



Friends of the Parks works to protect, preserve and improve Chicago's parks for all of its citizens.

Friends of the Parks Advocate

Fall 2004

Unilever Corporation Cares About Chicago Parks

Unilever Corporation, with offices in Chicago and Rolling Meadows, recently announced its new Unilever Cares program, a year-long initiative that engages its employees in an active volunteer project each month. The Unilever Cares kick-off began with a partnership with

Friends of the Parks on October 28 with a park and forest preserve clean-up.

Two hundred volunteers from Unilever's downtown office traveled to Douglas Park (1401 S. Sacramento Boulevard) to help improve children's playgrounds. Unilever received a warm welcome there

from 24th Ward Alderman Michael D. Chandler, Chicago Park District Area Manager Clara Portis, and Park Supervisor Michael Scott. The committed volunteers tackled four playgrounds, which they refurbished with new soft surface material

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Two hundred volunteers from Unilever's downtown office traveled to Douglas Park (1401 S. Sacramento Boulevard) to make improvements to four children's playgrounds, mulch fifty trees and create a special pumpkin patch for the Douglas Park Halloween Fest.

Kudos to Cook County Forest Preserve Board for Approving Land Policy Resolution and Ordinance

On November 4, the Board of Commissioners of the Cook County Forest Preserve District took the important step of approving a new Land Policy Resolution and Land Policy Ordinance. The measure was unanimously approved.


In March 2004, several municipalities made requests to the Board of Commissioners for purchase of Forest Preserve land, all of which were opposed by Friends of the Parks and other groups. At the March hearing, Commissioners Mike Quigley and Earlean Collins asked Friends of the Parks to organize environ-

mental groups to work with the commissioners' staff members to develop a new and updated Land Policy for the Forest Preserve District of Cook County.

This Land Policy Committee consisted of Audubon Society, Friends of the Parks, Friends of the Forest Preserves, The Nature Conservancy, Openlands Project and Sierra Club. In addition, Kim Walz from Commissioner Quigley's office and Michelle Devine from Commissioner Sufferdin's office worked diligently to develop the document.

The new Land Policy Resolution and

Ordinance reaffirms and consolidates the existing legal land policies from 1946 and 1962, along with the legal requirements in Illinois enabling legislation for the Cook County Forest Preserve District.

The approved resolution and ordinance simplify, codify and merge all existing legal requirements into one cohesive Land Policy Ordinance. As adopted on November 4, the resolution and ordinance will help the Board of Commissioners determine appropriate land policy decisions proposed in the future. 

Unilever (cont'd)

to make them safer for children. In addition, they mulched fifty trees and created a special pumpkin patch for the Douglas Park Halloween Fest.

From Unilever's Rolling Meadows facility, one hundred volunteers traveled to Busse Woods to undertake a serious litter pick-up. Bill Koenig, Jose Verillo and Jim Wagner of the Forest Preserve District of Cook County and Chuck Thompson of Friends of Busse Woods welcomed the group.

Unilever volunteers received pickers and bags and were sent in teams to remove garbage that collects inside of the



Unilever's year-long Unilever Cares program started with a clean-up at Busse Woods on October 28.



Unilever volunteers tackle improvements at Douglas Park.

forest's tree line. They also worked deep within the preserve's tree-line to collect hidden trash. After two and a half hours of work, the group collected one hundred bags of trash and threw them into a waiting garbage truck. As an added treat, volunteers spotted a healthy coyote making its way to the other side of the preserve. It was a very successful day, indeed!

Friends of the Parks thanks Unilever Corporation and its 300 employees, whose volunteer help contributed more than \$13,500 worth of work to the Chicago Park District and the Forest Preserve District of Cook County. We thank the Chicago Park District and the Forest Preserve District for their partnership in this successful event. We also thank Potbelly Sandwich Works for donating refreshments. 🌱



Bruce Varner (left) of Unilever Corporation, Jose Virella of the Forest Preserve District of Cook County, Jeremy Paulson of The Unilever Company and Renee Chester of Friends of the Parks take a moment from their busy work day to pose for a picture.

Park Budget Hearings Draw Hundreds of Park Activists

The Chicago Park District held three community input hearings in late September, providing a forum for community residents and advisory councils to present their requests for the 2005 Park District budget. Hundreds of park activists attended the public hearings to focus attention on their park needs.

