



www.olmstedsociety.org

## Annual Meeting To Feature Lecture On Zoo Woods

The Olmsted Society is pleased to announce that Forest Preserve District Master Steward John Kolar, Riverside-Brookfield High School's Mike Koch-Weiser, and Cook County Forest Preserve District's Bill Koenig will be the guest speakers for the Annual Meeting beginning at 7:30pm on Friday, January 19th, 2007 at Township Hall.

Their lecture is entitled *A Century of Progress—The Disappearance (and Reappearance) of an Area of Prairie in the Cook County, Illinois, Forest Preserve District*. The subtitle of the lecture comes from a mid-twentieth century pamphlet describing the loss of a well prairie at a site in what is now Zoo Woods.

According to Kolar, the inserted words "and Reappearance" refer to the work of the RBHS Ecology Club, which, with the generous sup-

port of the Olmsted society, has begun the restoration of the site and the surrounding savannas and woodlands. The pamphlet will be shown and explained in slides at the beginning of the lecture and aerial photographs, also donated by the Olmsted Society, will illustrate the closing and now the opening of the site.

The trio will illustrate the work days, burn days, brush pile burns, and some of the many rare native plants now appearing on the site. Bill Koenig will present the Forest Preserve District's involvement, Mike Koch-Weiser will describe the school's participation, and John Kolar will give background, history and ecology of the work.

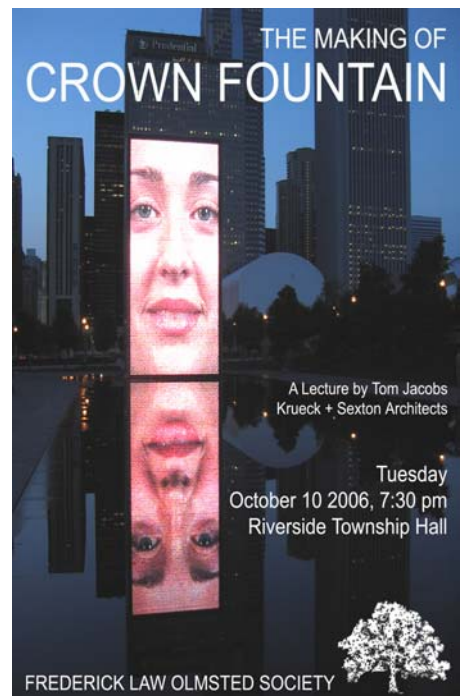
All members are encouraged to attend for what promises to be an and informative lecture.

## Crown Fountain Lecture a Success

On October 10<sup>th</sup>, the Architecture Committee sponsored "The Making of Crown Fountain," a lecture by Olmsted Society board member Thomas Jacobs of Krueck and Sexton Architects.

Located in the southwest corner of Millennium Park, the fountain consists of two glass block towers at each end of a reflecting pool. The towers project video images of a cross-section of 1,000 residents. The faces are projected on LED screens and periodically water flows through an outlet giving the illusion of water spouting from their mouths.

Thank-you Tom for sharing your insight into one of Chicago's newest and most popular art attractions.





[www.olmstedociety.org](http://www.olmstedociety.org)

## The Frederick Law Olmsted Society of Riverside

# NEWSLETTER

Winter 2007

Founded in 1968, the Frederick Law Olmsted Society of Riverside is a non-profit organization dedicated to the preservation and restoration of the original village plan, developed in 1868 by landscape architect Frederick Law Olmsted and his partner Calvert Vaux. Membership is open to all interested individuals. Annual Membership is available for a \$15.00 (tax-deductible) contribution.

### Officers

**President**, James Reynolds  
**Vice President**, Ralph Harast  
**Treasurer**: Scott Weiland  
**Secretary**: Yvonne Lucero

### Committees

**Architecture**, Yvonne Lucero, Joe Cablk  
**Fourth of July**, Sander Kaplan  
**Housewalk**, Jim Reynolds, Lonnie Sacchi, Geri Tauber  
**Landscape**, Holly Machina  
**Library**, Jane Kunka  
**Long-Range Planning**, Lonnie Sacchi  
**Membership**, Joanna Beaumont  
**Newsletter**, Ralph Harast  
**Tours/Education**, Tony Pecelunas, Lonnie Sacchi, Ted Smith  
**Website**, Scott Weiland

### Honorary Directors

Mike & Nancy DeLise  
Frances Higgins

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## Letter From the President

Looking back over 2006, it seems that the time has just flown by. However, once I pause to reflect on what we've accomplished this year, I realize where all those hours went - the Olmsted Society has been very active and its members have been working diligently.

