

Friends refuse to disclose why they’re divorcing after 20 years

Q: We have two friends we’ve known for over a decade. They recently separated and are getting a divorce. He moved out two months before the oldest child graduated from high school with what we perceive as no warning. Neither of them will tell anyone why they’re getting divorced. When we’ve asked them individually, or other people in the friend group have, they just say they don’t want to talk about it. It’s really awkward hanging out since it’s a giant elephant in the room. To be married for 20-plus years and then just stop? We wonder if we ever really knew



Carolyn Hax

these people to start with. What do you think would be the best thing to do? — **You’re Really Not Telling Me?** **A:** Get over yourselves. Or, cultivate some imagination? Or boundaries. Any one of these can get you where you need to go, which is to the aha point where you recognize you actually don’t need to know — because this is not

your business, and what made you friends is (so far) unaffected. Therefore, it’s possible to be normal in a room with two people who have chosen not to remain married for valid-to-them reasons they’re absolutely entitled to keep private. When you understand your discomfort is a choice, then you can make a different one. Seriously. What if the reason is embarrassing? Or complicated? What if a 20-plus-year-old lie just got exposed? What if their marriage didn’t “just” stop, except to your eyes? What if they want a molecule of oxygen so they can process? OK then.

We’re done here, right? Please? Yes, Virginia, some 20-year marriages end. I am exasperated, obviously. Entitlement has that effect on me, almost as much as the pearl-clutching “we.” But I am not saying this is not hard — of course it is. When you feel close to friends, you do enjoy a warm sense of VIP access, and no doubt you all feel the chill of a slammed door now. Plus your comfy-place friend group is in flux. This is going to be a difficult adjustment for all of you. Just nowhere near as tough as it is for them. So stop acting like you’re the injured party here. My

goodness. VIP passes never work behind the velvet ropes of friends’ partnerships, even if the couple themselves let you back there sometimes for a peek. Know where you belong, know you’ll never have the full story, and support the people in actual crisis. Start by taking “they don’t want to talk about it” for an answer that’s final and fine by you. • *Email Carolyn at tellme@washpost.com, or chat with her online at 11 a.m. Central time each Friday at washingtonpost.com.*

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Improv: Troupe’s radio play will have a different sound

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and Sam Wainwright; and Steve Plumhoff (Gurnee), Pop Bailey and Nick the Bartender.

The youth roles — Zuzu, Janey and Petey — are played by children from the Improv Playhouse Training Program.

Egon Schein, who plays both Clarence and Potter, said, “In one moment, I’m playing a ruthless tycoon, and 10 minutes later I’m an angel trying to earn his wings. It’s every actor’s dream to be wicked and holy in the same evening.”

Unlike most stage productions that use Foley props, this version “wraps the audience in sound,” as Stuart puts it.

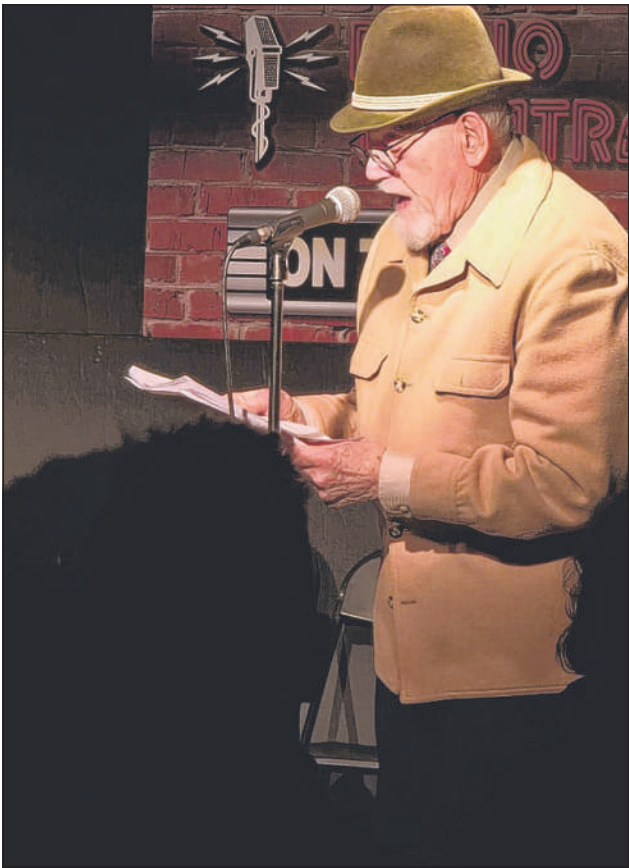
Carefully crafted audio — from steps through the snowfall to distant church bells to George’s final epiphany — amplifies the emotional arc, without diverting attention to performers manually creating effects.

The result is a seamless, radio-driven, theatrical experience that feels both vintage and surprisingly cinematic.

Audience members are encouraged to arrive early to explore the Bedford Falls Winter Wonderland, a lobby display of 1940s-era memorabilia, original radio posters, vintage photographs, film artifacts, and warm holiday décor.

This production marks not just a new holiday season, but a milestone: 25 years of Improv Playhouse.

Thousands of students trained. Dozens



COURTESY OF IMPROV PLAYHOUSE

Egon Schein of Libertyville stars as Clarence and Mr. Potter in Improv Playhouse’s production of “Frank Capra’s It’s a Wonderful Life: A Live Radio Play.”

of original productions. Hundreds of graduates now performing professionally. Countless stories told. And now, a new home in downtown Libertyville, a space for community and creativity. And a place where angels can get their wings.

As Stuart puts it: “In the end, it’s not a story about Christmas. It’s a story about belonging, about knowing your life mattered. That’s what a theater should do for a community: remind it of who it is,

and who it could be.”

