversity and understanding, including an interfaith panel that discussed the commonalities of Judaism, Islam, Humanism and Christianity.

"We are conditioned to put ourselves in bubbles where we feel safe and secure. Being uncomfortable on purpose and



MOMS BUILDING BRIDGES

The second annual Community Unity Walk to celebrate religious and cultural diversity and tolerance was held Sunday in Naperville.

with a purpose allows us to remember to connect to one another," said Imam Tariq El-Amin, one of several religious leaders who participated.

This was the second year the march and discussion event was held by Moms Building Bridges,

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School group joins push for new plan

Brookdale parents urge complete overhaul of District 204 boundaries

By SUZANNE BAKER
Naperville Sun

Residents who live near Brookdale Elementary School in Naperville say they're willing to sacrifice a year of overcrowding while Indian Prairie School District 204 hashes out a long-term attendance boundary solution.

Three parents of Brookdale students representing the group One Brookdale urged the school board Monday to stop making piecemeal fixes in favor of a top-to-bottom overhaul of school boundaries for all grade levels.

The appeal is a result of a proposal before the school board to ease overcrowding in the 2018-19 school year by adjusting elementary boundaries for 215 cur-

rent students and reassigning some incoming students who will move into the new subdivisions.

The changes would affect three schools: Brooks in Aurora, Brookdale in Naperville on the District 204's north end and at Peterson in Naperville in the south.

Many families who live in the tight-knit Brookdale neighborhood oppose the district's plan for their elementary school and created OneBrookdale.com and a OneBrookdale Facebook page.

In the district's proposal for Brookdale, 89 Naperville students who live in the Pebblewood Estates apartments would be shifted to Longwood Elementary, Bridgewater Estates town homes students would move to Cowlshaw Elementary, and children in the Courtyard Villages apartments and the River Brook

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2017 GUIDE TO CHRISTMAS DISPLAYS



JANE DONAHUE/NAPERVILLE SUN

Rick Tarulis is celebrating the holidays and his good health this year at his home on 827 Morven Court in Naperville.

WATTS UP, NAPERVILLE!

City bright with over-the-top light setups that bring holiday cheer to those driving past

By JANE DONAHUE | Naperville Sun

Rick Tarulis' future is looking bright, and so is his house on Morven Court. The dazzling holiday display is a testament to the Naperville resident's Christmas spirit and the fact he is healthy enough to decorate this year.

"I do it for the fun of it," Tarulis said.

"That's the main reason; it's like a little fireworks show, the more the better. Invite everyone to bring the kids by to see it."

Tarulis has been sharing his passion for exterior illumination with residents since he moved to Naperville in 1987. After finding out he had neck cancer in Octo-

ber 2015 — and going through the surgery and treatment that followed — Tarulis didn't have the energy to decorate.

In 2016, Morven Court was dark. "I had two months of chemo and radiation, and that was during the time I would normally do the lights," Tarulis said. "The treatment (for neck cancer) is really nasty. I was too sick to do anything."

This year is different, and Tarulis' home is brighter than ever. Now cancer-free, he said he's living a "new normal," but visitors to his home simply see the old passion for decorating.

Tarulis' home is one of many that readers nominated for the Naperville Sun's annual holiday lights map. Because of veteran decorators such as Tarulis and newcomers such as Mike Dahm, on Hidden Bay Court, it's beginning to look a lot like Christmas in Naperville.

"The reason we created our show was for our family, friends and neighbors, but most important for our daughter, Kaitlyn," Dahm said. "She has special needs and has trouble communicating. We are fortunate that she is very social, so we try

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Mike Dahm decided to decorate his home at 1934 Hidden Bay Court in Naperville to delight his daughter, Kaitlyn, who has special needs.



JANE DONAHUE/NAPERVILLE SUN PHOTOS

The display at 651 Edward Road is even bigger and brighter this year thanks to a lighted tunnel that extends the length of the sidewalk.

