



the NORTH MAYFAIR



improver

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THE NORTH MAYFAIR IMPROVEMENT ASSOCIATION

www.northmayfair.org

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## NMIA Board

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President

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**If you're interested in filling a board role, please talk to us. We welcome new leaders!**

## Message from the Board: NMIA in Transition

The North Mayfair Improvement Association has been a presence in the neighborhood for nearly 100 years and the first improver was published in April of 1936. Our completely volunteer-led organization advocates for residents' needs, creates community, and provides information.

**Advocacy:** We work with elected officials, the city, and other community civics to ensure our residents have a voice in matters of safety, policy, and municipal spending.

**Community:** We plan events to connect with our neighbors to build a supportive community. We promote causes that are important to the neighborhood and offer assistance where needed.

**Information:** We provide residents with information about things immediately relevant to them through the Improver newsletter and other sources of communication.



## 2022 Events Calendar

**NMIA Quarterly  
Community Meetings**

**Wednesdays at 7:00pm**

October 19 – Via Zoom

**Month of October**

North MayScare Halloween  
House Decorating Contest

Look for more information under  
Events on our Facebook page.

**Current NMIA leadership will be stepping down at the end of this year.**

**Please join us on October 19 to discuss a plan for the transition to new leadership and the future of NMIA.**

Don't miss the opportunity to openly discuss what defines NMIA and what community wants NMIA to focus on in the future. We would like NMIA to be an important presence in the neighborhood for another 100 years.

We need your help, so please join us!

## NMIA Community Meeting

Wednesday, October 19 – 7:00-8:00pm

**Join Zoom Meeting** | Meeting ID: 895 4197 1920 | Passcode: 896942

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/89541971920?pwd=Wkg3bENQdkRyKzNYUjhQcVhJNURSZz09>

## Palmer Elementary News by Jillian Solis

The Palmer community is happy to start the new school year off with an abundance of pride and excitement. The Friends of Palmer Street Banners are up along Foster Avenue and looking fabulous. We love to see the support our local businesses have for the future of our children.

While welcoming many new Palmer Families into our community, the Kindergarten Social and Back To School Bash were both a success. The kids were happy to be back in school while enjoying the summer weather, and fun with new classmates, teachers and community.

Palmer students are exploring new opportunities in art and enjoying learning again on so many levels. All our after-school programs have begun and many children are participating in Band, Martial Arts, Dance, Math, and so much more.



Palmer Banners along Foster



Kindergarten Social

### Upcoming Events

#### Friends of Palmer Street Banner Project

**Friends of Palmer Meeting**, Oct. 17, 7pm (Palmer cafeteria)

Keep up with Friends of Palmer events, or opportunities to partner! Like us on Facebook at [friendsofpalmer](#) or visit our website at [friendsofpalmer.org](#)

## St. Edward School Updates by Vince Meno

Homecoming was back to full force this year at St. Edward with a five-day spirit week that culminated with a homecoming Saturday that featured a Mass, parade, football game, and homecoming dance. We were so happy to bring the community of alumni in North Mayfair and beyond back together to celebrate their connection to the school and Parish.

St Ed's also rejuvenated this year's Harvest Bash on October 1. The Parish was able to offer both a classic pig roast as well as Vietnamese fare along with live music, kids games, and craft beer and wine tent. The party went rocking through the night fueled by the sounds of Kevin Purcell and the Nightburners.



Varsity team enters Gompers Field



St. Ed Scouts serving food at Harvest Bash

### Upcoming Events

#### St. Edward School Walkathon – Friday, October 19

Support St Edward's award winning programs and keep them affordable for our neighborhood families. Students will walk around the neighborhood and school campus to raise funds during this annual event.

For more information visit: [bit.ly/22StEdsWalkathon](https://bit.ly/22StEdsWalkathon)

Contact [office@stedwardschool.com](mailto:office@stedwardschool.com) to schedule tour with our principal. St. Edward School is a 2017 National Blue Ribbon Exemplary High Performing School. Visit our website at [stedwardschool.com](http://stedwardschool.com) or call the office at 773-736-9133.



## Celebrate North MayScare this October!

The Halloween fun continues this October with our 5th Annual North MayScare activities! We're once again having our Halloween House Decoration Contest, seeking the best houses or yards for recognition. Everyone enjoys seeing all the spooky photos on the NMIA Facebook page.

Bring out the pumpkins, ghouls, goblins, grave markers, and tortured souls clawing their way out of the ground. We can't wait to see what spirited scenes are created by our neighbors this year!

On Halloween night, we'll have a Haunt-Spitality station at Kostner and Argyle. Take a break and enjoy some donuts, snacks, and cider.

Visit us on Facebook for more information: [facebook.com/NorthMayfairImprovementAssociation/](https://facebook.com/NorthMayfairImprovementAssociation/)



## Gompers Park News by Lynn Thompson

### Park Upgrades Update

Tuckpointing on the fieldhouse has been completed. The roof replacement is in progress and should be completed in November. Construction of the ADA accessible entrance and two new ADA first floor bathrooms will begin soon. The new outside athletic equipment is expected to be installed late fall.