The majority of participants addressed a need for additional staff to plan and execute more programming for children and adults. In addition, park groups called for resuming park activities for toddlers and seniors, some of which had been eliminated in the last few years. Nearly a dozen residents identified problems with leaking roofs that damaged and warped gym floors.

To see in detail what park advocates requested at these budget hearings, visit our website at www.fotp.org.

Consistently trying to make the parks budget more transparent and understandable, Friends of the Parks submitted the following general recommendations to the Park District:

Improve the budget format by including a summary of budget highlights; a detailed appropriation and revenue overview outlining the previous year's accomplishments and 2005 goals; and organizational charts, including regional and area managers.

Include a projected actual column to show projected actual dollars spent in fiscal year 2004 in order to provide the public with information on real expenditures, not what was allocated, for each park.

Develop and include performance measures following the Government Finance Officers' Association and the National Advisory Council on State and Local Budgeting requirements, which state that agency budgets must include detailed program and service performance measurements.


Allocate more resources for park programs and staffing to accomplish the district's core mission "to be the leading recreational provider in Chicago." To that end, park programs for children, teens and adults should be maximized to ensure

that park fieldhouses are the heart centers of their neighborhoods.

Evaluate privatization contracts to determine their cost and operational effectiveness as compared to in-house operations.


Develop a long-term plan to reduce debt load. The debt in fiscal year 2004 totaled \$87 million, or 25% of the Park District's total \$351 million budget. The debt payment has increased \$20 million in only three years, resulting in park program cuts in that same period.

Expand tax base for nine museums to six-county area. Move the nine museums in the parks from a Chicago-only tax base to a six-county tax levy. This would positively impact the financial resources of these museums while also giving financial relief to the Park District.

The Park District released its proposed FY2005 budget on November 18. The budget calls for a consolidation of the District's five regions to four regions. The budget also calls for a property tax increase. At press time, Friends of the Parks is analyzing the budget in detail. 

Friends of the Parks to Kick Off 30th Anniversary Year with Annual Meeting and Awards Celebration

Friends of the Parks will kick off its 30th anniversary at the Annual Meeting and Awards Celebration on Thursday, February 3, 2005 in the G.A.R. Hall at the Chicago Cultural Center (78 E. Washington, Chicago). Chicago Park District General Superintendent Tim Mitchell will give this year's keynote speech, addressing the state of Chicago's parks. Tickets cost \$30 for members, \$35 for non-members. Patron tickets cost \$100.

Friends of the Parks will honor seven outstanding businesses, community groups, advisory councils, elected officials and individuals who have significantly contributed to park improvements in 2004. 

Friends of the Parks' Volunteers in Parks Nomination Form

On Sunday, March 13, Friends of the Parks will host its Annual Volunteers in Parks Awards Reception at Pulaski Park (1419 W. Blackhawk). We seek nominations for community leaders, volunteers and organizations that have made outstanding contributions to Chicago's parks and Cook County Forest Preserves during 2004. Please briefly describe below the nominee(s) and their work.

Name _____

Description _____

Please send nominations by January 15, 2005 to: Mary Eileen Sullivan, Director of Volunteers, Friends of the Parks, 55 E. Washington, #1911, Chicago, IL 60602.

Volunteers Improve Open Spaces on National Public Lands Day 2004

On National Public Lands Day, held on September 18, hundreds of volunteers helped rehabilitate the woodland, wetland, and grassland communities in the natural areas in Chicago's parks and the Cook County Forest Preserves. By mulching trees, sowing native seeds, cutting brush and removing invasive plant materials, volunteers refurbished and restored some of the city's and county's most important park land. Sites included Bartel Grasslands, Beaubien Woods, Harms Woods, Gompers Park, Jackson Park, Bill Jarvis Migratory Nature Center,

North Park Nature Center, Pulaski Park, Ridge Park, Spring Creek and Winnemac Park.

This national event takes place each September and brings together thousands of individual and organizational volunteers to restore the country's public places.

