

# A Prairie Retreat in Chicago's Western Suburbs

Once an open land of prairie and savanna, today Barrington Hills is home to approximately 3,000 residents. Yet it still maintains a rural feel. One family called on Mariani Landscape to remodel its five-acre estate to include more ornamentation and color, while retaining its prairie roots.

Before the renovation, the estate was simply a prairie-style home designed by two students of Frank Lloyd Wright, Fay Jones and Maurice Jennings. The two architects intentionally avoided landscaping, preferring instead to maintain a low profile and accentuate the native flora.

The Mariani team, led by Landscape Architect and Project Director Tony Lobello, re-established a prairie-like meadow on the home's grounds. After several years of

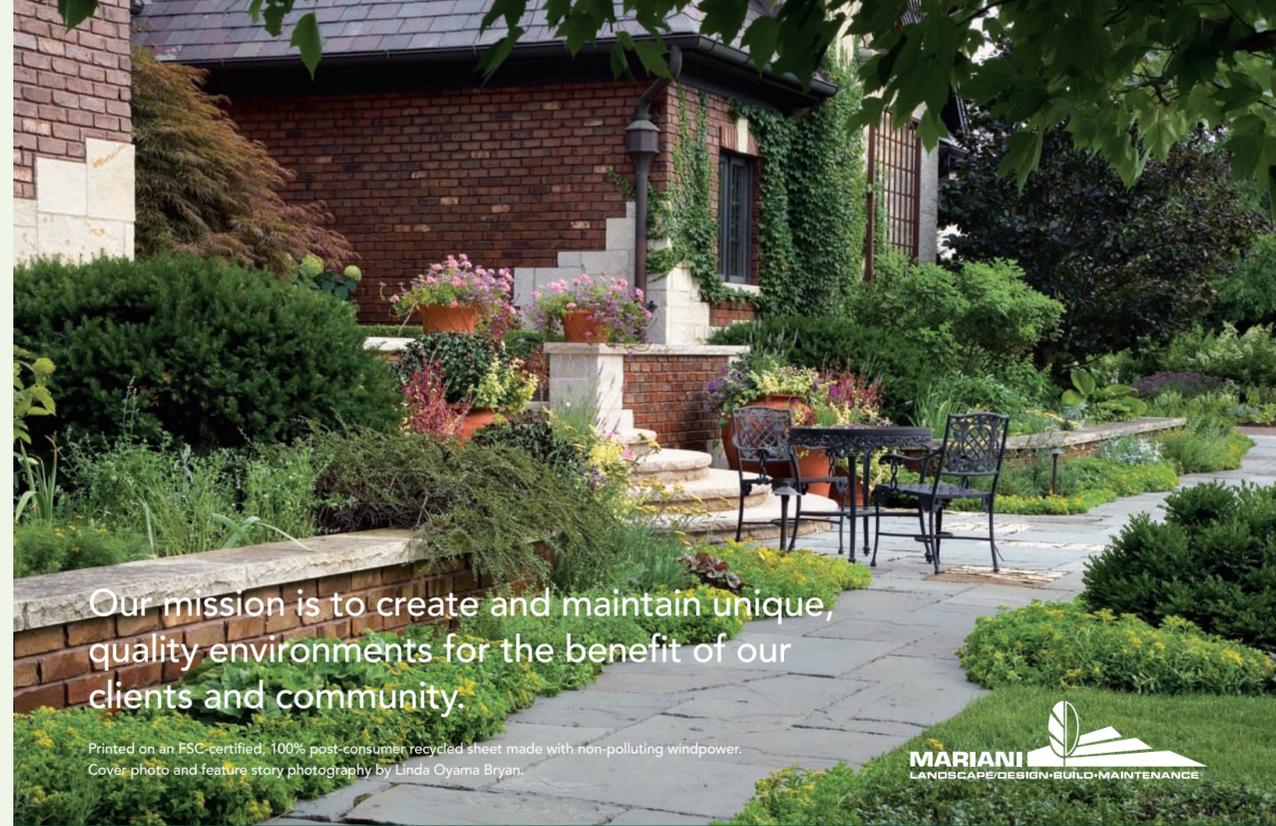
diligent care and five re-seedings, today the property flourishes with native grasses, wildflowers and plants indigenous to Northern Illinois Oak savanna. "All trees are deciduous on a traditional prairie, but the homeowners wanted a few evergreens," says Lobello. "We planted the trees in groves to stand in contrast to the horizontal space."

Containers of annual flowers lend color in spring and fall, while mowed walking paths meander throughout the grounds. Terraced limestone outcroppings and plants, manicured to convey a "grown over" look, provide a transition from hardscape to the landscape. Pedestrian and vehicular bridges add charm to the estate's entryway.

