



MANOR NEWS

FALL /
WINTER

2024

EVENT CALENDAR

- **December 13:** Pergola Lighting, Manor Park at 6pm

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.

Join the RMIA Today

To join or renew, go to ravenswoodmanor.com/membership or scan the QR code. Donations of \$100 or more include a custom gift!

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
- Follow us on Facebook at: facebook.com/ravenswoodmanorchi
- Follow us on Instagram @[@ravenswoodmanorchi](https://instagram.com/ravenswoodmanorchi)
- Sign up for our email newsletter at bit.ly/RMIANews
- Email the board at board@ravenswoodmanor.com or the president at president@ravenswoodmanor.com



TUTA Theater Company Celebrates 10 Years of Pushing Boundaries in Ravenswood Manor

By Rob Lott



Attempts On Her Life, Photo by Candice Conner of Oomphotography

The Utopian Theatre Asylum – better known to neighbors and audiences as TUTA – recently celebrated the 10-year anniversary of its move into Ravenswood Manor. The theater company marked the milestone with a blockbuster production of the show *Attempts On Her Life* presented throughout the summer to audiences who filled the cozy space just north of the Brown Line tracks at 4670 North Manor Avenue.

TUTA co-founders Zeljko and Natasha Djukic immigrated to the United States from Serbia in 1990. They were living and working in Washington DC when in 1996 they established the new theater company inspired by the Eastern European traditions of experimental productions and deep explorations of human psychology.

By labelling their company an asylum, the founders sought to evoke the fraught yet hopeful journey of many eastern European artists seeking refuge and new opportunities in the US. The reference to utopia also echoed dreams, aspirations, and impossible ideals brought to life on stage through theater.

TUTA moved to Chicago in 2002 and for many years occupied a space on Fulton Street. Over time, however, the company's leaders increasingly felt that the location had become difficult for both performers and audiences to reach. So in 2014 the company moved to the small, yet flexible space on North Manor Avenue that it has called home to this day. (The storefront had previously been occupied by Chicago Shimp, the

About the RMIA

Manor News is published twice a year by the Ravenswood Manor Improvement Association (RMIA). Hard copies are distributed by hand to households and businesses throughout the neighborhood and a digital version is available at ravenswood-manor.com.

Established in 1914, the RMIA is now a 501(c)(3) 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 Members

Amanda Aslam	Matthew Muench
Shannon Condon	Cynthia Mueller
Daniel Craig	Deborah Robinett
Danielle Defoe	Betty Roggenkamp
Tony Greif - Treasurer	Bette Rosenstein
Alison Howlett	Matt VanderZee
Rob Judd - Vice President	
Jane Kindra	
Liz Kores	
Rob Lott - Secretary	
Mina Marien - President	
Carol McLaughlin	



TUTA Theater Company Celebrates 10 Years Of Pushing Boundaries In Ravenswood Manor, continued

region’s only Japanese-American newspaper publishing articles in both English and Japanese. The space became available when the paper moved operations to Arlington Heights.)

TUTA’s leaders liked Ravenswood Manor’s proximity to public transit as well as the many nearby diverse and vibrant communities including those in Lincoln Square, Albany Park, and Irving Park. Aileen McGroddy, TUTA’s Co-Artistic Director, described the location as “a real nexus for our community.” For the last ten years, McGroddy explained, the company has used the Ravenswood Manor storefront, “as a rehearsal space, a performance space, and a meeting space.” An adjacent garage allows the company to store once and future sets, props, and costumes.

Manor residents are proud to have such a creative, boundary-pushing artistic entity in their midst. For the last ten years, they have met and



TUTA company members in August 2014 as they moved into the Manor

engaged with the many actors, writers, and stagehands who comprise TUTA’s company, often found buying lunch at First Slice or grilling in the alley. In the moments leading up to showtimes, the box office takes the form of a friendly company member sitting at a desk stationed on the sidewalk outside the front door. During major neighborhood events such as the garage sale and Manor Bash, TUTA has made its bathroom available to neighbors needing, in the words of McGroddy, “a very basic place of refuge.”

TUTA’s summer 2024 production of *Attempts On Her Life* -- a surreal, dramatic reflection on themes of consumption, media, and identity -- represented a return to in-person performance after COVID-19 had put such productions on hold. Chicago Tribune critic Chris Jones described it as “a most welcome return.” He continued: “I’m very glad you are back, TUTA. The scene has been the more impoverished for your long absence.”

Next up for the company is a production of Thornton Wilder’s *The Long Christmas Dinner* which TUTA describes as “nine decades long in just One Act,” a journey showcasing the lives of several generations of the Bayard family. The show will be performed from November 26 - December 29, 2024 in the Bramble Arts Loft in Andersonville. Tickets to this production and more details about past TUTA productions can be found on their website: <https://www.tutatheatre.org>



Urban Wetlands Take Root in River Park

By Danielle Defoe

New urban wetlands have been developed near the north river fork in River Park. The islands are nestled along the west bank of the river just north of the Argyle Bridge. This effort was funded via the National Fish and Wildlife Service’s Chi-Cal River Grant in partnership with the Park District and North River Commission.

