



The Frederick Law Olmsted Society of Riverside

Stewards of the land and Olmsted's plan

Summer 2020 Newsletter

Our Mission

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 Olmsted's 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.

Upcoming Events

Notice:

Due to the ongoing threat of Coronavirus (COVID-19), our landscape workdays, walking tours and other events and activities have been cancelled or postponed.

We will make every effort to resume our regular programs as state and local directives allow. Some may be offered in a limited or modified format.

Check the [FLOS Website](#) for the most current information.

Inside This Issue

Poetry Contest Results

The FLOS Poetry Contest winners have been selected and prized awarded. [Page 3](#)

Garden Groomers

Riverside teens (ages 16-18) can earn a certificate of basic gardening skills then use that credential to find work with local gardeners. [Page 4](#)



President's Letter



Cathy Maloney
FLOS Board President

Dear Members,

From the bottom of my heart, I wish you all good health and calm especially during this period of great uncertainty and trouble. Maybe we can glean some inspiration from our namesake, Frederick Law Olmsted, who, as General Secretary of the Sanitary Commission during the American Civil War, saw extreme illness and casualties in a war of brother against brother. He persevered, he worked to make it better, he carried on. He saw Nature as a great tonic.

In a paper before the American Social Science Association in 1870 on the value of parks and nature, Olmsted wrote, "The much greater rapidity with which patients convalesce, and may be returned with safety to their ordinary occupations after severe illness, when they can be sent to the Park for a few hours a day, is beginning to be understood." Here in Riverside, those of us lucky enough to be home can go to the Park, to the Commons, to the Natural Areas for, if not a few hours, a few minutes, and convalesce in mind, body, and spirit.

The Olmsted Society, like many businesses and nonprofits, is reimagining our programs so that we can comply with COVID-19 guidelines and keep Riverside a healthy place to live. Although we have had to hit "pause" on some programs, we are offering new options. Consider the new Garden Groomers program, developed for teens who might face a shortage of work opportunities this summer.

We are also reworking our lectures and tours for this summer. Read about our Poetry Contest, and how Riverside children experience nature.

We hope to see you on the Riverside trails or sidewalks – from a safe distance, of course. Keep the faith.



Virginia D., one of the five Poetry Content winners.
Photo courtesy of Wendy Dockter.

Kids' Nature Craft Activity

FLOS Board member Trisha Flassing suggested this craft activity; kids create nature scenes with found plant materials. For details, see:

[Boredom Buster: Nature Craft](#)

Take a photo of your children's creations and share with us on: [Facebook](#) or [Twitter](#)



“Reflections on Riverside: Focus on Flora and Fauna” Poetry Contest



Aberdeen Marsh-Ozga
Poetry Contest Chair

Olmsted’s design for Riverside encourages interaction with nature even in “uncertain” social times. So too, the Olmsted Society’s *Reflections on Riverside* poetry contest is a constant for area youth, encouraging contemplation of our natural surrounds and expression of its many wonders.

We wish to recognize everyone who took a break from e-learning, went out into the landscape, and thoughtfully explored this year’s contest theme: Biodiversity in Riverside. There is so much to appreciate here in Riverside, and the sheer variety of your poetic observations is testament to that fact.

We are pleased to announce to the community the over-all winners of the Poetry Contest, at each level:

Level	Student	School	Poem Title
3rd Grade:	Dominic K.	Ames	“Opposites”
4th Grade:	Virginia D.	St. John of the Cross	“Riverside”
5th Grade:	Laurel S.	Central	“Riverside’s Five Senses”
Jr. High:	Zoe B.	Hauser	“Spring in the Woods”
High School:	Caroline K.	Benet	“Everywhere”

In addition to the above-named winners, 30 students received special honors for their poems. While we would ordinarily attend each school’s year-end awards ceremony, e-learning meant that we had to get creative. This year’s certificates and prizes were delivered to students’ homes and personal congratulations extended by the (masked and socially-distanced) *Reflections on Riverside* Program Chair. It is our sincere hope that we brought each poet a little joy!

Following the poetry contest, we received this appreciative note from a parent of one of the entrants.

