Friends of the Parks Urges Transparency for Obama Presidential Library and South Shore Golf Complex

Friends of the Parks joins South Side residents in their concerns over a lack of transparency regarding plans for two projects on public land in Jackson Park: the Obama Presidential Library and the merging of the Jackson Park and South Shore golf courses. We believe there should be a transparent and inclusive process that respects community input for both of these projects.

The Obama Foundation announced in August that the Obama Presidential Center would be built in Jackson Park. Friends of the Parks has said since 2014, when Chicago was first mentioned as a potential site for the presidential library, that we are excited about this once-in-a-lifetime opportunity to host the president’s legacy on the city’s South Side, where he and the first lady have a deep connection to the community. We have also said from the start that we object to the use of parkland for the library. We echo the concerns of local residents over the decision to construct the library on the current site of playing fields. This decision directly contradicts FOTP’s Policy Principles, which include preserving existing park lands, providing active recreation opportunities, and maintaining an open, clear, and free lakefront.

Nevertheless, FOTP will not sue over the issue as it is our understanding that the selected site is not public trust land, unlike the proposed site for the Lucas Museum. “Friends of the Parks’ analysis suggests that there is no realistic legal remedy at this time to protect this public open space from this development,” said FOTP Executive Director Juanita Irizarry in a press release. Instead, she urged greater public input to the process, another of our policy principles. In particular, she proposed that the library’s design “should maximize the use of available vacant land and underground space, and be truly ‘park positive’ by adding parkland to the surrounding community. . . . Furthermore, any design should upgrade the park’s facilities and preserve existing recreational uses by the public.”

Meanwhile, in early January, the Chicago Park District Board of Commissioners voted unanimously to approve a $1.1 million contract to allow for site planning and engineering surveys in support of merging the Jackson Park and South Shore golf courses into a championship-level golf complex estimated to cost $30 million. Friends of the Parks is concerned, along with local residents, that this golf complex does not meet the needs of the community but rather will compete for funding and space with heavily used park resources, such as football, baseball, and soccer fields, as well as the outdated Jackson Park fieldhouse.

The Chicago Park District held its vote only two days after the first community meeting about the golf complex. In addition, the CPD has been referring to a framework plan for Jackson Park that was created in 1999, stating that this golf course fits into the framework plan. We believe the plan needs to be updated to include all of the other major projects taking place in the park, including the Obama Library. The rushed process in proposing and approving the initial contract for this golf course highlights the lack of transparency and community input.

“We recognize that there are always going to be disagreements about the best use or uses of parks,” said FOTP’s Irizarry during the public comment period of the January vote about the golf complex. However, she noted, “when you hold community input sessions at the very last minute, trying to create the impression of public participation, after the parks superintendent and the mayor had been secretly putting a plan in place for quite a long time, you create mistrust.”

See p. 8 for more on Jackson Park.
Volunteers-in-Parks Reception Honors Local VIPs

Since 1995, Friends of the Parks has honored the outstanding volunteers, community groups, and city and county employees who have made significant contributions to their parks. The “Volunteers-in-Parks” Reception, endearingly known as the VIP Awards Reception, helps us celebrate these stewards who help make our parks and open spaces great. VIP awardees are nominated by community members and it is a great honor for us to share their stories.

Daniel Ebel became an active participant in the Indian Boundary Park Advisory Council when it was reinitiated in 2013 and has spearheaded the repurposing of the Keepers of the Fire garden into a true community garden.

Brown Park Advisory Board has successfully advocated for the annexation of a vacant parcel to the park and has created the annual Picnic in Brown Park honoring Sidney Brown, Chicago’s first fallen African American firefighter.

Prairie District Neighborhood Alliance members have dedicated hundreds of hours to bringing the Women’s Park & Gardens Field House to fruition, providing a safe learning environment for local children on the Near South Side.

Morgan Halstead selflessly led the campaign to save the Humboldt Park Beach. Uniting community members, she kept the pressure on the Park District and helped find a sustainable, cost-effective way to keep the beach open.

Charlie Billups has boldly advocated for Humboldt Park, championing initiatives that build community rather than displace longtime, mostly minority or low-income residents.

Grassroots Illinois Alliance (GIA) has jumped into activism efforts surrounding the new 606 trail, the Humboldt Park Beach, and the anti-Riot Fest campaign.

Gary Morrissey has engaged more than 10,000 visitors through creative educational programming at West Ridge Nature Preserve since the park opened last year.

