70 Years and Counting! To say that the Old Town Triangle Association’s mission, agenda and goals are ROBUST is a colossal understatement! It has been this way since the OTTA’s inception in 1948 when the first meeting of concerned residents took place. Through the years, the level of involvement of the OTTA’s dedicated volunteer members has continued to increase.

Initially, our Association did not have a physical home. Today, unlike most other neighborhood organizations, we own our facility. In managing our space, we allow various neighborhood groups, schools, condo boards, and even our municipality (elections) to use it for very nominal rental rates, if any. We are an employer with two paid staff members. I don’t believe any of the other neighborhood organizations have employees.

While the improvement of education was one component of our stated mission, it wasn’t intended to mean sponsoring and operating an “art school”. Yet, since 1956, we have done just that.

One of our most compelling mission agenda items since 1977 and 1984 has been protecting our Chicago Landmark and National Register designations respectively. Originally, we took a “hard line- hold the line” position on zoning issues. Today, we continue to protect zoning and landmark issues as new ownership arrives in the Triangle.

Finally, all the above is made possible from the funds generated by our primary fundraiser, the Old Town Art Fair. It requires year-round organization which is accomplished by as many as 500 volunteers - an incredible achievement! The net proceeds from the Art Fair are used to carry out OTTA’s important missions and the maintenance and upkeep of our property. The OTTA’s goals and activities are encapsulated within the committees, which are established each February as the new President and Board of Directors are installed.

I like to believe that if each of our members truly understood the depth of effort and commitment required by each volunteer who serves our Association, they, too, would ask themselves how they might best assist us. I know of many people here in the Old Town Triangle who step up to the plate as often as possible to ensure our mission, goals, and beloved Art Fair become a reality...and for that, all of us on your Board thank you.

Karen Pfendler
President, OTTA

A WARM WELCOME to Our Artists

WELCOME TO ALL THE FINE ARTISTS PARTICIPATING IN THE 2019 OLD TOWN ART FAIR. THANK YOU FOR HELPING US BECOME THE #1 ART FAIR IN AMERICA – 4 YEARS IN A ROW!

COMMITTEE NEWS | Compiled by Michael Warnick

OLD TOWN ART FAIR COMMITTEE | Art Fair Updates | Lynn Smith, OTAF Chair and Sasha Mayoras, OTAF Vice-Chair

It’s our favorite time of year in Old Town! This marks the 70th year our neighborhood joins with artists, volunteers and visitors to celebrate the Old Town Art Fair. It’s time to catch up with old friends and make new ones, stroll the Garden Walk, have a bite and a beverage, take in terrific music, and surround yourself with amazing art and creativity. No wonder so many people look forward to this nationally recognized event.

Of the many reasons people come to the Fair, the main attraction is the beautiful artwork. Old Town patrons, known for curiosity and appreciation of art, value this opportunity to explore, discover and learn something new. Our 250 artists look forward to talking with you and sharing stories about their artistic process and what inspires them. You’ll even find some of them creating pieces right here at the Fair so keep your eyes open!
OLD TOWN ART FAIR COMMITTEE | Art Fair Updates

open! This is how we first noticed our 2019 featured poster artist, McKenzie Fisk. It was fascinating to watch her paint and see her charming creations come to life.

Remember, the Art Fair is a fundraiser. By making a donation, volunteering and participating, you directly benefit the community. All proceeds go to local schools, arts and cultural programs, youth and senior groups, neighborhood improvements, other community non-profits, and of course, the Menomonee Club for Boys and Girls. You can find a full list of recent Grant recipients on the Art Fair web-site. Grants are awarded every year at the Art Fair Thank You Party and all Art Fair Volunteers are invited to join us Friday, June 14, 6:00 – 9:30 p.m. to applaud a job well done.

It takes all of us coming together to make the Old Town Art Fair special and many hands have been busy behind the scenes. Menomonee Club and the Church of the Three Crosses have teamed up to solve an ongoing power supply challenge. Our talented friend and neighbor, Elaine Frei of Luft Balloons, has planned another installation to awe us and bring us joy. Volunteers have put in countless hours ironing out sticky details to make things just right. Friends of the Fair again have been incredibly generous with their donations. Neighbors have been busy sprucing up their yards and homes, planning parties and finding places to put their cars. Artists, entertainers and food vendors are getting ready to delight us with their talents. Everyone contributes something special. We appreciate your efforts and are pleased you are a part of the Fair. Enjoy this wonderful weekend!

