

# FLORAL PARK

NEIGHBORHOOD GAZETTE

**NUSA  
Neighborhood  
of the Year  
Winner**

**Getting Your House on the  
Historic Register**

**Front Yard Living  
Adirondak Chairs**

**LGBTQ Pride  
Floral Park Legends**

**Floral Park Architecture  
The Depression Years**

*Bells of the El Camino Real*

June issue / 2022

# Letter From The President

by Jeffrey Katz

The 2013 movie, “The Secret Life of Walter Mitty,” tells the story of a timid photograph manager at Life magazine. Walter, who lives life vicariously through daydreams and embarks on a true-life adventure when a negative goes missing. The negative was of a picture taken by Life’s premier photojournalist, Sean O’Connell, which was to appear on the final issue of the magazine.

When Walter finally catches up to Sean, he finds the photographer crouched behind a rock waiting to photograph the elusive snow leopard high in the Himalayas. The leopard is a symbol for those things in life that are beautiful and important but are rarely seen.

Sean describes the snow leopard thus: “Beautiful things don’t ask for attention.” The snow leopard is also a symbol for people, like Walter, who do beautiful things in the world, but often go unsung or unnoticed. The missing negative depicted Walter and the final issue was dedicated to the unnoticed people who made Life magazine.

This past May, Neighborhoods USA announced Floral Park as Neighborhood of the Year for 2021. As with the fictional final issue of Life, this column is dedicated to the people who have made Floral Park a nationally recognized neighborhood. While much credit goes to those directors who served on the FPNA board throughout 2021, I want to acknowledge our unsung heroes, the volunteers who do not ask for attention or demand accolades. They work behind the scenes to help create the magic in our neighborhood.

There are many volunteers that fit this description. It took more than 400 volunteers to make the 2022 Home & Garden Tour and Opening Night successes. I want to shine the spotlight on four neighbors

who symbolize the spirit of volunteerism with the greatest of humility: Richard Terrones (*Greenleaf*), Laz Brio (*Heliotrope*), David Fink (*Heliotrope*) and Paul Miller (*Flower*; not pictured). Never asked, these four men simply appear to set up events long before guests arrive and to clean up long after everyone has gone home. I express my deepest gratitude to them and all the neighbors who routinely step up and take the responsibility of continuing to manifest the magic that was conjured years ago by our progenitors.

I also want to thank the neighbors who helped make the Arts in the Parks (Adirondack Chair exhibit) remarkable: Jeanette Mustafa (*Riverside*), Marc LaFont, Peter Christoffersen (*Heliotrope*) and Gina Chiaramonte (*Greenleaf*).

There is a fascinating detail in Jewish law: A community must provide a poor person not only with the means to live, but also with enough so that he too can give to others. Rationally, this makes no sense. The money will be given to the poor anyway. Why give it to one person to give to another? Psychologically, however, it makes particularly good sense indeed. Giving is an essential part of dignity. It is no less than a human need. That is why even those

who have to receive also have to be able to give. They must be in a position not just to claim their rights, but also to fulfill their duties to others.

The ability to do one’s share is part of an inclusive community. One of the deepest forms of belonging is to be able to look at something and say, “I helped build this.” That is what a duty-based culture gives us. It turns us from paying guests into builders. It sees us as co-creators of the common good.

This year, please consider becoming part of the team that makes Floral Park the best neighborhood in the nation – a neighborhood that is known by its giving culture; not a demanding one.



Pictured from Left to Right: Laz Brio, David Fink and Richard Terrones

**Historic Floral Park: Neighborhoods USA  
2021 Neighborhood of the Year**