Tom Murphy is a dedicated volunteer with the West Ridge Nature Preserve, the Edgewater Environmental Sustainability Project board, the Bowmanville Community Greenspace, and water monitoring programs along Chicago’s lakeshore.

Angela Jackson is the Dawes Park Supervisor and works tirelessly to maintain her park as a safe haven for area youth through innovative family-friendly programming.

Carmen Rodriguez is a seasonal employee of the Chicago Park District and has overseen Unity Park every summer for the past 10 years. She helps keep the spray pool, restrooms, and other park amenities clean and safe all summer long.

Tom Drebenstedt is a longtime volunteer with the Rutherford Sayre PAC, has organized the resource fair at the PAC Conference for the past four years, and co-spearheaded the effort to unite PAC members through the PAC Leadership Alliance.

Jason Quaglia is one of the leaders of the newly formed Friends of the Dunning Read Conservation Area and organized more than 10 volunteer workday events last year alone at the Dunning Read Conservation Area, a 23-acre wetland and forest saved from development by Friends of the Parks and the local community in 2005.

The 2016 Volunteers-in-Parks award winners were honored at the annual VIP Reception in October.
Earth Team Teaches Teens Science Skills and A Love of Nature

Earth Team is an innovative science education program offered by Friends of the Parks at the Dunning Read Conservation Area (DRCA). The program, funded through After School Matters, introduces Chicago teens to the natural world through hands-on projects, discussions of environmental issues, and field trips. Teens gain useful skills while developing a love of the outdoors that can lead to a lifelong enjoyment of nature and careers in the sciences.

FOTP integrates the work of the Earth Team into its overall efforts toward restoring, preserving, and protecting the DRCA, a 23-acre conservation area on Chicago’s Northwest Side. Located in a neighborhood where residents often note a lack of natural areas, the DRCA contains a microcosm of three ecosystems: prairie, woodlands, and wetlands with a creek running through it. FOTP became the DRCA Site Manager in 2008 after lobbying for its protection and now coordinates with local partners to engage more than 200 volunteers per year during public workdays at the site.

Earth Team responds to the need for ongoing stewardship at the DRCA, as well as the development of the next generation of environmental leaders. Over the years, Earth Team teens have helped maintain a woodchip path, added signage, developed educational programming, removed invasive species, and planted native flowers and grasses. In addition to completing projects at the DRCA, the Summer 2016 Earth Team teens participated in field trips to Montrose Harbor and Eden Place Nature Center. At Montrose Harbor, the teens engaged with the local ecosystems (prairie, wetlands, lake, and dunes), learned to identify common bird species, and went fishing—a first for many of them! Earth Team's trip to Eden Place was an opportunity to see how a local community can transform a dumpsite into an educational center enjoyed by all ages. The teens were able to relate this experience directly to their community engagement projects at the DRCA.

FOTP plans to expand the Earth Team from a summer learning experience to a year-round program, and starting in 2017, the Earth Team teens will organize a tour of the DRCA as their capstone project, giving them a chance to showcase their hard work.

Photos (from top right to bottom left)
1. Native plant garden at Dunning Read.
2. New trail marker at Dunning Read.
3. Field trip to Montrose Harbor.
4. Preparation for native plant garden.
5. Field trip to Eden Place Nature Center.
6. Discussion about public commons.
7. Visit with the chickens at Eden Place Nature Center.
Chicago Plays! Program Brings Safe Spaces to Children Across the City

Keeping up with the more than 500 playgrounds in the Chicago Park District can be a challenge. Weather, age, and wear-and-tear take their toll on the playgrounds over time, eventually making them unsafe for children. To make matters worse, in the early 2000s, the replacement cost per playground in the City of Chicago rose to more than $500,000, a sum significantly greater than that of neighboring suburbs. Due to these high costs, the replacement rate slowed to about five playgrounds per year, meaning that it would take 100 years to rebuild all of the playgrounds in Chicago (note that playground equipment has an average lifespan of 15 years before it must be repaired or completely replaced).

In 2005, Friends of the Parks entered into a partnership with Children’s Memorial Hospital (now Lurie Children’s Hospital) and its Injury Free Children Coalition to biannually survey the safety of the city’s playgrounds. The survey focused on four key elements: age-appropriate design, fall surfacing, equipment maintenance, and physical environment. The results of the 2012 Playground Survey were alarming: more than 300 of the 500 surveyed playgrounds, or 60% of all playgrounds citywide, failed to meet national safety standards.