You don't, however, have to wait until September 2005 to get out and volunteer in your local park or forest preserve. Contact Mary Eileen Sullivan at (312) 857-2757 extension 13 to learn about Friends of the Parks' Adopt-A-Park program. 🌱



Hundreds of volunteers throughout Chicago parks helped to improve woodlands, wetlands and natural areas during National Public Lands Day on September 18.

Lakefront Running Path Resurfaced Thanks to LaSalle Bank

Thanks to a generous grant of \$110,000 from LaSalle Bank, the Chicago Park District resurfaced a 6.7-mile limestone/cinder running path in Lincoln Park, the

most heavily used running/walking path in the city, with new crushed limestone. The project included adding new limestone surfacing material to the path from

North Avenue to Hollywood Avenue. The District completed the work in early October. The resurfacing eliminated potholes and rough surfaces and corrected runoff and erosion problems.

The running path restoration continues LaSalle Bank's fine efforts to support running in Chicago. They also sponsor The LaSalle Bank Chicago Marathon. 🌱



Photo courtesy of the Chicago Area Runners Association

LaSalle Bank recently contributed \$110,000 to resurface the 6.7-mile limestone/cinder running path in Lincoln Park. The project added new limestone surfacing material to the path from North Avenue to Hollywood Avenue.

Friends Indeed

Major Contributors August 1, 2004 through October 15, 2004

We gratefully acknowledge these important contributors who so generously support Friends of the Parks.

PERSONAL SUPPORT

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\$1,000 and Above

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\$100 - \$999

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Ways to Give to Friends of the Parks

Annual Gifts

Each year, we seek membership gifts from caring citizens and families who want to assist us as we make Chicago's parks and forest preserves better and safer. Individual Memberships start at \$35, and Family memberships at \$50. You can make a tax-deductible gift in various categories to proclaim your support as a Protector (\$75), Patron (\$100), Conserver (\$250) or Benefactor (\$500). Gifts of \$1,000 or more give you membership in our special giving society, *The Frederick Law Olmsted Circle*. We recognize Olmsted gifts in a special section of our annual report, and we invite Olmsted Circle members to a special reception in January to show our appreciation for this grand level of support.

Employer Matching Gifts

Your employer may double or triple your gifts to Friends of the Parks with a matching gift program. Check for such a program with your employee benefits office.

Bequests: The Burnham & Ward Society

A bequest, or a gift from your estate, creates a wonderful, lasting legacy. A simple provision in your will, or an amendment, or a gift of life insurance will help Friends of the Parks protect Chicago's parks and forests preserves while decreasing possible estate taxes. Individuals who inform Friends of the Parks that we have been

included in their estate plans become a member of our estate circle, the *Burnham & Ward Society*, named after Daniel J. Burnham and A. Montgomery Ward, the two visionaries who helped to shape our city and parks. Please call our office for sample language.

Honorary and Memorial Gifts

You may make a contribution to Friends of the Parks in honor of a loved one, or as a memorial gift in lieu of flowers. We note such gifts in our Annual Report each spring.

Give a Membership

A great stocking stuffer! Give a friend or family member a membership in Friends of the Parks this holiday season. Show your support and introduce others to "Chicago's Best Friend."

Gifts of Stock

A gift of appreciated stock provides you with the double benefit of making a charitable contribution to Friends of the Parks and reducing or eliminating capital gains taxes on the appreciated assets.

As you evaluate your financial position and plan your estate, please keep Friends of the Parks and our mission in mind. For more information about making a contribution, please contact John O'Connell, Director of Development, at (312) 857-2757 extension 16 or oconnellj@fotp.org. 

Activities Abound in Neighborhood Parks Around Chicago

Calumet Heritage Partnership Receives Donations

The Calumet Heritage Partnership received \$40,000 from District 7 United Steelworkers of America for the historic preservation of the abandoned Acme Coke Plant, located at 112th Street and Torrence Avenue. The Chicago Steel Heritage Project hopes to convert the closed Acme Steel site to an industry museum and cultural park. In addition to the \$40,000 United Steelworkers Grant, the Landmarks Preservation Council of Illinois donated \$10,000 to the project. For more information, please visit www.chicagosteel.org.

