



Friends of the Parks works to protect, improve and expand Chicago's parks and forest preserves in Cook County.

# Friends of the Parks Advocate

www.fotp.org

Fall 2007

## Proposed Chicago Children's Museum Design Would Violate Important A. Montgomery Ward Rulings

Officials at the Chicago Children's Museum invited Friends of the Parks to review three architectural design iterations for the proposed museum in Grant Park. We examined the museum plans and evaluated whether the museum's proposal would conform to the two legal covenants governing its location in Grant Park. Those two legal strictures include the A. Montgomery Ward court decisions and the Lake Michigan and Chicago Lakefront Protection Ordinance.

In early testimony presented on February 8, 2006, Friends of the Parks stated that while museums are appropriate in parks, the final architectural design for the Chicago Children's Museum would need to comply with the two legal requirements. Policy 5 of the Lake Michigan and Chicago Lakefront Protection Ordinance (LPO) states: "Maintain and improve the formal character and open water vista of Grant Park with no new above-ground structure permitted." To comply with the LPO, the Chicago Children's Museum must build below ground.

Secondly, the A. Montgomery Ward court decisions govern all of Grant Park from Randolph Street on the north to

Roosevelt Road on the south. That includes the Illinois Supreme Court's ruling that Grant Park must remain "Forever Open, Clear and Free of any Buildings." To comply with the Ward court decisions, again, new construction must remain below ground.

Architects for the Chicago Children's Museum have twice revised the museum plan. After assessing the latest museum design in September, Friends of the Parks

wrote to museum officials reminding them that "the proposed 20 foot-high, 3,800 square foot glass entryway remains a building structure and does not conform to the A. Montgomery Ward court decisions."

In sum, Friends of the Parks does not support the Children's Museum as currently proposed for Grant Park because it violates the important laws created to protect that park. 🌿



*Volunteers from Motorola cleared buckthorn and saved trees during a work day at Busse Woods. See page 7 for story.*

# Mayor Daley Appoints Gery Chico to Park District Board, Commissioners Elect Chico Board President

At the annual meeting of the Chicago Park District Board of Commissioners on October 17, board members elected Gery Chico, newly-approved park commissioner, to serve as president. Mr. Chico replaces past president Maria Saldana.

In his statement to the City Council's Parks and Recreation Committee, Mr. Chico spoke of his childhood experiences using neighborhood parks for recreation. He highlighted the importance of parks for after-school programming and for recreational opportunities for children. Mr. Chico previously served at the President of the Chicago Board of Education

where he devoted years to the children and youth of Chicago by working to improve the schools and educational opportunities.

The Park District Board of Commissioners is a seven-member board appointed by Mayor Richard M. Daley and approved by City Council to develop policy, review and approve contracts and work on behalf of Chicago taxpayers. The current board members include President Gery Chico, Vice-President Robert Pickens, Dr. Margaret Burroughs, Laird Koldyke, Reverend Matos-Real, Cindy Mitchell and Rouhy Shalabi. Friends

of the Parks testified in support of Mr. Chico's appointment.

We urge you to communicate your park needs to President Chico and the other six park board commissioners by writing to them at the Chicago Park District, 541 N. Fairbanks, Chicago, IL 60611.

Friends of the Parks plans to host a reception for park advisory council members and activists in the near future to welcome Gery Chico. For more information, call Friends of the Parks at (312) 857-2757 extension 15 and visit our website at [www.fotp.org](http://www.fotp.org) for more details. 🌿

## Public Policy at Issue with Latin School Soccer Field Plan

On Friday, November 2, a contractor hired by The Latin School of Chicago began constructing an artificial turf soccer field in Lincoln Park despite strong opposition from nearby residents, local community groups and Friends of the Parks. By starting construction, Latin School apparently hopes to render moot Aldermen Vi Daley, Brendan Reilly and Tom Tunney's proposed resolution to have public review of the Latin School soccer field proposal at the next City Council's Parks and Recreation Committee.

On October 25, 2006, with no public hearings or notice to the neighborhood or to the broader community, the Chicago Park District approved a contract for Latin School to construct an artificial turf soccer field at the south end of Lincoln Park. Neither Latin School nor Park District officials presented any plan to Lincoln Park community organizations or Friends of the Parks.

