

# The Frederick Law Olmsted Society of Riverside

*Stewards of the land and Olmsted's plan*

Spring 2023 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*

3/9: 7 PM – [Presentation](#): *Riverside: The History & Mysteries* at the Riverside Library

3/23: 7 PM – [Presentation](#): *Native Plants and Living Soil & the Joys of Complexity in the Garden* at the Riverside Library

4/1: [Poetry Contest](#) Opens

4/27: 7 PM – [Presentation](#): *The Sweep and the Curve: Olmsted's Riverside* at the Riverside Library

4/30: [Poetry Contest](#) Deadline

5/20: 1 PM – [Vintage Baseball](#) at The Big Ball Park

5/28: 2 PM – [Walking Tour](#) (North) at Riverside Train Station

6/25: 2 PM – [Walking Tour](#) (South) at Riverside Train Station

**NOTE:** The 2023 schedule of Landscape Workdays will be determined in March and posted on the [Landscape Workdays page](#) on the FLOS website.

## *Inside This Issue*

### **FLOS Board Elections**

Meet the newest members of the FLOS Board of Directors. [Page 3](#)

### **FLOS 2022 Award Recipients**

Preservation and Spirit Awards were presented at the Annual Meeting. [Page 4](#)

### **Student Poetry Contest**

The Poetry Contest is open to grade, middle and high school students. [Page 4](#)

### **Vintage Baseball is Back!**

A spring rematch between the Chicago Salmon and the Blue Island Brewmasters. [Page 5](#)

### **Spring Presentations**

FLOS historian & raconteur Jim Petrzilka, native plant gardener Adrian Fisher, and architect & historian Charles Pipal to present. [Page 7](#)



## President's Letter



Yvonne Lucero

*FLOS Board President*

What's new...? So goes the song, and I began thinking of our current topics of conversation; we have economic woes, our neighbor, Chicago, is experiencing election turmoil – again, and winter continues its wild ride. More unique are the concerns that people think the next great works of literature will be written by a bot, and the only way to mingle with others is via an app.

Well then, what's *not* so new, but made news in 1873? I'm always surprised when looking at events, inventions, and other tidbits that show how modern developments often mirror historical precedent.

In 2022, we celebrated Olmsted's birth, and all things Olmstedian, but it is worth recalling that our innovative new town would undergo some arrested development because of a nationwide economic slowdown that would be later called the "Long Depression" of 1873. It actually lasted five years, due in large part to international railroad and land speculation, linked to bank collapse. Yet, the so-called "Gilded Age" is generally agreed to occupy the era from about 1870 to the late 1890s, with its reputation for charm, elegance and robber barons. Many well-known corporations date from this time; Chicago history has a bounty of the characters that became millionaires during the late 19th century – Jeff Bezos and Elon Musk are nothing new!

The FLOS booklet, *Riverside in 1871* (with info. from dates a little beyond) has an 1873 advertisement for "Field, Leiter and Company," located at State and Washington Streets, downtown. The owner kept the site but dropped Leiter...Mr. Marshall Field's wonderful store remains there today (renamed Macy's). Mr. Palmer's 'House' (hotel) was up and running after being rebuilt in 1871. Hinsdale and Downers Grove were incorporated in 1873, surrounded by farms and shrinking prairie. Speaking again of Olmsted, his work on the Columbian Exposition was still 20 years in the future...and the Chicago River had not yet been reversed in flow. Barbed wire and the typewriter were put into production in 1873, and Levi Strauss with his partner, Jacob Davis, started making dungarees, or "waist overalls" for gold miners (but not for the Gold Rush of 1849, as some think!). Cable cars started service in San Francisco, but George Custer had yet to meet with his demise at Little Big Horn. The list of historical trivia goes on!

If you want to know more about similar Riverside-related subjects, make your reservation for the March 9th FLOS presentation of [\*Riverside: The History & Mysteries\*](#) by Jim Petrzilka, at the Riverside Library! More info. on this and other events can be found below.



The Chicago Salmon return to the Big Ball Park on Saturday, May 20 for vintage baseball in a re-match with the Blue Island Brewmasters.

Photos courtesy of the Chicago Salmon Vintage Baseball Club



## FLOS Board Elections

### New Members

At the Annual Meeting in January, two new directors were elected to the FLOS Board.

