

Mayfair Messenger

A publication of the Mayfair Civic Association
Neighbors making a difference since 1945

October 2015
Volume 19, Issue 2

Learn How to Cut Energy Bills at MCA's Meeting

The next MCA meeting will be held at 7:30 p.m. on **Thursday, October 8**, at the Irish American Heritage Center, 4626 N. Knox. The meeting will feature Elizabeth Corrado from the local nonprofit organization, Elevate Energy. She'll share tips on how to lower energy bills, take advantage of utility rebates, and maximize the efficiency of smart meters. (See more details on page 6.)



Have any questions or concerns about other neighborhood issues? Please attend the meeting to bring them to MCA's attention. See you there!

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Letter from the President

Ron Duplack

Our last meeting focused on the large corner building located at 4459-67 W. Lawrence Ave./4748-50 N. Kenneth (situated at the Lawrence/Elston intersection). Nicholas Yassan, who recently purchased the building—together with his attorney Anthony Casaccio and construction manager Mike Lane—outlined improvements that have been underway. Currently, the five retail/commercial units on the ground floor are being upgraded. Roof-top signage has been removed, and modernized signage will be installed on the retail/commercial level.

Mr. Yassan has lived in the Mayfair community for 10 years and owns other Mayfair-area properties. He would like to purchase more, and envisions a freshened business strip along Lawrence Ave. At the meeting, he sought MCA approval of a special-use permit that would be required by the increased number of residential units that would result from the proposed reconfiguration of the building's second floor.

Previous owners had combined several smaller residential units into larger units to allow more tenants to inhabit the building. Mr. Yassan will reconfigure the five units, resulting in seven smaller residential units on the upper floor. The reconfiguration would actually reduce the density of the building occupancy. The larger unit sizes established by prior building changes had resulted in overpopulation through the "hostelling" of the units.

The building already has ample parking in the rear, and there are no plans to reinstall the roof-top signage, which some neighbors had complained was unsightly. Following an extended discussion by meeting participants, the permit request was unanimously approved.

Our October meeting will focus on winterizing and saving energy costs. Elizabeth Corrado of Elevate Energy will discuss smarter energy use, as well as available programs that may enable residents to lower heating costs, protect the environment, and ensure efficient alternatives for those who need them the most. We hope you'll be able to attend.



Attorney Anthony Casaccio (left) assisted Mike Lane and Nicholas Yassan (vice president and president, respectively, of Rany Management) to explain plans for the building at Lawrence and Elston. The company is seeking a zoning change.

Update from the Alderman

Margaret Laurino, 39th Ward

Fall has arrived with its clear days and cool nights. Take advantage of the mild weather to enjoy some of the great activities in our area. Then, on Sunday, November 1, please remember to set your clocks back one hour at 2:00 a.m. (or just set your clocks back one hour before you go to sleep), because daylight savings time comes to an end.

Harvest time brings out nature's bounty at local parks

Local farmers and merchants will be gathering at farmer's markets to bring you delicious produce, tasty foods, and great entertainment. But the last opportunity this year to shop at farmer's market at Independence Park (located at 3945 N. Springfield Ave.) will be on Sunday, October 11, and Sunday, October 25, from 9:00 a.m. until 1:00 p.m. Come and support our local farmers and merchants.

The North Park Village Nature Center (5801 N. Pulaski Rd.) will host its annual Harvest Fest and Farmer's Market on Saturday, October 10, and Sunday, October 11, from 10:00 a.m. until 3:00 p.m. The 24th annual Harvest Fest includes children's nature crafts, live music, storytelling, seasonal refreshments, tours, and a scarecrow-building contest. For more information, please contact the North Park Village Nature Center at (312) 744-5472.

Pulaski Road construction notice

Pulaski Road will be resurfaced from Peterson Avenue to Foster Avenue. Construction is tentatively scheduled to begin on October 6 (weather permitting and pending clearance from and coordination with existing utilities).

The work will include ADA sidewalk improvements, curb and gutter removal and replacement, and bus pad construction. The concrete work will take place first, followed by the milling of the the existing asphalt pavement, paving, and striping.

During construction, temporary "No Parking" signs will

be periodically installed as required. These temporary signs will restrict parking during working hours, while adhering to rush-hour restrictions, until completion of the work. All work on this corridor is scheduled to be completed by December 1, 2015.

