



# MANOR NEWS

FALL /  
WINTER

2021

## EVENT CALENDAR

### Upcoming Events:

See below to sign-up for any of the events listed.

- **December 13:**  
Ravenswood Manor Improvement Association ("RMIA") Board Meeting – 7:00 p.m.
- **December 21:**  
17th District (Police) CAPS ("CAPS") Meeting – 6:30 p.m.
- **January 5:**  
Horner Park Advisory Council ("HPAC") Meeting – 7:00 p.m.
- **January 10:**  
RMIA Board Meeting – 7:00 p.m.
- **January 18:**  
CAPS Meeting – 6:30 p.m.
- **February 2:**  
HPAC Meeting – 7:00 p.m.
- **February 14:**  
RMIA Board Meeting – 7:00 p.m.
- **February 15:**  
CAPS Meeting – 6:30 p.m.

(Continued on page 2)

## Major Progress on Ronan Park "Confluence" Project

By Rob Lott

Developments over the summer have resulted in significant progress on the important "Confluence Project" — a project that promises major improvements along Lawrence Avenue immediately west of the Chicago River.

Launched in summer 2020 by the North River Commission (NRC), the Confluence Project aims to improve and activate a series of sites, primarily including the entrance to Ronan Park and the area across from the intersection of Manor and Lawrence Avenues.

The idea of the project is to provide a lush and welcoming gateway to Albany Park. But of local

import, the intersection of Lawrence and Manor is also one of the most crucial points of entry into Ravenswood Manor.

The project began with limited funding and assistance from Our Great Rivers, the Chicago Community Trust, and the Metropolitan Planning Council. Project leaders surveyed neighbors and hosted a series of conversations among community members and local business leaders to identify their priorities and hopes for any potential future improvements for the area.

Ravenswood Manor Improvement Association (RMIA) board members have been actively



## Join the RMIA Today

The RMIA is run exclusively by volunteers and can only organize neighborhood events (e.g., the Garden Walk, Garage Sale, etc.) and make neighborhood improvements (e.g., the new neighborhood signs) thanks to membership donations. We have big plans for 2022 and increased membership and fundraising are key to achieving our goals. Please consider joining — for as little as \$10 — and together, we can #BeautifyTheManor. Scan the QR Code below to join or donate:



## About the RMIA

*Manor News* is published twice a year 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."

### RMIA Board

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### Summer and Spring Events, continued

#### Weekly and Monthly Events:

##### RMIA Board Meetings

2nd Monday of the month (except for July and August) at 7:00 p.m.

##### Horner Park Advisory Council Meetings

1st Wednesday of the month at 7:00 p.m.

##### 17th District (police) CAPS meetings

3rd Tuesday of the month at 6:30 p.m.

All meetings are being held virtually until further notice. A list of events with sign-up links can be found on the RMIA's website at [ravenswood-manor.com/events/](https://ravenswood-manor.com/events/) or by scanning the QR Code below:



### Major Progress on Ronan Park "Confluence" Project, continued

tracking progress and participating in meetings, and NRC representatives shared their vision with Manor residents at the RMIA annual meeting.

Perkins & Will and Omni Ecosystems provided initial pro-bono planning and design services. Together, participants developed conceptual drawings for community garden improvements, a new riverfront plaza, a new performance pavilion, and related landscape improvements around Ronan Park, the Global Garden Refugee Training Farm, and the community gardens. The visioning and design work also conceived additional tree plantings along Lawrence Avenue and explored potential improvements to the crossings at Manor and Lawrence that could reduce safety hazards for the increasing number of pedestrians and cyclists traveling north and south through the Manor Greenway and the parks the run along the river.

The drawings that came out of this early community-input phase — including the schematic depicted herein — were at the time largely aspirational. Funding for the project's implementation had not yet been secured when the drawings were completed.

In June 2021, however, the Chicago City Council passed a package of Tax Increment Financing (TIF) requests from the Park District that included \$3.5 million allocated for improvements to Ronan Park. Also included in the same package was additional funding for other nearby park projects including \$2 million for Legion Park and the Northside College Prep Riverfront; \$800,000 for the Kiwanis Park / Von Steuben High School Riverfront; and \$750,000 for the River Park Boathouse and Paddling Program.

This initial funding is a major step towards the Confluence Project becoming a reality.

