



2026 Newsletter



President's Corner

Welcome back to school!

I hope that you all had a pleasant holiday season. I look forward to seeing everyone in classes this week! Over 175 people have registered for classes this term! I want to express a heartfelt thank you to Nancy North and the dedicated people of the Curriculum Committee who worked to put together another term of interesting and fun classes, and to Jim Condon and his IT team who have made registration for these classes an uncomplicated and easy procedure.

We will have another TGITT in the Butler Room after Tuesday classes on Tuesday, February 24, starting at 5 p.m. You will receive invitations and response forms by email in early February. Those who attended this event in November had a great time! It's a good opportunity to meet new people, network, and spend time with friends.

Please put March 10 on your calendar for the annual Memorial Mass at 10:00 a.m., followed by the Spring Renaissance Forum at 11:30. This is always a special day. Come and bring a guest if you would like.

Look for other interesting entertainment and educational opportunities on our Facebook page. It is a great source for up-to-date information.

Jean Day
President

SXU Cafeteria 10% Discount with Renaissance Name Badge

The SXU cafeteria kitchen offers “from scratch” fresh salads, a full deli, homemade pizza and pasta dishes, as well as a grill station. Daily specials are available. Meeting at the cafeteria for lunch or a cup of coffee and a cookie before class is always a fun way to connect, and a way to eat without cooking!



The Paris Library

By Janet Skeslien Charles

Book Club - Evergreen Park Library
February 17, 2026 11 a.m.

Betty Kort, Facilitator

If you love libraries and the Dewey decimal system, you'll love this book that chronicles the American Library in Paris during the German occupation, WWII 1939-1945 and the life of a young girl in a small town in Montana, 1983. Young, ambitious Odile Souchet has it all: Paul, her handsome police officer beau; Margaret, her best friend from England; her adored twin brother Remy; and a dream job at the American Library in Paris, working alongside the library's legendary director, Dorothy Reeder. Also we meet Lily, a curious teen mesmerized by her neighbor, a widow the town calls the war bride.

"...why books? Because no other thing possesses that mystical faculty to make people see with other people's eyes. The library is a bridge of books between cultures." Join in a thoughtful discussion!



Winter 2026 Dates to Remember

January 20: Winter Term Begins

February 17: Book Club 11:00 a.m. Evergreen Park Library
The Paris Library Facilitator Betty Kort

February 24: TGITT 5:00- 7:00 p.m. The Butler Room

February 26: Last Day of Winter Term

March 10: Memorial Mass 10:00 a.m. McDonough Chapel
Renaissance Forum 11:30 a.m. The Butler Room

Join Us In Prayer...



On **Tuesday, March 10, 2026**, Renaissance Academy will host a **Memorial Mass at 10 a.m.** in **McDonough Chapel** to remember deceased former members of Renaissance. The last Memorial Mass was in March 2025. We will honor all those who have died since then. If you know of former members, or immediate family of

current members, who have passed away since the last Mass, please send their names to Melaine Herbert herbartzchicago@gmail.com. The Renaissance Forum in the Butler Room will follow this Mass. See Forum information below.



Renaissance Forum, March 10, 2026
Happiness Workshop
presented by **Mary Sullivan Kopale**
In the Butler Room

Mary Sullivan Kopale is an instructional designer, workshop facilitator, and former high school teacher. While teaching Psychology, Mary became especially interested in positive psychology, a branch of psychology defined by the University of Pennsylvania as the scientific study of what helps people live full lives. In the hands-on "Happiness Workshop," you will learn some research-supported strategies to reduce stress that are easy to incorporate into your life to help you to be a happier, healthier person. We'll do some individual activities, group activities, and have some laughs, too.

The forum is free of charge. Renaissance Academy members and guests are welcome.



Another benefit of Renaissance Academy membership:

We can walk the track at the Shannon Center on Tuesdays and Thursdays when Renaissance is in session. Senior membership (\$200 for a year) would allow access to the track (not the gym) whenever the Center is open.

Access to the **Warde Academic Center**, where our classes take place, is limited. The easiest entrance for Renaissance members is the handicap entrance located on the north side of the building. Our classrooms in the science wing can both be accessed from that hallway. **Remember** to wear your name tag, please. Also, remember to put *your* emergency contact on the back of your name tag if you have not already done so.