Two Parks to Be Named For Significant Chicago Women

The Chicago Park District proposed naming two more parks after significant Chicago women. The District will name Park 497 (2306 W. Maypole) on Chicago's Near West Side Ellen Gates Starr Park. Ellen Gates Starr (1859-1940), a teacher and an associate and close friend of Jane Addams, helped found America's first settlement house, Hull House in 1889. Starr also founded the Chicago Public School Art Society in 1894 and the Chicago Society of Arts and Crafts in 1897. Starr fought tirelessly for women's and workers' rights.

The District will name Park 316 (2914 N. Leavitt Street) in the North Center community Elizabeth Wood Park. Elizabeth Wood (1899-1993), also a teacher, worked for the United Charities of Chicago and sought housing reform for Chicago's poor. In 1937, shortly after the founding of the Chicago Housing Authority, Wood became the Authority's executive secretary, where she fiercely advocated for racially-integrated housing development and implemented a non-discrimination clause.

OSLAD Funding Sought for Kedvale Park

The Chicago Park District is seeking a \$856,800 grant from the State of Illinois' Open Space Land Acquisition Fund (OSLAD) to fund an expansion of Kedvale Park (4134 W. Hirsch Street). If the state approves the grant, the Park District will match it with \$900,000 to rehabilitate the children's playground, spray pool, basketball court and soccer field. The park would expand by 1.65 acres.

Playground Restorations Moving Forward at Three Parks

In October, the Chicago Park District approved a contract to construct new playgrounds in three Chicago parks: Berger Park in the Edgewater community, Gross Park in the Lakeview community, and Park West in the Lincoln Park community.

Lake Calumet Area Named Important Bird Area

The Audubon Society named forty-eight Important Bird Areas (IBAs) in Illinois. IBAs include both public and private lands that have a high bird diversity, threatened species or very high bird populations. Birding and conservation groups seek to work with the landowners to protect these critical habitat areas.



The Bocce Court at Veteran's Park (2820 E. 98th Street) is well-used by neighborhood residents.

In Chicago, the Audubon Society named the Lake Calumet Area, a 4,800-acre tract of publicly and privately owned land and home to the black-crowned night heron, common moorhen and the willow flycatcher, an IBA. In the northwest area of Cook County, the Society named Pratt's Wayne Woods, habitat for the sandhill crane and the yellow-headed blackbird, another IBA.

Bocce Court Improved at Veteran's Park

Park goers at Veteran's Park on the far Southeast Side (2820 E. 98th Street) enjoy the newly-refurbished bocce ball court. The park's advisory council implemented this summer project, with funding from Friends of the Parks. 🌿



In October, the Chicago Park District approved a contract to construct new playgrounds in three Chicago parks. Berger Park (shown above) in the Edgewater community will receive a new playground to replace this one used by children for many years.

Friends of the Parks Organizes Community Service Days to Beautify Chicago's Parks and Forest Preserves

Friends of the Parks worked with many organizations this past summer on park beautification projects throughout Chicago.

In July, children from the Jewish Children Services Bureau learned about nature at Gompers Park (4222 W. Foster Ave.) as they pulled out invasive weeds and planted native flowers throughout the park. Site Steward Jim MacDonald helped coordinate this event for over twenty volunteers.

In early August, Cadets from West Point Academy helped make the playground at 43rd Street and Lake Shore Drive safer by installing new fibar surfacing material. They finished the task in record time, impressing the Chicago Park District's Operation Manager Frank Amato. The Tribune Foundation sponsored this group, and they promised to return next year for a similar activity.

In mid-August, fifteen students from DePaul University helped the Chi-

cago Park District's Lakefront Region by mulching trees on the south lakefront. These students worked alongside the Lakefront Region's landscape crew and helped complete the task well ahead of schedule.

In early September, fifty students from DePaul University helped beautify Hollywood Park (3312 W. Thorndale Ave.). They leveled out the fibar in the playground making it safer, painted all the park benches, removed graffiti, mulched trees and even painted a portion of the fence surrounding the park. DePaul sponsored this work as part of its freshman orientation program.

Twelve students from the University of Madison Alternative Breaks program mulched 100 trees in McKinley Park (2210 W. Pershing Rd.) in early October. One student particularly enjoyed caring for the trees in the park where her mother played as a child. In addition to their

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In October, volunteers from Fireman's Fund Insurance Company recently logged in a Community Service Day at Gill Park (825 W. Sheridan Road).



