



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

Spring 2010

## Alderman Leslie Hairston Provides Good Advice To Park Advisory Councils During March Conference

On March 27, 2010, Alderman Leslie Hairston gave the keynote speech at Friends of the Parks' and the Chicago Park District's Park Advocacy Conference. She began by explaining that she has seen park advisory councils change dramati-



Alderman Leslie Hairston

cally over the past decade. From small park councils with few members, they have grown to include broader representation and more sophistication.

Based on her experience working with park advisory councils, Alderman Hairston offered six recommendations to park advisory council activists.

**My first point: to get things done, you must put competition aside.**

**Second, credibility and trust must be established between Park District, Park Advisory Council and Alderman.**

The alderman's office provides strong support for an advisory council even if the alderman doesn't agree with the council on every issue. The alderman has access to information and resources and the community at-large. He or she can write letters, testify at board meetings, talk to other elected officials, let you know about other groups that can be helpful, and help you recruit volunteers. Your alderman can help mediate, get through gridlock and assist in facilitating meetings. You must build relationships with your alderman and with Chicago Park District staff, administration and board members.

**Third, don't let budgets - or other red tape - deter you. Let it be your guide.**

For the rest of our natural lives and beyond, there will ALWAYS be budgetary

concerns. We are working with limited tax dollars. Ask for what you want and then figure out a way to pay for it. Sometimes, it may take long-term planning, fundraising, grant writing, corporate dollars or another creative way. Please don't forget to include maintenance, repairs and staffing. These are often overlooked but are necessary to the success of the park!

**Fourth, choose your battles.**

Every issue is not worth fighting for. It will cost you your council's credibility. Choose only those battles that impact your community the most. For example, South Lake Shore Drive had bridges overhead to link one side to the other. It was beautiful when they had hanging flowers from them and everyone was content to rebuild or repair them. However, when we received funding to rebuild the Drive, I suggested that we install underpasses to ensure safe passage across Lake Shore Drive. With much trepidation and some resistance by the Park District and the former alderman, the project seemed difficult. It was the community and I who pushed for the underpasses. In hindsight, it was the best solution.

However, you can't have it your way all of the time and sometimes you must agree to disagree. For example, the mud swamp on the north end of 63rd Street

Beach was intended to be a natural wetland. Unfortunately, it became a stagnated mosquito-infested watering hole that could drown children, and the Park District had to staff it with a lifeguard. The Army Corps of Engineers, the Park District and the advisory council all support the project. The alderman thinks it's a dangerous accident waiting to happen, but I am *not* choosing this battle.

**Fifth, we must bridge the gap between senior advisory members and new members.**

We can learn a lot about our park system by listening to historical stories about the parks and surrounding communities. We should not ignore history, but we must also encourage and embrace new people with new ideas. We can learn from them.

**Finally, I have learned that there has to be a balance between the interests of the community, the Park District, the alderman and the city as a whole.**

Superintendent Mitchell and his staff have been accessible, available, visible and attentive to the community and to me. He has listened to our concerns and criticisms and has not been afraid to engage us. Although we may not always agree, we respect one another and work well together. At the end of the day, I know that everyone has done their best. 🌿

### Federal Legislation Introduced to Support Urban Parks

The federal Urban Revitalization and Livable Communities Act, HR 3734, pending in Washington, would authorize \$445 million over ten years for park development, enhancement and park

maintenance. During eight years of the previous administration, the federal government did not make any funds available for urban parks. Friends of the Parks supports this important and overdue bill. 🌿

# Chicago Plan Commission Approves Planned Development and Master Plan for U.S. Steel Site

The Chicago Lakeside Development Project received approval from the Chicago Plan Commission to convert a nearly-500-acre brownfield site into a new residential community on Chicago's southeast side. The long-awaited development will create housing, commercial and entertainment uses, and parks on land cleared of steel manufacturing buildings in 1997.



The Chicago Lakeside Master Plan shows the development of the USX site.

Friends of the Parks supported a smaller Planned Development proposal, approved on April 15, 2010 for the construction of commercial, residential and mixed uses on 77 acres west of U.S. Route 41. Friends of the Parks recommended plans for adequate and usable parks to meet the needs of the anticipated 7,000 new residents in the development area.

Friends of the Parks recommended changes to a separate Chicago Lakeside Development Plan for 475 acres on the old U.S. Steel site east of U.S. 41. The Master Plan calls for 13,500 residential units, a new street grid, commercial, retail, cultural amenities, public parks and open spaces.

Friends of the Parks testified that the Master Plan omitted a vision for the future lakefront park. The Plan included only a narrow strip of lakefront (300' in width) designed 12 feet above Lake Michigan with a fence to prevent users from falling into the lake. The Plan included an unimaginative lakefront design that, if used as a guide by the Park District, will produce a limited park, inaccessible to Lake Michigan and inadequate in scope.

