



MANOR NEWS

FALL

2017

Event Calendar

Manor Tree Planting

Sat., Sept. 23, 9 a.m.; meet at 2926 W. Leland

Annual Meeting

Mon., Oct. 9, 7 p.m., Horner Park Field House

Weekly and Monthly Events:

RMIA Board

2nd Mondays of the month, 7 p.m.,
Horner Park Field House.

Horner Park Advisory Council

1st Mondays of the month, 7 p.m.,
Horner Park Field House

CAPS-17th District, Police Beat 1724

(south of Wilson Avenue) Wed., Sept. 20,
6:15 p.m., Horner Park Field House

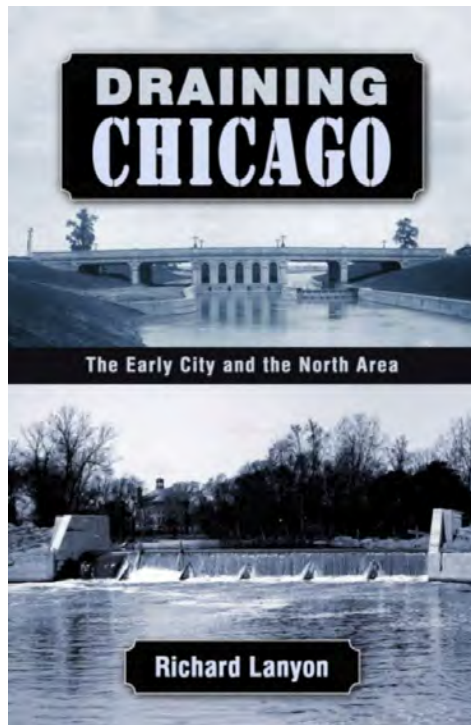
CAPS-17th District, Police Beat 1713

(north of Wilson Avenue) Wed., Sept. 27,
6:30 p.m., North Park Campus Center,
5000 N. Spaulding Ave.



JoAnne Conroy and Tom Melvin painted the Wilson Bridge Murals. See more photos of "Summer in the Manor" on pages 4 and 5.

Join Us for 103rd Annual Meeting



Former Manor resident Dick Lanyon will speak about his new book, "Draining Chicago," at RMLA's annual meeting on October 9.

The annual meeting of the Ravenswood Manor Improvement Association will be held at 7 p.m., on Monday, Oct. 9th, in a second-floor meeting room in the Horner Park Field House. This will mark RMLA's 103rd annual meeting, following its founding in September 1914.

In addition to annual elections for RMIA board members, guest speaker Richard "Dick" Lanyon will discuss the history of public improvements involving the North Shore Channel, which forms the eastern boundary of Ravenswood Manor.

Lanyon, who grew up on Giddings Street in the Manor, is the retired executive director of the Metropolitan Water Reclamation District of Greater Chicago. He is the author of "Draining Chicago: The Early City and the North Area" (Lake Claremont Press, 2016), which will be the topic of his lecture. Copies of the heavily-illustrated book also will be available for purchase.

Prior to Lanyon's talk, RMIA members will vote on candidates for a two-year term on the RMIA Board of Directors. The slate of candidates, which was submitted by the RMIA's Nominating Committee, includes:

Current Board Members: Athene Carras, Alan Mueller, Jim Peters, Joe Valentin, and Victoria Wiedel.

New Board Members: Brinda Gupta, Mina Makieri, and Lisa Washburn.

Also up for reelection, to serve one-year terms, are the following officers: President: Athene Carras; Vice President: Jim Peters; Secretary: Kathy Monk; and Treasurer: Suzy Thomas.

Thanks to the members of the Nominating Committee: Cristina Chavez, Alan Mueller, Jennifer Payne, Jim Peters, and Julia Smith.



Help Plant a Tree

The next round of tree plantings in the parkways of Ravenswood Manor will take place on Sat., Sept. 23rd, from 9 a.m. to 1 p.m. Volunteers are still needed.

These tree plantings were organized by RMIA Board Member Lorin Liberson, in association with Openlands' TreeKeepers Program. More than 20 trees will be planted in locations where an adjacent property owner had requested a new tree, while agreeing to help pay for (and water) the tree (see *Manor News*, Spring 2017).

If you are interested in helping out with the tree plantings, please send an email to trees@ravenswoodmanor.com. No prior experience is necessary, as volunteers from the TreeKeepers Program will be available to assist.

