



2026 Fall Newsletter



President's Corner

Welcome to our new Renaissance year, 2026-2027!

As I type the date, I feel overwhelmed with awe over the process of time and its continuum. As we begin a new “school” session, and I begin a new role with Renaissance, let us begin with the knowledge that our organization is founded on its membership. **We could not exist without your continuing active support.**

We are grateful for the work of my predecessor, Jean Day, past President, whose leadership and guidance have steered our organization for the past four years: two as president and two as vice-president. We thank you for your very hard work, and I thank you for being my mentor.

We exist for each other in fellowship, sharing knowledge and active participation. We could not do this without the valuable work of our committee chairs and committee members, who spend time apart from our classroom work, to make the magic of our organization. Tons of thought and effort go into our ability to give all of us an enriched life experience that provides us the fuel for our days.

Great classes are ahead involving history, art, literature, and travel, life skills, meditation, and mahjong, to name but a few. We strive to continue to meet your expectations in all we do. Your voice is critical to our mutual journey on this road, so let us hear from you when you have something we need to hear.

Marcia Levin, MPH
President
mhardylevin@gmail.com



Renaissance Members Bonus! \$10.00 tickets to all Southwest Symphony concerts! Next performance will be November 15, 2026, at Richards High School, in Oak Lawn. Call 708 802-0686.

Hello!

Distributing New ID cards in the Cafeteria!

Everyone will receive a new 26-27 ID card with a special Red Lanyard this year. The membership committee will be distributing the 26-27 ID cards on Tuesday, Oct 13 and Thursday, Oct 15th in the cafeteria at 2pm.

Please call Betty Kort [708-819-0139](tel:708-819-0139) if you are not able to pick up your ID card.

Remember you must show your ID card when going to the Shannon Center or to receive your 10% discount at the cafeteria.



Fall 2026 Dates to Remember

October 13:	Fall Term Begins	
October 20:	Book Club <i>Becoming</i> by Michelle Obama Facilitator Madonna Murphy Evergreen Park Library 11:00 a.m. Zoom 1:30 p.m.	
October 21:		
October 23:	Renaissance Forum	11:00 a.m. The Butler Room
October 28:	Book Club - <i>Sitting Pretty</i> by Rebecca Taussig Facilitator Betty Kort Zoom Noon	
November 10:	Book Club <i>A Promised Land</i> by Barack Obama Facilitator Madonna Murphy Evergreen Park Library 11:00 a.m. Zoom 1:30 p.m.	
November 11:	Book Club	
November 12:	TGITT	Butler Room After classes
:		
November 19:	Fall Term Ends	
December 8:	Christmas Luncheon	Noon Orland Chateau 14500 S. LaGrange Road Orland Park



Becoming
by Michelle Obama

Book Club - Evergreen Park Library
October 20, 2026 11:00 a.m.
Also Zoom, October 21, 2026, 1:30 p.m.
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

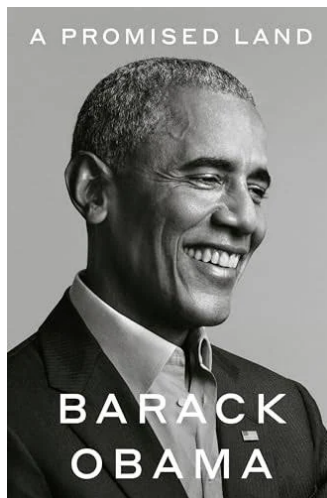
most famous address. Warm, wise, and revelatory, ***Becoming*** is the deeply personal reckoning of a woman of soul and substance who has steadily defied expectations—and whose story inspires us to do the same." *Optional field trip to the Obama Presidential Library Grounds TBD.*



