



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 2008

The Last 4 Miles—Friends of the Parks Envisions Completion of Chicago's Lakefront Park System

The Last 4 Miles initiative is a multi-year project to envision the completion of Chicago's lakefront park system. The Last 4 Miles was motivated by the centennial celebration of Burnham and Bennett's 1909 Plan of Chicago which promoted the lakefront as public park space.

By 1909, six miles of lakefront parks had been created by the Lincoln and South Park Districts following the foresight of Illinois and Michigan Canal Trustees who crafted a caveat that protected a portion of Chicago's lakefront to be "forever...open, clear and free." Beginning with these six miles of lakefront parks, Chicago citizens

in the 20th century embraced Burnham's bold vision by approving a series of binding referenda, authorizing the sale of bonds to develop 20 additional miles of lakefront parks.

These existing 26 miles of Chicago's public lakefront park system today create a linear park expanse unrivaled around the world for its beauty and public accessibility. However, two lakefront stretches which total approximately four miles are not part of the lakefront parks: two miles along the south lakefront, and segments on the north lakefront where there are gaps among the small parks and beaches

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In Memory of Celebrated Architect and Friends of the Parks Board Member Walter Netsch, 1920 – 2008

Renowned architect and Friends of the Parks Board member Walter Netsch died in his home in June at the age of 88. Known for his innovative ideas and



Renowned architect Walter Netsch was an outspoken and committed advocate for Chicago parks.

unconventional approach to design, Mr. Netsch is probably best known locally for his plan for the UIC Campus, the Regenstein Library at the University of Chicago, and the Northwestern University Library in Evanston. His most famous commission might be the Air Force Academy in Colorado Springs, particularly the Cadet Chapel with its distinctive "teepee" spires.

Yet in Chicago, and in the hearts of all who are "Friends of the Parks," Walter's most enduring accomplishment was his service as a Commissioner of the Chicago Park District, particularly as Board president from 1986-1988.

Under his leadership, several of his

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The Last 4 Miles (2 miles on the north and 2 miles on the south) would complete Chicago's lakefront park system.

Neighborhood Park News

Chicago Cubs Donate Replica of Wrigley Field in Humboldt Park

The Board of Commissioners of the Chicago Park District approved the construction of a Wrigley Field replica on the western edge of Humboldt Park. The Wrigley Field replica was originally located at Clybourn just south of North Avenue as part of the New City YMCA complex. With the sale and demolition of the New City YMCA, the Chicago Cubs sought to reinstall the baseball field in Humboldt Park. The baseball stadium will be three stories tall and seat 500 people with bleachers for an additional 500 people in the outfield along with a large scoreboard.

Humboldt Park, designed by Jens Jensen in 1888, is on the National Register of Historic Places. As a magnificently-designed regional park, Humboldt Park's landscape replicates the Illinois prairie and includes meandering streams and river features. The large three-story structure will not harmonize with the Jens Jensen-designed Humboldt Park. The outfield bleachers and score board will block views of the lagoon and historic fieldhouse.

While Friends of the Parks commended the Chicago Cubs for donating a unique ball field for Little League to the Park District, we recommended that the stadium replica be constructed in Roberto Clemente Park, a half-mile to the east of Humboldt Park.

Welcome to New Volunteer Management Staff of Cook County Forest Preserve District

Friends of the Parks salutes the Forest Preserve District of Cook County for its commitment to expanding its capacity to serve and support volunteers. This summer, the Volunteer Management Staff expanded to include two new naturalists, Friends of the Parks' very own Cassie Hatzfeld and Dee White; a new assistant manager, Cheryl McGarry; and two new clerks, Natasha Bynum and Monica Ivy.

Printers Row Fountain Park Expansion Delayed

The Printers Row Fountain Park expansion

Park District Moves Ahead on 31st Street Harbor and Diversey Revetment

The Chicago Park District applied for a permit from the Illinois Department of Natural Resources (IDNR) to construct an 830-slip recreational boat harbor in Lake Michigan at 31st Street. The proposed harbor will extend approximately 2,500 feet south of the 31st Street pier. The 31st Street Harbor project includes a proposed four acres of additional park land, a 2,050-foot-long stone breakwater, and a 242-foot-long stone groin (shore protection structure) which can also serve as a fishing pier. Steel sheet pile will be installed approximately 450 feet into the lake and then backfilled with clean fill to create the new four-acre park. The new breakwater and groin will protect the mouth of the harbor. The harbor will contain ten floating docks with 830 boat slips. The Park District will fund the project by selling Harbor Revenue Bonds.

