



Spring 2024 Newsletter

President's Corner



"April is the cruelest month" according to T.S. Elliot.

However, we in Renaissance Chicago welcome it for our annual Poetry Month celebration, the beginning of the Spring Term, and the arrival of so many blooming flowers when our *"heart with pleasure fills and dances with the daffodils."* (William

Wordsworth) We will also enjoy several special events this term, beginning with a TGITT at Gilhooley's and culminating with our Spring Luncheon at the Orland Chateau.

Wishing everyone an enriching and enlightening Spring 2024!

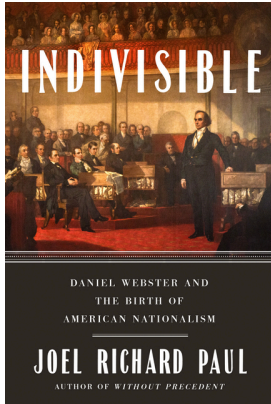
Maureen



**Renaissance is Pleased to Welcome
New Members Spring 2024!**

Mrs. Karen Danczak
Mr. Michael Moran
Ms. Sharon Powers
Mrs. Denise Roccasalva

A Plethora of Book Clubs for Your Enrichment!



Indivisible:

Daniel Webster and the Birth of American Nationalism

By Joel Richard Paul

Mike Hastings – Facilitator

Oak Lawn Library, Rotary Room

May 7, Noon to 1 p.m.

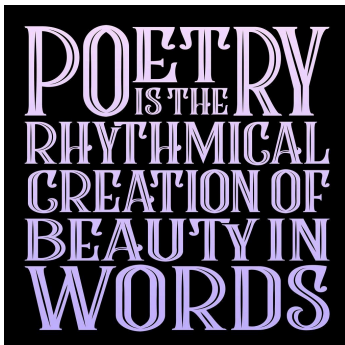
Just a few decades into existence as more than a hodgepodge of British colonies, the *United States* “was less reality than aspiration and *American* national identity was mostly a convenient fiction.” Joel Richard Paul's book retraces the process by which that fiction became a reality. In Paul's telling, a type of civic nationalism based on shared allegiance to the Constitution as an "organic expression of the will of *We the People*", proved victorious with Daniel Webster as its champion. (New Republic, Nov. 15, 2022, David Marques)

APRIL IS NATIONAL POETRY MONTH!

Jean Day - Facilitator

Evergreen Park Library

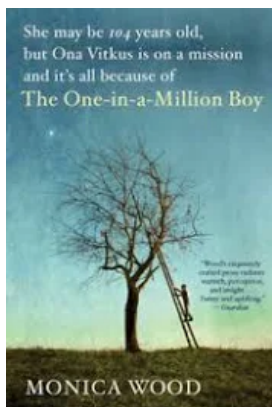
April 23, 11:00 am



Let's celebrate by getting together and sharing our favorite poems! Choose a poem from your childhood, your high school or college days, or a verse that has pulled at your heart for some reason or another. It could be funny, touching, and/or thought provoking. It could be beautifully phrased or discordant.

It could be a song, a rap, or a psalm. You may want to share

why this poem is meaningful to you. You may want to read it, sing it, or recite it from memory. Anything goes! Please join us.



The One in a Million Boy by Monica Wood

Carol Conway – Facilitator

Sisters of Mercy Meeting Place

10024 S. Central Park

June 3, 12:30 pm

I chose this simply because it's the lovely story of the unlikely friendship between a 104-year-old woman and a 10-year-old boy. I think you'll love it!

Carol



Annual Spring Luncheon!

Renaissance Academy is pleased once again to host the Spring Luncheon for current members.

Orland Chateau
14500 S. La Grange Road
Orland Park, IL

Tuesday, May 21, 2024

Cash Bar - 11:30 a.m.

Luncheon - noon

Reservations will be required; you may invite a guest for a charge tbd.