### Nature Play Space Update

Fundraising continues. The Park District has pushed back Phase One construction until 2023.

### Upcoming Events

#### Teen Game Night: October 28 from 6–8pm

Shout out to all interested teens aged 12–16. Gather, make new friends, exercise, or play board games. Contact [mfin73@gmail.com](mailto:mfin73@gmail.com) for more information.

#### Nature Play Space Fall Fundraiser: November 7–14

Stock up on Faris Gourmet Popcorn and treats to get you through the winter! Look for more info soon.

### Winter Programs

View Online: November 28

Online Registration: December 5

In-person Registration: December 10

Session Dates: January 9–March 3, 2023

For more information about upcoming events and to find out what is happening at Gompers Park like us on Facebook ([facebook.com/gompersparkadvisory-council](https://facebook.com/gompersparkadvisory-council)), follow us on Instagram ([#gompersparkadvisorycouncil](https://www.instagram.com/gompersparkadvisorycouncil)), or Email us at [gompersparkadvisorycouncil@gmail.com](mailto:gompersparkadvisorycouncil@gmail.com).



Kona Ice event at Gompers



Tennis at Little Goms



Fall colors in Gompers Park



If you live on the 5000 block of Kilbourn, you know Linda Marie Smith and music are like a beautiful duet. There's the baby grand and music stand in the bungalow window, the great August block party sing-along concerts for neighbors, and the performances near and far around

Chicagoland as the Linda Smith Band with husband, Robert Arendt, also a musician and audio and visual engineer.

But that's just a tiny glimpse of the musical magic Linda—who plays guitar, piano and organ—creates. The lifelong Northwest sider, who's also spent time in Oak Park, takes her audiences on journeys to visit other times, places, and people. Her evocative visual and musical full-length shows have been seen on PBS and have brought to life the stories of an Italian painter from the 1600's named Artemisia (2006), a mythical seal-like creature called a selkie (Mearra, 2013), and soon—Frida Kahlo. She's played for and sung in Red Moon puppet productions, has recorded five albums, and for years taught guitar at Old Town School of Folk. Today, she's teaching guitar privately, performing—and always, creating.

### **Musical Roots**

Growing up in Albany Park around Irving and Elston, Linda's love of music was nurtured by her grandparents. From age seven through high school, she took music lessons at Hoffman Studios close to her grandparent's home near Independence Park. She played organ and piano at Sunday services for Irving Park Free Methodist Church for years. And at 30, she picked up guitar.

### **Music and Social Work**

Linda's huge heart found its place, initially, in social work. A Loyola undergrad, she finished her masters at George Williams College and for 10 years was a counselor working with women. But all along, she was writing her own music and performing, playing the "Ground Round" restaurant circuit as "Linda and Larry", in a duo called One Reflection and later, with the late folk icons and dear friends, Barbara Barrow and Michael Peter Smith.

Life and music intertwined. Linda married, had a son, divorced and met her now husband, Robert, on her first album project—he filled in when the regular audio engineer got sick. Destined for love, four years later they married and moved to North Mayfair.

### **Artemisia, Mearra, and Frida**

Linda's passion for women and their empowerment is a theme in the musical stories she creates. "I relate to the lives of the women I write about in some way—the projects choose me—and in them, I'm telling my story, your story, finding that common ground we all share."

About the epic story of 17th century painter Artemisia, performed all over the Midwest, Linda says, "Artemisia is considered one of the finest artists of her era, but she was busting glass ceilings, a revolutionary in a time when women weren't allowed to paint for a living."

Mearra, she says, is "a love story" about "a woman shedding her skin." Based on a Celtic folk tale, a mystical seal creature falls in love with a fisherman and is able to transform into a human woman. Accompanied by animated illustrations, the magical performance was taped by PBS in 2013 at the Irish American Heritage Center and now airs around St. Patrick's Day.



Linda Smith Band



Mearra Performance



## Meet Neighbor Linda Marie Smith (continued)

Linda's Frida obsession simmered on low for about 25 years before coming to be. "I had a picture in my kitchen from a long-ago trip to Mexico, just drawn to her image. I thought my next show would be about artist Mary Casatt, but Frida called me, such a powerful character." With 16 songs now written, recording nearly complete after Covid delays, and visuals starting up, Linda's hoping for a March 2023 live performance during Women's History Month. "It will definitely be March madness around here."

Linda acknowledges her husband and musical partner, Rob, who plays drums and bass and engineers all of her work. "I couldn't have done this without him. He's so talented and encouraging—this has been our life together for 29 years."

For more about Linda's work or to sign up for private guitar lessons, visit: [lindamariesmith.com](http://lindamariesmith.com).



