



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

Friends of the Parks Advocate

Fall 2005

1975-2005—Friends of the Parks Celebrates 30th Anniversary

Friends of the Parks passed a major milestone this summer when we celebrated thirty years of protecting, preserving and improving Chicago's parks. As part of our 30th anniversary celebration, we interviewed two of our founders: Lois Weisberg, currently Chicago's Commissioner of Cultural Affairs, and Victoria Ranney, former chair of the board of Friends of the Parks and editor of the Frederick Law Olmsted Papers.

How did Friends of the Parks get started?

Lois Weisberg (LW): Journalist Jory Graham wrote an article called "A Slow Death for the Parks." I had been frustrated by what had been going on in the parks, so I called Jory and met with her. I then started calling people, getting them together—I was working at Business and Professional People for the Public Interest (BPI) at the time. We called a meeting, and 40 or 50 people came. About 12 to 15 agreed to be on the board of directors. We had no money or staff, so we used space at BPI until we could start to raise our own funds.

Victoria Ranney (VR): The parks at that time were a real mess— not well cared for. Chicago really needed someone outside the Chicago Park District to advocate.

LW: We were never an "advocate" for the Chicago Park District, more of an "adversary." But what we did advocate for was the parks. It was founded to be a "Friend of the Parks."

What were some of your first challenges and successes?

LW: There was so much garbage in the parks so we organized a clean-up. The
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In 1983, Friends of the Parks' founder Lois Weisberg (left) and Friends of the Parks' board president Cindy Mitchell (right) led Mayor candidate Harold Washington (center) on a tour through Chicago parks. Washington endorsed Friends of the Parks' "Agenda of the 80s" report, which stated our vision for the protection and improvement of city parks. Washington said, "We must exorcise totally [the Chicago Park District's] patronage system from the city."

Village of Orland Park Proposal Could Take Forest Preserve Land

The Village of Orland Park seeks to widen South 143rd Street, which would take approximately 1.8 acres of forest preserve land at McGinnis Slough Forest Preserve. This once quiet road is now crowded because of many new residential and business developments. In exchange for the land, Village officials propose giving the Forest Preserve District three acres of privately-owned land currently under threat from development on the other side of the preserve.

Alice Brandon, Friends of the Parks' Director of Forest Preserves, and Benjamin Cox of Friends of the Forest Preserves, met with Village officials to view both the road and the three acres currently under threat. Both groups

have concerns about the taking of forest preserve land for a road project, and we have requested detailed information to better understand the issue. At press time, neither organization had taken a formal stand on the proposal.

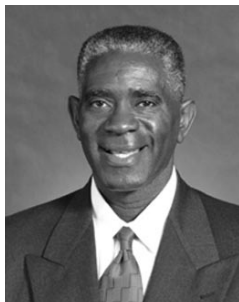


A road widening project in suburban Orland Park may gobble up 1.8 acres of McGinnis Slough Forest Preserve land and reduce the buffer between the slough and the road.

Friends of the Parks to Host Annual Meeting on February 2nd

Friends of the Parks will host its Annual Meeting and Awards Luncheon on Thursday, February 2, 2006 at the Chicago Cultural Center, G.A.R. Hall (78 E. Washington, Chicago). Invitations will be mailed to members in early January.

We are excited to announce our keynote speaker: Joseph Wynns, Director of the Indianapolis Parks and Recreation Department and Trustee of the National Recreation and Parks




Joseph Wynns

Association. Mr. Wynns is a certified parks and recreation professional with 36 years as a public servant. Under Wynns' leadership, the department received national accreditation from the Commission for Accreditation of Park and Recreation.

Wynns also serves on the Board of Directors of the American Academy

for Parks and Recreation. He serves as chairperson of the Urban Park and Recreation Alliance. He is a member of the Roundtable Associates, Inc. and the School of Health, Physical Education, and Recreation Dean's Associates of Indiana University. His local community involvement includes the Black Coaches Association Advisory Board, Circle City Classic Executive Committee, Indiana Sports Corporation Youth Committee, and the United Way's Bridges to Success and Successful Kids Impact Councils.

Call for Nominations!!!

