



JUST ASKING

BY MARY KLEST

What is your favorite piece of public art in the Barrington area?

I asked syndicated cartoonist Charles Boyce and copywriter Tamara Tabel.

When I inquire about favorite public art pieces, most people pause and then shrug their shoulders. I prompt them by suggesting the sculpture park at the Barrington Area Library, the Memorial statues in downtown Barrington, and the bronze horses at the Arboretum of South Barrington. My asking generated some curiosity. One person said: "Is there any public art?" Another asked: "Do you have a list of where each piece is?" Perhaps it's time to create such a list. I believe this is a case of people not stopping to smell the roses, or in this situation, view the art.



However, Charles Boyce was ready to answer the question. His favorite art piece is in the Memorial Park on Hough Street in Barrington (across from the school, where the United Methodist Church once stood). Titled the "Barrington Fire and Police Memorial," it was created by artist John Ketner. Charles says the bronze statues fill a purpose.

"The theme 'Hero' is still fresh in people's mind. I noticed the work as they were erecting it several years ago. You can't help but think of 9/11," he said. He believes a strong and immediate theme is important for public art.

Tamara Tabel chose the bronze statue of children playing at the entrance to Citizens Park (near the waterfall) in Barrington as her favorite. It is called "Acrobat Kids" and was donated by Citizens for Open Land.

"I love the energy of the piece – it captures the exuberance of children at play. It makes me smile every time I see it to remember my own children when they were younger." She likes the outward pose of the children's' faces. "It reminds me that public art can be intimate. It is created with the idea in mind that it will be shared."

Both Charles and Tamara are members of the Barrington Cultural Commission, an organization formed to position Barrington as a cultural hub. Tamara is also a poet and president of the Barrington Writers Workshop. Charles is retired from the "Chicago Tribune" and a member of the Barrington Cultural Arts Center.

Public art is accessible to all, staged for viewer pleasure. The sculptures at the Barrington Area Library are on temporary loan from area artists so they may vary from year to year. Other art forms have become permanent fixtures in our community landscape. As the seasons change they take on a different look and feel. There is no cost for admission.

Mary Klest is a Barrington-based writer and owner of Klest Communications, a content solutions company. Visit www.maryklest.com. Got a question? Send it to mary@maryklest.com.



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