Don't forget the sacrifices veterans have made

Mayfair Remembrance Day: A Salute to American Heroes is scheduled for Sunday, November 8, from 1:00 p.m. to 3:00 p.m. at the southwest corner of Lawrence and Keeler Avenues, by the Lawrence-Keeler Veterans Memorial. Come out and help us honor Mayfair and North Mayfair veterans, firefighters, and police officers for the many sacrifices they make, and their dedication to preserving our freedom and safety.

Free rain barrels can help conserve water

We've teamed up with the Metropolitan Water Reclamation District, the Albany Park Community Center, and the Mayfair Veterans Committee to make rain barrels available to 39th ward residents at no cost.

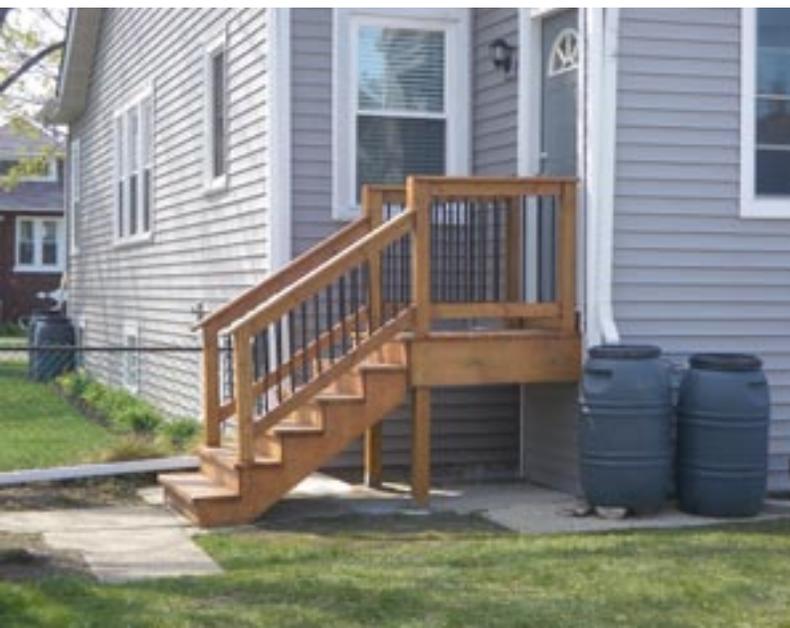
Rain barrels capture rain water and save it for later use. By keeping this water out of the sewer system, rain barrels help to prevent sewer overflows and flooding—and reduce harmful pollutants carried into local waterways by runoff. Rain barrels also can keep water away from your home's foundation. Homeowners throughout Cook County have incorporated rain barrels into their yards with great results. If you have areas of unpaved, pervious ground near your downspouts, rain barrels should work in your yard.

Most homes can benefit from several rain barrels. You can get up to two barrels free of charge, but can order up to four. Storing rain provides a free and sustainable water source for gardens. Rain is naturally free of chlorine, lime, and calcium, so plants prefer it. You also can use rain barrel water to wash cars, water lawns, or clean work boots and tools (just don't drink it; remember, it came from the roof).

The 55-gallon rain barrels are repurposed food barrels, so they're doubly green. You can choose gray, black, blue, or terra-cotta. Sign up for rain barrels at <http://aldermanlaurino.com/content/free-rain-barrels>. The Metropolitan Water Reclamation District will deliver your rain barrel before the end of the year. If you have any questions, please feel free to call the ward office.

Contact us via e-mail or phone, or visit us in person

As always, if you have any questions or concerns, e-mail ward39@cityofchicago.org, call us at (773) 736-5594, or stop in at my public service office, 4404 W. Lawrence Ave. Our office hours are Monday from 9:00 a.m. to 8:00 p.m., Tuesday through Friday, 9:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m., and Saturday from 9:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m.



Irish American Heritage Center 4626 N. Knox Avenue

Kathy O'Neill

Exciting events await you this October, as the Irish American Heritage Center (IAHC) continues to foster the practice, study and celebration of Irish, Celtic, and Irish-American cultural traditions.

2015 iBAM! Irish Books, Arts, and Music Celebration

An annual fundraiser for the IAHC, this year, iBAM! (the seventh annual Irish Books, Arts, and Music celebration—a comprehensive weekend of Celtic culture in all its flavors and variations) will present a 100th-anniversary commemoration of the 1916 Easter Rising.

