

WHAT'S NEW WITH WILLOW? Advisory group narrows expansion options, Page 7



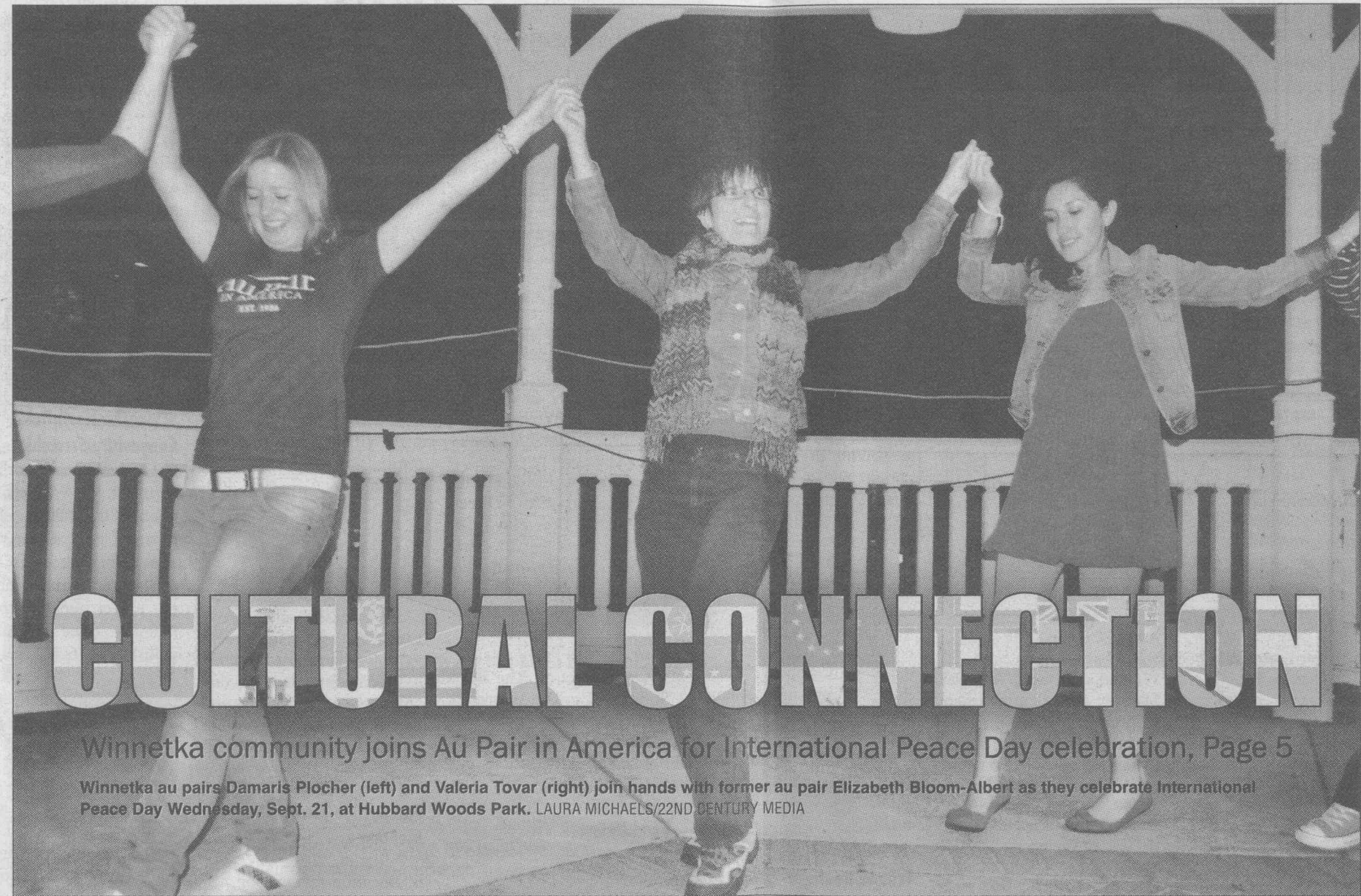
VOCAL HOMECOMING NT grad brings jazz style to The 'Mette, Page 21

TWICE IS NICE Trevs' field hockey tops Ramblers for second time this season, Page 39



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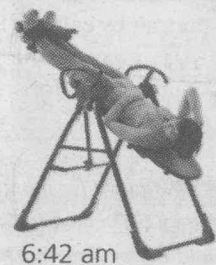
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## CULTURAL CONNECTION

Winnetka community joins Au Pair in America for International Peace Day celebration, Page 5

Winnetka au pairs Damaris Plocher (left) and Valeria Tovar (right) join hands with former au pair Elizabeth Bloom-Albert as they celebrate International Peace Day Wednesday, Sept. 21, at Hubbard Woods Park. LAURA MICHAELS/22ND CENTURY MEDIA



6:42 am



7:53 am



3:28 pm



10:13 pm

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 COVER STORY

# Winnetka celebrates International Peace Day, promotes cultural exchange

LAURA MICHAELS, Editor

Some people say math is the international language.