Friends of the Parks presented the following recommendations:

- The city should fully engage the Chicago Park District in planning for the future lakefront park system.
- The Master Plan should encourage the Chicago Park District to add lake fill for a larger and more imaginative park design that terraces down to Lake Michigan.
- A percentage of future TIF dollars (30-50%) should go to the Chicago Park District for constructing the lakefront parks.
- The developer should transfer the specified lakefront land (100 acres) to the Park District within a year of approval of the PD and Master Plan so that District officials can seek funds for developing the lakefront parks.
- The city should update the outdated and erroneous 1973 Lakefront Protection Ordinance maps to capture the public ownership of various lakefront properties.

Please check [www.fotp.org](http://www.fotp.org) for updates on this project. 🌱

## Global Youth Service Day A Success

On Saturday, April 24, in partnership with Chicago Public Schools, Friends of the Parks hosted over 100 students at the Dunning-Read Conservation Area as part of Global Youth Service Day. Students from Chicago Academy, Mather, Schurz, Vaughn Occupational, Al Raby and Foreman High Schools learned about stewardship of our natural areas while restoring a mulched trail, picking up litter and removing invasive species.

Chicago Public Schools Service Learning Initiative Office helped recruit over 2,000 students across the city to engage in service learning activities with various agencies. Friends of the Parks enjoyed participating in this ambitious and successful event with Chicago Public Schools. 🌱

## Neighborhood Park News: Activities Flourish Around the City

### Albany-Whipple Park News

In January 2010, the Trust for Public Land, Friends of the Bloomingdale Trail and the Logan Square Neighborhood Association asked Friends of the Parks to help them establish a park advisory council. Since that time, the Albany-Whipple Park Advisory Council has elected a board and has met three times with the Chicago Park District to discuss proposed design sites. Thanks to a generous grant from the Rails to Trails Conservancy, the Friends of the Bloomingdale Trail will fund a unique and innovative piece of art for Albany-Whipple Park.

### Ashe Park's Greening Initiatives

From supporting aldermanic efforts to pass the Clean Power Ordinance to promoting water workshops and high school youth leadership opportunities, the Ashe Park Advisory Council (2701 E. 74th Street) advocates continuously on behalf of environmental issues. The Council partners with organizations like the Chicago Center for Green Technology, the Chicago Department of Environment and the Active Transportation Alliance in an effort to improve the world in which we live.

*(continued on p. 6)*

# Friends of the Parks Works to Implement Last Four Miles

For several years, Friends of the Parks has worked with community groups and local and state public officials to increase park land and natural areas with connecting greenways in Chicago. In 2009, we published **The Last Four Miles: A Plan to Complete Chicago's Lakefront Parks**, in which we proposed adding 500 acres of new parks and beaches to complete the public lakefront park system. The Plan would add 400 acres on the south lakefront, including connections with natural areas and existing and proposed recreational trails in the Calumet area, and approximately 100 acres on the north lakefront linking Lincoln Park with Evanston.


To begin two of the phases of the plan, Friends of the Parks is working with the Chicago Park District to claim the new beaches created in the last ten years by the significant lowering of the Lake Michigan's water level, as well as by the natural southward movement of beach sand along the Illinois shore.

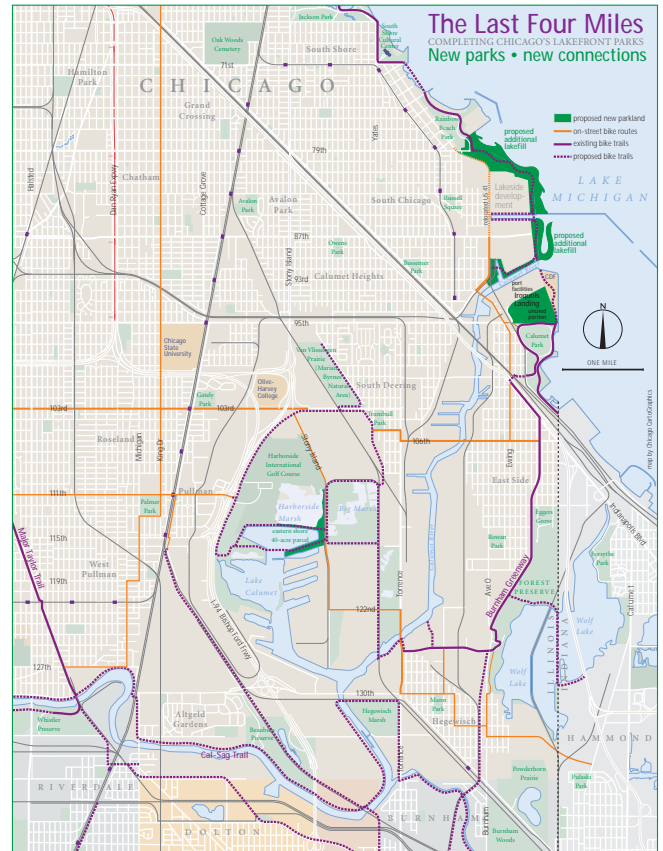
On the South Side, between the Calumet River and 95th Street, Iroquois Steel (later Youngstown Steel) expanded its steel mill by dumping slag into the lake in the early 1900s. In 1978, after the closing of Youngstown Steel, the Illinois International Port District took ownership

