



# MANOR NEWS

FALL /  
WINTER

2023

## EVENT CALENDAR

### Upcoming Events:

- **January 3:**  
HPAC Meeting – 7:00 p.m.
- **January 8:**  
RMIA Board Meeting – 7:00 p.m.
- **January 16:**  
CAPS Meeting – 6:30 p.m.
- **February 7:**  
HPAC Meeting – 7:00 p.m.
- **February 12:**  
RMIA Board Meeting – 7:00 p.m.
- **February 20:**  
CAPS Meeting – 6:30 p.m.

(Continued on page 2)

## Join the RMIA Today – Expand Membership & Improve The Manor

The RMIA is turning 110 this year! We can only organize neighborhood events (e.g., the Garden Walk, Garage Sale, etc.), keep up parks, and make capital improvements via membership donations. We have big plans for 2024 – including a possible Manor Bash and neighborhood entrance pillars – and increased membership and fundraising are critical. Please consider joining — for as little as \$10 — and together, we can #BeautifyTheManor. Scan the QR Code below to join or donate:



## Lawrence Gateway Project – Meeting Tomorrow Development



### Lawrence Gateway Project – Meeting Tomorrow Development

A proposed commercial and residential apartment development at 2919 W. Lawrence Avenue – along the northern edge of Ravenswood Manor – recently engendered a lot of neighborhood feedback as zoning changes were debated.

The “Lawrence Gateway” development would be built on the gravel parking lot and triangular warehouse building where Meeting Tomorrow has operated in recent years. The developer is planning to build a five-story building (two ground-floor commercial units and forty studio, 1br, and 2br units) and an improved and landscaped parking lot for up to 20 vehicles immediately to the west.

The entire building will be built west of the alley that runs between Lawrence and Giddings, so the main “factory” building between the alley and the river will not be impacted. The existing multi-unit residential building at Lawrence and Manor will also not be impacted.

In community meetings, including a November 21, 2023 meeting hosted by Alderman An-

dre Vasquez to consider the proposed zoning changes needed for the project – the developer emphasized:

- **The unique design of the building:** Designed to fit the space and location. Including custom siding (copper finish corrugated metal) and floor to ceiling windows, setbacks for upper floors, and a four-story signature mural meant to mark the “entrance” to Albany Park and to tie into the “Confluence” project which is expected to improve Ronan Park.
- **Associated community improvements:** Including an improved alley (with greater setbacks and new paving) and an improved “angled” path at the corner of Lawrence and Manor (where there is currently a dirt path north of the apartment building).
- **Necessity of the Parking Lot:** The area proposed for the parking lot cannot be built on because of an MWRD easement (the deep tunnel runs below it). The developer also believes some parking is needed for the commercial spaces.
- **Affordable Housing.** The development, if a zoning change is approved, would have 8 af-

## 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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Shannon Condon  
Daniel Craig  
Danielle Defoe  
Doug Farr  
Tony Greif – Treasurer  
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Jane Kindra  
Rob Lott – Secretary  
Alison MacDonald  
Mina Marien – President  
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Carol McLaughlin

Matthew Muench  
Cynthia Mueller  
Deborah Robinett  
Betty Roggenkamp  
Bette Rosenstein  
Gary Smith  
Matt VanderZee



### Fall / Winter 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.

A list of events with sign-up links can be found on the RMIA's website at [ravenswoodmanor.com/events/](https://ravenswoodmanor.com/events/) or by scanning the QR Code below:



### Lawrence Gateway Project – Meeting Tomorrow Development, continued



fordable residential units interspersed with the 32 market-rate units. As mandated by the city's inclusionary housing regulations, this represents 20 percent of the total units.

- **Green Design:** The development exceeds City of Chicago requirements and will be all electric.

Although there was much positive feedback, at meetings and in social media comments, residents, including neighbors on the north side of Giddings who are directly impacted, expressed concerns. Some of the most frequently raised have included:

- **Parking.** Concerns expressed about too little parking (since the parking lot is for the commercial spaces and not for residents). Neighbors expressed concerns about the impact on street parking on Giddings and other nearby streets.



