



The Manor News

Ravenswood Manor Community Newsletter

Spring 2008

mark your calendar

Thursday, April 24
RMIA Semi-Annual Meeting

Saturday, May 17
Garden Club Annual Plant Sale

Sunday, May 18
RMIA Garage Sale

Thursday, July 3
Fourth of July Parade



Manor Garden Club Moves New Location for Plant Sale and Meetings

AFTER MEETING AT HORNER PARK for many years, the Manor Garden Club has moved its meetings to Luther Memorial Church, 2500 W. Wilson Ave. (at Campbell). "We will still meet at 7:30pm on the third Monday of the month," said Nancy Siprut, the current president of the club. "We just felt it was time for a change and Luther Memorial could accommodate us."

Also, with the pending re-landscaping project ready to start at Buffalo Park, the Saturday, May 17th Plant Sale has also moved to Luther Memorial. The sale hours are 10am to noon in front of the church. Ample parking will be available on the streets around Waters School.

"We will have a wonderful selection of plants fresh from the nursery and are very excited to offer several new additions as well as many tried and true favorites," said Nancy. "There will be lots for gardeners of any skill level to choose from, concentrating on colorful container material, but also ferns and grasses, some spring perennials, tomatoes, herbs and hanging baskets. We are trying to keep prices reasonable and quality high." Club members will be ready to answer questions and help you with your order at the sale.

The sale also includes a bake sale, which is a fundraiser for the Ravenswood Gardens Homeowners' Association. They will offer homemade treats and beverages at the plant sale.

Attention: High School Students

Do you need service hours? Are you able to commit to working the plant sale on Saturday, May 17? You must be there at 8:00am and stay until noon and be able to unload plants, set up tables, etc. You must register in advance by May 5. Call Anne at (773) 334-7874.

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RMIA News Brief

THE RMIA WILL HOLD ITS semi-annual meeting at 7:30pm, Thursday, April 24 at the Horner Park Fieldhouse. Twice a year, the RMIA invites everyone from the community to attend a meeting to discuss the initiatives of the RMIA and the concerns of the community.

The focus of the meeting will be neighborhood beautification, including the planned capital improvements to the business district, and the RMIAs goals for fundraising for those projects around the Manor.

Also there will be an update on the status of listing the Ravenswood Manor neighborhood as a Historic District on the National Register of Historic Places.

There will also be an opportunity for residents to raise any other concerns they have directly with the RMIA board.

Be sure to come out to the semi-annual meeting to find out about the RMIA's exciting initiatives. Don't miss the meeting on April 24.

WOULD YOU LIKE TO SEE A RETURN of the Manor Garden Walk? Do you want to see Manorbash continue? These traditions cannot continue without you.

The RMIA has many volunteer opportunities. This summer, RMIA is specifically seeking volunteers for the Garden Walk and Manorbash. There is a need for everything from people to help organize these events to people to help for just an hour or two on the day of the event. Please contact the RMIA at rmiaboard@ravenswoodmanor.com to find out how you can be a part of these events.

ARE YOU INTERESTED IN TURNING YOUR neighbors into customers? Then consider advertising in the RMIA Newsletter.

The newsletter is seen by hundreds of people who love the Manor as much as you do. Advertising in the newsletter is extremely economical and can be as easy as handing over your business card. Or, ads that are larger and have more impact can also be purchased. Ads are purchased for a year of newsletters (that's four issues a year), so just pay once and you are done.

The deadline is fast approaching. All ads for the next year must be in by June 1.

For information and rates, please contact Jen at newsletter@ravenswoodmanor.com or 588-8213.

BECAUSE OF THE GROWING USE of the Internet and e-mail for communicating with our neighbors, the RMIA has decided to do away with the hotline.

For Manor residents who have questions, concerns or would like to volunteer for neighborhood events, please e-mail the board at RMIABoard@ravenswoodmanor.com. Residents can also visit the RMIA website, www.ravenswoodmanor.com, for updates on community events and happenings.