*“There is no time like Spring
When life’s alive in everything.”*
Christina Rosetti, “Spring”



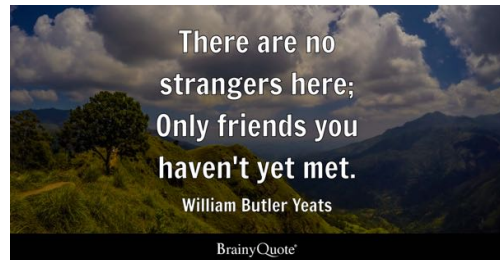
On March 7th a beautiful memorial Mass honored our members lost since March 2023 and Renaissance Forum presented the informative and entertaining *Six Wives of Henry VIII*. Thanks to all who prepared and participated in these wonderful events.



TGITT!

TGITT - Thank Goodness It's
Tuesday/Thursday.

Join us for this Fun Social Gathering!
Thursday, April 11, 2024
5 p.m. (Right after class)

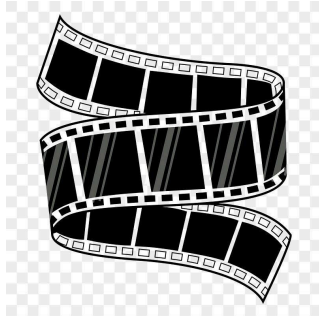


Gilhooley's
3901 West 103rd Street

Multiple hors d'oeuvres, plus cash bar

Reservations & Prepayment Were
Required by April 4, 2024 - \$28.00

Payments will be accepted at the door.



Renaissance Members are invited to a free film screening of **“This is Where I Learned Not to**

Sleep” on April 8, 2024 at 6 pm in McGuire Hall at St. Xavier University. This documentary is part quest for justice, part quest for healing. It frames the complexities of domestic violence through the lens of decorated Nashville Police Lt. Mark Wynn’s life. He wrestles with his own violent childhood and his quest for justice in domestic violence mishandling, and cover-ups from deep within law enforcement. The film creates a compelling call to men to take the lead in reform.

The keynote speaker, **Sheriff Tom Dart**, has brought compassionate and thoughtful approaches to law enforcement. After the documentary, there will be a discussion by domestic violence content experts: Aileen Robinson, assistant director of the Chicago Police Department, and Itedal Shalabi, Executive Director of Arab American Family Services. The event is a collaboration between SXU and the Archdiocese of Chicago Domestic Violence Outreach Committee to heighten awareness in our community.



2024 Dates to Remember

- | | |
|-----------------------------------|--|
| April 8
6:00 pm | Documentary
McGuire Hall |
| April 9
11:30 am | First day of Spring term
Zoom Board Meeting |
| April 23
11:00 am | <i>Poetry</i>
Evergreen Park Library |
| May 7
Noon | <i>Indivisible</i>
Oak Lawn Library,
Rotary Rm |
| May 16 | Last day of Spring term |
| May 21
11:30 am
Noon | Board Meeting 11:00 am
Cash Bar
Spring Luncheon
Orland Chateau |
| June 3
12:30 pm | <i>The One in a Million Boy</i>
Sisters of Mercy
Meeting Place
10024 S Central Park |



Champ's Kitchen

is an on-campus food pantry located within Saint Xavier University's Warde Academic Center. It is aimed to alleviate hunger on campus so students can continue to focus on their studies and succeed in their chosen academic and career pathways. The food pantry is in **Room L-208 in the Warde Academic Center** and is open Monday through Friday, 8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.

Champ's Kitchen was created in response to a 2019 nationwide survey by Temple University's Hope Center, which determined 39% of students experienced food insecurity. Saint Xavier University has a high number of in-need, Pell-eligible students and Champ's Kitchen provides a way to alleviate hunger on our campus and get students the fuel they need to continue to be successful in their studies. Please consider donating! Physical donations can be dropped off at WAC (Room L-208) or in one of the marked cardboard bins around the University.