Now that the council has approved \$3.5 million, it is up to the Park District to develop and oversee the kind of detailed, functional designs that are necessary for the vision to become a fully implemented reality. Officials expect that process will begin shortly with the Park District issuing a formal Request For Services.

As the Confluence Project moves forward and develops, the RMIA will continue to monitor the project and ensure that community members have an opportunity to weigh in.

Carson Poole, Community Organizer at the North River Commission and a director on the Confluence Project, affirmed the vital role that civic organizations will play in shaping the project: "I am actively working with the Park District, Ward Offices, and Park Advisory Councils to coordinate our continued involvement in each of these processes moving forward. We will ensure that community involvement is maintained throughout the process, and in the case of the neighborhood gateway, ensure that NRC's vision and goals of equitable economic development are prioritized. This is an exciting and major victory for our riverfront, parks, and community."

For more information on the Confluence Project, including to sign-up for updates, scan the QR Code below:





# Manor Happenings

By Renata Jasinski Laszuk

Since the Spring / Summer edition of the Manor News — which featured the RMIA Wildflower Give-Away and numerous other events — the RMIA has been busy. Just over the last few months the RMIA has sponsored and supported numerous neighborhood events and improvements.

## Ravenswood Manor RMIA Garage Sale 2021 Sept. 12



Thousands of bargain-hunting shoppers descended on Manor streets and alleyways for the 2021 RMIA Garage Sale. Despite the new date, well over 100 households participated in what continues to be one of the largest and most anticipated neighborhood garage sales on Chicago's north side.

## New Neighborhood Designation Signs Oct. 7



As part of the RMIA's #BeautifyTheManor initiative, over 25 locations in Ravenswood Manor acquired new neighborhood designation signs. These signs replaced the few remaining rectangular signs that were hung in 2016. Thanks to the RMIA's Parks & Parkways Committee, and in particular to Mina Marien for her extraordinary efforts.

## RMIA and Openlands Biennial Tree Planting Oct. 13

This year's biennial RIMA/Openlands Tree Planting Day was a great success. Openlands' Treekeepers and 19 neighborhood volunteers planted a dozen new oak trees replacing trees lost to invasive pests and diseases. These trees add to the 100+ already planted in our community since 2013. Thanks to the RMIA's Parks & Parkways Committee, and in particular to Deb Robinett for her extraordinary efforts.

## LaPointe Park Rededication Ceremony Oct. 24

The LaPointe Park Committee hosted a ceremony celebrating the five families who adopted the LaPointe Park sundial and benches. Due to inclement weather, the full ceremony was postponed until spring, but the gathering was extremely special for those who braved the elements (several traveling from far away — see accompanying article).

LaPointe Park has become a cherished neighborhood gathering spot — just as we'd hoped. Please consider scanning the QR Code to support the park's ongoing redesign and upkeep. Exciting projects coming soon! And even small donations help make them possible.



## Manor Halloween and the RMIA HalloWalk and Raffle Oct 31

As always, the Manor was the place to be to Trick-or-Treat. Full-sized candy bars? Check. Live music on Wilson? Check. Giant skull keeping a Manor manhole covers securely in place? Check, check, and check. And it goes without saying — but we will say it — that our own Kevin Byrne (@kevinbyrne773) won the internet this year with his Halloween Zombie House (pictured).

This year the RMIA also put together an interactive walkable Halloween decoration map and a few lucky (random) raffle winners received great gift cards from local merchants. Shout out to Twisted Hippo Taproom & Eatery, First Slice Pie Cafe, and Bru Coffeeworks for their support.



## Manor Holiday Lighting Ceremony Dec. 4

The RMIA hosted a holiday lighting ceremony at the Manor Park pavilion on December 4 complete with snacks, warm drinks, music, and lots of kids. It was a great way to get out of the house and see neighbors and friends! Thanks to everyone that came out to help us celebrate the holiday season.

# RMIA SPOTLIGHT: ANNETTE D'ANNA

By Renata Jasinski Laszuk

**Lifelong Chicagoan, Manor resident,  
and welcoming face of First Slice Cafe**

What do you call someone who recognizes you and calls out your name (first and last) when they hadn't seen you since elementary school 30 years ago? I call that person Annette D'Anna.