of the 190-acre property. The Port District developed the Iroquois Landing Lakefront Terminus for port activities on 90 acres of the site along the Calumet River. The Port Authority left the 100 acres south of the Lakefront Terminus and contiguous to Calumet Park vacant and fenced off from public use.

We are working with state legislators on two bills to transfer land to the Chicago Park District. Senate Bill 3779, under review in Springfield, would transfer the 100-acre vacant unused portion of Iroquois Landing from the Port District to the Chicago Park District to expand Calumet Park.

A second bill, Senate Bill 3778, would transfer approximately 40 acres on the eastern shore of Lake Calumet from the Port District to the Chicago Park District. The land on the eastern shore of Lake Calumet would provide public

access to Lake Calumet and also link to the lakefront trail system and the Cal Sag Trail. 



# Green Harbors Initiative Kicks Off for Boating Season

Friends of the Parks, the Chicago Park District, Westrec Marinas, the Chicago Yachting Association and the Chicago Department of Environment recently partnered with the city's boating community



*John Buenz, partner of Solomon Cordwell Buenz and a Friends of the Parks' board member, designed the Green Harbors flag.*

to implement best environmental practices for Chicago's nine harbors and the parks adjacent to those harbors.

Entitled Chicago Green Harbors Program, this green initiative will urge voluntary compliance in a proactive approach to environmental stewardship. Program leaders will educate boaters, park users and harbor management staff about Best Boating Environment Practices. The practices address critical environmental issues such as waste management, storm water control, spill prevention, specialized recycling and improving the quality of Lake Michigan.

Several coastal cities have established clean harbor programs, and many Great

Lakes states have examined ways to minimize their impact on lake environments. Michigan has established a voluntary Clean Marina Program, and, to date, has designated twenty-one sites as Clean Marinas.

Chicago harbors that comply with a set of environmental criteria will win certification as a Green Harbor and will receive a Green Harbor flag to fly. Architect, boater and Friends of the Parks' Board member John Buenz designed the Green Harbor flag.

The Chicago Green Harbors Program kicked off in May. 

## Park Advocacy Conference Draws Park Activists

On Saturday, March 27, over 150 Park Advisory Council (PAC) representatives joined together at the beautiful South Shore Cultural Center to network with council members from across the city in hopes of leveraging best practices and building relationships.

Friends of the Parks, the Chicago Park District, the City of Chicago and several non-profit community organizations conducted interactive discussions during two breakout sessions covering nine areas of interest. Topics of discussion ranged from "How to work effectively with government and partners to improve parks and preserves" to "Growing gardens for healthy and beautiful communities." Conference attendees selected breakout sessions of interest. Many PACs sent several representatives.

In consideration of advisory council

time commitments, the conference lasted three hours. Feedback indicated that advisory councils would not only like to attend a similar event on an annual basis, but would also like to spend more time in breakout sessions. Panelists also found the discussions riveting. We expect that through this conference, council members initiated relationships that will result in ongoing, positive communications between park advocates and officials throughout the city.

Erma Tranter, President, Friends of the Parks; Shawn Schmidt, Chief of Staff, the Chicago Park District; and Tim King, Director of Community Affairs and Government Relations, provided opening remarks. Alderman Leslie Hairston gave the keynote address (see page 1 for story). Bob Pickens, Vice President of the Chicago Park District Board of Commissioners,



and Timothy Mitchell, Superintendent and Chief Executive Officer of the Chicago Park District, provided closing remarks. All involved offered a sincere thank you to park advisory council volunteers for their work in the parks.

Ann Sather Restaurant and Julius Meinl generously provided refreshments and the Garfield Park Conservatory Alliance provided beautiful floral arrangements. 🌿

## Chicago Tree Initiative Seeks to Plant Thousands of Trees

As a partner in the City of Chicago's Tree Initiative, Friends of the Parks has joined with other city organizations to increase the tree canopy in Chicago by planting thousands of trees over the next several years. The partnership wants to increase the tree canopy in Chicago from 13% to 20%.

Our 2010 program includes a plan to plant 100 trees in Chicago's parks and give away 300 more trees to citizens for planting in 2010.