Friends of the Parks seeks nominations for our annual awards. We seek to recognize individuals, park advisory councils, elected officials and businesses who made significant improvements to Chicago's parks and/or forest preserves in 2005. Please submit your nomination(s) using the form below, by December 2, 2005. You may also email your nomination(s) to Sarah Dunn at dunns@fotp.org. 

FOTP Celebrates (cont'd)

Park District went out in the middle of the night to clean it before we got there! We got them to finally clean that park!

VR: When we first started, the parks were in a sorry state. There was poor maintenance of facilities, discrimination against the poorer sections of the city, and a lack of public transportation to get people to the parks. In addition, there were not always people on the Chicago Park District Board of Commissioners who had a professional interest in landscape architecture or other fields—they were all political appointees.

We started out with simple things like park cleanups. These got a lot of publicity, and got results. The press helped a lot. In addition, park advisory councils became important parts of local parks, providing a legal framework that required the Chicago Park District to pay attention to them.



On November 9, 1975, a newly-formed Friends of the Parks sponsored a clean-up of Jackson Park where skin divers cleaning the Jackson Park lagoon found, among other items, a telephone booth filled with coins dating the booth's sinking back to 1968.


In your observation, how has the City of Chicago changed vis-à-vis the parks since Friends of the Parks was established?

VR: The current Mayor Daley is a real proponent of parks and green spaces. He has made an enormous difference. There have also been some good appointments to the Board of Commissioners.

Friends of the Parks has also gotten better. The Board of Directors of Friends has become stronger, commands more attention, raises more money, and is making good points in strategic areas.

LW: The parks have improved in a

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 Cut out and mail

Friends of the Parks' Annual Awards Nomination Form

Your Name _____

Daytime Telephone Number _____

Your Email Address _____

Your Nomination (individual, advisory council, elected official, business, etc.) _____

Description of nominees' park project, initiative, success: _____

Please send nomination to: Friends of the Parks, Attn: Annual Awards Nomination, 55 E. Washington, Suite 1911, Chicago, IL 60602. Or fax to (312) 857-0656.

Pritzker Pavilion Not Always the “People’s Park”

Within a year of its spectacular opening and dedication as the “people’s park,” the Pritzker Pavilion became a private music venue for a for-profit Chicago production company. Since its July 2004 opening night, the Pritzker Pavilion has hosted free concerts ranging from the Chicago Symphony Orchestra to Latin salsa. Indeed, the Millennium Park 2005 concert brochure exclaims, “You never need a ticket to attend a concert! The lawn and general seating section are always admission free.” That was true until the August 31st Tori Amos concert closed the Pritzker Pavilion, the Great Lawn and the BP Bridge over Columbus Drive to the public. To attend the show, concert-goers had to purchase tickets at \$50-\$60 for reserved seats or \$10 for lawn seats.

Friends of the Parks voiced its objection to closing the Great Lawn to the public, noting that it was regretful that within a year, Chicago’s free Pritzker Pavilion was rented out to host a for-profit performance.

Chicago taxpayers spent millions of tax dollars to create a concert venue at Soldier Field (a multi-use facility was the justification for a new stadium). In addition, Chicagoans provided land this spring for a “temporary” new concert venue at

Northerly Island. Both of these venues were earmarked for larger scale attractions such as the Tori Amos concert.

Described by a city official as a “test case,” if the managers of Millennium Park deem the test case as passing, a new precedent of renting the Pritzker Pavilion for for-profit concerts could become the order of the day.

Friends of the Parks urges park managers to direct private concert production companies to Soldier Field, the Soldier Field south parking lots or the new Northerly Island Music Pavilion. The Great Lawn of the Pritzker Pavilion should remain a free venue for Millennium Park to live up to its name as the “People’s Park”. 🌿



Since its opening in July 2004, the Pritzker Pavilion has hosted free concerts ranging from the Chicago Symphony Orchestra to Latin salsa. This summer, for-profit production companies have sold tickets for private performances in this venue.

Friends of the Parks to Co-Host Symposium Focusing on the Future of Chicago’s Lakefront and Its Harbors

The Chicago Park District recently contracted with JJR, a land-planning, design and engineering firm, to develop a District Wide Harbor System Plan. The goal of the harbor planning process is to further enhance the overall lakefront experience for recreational boaters and park users.

