

# Spring 2020 Newsletter

## Renaissance Academy at Chicago NFP Growth, Enrichment, Fellowship

Saint Xavier University  
3700 West 103rd Street, Room L214  
Chicago, IL 60655

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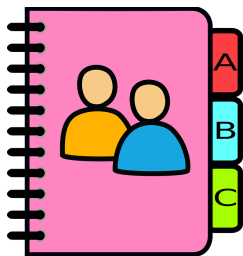
### President's Corner

Now we know that the “best laid schemes of mice and men” can change and they have. Renaissance is now hoping that we might have a “Spring” luncheon in June or July and that we can still have the Think Tank on June 5th. These are all question marks but we are thinking positively.

In the meantime, stay healthy and look forward to better times and Renaissance in the Fall.

Grace Ann Kartheiser

### RA 2020 Membership Directory



The Directory is no longer published in booklet form but emailed to the membership when updated. You should have received an email February 13, 2020 with the latest version (it is 21 pages in length) that you can save on your computer and/or print a copy for your reference. If you can't find the email, you can contact [pflaherty43@gmail.com](mailto:pflaherty43@gmail.com) and she can email it to you as an attachment.



### **Think Tank? Tentatively June 5, 2020. 9:00 a.m. 4th floor Conference Room in Nursing Wing**

Facilitators and those with ideas about course topics and issues related to classes or the development of additional ones are cordially invited to join us to brainstorm about the future. Coffee “and” will be served.



## **Suggested Links for Our Shelter-in-Place Days**

For these days of 'sheltering-in-place' you might want to try Googling some interesting web sites which provide virtual tours of museums and national parks as well as classical movie concerts and Sunday services. Some suggestions are: Google Earth for the national parks, Travel and Leisure for the museums, Open Culture for a multitude of offerings, Old Saint Pat's in Chicago for their Sunday mass at 10 a.m.

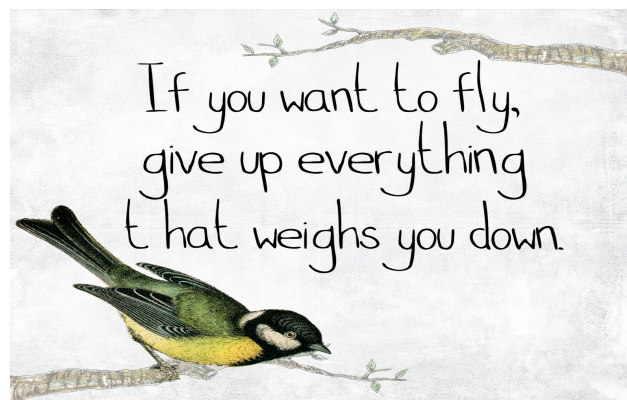
[www.travelandleisure.com/attractions/museums-galleries/museums-with-virtual-tours](http://www.travelandleisure.com/attractions/museums-galleries/museums-with-virtual-tours) This website lets you explore several museums around the world.

[Imperfectfoods.com](http://Imperfectfoods.com) This website features reduced costs on produce that is “less than perfect” delivered to your home.

[Oldstpats.org](http://Oldstpats.org) This link livestreams Sunday Mass beginning at 9:50 a.m.

[Chicagonaturenow.com](http://Chicagonaturenow.com) (Copy and paste link in your browser.) Subscribe (free) for weekly wildflower reports and pictures

[Digitalconcerthall.com](http://Digitalconcerthall.com) Set up a user account by March 31 - free and without obligation - and log in. Then you can redeem the code BERLINPHIL and use the Digital Concert Hall free of charge for 30 days. Redeem the voucher to begin listening to the Berlin Philharmonic Orchestra's archives.



## **Donna Wilkinson - A Renaissance Member You Should Know**

by Melaine Herbert

Chair yoga is a wonderful way to close the day on any Thursday afternoon at the Shannon Center. Guided by Donna Wilkinson, you will do breathing and stretching exercises to quiet music and low lighting. Donna is a Certified Master Yoga Instructor. She believes passionately in what she does and practitioners of all levels can benefit from her classes. She has mentored many yoga instructors over her career.

