

Volume 27, No. 4
Fall 2011

Upcoming Events

Second Saturday
at the Society Lectures

Saturdays
October 15
November 12
December 10
from 10:30 a.m. to noon
at the Society

Save the Date for
Open House Chicago
October 15-16

Board of Directors
Monthly Meetings

All meetings are held on
the fourth Monday of
each month at 7 p.m. at
the Society—1447 W.
Morse, and are open to
all members

October 24
November 28
December 26

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The Historian

Preserving & Promoting Neighborhood History

Welcome to openhousechicago

by Hank Morris

Your Society was approached by the Chicago Architecture Foundation (CAF) to designate this year's North Side sites for the new openhousechicago event, which previously has been held in London, New York City, Toronto, Tel Aviv, Dublin, Barcelona, Galway, Rome, Melbourne, Slovenia, Milwaukee, Denver, Glasgow, Niagra, Winnipeg, and other locations.

This year, 2011, openhouse comes to Chicago and the Rogers Park/West Ridge Historical Society is in on the ground floor! CAF sent out requests for proposals to many local organizations to find those that could help make this annual event a success. Our proposal won for the North Side!

The openhouse concept was originally developed in London nearly 20 years ago and has become an international phenomenon with programs in many cities worldwide; branded as either "Open House" or "Doors Open". No matter the name, the concept is the same; large scale, free, public events aimed at providing access to outstanding places & spaces (many not usually open to the public) as well as programs and activities that help draw participants into a better appreciation of the city and the role that the architecture, design, engineering, and planning play in supporting quality-of-life and economic vibrancy.



The Cat's Cradle bed and breakfast on Sheridan is one of the many north side venues featured this year. (Photo courtesy of Chicago Architecture Foundation)

Visitors will have unprecedented access to some of the really interesting locations in Rogers Park, West Ridge, and Edgewater—21 in all.

see OHC, page 5

Complete our Survey and Win Fabulous Prizes!

Your suggestions and ideas are valuable to us, and we hope to capture them with our survey, which is printed in the center of this issue and is also available online at <http://survey.rpwrhs.org>. Everyone responding to the survey by Monday, October 31 will be entered into a raffle, with prizes made available through the generous donations of the Greenleaf Art Center, Lifeline Theatre and the Mayne Stage.

see SURVEY, next page

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The Historian

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Lily Pagratis Venson (1925-2011)

Long-time Society member, Lily Pagratis Venson, 86, passed away after a brief illness on June 27. She was born to the late Rose Desila, and Peter Pagratis, and was a life-long resident of Chicago. She was an award-winning journalist and feature writer for Lerner Newspapers from 1963 to 1973. She was nominated for a Pulitzer Prize for more than 100 articles over eight years, on a successful community crusade to preserve 100 acres of private golf land, to establish Warren Park in the West Ridge community of Chicago. She was awarded a plaque for excellence in reporting on this crusade from Governor Richard Ogilvie.

Lily served as Public Information Officer for Cook County Hospital and Public Information Officer for the Illinois Department of Children and Family Services from 1973 to 1991, during which time she received awards for magazine articles from the Illinois Press Women's

Association and the National Federation of Press Women. Lily loved travel, literature, writing, her many friends, and her family.

Wife of the late Rogers Park pioneer, George J. Venson (1910-1980's); she is survived by her daughter Virginia Venson (Paul) Greninger; son Perry (Jessica); brother Peter S. Pagratis; grandchildren Alethea, and George; and nieces, and nephews Karen Venson, Dr. John Nicholas Venson, Michael Venson, and John Peter Venson. Interment was in Elmwood Cemetery. In lieu of flowers, the family requested that donations be sent to St. Andrew Church or the American Cancer Society, Illinois Division, 225 N. Michigan Ave., Suite 1200, Chicago, IL 60601.

The RP/WRHS is privileged to have printed articles by Lily in previous *Historians*, and to have some of her own hand-written memoirs that talk about her early life here in Rogers Park

She is already missed.

SURVEY, from page 1

Last December, the Rogers Park/West Ridge Historical Society moved to 1447 West Morse Avenue near the Red Line stop. Since then, we have had over 1,500 visitors. Our regularly scheduled Second Saturday series has been a popular addition to our events schedule. In addition, we are partnering with the Chicago Architecture Foundation to coordinate the North Side events for Open House Chicago coming in October (see cover story).