The Chicago Park District applied for a second IDNR permit to begin reconstructing about 700 feet of the revetment (retaining wall) on the north side of the

Diversey Outer Harbor. The revetment project is part of the decade-long shoreline protection program for reconstructing eight miles of Chicago's failing shoreline. Steel sheet pile will be constructed 30 to 60 feet out from the existing shoreline, and then filled with clean fill, thus creating a small amount of new park land. This will be capped with a tiered concrete step-stone structure. The new revetment will reach north and tie in with the previously reconstructed revetment south of Belmont. Funding sources include city, state, federal and Park District funds.

The Park District is required to secure city, state and federal permits for construction projects in Lake Michigan. In the case of the state required permits, the Park District applied this summer to the IDNR, Office of Water Resources. Plans for the work may be seen at the Chicago Office of Water Resources. Call Jim Casey at (312) 793-5947 for more information about either of the projects. 🌱



Forest Preserve District of Cook County Volunteer Resources staff pictured from left to right: Dee White, Cassie Hatzfeld, Kinda Cutts, Monica Ivy, Joni Marin, Cheryl McGarry, John Suffredin, Natasha Bynum, Joe Swano, Eloise Saperstein, Dan Melone. Not pictured: Bill Koenig, Geno Garcia

sion was set to begin construction this summer. However, the Park District recently announced that the construction bids came in over budget. Because the costs exceed the budget, the Chicago Park District now plans to rebid the project. The construction time-line will be developed once the contractor has been hired with a targeted date for a new ground breaking event.

In early 2006, the Chicago City Council approved the expenditure of \$1 million "open space impact fees" for the total park expansion budget; \$100,000 was allocated for the environmental remediation of the parking lot to be incorporated into the park, and \$900,000 was allocated for the construction costs. The City acquired the parking lot in 2004 with the intent to

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Walter Netsch (cont'd)

ideas were either implemented or were adopted after he left the Board. Most notable:

- A President's Report that mandated equitable distribution of park facilities and program hours, shifting staff to underserved parks
- Decentralization of Central Headquarters and working with Friends of the Parks to form park advisory councils
- Preservation of the Chicago Park District archives
- Establishment of a Planning Department, which created the Lincoln Park Framework Plan and the Grant Park Plan
- The soft-surface playground program for 510 playlots
- Gardened medians in Lake Shore Drive
- An ongoing shoreline protection plan
- Greater accessibility for park facilities for the handicapped
- The Museum Campus (reconfiguration of Lake Shore Drive)
- Restoration of the South Pond Refectory in Lincoln Park
- Converting Meigs Field into a park (as Daniel Burnham intended)
- A new park in Chinatown (which became Ping Tom Park)
- Converting abandoned railways into lineal parks including Burnham Greenway and Dan Ryan Woods Trail
- Acquisition of the South Shore Cultural Center

Last 4 Miles (cont'd)

no continuous lakefront park.

Supporting the Burnham Centennial Celebration in 2009, as well as the mandate of the 1973 Lake Michigan and Chicago Lakefront Protection Ordinance to complete the lakefront parks (including the lakefront path). Friends of the Parks began to work in 2005 with citizens, park advisory councils, community groups and public officials to envision a plan to complete Chicago's lakefront park system from Evanston to the Indiana border.

After two years of meetings, charrettes and dialogues, with the professional assis-

- Initial negotiations with the Illinois Central Rail Road for the rights to the site that became Millennium Park

Always an outspoken advocate for parks, in the 1960's Walter helped to lead the protest that stopped a highway from being built through Jackson Park. Along with fellow Friends of the Parks' Board member Kay Clement, Walter tied hundreds of ribbons to trees. The campaign was successful, and Walter was appointed by Mayor Richard J. Daley to chair a special committee to review plans for roadways in parks. That committee's report recommended that the city cease further destructive acts in city parks.

