



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 2010

A Park Finally Named in Honor of Aaron Montgomery Ward

In October, Friends of the Parks, Alderman Brendan Reilly, the Chicago Park District, North River Residents Association and Fulton River Neighbors celebrated the naming of Park 511 (630 N. Kingsbury) as A. Montgomery Ward Park.

A. Montgomery Ward singlehandedly fought to keep Grant Park and our lakefront "forever open, free and clear" for the people of Chicago. From 1890 to 1911, Ward filed four separate lawsuits against the City of Chicago to prevent construction of municipal structures; a city hall, a post office, a police station, a power house and stables for the Department of Streets and Sanitation, all of which were proposed by the city for Grant Park. City politicians at the time saw Grant Park as "free land" for municipal buildings.

Ward was aware of an 1836 map on which the Illinois Canal Commissioners had labeled the area east of Michigan Avenue and south of Randolph Street "Public Ground-Forever Open, Clear and Free of any Buildings, or Other Obstruction Whatever". Telling his attorney, "This is a damned shame! Go and do something about it". Ward began a 20-year battle against the city to end the disgusting conditions of Chicago's nascent lakefront park.

In his lifetime, Ward was labeled an intractable obstructionist by the politicians and the media. But he continued the fight using his private fortune to pay legal fees all the way to the Illinois Supreme Court, which ultimately ruled in Ward's favor in 1911. Known as the Ward Court Decisions, these rulings have served to protect Grant Park and the lakefront for future generations. Ward, vilified by city leaders and his

corporate colleagues, died two years after the landmark court rulings.

In 2010, Friends of the Parks petitioned the Chicago Park District to name a new

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John Baird, Burt Natarus, Erma Tranter, Mike Riordan, State Representative Kenneth Duncan, Brian Israel and Alderman Brendan Reilly (left to right) celebrate the dedication of A. Montgomery Ward Park (630 N. Kingsbury) along the Chicago River.

Officials Dedicate New West Loop Park

City officials and neighbors attended two dedication ceremonies celebrating Mary Bartelme Park, Chicago's newest park located at Sangamon and Adams in



Newly-dedicated Mary Bartelme Park features a modern fountain plaza with five misting gates.

the West Loop. Mary Bartelme served as the first female attorney in Illinois and the first female Cook County Public Guardian. She worked to protect abused and abandoned children, and she established several shelters for children in the city. She was known as "Suitcase Mary" because she provided children with new suitcases of clean clothes. She was born and raised not far from the new park. It is fitting that the West Loop's newest park be named after her.

Formerly a social service site owned by the University of Illinois Chicago, this 1.4 acre park serves the booming new residential West Loop community. Features

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Friends of the Parks' "Last Four Miles" Plan Seeking to Complete Chicago's 26-Mile Lakefront Park System

Unwavering public commitment helped create Chicago's lakefront park system even before the city's incorporation in 1837. In his 1909 *Plan of Chicago*, Daniel Burnham advanced this vision of a public lakefront. The City embraced Burnham's bold plan from the 1920s through the 1950s by developing thousands of acres of lakefront parkland, and in 1973 by enacting the Lake Michigan and Chicago Lakefront Protection Ordinance, which calls for completing the lakefront parks.

Today, Chicago's 26 miles of lakefront parks offer us an unparalleled work of beauty and source of recreation. Even so, they remain incomplete. Approximately two miles on the south lakefront and two miles on the north lakefront remain undeveloped, unconnected or blocked from public use.

As stewards of the legacy of Chicago's public lakefront, today's park advocates must work to complete and expand our shoreline for future generations. In 2006, Friends of the Parks began the Last Four Miles initiative, bringing citizens together to envision and discuss the possibility of completing Chicago's lakefront parks. After several years of public meetings, design charrettes and dialogues with the professional assistance of the Last Four Miles design team, Friends of the Parks published "The Last Four Miles: A Plan to Complete Chicago's Lakefront Parks" in 2009.

The Last Four Miles Plan proposes construction of 100 acres of new parks and beaches on the north lakefront and 400 acres of new parks and beaches on the south lakefront, including connections with natural areas and existing and proposed recreational trails in South Chicago and the Calumet area.

In addition to expanding lakefront recreational opportunities for all, the completion of Chicago's lakefront, including a trail along the entire city shoreline, will knit together the city's north and south. Links to other trail systems will weave together the entire region. Additionally, the new lakefront parks and beaches will help protect the shoreline against erosion

and guard public and private property from the buffeting of lake storms. The Last Four Miles project will foster the creation of aquatic and wildlife habitat that benefits Lake Michigan's ecosystem. It would add approximately 500 acres of new open space to communities where it is in short supply.

