



## MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT



Footprints from OTTA's Past! I am re-presenting a column that was printed in VOL 3, NO.1 from the January-February 1964 Old Town Newsletter. It was titled—An Orchid to Jessie Blouke. The history this article provides is most instructive.

"This column represents a belated bow of salutation and recognition to the very many dedicated individuals who both pioneered and

labored hard and long to make the Old Town Triangle what it is today". Our very first special orchid goes to Mrs. Jessie Blouke, 1810 N. Orleans St.

In 1941, when Jessie and Pierre Blouke moved into 1810 with one child, the entire area was a virtual slum, due for land clearance at some nebulous future date. Taking their courage and pocketbook in hand, they dared to modernize and deconvert 1810 into a single-family dwelling. 1944 now saw 3 children in the family, and the first neighborhood cooperative play area in their front yard—organized with 10 other families. Two national magazines thought enough of this effort to write it up.... the play area was the direct precursor of the Menomonee Club, first germinated in 1945. The Blouke's roots were down deep in the area by now (4 children in the family) and things were starting to change for the better.

As one of the founding "Mothers" of the OTTA, Jessie Blouke devoted "blood, sweat and tears" to making it both feasible and workable. Because of her devotion to duty, she was also made Director of the Menomonee Club in 1949.

Jessie was one of the very first pioneer-founders of the Old Town Art Fair in 1950—which started off merely as a neighborhood get-together, with everyone invited to participate in showing their amateur or professional skills in a wide gamut of creative effort. She also served as Chairman and

Co-Chairman of the Art Fair. The YWCA nominated Jessie as Volunteer-of-the Year in 1954; she was one of 6 finalists at the State Street Council Awards.

Finding spare time palling, Jessie in succeeding years managed to run a busy household and serve as: Chairman of NCCJ (National Council for Community and Justice) Brotherhood Week; member of Board of Metropolitan YWCA; committee member at Parker School, Menomonee Boy's Club and the Triangle Association; member of the Governing Committee for the Lincoln Senior Center; organizer for "Inurbia Tour" for Francis W Parker; member of the OTTA Board of Directors; member of the Executive Committee Women's Board of Parker School; member Board Director Lincoln Park Zoological Society and serving member of the Community Board of the Joint Youth Development.

Space prohibits the inclusion of many other activities...all of which kind of leaves one rather breathless. And today—ask a volunteer to work on a necessary neighborhood project...ask for a chairman for a needed committee---and you are never turned down by Jessie Blouke, who carries a volunteer work schedule that would stagger most people!"

It is on the shoulders of founders like Jessie Blouke we do our best to continue the magnificent history of our beloved OTTA and its neighborhood involvement. We always have room for more volunteers. Please encourage your friends and neighbors to join the OTTA—we need everyone's help in maintaining the vibrancy of our beloved neighborhood association.

**Karen Pfendler**  
President, OTTA



## TREASURER'S REPORT | Fiscal Year Ending July 31, 2019 | By Ed Sokolofski, OTTA Treasurer

The Old Town Triangle Association achieved another successful result for the fiscal year ending July 31, 2019. The Art Fair remains the Association's major income producing asset. Every revenue stream (Art Fair, First Sight, art class tuition, member dues) met or exceeded budget. Expenses were as budgeted with the exception of costs related to the physical plant (condominium) and legal fees. Our fiscal performance allows us to make significant contributions to our neighborhood organizations and to improve and maintain our special landmark

neighborhood. Our financial performance could not have been achieved without the tireless effort and dedication of our volunteers and office staff.

### Art Fair Performance

Total Art Fair revenue was \$453,018 vs. \$423,900 budgeted (F2018 was \$398,000). This remarkable performance was achieved in spite of poor weather on Sunday. Art Fair expenses were \$113,610 vs. \$112,900 budgeted resulting in an operating income

of \$339,408. Likewise, First Sight income of \$29,526 exceeded budget while expenses of \$9,783 were under budget resulting in an operating income of \$19,743. All Art Fair/First Sight income streams (gates, booth fees, etc.) met or exceeded budget. The Association's significant operating allows it to continue its charitable and educational missions while maintaining and its facilities and the landmark neighborhood. Almost 40% of Art Fair gross revenues are returned to the community.

