

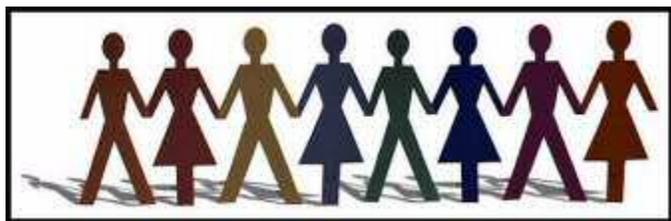
Sherman Garden Cooperative Apartments

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

APRIL 2022 NEWSLETTER



One of the first signs of spring – daffodils and bluets in the garden in front of 1862.



ASSOCIATION NEWS

By Allen Feuerstein (1856), SGAA President

Spring is approaching and lots of things are in the works. The SGAA is planning a coffee and bagels gathering on Saturday, April 23 in observance of Earth Day. Please watch for information and plan to join your neighbors beginning at 10:00 am.

The Meet the Candidates Zoom meeting was a success with over 30 attendees. If you were unable to attend this meeting, please review the minutes that are provided at the end of this newsletter.

All voting-eligible SGA owners should have recently received their ballot and voting instructions from Heil &

Heil. Please read the instructions carefully and then cast your ballot. Ballots will be counted on Sunday morning, May 1.

I am pleased to welcome to our community Brendan and Rebecca Walsh, who are moving into 1860, 2NE.

###



FROM THE TRUSTEES

Dare we hope that spring has actually sprung and the winter is vanquished?

Speaking of winter being vanquished: the boilers will be shut off on May 15th.

STAIRWELL PAINTING

Don't the stairwells look wonderful?! Sprucing up the buildings will continue as the new board of Trustees gets acclimated and moves forward with plans for carpeting and other improvements.

GARDEN WALK 6-26

And the garden volunteers will be working hard to spruce up the outside of the buildings and prepare our gardens for the Evanston Garden Walk 2022 on Sunday, June 26th.

FRIEND FOR SWEETIE

We have adopted a new feral cat, a one-year-old female gray and white tabby who has not been named as of this writing. She is fully "vetted", meaning spayed, microchipped, ear clipped and has received all her shots.

SKATEBOARDERS

We have had some visits from trespassing skateboarders recently. EPD's Community Policing Division is working with pictures we sent them for identification purposes. As hard as it is, if you see them, please don't confront them – they seem to thrive on

confrontation and enjoy that as much or more as the jumps they take off our stairs. Please call 911 immediately and take pictures if you can of individuals so the police can work to identify them and talk to the kids themselves and the parents. We have been told that calls from Sherman Gardens will be given as high a priority as possible, given their current staffing shortage.

PLEASE VOTE!

This is a highly unusual election year and we commend the Nominating Committee for their efforts in coming up with a mix of experienced past and new trustees with a wide range of talents and knowledge. Your vote matters to decide who will serve for what length of time.

THANKS!

As Keith Johnson and Diane Petersmarck retire after serving six years, we thank them for their service to SGAT.

FOR SALE

1860 - 1SE - \$144,000

2BR/1B/Balcony

Agents: Colin Hebson, Chaya Benhlyoun

Dream Town Realty

Telephone No: 312/242-1000

MLS#: 11333013

1862 - 1NE - \$99,900

2BR/1.5B

Agent: Joe Gerber

Engel and Voelkers

Telephone No: 847/441-5730

MLS#: 11271069

###



TRUSTEE ELECTION

Morris Phibbs (1862)

All SGA certificate holders should have recently received from Heil & Heil the ballot and voting instructions for the 2022 SGA

Trustee election. As a reminder, there are four candidates running for four vacant positions, so the owner(s) of each SGA unit may cast up to a maximum of four votes. Each unit, regardless of the number of owners listed on the Certificate of Beneficial Interest, is allowed a maximum of four votes.