Friends of the Parks will partner with the Chicago State University Library, Chi-

cago State University Geography Program and the Lake Calumet Vision Committee to host an exhibit of The Last Four Miles at Chicago State University. The exhibit takes place at Chicago State University Library from November 15, 2010 through January 31, 2011. The partners will host a symposium on January 26, 2011, from 4:00-7:00 p.m.

Belmont-Diversey Revetment Construction Project Completed at Last

Chicago Park District Superintendent Tim Mitchell and Alderman Tom Tunney (44th Ward) joined representatives from the Army Corps of Engineers and the Illinois Constructors Corporation to cut the ribbon and unveil the end of the multi-year Belmont-Diversey Revetment project along the shoreline.

The project, which began in April 2003, removed old crumbling limestone protection barriers from a 1,700-foot stretch along the lake and replaced them with a new multi-tiered concrete



The Belmont-Diversey Revetment project, which began in April 2003, removed old crumbling limestone protection barriers from a 1,700-foot stretch along the lake and replaced them with a new multi-tiered concrete structure that can also be used as a pedestrian promenade.



"I congratulate the Army Corps of Engineers, Chicago Park District and Illinois Constructors Corp. for their hard work in making our shoreline stable, secure and fully accessible," said Alderman Tom Tunney (44th Ward) about the Belmont-Diversey Revetment project unveiling.

structure that can also be used as a pedestrian promenade.

In total, 270 original Belmont Art Rocks were reused to complete the landscape, where they were sunk into the ground along the new concrete revetment. In addition, 40 new trees were planted on the eight acres of land that received new topsoil and sod. Work also included restoring the lakefront bicycle/pedestrian trail from Diversey to Belmont.

“Flyover Bridge” Near Navy Pier Funded But DuSable Park Negatively Impacted by Roadway

A community planning process began in 2003 to design a new bridge to “fly-over” the congested area at Grand and Illinois Streets near the lakefront and Navy Pier. Community groups and Friends of the Parks reviewed design plans at multiple public hearings held to introduce the bridge concept. The flyover bridge was intended to help solve dangerous pedestrian and bike conflicts on Chicago’s lakefront path. After two years of planning and design, officials put the project on hold for lack of funding.

In 2010, \$19 million in federal dollars coming from Congestion Mitigation Air Quality (CMAQ) were approved in Washington. With funding now available, city officials revived the plans, revised the design and announced a three-phase construction schedule for the Navy Pier Flyover Bridge.

In 2010, however, officials redesigned and re-engineered the south half of the bridge to accommodate the construction of a roadway completed two years ago on DuSable Park. The roadway was built to serve as an on-off ramp for the future residents of The Chicago Spire.

The Spire ramps are located on DuSable Park, so the city’s Department of Transportation redesigned the Navy Pier Flyover so that it is no longer a minimal bridge hugging Lake Shore Drive. The Flyover was redrawn to jut approximately 100 feet from Lake Shore Drive into DuSable Park, presenting a significant encroachment and damaging the future three-acre DuSable Park.

Newspapers currently report that the Chicago Spire project is “dead”. Foreclosure lawsuits have been filed against the developer. With the Spire terminally ill, the ramps are now ramps to nowhere. Friends of the Parks is pushing the city to remove the Spire’s off ramps on DuSable Park and reinstate the original Navy Pier Flyover’s plan.



Silversurf Gate Sculpture Installed at Popular Skate Park in Logan Square

When the idea of building a skate park in Logan Square under the Kennedy Expressway was first suggested in 2004, community members responded with strong enthusiasm. As a result, the Chicago Park District entered into a lease agreement with the Illinois Department of Transportation to use a 1.6-acre surface area under and adjacent to the expressway for the skate park. The City of Chicago transferred Open Space Impact Fees to the Chicago Park District for this project. The Logan Boulevard Skate Park spans between the columns that support the Kennedy Expressway.

During the planning phase, community members suggested the inclusion of original artwork in the park that would serve as a gateway into the community. The Park District commissioned installation artist and sculptor Lucy Slivinski to produce a pair of sculptures for the north and south ends of the site. A Chicago artist who received an MFA from the Cranbrook

Academy of Art, Slivinski uses found objects and recycled materials to create her sculptures. Silversurf Gate is made out of various chrome elements such as tailpipes and hubcaps along with colorful lenses from old traffic signals.