#### Richard Marritt



Richard leads a small healthcare technology start-up, Kardian Health and has worked in the home healthcare and medical device industries for the last 25 years. He is an architecture buff and a fan of old houses. He moved to Riverside in 2019 when he moved back to Chicago to take on a new work opportunity as the Chief Marketing Officer of Hillrom. He grew up in Canada, in a small town outside Toronto and is looking forward to supporting FLOS's mission focusing on support of marketing and promotional activities.

#### Steve Oldham



Steve is also Canadian, and a retired middle school teacher. In 2018, he gave up “running with 12-year-olds”. In 2019, Steve & Richard (his spouse of 30+ years) became the stewards of the Avery Coonley house in Riverside. Keeping up with the Coonley house takes up much of Steve's time, but he's always enjoyed interesting projects. With Richard's uncle Bob (who was 85 at the time), Steve set up and ran a small maple syrup operation on the family farm in southern Ontario. Syrup season engaged family, friends, and neighbors for 10 years, till Steve retired, and he and Richard came to Riverside. Steve also enjoys music and is known to be a pretty good cook. He enjoys hosting friends and neighbors at the Coonley house dinners often throughout the year.

The FLOS Board is pleased to welcome Richard and Steve. Their experience in marketing, education and arboriculture will make them effective stewards of all the wonderful architecture and nature we have here in Riverside! We think Steve and Richard should host a tree tapping “How To” lesson soon!

### FLOS Board Officers for 2023

Also at the January Annual Meeting, the officers for the FLOS Board of Directors were elected for the 2023 calendar year. They are:

- President: Yvonne Lucero (returning)
- Vice-President: Jim Petrzilka (returning)
- Secretary: Susan Worthington (returning)
- Treasurer: Kim Freeark (returning)





## Awards Presented at the Annual Meeting

### Preservation Award Presented to Serge Ambrose & Michelangelo Sabatino



Serge Ambrose (left) and Michelangelo Sabatino (right) receive the Preservation Award from Mike Malone.

The 2022 FLOS Preservation Award is presented to Serge Ambrose and Michelangelo Sabatino for their work on the Sylvia Valha and Francis J. Benda House and Garden (1939) by Winston Elting, Architect, and Arvid H. Viren, Builder. This 1930s International Style house was beautifully restored by its owners (one trained as an architect/engineer and the other as an architect/historian), and their collaborators. The addition of a new landscape garden re-establishes the relationship between nature and this modern house while extending Olmsted and Vaux's vision for Riverside.

### Spirit Award Presented to Sandie & Jim Petrzilka

Jim and Sandie Petrzilka were honored at the Olmsted Society at its Annual Meeting. They received the Spirit Award for their years of dedicated service to FLOS. Jim leads the Tour Program which began under his leadership, and he has expanded greatly. Sandie put the Society "on the map" with the numerous media connections she has established. Together they help each other and FLOS receives the benefits from them.



Spirit Award Recipient Jim Petrzilka accepts the award with Sandie Petrzilka (far left).

## Reflections on Riverside Student Poetry Contest



Trisha Flassing

*Poetry Contest Chair*

### Entries Welcome for 2023 Student Poetry Contest!

Last year, we celebrated the 200th anniversary of Frederick Law Olmsted's birth. In honor of this milestone and Olmsted's enduring influence on the American landscape, we've selected a special theme for this year's poetry contest: *Born to Be Wild*. Students in grades 1-12 are invited to spend time in Riverside's national landmark landscape and to incorporate reflections upon what it means to be ***Born to Be Wild*** into their poems.

Explore this theme by heading outside and enjoying nature! Stroll along the riverbanks, spend time in our parks and green spaces. Look slow. Listen long. Observe wildlife in their natural habitat, reflect and share. Poems of any style or length exploring this year's theme are welcome.

The Olmsted Society will award first place winners \$100 in the High School division, \$50 in the Junior High division (grades 6-8) and \$25 at each grade level 1-5. All poets will be invited to read their poems at a special ceremony to be held later in the year. The contest is open from April 1 to April 30. Please email entries by April 30 to [poetrycontest@olmstedsociety.org](mailto:poetrycontest@olmstedsociety.org). For more details visit the FLOS website, [olmstedsociety.org](http://olmstedsociety.org).

