

# Chicago

AUGUST  
2012

TOP COP  
McCARTHY  
ON CRIME

CTA BOSS  
CLAYPOOL  
ON THE EL

SOX STAR  
KONERKO  
ON COOPERSTOWN



**READERS'  
CHOICE  
AWARDS**





**BEST BABY GEAR**  
**GALT TOYS + GALT BABY**  
900 N. Michigan Ave., 312-440-9550; 1915 N. Clybourn Ave., 773-327-9980; also in Skokie

**[1]** We tried, we really did, to find a new best place to shop for the most trend-forward modern baby goods in Chicago. But Galt, the local family-owned toy specialty store, still wins. It's often the first to carry strollers and infant gear that soon become must-have items: the folds-by-itself Origami stroller, the Silver Cross pram, the Naked Tub from Boon, and, today's hot seller, the Mamaroo bouncy seat.



**BEST NEW MEN'S CLOTHING**  
**INDEPENDENCE**  
47 E. Oak St., 312-675-2105

**[4]** Opening amid many clothing store closings last year, Independence, a cozy but well-stocked men's apparel den, is a spark in the ash heap. George Vlagos, the local craftsman behind Oak Street Bootmakers, opened the shop in March and governs it with his take on the made-in-America mantra. Look for goods previously unavailable in Chicago: denim from Imogene + Willie, sunglasses from American Optical, and Brooklyn-made aprons from Stanley & Sons.



**BEST HOSTESS GIFTS**  
**HAZEL**  
1902 W. Montrose Ave., 773-769-2227

**[2]** The successful hostess gift depends on striking just the right note. In three connected storefronts, Hazel offers a dazzling array of solutions: glass platters painted to resemble Chinese checkers or backgammon boards (\$40), Angela Adams soy candles (\$16), a mod Joseph Joseph spatula (\$10), and a big selection of affordable jewelry. The nicest touch: Hazel also sells flowers by the stem. Toss three yellow calla lilies into a vase and the next invite is assured.

**BEST NEW HOME DESIGN SHOP**  
**MEGAN WINTERS MAISON**  
675 Forest Ave., Lake Forest, 847-295-1675

**[3]** Some people think traditional design means fussy and dull. Designer Megan Winters wants to change that perception. Her charming new Lake Forest shop and design studio, dominated by a bold black-and-white color scheme, is filled with home accessories, gifts, and furniture that Winters finds at flea markets and fairs here and in Europe. She then paints, gilds, and upholsters the classic pieces to make them fresh and modern.



**BEST REUSABLE SHOPPING BAG**  
\$8 at The Haymaker Shop (5507 N. Clark St., 773-681-0798)

**BEST NEW RETAIL CONCEPT**  
**HERITAGE BICYCLES**  
2959 N. Lincoln Ave., 773-245-3005

**[5]** Equal parts coffee shop, custom bike lab, and Americana shrine, this Lake View spot defies easy categorization. Michael and Melissa Salvatore craft luxury two-wheelers out in the open—plus sell vintage sporting goods, cycle-inspired stationery, fresh pastries, and Stumptown coffee. Whatever the concept is, we—and the creative types who colonize the café's communal table—agree that they've nailed it.

PHOTOGRAPHS: (WINTERS) JULIA STOTZ; (GLASSES) TYLLIE BARBOSA; (HERITAGE) MELISSA OSNEAL; (BAG) MEGAN LOYDEY; (ALL OTHERS) COURTESY OF VENDORS