In July, children in the Jewish Children Services Bureau program pulled out invasive weeds and planted native flowers throughout Gompers Park (4222 W. Foster Avenue).

Community Service Days (cont'd)

service work at McKinley, the students helped renovate and restore a riverbank on Chicago's north side with Site Steward Pete Leki.

Employees participated in Fireman's Fund Insurance Company's day of service in late October by volunteering at Gill Park (825 W. Sheridan Road). Employees cleaned the playground, added fibar and removed thirty bags of debris from the park.

Students from Northwestern University's Evanston Campus joined their Center for Student Involvement by helping beautify Chicago's parks in late October. A group of fifteen students worked with TreeKeeper Pat Reis in Grant Park, mulching trees along Lake Shore Drive. Another group of fifteen students spruced up Washtenaw Park's playground (2521 S. Washtenaw Avenue) in Chicago's Lawndale community, while another group of twenty students spruced up the playground with fibar at Piotrowski Park (4247 W. 31st Street) in the Little Village neighborhood.

We commend these organizations for initiating their stewardship activities and hope other schools and companies in Chicago will follow suit in encouraging their students or staff to volunteer in the parks. If you would like more information about arranging a Community Service Day please call Mary Eileen Sullivan, Director of Volunteers at (312) 857-2757 extension 13. 🌱



In October, students from Northwestern University's Evanston Campus spruced up the playground at Washtenaw Park (2521 S. Washtenaw Avenue) in Chicago's Lawndale community.



In September, fifty students from DePaul University helped beautify Hollywood Park (3312 W. Thorndale Ave.). This group painted a portion of the fence surrounding the park.

Fall Frolic Ride Attracts Bicyclists to North Branch Bike Trail in September

Nearly one hundred bicyclists joined Friends of the Parks for our first-ever Fall Frolic bicycle ride through the North Branch Bike Trail of the Forest Preserves. The event took place Sunday morning, September 19. Riders mounted their bikes at Caldwell Woods (Devon and Milwaukee Avenue) and headed north to the Chicago Botanic Garden for a leisurely and scenic fall ride through the Forest Preserves. At the Botanic Garden, riders

received complimentary tours of the gardens as well as refreshments and snacks. The participants then headed back south, ending the event at Caldwell Woods.

A glorious day of weather and a great partnership with the Chicago Botanic Garden contributed to the success of the event. All of the riders said they hope to ride in the event again next year. Save the date: Sunday, September 18, 2005. Members ride at a discounted rate! 🌱



Frank Bing (left), Gretchen Bystedt, Friends of the Parks' Office Manager, and Dr. Victor Bernhard, Friends of the Parks' Board Member, enjoy the crisp weather during Friends of the Parks' first-ever Fall Frolic bicycle ride through the North Branch Bike Trail.

Friends of the Parks Presents Ideas to Forest Preserve District of Cook County for 2005 Operating Budget

Friends of the Parks submitted the following recommendations to the Forest Preserve District for consideration as the District moves forward to develop the 2005 Forest Preserve District budget:

Make FY2005 budget more transparent. The District should make the FY2005 budget more “transparent” or open about policy goals, formulation and implementation. In addition, the District should make the FY2005 budget available at least a month before the Board of Commissioners reviews the budget.

Include fund balance statement. Appropriate budgeting requires that the budget include an opening fund balance from the previous year (or deficit). In recent years when the budgets did not include a balance sheet, it later came to light that the Forest Preserve District had operated with a deficit without notice to the board or the public.

Provide complete expenditures for each department’s operations. Each department’s budget should include all income and expenses that the District can reasonably charge to that department. This includes not only salaries of each department’s employees, but also all related expenses such as workers’ compensation, unemployment, and health and pension expenses. The District should no longer lump these related expenses together with those of all other Forest Preserve employees in the Fixed Charges account.

Provide information in budget of land acquisition completed in FY2004. The land acquisition chapter should include a report of land acquired in the current year as part of the accomplishments section.

Eliminate or reduce the Department of Recreation. In FY2004, the Recreation Department included 14 full-time employ-

ees and 23 seasonal employees primarily in charge of picnic permits and three swimming pools (of which only one was open in 2004).