Do you know that hesitant half-smile you give someone when you aren't quite sure? Annette doesn't. Hers is a full-on, warm, genuine smile. As soon as she sat next to me, I remembered her, and we began talking as if we were back at St. Pete's.

Soon after, I began to see Annette everywhere — at Manor Park concerts, Horner Park farmer's markets, and most often at First Slice Cafe, where I like to eat pie.

Recently, I had the pleasure of talking with Annette after one of her First Slice shifts. I wanted to chat with her about her life in Chicago, the Manor, and what makes First Slice Cafe such a great place to work.

But first, she asks me if there's anything she can get for me. I reluctantly decline but tell her First Slice's Key Lime pie is the best I've ever had. "I agree!" she says enthusiastically.

When Annette was growing up, the D'Annas lived in the 1500 block of North Lockwood in the North Austin neighborhood. It was the mid-'70s. "I had a bumpin' block. Everyone cool lived on that block. We had a lot of ethnicities living in that very Catholic neighborhood."

Annette is a lifelong Chicagoan, third generation on her father's side. Her mother's parents emigrated from Sicily. Her father's parents met at the Aragon Ballroom and held their Huntington Dance Academy wedding reception at 4616 N Clark. Her father went to Lane High School. So yeah, the D'Anna family has a lot of Chicago history.

She suddenly stops and looks at the sky. "Do you see that? That cloud? It's like a little rainbow cloud, and it's going fast. Take a look." I turn around.



*First Slice offers a free small coffee with purchase until January 1st if you mention Annette's Spotlight article in the RMIA newsletter.*

She's right. I doubt anyone else would have noticed the odd green and purple cloud. But, of course, Annette does.

After putting herself through school (UIUC) waiting tables, Annette returned to Chicago and began looking for work. Bill Ammons owned Lakeview's sensational Star Top Cafe. Annette had been there sometime earlier as a customer, and Bill waited on her and her then-boyfriend. Later, when Annette applied for a job at Star Top on a friend's recommendation, Bill remembered her — where she sat and even what she wore that night. They've been married for 27 years.

When Annette and Bill started looking at houses, they stumbled upon Ravenswood Manor. "I was enchanted by the river, the El tracks running on the ground, the large canopy of trees, and the fact that you could find street parking."

They moved into the Manor in June of 1997. Then in March of the following year, their lovely and incredibly brilliant son Dante was born. "It was our 'starter' home," Annette says, "but we're still here, so we must not be finished."



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Her heart and home both lie in the Ravenswood Manor area, where she's sold dozens of homes in just the last two years. **Scan the QR code** to hear what your neighbors say about working with Deb and her team.



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I asked Annette why the neighborhood held such appeal for her. “I always felt like the Manor was like a small village tucked away in a large city,” she replied. “We have small-town traditions like the 4th of July kids’ bike parade, garden walks, and summertime concerts. I grew up in a tightly-knit neighborhood, and Ravenswood Manor has a similar feel to it.”

“The centerpieces of the neighborhood — Manor Park and the Francisco stop — encourage people to walk and meet fellow Manor folks. And I’ve been lucky enough to work at First Slice, which sometimes feels like Ground Zero as a place where the friendly neighborhood comes to eat pie! How great is that?”

At this point, Annette spies a customer coming toward the cafe. “Hi! How are you?” She is genuinely happy to see him. “Hey,” he says. “Yeah, I’m a real person,” she counters. She introduces me to her friend, Lou. “I thought I was too late to run into you today,” he says. She laughs and says, “Sorry you got unlucky.” They talk for a while, and then Annette invites him to go inside. “We’ll have a nice hot cup of coffee for you.” This is the microcosm — Annette knows everyone.

I tell her I’m amazed at the positive energy vibe she gives off all the time.

“It’s hard not to. I mean, you’re working in a pie place. And those guys in the back work so hard. Like you have never in your life worked so hard. When I worked at Printer’s Row restaurant from 1987 to 2004, I worked with these guys.”

Not the same ones, surely.

“Yeah,” she says. “Carlos, Rafael, Julio. And Mary Ellen (Diaz, owner of First Slice) was the chef.

“A lot of people don’t know that the chef and the cooks, Carlos, Rafael, Julio, Manny, and Gloria, are here at the crack of dawn right back there cooking. A lot of what they’re doing every day is making food for World Central Kitchen, José Andrés’ charity that we work with.

