

## PARK TOWER PROFILE

The other evening I sat down with long-time residents Catherine Kesler and Dan Johnston to talk about their experiences living here and working in Chicago. Catherine and Dan have been together for 35 years and moved into Park Tower in 1983. Their jobs today are as they were then. Catherine is an elementary school teacher, Dan a sporting event pari-mutuel clerk. The short story: They still like each other, the building, and their jobs! Let's have a closer look.



Dan is second-generation racetrack, as he puts it, having followed his dad into the betting end of the business. Growing up, the Chicago area tracks were Hawthorne, Washington Park, Arlington, Balmoral, Maywood, and Aurora. Winters took the family to tracks in Tampa, Florida. Semi-retired now, Dan works a couple days a week and mainly at Hawthorne Race Track, the oldest family-owned track in North America. As a pari-mutuel clerk he sells tickets to betters and cashes in tickets for the lucky winners. He's been at it for 55 years, with a break during which he owned several businesses, one of which was Orphans, a popular nightclub on Lincoln Avenue where in the 1970's he met Catherine.

Catherine teaches art to 3rd, 4th and 5th graders at the Sacred Heart Schools, a brisk walk away at the corner of Sheridan and Granville. Chicago's Sacred Heart Schools are part of a worldwide network of about 200 similarly-named schools, all of them associated with the Society of

Sacred Heart. Like Alice Parker and Chicago Latin, Catherine's school is private, independently-governed, tuition-based, and features very low teacher to student ratios.

Like Dan, Catherine was born and grew up in Chicago. With degrees from Mundelein College and National Lewis University, she values the City and, for instance, appreciates the Art Institute for its teacher and student enrichment program. The routine nowadays is demanding, up at 5:30 am and often not home until mid-evening. But she loves her kids and benefits greatly from Sacred Heart's sense of school community. Furthermore, she believes the arts belong in schools, that they contribute to children's sense of self-worth and can be the crucial link that keeps a child fully engaged.

And for fun? Both are exceedingly fit and are careful eaters. They love to swim, Dan being particularly passionate about it. Starting young, he was in the water constantly during those Florida winters and back in Chicago belonged to the swim team at Lane Tech High School. Our very fine pool here was the clincher when Dan and Catherine chose Park Tower in 1983, and they continue to swim, do cardio and weights, and walk/run the beach pretty much every day. A few years ago, they entered a Six County Senior Olympics and each swept gold in all seven swimming events!

Acting is another of Dan's pursuits. He's taken acting classes and appeared in fourteen short films, most of them by budding cinematographers attending Northwestern University and Columbia College Chicago.

Dan and Catherine attend board meetings when they can and were

certainly up on current building issues. If granted a wish, it might be for more appreciation among residents for the terrific work by our board, management and the maintenance crew.

It was a wonderful interview: Appreciating the past, aware of the present, and looking positively to the future.

By Bob Shamo

## NEW!! 5K EDGEWATER RUN

Do you enjoy a good walk or run? Do you enjoy helping community schools? Then the first annual Edgewater 5k Run/Walk may be just what you're looking for. This event will be held on Sunday, September 28th and registration is already under way.

The route begins at Granville and Kenmore and heads east to Sheridan Road, where it turns south to provide runners the chance to run in the street dwarfed by high rises on either side. The route turns east at Ardmore to the northern edge of the scenic lakefront path, heading south past Kathy Osterman Beach and more high-rises (including Park Tower) to Foster Beach. The path then rounds the concession area before returning back. Runners can gather post-race for snacks or brunch, or wander to Granville Avenue for the Edgewater Fall Art Fair, featuring over 90+ artists, two stages and a beer garden.

The timed 5K run starts at 8AM. The 5K Run/Walk starts at 8:15. The 5K Run/Walk with your dog starts at 8:30. The cost to register now is \$40; after August 3rd, the cost will be \$45. \$5 of your registration fee goes to the Edgewater school of your choice. You can register online at <http://www.edgewater.org/5k/>

By Vince DiFruscio