

# WANT NEWS

## West Andersonville Neighbors Together

JUNE  
2013

We are a not-for-profit organization committed to the betterment of the neighborhood through development of community spirit and group involvement. The boundaries of WANT are the north side of **Foster**, the south side of **Bryn Mawr**, the west side of **Clark**, and the east side of **Ravenswood**.

VOL. XXXLI  
NO. 2

### FOSTER



JUNE 25



### GENERAL MEETING

WANT's next General Meeting will be held June 25th at 7:30pm at Ebenezer Lutheran Church. Come to the basement of the church, through the entrance on Foster near Paulina. We anticipate updates on issues raised at our last meeting, including reports on traffic related to local schools, Trumbull Elementary, and the development of the Rosehill Park, as well as information about upcoming events. Everyone is welcome! We want to hear the opinions of all members of our community, regardless of their membership in WANT, so please encourage your neighbors to attend!

CLARK STREET



### Block Party!!



**Sunday, 21 July 2013**

Everyone's invited, so come join the fun at the first annual WANT block party! All are welcome. Grab your lawn chair and your cooler, your ball and your bat and your bike and your kids, and find us dead center of the 'hood on Balmoral between Ravenswood and Paulina, 1:00p.m until 7:00. We'll have a bounce house for kids, ice cream social mid-afternoon, and hamburger/hotdog grilling, all courtesy of WANT. Check out the website for more details!



### June 29 Annual Yard Sale

*Sign up now!*

The WANT annual yard sale is coming up! It will take place **Saturday, June 29**, 9 am to 4 pm. The \$10 fee covers advertising, signage, and inclusion on maps of participating homes that we'll distribute. To be included on the map, you must call Dena before June 21. If you're not yet a member of WANT, join now and the fee is waived! Call Dena to sign up (773.275.9974); make sure to leave your name, address, phone number, and e-mail address. Last year's yard sale was a great success, and we expect even better this year.



### WANT'S NEW WEB\*SITE

WANT has recently launched a new website at [www.westandersonville.com](http://www.westandersonville.com)! Please visit and let us know what you think. Our new format will be easier to update, so we hope to be able to bring you more up-to-the-minute news on what's happening in West Andersonville. It also allows for greater interaction with users (including the ability to comment on posts). Big thanks to Jude and Clare Reter for creating our new website! Many thanks to Verena Block for her previous stint as webmaster for WANT.

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## Check Out Our New Look West Andersonville Gardens

Maryon Gray, Chair, West Andersonville Garden Committee

West Andersonville Gardens, our community garden along Ravenswood, has a new look. Please take a stroll through the garden from Balmoral to Berwyn (or vice versa) and check it out. We've redesigned and replanted the area east of the path at Summerdale, and new shrubs and groundcover will give the area a unified look once they settle in. In addition we planted ground cover at the north end of the garden in front of two areas that were redesigned last year.

All this was possible because of the hard work of our wonderful volunteers who came on March 23rd and raked up bags of leaves (as well as composting some) and on April 28 to prune, weed and prepare one of the areas for planting.

Our planting was completed on May 19th. A special thanks goes to the manager of **Walgreens at Clark and Catalpa**, who organized associates to volunteer and donated leaf bags and refreshments.

Another special thanks goes to the students and faculty of **St. Gregory the Great High School**. In fulfillment of their community service hours they spent the afternoon of May 9th digging up areas to be replanted, digging out compost to enrich those areas and turning the compost pile, as well as digging out some pesky dandelions. All this was done with enthusiasm and good humor while saving us older volunteers from aching backs!

We always need new and returning volunteers to keep West Andersonville Gardens beautiful. We hope you'll be able to join:

- Saturday, June 15th      • Sunday, July 14th
- Saturday, August 10th      • Sunday, September 8th

Please join us for one or all of these important workdays. All weekend workdays are from 9:00 a.m. to Noon. In addition to our weekend workdays, we beautify the garden on two weekday evenings each month (a Monday and a Thursday). We meet at 6:30 p.m. and work until dark. These work evenings are a great way to relax from your regular work week, hang out with your neighbors and create a thing of beauty. Our evenings are:



Mondays: June 10, July 8 and August 19; Thursdays: June 27 and July 25.