“These guys are making very specific meals.” Annette lists a few. “We’re partnering with Lakeview Presbyterian Church, and we’re making meals for the Chicago Help Initiative. In addition, we do the welcome meal every Wednesday for the Epiphany Lutheran Church. So we’re talking hundreds of meals.”

It all goes back to Mary Ellen Diaz’s vision. Annette elaborates: “She was executive chef for Lettuce Entertain You, and she said, screw this, I don’t want

to do this. I’m going to do something helpful. She’s got a very strong social conscience. So she started this cafe to fund the food outreach programs.”

To help fund the charitable endeavor, First Slice offers a Subscriber Program, a meal-sharing program that sends you home with three high-quality, locally-sourced meals every weekend.

At this, Annette begins to ramp up. “The subscription meal service is like a logistical ballet. Two locations (the other First Slice is in Andersonville), menu choices, three meals for three days. It’s why we can only do Pizza nights on Friday.”

Again, our conversation came to a halt. Annette is genuinely thrilled when a mother and daughter come over just to say hello. “Oh my gosh, I saw your sister lately,” Annette gushes. “And I saw your grandma. And I saw your dad. So now it’s all complete. So nice to see you!”

After they leave, Annette turns to me. “That girl, when she was little, she and her mom would come here every day, and every day she’d bring me a leaf, and I’d put it on my head to make her laugh.

“The first month I worked here, I catered a baptism for a baby girl. And now that girl is in fifth grade.”

Annette says that’s the best part of the job — watching the kids grow up.

“Printer’s Row was a fine dining restaurant, a special occasion restaurant. So we got a lot of famous people in, but most of the people would come like on a birthday or an anniversary. But the people here come here all the time, some of them every day, right until they move away. So, I mean, it’s a totally different bird, besides the difference in food. It’s just that when you’re in a neighborhood, you can’t help but see the same people all the time. And if you let people tell you their stories, it’s like you’re kind of a Studs Terkel.

“And I’m Facebook friends with so many people who have come and gone over the years. So I’m probably like the crazy lady — stop commenting!” she laughed. “First Slice is like the Hotel California. You can check out any time you like, but you can never leave. I love these people so much.”

We’d finished our interview, and just as I was getting ready to leave, Annette did the most Annette thing ever. She ran inside and came back with my favorite, a mini Key Lime pie.



#lovewhereyoulive

#lovewhereyouwork

Jill Peet Saponaro been a resident in Ravenswood Manor for more than 30 years. She brings to her clients her 30+ years of experience in the field of real estate. She has also won top producer awards at the Chicago Association of Realtors and has consistently been in the top 2% of realtor’s in the city.



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## Ravenswood Manor Loss - John Byrne

By Rob Lott

Ravenswood Manor suffered a loss this summer when life-long resident John Byrne passed away in August. In addition to being a beloved friend and neighbor, many Manor residents met John before they even moved to the neighborhood: as a realtor, he sold over 170 homes in Ravenswood Manor and Ravenswood Gardens. His obituary follows:

John E. Byrne, 68, life-long resident of Ravenswood Manor, passed away on August 21, 2021. Son of the late Dr. John P. Byrne and Katharine (nee Mann). Treasured husband of 43 years to Gale. Loved by siblings Kate, Jody, Jim (Helen), and Peggy (Doris); in-laws Dawn and Thomas Waltrich; many nieces and nephews far and wide; a cadre of friends and neighbors that were like family; and his ever-present dog Buddy. John devoted his forty-year career in real estate to selling the homes he grew up with and loved, first at Fox Realtors, then at Baird & Warner. Proud Lane Tech alum, class of '71. No services were held, as per his wishes.

For an oral history on the neighborhood with John and his sister, scan the QR Code below.



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# Rock Band Born in the Manor

By Matt McClintock

Close to the river end of Leland, two sisters have been quietly — or maybe from their parents' perspective not so quietly — doing something extraordinary.

Sofie Richter and her younger sister Hannah are one of two sets of sisters who formed the indie rock band “Neptune’s Core” in 2018.

The two sets of sisters met in elementary school but built their friendship at Chicago’s School of Rock. They bonded through rehearsals, concerts, and festivals and decided to start the band. “We all love music, and we had become friends, so we formed the band for fun and as a creative outlet,” said Sofie Richter, who plays guitar and is the lead singer.