The success of these efforts could not be possible without the support of our members, volunteers, guests, and friends. But as we continue to develop more programs, we need to understand the needs of our members, as well as the interests of the larger Rogers Park / West Ridge community and interested parties from outside our community.

To better serve such a broad constituency, we have prepared a brief survey, which you can find in the center of this issue. We hope you will take a few minutes to complete and mail it. Or, simply go to <http://survey.rpwrhs.org> and complete the survey online.

As an incentive, those 18 years of age or older completing the survey and providing their name and contact information will be entered in a drawing to be held at our November Second Saturday event—10:30 to noon at the Society's offices at 1447 West Morse Avenue. We'd like to thank the following local businesses for donating these wonderful prizes:

- **First Prize: A free class from the Greenleaf Art Center** (a \$90 to \$200 value)
- **Second Prize: Dinner and a show from the Mayne Stage** (a \$50 value for the meal and two free tickets to a show)
- **Third Prize: An evening of theater for two**, provided by Lifeline Theatre (up to a \$70 value)
- **Two Fourth Prizes: A free Family Membership to the Society or a copy of one of the Society's award-winning books** (a \$25 to \$35 value)

So let your voice be heard and help the Society better serve our community. It is your Society, and we can't do what we do without you!



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From the President's Desk

by Paul Bluestone

Welcome to our Fall, 2011 issue of *The Historian*. Perhaps it is redundant to say that this issue is an historic one, but as you can see, our newsletter has undergone some big changes. This issue is larger than previous ones, printed in full color and includes advertisements from individuals, businesses and organizations in our area who have generously stepped up to help support the work of our Historical Society. We've made these changes to celebrate the citywide **openhousechicago** public building tour, to be held on October 15th and 16th at over 100 sites throughout the city, 21 of them right here in Rogers Park and West Ridge. We hope you enjoy these changes and we welcome your comments.

openhousechicago

Our Historical Society is playing an important role in openhousechicago. We are collaborating with the Chicago Architecture Foundation to plan and carry out this event and are one of only five neighborhoods in the city being featured. In addition to coordinating openhousechicago for our two neighborhoods, our Historical Society is one of the 21 sites being featured in the tour. In this issue, you will get a preview of all 21 sites.

We want to thank all of the sites who will be opening their doors on October 15th and 16th, and urge you to help us out with this historic event by volunteering at one of the 21 sites in Rogers Park and West Ridge. The Chicago Architecture Foundation is anticipating crowds of 50,000-100,000 throughout the city, making it Chicago's biggest cultural event of 2011! We encourage you to sign up for a 4-hour volunteer shift at your favorite site and help us make this event a huge success, both for our two neighborhoods and for our Historical Society as well. So come



in to the Historical Society at 1447 W. Morse to sign up to volunteer or sign up on line at www.openhousechicago.org.

Bob Fuller

Please join me in extending a warm welcome to Bob Fuller, the Society's new Volunteer Coordinator. Bob comes with considerable experience working with not-for-profits in our area and has specific experience with volunteers. Bob will be working on recruiting, organizing and training our volunteers for openhousechicago as well as recruiting much-needed volunteers for ongoing work at the Society. We hope you'll be one of those volunteers.

And I'd like to extend our thanks and a warm welcome to all of our new members, volunteers and advertising sponsors. We're grateful that you have found us worthy of an investment of your time or money and look forward to working with you in 2011 and beyond.

We're also looking forward to seeing you at openhousechicago.

Paul

Membership as of August 1, 2011

Welcome New Members!

Individual

- Ellen Heppner Barnes
- Brian Butterfield
- Margaret Cragin
- Adrienne Green
- Doris Hambacher
- Jennifer Kohnke
- Heidi Korthase
- William Malleris
- Jane Neufeld
- Ruzica Rakocevic
- Lisa Lyle Smith

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- Anthony Chereck Family
- Veronica Heiler Family
- Jason & Kathryn Richards
- Victoria Szymcek Family
- Greg Tonsik & Jeanne Gourguechon

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- Ed Bush
- Gary Knutson
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(continued on page 5)

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New openhousechicago event on October 15-16 spotlights Rogers Park and West Ridge neighborhoods

by Tony Schor, North Shore Public Relations, Inc.