We look forward to reading your inspired poems!



## *Vintage Baseball is Back!*

**Saturday, May 20 at 1:00 PM at the Big Ball Park**

Batter Up! Bring the family to Big Ball Park on Saturday, May 20 at 1:00 PM to watch the popular Vintage Baseball game. This free entertainment shows how baseball was played in Frederick Law Olmsted's era. Look for old-fashioned uniforms, long wooden bats, old time rules, and a special song during the Seventh Inning Stretch.

The Chicago Salmon will again be playing the Blue Island Brewmasters. The rematch promises a great day of baseball. Kids are allowed to "run the bases" after the game with real players in attendance. Join us!

## *Tributes & Trees Program*

Please think of *Tributes & Trees* when recognizing special people. All funds raised will be put to good use. An order has just been placed for tools to support landscape workdays. Our Landscape Workday volunteers are hard at work from April through November taming and maintaining our parks.

Visit our website to [donate](#) to Tributes & Trees

### TRIBUTES & TREES REMEMBERS:

In memory of **Joyce Van Cura**

Multiple Donors:

- Judy & Bob Finn
- Cindy Kellogg
- Constance & Thomas Guardi

In memory of **David "Grumpy" Moreau**

Donors: Constance & Thomas Guardi

In memory of **Rueben Bautista**

Donors: Constance & Thomas Guardi

In memory of **Irene Golden**

Donors: The Johnson Family

### TRIBUTES & TREES CONGRATULATES:

**Bridget Doherty & Leon Pietrowski**

"Just learned about the new addition to your family! Congratulations!"

Donors: Sandie & Jim Petrzilka







## Walking Tours of Historic Riverside

### Let Us Share Our Hometown Pride with You!

What better way to celebrate 201 years of Olmsted's legacy than to take a walking tour of Riverside, America's first planned suburb and a national historic site?

Today, this magical place of lush landscaping, curving streets, gas lamps, and charming parks still fulfills Olmsted's dream. It has since inspired architects such as Frank Lloyd Wright and Louis Sullivan to create some of their most beautiful works. Over 70 landmarked structures representing over 150 years of American architecture dot the village.

The Frederick Law Olmsted Society of Riverside invites you to experience this very special American place. A place with a hidden history that may surprise you.

The regularly scheduled Sunday afternoon tour dates for 2023 are:

Date	Tour Area
May 28	North Division
June 25	South Division
July 30	North Division
August 27	South Division
September 24	North Division
October 29	South Division

Tours depart at 2:00 PM from the main Riverside Train Station on Bloomingbank Rd., south of the BNSF railroad tracks, on the east side of the platform.

Tickets are \$20 per person (\$15 for seniors 62+ and Olmsted Society members). PayPal or credit card payments are accepted in advance on the Historic Walking Tours page of our website. Tickets may be purchased with cash only at the start of the tour.

Special customized tours are available by appointment. For more information call 708-447-7635 or e-mail [tours@olmstedsociety.org](mailto:tours@olmstedsociety.org).



Visitors and residents (both new and long-time) enjoy walking tours led by FLOS guides.





## Presentations Report



Dan Murphy  
Presentations Chair

### Advance Registration Encouraged

For each presentation you plan to attend, please pre-register on the Riverside Public Library website. This will ensure that the library provides enough chairs for the expected number of attendees. Of course, you're always welcome to attend our free presentations – even if you don't pre-register.

## Riverside: The History & Mysteries

**Thursday, March 9 at 7:00 PM at the Riverside Public Library**

The beautiful Village of Riverside has a long history that might surprise you. It also has some associated mysteries that, it is hoped, will someday be resolved. This talk will explore both. Even before there was a Riverside, as we know it, there were things to be found and events happening on this strategically placed piece of ground, and surrounding areas, that affected almost two-thirds of North America. Today Riverside, and its designer, Frederick Law Olmsted, are world famous. The entire village is a National Historic Site. People from around the nation and the world come to visit and tour. The community's design and rationale are taught in schools of landscape architecture everywhere. And oh, by the way, it remains a *really cool* place to live. Come join us. You will learn a lot about Riverside. And maybe you can help us eventually solve one of Riverside's mysteries.