We donated 100 white oak seedlings for the Arbor Day celebration, had a very successful "Riverside Rejuvenated" House Walk, supported the Ecology Club at RB, continued our work caring for the landscape with our fight against the insidious buckthorn, and helped with the many prescribed burns and mulching sessions.

We provided funds for the purchase of leather gloves and Collapsible Backpack Firefighting Pumps to be used by the RB Ecology Club for the Waubensee Woods burn and other "planned burns." We presented the Village of Riverside with funds to purchase additional Arboret to protect our trees from Dutch Elm disease. Lastly, we donated more than \$5,000 to fund a fully automatic irrigation system for the landscaping project at the Riverside Library led by the Garden Club.

At the 4<sup>th</sup> of July Parade, we gave native plants to several dozen lucky Village residents who had the winning numbers in our raffle and we sent Village Forester Mike Collins and board members Holly Machina and Cindy Kellog to an intensive seminar on landscaping. Their increased knowledge will benefit our Village for years to come.

Olmsted Society member and

Forest Preserve District Master Steward John Kolar conducted a series of classes during the summer on "The Natural History of Riverside". His expertise is unparalleled and we are thrilled that Mr. Kolar along with Michael Koch-Weiser and Bill Koenig will be speaking at our Annual meeting on January 19<sup>th</sup> (see notice in this newsletter). We all look forward to hearing about their amazing accomplishment restoring Zoo Woods back to its original splendor!

We hosted Mr. Jerry Baum, co-chair of the National Association for Olmsted Parks, in November and hosted a tour for the NAOP in the spring. Our Walking Tours continued to educate and delight not only visitors to the Village but our own elementary and junior high school students by teaching them about this magical space that we inhabit.

Our Architecture Committee conducted two enjoyable events; a bus tour to the famous Farnsworth House and Fabyan Windmill and a lecture by board member Tom Jacobs on "The Making of Crown Fountain." It was wonderful that one of our board members could share his expertise in design with our membership.

These many accomplishments are only possible through your support and the hard work of all of our members.

Since June of this incredible year we have been faced with the possibility of the imposition of a Tax Increment Financing District in downtown Riverside. It includes many of our green spaces. It is my view that this could forever alter the way our Village looks and functions. It becomes my

*(Continued on page 3)*

(Continued from page 2)

responsibility to alert you to the fact that we are currently facing a situation in which residents do not have a vote. In recent public meetings, resident after resident asked the Village Board to put this issue to a referendum, but Village official's only response was that this was not necessary under the law.

It would be a tragedy to let this TIF happen without understand-

ing how this will impact Olmsted's Plan in our historic village. We have been entrusted to care for and protect our historic landscape so that it may be preserved for generations to come. For 130 years we have done just that. Unfortunately, it could drastically change in the next few years. I therefore ask you to invite your friends and neighbors to join us in this fight to stop this TIF and preserve our

heritage here in Riverside, by joining the Olmsted Society.

Yes, it has been a busy year, but one that has been rich and fulfilling. We should all be proud of how hard we have worked to preserve our little Village! Thank you to all of our members!

James D. Reynolds, President  
fta@sbcglobal.net

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## Generous Book Donation

Dr. and Mrs. Martin Marty donated a large number of important books by or about Frederick Law Olmsted that will be housed in the general collection of the Riverside Public Library.

One of the books is not in the Olmsted Collection and is an

especially welcome addition. "The Slave States" by Frederick Law Olmsted is a compilation of his writings for the New York Times during the 1850s and is a most important source of information about the life and customs of the slaveholding states of the South. The original four volumes that Olmsted compiled from his newspaper articles are in

the Olmsted Collection, but the long introduction by Harvey Wish, professor of History at Western Reserve University for "The Slave States" explains Olmsted's relationship to his time and culture.