Friends of the Parks, Friends of Monroe Harbor, Friends of the New Lakefront, and the Chicago Architectural Foundation will host a symposium with prominent Chicago architects and planners to critique and discuss the Chicago Park District’s Draft Harbor Plan.

The symposium, entitled “The Future of Chicago’s Lakefront and its Harbors,” will be held on Thursday, January 19, 2006 from 5:30 - 7:00 p.m. at the Chicago Architectural Foundation, 224 South Michigan. It is free to the public.

Architectural panel:

- John Buenz, partner, Solomon, Cordwell & Buenz
- Philip Enquist, partner, Skidmore, Owings & Merrill
- Tom Greene, partner, Greene & Proppe. 🌿



Friends of the Parks will co-host a symposium entitled, “The Future of Chicago’s Lakefront and Its Harbors” on Thursday, January 19.

Andersonville Playlot Makes Its Mark in the Park with Magnificent Mural

Friends of the Parks' Seed Grant program funded a wonderful mural project in **Andersonville Playlot** (5233 N. Ashland) this summer.

The **Andersonville Park Advisory Council** hosted its Mural Day on August 20th to introduce its summer-long park beautification project to the community. On Mural Day members of the community came out to decorate a panel dedicated to the community. Colorful handprints from young and old decorated the branches of a tree. The event brought the entire community to the playlot. Funds for this project were provided by Friends of the Parks' Seed Grant program.

Mike Marin, the Positive Paths Coordinator at the **American Indian Center**, designed and installed the first panel, called **DA'WAA'S HARVEST**, with students from the program. The two figures (Kachinas) on the end represent guardians and harvesters of the corn. To the Pueblo people of the American Southwest, corn represents faith in Mother Earth and belief in the Great Spirit. Corn is also used spiritually and medicinally by the Pueblo medicine societies in prayer and ceremony. The rainbow, or Water Bridge, shows the connection between the rain and the earth. The Da'Waa (Sun Face) watches over the harvest while the dragonfly and the bee serve as messengers to help spread the seeds of the harvest. 🌱



Andersonville Park Advisory Council members (from left to right) Andy James, Megan Collins, Lynn Schnaiberg and Julie Lambert celebrate Mural Day. Colorful handprints decorated branches of the tree mural behind them.



Students from The American Indian Center created a mural panel called DA'WAA'S HARVEST at the Andersonville Playlot.



Students sit proudly in front of the mural they created for Andersonville Playlot (5233 N. Ashland).

Neighborhood Park News

Young adults and children involved in the therapeutic recreation program at **McGuane Park** (2901 S. Poplar Avenue) celebrated their summer artistic accomplishments with staff, parents and educators from **Pros Arts Studio**. Participants decorated a garden bench depicting scenes from nature as well as new banners for their classroom windows, which showcased field trips and favorite activities of the group. A Seed Grant from Friends of the Parks funded this program.

Across the street from McGuane Park sits an up-and-coming new park—**Stearn's Quarry**. Be on the lookout for an exciting recreation space which will add thirty acres of much-needed parkland in the Bridgeport community.

Cedar Park (5311-17 N. Winthrop Avenue) has been active! After completing a successful summer concert series, the park received another facelift for a summer wedding held at the playlot in late August. A local florist donated plants to beautify the park for the nuptials; community members planted the new greenery.

The newly-active **Eckhart Park Advisory Council** (1330 W. Chicago Avenue) completed its first council project on October 15th. Students from **Noble Street High School**, members of **Ameri-corps** and advisory council members and their families cleaned up the playlot and replaced the loose-fill soft surfacing on the playground. After many hours of sweat-equity, the team relaxed and enjoyed the beautiful day with a pizza lunch. Great job on organizing a successful clean-up!

Funding for Parks Workshop

Friends of the Parks recently sponsored a workshop for park advisory council members to explore alternative revenue sources for park enhancements. John Paul Jones from the **Neighborhood Capital Budget Group** engaged participants in a lively discussion of the complicated process of Tax Increment Financing (TIF) and how those funds may be used to leverage

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Friends Indeed

Major Contributors August 1, 2005 through September 30, 2005

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

PERSONAL SUPPORT

FREDERICK LAW OLMSTED CIRCLE

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CORPORATE AND FOUNDATION SUPPORT

\$20,000 - \$50,000

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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 greener and safer.