Artemisia performance

## The Importance Of Having A Community Voice by Marisa Goldberg

North Mayfair might look a lot different if not for the past efforts of the North Mayfair Improvement Association. These excerpts from a North Mayfair historical book illustrate some of NMIA's accomplishments over the years.

**August 1933** – Foster Avenue opened to traffic. NMIA spearheaded the drive to build bridges and pave the dirt footpath.

**December 1940** – After a 3-year campaign by NMIA, new street lights on Foster Avenue are turned on.

**May 1941** – NMIA lead an opposition to change zoning on Kenneth and Kilbourn from single family to apartment status along with a proposal to change the 4500 block of Foster to industrial zoning.

**May 1942** – The North Branch of the Chicago River is cleaned due to efforts of NMIA, Albany Park Improvement Association, and North Park Property Owners.

**October 1942** – Dedication of new Mayfair library branch at 4750 Kenneth after nearly a decade of campaigning by local organizations. NMIA President was leader of the drive.

**November 1957** – The state has plans to condemn Forest Preserve land at Kilbourn and Foster for use as a motor vehicle inspection and driver's license testing site. Campaign by NMIA causes Sec. of State to abandon plans. The structure was built near Elston and Bryn Mawr.

**February 1970** – 10 years of untiring efforts were realized when the stop lights were activated at Tripp and Foster avenues.

**October 1972** – After strong objections by NMIA, a proposal by the Salvation Army to erect a thirty-story building was discarded.



## Mayfair Presbyterian Church by Cheryl Musto



For more information visit us on Facebook or call our office: (773) 685-0104.

### Sunday worship hours:

8:30am Contemporary Praise Service  
10am Traditional Service

### Monthly Events:

**Adult Bible Study:** Tuesdays at 1pm

**Quilt Connection:** Thursdays at 1pm

### NEW! Baby & Toddler Play Group: Fridays from 9–11am

The playgroup provides an opportunity for socialization and interaction with children and adults. Activities include story time, games, and puzzles, along with healthy snacks.

## North Mayfair Improvement Association Summer Events by Marisa Goldberg

### North Mayfair Community Garage Sale & Plant Swap

Thank you to all who came out for our North Mayfair Garage Sale in June. We had over 60 homes participate and it was a perfect day to shop. Our NMIA Plant Swap was also a busy place. Plant lovers were excited to pick up new plants and discuss new gardening ideas. Thanks to all the volunteers who made the sale a success and those who donated plants from their own gardens.



### Fourth of July Parade

It was great to all be together for the 4th of July Parade after two years absence due to the pandemic. NMIA worked with Friends of Palmer to make the event a success!

Thank you to the volunteers who set up, cleaned up, led games, provided treats and donated. The families and neighbors who joined in the fun help make North Mayfair a beautiful place to live!



### North Mayfair Improvement Association Membership for 2023

Please join or renew your membership online at [northmayfair.org](http://northmayfair.org). If you don't have access to our online form, please complete and mail this form with your payment. Contact Belinda O'Kelly, [belindaleekelly@gmail.com](mailto:belindaleekelly@gmail.com) with questions about your membership.

☐ Renewal ☐ New Membership

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Phone \_\_\_\_\_ Email\* (required for Enews) \_\_\_\_\_

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\_\_\_\_\_ \$15 Individual Membership

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\_\_\_\_\_ \$50+ Annual Supporter\*\*

\_\_\_\_\_ Donation

**For membership make your check payable to NMIA and send to:**  
**North Mayfair Improvement Association**  
**PO BOX 300611, Chicago, IL 60630**  
**For online membership, visit [www.northmayfair.org](http://www.northmayfair.org).**

\*Please know, we'll never share your information.

Annual memberships run Jan 1 to Dec 31. Dues received after Nov 1 are applied to the next year's membership. NMIA is a 501c3 non-profit so your payment is fully tax-deductible.

\*\*Any donation over and above your membership is greatly appreciated and supports neighborhood projects.

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[www.northmayfair.org/nmia](http://www.northmayfair.org/nmia)





NORTH MAYFAIR IMPROVEMENT ASSOCIATION  
PO BOX 300611  
CHICAGO, IL 60630

**North Mayfair Improvement Association** was founded in 1929 to work for community improvement, civic welfare, quality schools, educational programs, children's opportunities, and other actions to make North Mayfair a better place to live. NMIA is a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization.

**North Mayfair's boundaries** – East: Pulaski Road West: Cicero Avenue North: south side of Bryn Mawr Ave South: south side of Lawrence Avenue.

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## North Mayfair “Give Thanks” Food Drive



### NMIA's “Give Thanks” Food Drive Returns!

**Let's share with neighbors in need.**

**Wednesday, November 23, 9am–12pm**

**Palmer Elementary Gym Entrance | 5000 Block of Kenneth**

Drop off canned or non-perishable items and we'll get them to the Northwest Church of Christ Food Pantry in time for the holiday!