*(CONTINUED ON PAGE 2)*

### Association Expenses and Net Income

Association expenses were on or near budget with two exceptions: Occupancy Expenses and Legal Fees. Occupancy expenses were \$17,287 over budget due to \$6,166 of additional maintenance costs and \$10,253 required to replenish the condominium reserves. Legal expenses were over budget \$55,196 (original budget \$5,000). The majority of the excess was related to legal efforts to defend landmark/building issues.

The original 2019 operating budget reflected a balanced budget. The final net operating loss of \$39,255 reduced the Association's cash position by that amount.

### Balance sheet

The Association's Balance Sheet remains substantial with cash or cash equivalents of over \$735,000 at fiscal year-end. This reserve is sufficient to allow the Association to continue operating on an ongoing basis and fulfill its mission and weather unexpected financial

events. Sufficient funds are available to fund the approved and much anticipated facility light project in Fiscal 2020 (\$40,000).

### 2020 Outlook

The Association's Fiscal 2020 Budget has been and approved and incomes and expenses are in balance. The projections are reasonable and in line with historical performance. With the continued thankless and amazing efforts of our volunteers, staff and neighbors, Fiscal 2020 will be another excellent year.

## COMMITTEE NEWS | Compiled by Michael Warnick

### OLD TOWN ART FAIR COMMITTEE | Art Fair Wrap Up | Sasha Mayoras, 2020 OTAF Chair

This year's Old Town Art Fair was one of the most successful in its 70-year history raising record amounts of money, much of which will be invested back into the local community. In spite of rain on Sunday, 2019 produced the highest gross revenue on record at \$455,185 and the second-highest net income of \$335,698 --a whopping 8% above goal! The 2019 "Friends of the Fair" solicitation, one of several components of the OTAF's financial success, was the 2nd highest donation amount since 2001 at \$18,995—thank you, neighbors, for again being so generous!!!!

The annual "First Sight" kick-off party, was again essential to the success of the Old Town Art Fair. For the second year in a row, the fundraiser returned to A New Leaf's fabulous event space and was not only a roaring good time, but also a financial boon. This party could not occur if not for the many generous sponsors, donors, guests, as well as the talented First Sight Committee who once again secured many very compelling auction items. This year's First Sight surpassed its goal by 31%, with net earnings of \$19,743, placing it as the third most profitable First Sight party, behind last year (\$23,035) and 2013 (\$21,255).

While most of the income comes from advertising, sponsors, donations, and fees, the money would not be raised without hundreds of hard-working volunteers managing and working every aspect of the Fair. Volunteers like the ones on the Exhibitors Committee manage all aspects of the artists' participation, from the application and jury process through

exhibiting, awards, and breakdown. The Gates Committee works hard to engage visitors to explain the importance of their donations, often needing to educate them on how the money funds grants for social services and neighborhood improvement projects. The Artist Breakfast's team solicits in-kind contributions from local stores and restaurants, enabling its members to feed as many as 800 people over two days. During set-up, the Equipment Committee oversees the work of placing heavy barricades, tables, and signs around the Fair and gathers them back up again when artists leave. The Traffic Committee efficiently maneuvers hundreds of oversized vehicles thru narrow streets, so 250 artists can assemble and disassemble as many booths within just a few hours. The tiny Entertainment Committee finds and books crowd-pleasing talent for hours and hours of fun on the Fair's two stages. Booth Sitting's 40+ volunteers see to it that scores of artists can take well-deserved breaks and not miss essential sales. Artists' Aid fans out across the fair each day and delivers pleasing snacks and eliciting happy smiles. The Merchandise Team designs and sells a wide variety of stylish t-shirts, fun hats, useful tote bags, and other themed merchandise. The Garden Walk Committee somehow secures the participation of 50+ neighborhood plots that add another appealing facet to our Fair. The talented Photography Committee captures images that depict the broad range of art available at the OTAF, as well as shots of all the fun visitors, have there. Security & Grounds team has the unenviable task of overseeing the filling of potholes, cutting of tree limbs, and makes sure



the show's many security guards are in place and alert the whole weekend. And finally, the Thank You Party team throws a 300-person dinner on a small budget, but with tons of delicious food, fun cocktails, lively music--to thank the Art Fair's hundreds of volunteers for their hard work.