Mission Statement: *The Renaissance Academy at Chicago NFP* was created for those individuals of the community, retired and semi-retired, who have the desire to learn simply for the joy and excitement of learning. Its primary purpose is to provide forums for participatory group study on topics decided on by the membership. The focus is on member participation and peer teaching. Aims include intellectual stimulation, cultural enrichment, and fellowship.



Have you joined the **Renaissance Facebook** group yet? New members will receive an email with a link to join. Current Renaissance members who would like to join should email Pat Schultz at schultzp@comcast.net

Renaissance Email: renaissancechgo@gmail.com

Only to be used for general questions. Telephone: 773-298-3149

N.B. Renaissance Office is not staffed. Please leave a message or contact us via email.



You look great in photos!

Check out the Past Events Photos tab on the Renaissance website and see how much fun was had! Multiple photo albums of previous events are available for you to peruse.

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

Trivia Anyone?



**THE BEVERLY THEATRE GUILD
PRESENTS**

PRODUCERS:
Tanya Harasym
Kenneth J. Krajniak

DIRECTOR:
Anna Rachel Troy

ASST. DIRECTOR:
Lewis R. Jones



Clue

Based on the screenplay by JONATHAN LYNN

Written by SANDY RUSTIN

Additional Material by Hunter Foster and Eric Price

Based on the Paramount Pictures Motion Picture

Based on the Hasbro board game CLUE

Original Music by Michael Holland

TICKETS:

773-BTG-TIXS (284.8497)
BEVERLYTHEATREGUILD.ORG

Adult: \$25

Member/

Senior/

Military: \$23

Students

(≤13): \$18

Group Rates Available!



SHOW TIMES:

 FEB 13 - 7:30 PM

 **FEB 14 - 2:00 PM**

 **FEB 15 - 2:00 PM**

 This program is partially supported by the **Illinois ARTS Council**

Clue is presented by special arrangement with Broadway Licensing Global servicing the Dramatists Play Service collection (www.dramatists.com)

BAER THEATRE  **MORGAN PARK ACADEMY**  **2153 W 111TH ST.**

The Beverly Theatre Guild is a registered 501(c)(3) not-for-profit corporation under the U.S. Internal Revenue Code.

"Clue", based on the board game, should be great fun. Anyone interested in purchasing **discount tickets** at a group rate, please contact Renaissance member **Betty Kort** 708-819-0139 or email candbkort@aol.com



*"Live as if you were to die tomorrow.
Learn as if you were to live forever."*

- Mahatma Gandhi

A Renaissance Person to Know - Karen Danczyk-Lyons

Interviewed by Mary Healy



Karen has spent her career in public service and continues to serve in the Renaissance program. Here is her story in her own words. Some of the best advice I received was from my father, who suggested I would benefit from a Jesuit education as he had. Taking his advice, I received my undergraduate degree from Loyola University in Chicago. I learned of the seven Jesuit values while studying at Loyola and living away from my home in Rogers Park. The goal of the Jesuit values is to prepare students to be wiser and more compassionate. All seven values are important, but I find three to be especially meaningful.

(Karen & husband Brian Lyons)

Magis: A commitment to the concept of Magis (Latin for more) is a hallmark of Jesuit education. It challenges students to go beyond what is expected, interacting with the world with generosity, excellence, and empathy.

Reflection: A foundation of Jesuit education, Reflection invites students to pause to consider the world around them and their place within it before making decisions.

