



Renaissance Academy at Chicago NFP

Fall 2026

October 13 -November 19

Located at

Saint Xavier University

3700 West 103rd Street

We will offer a class online via Zoom.

What is the Renaissance Academy?

The Renaissance Academy is an association of retired and semi-retired men and women who get together to experience intellectual growth in an environment that is open to all who believe in pursuing the Academy's lifelong learning opportunities.

Members are encouraged to volunteer their energy and skills to make the program successful. Please consider how you might contribute your time and talent to our organization.

Renaissance Academy Information

Email: renaissancechgo@gmail.com

Phone: 773-298-3149. **This is an answering machine only. Please leave a message.**

The Newsletter can be accessed on the Renaissance Academy website:

<https://www.renaissancechgo.org>.

Fall 2026 Registration

We are on the SXU campus for Fall classes!
We will also offer a class via Zoom and book clubs.

Membership Enrollment will be available **September 11 thru September 25**. We will be emailing you a **link** to our **New Membership Enrollment System**. It will **also be available on our website**
<https://www.renaissancechgo.org>.

Every member must have access to email. No information or materials will be mailed.

The membership enrollment fee for the entire year is \$180. **Current Renaissance Members log in using your current user name and password. Then go to Annual Enrollment (top left) and proceed to pay your annual enrollment fee which is still \$180.**

All New Members, you will initially need to set up a new one-time Renaissance Membership account. Establishing an account means picking a username and password (make it easy to remember and/or make a note of it). Once you have an account you will not have to re-enter your personal data every time you register for classes in the future.

After setting up your account and charging a onetime annual membership fee payment to your credit card, you will proceed to Online Course Registration. For your convenience, each course description will be included on the Course Registration form.

The fee includes: classes for **all three terms**, Christmas and Spring luncheons, use of the Shannon Center track on Tuesdays and Thursdays, Renaissance Forum and the opportunity to audit an SXU class with consent of professor.

While participating in our various programs, you may be included in photos and/or videos. These photographs and videos are used in a variety of publications and advertising materials. By registering for our programs, participants consent to the use of these photos and videos.

Requests for registration assistance can be emailed to renaissancechgo@gmail.com.

The final date for enrollment is September 25, 2026.



Welcome to the 2026-27 new year of Renaissance Academy Chicago learning, sharing, and fellowship. Each one of these elements is contained in what we do and who we are. We listen and learn from the wisdom of our peer facilitators, seeking a new understanding of the world. We share our own experiences and interests. We meet new, different and exciting people and broaden our own horizons, in true Renaissance fashion.

Renaissance Academy Chicago fall class schedule is contained inside this booklet. Our Renaissance Open House is Sept.10 in the Butler Room at St. Xavier University from 2:30-4:30. Join us to hear about the new class offerings and events that are planned for the upcoming sessions. Classes begin Oct. 13, 2026. Most classes are in-person and a few offerings are available on ZOOM.

As a reminder, SXU offers us a 10% discount in their cafeteria with our Renaissance ID badge. Members are also allowed to use the walking track on Tuesdays and Thursdays any time of the day when classes are in session.

We look forward to meeting our new friends and seeing our returning Renaissance friends for another successful year of life-long learning!

Marcia Levin
President

**Fall 2026 Session
Oct. 13 – Nov. 19
On Campus**

Tuesday 2:30-3:30

- 1. Zentangle: Meditative Drawing for Stress Relief
Mary Ellen Ziegler / Carmen Reyes**
- 2. News and Views
Mike Yeager and team**

Tuesday 3:45- 4:45

- 3. Route 66 in Illinois
Kerrie and Brad Stone**
- 4. The Scientific Guide to Health and Happiness
Maureen Connolly**

**Fall 2026 Session
Oct. 13 – Nov. 19
On Campus**

Thursday 2:30 – 3:30

- 5. Improv Acting
Gail and David Lauryn**
- 6. Being the Best at Your Age
Rita Hannon / Caron Beissmann**
- 7. Mahjong (2:30 - 4:30)
Denise Nelligan**