They haven’t looked back.

From humble roots, playing first at a school talent show and then at open mic nights at The Old Town School of Folk Music, the band has gotten more serious “in a good way,” according to Sofie. The band independently released two singles in 2019, a full-length album called “Can’t Have it All” in 2020, and most recently a follow-up album called “Evolving” in October of this year.

“We love performing live,” said Hannah, who plays bass. It shows. The band has played a wide range of local venues (City Winery, Schubas, Uncommon Ground, Martyrs’ and, of course, Montrose Saloon). Neptune’s Core also finds itself more and more in demand beyond Chica-



go. They recently played at the Cactus Club in Milwaukee and opened for Cheap Trick in Rockford in July.

Jackie Cywinski (lead guitar) and her older sister, Kaitlin (drums), are the second set of sisters. Although the band primarily practices in the basement of the Cywinskis' North Center home, all is not quiet at the Richter household. "Sofie and Hannah practice plenty here, too," said Anne, Sofie and Hannah's mother.

"A lot of the creative stuff happens here," Hannah said. "Sofie comes into my room at any time, day or night, trying out new things that have popped into her head." The musicians pride themselves on writing all their own songs, a process that starts with Sofie or Jackie creating a melody before bringing it to the others to build the rhythm and harmonies around it.

Juggling school (Sofie takes the El from the Francisco stop every morning) and life and the band's increasing (but good) demands are not always easy. But the girls say it is well worth it because they love what they do. "Music has always been in the house. I've always been attracted to the beautiful melody, putting that with words. It's really how I express myself and get things off my chest, and I end up making something pretty in the process," Sofie recently said in an interview with WBBM Newsradio.

The entire thing is a bit humbling for the parents. "I love music and festivals," said Clark, Sofie and Hannah's father. "I just didn't envision that I would be helping set up and even selling merchandise at my daughters' shows, but it has been fun and amazing to watch them develop and grow."

Extremely locally, the band loves to play Montrose Saloon. During the height of the pandemic, the girls even did a live "alley show" from the elevated deck in their backyard, leading to an unexpectedly large (but socially distanced) crowd of neighbors who filled the alley between Leland and Giddings. "As a family, we have always loved the Horner Park concert series, and we feel lucky to have Montrose Saloon so close as a neighborhood music venue," Hannah said.

I asked — selfishly — when we might see Neptune's Core at a Manor Park concert, and Sofie replied, "As soon as it's safe! We love the Manor!"

Favorite Neighborhood Restaurants:

- Sofie: Brazilian Bowl ("especially the veggie bowl")
- Hannah: Kabobi ("I eat salmon and dill rice")

Favorite Neighborhood Event:

- Sofie: Garden Walk ("I like gardening, so the garden walk is always fun.")
- Hannah: Halloween ("Dad does a great job decorating the house.")

You can download any of the band's albums on iTunes, and you can follow Neptune's Core here:

Instagram: @neptunes.core

Neptune's Core YouTube Channel:



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North Park Church Cooperative Preschool is a play-based preschool that offers authentic experiences for children to learn about themselves, their peers and their world! NPCCP programming runs September-May and offers three classes:

- **Young 3's Class-** Tuesday/Thursday 9:00am-11:15am  
Students must turn 3-years-old between September 2nd and December 31st
- **Preschool 3's Class-** Monday/Wednesday/Friday 9:00am-11:15am  
Students must be 3-years-old by September 1st
- **Preschool 4's Class-** Monday-Thursday 12:30pm-3:15pm  
Students must be 4-years-old by September 1st

For more information, please email the Preschool Director and visit our Preschool Webpage:

Email: [preschool@npcovenant.org](mailto:preschool@npcovenant.org)

Webpage: <http://www.npcovenant.org/npccp/>



## A Letter From Peter Rutkowski – New Waters School Principal

Dear Ravenswood Manor Families,

I've lived nearby Waters in North Center for the last twelve years and love living and working in the same neck of the woods. During my previous five years as a school administrator, I've been very humbled when families and staff say they regard me as a calming presence with a great, if very dry, sense of humor. When not working at school, I enjoy reading and doing triathlons. This past summer, I did the Chicago Triathlon as a fundraiser for Save the Children and look forward to doing more when the next season rolls around.