Walter Netsch's commitment to parks never flagged. As Walter himself once stated:

"We continue to seek ways to bring people to the lakefront and to the parks in an atmosphere of camaraderie and in beautiful surroundings which have typified our classic parks and which are Chicago's natural and cultural legacy... These parks of Chicago should again become, like the Chicago skyscrapers, major venues in the city scene. The cities – all cities, including Chicago – will only survive if their parks survive, and only if the missions and responsibilities in the professional areas of landscape architecture and planning continue to take a positive interest." 🌿

tance of Friends of the Parks' Design Team, a concept plan is evolving for the completion of the park system to Evanston on the north and to Indiana on the south.

This fall we are conducting engineering feasibility, environmental review and cost estimate studies, and we will incorporate the results into our final recommendation for completing Chicago's lakefront parks. Additional public reviews and dialogues are scheduled for this fall. The preliminary ideas can be seen at www.fotp.org.

Friends of the Parks is very grateful for the pro-bono architectural design expertise and leadership of The L4M Design Team:

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Membership Opportunities Give the Gift of Green

Give a Membership! A great birthday, wedding or anniversary gift! Give a friend or relative a membership in Friends of the Parks. Show your support and introduce others to "Chicago's Best Friend."

Honorary and Memorial Gifts

You may make a contribution to Friends of the Parks in honor of a loved one, or as a memorial in lieu of flowers.

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.

To give a Gift of Green, call Friends of the Parks at (312) 857-2757 extension 14 or donate online at www.fotp.org.

Friends of the Parks' Junior Board Seeks New Members

The Junior Board is a group of dedicated young professionals passionate about preserving and protecting Chicago's parks and forest preserves. Through Junior Board experience, members will gain valuable networking and leadership skills, while drawing inspiration from other environmentally-conscious individuals. Contact Amy Donatell at (312) 857-2757 extension 14 for more information. 🌿

John Buenz of Solomon, Cordwell Buenz; Joanne Bauer and Julie Burns of Bauer Latoza Studio; Peter Kindel of Topografis; and Thom Greene of Greene & Proppe Design. We thank you for your hard work.

The Louis R. Lurie Foundation has provided a generous grant of \$225,000 to Friends of the Parks in support of our Last 4 Miles Initiative. Headquartered in San Francisco, the Foundation is a private family foundation. With this support, we plan on producing a Last 4 Miles Publication and DVD, as part of the Burnham Centennial Celebration. 🌿

Parks Lost to Schools and Senior Center

In an unfortunate pattern of taking public park land for schools and senior centers, the Park District Board of Commissioners approved the transfer of Rosenblum Park (8050 South Chappell) to the Chicago Board of Education to build a new South Shore High School. At the same Board meeting, the Board of Commissioners approved the transfer of Park 484 (4701 West 67th Street) to the

Chicago Board of Education to construct a new Hurley Elementary School. The Park District additionally transferred a portion of Norwood Park (5801 N. Natoma) for a senior center building.

Friends of the Parks believes that park land should not be sold, transferred or leased to other governmental agencies any more than it should be used for private purposes. Friends of the Parks agrees with

the statement of DuPage Forest Preserve District Board President Dewey Pierotti in a March 5, 2008 Chicago Tribune article: "We're not a land bank for anybody. Not for school districts or municipalities." Friends of the Parks strongly believes that the Chicago Park District is not a land bank for the Chicago Board of Education for new schools, or for the Chicago Department of Aging for senior centers.

Chicago is a park-poor city, especially for the majority of the residents who do not live near the lake. Fifty-five out of 77 community areas in Chicago do not have two acres of parks per 1,000 residents, which is far below the national norm. Indeed, the CitySpace plan, approved by several local government entities in 1998, concluded that the city is severely park deficient. The City Space Plan established aggressive goals to acquire more land for parks, not to eliminate established parks. 🌿



The Chicago Park District recently transferred Rosenblum Park (8050 South Chappell) to the Board of Education to build a new South Shore High School.

"Forest Preserves or Bust Bus Tour" a Hit

Friends of the Parks held its first-ever bus tour of area forest preserves on Saturday, August 2. A coach bus ferried eager explorers to the Calumet area to see what natural treasures were to be found in three preserves within the Forest Preserve District of Cook County system.