Jim Petrzilka has been a member of the Riverside's Historical Commission for eleven years and has lived in the village for 46 years. He is a self-described history geek. Jim's time in Riverside's History Museum afforded him the opportunity to delve deeply into the archives of village history. Jim is also a village tour guide for the Olmsted Society and a member of its board of directors. Prior to his volunteer work in the village, Jim was a product manager for AT&T.

Register for [Riverside: The History & Mysteries](#) on the Riverside Public Library website.

## Native Plants and Living Soil & the Joys of Complexity in the Garden

**Thursday, March 23 at 7:00 PM at Riverside Public Library**

American gardens are changing. More and more people are planting pollinator gardens, gardening for birds, or are simply adding native plants to their designs. Hear what makes native plants native, why they belong in every garden, and how using them can bring new complexity to your garden and joy to your life. Learn why you should and how you can use these wonderful grasses, sedges, flowers, and shrubs without fear, no matter your gardening style.



Adrian Ayres Fisher has been enthusiastically gardening with native plants for over thirty years. As a board member of West Cook Wild Ones, she educates about and advocates for native-plant gardening, natural area restoration, and biodiversity. She also serves as volunteer site steward of National Grove Forest Preserve in North Riverside, Illinois, where she manages volunteer restoration projects. Formerly she was a sustainability coordinator at a community college. Her website is at [www.ecologicalgardening.net](http://www.ecologicalgardening.net).

Register for [Native Plants and Living Soil](#) on the Riverside Public Library website.





## *Presentations Report (cont'd.)*

### The Sweep and the Curve: Olmsted's Riverside

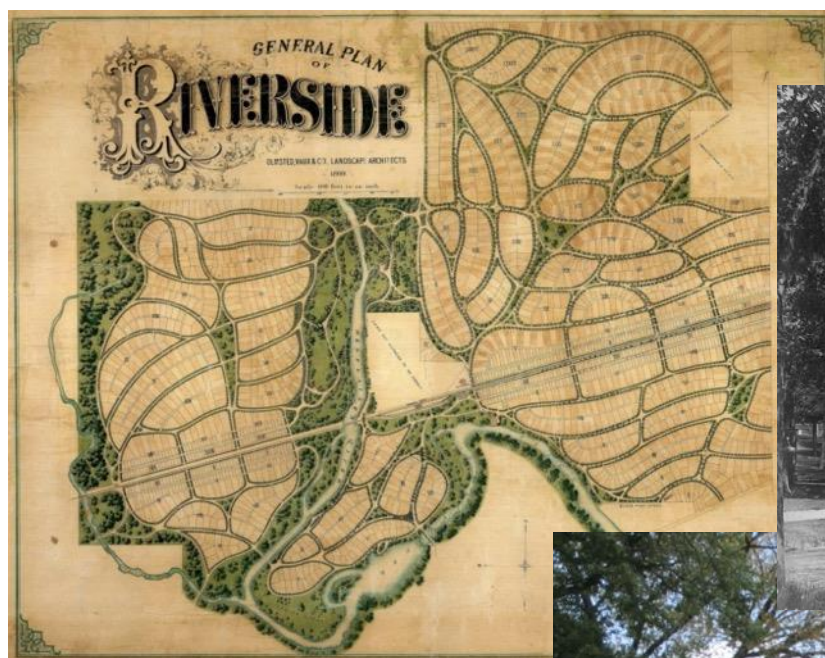
**Thursday, April 27 at 7:00 PM at Riverside Public Library**

The Sweep and the Curve will discuss a brief history of the town and challenges us to view Riverside not only in historical context, but also as a model of sustainability that needs care and stewardship.



Charles Pipal is a practicing architect, historian and award-winning professor in Historic Preservation and Architecture at the School of the Art Institute of Chicago, where he has taught since 1999. He holds a bachelor's degree in landscape architecture and a master's degree in architecture with a concentration in Historic Preservation, both from the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign. He is a past board member of Landmarks Illinois and is the current Chair of the Riverside Preservation Commission. Prof. Pipal's professional and academic focus has been on the documentation and rehabilitation of historic buildings and the interpretation of historic sites.