Exelon Corporation has provided a generous matching challenge grant of \$10,000 to Friends of the Parks to plant 100 trees in Chicago this year. For every new donation of \$100 (or an increase in current membership by at least \$100), Exelon will contribute to Friends of the Parks in fulfillment of that pledge. In this way, gifts to Friends of the Parks can be doubled, and Chicago will get hundreds of new trees in our parks!

Friends of the Parks kicked off the initiative on Friday, April 16 with employees from Wm. Wrigley, Jr. Company in Humboldt Park. We planted 25 native trees just east of the Humboldt Park Boathouse.

On Earth Day, April 22, we planted 25 trees with Exelon employees in Jackson Park in honor of Vicky and George Ranney. On April 30, employees from PepsiCo planted 30 oak saplings in the Dunning-Read Conservation Area. On May 15,

we planted a memorial grove of trees in memory of former Chicago Park District Board President Michael Scott.

For more information on this program, please contact John O'Connell at (312) 857-2757 extension 16 or [occonnellj@fotp.org](mailto:occonnellj@fotp.org). 🌿

## Park District Restricts Public Participation

On October 14, 2009, the Chicago Park District Board of Commissioners changed the rules for public participation at Committee and Board meetings. The Board did not permit the public to review the rule changes. After receiving the resolution, Friends of the Parks argued that the following rules severely limited the public's role in policy discussions:

"Speakers will be limited to speak on one (1) agenda item during one Committee meeting and cannot speak to any other item from other committee meetings scheduled from the same date."

A speaker attending the three committee meetings would have to select one item from all three committee agendas and comment on only that one item (of

perhaps thirty items total). The rule unnecessarily restricts speakers.

"Groups must select a maximum of two (2) representatives from those who have signed up to speak on their behalf. The Board Secretary will schedule group speakers according to topic."

Friends of the Parks believes that any person who has taken the time to come to the Park District's Board meeting and wishes to speak should be able to testify.

Finally, the new rules require that the public arrive a half hour early to sign up to speak, wasting both the Park District staff's and the public's time.

We have urged the new Board President, Dr. Bryan Traubert, to revoke these restrictions. 🌿

# Friends Indeed

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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 Four Miles initiative.

# Friends of the Parks Hosts its 35th Annual Meeting and Awards Luncheon to Celebrate Parks and Park Advocates

Friends of the Parks hosted its 35th Annual Meeting and Awards Luncheon on February 4 at the Chicago Cultural Center. Nearly 150 people were on hand to celebrate this milestone in our history. Tim Mitchell, General Superintendent of the Chicago Park District, gave the keynote speech. He addressed park programs and park issues that the Chicago Park District will administer throughout the year.

## New Board Members Elected

Friends of the Parks elected Mary Kennelly of Conlon Public Strategies, Madiem Kawa of the Washington Park Conservancy, and Kelly Townsel as new trustees of Friends of the Parks' Board of Directors.



*The Honorable Toni Preckwinkle (center), fresh from her victory as Democratic Nominee for Cook County Board President, enjoys a moment with Friends of the Parks' staff members Angela Cisneros and Amy Donatell.*



*Motorola Foundation president Eileen Sweeney accepts the Corporate Award for Motorola's support of the environment through their Global Service Day each year.*



*Matt Haas accepts the Individual Award from Friends of the Parks' Board Chairman Lauren Moltz. Matt has become an important steward at Busse Woods.*



*The Honorable Robert Fioretti, Second Ward Alderman, accepts the Legislative Award from Lauren Moltz, Friends of the Parks' Board Chair.*

## Park Advocacy Awards

The 2010 awardees included:

**Individual Award:** Matt Haas

**Corporate Award:** Motorola

**Advocacy Award:** The Englewood Greening Association

**Park Advisory Council Award:** Eugene Field Park Advisory Council

**Park Advisory Council Award:** Ashe Beach Park Advisory Council

**Legislative Award:** State Representative Esther Golar

**Legislative Award:** Alderman Robert Fioretti

**Leon Despres Lifetime Commitment to Parks Award:** Charles P. Schwartz, Jr.



*Qae-Dah Mohammad accepts the Advisory Council Award for Ashe Beach Park as Friends of the Parks' Director of Neighborhood Parks Jill Heise looks on.*

## Neighborhood News (cont'd)

### Events and More Events at Chase Park

By all accounts, Chase Park Advisory Council (4725 N. Ashland) has already had a busy 2010. Many people braved the cold on a snowy Saturday in March as the Chase Park staff, the Chase Park Advisory Council, Alderman Gene Schulner and State Representative Greg Harris attended the official groundbreaking of the Chase Park Playlot Renovation. Plus, the Council also had a record turnout at the March 27 Spring Eggstravaganza!

