

SPRING 2010

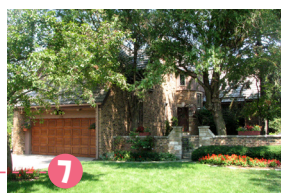
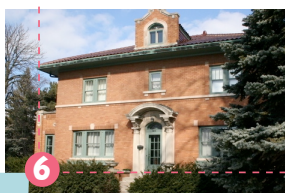
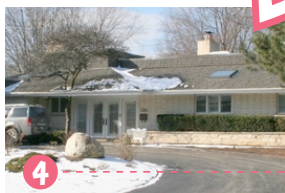
The Frederick Law Olmsted Society of Riverside is dedicated to sustaining Olmsted's vision for Riverside for generations to come. Its members are guided by his concern for humanity, nature, sense of community, and the innovative and thoughtful essence of his work. The Olmsted Society invites residents and visitors to join us in learning, protecting the environment, and preserving our cultural and physical heritage.

Membership is open to all interested individuals for a \$25 tax-deductible contribution by check or online.

Olmsted Society  
PO Box 65  
Riverside, Illinois 60546  
[www.olmstedsociety.org](http://www.olmstedsociety.org)



# FROM BABSON to **BALTIS**



## ANNOUNCING THE 2010 FREDERICK LAW OL MSTED SOCIETY HOUSEWALK: MAY 16, 2010

This year's housewalk promises to be one of the most exciting. Instead of the stately Queen Annes and Victorians of past walks, we will be concentrating on more modern architecture and a part of the village never featured before on a Housewalk. The tour will include the elegant, expansive and trend-setting residences developed in the mid-twentieth century by Baltis Riverside Estates (coined the "Fortunate Forty")—homes reminiscent of the Brady Bunch home.

These homes were built on the site of the former Babson Estate. In 1905, when the northern part of Riverside was still mostly open prairie, Henry Blake Babson—wealthy phonograph equipment distributor, manufacturer of dairy equipment, and Arabian horse breeder—bought 23 acres of this land and decided to establish an estate. The property included the Emery Childs home consisting of three separate blocks in Olmsted's Riverside plan. Babson hired renowned architect Louis Sullivan to design and build the main house on his estate which was erected in 1907 on the same spot as the William Le Baron Jenney-designed Childs home, which had been demolished.

Babson engaged architects Purcell and Elmslie to design and build the estate's Service Buildings in 1915. The estate, supplemented with about five additional acres on the north side purchased in the early 1920s, included extensive gardens of native plantings, many beautiful trees, a three-hole golf course, a large pond, and roaming peacocks. The famous landscape architect Jens Jensen was hired to design the estate landscape.

In 1945, Babson offered the estate to the Village of Riverside as a park

## NEWSLETTER, SPRING 2010

### THE FREDERICK LAW OLMSTED SOCIETY OF RIVERSIDE

If you have a question or comment about the newsletter, please direct them to [newsletter@olmstedsociety.org](mailto:newsletter@olmstedsociety.org).

#### OFFICERS

President: Kimberly Jacobs

Vice President: Tim Ozga

Treasurer: Fred Kitch

Secretary: Cindy Kellogg

#### COMMITTEES

Architecture: Sander Kaplan

Housewalk: Constance Guardi,  
Kimberly Jacobs

Landscape: Cindy Kellogg,  
Holly Machina

Library: Jane Kunka

Long Range Planning & Lectures:  
Thomas Jacobs

Media: Sandie Petrizilka

Membership: Joanna Beaumont

Newsletter: Sally Faust

Tours/Education: Tony Pecelunas,  
Lonnie Sacchi

Website: Tim Ozga

Writing: Aberdeen Ozga

Honorary Directors: Ted Smith,  
Geri Tauber

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of Riverside  
PO Box 65, Riverside, Illinois 60546

## Dear Friends,

The stars are aligned just right for the Olmsted Society in 2010 because the FLOS board makeup is an illustrious combination of talents and passions.