Thursday 3:45 – 4:45

- 8. The Great Band Era
Betty Kort**
- 9. Downton Abbey
Nancy Harvey**



**Fall 2026 Session
Oct. 13 – Nov. 19
Zoom Noon- 1:00**

**10. Are We on the Same Page?
Teresa Miller**

**Tuesday 2:30 - 3:30
On Campus**

1. Zentangle: Meditative Drawing for Stress Relief

Mary Ellen Ziegler / Carmen Reyes

Welcome back to another session of exciting discoveries in “Gratitude, appreciation, no mistakes, community & sharing with the **Zentangle method!**”

If you want to hear from 20 years of testimonies, check out their monthly newsletter. It is a delight and they don't bombard you! zentangle.com. Look for Rick & Maria, the founders of this inspiring journey.

We will be using black micron pens 01 and perhaps a thicker one like 05, a paper tortillon for blending pencil shading, white chalk pencil, pencil, and a white gel pen (all pens dry out quick so you need to practice capping them tightly).



If you are more comfortable with a favorite writing instrument or colored pens, you are welcome to use these.

2. News and Views

Kathleen Austin / Jim Condon

Matt Costello / Mary Hendry / Nancy North

Pat Monahan / and Mike Yeager

Stay informed, connected, and engaged! *News & Views* is an interactive, six-week course designed for adults who want to explore and discuss the headlines shaping our world. Meeting just one hour a week, this dynamic class covers a diverse mix of current events—from local community developments and state policies to national debates and global affairs.

Beyond hard news, we'll dive into hot political discussions, uplifting human-interest stories, and trending popular culture. Bring your unique perspectives, open mind, and curiosity for lively, respectful conversations that help make sense of today's fast-paced news cycle. No homework required!



**Tuesday 3:45 - 4:45
on campus**

3. Route 66 in Illinois

Kerrie and Brad Stone

Get your kicks on Route 66!

In honor of Route 66 turning 100 years old in November, we will be taking a trip through the Illinois section of the mother road. We will go through big cities and small towns, each with their own unique vibe. We will also explore a few places that are off the beaten path. Route 66 is steeped in history and just plain interesting.



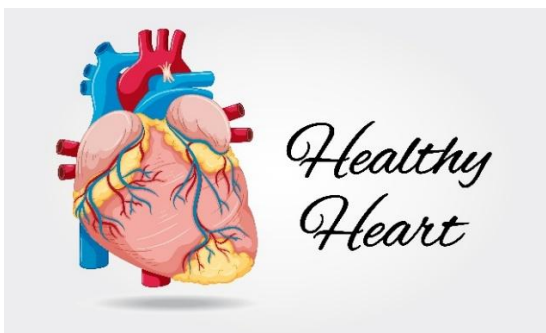
4. The Scientific Guide to Health and Happiness

Maureen Connolly

Dr. Robin Miller, our presenter on *Great Courses*, is a general internist and integrative medicine expert who is a consultant for physicians who need help with complex patients. Dr. Miller's passion for using the latest research to promote a holistic understanding of health has been frequently recognized in the media. For more than a decade, Dr. Miller has hosted a medical call-in show and produced a medical advice slot for NBC News.

During the six sessions of the fall, Dr. Miller will discuss the following topics which we will then discuss:

- The Health and Happiness Connection
- How Happiness is Created in the Brain
- What Do We Know about living longer
- Happy Heart, Healthy Heart
- The Gut: Our Second Brain
- The Microbiome: How Bacteria Keep Us Happy



**Thursday 2:30 – 3:30
on campus**

5. Improv Acting

Gail and David Lauryn

Did you ever have a desire to perform on the stage? Do you love to have a good time? Then this is the class for you.

The class will consist of learning the basics of acting and stagecraft by lectures, videos and handouts. We will then focus on improv acting.