Showcasing the unique culture, history and diversity of the Rogers Park and West Ridge neighborhoods has always been one of the most important missions of the Rogers Park/West Ridge Historical Society. Now, with a partnership with the Chicago Architecture Foundation, these neighborhoods will take center stage in a new event aimed at highlighting the beauty and significance of Chicago's landmark sites and hidden gems.

The Rogers Park/West Ridge neighborhoods have been selected as one of six areas throughout the city of Chicago to be represented in the Chicago Architecture Foundation's new event, openhousechicago, taking place Oct. 14-16, 2011. Modeled after popular programs in New York, London and Toronto, the Chicago Architecture Foundation will offer access to more than 150 unique locations during the very first openhousechicago weekend.

The Rogers Park/West Ridge Historical Society is organizing 21 tour locations in the Rogers Park/West Ridge neighborhood for the event. Guests on the tour will have special access to sites that are normally not open to the public. From going backstage at the Main Stage Theatre to watching authentic naan bread being prepared at Hema's Kitchen, this is one tour that truly highlights the diversity of the community. Guests can enjoy admission to never-before-seen sections of popular landmarks in the local area, such as Park Castle, Casa Bonita, Emil Bach House, Saint Scholastica Monastery, Lifeline Theater, Heartland Café and more.

"We are incredibly proud of the way our community has come together to grant access to openhousechicago sites in our neighborhood," said Rogers Park/West Ridge

Historical Society President Paul Bluestone. "The Rogers Park/West Ridge communities have many notable structures that we are excited to highlight during this event. We welcome all to our communities to learn about the rich history of our area and how Rogers Park and West Ridge play a compelling role in Chicago's past and present."

The openhousechicago tour of Rogers Park and West Ridge is especially unique in that it showcases many different types of places, from restaurants to homes to theaters. Whether guests are history buffs, architecture admirers or cultural enthusiasts, this tour will satisfy their curiosity, teach little-known facts and provide memorable encounters. Plus, both neighborhoods offer plenty of options before and after the tour—from enjoying a meal to shopping to checking out live entertainment, guests can truly experience what Rogers Park and West Ridge have to offer.

Openhousechicago is open to all ages, and tours are free of charge. "This is an amazing way to see our city's history and culture," said Bluestone. "We're very pleased to work with the Chicago Architecture Foundation to bring this idea to life."

For more information on openhousechicago, including registration opportunities, visit www.openhousechicago.com. For updates and details on the upcoming Rogers Park/West Ridge neighborhoods tour during openhousechicago, join the Rogers Park/West Ridge Historical Society's Facebook fan page and visit www.rpwrhs.org.

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openhousedchicago sites in Rogers Park and West Ridge

The following sites have been confirmed for openhousedchicago on October 15-16, 2011. Here's a sneak peek of the special access that will be granted at each of these locations during this not-to-be-missed tour.

Warren Park Field House: 6601 N. Western Ave.



Check in for the north Chicago tour sites, pick up your free maps and other information about the tour. Then decide which of the 21 sites you will visit.

Rogers Park Sites

1. Heartland Café: 7000 N. Glenwood Avenue

<http://www.heartlandcafe.com>

Special openhousedchicago 2011 access: Tour back areas including the Boho Theater.



2. Lifeline Theater: 6912 N. Glenwood Avenue <http://www.lifelinetheatre.com>

Special openhousedchicago 2011 access: Visit back-of-the-house areas including set construction and costuming.



3. Mayne Stage: 1328-30 W. Morse Avenue <http://www.maynestage.com/>

Special openhousedchicago 2011 access: visit backstage and the state-of-the-art recording control room.

4. Rogers Park/West Ridge Historical Society: 1447 W. Morse Avenue

<http://www.rpwrhs.org>

Special openhousedchicago 2011 access: Visit the Historical Society's archives



Advertise in *The Historian*.
Contact Denis Paluch (d.paluch@rpwrhs.org)
for details

Enjoy the historical, culturally significant and beautiful architecture that Rogers Park has to offer at Open House Chicago!



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5. United Church of Rogers Park: 1545 W. Morse Avenue

<http://www.ucrogerspark.org>

Special openhousedchicago 2011 access: Visit the church's sun-filled sanctuary and admire its grand painted dome.

continued, page 8

OHC, from page 1

Our new Society location at 1447 W. Morse will be one of the stops along the way. We'll host hundreds of visitors during the two-day affair, greatly advancing the public's knowledge of us and what we do. This is a great opportunity for your Society to gain new members.