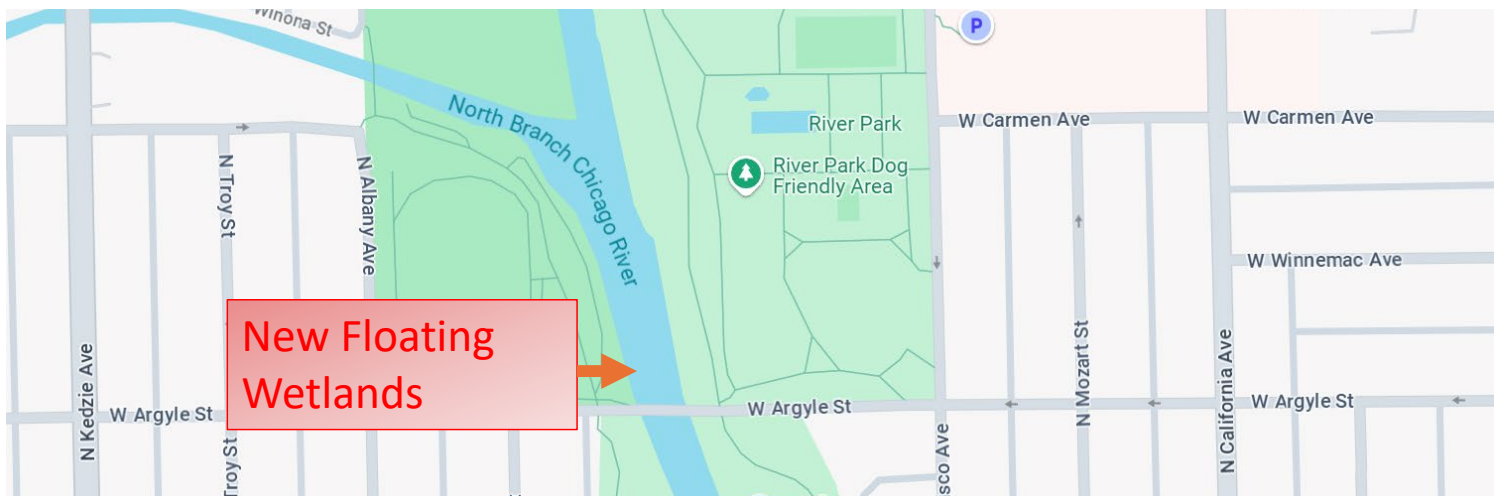
The island structures come from a Scottish company, Biomatrix Water, and are constructed with a frame of pontoons. On top of the frame there is landscape fabric with a mixture of mulch and lightweight clay and gravel to provide a growing environment for native plants. The structures are anchored to the bottom of the river, allowing them to rise and fall with the water levels. The structures are expected to last about 20 to 25 years.

“The islands are useful, especially in urban environments, because they are resilient and stable systems that can host the types of plants that should exist along diverse river shorelines, which are extremely rare in the city,” said Phil Nicodemus, Head of Biology with Urban Rivers.

About 20 different native wetland/mesic plant species and a few trees and shrubs are growing on the islands. They provide areas for wildlife to nest or rest, and the plant root systems grow down into the water where algae and microbes can grow on them and fish can hide or lay eggs in them.

“It’s a great way to add in-stream habitat that stays out of the way of boats, fills a gap in the ecosystem, and removes some pollutants,” said Nicodemus.

**Photos provided by Phil Nicodemus, Head of Biology with Urban Rivers*





The Manor Shows Off and Lets Loose at 2024 Bash

By Liz Kores

Our beloved Ravenswood Manor transformed into a vibrant celebration on August 24, 2024 for the Manor Bash, marking the 110th anniversary of the RMIA. And what a day it was! The sun shone brightly, casting a perfect summer glow over the festivities and making it a day to remember for neighbors old and new.

The fun kicked off early with “Mini ManorBash,” a playdate in Manor Park for our littlest neighbors. Kids giggled and played as parents and caregivers chatted, setting the tone for a day filled with commu-

nity spirit. The excitement continued with the Bike & Scooter Parade, where kids adorned their rides with sparkly decorations and zoomed down Eastwood Avenue, cheers echoing through the air.

Closed to car traffic, the streets around Manor Park burst at the seams with free activities for all. Families enjoyed face painting, crafts, a BYO Bubble Bash and not one, but three bounce houses. For those looking for a bit of friendly competition, pickleball, putt putt and a bags tournament offered plenty of excitement, while marshmallow golf kept the



laughter rolling. Adventurous spirits explored a scavenger hunt and marveled at a circus wheel demo, while the paleta cart and lemonade stand kept everyone cool and energized.

Neighbors gathered at the pergola for a series of performances, kicked off by the LBP Dance school. Later, The New Cats brought their bluegrass vibes, filling the park with foot-tapping tunes, while The Red Roses rounded out the evening with their alternative and indie hits that had everyone singing along.