So much of the success of the 2019 Art Fair is because its chair, Lynn Smith, who worked tirelessly to make it so. Lynn is incredibly smart, detail-oriented and humble--she credits her success to the fact that she was well-trained after serving as Vice-Chair under Vi Daley in 2016 and as Co-Chair with Vi in 2017 and 2018. Those who know Lynn well will find it unsurprising that when she was Vice-Chair, Co-Chair and/or Chair, the OTAF had three of its most profitable Fairs: 2016 (\$353,617), 2019 (\$335,698), and 2017 (\$335,265)--foul weather was the reason 2018 wasn't a smashing success. Lynn's can-do attitude and great sense of humor are going to be sorely missed by the 2020 OTAF team!



**GRANTS COMMITTEE** | Diane Gonzalez

The mission of the Grants Committee is to oversee and administer the Grant Program that the Old Town Triangle Association offers to schools and organizations that serve our community and support the stated mission and goals of the Old Town Triangle Association.

In May, the Grants Committee voted to approve 17 applicants for a total of \$53,000 in grants. The Board approved the committee recommendations.

Choosing recipients and amounts is very challenging as every applicant presented a worthy cause and a need for grant money. The requests totaled over \$76,000 this year.

New recipients for 2019 are A Red Orchid Theater, Giordano Dance and Menomonee Judo Club. Returning recipients include Art on

Sedgwick, OTTA's Boy Scout Troop 79, Chicago Sculpture Exhibit, Deborah's Place and Green City Market Club Sprouts program for kids. Also included are LaSalle Language Academy's World Language Department and their Fine Arts program, Lincoln Park High School's Athletics Booster Club and their Instrumental Music Program. Rounding out the list are Lincoln Park Community Research Initiative, The Village Chicago, Lincoln Park Zoo, Midwest Buddhist Temple and Near North Library. Recipients received their checks at the Art Fair Thank You Party on June 14th.

A special thanks to the Grants Committee who worked diligently and gave up many evenings to hear and discuss the presentations before determining request amounts. This year's committee consisted of Robert Jones, Chair,

Dee DeCarlo, Darlene Fahrenkrog, Joyce Freeman, Rick Rausch, Mary Ann Weprin, Stefani Turken and Diane Gonzalez.



Grant awards were presented at the Art Fair Thank You Party.

**OTTA PRESENTS**  
**Oktoberfest**  
**Saturday,**  
**September 21<sup>st</sup> | 5 - 8 pm**  
**FOOD, BEER, LIVE MUSIC,**  
**GAMES, BOUNCY HOUSE,**  
**MENOMONEE CLUB GAME ROOM**  
**PLEASE BRING A DESSERT**  
**TO SHARE!**



**Help us plan by registering  
online or in person.**

[www.oldtowntriangle.com](http://www.oldtowntriangle.com)  
Old Town Triangle Center | 1763 N. North Park