Please watch *Manor News* for details about future plantings.



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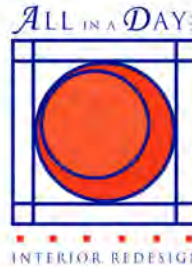
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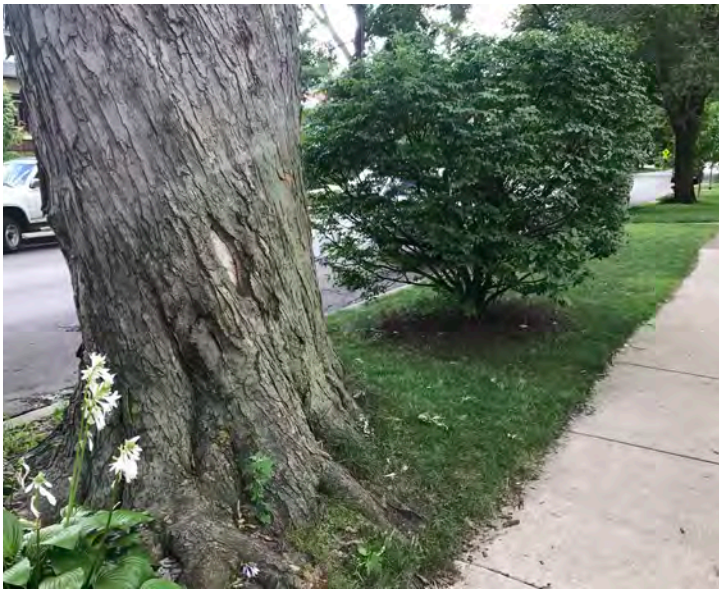
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1920 photo of the 4400-block of Francisco, showing original parkway trees and flowering shrubs.

lining the new streets. Interspersed between the trees were flowering shrubs (see far left photo). We also can tell, from early photographs, that some of the largest trees were located along Wilson Avenue, which may have predated other streets in the Manor.

Unfortunately, due to Dutch elm disease in the 1960s, very few of these original elm trees remain. Two of the oldest surviving elm trees can be found in the public right-of-way in front of 4416 N. Mozart St. and in the 2600-block of Wilson Avenue (in Ravenswood Gardens). While many more of the original silver maple trees survive, they are nearing the end of their average life span of 130-150 years. Furthermore, these trees have brittle wood and are commonly damaged in storms.

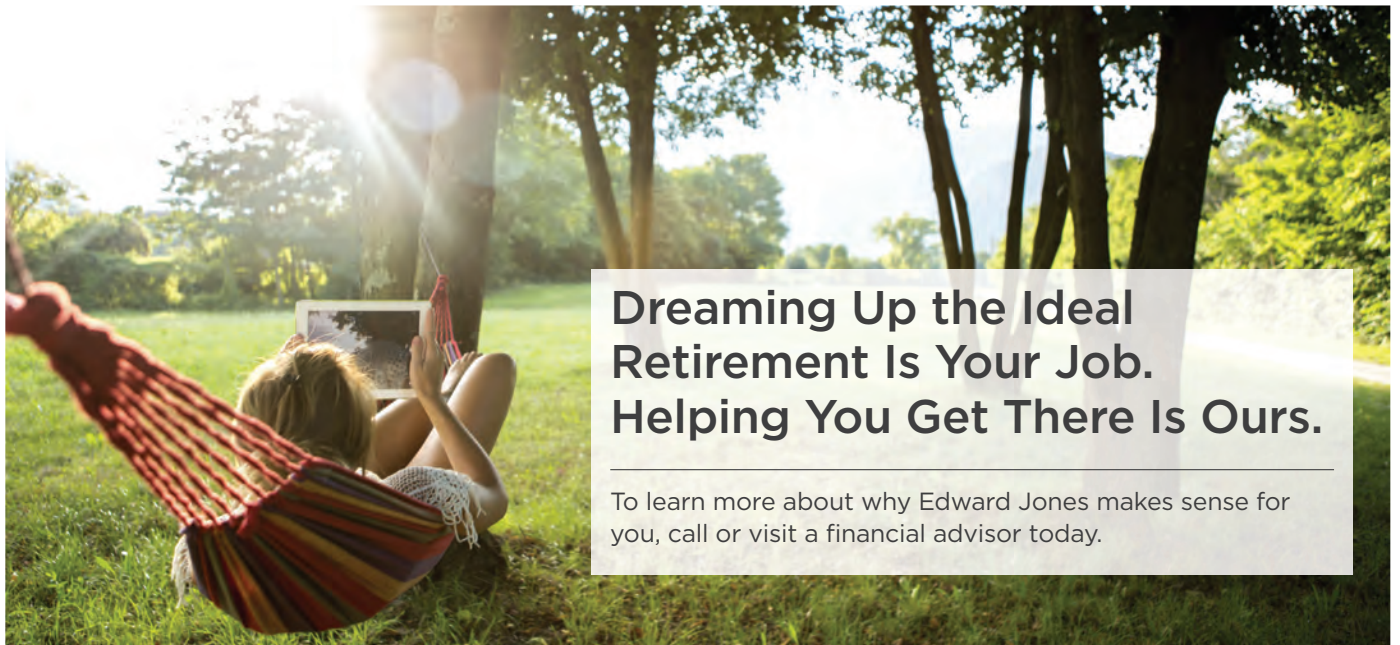
When the elm trees died, many were replaced by ash trees, which now constitute 17% of Chicago's street trees. Unfortunately, many of these ash trees are now being lost, due to the Emerald Ash Borer beetle. Because of these experiences, current tree planting policies by the Chicago Bureau of Forestry (and other groups; see page 2) utilize a much wider range of tree species, in order to avoid monoculture plantings that can be subject to widespread losses.