For example, Holly Machina and Cindy Kellogg work with Village Forester Mike Collins to make a schedule of landscape workdays, tour the sites the days before the workdays to identify what needs to be done, find talented and enthusiastic volunteers to staff the workdays, and finally you will find them hard at work in the pasture on those days too.

Did you know that the Olmsted Collection at the Riverside Library, which was started by Michael Higgins decades ago, has continued because of the extraordinary efforts of Jane Kunka for years? Jane announced last week that the Olmsted Collection is near complete. She has successfully found most of the books identified by Michael as imperative to the collection. What an amazing legacy.

I call the Petrzilkas "The Dynamic Duo." Sandie is the ultimate "go-getter" as our publicity chair, and Jim has described his historical research like "eating popcorn ... you just can't stop!" What he has uncovered in his research for the 2010 Housewalk ... you will not believe your ears.

I would mention more board members, but our fabulous new newsletter editor Sally Faust runs a tight ship and the time is now to be showcasing our fantastic upcoming events.

There are 21 board positions, and we look for new board members every fall. Let us know if you would be interested in joining this enthusiastic and talented group.

Thanks to this board, 2010 will be a remarkable year.

Kim Jacobs  
*[president@olmstedsociety.org](mailto:president@olmstedsociety.org)*

## RIVERSIDE WALKING TOURS 2010 SCHEDULE

Learn about the history of Riverside and discover the winding roads, delightful parks, beautiful landscapes, and varied architecture that make up this historic landmark village. Conducted by the Frederick Law Olmsted Society of Riverside, the two-hour guided walking tours are divided by region (north and south) and alternate monthly. Groups from one to 100 are led on a two-hour tour that departs from the Riverside Railway Depot at 2 p.m. on Sundays. The walking tours are an excellent way to share the unique attributes of Riverside with your family, out-of-town guests, friends and others unaware of Riverside's national significance. Group tours can be arranged upon request.

May 30 (North Tour)

June 27 (South Tour)

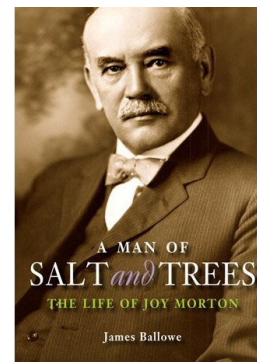
July 25 (North Tour)

August 29 (South Tour)

September 26 (North Tour)

October 24 (South Tour)

For more information, call  
708.442.7675 or 708.442.0845,  
or email [tours@olmstedsociety.org](mailto:tours@olmstedsociety.org).



## Addition to The Olmsted Library Collection

“A Man of Salt and Trees” is the first full-length biography of Joy Morton, founder of the Morton Arboretum, an internationally acclaimed outdoor museum of woody plants, and Morton Salt, the brand that for more than a century has been a household name in the United States. Joy Morton’s story begins in the pre-Civil War Nebraska territory and concludes in the midst of the Great Depression in Chicago, the city in which he lived for more than a half century.

Morton left his mark in several areas, from business and city planning to transportation and environmental preservation. He was a contributor to the development of Daniel H. Burnham and Edward Bennett’s 1909 Plan of Chicago, which affects the lakefront and the approach to transportation and park issues throughout the region. During the last three decades of his life, Morton served on the Chicago Plan Commission.

Toward the end of his life, Morton funded the University of Chicago’s explorations of the Mississippian Indian culture in central Illinois and traveled throughout the world visiting ancient, as well as modern, cultures and gardens. The Morton Arboretum stands today as a natural expression of a desire Joy Morton had from childhood. A necessary compliment to a good life is the cultivation and preservation of the environment.

Book three of the Sterling Morton Library Bibliographies in Botany and Horticulture by Ian MacPhail has been donated to the Olmsted Collection by Craig Johnson.

Established by the Olmsted Society in agreement with the Riverside Public Library, The Olmsted Collection is a permanent memorial collection of books and other historical documents relevant to the works, history and reach of Frederick Law Olmsted, America’s greatest architect and designer of the Village of Riverside. A complete listing of books and materials included in the collection can be viewed on our website; the collection is open to the public and is located in the southwest corner of the main floor of the Riverside Public Library. To donate a book relevant to this special collection, please contact [library@olmstedsociety.org](mailto:library@olmstedsociety.org).