Register for [The Sweep and the Curve: Olmsted's Riverside](#) on the Riverside Public Library website.







## Landscape Workdays



Cindy Kellogg & Holly Machina

*Landscape Co-Chairs*

### Help Beautify Our Public Parks

For 2023, we are teaming up with the Village of Riverside to help beautify our green spaces.

Frederick Law Olmsted designed the parks in Riverside to provide changing vistas for both pedestrians & vehicles. His plan can be better realized by reducing shrub overgrowth, eliminating weeds, and opening up the river view. Join us as we tame, and then maintain your public parks of Riverside.

All workdays are scheduled for **Saturdays from 9 AM to 12 PM**. Bring your own **work gloves and a water bottle**. All landscaping supplies and pandemic-safe snacks will be provided.

The schedule of Landscape Workdays will be determined in March and posted on the [Landscape Workdays page](#) on the FLOS website.

To make advanced reservations to participate in a workday or to be added to our FLOS landscape committee e-list, please contact:

- Holly Machina & Cindy Kellogg  
FLOS Landscape Committee  
Chairpersons  
[workdays@olmstedsociety.org](mailto:workdays@olmstedsociety.org)  
708-447-0226
- Michael Collins  
Riverside Village Forester  
[mcollins@riverside.il.us](mailto:mcollins@riverside.il.us)  
708-442-3590 x 502



Join us at a landscape workday! You'll be surprised at what you can accomplish!



## Membership Report



**Linda LaBelle**  
*Membership Chair*

2023 Membership renewals are off to a great start. Thank for your generous contributions. Many activities are planned for 2023. Members and the community are welcome to participate.

Please consider renewing, becoming a member or giving the gift of membership. The Olmsted Society invites residents and visitors to join us in learning, enjoying Riverside's landscape and preserving our cultural and physical heritage.

Membership is open to all interested individuals for a minimum \$35.00 tax-deductible contribution by check or you can renew online:

[FLOS Membership Renewal Form](#)

If you prefer to use a check, print and mail the form below:

Frederick Law Olmsted Society of Riverside  
PO Box 65  
Riverside, Illinois 60546

Thank you for your continued support!



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

Founded in 1968, the Frederick Law Olmsted Society of Riverside, is a non-profit organization dedicated to the preservation and restoration of the original plan for Riverside. The town was developed in 1868 by Landscape Architect Frederick Law Olmsted and his business partner Calvert Vaux.

Membership is open to all interested individuals for the current calendar year (Jan. 1- Dec. 31), and is tax deductible. It includes your immediate family members living in your household. Please return this form with your **check payable to the Frederick Law Olmsted Society PO Box 65, Riverside, IL 60546** or join online at [www.olmstedsociety.org](http://www.olmstedsociety.org) and select the Membership tab.

#### MEMBERSHIP:

☐ *Reliable Redbud* \$35-\$49 \$ \_\_\_\_\_

☐ *Hearty Hickory* \$50-\$124 \$ \_\_\_\_\_

☐ *Sugar Maple* \$125-\$249 \$ \_\_\_\_\_  
(includes 2 walking tour tickets)

☐ *Mighty Oak* \$250 + \$ \_\_\_\_\_  
(includes 4 walking tour tickets)

☐ New Member

☐ Renewal

☐ Gift Membership

Name:

Address:

Phone:

Email:

#### COMMITTEES:

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

- ☐ Architecture
- ☐ Education & Tours
- ☐ Fundraising events:
  - ☐ Hop Stop
  - ☐ Housewalk
- ☐ 4th of July Parade Float
- ☐ Landscape Workdays
- ☐ Library
- ☐ Membership
- ☐ Newsletter
- ☐ Public Relations
- ☐ Website

☐ I wish to receive a receipt for my tax deductible donation





The Frederick Law Olmsted Society of Riverside is a registered 501c3 organization.

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Subscribe to our newsletter by emailing us at:  
[newsletter@olmstedsociety.org](mailto:newsletter@olmstedsociety.org)

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



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[instagram.com/riverside.FLOS](https://instagram.com/riverside.FLOS)



[olmstedsociety.org](https://olmstedsociety.org)