Crain's Chicago Business later reported on the contract agreement with Latin School. Crain's reporter Greg Hinz analyzed the contract and wrote an article with the headline "Prestigious Prep School Lands Sweet Deal for New Lincoln Park

Field." Additional newspaper articles brought the issue to light and community groups voiced their opposition to the use of public land for a private school. In September, after months of community activism, Alderman Vi Daley and Alderman Brendan Reilly held a public meeting at Latin School where hundreds of citizens voiced their opposition to the Latin School proposal. The aldermen followed this meeting with a City Council resolution on the matter.

After the construction started, Alderman Vi Daley called together representatives from community groups including the Lincoln Park Advisory Council, the Lincoln Park Conservancy, Gold Coast Neighbors and Friends of the Parks to meet with Park District and Latin School officials to review the construction and usage plans. While Friends of the Parks made it clear that it does not support the policy of leasing public park land to a private institution for their priority use, the Park District reiterated that the contract had been approved and the soccer field project is moving ahead.

Alderman Daley and the park groups insisted on changes to the signed agree-

ment which include a reduction of Latin's use time by 10%, a complete landscaping plan, a significant number of new trees, retaining the configuration of the running path and the addition of a drinking fountain to the south of the soccer field.

Looking forward, Friends of the Parks encourages the Park District to develop a policy and plan that calls for the District to construct public soccer fields that are open for permitted use by the general public. 🌿



*Despite strong opposition, The Latin School of Chicago wants to construct an artificial turf soccer field at the south end of Lincoln Park.*

# Fall School Year Sees Expansion of Friends of the Parks' Exciting Environmental Education Programs

Friends of the Parks' Environmental Education program features exciting outdoor class experiences for both elementary and high school students.

Elementary school students learn environmental science at two lakefront locations, Montrose Point on the north lakefront and the South Shore Cultural Center on the south side. On fieldtrips to the lakefront, elementary students in grades 3-8 are introduced to Chicago's lakefront ecology as they explore the Magic Hedge and South Shore Cultural Center's natural dunes areas. The students focus on perfecting observation skills and using different senses. They create nature journals to record their experiences for future classroom discussions. So far, classes have encountered migratory birds, falcons

and even two bats sleeping on a tree in the Magic Hedge!

High school students are engaged in Friends of the Parks' After School Matters programs through the Earth Team and CYCLE (Chicago's Youth Changing Local Environments) programs. Earth Teams offer apprenticeship opportunities for 125 teens to work at five locations, including Calumet Park, Horner Park, Humboldt Park, Norwood Park and Roosevelt High School. Students learn about and improve their local park environment. In addition to daily after-school environmental activities and projects, Earth Team teens are linked with local environmental organizations and professionals in Chicago. Fieldtrips so far have included a behind-the-scenes look at Lincoln Park Zoo,



*Apprentices from the Roosevelt High School Earth Team work hard at Edgebrook Woods.*

fishing with the Illinois Department of Natural Resources' Chicago Urban Fishing Program and several trips to the Forest Preserve District of Cook County for restoration workdays.

Through the CYCLE program, teens earn required service learning credits at one of two locations, Bowen High School and Douglas Park. 🌱


## Friends of the Parks Seeks Park Steward Award Nominations

Friends of the Parks celebrates citizen involvement in park advocacy, maintenance, monitoring, planning and greening. Each year, we recognize park advocates who have made the most significant contributions to Chicago's parks. We now seek nominations for the 2007 Annual Park Steward Awards.

Friends of the Parks will present this year's awards at our Annual Meeting on Thursday, February 7, 2008 at the Chicago Cultural Center.

We encourage members and friends to make nominations in the following categories:

- INDIVIDUAL
- CORPORATE
- PARK ADVISORY COUNCIL OR COMMUNITY GROUP
- ADVOCACY
- LEGISLATOR
- LEON DESPRES LIFETIME COMMITMENT TO PARKS AND PRESERVES AWARD
- SMOKY SAKURADA FRIEND OF FRIENDS AWARD
- OUTSTANDING CHICAGO PARK DISTRICT EMPLOYEE AWARD
- OUTSTANDING COOK COUNTY FOREST PRESERVE DISTRICT EMPLOYEE AWARD

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.

You may also email your nomination(s) to Amy Donatell, Membership Director, at donatella@fotp.org. Please indicate "Annual Awards Nomination" in the subject line. Deadline for submissions is Friday, December 7, 2007.

# Friends of the Parks Hosts 19th Annual After-Midnight Bicycle Ride Through Chicago for 8,500 Night Owls

Friends of the Parks hosted its 19th annual after-midnight bicycle ride to benefit our citywide parks advocacy work.

