



Chicago Latvian Community Center - “LIGZDA”

Oktoberfolk Fest – Saturday, October 3, 2026

Information Booklet / “VADONIS”

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Chicago Latvian Community Center "LIGZDA"



Welcome/ "Sveiks"

Dear Participants and Guests!

On behalf of Ligzda Latvian Center we welcome you our inaugural Oktoberfolk Fest event! We would like to express our deepest gratitude to the dancers, singers, market vendors and our GREAT sponsors who have helped finance this event, and of course our many many volunteers.

Looking forward to an amazing afternoon of music and dance, featuring various European cultures/ languages, with great friendship and community spirit.

Cienījamie dalībnieki un viesi!

"LIGZDA" vārdā sveicam jūs mūsu pirmajā "Oktoberfolk Fest" pasākumā! Pateicamies visiem, dejotājiem un dziedātājiem, pārdevējiem mūsu tirdziņā, kā arī mūsu lieliskajiem sponsoriem, kuri palīdzējuši īstenot šo pasākumu, un, protams, daudzajiem brīvprātīgajiem palīgiem

Ar nepacietību gaidām jauku pēcpusdienu, kas būs piepildīta ar mūziku un dejām, atspoguļojot dažādas Eiropas kultūras un valodas, kā arī stiprinot draudzību un kopības sajūtu.

Andris Slokenbergs

Andris Slokenbergs

Chicago Latvian Community Center "LIGZDA" – President and Board Chairman

Schedule – Outline of Events

Estimated Start Time	Description / Performance
12:00	OPEN
13:15	“Čikāgas Uguntiņa un Mazā Uguntiņa” Krišjāņa Barona Latvian School dance group, Chicago, IL
13:30	“Zagora Folk Dance Club” St. Sophia Bulgarian Orthodox Church, Des Plaines, IL
13:50	“Dzelmieši” Latvian dance group, Chicago, IL
14:10	“Omladina Dance Group” The United Moravian Societies, Glendale Heights, IL
14:30	“Čikāgas vīru kora ansamblis” Chicago Men's Choir Ensemble, Chicago, IL
14:50	“Tautas Deju Kopa Mantinieki” Latvian dance group, Chicago, IL
15:00	“Saol Irish Academy of Dance” Edison Park, IL
	BREAK/ BAND SET UP
16:00	“The Neverly Brothers” Rock 'n' Roll tribute band, Chicago, IL
18:00	CLOSE

Key Contacts

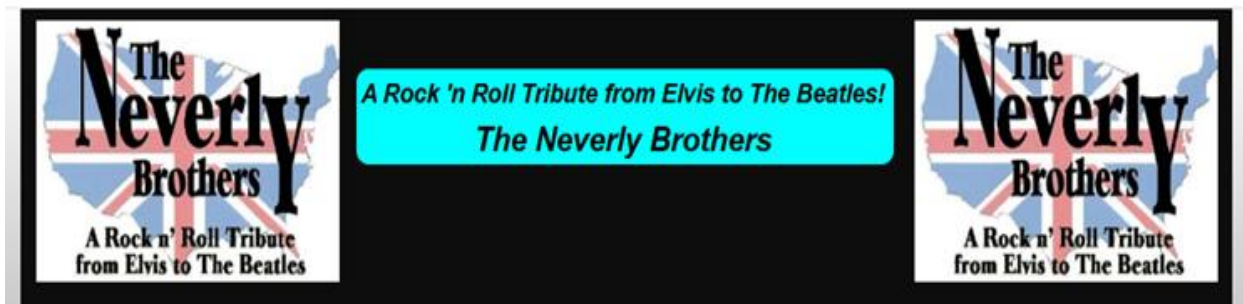
LIGZDA Operations Director	Inga Klints, 224-232-0247
Oktoberfolk Fest Lead	Andris Slokenbergs, 630-248-0960
Safety / Logistics	Helmuts Lackajs, 773-230-8265
Music	Alnis Cers, 312-907-1421
Master of Ceremonies	Kalvis Cers, 773-230-6267
Food / Refreshments	Solveiga Brunovskis, 708-692-7251 Aiga Berzins, 312-806-3672
Marketing / Design	Mallia Eihentale, 773-732-8625
Program Coordinator	Martin Staks, 925-303-3089