In need of the following items:

- Soups
- Canned vegetables and beans
- Ramen, rice, mac and cheese, pasta, and sauce
- Boxed meals
- Protein (canned meat, tuna, chicken, peanut butter)
- Snacks (granola, crackers, chips)
- Cereal
- Toiletries, feminine products, and hygienic products such as shampoo and soap

If you cannot donate physical items but are interested in donating fiscally, please visit [SXU's Make a Gift web page](#), select "Other" from the "Designation" drop down menu, and type *Champ's Kitchen* in the text field that appears below.

The collection box pictured is in front of the Butler Room near the switchboard at the main university entrance.



Catherine's Caring Cause

By Michelle Martin | Staff Writer,
Chicago Catholic March 13, 2024



(photo Karen Callaway/*Chicago Catholic*)

A little more than six months ago, Luz, a Venezuelan migrant, was staying in a shelter with her son, Jose, trying to figure out her next steps. Now Luz and Jose, 10, share an apartment with her sister and brother-in-law and their 5-year-old son, Thiago. Luz recently received a work permit

and is employed in a restaurant; both boys are in school.

The family is being supported by **Catherine's Caring Cause**, a non-profit created by the Chicago Mercy Justice Committee, a group of Mercy sisters and associates. The organization is working to help migrant families by finding apartments, paying the first several months' rent and utilities, and assisting them with legal services, employment, enrolling children in school, and the myriad other things that must be taken care of to start building a new life. The organization is named after Mother Catherine McAuley, founder of the Mercy Sisters.

Carol Conway, Renaissance member, Mercy associate and board member of Catherine's Caring Cause, is the mentor working with Luz and her family, who have already taken over their own utility costs as the adults have been able to find work. Luz said her family is extremely grateful for the help of **Catherine's Caring Cause** and Conway especially. "She's a wonderful person who has done so much for us," Luz said in Spanish. "We wouldn't have gotten where we are without them. I have a work permit, an immigration lawyer."

Currently, Catherine's Caring Cause is working with ten families totaling 23 children and 13 adults. The plan is to keep the caseload at ten families, Conway said, so that when a family reaches the point where it can support itself financially, it will be replaced by another family. So far, most of the families have come from Venezuela and applied for asylum when they crossed the U.S. border in Texas. Most are among the more than 36,000 migrants who have been sent north by Texas authorities with no real understanding of where they were going or the challenges they would face, Conway said. "They come with the clothes on their backs and sandals on their feet," she said. "They have no idea of the cold."

At the moment, there are nine families in apartments and two waiting for apartments, Conway said. Finding apartments has been a challenge. "We have someone who spends a lot of time looking for apartments," she said, adding that many landlords do not want to rent to migrant families.

The group has a storage room with clothing and household items and helps find legal representation to help migrants file their paperwork properly and apply for permission to work legally. The general plan is for Catherine's Caring Cause to pay full rent and utilities for six months, then half the rent and utilities for the next six months.

Organizers have found that it is not always easy, especially when unexpected problems crop up, including medical and dental issues. Rent is the organization's largest expense, making up nearly 2/3 of the \$280,000 budget. Utilities and food make up more than 40%.

The biggest needs Catherine's Caring Cause has is for volunteer mentors and monetary support, Conway said. There is no need for more clothing or furniture at the moment. Volunteers are also applying for grants and seeking financial support wherever they can find it.

Conway acknowledged that much more needs to be done, but said every small action helps. "This isn't even a drop in the bucket," she said. "It's a drop in the ocean. But it lets me sleep at night." For more information, visit catherinecareschicago.org.



**Gaelic Park Players presents
*Anyone Could Rob a Bank***

The Gaelic Park Players presents its spring production *Anyone Could Rob a Bank* **Fridays April 12 and 19, Saturdays April 13 and 20, at 8 p.m. and Sundays, April 14 and 21, at 3 p.m.** The play is by Thomas Coffey and is directed by seasoned actor and director Julie Zebleckis.