We'll be providing the volunteers at each location, who will act as outside greeters, checking visitor I.D.s, etc, so we will need over 100 volunteers. Those interested may register at our offices or on the CAF's website.

Whether or not you decide to volunteer, you won't want to miss openhousedchicago. It is sure to be one of Chicago's greatest events in 2011.

Special Thanks to the Society's Volunteers!

As we approach our first anniversary in our new home, the Rogers Park/West Ridge Historical Society has achieved remarkable growth due, in no small part to the ongoing efforts of our many volunteers who support our operations and programs. We would like to recognize and thank the following people for their time and dedication. Please forgive us if we have inadvertently omitted anyone.

<i>Oscar Arriola</i>	<i>Myra Epping</i>	<i>Heidi Krothase</i>	<i>Adrienne Ruddock</i>	<i>Felicia Sue</i>
<i>Brian Butterfield</i>	<i>John Fitzgerald</i>	<i>Ken Kwan</i>	<i>Lisa Smith</i>	<i>Jeremiah Vaught</i>
<i>John Burns</i>	<i>Autumn Franger</i>	<i>Joseph Lim</i>	<i>Sue Sosin</i>	<i>Carol Veome</i>
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openhousechicago sites in Rogers Park and West Ridge

continued from page 5

6. Greenleaf Art Center: 1806 W. Greenleaf Avenue

<http://www.greenleafartcenter.com/>

Special openhousechicago 2011 access: From 11-3 pm Saturday attend “Artful Networks,” an open studios and group gallery exhibit. 11-3 pm Sunday return for a group show and see artists at work in their studios.



7. Cats Cradle Bed & Breakfast: 7415 N. Sheridan Rd.

<http://www.catscradlechicago.com/>

Special openhousechicago 2011 access: Tour this historic home turned Bed and Breakfast.



8. Emil Bach House: 7415 North

Sheridan Road

http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Emil_Bach_House

Special openhousechicago 2011 access: Tour this Frank Lloyd Wright home normally not open to the public.



9. Uncommon Ground:

1401 West Devon Avenue

http://www.uncommonground.com/pages/devon_home/35.php

Special openhousechicago 2011 access: Meet Farmer Dave who will lead you on a tour of Uncommon Ground’s rooftop garden. Then you’re invited to stick around to eat a tasty meal made in part from the vegetables grown above the restaurant.

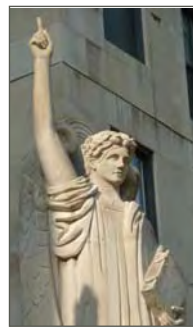


10. Mundelein Center for the Fine and Performing Arts, Loyola University:

1032 W. Sheridan Road

<http://www.luc.edu/dfpa/facilities.shtml>

Special openhousechicago 2011 access: Tour behind the scenes in Loyola Fine Arts Department - currently under renovation.



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11. Norville Center for Intercollegiate Athletics, Loyola University:
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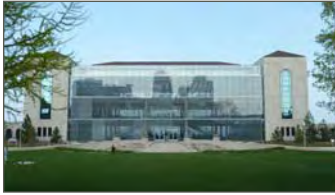
http://www.luc.edu/partner/campaignnews/reimagine.html



Special openhousechicago 2011 access: to be determined.

12. Richard J. Klarchek Information Commons, Loyola University: 6501 N. Kenmore Avenue

http://www.luc.edu/ic/



Special openhousechicago 2011 access: The staff of the Klarchek Information Commons will take you on a tour of the building showing off all of its green features.

West Ridge Sites

13. Hema's Kitchen: 2439 W. Devon Avenue http://hemaskitchen.com



Special openhousechicago 2011 access: Be welcomed into the kitchen of Hema's Kitchen, to see naan bread prepared in their tandoor oven.

continued, next page

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(continued from page 3)

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openhousechicago sites in Rogers Park and West Ridge

continued from page 9

14. Patel Brothers: 2610 W. Devon Avenue

<http://www.patelbros.com>

Special openhousechicago 2011 access: Seasoned cooks of the Indian cuisine will guide you through Patel's spices, advising you on what you might need to make delicious Indian meals of your own.



15. Sari Sapne: 2623 W. Devon Avenue

Special openhousechicago 2011 access: Admire Sari Sapne's wealth of saris and tunics. If interested, Sari Sapne's staff will wrap YOU in a sari!