Take a tour of over-the-top displays

Lights, from Page 1

to foster every opportunity for people to get to know her.”

Mission accomplished. The brightest house on Hidden Bay Court is known as Kaitlyn's house, and children and adults have been flocking there to enjoy the musical light show.

“We hosted a party for the kids (when we turned the lights on),” Dahm said. “Besides hearing kids talk about Kaitlyn's house, the best part is hearing kids laugh and scream when they see things they like. (That) makes it all worth it.”

Thousands of area residents will check out these homes and others with the help of Annette Wehrli, of Naperville Trolley & Tours. Wehrli is an expert when it comes to exterior illumination.

“What I love best about this is that it is a tradition for so many,” Wehrli said. “It is humbling when I hear back from so many families each year. I am honored to be part of their tradition.”

For more than two decades, Wehrli and her team have made it a tradition to scope Naperville's best and brightest homes to share with riders of all ages.

“I always say more is more,” Wehrli said. “Our guests want to see as many highly decorated homes as they can (during) their tour time.”

Jane Donahue is a freelance reporter for the Naperville Sun.

Plan a trip to see light displays

Here's the scoop on some of the city's most festive homes.

1. 827 Morven Court

For nearly three decades, Rick Tarulis has been decking the halls — and everything else — on Morven Court. One can't help but be in awe when approaching the festive home that includes many of Disney's favorite characters and a host of others.

2. 1934 Hidden Bay Court

There is a new musical light show that's worth hearing and seeing on Hidden Bay Court, thanks to the Dahm family. Inspired to create it for his 6-year-old daughter Kaitlyn, Mike Dahm said “Hot Chocolate” from “Polar Express” is one of their favorite parts of the show. Stop by Kaitlyn's house and check it out.

3. 1228 Atlas Lane

Who-ville meets Naperville at this charming home on Atlas Lane. From the ground to the rooftop, this house is a bright spot that would even make the Grinch smile.

4. 347 S. Columbia St.

Simply elegant best describes this home that is worth seeing. While it doesn't have the typical more is more, it's subtle blanket of white lights makes it a stand-out.

5. 426 S. Columbia St.

Every color combines for a bright and bold display that reaches soaring heights. This home shines in the front and back, and everywhere in between.

6. 326 S. Sleight St.

The Hennessy home has something for everyone. The winner of last year's ABC-7 “Great Chicago Light Fight” is a winner every year on Sleight Street. From the lifesize nutcrackers, candy canes,

Santa and an amazing nativity scene, this house is a perfect backdrop for holiday photos.

7. 357 S. Sleight St.

Marc Sweda hasn't lived on Sleight Street for a long time, but that hasn't stopped him from getting down to Christmas business. The family's tasteful white lights and lighted reindeer will be joined by a couple of live reindeer (maybe Dasher and Dancer) and elves from 5 to 8 p.m. Sunday.

8. 1326 N. Webster St.

The Murphy family's display of hand-crafted wooden characters is worth seeing. In fact, there are so many to see that they've spilled over into their neighbor's yard again this year.

9. 753 E. Bauer Road

White lights frame this home on Bauer Road, but it's the meticulously staged scenes of Santa's workshop that make this one special. Make sure to check out what's at the end of the driveway before leaving.

10. 24455 Royal County Down Drive

Bright, bold-colored lights hung on the tallest of trees make the Young's home barely visible behind the sea of color. It takes a cherry-picker to set up this display of purple, red, green and blue LED lights that has been thrilling visitors for years.

11. 24546 Killarney Court

The McKee family shares the holiday spirit with others again this year with their festive display. We've been told that Santa has been seen around this house, so be on your best behavior.

12. 3111 Wolfe Court

It's been five years since the Amundsen family began delighting with the magical musical light show on Wolfe Court. Along with the Christmas staples, this year Scott Amundsen included a “Star Wars” medley sure to please movie fans. View the display at www.naperlightshow.com.