The Council continues to raise funds to support playground renovation and park programming through events such as the May Ladies' Night, the June Raven Festival, and the not-to-be-missed Circus in the Parks (date to be announced soon).

*(continued on p. 7)*

## Neighborhood News (cont'd)

### Low Park's Recreation Programs

K.O.P.E. stands for Keep Our Park Existing. The newly rejuvenated Lowe Park Advisory Council (5203 S. Lowe Avenue) has adopted K.O.P.E. as its mission. Located just south of 51st Street and west of the Dan Ryan Expressway, this four-acre park includes a small field house, basketball and volleyball courts, and an athletic field intended for football, softball and baseball. Supported by the diligent work of the advisory council, the field house recently reopened and the park came under the supervision of a new recreation leader. Children and community members of all ages have joined together in Lowe Park for fun, recreation and park clean-up projects.

The Council will continue to help the Chicago Park District staff enhance park programs by hosting a variety of community fundraisers, including a 2010 community carnival. Future plans include family reading nights, movie days, competitive sports, game tournaments and other events to unite the community.

### Baseball Conflict at Popular Oz Park

The Oz Park Advisory Council (601-733 W. Webster Avenue) expressed concerns to the Chicago Park District, Alderman Vi Daley and to Friends of the Parks over a recently-established Oz Park Baseball Association. The Oz Park Advisory Council has existed for more

than 30 years, but the Park District failed to notify the Council of an agreement with the new Baseball Association for use of all three baseball fields in Oz Park for every weekend through early August. The Council worried that the youth in the community would no longer have access to the baseball fields on weekends.

Alderman Vi Daley called a meeting with all the interested parties and mediated an agreement. The Baseball Association agreed to spend up to \$15,000 to maintain the baseball fields and other areas in Oz Park. The little leaguers and their parents agreed to clean the fields of any litter after each game. The Baseball Association will meet with the Council at the end of the season to review the Little League program.

### Wicker Park's Kids Grow Program

This spring the Wicker Park Garden Club offered a unique opportunity for children ages 5-11 to design a music garden, grow plants from a seed, grow heir-

loom tomatoes and herbs for their homes, learn sustainable gardening and green technology, and learn garden design.

Parkways Foundation and Friends of the Parks funded or supported the Club's Earth Day classes.

### Washington Park's Nature Area

The Washington Park Conservancy held leadership training in Washington Park (5531 S. Martin Luther King Drive) to teach volunteers how to mulch trees, lead groups and to become good stewards. Other exciting Washington Park activities included a controlled burn in the nature area and a teen ecological adventure with teens from the Gary Comer Youth Center.

The Washington Park Conservancy offers regularly-scheduled nature area habitat restoration work days every third Saturday, from 9:00 a.m. to noon, from March to October. The group meets on the southeast corner of the lagoon near the Fountain of Time sculpture. 🌱

## Grove of Trees in Memory of Michael Scott Planted in Garfield Park

Friends of the Parks' volunteers and friends of Michael Scott planted a grove of 25 Quaking Aspen trees in Garfield Park in memory of the past Chicago Park District Board President.

Friends of the Parks officially dedicated the Michael Scott Grove on May 19

at the Garfield Park Conservatory. Friends of the Parks will continue to accept donations for this program. Please contact John O'Connell, Vice President of Development, at (312) 857-2757 extension 16 for more information on contributions and how to help at the planting. 🌱

## Friends of the Parks Supports Plan for Gateway Harbor

Friends of the Parks supported the design and location of the new Gateway Harbor south of Navy Pier. The Chicago Park District will construct public amenities including a half-mile, 30-foot-wide public promenade for walking, fishing and experiencing the skyline and Lake Michigan. The Park District will create new public land to connect Dime Pier to Gateway Park.

Boaters will benefit from a new 240-slip harbor in Lake Michigan. For the first time, Chicago will offer 160 transient slips for visiting boaters and will provide 80 additional rental mooring slips.

Friends of the Parks stated concerns about the height of the proposed structures. Park District officials considered our concerns and reduced the harbor/café building heights by nearly 12 feet. The Park District also plans to build LEED silver-certified structures. Friends of the Parks made specific recommendations to improve the plan as it moves ahead toward blueprint production:

1. The design of the buildings should include significant sun control on the south facing façade to ensure the comfort level of users both in summer heat and winter cold.

2. The design should incorporate cost-efficient and simple glass cleaning and maintenance systems so that the Park District will not need to set aside future tax dollars for such tasks.
3. The design should use only bird-friendly glass to protect migratory birds from crashing into the glass buildings. We underscored that need.
4. We commended the Park District and the City for protecting Gateway Park by prohibiting any parking on the site. We recommend the parking restriction continue in perpetuity.