16. Indian Boundary Park & Cultural Center: 2500 West Lunt Avenue

www.chicagoparkdistrict.com
This quaint, Tudor-revival fieldhouse features Native-American themed ornament inspired by the park's name. A designated cultural center in which theatre, arts, painting, piano, dance and voice lessons are offered.



17. Park Castle Condominiums: 2416-2458 West Greenleaf Avenue

Special openhousechicago 2011 access: Take a peek at this private pool with a fountain, decorated walls, and a unique tent-like ceiling.



18. Park Gables Condominiums: 2428-2484 W. Estes St.



Special openhousechicago 2011 access: Admire the gables on this Tudor-revival building and see the

indoor pool that makes Park Gables such a special building.

19. Saint Scholastica Monastery, Benedictine Sisters of Chicago: 7430 North Ridge Boulevard

www.osbchicago.org

Special openhousechicago 2011 access: the Monastery is as a rule not open to the general public without a specific invitation.



20. Casa Bonita Condominiums: 7340-7350 North Ridge Boulevard

Special openhousechicago 2011 access: Take a peek at Casa Bonita's historic

indoor pool.

21. The Fish Keg Restaurant: 2233 West Howard Street

<http://www.thefishkeg.com>

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Alderman Silverstein of the 50th Ward (West Ridge) Visits RP/WRHS

On Tuesday, July 19, 2011, the Rogers Park/West Ridge Historical Society held a private, after-hours reception to welcome newly elected 50th Ward Alderman, Debra Silverstein, to our new Society offices on Morse Ave.



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 Sun Oct 16, 11-3pm Group Show & Open Studios plus a peek into the creative process • watch as artists work • listen to talks about creation

Greenleaf Art Center
 1806 W Greenleaf • Chicago, IL 60626 • 773-465-4652 • GreenleafArtCenter.com

ROGERS PARK FRUIT MARKET
 7401 N. Clark St. Chicago IL 60626
 Tel: (773) 262-3663 Fax: (773) 262-5317

Chara Carpentry and Construction
 Paul Goggin
 773-726-0322
 CharaConstruction@yahoo.com
 Fully Insured Interior & Exterior General Remodeling



**Been in the "hood" a while?
Know somebody who has?**

The Rogers Park/West Ridge Historical Society is conducting an on-going oral history project. We're collecting the memories of those individuals who remember what life was like in Rogers Park and West Ridge "way back when."

Oral histories are a wonderful way to learn about our neighborhoods before all the complexities of "modern life" settled in.

Memories are precious. Whether they're yours, a friend's or a relative's. Help preserve our community's past through oral history today.

You can reach Nancy Jane Lauren to arrange an interview at: 773-338-5365 or nancyjanel Lauren@sbcglobal.net

Do you have old photos of Rogers Park or West Ridge?

Our Photo Archives and Cataloging Project is charged with the preservation of our photo collection. In it, we have literally thousands of photographs that have been donated to the Society to be preserved for future generations and today's researchers.

It's one of our most valuable resources. Why not add your old photos to our collection? We will scan them and put them in the Photo Archives. Future generations and today's researchers will thank you for your efforts.

We can scan slides, negatives, prints, whatever. While we would prefer to preserve the originals, we're not greedy. If you want them back, we will honor your request.

It would be most helpful if you could provide notes as to what is being shown in the photographs. We've never met Aunt Martha. Please tell us who is who. Neighborhoods change. Please tell us where the photo was taken and when.

For more information, contact the Society's offices.

Rogers Park/West Ridge Historical Society
1447 West Morse Avenue, Chicago, IL 60626
Phone: 773-764-4078 or e-mail us at rpwrhs@aol.com.

Do You Know?

What do you know about this house?
Send your solution to rpwrhs@aol.com.
The first person that correctly identifies the house gets a copy of one of our two Society-published books.



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Chicago, IL 60626

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<http://www.rpwrhs.org>
rpwrhs@aol.com
Open daily 2 pm - 7 pm
Other times by appointment



To reduce our carbon footprint, we can send you this newsletter electronically instead of in print.



To participate, send an e-mail to rpwrhs@aol.com with the subject line "Green."

Mark Your Calendars!
Second Saturdays at the Society, 10:30 a.m.
Open House Chicago,
October 15-16, 2011