If you'd like to volunteer, just come to Ravenswood at Summerdale east of the METRA tracks on one of our workdays. No gardening experiences is necessary. Tools will be provided. Come when you can; leave when you must. To learn more, contact us at westandersonvilleneighbors2@gmail.com and someone from our project will e-mail you back.

West Andersonville Gardens was created in 1995 with a grant from Greencorps, a program of the City of Chicago Department of Environment. We're in our 18th year!! The garden has been maintained and improved for those 18 years by community volunteers with occasional assistance from Greencorps and the Chicago Botanic Garden. We always need new (and returning) volunteers to keep the garden beautiful. PLEASE JOIN US!



### Trumbull School to Close

In a mass vote on May 22, the Chicago Board of Education voted unanimously to close Trumbull Elementary School (corner of Foster and Ashland), along with 48 other schools. Reasons initially given were high maintenance costs and under-utilized classrooms. The school has been undergoing a turnaround, though, with a new principal, newly elected local school council and dramatically increasing test scores.

Local School Council member Ali Burke was part of the fight to contest the Chicago Public Schools' characterization of Trumbull as half empty; rather, she said, it's at more than 80 percent capacity when you account for the special-ed kids. The large Special Education (SPED) program (33%, according to the CPS) was inadequately taken into account in the utilization assessment for Trumbull: when its SPED program is accounted for, the school is at 80% utilization. Months ago, CPS said it would not close schools that were at a capacity of 70 percent and higher. Further, federal and state regulations mandate strict class size limits of 7 or 13 per room, Burke said, as quoted in the *Chicago Sun-Times* on April 14, 2013, so by being "compliant with state and federal mandates, we're being punished."

According to LincolnSquarePatch.com on May 22, Alderman Patrick O'Connor spoke against the school's closure. O'Connor argued that the figure quoted by CPS on maintenance of the building was largely exaggerated.

A group of parents — backed by the Chicago Teachers Union — want to delay the closures and pursue this fight in court. They say in two class-action lawsuits that black and disabled students will be unfairly affected by the closures. Judge John Z. Lee declined request to issue a preliminary injunction against the closures before the school year ends, but he said he would hear evidence at a hearing starting July 16.

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## *St. Gregory the Great Woman of the Year 2013* **Frieda Mkrtshjan**

Long time West Andersonville resident Frieda Mkrtshjan has been named "Woman of the Year" by the Catholic Council of Women of St. Gregory the Great Catholic Church.

On Saturday May 11th, several members of St. Gregory the Great Catholic Church attended a banquet hosted by Catholic Council of Women at White Eagle Banquet Hall in Niles, Illinois, to honor fourteen "Women of the Year" nominated by their respective Chicago area parishes. Also in attendance were ten members of Mrs. Mkrtshjan's family.



Frieda Mkrtshjan, mother of seven, was recognized for her dedicated service on the Social Care Committee of St. Gregory which provides visits to shut-ins

and Thanksgiving and Christmas care packages for those in need. She was presented with a pin and a plaque which was inscribed with these words: "A Woman of Distinction in a Journey of Faith with Love." We are all very proud of her and inspired by her service to others.

## *Get to Know WANT's Business Members* **Dream Big's Lisa Lang**

Since 4th grade, Lisa Lang knew there were two things she wanted to be: a teacher and an actor. Family and friends were always asking, why not put the two things together? Lang didn't foresee creating Dream Big Performing Arts Workshop, an Andersonville-based business that now teaches students ages 2-18 in afterschool classes, in-school residencies, camps, birthday parties and performance opportunities.

Lang started as an elementary school teacher, but before long, she created a K-4th grade drama program at her school. Within two years, Lang's success inspired her to offer more classes to the larger community, and her company, Dream Big, was born. Her first class in January 2006 in Andersonville had just four students. The first years

were a slow struggle, but steady growth in interest, enrollment and enthusiasm convinced Lang to stick to it. In 2007, she implemented programming at Peirce School, which, shortly after, grew into more schools. In 2008, she added week-long drama-themed summer camps and she's been adding opportunities ever since.