Guest Participants

Headliner Band - “The Neverly Brothers”

A Northern Illinois-based rock and roll tribute band. The band features brothers Kevin Giragosian (lead vocals, guitar, and harmonica) and Kegham "Keg" Giragosian (lead vocals and drums), along with Michael Bradburn (upright bass and background vocals). The trio acts as "tour guides," framing their concerts as a virtual bus tour where the crowd travels through the history of rock, complete with period-accurate wardrobe changes, historical trivia, and vintage hits.

<http://www.theneverlybrothers.com/>



“Zagora Folk Dance Club”

From the nearby suburb of Des Plaines, IL and practicing out of Saint Sophia's Bulgarian Orthodox Church. The club's director is **Mima Andreycheva**. View several wonderful pictures of this women's troupe with such beautiful and colorful ethnic costumes.



“Omladina Dance Group”

Omladina, translated into English as “Young Adults” are part of the United Moravian Societies (UMS) from Glendale Heights, IL and feature Czech/Slovak dancers. **Denise Marek** is the president of UMS which began in 1939, when a number of related ethnic clubs and societies came together with a shared vision: to unite their communities and preserve their traditions for future generations. **Myles Mojica** is the dance instructor and choreographer. See below for several beautiful pictures of this group.



“Saol Irish Academy of Dance”

The Irish word 'Saol' (pronounced “sail”) translates to 'life' in English, and we believe Irish Dance can provide lifelong experiences that will positively impact every child's life. At Saol Academy we recognize that each dancer is unique, and encourage our students to challenge themselves by striving to reach their greatest potential in a supportive and friendly atmosphere. The primary instructors are **Kara Wilke** and **Caitlin Angelini**, and the school is located in Chicago's Edison Park neighborhood. We can't wait to perform at Oktoberfest!"



Host Participants

“Čikāgas Uguntiņa un Mazā Uguntiņa”

Čikāgas Uguntiņa un Mazā Uguntiņa, translated into English as “Chicago’s flame and little flame” dance groups are comprised of children from the Krišjānis Barons Latvian School—ranging from the youngest preschoolers to high school students. These groups are led by **Elizabete Dudorāne**, assisted by **Stefānija Nsame** and **Elisa Sīpols**. This summer both groups participated in the Grand Rapids Latvian Song Festival with great joy and enthusiasm. Now our dancers are ready to take the stage once again and delight the audience at our Oktoberfolk Fest!



“Čikāgas vīru kora ansamblis”

Translated into English as “Chicago Men's Choir Ensemble” this group is lead by musical director **Māra Vārpa**, who is also organist for the Zion Latvian Lutheran Church. This musical cast of characters is a mainstay performer at many local Latvian community events and have traveled to neighboring states to perform as well. The group looks forward to performing for our guests at Oktoberfolk Fest!



“Tautas Deju Kopa Mantinieki”

Chicago Latvian Dance Group “Mantinieki” was founded in 2016, and is led by **Jānis Velkme**. Over the past ten years, “Mantinieki” have become an integral part of Chicago’s Latvian community’s cultural life, delighting audiences with their dancing, energy, and colorful repertoire, and selling out their annual spring concert every year. Throughout their history, “Mantinieki” have participated in two Latvian Song and Dance Festivals in Latvia, as well as the Song and Dance Festivals in Toronto, Baltimore, St. Paul, and Grand Rapids. The group regularly performs at concerts in Chicago and has also traveled to participate in Latvian community events in Michigan, Texas, Florida, California, and New York.