Coming into the role of principal in mid-September at Waters has been a wonderful experience. The start of the school year offers a unique opportunity to bring the community back together, and connecting people is a vital part of school leadership throughout the year. For those reasons, increasing the frequency and regularity of communication at Waters has been my main focus during the first couple of months here. School-wide communications are certainly a part of that, but finding opportunities for families to engage with each other and staff on a smaller scale is also important. This year, we have recruited about 50 room parents who actively facilitate closer relationships among our families and staff to support our just over 600 students.

My long-term goal is for Waters to be the first-choice school for every family in our neighborhood. We are off to a great start, and I've enjoyed becoming a part of that growth. Our fall fundraiser, the Walkathon, was a tremendous success and so much fun for our students. We exceeded our fundraising goal by over \$40k and are looking forward to another successful event for our primary annual fundraiser, which we call "Big Night," which will take place in May.

We have been updating our website with information about tours and all of the programs we offer our students. We are excited to announce that we have opened up limited on-campus tours again. Please visit [waterselementary.org](http://waterselementary.org) to learn more, or visit!

Kind regards,  
Peter Rutkowski  
(he/his/him)

Principal, Waters Elementary  
@WatersPrincipal

## The Demise of Manor Cleaner

By Matt McClintock

Could its shuttering usher in a broader discussion about Ravenswood Manor's "downtown"?

Manor Cleaner, the neighborhood dry cleaner that operated across the street from the First Slice Pie Café for years, closed its doors permanently at the end of October 2021. Many will remember it for the array of plants that filled the shop and the green-thumbed owner who would carefully carry them out to "sun" by the train tracks when the weather was fine.

In the end, sadly, the pandemic led to the cleaner's closure. As customers grew scarce (fewer of us were/are wearing button-up shirts and suits), the shop could not hold on.

As of publication, *The Manor News* had not heard back from the landlord (who owns the entire building at 4663-4669 N. Manor) about plans for the space. However, work appears to be ongoing.

The Manor Cleaner closing provides an opportunity for the community to reflect on how we might improve the Manor's "downtown" area around the Francisco El stop. Existing businesses such as First Slice Pie Café and Le Ballet Petit School of Dance serve as fantastic anchors. Still, other locations, such as the former Steingolds outpost, remain vacant, and other spaces seem underutilized. In an upcoming issue of *The Manor News*, we hope to include a broader discussion on the topic, including some historical perspectives on businesses that existed and thrived, past efforts to enhance the district, as well as ideas and resident feedback.

Join us...

A black and white photograph of a woman with very large, voluminous, styled hair. She is wearing a dark jacket over a polka-dot scarf. The text "Join us..." is at the top left. At the bottom left is the "Supreme Beauty Parlor" logo, which includes a stylized 'S' in a square. To the right of the logo, the text "...and take \$5 off your first appointment" is written. At the bottom right, the address "2944 W Montrose" and phone number "773-516-4497" are listed, along with the email "supremebeautyparlor@gmail.com".



# Remembering Loved Ones and Fond Memories of the Manor at LaPointe Park Ceremony

By Deb Robinett and Mina Marien

On October 24th, the LaPointe Park Committee conducted a small ceremony with the five families who adopted the sundial and benches in LaPointe Park. The event was originally planned on a larger scale; however, the rainy weather temporarily delayed those plans. We hope to reschedule the parade, seed throwing, speeches, and refreshments for the spring so we can further celebrate all the donors, volunteers, and neighbors who worked together to redesign LaPointe Park over the past three years. Stay tuned for more information. In the meantime, we wanted to share a bit about each family with you here so that when you visit the park, you will know more about the people, families, and memories each memorial represents.

## The LaPointe Sundial

Suzanne Wodka, daughter of Arthur and Kittie LaPointe, generously donated money towards the renovation of the park and officially rededicated the sundial in her sister and family's memory. The sundial and beautiful ceramic enamel pillar had been donated during a previous phase of the park design, but it was relocated to a permanent ce-

ment pad that bears a plaque reading The LaPointe Family, Dr. Janice Crump, Suzanne Wodka. The sundial originally belonged to Manor Resident, Richard Lanyon, who was a friend of the LaPointe family and former Executive Director of the Metropolitan Water Reclamation District (MWRD). He gifted it to the family when he moved out of the neighborhood, and the pillar stood in the LaPointe family backyard until it was dedicated to the park at a later time.

