

Village View

The Voice of Roscoe Village Neighbors



Roscoe Village an Ideal Place to Live, Work

Introducing the Inaugural
Issue of RVN's
Official Newsletter

In an effort to keep our neighbors in Roscoe Village informed of goings-on in our community, Roscoe Village Neighbors has officially launched *Village View*, a newsletter for everyone in Roscoe Village. Welcome to our first issue!

Starting today, *Village View* will keep tabs on fantastic neighborhood events, like Retro on Roscoe in August and the ever-growing Roscoe Village Halloween Parade. But we'll also strive to do more, like tell stories about the history of this neighborhood and spotlight the individuals who help make it a terrific place to live and work.

We hope you enjoy our efforts—and that you'll tell us how to make it better. Feel free to drop us a line anytime; our address is roscoevillageneighbors@gmail.com.



Sunlight on the Roscoe Street overpass, Feb. 13, 2017. Jeff VanDam/RVN

What is RVN? And How Can I Get Involved?



First, the basics: Roscoe Village Neighbors is a 501(c)(3) non-profit dedicated to serving as an advocate for you—the people of Roscoe Village. Our bylaws commit us to working with everyone in the neighborhood, promoting Roscoe Village as a place of business, and providing a public forum, as well as speaking as a uniform voice for the community and promoting cooperations among neighbors.

Then there's the fun stuff. We put on nearly a dozen events each year with goals of showing our neighbors a good time and raising money for local causes, like the schools that educate our children. We put on a Village-wide garage sale, a garden walk, fun nights out, a spring clean-up event, and plenty more. See our **Calendar on Page 3**.

So how can you help? First, sign up to be an RVN member at roscoevillage.org. (It's only \$20 annually per family.) Second, be a volunteer. Our events don't work without the efforts of our neighbors. We can't wait to meet you!

Roscoe Village History File

Pencil Factory Sit-In Strike Sets Precedent

Eighty years ago, Chicago's first sit-down strike began right here in Roscoe Village, thanks to the intrepid workers at the Wahl Eversharp pencil factory at 1800 W. Roscoe.

Seeking a 30 percent increase in wages, some 150 Eversharp employees stopped work on Feb. 12, 1937, and refused to leave. Soon after, 30 police sentries were stationed around the building to protect the company's property, which included over \$150,000 in gold used to make pen points. (The factory had already been hit a few years earlier by robbers, who cracked six



Striking (but happy!) workers

Please see **PENCIL FACTORY**, Page 3.

RVN Community Briefs

Safety First and Beautiful Schools Highlight RVN Events

RVN Community Watch Launch Meeting, Mar. 1

Dozens of Roscoe Villagers filled Audubon Elementary's gym to hear from our Chicago Police Department 19th District captain as well as Alderman Scott Waguespack about community safety in our neighborhood. Residents received tips about keeping streets safe, posed questions to our local officials, and participated in a raffle to win safety-themed prizes. Neighbors picked up free house number decals to place on garages, which CPD recommends for safety, and learned about See-Click-Fix, an app anyone can use for reporting safety issues.



Mural Unveiling, Jahn School of Fine Arts, Feb. 15

Over 50 parents and students visited Jahn School in February to view a terrific new mural in the school's front entrance. Painted by artist Jessica Mueller, the mural is a colorful representation of our community, with depictions of the Chicago skyline as well as housing styles native to Roscoe Village and surrounding areas. Jahn Principal Michael Herring welcomed guests along with artist Mueller, RVN President David Kerber and the Jahn Arts Council. Financial assistance for the mural project was provided by RVN, which issues grants to local schools in order to strengthen education in our community.