“Dzelmieši”

This Latvian dance group was founded in 1951 by Voldemārs Dzelme and through the years grew into one of the most known and highly respected Latvian diaspora dance troupes, performing across the United States, Canada, and Latvia. The group today is lead by **Ērika Inka** and continues to entertain audiences bringing a lively and vibrant step to their dance. They also recently participated at Latvian Song and Dance Festival in Grand Rapids, MI.



About LIGZDA

The beginnings of our Chicago Latvian Community Center “LIGZDA” is a fairly recent story, as we were formally established and began operations in 2020. Ligzda, translated into English is “nest”, ... which we choose to define as a friendly gathering and meeting place for our many Latvian organizations and a place to hold events for our more widespread community. More to follow about LIGZDA further below.

Back in the late 1970s this property was leased and then eventually outright purchased from Cook County by Zion Latvian Lutheran Church. The property is within what is called the Dunning neighborhood, part of the 38th Ward, and has a rich history dating back to the 1860s. But since the early 1980s and going forward, this area experienced significant change with institutional, commercial, and residential development: Wright Community College to the east, condominiums to the southeast, larger homes by Ridgemoor Country Club to the north, to the west Eli’s Cheesecake, Read Mental Health Center, as well as, other businesses, and with the very recent Taft Freshman Academy school to the southwest.

Up until 2020, this 4 acre property, with two equally shaped building structures that mirror one another and separated by a drive thru lane, was run and managed by the Church. The Latvian School of Chicago “Krišjāņa Barona Latviešu Skola Čikāgā”, founded in 1950 by Latvian immigrants, have been at this site soon after originally leased. Later the Latvian Welfare Association of Illinois (“Daugavas Vanagi”) and other Latvian organizations began to “nest” at this location. Then in 2020, LIGZDA was formed by these organizations. Today LIGZDA also includes the Chicago Latvian Association “Čikāgas Latviešu Biedrība” and Chicago Latvian Preschool “Stariņš”. We collectively call this our home.

All the Latvian groups performing at the Oktoberfolk Fest: “Čikāgas Uguntiņa un Mazā Uguntiņa”, “Čikāgas vīru kora ansamblis”, “Tautas Deju Kopa Mantinieki” and “Dzelmieši” practice here. In addition, a Bulgarian language school uses our facilities, as do Ukrainian groups for summer camp and dance activities. The library of the Latvian Evangelical Lutheran Church in America is also located here, and we are excited to complete an expanded combined library

from several Chicago Latvian organizations, which also features various Latvian artwork. LIGZDA is a familial place, where our member organizations gather, and we welcome others, both Latvian and from the broader community.

Our next internal project, currently in process, is depicted on the following page. We plan to transform our Ops Center, so to more effectively and efficiently manage the property and to provide increased service levels to our users and guests. All profits from the Oktoberfolk Fest will go toward this project and to the operations and upkeep of our LIGZDA property. We view LIGZDA as critical in keeping our local Chicago Latvian Community active and thriving, and welcome all friends to join us in meeting this objective.

Our Ligzda, Our Responsibility!

WELCOME to our new LIGZDA Operations Center Director!

A heartfelt **WELCOME** to **Inga Klints**, who recently accepted this very important role with LIGZDA. Inga has already made a huge difference in assisting with our current library project, and so much more. Please introduce yourselves to Inga, as she will be an integral part and assisting with safety and logistics aspects during the Oktoberfolk Fest.



Our Next Project – Ops Center



LIGZDA
CHICAGO LATVIAN
COMMUNITY CENTER

INVESTING TODAY, BUILDING OUR FUTURE.

A thoughtful renovation of the space to create the Ligzda Ops Center—a dedicated place for the work required to operate and support our community.

A DEDICATED HOME FOR LIGZDA'S WORK

This project creates a professional, functional setting for day-to-day administration, property oversight, community service and the work of our new Operations Director.

WHY THIS IS NECESSARY

01

SAFETY & SECURITY

A consistent onsite presence helps protect the building, address issues quickly and keep safety at the forefront.