At the dedication ceremony, Suzanne spoke fondly about her childhood living in Ravenswood Manor, where her parents had always dreamed of living. In 1950 they pooled about \$19,000 from friends and family to buy 2940 W. Eastwood. In 1954, Kittie, a professional ballet dancer and choreographer, began teaching dance lessons in their basement. Within a decade she outgrew the basement and moved to the commercial space at the corner of Francisco and Eastwood where "Black's Pharmacy" used to be. Her dance school, now known as Le Ballet Petit, became a neighborhood fixture that continues to enrich the lives of children from the Manor and beyond. When they first opened the school, Suzanne recalls helping to lay the wood floor with her father because "they couldn't dance on linoleum!"





Meanwhile, Arthur, a pilot and teacher of aviation and aeronautical mechanics for CPS, joined the RMIA Board during a somewhat turbulent time. During his 10 years as president, the RMIA successfully opposed a proposed highway along the river, the widening of Wilson Avenue, a proposed furnace manufacturer on Lawrence, a bar and bowling alley, and the potential closing of the Francisco 'L' station. He also served the city in larger capacities by using his connections in Chicago Vocational Schools to collaborate with the city in transforming Horner Park from a garbage dump into the beautiful green space we have today. He also helped to organize safety corridors along airport runways and enact noise restrictions outside the city's airports. LaPointe Park was named in his honor in 1986, one year after his death. You can read more about Arthur and Kittie in the Spring/Summer 2020 edition of the Manor News which is archived on our website.



### The Weber Bench

Lori Weber's parents, Ralph & Anne, discovered Ravenswood Manor in the mid-'60s when they were bringing her sisters to Le Ballet Petit. They found a house on Richmond, moved in, and Lori said they had dozens of kids to play with at 'The Little Park' (Manor Park). They routinely went to 'The Little Store' (B & D Grocery, at that time, across from the park). Ralph Weber designed the stained glass windows at the Methodist Church on Wilson & Albany. Anne helped host many bazaars, potlucks, rummage sales and other activities, helping to raise money for families in need. The plaque on their bench reads In Memory of our Loving Parents, Ralph and Anne Weber.

### The Liggett Bench

The Liggett sisters dedicated their bench to their loving parents Marge and Jack. Their house was a neighborhood gathering spot for the local kids, especially in the summertime with their pool and swing set. They recalled countless hours of fun playing outside until the street lights came on. They thank their parents for the love and laughter they remember growing up here. Their plaque reads With Love for our Grammie & Bapa, The Liggett Family.



### The Wrobel Bench

Adrian Collins, a long time and current Manor resident, adopted a bench to honor her mother Marian Wrobel. Marian was one of the first female police officers in the Chicago Police Department. During her career she worked undercover for detectives and was a frequent bodyguard for visiting dignitaries, including first ladies Lady Bird Johnson and Pat Nixon. As one of the first female CPD officers, she helped redesign the women's uniform, which originally consisted of an ill-suited skirt, nylons, a purse (where her gun was stashed), a "silly" hat, and one and a half inch heels. She often worked as a plainclothes officer along the lakefront and in Lincoln



Park Zoo. The plaque on the Wrobel bench reads Manor Memories... Marian Wrobel - CPD, Yellow Dogs & Ringo. To learn more about Marian, see the Spring 2016 article in the Manor News, which is archived on our website.



#### The Brandon Bench

Melody Blackburn made a long-overdue return trip from Texas to the Manor to dedicate her bench to her parents Richard & Maryann Brandon. As they raised their family on Richmond Avenue, Maryann was THE neighborhood daycare, looking after children from 312 families over many years. She accepted everyone with open arms, both figuratively and literally as she was an avid hugger. Richard was a loving father who later in life became a Buddhist minister. Melody said the inscription "Be In Peace & Live In Wow!" was inspired by his wonderful outlook on life. He encouraged everyone to live in the present moment and be mindful of the small gifts and beauty around us. The full text of the plaque reads Be in Peace & Live in Wow! Richard & Maryann Brandon, Forever in Hearts & Hugs.



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