The group first stopped at Powderhorn Prairie and Marsh, southeast of Lake Calumet. Local forest preserve steward John Pastirik led the group into the preserve on a trail along one of a series of ridges that parallel the shoreline of Lake Michigan, noting that these ridges were once ancient beach ridges from thousands of years ago. All along the ridge, the group viewed a multicolored feast of prairie wildflowers in full bloom. The sandy soil there supports many typical prairie species, like blazing star, goldenrod and wild bergamot and some surprises, like prickly pear cactus! As another surprise, a family of ospreys greeted the group with their eerie calls and circled overhead for a few minutes.

Beaubien Woods, which lies along the north bank of the Calumet River just west of the Bishop Ford Freeway, was the next preserve. There, the site's resident volunteer group was in the middle of its regular workday. Tour participants joined

in and helped pick up trash as site steward Laurel Ross walked the group through the woods and prairie. She showed off the site's grove of beautiful old oak trees and a lovely prairie opening where her volunteers have been doing restoration work.

More gorgeous old oak trees graced the third stop, Whistler Woods, which lies on the south bank of the Calumet River, just east of Harlem Avenue. Volunteer Jane Healy shared with the group pictures and stories of her experiences at Whistler,



A site steward points out a rare prickly pear cactus at Powderhorn Prairie.



Better than the Air & Water Show! A family of ospreys makes a surprise fly-by.

which include running Earth Day clean-ups every April with the help of the Blue Island Bicycle Club and a local grade school. In addition, Friends of the Parks staffer Rebecca Blazer talked about the variety of interesting and unusual woodland wildflowers that can still be found in patches throughout the woods, despite the slow takeover by invasive brush.

A special thanks to the stewards/naturalists at each site who took time out of their busy schedules to join us and tell the stories of these sites: John Pastirik, Laurel Ross, Christy Page, and Jane and Katie Healy.

Watch for more forest preserve tour opportunities in 2009! If you would like to be notified as soon as tour dates become available, or for more information, contact Rebecca Blazer at (312) 857-2757 extension 17 or BlazerR@fotp.org. 🌿

Friends Indeed

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

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* The Louis R. Lurie Foundation has provided a grant of \$225,000 to Friends of the Parks in support of our Last 4 Miles initiative. See page 1 for more details about the Last 4 Miles.

Starcom Worldwide Helps Chicago's Parks and Preserves

Friends of the Parks organized a major community service workday event in June, bringing over 500 employees of Starcom Worldwide out to beautify five

of Chicago's neighborhood parks and preserves on a single day. Their volunteers came to Garfield Park, Humboldt Park, Lincoln Park, Marquette Park and Edge-

brook Woods. They refurbished two playlots with Fibar (processed wood chips), planted 14 large-caliper trees, mulched trees and removed litter. 🌱

Friends of the Parks Hosts Fifteen Community Service Days

This summer, Friends of the Parks hosted fifteen community service days with employees from Bank of America, Boston Consulting Group, Deloitte, Goldman Sachs, Motorola, PepsiCo and Unilever. Volunteers from these organizations used their leadership skills to encourage team building while learning about environmental stewardship.



Enthusiastic Starcom Worldwide employees planted large caliper trees in Lincoln Park.



Chubb volunteers moved over 150 yards of mulch at McKinley Park.

If your company is interested in hosting a community service event in the parks or preserves, please contact Mary Eileen Sullivan, Director of Volunteers, at (312) 857-2757 extension 13. 🌱



GE Capital volunteers helped make Metcalfe Park safer.

Chicago Public Schools and Friends of the Parks Embrace Parks and Preserves as Part of Adopt-an-Ecosystem Program

Nearly twenty Chicago public high school teachers agreed to partner with Friends of the Parks to use their neighborhood parks or preserves as outdoor classrooms as part of the Chicago Public Schools Service Learning Initiative's Adopt-an-Ecosystem program. Friends of the Parks provided the teachers with field guides, gloves, and garbage bags along with information on parks and preserves they could use to educate their students about environmental stewardship. 🌱

Earth Team Apprentices Focus on Environment

Friends of the Parks' Environmental Education programs expanded this summer to 210 teens. In conjunction with After School Matters, Friends of the Parks offered Earth Team environmental apprenticeships to Chicago students at Calumet, Humboldt, McKinley, and Horner Parks, and at Edgebrook Woods Forest Preserve. Each Earth Team completed a comprehensive survey and study of a park or preserve, then designed and focused on a specific initiative to enhance that park or preserve.