The Forest Preserve District should transfer ownership of the three swimming pools to local park districts. The Forest Preserve District should focus on providing recreation activities based on its core mission, including hiking, running, biking, nature education, birding, picnicking and cross-country skiing.

The District could transfer responsibility for assigning picnic permits, primarily a clerical and office function, to another department.

Increase revenues from non-tax sources. Analyze options for fee increases in some areas such as; 1) utility licenses; 2) cable, cell towers, sewer lines, etc.; 3) user fees (picnics, golf, other user fees; 4) different fee arrangements for non-Cook County users.

Broaden the tax base for Brookfield Zoo and the Chicago Botanic Garden to a six-county area. Brookfield Zoo and the Chicago Botanic Garden provide wonderful public education and conservation programs. The two institutions receive tax subsidies totaling \$75 million, or 53% of the Forest Preserve District budget in 2004. However, while the two institutions are located in the borders of Cook County, they serve a multi-county population, and other counties should help fund their operations. 🌿

Forest Preserve District Approves \$100 Million Bond Issue

In early October, the Forest Preserve District of Cook County approved the sale of a \$100 million bond issue for capital improvements in forest preserves (\$50 million), Brookfield Zoo (\$25 million) and the Chicago Botanic Garden (\$25 million)

The approval came despite concerns that there was no specific plan for where the dollars would be spent. Charles Schwartz, Vice-Chair of Friends of the Parks and past Chairman of the Board, testified that the “proposed use of funds from the forthcoming bond issue is so general that it resembles a bear reaching into the honey pot.”

For example, the Forest Preserve District proposes to allocate nearly \$8 million to the Forest Preserves for “miscellaneous project related costs.” The project list includes over \$4 million for “parking

lot construction” and over \$10 million for “nature center and resource management facilities.” While the District gave some details later, it did not list specific dollar estimates for each item.

On the other hand, the District proposes only \$455,000 for the essential work of the District, “terrestrial habitat restoration,” while appropriating nearly \$2.5 million for “general headquarters,” and nothing for land acquisition. Here, the project plan appears contrary to the needs of the forests themselves.

Friends of the Parks urged that the Board’s approval of the bond issue include a sincere commitment to provide a very specific and detailed capital improvement list for the projects earmarked with the \$100 million bond issue. 🌿

Dominican University Requests Forest Preserve Land To Construct Driveway Through Part of the Preserve

Dominican University, located adjacent to Thatcher Woods Forest Preserve in River Forest, recently petitioned the Forest Preserve District of Cook County to construct a driveway through part of the preserve to access a parking garage on the Dominican campus. The Forest Preserve District referred the petition to the Citizens Advisory Committee (CAC) for its recommendation. Friends of the Parks opposes Dominican's request for forest preserve land.

The mission of the Forest Preserve District is "To acquire and hold lands containing natural forests, or lands connecting such forests, for the purpose of protecting and preserving the flora, fauna and scenic beauties...."

The Citizens Advisory Committee has, since the 1940s, documented its response to requests for Forest Preserve land. In 1948, the advisory committee said no to the Village of Oak Forest for a park and playground, stating "... it is entirely beyond the power of the Forest Preserve District to grant to a Village or to others

the exclusive right to utilize or to develop Forest Preserve lands which were acquired for a specific legal purpose and for use by all the people."

Again in 1948, the Advisory Committee stated, "It has required and will require continuing fortitude on the part of the Board to adhere to its acknowledged responsibility in declining to dissipate or dissolve the great values of this Forest Preserve System in order to meet the problems of other bodies which may be solved otherwise."

Friends of the Parks wrote to the Citizens Advisory Committee to urge them to refuse the request for exclusive use of the Forest Preserve land by Dominican University. This position is based on the following principals of the Land Policy:

- * The Forest Preserve land was acquired for public use and cannot be alienated for the private use of a university, however laudable its mission.
- * The construction of a driveway for a

private university would cut into a four-acre forest preserve tract of land with ancient trees. Bringing automobile traffic onto the triangle would result in eliminating the possible use of the four-acre site.