The skate park in Logan Square under the Kennedy Expressway attracts many skateboarders.



Artist Lucy Slivinski created the Silversurf Gate sculpture at the popular skate board in Logan Square.

New West Loop Park (cont'd)

for this ultra-modern urban park include a fountain plaza with five misting gates, a sizable hill with a view of Chicago's skyline, and a sunken dog park with a constantly refilled water bowl. A non-traditional children's playground allows kids to use their whole bodies for play with unique climbing features, bridges and slides. Many newly-planted trees also grace the park.

On August 19, Mayor Daley, Alderman Robert Fioretti (2nd Ward), Alderman Walter Burnett (27th Ward), Chicago Park District officials including Superintendent Timothy Mitchell and Commissioner Juan Rangel, Beth White of the Trust for Public Lands, Bill Kurtis, and Jerry Roeper from Chicago Gateway Green and other supporters were on hand to celebrate the new park.

On August 21, the West Loop community helped Aldermen Fioretti and Burnett host a second park dedication ceremony for hundreds of park supporters, children and residents and their dogs. Neighbors came out in droves to celebrate completion of this park, almost ten years in the making.

Alderman Fioretti described the community as a vibrant urban neighborhood close to the Loop with residents who desire green space. Alderman Burnett, proclaimed "Thank God for TIFs," and described how an \$18 million TIF made this park possible. Both aldermen thanked the community for its tenacity and vision, exclaiming that this is not the end of green space expansion near the Loop. Both aldermen currently seek more green space for new parks and two dog-friendly areas.

Residents have already formed a new park advisory council. More than 300 park patrons later attended a Movie in the Park in September.



Mayor Richard Daley addresses the crowd during the dedication of Mary Bartleme Park, located in the West Loop. In the crowd are Bill Kurtis (left to right), Alderman Walter Burnett, _____, Alderman Bob Fioretti and Tim Mitchell (in white shirt), CEO and General Superintendent of the Chicago Park District.

America's Great Outdoors Campaign Addresses Nation's Health and Wellness

The National Park Service hosted listening sessions in cities throughout the country to hear how Americans value the outdoors. The public meetings provided the background information for the America's Great Outdoors report to be provided to President Obama in November.

Friends of the Parks testified at the hearings about the importance of parks and open spaces for the health, fitness and well being of our area's citizens.

Physical activity keeps children and adults healthy. Studies have shown that when people have neighborhood parks and trails close to them, they increase their frequency of exercise. Conversely, the same studies show that where there are no parks, residents often go without exercise. In dense urban environments, particularly in low-income neighborhoods, parks, playgrounds, greenways and trails are often the only spaces for children and adults to engage in play and fitness activities. In these low-income communities, people do not have access to and/or cannot afford health club or gym memberships.

The National Recreation and Parks Association calls for ten park acres per 1,000 residents for a healthy community. Chicago does not have adequate park space to serve its population. In fact, fifty-five of Chicago's seventy-seven community areas do not have the basic two acres of parks per 1,000 residents.

According to a 2007 Center for Disease

Control study, Illinois ranks 10th in the nation for the percentage of overweight children 10-17 years old. With regard to childhood obesity, Illinois ranks 4th in childhood obesity behind Mississippi, Georgia and Kentucky. The cost of obesity in dollars alone is astronomical – \$117 billion, according to a 2000 study by the U.S. Surgeon General. Reports now show that more people die prematurely from obesity than from smoking.

Friends of the Parks recommended that the America's Great Outdoors Campaign be a critical component in addressing our nation's health and wellness. We must prioritize federal funding and policy initiatives for parks and recreation in order to promote healthier lifestyles, including:

- Federal funding for urban parks through the Urban Parks and Recreation Recovery Program, the Land and Water Conservation Program and the Livable Communities Program
- "Get Active" campaign adopted by the U.S. Surgeon General's office (similar to the "Stop Smoking" campaign) to reduce our sedentary lifestyle behaviors
- Federal policy or guidelines with incentives that reward and support the use of local and state agency land for parks and greenways and trails, including abandoned rail lines

We are pleased to be part of this campaign. 🌿

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 Four Miles initiative.

Ways to Give to Friends of the Parks

Give a Membership—A great birthday or holiday gift for a friend or family member!

Annual Gifts - Please consider a tax-deductible gift in support of our park advocacy work.

Employer Matching Gifts—Double or triple your donation through your employer's matching gift program.

Bequests: The Burnham & Ward Society—A bequest, or a gift from your estate, creates a wonderful and lasting legacy.

