

East Rogers Park
by I-GO Member Lisa Kemp

Rogers Park, a very ethnically and economically diverse community, is the last Chicago neighborhood before you arrive in Evanston, located at the northernmost point of the city. Because of its diversity, Rogers Park has a wealth of restaurants and activities, and a very down-to-earth and relaxed feel. Since Rogers Park is generally sub-divided and referred to by "east" and "west," this is some of the best of what East Rogers Park has to offer. For more information or to get details on current events, visit www.RogersPark.com

Loyola - near Loyola CTA station

1) Lots of great restaurants are near this CTA station - Cafe Suron (fabulous Middle Eastern, with a gorgeous high-ceilinged location and some of the best hummous in the area - 1146 West Pratt, at Pratt & Sheridan); Leona's on Sheridan (Italian, lots of room for big groups, and large food portions - 6935 North Sheridan); Giordano's (great pizza - 6836 North Sheridan); and a short ride on the #155 bus to all the great Indian restaurants on Devon Avenue.

2) The Armadillo's Pillow, a comfortable used bookstore and Rogers Park institution, is located at 6753 North Sheridan, just across and up the street from the Rogers Park Starbucks. Sit in one of the comfortable chairs and browse a wide variety of books, including philosophy, arts, fiction, cooking, mysteries, and much more. Atmosphere is casual and friendly, with scented incense wafting out the front door, and the owners' dog as an occasional visitor.

3) The Village North theater, Rogers Park's own "metroplex" at 6746 North Sheridan, features a couple of small screening rooms, and is converted from what used to be one large theater that showed "The Rocky Horror Picture Show" every weekend. No longer the haven for Dr. Frank-N-Furter look-alikes, the current venue shows first-run movies at slightly lower prices. Bring your own bag/container for FREE popcorn on Wednesday evenings!

Sheridan/Touhy - Citgo station

1) The Loyola Park fieldhouse and playing fields are across Sheridan from the Citgo station housing two i-Go cars. The fieldhouse offers many free and low-cost Chicago Park District programs with a focus on fitness and the arts, and lots of family-friendly activities. Their

next event is a Cookie Bake (free, ages 8-12) on the day after Thanksgiving - participants will learn to bake (and eat - as if that were going to be a problem!) cookies. The fieldhouse address is 1230 West Greenleaf, at Greenleaf and Sheridan, one block south of Touhy and right at the edge of Lake Michigan. There's a large metered parking area, and a playground for the wee ones.

2) The Heartland Cafe (7000 North Glenwood) anchors an entire corner of businesses at Lunt and Glenwood, directly in the shadow of the Morse CTA Red Line stop - the Red Line Tap, Studio Theater, and No Exit Cafe are all part of the Heartland Cafe "empire." Celebrating its 31st year, the Heartland continues to offer "wholesome food for the mind and body" but now offers much more as well: internet radio, art exhibits, general store, and the Buffalo Bar, as well as yummy food and some of the busiest brunch action on the North side.

3) The Lifeline Theatre, at 6912 North Glenwood, focuses on original literary adaptations, using unconventional and creative staging to bring sprawling stories to an intimate stage. Every seat in the house is a good one! This long-time Rogers Park venue anchors the Glenwood Avenue Arts District, and is currently presenting "The Island of Dr. Moreau" through Dec. 2nd. Lifeline will launch the family-friendly "Lyle, Lyle, Crocodile" on December 15th.

4) The Glenwood Avenue Arts Fest, held every August, showcases the thriving Rogers Park art scene and is a fun time by all. This jam-packed weekend event features food, music and every form of art and craft under the sun. Mark your calendar for late August, 2008 - see you there!

5) The Jarvis/Greenview corner is home to a bunch of great new restaurants and a destination no matter what you're hungry for! Try Gruppo di Amici (1508 West Jarvis) for the crispy pizza cooked in their imported wood-burning firepit, an affordable winelist, and a slew of other mouth-watering delights. If bagels are your bag, get to the Dagel and Beli (7406 North Greenview) for some of the yummiest bagels and sandwiches in the city; "Dagel and Beli" is a "spoonerism" or a transposition of two or more (usually vowel) sounds - the theme is carried through the sandwich names, such as Ram on High (ham on rye). If you're jonesin' for some java, then Charmer's Cafe (1500 West Jarvis) is just the ticket; adjoining the Dagel by a corridor, you can eat your sandwich and cafe au lait in either spot. Great baked goods too, and a homey, relaxing vibe just right for a winter rest stop.

6) The Jarvis/Greenview corner is also home to the fabulous Rogers Bark Pet Salon for pet grooming, food, and toys, at 1447 West Jarvis. Caring, attentive grooming, friendly staff, and a big water bowl at the

door in warm weather are some of the high points of this doggy spa.

Greenleaf Art Center

1) Greenleaf Art Center, a neighborhood "incubator" for artists and developing businesses, is located right next to the Rogers Park Metra station. GAC features artist studios, classes in a variety of arts and craft techniques that are open to the public, monthly art salons, and two shows per year; the next show is "ARTrageous" scheduled for prime pre-holiday gift shopping on November 16 & 17. Marked for Dessert is one of the businesses residing there; the bakery just took first place in the 2007 National Wedding Cake competition! Visit www.GreenleafArtCenter.com for more information. The GAC is also an i-Go location, with two cars in their 24-7 access parking lot.

2) Jessica's Western Wear, at 7015 North Clark, has Western boots, jackets, clothing, and more. After shopping, grab some tacos or burritos from one of the authentic Mexican restaurants in this section of Clark Street, or if everyone has a different craving, there's something for every appetite and every pocketbook at the A&T Grill (7036 North Clark).

3) A new neighborhood edition is Bark Place, a haven for dogs (and their people). With an emphasis on wholistic and organic types of dog food, grooming, daycare, and boarding, this spot's got something for every Fido! The staff are friendly and there's a nice assortment of merchandise and lines of dog (and cat) food in an intimate shop that's immediately adjacent to the Rogers Park Metra stop.