- **Congestion.** Concerns about the impact on: (a) the already difficult intersection at Lawrence and Manor and (b) traffic in the alleys adjacent to the development (including to access the parking lot).
- **Environmental factors.** Concerns about impact from potentially exacerbated drainage problems, noise (from HVAC and other mechanical features), and soil disturbances (from demolition and construction).

After collecting neighborhood feedback, Alderperson Vasquez's office ultimately approved the zoning changes needed to allow the project to continue to proceed. To further address neighborhood concerns, however, his office is commissioning a traffic study for the intersection of Lawrence and Manor and is investigating streetscape / traffic calming measures for the stretch of Lawrence adjacent to the development. If the project goes forward, the developers expect work to begin on the ground in mid-2024.



# Manor Happenings

The RMIA has been busy since the Spring / Summer edition of the Manor News! Just over the last few months the RMIA has sponsored and supported numerous neighborhood events and improvements. A few are highlighted below.



## Holiday Lighting Ceremony December 8

Awesome time at the annual lighting ceremony with neighbors, carolers, cocoa, cookies, and holiday cheer! Thanks to @dovetail\_dance\_fitness, LBP School of Dance, and @chicagochorusgirls! Happy holidays everyone!

## Annual Meeting October 24

It was great to see everyone at the RMIA annual meeting! In addition to electing new members (and thanking outgoing ones), neighbors heard updates from elected officials, a presentation from the Metropolitan Water Reclamation District, and an update on Ronan Park improvements from the North River Commission. Thanks to everyone who attended!



## Halloween & Hallowalk October 24

Halloween in the Manor was incredible as always! Thanks to everyone who decorated and participated in the RMIA's annual Hallowalk – the decorating seems to get better every year. And thanks to our wonderful sponsors:

## Concert Series All Summer

The concert series was amazing as always! So much fun to have capacity crowds at Manor Park, neighbors on blankets and lawn chairs, a packed playground, and the sound of music wafting over the neighborhood.



RMIA is one of the largest sponsors. Please consider donating to the Horner Park Advisory Council to ensure that this amazing tradition will continue: <https://bit.ly/manorconcerts> or scan the QR code.



# Meeting Tomorrow



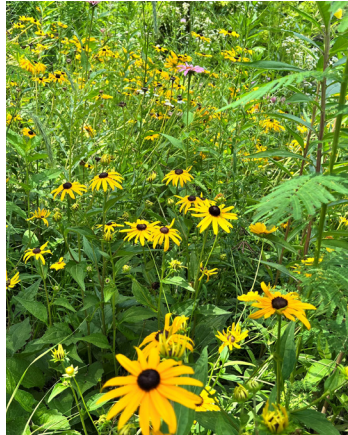
We're hiring! [meetingtomorrow.com/careers](https://meetingtomorrow.com/careers)





### Garden Walk July 23

The 67th annual Ravenswood Manor Garden Walk was lovely! Lots of beautiful gardens and an amazing opportunity to meet new neighbors. Plus the walk ended with a Manor Park concert by neighborhood band Neptunes Core. Thanks to everyone who participated and attended! And a huge thanks to Lorin Liberson and Heidi Hockburger for organizing!



### Summer Kids Bicycle Parade June 10

Dozens of neighborhood children were escorted up Manor Ave from Buffalo Park to Manor Park by a Fire Truck. All were looking festive with decorated bikes and helmets. Very few crashes! The parade ended with popsicles compliments of the RMIA in Manor Park. The weather was perfect! Image: our fearless leader – RMIA President Mina Marien – posing on the truck.



### Garage Sale May 21

As usual, thousands of shoppers descended on Manor streets and alleyways for the 2023 RMIA Garage Sale. Over 100 households participated in what continues to be one of the largest and most anticipated neighborhood garage sales on Chicago's north side.