Complete voting instructions are enclosed in the mailing

from Heil & Heil, which should include:

1. Cover memo dated April 1, 2022
2. Voting instructions
3. Ballot
4. Owner Warranty, which must be signed and returned with your ballot
5. Business reply envelope to Heil & Heil ("DO NOT OPEN" is directed to Heil & Heil staff or SGA person who collects ballots that have been slipped through the Trustee Office mail slot)
6. Small envelope with your Certificate of Beneficial Interest Number written on it. This is the number you will transfer where indicated to your SGA Owner's Warranty.

After you complete your Owner Warranty sheet, fold it and place it in the business reply envelope. Your completed ballot should be folded and sealed in the small envelope with the hand-written number on it. The small, sealed envelope that now contains your ballot is then inserted in the business reply envelope, which now contains the completed Owner Warranty sheet and your ballot.

To maintain voting security, the Owner's Warranty number will be cross-referenced with a list of qualified numbers provided by Heil & Heil.

Personal statements provided by each of the four candidates were printed in the March *SGA Newsletter*. Minutes from the March 16 "Meet the Candidates" Zoom meeting are appended to the April newsletter.

###

SG NOMINATING COMMITTEE THANKS

Don Schollenberger (1864), Chairman
SG Nominating Committee

I would like to take this opportunity to thank the members of the SG Nominating Committee: 1856- Keith Johnson and Sheree Brutzkus, 1860- Catherine Marsh and Norman Weston, 1862 - Michael Blanski, 1864 - Michael Stephens and 1866 - Louise Keely and Jim Edgren.

What normally takes two meetings to complete wound up taking six meetings. In fact, we asked Morris Phibbs, 1862 to assist us in designing the ballot at the last meeting.

Having been involved in many capacities at Sherman Gardens for over thirty years, the slate we presented is

a very good one. You have the experience of Barbara Pearson and Marcia Bosits as former Trustees combined with Louise Keely and Jim Edgren who will be first-time Trustees.

###



SAVE THE DATE: APRIL 23, 10AM-NOON SGAA CELEBRATES EARTH DAY

Morris Phibbs (1862)

The world will celebrate Earth Day this year on April 22. Assuming that spring will have finally arrived in Evanston by then, the SGA Association invites everyone to salute our Mother Earth on Saturday, April 23, 10:00 am to noon in the courtyard. **There will be coffee and bagels!**

Planning is not complete, but we hope to have some “patio prizes” provided by Downtown Evanston establishments and to give you the opportunity to help prepare our gardens for more loveliness. Additional information will be coming soon.

To get you in the mood, here are links to sites and materials that provide the history and purpose of Earth Day and suggest ways we each can help care for our global home on a year-round basis.

<https://www.earthday.org/earth-day-2022/>
<https://earth911.com/inspire/how-you-can-invest-in-our-planet/>
<https://earth911.com/category/living-well-being/>

And from **13 Ways to Live A More Sustainable Way in 2022** (from Headwaters Charitable Trust), here are suggestions worth consideration. Some of these ideas are not applicable to our cooperative living environment, but you can pass them along to your family and friends. Congratulations to those who are already participating in some of these practices. More information on these suggestions is found

at <https://hwct.org/13-ways-to-live-a-more-sustainable-way-in-2022/>.

- Save energy
- Use reusable alternatives
- Go paperless
- Use renewable energy
- Recycle and reuse
- Grow your own produce
- Donate unused items
- Buy fair trade products
- Drive less
- Don't waste food
- Shop at thrift stores
- Use eco-friendly cleaning products
- Go get some fresh air

There are several online sites that enable you to calculate your personal carbon footprint. These tools can be eye-opening.

<https://www.nature.org/en-us/get-involved/how-to-help/carbon-footprint-calculator/>
<https://www.carbonfootprint.com/calculator.aspx>
<https://www3.epa.gov/carbon-footprint-calculator/>

Come visit with your neighbors on Saturday, April 23 as we enjoy the coming of spring, the awakening of our gardens, and share ideas on improving and maintaining the health of Our Mother. You may even win a “patio prize”!

###

RECYCLING ELECTRONICS

Please do not put anything with a cord out to the dumpsters or in the dumpsters. IL State law says no electronics may be added to the landfill, they all must be recycled. Here are the places where you can get rid of your unwanted electric items.