Frederick Law Olmsted

You may make a tax deductible gift as a member: Individual \$35; Family \$50; Protector \$75; Patron \$100; Conserver \$250; Benefactor \$500. Donors of \$1,000 or more enter our special giving society, *The Frederick Law Olmsted Circle*.

They are recognized in a special section of our annual report and receive an invitation to a special donor's reception each year to show our appreciation for this grand level of support.

Employer Matching Gifts

Your gifts to Friends of the Parks can be doubled or tripled if your employer has a matching gift program. Check with your employee benefits office where you work.

Bequests: The Burnham & Ward Society

A bequest, or a gift from your estate, creates a wonderful and 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 members 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.

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 will note such gifts in our Annual Report each spring.

Give a Membership

A great stocking stuffer! Give a friend or relation a membership in Friends of the Parks. 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 the 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 occonnellj@fotp.org.

Community Service Days Draw Hardworking Volunteers

In mid-August, on one of Chicago's few rainy days, over twenty employees from **Chubb**—a leading global insurance organization—showed great teamwork at Horan Park (3035 W. Van Buren). The drizzle did not deter the employees from making the playground safer with an impressive addition of eight loads of fibar soft surface material.

The following week volunteers from **SEEDS**, a youth group in Pilsen, also got caught in the rain at Magnolia Park (3224 W. Flournoy). The students enjoyed their day and committed to coming out and working on a forest preserve project later this fall.

Volunteers from the **Kellogg Business School** made significant improvements at Leone Beach Park (1222 W. Touhy Ave.). They showed their ingenuity by moving mounds of fibar soft surface material with buckets and garbage cans on the last Sunday in August to complete the task in record time! In a second community service project held in September, 150 students in the **Kellogg Business School** program helped beautify historic Humboldt Park (1400 N. Sacramento). Teams of students



Kellogg Business School students enhanced their teamworking skills by volunteering at Humboldt Park.

mulched trees, picked up litter, painted playground equipment in the children's accessible playground and installed fibar soft surface material in a second playground in Humboldt Park.

In October, thirty alumni from the **University of Worcester**, along with their children, learned about the importance of tree care at Garfield Park (100 N. Central Park) by mulching more than eighty trees. (Mulch helps keep tree roots warm in winter and cool in summer.) Young members of the group were treated to games and activities with a new Friends of the Parks' student volunteer, Christina Fontenelle, from Senn High School.

Also in October, fifteen students from the **University of Wisconsin at Madison** Alternative Breaks Program visited Chicago to help clean up Maple Lake Woods in the Forest Preserve located in Willowbrook. They removed more than fifty bags of glass and debris from the lake's shoreline. Some of the students had worked with Friends of the Parks last summer and were happy to work for the first time in the Cook County Forest Preserves. The Forest Preserve District's Fisheries Biologist, Jim Phillips, gave the students a brief explanation of the history of the forest preserves in Cook County. Special thanks to the District's Volunteer

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Students and alumni made a difference by cleaning up at Pottawatomie Park.

Neighborhood Park News (cont'd)

park capital projects. TIF funds may be used for new parks and park development within a designated TIF district.

The workshop highlighted the possible use of Open Space Impact Fees for new park acquisition or development in the affected communities. Aldermanic menu money may also be used as a source of funds for park projects and enhancements.

The Neighborhood Capital Budget Group has extensive information on these topics at www.ncbg.org. You may also log onto Friends of the Parks' website at www.fotp.org to learn more about upcoming workshops.

Friends of the Parks' **Nature Along the Lake** program is thriving this fall, thanks to full funding and a newly-hired Program Director. Nature Along the Lake is designed to engage elementary students in environmental education using the natural areas of Chicago as a classroom. This fall, students have adopted a tree, gone bird watching and fishing, and learned about formation of the dunes at Montrose Beach. We are currently serving a maximum 27 classrooms. Special thanks to our funders, including the Helen Brach Foundation, the Bowman C. Lingle Trust, and the Oppenheimer Family Foundation.