IF YOU ARE INTERESTED IN MEETING new friends and reading some great books, then consider joining the Manor Book Club.

The book club is open to all Manor residents and meets the second Tuesday of the month from 7:45 to 8:45pm, usually at Horner Park.

Here's what the club will be reading for the next few months:

Tuesday, May 13: "Tallgrass" by Sandra Dallas

Tuesday, June 10: "March" by Geraldine Brooks

Tuesday, July 8: "Zookeepers Wife" by Diane Ackerman

If you would like more information about the club or to be added to the club's e-mail list, please contact Jen at manorbookclub@ravenswoodmanor.com or call 588-8213.

The Manor News is published by Ravenswood Manor Improvement Association (RMIA) as a service to our members. It contains news, information and other items of interest to those living and working in Ravenswood Manor. Please make submissions or comments to Editor at PO Box 25486, Chicago, IL 60625. www.ravenswoodmanor.com

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Officers

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Orysia Pokorni *Secretary*



Useful Local Numbers



Police Emergency
911

City Services
311

Police Non Emergency
311

Chicago Police 17th
District Station
312-742-4410

Chicago Alternative
Policing Strategy (CAPS)
312-744-3774

Alderman Richard Mell
773-418-8040

Recycling Resource Center
773-821-1351

Graffiti Removal
312-744-5000 or 311

Neighborhood Garage Sale

ON SUNDAY, MAY 18 FROM 10AM TO 4PM, the RMIA will host the neighborhood's annual garage sale – one of the oldest and largest in the City of Chicago.

We're excited to carry on this great tradition! The RMIA will promote the sale widely through advertising in websites and major newspapers, as well as through the distribution of the Map of Participating Homes.

To participate in this event you will need to complete and submit the City's Garage Sale Permit Application Form. You can link to the form, or print it from the City of Chicago website at egov.cityofchicago.org/webportal/COCWebPortal/COC_EDITORIAL/GaragesaleFlyer.4.16.07.pdf

Please complete and either drop off or fax this permit to Alderman Mell's office at (773) 478-8006 (fax) or 3649 N. Kedzie. The deadline for submitting applications for permits is May 12th.

You may also call the Alderman's office (773) 478-8040 for more information.

For inclusion on the Map of Participating Homes, please also complete the following participation form, and submit it by May 12th, along with your financial contribution to offset the RMIA's advertising costs, to: Eileen Rochford, 4500 N. Francisco or call at (312) 953-3305.



2008 RAVENSWOOD MANOR GARAGE SALE REGISTRATION (May 12th deadline)

NAME _____

ADDRESS _____

UNIT # _____

PHONE NUMBER _____

EMAIL _____

I wish to make a contribution of (please circle amount) \$15 \$25 \$30
to RMIA for garage sale expenses.

Please make checks payable to Ravenswood Manor
Improvement Association and mail your registration to:
RMIA Garage Sale, P.O. Box 25486, Chicago, IL 60625



New Gardens Could Grow at Manor

SPRING IS THE TIME TO THINK of nature and all things growing. To enhance the beauty of our neighborhood's "front yard," the RMIA is launching an initiative to create nine new parkway gardens at the intersection of Manor and Francisco. Landscape Designer, Marisa Gora of Kemora Landscape Designs, graciously donated her time and expertise to the RMIA to assist with the creation of the garden master plan.

Now is the time for the Manor to support beautification of the business district parkways. This summer, the RMIA is launching a fundraising drive to pay for the capital improvements in the heart of our neighborhood. Everyone has an interest in improving the "main street" of our neighborhood.

The plan suggests installing landscape timbers around the perimeters of each of the nine gardens. The timbers would not project more than six inches above the ground in most locations so they would not be obstacles to swinging car doors. They would allow the interior of the planting beds to be leveled with new, high quality soil without covering the existing tree trunks with additional soil. In addition to the timber borders, the walkways on Francisco would be edged with *Holland Stone* pavers to provide more width for pedestrian movement between the curb and the sidewalk.