We will keep members updated on this plan at [www.fotp.org](http://www.fotp.org). 🌱

# Successful Earth Day Parks & Preserves Clean-Up Draws 4,000 Hard-Working Volunteers to 108 Sites

Chicagoans came out in large numbers to celebrate the 40th anniversary of Earth Day as part of Friends of the Parks' and the Chicago Park District's Earth Day Parks & Preserves Clean Up, presented by Exelon Corporation.

On Saturday, April 17, the Saturday before Earth Day, over 4,000 volunteers removed litter, mulched and planted trees in city parks, and removed invasive spe-



A young Earth Day volunteer models this year's official t-shirt. Leticia Estrada of the Humboldt Park Earth Team created the winning design in Friends of the Parks' annual Earth Day t-shirt design contest.



Exelon volunteers planted 25 trees in Jackson Park near the Museum of Science & Industry to celebrate Earth Day.

cies such as buckthorn and garlic mustard in several forest preserves. Participants cleaned and greened over 108 parks and forest preserve sites that morning!

Employees of several Earth Day sponsoring companies also helped with the clean-up. More than 25 Kohl's Department Stores sent associates to assist at seven sites that morning. Staff from Zurich North America helped at Busse Woods. KPMG staff pitched in at the Dunning-

*(continued on page 9)*



Brandon Antoniewicz of KPMG loads mulch into a wheelbarrow at the Dunning-Read Conservation Area.

## Friends of the Parks Awards Seed Grants for Park Projects

Friends of the Parks established its Seed Grant Program in 2003 to provide resources for volunteer-led projects in Chicago parks and forest preserves. We designed the Seed Grant Program to build stronger communities, develop alliances and foster a sense of care for parks. Through this program, park advisory councils can apply for small grants to support local park projects to green parks, provide children's programs and activities, offer free special events, and sponsor innovative cultural programs.

In 2010, Friends of the Parks awarded Seed Grants to fourteen park advisory

councils, dog park associations and community partners. We provided \$10,000 for projects by the following organizations:  
 Park 550: facility equipment  
 Churchill Field: dog water fountain  
 Edmonds and Junction Grove: community projects  
 Eugene Field: summer family fest  
 Golden Gate Homeowners Association: beautification  
 Gompers: yoga program  
 Hamlin Park Dog Friendly Area: dog park improvements  
 LeClaire/Hearst: community festival  
 Kilbourn: nature board and education

Lowe: grand opening celebration and materials  
 Mayfair: gymnastics equipment  
 Nash Community Center: Wii equipment and board games  
 Unity: art in the park events  
 Weisman: playground renovation  
 Thank you and congratulations to all Seed Grant applicants. We encourage you to continue to improve your parks and communities. Chicago residents appreciate your efforts! Please check [www.fotp.org](http://www.fotp.org) in fall 2010 to apply for a 2011 grant. 🌱

## Earth Day (cont'd)

Read Conservation Area, helping to build the woodchip trail.

That Saturday afternoon saw a wonderful celebration at Humboldt Park where more than 500 volunteers enjoyed complimentary food provided by the local Block Club. Also, for the second year, Tasty Catering provided food to more than 200 volunteers at Busse Woods, including employees of Tasty Catering and their family members who assisted that morning.

Exelon not only supported the activities as our Presenting Sponsor of Earth Day, but later that week Exelon employees put some muscle behind their company's financial support. During the week, on the actual Earth Day - Thursday, April 22 - more than forty Exelon employees planted 25 trees in Jackson Park near the Museum of Science & Industry.

Another of Friends of the Parks' Earth Day events occurred on April 24, when



*KPMG staff constructed a wood chip trail at the Dunning-Read Conservation Area.*

120 high school volunteers worked at the Dunning-Read Conservation Area to install a walking path as part of the Global Youth Service Day with Chicago Public Schools.

Our thank to Exelon for the Presenting

Sponsorship of Earth Day. Thanks also to the Chicago Park District and the Forest Preserve District of Cook County for their assistance on that day. Thanks as well to the thousands of volunteers who came out to clean and green their local parks or preserves. 🌱



*Staff from Wm. Wrigley, Jr. Company planted trees in Humboldt Park.*

## Parks Used as Outdoor Classrooms

Friends of the Parks' Earth Team - our after-school program for high school students - finished its spring session by leading Earth Day stewardship activities at various parks and preserves.

The Horner Park Earth Team, led by instructors Caitlin McMahon and Stacey Schoenecker, organized a day of park clean-up, mulching and nature games for neighborhood children. For the second year, Horner's teens created special activity stations where youngsters had fun while learning about the environment.

The Carver Academy Earth Team created a music video based around environ-



*DeWitt Clinton Elementary first graders show off the zebra mussel shells they've scavenged from Montrose Beach during a Nature Along the Lake outing in April.*

mental themes. The Team's proximity to Beaubien Woods allowed them to work in the forest preserves and film their video there.