EVENTS COMMITTEE | Shelly Murphy, Chair

The Events Committee will be hosting an OTTA Summer Party in late July. Be on the lookout for the details and be ready to come and join the neighborhood fun!

If you are looking to lend a hand in growing the Events programming and promote social interactions within the neighborhood, we need you! We plan and implement a variety of functions throughout the year. On deck for the balance of 2019 is the Summer Party, plus Oktoberfest and a holiday gathering in December. If you have ideas, want to plan something or just be a worker bee, please join the Events Committee by emailing Shelly Murphy at info@oldtowntriangle.com.

THANK YOU TO OUR FRIENDS OF THE FAIR

| $1,000+ | Sharon Karsten |
| $500 to $999 | Jane Bachmann, Rosemary Corriere, Alderman Brian Hopkins, 2nd Ward, Kehoe Designs & The Geraghty, Jon W. Balke, The Eley Family, John and Pat Hall, Lee Hamilton, Claire M. Leaman, Rick and Shelly Murphy, Peter and Gwenn Rausch, Allen Smart and Brian Hollander |
| $100 to $149 Cont. | Fred Tannenbaum and Marilyn Spracker, Michael and Abby Warnick, Tom and Ruth Ann Watkins, Constance D. White, David Young and Jeffery Peters |
| $50 to $99 | Anonymous (4), Gerda Meyer Bernstein, Michael and Stephanie Binetti, Steven Breckel and Patt Noonan, John S. Burcher, Judith Lauth Casey, Mr. and Mrs. Paul Cassidy, Sharon Conway, Suzette Fehrer, Barbara Fields, Susan and Shelly Gombert, Joel F. Henning and Maria A. Ojeda, Rick and Ann Herrick, Matthew Hurst and Mandy Zaransky-Hurst, Pat Kilduff, Jennifer Knopf and Dan Boehm, Paul Kuhn, Amy May, Hector and Zina Munoz, John and Lorry Murphy, Jim Ryser, Caroline and Allan Shoenberger, Barbara Siebel, Kay Smith, Carol Smoler, Dylan and Kate Wolin |

In Memoriam

Sherwood Snyder in Memory of Roger H. Olson
Michael Harada in Memory of Edwin Seidman

DONATE ONLINE:
OldtownArtFair.org/ friends-of-the-fair/
I heard about Dina and Georges Culioli because their friends and neighbors speak so highly of the couple and the art they've collected over the years at the Old Town Art Fair. The Culiolis live in a building in the heart of the Art Fair. Therefore, it would be perfectly reasonable for them to not love and support an event where thousands of people descend on their block leaving them housebound for two solid days each year.

Dina Culioli hails from New York and Georges from France, where the couple moved together in 1988 and where ultimately, they raised their two children Alexa and Raphael. They moved into the Old Town Triangle purely by chance because it was just one of a few neighborhoods within walking distance of their son’s school, Francis W. Parker. It wasn’t until they had already purchased and moved into the new home that they learned about the Old Town Art Fair and the many benefits that go with living in the Triangle.

Georges and Dina remember relocating to Chicago and living for a while with an echo in their home because the art that had filled the walls of their “nice sized Paris apartment” was sorely lacking for their needs here. Like many people serious about purchasing art, Dina and Georges use the strategy of walking the Fair on Saturday to check out all the booths, isolating the pieces of most interest. Tours of certain booths where the artists would be present are sure to love. Being able to meet and speak with the artists is what the Culiolis find most compelling about the OTAF, especially those artists who more often than not remember Georges and Dina and the exact work they purchased.

Georges underscored that these interactions between artists and patrons are unique to art fairs, which you wouldn’t have in a gallery, store and certainly not on the internet.