13. 1020 Hollingswood Court

The sights and sounds of Christmas are evident on Hollingswood Court again this year. Plan to stay for a few songs to leave you in the holiday spirit.

14. 23341 Rebecca Court

Tucked at the end of a cul-de-sac off of Book Road, this residence shines for all to see. About every inch of the yard is adorned with something interesting, including the cast of “Peanuts” and many other Christmas characters.

15. 1254 Harvest Court

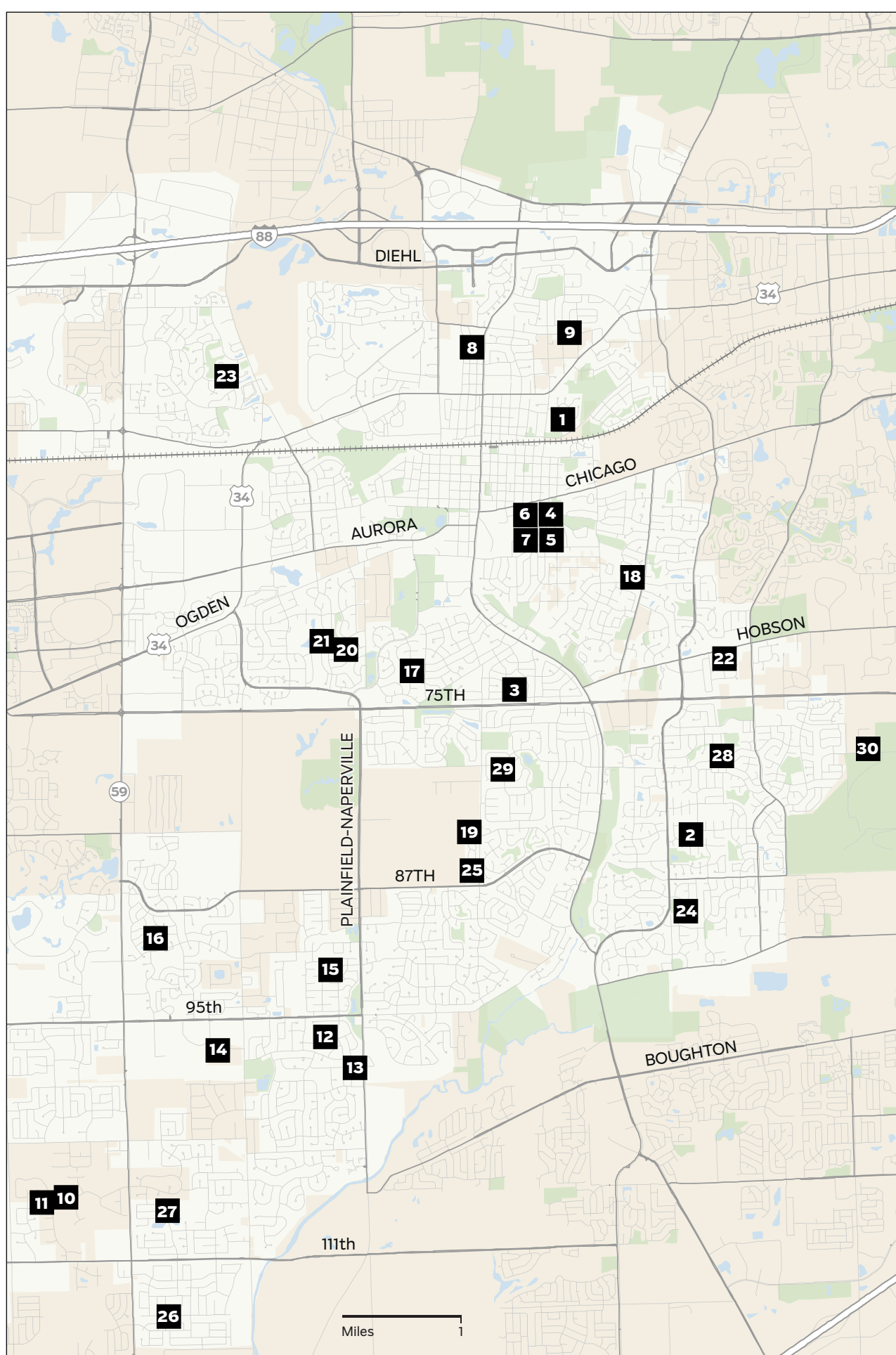
This synchronized light show is a thrill and is sure to get visitors toe-tapping and humming. The neighbors have made their homes festive as well, which is an added bonus.