## "REFLECTIONS ON RIVERSIDE" POETRY CONTEST DEADLINE MAY 1

We are now accepting entries for our annual "Reflections on Riverside" Student Poetry Contest. Poetry that reflects upon, or encourages reflection upon, any of Riverside's natural areas is welcome.

This year, the Riverside Public Library and Brookfield Zoo are helping promote the Contest via a Youth Poetry Workshop. The Workshop, to be held Saturday, April 10 from 10:30 a.m. – noon will feature an outdoor experiential component, whatever the weather. Volunteers from the Library, the Zoo, the Olmsted Society and professional local poets will lead small group explorations of nature-themed poetry and will introduce our "Reflections on Riverside" theme as a basis for the children's own poetic musings.

As explained on our website, Contest winners receive great prizes and even greater recognition. In addition, the Library will imprint one or more of the winning poems on a rain barrel to be gifted to the Zoo for its new Great Bear Wilderness area. Everyone who visits the Zoo's new exhibit will be treated to these special poems.

Aspiring young poets should visit [www.olmstedociety.org](http://www.olmstedociety.org) for more details and to download an entry form today. The May 1 deadline is fast approaching. Please email [poetry@olmstedociety.org](mailto:poetry@olmstedociety.org) with any questions.



## Join us on a Field Trip to the SC Johnson Building

The Frederick Law Olmsted Society Architecture Committee will be organizing a field trip to the SC Johnson Administration Building in Racine, Wisconsin. The exact details (time, date and price) are pending and are dependent upon demonstrated interest. We are planning the tour for a Friday in the first two weeks of August. Transportation will be provided to and from Riverside and the SC Johnston Facility. The cost will be approximately \$10 to \$40 per ticket depending on the size of the group. The bus will depart Riverside at approximately 9 a.m. and arriving back in Riverside around 4 p.m. Please bring your own packed lunch, or accommodations can be made for a trip to a local restaurant (not included in the price of the tour). These tours require a good amount of walking so wear comfortable shoes. Photography is not allowed inside the buildings.

The tour will include the SC Johnson Administration Building including the Great Hall, the Great Workroom, the Frank Lloyd Wright Library, Frank Lloyd Wright Reading Room and the newly completed Fortaleza Hall. The Administration Building was designed by Frank Lloyd Wright and opened in 1939. FLW designed the buildings as well as the furniture inside. The building is one of very few Wright-designed commercial buildings and is still a highly regarded corporate headquarters. The interior column design was unique and revolutionary at the time and was questioned by building officials as to its structural adequacy. Eventually the design was proven to be successful both structurally and visually. FLW's use of glass pyrex tubes and plate glass are visually stunning both inside and out. The research tower was designed later in 1947 by Frank Lloyd Wright but unfortunately has been closed for some time and is visible only from the exterior. The highly acclaimed Fortaleza Hall is a museum building designed by Sir Norman Foster from London, England, and houses a precise replica of the airplane flown to Brazil in 1935 by Sam Johnson in his quest for a source of wax for use in his products. Fortaleza Hall also houses a small Frank Lloyd Wright reading library.

Please RSVP with interest at your earliest convenience, but no later than June 30, to [architecture@olmstedociety.org](mailto:architecture@olmstedociety.org) or call Sander Kaplan at 708.447.5422.

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

and community recreation center. Unfortunately, the timing was bad. A 10% property tax increase had just been announced, and the village turned down Babson's offer after a referendum failed to win citizens' approval. The estate was purchased by A.M. Komarek, who, in turn, sold it to the Sisters of St. Joseph since Komarek could not win approval to subdivide the estate. Ultimately, the nuns sold the property to local builder and developer Walter S. Baltis in 1953.

Baltis, known and respected for building quality homes, planned to subdivide the estate into the Baltis Riverside Estates. Having been unsuccessful in offering the Sullivan-designed home to the Village, Baltis had it demolished in 1960, much to the distress of the architectural community and preservationist Richard Nickel.