More than 8,500 bicyclists participated in McDonald's L.A.T. E. Ride, presented by Sports Authority and Peoples Gas & North Shore Gas, on Saturday night/Sunday morning July 15. Riders began their 25-mile trek from beautiful Buckingham Fountain. The route went, roughly, from Buckingham Fountain northwest to Foster and Pulaski, east to Foster Avenue Beach and then south along the spectacular lakefront bicycle path back to Buckingham Fountain. Many stopped along the lakefront to watch the sunrise.

Participants cycled past skyscrapers, heard shouts of "Opaah!" in Greek Town and shared high-fives with onlookers along the way.

Many thanks to our 40-person volunteer planning committee who worked year-round to help plan the route, solicit sponsors and donors and coordinate event details. Special thanks to committee member Lynn Wier for her graphic design work and to Jeff Goeters for his work on the event website, [www.lateride.org](http://www.lateride.org). Congratulations to Yvette Diaz DeLeon for winning this year's event t-shirt design contest.



*During the ride, many participants stop along the beautiful lakefront to view the sunrise.*

We'd like to thank our major sponsors for their incredible support:

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*During the last five miles of the course, cyclists ride along Chicago's spectacular lakefront bicycle path from Foster Avenue south through the Museum Campus. Many catch a glimpse of the sunrise toward the end of their trek.*

## **In-Kind Contributors**

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## **Special Thanks**

**Chicago Police Department** Special Events; Commanders, Neighborhood Relations and Officers in whose districts we rode

**Chicago Park District** Permit Department; Grant Park, Lakefront and River Park staffs

**City of Chicago** Mayor's Office of Special Events; Departments of Bridges, Streets & Sanitation, Traffic and Transportation

The 20th anniversary McDonald's L.A.T.E. Ride, hosted by and benefiting Friends of the Parks, is tentatively scheduled for Saturday night/Sunday morning July 13. (As soon as the Taste of Chicago 2008 schedule is announced, we will know our official date.) Please join us for this incredible event. Log onto [www.lateride.org](http://www.lateride.org) for more details. 🌞

# Friends Indeed

## Major Contributors April 1, 2007 through October 31, 2007

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

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# Friends of the Parks' VIP (Volunteers in Parks) Program Recruits Park Lovers to Improve Parks and Preserves

## Volunteers Abound on National Public Lands Day

On Saturday, September 29, hundreds of volunteers turned out to beautify our parks, forest preserves and natural areas for National Public Lands Day. The Forest Preserve District of Cook County hosted thirteen sites including Bartel Grasslands, Beaubien Woods, Cermak Woods, Dropseed Prairie, The Grove, Harms Flatwoods, Iron Oaks Preserve, Kickapoo Woods, Lincoln Marsh Natural Area, Mount Forest Island, Portage Woods, Whistler Woods and Wolf Road Prairie Nature Preserve. The Chicago Park District hosted two sites including North Pond in Lincoln Park and the Major Taylor Bicycle Trail.

Friends of the Parks extends our warmest thanks to the Ford Motor Company for their support of this year's Public Lands Day Parks and Preserves Stewardship Day.



*Friends of the Parks led volunteers from Northern Trust and community children during a clean-up at Brainerd Park.*

## Chicago Area Corporations and Universities Volunteer For Community Service Days

Friends of the Parks in recent months organized and hosted twenty community service days for area universities, corporations, national organizations and high schools.

Country western singer Eric Church, a major proponent of environmental causes and tree planting, brought forty of his fans out to mulch trees in Portage Park (4100 N. Long).

*(continued on page 7)*



*On National Public Lands Day, volunteers helped clean up Whistler Woods with Friends of the Parks' staff members Rebecca Blazer (far right) and Maria Dmyterko (far left).*



*Volunteers from Chubb celebrate their work on the playground at Garfield Park.*

We thank the following companies, schools and groups for serving as stewards for the environment. Their work on behalf of our parks and preserves makes a difference in Chicago.

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 Mann Park and Palmer Park  
 Busse Woods  
 Brainerd Park  
 Garfield Park  
 Union Park  
 Senior Citizens Park  
 Ma Houston Park  
 Eckhart Park

## Volunteers (cont'd)



*Motorola CEO Ed Zander pitched in on Motorola Global Day of Service at Busse Woods, where Friends of the Parks organized a major clean-up day for the corporation's employees.*

### Motorola's Global Day of Service

#### Focused on Busse Woods Preserve

The Motorola Corporation, a Schaumburg-based firm, celebrated community service on a global scale by designating October 10 as a day in which Motorola employees work internationally on community service projects. In forty countries around the globe, 9,000 Motorola employees and their leaders donated time to work on community service projects.