For Paul Collins, however, it's dance and he speaks it fluently.

Collins, a leader of Ethnic Dance Chicago, helped others become bilingual as part of an International Peace Day event at Winnetka's Hubbard Woods Park Wednesday, Sept. 21. Organized by Au Pair in America and the organization's Winnetka counselor Renee Bernal, the evening brought plenty of smiles as attendees learned dances from countries like Bulgaria and Slovakia.

"Dance is a common language that people can share and learn," Collins said as he put on his dancing shoes. "You hopefully find a way to see similarities and com-

monalities and together reach a successful outcome – in this case, completion of the dance."

Collins began dancing when he was just 8 years old and now visits area schools, churches and non-profit groups to share ethnic dances and promote cultural exchange.

"Dance is a way to learn a lot about other people, about other parts of the world," Collins said. "These dances are the kinds of dances that could be lost if they're not preserved."

Bernal, who's been with Au Pair in America for 10 years and also lives in Winnetka, said International Peace Day presented the perfect opportunity to bring the community together and let several au pairs share their culture.

"They're basically like

ambassadors for their country," Bernal said of local au pairs. "Our thought for world peace is, if you know your neighbor you're not going to want to harm them. You have that global perspective."

Before the gathering at Hubbard Woods Park, Winnetka children's store Leoleo offered another exchange opportunity, as au pairs gathered to share their cultures, treats from their countries and lead children in a flag-making activity.

Delys Flores, a 25-year-old Panamanian, has been an au pair with the Boling family in Winnetka for six months. She said not only does she enjoy caring for children but being an au pair is also helping her improve her English.

"This is a good experience for me," Flores said. "This

opens the door to find better jobs.

"I love being here – you have a whole family. You become part of the family."

Emily Boling echoed Flores and said having her as an au pair means the Bolings trust her like a member of the family. Boling's three daughters also benefit from learning about another culture.

"Delys speaks Spanish to the girls and Maddie is really learning," Boling said of her 4-year-old.

To learn more about Au Pair in America, visit [www.aupairinamerica.com](http://www.aupairinamerica.com).



Winnetka au pairs Valeria Tovar (left) and Elodie Bertaso raise their hands while dancing in Hubbard Woods Park Wednesday, Sept. 21, during an International Peace Day event. LAURA MICHAELS/22ND CENTURY MEDIA

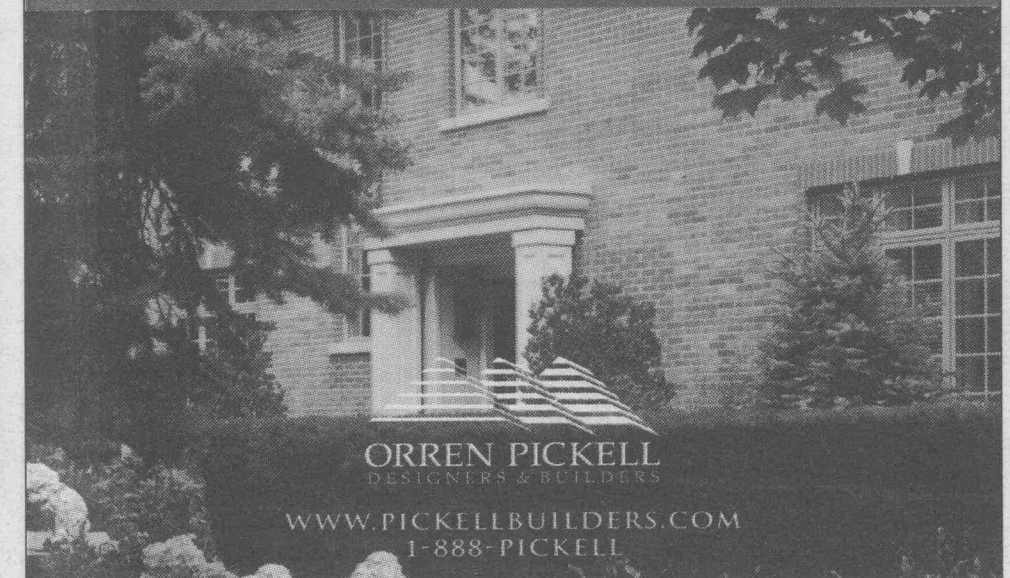


Delys Flores, an au pair from Mexico, cuddles with Lily Boling, one of the Winnetka children she helps care for. PHOTO SUBMITTED

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