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Save These Dates: 2017 RVN Calendar

Apr. 22 | Spring Clean & Green Day Help clean up our streets and meet neighbors! 9AM-12PM, meet at Fellger Park for supplies (Damen & Belmont)

May 6 | Talk Derby to Me Pub Crawl Roll out the seersucker, bowties and big hats: it's derby (and mint julep) time. 1-?PM, start at Roscoe Village Pub (2159 W. Addison, at Leavitt)

June 3 | Community Garage Sale Join your neighbors in selling your stuff; over 30 sales throughout our area. 9AM-2PM, throughout Roscoe Village

July 30 | Roscoe Village Garden Walk Show off your green thumb and tour fabulous Roscoe gardens. 12PM-6PM, throughout Roscoe Village

Aug. 11-13 | Retro on Roscoe Three awesome days of music, food and revelry. Roscoe from Damen to Claremont (more details on [Page 4](#))

Oct. 22 | Roscoe Village Halloween Parade, March down Roscoe in your costume and trick-or-treat at local businesses! 2 PM, Roscoe Street

December | Holiday Decorating Contest, Throughout Roscoe Village

Dec. 2-3 RVCC/RVN Roscoe Village Winterfest, Roscoe Street



Over 100 people, including these chocolate bunny fans, joined RVN's 19th Annual Spring Brunch at Riverview Tavern on April 1 for neighborly fun and delicious food. **Anne Stockton/RVN**

Pencil Factory Strike: Dancing, Poker and Sweet Rolls



A husband greets his striking wife, a worker at the Eversharp pencil factory, 1800 W. Roscoe.

Photo here and on [Page 1/Chicago Daily Tribune](#)

Continued from Page 1 safes and stole \$25,000 in gold (about \$337,000 in 2017 dollars) in 1927.

As the night wore on, workers striking in the factory made the best of things. Reports indicate that they passed the night by singing, dancing, shooting craps, and playing poker, according to newspaper accounts at the time.

Although police prevented family and friends from bringing food and drink to the strikers after the first few hours, the workers had a solution there, too—an ingenious one. At the time, there was a bakery next door to

the factory, and female workers sought to distract officers on the ground while male workers went upstairs. There, they lowered a rope to the roof of the bakery, pulling it back up soon after with an order of 240 sweet rolls.

The strike was successful, and not just at acquiring pastries. The day after it started, an Eversharp vice president agreed to negotiate if the strikers left the plant. The result? A ten-cent pay raise when workers returned to the factory the following Monday. The strike set a precedent, and Roscoe Street's place in history was made.

Where the Party Happens: Retro on Roscoe 2017



Feeling nostalgic? Bands from every era of rock and pop fill the three stages at Retro all day and every evening. Get ready for three days of fun this August. RVN

Once a year, just about everyone in Roscoe Village gets together up and down Roscoe Street for our neighborhood's biggest event: **Retro on Roscoe**. And this year's Retro, which we'll bring you from **August 11 to 13**, promises to be bigger than ever.

Retro is known as one of the best neighborhood events in the city, and it's not hard to see why. We bring in nearly three dozen bands, who perform on three stages all afternoon long and into the night. We've got both craft and traditional beer booths along with food vendors from all over Chicago. And we always have a radical kids' area with giant slides, rides and lots, lots more.

Aside from all the fun, the best part of Retro may be the result. As your nonprofit neighborhood association, we use the revenues from Retro to help fund local schools like Audubon, Lane Tech and Jahn. And we couldn't make it happen without scores of volunteers. Please join us in August for what will once again be the best party of the year!

Who Are We, Anyway? Demographics in Roscoe Village

Using recent Census and CDC data, RVN took a look at demographics inside the four borders of our neighborhood—Belmont, Western, Addison and Ravenswood—and learned a few things about Roscoe Village. Here's a quick glimpse at what we found. Do these numbers match your perception of our community?

The total number of Roscoe Village residents is **8,673**.

The average median family income is **\$134,609**.

Out of **4,462** total housing units, **46%** are owner-occupied, with an equal percentage renter-occupied.

Here's how our population breaks down: **80% White, 12% Hispanic, 4% Asian, 2% Black, and 2% Other**.

We like to stay active: just **12.7%** of Roscoe Villagers report **no leisure-time athletic activity**.

But we're not sleeping much: on average, **30%** of us sleep **fewer than 7 hours per night**.



Afternoon on Cornelia St., Feb. 12, 2017. **Jeff VanDam/RVN**