**CALENDAR | SEPTEMBER - NOVEMBER**

**SEPTEMBER**

**SUNDAY, SEPTEMBER 8TH, 2 - 5 P.M.**  
GALLERY RECEPTION: INSTRUCTORS SHOW  
EXHIBITION THROUGH SEPTEMBER 26TH

**TUESDAY, SEPTEMBER 10TH, 7 P.M.**  
BOARD MEETING

**THURSDAY, SEPTEMBER 12TH, 6 P.M.**  
CAPS

**MONDAY, SEPTEMBER 16TH, 7 P.M.**  
NEIGHBORHOOD IMPROVEMENT COMMITTEE

**SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 21ST, 5 - 8 P.M.**  
OKTOBERFEST

**OCTOBER**

**WEDNESDAY, OCTOBER 2ND, 7:15 P.M.**  
MEMBERSHIP COMMITTEE

**SUNDAY, OCTOBER 3RD, 2 - 5 P.M.**  
GALLERY RECEPTION: FAITH HUMPHREY HILL  
EXHIBITION: SEPTEMBER 27TH - OCTOBER 24TH

**SUNDAY, OCTOBER 13TH**  
BANK OF AMERICA CHICAGO MARATHON

**TUESDAY, OCTOBER 15TH, 7 P.M.**  
BOARD MEETING

**MONDAY, OCTOBER 21ST, 7 P.M.**  
NEIGHBORHOOD IMPROVEMENT COMMITTEE

**SATURDAY, OCTOBER 26TH**  
SPOOKY ZOO SPECTACULAR

**NOVEMBER**

**SUNDAY, NOVEMBER 3RD**  
DAYLIGHT SAVING TIME ENDS

**WEDNESDAY, NOVEMBER 6TH, 7:15 P.M.**  
MEMBERSHIP COMMITTEE

**MONDAY, NOVEMBER 11TH**  
VETERANS DAY

**TUESDAY, NOVEMBER 12TH, 7 P.M.**  
BOARD MEETING

**THURSDAY, NOVEMBER 14TH, 6 P.M.**  
CAPS

**MONDAY, NOVEMBER 18TH, 7 P.M.**  
NEIGHBORHOOD IMPROVEMENT COMMITTEE

## PHOTO GALLERY | It was an Art Faire Extraordinaire

Photos by Michael Warnick, Ann Tuite, Ann Holmberg, Martha Connolly, Arthur Herbst, Lisa Cavaluzzi, Fernando Velasquez ,  
Tan Chen, Tiffany Tavalino, Emma Rahme, and Michael Garzel.





Take another walk through the streets of Old Town and remember what a good time we had June 8 and 9 in the midst of art, food, music, gardens and summer fun.

## NEIGHBORHOOD SPOTLIGHT | LaSalle Playground Update | By Paul Gustafson

LaSalle Language Academy's playground construction project work has gone well and has finally entered the home stretch 45 days ahead of the original proposed Chicago Public Schools (CPS) schedule. Over the past three months the concrete was poured, the field substructure and drainage was completed and the playground was assembled. The playground and asphalt part of the project is mostly completed to the point that the installed turf field portion will allow the school children to have access for recess and a place to line up before school begins each day. What will be missing is the running track and the specific striping needed for the turf field and part of the asphalt. That will be completed post the community movie night in early September.

After that stage, part of the turf field will be fenced off again to allow for the installation of the rubber track which will need to set



**LEFT PHOTO:** LaSalle Language Academy's new playground turf field. **RIGHT PHOTO:** The newly installed playground equipment.



for about 4 to 5 weeks. The playground and asphalt area will still be accessible for the community to use after school hours. Net net, all is opened for the first day of school followed by formal completion by early October. A formal ribbon cutting ceremony will be determined in the coming weeks...stay tuned. Feel free to

stop by the school to see the progress.

Thank you to OTTA for your continued partnership. If you have any questions or need further information don't hesitate to contact LaSalle Language Academy at (773)534-8470 or [www.lasallechicago.com](http://www.lasallechicago.com).

## HISTORY OF OLD TOWN | Joseph Kasper, Jeweler and Ghost? | By Diane Gonzalez

Bohemian-born in 1852, Joseph Kasper learned the watch making trade as a young boy. His family immigrated to Owatonna, Minnesota when Kasper was age twelve, and in the 1880's Kasper found his way to Chicago where he became a lucrative jeweler. He partnered with J.B. Chambers & Co, then C.B. Shourds, and finally co-owned Kasper & Barnes. Kasper, once estimated to own about \$100,000 worth of real estate, traveled to back and forth to Europe to purchase diamonds and other gems.

But Kasper's life took a rough turn shortly after his wife Bella died in 1895. Kasper, residing at today's 172 Eugenie Street was left with his two young sons and began to experience financial losses. Kasper & Barnes closed temporarily in 1895 due to "dull business and overbuying." They found creditors and reopened. An 1895 a newspaper ad requested "ten bright and good-looking women to sell jewelry from Monday morning to Christmas Eve" at Kasper & Barnes. Salary was \$20 for ten days, and applicants were to apply at 7:30 a.m. to Joseph Kasper. But the upturn was short-lived, business folded and Kasper lost everything. Kasper tried to broker a private jewelry deal, but the client charged Kasper with larceny and he was arrested at Koenigsberg's Tavern at Wells and Eugenie Streets on December 30, 1898.