- * The construction of a driveway would destroy habitat that is home to an endangered flora species, the large-leafed violet.
- * Transferring the land, whether by direct transfer, easement, or by intergovernmental agreement, to a municipality for the direct use by a private university violates the Land Policy of the Forest Preserve District. Entering into an intergovernmental agreement with the Village of River Forest is an obvious attempt to by-pass the direct transfer of public land to a private entity.
- * A driveway could easily be constructed by using land on one of the three other streets bordering Dominican University without the effect of doing harm to a quality public forest preserve. 🌿

IDOT Transfers Unused Land Under Kennedy Expressway For Two "Gateway" Parks To Logan Square Community

In the recently-adopted Logan Square Open Space Plan, the City of Chicago identified two parcels of unused Illinois Department of Transportation (IDOT) land which the Chicago Park District could use as "gateway" parks to the Logan Square community. Located under and adjacent to the Kennedy Expressway at Artesian and Logan Boulevard, these two parcels of land could help to address the Logan Square community's desperate need for

more park space. Out of seventy-seven community areas in Chicago, the Logan Square community has the second greatest need for more park space.

IDOT initially requested that the Chicago Park District purchase this land for a price the District could not afford. That's when Friends of the Parks stepped in. Working with the Logan Square Parks Alliance and the Chicago Park District, Friends of the Parks requested help from

elected state officials in the community. Thanks to Senators Iris Martinez, Miguel Del Valle and State Representatives William Delgado and Toni Berrios for successfully advocating that IDOT transfer the unused land to the Chicago Park District for public parks in Logan Square. The Park District plans to develop these newly acquired parcels into a skate board park and a dog park. 🌿

Friends of the Parks' Adopt-a-Park Program Improves Parks Around the City

Kudos to Harry Egipciano of the North Harding Block Club who initiated a work day at the Harding Playlot (3917 W. Division St.) on August 21. Volunteers worked with Chicago Park District employees to paint playground equipment and clean up the small playground. Alderman Walter Burnett was pleased with the results.

Chicago Public School teachers Heather Monroe and Heather von Oesen have embarked on a creative learning initiative by having their respective fifth grade students participate in

the Adopt-a-Park program. Using the parks as outdoor classrooms, students from the Franklin Fine Arts Center will adopt Seward Park (375 W. Elm Street) and students from the Richard J. Daley Academy will adopt Cornell Park (5473 S. Cornell Avenue). They hope to create an ongoing project at each site and allow each class to visit the other's park. We wish them well on this endeavor!

Need more information on Adopt-a-Park? Call Mary Eileen Sullivan, Director of Volunteers at (312) 857-2757 extension 13. 🌱

Friends of the Parks' Members Corner

Holiday Photos

Get your holiday photos at a discounted price and support Friends of the Parks at the same time! This month, Friends of the Parks teams up with Stuart Rodgers Photography to offer a specially-priced package for our members, plus Stuart Rodgers Photography will donate 20% of all sales receipts to Friends of the Parks! For more information, call Stuart Rodgers at (312) 787-8696 and mention that you are a member of Friends of the Parks.

Leon M. Despres Book Now Available

Friends of the Parks' long-time board member Leon M. Despres recently released his book, "Challenging The Daley Machine: A Chicago Alderman's Memoir."

In 1955, south-sider Leon Despres was elected to the Chicago City Council — the same year that Paddy Bauler famously uttered that "Chicago ain't ready for reform." Ready or not, Chicago got twenty years of reform efforts from Despres, one of the few independents in the council and the most liberal alderman in the city.

Over the years, his crusades to ban discrimination, preserve Chicago landmark buildings, and gain equality for African-Americans challenged the Machine time and again. And, not incidentally,

changed the city. But "Challenging the Daley Machine" is more than a memoir. It is a historical portrait of the way things were done under the Boss, when changing times and a changing city forced the Machine to confront the problems Despres championed.

"Throughout his career [Leon M. Despres] has been in the forefront of just about every decent, worthwhile effort made to improve life in the city," Mike Royko is quoted in the foreword.

Winners of Member Renewal Campaign

Congratulations Erna and Enrico Mugnaini of Chicago! They won a \$75 gift certificate to Fogo de Chao, Chicago's premier Brazilian steakhouse! The drawing was part of a large membership renewal campaign which enticed more than 120 lapsed members to renew their support of Friends of the Parks!