RMIA president Mina Marien reflected on the significance of the day: “We live in a neighborhood like no other. We are truly lucky to be surrounded by such a wonderful community full of kind people, creative minds, outgoing spirits, and dedicated volunteers. We could not have pulled off such an amazing event without your hard work and reciprocal love for our community. Thank you for all that you did to make the event a success, and thank you for all that you do each day to make Ravenswood Manor one of the best neighborhoods in the city.”

A special shoutout goes to our organizing partner, the Horner Park Advisory Council, and the generous sponsors who helped to make ManorBash possible: Anderson Coverage Group, Angelo’s Wine Bar, Bru Coffeeworks, Chicago Counseling Services, Deb Hess & Partners | Compass, Liquid Death, Loving Care Lincoln Square, Lyon Communications, Narloch Piano Studio, Smart Association Management, Somethin’ Sweet Donuts, Susan & John O’Connell, Titan Builders, and Windy City Trivia.

As Manor Bash 2024 came to a close, neighbors left with full hearts, cherished memories, and a renewed sense of community. Here’s to many more years of celebrating our incredible Ravenswood Manor neighborhood!



Looking Back on The Annual Garage Sale – May 19, 2024

More than 130 households registered and participated in the annual Ravenswood Manor garage sale bringing bargain hunters from across the city. The streets and alleyways were buzzing with shoppers who pulled wagons and carried full bags with their precious finds.



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**Looking Back on the
Ravenswood Manor
Garden Walk
– July 28, 2024**

Twenty neighbors opened up their gardens to visitors this year. Despite sporadic rain showers, at least 300 guests made their way from home to home, chatting it up and smelling the blossoms. The event also included a free live concert in Manor Park performed by the Horner Park Jazz Band. Thanks to all the gardeners for sharing their beautiful spaces with the community. And thanks to the volunteers for making the walk happen!





Looking Back on the RMIA Annual Meeting – October 24, 2024

Dozens of neighbors gathered for the RMIA Annual Meeting at Waters Elementary School on October 24th. RMIA President Mina Marien provided updates on RMIA events and other neighborhood business. Members then voted on the new board set to take office in November 2024. Neighbors then heard from Alison Murphy, Director of Communications & Development for 40th Ward Alderman Andre Vasquez as

well as representatives from CDOT regarding proposed traffic updates within the Manor. They talked about the findings of recent traffic studies, then presented some potential traffic mitigation and safety solutions. Several neighbors expressed their opinions about the proposals. Alderman Andre Vasquez was also in attendance and provided a few updates, including on participatory budgeting.



A Note from the RMIA President: Join Us

By Mina Marien

On November 1st the Ravenswood Manor Improvement Association began a new membership cycle that runs through October 31, 2025.

Whether you are new to the neighborhood or lived here 50 years, I ask that you consider joining or renewing your membership today to fund the events and initiatives that improve the lives of all residents. We are a volunteer, non-profit 501(c)(3) organization which depends solely on membership donations to do our community work. This past year we used our funds to:

- Hold special events such as the Holiday Pergola Lighting Ceremony, Easter Egg Hunt, Garage Sale, Manor Bash, Bike Parade, and HalloWalk Decoration Raffle;
- Organize an annual meeting in October and Semi-Annual meeting in April to provide community updates;
- Sponsor the Horner Park Advisory Council's (HPAC) John O'Connell summer concert series;
- 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 new plantings at Manor and Wilson, and volunteer work in Ravenswood Manor and Buffalo Parks;
- Provide access to historic centennial plaques for homes turning 100 in or before 2024;
- 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.

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. Any amount helps support the community that we all love. For more information about membership, flip over this page or visit www.ravenswoodmanor.com/membership.

Nota Bene: Last year we switched membership platforms to provide a more user-friendly and fully digital experience for registration. You may or may not have placed your membership on-auto renew. Please check your membership status by visiting our Join It page, which is linked on our membership page at bit.ly/memrmia. If you have any questions, please reach out to membership@ravenswoodmanor.com.

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.



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*Our membership year began on November 1. Scan this QR code to renew your membership today!





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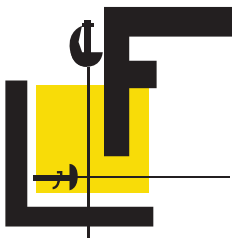
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As a lifelong Chicagoan with over 33 years of deep-rooted real estate experience, I am proud to serve our Ravenswood Manor community. My dedication to providing unmatched insights and strategic guidance has propelled my career sales across Chicagoland to exceed \$850 million. Living and working in the Ravenswood Manor area, I was honored to be named The Top Neighborhood Producer in 2023 by The Chicago Association of Realtors. Over the past two years alone, my team and I have successfully facilitated dozens of local home sales, enhancing our neighborhood one family at a time.

Discover why your neighbors trust me with their real estate needs. **Scan the QR code** below to listen to their experiences and learn how I can help you achieve your property goals.



Deb Hess

Founder of Deb Hess & Partners
Licensed Real Estate Broker

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Jill Peet Saponaro been a resident in Ravenswood Manor for more then 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 Park Pergola Lighting Ceremony

**Friday, December 13 @ 6:00PM
Manor Park Pergola**

More details, including volunteer opportunities, coming soon. Follow us on social media for updates.