Honorary or Memorial Gifts—You may contribute in honor of a loved one, or as a memorial gift in lieu of flowers.

For more information, please contact John O'Connell at (312) 857-2757 ext. 17 or occonnellj@fotp.org today.

“GO TO 2040” Plan Addresses Region’s Need for Parks

The seven-county region of metropolitan Chicago unanimously adopted “GO TO 2040”, the area’s first comprehensive regional plan since the Burnham Plan of 1909.

The Chicago Metropolitan Agency for Planning (CMAP) – formed in 2005 to lead “GO TO 2040” and help guide development and investment decisions through mid-century and beyond – recently received a Sustainable Communities Regional Planning Grant for \$4 million.

The grant award will leverage existing initiatives and future efforts, as GO TO 2040 seeks to strategically maximize the benefits of scarce resources as the region adds more than 2 million new residents by 2040. The plan reflects more than three years of research and deliberation by CMAP and its partners, including Friends of the Parks.

Its four themes include:

- Livable Communities
- Human Capital
- Efficient Governance
- Regional Mobility

The plan includes detailed recommendations regarding land use, housing, water and energy, parks and open space,

food systems, education and workforce development, state and local tax policy and transportation. Livable Communities emphasizes expansion of and improvements to parks and open space in the region. Access to parks and open space improves quality of life. Open space also plays a crucial role in flood protection, public health, drinking water supply and quality, and adaptation to climate change.

GO TO 2040 takes a three-fold approach: First, the region should provide more parks in developed areas to increase park accessibility and equity. Second, the region should preserve the most important natural areas and conserve a network of land and water that protects biodiversity, follows waterway corridors, expands existing preserves and creates new preserves in the region. Third, the region should provide functional connections or greenways between parks and preserves for both recreational use and ecosystem function.

In the Connections Recommendations, GO TO 2040 incorporates the Green Legacy projects developed for the Burnham Centennial, “one of the most important being the Last Four Miles Plan to complete

the park system along the Lake Michigan shoreline.” GO TO 2040 states: “A full public and accessible lakefront was part of Burnham’s vision for the region, and the Last Four Miles Plan lays out a modernized approach to complete the lakefront park system. Considering it calls for lake-fill in certain places to construct additional open space, the Last Four Miles Plan would also result in better park accessibility in some of the most underserved areas of the region.”

The plan is available at www.cmap.illinois.gov/2040. 🌱



Volunteer gardener Marshall Matz tends to the garden at Lake Shore Park. He typically volunteers thirty hours a week—and it shows!

Aaron Montgomery Ward (cont’d)

park, Park 511, in his memory. The park is located in the shadow of Montgomery Ward’s catalogue corporate warehouse, south of Chicago Avenue on the east shore of the Chicago River.

The naming commemoration was a long time coming. The community, Friends of the Parks, Alderman Brendan Reilly



A. Montgomery Ward

and the Chicago Park District were pleased to finally celebrate the vision and accomplishment of a great city leader who saved Chicago’s lakefront. 🌱



Newly-dedicated A. Montgomery Ward Park, named for the great city leader who saved Chicago’s lakefront, is located just south of Chicago Avenue on the east shore of the Chicago River.

Friends of the Parks Welcomes New Park Board President

Friends of the Parks hosted a reception in October during which Park Advisory Council (PAC) members from all over the city could meet Dr. Bryan Traubert, the newly-appointed President of the Chicago Park District Board of Commissioners.



Dr. Bryan Traubert

PAC members learned that during the first five months of his tenure, Dr. Traubert has conducted weekly park visits and held listening sessions with staff to familiarize himself with park issues throughout the city.

In a discussion session with President Traubert, PAC members expressed concerns about the reduction of staffing at parks. They expressed frustrations with the permit application process, and with a new rule requiring liability insurance for PAC events. President Traubert promised to bring these concerns to the Park District and will review the permit application process. He applauded the PACs for their great work and spirit of volunteerism.

In the "Brag About Your Park" session, attendees learned about Indian Boundary Park's Keeper of the Fire Garden, the Open House at Grand Crossing Park, West Chatham Park's exciting youth jazz resi-

dency, the lakefront clean-up hosted by the Lincoln Park Advisory Council, and Mary Bartleme Park's successful Movie in the Park event.

Attendees enjoyed treats generously provided by Heaven on Seven, Kim and Scott's Pretzels, Terry's Toffee, and Whole Foods.

