



What goes around comes around!

Between 2002 and 2004, my boyfriend, (now husband) would occasionally drop me off at the train station just over there, so I could take the train into the city for work. We lived in Bartlett at the time and he worked in Aurora, so it was conveniently located midway. We ended up moving here in 2004, in part because I as an immigrant found comfort in the very diverse community and as an artist also saw a lot of potential in the sparsely retail inhabited downtown. In addition I was drawn to the ability to get around on foot or bike locally and by train to get further.

My first involvement with the City of West Chicago, was as an exhibitor in a portrait exhibition at the West Chicago City Museum - a month or so before we moved into our newly erected condo, just a few steps from here. After organizing a large pop up exhibition: artXposium in the former Grobe's True Value in 2007, it was suggested that I join the Cultural Arts Commission, so I did and was appointed in 2008 (though not as chairwoman until 2014) - and I have since been on a mission to put West Chicago on the art map.

For those of you that are not familiar with the work the commission does, these are some of the initiatives that have either been spearheaded, organized and/or supported by our commission in the past and present, either through numerous volunteer hours by our members or with the small portion of money we have to spend on enhancing our community both visually and communally: Fine Arts Fiesta at Rail Road Days, Community High School Art Scholarship, Gallery 200, artXposium (a 3day multimedia art exhibition), Community Banner Art Project (banners along Main Street every year May-September), International Artist in Residency Project (bringing artists into the community to do art projects about and with our community in collaboration with City Museum and PMV), Local Music Night, Gallery Theater, ArtéCulture at Blooming Fest and Public Art. Wow! We do a lot with very little! Oh, and I forgot: This year, we are working on an inventory of our public art as well as creatives in our community in efforts to develop a Public Art Master Plan....

Anyway, when we initiated the Public Art component back in 2014, we didn't set out to just beautify our town. We wanted to develop a program that embraces our community, tells our many stories, serves as a document of the past and present; that engages and inspires us, tickles our curiosity and makes us wonder and dream as we pass them by. Today, we are here to dedicate *Signa Rotae*, a mosaic mural created by West Chicago artist and also commission member Buddy Plumlee, who has donated his time and talent to do just that. Working with Sara Phalen at the West Chicago City Museum, he dug into the history and has now created this new spectacular local landmark, using a combination of materials of which some has been contributed by the community. This piece will not only serve to "hold up history" with the placement of the old train wheel on top, but also serve as must see "new stop" for anyone that pass on the Prairie Path or the train.

Thank you Buddy Plumlee for your generous contribution to our community! Thank you to the City of West Chicago for supporting the existence of a West Chicago Cultural Arts Commission. Thank you to Public Works for all the practical guidance and help making this happen! I am excited that we have added yet another reason to the list, of why we should be proud to live in West Chicago. I am confident that this continued investment in the arts is going to pay off. Whether you live here or are just visiting. Whether you'll pass through on foot, by bike, car or on the train, I hope that you will be enlightened and inspired by our efforts. I firmly believe, what goes around comes around.

Anni Holm, Chairperson of the West Chicago Cultural Arts Commission
On the occasion of the Dedication of *Signa Rotae*
October 22, 2016