The Easter Rising was an armed insurrection in Ireland during Easter week, 1916, when the United Kingdom was heavily engaged in World War I. The Rising was mounted by Irish republicans to end British rule in Ireland and to establish an independent Irish Republic.

iBAM! highlights include a gala awards dinner on Friday night, as well as concerts given by Sharon Shannon and the High Kings on the weekend. On Saturday and Sunday, from noon to 6:00 p.m., iBAM! will feature more than 30 Irish authors—including Cynthia Neale, Jean Roppolo, Ginger Glomstead, John O'Brien, Noirin Leahy Makowski, and Pat Butler—who will sign books and make presentations.

Also scheduled are a special exhibit from Ireland on James Connolly, art exhibits, panel discussions and films about 1916, poetry readings and competitions, and a literary salon with author readings. Enjoy music, theatre, dance performances, and plenty of children's activities.

Confirmed iBAM! headliners include:

- Author/chef Darina Allen, direct from Ireland, of the world-famous Ballymaloe Cooking School
- Author/chef Emmett McCourt, whose book, *Feast or Famine*, was winner of The Best Culinary Travel Book in the World at the Gourmand World Awards in 2015
- Author Mary Pat Kelly
- Poet Desmond Egan, author Sinead McCool, and author Dr. Ruan O'Donnell, direct from Ireland
- Poet/author Daniel Thomas Moran
- Musicians the High Kings and Sharon Shannon, direct from Ireland
- Artists Michael Carroll of Chicago, and Barry "Jazz" Finnegan, direct from Ireland
- Storyteller and musician Pat Waters, direct from Ireland
- Storyteller, musician, and illustrator Randall Stephen Hall, direct from Northern Ireland

On Friday, October 9, the Gala Awards Dinner and Cocktail Party in the Erin Room will celebrate outstanding contributions by Irish individuals in a number of categories. Dress for this event is black-tie optional.

Admission to iBAM! is free, but voluntary donations will be accepted. For information (and tickets for the events), please call (847) 872-0700, or visit www.ibamchicago.com.

7th Annual iBAM! Irish Cultural Celebration

Admission: free (donations accepted)

Location

Irish American Heritage Center
4626 N. Knox Ave.
(773) 282-7035, ext. 13

Saturday, October 10
Sunday, October 11

Author signings: 12:00 p.m. to 6 p.m.
Music performances
Literary salon
Poetry readings
Theater performances
Children's activities

iBAM! Concerts

Saturday, October 10

8:00 p.m.

Sharon Shannon

Tickets: \$30 and \$40

Sunday, October 11

5:00 p.m.

High Kings

Tickets: \$30 and \$40

iBAM! Awards Gala

Friday, October 9

Cocktails: 7:00 p.m. to 8:00 p.m.

Dinner: 8:00 p.m. to 11:00 p.m.

2015 iBAM! Award Winners

Culinary arts: Darina Allen

Music: Sharon Shannon

Performing arts: Liam Neeson*

Visual arts: Michael Carroll

Literature: Desmond Egan

Media award: Mary Ann Ahern

Person of the year: Jim Sloan

Gala reservations required

Tickets: \$125 for IAHC members;

\$150 general admission

For iBAM! event tickets

Please call Irish American News

(847) 872-0700

or visit www.ibamchicago.com

*Attendance not confirmed.



Youth boxing event!

Don't miss the chance to see the next Jack Dempsey or Muhammad Ali in action. Grab a ringside seat on Thursday, October 22, at 7:30 p.m., for a night of youth boxing. Young athletes from the Chicago Park District will square off with youth boxers from Ireland for an exciting night of sports and camaraderie at the IAHC Youth Boxing Tournament.

The young pugilists from Ireland—aged 12 to 16 years old—hail from counties across Ireland. They'll be matched up against members of boxing clubs from across Chicago, who are part of the Chicago Park District's Youth Boxing Program. The evening will feature nine to twelve bouts.

Food and drink will be available for purchase. Tickets are \$10 for adults and \$5 for children 12 and under, and can be purchased by visiting www.irish-american.org, calling (773) 282-7035, ext. 10, or at the door. Reservations are strongly suggested.

Lawrence Avenue Garden Bump-Outs

Gabby Lambesis

We had an unusual gardening season this year, with many occasions of rain and humidity. Our community gardens still continue to thrive and bloom despite the extraordinary weather. But there is work still to be done to our gardens

to get them ready for next spring. You can use the same techniques in your own gardens.

Welcome fall; think spring

October is the time to pull weeds. Place your tired-looking, heat-exhausted summer plants in the compost pile (without any guilt). Plant perennials and bulbs in October and November—a great way to get gardens ready for next year.



