

Chicago maps out the holidays

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CHICAGO — Anyone who revels in unfolding a paper map to plot a driving route or in using computer technology to set a course will find it's worth a trip to the Field Museum's upcoming special exhibition.

Titled "Maps Finding Our Place in the World," the exhibit runs Friday Nov 2 Sunday Jan 27. In addition to exquisite maps borrowed from the Vatican, Queen Elizabeth II and great libraries of the world, the showing includes some 20 rare maps from Chicago's Newberry Library, co-organizer of the exhibit. There are maps done by Mercator, Leonardo da Vinci and Abraham Lincoln.

Maps are windows into cultures and historical periods and tell us what's important to the people who made or used them, says James Akerman, director of the Newberry Library's Center for the History of Cartography.

For example, he says, in places where river transport was of prime importance, rivers are shown as much wider than they would be if drawn to scale. Modern road maps emphasize driveable roads with little regard for rivers and lakes and subway maps note the order of stations usually without regard for the distance between them. A map of colonial America ignores large American Indian nations as a sign they were not important to the makers and users.

One gallery includes maps drawn on clay tablets, molded into pottery, drawn on papyrus and deerskin, carved into driftwood, etched on a powder horn and painted in reindeer blood.

Other Chicago museums and attractions taking part in a city-wide Festival of Maps will have map exhibits from November to January.

Call (312) 922-9410 or visit fieldmuseum.org

museum.org

Shedd Aquarium, the Field Museum's neighbor across the lakefront Museum Campus, has extended its popular "Lizards and the Komodo King" exhibit through summer. The star attraction is the Komodo dragon, the world's largest lizard.

The Shedd's high-tech 4D theater (an extra charge) is now showing a SpongeBob SquarePants feature enhanced by special effects like neck air, a water-squirt leg

tickler and seat buzzer. The film "Dolphins" precedes the cartoon character's exploits.

Call (312) 939-2438 or visit shedd-aquarium.org

Many museum-minded tourists opt for the Chicago CityPass, a money-saving booklet of admission tickets. Priced at \$49.50 for adults, CityPass is good at the Field Museum, Shedd Aquarium, Adler Planetarium, Museum of Science and Industry and Hancock Observatory. Youth (ages 4-11) pay \$39. The pass is valid for nine days from date of first use. Call (707) 256-0490 or visit citypass.com

SOFA Chicago 2007, a prestigious exposition of Sculpture Objects and Functional Art returns to Navy Pier's Festival Hall Friday to Sunday Nov 2-4 to showcase works from 100 galleries and dealers from 16 countries. The art fair also presents lectures from renowned artists, critics and museum curators. Special exhibits include "Offering Reconciliation,"

a thought-provoking display of 135 ceramic bowls created by prominent Palestinian and Israeli artists exploring the theme of peace and tolerance. Call (800) 563-7632, or visit sofaexpo.com

The circus comes to the suburban Allstate Arena and Chicago's United Center for four weeks in

November. Bellobration, the latest edition of Ringling Bros and Barnum & Bailey, revolves around the daredevil clown Bello, noted for his iconic tall orange hair and over-sized tuxedo. The Great Show on Earth invites audiences to arrive one hour before showtime for free interactive experiences. Guests can learn circus skills, meet performers and get up close looks at animal stars. Call Ticketmaster at (312) 559-1212 or visit ticketmaster.com or ringling.com

On the Saturday before Thanksgiving, tens of thousands flock to North Michigan Avenue for the **Magnificent Mile Lights Festival**, a procession that heralds the

start of the Christmas holidays. More than one million lights on 200 trees between Oak Street and the Chicago River are illuminated as the parade passes. Call (312) 642-3570 or visit themagnificentmile.com or lightsfestival.com

Earlier in the day, stage shows, ice carving demonstrations, a petting zoo and other diversions entertain crowds at Pioneer Court, near the river. On stage will be Disney characters, recording artist KT Tunstall, family favorite Justin Roberts and the Not Ready for Naptime Players and teen idol Corbin Bleu of Disney's High School Musical. Festivities also include 60,000 people breaking a world record as they sing in the World's Largest Holiday Carol.