Friends of the Parks will host a special PAC meeting at its offices on Wednesday, November 17 at 5:30 p.m. to review the Chicago Park District's 2011 budget. Please contact Maria Dmyterko Stone to RSVP at stonem@fotp.org or (312) 857-2757 ext. 17.

Friends of the Parks' Volunteers Improve Chicago's Parks and Natural Areas

Friends of the Parks hosted over forty community service events this year, partnering with high schools, universities and corporations to improve Chicago's parks and forest preserves.

In July, students from Al Raby High School cleaned Garfield Park and mulched trees as part of two summer service events.

The William Wrigley Jr. Company made an impressive contribution by mulching trees on the perimeter of Columbus Park from Jackson Boulevard to the Eisenhower Expressway.

Volunteers from Mesirow Financial made Union Park safer by cleaning the children's playground and installing a fresh load of Fibar (wood chips).

In September, volunteers from PepsiCo celebrated National Water Awareness Week by cleaning Montrose Park and Beach, and helped our Nature Along the Lake students remove invasive fish from Montrose Harbor.

Motorola participated with Friends of the Parks in its Global Day of Service in October with over 300 employees working at two sites. Chicago-based employees worked at Metcalf Park to install fresh Fibar in the playground and mulch several trees in the park. Motorola's suburban

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During its Global Day of Service, Motorola sent 300 employees to two sites to work with Friends of the Parks. At Busse Woods, Motorola staff mulched trees, cut buckthorn and cleared the woods of debris.

Volunteer Awards Reception

Friends of the Parks hosted its annual VIP (Volunteers in Parks) reception on November 14 in Garfield Park during which we honored volunteers, stewards and community groups.

We presented the following awards:

Stewardship Award

David Painter (Lincoln Park)
John Videkis (Dunning Read Conservation Area)
Kurt Leslie (Forest Preserve District of Cook County and Dunning Read Conservation Area)

Individual Award

Reverend Sylvia Jones (West Chatham)

Park Advisory Council Award

Unity Park and Rainbow Beach Advisory Council

Community Group Award

C.I.M.B.Y. (Calumet in My Backyard)

Advocacy Award

Bowmanville Community Organization – Greenspace Chicago

Chicago Park District Employee Award

Pat Levar, Director of Facility Management

Forest Preserve District Employee Award

Rebecca Moss (Sand Ridge Nature Center)

Smoky Sakurada "Friends of Friends" Award

Natalie Ward

Eighteen Chicago Parks Receive \$31.6 Million in TIF Funds

The Chicago Park District received approval of \$31.6 million in TIF funds for eighteen Chicago parks. Officials will use the TIF dollars for much-needed improvements, including new children's playgrounds, dog friendly areas and a new skate park.

18th & Clark Street—\$3 million for an indoor/ outdoor skate park

Blackwelder Park—\$1.2 million for new children's playground and fencing

Buttercup Park—\$1 million for a renovated park and playground

Fireman's Park—\$675,000 for a firefighter memorial and passive park

Grant Park—\$1 million for right of way improvements

Heritage Green—\$750,000 for land acquisition and a new dog friendly area

Hermitage Park—\$600,000 for a new

children's playground

Jesse White Park—\$5 million for a new park fieldhouse on North Avenue

Ping Tom Park—\$10 million for a new park fieldhouse

Seward Park—\$650,000 for fieldhouse improvements

Skinner Park—\$375,000 for a new dog friendly area

Smith Park—\$475,000 for rehabilitation of the ceramics building

Stanton Park—\$1.5 million for fieldhouse renovations

Stearns Quarry—\$1 million for additional landscaping and paving

Taylor-Lauridsen—\$75,000 for a new ball field, fencing

Ward Park—\$750,000 for a playground expansion

Warren Park—\$75,000 for restoration of tennis courts

Wilson Park—\$500,000 for a new children's playground

Women's Park—\$3 million for fieldhouse renovations

Friends of the Parks will continue to monitor new park projects and assist communities when asked.

Adopt-A-Beach Clean Up Day Has Other Benefits

More than forty beach lovers gathered on September 25 for a beach clean-up at Ashe Beach (74th and Lake Shore Drive). Strong winds and rough waves at this 0.42-acre beach did not deter the participants. They worked as if it were another sunny day on the beach.

Representatives from the Sea Scouts 5212 of the Jackson Park Yacht Club, students and Chicago Conservation Corp (C3), Valerie Hardy from the Jane Neil School, The Arthur Ashe Park Advisory Council, Veronica Kyle of Faith In Place, community organizer Faye Patterson of the C.A.P.S. Implementation office and other neighborhood environmental enthusiasts removed over fifty pounds of plastic, cigarette butts, cans, bottles, straws, and other debris. Students learned how to collect water samples to screen for bacteria pollution, water temperature and pH (acidity/basicity) level.