02

PROPERTY MAINTENANCE

Repairs and upkeep are a constant reality. The Ops Center supports timely follow-up and accountability.

03

SERVICING & SALES

A professional setting provides a reliable place to support our users, event guests and rental activity.

04

FUTURE DIRECTION

The Ops Center gives our new Director the setting and tools needed to lead Ligzda forward.

THE PROJECT

01

OPS CENTER IMPROVEMENTS

Create a clean, professional and functional home for Ligzda operations.

02

KITCHEN & BATH

Update cabinetry, fixtures, appliances and finishes.

03

PAINT & FINISHES

Refresh the space throughout, including ceilings.



ESTIMATED PROJECT COST

\$28,000-\$31,000

Estimated project range.

TRANSFORMATION TO THE LIGZDA OPS CENTER

Before-and-after views illustrate the renewed, professional setting this project will create.

KITCHEN

Renewed to support the daily work and hospitality of the Ligzda Ops Center.

BEFORE



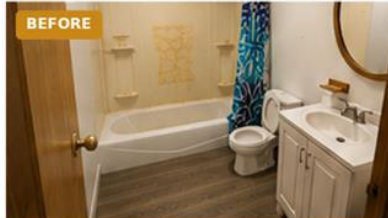
CONCEPT RENDERING



BATHROOM

Clean, updated finishes complete a functional Ops Center workspace.

BEFORE



CONCEPT RENDERING



TOGETHER, WE STRENGTHEN LIGZDA.

Thank you for investing in our future.

MŪSU LIGZDA, MŪSU ATBILDĪBA

Our Ligzda. Our responsibility.

Special Thanks!

For helping financially support Oktoberfolk Fest to:

“Čikāgas Latviešu Biedrība” (ČLB), The Chicago Latvian Association, is a cultural organization that supports the Latvian community in the Chicago area by hosting concerts, art exhibits, theater performances, and traditional markets. ČLB is foundational as part of our Latvian community!



Cook M&A, a Chicago-based buy-side M&A advisory firm established in 1996 that specializes in connecting private equity firms, family offices, and corporations with industry-leading executives and strategic acquisition targets. Cook M&A graciously supports many Latvian initiatives.



Modulove, a local furniture business built by two brothers Andis and Edgars Cers, specializing in USA – made upholstery and recently expended to bedroom, dining, and decor. They built Modulove to be different. No long delivery times, offer flexibility, and provide a real customer care. The focus is on modular furniture that adapts to your space.



Modulove.com

For your guidance in helping form LIGZDA ... and along the way:

Al Domanskis – from Boodell & Domanskis, LLC ... estate planning, real estate and business attorneys, located at: 1 N Franklin St., 1200, Chicago, IL 60606, Tel: (312) 938-4070

Kevin Burke – from Smith, Hemmesch, Burke & Kaczynski (SHBK) ... who specializes/practices in the area of real estate taxation, located at: 10 S. LaSalle St., Suite 2660, Chicago, IL 60603, Tel: (312)-939-0100

Tim Kacerovskis – from State Farm ... an Insurance Agent offering various products including: Auto, Homeowners, Business, Life, Health, etc., located at: 14340 LaGrange Road, Orland Park, IL 60462 , Tel: (708) 349-6919

About Latvia

Map:



Flag:



Coat of Arms:



Language: Latvian, Russian, English

Currency: Euro (€).

Religion: Lutheran, Catholic, Orthodox

Latvia, officially the Republic of Latvia (*Latvijas Republika*), is a country in the Baltic region of northern Europe. It is a country in Northern Europe along the Baltic Sea and is one of the three Baltic states, bordered by Estonia, Lithuania, Russia, and Belarus.

Other Quick Facts

- **Capital:** Riga, famous for its Art Nouveau architecture and medieval Old Town.
- **Population:** Approximately 1.8 million.
- **Government:** Parliamentary republic, and member of the European Union and NATO.