Turkey Day throngs get into the Christmas spirit at the annual **State Street Thanksgiving Parade** in the historic Loop shopping district. Up to a half million spectators turn out for holiday floats, giant helium balloons



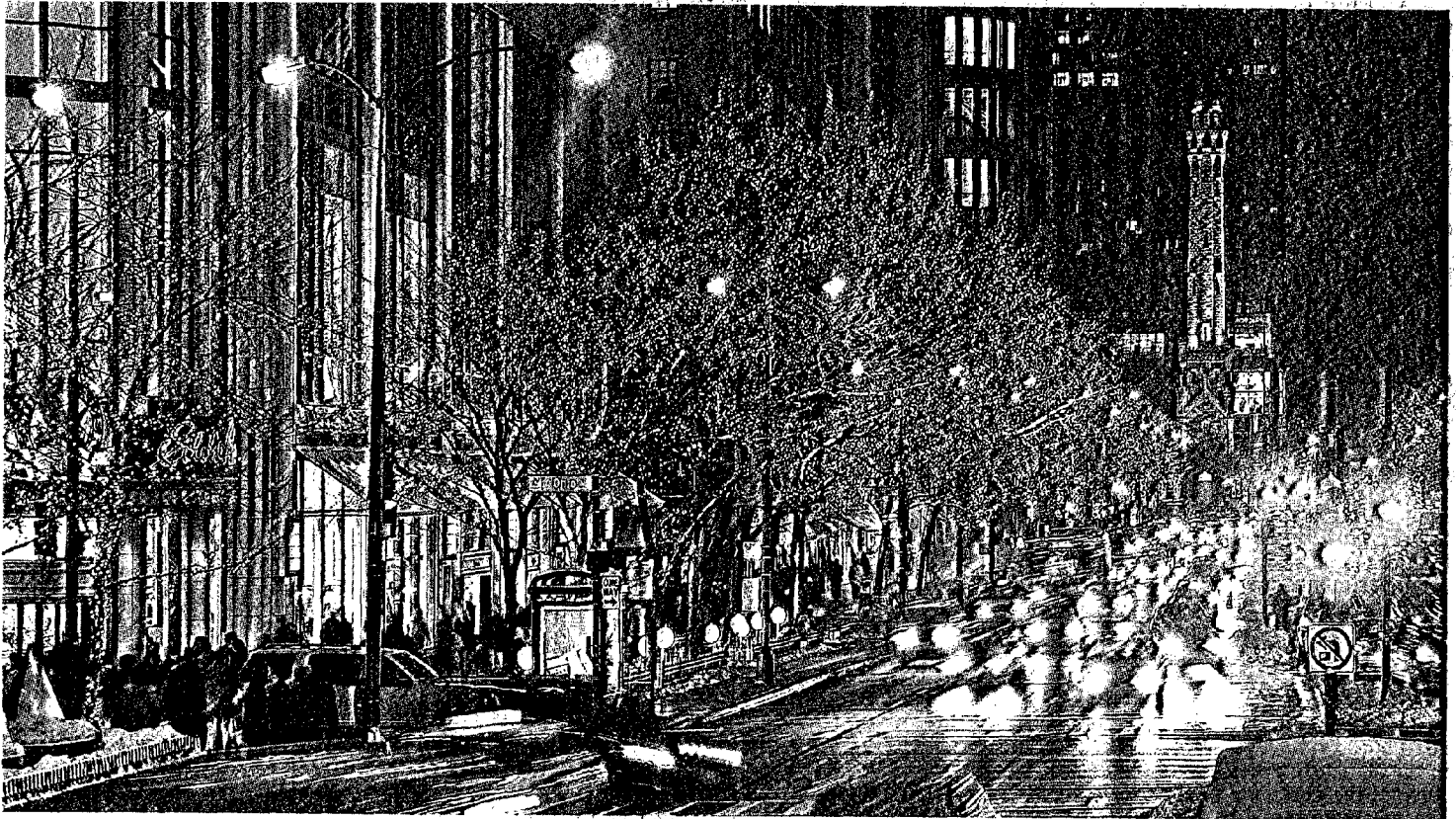
marching bands and equestrian troupes Entrants this year include the fire baton twirling Barefoot Hawaiians, 150 member Ameri Cheer All American Spirit Team and the hoop skirted Azalea Trail Maids from Mobile Ala The grand finale is the arrival of Santa and Mrs Claus
Call (312) 781 5681 or visit *chica*

gofestivals.org

Another way to jump start the holidays is to catch the **"Radio City Christmas Spectacular,"** starring the high kicking Rockettes The show returns to the Rosemont Theater Friday Nov 9 Sunday Dec 2 Dance numbers include The Parade of the Wooden Soldiers and The Liv

ing Nativity both staples of the Christmas favorite at New York's Radio City Music Hall since 1933 Call Ticketmaster at (312) 559 1212 or visit *ticketmaster.com*

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Chicago's Michigan Avenue, a favorite shopping venue, glows with holiday lights As the Windy City prepares for winter, the State Street Thanksgiving Parade and Magnificent Mile Lights Festival serve as beacons to the city