No experience is necessary. Members will get a chance to perform if they choose to do so. Or come be the audience and enjoy helping the actors.

6. Being the Best at Your Age

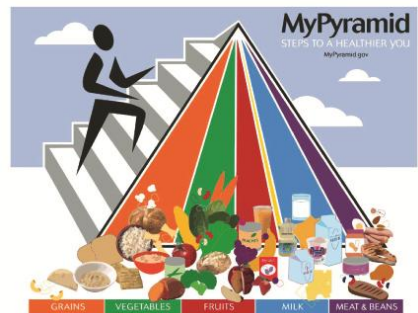
Rita Hannon / Caron Beissmann

September is the New January (*Oops, we're late!*)

A couple months of graduations, vacations, BBQs and perhaps a wedding or two are behind us but coming soon are three months of “food” holidays: Halloween, Thanksgiving, Christmas and, of course, New Years Eve! If you’ve ever made a New Year’s Resolution, you already know how often they fail. What if your “resolution” came early, you might cut those months of indulgencies in half. I have a head full of tips and tricks I’ve learned well and practice daily. They are a combination of many small changes that bind together for a long term better you.

We will NOT be training for a marathon or auditioning for the Biggest Loser. We will be moving and stretching along with learning safety tips for you and your home. *Most exercises will have adaptations for any physical restrictions.* We’ll also look at better food choices for your stronger body.

Consider it all a fun adventure to a healthier you.



7. Mahjong Denise Nelligan

Join us as Denise Nelligan, a passionate local Mahjong instructor, introduces us to the timeless game of Mahjong in the adopted American version. Four players compete to create specific patterns. The tiles will be provided during class time.

This is considered one class and will be a two-hour period running from 2:30-4:30. It is limited to 20 participants. You will need to attend all sessions.



**Thursday 3:45 - 4:45
on campus**

8. The Great Band Era

Betty Kort

Tommy Dorsey, Duke Ellington, Glenn Miller, Benny Goodman, Guy Lombardo, the list goes on. All in all, they made great music. For some of us, it was the music our parents played on the stereo cabinet, double speakers and room for the album collection, big enough space for a small child to hide. In this class, we will take a trip down memory lane as we listen to the music and discover what life was like for these entertainers during the late thirties, through the war years to 1945.



9. **Downton Abbey** **Nancy Harvey**

Join us in a journey through the time, life styles, and characters portrayed in the most popular series of the last decades. We will explore the class structures (duties and life expectations)and life changes.

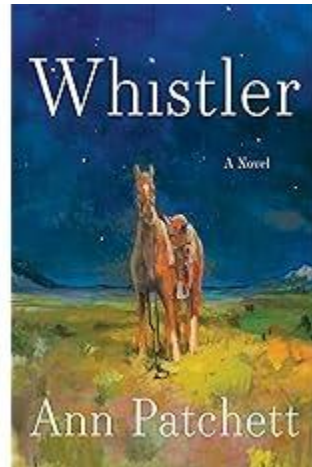
During the class you may challenge yourself and your values compared to those in the series.



**Wednesday Noon – 1:00
Zoom**

10. Are We on the Same Page? Teresa Miller

Is reading and reviewing a book enjoyable? If not, consider this group anyway as we learn through new perspectives of each other. Come for the “novel” conversations and enjoy a book choice you may not have otherwise selected.



Our first book is *Whistler* by Ann Patchett. At the Metropolitan Museum of Art, a 53-year-old English teacher encounters her stepfather whom she loved and lost more than four decades earlier.

Talking points include the complex bonds between family members and how those ties to people and memories influence who a person becomes.

BOOK CLUB

**October 20- 11:00 AM
EVERGREEN PARK LIBRARY**

Also ZOOM October 21 1:30– 2:30 PM

***Becoming*
by Michelle Obama**

Madonna Murphy – Facilitator

"In her memoir, Michelle Obama invites readers into her world, chronicling the experiences that have shaped her—from her childhood on the South Side of Chicago to her years as an executive balancing the demands of motherhood and work, to her time spent at the world's most famous address. Warm, wise, and revelatory, *Becoming* is the deeply personal reckoning of a woman of soul and substance who has steadily defied expectations—and whose story inspires us to do the same."