Lang credits much of Dream Big's success to partnerships. First Free Church in Andersonville is a popular summer camp location. First Free also hosted Dream Big's collaborative effort during last fall's teacher strike to provide emergency childcare. Chase Park nearby has allowed Dream Big to offer additional classes at a lower cost. Source 4, a consortium of four separate businesses, provides day-long and week-long camps in which students rotate through activities.

Lang concludes, "Not only do we make sure we are delivering the best drama programming around through best practice and hiring teachers who work amazingly well with kids to develop character, confidence, and collaboration skills, but we focus on what really

matters by listening to the needs and interests of our students and parents, building relationships, and staying flexible.... All the other things have a way of falling into place.”

Today, Lang employs around 20 teachers a session, teaching over 30 classes to approximately 300 students per week, all while running Dream Big out of her home in Andersonville. Follow all the company’s new partnerships and plans at <http://www.dreambigperformingarts.com>.

## *Living Treasures of Edgewater, 2013*

Maryon Gray and Ron Massengill

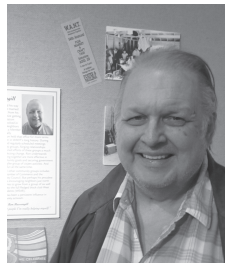
Two past presidents of WANT, Maryon Gray and Ron Massengill, have been selected as 2013 Living Treasures by the Edgewater Historical Society. Maryon was awarded this distinction for her work over the years with the West Andersonville Gardens. Ron served many years on the WANT Board and other Edgewater organizations and was instrumental in founding West Edgewater Area Residents (WEAR).



The Edgewater Historical Society’s current exhibit focusing on 25 Living Treasures runs until the end of the year, and can be viewed weekends from 1 to 4 pm. Stop by to learn more about Edgewater Treasures and listen to their oral histories, which capture their efforts to improve their

neighborhood.

Maryon Gray will also be performing on her clarinet again on August 29 for “Summer Nights in Edgewater,” a program featuring local musicians every Thursday evening during the summer from 6 to 8 pm in Edgewater Historical Society’s garden. The free festivities include refreshments and a fun time. All ages are welcome and the garden is pet-friendly. Save the date!



## *Land Use and Zoning Quarterly Report*

*Tom Simms, Committee Co-chair*

There has been no new development with the Edgewater Medical Center. The Waveland Partner Group, which submitted a plan acceptable to the city, has not yet found a developer to proceed with the plan.

As noted in the last WANT newsletter, the LUZ committee did approve a plan for the former Ravensweed Pub. A building permit has been posted on the site describing the three story, six unit condo building. As of this date, construction has not begun.

Traffic congestion on Ravensweed during Montessori School dismissal was discussed at the last WANT general meeting, and a solution has not yet been resolved. A modified dismissal plan by the school failed to relieve the congestion. The WANT board continues to work with the school and the Chicago Police Department to solve the problem.

The Trumbull School will be closed June 24th. The building cannot be a charter school this coming school year. It will be vacated and locked up

LUZ continues to work through the alderman’s office to monitor construction sites and abandoned buildings within the WANT area. If you are concerned about new construction, remodeling or abandoned property, please contact LUZ.

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## WHAT'S ON, IN AND AROUND

### **Midsommarfest Is Back!**

Andersonville's popular annual street festival will be held June 7-9 all along Clark Street. This year marks the forty-eighth Midsommarfest! In addition to delicious food and drink, kids' activities, arts and crafts, and shopping, there is another great line-up of music. In keeping with Andersonville's Swedish history, Saturday night features ABBA cover band ABBA Salute! The line-up all weekend has a fantastic and eclectic mix of festival favorites, new acts, kids' entertainment, Swedish folk performances, and more, with five stages along Clark. Check [www.westandersonville.com](http://www.westandersonville.com) for a full list of performers and locations.