In Chicago, Motorola selected Friends of the Parks to coordinate a large community service effort. A week prior to the event, Motorola sent fifty employees to train its lead volunteers. Over 600 employees from their Schaumburg headquarters spent the day at Busse Woods cutting buckthorn, pruning shrubs, mulching trees and picking up litter. The volunteers moved over 100 yards of mulch to treat over 250 trees. In addition, they pruned hundreds of shrubs and trees along the walking/bicycle and picnic grove paths. Nearly 400 of the volunteers assisted the Forest Preserve District in removing the damaging, invasive buckthorn, a European plant originally introduced to the U.S. for ornamental hedgerows. Buckthorn is a small shrub that spreads quickly and grows low to the ground with dense foliage that effectively eliminates all native vegetation.

Friends of the Parks commends Motorola for its Global Day of Service efforts to give back to the community. 🌱



*During a major clean-up day organized by Friends of the Parks, Motorola employees volunteered to clear buckthorn in order to create a beautiful view of the lake at Busse Woods.*

## Earth Team Teens Fight Downhill Battle (Against Erosion) on Chicago River Bluff

During the summer of 2007, Friends of the Parks piloted a new addition to its apprenticeship program for high school students, funded by After School Matters. Previously, Friends of the Parks hired teens to participate in four park-based "Earth Teams" that tackled environmental challenges in their neighborhoods. This year, in partnership with the Forest Preserve District of Cook County and expert restorationist Ken Schaffer of Oakton Community College, we formed the first-ever forest preserve-based Earth Team, based in Edgebrook Woods on Chicago's Northwest Side.



*Cajette and Keenan saw buckthorn stakes to help support the terracing.*

The Edgebrook Woods Earth Team consisted of 25 teens who worked five days a week for six weeks to explore biodiversity concepts, learn ecological restoration techniques and complete a challenging erosion control project in which they restored a small, badly-degrading river bluff overlooking a floodplain of the Chicago River.

Astonishing quantities of buckthorn and other invasive shrubs and small trees had choked out most of the hillside's native grasses, wildflowers and baby oaks, leaving bare dirt that was washing away with every rainfall. To remedy this problem, first the teens carefully—and, eventually, quite skillfully!—wielded loppers and bow saws to cut down the invasive

species. Next, they shaped and staked the cut brush into a series of elegant terraces spanning the hillside, finally topping the project off by scattering seeds from native grasses and wildflowers in the mini catch-basins formed by each terrace. With the rains and snows of this fall and winter, soil will accumulate in the terraces, providing a fertile launching pad from which the eager seedlings can shoot up in the spring to reclaim the forest floor, and ensure the continued existence of the river bluff and its unique community of plants and animals.

The success of this newest Earth Team is evidenced not only by the results of the teens' restoration project, but also by the extraordinarily high attendance rates of participants – and the friends of participants, a handful of whom thought it was so great that they began showing up regularly to help out as volunteers!

Plans are now underway to add another new forest preserve-based Earth Team next summer based at a South Side preserve. For more information, contact Cassie Hatzfeld, Education Program Director, at [chatzfeld.fotp@yahoo.com](mailto:chatzfeld.fotp@yahoo.com) or (312) 857-2757 extension 20. 🌱



*The Edgebrook Earth Team completed terraces, providing a fertile launching pad from which eager seedlings can shoot up in the spring and reclaim the forest floor.*

# Neighborhood Park News: Activities Flourish Throughout the City as Residents and Advocates Push for Green

## **Bromann Playlot Gets Facelift**

Bromann Playlot (5400 N. Broadway), which recently received a facelift with new equipment and safe soft surfacing, will almost double in size thanks to the acquisition of two parcels of land to the north. Alderman Mary Ann Smith, 48th Ward, arranged for the acquisition to provide additional green space for the Edgewater Community. The Corporation for Open Lands, a non-profit land trust, acquired the land and building at 5406 N. Broadway. The Community Development Commission acquired the vacant parcel at 5408 N. Broadway.