The **Block Club Federation (BFC) in Humboldt Park** together with **Openlands Project** launched an effort in 1999 to create a small park in the 1400 block of North Monticello on a parcel of land owned by Metra. Magdalena Martinez and Paco Mojica, residents and members of BCF, approached the Chicago Park District and Metra to ask officials to consider installing a park in this neighborhood, an area designated as "unserved" in the Chicago Park District Land Policy Study. The only open land available was a neglected acre along the Metra tracks. After many letters, phone calls, meetings, Park District Budget Hearings and community planning and design sessions, residents now have the park they have hoped for. This project represents a successful "public-private" partnership that included non-profit organizations and elected officials: **Arch-Treasures**, the **Chicago Botanic Garden**, **Openlands Project**, **Alderman Billy Ocasio**, **Senator Miquel DelValle** and **Representative Willie Delgado**. The of-

ficial grand opening of the park will take place in the spring of 2006. A small local celebration is being planned by residents before the snow falls!

Fireworks Approved for Parks

The Chicago Park District Board of Commissioners recently amended the district's code to allow the permitted use of fireworks and pyrotechnics on Chicago Park District property. Prior to this amendment, the code prohibited any person from "firing, discharging or setting off any rocket, cracker, torpedo or other fireworks, or any substance of an explosive nature within the District."



First-hand experiences make a lasting impression on young students participating in Friends of the Parks' "Nature Along the Lake" program.

District Superintendent Tim Mitchell said the commissioners took this action to respond primarily to requests for fireworks in Soldier Field and the Clear Channel Pavilion. In addition, officials amended the 2005 parks budget to reflect a new maximum fireworks permit fee of \$5,000.

Beverly Property Acquired for New Park

The Chicago Park District approved a plan in September to purchase property for a new park at 10609-15 South Western Avenue in the Beverly Community. The Park District and City of Chicago will

together pay \$625,000 to acquire this half-acre parcel of land. Officials are considering this site as a memorial to a Chicago firefighter.

Jesse Owens Park Advisory Council Seeks Fieldhouse

Representatives of the **Jesse Owens Park Advisory Council** attended a recent Chicago Park District board meeting to again request that District officials allocate capital dollars in its 2006 budget for construction of a new park fieldhouse. At the meeting, a representative stated that community members have been working for more than ten years to ensure that a new fieldhouse will be built in Jesse Owens Park. Neighborhood children have no gym in which to play and have been sorely underserved by park programs.

Commercial Park Advisory Council "Best" in Chicago

In September, the Chicago Park District named **Commercial Park Advisory Council** the "Advisory Council of the Year" during the Advisory Council Appreciation Day ceremony and picnic at Northerly Island Park. The group received the award for its hands-on park programming, fundraising and overall involvement with the community. The group raises funds to pay for supplemental park programs, including yoga, knitting, arts and crafts, art in the park and year-round special events. The advisory council recently began producing a multi-color newsletter, as well.

PoeTREES Sprout in Wicker Park

As part of the Around the Coyote festival in the Wicker Park community, the **Wicker Park Garden Club** designed and added a new park component called PoeTREES. The project engaged children to write poems and then put them all in the trees in Wicker Park's children's playground, thus creating one big poem in a tree. The children wrote their poems on ribbons, which were then tied to the limbs of two trees.

The PoeTREES filled with poems remained on display for three weeks, from September 11 until October 1. The after-school Park Kids program incorporated the trees into its lessons during the month of September. The garden club hopes that the poems and poetry will be incorporated into the Park Kids Program as a new poetry initiative. 🌱

Montrose Beach Designated High-Quality Natural Area

Leslie Borns, Park Steward at the **Montrose Beach Dunes**, announced that the site recently received official designation as an Illinois Natural Areas Inventory (INAI) site by the Illinois Nature Preserves Commission. The INAI is a state-recognized list of high-quality natural areas.

Last August, biologists from the Illinois Department of Natural Resources (IDNR) visited the dunes and were very

impressed with its unique flora and fauna; they also noted geological features such as the panne (wet depression in a dune/swale system). The panne is quite uncommon nowadays, especially in a big city! IDNR subsequently nominated the site for INAI status.

A commission in Springfield reviewed and approved the lengthy application and the supporting documentation. Congratu-

lations to all of the volunteers at Montrose Beach Dunes whose tremendous support, dedication and hard work have kept the dunes healthy and thriving. Working without a Chicago Park District natural areas contractor made last summer's growing season a great challenge. Thanks to everyone who stepped up to help. 🌱

Wicker Park Garden Club Receives Major Awards

Would you like to see a magnificent park garden designed, planted and maintained exclusively by community volunteers? Visit beautiful Wicker Park (1425 N. Damen)!