The McKinley Park Earth Team created environmentally-themed dramatic plays to perform for children's groups in their region, in an effort to promote environmental consciousness to a new generation. The Calumet Park Earth Team revitalized a community garden that had gone uncultivated, working to beautify the area and make the garden an accessible and enjoyable destination for members of the Southeast Side community. The Earth Teams at Horner Park and Humboldt Park both undertook multi-media park survey projects, photographing, drawing, painting and documenting their parks. Finally, the Edgebrook Earth Team engaged in an ethological sand-tracking project, creating a portable tracker to assist in monitoring the behavior of area animals in the preserves.



Friends of the Parks' environmental educator, Jay Majetich, teaches Chicago teens the importance of wetlands preservation at a lagoon in Garfield Park.

McKinley and Humboldt Parks were sites for two new health and fitness initiatives entitled Friends of the Parks' Ultimate Team. These pre-apprenticeships taught Chicago teens about nutrition and health through the popular urban sport of Ultimate Disc. The sport is a natural fit for Chicago's parks, as the game only calls for open green space and a flying disc!

As fall approaches, Friends of the Parks' flagship Nature Along the Lake Program continues to introduce more and more elementary school students to Chicago's lakefront ecology. With the addition of a new partner in the Uno Charter School network, Nature Along the Lake now boasts seventeen partner schools, reaching upwards of 800 students per semester at both Montrose Point and the South Shore Cultural Center. Building on our partnership with the Illinois Department of Natural Resources, several of our fall programs will include a Great Lakes fishing lesson at Montrose Point. Students will learn about invasive species in Lake Michigan and then fish for them at the harbor. The fall

program will also study lakefront mineral composition; freshwater wildlife; and the yearly highlight, a birding hike through Montrose's "Magic Hedge." 🌱



The Humboldt Park Earth Team teens completed a multi-media park survey project that involved photographing, drawing, painting and documenting their park.

Friends of the Parks Partners with Injury Free Coalition for Kids on Playground Safety Study

Friends of the Parks again partnered with Children's Memorial Hospital this summer to complete a site survey of the Park District's 500 playgrounds. The purpose of the 2008 playground survey was to reassess the safety of the playgrounds since the completion of a similar Playground Study in 2006. This year's study seeks to provide the Park District with objective criteria for the construction of new playgrounds in 2009-2010. In addition, the study will identify and report any existing safety problems to be repaired by



Many playgrounds in Chicago's parks are reaching the end of their planned lifespan, including this playground in Carver Park.


the Park District. The study seeks to help the Park District distribute funds to communities of need based on the conditions of the playgrounds, and not solely based on fundraising capacity.

Since 2005, Friends of the Parks has partnered with the Injury Free Coalition for Kids of Chicago to assess the safety of the Park District's 500+ playgrounds in Chicago. In 2005, the partnership surveyed 200 playgrounds and found that 117 (59%) were below the standard of safety and 83 (41%) met the standard of safety. In 2006, the partnership surveyed all 500 Chicago Park District playgrounds and found that over 70% of the playgrounds were below safety standards.

Friends of the Parks and Injury Free Coalition for Kids of Chicago hired and trained three interns to assess Chicago's 500 playgrounds. A certified playground inspector trained the interns to use a Playground Safety Report Survey previously approved by the Park District. The survey form was used for the three phases of the Chicago Park District Playground Safety



This photo shows equipment at an older playground in Morgan Field Park.

Study. The survey evaluates twenty-two safety issues on each playground and provides a numerical score. A score of 68% or lower indicates a playground does not meet safety standards. Playgrounds with a score of 69-100% meet the safety standards. Friends of the Parks will post the 2008 playground scores on our web site this fall. The 2006 playground scores are available at www.fotp.org. 

Warren Park Protected as Open Space by Legal Covenants

Chicago's Department of Aging has proposed constructing a new senior center on park space in Warren Park (6601 N. Western Avenue), in violation of legal restrictions in place to protect Warren Park in perpetuity as open space for public recreation.