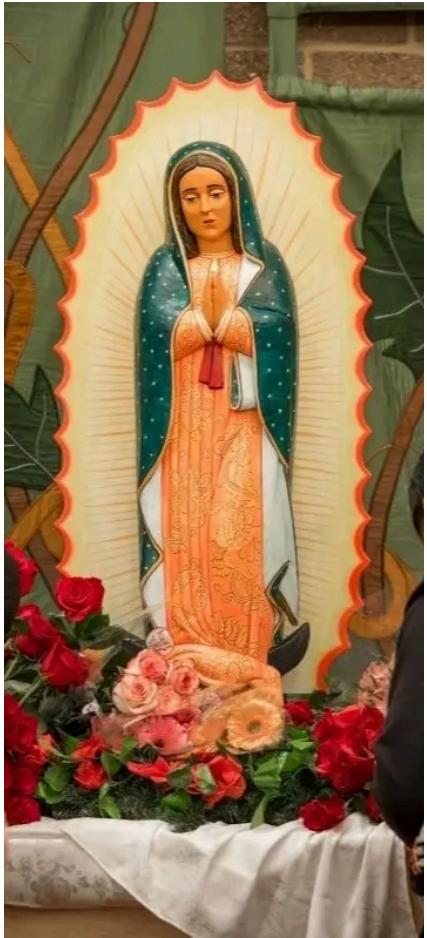
Solidarity and Kinship: Students work together for the greater good. They develop relationships with their surrounding communities and share their talents and skills to help and serve others.

These values and my own moral code were the foundation for my years of public service. I began my career with the City of Chicago performing administrative work for the Office of Municipal Investigation. After a few years, I moved to the Office of Budget and Management as a principal budget analyst. Eventually, I became the principal budget analyst and supervising analyst for every department in the City of Chicago. When Mayor Richard M. Daley appointed me as budget director, my knowledge of the departmental purposes and functions informed our approach to innovation, streamlining, and improvement.

Next, I was appointed the first deputy commissioner of the Chicago Public Library. When I joined the staff of the Chicago Public Library, I felt like I was coming home! I received my Master of Library and Information Science degree from Rosary College in 1997. My team and I worked to improve administrative functioning, accountability, and services provided to residents of all ages across every Chicago neighborhood.

From 2012 until my retirement in 2022, I was the executive director of the Evanston Public Library. Applying Appreciative Inquiry and Asset-Based Community Development to the work of the Evanston Public Library, we strengthened our community engagement, created new partnerships, and turned outward.

In this new chapter of my life, I am grateful to have the time to care for my family, follow my curiosity, explore innovative ideas and hobbies, and spend time with those whom I love. There are so many places and ideas to explore. It is such a gift to have time just to breathe and enjoy.



Our Lady of Guadalupe

Many know the story of Juan Diego, the Mexican peasant who met the Virgin Mary on December 12, 1531, and three other times. When others doubted his story, she sent Juan Diego a miraculous bouquet of roses which he wrapped in his cloak as proof of her existence and his veracity. Saint Xavier University V.P. of Mission and Heritage Jenny Di Vivo commissioned this sculpture from the artist Rhonda Crespin, who lives and works in Santa Fe. She works in the Spanish Colonial style, hand carving wooden sculptures called *bulbos* and *retablos* which she then paints in bright colors. This sculpture was carved from a single piece of aspen and is unique in North America. Catherine McCauley, the founder of the Sisters of Mercy, professed her vows on December 12, 1831, in honor of Our Lady of Guadalupe.

The statue was formally installed in December 2025 in the McDonough Chapel. The artist will be on campus during the Spring of 2026 to speak about her work and teach in the Art classes on campus. We look forward to her visit and lecture.

Dr. Di Vivo especially wanted this art work because she knows that many of Saint Xavier University students have a special devotion to our Lady of Guadalupe. There will be opportunities to attend services honoring Mary for SXU students, Renaissance members, and members of the community. The Chapel is open daily for prayer and meditation.



Saint Xavier University rated as One of Top 10 in Illinois by U.S. News & World Report

The U.S. News & World Report 2026 edition named Saint Xavier University a "Best Value School," a "Best Regional University," and one of the top performers for "Social Mobility" in the Midwest. It also ranks Saint Xavier University among the 2026 Top 10 "Best Colleges" in Illinois.

In addition, SXU ranks among "Best Undergraduate Nursing Programs," number four in Illinois as a "Best College for Veterans." For the second time, SXU was nationally ranked for "Best Undergraduate Computer Science Programs," for the fourth year in a row ranked in "Best Undergraduate Business Programs" and for the third year was ranked in "Best Undergraduate Psychology Programs."

2025 - 2026
Renaissance Academy



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