Sitting Pretty
by Rebecca Taussig

Book Club
October 28 Zoom 1:30– 2:30 p.m.
Betty Kort, Facilitator

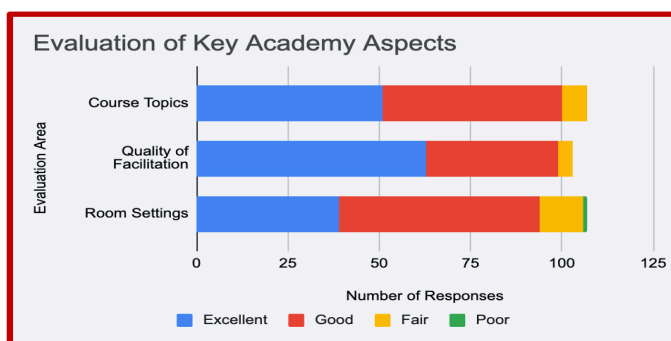
Growing up as a paralyzed girl during the 90s and early 2000s, Taussig only saw disability depicted as something monstrous, inspirational, or angelic. She longed for more stories that allowed disability to be complex and ordinary, uncomfortable and fine, painful and fulfilling. Here she writes about 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.



A Promised Land by Barack Obama

Book Club - Evergreen Park Library
November 10, 2026 11:00 a.m.
Also Zoom November 11, 2026 1:30 p.m.
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 field trip to the Obama Presidential Library TBD.*



2026 Renaissance Satisfaction Survey

In late June the Renaissance Academy distributed a survey to 220 members. We thank all of you who responded and want to share some of the feedback with you. 109

members replied, an excellent response rate of 49.5%; 14 members responded anonymously.

Responses were positive, citing the variety of topics and the preparation and expertise of the facilitators as key to their satisfaction with Renaissance. The average rating was 9.3/10. Areas needing improvement will be addressed; several mentioned providing microphones for the facilitators and having the facilitators share the mic when eliciting class discussion. More classes were requested and a variety of topics suggested. We hope this will inspire more volunteer facilitators to begin to plan some course offerings for the Winter and Spring terms.

Our social activities were highly valued. Engagement with like-minded active seniors is one of the core values of Renaissance. Pat Shultz correlated the data and put together a thorough analysis with graphs and details. The Board will consider and apply the thoughtful recommendations for improvement and enhancement of our valued Renaissance program.

