

Neighbor&Classifieds

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Weekend watch

Visit Lake County's tips on things to do...

Cynthia Erivo, CSO at Ravinia Festival

Grammy, Emmy and Tony Award winner Cynthia Erivo returns to the Ravinia Festival on Aug. 15 for an evening of music alongside the Chicago Symphony Orchestra. Known for her soaring vocals, commanding stage presence and genre-spanning versatility, Erivo will perform just months after captivating audiences as Elphaba



in "Wicked: Part One." The British-born actress, singer and producer has an acclaimed career on stage, screen and in concert halls around the world. In addition to her

Oscar-nominated performance as Harriet Tubman in the 2019 film "Harriet," Erivo is a Grammy-nominated songwriter whose debut album, "Ch. 1 Vs. 1," was released in 2021. For details or tickets, visit Ravinia.org. Ravinia Festival runs on select days through Aug. 31. Tickets start at \$54. 7:30 p.m. Friday, Aug. 15, Ravinia Festival, 200 Ravinia Park Road, Highland Park.

Little Bear Ribfest in Vernon Hills

Celebrate summer with three days of food, music and community at the Little Bear Ribfest. The renowned Vernon Hills festival features local vendors serving their best ribs, along with a selection of beer, wine and a bourbon tasting for adults. The event kicks off with country music on

Friday, followed by blues performances on Saturday. All proceeds benefit the Vernon Hills Park District's Family Scholarship Program, which helps residents in need access recreational programs. Full festival details are available on the Little Bear Ribfest website, vhpark-district.org/little-bear-rib-fest. Tickets start at \$5. 6-11 p.m. Friday, Aug. 15, and 4-11 p.m. Saturday, Aug. 16, Century Park, 1001 Lakeview Parkway, Vernon Hills.

Grayslake SummerFest

The Grayslake Area Chamber of Commerce is hosting its reimagined summer celebration, now called SummerFest. This all-day event in downtown Grayslake, formerly known as Summer Days, features a full day of music, food and community activities. You can enjoy live music, food trucks, drinks, bingo and the annual parade. Each night, Whitney Street will transform into

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Bagpipes and beer

Long Grove Irish Days returns with music, pop-up pub, dog contest

Submitted by Jody Grimaldi

The luck of the Irish will land in Long Grove on Labor Day weekend as Irish Days returns for three days of culture, community, and craic.

Taking place Saturday, Aug. 30, through Monday, Sept. 1, this annual festival turns Fountain Square into a lively celebration of all things Irish — with music, dancing, food, contests and family fun.

Whether you come for the bagpipes or the beer, Irish Days offers a blend of small-town Americana and Celtic spirit.

Festival hours are 10:30 a.m. to 8:30 p.m. Saturday, Aug. 30; 10 a.m. to 8:30 p.m. Sunday, Aug. 31; and 10:30 a.m. to 4 p.m. Monday, Sept. 1, in and around Fountain Square, 145 Old McHenry Road, Long Grove. Parking and admission are free.

What's new in 2025

This year's festival features extended hours on both Saturday and Sunday, new evening entertainment, and a pop-up pub: the Lions Club "Fibber MaGee" Pub, serving up spirited pours and local personality.

The live music lineup is stacked with fan favorites, including returning headliner Without U2 (Saturday night) and the high-energy Dirty Wellies



SUBMITTED BY JODY GRIMALDI

The Shannon Rovers will play at the Long Grove Irish Days festival.

(Sunday night).

Add to that traditional folk bands, pipe-and-drum performances by the Shannon Rovers, and multiple Irish dance schools taking the stage each day and the weekend is packed with nonstop entertainment.

Returning favorites

- Best Men's Legs in a Kilt Contest

Back and bolder than ever, this hilariously charming competition invites brave lads to strut their stuff for bragging rights — and some serious laughs.



COURTESY OF LONG GROVE IRISH DAYS

Guys pose during the Best Men's Legs in a Kilt contest at Long Grove Irish Days.

- Best Irish Dog contest
- Pups parade in themed attire and compete for titles

like King, Queen, Prince, and Princess of Irish Dogs. Registration is free on-site.



COURTESY OF LONG GROVE IRISH DAYS

The Irish dog competition is a traditional part of Long Grove Irish Days.

- Kids' craft tent
- A dedicated space for little ones to get creative while families enjoy the sights and sounds of the fest.

- Mass with Irish music
- Live Irish music and dance

Start Sunday morning with a beautiful outdoor Catholic Mass accompanied by the voice of Gavin Coyle. Featuring The Toolies, The Dooley Brothers & Jimmy Moore, The Larkin & Moran Brothers, Kathleen Keane & Jim Conway,

and more throughout the weekend.

Spend local, sip in style

Shoppers who spend \$150 or more (pretax) at any of Long Grove's local shops or restaurants over the weekend can redeem receipts for a free Irish Days pint glass at the Visitors Center or event booth, available while supplies last.

For more information and a full schedule of entertainment, visit longgrove.org/festivals/irish-days.

Honoring a native son

Waukegan to host Ray Bradbury's Dandelion Wine Arts & Music Festival

Submitted by the Waukegan Park District

The Waukegan Park District will host the 25th annual Ray Bradbury's Dandelion Wine Arts & Music Festival from noon to 6 p.m. Saturday, Aug. 16, at Bowen Park, 1800 N. Sheridan Road, Waukegan.

The free, family-friendly festival celebrates Ray Bradbury with arts and music. Art vendors, including painters, sculptors and photographers, will have their art for sale.

During the festival, the Arts Park Program will give attendees the opportunity to create art, the Haines House Museum at Bowen Park will be open for free self-guided tours,

community organizations will provide free goodies and local resources, and Nightshade and Dark's Pandemonium Brewery will be selling Ray Bradbury-themed beers, cocktails, and wines.

Ray Bradbury, born in Waukegan on Aug. 22, 1920, was an author and screenwriter in fantasy, science fiction, horror and mystery.

Some of his most famous works, like "Dandelion Wine," include references to his hometown memories of Waukegan. Bradbury passed away on June 5, 2012, and is honored in numerous ways in Waukegan.

The 25th Annual Ray Bradbury's Dandelion Wine Arts & Music

Festival will feature live performances from the following local artists:

- Noon to 12:45 p.m. ALAT'S Dance
 - 12:45-1:15 p.m. Bill Tong
 - 1:15-3 p.m. The Blues Family Robinson
 - 3-3:45 p.m. Jessica Brown
 - 3:45-4:15 p.m. Doug Blake
 - 4:15-5 p.m. Rafael Mendez
 - 5-6 p.m. Jeff "Jazzman" Justman
- For more information, visit waukeganparks.org/dandelion.

Jeff "Jazzman" Justman will perform at 5 p.m. at the Ray Bradbury's Dandelion Wine Arts & Music Festival Aug. 16.



COURTESY OF RAY BRADBURY DANDELION WINE FINE ARTS FESTIVAL

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