The Service Buildings, the last remnants of the Babson Estate, will be on the Housewalk.

**SUNDAY, MAY 16, 2010**

FROM  
**BABSON**  
to **BALTIS**

**NOON to 5:00P.M.**

Tickets are \$25 pre-sale and  
\$30 day of the Walk.  
(Olmsted Society members receive a  
\$5 discount on tickets)

**TICKETS ARE AVAILABLE AT:**

Aunt Diana's Candy Makers  
29 East Burlington, Riverside

Riverside Public Library  
1 Burling Road, Riverside

By mail: Checks to Olmsted Society  
P.O. Box 65 Riverside, IL 60546

Or online: [www.olmstedsociety.org](http://www.olmstedsociety.org)

For more information, please contact  
[housewalk@olmstedsociety.org](mailto:housewalk@olmstedsociety.org) or  
call 708.447.2311.



## FLOS DONATES ARBOTECT TO VILLAGE

For the fifth year in a row, The Frederick Law Olmsted Society of Riverside has donated \$1500 to the Village to purchase one case of Arbotect, which is used in the prevention of Dutch elm disease. Typically, one case of Arbotect will provide enough fungicide to inject approximately 7 to 9 trees and protects the trees from Dutch elm disease for as long as three years. Including the two cases that the Village has budgeted for, a total of between 21 and 36 elm trees in the Village of Riverside will be protected.

## Lend a Hand at Our 2010 Landscape Workdays

In 2010, The Frederick Law Olmsted Society is again teaming up with the Riverside Public Works Department, the Riverside Landscape Advisory Commission, and the Forest Preserve District of Cook County to help beautify Riverside by leading Landscape Workdays. Participating in a Landscape Workday is an excellent way to offer hands-on participation in community efforts, learn about landscape maintenance, and meet new friends.

Frederick Law Olmsted designed our public areas to provide changing vistas for both pedestrians and vehicles. His landscape plan can best be realized by reducing shrub overgrowth and eliminating weeds. Volunteers are needed in order to tame and maintain these beautiful public areas of Riverside.

Public areas to be maintained include Scottswood Common and the Long Common which serve as the backbone of Riverside's landscape architecture; the park along Riverside Road from the swinging bridge to Miller Woods; and the public planters along Burlington, Quincy and Riverside Roads which will be planted with perennials to make the Central Business District more attractive.

All workdays are scheduled for Saturdays from 9 a.m. - 12 p.m., except where noted. Look for the Riverside Public Works dump truck. Come for an hour or three, whatever your schedule allows. Supervised children are welcome. Service hour credits are available. Bring your favorite work gloves and a water bottle. All other supplies & snacks will be provided. For more information, or to be added to our targeted FLOS landscape committee email list, please contact [landscape@olmstedociety.org](mailto:landscape@olmstedociety.org).

### HELP WEED OUR PUBLIC PARKS

March 20	9a.m. – 12p.m. Longcommon Common ( <i>at Nuttall</i> )
April 10	9a.m. – 12p.m. Longcommon Common ( <i>at Nuttall</i> )
April 24	9a.m. – 12p.m. Miller Woods
May 15	9a.m. – 12p.m. Longcommon Common ( <i>at Addison</i> )
May 29	8a.m. – 4p.m. Central Business District
June 26	9a.m. – 12p.m. Longcommon Common ( <i>at Addison</i> )
July 17	9a.m. – 12p.m. Scottswood Common ( <i>at Millbridge</i> )
August 14	9a.m. – 12p.m. Riverside Road ( <i>at Gage</i> )
September 11	9a.m. – 12p.m. Riverside Road ( <i>at Gage</i> )
October 2	9a.m. – 12p.m. Riverside Road ( <i>at Olmsted</i> )
October 23	9a.m. – 12p.m. Riverside Road ( <i>at Olmsted</i> )
November 6	9a.m. – 12p.m. Longcommon Common ( <i>at Downing</i> )





## Zoo Woods and Waubensee Preserve Tours

Please Join Olmsted Society member, and Master Steward of the Forest Preserve District of Cook County, John Kolar on a tour of Zoo Woods and the Waubensee Preserve.