Children and many adults have lost touch with the outdoors and nature. This day was another of many marvelous opportunities to get people from indoors to the outdoors for a therapeutic dose of nature. The Ashe Park Advisory Council wanted to share and display the passion that we have for our beach and park with everyone. We will continue to protect our beach and the land around it from the potential threats of environmental pollutants and trash.

This article was written by Qae-Dah Muhammad, President of the Arthur Ashe Beach Advisory Council.



At Busse Woods, Forest Preserve District of Cook County Commissioner Tim Schneider (right) helped mulch trees alongside Motorola employees.

Volunteers (cont'd)

employees from Schaumburg, Arlington Heights and Libertyville volunteered at Busse Woods in Arlington Heights for the fifth year in a row. They cut buckthorn, mulched trees and cleared the woods of garbage and debris.

Also in October, 110 students from Latin School cleaned and mulched Washington Square Park. They moved one semi-trailer load of wood chips from the street to mulch trees and flower beds in the park.

Orr High School students volunteered as part of their service learning initiative at Orr Park and in Humboldt Park.

Bank of America brought out 80 of their employees to clean and mulch trees at Humboldt Park. The results were quite impressive because they were able to mulch the perimeter of the park from Sacramento and Division all the way south to North Avenue.

Volunteers Do the Work at the Dunning-Read Conservation Area

The Dunning-Read Conservation Area (DRCA), one of only two conservation areas in the city, has attracted large groups of volunteers on a regular basis.

In July, the Boston Consulting Group brought several staff members out to work on the trail within the 25-acre natural area. The same day, DraftFCB built buckthorn fences around some of the newly-seeded native plant areas. In August, a crew from Whole Foods brought out a crew of people to work on the trail and fences as well. September saw the biggest groups with volunteers from DePaul University, Mizuho Corporate Bank and Wright College.

The William Wrigley Jr. Company made a significant donation in late October by planting 32 trees and 43 shrubs, all of which are native species that will improve the habitat for birds and butterflies. Volunteers planted some of the new trees near the corner of Oak Park Avenue and Irving Park Road to define the site of a future native plant nursery, which will



During a Friends of the Parks work day this summer, volunteers from Boston Consulting Group removed invasive plants along the trail at the Dunning-Read Conservation Area.

be installed in 2011 thanks to help from GreenCorps. Also, Friends of the Parks is forming an exciting new partnership with the American Indian Center (AIC), whose volunteers will install a rain garden this fall and host additional work days this winter with their youth.



During a summer work day organized by Friends of the Parks, volunteers from DraftFCB created a wonderful grape vine path at the Dunning-Read Conservation Area.

WTTW Is Biking the Boulevards

The 80-minute television special *Biking the Boulevards*, WTTW's newest entry in its successful Chicago "TV tour" series, will debut on Monday, November 29 at 7:30 p.m. In it, Geoffrey Baer will take viewers on an invigorating virtual journey all over the city, exploring the sights and sounds along Chicago's broad, tree-shaded boulevards, pointing out many amazing discoveries not immediately apparent from a car.

On the 28-mile route, viewers will learn about the origins of the city's scenic boulevard system – the first of its kind in the country – imagined in the 1860s as a way to link Chicago's green spaces. Baer will also share the fascinating history of bicycling in Chicago – from the fashionable cycling clubs that were all the rage in the 19th century; to the invention of the "safety bike," which contributed to the popularization of biking in the city; to Mayor Daley's more recent push to make this the most bike-friendly city in America.

Biking the Boulevards begins in the Bronzeville neighborhood, where Baer introduces us to such landmarks as the legendary Regal Theater; the Ebenezer Baptist Church, which housed the first gospel choir; and a former Civil War POW camp. He then moves south to Washington Park, created by Frederick Law Olmsted and home to the DuSable Museum of African American History, and then west through Englewood – home of Chicago's first serial killer whose story was the basis of the novel *The Devil in the White City* -- and scenic Sherman and Gage Parks. Baer heads north through the historic Back of the Yards district, McKinley Park, the Mexican-American enclave of Little Village, and Lawndale, a past center of Jewish culture that later became the temporary home of Martin Luther King, Jr. Then he explores the spectacular lagoons and stunning architecture of Douglas Park, Garfield Park, and Humboldt Park, a onetime "winter playground" for Chicago's Norwegians; now the surrounding neighborhood is the heart of the city's Puerto Rican community. Baer winds up his informative tour in the rejuvenated

(continued on page 10)

Wicker Park Draws New and Veteran Gardeners

The Wicker Park Garden Club, organized in 1984, brings new and veteran garden enthusiasts from the city and suburbs together to create a forum in which participants learn about landscape design, green technologies and practical gardening techniques.