SWANCC drop-off locations are open to residents of any **SWANCC-member community**.

Please bring an ID or utility bill to verify residency. There is no fee for these services.

Go to this site for lists of what is accepted where.
<https://www.swancc.org/recycling/recycle-directory>

[Weekly Electronics Recycling Drop-Offs](#)

Glenview Transfer Station

[3 Providence Way, Des Plaines](#)

Saturdays: 9:00 am - 11:30 am
Open Year Round

Opening this in April:

Hoffman Estates Village Hall

[1900 Hassell Rd](#)

Mondays: 10:00 am - 12:00 pm
April 4, 2022 - November 14, 2022

Mount Prospect Public Works

[1700 W Central Rd](#)

Wednesdays: 10:00 am - 12:00 pm
April 13, 2022 - October 26, 2022

Winnetka Public Works

[1390 Willow Rd](#)

Thursdays: 1:00 pm - 3:00 pm
April 7, 2022- November 17, 2022

###



AMERICAN ROBIN

By Diane Petersmarck (1860)

The robin is one bird that is always hopping around the courtyard or up in the lower branches of our trees. Both males and females are gray-brown birds with yellow bills and orange breasts, but the male's head is usually darker than the female's

Robins are not seed-eaters, so you won't attract them with bird feeders. Instead, look for them on the ground. Notice how they curiously tilt their heads - they are listening for worms. Robins use both visual and auditory

clues to hunt down their favorite snack. I have often seen them perched on the light covers in our courtyard.

In the fall, robins gather in flocks, to roost together at night. They also make small migratory movements to find food. These birds eat berries year-round, and I once saw about 50 robins on our courtyard patio eating the red berries of the serviceberry (I think) trees growing along the fence line.

###

UPDATE ON COOK COUNTY SENIOR FREEZE EXEMPTION

Morris Phibbs (1862)

Our friend Mitzi Gibbs, Evanston Property Tax Assessment Reviewer, has sent me this updated application information for the Cook County Senior Freeze Exemption and the Senior Property Tax Exemption ("Senior Exemption").

The Cook County Assessor's Office has just confirmed with Mitzi that the 2020 Senior Exemption (not the Senior Freeze Exemption) has been auto-renewed for homeowners at Sherman Garden Apartments who are already in that program. She says it is assumed that the 2021 Senior Exemption will also be auto-renewed. Please note that you qualify for this exemption if (1) you are new to Sherman Garden and were age 65 or older during 2021, or if (2) you are a continuing resident and were age 65 or older during 2021. Please see the March *SGA Newsletter* for additional information.

However, if you qualify for the Senior Freeze Exemption, you will need to re-apply for 2020 and 2021. There is currently no deadline set for the 2021 exemption application, but Mitzi suggests you should submit your application by April 22nd. Please see the March *SGA Newsletter* for qualifications and application procedures, or go to <https://www.cookcountyassessor.com/news/homeowners-find-out-which-property-tax-exemptions-automatically-renew-year> and [cookcountyassessor.com/exemptions](https://www.cookcountyassessor.com/exemptions).

If you have missed receiving any exemptions for tax years 2017–2020, you can submit a Certificate of Error (C/E) application on the Cook County Assessor's website at <https://www.cookcountyassessor.com/certificates->

[error](#). Homeowners have about three years to submit refund applications for missed exemptions. It may take up to three months after submitting your application(s) to receive a refund check for the missed exemption(s).

You may sign up to receive the latest news and updates from the Cook County Assessor's office at <https://public.govdelivery.com/accounts/ILCOOK/signup/12686>.

Mitzi remains committed to offering her assistance as needed.

Mitzi Gibbs
Property Tax Assessment Reviewer
City Manager's Office, Morton Civic Center
City of Evanston
2100 Ridge Ave., Room G551 | Evanston, IL 60201 | 847-448-8168
Office Hours: M-F; 10:00am-3:00pm, appointments recommended
mgibbs@cityofevanston.org

###



Our very own Cloud Gate.



