

# RAVENSWOOD MANOR NEIGHBORHOOD NEWSLETTER FALL 2003



Published by Ravenswood Manor Improvement Association (RMIA) P.O. Box 25486, Chicago, IL 60625  
RMIA Hotline (312) 409-3213 - Newsletter Online at [www.ravenswoodmanor.com](http://www.ravenswoodmanor.com)

## Property Tax Assessments to Rise

**R**avenswood Manor residents beware! The witching hour is upon us. Just as you are carving pumpkins for Halloween, your triennial property tax reassessments will appear in your mail slots. Assessments are projected to rise by approximately 40% or more.

Notices in the Manor area are scheduled to be mailed around Oct. 17. Similar recently reassessed Chicago properties received assessment increases of 40% to 125% and more. The Chicago Tribune reported the 60625 zip code as Chicago's second highest appreciated area in the past several years.

There are things Manor residents

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## Holiday Wine Tasting Dec. 6

**H**ome Café and the RMIA will host a neighborhood wine tasting from 7:00 to 9:00 p.m. at Home Café. Bring two bottles of your favorite wine to share. Appetizers and other beverages will be served.

## Traffic Update Headlines Annual Mtg.

**T**he RMIA Annual Meeting will be held on Wednesday, October 29th, at 7:30 p.m. at the Horner Park field house. All Manor residents interested in reviewing a proposal to improve pedestrian safety should attend. Adding a curbed bulbout at Francisco and the RR

tracks, and one at California and Manor will shorten the distance to cross the street and create a more pronounced turn for cars. A second bulbout is proposed for Mozart at Wilson. We will also discuss proposed zoning changes to Manor businesses.

## Manor Docks and Access Rights Challenged

**T**o many people the docks and boats along the river bank of our neighborhood add to the unique character and charm of Ravenswood Manor and Gardens.

To others no private structures should be allowed. Many Ravenswood Manor and Gardens residents with docks or other improvements on the Chicago River have been included in a lawsuit naming dozens of homeowners between Montrose and Lawrence.

The lawsuit seeks to "evict"

homeowners with structures built on the river banks.

On August 12 the Metropolitan Water Reclamation District Board held a community meeting to hear input before they made a decision on whether the improvements could stay. The Board's stance is that the docks are unlawfully on their property and the District may be liable if someone gets hurt on them. Residents maintain that the District was party to a legal covenant in 1903 that permits the directly adjacent homeowners to build slips and other structures on the river banks.

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**E**nter Go Café's pumpkin carving contest now through Oct. 24.. All Manor residents are welcome to vote Oct. 24-31. The winner will be announced Halloween night.

## ...Dock Access Rights Challenged

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Two days later the Board voted to allow only the docks that are already built to stay so long as the homeowners meet certain guidelines. Although final guidelines have not been adopted, a draft with 25 provisions has been circulated informally. Among these are requirements for engineering certification, annual inspections and maintaining \$4 million liability insurance naming the district. Also a yearly permit fee would be assessed based on property value. The fee structure is still being decided but has been discussed to be between \$1,000 to over \$10,000 per year per property owner.

A new neighborhood organization, the Ravenswood River Neighbors Association, has been incorporated to represent the riverfront homeowners from Montrose to Lawrence. Relying on the rights granted under the 1903 covenant, many of these

homeowners have invested significant amounts of money to maintain and improve the riverbanks, including controlling erosion and developing landscaping as well as simply building docks. Recognizing this, the organization will try to work with the District and other interested groups to develop workable guidelines, reasonable yearly fees and obtainable insurance requirements that would allow all residents to enjoy their docks and other riverfront improvements. At the same time, the organization will undertake the legal defense against the lawsuit brought by the District. For additional information, you may contact Scott McCausland at 2701 W. Sunnyside or by email at [mccott@speakeasy.org](mailto:mccott@speakeasy.org)

## ...Property Taxes

can do to fight the proposed increases:

1. **Appeal your proposed increases:** Up to 80% of residential properties appealing their assessments beyond the assessor level obtain some relief.
2. **Don't believe the Assessor listed market value:** It is false.

Due to a legal, statistical fiction, the value will be about 60% of what you think your property is worth.

- 3) **Uniformity is the key:** Appeals are based on how your property compares on a dollar per square foot basis.

The *Ravenswood Manor Community Newsletter* is published by the Ravenswood Manor Improvement Association (RMIA), a non-profit group of Ravenswood Manor residents formed to implement the will of its members. All those who live or do business in Ravenswood Manor are eligible to become board members. The Board meets on the second Monday of each month at 7:30 p.m. at the Horner Park field house. Meetings are open to all members.

To join the RMIA, volunteer or make a suggestion, call the RMIA hotline at (312) 409-3213 or send us an e-mail at [rmiaboard@ravenswoodmanor.com](mailto:rmiaboard@ravenswoodmanor.com)

## ....Taxes

- 4) **Verify the listed size of your property:** Then realize discrepancies may exist in dollar square foot determinations
- 5) **Attend a seminar for Manor residents on how you can appeal:** Gary H. Smith, RMIA board member whose law offices concentrate on property tax appeals, will be the presenter. This seminar will take place on November 6, 2003, at 7 p.m. in the Horner Park Field House downstairs.

## 2003-2004 RMIA Board Members

**T**he RMIA Nominating Committee has submitted the following slate of candidates for vote at the Annual Meeting on Oct. 29th: Shalini Agrawal, Diane Black, Julie Faude and David Round. Returning Board members are:

- Brian Basler
- Julie Faude
- Julie Gelfond
- Geoff Gieske
- Anne Marie Mitchell
- Alan Mueller
- Hollis Russinof
- Susan Siegert
- Josh Silverman
- Gary Smith
- Don Valentin
- Eileen Valentin
- Scott Wheeler

The entire RMIA Board is looking forward to an exciting year of meeting the needs of our community.

### Get the latest news via e-mail

**O**ur newsletter is delivered quarterly but there are many times when there are important neighborhood meetings, social events or alerts that pop up between newsletters. Stay informed by subscribing at [www.ravenswoodmanor.com](http://www.ravenswoodmanor.com) You are able to unsubscribe at any time.

## Time to Renew Your RMIA Membership or Become a Member

**F**or only \$10, you can enjoy the benefits of a 2003-2004 RMIA membership.

The RMIA is a volunteer organization that seeks to achieve the following on behalf of Ravenswood Manor families and businesses:

- To maximize the safety of our families and property;
- To promote a sense of community among neighborhood residents;

- To maintain/increase property values;
- To ensure consistent delivery of city services; and
- To preserve the beauty of our trees, parks and parkways.

To get involved and support RMIA activities, just complete the form below and send it in with a check for \$10. Thanks for your support!

## RMIA MEMBERSHIP FORM

Please consider renewing your membership today by filling out this membership application. Your membership fee will be invested in the ongoing improvement of our neighborhood.

Thank You!

RMIA Membership  
P.O. Box 25486  
Chicago, IL 60625

Membership Duration November 2003— October 2004

Membership Fee \$10

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

Phone \_\_\_\_\_

E-mail \_\_\_\_\_

Interested in a \$10 RMIA T-Shirt? Number of t-shirts \_\_\_\_\_

Circle Size (s): Adults: M, L, XL, XXL or Children: S, M, L

Total Amount Enclosed (membership + t-shirts) \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Which RMIA activities are most valuable to you?

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