The plan also calls for larger, sturdier plants to be installed near the corners of each garden to define the borders and protect the interior planting beds. To avoid a visually monotonous appearance, the plan calls for a variety of other plants to weave through the interior of each garden. These secondary plants would vary in height, density and seasonal display to provide a softer, more organic overall character to the gardens.

The goal is to install the gardens incrementally as community donations allow. The current plan is to do the installation in three phases beginning with the preparation of the beds, followed by primary planting, and then followed by secondary planting. Depending on the availability of funds, an alternate approach may be to phase the gardens by location by installing West Francisco, East Francisco and West Manor separately.

The master plan includes "notched out" areas in the center of each of the new gardens along the adjacent sidewalk. These are the locations of future park benches to provide new seating opportunities for our residents to enjoy the new gardens. Currently there is no City funding to provide park benches but that will be the focus of future community efforts.

Through the assistance of the Alderman's office, a new tree has already been installed on the west side

The Manor-Francisco Gardens Initiative



Landscape Design by Kemora Landscape Designs 773-910-1800 www.kemoralandscapes.com

9 New Parkway Gardens

Featuring:

- * Landscape timber edging
- * Holland stone walkway borders
- * Everlow yew
- * Gro-lo sumac
- * Euonymus
- * Echinachea
- * Geranium
- * Columbine
- * Hydrangea
- * Hosta
- * Sidewalk space for future benches

Beautifying the Heart of the Manor

The Ravenswood Manor Improvement Association is launching an initiative to beautify the heart of our neighborhood. The landscape master plan creates nine gardens with raised borders. The total installed cost of the project is estimated at approximately \$20,000. The installation would be approached in three phases described below. The RMIA is now fundraising for Phase 1.

Phase 1: Foundations (Budget \$7,500)

Landscape timbers, stone borders, new soil, grading

Phase 2: Establishment (Budget \$7,500)

Mature plantings to establish outer edges of each garden

Phase 3: Enhancements (Budget \$5,000)

Infill planting to create varied height, color & seasonal interest



Ravenswood Manor Improvement Association

Chicago's Oldest Neighborhood Organization
PO Box 25486, Chicago, Illinois 60625

Yes, I want to help support Phase 1 of the Manor-Francisco Gardens Initiative!

I am enclosing:

\$25

\$50

\$100

Other

Name: _____

Address: _____



(NEW GARDENS, continued from page 4)

of Francisco in the location formerly occupied by bike racks. A new bike parking area has been established on the west side of Francisco with simple locking racks. The Business District Committee has been exploring the possible installation of a "bike shelter" (similar to a bus shelters) that would provided an overhead canopy to protect bikes from rain. The issues of City approval and funding for a bike shelter are still being explored.

Any resident with additional questions regarding the proposed gardens can contact the Business District Committee at businessdistrict@ravenswoodmanor.com or care of the RMIA, PO Box 25486, Chicago, IL 60625.



The Blue Flag on Mozart: A Major Redesign

by Judith Davis Downey

MOST OF YOU IN THE NEIGHBORHOOD have seen my blue Fleur de Lis flag flying. Many of you volunteered to help my friends in the fall of 2005 by donating clothes, infant and children's clothes, toys and household items.

And several have asked, "Why?"

I'm from New Orleans. It is the place I call home. I met my husband there, and when we moved to Chicago, he promised we could retire back South, therefore, I kept my house. When Katrina hit New Orleans in August 2005, I had a couple of years of interior redesign business under my belt, but I was not prepared physically, emotionally or financially for the vast undertaking of rebuilding my house from afar. As a colleague told me, this was my "baptism by fire."