### **Rosehill Park--Advisory group forming**

West Ridge Nature Preserve will comprise 20 acres of former Rosehill Cemetery property that was purchased by the city in 2011, the largest lot purchased—for \$7.7 million—by the city in decades. A group working to preserve, protect, improve, and promote the site in an environmentally responsible manner for the benefit of current and future generations and our native plant and animal species is forming. Get involved and stay informed: join their open group on Facebook (search

### **Farmers Market—**

Andersonville's popular farmers' market is slated to start its 2013 season on June 5th. The market will run every Wednesday from 3pm-8pm on Berwyn between Ashland and Clark until September 4th. Many of our favorite vendors will be back in Andersonville this summer; check out [www.andersonville.org](http://www.andersonville.org) for a full list. And be sure to stop by the market on June 26th – WANT will be the featured sponsor that week and will have a booth at the market!

Sadly, the organizer of the Sunday farmers market at St. Gregory the Great Church lot has decided to pass on running it in 2013. Thanks to organizer Dianne Daleiden, St. Gregory's, and the volunteers for all her hard work the last couple years.

### **Andersonville Sidewalk Sale**

The stores of Chicago's Andersonville neighborhood will be lining the sidewalks with great bargains during the annual Andersonville Summer Sidewalk Sale on Friday, July 26, Saturday, July 27, and Sunday, July 28, 2013. Participating merchants will stretch from 5000 to 5800 North Clark Street and include old favorites and neighborhood newcomers. The Women & Children First Used Book Sale will be held on Saturday, July 27 and Sunday, July 28.

### **Energy rebates still available**

Energy Impact Illinois (which presented at the December WANT meeting) is a program funded through stimulus money from the Department of Energy. They offer discounted energy assessments through vetted contractors and significant rebates to help people make energy-efficiency upgrades to their homes. Funding expires at the end of the summer. If you own a single family home, 2-4 unit apartment building or a townhouse, contact local organizer Zoe Bottger at (312) 404-2945 or [zoe@energyimpactillinois.org](mailto:zoe@energyimpactillinois.org) for more information or [www.energyimpactillinois.org](http://www.energyimpactillinois.org).

*Summer in West Andersonville!*

*Midsommarfest, June 7-9*

*WANT Yard Sale, June 29*

*WANT Block Party, July 21*



## ENJOY LOCAL THEATER!

### **The Neo-Futurists**

5153 N. Ashland Ave. \* [www.neofuturists.org](http://www.neofuturists.org)

*Too Much Light*, Fri.-Sat. 11:30 pm; Sun. 7:00 pm

*The Miss Neo Pagant*, conceived by Megan Mercier and directed by Stephanie Shaw,  
through June 22

### **Quest Theatre Ensemble**

The Blue Theater, 1609 W. Gregory (at St. Gregory Church campus)

[www.questensemble.org](http://www.questensemble.org)

### **The Raven Theatre**

6157 N. Clark St. \* [www.raventheatre.com](http://www.raventheatre.com)

*Brighton Beach Memoirs*, by Neil Simon, directed by Cody Estle

Saturdays at 7:30pm, Sundays at 3:00pm through June 29

### **Redtwist Theatre**

1044 W. Bryn Mawr \* [www.redtwist.org](http://www.redtwist.org)

*Reverb*, by Leslye Headland, directed by Jonathan Berry

Chicago premiere! May 18-June 23

### **Rivendell Theatre Ensemble**

5779 N. Ridge Ave. \* [www.rivendelltheatre.org](http://www.rivendelltheatre.org)

*The Electric Baby*, by Stefanie Zdravec, directed by Tara Mallen

May 16-June 22

### **Steep Theatre Co.**

1115 W. Berwyn Ave. \* [www.steeptheatre.com](http://www.steeptheatre.com)

*The Knowledge*, by John Donnelly, directed by Jonathan Berry

Run extended! Apr. 18-June 23

## MUSEUMS

### **Edgewater Historical Society**

5358 N. Ashland • 773.506.4849

*Those Were the Days* Radio Players, opens May 4, *Treasures of Edgewater*

[www.edgewaterhistory.org](http://www.edgewaterhistory.org)

### **Swedish American Museum**

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For info, contact Elizabeth Dowling ([eliza9dowling@gmail.com](mailto:eliza9dowling@gmail.com))

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