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- NEWS
- BUSINESS
- GOVERNMENT
- SCHOOLS
- CRIME
- SPORTS
- HIGH SCHOOL
- HIGH SCHOOL
- ENTERTAINMENT
- THINGS TO DO
- ARTS & CULTURE
- CALENDAR
- GOOD THINGS
- WEEKEND
- OBITUARIES
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- GUEST EDITORS
- WEDDINGS
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- DIRECTORY
- CALENDAR

THINGS TO DO

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## Library, Turning Point present real recovery stories



### Mike Isaacs

misaacs@pioneerlocal.com |  
@SKReview\_Mike  
April 8 1:51 p.m.

SKOKIE — He tells the painful story of when he was little and was awakened because his dad wanted money to gamble. His mom said no and he got angry.

“They got into it, or rather my dad got into it with my mom,” he recalls. “I woke up to her screaming, and my dad had backed her up — backing her into a closet door and into a corner.”

It’s an ugly, awful story difficult to erase from the mind. It is a real story even though an actor convincingly delivers it — making the memory of it come to life, the very real terror of it palpable by just looking at his eyes.

“He’s hitting her in the face again and again and again,” he says. “And he has a gun in his hand and hits her in the face with it. And then he decides to play Russian roulette with it. So he spins the barrel and he pulls the trigger. And he spins the barrel and he pulls the trigger again. And again.”

Turning Point Behavioral Health Care Center and the Skokie Public Library April 22 will present “Stories of Recovery & Resilience” where professional actors use real words written by people struggling with a variety of mental health issues.

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The stories will be performed by Erasing the Distance, a Chicago theater company that uses the power of performance to disarm stigma, spark dialogue, educate and promote healing surrounding issues of mental illness.

The presentation comes right before Mental Health Awareness Month in May.

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Erasing the Distance was founded in 2005

"We collect true stories from people whose lives have been impacted by mental health issues, and we sculpt their actual words into monologues and scenes," Erasing the Distance creators say. "Our ensemble of professional actors then brings these stories to life on stage in a theatrical performance before a live audience."

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Every performance is followed by a moderated, interactive discussion with the audience exploring the stories that unfolded. When appropriate, the discussion also leads to identifying mental illness signs, symptoms, recovery options and community resources.

**Letter: Blaser comment on Polish people was insensitive**

Oct. 3 4:38 a.m.



Erasing the Distance even holds "story sharing days" to collect stories from people who want to share their experiences with mental health issues. "We audio record the collections and then, with the storyteller's permission, transcribe and sculpt the stories into monologues, scenes and full productions, always using and honoring the real words of the tellers," creators say.

"Stories of Recovery and Resilience" is scheduled for 6:30 p.m. to 8:30 p.m. in the Petty Auditorium of the Skokie Public Library, 5215 Oakton St.

Topics to be explored during this session include surviving violence, experiencing depression, the emotional impact of being an immigrant or refugee, and more.

Following the performance will be a question and answer session with the company.

To register, call the library reference desk at (847) 673-7774.

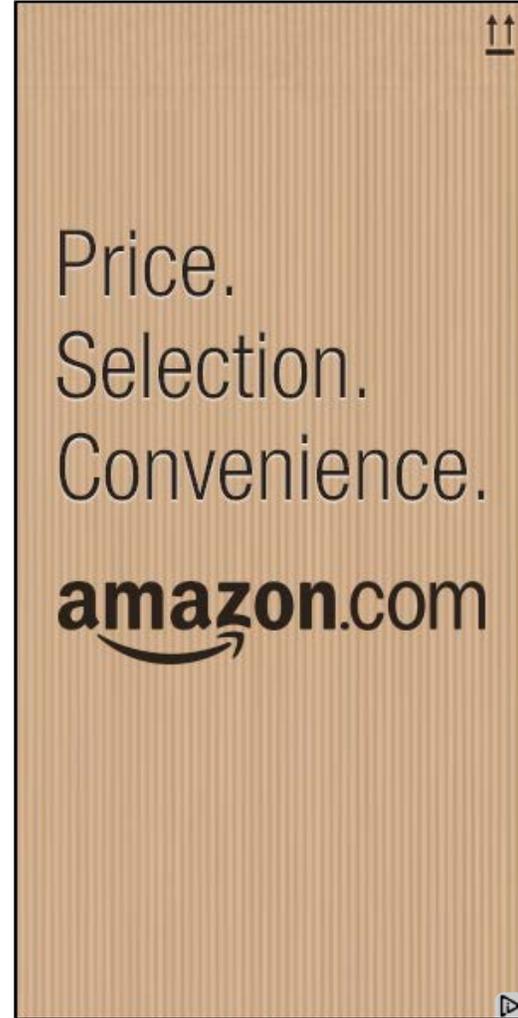
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