It is important to give perennial beds a layer of mulch around the crowns of the plants to reduce the chance of frost heaving. Taking care of such tasks will save time next spring and help reduce the amount of pest and disease problems you might have to deal with next year.

Thanks, bump-out sponsors and gardening volunteers!

We want to thank our garden volunteers for their time and contributions in maintaining the garden bump-outs this season: Lillie Asbury, KarenLynn Augustyn, Gavin and Margie Chase, Sandy Cuprisin, Wally and Bea Eliassen, Jessica Genualdi, Tom Keating, Kathy Payne, Nik Pecic, Ashley Romano, Pam and Ray Sanders, and Gail Saunders.

Thank you to our sponsors for their generous donations that allow us to purchase plants, annuals, and gardening supplies: Laborers International Union—Local #6; Yemen Restaurant; Halogen Supply Company, Inc.; Hala In Restaurant; We Wash Car Care Center; Garcia Mufflers Corp.; State Representative John D'Amico; Alderman Margaret Laurino; Brian J. Grienenberger; and Dispatch Taxi Affiliation.

We are grateful for all your work and support to making our neighborhood a great place to live!

Community First Medical Center Programs

The Community First Medical Center, 5645 W. Addison St., will offer the following no-cost health events in October. To register for an event, please call (844) 236-2362.

Free blood-pressure screening

Free blood pressure screenings will be offered on Friday, October 9, from 9:00 to 10:00 a.m. in the hospital's main lobby. Registration is not required.

Medicare and Medigap demystified

A free healthy-aging program will be held Friday, October 9, from 1:00 to 2:30 p.m. for those 55 and older. Larry Pahlke, of Pahlke and Pahlke Insurance Agency Inc., will discuss Medicare/Medicare supplements. No registration required.

Check on the health of your kidneys

The National Kidney Foundation of Illinois (NKFI) partners with Community First Medical Center to provide free screenings Tuesday, October 20, from 12:00 to 4:00 p.m. The NKFI educates high-risk individuals on kidney-disease prevention and provides information for managing diabetes and hypertension, the two leading causes of kidney disease. Participants will receive a blood pressure reading, body mass index, waist circumference, blood glucose, blood draw (if necessary), urinalysis, and private consultation. Advance registration is required; please call (844) 236-2362.

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Mayfair Park 4550 W. Sunnyside Ave.

Maria McDorman

It's October—and that means all the ghosts and goblins will be out and about looking for treats and trying to play tricks. Keep those little imps out of trouble by participating in some related activities at Mayfair Park!

Little ones can decorate hand puppets

Give your toddlers a chance to participate in a creative Day of the Dead workshop. Each child will be given a pre-sewn hand puppet in the shape of a skeleton. Then, they'll get to decorate it with colorful pre-cut felt pieces that include flowers, hats, and miniature accessories.



The workshop is scheduled for Wednesday, October 21, 10:00 to 11:00 a.m., for children between 18 months and 3 years old for a fee of \$5. The kids must be accompanied by an adult, so the glue goes on the puppet, not the children!

Skulls are traditional Day of the Dead décor

Older kids don't have to be left out of the fun. On Thursday, October 22, from 4:30 to 6:30 p.m., kids from 9 to 12 years old can make their own spooky decoration. Each child will receive a felt cloth cut into the shape of a *calaca* or sugar skull. To decorate their project, they'll be able to sew on pre-cut felt pieces to create a one-of-a-kind art piece. The fee for this workshop is \$10; space is limited, so please register early!



You can register online at www.chicagoparkdistrict.com; feel free to stop in at the park for more information, or call (773) 685-3361.

Also, mark your calendars to check on upcoming winter programs at Mayfair Park; registration starts November 30.

Arts in the Mayfair Area

Marlena Ascher

No matter whether you enjoy listening to music, attending plays, enjoying art, or marveling at dance, there's something everyone can enjoy at venues close to Mayfair.

"My Brilliant Divorce" at Chief O'Neill's

Enjoy the hilarious and moving story of Angela—recently deserted by her husband for a younger woman—as she sets out to survive and enjoy a life on her own. In a world of surly lawyers, "Lonely Hearts" dates, help-line counselors, and a myriad of self-diagnosed diseases, does Angela fight to keep her husband—or just move on? The Midwest premiere of one of Ireland's leading female playwrights, Geraldine Aron, is presented by the Irish Theatre of Chicago.