I Am Curious (Manor)

Q: Which is the oldest tree in the Manor?

A: Without cutting them down—and counting the rings—we don't have any real way of knowing. (And, please, don't do that, dear readers.)

However, we do know that when Ravenswood Manor was laid out by developer William E. Harmon in 1909, he primarily planted American Elms and Silver Maples along the public parkways



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Summer in the Manor



New Murals

The Wilson Avenue Bridge beautification project was dedicated on August 31st (right) by Ald. Deb Mell (33rd Ward), Ald. Ameya Pawar (47th Ward), and others—including the RMLA—who helped fund this set of murals on the bridge’s concrete approach walls. JoAnne Conroy (above), a high school art teacher and artist, designed the four Chicago River-related scenes. They were painted this summer by Conroy and Manor resident and muralist Tom Melvin (top right), with staging help from Doug Bristol and Carol Ehlers. If you are interested in helping to fund the continued maintenance of the murals, please go to wilsonbridgemural.com.

Photo: Patsy Welch, DNAmpl

This block features a collection of ten detailed architectural illustrations of various house styles, including bungalows, cottages, and multi-story homes. The drawings are in black and white, showing intricate details of the buildings' exteriors, windows, and landscaping. Centered below the illustrations is the website address: WWW.CAPEHORN-ILLUSTRATION.COM.

Construction

Residents couldn't escape this summer's twin infrastructure projects: the installation of new water mains by the City of Chicago and new gas meters and mains by Peoples Gas. Streets were closed, dust was a constant, and parkways were chopped up. The bulk of the work will wrap up this fall, which is good news for everyone except those neighborhood children (and some adults) who loved seeing the giant Tonka trucks at work and who will miss those strange sidewalk hieroglyphics.



Events

The Independence Bike Parade on Sunday, June 25th featured more than 100 children, their parents, and one clown walking the four blocks of Manor Avenue, between Buffalo and Ravenswood Manor parks. Friday night concerts in Manor Park were organized by the Horner Park Advisory Council, while the Manor Garden Walk on Sunday, July 23rd, was organized by the Manor Garden Club. Our thanks to all of the volunteers who made these events possible.



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PHOTO BY DAVID HAWK

About RMIA

Manor News is published quarterly by the Ravenswood Manor Improvement Association.

Established in 1914, the RMIA is a neighborhood association run entirely by volunteers. We hold monthly board of directors meetings, stage various social events and special projects, and maintain communication channels through our web site, e-mail alerts, and newsletter. Your annual RMIA membership helps to support all of this work.

The RMIA Mission Statement is: "To promote the welfare of the community in respect to the maintenance and improvement of the physical appearance of the private and public property; the compliance with the laws as applicable to private and public property; the maintenance of facilities with respect to the safety, health, and welfare of its residents."

The RMIA officers are:

- Athene Carras – President
- Jim Peters – Vice President
- Kathy Monk – Secretary
- Suzy Thomas - Treasurer



Web site: ravenswoodmanor.com
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 E-mail: board@ravenswoodmanor.com
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Manor News is delivered to residents and businesses by volunteer block captains. Past issues are available on our web site (see "Communications"). Editor: Jim Peters; Design and Layout: Steve Shanabruch; Advertising: Thomas Applegate.