In addition to the natural landscape, the property contains high-end amenities. Mariani carved away nine feet of hillside to

create a pool and waterfall, under which is a hot tub, outdoor bar and fire pit. The pool terrace, constructed of natural stone, lends an exotic yet rugged feel. The home's architectural plan naturally subdivides the site into quadrants; Mariani used these spaces to create garden rooms, including a cutting garden, children's vegetable garden and secret garden.

Mariani's remodeled setting complements the historic and natural context of the home, while offering a livable environment for an active suburban family. The care and sensitivity shown to this unique site earned a Merit Award for Residential Design from the Illinois Chapter of American Society of Landscape Architects (ASLA) as well as a Grand Award for Design and Installation from Professional Landcare Network (PLANET).



Our mission is to create and maintain unique, quality environments for the benefit of our clients and community.

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# Folio

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OUTDOORS COME  
ALIVE IN BURR RIDGE

Mariani creates an impressive space  
for entertaining and family fun

Mariani Landscape:  
A true family business

A prairie restoration project  
in Barrington Hills



## Featured Foliage



**Nemesias** (*Nemesia strumosa*)  
Nemesias are wonderful small-statured plants for spring containers and flower beds. Many varieties are perennials in their native habitat, but in our region they are best considered annuals. The newer hybrids bloom for many months in spring and fall. The most popular varieties are "Bluebird" in medium blue and "Refined Innocence" in pure white, although recently introduced

hybrids are expanding the color range and proving to be equally lovely. The Sunsetia series has the largest flowers and great colors including banana, raspberry and mango. Nemesias are easy to grow, asking only for bright light and average moisture. They combine nicely with pansies in spring planters or as companion bedding plants for bulbs in courtyards, patios or doorway gardens—anywhere that is viewed up close.



**Dear Friends:**

Politics, elections, campaigns—what do these words mean to you? Personally I dread the whole presidential election process, but at the same time am grateful to have the opportunity to participate. It seems the older I get, the more it becomes apparent that life is rarely black and white, right or

wrong, Republican or Democrat. I am not trying to suggest how anyone should cast a vote. My focus is how to best influence my friends and clients to support candidates who have a desire to fix the immigration crisis we are currently facing.

Let me begin with some facts. Mariani Landscape currently employs more than 340 legal associates. We run background checks to ensure our associates are law-abiding citizens. We train extensively so our team can deliver the best products and service year after year. Over the past seven years we have employed hundreds of associates through the U.S. government's H-2B guest worker plan. Our associates select friends and family from their native countries who have the necessary work ethic, and we encourage them to apply for an opportunity to work in the U.S. legally. At Mariani, we do things the way the law dictates because happy, healthy associates lead to satisfied clients.

Most Americans—politicians included—do not realize we have a shortage of legal Americans that want to work in businesses such as Mariani Landscape. The same is true for other trades; consider those who cook food, bus tables, clean dishes and wash cars. Most of these services we could do ourselves if the price became too high. I know the attention we give when hiring our legal employees, and consequently I know how many employers do not share our concern.

Last year the H-2B program granted 66,000 work visas for the entire country; a quota that most likely could not fill the needs of Chicago alone. The 66,000 visas approved for 2008 have already been taken. Furthermore, in past years, program workers beyond the 66,000 cap were granted return visas if they followed the rules; in 2008, this exemption has been discontinued. This change penalizes workers and companies who follow the rules.

At Mariani, we do the best landscaping for the best clients. Chances are no matter how serious the immigration issue becomes, our clients will not elect to plant their own trees or mow their own grass—they will foot the bill. If we do not address supplementing our work force by giving our neighboring countrymen a way to work here legally, costs will continue to rise, and those that play by the rules will not be able to stay competitive.

I have met with presidential candidates from both parties and am participating in the political process with a trip to Washington, D.C. to express my opinions to our senators and congressmen. I encourage everyone I know to study this important issue. The U.S. is the shining star of all countries; please participate in the process and make your vote count.

*Frank Mariani*

Frank Mariani, CEO

**In the News**

**Mariani Gives Back to the Community**

Since its founding in 1958, Mariani Landscape has believed in a strong sense of community. This past fall, Mariani made two major donations to local organizations: Community Representing Our Young Adults (CROYA) and the Liberty Prairie Conservancy.

“At Mariani, we are always honored to help support the outstanding benefits these well-run organizations provide,” says President Fred Wacker.

CROYA provides a supportive environment for youth in grades 7-12 who are residents of Lake Forest, Lake Bluff and Knollwood. CROYA members participate in after-school activities, retreats and service events to develop leadership skills and build confidence. Mariani donated landscape design and installation services in the front of CROYA's new building, located in the Recreation Center at 400 Hastings Road in Lake Forest.