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# Major Improvements Coming to Ronan Park



- 1 River Plaza
- 2 East Entrance w/ Elongated Stairs + Ramp
- 3 West Entrance
- 4 Garden Entrance with Truck Access
- 5 New Fence
- 6 River Outlook Platform
- 7 Pavilion with Ramp
- 8 Outdoor Classroom
- 9 Entrance Portal
- 10 Median with Fruit Trees
- 11 Farmer’s Market Tents
- 12 Central Lawn

Over the last several years, the North River Commission (NRC) has been working with the Park District, Our Great Rivers, and many other stakeholders on the exciting “Confluence Project” – and it is now getting very close to becoming reality.

The project aims to improve and activate a series of sites, primarily including the entrance to Ronan Park along Lawrence Avenue. When complete, it should vastly improve the northern “entrance” to Ravenswood Manor and provide a lush and welcoming gateway to Albany Park more broadly. We provided detail on the project in a prior edition of the Manor News, and there is more on the NRC’s website:



The project, the result of extensive conversations and meetings with neighbors, groups and stakeholders, has funding (via TIF funding), and the Park District is in the process of pricing out bids. Renderings of what the final result might look like are pictured, though subject to change based on pricing. Work on the community gardens, a part of which will be moved to accommodate the new entry to Ronan Park across from Manor Ave., is already underway.

The proposed “Meeting Tomorrow” development discussed separately is directly across the street from the entrance to Ronan Park, and contemplates a significant amount of additional trees and landscaping on the south side of Lawrence. So between the two projects, the Lawrence Avenue approach to Ravenswood Manor promises to look very different – and hopefully far better – in the very near future.





# Ruth Robbins (1918-2023)

Ruth Robbins, a resident of Ravenswood Manor for nearly 100 years, passed away on September 30th. She was 105.

In 1924, at age 6, Ruth moved with her parents and sister Elaine to a new two-flat in the 4400-block of California Avenue. They shared the building with Ruth's grandmother Eva Dveres, a Russian immigrant, and several other relatives. Ruth continued to live in this house her entire life.

In a 2014 interview, Ruth recalled playing in the muddy streets of Ravenswood Manor, before they were paved. One game, she said, was called "Three Feet Across the Mud Puddles," which involved trying to jump across the pools of water in the street.

Ruth also remembered playing in nearby Buffalo Park. "My friends and I would put our dolls in their buggies and take an umbrella and go to the park because there was water trickling down" from a large fountain in the park. (The concrete fountain, which featured several buffalo heads, was removed in the 1940s, due to severe deterioration.)

One of Ruth's favorite childhood haunts was a drugstore and soda fountain at the corner of Mozart and Montrose. "We'd go there and have our sundaes," she said, while eying the "silver beautifully-wrapped" Nancy Keith chocolate bars that were made right in the neighborhood. "I always had very expensive taste for chocolate," Ruth added. (For more on Nancy Keith Candies, see "Lela Mueller and Bess Recoschewitz: Candy Makers" in the Fall 2017 Manor News.)



*Ruth Robbins celebrates her 100th birthday in 2018.*



SEPT. 1924

*Ruth Robbins in Buffalo Park: 1924 and 2014*





MARCH, 1930

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A c.1930 advertisement for Robbins and Stauffert, a leather goods manufacturer co-owned by Ruth Robbins' father Samuel.

The first movie Ruth said she saw was "Peter Pan," a 1924 silent picture, at the Alba Theatre on Kedzie Avenue, north of Lawrence Avenue. (The theatre was torn down in the 1970s and a senior housing complex now occupies the site.) Ruth also recalled learning to drive on the streets of the newly-platted Budlong Woods subdivision, before any houses were built.

Ruth's father, Samuel, was co-owner of Robbins & Stauffert, a leather goods manufacturer. Ruth recalled that "all of my teachers (at Bateman Elementary) were so happy when they'd have me in their class, because they knew at Christmas they would get a handbag."

Ruth graduated from Von Steuben (then-Junior) High School and Roosevelt High School, before attending the University of Wisconsin-Madison. She worked for several publishing companies (e.g., Ladies Home Journal and McCall's magazine), before joining the staff of the National Association of Broadcast Employees and Technicians (NABET) in 1953. She worked as an administrative assistant to the union's president until 1992, when she retired.