As part of the largest Earth Day celebration in the city, the Humboldt Park Earth Team led park tours on Earth Day and created activities for neighbor kids. Earth Team apprentice Leticia Estrada designed the official logo for the 2010 Earth Day t-shirts worn by volunteers citywide.

Nature Along the Lake, Friends of the Parks' elementary school field trip program, continues to grow in popularity and expand in reach. DeWitt Clinton Elementary and George Armstrong International Studies Elementary became Nature Along the Lake partner schools this spring, with Clinton introducing kindergarten and first grade students to the program for the first time.

Nature Along the Lake will bring 900 students from twelve schools to Montrose Harbor and the South Shore Cultural Center this spring, from grades K to 7. Programs will introduce students to birding in the Magic Hedge, dune ecology on the Montrose shore, Purple Martins at



*On April 17, Earth Team apprentices prepared to mulch trees in Humboldt Park for Earth Day.*

South Shore and Lake Michigan ecology on the beach.

As a special springtime event, Brenda McKinney, a longtime partner from the Illinois Department of Natural Resources, will teach fishing. Students fish at the Montrose Harbor pier, catching the invasive gobies.

As we look forward to summer, our Earth Team program will provide summer jobs for teens at Humboldt, Calumet and Horner Parks. 🌱

# Friends of the Parks Honors Vicky and George Ranney During the Parks Ball at the South Shore Cultural Center

Friends of the Parks hosted its 21st annual Parks Ball on Friday, April 9. More than 225 guests flocked to the beautiful South Shore Cultural Center to honor Vicky and George Ranney and to celebrate Chicago parks. The event featured Redmoon Theater performers during cocktail hour, an exciting silent auction, "Give for Green" pledging, a sit-down dinner and dancing.

## 2010 Honorees

Our 2010 Honorees are special people, indeed. Vicky Ranney co-founded Friends of the Parks in 1975. A well-known scholar on the great landscape architect Frederick Law Olmsted, she acted as an associate editor of the *Papers of Frederick Law Olmsted* for many years and wrote *Olmsted in Chicago* in 1972. She has chaired the Illinois Humanities Council and the Illinois Nature Preserves Commission. She sits on the board of the Land Institute in



Photo: Lauren Bauer

*Friends of the Parks was happy to welcome Chicago Park District Superintendent and CEO Timothy J. Mitchell (left) and Chicago Park District Chief of Staff Shawn Schmidt (second from left) to the Parks Ball. With them are Friends of the Parks' Chairman of the Board Lauren Moltz and Past Chairman Fred Bates.*

Salina, Kansas, and chairs the Liberty Prairie Foundation in Lake County. She was a member of a state task force that drafted the Illinois Local Food, Farms and Jobs Act that became law in 2009.

George Ranney has been a major force in civic leadership and the local environmental movement. He serves as CEO of Chicago Metropolis 2020, a business-based organization formed by the Commercial Club of Chicago to improve our region's global competitiveness. In 2009, with John Bryan and Adele Simmons, George co-chaired the Burnham Centennial Celebration, a yearlong series of events that advanced regional green legacy projects.

George has been a partner or associated with the Mayer Brown law firm since 1996. He spent much of his career with Inland Steel, where he ran the company's mines and served as Vice President and General Counsel. He was Illinois' Deputy Budget Director under Governor Ogilvie and led the campaign that created the Regional Transportation Authority. He chaired the Task Force on the Future of Illinois for Governor Thompson, and Governor Edgar's Task Force on conversion of the Joliet Arsenal to

the Midewin Tallgrass Prairie. He serves on the boards of the University of Chicago, Field Foundation of Illinois, the Metropolitan Planning Council, WTTW, and the Conservation Fund.

In 1977, Vicky, then President of Friends of the Parks, and George, then President of the Metropolitan Planning Council, collaborated with Openlands Project and the Chicago Chapter of the American Institute of Architects on an attempt to build a new park over the railroad yard east of Michigan Avenue in downtown Chicago. Many years later that idea finally came to fruition as Millennium Park.

Together, Vicky and George developed Prairie Crossing, one of the nation's first green communities. Located on 677 acres in Grayslake, Prairie Crossing is a national model for environmentally-conscious, transit-oriented suburban development. 🌱



Photo: Lee Auerbach

*Friends of the Parks honored Vicky and George Ranney for their many civic accomplishments.*



Photo: Lauren Bauer

*Friends of the Parks' Board members Fredda, Lauren Moltz and Ian Grossman join President Erna Tranter (second from right) at the Parks Ball gala.*

## Parks Ball Supporters

Friends of the Parks would like to thank the following individuals and businesses for their generous support:

### GUESTS

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Ellen J. Benjamin and Frederick N. Bates  
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Vicky and George Ranney  
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Susan and Tom Weingartner  
Deborah Yanowski