The book is a wonderful addition to the Collection and we are very grateful to the Martys for their contribution.

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## Candidates For Olmsted Society Board Of Directors Announced

The Nominating Committee has prepared a slate of candidates for election to the Olmsted Society Board of Directors. Voting will take place at the Annual Meeting on Friday, January 19, 2007, at the Riverside Township Hall.

The following Board members have been nominated to serve one-year terms as officers:

- President: Jim Reynolds
- Vice President: Ralph Harast
- Treasurer: Theresa Pelletier
- Secretary: Yvonne Lucero

Directors typically serve for three years with married couples sharing a vote.

The following individuals have

been nominated for three-year terms:

- Fred Kitch
- Yvonne Lucero and Jim Harrington
- Holly Machina and Jason Kinnan
- Phyllis and Tony Pecelunas
- Chandra and Jim Reynolds
- Lonnie Sacchi
- Geri Tauber is nominated to be an Honorary Director, to fill her three year term the following nomination is made:
- Kevin and Toni Hicks

The Committee wishes to thank everyone who assisted us with their task!!!

Nominations for Officers and

Directors will also be accepted from the floor at the Annual Meeting. All active members who attend the Annual Meeting are eligible to vote.

Members interested in possibly becoming a member of the Board of Directors are invited to contact Constance Guardi at 447-2311.

*Members of the 2006 Nominating Committee were: Constance Guardi, Chair; Robin Benoy, Jason Kinnan, Theresa Pelletier, and Eric Zuschlag.*

# Walking Through Olmsted Landscapes in Riverside

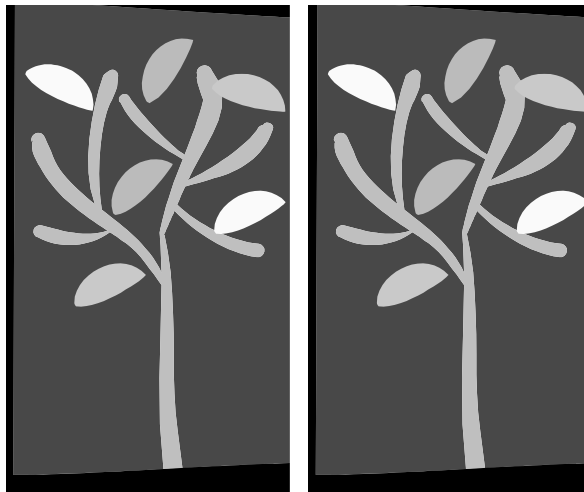
For years Chet Raymo walked to Stonehill College (where he is Astronomy Professor), leaving his 1880's Queen Anne wood frame home (built for middle management of the Ames Shovel Factory), walked up Jenny Lind Street (those less than septuagenarians should ask their elders about the Swedish Nightingale) and stepped into an Olmsted Landscape en route to his classes. We've previously reviewed his account of *The Path: A One Mile Walk Through the Universe* and again recommend it: the library has copies.

That account suggested a search for such a walk through an Olmsted landscape in Riverside, about a mile in length. Many wonderful examples exist. We'll describe three here, and in future newsletters prepare you for the changing pageant of landscape: spring ephemerals, summer wildflower progression, and fall color. All three walks start at the parking lot in Indian Gardens next to the two ball fields. One is a loop that conveniently ends at the lot, the other two are open ended at Guthrie Park in the center of town but you can conveniently return to the parking lot along historic Scottswood Common and Coonley Road or via Barrypoint Road and Fairbank Road adding about another half mile to the walk.

The loop starts at the drive to the parking lot. Skirt the woods on your left and walk southwest. Several big old cottonwoods are the hallmark of the river edge when the recreational fields were a lower marshy Coonley Bay. The meadow between the woods and street is dotted with old tree form Hawthorns, shaped by browsing cattle on David Gage's pasture. This Downey Hawthorn loses its thorns with maturity but now, in the ab-

sence of cows, suckers are sprouting at the bases and they bear spines. Ten yards into the woods is a presettlement Swamp white oak and a bit along just before the verge bend left toward the river, a slippery or red elm, once prized for tool handles and now quite uncommon. The savanna in front of the Cabin has black cherry, red oak and walnut trees.