Sherman Garden Trustees

Diane Petersmarck	Term ends May 2022
Keith Johnson	Term ends May 2022
Louise Keely	Term ends May 2022
John Coughlin	Term ends May 2023
Barbara Pearson	Term ends May 2022

Sherman Garden Association

President, Allen Feuerstein, 1860
Vice-President, Joyce O'Callahan, 1860
Secretary, Morris Phibbs, 1862
Treasurer, Julie Lamberti, 1860
Building Coordinators: 1856 – Sherre Brutzkus, Lisa Noble
1860 – Norman Weston, Tim Mahoney
1862 – Jack Stern
1864 – Sarah Vanderwicken, Rosa Alanis
1866 – Pat Rolfs, Walter Henebry

Sherman Garden Apartments is managed by

Heil, Heil, Smart & Golee

5215 Old Orchard Road, Suite 300
Skokie, IL 60077 847.866.7400
hsd@hsg.net

Property Manager: Gregg Rithmiller

Building Engineers

Rafael Del Rio, Oscar Huazano
Boiler Room Phone: 847.864.6887

SGA Newsletter is edited by Cindee Bath. It is written by Roving Reporters from the SGA Community. Produced by Diane Petersmarck.

Submissions are welcome.

Meet the Candidates Zoom Meeting

March 16, 2022

Please note that each of the candidates provided written responses to a Nominating Questionnaire. These responses may be found as an attachment to the March SGAA Newsletter.

SGAA Board President, Allen Feuerstein, welcomed everyone to the meeting. He acknowledged and introduced Don Schollenberger, who assembled and chaired the 2022 SGA Trustee Nominating Committee, consisting of Michael Blanski, Sheree Brutzkus, Jim Edgren, Keith Johnson, Louise Keely, Catherine Marsh, Michael Stephens, and Norm Weston.

Don Schollenberger, then introduced each of the four candidates, who spoke about their goals as potential SGA Trustees.

Louise Keely (1866)

I have lived in 1866 for four years with my two sons and boyfriend. I've lived in Evanston for 15 yrs. My Mom is Diane Keely, who along with my Dad moved to Sherman Garden in 2010.

From a work standpoint, I'm a partner at Ernst and Young, where I work in Strategy and Transactions Practice. I work a lot with consumer industries, retailers, and consumer products companies, helping them to make better decisions. In terms of my interest in becoming a trustee and what I see as my priorities as a trustee, I would say there are a couple of things I would bring to the table to help the community and the trustees. I have a background in business; though I'm not an accountant or a finance person, I know how to think about project revenue and costs. I've managed large projects as well as day-to-day teams, and I think I'm very good at structuring things. I've been involved with the trustees both as a resident and now as a temporary trustee; I'm currently helping with the garage project. I would say that my main priority has been helping bring structure and helping us think through what information we need to gather in order to make a decision. I would say for trustees this is the most important thing we do--gather information, think through it, talk about it as a team, and then make a decision.

As a trustee, I have three priorities: one is to ensure the financial stability of the trust, which involves making sure that we have enough funds to maintain the trust in a safe and comfortable way and provide a really great experience for the people who live here. And do it in a cost-effective way that respects the different resources that we all bring. There is concern about assessments and property taxes and things like that. I want to make sure that the trustees work as a team and that we all bring different experiences, strengths, and skills to the table. So as a trustee I look to collaborate with my fellow trustees in a way that brings out the best in all of us. Last, but not least, I also want to make sure that we bring to the table the skill and expertise of our residents. I know a lot of you have professional and personal experiences that are important for the decisions we have to make that are coming up now and will come up in the future. As an example, I'm really interested in improving some of our commons areas in a way that is cost-effective. We have some people living here who have backgrounds in interior design and graphic design, and I want to take advantage of those free resources that people can offer to make this a great place to live. So bring in the voices of our residents and make sure that people feel like their voices are heard and are given opportunities to contribute.

Barbara Pearson (1864)

(Barbara was having technical issues with Zoom, and so her comments were interrupted and fragmented.)