### Special Thanks

We give a special thanks to our hard-working planning committee. We also thank: "Give for Green" - Ace Auctioneers; Photography - Lauren Bauer and Lee Auerbach; DJ - Chad Bell; Flowers - Florisculpture; Graphic Design - i2i Design / Lynn Wier; Production Consulting - Online Productions; Alicia and Peter Pond; Fun - Redmoon Theater performers; Christi Regnery, Chicago Metropolis 2020; Presentation Support - Skidmore Owings & Merrill; Catering - Washburn Culinary Institute / Bill Reynolds. Special thanks to all of our guests, contributors and auction donors who gave so generously to Friends of the Parks. 🌱

## Events calendar

### TUESDAY, MAY 25

#### 5:30PM

Park Advisory Council Network Quarterly Meeting, Friends of the Parks, 17 N. State St., Suite 1450. Invited speaker: Pat Levar, Chicago Park District Facilities Director.

### SUNDAY, JUNE 6

#### 2:00PM

Join us for the dedication of Lane Beach Park and Max Pastin Children's Playground (5915 N. Sheridan Road). The newly-renovated park and new playground will be dedicated by Alderman Mary Ann Smith, members of the Edgewater community and the family of Max Pastin.

### WEDNESDAY, JUNE 9

#### 4:00PM

The Board of Commissioners of the Chicago Park District hold their regularly scheduled meeting at 541 N. Fairbanks, 8th floor conference room. Citizens can address policy issues in the People in the Parks segment at 4:00 p.m. Arrive early to sign up to address the Board of Commissioners.

### WEDNESDAY, JUNE 16

#### 6:30PM

The free Grant Park Music Festival begins in Millennium Park on June 16 and runs through August 21 in the Pritzker Pavilion in Millennium Park on Wednesday, Friday and Saturday evenings. Enjoy Chicago's magnificent concert series with a picnic on the Great Lawn of Millennium Park. For concert details, go to [grantparkmusicfestival.com](http://grantparkmusicfestival.com).

### FRIDAY, JUNE 18 AND

### SATURDAY, JUNE 19

#### 9:00AM - 3:00PM

Volunteers needed to build a new children's playground in Grand Crossing Park, 7655 S. Ingleside Avenue. Contact Mary Eileen Sullivan at (312) 857-2757, extension 13.

### SAT NIGHT/SUN MORNING JULY 10

#### MIDNIGHT TO SUNRISE

Join 8,000 bicyclists for Friends of the Parks' L.A.T.E. Ride. It's our annual 25-mile after-midnight ride through Chicago. Participants receive a t-shirt, rider goody bag and refreshments. For more information, log onto [www.lateride.org](http://www.lateride.org) today. Proceeds benefit our city-wide parks advocacy work.

### WEDNESDAY, JULY 14

#### 4:00PM

The Board of Commissioners of the Chicago Park District hold their regularly scheduled meeting at 541 N. Fairbanks, 8th floor conference room. Citizens can address policy issues in the People in the Parks segment at 4:00 p.m. Arrive early to sign up to address the Board of Commissioners.



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Nancy Minster Swabb, *Communications and Events Director*  
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**Jr. Board Hosts Murphy's Bleachers Event**

Snow may have fallen in the parks, but on February 27 participants kept warm inside Murphy's Bleachers at the 2nd Annual Jr. Board winter fundraiser. Guests participated in a raffle and karaoke kept everyone entertained.

Friends of the Parks' Junior Board consists of young professionals interested in the parks and environmental issues. They meet once a month and host several fundraisers and volunteer work days in parks throughout the year. The newly-elected officers for the 2010 Junior Board include Mike Weeks, President; Jonathan Chap-

arro, Vice President; Matt Haas, Treasurer; and Mike Wall, Membership Chair. If you are interested in learning more about the Junior Board, please contact Amy Donatell at donatella@fotp.org. 🌿

**The Signature Room Event a Success**

The Signature Room at the 95th (atop the John Hancock Center on Michigan Avenue) selected Friends of the Parks as one of twelve charities for its 2010 Charity-of-the-Month. As a beneficiary, Friends of the Parks was a beneficiary of the Table of Twelve Gala held in January.

You have an opportunity to support Friend of the Parks by dining at The Signature Room at the 95th in the month of August, too, when the restaurant has designated Friends of the Parks as the Charity-of-the-Month. You can enjoy a specially-created menu featuring entrees, appetizers and desserts, and The Signature Room will donate 10% of the sales to Friends of the Parks. For more information, go to [www.signatureroom.com](http://www.signatureroom.com). 🌿



*Friends of the Parks' Junior Board members (left to right) Matt Haas, Mike Weeks and Kara Clark have fun at Murphy's Bleachers.*

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