Performances will be at 7:30 p.m. Fridays, Dec. 12 and 19; 7 p.m. Saturdays, Dec. 13 and 20; and 2:30 p.m. Sundays, Dec. 14 and 21, at Improv Playhouse Theatre, 130 N. Milwaukee Ave. in Libertyville.

The runtime is 75 minutes. Recommended for ages 7 or older.

Tickets are \$25, \$20 for ages 65 and older, \$15 for students and youth. For tickets or group information, call (847) 968-4529 or visit improvplayhouse.com.

Ravinia District to host Cookie & Cocoa Crawl

Submitted by Ripple Public Relations

The Ravinia District of Highland Park will host its annual Cookie & Cocoa Crawl from 11:30 a.m. to 1 p.m. Saturday, Dec. 6.

New this year, children accompanied by an adult will take part in an interactive Cookie Craft (and Cocoa) Scavenger Hunt of participating businesses throughout the district.

Each child will start at 594 Roger Williams Ave., the southeast corner of Roger Williams and Pleasant avenues, where children, accompanied by an adult, will pick up a collection bag courtesy of Gilbert Orthodontics along with a scavenger hunt form.

Children can visit with Santa at 595 Roger Williams Ave., enjoy a DJ spinning holiday tunes in front of Viaggio, grab a cup of hot cocoa outside of Abigail’s, and visit other participating businesses along the path.

Kids will then choose to follow one of three scavenger hunt “paths” based on the cookie design they would like to enjoy.

At participating businesses along the path, kids will pick up one cookie form in the shape of a snowman, gingerbread man, or mitten, accompanied by a cup of frosting, a bag of candy pieces (based

on the one path they choose), as well as a make-your-own Olaf craft project.

All children will end at the final stop, where they can decorate their cookies and put together their Olaf.

Stops on the Cookie & Cocoa Crawl include cookie pickup locations: Astra Coffee Roasters, Steep Ravine Brewing Company, and Yana’s Barbershop & Speakeasy, as well as Abigail’s, BWB Shakes, Griswold Home Care, Happi Sushi, IQ Bar, Mil Colibris Bakery & Café, Ravinia Barber Shop, Ravinia Books, Antiques, Etc., Spool Clothing, Vintage Rescue, and Zolboo Skincare.

Special thanks to the Ravinia District Special Service Area 17 property owners for sponsoring, all participating businesses, and the Cookie & Cocoa Crawl sponsors, including: Arbor Terrace, Carolyn Cerf @ Properties, Conciurgent Care, Foss Swim School, Gilbert Orthodontics, Matchmaker Bookshop, and Wayfarer Theaters.

For more information on the Ravinia District of Highland Park and event updates, like and follow RaviniaDistrict. HighlandPark on Facebook and @RaviniaDistrict on Instagram, or visit enjoyhighlandpark.com/cookiecocoacrawl.

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NOTICE OF PROPOSED PROPERTY TAX INCREASE FOR DIAMOND LAKE SCHOOL DISTRICT 76

- I. A public hearing to approve a proposed property tax levy increase for Diamond Lake School District for 2025 will be held on Tuesday, December 16, 2025, at 7:00 p.m. at Diamond Lake Elementary School, 25807 Diamond Lake Road, Mundelein, IL 60060.

Any person desiring to appear at the public hearing and present testimony to the taxing district may contact Dr. Erin Knoll, Supt. of Schools, 26156 N. Acorn Lane, Mundelein, IL 60060; phone 847-566-9221.

- II. The corporate and special purpose property taxes extended for 2024 were \$15,343,809. The proposed corporate and special purpose property taxes to be levied for 2025 are \$16,761,500. This represents a 9.24 percent increase over the previous year.
- III. The property taxes extended for debt service and public building commission leases for 2024 were \$881,485. The estimated property taxes to be levied for debt service and public building commission leases for 2025 are \$882,241. This represents a 0.08 percent increase from the previous year.
- IV. The total property taxes extended for 2024 were \$16,225,294. The estimated total property taxes to be levied for 2025 are \$17,643,741. This represents a 8.74 percent increase over the previous year.

Dated: December 5, 2025

Elisa Bailis
Secretary,
Diamond Lake SchoolsBoard of Education
Lake County, Illinois

PUBLIC NOTICE

Notice of Proposed Property Tax Increase for Kildeer Countryside Community Consolidated School District 96.

- I. A public hearing to approve a proposed property tax levy increase for Kildeer Countryside Community Consolidated School District 96 for 2025 will be held on December 16, 2025, 7:00 P.M., in the EDC Room of Ivy Hall School, 1072 Ivy Hall Lane, Buffalo Grove, Illinois.

Any person desiring to appear at the public hearing and present testimony to the taxing district may contact Mr. Jonathan G. Hitcho, Associate Superintendent of Business and Operations/CSBO, 1050 Ivy Hall Lane, Buffalo Grove, Illinois 60089, 847-459-4260.

- II. The corporate and special purpose property taxes extended or abated for 2024 were \$61,490,359.49 plus the amount abated by the taxing district prior to extension. The proposed corporate and special purpose property taxes to be levied for 2025 are \$68,910,346.16. This represents an 12.58% increase over the previous year.
- III. The property taxes extended for debt service and public building commission leases for 2024 was \$0. The estimated property taxes to be levied for debt service and public building commission leases for 2025 are \$0. This represents an 0% increase from the previous year.

- IV. The total property taxes extended or abated for 2024 were \$61,490,359.49. The estimated total property taxes to be levied for 2025 are \$68,910,346.16. This represents an 12.58% increase over the previous year