These areas were once owned by the Riverside Improvement Company and contain remnants of the pre-settlement flora and fauna of the region. Thanks to the hard work of the Riverside Brookfield High School Ecology Club and monetary donations from the Olmsted Society, both of these areas are well on their way to being fully restored.

The first tour will take us through the re-emerging prairie and savanna of Zoo Woods and into the recently reclaimed woodlands. Here we will see many of the native spring wildflowers indigenous to Riverside. These areas were cleared by Audubon interns, who were funded by the Olmsted Society, this last fall and winter. We will be among the first visitors seeing these plants in almost a century.

The second tour will include the prairie and savanna of the Waubensee Preserve. Starting from a buckthorn desert eight years ago, volunteers and interns have produced almost ten acres of extremely high quality prairie and savanna.

Tours are free of charge; RSVPs are not necessary, but welcome. Walk-ins are also welcome. The Zoo Woods entrance is located just south of 31st Street and just east of 1st Avenue. The parking lot is “U” shaped with two entrances off of 1st Avenue. Park at the northern end of the parking lot. Waubensee Woods is located two blocks south of Forest Avenue and 1/2 block west of First Avenue. Please enter Waubensee Street from First avenue and park on the south side of the street.

### **ZOO WOODS TOUR**

Saturday, May 1  
Noon – 2 p.m.

### **WAUBANSEE PRESERVE TOUR**

Saturday, June 5  
Noon – 2 p.m.

For questions about the tours, or to be added to the Landscape Committee email list, please contact [landscape@olmstedsociety.org](mailto:landscape@olmstedsociety.org).

## MYTHBUSTERS

One of The Olmsted Society’s ongoing challenges is that of public perception. In an effort to separate truth from oft-repeated rumor, we introduce this column created to address various stories about our involvement in Village affairs.

**MYTH:** “The Olmsted Society made me remove the hostas I had planted around the tree in my parkway.”

**TRUTH:** The Olmsted Society has no jurisdiction over Village property and does not police Village ordinances. However, it participates in maintaining and beautifying village parks. The Village’s Landscape Advisory Commission and the Village Board work together to create and enforce the Parkway Planting Policy (available on the Village website) and also publish landscape guidelines for private property.

Have a myth versus truth question? Please email [newsletter@olmstedsociety.org](mailto:newsletter@olmstedsociety.org). All questions are welcome.



The Frederick Law Olmsted Society of Riverside

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### BECOME A MEMBER OF THE FREDERICK LAW OLMSTED SOCIETY OF RIVERSIDE

Your support will help promote the progress of Riverside, educate residents about the history and significance of the Village, and support active involvement in the Village's needs. Membership covers a calendar year and entitles you to participate in the Society's functions free-of-charge or at discounted prices, reimbursements in Riverside's co-op tree planting program, and the quarterly newsletters. Please return this form with your check payable to the Frederick Law Olmsted Society, PO Box 65, Riverside, Illinois 60546. Please contact [membership@olmstedsociety.org](mailto:membership@olmstedsociety.org) with questions or see our website at [www.olmstedsociety.org](http://www.olmstedsociety.org).

#### MEMBERSHIP

- |  |          |
|--|----------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Reliable Redbud (\$25-\$49) | \$ _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Hearty Hickory (\$50-\$99)  | \$ _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Sugar Maple (\$100-\$249)   | \$ _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Mighty Oak (\$250+)         | \$ _____ |
| Total Enclosed                                       | \$ _____ |

- ☐ New Member    ☐ Renewal    ☐ Gift Membership

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

Phone \_\_\_\_\_

Email \_\_\_\_\_

**Please provide your email address so we save paper and trees!**

#### COMMITTEES

Put your talent to work  
and your energy to good  
use by joining a committee!

- ☐ Architecture
- ☐ Landscape
- ☐ Housewalk
- ☐ Membership
- ☐ Library
- ☐ Public Relations
- ☐ Newsletter
- ☐ Website
- ☐ Tours/Education
- ☐ Other Talents \_\_\_\_\_