Manor News Ads

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SUZY THOMAS

Notable Neighbors

Lela Mueller and Bess Recoschewitz: Candy Makers

By Jim Peters



Lela Mueller (top) and Bess Recoschewitz

For a couple of decades, from the 1920s through the '40s, a Ravenswood Manor residence was the headquarters of one of Chicago's gourmet chocolate makers, Nancy Keith Candies.

The company was started in 1921 by sisters Lela Mueller (1879-1973) and Bess Recoschewitz (1881-1950), as a way to help supplement their family incomes through the sale of chocolate creams during the holiday season. Mueller's husband, Louis, had been seriously injured in a streetcar accident and Recoschewitz' husband, Julius, a musician, was often between jobs. In fact, at one point, Lela had been hired by the RMIA to collect membership dues, door to door.

The sisters decided to name the company for their mother, whose maiden name was Nancy Keith. Operations began in the attic of Mueller's house at 4445 N. Francisco Ave., but

soon expanded into the house's basement, after two employees were hired.

By the end of 1924, the company had opened a small retail store at 1123 W. Argyle Ave., where they sold chocolate bon bons, caramels, creams, nougats, and other varieties. In addition, their products were sold through hotel gift shops in the Loop, Evanston, and Grand Beach, Mich., as well as at the Francisco "L" station.

Nonetheless, regular customers continued to come to the house to make their purchases. Longtime Manor resident Ruth Robbins recalls, as a young girl in the late-1920s, buying "beautiful silver-wrapped chocolate bars" in the Mueller's living room. "It was really gourmet candy," she remembers, noting that Nancy Keith's chocolates spoiled her for the mass-produced chocolates of the age.

According to a 1924 letter from the sisters' mother, Nancy Keith Brown, their's was one of the few candy companies in Chicago that didn't use any artificial products, such as parafin. "They use only the best cane sugar, butter, and cream," Brown bragged. The operation also was a true family business, with numerous daughters, sons, and grandchildren working in the kitchen, retail store, or serving as delivery people. Lela and Bess' brother, Claude Brown, a commercial artist, designed all of the company's packaging, advertisements, and marketing materials.

In 1927, the sisters opened a bigger retail store at 1021 W. Argyle Ave., followed by an even larger establishment at 5240 N. Sheridan Road, where the company remained until 1953, following Bess' death. The business later reopened in Evanston, but was sold in the 1970s.



Nancy Keith Candies were truly homemade—in the basement of the Mueller residence at 4445 N. Francisco (left). They were later sold at a store 5240 N. Sheridan Rd. (above).

At a recent gathering of a few of Bess and Lela's grandchildren at First Slice Café (4564 N. Manor Ave.), they said they still get together on occasion to make candies from the original recipes. Bob Brown, Bess' grandson, says he believes the company's origins may lie in the fact that his grandmother often made chocolates as gifts to members of the Chicago Symphony, where his grandfather was a violinist. Barbara Triphahn, Lela's granddaughter, says the entire undertaking is an excellent example of two women in difficult circumstances finding a way to earn money to help raise their families, particularly during the Depression.

Manor Details



This newspaper box, holding 40-year-old copies of the Reader, mysteriously appeared on the 2900-block of Lawrence this summer. Its origins are unknown.

Business Profile: 2nd Story

By Kathy Monk



2nd Story is a 19-year-old organization that began as a theater company, but quickly gained success through storytelling. When describing what 2nd Story does, Lauren Sivak, Managing Director says, “We want to live in a world driven by empathy where we tell the first story on stage, so the audience can share their second story. Facts don’t change people’s minds, so we look to stories to do that.”

The core value of this arts organization is inclusion and fostering meaningful connections between individuals and communities. With over 600 stories in its repertoire, 2nd Story encourages these connections through the specifics in a story in hopes of providing a sense of familiarity – even if individuals or groups are different. Stories come to 2nd Story through an open submission process and one barometer is a story must be true.

In addition to performances, 2nd Story conducts classes and workshops geared towards artists, writers, and performers as well as designs professional events for corporations and groups to build community while addressing sensitive issues. Sivak said this is 2nd Story’s most ambitious season yet with a monthly series at Pub 626 in Rogers Park and numerous upcoming special events scheduled.

2nd Story

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