"She was a one-person office for many years," says Susan Gerb, who worked with Ruth for 15 years at NABET. "I always had great respect for her," Gerb adds. "She was a very interesting woman. She had great fashion sense and she liked nice things."

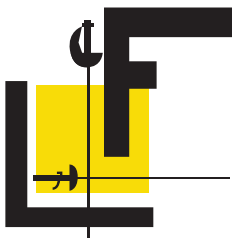
"She was the quintessential liberated woman," notes her niece, Jeffie Margolis. "She lived her life the way she wanted," which included traveling the world, either alone, with friends, or with her sister Elaine, who preceded Ruth in death.

Margolis says that her aunt did not want a funeral service. Instead, Ruth's life will be celebrated by her family next spring "when her tulips are in bloom."

The 2014 interview with Ruth Robbins was part of the Ravenswood Manor Centennial Oral History Project. In addition to Ruth, several other oral history participants have recently passed away, including John Byrne, Beth Newell Murphy, and Eileen Valentin. You can find their interviews at [ravenswoodmanor.com/manor-stories-landing](http://ravenswoodmanor.com/manor-stories-landing).

## Lincoln Square Fencing

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- **MUSKETEERS (ages 7-9)** - This program makes sure the kids have fun while learning healthy habits and lifelong enjoyment of sport!
- **YOUNG ADULT (ages 10-18)** - The Young Adult program focuses on long-term development and progressive skill acquisition to prepare for competition and even coaching.
- **ADULT (Recreational or Beginner)** - Our Adult classes allow busy professionals to enjoy a new sport, and develop their fitness at their own pace.
- **SUMMER CAMPS (ages 7-18)** - Summer Camps are week-long sessions with each week open to all levels of experience.

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Dear Ravenswood Manor Neighbor,

Each November, we reach out to encourage you to join or renew your membership with the Ravenswood Manor Improvement Association (RMIA). And this year is special - the RMIA is turning 110! We are one of the oldest continuous neighborhood organizations in Chicago. But it's not our age or charm that makes our neighborhood special - it's you. Among the over 750 households you'll find people of all ages and backgrounds — some who moved here last month and others who have lived here for over 50 years. Yet regardless of our differences, we share one thing in common— a love for Ravenswood Manor and the community that makes it stand out. Your membership dues, donations, volunteer hours, and dedication make Ravenswood Manor one of the best places to live in Chicago.

With your donated funds, the RMIA was able to do the following over the past year:

- Hold special events such as the Holiday Pergola Lighting Ceremony, Easter Egg Hunt, Garage Sale, Garden Walk, Summer Bike Parade, and HalloWalk Decoration Raffle;
- Sponsor the Horner Park Advisory Council's (HPAC) John O'Connell summer concert series;
- Represent and communicate community interests with 33rd, 40th, and 47th ward offices; state representatives; state senators; Chicago departments such as police, fire, parks, and schools; local businesses; neighboring associations; and media;
- Maintain our parks and parkways, including the redesign and upkeep of LaPointe Park, the plantings at Manor and Wilson, and volunteer work in Ravenswood Manor and Buffalo Parks;

- Plant new trees in parkways in collaboration with homeowners and Openlands;
- Inoculate dozens of mature Ash Trees against Emerald Ash Borer;
- Communicate with neighbors via our biannual printed newsletter, The Manor News, email blasts, Facebook and Instagram posts, mailings, flyers, and website articles on our website, [ravenswoodmanor.com](http://ravenswoodmanor.com).

I hope you will consider joining the RMIA at an amount that is significant to you whether it be an individual \$10 membership or a custom amount beyond our \$110 Anniversary donation. Our goal is not to raise the most money but rather to raise the most participation because it is each of our individual connections to this community that has allowed Ravenswood Manor and the RMIA to grow for the past 110 years. For more information about membership, flip over this page or visit [www.ravenswoodmanor.com/membership](http://www.ravenswoodmanor.com/membership).