The 8,000-square-foot gardens, officially named the William Westfall Gardens, recently received First Place in the Community Landscape, Region I category by the city's Department of Environment. The city presented the award to this hard-working, creative group on November 5th at the Garfield Park Conservatory.

More good news! Doug Wood, Denise Browning and the Wicker Park Garden Club received Mayor Daley's Gardener of the Year Award on November 5th. The city gives only one such award each year.

Finally, the Chicago Park District issued a resolution at its October board meeting honoring the Wicker Park Garden Club for creating and maintaining the gardens as well as for providing programming for children and adults. As part of the Park District's resolution, officials acknowledged Denise Browning and Doug Wood for a special gift of their home garden (which they dug up and relocated, plant by plant, in Wicker Park). The garden contribution was valued at \$45,000.

Friends of the Parks congratulates Garden Club Chair Doug Wood, Denise Browning and all the volunteers who devote countless hours to making Wicker Park the beautiful heart center of the community. 🌱



Friends of the Parks congratulates the Wicker Park Garden Club for its First Place honors in the Community Landscape, Region I category, awarded by the city's Department of Environment. We encourage you to visit the 8,000-square-foot garden (1425 N. Damen), officially named the William Westfall Gardens.

FOTP Celebrates (cont'd)

number of ways: better programming, better maintenance, better responsiveness on the part of the Board of Commissioners.

What was Friends of the Parks' involvement in the concept of what has become Millennium Park?

VR: I was head of Friends of the Parks' board and, at the same time, my husband George was head of what is now the Metropolitan Planning Council. We worked with many people on the "Lakefront Gardens," which called for using the air-rights over the Illinois Central railroad tracks and putting a park over these lines. That effort was not immediately success-

ful, but the basic idea we had was taken up by Millennium Park, and that happened this past decade. It was an idea whose result was a long time coming, but Friends of the Parks was involved right at the beginning of it. It took a shift in the mind-set of people to get the job done.

LW: This concept had several members on a committee, including Friends of the Parks. It really came together when Mayor Daley actively sought to get the air-rights from the railroad.

Do you think Friends of the Parks is still relevant today?

VR: I am sure it is.

What guidance would you give to concerned citizens today who want to participate in positive change in their local park?

LW: First, you have to be active and really get with the people who are responsible for the changes you'd like to see happen. Second, do not get discouraged by the response of the bureaucracy and, third, build alliances and partnerships, but be non-confrontational.

VR: I'd say "Join Friends of the Parks, and get involved." 🌱

Volunteers Pitch in During National Public Lands Day

More than 400 volunteers joined together with Friends of the Parks and other environmental organizations on September 24th to improve Chicago and Cook County natural areas as part of National Public Lands Day, the nation's largest hands-on volunteer effort to improve and enhance the public lands Americans enjoy. With hundreds of adults, children, families and seniors working throughout the county and city, organizers deemed this year's effort a big success!

Employees from **ShoreBank**, along with thirty students from the **University of Chicago** beautified Rainbow Beach Park (3111 E. 77th Street). Volunteers cleaned two playgrounds, removed fifteen bags of litter and mulched more than fifty trees.

Volunteers also helped at Gompers Park, North Pond in Lincoln Park and Winnemac Park - all three recognized as Chicago Park District natural areas.

The Forest Preserve District targeted fourteen sites for stewardship work, five of which held large-scale clean-ups (Beaubien Woods, Dan Ryan Woods, LaBagh Woods, Sommes Woods and Thatcher Woods).

Over the weekend, volunteers removed 118 bags of litter, collected 10,000



Team leaders from Carver Military Academy stack garbage bags into a truck after cleaning up Beaubien Woods.

prairie seeds for restoration purposes, removed an estimated 5,350 invasive shrub and tree stems, and created and improved miles of trails. Volunteers contributed 1,279 hours, valued at \$23,000 to our community!