As you veer left toward the river you find the opening of a path, covered in wood chips. In the 1930's the Desplaines became a series of un-



connected, stagnant, malodorous, mosquito breeding pools in summer drought. To correct this, the W.P.A. dynamited a channel from about Forest Avenue to the Hoffman Dam. Rubble from this excavation was piled as a berm along the Riverside shore. At places you can still see the rubble. You may meet joggers and dog walkers. There are several bird benches if you want to stop and watch.

The berm continues past the ball fields and tennis courts on the left, separated from the latter by a sedge meadow and linear marsh which this year had standing water in every month, and ends at a bifurcation, the left a bit easier walk than the right. Both give into an open meadow with European weeping willows framing

a view of Hoffman Tower on the right, and a native willow in front of a woods largely silver maple. Olmsted would object to the three spruce at Fairbanks Road as inconsistent in color, form and texture with this landscape, as well as obviously alien to northern Illinois. The woods also have tamarack, euonymus, red osier dogwood, pawpaw, nannyberry, hazelnut, and poison ivy. Learn to identify and avoid the last. Inside the woods is a linear berm bordered by young willows diverting floodwater back to the river, protecting the Courts. The thick and rotting trunks of their progenitor willows mark the verge of Coonley bay here. As you leave the meadow turn left along Fairbank Road. A slight rise in the ground has been planted with a line of Bicolor Oaks, and marks the shore of the old bay. Walk in the shade of a red oak grove, or in the sun along the right field foul line and you're back at the parking lot.

The other two walks take you along the river. Upstream you past the Scout Cabin, climb to walk above the river to the railroad trestle, the Swim Club and Guthrie Park. The streetscape of the middle block of Bloomingbank is one of the finest examples of Riverside homes from the 1870's to contemporary. Or walk downstream past the two dams, through Picnic Island and past Swan Pond almost at water's level, and up to the Library. These two paths are well used in all seasons by both man and beast. In subsequent newsletters we advise on what to look for in the plant, animal and occasionally fungal kingdoms, as the seasons shift the landscape designs.

*The Curious Scribe*

# Fall Photo Highlights

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A new Burr Oak is planted in Scottswood Commons to replace one destroyed during one of the summer storms. In 2006 the Olmsted Society donated \$3,432.00 to purchase 17 new trees.



Forest preserve District Master Steward John Kolar lectures on-site in Zoo Woods.



RB Ecology Club members pause to be photographed during a volunteer day in Zoo Woods.



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FREDERICK LAW OLMSTED SOCIETY  
 OF RIVERSIDE

P.O. Box 65  
 Riverside, IL 60546

**Calendar**

**Annual Meeting**  
**January 19, 2007**  
**7:30pm**  
**Riverside Township Hall**

**Landscape Workday**  
**January 21, 2007**  
**Noon—3:30pm**  
**Waubensee Woods**  
**With RB Ecology Club**  
**(Brushpile burn)**

## 2007 Membership Renewal

Membership is for the calendar year. If you haven't already renewed, please return this form with your check payable to: The Frederick Law Olmsted Society, P.O. Box 65, Riverside, Illinois 60546.

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|------------------------|--------------------------|----------------|-----------------|
| General Member         | <input type="checkbox"/> | \$15-\$24      | \$ _____        |
| Contributing Member    | <input type="checkbox"/> | \$25-\$49      | \$ _____        |
| Patron Member          | <input type="checkbox"/> | \$50 and above | \$ _____        |
| Gift Membership        | <input type="checkbox"/> | Add amount     | \$ _____        |
| <b>Total Enclosed:</b> |                          |                | <b>\$ _____</b> |

The Olmsted Society welcomes your participation in our ongoing activities. Put your talent and energy to good use by joining a committee.

Check off the committees that interest you. The chairman will contact you with more information.

- |  |                                     |
|--|-------------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Architecture        | <input type="checkbox"/> Education  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Fall Festival       | <input type="checkbox"/> Housewalk  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Landscape           | <input type="checkbox"/> Library    |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Long Range Planning |                                     |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Membership          | <input type="checkbox"/> Newsletter |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Public Relations    | <input type="checkbox"/> Tours      |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Website             |                                     |

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