## **Contract Approved for Logan Square Skateboard Park**

The Park District Board of Commissioners approved a contract totaling \$500,000 to construct what will be Chicago's third permanent skateboard park. The Park District will construct the skate park in a unique location, under the elevated structure of the Kennedy Expressway in Logan Square. With Logan Square designated as a park poor community with few available tracts of land, the hardscape skate park plan creatively makes use of Illinois Department of Transportation land. Mark Heller, a Logan Square activist, led community efforts to support the design, funding, and approval of the skate park. Kudos to Mark and the Park District!

## **Washburne Culinary Institute Offers Classes at South Shore Cultural Center**

The Washburne Culinary Institute conducts adult cooking classes at its full-service park location on the third floor of the South Shore Cultural Center (7059 South Lake Shore Drive). If you have not seen the Washburne facility, you have a treat in store. Gleaming with stainless steel appliances and a state-of-the-art culinary school, the South Shore Cultural Center Culinary Institute served as the Washburne Culinary Institute for three years while the permanent institution was being constructed as part of the new Kennedy-King College on West 63rd Street. With the opening of the Washburne Culinary

Institute in the Kennedy-King College this summer, the South Shore Cultural Center location has become a center for Adult and Continuing Education Culinary Classes.

Cooking classes take place on Saturdays (9:00am-1:00pm) and on Wednesday evenings (6:00pm-10:00pm). Classes are \$45 each or \$100 for three classes. Upcoming classes include:

November 17: Thanksgiving Favorites  
January 9 and 12: French Bistro Cooking  
January 26: Aphrodisiac Dinner  
February 13 and 16: Winter Desserts  
March 12 and 15: Classical Sauces

To obtain a complete listing of courses for 2008 or to register for classes, contact Anne McDougal at (773) 602-5487 or at [amcdougal@ccc.edu](mailto:amcdougal@ccc.edu).

## **Park District to Enlarge and Rebuild Kedvale Park**

The Chicago Park District will expand and reconstruct Kedvale Park (4134 W. Hirsch) in 2008. At the October board meeting of the Park District, park commissioners approved a \$1.5 million contract to redesign the park and add a new children's playground. The Park District recently acquired a parcel of land and closed off an adjacent street to enlarge the park.

Alderman Emma Mitts, 32nd Ward, a proponent of parks in her ward, attended the Board meeting to support the expansion of Kedvale Park.

## **Park District to Expand Jefferson Park in Pilsen Neighborhood**

During its October meeting, the Park District Board approved a contract for architectural and landscape design for Jefferson Park (1640 South Jefferson). The contract fees include a community involvement process, as well. The existing Jefferson Park totals 1.18 acres, and through the acquisition of a neighboring lot and the closing of an adjacent street, the park will expand.

## **State Lawmakers Secure Dollars for Parks in Their Districts**

Kudos to State Representative Marlow Colvin for securing \$3.45 million to match Chicago Park District capital dollars to

construct a new fieldhouse in Jesse Owens Park (2032 E. 88th Street), in the Calumet Heights community area. The advisory council worked closely with Representative Colvin to help secure funding. Beginning a decade ago, the Jesse Owens Park Advisory Council documented a need for a Park District recreation center in the 17-acre park. Meanwhile, City and Park District officials identified the Calumet Heights community area as underserved by parks. While visitors to the Jesse Owens Park heavily use the outdoor baseball fields, football and soccer fields, tennis court and children's playground, they have no indoor facility for recreation or fitness classes. With money now in place, the Park District will construct the fieldhouse.

Speaker of the House Michael Madigan secured \$3.45 million to match Park District capital dollars to construct a new park fieldhouse in Taylor-Lauridsen Park (647 W. Root) in the New City community area.

Other elected state officials who worked on behalf of their constituents to earmark \$500,000 or more in state funds for capital improvements in parks within their districts include: State Representatives Toni Berrios, Barbara Flynn Currie, John D'Amico, John Fritchey, Sara Feigenholtz, Esther Golar, Kevin Joyce and Larry McKeon, and Senators Iris Martinez and Donne.

## **JJR Awarded Northerly Island Planning Grant**

The Park District has considered many plans for Northerly Island Park, the current location for an out-of-scale music pavilion. In October, the Park District awarded a professional services contract to JJR, L.L.C. to develop a park plan for Northerly Island. JJR will collect ideas and past plans and review existing plans and their stated programmatic goals. Then the firm will synthesize the goals and analyze preliminary costs. All phases of the planning process must involve the community. Finally, JJR will produce a framework plan for Northerly Island. A five-person Park District evaluation team selected JJR, L.L.C. from ten submitted bids. 🌱

# Friends of the Parks' Membership and Advocacy Expands

## Sally Chappell Talks at Lincoln Park Conservatory

Noted author Sally Kitt Chappell spoke to a group of Friends of the Parks' supporters on Wednesday evening, October 25 at the Lincoln Park Conservatory. Sally narrated a slide show highlighting portions of her new book, *Chicago's Urban Nature: A Guide to the City's Architecture and Landscape* (© 2007, University of Chicago Press). It is a wonderful collection of striking photos and descriptions of some of Chicago's most inviting sites. Special thanks to Steve Zelner and the Lincoln Park Conservancy for their assistance in presenting this event.