One year, Dina and Georges volunteered on the Booth Sitting Committee and they happened to start their shift during a bit of a lull in traffic, perfect timing for the artist to have some downtime while unlikely to miss an important sale. Having been to the booth before, Dina and Georges welcomed the chance to look at the artwork more closely. True to his personality, Georges struck up a conversation with the next person who happened into the booth and soon the booth became filled with more and more people suddenly wanting to check out the art and likely attracted by the hubbub that Georges had inadvertently sparked.

Georges and Dina feel strongly that booth sitting and the various other ways that the OTAF takes good care of artists is vitally important to maintaining the high caliber art for sale at the event and why it is repeatedly the #1 Art Fair in America. When I asked them what more the OTAF could be doing to continue to attract great talent, Georges made a suggestion that artists and serious art enthusiasts alike are sure to love. Georges noticed that late mornings of AF weekend usually have less foot traffic than other times and are therefore perfect for hosting intimate, behind the scenes tours of certain booths where the artists would be prepared to speak for a few minutes about their work, or about inspirations & innovations in the medium or other art-related subjects. In 2019, thanks to the Culiolis, interested visitors will be able to sign-up on a first-come, first served basis to have such a tour! Go to BehindTheCanvasTour@oldtownartfair.org for more information.

CALENDAR  | JUNE – AUGUST

**JUNE**

- **SUNDAY, JUNE 2ND, 2 – 5 P.M.**
  GALLERY RECESSION: ANNUAL STUDENT FACULTY EXHIBITION EXHIBITION JUNE 1ST JULY 12TH
- **SATURDAY, JUNE 8TH, 10 A.M. – 7 P.M.**
  SUNDAY, JUNE 9TH, 10 A.M. – 6 P.M.
  OLD TOWN ART FAIR
- **FRIDAY, JUNE 14TH, 6 – 9:30 P.M.**
  THANK YOU PARTY & GRANTS COMMITTEE AWARDS PRESENTATION
- **SUNDAY, JUNE 16TH**
  FATHER'S DAY
- **MONDAY, JUNE 17TH, 7 P.M.**
  NEIGHBORHOOD IMPROVEMENT COMMITTEE

**JULY**

- **WEDNESDAY, JULY 3RD, 7:15 P.M.**
  MEMBERSHIP COMMITTEE
- **THURSDAY, JULY 4TH**
  INDEPENDENCE DAY
- **TUESDAY, JULY 9TH, 7 P.M.**
  BOARD MEETING
- **THURSDAY, JULY 11TH, 6 P.M.**
  CAPS MEETING
- **MONDAY, JULY 15TH, 7 P.M.**
  NEIGHBORHOOD IMPROVEMENT COMMITTEE
- **FRIDAY, JULY 19TH – 21ST**
  SHEFFIELD MUSIC FEST & GARDEN WALK
- **SUNDAY, JULY 21ST, 12 – 5 P.M.**
  OLDEBOURN GARDEN WALK

**SATURDAY, JULY 26TH – SEPTEMBER 26TH**

**OLD TOWN ART CENTER INSTRUCTORS SHOW**

**AUGUST**

- **WEDNESDAY, AUGUST 7TH, 7:15 P.M.**
  MEMBERSHIP COMMITTEE
- **FRIDAY – SUNDAY, AUGUST 9TH – 11TH**
  GINZA HOLIDAY
  MIDWEST BUDDHIST TEMPLE
- **FRIDAY – SUNDAY, AUGUST 9TH – 11TH**
  CHICAGO HISTORY MUSEUM HOT DOG FEST
- **TUESDAY, AUGUST 13TH, 7 P.M.**
  BOARD MEETING
- **SATURDAY, AUGUST 17TH – 18TH**
  CHICAGO AIR & WATER SHOW
- **MONDAY, AUGUST 19TH, 7 P.M.**
  MEMBERSHIP COMMITTEE
NEIGHBOR SPOTLIGHT | Award Winning Author…Our Own Donna Cousins Vos | By Diane Sokolofski


Donna earned a master’s degree from the Medill School of Journalism at Northwestern University before becoming a fiction writer. She was the founding editor of Career World magazine and has worked in Europe and Asia where her articles on local culture appeared in The Courier, The Singapore American newspaper, Orientations, and The Asia Magazine.

Her fiction-writing career began with short stories she submitted to magazines and journals. “The rejection slips piled up,” she said, “but one day I got a really good one from The New Yorker. On a pre-printed postcard the reviewer hand-wrote a note! She wrote that the story was good, but the ending needed work. I was thrilled.” She persevered, and a different story was eventually published by Amherst Writers & Artists Press in the literary journal Peregrine.

“For writing fiction, I start by thinking up a problem and some interesting characters. Once the characters take shape, they themselves help define the way forward. I never know the ending when I begin, which keeps me on the edge of my chair.”

Waiting for Bones was inspired on a game drive in Zambia when the safari guide stopped the Land Rover, got out, and disappeared over a hill. Sitting in an open vehicle in the middle of nowhere with three other clueless guests, Donna thought, what if he never comes back?

Personal experience, research, observation, and imagination fuel her stories. “Ideas are everywhere,” she says. “At the dinner table, in the doctor’s waiting room, standing next to the potato bin in the grocery store. The challenge is to seize that glimmer and shape it into a sustained narrative with a beginning, a middle, and an end. It helps if the characters step forward and take over, as they often do. The potato bin must lead to a person. Or a dog.”

I asked Donna if she had a personal story she’d like to share. “I once met a black spitting cobra in an outdoor shower in Zambia. But,” she quickly added, “here I am, safe and sound. I wouldn’t want to scare anyone away from Africa. A safari is an extraordinarily wonderful experience.”

In 1995 Donna and her husband, Dirk Vos, moved to Chicago from California. Realtor friend Nancy Joyce showed them dozens of houses before they decided to buy the very first house they were shown in the Triangle. Says Donna, “We love and appreciate the neighborhood. Almost every time I step outside our door, I see someone I know. Potluck dinners, recipe contests, a newsletter, the art fair—we are so fortunate to enjoy village life in a city of millions.” With a twinkle in her eye she added, “Maybe my next book should be about an art fair. Think of the drama!”

GRANT SPOTLIGHT | Record Number Hit Eagle Scout Rank | By Barbara Guttmann

The Old Town Triangle Association is the sponsoring organization for Boy Scout Troop #79. This Spring, a record number of our scouts attained the rank of Eagle Scout. Ten (10!) young men met the highest standards in scouting from our Troop 79. Typically, only one in ten scouts earns the Eagle Scout rank. Ten from a single troop is a huge accomplishment! Nearly 300 friends, family and fellow scouts were in attendance for the pomp and circumstance that this special day deserved. The ceremony provided a wealth of information on scouting and the challenges these scouts endured to reach the required 21 Merit Badge, not to mention the dozens of additional medals earned by these young men.

The ten scouts each completed a major service project. To complete the projects, scouts had to bring in additional volunteers where needed and raise funds to complete their projects. A sample of the beneficiaries included a west side school whose library had flooded; an inner-city farm with no protection for food or play area for children of workers; and the documenting of all marching band music scores into a searchable database for a high school. Thousands of hours of project time were donated to Chicago area not-for-profits.

At the ceremony, parents of all the Eagle Scouts were brought on stage to present medals to their sons and, in turn, these same scouts rewarded their families with special recognition. The Triangle is pleased to announce the names of our 10 Eagle Scouts for 2019: Edward Boyle, Otto Brown, Will Gardner, Kenny Larson, Nick Martorina (second row) Hayden Morgan, Matthew Nelsen, Jake Nitzsche, John Patti and Michael Youngblood. Photo by Colin Boyle.


Look for the OTTA Scout Troop helping around the Art Fair – as they do every year.
Old Town students have been busy preparing for the Annual Student Faculty Exhibition which runs through July 12th at the Leslie Wolfe Gallery. It will be followed by the Old Town Art Center Instructors Show which will be on display through September 26th. Left: Beth Kordick with Tom Francesconi. Right: Art School Instructor Kathleen Newman with Ellen Rissman.

Left: Countless hours are spent planning The Old Town Art Fair. Meeting with Art Fair Chair Lynn Smith (center) are Emma Rahme and Michael Garzel. Right: Showing Old Town spirit, good neighbor Alan Lougee aids the city street sweeping crew in early spring.

Left: The Grants Committee meets to finalize awards to recipients that will be at the Art Fair Thank You Party on June 14th. Pictured: Joyce Freeman, Dorothy DeCarlo, Robert Jones, and Diane Gonzalez. Not pictured: Darlene Fahrenkrog, Stefani Turken, Mary Ann Weprin, Rick Rausch. Right: Friends of the Fair mailing volunteers gather to stuff envelopes and catch up with neighbors.

**Hotel Lincoln Mural**
By Michael Warnick

Art can be found anywhere and it’s not always at eye level. Just take a look at the stunning new mural of Abraham Lincoln on the south wall of the Hotel Lincoln. Best viewed from Clark Street and Lincoln Park and partially visible from Wells Street, it was completed in December 2018.

The management of the Hotel Lincoln hopes it will be a new icon of our neighborhood. “We consider Hotel Lincoln the gateway to Lincoln Park,” said Lea Rodriguez, Director of Sales and Marketing, “and thought this design hit the mark. We looked at a few known artists and reached out to our original sign maker, Right Way Signs. It took us some time to choose a design that spoke to the team.” The mural, 80 by 40 feet or about 8 stories tall was designed by Aubrey Sands and painted in five weeks by Ches Perry and Randy Pestka of Right Way Signs.

**LaSalle Language Academy Mural**
By Rachael Russ

LaSalle Language Academy’s Fine Arts Residency Program titled “Journey of the Butterfly: Immigration Stories Through Words and Images” included a series of workshops held by Chicago Public Art Group to create a mural focused on the topic of immigration for the south exterior wall of the school. It brought the entire school together to think about the important and topical issues surrounding immigration and the immigrant experience.

LaSalle students, teachers and staff worked with Mexican artist Alfonso “Piloto” Nieves Ruiz, a self-taught artist who works primarily with clay and recycled materials to create mosaic pieces that deal with social issues. The theme of the mural uses the metaphor of the migration of the butterfly and the hummingbird to discuss issues surrounding immigration; the obstacles faced by the butterflies and hummingbirds along with the resources that allow them to complete their journeys, and how these mirror the challenges immigrants face as they move from one country to another. The mural is a 12’ by 12’ installation combination of hand-made clay pieces, broken ceramic tile and painted material.

The students developed the image and created clay pieces which were then glazed and fired to form the ceramic tiles installed in the mural. The students learned the clay-making process and developed collaboration skills by learning how a piece of their work contributes to a larger outcome of the mural project enjoyed by the community. LaSalle Language Academy thanks the OTA for the 2018 grant donation which supports the Fine Arts Residency Program.
THE VILLAGE CHICAGO (https://www.thevillagechicago.org/) presents Rachel Barton Pine to Headline The Village Chicago 10th Anniversary Celebration and Benefit. Celebrated violinist Rachel Barton Pine, along with her daughter Sylvia will perform at the Village Chicago’s 10th Anniversary Celebration and Benefit on Tuesday, June 4, 2019, 5-8 p.m. at the DePaul University School of Music, Holtschneider Performance Center, Fullerton and Halsted. The Village is pulling out all the stops to create an evening to remember with glorious music, irresistible silent and live auction prizes including trips, experiences and beautiful objects; plus a raffle, appetizers, and drinks. For more information or to purchase tickets, call the Village office at 773-248-8700 or contact vchong@thevillagechicago.org.

The MIDWEST BUDDHIST TEMPLE is hosting a Used Book Sale on Saturday, June 8th and Sunday, June 9th from 10:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. Donate and purchase used books. It’s a fundraiser for the Homeless Project.

Save the Date! The Ginza Holiday Festival is August 9, 10 & 11th. Hours are: Friday, August 9th 5:30 p.m. -10 p.m., Saturday, August 10th, 11:30 a.m.-9:00 p.m. and Sunday, August 11th, 11:30 a.m.-7 p.m. The Midwest Buddhist Temple is located at 435 West Menomonee Street. For more information call the Temple at 312-943-7801 or email office@mbtchicago.org.

ST. MICHAEL IN OLD TOWN (www.st-mikes.org/) is what makes the Old Town Triangle the historic neighborhood it is! Calling all “chicken wing lovers”. Come to WingOut on Saturday, June 1st and Sunday, June 2nd from 2-6 p.m. each day. All tickets are pre-sold at http://wingoutchicago.com.

St. Michael’s Grand Raffle is happening now! There are 250 tickets at $100 each. Grand prize is $5000. Tickets are available at the Parish Office, 1633 N. Cleveland Ave. All details can be found at st-mikes.org. Monies raised will go toward the restoration of St. Michael’s Church. The Early Bird Prize drawing will be held in July for two $500 prizes. Final drawing will be held on or before October 19th.

A Scotch Tasting and Cigar Event is on Friday, June 21st. The cost is $50 per person for 5 tastings and a cigar. Tasting begins at 6:30 p.m. in the Parish Center garden. Sign up is available at st-mikes.org.

The CHURCH OF THE THREE CROSSES (http://www.churchofthethreecrosses.org/), has been a good neighbor since the 1970s and a good friend to our beloved pets. Please join us for the “Blessing of the Animals” Worship at the Church of the Three Crosses on Sunday, August 25th at 11:00 a.m. The service is held outside in the park amphitheater next to the church on the corner of Wisconsin & Sedgwick (Church of the Three Crosses is located at 333 W. Wisconsin Street). Held during Worship, our annual “Blessing of the Animals” is a time of celebrating the gift of pets and the important part animals play in the ecological balance of our world. Bring your pets, of every kind, for an enriching worship! Please bring small pets in carriers. For more information, visit the website or contact Erika Colin, Office Manager, at 312-951-7916 or admin@churchofthethreecrosses.org.

Menomonee Judo Club News! Congratulations to the Menomonee Judo Club athletes! The Menomonee Judo Club sent 10 athletes to the USA Youth National Championships in Colorado Springs, Colorado. Natalija Stanoejevic took Gold Medals in both of her divisions (Cadet +70kg and UF 78kg) and earned coveted spots on four major international teams. Max Antoniou and Manny Rosenkranz both came close to making World Teams, by taking home Bronze Medals in 66kg divisions. Max took 3rd in the UF 66kg, while Manny took 3rd in the Cadet 66kg division.

Sign-up today for Menomonee Club’s Summer Programs! Camps begin the week of June 3rd and run through Aug. 30th, 2019. Week-long camps offered include programs such as: Art Explorers, Chess with Chess Wizards, Fencing, Engineering with LEGO, RetroActive Sports, STEM programs. Some of our partner programs include Emerald City Theatre and Knuckleball Comedy (registration is done directly through them). From June 17th–July 28th, Windy City Fencing will offer classes during our six-week summer session. Visit our website to register (all sessions are online) at: www.menomoneeclub.org or give us a call at: (312) 664-4631 ext. 100.

Green City Market Lincoln Park hours are Wednesdays & Saturdays, 7 a.m.-1 p.m. Green City Market is celebrating its 20th An-
COMMUNITY CORNER | (Continued From page 6)

niversary all season long. Join us in Lincoln Park for the season’s best produce and provisions, chef demos, youth activities, live music, market tours, and more. Visit www.greencitymarket.org for more information about our farmers, artisans, and programs. See you at the market!

2019 Green City Market Chef BBQ is July 18, 5:30-8:00 p.m. in Lincoln Park. Don’t miss Chicago’s top culinary event of the summer. Join 100+ local chefs, brewers, mixologists, and winemakers for a farmers-market-inspired menu at Green City Market’s largest annual fundraiser. Enjoy a summer evening in the park and savor the peak flavors of summer in the Midwest. Visit www.gcmbbq.eventbrite.com to buy your tickets today!

Lincoln Park Conservancy gives free (donations encouraged) guided tours of the beautiful wildflowers around the North Pond Nature Sanctuary or the Alfred Caldwell Lily Pool. Learn about the benefits of native wildflowers and how to identify them. Each month will feature different wildflower species in bloom. These easy 45-to-60 minute walks begin at 10 a.m. and are great for beginners as well as the experienced and are geared toward adults. Here are the dates for the 2019 season: Alfred Caldwell Lily Pool: May 25, June 15, July 20, August 31, September 21, October 5 and North Pond Nature Sanctuary: May 11, June 8, July 13, August 3, September 14, October 12. Registration required. Contact Aaron Hammond at (773) 883-PARK for more information.

HISTORY OF OLD TOWN | Charles Wacker: Chicago Leader and Lincoln Park West | By Diane Gonzalez

Chicago advocate Charles Wacker resided on Lincoln Park West for about 25 years. Born in 1856 in Chicago, Wacker was the only child of Katerina and Frederick Wacker, a brewer who emigrated from Wurtenberg, Germany in 1854. In 1870, the family moved to 714 Franklin (today’s 1838 Lincoln Park West) which burned during the Chicago fire of 1871. The Wackers rebuilt a fanciful, Swiss-chalet style home and went to Europe from 1876-1879. Charles studied in Stuttgart and Geneva. Upon return, the family settled back in the home they had owned during their years abroad. They remained there until 1897 when Charles began to build a residence on State Parkway.

Joining his father in the Wacker & Birk Brewing and Malting Co., Charles became president in 1884. In 1893 Charles, at age 37, was appointed the youngest director of the World’s Columbian Exposition.

Described as gregarious, Charles was a leader at the Exposition and in the brewery. He was also the Director of the Illinois Merchant Trust Co. and the Chicago Heights Land Association.

He volunteered with the Relief and Aid Society and even presided over a German singing society. Perhaps he harmonized with beer mug in one hand and songbook in the other.

But it was as the chair of the Chicago Plan Commission for 17 years that Wacker left his biggest mark on Chicago. In 1909 Mayor Busse appointed him to head 328 commissioners who were tasked to execute the famed 1909 Chicago Plan authored by Dan Burnham and Ed Bennett. The plan, which included numerous proposals to make Chicago beautiful, is still viewed as the most significant U.S. urban planning document written. Ideas included a wider Michigan Ave, a double-level Wacker Drive, and increased lakefront parkland.

Charles and his colleagues worked indefatigably to earn public support. They produced the Wacker’s Manual of the Plan of Chicago, a shorter, cheaper-to-print version of the Plan. They offered lantern slide shows in many languages. Wacker and two others gave an estimated 500 talks to 150,000 listeners in seven years! Chicago’s 8th graders were required to study the Plan. An imperfect document, the Plan failed to address housing and other working man’s needs. Some portions were not approved, but between 1902-1931 over 80 bond issues passed for funding. Chicago grew beautiful.

In appreciation of his work, the City Council renamed South Water Street “Wacker Drive” in 1926. Unfortunately, Charles was too ill to attend the dedication. Author Rudolf Hofmeister wrote, “of Chicago’s German element, Charles Wacker, without a doubt, has done the most for the development of the city.” This year is the 110th anniversary of the Chicago Plan. When driving speedily along Lower Wacker with slower traffic above, Chicagoans nod “danke” to a former Lincoln Park West resident for his tireless efforts to improve Chicago.

Charles Wacker photo, courtesy of the Chicago History Museum

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OUR MISSION STATEMENT
The Old Town Triangle Association is a community-based, not-for-profit organization dedicated to enhancing the quality of life for residents who live in an area of the City of Chicago bounded by North Avenue, Clark Street and the ghost of Ogden Avenue (“The Triangle”).

THE LESLIE WOLFE GALLERY: JUNE — AUGUST

JUNE | Annual Student Faculty Exhibition
The Leslie Wolfe Gallery celebrates Old Town Art Center’s many years of classes and stunning artworks by students and faculty.
Exhibition: June 1 – July 12
Artist Reception: Sunday, June 2, 2-5 p.m.

JULY | Old Town Art Center Instructors Show
The Artist as Teacher: The Old Town Art Center proudly presents works in oil, watercolor and pastel by the artists who teach their many skills.
Exhibition: July 26 – September 26
Artist Reception: Sunday, August 11, 2-5 p.m.