This serious deficiency, as well as the slowing of the playground replacement rate due to skyrocketing costs, prompted FOTP to develop a new playground construction plan. Noting that the majority of the playground cost was for a rubber matting surface in fall zones, FOTP asked the Park District to substitute fibar wood chips for the rubber mats, thus reducing the replacement cost to $100,000 per playground. This would allow the Park District to build 50 playgrounds per year instead of 10 at the same annual cost of $5 million.

The Park District agreed to the plan and funded the new playground equipment while Friends of the Parks was responsible for implementing a comprehensive community engagement strategy. An important part of our role was management of the application process. New playgrounds were selected each year through an application-based process that allowed community organizations to nominate those playgrounds most in need. In addition, FOTP was responsible for including local residents in the playground design process, providing technical assistance to community partners, and overseeing volunteer workdays. However, by 2015, the Park District had altered the Chicago Plays! Program procedures heavily and FOTP’s community engagement process was no longer prioritized.

In early 2016, the Park District told FOTP that Mayor Emanuel was pushing to complete the remaining 80-some playgrounds by the end of the year, despite our expressed concerns that a robust and inclusive engagement process for so many playground communities could not be completed in such a short period of time. FOTP and the Park District worked to identify community members to participate in Chicago Plays! for the remainder of 2016, but some playground neighbors reported that no engagement process had been undertaken. Instead, they learned of the project when they took their children to local parks and were greeted by fencing and “Under Construction” signs.

In October 2016, one year ahead of schedule, Mayor Emanuel and the Park District announced the completion of the Chicago Plays! Program, which built or renovated a total of 327 playgrounds. The Chicago Plays! model relies on communities adopting their playgrounds and participating in their continued cleanliness, maintenance, and safety. We hope that the rushed manner of the Chicago Plays! program in its latter years will not detract from this community engagement, which is essential to making the program a success for years to come.
Placemakers Laboratory Builds Community Through Art and Action

Placemakers Laboratory is an advocacy education program created by Friends of the Parks to connect Chicago youth with their communities. This new program was piloted from 2014 to 2016 and encouraged high school students to rethink public spaces in their communities and to “placemake” them into beautiful spaces where people would want to be. FOTP staff supported students in this process by serving as mentors and supplying funds for youth to realize the projects they envisioned. The success of the Placemakers Laboratory depended on collaboration with two community partners: Gary Comer Youth Center (GCYC) in 2014-2015 and Broader Urban Involvement & Leadership Development (BUILD) in 2015-2016.

The students at GCYC were selected for the program in 2014 based on their vision for a beautification project at Hoard Park, located one block from the youth center. The teens worked with FOTP mentors every month for six months to guide the project to completion. The final art installation included a mural designed by a professional artist on the defunct concrete spray pool and a meditation garden memorializing Cardell King, the former Assistant Security Director at GCYC. The teens organized an unveiling of the project at the Hoard Park Beautification Dedication in late spring of 2015, inviting community members and a live storyteller to participate in the celebratory event.

In the summer of 2015, our education team partnered with BUILD Chicago to engage their youth council in a student-led placemaking project. After conducting a needs assessment with FOTP staff, the students unanimously decided to donate picnic benches to Simons Park, where a large green space adjacent to the fieldhouse was devoid of seating. The teens wanted to decorate the benches with artwork demonstrating unity in the face of the exclusionary impacts of recent gentrification in the Humboldt Park neighborhood. They created a proposal, including a budget, draft designs, and explanations of each art piece, and submitted it to the Chicago Park District’s Park Enhancement Committee. After multiple back-and-forth exchanges, the committee rejected the proposal based on concerns about the quality of the artwork and long-term maintenance of the benches.

The teens were devastated, but they took away the life lesson that sometimes plans change and you have to adapt to a new vision. BUILD leadership decided to add the picnic benches to the green space at their Austin headquarters, and the project was given a second chance. Led by Rick Miranda, BUILD’s Manager of Arts Academy Programs, the teens worked on their benches in the spring of 2016. The picnic benches were unveiled to staff, youth, and community members at BUILD Chicago’s 2016 End of Summer Bash! in August. The benches will be heavily used by the organization’s youth and neighbors, and they will add to BUILD’s evolving open space. To top it all off, a neighboring organization saw the final product and asked the teens to paint their picnic benches too!