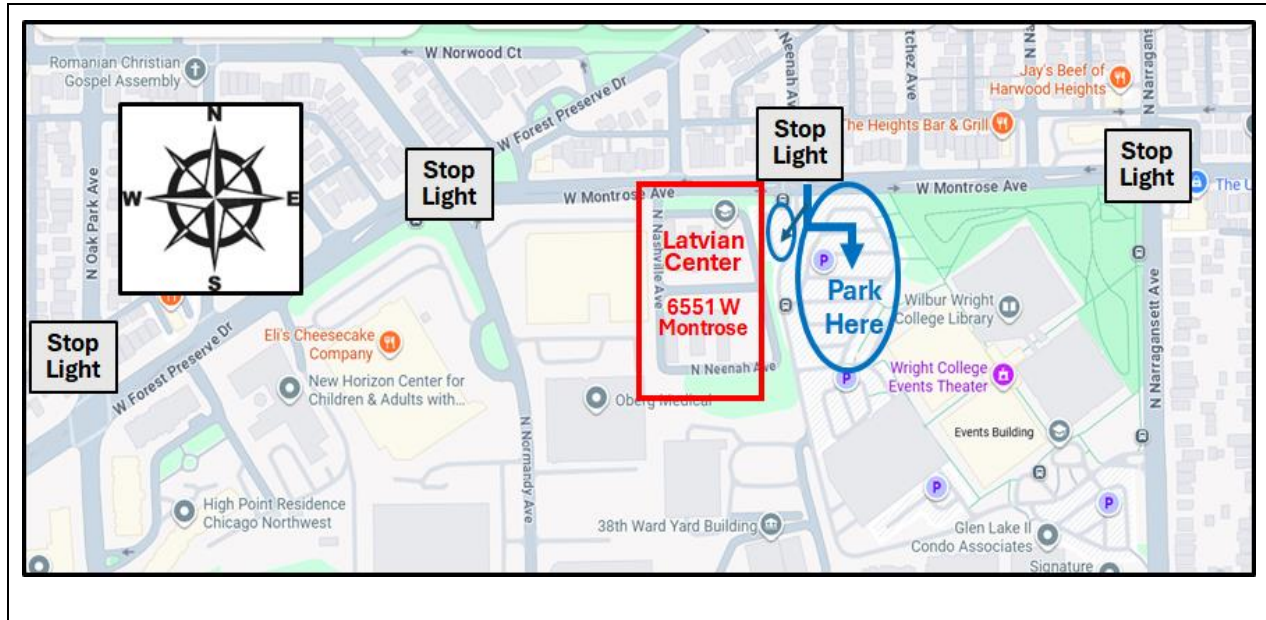
Geography and Environment

- **Land:** Covers over 64,000 square kilometers. Forests cover nearly half of the country, alongside thousands of small lakes and bogs.
- **Climate:** Temperate climate with four distinct seasons, featuring warm summers and snowy winters.