Dear Olmsted Society,

My email is not as eloquent as the poems the children wrote but my gratitude for all that the Olmsted Society contributes to our community must be acknowledged. I wanted to thank you for continuing the Olmsted values of appreciation and love of Riverside and natural beauty. Given the unrest, fear, and isolation our country is experiencing, The Olmsted Poetry Contest offered our family a chance to look for goodness.

Thank you, Katie Kowal



Garden Groomers

Olmsted Society Offers Garden Groomer Certificate



The Frederick Law Olmsted Society of Riverside will be offering a “Garden Groomer” certificate course to teens aged 16-18. The course, available through the Society’s website, consists of online instruction and hands-on training. The focus is on how to maintain a garden naturally, without electronic or gas-powered tools. The program is free, and is open to Riverside teens.

In developing the program, FLOS realized a lot of teens may be out of a summer job, or just need something to do this summer because of the pandemic. The training covers such topics as edging, watering, mulching, weeding and more. Garden “coaches” are members of the Olmsted Society with long-term gardening experience. They will conduct the skills-check portion of the training in private

gardens in Riverside. Teens’ parents or guardians are invited to attend the hands-on training. Teens must provide their own work gloves, and it is recommended that they provide their own spade or shovel.

Upon receipt of a FLOS Garden Groomer certificate, teens may advertise their garden maintenance services noting this extra training. “The Olmsted Society does not supervise or help the teens get jobs,” Maloney clarified. “Our role is to provide the training, and the teens on their own from there.”

Anyone interested in the program can visit the [Garden Groomers Program page](#) on the Olmsted Society website or contact us at gardengroomers@olmstedsociety.org. Limited spaces for the hands-on training sessions begin in early June and the online training materials are available now.

Presentations Report

Olivia Barraza & Dan Murphy
Presentations Co-chairs

Postponed: *A Tree Guy in Shanghai: A Forester in a Foreign Land*

Originally scheduled for Thursday, June 11 at 7:00 PM, Riverside Village Forester Michael Collins’s presentation has been postponed indefinitely until state and local directives allow groups to gather in the Riverside Library.

Riverside Public Library Online Presentations

In June, the Riverside Public Library is offering these online presentations:

- "[Digging Deeper: The Foundations of Chicago Architecture](#)" on Zoom with Dave Clark, the Windy City Warrior, June 17 at 7:00 PM.
- "[Ask A Gardener with Sallie Boge](#)" on Zoom with Sallie Boge, June 24 at 7:00 PM.

While these presentations are not co-sponsored by the Olmsted Society, we thought the topics may interest our members (and we want to support our friends and regular FLOS presentation co-sponsors at the library).



Landscape Workdays



Cindy Kellogg & Holly Machina

Landscape Co-Chairs

Last winter FLOS donated money to the Village of Riverside to purchase ten American Larch trees. American Larch trees are both conifers and deciduous. Michael Collins, Village Forester, planted them the week of May 17. Four are in the Longcommon and Downey Triangle. Three were placed in the Big Ball Park near Shenstone and another three are located at Shenstone and Delaplaine.

Our landscape workdays have been postponed until the Governor and the Village determine it is safe for gatherings. Once that happens, we plan to revisit the sites we have chosen and decide if those are still where work is needed. We hope to see you very soon! We probably will require a reservation when we are able to once again to help the Village.

For more information or to be added to our FLOS landscape committee e-list, please contact:

- Holly Machina & Cindy Kellogg
FLOS Landscape Committee Chairpersons
workdays@olmstedsociety.org
708-447-0226
olmstedsociety.org/events/landscape-workdays/
- Michael Collins
Riverside Village Forester
mcollins@riverside.il.us
708-442-3590 x 502
riverside.il.us/publicworks



American Larch trees donated by FLOS planted in Riverside this May



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Subscribe to our newsletter by emailing us at:
newsletter@olmstedsociety.org

Check out our social media links for information on upcoming events:

 facebook.com/RiversideFLOS

 twitter.com/RiversideFLOS

Visit the Olmsted Society website at:
olmstedsociety.org