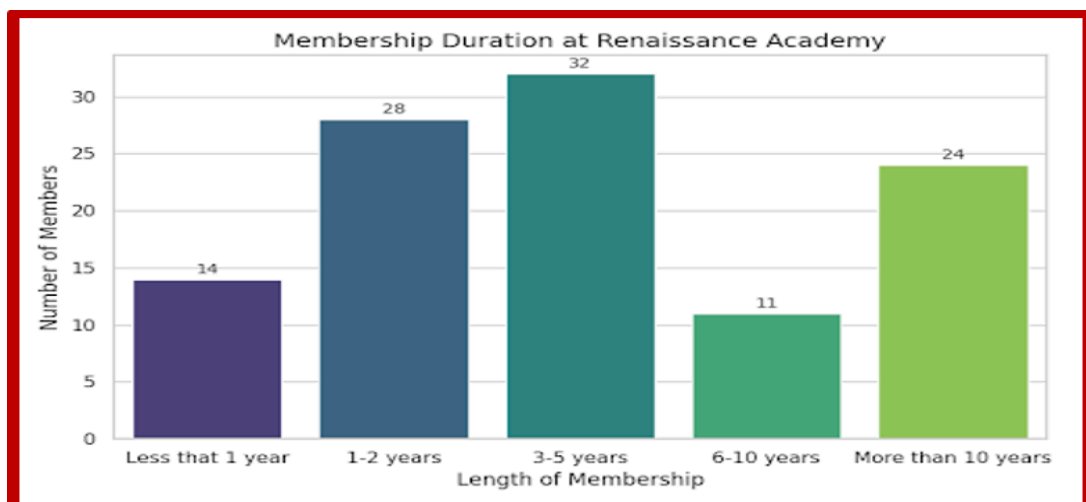


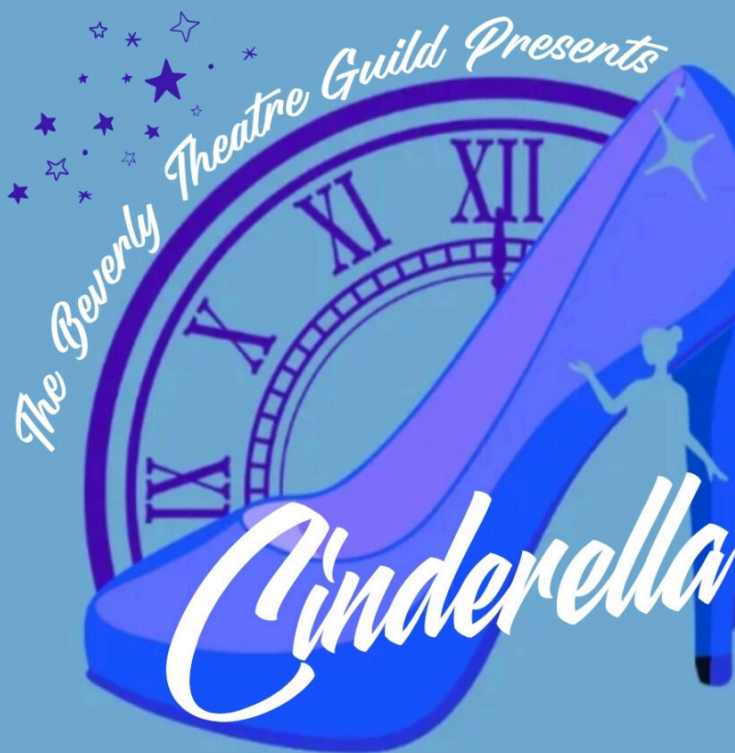
Renaissance Academy is pleased to welcome 2026 - 2027 new members!

So happy that you have joined us.

Edward Barry
David Bartley
Pat Byrne
Mary Cahill
Margaret Cahill-McGovern
Patricia Carroll
Karen Cotterell
Maureen Delehanty
Cheri Finno
Judith Fitzgerald
Mary Fitzpatrick
Patricia Fleming
Darlene Folliard
Donna Folliard
John Francis
Patricia Gentleman
Anna Marie Heenan
Cecilia Hochsprung
Lois Jacob
Suzanne Kennedy
Neal Levin
Barbara Lucente

Mitchell Marks
Carole McCarthy
Lorraine (Sissy) McClowry
Donna Morrone
Nancy Murphy
Laura Nieciak
Maureen Nolan
Jeanne Qualter
Marilyn Quinn
Jeanette Rieger
Marci Schneider Batsakis
Dorothy Simich
Carole Timkovich
Bill Walsh
Cyril Watson
Susan Welch
Kathryn Wiggins
Ellen Yanz
Ginny Zic-Schlomas
Patricia Zomaya
Susan Zupan





Music by
Richard Rodgers
Lyrics by
Oscar Hammerstein II
New Book by
Douglas Carter Beane
Original Book by
Oscar Hammerstein II
,,*,*,*,*,*,*,*,*,*

Orchestrations by
Danny Troob
Music Adaptation &
Arrangements by
David Chase
,,*,*,*,*,*,*,*,*,*

Director- Nikolie Christophy

Producer- Samantha Tetzlaff

Music Director- Stephen Lopez

Choreographer- Beck Hokanson

CINDERELLA is presented by arrangement with Concord Theatricals
on behalf of The Rodgers & Hammerstein Organization
www.concordtheatricals.com

Tickets

Adults: \$28

Members/Seniors/
Military: \$25

Children/Students: \$20

Get your tixs at our
website listed below!

Questions? Contact
Tickets@beverlytheatreguild.org or
call 773-BTG-TIXS

Times

Fri. Oct. 23rd
7:30 pm

Sat. Oct 24th
2:00 pm
ASL interpretation

Sat. Oct 24th
7:30 pm

Sun. Oct 25th
2:00 pm

FALL 2026



Theatre

The Baer Theater
at Morgan Park
Academy

2153 W. 111th St.
Chicago, IL 60643

This program is partially
supported by the following:

Illinois
ARTS
Council

The Elizabeth Morse
Charitable Trust

BEVERLYTHEATREGUILD.ORG

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

The History of Native Americans in the Blue Island Ridge Area

By
Carol Flynn

Fall Forum

**Friday, October 23, 2026
11am**

Butler Room.

Carol will bring us back in time to explore the locations around the Blue Island Ridge associated with Native Americans and their lifestyle in this region. Social and leadership structure, land and resource use, economics, spirituality, gender roles, pastimes, and more. This presentation will be timely as we observe Indigenous Peoples' Day on October 12th, and November is National Native American Heritage Month.