*Author Sally Kitt Chappell spoke at a recent Friends of the Parks' donor event on October 25. She narrated a slide show based on her recently-released book, Chicago's Urban Nature: A Guide to the City's Architecture and Landscape.*

## Friends of the Parks' Membership Grows by 20% in Fiscal Year 2007

Friends of the Parks had an exciting year with an increase of 500 new members! As our membership base grows, Friends of the Parks has a stronger voice on park and preserve issues that matter to you. We thank all of our loyal supporters who have helped get the word out about our advocacy and volunteer work. Thanks and welcome to all of our new members who have shown their passion about parks and preserves and have endorsed Friends of the Parks by joining our advocacy organization. We hope to

continue to build our membership base in 2008! If you or someone you know would like to become a member of Friends of the Parks, please call (312) 857-2757 extension 14 or email our Membership Director, Amy Donatell, at donatella@fotp.org.

## Friends of the Parks Receives Taproot Foundation Grant

Over the past year, Friends of the Parks has been working with the Taproot Foundation on a unique type of grant. Most foundations provide support to non-profits through cash grants. Taproot instead provides "Service Grants" to charity groups. The Foundation coordinates pro-bono engagements by seasoned professionals to address needs of small and medium sized-nonprofits, with specific help in marketing, human resources or information technology.

Friends of the Parks qualified for Taproot's most coveted grant: Key Messages and Brand Strategy. A team of five professionals in the advertising and marketing industries volunteered to work with

a team of our board and staff to review the "brand" of Friends of the Parks, and make recommendations on ways to enhance the message we bring to the public. Over the next few months, we will use many of their recommended techniques to enhance our public relations and marketing ability.

Aaron Hurst founded the Taproot Foundation in San Francisco in 2001. Hurst followed the inspiring example of his grandfather, Joseph E. Slater, founder of the Peace Corps. Taproot strengthens non-profits by engaging business professionals in service. A "taproot," the core root of a plant, gathers nutrients from lateral roots and delivers them to a plant to enable it to flourish. The Taproot Foundation sees itself as a taproot for the nonprofit sector, drawing nutrients from the community and delivering them to nonprofits to enable them to thrive.

We thank the Taproot Foundation for its support. You can find more information on the Taproot Foundation on their website: <http://www.taprootfoundation.org>.

*(continued on page 11)*

## Dr. Margaret Burroughs Honored By Friends and Fans on Her 90th Birthday

Friends, supporters, admirers and fans of Dr. Margaret T.G. Burroughs honored her as a cultural icon of Chicago as part of her 90th birthday celebration in November. Dr. Burroughs founded the DuSable Museum of African American History in her garage and led its growth and expansion into a world-renowned museum in Washington Park. In addition, Dr. Burroughs is a devoted teacher, author, and historian; an accomplished artist and poet; and a Chicago Park District Commissioner.

Dr. Burroughs' birthday celebration lasted three days, beginning with a Legacy Breakfast at Pearl's Restaurant, followed by a bus tour of the important historic points in Dr. Burroughs' long and successful career, and culminating with a luncheon in Abbott Park. On the second day, friends honored Dr. Burroughs as an educator, poet and author as students pre-

sented their poetry, essays and artwork. Finally, on the third day, November 3, the DuSable Museum of African American History celebrated Dr. Burroughs as its founder with a gala celebration. 🌿



*Admirers, friends and supporters helped Dr. Margaret T.G. Burroughs celebrate her 90th birthday.*

# Friends of the Parks Supports Restoration and Proper Land Management in Cook County Forest Preserves

More than thirty years ago, the Forest Preserve District of Cook County and trained stewardship volunteers began ecological restoration work in the woodlands, wetlands and prairies of our preserve system to halt the encroachment of invasive plants and shrubs. These aggressive shrubs and small trees were suffocating native trees and plants, rapidly degrading the preserves' ecosystems and causing the disappearance of many animal and plant populations.

