

Press Office
City of Chicago, Department of Aviation
Nuria I. Fernandez, Commissioner



News Release

December 18, 2006
Contact: Wendy Abrams
(773) 686-3700
wabrams@ohare.com

CHICAGO'S AIRPORTS WELCOME NEARLY 3 MILLION TRAVELERS FOR THE HOLIDAYS

Free gift-wrapping at O'Hare and Midway begins today

CHICAGO - The Chicago Airport System expects nearly 3 million travelers at O'Hare and Midway International Airports this holiday season beginning Thursday, December 21 through the end of the year. The busiest day is expected to be Friday, December 22, with nearly 240,000 passengers at O'Hare and 62,000 at Midway.

Both airports will be hosting live entertainment to spread cheer to holiday travelers in all terminals this Tuesday, December 19 through Friday, December 22 from 2:00 p.m. to 5:00 p.m., including performances by Christmas carolers, barbershop quartets and local blues and jazz bands.

"In general, passengers are in a festive mood when they arrive at the airport because many are making their way home to family and friends," said Aviation Commissioner Nuria I. Fernandez. "When they see the live performers, they light up and many seem to forget about the challenges that sometimes go along with holiday air travel."

The Transportation Security Administration (TSA) asks that travelers not bring wrapped gifts to the airport, since they may be opened and inspected as part of the security screening process. To assist passengers with this request, the Chicago Airport System is pleased to provide free gift-wrapping services Monday, December 18 through Friday, December 22, from 2:00 p.m. to 5:00 p.m. at O'Hare and noon to 4:00 p.m. at Midway.

A diverse selection of holiday-themed wrapping paper and gift bag designs will be offered, including a design created by Gallery 37 students as part of Chicago's internationally recognized job-training program for young people interested in the arts.

Volunteer Airport Ambassadors will wrap gifts at a location near Harry Caray's restaurant at Midway International Airport. At O'Hare, gift-wrapping will take place in Terminal 1, B Concourse, at the dinosaur exhibit; in Terminal 2, near the Travelers and Immigrants Aid office; and in Terminal 3, across from Mrs. Field's Cookies, near Gate H1.

~ ~ ~ ~

The Chicago Airport System is self-supporting, using no local or state tax dollars for operations or capital improvements at O'Hare and Midway International airports. Together, Chicago's airports generate more than \$45 billion in annual economic activity and create 540,000 jobs for the region. Please visit www.flychicago.com to learn more about the Chicago Airport System.

###