Since 2002, the club has offered an eight-month lecture series focusing on landscape design concepts and a workshop series highlighting basic horticultural techniques like plant propagation from seeds and cuttings and container design techniques. The group offers tool sharpening and home canning technique classes.

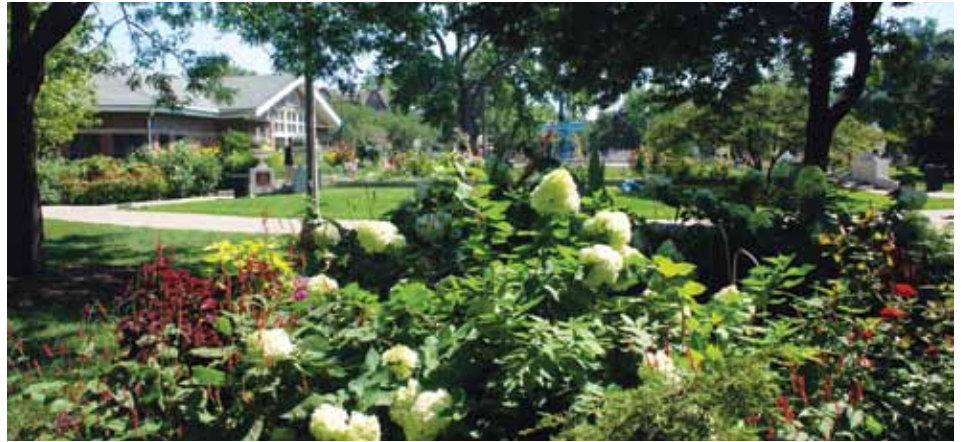


Wicker Park's youngest gardeners get their hands dirty!

This year, professional lecturers included landscape architects from Hoerr-Shaudt Landscape Architects, Culliton Quinn Landscape Architecture Workshop, DT Landscape Design, G-Studio Design, J. Siegel Designs, and many others. The fall lectures will focus on designing new and restoring historic landscapes that work with existing architecture, yet serve the needs of those who live there. The Winter-Spring Lectures will focus on the work of late 20th and early 21st century landscape architects such as Roberto Burle Marx and Piet Oudolf who have influenced many of our contemporary landscape designers, and how the home garden designer can adopt their philosophies to creating their own magnificent landscapes.

The Home Landscape Design Workshop held in January and February is among the club's most popular offerings. Students will learn how to analyze their home's light and soil elements, as well as which shrubs, trees and flowers work for their site.

The Club also offers Park Kids Grow for ages 4-12. This program addresses garden design, horticultural techniques, and



The Wicker Park Garden Club plants and maintains beautiful garden landscapes at the park.

Photo: Doug Wood

green technologies with a study of historic designs, the visual arts, music, and techniques of self expression. Children create designs and grow all the plants for an ornamental garden in the park.

The Club ends the year with a plant sale and workshop weekend series to obtain the funding needed to maintain the 10,000 square feet of beautiful gardens they design, fund and maintain in Wicker Park.

Since 2002, financial support for this series has been donated by Friends of the Parks, Parkways Foundation, and by

most of the landscape architecture firms presenting this year. The Wicker Park Garden Club received the 2005 Mayor Daley's Gardener of the Year Award and the 2006 Illinois Environmental Hero Award from then Lieutenant Governor Pat Quinn. The club has no membership fees and welcomes all residents to participate in its lectures, workshops and special events. Visit www.wpgarden.org to learn more.

This article was written by Doug Wood, President of the Wicker Park Garden Club.

Governor Initiates "Mud to Parks" Program to Use, Clean Dredged Mud

Several years ago, Governor Pat Quinn initiated Mud to Parks, a program to use clean, dredged mud from the Illinois and Peoria Rivers to create parks around the state. In 2004, a Chicago south side park received the first installment of Mud to Parks. Crews brought mud via barges from the two rivers north to Chicago to cover sixteen acres of the former U.S. Steel South Works site along the lakefront between 87th Street and the Calumet River.

Recently, the Chicago Park District approved a second partnership with the Illinois Department of Natural Resources to accept mud from farm fields and stream banks to various lakefront park locations in need of clean fill or top soil.