Then ten years ago, a small group of people on Chicago's North Side pressured local officials to stop ecological restoration in our newly-healing forest preserves. Their efforts snowballed into a countywide moratorium on restoration that allowed this public land to be lost again to neglect and invasive trees and brush. Eventually, restoration resumed on all but five forest preserve sites, which were located along the North Branch of the Chicago River. Last fall the moratorium was finally lifted from the last remaining sites. Now that the moratorium has been lifted, this same group of anti-restorationists are once again working to halt the restoration practices that are critical to the survival of our native prairies, woodlands and wetlands - and the thousands of species of wildlife that depend on them.

On behalf of this small group of restoration antagonists, three aldermen have proposed an ordinance to prohibit the use of ecological burns in forest preserves within city limits. They are Alderman Margaret Laurino of the 39th Ward, Alderman Brian Doherty of the 41st Ward and Alderman Pat Levar of the 45th Ward.

An ordinance such as this would have a devastating effect on the long-term health of our forest preserves, because controlled burning is essential to successfully restoring native ecosystems. In accordance with nationally-accepted, scientifically-based management techniques, the Forest Preserve District of Cook County has been using fire to maintain natural areas throughout the preserves for more than thirty years without incident. Fire is used in two ways: 1) controlled burns, which are conducted by trained professionals after weeks of careful planning

and which reduce invasive brush and promote reproduction of native plants; and 2) brushpile burning, which is the most cost-effective and least damaging way to dispose of the large amounts of invasive brush that must be removed manually.

In order to ensure the county's ability to manage preserves in accordance with scientifically-proven best practices, a coalition of local environmental groups including Friends of the Parks, Friends of the Forest Preserves, Illinois Chapter of the Sierra Club, Audubon Society - Chicago Region, the Nature Conservancy of Illinois, and the Chicago Wilderness Coalition are working to educate our members about restoration and to demonstrate that, contrary to what the anti-restorationists suggest, there is actually strong, broad support for land management among the people of Chicago. What you can do:

**Call or write:** Contact your Alderman and your County Commissioner to voice

your support for land management and to oppose the "Ordinance to Prohibit Open Burning in Chicago Property Lying Within Forest Preserves", **especially if you live in the 39th, 41st, or 45th Ward.** If you don't know who your representatives are, we can help. Please contact Rebecca Blazer, Director of Friends of the Parks' Forest Preserve Initiative, at (312) 857-2757 extension 17 or [blazerr@fotp.org](mailto:blazerr@fotp.org). Or visit [www.civicfootprint.org](http://www.civicfootprint.org) and enter your address in the search box.

**Learn more:** Join Friends of the Parks, Friends of the Forest Preserves, Audubon, and Sierra Club for a "Restoration 101" workshop (date to be announced soon) to help you learn more about the hows and whys of restoration and how you can help deal with the current challenges. Registration is required.

For more information, please contact Rebecca Blazer at (312) 857-2757 extension 17 or [blazer@fotp.org](mailto:blazer@fotp.org). 🌱

## Signs of Life Appear at Dunning-Read Conservation Area on City's Northwest Side

On Saturday, October 13, Dunning-Read Conservation Area volunteers took a break from their six-month marathon of cutting invasive brush and cleaning up trash at this unique preserve located at Irving Park Road and Oak Park Avenue to pose near one of the site's two newly-installed signs. The Illinois Department of Transportation produced the striking permanent signs (whose northwest maintenance yard borders the conservation area) at the behest of State Senator James DeLeo, a long-time champion for the site's protection and restoration.

Senator DeLeo is also helping the Dunning volunteers secure funding for the installation of a one-mile crushed limestone perimeter path for the site that will allow community members to use the site for walking, birding (look for the site's resident Cooper's hawk and lots of migrating birds stopping through!), enjoying other wildlife (a family of coyotes maintains a den nearby and lots of crayfish hunt in

the stream), finding native wildflowers and grasses (little patches of big bluestem, switchgrass and tall gramma grass have hung on in places and the New England asters are gorgeous!), learning about ecology and other recreational pursuits.