In 1976, the State of Illinois donated the land now known as Warren Park to the Chicago Park District for use as a public park. The deed signed on February 3, 1976 provides that ownership of the land could revert to the state if the Park District uses it for any purpose other than a public park:

"The Chicago Park District shall hold the property above described in fee simple subject to the condition that the property be held and administered by the Chicago Park District as a public park. The Department of Conservation of the State


of Illinois [now the Illinois Department of Natural Resources or IDNR] shall hold a right of entry in the property which shall be exercised to revert all right, title and interest in the property to the State of Illinois for use as a public park in the event this condition is broken."

The Illinois Department of Natural Resources and the U.S. Department of Housing hold the conservation easements on the land. Legal covenants restrict the use of Warren Park, requiring the Park District to maintain it as open space for public recreation.

Friends of the Parks supports new senior centers, but opposes building senior centers on park land instead of city-owned land. Chicago should not treat parks as land banks for other agencies. If every entity with a worthy cause could build on park land, the park land itself would

soon disappear. Chicago should place a high value on parks, which provide precious open space for public recreation in a crowded city.

A coalition of neighborhood and park groups, including the Warren Park Advisory Council and Friends of the Parks, announced its opposition to the taking of park land in Warren Park for a senior center. The coalition called on the Illinois Department of Natural Resources and the U.S. Department of Housing to uphold the deed restrictions and the conservation easement that protects Warren Park.

The coalition further called on the Department of Aging to continue its plan to construct a senior center in West Rogers Park, but to build it on city-owned land in the community or to create a thriving senior program within the existing Warren Park Fieldhouse. 

Friends of the Parks Hosts McDonald's L.A.T.E. Ride - Our 20th Anniversary After-Midnight Bicycle Ride

Friends of the Parks hosted its 20th Anniversary 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, on Saturday night/Sunday morning July 13. 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 and i2idesign for her graphic design work and to Jeff Goeters for his work on the event website, www.lateride.org. Congratulations to Erin and Alvin Mendoza for winning this year's event t-shirt design contest. 🌞



Participants enjoyed a great 25-mile ride, refreshments at the rest stop and breakfast at sunrise. "I loved the camaraderie!" said one rider.



McDonald's L.A.T.E. Ride, hosted by and supporting Friends of the Parks, is among the largest bicycling events in the United States and Chicago's only after-midnight ride! Cyclists started their trek from Buckingham Fountain and traveled 25 miles under the moonlight through the city's downtown and North Side neighborhoods and along the lakefront path.

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

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Friends of the Parks acknowledges the generosity of those who provide food and beverages for thousands of riders.
McDonald's Dasani® Water, Glaceau Vitamin Water, Apple Dippers, Harlan Bakery Bagels, Sweet Life Fresh Baked Cookies, Minute Maid Orange Juice
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Special Thanks
Chicago Police Department Special Events Section; Commanders, Neighborhood Relations Officers and other 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 Streets & Sanitation and Department of Transportation

The 21st annual McDonald's L.A.T.E. Ride, hosted by and benefiting Friends of the Parks, is tentatively scheduled for Saturday night/Sunday morning July 12. Please join us for this incredible event. Log onto www.lateride.org for more details.

Neighborhood Park News (cont'd)

expand the park, while the Illinois EPA approved the remediation plan in August 2007. When the expansion is complete, the City of Chicago will transfer ownership of the park to the Chicago Park District.

Wicker Park Summer Series Wildly Successful

On a series of Sundays throughout the summer, several thousand neighbors and visitors came to enjoy all the glories of Wicker Park. The Sundays in the Park activities included listening to music including the Trio Lorin Cohen, shopping at the Farmer's Market, taking historic park and garden tours, playing soft ball, and hanging out at the children's playground and the dog park. The Wicker Park Advisory Council hosted the free summer concerts. To learn more about Wicker Park go to www.ourwickerpark.org

New Gale Park Fieldhouse Dedicated

The long-delayed opening of the Gale Park Fieldhouse, located at Howard and Marshfield in Rogers Park, was held on August 1st. The Park District hosted an open house on Saturday, August 2nd, and invited community residents to meet the new park supervisor, Sharon O'Connell, and her staff. Neighbors took tours of their long-awaited facility and checked out the new fitness center, gymnasium and club room.