Congratulations to Eleanor Roemer

Congratulations to Eleanor Roemer, former General Counsel/Public Trust & Policy Director for Friends of the Parks, on receiving a Fulbright Scholarship. She will reside in Bucharest, Romania for eight months while teaching the basics of law at the University of Bucharest. 🌱

Events calendar

THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 3 NOON-1:30PM

Friends of the Parks will host its 30th Annual Meeting and Awards Celebration with keynote speaker Tim Mitchell, Chicago Park District General Superintendent. Invitations will be mailed to members in January 2005. The event will take place in G.A.R. Hall at the Chicago Cultural Center, 78 E. Washington Street.

THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 10 12:15PM

Friends of the Parks will host a public lecture to discuss how the loss of Brown University's oldest and largest elm tree became an inspiration rather than a memory. Professor Richard Fishman will discuss "The Elm Tree Project" and how he created a multi-year curriculum using the lost elm tree for studies in art, horticulture and architecture. The free lecture will take place at the Chicago Cultural Center, 78 E. Washington Street.

SUNDAY, MARCH 13 2-4PM

Friends of the Parks will host its annual Volunteers in Parks Awards Reception at Pulaski Park (1419 W. Blackhawk Street) to recognize significant contributions to Chicago's parks. All members and volunteers welcome!

THURSDAY, APRIL 14 12:15PM

Friends of the Parks will host a panel discussion on Chicago's best greening projects, including rooftop gardens, tree planters, median dividers and environmental innovations. This free talk will take place at the Chicago Cultural Center, 78 E. Washington Street.

SATURDAY, APRIL 23

Friends of the Parks will host its annual Earth Day Parks Clean-Up and Earth Day Fair. We need volunteers and volunteer park captains! To sign up, please contact Mary Eileen Sullivan, Director of Volunteers, at (312) 857-2757 extension 13 or sullivanme@fotp.org.

MAY 2005

Friends of the Parks will host its annual Parks Ball gala honoring Cindy Pritzker. For more information, please contact Nancy Minster Swabb, Events Director, at (312) 857-2757 extension 11 or nancymswabb@hotmail.com

For more information on lectures and the Annual Meeting and Awards Celebration, please contact Sarah Strong, Membership Director, at (312) 857-2757 extension 14 or strongs@fotp.org



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Advocate**

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**Friends of the
Parks To Host
Theatre Night**

Join us for a sneak preview of *Looking-
glass Alice* while supporting Friends of the
Parks! *Lookingglass Alice* retells the story
that first brought this theatre ensemble
together 18 years ago. It was adapted from
Lewis Carroll's *Alice's Adventures in
Wonderland* by Ensemble Member and
Artistic Director David Catlin. Join us for
this incredible night of theatre (along with
an after-show party) at Lookingglass
Theater in The Water Tower Water
Works Building, 821 N. Michigan
Avenue. Ticket prices are \$75 and \$30
(member discount of \$5). For more
information, call Sarah Strong, Member-
ship Director, at (312) 857-2757
extension 14. 

We'd Like to Hear From You!

Friends of the Parks often helps resi-
dents with questions, problems and
issues concerning their neighborhood
parks. If you have concerns you wish to
discuss or help solve, you may contact
us in one of the following ways:

PHONE: (312) 857-2757 / (312) 85-PARKS
FAX: (312) 857-0656
WEB SITE: www.fotp.org
ADDRESS: 55 E. Washington, Suite 1911,
Chicago, IL 60602-2174

Friends of the Parks is a designated 501(c)(3)
non-profit that works to preserve, protect and
improve Chicago's parks and forest preserves
by creating citizen awareness, volunteer and
educational opportunities and influencing
public policy.

Yes! I want to help preserve, protect and im-
prove Chicago's treasured parks by making a
contribution of:

- \$1,000 Frederick Law Olmsted Circle
- \$500 Benefactor
- \$250 Conservor
- \$100 Patron
- \$75 Protector
- \$50 Family
- \$35 Individual/Park Advocate
- \$25 Student/Senior

I have enclosed my check payable to
Friends of the Parks.

Please charge my:
 Visa MasterCard

Account Number

Expiration Date

Name

Address

City State

Zipcode

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