First produced in 1960, "Anyone Could Rob a Bank" is a spirited comedy, with a farcical, highly improbable plot. The play is set in the kitchen of Badger Grey's house and shop, in the town of Ballybawn in rural Ireland. Having read a newspaper account of a failed bank robbery in Dublin, Badger, his brother Jeeren Grey, and his next-door neighbor Windy O'Sullivan fantasize how they might conduct a successful heist. Since they had no real intention of engaging in such a crime, imagine their amazement when two days later a robbery, to the exact specifications of these masterminds, occurs at the local bank in Ballybawn. Adding to the hilarity is a further cast of exaggerated characters: Badger's hair-brained wife, Sarah; his flirtatious daughter, Noreen; Noreen's on-again, off-again boyfriend, the local police sergeant; a current house guest, Tony O'Shea; and Badger's nephew, Mickey, a wannabe champion boxer.

Theatre-only tickets are available for \$15. On Fridays and Saturdays, the Pub Dinner-Theater Combo tickets are \$35. On Sundays, the Buffet-Theater Combo tickets with buffet after the show are \$45. **Reservations are necessary.**

For more information, call (708) 687-9323 or visit the website at www.ChicagoGaelicPark.org or

[Buy tickets – Anyone Could Rob a Bank](#)



A Renaissance Person You Should Know **Jim Condon**

by Mary Healy

Meet our resident IT Specialist and board member, Jim Condon. Because of him, RA has grown from paper to online registration, including a credit card payment option. We are part of the 21st century!! Jim has a wealth of knowledge in the IT field as he worked as an AT&T global account executive. The task of that team was to change the business paradigm from an AT&T Bell System to conducting

business in a new competitive world

Jim grew up in Mount Greenwood and married the girl on the next block! He and Joanne have been married for 48 years and have three children and five grandchildren. They currently live in Evergreen Park.

Volunteer work is nothing new to Jim. When their children attended Queen of Martyrs School both Jim and Joanne were active volunteers in the church and school. They hosted PreCana conferences and found sharing their experiences with young couples rewarding. In addition, Jim was a member of the parish council, a Eucharistic minister, and a basketball coach.

In his spare time, Jim enjoys morning power walks with Joanne, golf with friends, and anything with the grandkids.

Jim takes a can-do attitude toward projects and prefers do-it-yourself options. This has helped expand his knowledge of how things function and given him the satisfaction of being more self-reliant.

Favorite Renaissance classes are those that include open discussion especially ones on current issues. He also enjoys classes on historical events providing an opportunity to learn from the past.

Renaissance is fortunate to have such a knowledgeable and generous member. We all benefit from his technical expertise!

**LOOK
WHAT'S
NEW!**

FLICKR SITE!

Photos and videos of Renaissance Academy events are now available to view and download from the Renaissance Academy Flickr site thanks to Pat Schultz!

<https://bit.ly/RA-Flickr>

You may also view these albums by going to the Renaissance Academy Home page <https://www.renaissancechgo.org> and clicking on Past Events Photos at the bottom of the page.

FACEBOOK PAGE!

Have you joined the Renaissance group on Facebook? New members should have received an email with a link to join. Any Renaissance member who would like to join should email Pat Schultz: at schultzp@comcast.net

ATTENTION



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

Renaissance Email: renaissancechgo@gmail.com

Telephone: 773-298-3149

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

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.

MISSION



Shannon Center

We can walk at the Shannon Center any time on Tuesdays and Thursdays when Renaissance is in session **without** a Shannon membership. Shannon Center is open from 7 a.m. to 7 p.m. Check in at the desk on the first floor. We cannot walk at Shannon Center when Renaissance is **not** in session.

**2023 - 2024
Renaissance Academy**



<u>Officers</u>		<u>Committees</u>	
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Vice President:	Jean Day	Curriculum:	Sue Wrzesinski* Grace Ann Kartheiser
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Info Systems:	Jim Condon*	Membership:	Betty Kort
Past President/ Consultant:	Eileen Holderbaum	Newsletter:	Peggy Dosch* Mary Healy Maureen O'Connor
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		Publicity:	Carol Conway*
		Renaissance Forum:	JoAnn Gruca* Pat Clair Therese Cunningham Mary Howley
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