The Gale Park Fieldhouse will be open to the community Monday through Friday,



This summer, activities flourished in Wicker Park. Visitors and residents enjoyed string quartet and jazz performances, and tours of the award-winning park gardens and the historic neighborhood.

noon to 8 pm, and Saturday, 9 am to 5 pm. State Representative Julie Hamos is working with Gale Park's Advisory Council and Alderman Joe Moore on ways to finance opening the park on Sundays. Friends of the Parks applauds this collective effort to ensure the maximum use of the Gale Park facility and its Park District staff.

Docents Trained to Lead Tours of Indian Boundary Park

Indian Boundary Park is a thirteen-acre park at 2500 West Lunt in West Rogers Park. It is one of the most unusual parks within Chicago and includes a small petting zoo, a picturesque lagoon, natural areas and the beautiful original fieldhouse designed in 1929 by architect Clarence Hatzfeld.



Volunteers and docents work in the nature area of Indian Boundary Park.

The Indian Boundary Park Advisory Council led by activists Jennifer Albom, Ann Glapa and Michael Oster implemented a docent program to train volunteers to lead tours of the park. This summer ten docents completed the seven-week training program. After completion of their training, the docents began leading park tours highlighting the park's history, explaining the significance of the park's name, and highlighting the unique design features of the park.

Indian Boundary Park was named to reflect the territorial boundary established by the Treaty of 1816 between the Pottawattomie Nation and the U.S. government. The boundary line delineating U.S. territory from Pottawattomie land runs through the park and remained in effect only until 1833 when the Pottawattomies were pushed out entirely from the area due to white settlement.

Indian Boundary Park was designated a Historical Landmark by the City of Chicago in 2005 and is also listed in the National Register of Historical Places. 🌿



The long-awaited Gale Park Fieldhouse (1610 W. Howard Street) in Rogers Park opened in August and features a fitness center, gymnasium and club house.

Chicago Park District Acquires Three New Public Parks

The Park District took ownership of three new parks in August. In the River North area, Fifield development group transferred a new park located at 601 West Kinzie to the District for use as a public park. The city required the developer to construct the park as part of a Planned Development project.

Similarly, the Belgravia Group transferred a half-acre park located at Schubert and Hermitage Avenues to the Park District for use as a public park. The City required the Belgravia Group to construct the park as part of a Planned Development project.

The city transferred Pritzker Park, located at State and Van Buren, to the Park District for reconstruction. The new plan calls for a raised lawn, planted areas, a hard-surfaced plaza with movable seating and flexible spaces for performances and movies in the park. The Park District will use \$1.4 million in tax increment financing funds to reconstruct the park in the South Loop (\$1 million of the project cost was secured in prior years). 🌱

Park District Commissioners Approve Bond Sale

At the August 13th Park District Board of Commissioners meeting, commissioners approved the issuance of \$35 million in bonds for capital improvements to update park buildings and facilities for people with disabilities. The life of the bonds is 25 years and the bonds will be secured by the Special Recreational Activity (SRA) property tax levy approved in 2005. The SRA tax raises \$6 million annually, which the Park District will use to pay the cost of the debt. In 2009, the Park District will begin making buildings and park facilities accessible to individuals with disabilities. 🌱

Events calendar

THURSDAYS FROM 1:00-4:00 P.M.: SOUTH-EAST CHICAGO HISTORICAL SOCIETY

Visit this unique historical society in the Calumet Park Field House at 9801 South Avenue G. The Southeast Chicago Historical Society offers collections and exhibits on the history of Chicago's Southeast Side including the communities of South Chicago, South Deering, the East Side, and Hegewisch. Free admission.

OCTOBER 18 8:00AM

Men's Health Urbanathlon & Festival (Benefiting Friends of the Parks)

Men's Health Urbanathlon & Festival in Chicago is a wild athletic event that will take you tearing through the streets of Chicago to conquer obstacles at iconic landmarks of the historical Windy City. After the race, attend the free festival (10 am-4pm) in Grant Park with live music, food, product demos and giveaways! To register for the Urbanathlon, go to www.menshealthurbanathlon.com.

OCTOBER 26 9:00AM – 1:00PM

Sunday Parkways

Bring your bikes, scooters, strollers or just yourself to dance, play and exercise on traffic-free streets and parks for the second Sunday Parkways event sponsored by the Chicagoland Bike Federation. The traffic-free event will go from 24th Street and California to Lake Street and Central Park. For more information visit biketraffic.org/sundayparkways or call (312) 377-5727.