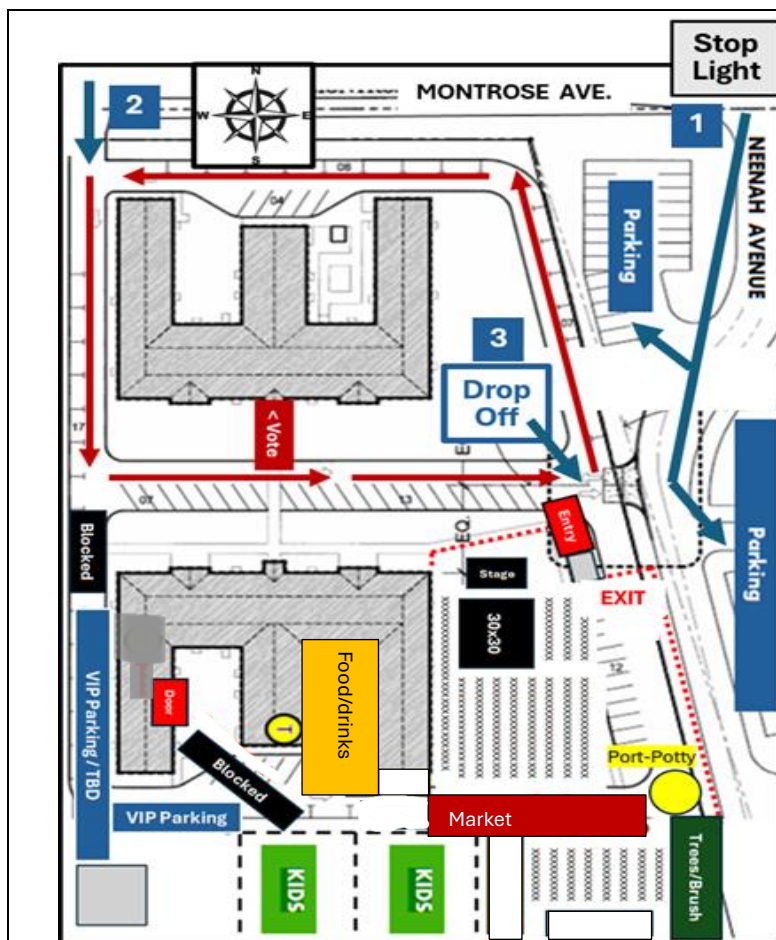
Culture

- Traditional Latvian folklore, especially the dance of the folk songs, dates back well over a thousand years. More than 1.2 million texts and 30,000 melodies of folk songs have been identified.
- The Latvian Song and Dance Festival is an important event in Latvian culture and social life. It has been held since 1873, normally every five years in Latvia, but also in off years in the diaspora throughout Europe, USA, Canada, and Australia.

Maps / Parking



Latvian Center



Instructions:

1 - Enter at the Montrose and Neenah Stop Light – turn on to Neenah going south and park at areas indicated within Wright College. We request ALL participants and guests to park in these parking areas, as possible. With the exception, if there is a special need to drop off individuals or equipment closer, or with other special requirements go to entry 2.

2 – Enter at 6551 W. Montrose the Latvian Center entrance, going south. Proceed to the 3 - “Drop Off” area, and when completed proceed back to Montrose and to Wright College at entry 1 to park.

Answers to Some Questions

What will be the food and drink offerings?

Food: grilling bratwursts, chicken bratwursts and hot dogs

Sides: sauerkraut, potato salad, pretzels, pickles

Beverages: water, soda, beer

We are hoping to both expand and add to these selections and potentially offer some sweets ... to be determined.

Will there be a place for participants to leave gear, can we get there early?

Yes, you can arrive any time after 12:00, when the gates open. We plan to use the large hall room in the south building as a combined and open area for all participants. Volunteers will be monitoring the area, and will also assist with managing the scheduled performances.

What happens if there is rain?

Our plan is to bring everything indoors to the south building. It will be cozy.

Can we bring lawn chairs and blankets?

Yes, please, ... this is encouraged.

Can we bring our pets?

Regretfully no, ... sorry for this inconvenience.

Is smoking allowed?

Smoking is not allowed inside our buildings or close by the entrances.

Please be respectful of your surroundings and others, if smoking outside.

If I have other questions before or during the event, who can I ask?

Page 4 of this Information Bulletin lists the names of key contacts, our organizers – do not hesitate to call or text. During the event designated volunteers will be wearing black shirts/blouses and with yellow lanyards – do not hesitate to ask any of these individuals for assistance.

Thank You / “Paldies”

Dear “Oktoberfolk Fest” participants and guests:

We are VERY thankful that you attended our event. We look forward to seeing you again. Have a safe journey home!

LIGZDA operations team and Board

Mīļie” Oktoberfolk Fest” dalībnieki un viesi:

Esam LOTI pateicīgi ka apmeklējāt mūsu pasākumu! Satiksimies atkal driz. Lai drošs ceļš mājup!

LIGZDA operatīvā grupa un padomes vadība