Volunteer workdays generally occur on the second Saturday of the month, from 9:00 a.m. until noon. To get involved, or for more information, contact volunteer leader John Videckis at (773) 205-1429. 🌱



*Dunning Conservation volunteers and Chicago-Read Mental Health Center staff members show off their eye-catching new signage.*

## Burnham Park Nature Area Gets TLC from Volunteer Stewards



Stewardship leader Pam Holy is a certified steward and helps to maintain the natural area at 47th Street in Burnham Park. With volunteer George Davis (pictured above) and other volunteers, they help to maintain this 4.5 acre site. In the summer, the natural area serves as a haven for wildflowers, tall grasses and butterflies. The native plant material and tall grasses planted by the Chicago Park District have matured into one of the city's most beautiful prairies. With a boardwalk, the prairie offers a unique tucked-away walking space for all to enjoy.

Following the example of the 47th Street stewards, Friends of the Parks would like to establish a Burnham Park Advisory Council to serve as the voice of all of Burnham Park, from 23rd Street on the north to 55th Street on the south. Burnham Park has several large projects on the books, including a new 35th Street Bridge and a proposed harbor at 31st Street, which require citizen review. If you are interested in participating on the Burnham Park Advisory Council, please call John Paul Jones, Friends of the Parks' Director of Neighborhood Parks and Community Relations, at (312) 857-2757 extension 15. 🌿

### Membership (cont'd)

#### Friends of the Parks to Award Seed Grants to Park Groups

Friends of the Parks' 2008 Seed Grant Program will award grants totaling \$15,000 to park advisory councils and Adopt-a-Park groups to improve their neighborhood park or playground or to provide programs for the community. Friends of the Parks will mail the 2008 Seed Grant applications to such councils and groups in December. To find out more about the program, log onto our website at [www.fotp.org](http://www.fotp.org)

#### Friends of the Parks Involved in "Urbanathlon"

The *Men's Health* Urbanathlon™ & Festival took place on Saturday, Octo-

ber 20. Over 2,000 people participated in the 12-mile relay race through iconic locations like Navy Pier, Northerly Island, and the stairs at Soldier Field. Some of the course challenges included leaping over the hoods of taxi cabs, crawling through cement cylinders and climbing over a six-foot wall. *Men's Health* magazine selected Friends of the Parks as one of the event's non-profit beneficiaries. The event increased park usage, promoted health and fitness and showed off Chicago's architecture. We look forward to being a part of the event next year! 🌿

## Events calendar

### WEDNESDAY, NOVEMBER 14 7:00PM

The Chicago Department of Transportation will host a public meeting at Sixth Grace Church (35th Street and Cottage Grove Avenue) to present plans for a new pedestrian/bicycle bridge at 35th Street over Lake Shore Drive. The city selected the beautifully-designed bridge through an architectural competition.

### THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 7 NOON-1:30PM

Friends of the Parks will host its 33rd Annual Meeting and Awards Luncheon to present awards and to celebrate the work of individuals, park advisory councils, organizations and legislators to improve and protect parks and preserves. Friends of the Parks will hold the luncheon in the GAR Room at the Chicago Cultural Center (78 E. Washington). For ticket information, call (312) 857-2757, extension 14.

### FRIDAY, MAY 9, 2008

Join Friends of the Parks for our annual Parks Ball "Swingin' in the Parks - Let's Play!" black tie gala. The event will be held in the Grand Ballroom of Navy Pier and will feature an exciting live auction, silent auction, sit-down dinner and dancing! Our 2008 honoree is football great and park lover Gale Sayers. Don't miss it! For more information, contact Nancy Minster Swabb, Events Director, at (312) 857-2757 extension 11 or log onto [www.fotp.org](http://www.fotp.org).



Participants celebrate at the finish line of the Urbanathlon in Grant Park.



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## Sustainable Englewood Project Launches Greenway Tours

In the Englewood neighborhood, citizens and activists are eager to expand urban recreation opportunities and want to develop the area's vast amount of vacant land for uses other than housing.

On a recent Green Development Tour hosted by Friends of the Parks, community leaders visited potential sites for nature trails, water activity parks and open spaces targeted for food production. The Sustainable Englewood Project—in cooperation with Friends of the Parks, Environmental Research Foundation, Alderman Toni Foulkes, Alderman JoAnn Thompson and local groups—will develop a Sustainable Englewood Plan to identify new greenways and land for food production as well as for the restoration and improvement of existing parks in Englewood.



*This photo shows part of a 2.5 mile abandoned rail line which the Sustainable Englewood Project hopes to turn into a nature trail.*

For more information about the Sustainable Englewood Plan, contact John Paul Jones at (312) 857-2757 extension 15. 

### 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](http://www.fotp.org)

ADDRESS: 55 E. Washington, Suite 1911,  
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