NOVEMBER 1 9:00AM – 12:00PM

Volunteer Workday at Busse Woods

Join Friends of the Parks and the Forest Preserve District of Cook County for a fabulous fall restoration workday at Busse Woods in Elk Grove Village. We'll be cutting invasive brush on the southwest side of the preserve. Wear sturdy shoes and long pants, and dress in layers for the weather. The exercise will warm you up – and, if weather conditions permit, we may be able to burn a brushpile fire that will keep you warm all morning! Tools and gloves will be provided. Please RSVP to Rebecca Blazer at (312) 857-2757 extension 17 or BlazerR@fotp.org so we can bring enough equipment and supplies.

NOVEMBER 5

Chicago Park District, Board of Commissioner's Finance Meeting

The Chicago Park Board will hold a public meeting on the proposed 2009 Budget. Use this opportunity to impact the final budget plan and ensure your park needs are included in

the 2009 budget. Visit chicagoparkdistrict.com for details.

NOVEMBER 8 9:00AM – 12:00PM

Volunteer Workday at Dunning-Read Conservation Area

Join Friends of the Parks, the Austin-Irving Community Council, Northwest Concerned Citizens, the Chicago-Read Mental Health Center and the Dunning-Read Conservation Area volunteers for an invigorating prairie/savanna restoration workday on Chicago's northwest side. The tasks we'll work on will include removing invasive brush with saws and loppers, spreading native seeds, litter pickup and trail maintenance. If interested, please RSVP to John Videckis at (773) 205-1429. Location: the 20-acre Dunning-Read Conservation Area is on the campus of the Chicago Read Mental Health Center, 4200 N Oak Park Avenue. Enter the CRMHC campus on the west side of Oak Park Avenue just north of Irving Park. Drive south and west through the parking lot to its furthest southwest corner. From there, take the small access road west and around to the back of the Center. Park on the grass along the road. Wear sturdy shoes and long pants, and dress in layers for the weather. Tools and gloves will be provided.

NOVEMBER 10 5:30PM

Friends of the Parks' Park Networking Meeting

Attend this session to review and discuss the preliminary findings of Friends of the Parks' Playground Safety Report for 2008. Friends of the Parks, 17 North State, Suite 1450. To view our 2007 Playground Safety Scores, go to www.fotp.org.

NOVEMBER 12 4:00 PM

Park District Board Meeting

The Board of Commissioners of the Park District are tentatively planning to vote on the 2009 budget. Visit chicagoparkdistrict.com for details.

DECEMBER 11 12:15PM

Creative Living in the City Lecture, NeighborSpace Gardens, the Power of Community

Over 50 vacant lots have been transformed into lavish gardens and pocket parks by citizens and neighborhood groups who cleaned the lots and designed and built the gardens and parks. Guest speaker Benjamin Helphand, executive director of NeighborSpace, will present case studies on how to take derelict property in your community and turn it into a treasure. Chicago Cultural Center, 78 E. Washington.



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Friends of the Parks to Host Volunteers in Parks Reception

Please join us on Sunday, November 16th for Friends of the Parks' VIP (Volunteers in Parks) Awards Reception. The event will take place from 2:00-4:00pm at the Forest Preserve District of Cook County Volunteer Resource Center, located at 6100 N. Central Avenue in Chicago.

Friends of the Parks will honor individuals and groups for their outstanding work in Chicago's parks and forest preserves. You can submit nominations for the following categories by Wednesday, October 22nd. More information is available on our website www.FOTP.org.


- * Advocacy Award for Outstanding Work in a Park or Preserve
- * Advisory Council Award

Friends of the Parks Has Moved

Friends of the Parks
17 North State Street, Suite 1450
Chicago, IL, 60602

Our phone and fax numbers remain the same: phone (312) 857-2757 and fax (312) 857-0656.

- * Community Group Award for Outstanding Work to build interest in their local park or forest preserve
- * Outstanding Chicago Park District Employee Award
- * Outstanding Forest Preserve District of Cook County Employee Award

To RSVP for the reception, please call Mary Eileen Sullivan, Director of Volunteers, at (312) 857-2757 extension 13. 

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: 17 North State Street,
Suite 1450, Chicago, IL 60602-2174