The former U.S. Steel site again received approval for mud, and this time the mud will be used to develop soil for a park from 79th to 87th Streets. The large 100-

acre site is now made up of slag from the former steel mill and is devoid of topsoil.

Friends of the Parks supports the Mud to Parks program as a cost-saving, environmentally-friendly park development opportunity. For future installments, Friends of the Parks additionally recommended that mud be used for closing and capping the Confined Disposal Facility at Iroquois Landing located at 90th Street and Lake Michigan.

Biking The Boulevards (cont'd)

Logan Square neighborhood, where the city's boulevard system ends.

Biking the Boulevards will feature an interactive website, now under construction, to be accessed at wttw.com/bikingth-eboulevards, where visitors can share their biking stories, photos, and videos.

Friends of the Parks' Jr. Board Hosts 2nd Annual Fall Frolic Wine Event

In October, the Junior Board of Friends of the Parks hosted a fall-themed wine tasting event at In Fine Spirits in the Andersonville neighborhood.

The event included a silent auction and raffle with prizes donated by Chipotle, Noodles and Company, PRP Wine Company, Unilever, Wow Bao and 1154 Lill Studio. A big thank you to Pat and Scott Miller, who donated a week's stay at a Michigan lake house to the silent auction. Money raised from this event will go toward preserving, protecting and improving parks and preserves in Chicago.

The Junior Board consists of environmentally-conscious Chicagoans in their

twenties and early thirties who love and use the city's parks and preserves. If you would like to learn more about the Junior Board, please contact Amy Donatell at



_____ and _____ enjoyed the Fall Frolic wine event, hosted by Friends of the Parks' Junior Board.

Events calendar

WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 1 4:00PM

The Chicago Park District will host a public hearing to discuss its 2011 budget (541 N. Fairbanks).

SUNDAY, DECEMBER 5

Friends of the Parks will release its annual "Seed Grant" application form to interested Park Advisory Councils and community groups. To receive a copy, log onto www.fotp.org or contact Maria Dmyterko Stone at (312) 857-2757 ext. __ or stonem@fotp.org.

WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 8 4:00PM

The Chicago Park District will host its monthly board meeting (541 N. Fairbanks).

THURSDAY, DECEMBER 9 12:15PM

Join us for a free lecture, "Enjoying Chicago's Parks in Winter," part of our Creative Living in the City series, to be held at the Chicago Cultural Center (78 E. Washington).

TUESDAY, JANUARY 18 5:30PM

Friends of the Parks will host a PAC (Park Advisory Council) networking meeting at our office (17 N. State, Suite 1450). To RSVP, contact Maria Dmyterko Stone at (312) 857-2757 ext. __ or stonem@fotp.org.

WEDNESDAY, JANUARY 26 4:00PM

Connecting Communities Through Trails, Parks and Open Spaces Symposium, Chicago State University (more info?)

THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 3 12 NOON

Friends of the Parks will host its Annual Meeting and Awards Luncheon at the Chicago Cultural Center (78 E. Washington, GAR Room). Lunch will be served. Ticket price: \$_____.

FRIDAY, MAY 20 6:30PM – 11:00PM

Save the Date: Friends of the Parks will host its annual Parks Ball gala at Galleria Marchetti. Cocktails, a performance by the South Shore Drill Team, a silent auction, a sit-down dinner and dancing will make this a memorable night! Ticket information is available at www.fotp.org.



In August, community members and partners attended a dedication to celebrate playground improvements at Grand Crossing Park. Among the attendees were Lauren Moltz and Erma Tranter, Friends of the Parks; Dr. Karen Sheehan and Amy Hill, Children's Memorial Hospital and Injury Free Chicago; and CeCe Edwards of the Grand Crossing Park Advisory Council.



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www.fotpp.org

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**Circus In the Parks
Draws Big Crowds**



Twenty awe-inspiring Circus In the Parks shows featuring The Midnight Circus delighted more than 6,000 people over five weekends this fall. The tour raised funds for five Chicago parks and was made possible by a partnership between the Chicago Park District, local aldermen and hard-working park advocates.

Chase, Gompers, Holstein, Portage and Welles Parks will split approximately \$60,000 evenly to boost fundraising efforts for park improvements such as playground renovations and building upgrades. The Circus In The Parks featuring The Midnight Circus expansion was a collaborative effort to bring communities together in their local parks for an afternoon of world class entertainment.

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.fotpp.org

ADDRESS: 17 North State Street,
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