Donna attended Nativity of Our Lord in Bridgeport until fifth grade when her family moved, so she finished grammar school at St. Rita and graduated from Maria High School in 1960. "My first full time job after high school was for a vending machine company on 22<sup>nd</sup> and Indiana. I was a dispatcher for all the guys that serviced the vending machines."

She started beauty school while working at Kwik Kafe. After paying off her tuition, she quit her job and became a full time hair stylist. She worked at Snip and Curl on 63<sup>rd</sup> and California (across from the well-known El Bianco's) for years.

Donna met her husband at Rainbow Beach. He had graduated from Leo High School and was attending the University of Illinois at Navy Pier. They married in 1965 and were blessed with three children, one girl and two boys. Now all the children are married and she has six grandchildren!

"My youngest child was born in 1971. I was 30 years old and of course, always looking to lose the baby fat." A friend had a cousin who taught yoga, so five friends together started yoga in Donna's basement. "I was the only one who stuck to it. I attended many seminars and weekend study groups. I loved yoga and what it did for me. It changed my life and brought me self confidence and peace."

She started teaching for the Chicago Park District in 1979, and taught at many southwest parks: Mt. Greenwood, Kennedy, Ridge, Marquette, West Lawn and Curie. She worked for the parks for the next 23 years. Before Saint Xavier became a university, she taught in its Adult Ed department and also at Curie High School on Saturday mornings. In 1985, she started classes at the Beverly Unitarian Church (the Castle). "It's been 35 years and I still teach there." While her children were school age, all her classes ended at 3:00 p.m. so she could be home with them after school. On Fridays she also did hair in her home, so "this was a very busy time for me!"

"My husband Bill passed away in 2008, so I have been a widow for almost 12 years. We had a wonderful life, traveling to Italy, France, and Ireland." They had a home in Fort Meyers, Florida and spent many winters there. In 2000, she

retired from the Park District and her husband retired from the Fire Department (he was a Battalion Chief as well as a lawyer). They bought a sailboat, learned to sail and loved it. “We would go out on the Caloosahatchee River that led to the Gulf of Mexico and spend hours listening to music and sailing. We always wanted to sail to Key West but our sailing skills weren’t honed enough.”

Yoga has taught Donna many things. “One of the most important lessons is not to expect justice or security, but to live in the present moment with no expectations. I try to teach this in my classes.” This is advice she would give to anyone at any stage of life: give up expectations! Donna notes that she has met many wonderful people in her classes who have taught her so much about love. One was Eleanor Zanner, the originator of our Renaissance Academy. “We became great friends and she was an example of strength and wisdom.”

In her spare time, Donna loves watching old movies. She’s a TCM advocate. Some of her favorites are John Wayne westerns, musicals with Doris Day and Debbie Reynolds, and dramas with Ingrid Bergman, Betty Davies and others. She has no one favorite movie, she likes so many. “I also love theater.” She is a season ticket holder at Court Theater in Hyde Park. She joins her high school buddies every few months to go to dinner and a play at the Western Springs Community Theater.



This past summer Donna fulfilled an ambition and made the famous pilgrimage Camino de Santiago featured in the movie *The Way* starring Martin Sheen. People have been walking the roads to the shrine of St. James the Apostle in northwest Spain to accomplish spiritual growth since the Middle Ages! **Donna with her daughter Dana** (pictured left) and five friends, walked 100 miles to the church where the martyr’s body is buried. The photo is at the end of their pilgrimage.

At the end of each yoga class, Donna bows and says the Hindu word Namaste, meaning I see the divine in you and we are one. “The accomplishment I’m

most proud of is becoming a yoga teacher and helping so many people in my 42 years of teaching.” The most valuable lesson she’s learned that comes from many of the old Yogis of India is *“Forgive immediately and love unconditionally!”*

