

# KEY This Week in Chicago Celebrates 100th Anniversary

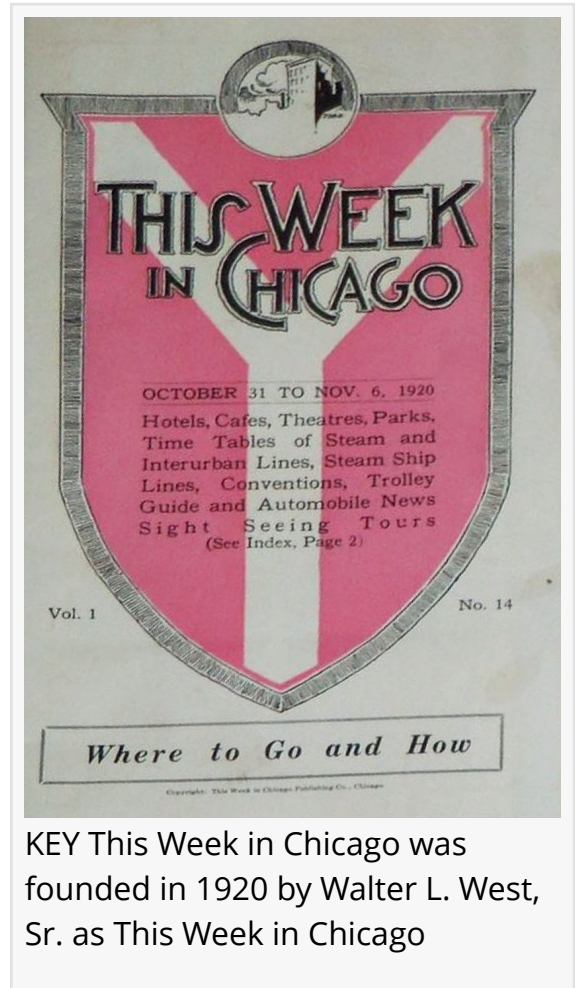
*KEY This Week in Chicago, one of Chicago's oldest and most iconic publications, a free weekly guide for hotel guests, celebrates its 100th anniversary Aug. 19.*

CHICAGO, IL, USA, August 13, 2020 /EINPresswire.com/ -- [KEY This Week in Chicago](#), one of Chicago's oldest and most iconic publications, distributed as a free weekly guide for hotel guests, celebrates its 100th anniversary August 19. Founded as This Week in Chicago, KEY is a Chicago institution in the hospitality industry that has introduced visitors to a century of things to do, see and experience while visiting Chicago. It has been an important resource for visitors as well as hotel concierges who need up to date information on what is happening in the city.

To get an idea of what a century of information looks like, when it was launched in 1920 by Walter L. West Sr., the magazine included timetables for steam ship and trolley lines in addition to information on hotels, cafes, theaters, automobile tours and sightseeing tours. Walter L. West Jr. took over the publication in 1967, and 51-year-old Walter L. West III has been at the helm since he took over in 1991. It is an independent family-owned business operating in Chicago for 100 consecutive years.

"My grandfather created the perfect magazine for a visitor," said West. "It was digest size, so it was easy to carry outside the hotel and, because it came out weekly it covered a time frame that fit the needs of most tourists."

West credits his father for later introducing and establishing a nationwide KEY brand. "He pushed for like-minded publishers in other cities to band together under the KEY brand. Today, you can find KEY editions in many cities across the U.S. Our company has always valued a strong work ethic and it has helped it continue to thrive and innovate."



KEY This Week in Chicago was founded in 1920 by Walter L. West, Sr. as This Week in Chicago

Surviving this long in print is not easy but being adaptable and resourceful has been crucial. "When you have been in business for one hundred years, not only do you see quite a few challenges, but you also become adept at overcoming adversity," West reflected. "We overcame the stock market crash of 1929, World War II, 9/11, the Great Recession and now, COVID-19."

Building strong relations with hotel professionals has been another important factor in the publication's success. West understands that the hospitality business is about service, and he strongly advocates for the value that concierges bring to hotel guests. "The difference between a good stay and a great stay can often come down to the concierge and front desk staff," he said. "These hard-working people are Chicago's front-line ambassadors to millions of people from all over the world. Not only can concierges get you a reservation at that trendy restaurant or a ticket to a sold-out show, but they can also create a custom itinerary for a guest on how to best enjoy the city."

KEY hasn't been immune to the pandemic's effects on the hospitality industry—the print edition is currently on hiatus—but that doesn't deter West. "We're doing what every proactive hospitality business is currently doing," said West, "We're digging in our heels, developing new strategies and taking on new initiatives that will enable us to serve Chicago hotels and visitors even better than before the pandemic. Right now, we are developing a custom digital city guide for each hotel in the city and suburbs. It will work in conjunction with our print publication."

West remains optimistic about Chicago's hospitality and tourism industries. "I'm still very bullish—the hospitality market WILL get through this at some point and I believe we will come back better than ever," he said. "Our hospitality,



Walter L. West III has been at the helm of the weekly publication since 1991





restaurant, shopping, and entertainment scene is very important to Chicago and I'm confident it will continue to be dynamic, always growing and evolving."

A century of influential events that attracted Chicago tourists

Looking back over the life of the publication, West reminisced about the many influential and notable breakthroughs that have become part of the KEY Magazine recommendations:

- Balaban and Katz Theatre (now called The Chicago Theatre) opens in 1921
- Union Station opens in 1925
- Buckingham Fountain opens in 1927
- Midway Airport opens in 1927
- Adler Planetarium and Shedd Aquarium open in 1930
- The Century of Progress Exposition and Museum of Science and Industry open in 1933
- The Sewell and Ric Riccardo invent Deep Dish pizza in 1943
- ATA created in 1945
- Chess Records founded in 1950
- McCormick Place opens in 1960
- O'Hare Airport opens in 1963
- Sears Tower opens in 1973
- "Ferris Bueller's Day Off" premieres in 1986
- Navy Pier reopens in 1995
- Cubs win the World Series in 2016

About KEY This Week in Chicago

KEY This Week in Chicago was founded by Walter L. West Sr. in 1920 and has been published weekly for one hundred years. Part of a nationwide visitor guide network, KEY This Week in Chicago has been serving hotel guests in the city of Chicago and surrounding suburbs since 1920. Each weekly issue provides comprehensive and easy-to-find information about Chicago's top restaurants, shops, nightclubs, sightseeing, performance arts, special events, as well as detailed pullout maps.

In addition to publishing the magazine, KEY also hosts several major events for concierges and event planners to introduce them to the many restaurants, theaters, and event activities available in Chicagoland. Among them is



KEY This Week in Chicago has been a trusted guide for 100 years



KEY This Week in Chicago covers major events and many other things to do for visitors

the annual Hospitality Holiday Showcase held at the Civic Opera House that draws over 1400 tourism movers and shakers.

For more information about KEY this Week in Chicago, please contact Walter L. West III, Publisher at (312) 961-6106 or [wwest@keymagazinechicago.com](mailto:wwest@keymagazinechicago.com)

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