Most residents here probably already know me from my previous service as a trustee for 6+ years. And after 2 years of COVID, I am back and ready to be involved again.

The parking structure is a huge deal, and tenant relationships are always at the top of my list. I have always been a trouble-shooter for on-site issues. A tenant joined Barbara's time and pointed out that Barbara played a very large role in supervising the major plumbing projects during recent years, thus demonstrating that she can manage large projects..

Marcia Bosits (1862)

I've lived at Sherman Garden since 1994, and I chose this community primarily for its location. I've been a professor at the Bienen School of Music and will be retiring this year after 40 years of service. I am now rethinking how I want to use my time and energy. I have served as a Sherman Garden trustee for one year, so I know that this is really a demanding role and no trustee will satisfy all the concerns and needs of the residents all the time.

I imagine myself working toward balance, which I see in three different ways. One is financial (some of my comments will echo what the previous candidate said). We live in aging buildings and there's no question that we'll need to spend money to keep them clean, comfortable, and up to date. We all want a pleasant place in which to live. But I think I would be extremely cautious in promoting large projects (where, for example, there could be unknown costs), so as to protect the financial security of our community.

Two, I think the board of trustees has to be a balanced organization; we don't really have a president or chair of the trustees, so I think that means we have to try to share the workload as evenly as we can and be sure that all the trustees' voices are heard and respected equally. Then when we bring in residents and outside experts we can all feel that we've had an equal investment in whatever decisions have to be made.

Third, I think about using that balance in the decision-making process. By necessity, the board has to make some difficult decisions, and all I can say is that it would be my goal to be sure that residents are informed of the issues we are discussing and dealing with, and that we collect feedback as often as possible in the process. True, people don't answer sometimes, or they disagree with each other, but again I feel that it is important that people feel that they're heard even if their preference doesn't always win the day.

I think once we make a decision, we should try to implement it as fairly as possible and protect the confidentiality of the people involved. We need to respect each other. I consider myself one of the community of characters here and that's a wonderful aspect of our community. So it just means that unless someone is causing a problem for someone else, we need to protect our individuality and let people live their lives. That's a lot of goals and I'm not sure that I'll always be successful, but I would make my best efforts.

Jim Edgren (1866)

We bought our unit in 2017 and moved in in 2018. I retired a couple of years ago and am glad I'm here, because I now have time and energy to work on things, one of which has been cleaning up the bike

rooms and helping with holiday parties. And then I got involved in the trustee nominating committee. Several people I asked to run for a trustee position said they wouldn't run, but suggested that I should. So I decided why not?

I've worked with large numbers of people, and I was head of a union for twenty years off and on. I negotiated contracts for 400-600 people multiple times, fighting tooth and nail to get the best possible deals for all members of the union. Off and on since I was thirteen years old, I've worked on people's buildings. So I know a little bit about buildings and what needs to be done. And I know one thing: if you defer maintenance you will pay a lot later, so you need to get on stuff right away. Everyone wants to save money, but we need to spend some money to get the best possible things we need.

I work with people with a voluntary organization that was international in scope—local, state, national, and international. So I know how to work with people of different cultures. I just want to see what happens as we go forward with this garage project. There are other things going on too, but everyone seems to be focused on the garage. We'll see what happens. My goal is—I want a safe place to park and I think everyone else does and I think we can get something that doesn't cost very much money.

Questions and Discussion

Q: Given that there is chronic and unresolved conflict within the trustees and within the SGA community, how do you personally believe that kind of conflict can be resolved?

KEELY: The conflict is never going to be resolved; there are always going to be differences of opinion. The key is, like Marcia was saying, we have to be respectful of one another and listen to one another. My view is that five people [the trustees] are going to have to make decisions, meaning sometimes it will be 3 vs 2, 4 vs 1, etc., but we all come into it trying to do the best for the community. Sometimes my view isn't going to be the view that wins the day, but I will know that I was heard, that my input was listened to, that the other people are reasonable, and that we'll be able to move forward with that. And once a decision has been made, we must all get behind it. We need to recognize what we have in common, even if we don't all see eye-to-eye. The trustees are essentially volunteers [each does receive a small remuneration] and there is a lot of time and care that goes into being a trustee. Whatever we decide, some people will be left unhappy, and that's just the way life is, so that problem is not going to go away. I care about the other people in the community and I care what the other trustees think, but my view is we have to make decisions and we have to make sure that we're being fiscally responsible and that we are moving forward. That will be my first priority.