Koenigsberg when asked, would not provide the \$50 bail, so Kasper and the officers walked down the block to his friend Henry Piper at Piper's Bakery who ran a successful baking operation at today's 1610 N. Wells Street. Piper also declined, but he asked that bond be withheld until morning when he felt he could help. The officers refused. Kasper, who was awaiting word in Piper's private office, overheard the reply, he drew a revolver from his pocket and shot himself in the head. The coroner's report attributed Kasper's tragic suicide to temporary insanity.

Kasper, age 46, was buried in Graceland beside his late wife. Sixteen years later Piper died at age 73. Coincidentally the men lie within walking distance of each other in Graceland today.

**Note:** After 1962 That Steak Joynt Restaurant took over the Piper's Bakery building. It was rumored that the restaurant known for its eclectic décor was supposedly haunted. Owner Billy Siegel permitted paranormal experts to film the interior after hours. His ghostbusters determined that there was paranormal activity on the infrared film. After That Steak Joynt closed and its artifacts were sold off, Adobo Grill moved in the building. Reports of paranormal activity ceased. The building has since

suffered a terrible fire. Was is a grease fire or did Joseph Kasper have a final word?



Joseph Kasper (from The Handbook of Chicago Biography)



Kasper monument in Graceland Cemetery sits very close to where Henry Piper was buried. (Photo by Diane Gonzalez)



ST. MICHAEL IN OLD TOWN ([www.st-mikes.org/](http://www.st-mikes.org/)) is hosting three special events this fall.

On **September 26th**, **A Survivor's Story** is from 7:00pm to 8:00pm in The Parish Center Café. The Community Against Trafficking presents the story of Kandi, a survivor of the world of sex trafficking. Kandi is now the Project Manager for Project Beacon, a DOJ Initiative.

On **September 28th**, **A Dreamers Workshop** is from 10:30am – 12:30pm in the Parish Center Café. Explore the symbolic language of dreams, discover how to dream more and recall your dreams. For more information and to register email [susan@sacredsoulfood.com](mailto:susan@sacredsoulfood.com). There is a \$15 suggested donation for this event.

On **October 18th**, **Celebrate the Steeple Gala** starts at 6:00pm at the Union League Club. Enjoy an evening of fun with cocktail hour, dinner, dancing, and silent and live auctions to help support the maintenance effort at St. Michael in Old Town. Contact Toni at 312-642-2498 or email [tdunning@st-mikes.org](mailto:tdunning@st-mikes.org) to donate an auction item, or to make your reservation!



Menomonee's Fall Session is upon us! Join us for some of our fall programs! **Fall 2019 Session** begins **September 9th** and runs through **December 8th, 2019**. We offer art and creative programs

including: art, chess, cooking, "Fun Club," music lessons (piano & voice), and theater. Sports programs include: basketball, fencing, indoor soccer, judo, "RetroActive Sports" rhythmic gymnastics, Skip & Scoot (kids fitness adventures), taekwondo, and tumbling.

Menomonee Club is involved with many partner programs including: 3 Point Athletics, Chicago Fit Performance, Emerald City Theatre, GCE Lab School, First Class Hoops, Little Kickers, Lil' Sluggers, and Shirley Ryan Ability Lab.

To sign-up for classes, visit our website at [www.menomoneeclub.org](http://www.menomoneeclub.org) or give us a call at: (312) 664-4631. Classes take place at The Menomonee Club – Drucker Center, 1535 N. Dayton St. in Lincoln Park or at The Menomonee Clubhouse, 244 W. Willow St. in Old Town. Judo classes are at the Triangle.

If your child goes to LaSalle Language Academy, Menomonee offers a walk-over service to The Clubhouse, where we have a supervised game room from 2:30-6:00pm Mon-Fri. We hope to see you this fall!