When we arrived in New Orleans in October 2005, I thought I was ready for what I would see. I had seen every newsreel and photography I could get my hands on, but nothing prepared me for the devastation we saw on our trip down, starting in Mississippi. It was far greater than anything seen in the news. As we drove along Airline Highway from Baton Rouge to New Orleans, billboards had been wrapped around buildings, animals lay dead on the side of the road, boats were washed up in the middle of the highway and bridges were mangled—and this was two months after the storm.

While driving along Carrolton Avenue headed to the house, we passed an entire city block across from the Seminary that had been burned to the ground—only the stark black chimneys remained standing as a testament to what once had been there. When we turned onto Nashville Avenue, I saw the house. It was still standing. It didn't look too bad. The bright orange "tattoo" on the front matched all the other houses in the city. Then we went inside. The stench was overwhelming. Most of the furniture was still standing in

the original places, but there was oozing grayish green mold crawling up the legs. A small table that once held various vases was still standing, but the shelf had rotted and the vases slid onto the floor—unbroken. It was such a surreal feeling being in the house.

It took a day to comprehend. The next day friends arrived and the clean out began. By the end of the first day, we had thrown out all we could not salvage, washed off what we thought we could, removed the kitchen cabinets and appliances and ripped up the hardwood flooring. By the end of the week we had a pile of trash as tall as the first floor of the house. For Christmas that year, my husband gave me a striking pair of steel toed boots after I had fallen through the rotted floor.

There were no tradesmen to hire in the city. Everyone was in the same predicament. If you did find someone, they were from out of town and you had to pay an inflated price for shoddy work. Needed supplies were not being delivered on a timely basis, and if you were lucky enough to be around on the day a shipment arrived, you had to take what you could get. I settled on a brown shingle roof instead of being able to replace the terracotta tile roof I previously had—and I was lucky to have a roof.

After a year of ripping out plaster and lath, gutting and hauling away and cleaning out mold, we started putting back windows and walls. We worked for a year without electricity. The painting contractor I work with was willing to take on my job in New Orleans and by the time they left, had procured two other jobs. Once the painting was done, we laid the hardwood flooring, the kitchen and bathroom tile, and we installed baseboards and trim my brother-in-law replicated from what we ripped out of the house. We installed the cus-

(continues on page 8)



Community Garden Gears Up for Spring Planting

WITH SOME PILES OF SNOW SLOW to melt, it is hard to imagine that in just a few short months, Manor residents can be feasting on fresh tomatoes grown in the Community Garden.

For the third year, the RMIA will be running the Community Garden at LaPointe Park. The community garden has a limited amount of space for aspiring farmers, so neighbors are encouraged to sign up early to secure their plot.

Last year, the garden was upgraded. With the help of volunteers, a wooden perimeter was built around the garden, in order to crate the necessary raised bed for growing vegetables. In addition, more soil was added and the water spigot was brought closer to

(BLUE FLAG, continued from page 7)

tom kitchen cabinets he made in his shop and drove to New Orleans. Through all of this I have become quite capable with a crowbar and hammer, but as of yet, I have not needed these skills in my redesign business. My happiest moment was the day the kitchen appliances were delivered and I made my first pot of red beans and rice.

This has been a long two-and-a-half-year struggle to rebuild my house. I proudly fly my blue and gold flag that reads: Recover, Rebuild, Rebirth. We recovered what we could; we rebuild the house; and now await the rebirth of New Orleans.

—Judith Davis Downey lives on Mozart Street and owns All in a Day interior redesign business.

the garden by running a hose from the water source closer to the beds.

Besides a little labor in the summer sun, gardeners are only asked to pay a small fee, \$25 for RMIA members and \$35 for non-members, to offset some of the costs of running the garden. The entire garden will be turned over and tilled prior to the planting season so that the soil is ready for each gardener to start planting.

Plots will be approximately four feet wide and six feet long, and gardeners can take an entire plot, or share with a friend if they prefer. Plots will be ready for planting sometime in Mid-May, weather permitting.

If anyone is interested, or wants more information, contact Adam Betzen at gardencordinator@ravenswoodmanor.com.