Performances will take place at Chief O'Neill's Pub and Restaurant, 3471 N. Elston Ave., from October 7 through November 1 on Thursday, Friday, and Saturday at 7:30 p.m., and Sunday at 2:30 p.m. Tickets are \$25 (senior, student, and group discounts are available); please call (866) 811-4111 or buy online at <https://web.ovationtix.com/trs/cal/28605>

Multimedia performance makes a strong statement

On Saturday, October 10, the National Veterans Art Museum at 4041 N. Milwaukee Ave. (second floor) will host "Poet's Eye, Artist's Voice: War and the Urban Studio" from 3:00 to 4:00 p.m.

This free multimedia event will explore war through visual images, poems, and movement. Call (312) 326-0270 for more information.

New Orleans night at Northeastern Illinois University

Doreen's Jazz New Orleans is a group that shares the culture and traditional music of New Orleans. Doreen Ketchens, the leader of the group, has been called "the female Louis Armstrong."

Doreen's husband Lawrence plays tuba, valve trombone, and piano, and also arranges and produces music. The newest addition, Miss Dorian Ketchens-Dixon, is a talented drummer.



Lawrence and Doreen Ketchens will get your toes tapping and your hands clapping to the sound of New Orleans jazz.

The group will perform at 7:30 p.m. on Friday, October 16, at the NEIU auditorium, 5500 N. St. Louis Ave. Tickets are \$17.50 or \$25. Purchase tickets online at <http://tinyurl.com/NOjazzNEIU>, or please call (773) 583-4050.

St. John's presents a free fall concert

Enjoy an afternoon of classical music performed by members of the Chicago Symphony Orchestra on Sunday, October 18, at 3:00 p.m. at St. John's Episcopal Church, 3857 N. Kostner Ave.

William Lester was a longtime composer and church organist in Chicago and his Quintet for Strings—along with Franz Schubert's Piano Quintet—will be performed.

Energy Conservation

Elizabeth Corrado

We hope you'll attend the MCA meeting on Thursday, October 8, at 7:30 p.m. at the Irish American Heritage Center. If you just can't imagine missing *Scandal* or *How to Get Away with Murder*, how about learning *How You Can Save Now by Making Common Sense Changes in Your Home* instead?

How to reduce bills, winter and summer

You may be worried about your energy bills. In Chicago, the average household spends more than \$2,000 annually on gas and electricity. But, there are opportunities to save. With the new smart meters, you can take control of your energy use and potentially save money. To uncover these savings, local nonprofit Elevate Energy is helping homeowners in the area make smart choices about energy.

For example, many residents aren't aware of various pricing programs, which leverage the smart meters to allow you to pay at rates that are based on *when* you use electricity. Shifting electricity usage to lower-priced hours can lower electric bills too. Elevate Energy advisors have more information on how these programs work, as well as other ways to take advantage of your new advanced meter.

Take advantage of available rebates

Even bigger savings can be achieved by making home energy-efficiency improvements, which can cut energy bills by an average of \$400 per year. Most homes (even newer ones) are too cold in the winter and too warm in the summer. Unfortunately, many people assume this is normal. But with basic improvements, every home can be cozier and more comfortable year-round. Elevate Energy makes it easy. Advisors will inform you about utility rebates, as well as connect you with a network of qualified contractors to help you make the best, most cost-effective improvements to your home.

Homes with improvements that reduce energy loss by 15% or more are eligible for an "Illinois Home Performance with ENERGY STAR" certificate. This certificate can help you sell your home faster or for more money (if you really want to move from that now-comfy house).

If you really can't attend the MCA meeting, to speak with someone who can help advise you on the next steps for your home, contact me at (773) 671-0495 or (844) 922-1222, or e-mail Elizabeth.corrado@elevateenergy.org.

P.S. Don't forget the 6th annual classic car show at Marie's Pizza, 4127 W. Lawrence Ave., on October 11, starting at noon.

Mayfair Beautification



Decorating to celebrate the seasons is fun—and so is enjoying the imagination our neighbors put into sharing the fun with us all. Make it a point to walk around the block and venture up the street to soak up the sun, celebrate autumn—and compliment the decorations!

Also, don't forget to say "thanks" to the folks who sponsor and keep the Elston Avenue planter boxes full of flowers and free of trash, so we can all enjoy spots of color in our urban landscape, summer and fall.