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American Heritage Month.



A Fall Forum planning meeting was held at the Beverly Bakery.

Standing: Betty Kort (Membership Chairperson), and Marcia Levin (Renaissance Academy President).

Seated: Pat Clair (Forum Coordinator) and Carol Flynn (Presenter).



Saint Xavier University Health Center:

The SXU Health Center is a nurse practitioner-led primary care clinic that serves students, faculty, staff, and community members with holistic care consistent with SXU's standard of excellence. For quality care you can trust, click the appointment link:

[Schedule an Appointment](#)



Another Benefit of Renaissance Academy Membership:

We can walk the track at the Shannon Center at no cost on Tuesdays and Thursdays when Renaissance is in session. Shannon Center senior citizen membership (\$200 for a year) would allow access to the track (not the gym) whenever the Center is open.

Also: **SXU Cafeteria 10% Discount with Renaissance ID**

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!



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**](mailto:schultzp@comcast.net)

Renaissance Email: [**renaissancechgo@gmail.com**](mailto: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 AND Videos on the Renaissance website and see how much fun was had! Multiple previous events are available for you to peruse.

Renaissance Website: [**https://www.renaissancechgo.org**](https://www.renaissancechgo.org)

A Renaissance Person to Know - Laura Alonzo

Interviewed by Mary Healy



Renaissance is blessed to have our very own musician/pianist in residence. **Laura** Alonzo adds to the ambiance of our TGITT gatherings with her delightful playing. Laura has been a member for three years and attends classes with her husband, **Joe**, and their daughter, **Gabriela**. Being a musician, Laura especially enjoys the classes on music.

Laura was born and raised in McKinley Park. She attended St. Maurice Grammar School, where she launched her musical career by playing the organ. She continues to play at that same parish 53 years later! That parish is now combined with two others and is called Blessed Sacrament.

Laura is the music director/organist for the English masses there. She is also the organist at St. Daniel the Prophet in Garfield Ridge. In addition, Laura served as music teacher there for eight years, teaching 600 students from pre-K to eighth grade.

Moving on to Curie High School, Laura entered when it first opened and is a proud member of the first graduating class. Following high school, Laura attended Robert Morris for the Secretarial Co-operative Honors Program. She worked as a secretary at Sargent & Lundy Engineers for ten years.

Besides Gabriela, Laura and Joe have two other children, Kristin and Anthony and are grandparents of five grandchildren, ages 3-9. The older ones keep Laura and Joe busy attending their many activities. In addition, Laura and Gabriela volunteer in the Basic Needs room at Catholic Charities in Summit.

Family interests include travel. Last summer, Laura, Joe, and Gabriela enjoyed a Baltic Sea cruise where they visited nine countries in 11 days. They also are fond of attending musicals and operas. Being a cancer survivor, Laura is grateful to wake up each day and share the little things with the ones she loves. She is most proud of being a good wife, mother, and grandmother.

Renaissance is proud to count this talented woman as a member.



2025 - 2026
Renaissance Academy



<u>Officers</u>		<u>Committees</u>	
President:	Marcia Levin	Care:	Melaine Herbert
Vice President:	Karen Danczyk Lyons	Curriculum:	Nancy North* Madonna Murphy Mike Yeager
Secretary:	Kate Walsh	History:	Pat Schultz* Peggy Devlin Casey
Treasurer:	Paula O'Brien	Information Systems Support:	Vanessa Glover Mary Johnson Paula O'Brien Jim Sim Mary Wolf
Information Systems:	Jim Condon*	Membership:	Betty Kort* Maggie Bertling Chris Bibro Maureen Jucas Peg Schneider Jim Sim
Consultant / Past President:	Jean Day	Newsletter:	Peggy Dosch* Mary Healy Maureen O'Connor
SXU Liaison:	Sandra Diaz / Linda Moreno	Office Management:	Nancy Ficaro*
		Publicity:	Mary Gallagher
		Special Events:	Deb Buie Michel' McGee Sharon Powers*
		Course Booklet:	Mary Johnson* Grace Ann Kartheiser
			*Chairs

"Autumn is a second spring when every leaf is a flower." — Albert Camus