



Bringing Christmas to life

Terry Lynch's teenage children groan when they visit a historical site while traveling with their dad. A recent visit to the St. Louis arch resulted in yet another "Oh no, not again," from the two teens as their dad waxed eloquent on the history they were lucky enough to experience. Even worse, at times their history-obsessed dad walks around in Ben Franklin's tri-cornered hat or talks like Teddy Roosevelt.

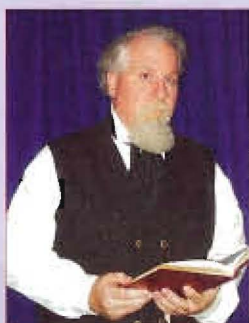
Lynch, an Orland Park dad who is a historical portrayer, spends his time appearing as such famous figures as George Washington, Teddy Roosevelt and Andrew Jackson. An improv actor who wanted a job better suited to family life, Lynch started performing for school groups nine years ago and has never looked back.

"As an actor I was working late at night," he says. "This lets me schedule around family and be there for important family things."

And in spite of the groans of protest, Lynch's whole family is part of his business: Histories for Kids Inc. His wife, Laura, is an educator who helps research the historical figures and creates study guides and lesson plans for the schools they visit. His son helps with videotaping and his daughter is the illustrator for their most recent book, *Nicholas Comes to America*, the story of St. Nick and how he became Santa Claus.

And he has realized that performing, especially for kids, isn't much different from his improv days. "If I don't get them at the beginning of the show, I've lost them," he says. "They're so honest, they're very blunt, so you've gotta be on your toes with stuff."

Liz DeCarlo



IF YOU GO

- Terry Lynch as author Charles Dickens
- Dec. 12 from 4-5 p.m.
- Naper Settlement, 523 S. Webster St., Naperville
- \$7, \$6 kids, \$6 in advance, \$5 in advance kids.
- (630) 420-6010 or www.napersettlement.museum

(312) 421-8020
UkrainianNationalMuseum.org

The museum's collection consists of more than 1,140 artifacts. Visitors can see dolls and mannequins dressed in traditional Ukrainian costumes, folk art, metalwork, carvings, Ukrainian Easter eggs and historical dioramas. Hours: 11 a.m.-4 p.m. Thursday-Sunday; by appointment Monday-Wednesday. Admission: \$5, free kids under 12 with parent.

HISTORICAL/REGIONAL

Abraham Lincoln Presidential Library & Museum

212 N. Sixth St., Springfield
(800) 610-2094
PresidentLincoln.org

Follow Abraham Lincoln through his boyhood years, the White House, the Civil War and his assassination. The museum immerses your family in Lincoln's world and time. Mrs. Lincoln's Attic is a great place for the kids where they can try on period clothing, build a log cabin and do old-fashioned chores. Hours: 9 a.m.-5 p.m. daily with last admission at 4 p.m. Admission: \$12, \$9 seniors and students, \$7 military, \$6 kids 5-15, free kids under 5.

Arlington Heights Historical Museum

110 W. Fremont St.
Arlington Heights
(847) 255-1225
ahmuseum.org

The five-building complex and their contents tell the story of Arlington Heights over the last 150 years. The Muller Victorian and 1908 Banta homes, carpentry and blacksmith shop, soda factory displays and dioramas in the coach house are popular. Tour the Martha Mills doll collection and three dollhouses filled with miniatures. Hours: Tours: 2 and 3 p.m. Saturday and Sunday or by appointment. Heritage Gallery: 1:30-4:30 p.m. Friday-Sunday. Admission: \$4, \$2 kids for tours. \$2 donation suggested for Heritage Gallery.

Cantigny Park

15151 Winfield Road, Wheaton
(630) 668-5161
cantigny.org

Cantigny Park has many events for families including art shows and military re-enactments. Visit the McCormick Museum, the former home of Robert R. McCormick, and the interactive First Division military museum. Kids can even play on the tanks parked outside. There's a res-

taurant, coffee shop, gift shop and picnic area with playground close by. Hours: Museum hours: 10 a.m.-4 p.m. Tuesday-Sunday. Grounds: November-December 9 a.m.-sunset daily. January closed. February 9 a.m.-sunset Friday-Sunday. March 9 a.m.-sunset daily. Admission: Free. Parking (per car): \$5, \$2 when museums are closed.

Chicago History Museum

1601 N. Clark St., Chicago
(312) 642-4600
chicagohistory.org

The museum offers a permanent exhibition "Sensing Chicago" where children can explore the city's history through their five senses. Families and kids can also explore the city's first 'L' Car and the first steam-powered locomotive to come through Chicago. Temporary exhibitions on a wide range of topics also are constantly changing. Hours: 9:30 a.m.-4:30 p.m. Monday-Saturday; noon-5 p.m. Sunday. Admission: \$14, \$12 seniors and students, free for mnsnm members and kids 12 and under.

Civil War Museum

5400 First Ave.
Kenosha, Wis.
(262) 653-4141
thecivilwarmuseum.org

This museum provides a presentation of the Civil War connections between the upper Midwest home front and the battle front. The exhibit gallery showcases significant Civil War artifacts through life-size, interactive exhibits, audio and video. Hours: Noon-5 p.m. Sunday; 9 a.m.-5 p.m. Tuesday-Saturday. Closed Monday and holidays. Admission: \$7, free kids 15 and younger.

Clarke House Museum

1827 S. Indiana Ave., Chicago
(312) 326-1480
clarkehousemuseum.org

Built in 1836, the Clarke House Museum is Chicago's oldest home. This Greek Revival style house shows what life was like for a middle-class family in Chicago before the Civil War. For information about tours, call the Glessner House Museum at (312) 326-1480. (Both Clarke and Glessner House museums may be toured for \$15, \$12 and \$8.) Tours begin at Glessner House Museum on 18th Street. Hours: Clarke House Tours: noon and 2 p.m. Wednesday-Sunday. Admission: \$10, \$9 students and seniors, \$6 kids 5-12. Free Wednesdays.

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