At Beaubien Woods where Friends of the Parks is working extensively to involve the community in environmental stewardship, sixty dedicated volunteers participated in a clean-up. Most of the volunteers were high school students from **Carver Military Academy**, many of whom had never been to a forest preserve. They witnessed native mussels and great blue herons for the first time. We are proud to report that the students picked up 77



Sixty Carver Military Academy students pose for one last group shot at Beaubien Woods during National Public Lands Day. The students picked up over 77 bags of litter during the event.

bags of litter and removed many old tires, which can harbor mosquito larvae and, therefore, the West Nile virus.

Friends of the Parks, along with Friends of the Forest Preserves and others, presented a report on National Public Lands Day to the Forest Preserve District Board on October 6th highlighting all the great work volunteers are doing in the District. We hope to build upon this great success for next year. 🌱

New Junior Board Hosts Fundraiser

Friends of the Parks' new Junior Board hosted its first fundraiser at Goose Island Brew Pub on October 20th. This group of young professionals was formed to create outreach to members and help to raise funds for Friends of the Parks' programs. The event at Goose Island raised over \$1,200 for Friends of the Parks' Seed Grant Program, which disburses money to park advisory councils and Adopt-a-Park groups for locally-designed projects.



Friends of the Parks' newly-formed Junior Board hosted its first fundraiser at Goose Island Brew Pub on October 20.

Members of the Junior Board include Christine Baron, Buck Betten, Jessica Bouboulis, Louis Brownstone, Kristin Groce, Erica Hewes, Angela Leontis, Abbie Perelman, Kate Piercy, Kristin Pollock, Alison Price, Elizabeth Quadros, James Rich, Juan Rodriguez, Debbie Solomon and Lindy Stanley.

If you'd like more information about this dynamic group, please contact Friends of the Parks' Board member and Junior Board founder, James Rich, at jamesrich@gmail.com. 🌱

Friends of the Parks' Fall Frolic Takes Bicyclists Through North Branch Trail of the Forest Preserves

Nearly two hundred bicyclists joined Friends of the Parks for our second annual Fall Frolic bicycle ride through the North Branch Bike Trail of the Cook County Forest Preserves. The event took place Sunday morning, September 18. Riders mounted their bikes at Caldwell Woods (Devon and Milwaukee Avenues) and headed north to the Chicago Botanic Garden for a leisurely and scenic fall ride through the Forest Preserves. At the Botanic Garden, riders were treated



Two hundred bicyclists enjoyed Friends of the Parks' second annual Fall Frolic ride.



Fall Frolic participants started their ride at Caldwell Woods, then headed north to the Chicago Botanic Garden for a scenic trip through the Forest Preserves.

to complimentary garden tours, refreshments and snacks. Participants then headed back south, ending the event at Caldwell Woods.

Gorgeous weather, enthusiastic riders and a great partnership with the Chicago

Botanic Garden contributed to the success of the event. Riders seemed eager to participate in the event next year. Save the date: Sunday, September 17, 2006.

Members ride at a discounted rate! 🌿

Dominican University Moves Forward with Plans To Build Driveway Through Thatcher Woods

Dominican University's plans to construct a driveway through a small segment of the Thatcher Woods Forest Preserve moved a step closer to reality. The Village of River Forest's Development Review Board approved Dominican's plans for the driveway at its last meeting in October.

This triangle of forest preserve land has been under ownership dispute for a

number of years. The University claims they own the land. This is in spite of the fact that the four-acre triangle has been actively managed and protected as Forest Preserve land for over 60 years.

Friends of the Parks and other environmental organizations dispute Dominican's claims and have asked the Forest Preserve District to appoint an independent legal arbitrator to settle

the dispute once and for all. According to Cook County Commissioner Larry Suffredin, Cook County Board President John Stroger did appoint a special council, retired Judge George Leighton, to look into the issue on October 6th. No word yet on when the judge will rule on the dispute. However, Friends of the Parks will be closely monitoring this issue as it unfolds. 🌿

Community Service Days (cont'd)

Resource staff for treating the out-of-town and local volunteers to lunch.

A newly-formed park advisory council, organized only in September, held their first playground improvement day. The **Eckert Park Advisory Council** recruited other community members to install ten loads of fibar soft surface material to the children's playground, thereby greatly improving safety.