Thank you for making Ravenswood Manor a wonderful place to live. We look forward to welcoming you in person at one of our events soon. Please don't hesitate to reach out via email at [president@ravenswoodmanor.com](mailto:president@ravenswoodmanor.com).

Sincerely,

Mina Marien



Our Purpose

The purpose of the Ravenswood Manor Improvement Association, founded in 1914, per its bylaws, 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.

Keep in Touch

There are many ways to stay up to date and in touch with the RMIA.

- Visit the Communications page on the RMIA website at [ravenswoodmanor.com](https://ravenswoodmanor.com)
- Follow us on Facebook at: [facebook.com/ravenswoodmanorchi](https://facebook.com/ravenswoodmanorchi)
- Follow us on Instagram [@ravenswoodmanorchi](https://instagram.com/ravenswoodmanorchi)
- Sign up for our email newsletter at [bit.ly/RMIANews](https://bit.ly/RMIANews)

Email the board at [board@ravenswoodmanor.com](mailto:board@ravenswoodmanor.com) or the president at [president@ravenswoodmanor.com](mailto:president@ravenswoodmanor.com)

Become a Member

Join the RMIA or renew your membership in one of two ways:

**Option A:** Online (preferred) - Join online, skip the mail, and enjoy the benefits of auto-renew!  
Go to [ravenswoodmanor.com/membership](https://ravenswoodmanor.com/membership) or scan the QR code to join the RMIA.  
Donations of \$50+ include a Ravenswood Manor Sticker and anything above \$100 includes a custom mug!



**Option B:** By mail - Fill in the form below, print, and mail along with your check.

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Membership Form

Choose your Membership:

- ☐ Anniversary- \$110
- ☐ Sustaining - \$50
- ☐ Household - \$25
- ☐ Individual- \$10

Please return this form with a check made out to: RMIA, PO Box 25486, Chicago, IL 60625

Membership runs from **November 1, 2023 to October 31, 2024**. Your personal information will be used only by RMIA for communications with you. RMIA will not sell or share your information.

Name(s) \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

Email 1 \_\_\_\_\_

Email 2 \_\_\_\_\_

Year you moved to Ravenswood Manor: \_\_\_\_\_

☐

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## 25 new trees in Ravenswood Manor!

Dozens of neighbors volunteered to help plant 22 new parkway trees in Ravenswood Manor. Even Alderperson Andre Vasquez dug in -- but what is he doing with that axe?!?

Thanks to Openlands, the RMIA, Matt Muench & Debbie Robinett, Something Sweet Donuts (delicious donated donut holes!), and most importantly to all the volunteers who dug holes, mulched, watered, and helped keep the Manor's canopy green!

This annual program has resulted in over 125 trees being added to Ravenswood Manor parkways since 2013. This is critical to help replace

trees that are removed as a result of age, storms, and disease. Please consider adding a parkway tree in 2024 if you have space -- together we can: #BeautifyTheManor



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# Manor Ash Trees Protected Until 2026

Thank you, Ravenswood Manor! Thanks to your generosity, the RMIA raised enough money to once again inoculate and protect 99 of our beautiful Ash Trees!

The inoculation protects Ash trees against the Emerald Ash Borer, a highly invasive beetle from north-east Asia that feeds on ash species and will kill every tree it infests. Ravenswood Manor has approximately 108 Ash trees in the parkways. Of these, 99 were identified as healthy enough to save, and were inoculated in May. This treatment protects the trees for 2-3 years, so the trees should be protected until approximately spring of 2026.



As most of you know, the City of Chicago abandoned its inoculation efforts of the city's Ash Trees as a budgetary decision in 2018. There has been renewed discussion about a city-wide program, so there is hope that the city could start inoculations again before 2026.

NOTE: Take a careful look at the Ash trees next time you take a walk. The Ash trees were tagged when inoculated, so you can easily identify which Ash trees are being treated.

Thanks to @Lorin Liberson for spearheading!





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Her heart and home both lie in the Ravenswood Manor area, where she frequently helps both buyers and sellers achieve impressive results. **Scan the QR code** to hear what your neighbors say about working with Deb and her team!



### Deb Hess

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