Optional fieldtrip to the Obama Presidential Library grounds TBA

BOOK CLUB

Zoom 1:30– 2:30 PM

***Sitting Pretty* by Rebecca Taussig**

Betty Kort – Facilitator

Growing up as a paralyzed girl during the 90s and early 2000s, Taussig only saw disability depicted as something monstrous, inspirational, or angelic.

She longed for more stories that allowed disability to be complex and ordinary, uncomfortable and fine, painful and fulfilling. Here she writes about the rhythms and textures of what it means to live in a body that doesn't fit.



Taussig reflects on everything from the complications of kindness and charity, living both independently and dependently, experiencing intimacy, and how the pervasiveness of ableism in our everyday media directly translates to everyday life. She shows how disability affects all of us, directly or indirectly, at one point or another.

BOOK CLUB

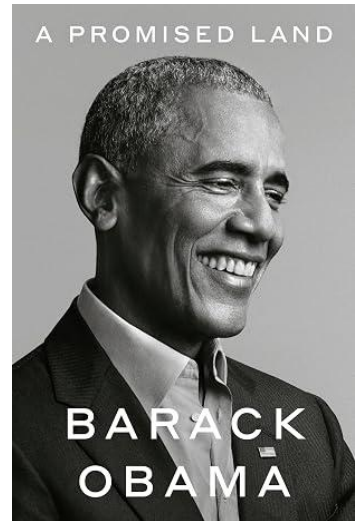
**November 10 - 11:00 AM
EVERGREEN PARK LIBRARY**

Also ZOOM November 11 1:30 – 2:30 PM

***A Promised Land*
by Barack Obama**

Madonna Murphy – Facilitator

"In the stirring first volume of his presidential memoirs, Barack Obama tells the story of his improbable odyssey from young man searching for his identity to leader of the free world, describing in strikingly personal detail both his political education and the landmark moments of the first term of his historic presidency—a time of dramatic transformation and turmoil."



Optional fieldtrip to the Obama Presidential Library grounds TBA

Fall 2026

Dates to Remember

Sept. 10 2:30 – 4:30	Open House Butler Room All Are Welcome
Sept. 11 – Sept. 25	On-line registration
October 13	First Day of Fall term
October 20 11:00-12:00	Book Club <i>Becoming</i> Evergreen Park Library
October 21 1:30 -2:30	Book Club <i>Becoming</i> Zoom
October 23 11:00	Forum Butler Room
October 28 Noon	Book Club <i>Sitting Pretty</i> Zoom
November 10 11:00-12:00	Book Club <i>A Promised Land</i> Evergreen Park Library
November 11 1:30 -2:30	Book Club <i>A Promised Land</i> Zoom
November 12	TGITT - Butler Room
November 19	Last Day of Fall term
December 8 12:00PM	Christmas Luncheon Orland Chateau

OFFICERS, COMMITTEE & BOARD MEMBERS

2026-2027

President:	Marcia Levin
Vice President:	Karen Danczak Lyons
Secretary:	Kate Walsh
Treasurer:	Paula O'Brien
Information Systems:	Jim Condon
Consultant/Past President:	Jean Day
SXU Liaison:	Sandra Diaz / Linda Moreno

STANDING COMMITTEES (*Committee Chairperson)

Care:	Melaine Herbert
Curriculum:	Nancy North* / Madonna Murphy / Mike Yeager
Forum:	Pat Clair / Ginny Lock / Karen Danczak Lyons
Historian:	Pat Schultz* / Peggy Devlin Casey
Information Systems Support:	Jim Condon* / Vanessa Glover Mary Johnson / Paula O'Brien / Jim Sim / Mary Wolf
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