BOSITS: I agree with Louise in that once a decision has been made, even if not unanimously, what is important is that the trustees get behind it, that there isn't a lot of second-guessing or we don't put that issue aside, and then bring it up again in a few months because someone may want a different resolution. We need to step back, move on, and implement that decision. I do think it helps to collect a lot of resident input no matter how diverse this is because we might break down the stereotyped view that some of the trustees do not listen to anybody else. The sense of being heard is important.

EDGREN: Part of this question is a real concern of mine. There's going to be conflict among the trustees, but I think some of the stuff that spills out is people taking trustee business outside of the committee, and complaining to other people. I think what they should be doing is solving the problems in there and not looking for so much help from outside. Conflict within the Sherman Garden community is going to happen because we have a vast variety of people. [We should] try to work toward keeping everybody as happy as possible, but not everybody is going to agree with everything.

PEARSON: I think any decisions the trustees make are based on a majority vote among the five. All of the pertinent information is shared with all of the trustees, so everybody can make a rational decision and then vote. There should not be a problem. People always disagree, but the majority rules.

COMMENT: The trustees need to obey the open meetings act. The entire meeting does not need to be in closed session, which is the way it is now. Also, our right to privacy needs to be respected.

BOSITS: I would be OK with open meetings as long as there is a portion of the meeting that is closed to discuss confidential things. I have concerns with some of the same things that were asked about. Some of the things in our rules, such as access to units during emergencies, need to be rephrased, because it seems to allow trustees to make individual judgments about when they could enter someone's apartment. Crossing of privacy rules should be used only in very very rare circumstances.

PEARSON: During my tenure as a trustee, it was rare that we ever entered an apartment except for during the plumbing projects. It is very rare. If we did go in when someone was not at home it was when we smelled gas in the hallway, that kind of thing. Things that were actual emergencies. In my experience, trustees have been pretty good at respecting unit owners.

Q: If there is a conflict among the trustees, is that conflict typically shared with the owners, so that we have some input on how the conflict is resolved?

DON: I've never seen a situation where a conflict within the trustees can't be resolved. The resolution should be made by the trustees.

KEELY: If there is an unresolvable conflict, my thought is to bring in outside counsel (Heil & Heil, a former trustee, etc.) to help them work through the issue.

Q: What are your views on the putative land swap?

BOSITS: We've collected an awful lot of new detailed information during the past few days. Potential project costs, zoning issues, and a number of other issues, all of which means that we're re-examining the whole process. Some of them would allow us to make decisions about what demands and conditions we might need to make, or to simply let go of the project. Nothing is happening in the near future; a lot of residents have had the impression that something was happening without knowing enough. We're sorting through a lot of recently received financial details.

EDGREN: I don't have enough information, but I'm not worried about it. All I want is whatever is best for the community.

Q: Trustees often express that they are overwhelmed with the enormous responsibility. How do you deal with this, rather than just going away? Issues like chronic and unresolved problems and the lack of communication and transparency, all of which affect building maintenance and the homeowners.

KEELY: I'm going to be very careful to think about what I can contribute and where I can make the most impact. Each of the five trustees has different strengths. I would make a list of all current resident concerns and put it in a confidential space so that we can monitor and take care of them. I will be good

at putting structures in place so that we can keep track of what's going on. Concerning communications, the trustees may want to reinstate an ask-the-trustees time (once a month, or every six weeks, possibly held in a home). This would be a structural thing that would help.

In closing, Don praised the nominating committee which produced the best trustee slate in a long time with varied backgrounds and experience.

Submitted by Morris Phibbs
SGAA Secretary