Photos (from top to bottom)
1. Creation of the Hoard Park mural by GCYC youth.
2. Completed Hoard Park mural.
3. Hoard Park Beautification Dedication event.
4. BUILD youth working on their picnic table murals.
5. Finished picnic table mural.
2016 Annual Parks Gala: “Celebrating Chicago’s Lakefront”

Friends of the Parks celebrated the challenges and successes of 2016 at our Annual Parks Gala on November 17th at the Mid-America Club. The night was themed “Celebrating Chicago’s Lakefront” and included cocktails, auctions, dinner, and dancing. We also honored our co-plaintiffs, John Buenz and Sylvia Mann, and our attorneys, from the firm Despres, Schwartz, and Geoghegan, for their leadership in our legal battle to keep the Lucas Museum off Chicago’s public trust land, protecting the city’s lakefront for generations to come. The Gala is our largest fundraiser of the year. We thank all of our supporters who came out to celebrate with us and look forward to an equally exciting 2017!

John Buenz, a retired architect with Solomon Cordwell Buenz, is a longtime supporter and former board member of FOTP. He first became involved with FOTP in 2004 while advocating to keep Monroe Harbor clear of permanent docks and marinas. He proudly lists preventing construction of the Lucas Museum east of Lake Shore Drive as his latest park achievement.

Sylvia Mann was delighted when asked to be a plaintiff in the case to prevent the Lucas Museum from being built on the lakefront. In addition to the merits of the fight it represented, the case was her way of honoring her deceased husband, Robert Mann, who as a State Representative worked so hard to keep private interests from building on the lakefront.

Thomas Geoghegan is a graduate of Harvard Law School and has represented labor unions and employee groups in many significant cases in various United States district courts and courts of appeals, as well as before the United States Supreme Court. He has written six books and his writing has appeared widely in national publications.

Sean Morales-Doyle is a graduate of Northwestern Law School and has represented workers and unions in a variety of labor and employment cases. He has also litigated constitutional and civil rights matters, as well as advocated on behalf of consumers in fraud cases against payday lenders. He previously served as a U.S. District Court law clerk.

Michael Persoon has represented workers and unions in fighting for justice in the workplace since 2008. He has fought race discrimination, wrongful termination, minimum wage violations, and unfair labor practices, as well as advising on labor issues in the technology sector.

Photos: Thomas Spees, 2016

Honorees John Buenz with FOTP’s Juanita Irizarry and Lauren Moltz.

Honoree Sylvia Mann with FOTP’s Juanita Irizarry and Lauren Moltz.

Honoree John Buenz with FOTP’s Fred Bates and Juanita Irizarry.

Honorees Sean Morales-Doyle and Tom Geoghegan with FOTP’s Fred Bates and Juanita Irizarry.

Gala attendees enjoyed a night of dinner and dancing while coming together to support our parks and protect our lakefront.

Photos: Thomas Spees, 2016
NEWS & EVENTS

Friends of the Parks Conducts Listening Tour Across Chicago

Friends of the Parks hosted more than 10 community meetings throughout Chicago as part of its Listening Tour in the second half of 2016. Our focus was on listening to community members discuss their experiences, both positive and negative, in local parks.

We heard a wealth of stories and the feedback was wide-ranging, from appreciation for park programming to concerns over park security. Some residents expressed worries about the affordability of park programming and access to park amenities while others voiced gratitude for the new playgrounds installed through the Chicago Plays! Program (p. 4).

At Rowan Park and other parks near the southern end of the city, the Listening Tour meetings presented an opportunity to discuss whether local residents consider themselves to be part of a coastal community. Discussions also centered on what can be done to develop the southernmost two miles of Chicago’s lakefront park system.

We look forward to expanding our Listening Tour throughout 2017. We plan to continue hosting these meetings at parks all over the city and would welcome the opportunity to host a meeting with your park or community group. For more information, please email Julia at Epplin-zapfJ@FOTP.org or call her at (312) 857-2757 x8. To participate individually in our collection of park experiences, please fill out the 2017 Friends of the Parks Community Survey at http://tinyurl.com/gmxdflg.

Solzman Gallery Opens at Friends of the Parks Office

A VIP reception was held in January to celebrate the new year and the opening of the David Solzman Gallery at the Friends of the Parks office. A lover of Chicago’s parks and rivers, an avid photographer, and a dear friend of Friends of the Parks, David Solzman has graciously donated a collection of his favorite photos of Chicago’s parks to FOTP for all to enjoy. Attendees of the reception had a chance to meet Mr. