

Times

OLD TOWN TRIANGLE ASSOCIATION

CALENDAR



All events are held at the Old Town Triangle Center unless otherwise designated. Meetings are open to all members.

TRIANGLE EVENTS

January 22, 6:30-8:30 p.m.
OTTA Annual Dinner

February 10, 7:00 p.m.
OTTA Board Meeting

February 17, 7:00 p.m.
Historic District/Planning & Zoning Committee

February 24, 7:00 p.m.
CAPS Meeting



OPENINGS

February 15, 2:00-5:00 p.m.
Chance Encounters
The Paintings of Baila Miller

March 14, 2:00-5:00 p.m.
Silver Prints by Jon Balke



Reminder

The OTTA Times with color photos—online at oldtowntriangle.com

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE



LEE FREIDHEIM

Are you listening? Is it really sinking in? Do you really have a grasp of the essence and profundity of what you have just heard. Is there a Pinter-like silence and a yearning for more? Or are you ready to pounce and just waiting for a min- break to tear off on a non sequitur of your own? Or, perhaps you really process faster and have moved on. Whatever the case, I propose that the art of listening is in its death throes and desperately needs resuscitation. We need a Congressional Hearing and a Commissioner of Listening. Every school and organization should have a fully funded and mandatory workshop devoted to its study. Imagine all the magical moments of personal listening – a heartbeat, a breath, a tolling bell, the thump, thump of mortars being launched. The first cry of a newborn baby is perhaps the most welcome and joyous sound of all. But who could forget the fear brought on by the crunching sound of the approaching vehicle on the gavel road in Misery? I never hear a flock of seagulls without thinking of The Birds and terror they inspired in Alfred Hitcock's movie. Remember the glass door shattering in Body Heat ? That sound was worth a thousand well-censored words. Listening can also have monumental consequences. Most of us can think back to more than a few tragedies that might have been averted had we been listening better. It took a long time for the world to hear the true meaning of the tirades of Nazi Germany. Had we been listening to Joseph Stiglitz and not Allen Greenspan we may have averted the current economic meltdown. At our own peril we fail to hear our newly elected and appointed government leaders. We will soon have the Governor's fully recorded comments on the Senatorial appointment for our comedic pleasure. I assume that Patrick Fitzgerald has a keen ear. While so few of us will have the opportunity to change the course of history, we do have a responsibility to listen those who might. But enough pedantry. Listening for the pure, unadulterated joy of it should be all the motivation we need. What could be more glorious than the 1812 Overture, Lake Michigan crashing on the breakwater, or our own quirky little messages on voice mail? We could even heed the admonition of Simon and Garfunkel and simply listen to "the sounds of silence". I do want to thank all of you for "listening" or at least reading and recycling my messages for the past two years. Now, it's time for new leadership and a new face to grace our newsletter. So it is with true pleasure and great expectation that I warmly welcome the next President of the OTTA, Fern Bomchill Davis.

COMMITTEE REPORTS

ART FAIR

JOAN GOLDSTEIN, EXHIBITORS' CHAIR

We are pleased to report that we received 708 applications from artists to exhibit

in the 2009 Old Town Art Fair via Zapplication.org. This is the second year we have asked artists to submit their applications online, and the process has proved enormously successful. The dead-

→fromP1 line for online application was December 15, 2008.

Sixteen jurors have been selected to determine which of the new artists will be selected to exhibit; four of these are returning artists who are in the show, the other twelve are from the local art community. Jurying will take place the first week-end in February. The categories in which the artists will be judged are:

- Two dimensional—drawing, painting, pastel, 2-D mixed media, photography, and printmaking
- Three-dimensional—ceramics, fiber, glass, stone, wood, 3-D mixed media, jewelry, metal, and sculpture

Two hundred four artists will be returning to the fair from the 2008 show. An additional 54 will be juried in at the February meeting, bringing the total number of exhibitors to 260.

The first fairs were invitational, and anyone could enter. “Artists” made potholders, painted driftwood, modeled pipeholders, and glued sequins on aprons. After a few years, the committee decided that the quality of the art would be vastly improved with the appointment of a jury to review submissions. Among the jurors were artists, art instructors, and museum curators. This level of professionalism prompted some of the amateurs to withdraw from the fair. No more crocheted potholders. In 1958, the fair program guide explained that the Exhibitors’ Committee sought to maintain a reasonable balance among painting, sculpture, ceramics, and other art media. Each artist brought one piece to be examined by the jury. If the artist was accepted, this piece served as his/her auction donation.

This procedure was followed by a system whereby artists submitted five representative slides to the jury. If chosen, the artist brought an auction donation

to the fair. This practice lasted for nearly 40 years. With the demise of the auction and the rise of technology, artists now submit their works online; and each juror uses a computer to evaluate the art and make selections. Criteria include basic art design, technical skills, and artistic expression. We’ve come a long way.

MEMBERSHIP COMMITTEE

MICHAEL WARNICK, CO-CHAIR

Our Annual Dinner and Election will be held on Thursday, January 22, from 6:30 to 8:30 p.m. Once again, we have arranged for Kasia’s to cater the event, and there will be a little something for everyone’s taste. Neil Dixon Smith will provide background music for the evening, and the kids can jump away on the Moonwalker Bouncer in the South room. Following the dinner, there will be a brief business meeting to confirm and swear in the new Board, and a short presentation from our Beat 1814 CAPS officers. This dinner is always a lot of fun, and a great opportunity for neighbors to get together and shake the mid-winter blahs. We hope to see you all there.

We are planning a first-ever joint activity with our neighbors to the south of North Avenue—the Old Town Merchants and Resident’s Association. The Association’s Director (OTMRA), John Blick, and their President, Tom Erd, are involved in the arrangements, along with Shirley and Michael.

We are hoping to make this an annual event, with venues switching between OTTA and OTMRA each year. The first one will be held at the Triangle in early April. Tentatively titled, “We Love Old Town”, we hope to solicit stories and artifacts to display at the event, including personal experiences, old posters, and old photos. There will be live music, a raffle, and fun activities for the kids. The event

will be free to members and residents with OTTA and OTMRA sharing the cost. We’ll let you know more about this exciting event in the next newsletter.

NEW WHISTLEBLOWER POLICY

Along with other neighborhood organizations, OTTA has adopted a new whistleblower policy to provide a process for reporting untoward behavior. The policy is as follows:

Whistleblower Policy

ADOPTED 12/09/08

The Old Town Triangle Association (the “Association”) is committed to lawful and ethical behavior in all of its activities. This whistleblower policy is designed to provide a process for reporting inappropriate, unethical, or illegal behavior by anyone who is associated, or does business with, the Association.

Anyone with a concern or question about the propriety or legality of an act involving the Association can report directly to an officer of the Association.

The Association officer will cause an investigation of the concern or question in a timely manner and, if warranted, will cause appropriate action to be taken.

Any reported concern, question or other matter, as well as the identity of the “whistleblower,” will be handled discretely and confidentially to the extent allowed by the circumstances and the law.

The confidential e-mail addresses for each officer can be found on the website, info@oldtowntriangle.com. In addition, letters can be left privately for any designated officer at the Association offices. 

The Old Town Triangle Association **Times** is published ten times a year by Old Town Triangle Association Bounded by Clark Street, North Avenue, and the ghost of Ogden Avenue

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OFFICE HOURS

Monday through Friday—10:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.
Saturday—10:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m.

Please feel free to contact Administrators Shirley Baugher or Leslie Wolfe at the office during those hours.

OFFICERS

LEE FREIDHEIM, *President*
FERN BOMCHILL DAVIS,
First Vice-President
MARTHA CONNOLLY, *Second Vice-President*
MICHAEL WARNICK, *Secretary*
CHRISTINA BEER, *Treasurer*

DIRECTORS

MATT BEER
PHIL GRAFF
ALICE HUFF
JEFF PINES
EMILY ROSE
DIRK VOS



The Old Town Triangle Association is pleased to present a solo show of paintings by Baila Miller for the month of February. Entitled “Chance Encounters” Ms. Miller’s exhibit is composed of paintings that deal with the consequences of chance events on life. She writes: *My art embodies the struggle to resolve the irrepressible consequences of chance events. Most of us live under an assumption that we can control our lives and environment, but random events, accidents, politics, or weather frequently cre-*

ate experiences beyond our control. Using a variety of techniques, such as layering, scraping, and brushing paint, I explore color and subtle shape variations. As I work, I am drawn in by the play of paint, texture, rhythm, color, and form. I usually draw upon my internal images of nature and landscape as inspiration, rather than reference to specific places or events. I try to encompass the looseness and happenstances

of nature through the intuitive processes I impose on the painting. My intent is to gain control of the arbitrary in order to create a purposeful mood of contemplation and sense of beauty. ¶ Unlike many artists, I have not been scribbling and drawing since childhood with a repressed yearning to be an artist. Rather, I discovered that my love of color and of

nature could be satisfied by explorations in paint and abstract forms and that I loved the activity of painting. I began my serious art explorations in 2000, when I retired from my academic professorship in social work and gerontology. I began identifying artists whose work I admired, such as the abstract expressionists Helen Frankenthaler, Jackson Pollock, and Vasili Kadinsky; and practiced techniques related to their works. In addition, I have taken art classes at the Art Institute of Chicago and the Old Town Art Center. I have studied privately with Owen McHugh, a Chicago artist and Columbia College retired professor of Art I explored a wide variety of approaches and enjoy the learning process—the challenge of continued experimentations of style and themes. I also enjoy the interplay between intuitive artistic play and analytic reflection on what I am painting. ¶ Ms. Miller’s paintings will be installed on January 23, and the formal opening will be held on February 15 from 2:00 to 5:00 p.m. in the Triangle Center, 1763 N. North Park. Refreshments will be served, and everyone is invited. ¶

JANUARY 23

chance encounters

Baila Miller



MARCH 14

gelatin silver prints

Jon W. Balke

Jon is a retired public school administrator by profession and a fine art photographer by volition. He graduated from North Central College in Naperville in 1969 with a degree in biology. He subsequently earned advanced degrees in Administration and Supervision from Roosevelt University and Illinois State University. He retired from education as the Assistant Superintendent for Curriculum and Instruction in Plainfield School District #202. ¶ A self-taught photographer, Balke has been photographing nature for more than forty years. His environmental studies are created with a large format view camera and printed using the traditional gelatin silver process. Balke’s prints capture the world with unique lighting and spatial relationships, which add to their timeless appeal. He studied darkroom techniques with Ansel Adams and photographic composition with Willard Clay. He is currently teaching black and white photography at the Morton Arboretum in Lisle. In addition to his environmental studies, Balke has also provided photographic content for

some fifteen different books authored by Carol and Don Raycraft. ¶ Jon Balke’s prints have been exhibited in shows at Western Illinois university, North Central College, the Illinois State Museum, the Mclean County Art Center in Bloomington, IL, the Teachers’ Retirement System Building in Springfield, IL, the Spiva Art Center of Joplin, Mo, the Ray Drew Gallery in Stockton, CA, the Anderson Art Center in Kenosha, WI, and many other museums and galleries nationwide. His college and university exhibitions include North Central College, Wheaton College, the University of St. Francis, Lewis University, Lawrence University, and Governor’s State University. He has exhibited in libraries, banks and corporate offices throughout the Chicago area, as well as in shows with the Chicago

Society of Artists. Jon’s prints are sought after by many private collectors and are part of many permanent corporate collections. ¶ Balke serves as President of the Chicago Society of Artists, Inc. He is also involved with the Chicago Artists Coalition. ¶ The Jon Balke exhibit will be installed on March 6, 2009, and the formal reception will be held on March 15 from 2:00 to 5:00 p.m. in the Triangle Gallery, 1763 N. North Park. Refreshments will be served and everyone is invited. ¶



JOIN US FOR THE

Big TOWN TRIANGLE ASSOCIATION Event



The Annual Meeting and Election of Officers

Veal Meat Balls
Pork Tenderloin
Assorted Pierogis:
Meat, Cheese, Spinach
Fresh Vegetables
Caesar Salad
Fresh Fruit
Brownies
Apple Slices

T H U R S D A Y
J A N U A R Y 2 2
2 0 0 9

6 : 3 0 T O
8 : 3 0 P M

Shake the
winter doldrums
warm up with
friends and neighbors
Celebrate two inaugurals:
the 44th President
of the United States
and The 55th
OTTA Board

TRIANGLE CENTER



1763 N. NORTH PARK

DON'T MISS

it!



holiday party



Sounds of Sweetness
home made cookie exchange
food bank
friends and neighbors
holiday tattoos
refreshments

photos by Michael Warnick



The accolades just keep coming for Old Town's favorite new restaurant. Tribune restaurant critic, **Phil Vetell**, named **Perennial**, one of his top ten new restaurants of the year 2008. He singled out chef de cuisine **Ryan Poli** for special praise, and named his pork belly dish one of the best in Chicago. If you haven't been, you are missing a real dining experience.

Kudos also to **Landmark**, another restaurant in the Boka group, just outside Old Town. Located across the street from the Steppenwolf Theater on Halsted, right off North Avenue, the place is a real gem. Although it's been open for more than a year, we visited the place for the first time over the holidays, and we were blown away. If you like the simple pleasure of a great hamburger, a pork chop big enough for two and grilled to perfection, and a steak that brings a smile to your face (if you are a carnivore), Landmark is your place. They serve the best mac 'n cheese I've ever eaten—also in Paul Bunyan-like portions, so be prepared to take away doggie bags.

AULD LANG SYNE

We said good-bye to two very special Old Town neighbors in the waning months of 2008: **John Cook** and **Leigh Sills**. John left us on October 4, 2008. He was 86. For those of you who might not recognize his name, **John** was one of the community's longest and most devoted advocates. He came to the neighborhood in 1948, the year the Triangle Association came into being as an adjunct of the old civilian defense organization. He joined the group of artists, writers, and young professionals who sought to transform an area that had been down on its luck since the days Great Depression. A native of Oak Park, Mr. Cook attended St. Edmund's Grammar School and later graduated from Fenwick High School. He was a University of Chicago undergraduate when he enlisted in WWII. After serving four years with the Medical Corps, he returned to the University of Chicago where he received a law degree.

He was attending a friend's party in Chicago when a classmate from his grammar school days walked it. That was it for both of them. Within a year, John Cook and Barbara Humes were married and moved to Old Town. Among their homes was one at 1716 Crilly Court in the mid-fifties, when Edgar Crilly was in the process of renovating the houses and trying to attract young married couples back to the area. The Cooks followed Kappy and Alexander Maley (who signed a lease on the house in 1937), and joined neighbors Ted Ericson, the O'Tooles (1706), the Spencers (1708), the Drumms (1710), the Leamingtons (1712) and the Washburnes (1720). Though they moved briefly to Oak Park when their son John was in school, they returned to Old Town and settled in at the home on Lincoln where Barbara still lives.

Cook had a busy and colorful career in Chicago. He had a successful law practice focusing on representing family businesses for more than 60 years. In the 1950s, he was an assistant to the City Council Emergency Crime

Commission, the "Big Nine", which investigated the alliance between crime and politics in city government, department by department. In 1952, the Committee demanded income tax data from the city's policemen and submitted the results to the police commissioner.

Locally, John was an officer with the Lincoln Park Conservation Association, and the Old Town Boys and Girls Club (Menomonee Club). He was president of the OTTA in 1958-59, and his wife Barbara chaired the Art Fair for two years. He was passionate about neighborhood preservation and was a key part of the group that worked to achieve landmark status for Old Town. He was also on the board of the Union League Club of Chicago. A devoted churchgoer, he was a lector at both St. Peter's Church and Holy Name Cathedral in Chicago.

His portrait on the program cover of his memorial mass at Holy Name Cathedral says it all: a smiling man with a glass raised to his wife, his community, his legacy, and to life. From all of us, here's to you John. And thank you.

We are indebted to **Richard R. Seidel** for the following information on longtime neighbor **Leigh Sills** (1930-2008) who died in Maryville, Illinois on November 11, 2008. Born in Granite City, Illinois, she received her public school education in Edwardsville, Illinois. Though she later moved to Old Town, she kept her historic home in Edwardsville and returned there frequently. As a member of St. Andrew's Episcopal Church in Edwardsville, she was an integral part of its many activities. She became involved in preservation as a member of the Lusk Memorial Cemetery Association which helped maintain Edwardsville's earliest burial grounds. An interest in genealogy and local history prompted her to join the Edwardsville Historical Association and the Madison County Genealogical Society. She became the family historian traveled throughout the world to meet and befriend members of her extended Richards and Sills families. The information she gathered from them was placed in a monumental family archive which she compiled and organized.

Leigh attended William Woods College in Fulton, Missouri for two years; then moved on to the University of South California where she received a degree in business administration. Leigh led a very interesting life. She did a stint with the entertainment arm of the U. S. Army in Korea for several years in the late 1950s. She was a student traveler in Europe for a time; and in the early 1960s, she became a systems analyst and programmer for Honeywell. It was during this period that she purchased her home on Concord Street in Old Town.

Leigh continued to be an active member of the Episcopal Church. She joined St. Chrysostom's in Chicago and served the church in many capacities: President of the Diocesan Episcopal Churchwomen, the Archives Committee for the Episcopal Diocese of Chicago, Episcopal Charities, and the Episcopal Women's History Project. She was on the Women's Board of Seabury-Western Theological Seminary in Evanston, Illinois.

Her commitment to civic responsibility prompted her to join the Old Town Triangle Association where, along with Bill Hyer, Amy Forkert, and Diane Gonzalez, she became a tireless worker in the crusade to have Old Town designated an historic district by the Chicago Landmarks Commission. She also played a key role in gathering and cataloguing information on most of the neighborhood houses in order to have them listed on the National Register of Historic Places.

Another of her many interests was prison reform and ministries to women in prison. She was a member of an ecumenical team of women who made regular visits to women prisoners at the Dwight Correctional facility and served on the

Advisory Board of Grace House, Chicago, a half-way home for women ex-convicts.

But her energy and imagination were bigger even than all of these activities. In her spare time, she joined the Chicago Map Society, the History of Cartography Project at the University of Wisconsin, and the Daughters of the American Revolution. Staggering, but that was Leigh.

With the passing of John and Leigh, Old Town has lost two of its best and brightest. We remember and thank them for all that they gave and all that they left us.

What we do for ourselves dies with us. What we do for others remains and is immortal. T

Old Town Triangle Association Annual Meeting and Election of Officers Thursday, January 22, 6:30 – 8:30 p.m. Old Town Triangle Center See details on page 4



*Each evening, from December to December,
Before you drift to sleep upon your cot,
Think back on all the tales that you remember
Of Camelot.*

It happens every December. As we face the *tabula rasa* before us, we take a last look back at the sad, the good, the bad, and the ugly of the year that was. We will remember:

THE SAD

The golden boys and girls who, in one way or another, touched our lives: Michael DeBakey, Cyd Charisse, Jesse Helms, Paul Scofield, Tim Russert, Bernie Mac, Yves Saint Laurent, Charlton Heston, Heath Ledger, Studs Terkel, Michael Crichton, Odetta, Tony Snow, Paul Newman, Aleksandr Solzhenitsyn, Isaac Hayes, Robert Rauschenberg, Edmund Hillary, Bo Diddley, Eartha Kitt, Harold Pinter, Bobby Fischer, Margaret Truman, William F. Buckley, Arthur Clarke, George Carlin, Suzanne Pleshette, Roy Scheider, Richard Widmark, Sidney Pollack, Jim McKay, Randy Pausch, Tony Hillerman and so many more. We will miss you.

THE GOOD

- The excitement and turmoil of the long presidential campaign that ended on a chilly November night in Grant Park when a young Chicago senator became the first African American President of the United States. We watched the tear-streaked faces of those who saw Barack Obama and his family take the stage to announce that “Change had come to America.” Perhaps we shed a tear or two as well.
- The exuberance of an invigorated voting population: young and old, majority and minority, seasoned participants and

first-time voters who turned out in record numbers to let their voices be heard

- The feats of a young man from Maryland who epitomized the American spirit at the Beijing Olympics and did what no one had ever done before: he won eight gold medals
- The bravery and indomitable spirit of an iconic senator from Massachusetts who returned to the U. S. Senate this past January for his last hurrah following surgery for a brain tumor

THE BAD

- Soaring gas prices
- A plunging the stock market and the onset of an economic crisis that brought about the failure of many of our seemingly invulnerable financial institutions
- The downward spiral of an automobile industry that once dominated the world
- Massive layoffs and unemployment unparalleled since the Great Depression
- A national debt that exceeded one trillion dollars.

THE UGLY

- The indignity of a governor accused of engaging in “pay for play” and defying calls for his resignation
- The spectacle of his “unwanted” appointee appearing before the Senate security guard and demanding admittance. Both should have been ashamed of themselves. Neither was.

AND A LITTLE APPLAUSE

Finally, we put our hands together for some extraordinary artists who were honored in December at the Kennedy Center for their contributions to American culture

→p8



- For George Jones, said to possess the greatest singing voice in country music
- For Twyla Tharp, one of the most highly regarded choreographers of our time
- For Peter Townshend and Roger Daltry stars of The Who, one of the greatest and loudest rock bands ever
- For Morgan Freeman, a trail-blazing actor and academy-award winner whose performances in such unforgettable films as “Driving Miss Daisy” and the “Shawshank Redemption” have engraved themselves in our collective consciousness
- And for Barbra Streisand, everyone’s favorite “Funny Girl” who sang her way into our hearts some 40 years ago and never left.

The honorees watched visuals of their past achievements flash across the screen and heard younger artists perform the works that made them famous, happily retracing their journeys: Jones, clapping while Randy Travis and Garth Brooks twanged their guitars to his best-known lyrics; Freeman, accepting the accolades of Clint Eastwood, Denzel Washington and blues greats Koko Taylor, Pinetop Perkins, and B. B. King; Daltry and Townshend rocking as Jack Black declared their music a collection of (expletive)-kicking songs, the likes of which will never be heard again; and Tharp whom

Lily Tomlin praised as “a woman who could watch the Beach Boys and create a ballet.”

Only Streisand seemed wistful when Beyonce Knowles rose from the stage floor to sing “The Way We Were”. Was she thinking of the scene when she pushed aside Robert Redford’s blonde locks and sang to him, “misty water-colored memories of the way we were?” Was she acknowledging that they are both much older now; that Redford’s matinee-idol looks are gone and that “only in the corners of her mind” could she still deliver those lovely, sustained notes?

Not to worry, Barbra. We will remember you all for the way you were and the way you are. And we thank you for sharing your remarkable gifts with us.

Time now to close the books on 2008. It was, indeed, a tumultuous year, and most of us are happy to enter a new era of change and hope. Will it be a good time, a revolutionary time? We shall see.

If there is any one period one would desire to be born in, is it not the age of Revolution—when the old and the new stand side by side and admit of being compared; when the energies of all men are searched by fear and by hope; when the historic glories of the old can be compensated by the rich possibilities of the new era. This time, like all times, is a very good one, if we but know what to do with it.

RALPH WALDO EMERSON 