In October, more than thirty students from **Northwestern University** made a difference at Pottowatomie Park by spruc-

ing up the playground with fibar soft surface material.

Friends of the Parks' newly-formed **Junior Board** cleaned Touhy Herbert Park and placed new fibar soft surface material to make the park safer. The newly-formed **Touhy Herbert Advisory Council** was impressed with the work completed by this small group.

If your group would like to make a difference by volunteering in a local park or forest preserve, please contact Mary Eileen Sullivan, Friends of the Parks' Director of Volunteers, at sullivanme@fotp.org or (312) 857-2757 extension 13. 🌱



Students from University of Chicago pitched in by picking up litter at Rainbow Beach Park.



Collins High School students learned to care for the trees at Douglas Park.

Events calendar

THURSDAY, DECEMBER 8

12:15PM

Friends of the Parks will host a Creative Living in the City lecture titled "**The Impact of the Illinois Central Railroad on the Lakefront System.**" The history of Chicago parallels the history of transportation in the U.S. Located at the confluence of Lake Michigan and the Chicago River, Chicago relied heavily on boat transportation in its earliest years. Railroads were the second transportation system to shape the City of Chicago, particularly the Illinois Central Railroad, which had an impact on Chicago's lakefront through the 21st Century. The lecture by author and historian Dennis Cremin, free to the public, will be held at the Chicago Cultural Center (78 E. Washington, Chicago).

MONDAY, DECEMBER 12

7:00PM - 8:30PM

DECEMBER GARDEN WALK AND SOCIAL

While the snow is blowing outside and most Chicago gardens are brown, you can help create an exciting visual garden walk in December. The Wicker Park Garden Club will create an indoor garden walk at the Wicker Park Fieldhouse (1425 N. Damen) that includes your home gardens and/or community gardening projects photographed at their best in the summer of 2005. Interested? Submit 5-10 electronic photos by November 15. Organizers will create a power point presentation and will assist ten participants in their 8-10 minute presentation. For more information and reservations, contact The Wicker Park Garden Club at wpgarden@aol.com or (773) 278-9075.

THURSDAY, JANUARY 19, 2006

Friends of the Parks will co-host an architectural symposium to discuss "The future of Chicago's Lakefront and its Harbors". The lecture, free to the public, will be held at the Chicago Architecture Foundation, 224 S. Michigan Avenue, 5:30-7:00 p.m.

THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 2, 2006

NOON

Friends of the Parks will host its 31st Annual Meeting and Awards Luncheon at the Chicago Cultural Center (G.A.R. Hall, 78 E. Washington, Chicago). Joseph Wynn, Director of the Indianapolis Parks and Recreation Department, will be our keynote speaker. For more information, please contact Sarah Dunn at dunns@fotp.org or (312) 857-2757 extension 14.



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Illinois Enacts "Right to Know"


Governor Rod R. Blagojevich signed into law environmental legislation (SB 241) providing Illinois residents with "right-to-know" protection about potentially dangerous local environmental threats. The law gives the Illinois Environmental Protection Agency (IEPA) additional power to expedite cleanups when pollutants cause an imminent threat.

The new law also requires polluters to bear the costs of measures taken to inform the affected public of exposure risks from off-site contamination.

For newly identified contamination, IEPA will evaluate the scientific information available to identify the responsible parties for any "off-site" spill or release which poses a significant public health threat, and work with the state and local health departments to notify area residents. For existing sites, IEPA will review case files to determine if there is a poten-

tial off-site public health risk that warrants additional notification.

The specific process and range of notification tools have not been completed by the IEPA. They could include direct mail notices, phone calls, door-to-door visits, small group meetings, and public service announcements and flyers, depending on the type and nature of contamination. The new law makes polluters responsible for reasonable notification costs.

The other key part of the legislation gives IEPA an authority to issue "administrative orders" compelling responsible parties to cleanup or contain hazardous contaminants released into the environment. Previously, the Agency had to ask the Attorney General to seek a court order in such cases or refer the matter to the U.S. EPA for a federal administrative order, which potentially could take many years. Environmental agencies in most other states already had such authority. 

We'd Like to Hear From You!
Friends of the Parks helps residents 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

Save the Date!
Parks Ball
Friday, May 12, 2006
Navy Pier Ballroom
Honoree:
Richard H. Driehaus