Recently, Mariani donated 18 burr oak trees and supplied labor to clear away invasive species and establish a native oak savanna on a four-acre section of Oak Openings. The 33-acre nature preserve is protected with help from the Liberty Prairie Conservancy, a non-profit organization that preserves open space and restores Lake County's natural areas.

“Not only did Mariani take an unsightly, yet highly visible, area and make it absolutely beautiful, they used the utmost care for the environment in the process,” says Sarah Surroz, Stewardship and Education Coordinator for Liberty Prairie Conservancy. Prior to the restoration, the site had several potholes inhabited by a small population of frogs. Surroz organized a group of children to rescue the frogs before the potholes were graded over. When the children arrived at the preserve, Mariani's crew members worked through their lunch break to help with the amphibian rescue. By considering the preserve's natural environment and showing extra care for its flora and fauna, Mariani helped the conservancy create a beautiful, natural space that is enjoyed by all.

Mariani Landscape mourns the loss of Doug Hills, who passed away January 9, 2008. Doug served as a principal at Mariani since 2005. Prior to joining Mariani, he founded his own landscape architecture firm, Douglas Hills & Associates, and was an employee at the well-known firm of Skidmore, Owings & Merrill. Doug was an award winning landscape architect who possessed a love of nature and strong appreciation for design. He was dearly loved by his family, friends and coworkers and will be greatly missed.



# Burr Ridge Landscape Mirrors Richness of Home

At the end of a cul-de-sac in a small Burr Ridge subdivision, stands a residence that is anything but ordinary. Originally built as a spec home with meager landscaping, Mariani Landscape recreated the outdoor space to match the luxurious details the current owner added to the home.

The homeowners called on Mariani to combine the aesthetic feel of a Euro-style garden with a practical yard suitable for entertaining and family activities. “We started with a truly blank slate,” says landscape architect and project director Tony Lobello. “Since we removed all aspects of the original design, the yard was a true ‘island unto itself.’”

The remodeled landscape meets the needs of the homeowners, an active family with young children. Strategically positioned ever-green trees provide necessary privacy. A raised stone terrace offers entertaining space, and a wisteria-covered pergola constructed from reclaimed barn wood transitions to the yard. A nondescript sloping lawn was leveled to create a sunken garden with angular hedges, gravel pathways, a cutting garden and an illuminated fountain that can be heard from any part of the rear yard.

The original front yard featured a circular driveway that divided the lawn in half. Lobello removed the drive and created a usable yard area suitable for children to play. A colorful front walk and porch establish an elegant yet inviting approach, while affording adequate privacy for a café table and chairs.

“We consider every detail in the design process,” says Lobello. “The landscape had to reflect the richness of the house.” Weathered stone and brick match the vintage materials employed in the home's construction. A European style iron deck replaced the original wooden structure to play off the home's opulent copper façade.



## Exterior Design Event Showcases Outdoor Furniture

More than 5,000 retailers from across the country and abroad attended the Exterior Design Showcase for Casual Furniture, presented by *Garden Design* magazine and The Merchandise Mart on September 17-21, 2007. Mariani Landscape returned as one of the few designers, landscape architects and manufacturers to feature a display furniture vignette.



This year's theme was “Entertaining Alfresco.” Mariani's Shannon Mitchell worked directly with furniture manufacturer Barlow Tyrie to provide a vignette with a waterfront entertaining theme. The display featured the Dune Daybed with Ottoman and included a teal backdrop set against palms, yucca and bamboo. *Garden Design* magazine featured the show's vignettes in its January 2008 issue.

## A True Family Business

Established in 1958, Mariani Landscape began as a small maintenance company and has grown into a full-service landscape design, construction and maintenance firm. Today, Mariani is the largest residential landscape firm in the country; despite its size, the company retains its family values.

Agustin Botello is a prime example of Mariani's family tradition. Joining the company in 1998 as a maintenance crew member, he has since been promoted to crew leader and works side-by-side with his two sons, Agustin Jr. and Antonio, and godson, Aldotorres. Agustin's four-person crew cares for the properties of Mariani's most premier clients in the western suburbs.

“What stands out most about Agustin is his consistency and his knowledge,” says maintenance branch manager Jon Rudey. “He is always willing to take that extra step to do what is best for the client and is an all-around top-notch guy.”

Mariani Landscape strives to create a family-like work environment, and all associates are eligible for health benefits and retirement plans. “We aim to foster a feeling of long-term employment for all our people, whether office or field staff,” says Rudey.

Agustin Botello and his crew truly show what family means at Mariani. “I am very happy for the opportunity to work with my two sons,” says Botello. “I enjoy working with everyone who works here and am very lucky to be a part of Mariani.”