Elston Avenue Planter Sponsors

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North America—Local #6**
4670 N. Elston Ave.

O'Donnell's Pub
4500 N. Elston Ave.

Schuham Builder's Supply Co.
4640 N. Elston Ave.

The Fish Guy
4423 N. Elston Ave.

X Sport Fitness
4677 N. Elston Ave.

Around the Neighborhood

Although progress is being made in the rebuilding of the retail stores associated with the Citgo gas station located at 4251 W. Lawrence Ave., neighborhood residents raised concerns about the construction of the wall along the alley.

At the last meeting of the Mayfair Civic Association, it was noted that the building's back wall appeared not to be set back from the alley. This led to a discussion of whether flooding might be worsened during rainy weather, or whether snow removal would be impeded in winter.

Some attendees also pointed out that building permits were not visible, and questioned whether Chicago's building inspectors had approved of the back wall's location. The station's owners have not updated the MCA on their plans or the anticipated completion date.



The back wall of the new construction butts up to the alley, requiring the wall to be constructed with an indent to accommodate an existing telephone pole.

News You Can Use

We're all tired of the noise overhead from aircraft using the new runways at O'Hare. But—short of using former Mayor Daley's bulldozers to tear them up—we just have to cope.

Re-introducing consideration for neighbors

On the other hand, a freshman alderman in the 15th ward has proposed an ordinance amendment that would allow police to start enforcing ground-based noise complaints at 8:00 p.m., instead of the current 10:00 p.m. deadline.

The current ordinance lists fines of \$300 for the first offense, \$500 for the second, and \$1,000 for the third offense committed in a one-year period (the enforcement period now runs from 10:00 p.m. to 8:00 a.m.). Alderman Raymond Lopez's proposal would increase the fines to \$500 from 8:00 p.m. to 10 p.m., \$1,000 from 10:00 p.m. to midnight, and \$2,000 after midnight.

Lopez pointed out that a lot of people don't work a standard 9-to-5 job, and may need to sleep when other people think it's time to party—loudly. In addition, unwanted noise can be stressful and adversely affect residents' health over time.

Although the likelihood of the passage of Lopez's proposal is small, Lopez put his finger on a problem of today's city living. "It's not a right for people to be as loud and obnoxious as they choose" he said. "It's a right for people not to have their peace and liberty infringed upon."

Read the ordinance (especially part B) at this website: <http://tinyurl.com/QuietingNoiseInChicago>. In the meantime, call 911 when the party next door goes on too long. Enough complaints can lead to citations—and quiet.

Help city finances—turn in sticker scofflaws

We've all seen them: "temporary" license plates affixed to a vehicle for years, or expired (or nonexistent) city stickers on cars that belong to city residents. Meanwhile, law-abiding citizens must pay sticker prices that keep on rising.

It's not snitching to report these violations. To report missing city stickers, call the Chicago City Clerk's office of investigation at (312) 742-9217. Missing Illinois license plate stickers can be reported to the Secretary of State's office at (312) 814-2279. You'll need to provide the vehicle's license plate number or the VIN (vehicle identification number).

Read peanut butter labels to keep Fido healthy

Dogs will eat almost anything, and for many pooches, peanut butter is a treat (even if it's hard to eat and makes their humans laugh). But dog owners should be aware that some brands of peanut butter have begun using xylitol as a sweetener in place of sugar. Unfortunately, xylitol is harmful to dogs, and can even cause death. You can learn more at <http://tinyurl.com/XylitolHurtsDogs>.

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For more information, pictures, and pricing, please visit
www.tohlefuneralhome.com
Mayfair Messenger subscribers can use this ad for a \$250 to \$500 discount on prearranged funerals

A note from membership

To keep your membership current for the following year, renewals will be billed in January and July. If you joined the association between May and October, your renewal will be billed in July. If you joined between November and April, you'll be billed in January.

Thank you in advance for your understanding and cooperation!

A note from the editor

Please submit articles of interest or announcements of upcoming public and community events to mayfair.messenger@yahoo.com (the editor reserves the right to edit submissions for space and content; items may not appear if they're past the publishing date).

If you're already a member, please pass this on to a neighbor.

Mayfair Civic Association Membership Application
\$10 per household; \$6 for senior citizens

Name _____

Address _____

City/Zip _____

Phone _____

E-mail address _____

Please fill out the above information, and return with your check to:

Mayfair Civic Association
c/o Margie Scannell
4731 N. Kilbourn Ave.
Chicago, IL 60630