

Sherman Garden Cooperative Apartments

A monthly publication for residents of Sherman Garden Apartments, 1856-66 Sherman Avenue, Evanston, IL

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GARDEN ROOTS

By Joan Cotter

Do you know that we have cousins in Rogers Park? Lunt-Lake and Winchester-Hood Apartments were designed and built by Holsman, Holsman, Klekamp & Taylor shortly after Sherman Garden. Lunt-Lake is, as you might guess, on Lunt at Lake Michigan; Winchester-Hood is in the West Rogers Park (or West Ridge) neighborhood at Winchester and Hood, west of Ridge between Devon and Peterson. For information about Winchester-Hood, see their website winhoodhomes.com.

Recently we sat down with Lew Rosenbaum, the chair of the Board of Lunt-Lake. With 88 units in three buildings, it is somewhat smaller than SGA. Two of the buildings have 9 stories (with elevators that are slightly larger than ours) and the third building is a four-story walk-up. Lunt-Lake was first occupied in January 1950, whereas the first SGA owners moved in during July of 1948.

The Rogers Park co-op is managed slightly differently than ours. There is a Board with a minimum of seven members (there are currently nine) and all are resident shareholders. The Board's functions are similar to ours. Meetings are held monthly and have two parts: an executive session and a public meeting open to all shareholders. Because of this opportunity for monthly access to the Board, there is no annual meeting. Members of the Board serve three-year terms and can be re-elected (by the Board, not by all the shareholders). In addition to the Board, there are several committees comprised of Board members and other residents: facility maintenance, legal affairs, and the "Green Team," which promotes recycling and reuse, oversees the landscaping, and generally builds a sense of community through group projects. The committees draw on the specific expertise of their members, review what needs to be done, and take proposals to the Board for action.

We asked about building maintenance issues and were not surprised to learn that they are faced with pending upgrades similar to ours at SGA: plumbing, heating, electrical and elevators. In addition to having to bring the elevators up to code to comply with City of Chicago requirements by 2012, they have found it difficult to find parts for the old elevators when repairs are necessary. Lunt-Lake replaced its windows in about 1998. Rosenbaum is interested in exploring the installation of satellite television and WiFi in the complex.

Comparing the external appearance of SGA and Lunt-Lake, he observed that the embellishments of stone sculptures on our walls make SGA somewhat more elegant, whereas Lunt-Lake has a more park-like appearance with larger grounds and, of course, with the view of Lake Michigan from many of the units. It's clear that we're related, though not quite siblings. Cousins we are!