**Save-the-date for A (Mostly) Veggie Affair**  
Mark your calendar for Thursday, **November 7th** to join us for the city's best fall food event, A (Mostly) Veggie Affair! Early bird tickets go on sale on Monday, September 9th.

The fundraiser at Lakeshore Beverage features 25 chefs, brewers and mixologists. Visit [www.greencitymarket.org](http://www.greencitymarket.org) to purchase tickets.



**THE VILLAGE CHICAGO** (<https://www.thevillagechicago.org/>) Join us for our fall program **The New Age of Dying and Death: Fifty Years After Kubler-Ross** on Monday, September 23. Registration is 5:30pm followed by the program from 6:00pm to 7:00pm at Advocate Illinois Masonic, Olson Auditorium, 836 W Wellington Avenue. The program is FREE. RSVP online at [www.thevillagechicago.org](http://www.thevillagechicago.org) or at [info@thevillagechicago.org](mailto:info@thevillagechicago.org) or call 773-248-8700.

In her 1969 book, *On Death and Dying*, Elisabeth Kubler-Ross revealed the widespread denial of death and lack of understanding of the dying process in America. While we are benefitting by living longer, even with serious chronic illnesses, we face more ethical and personal questions about dying and death. A panel will discuss some of the critical end-of-life issues experienced by individuals, family, loved ones, care receivers, and care providers. Panel includes Loretta Downs - Founder, Chrysalis End-of-Life Inspirations, Rev. Myron Erickson - Vice President, Mission and Spiritual Care; Kimberly Callinan - Chief Executive Officer Compassion and Choices; and H. Peter Steeves - Professor of Philosophy and Director of the Humanities Center at DePaul University.

## NEWS YOU CAN USE | The Old Town Art Center Fall Classes | By Barbara Guttman

Have you ever wanted to take art classes at the Triangle Center? Did you know most classes always have a few absolute beginners. Check out our exciting fall offerings! We hosted a one-day Drawing Basics workshop in August that sold out and we're offering another Drawing Basics again in October. Whether you are an absolute first-timer or someone who has been away from art classes for a number of years, this is a great way to get started. If you prefer to build up your skills over time, try the Charcoal Drawing class on Tuesday evenings (5 or 10 weeks).

If you are a little further along and ready to get your feet wet in a different media, we offer Oil,

Watercolor, Pastel and Acrylic painting classes. Classes take place days, evenings and week-ends. The Art Center offers shorter workshops periodically (a three-day Oil Painting session in September and another in October). Five-week classes are also available. A figure drawing studio class is happening every Monday from 12:00pm to 3:00pm, drop-ins are welcome.

Everyone needs an outlet – artistic pursuits not only relieve stress and tension, but they are good for the brain! Making art ranks right up there with crossword puzzles and learning a new language – all are activities that strengthen the mind's muscles so "use it or lose it".

Visit the Old Town Triangle website [www.oldtowntriangle.com](http://www.oldtowntriangle.com) or stop by for a current class list. We're happy to help direct you to a class that suits your interest and level of skill.



Drawing Basics workshop conducted by Douglas David was a huge success.



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#### ESTABLISHED IN 1948

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Tuesday through Friday  
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OldTownTriangle



#### 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").

## LESLIE WOLFE GALLERY: SEPTEMBER-OCTOBER

### SEPTEMBER | 2019

#### Old Town Art Center Instructor Show

Exhibiting different styles, medias and concepts, the instructors at the Old Town Art Center offer a wealth of experience to students and gallery attendees. Marie Kirk Burke, Douglas David, Tom Francesconi, Kathie Newman, Joe Taylor and Vivian Visser exhibit their own creations in oil, watercolor, pastel and acrylic.

**Exhibition:** September 6 – September 26

**Reception with the Artists:** Sunday, September 8, 2-5 pm



### OCTOBER | 2019

#### Faith Humphrey Hill | Knit Prints

Integrating drawing and knitting visually, Faith brings together traditional and modern processes when creating her artwork. Her work communicates a sense of unity created by the dance of the familiar and foreign, earthy and electric, real and virtual.

**Exhibition:** September 27 – October 25 | **Reception with the Artist:** Sunday, October 6, 2-4 pm