16. 2648 Charlestowne Lane

Let there be peace on earth, and let it begin on Charlestowne Lane. This elegant display of red and white lights includes a beautiful nativity scene and reminder of the “reason for the season.”

17. 630 Vicksburg Court

The “Believe House” has had us believing again and again. The Nilles/Knoth home has something interesting around every bend (and second-story window), which is why this is a favorite of many.



It's hard to miss the house at 630 Vicksburg Court, where every inch of the yard has been meticulously decorated.

18. 651 Edward Road

When one thinks this home can't get any better, it does. Clark Griswold would blush at the mad skills displayed on Edward this year, especially the lighted passageway that runs the length of the sidewalk, the Ferris wheel and the Frosty that is two stories high.

19. 428 Bayview Ave.

Dasher and Dancer and the crew take flight over the Dammann house, with a display that which is even bigger and brighter this year.

20. 1222 Oakton Lane

The Kobleski home is a spectacle on Oakton Lane. They have decked the halls, the walls and everything else imaginable. The attention to detail is delightful.

21. 859 Raintree Drive

The whole street is impressive, but especially the Larson-Buranosky family home. Check out their display as well as that of their neighbors, who have made Raintree a real bright spot.

22. 1408 Justin Court

Reindeers fly and Santa can be seen making his way into the Wincek family home, which is a sparkly and special spot in Naperville.

23. Manchester Court

Why decorate a single house when the whole cul-de-sac can be decorated? That's exactly what Metea Valley High School student Matt Baker did with his amazing musical light show (www.manchesterlights.com) in Brookdale subdivision. In addition to brightening the holidays for visitors, there is an opportu-

More online

Views photos from all 30 homes in the Naperville Sun's 2017 guide to Christmas lights and holiday displays at www.napersun.com.

nity to brighten the holidays for four-legged fans by donating to the Naperville Area Humane Society.

24. 2320 Remington Drive

It's pretty bright when one can see it from Naperville Boulevard. That's the case for the Zavoral family home, which has been shining on Remington Drive and all the way through Farmington Park for the past 20 years.

25. 2113 Dorval Drive

The McDonough home uses every square inch of real estate to spread Christmas cheer with visitors to Dorval Drive. From the giant Santa to the Abominable Snowman and everything in between, this charming home has it covered.

26. 2612 Wild Timothy Road

One can get wild and get a groove on at the Marbach home when taking in the musical light show on Wild Timothy. There is plenty to see and hear at this south Naperville home.

27. 2532 Freeland Court

Joey Moore's display is a slam-dunk again. The Neuqua Valley High School student has been busy decorating his family's home and making it a must-see when it comes to exterior illumination. Moore seems to have inspired the whole street, which is looking merrier than ever.

28. 1109 E. Bailey Road

Judy and Bob Jung have given their house a fresh sheen of green lights, which can be seen from afar. Giant wood reindeer keep watch over the side and rear yards of this Bailey Road home, which is a real treat to see.

29. 1509 Riparian Drive

William Gayde is at it again, using his time and his talents to decorate his family's home on Riparian Drive. Even though Gayde is a studying at the University of Illinois, he's able to work his Christmas magic with a synchronized musical light show in Naperville.

30. 85770 Singletree Lane

Tucked on the corner of 79th Street and Singletree Lane, this large piece of property sparkles with its many lights and festive decorations. It may be off the beaten path, but it's one worth traveling to see.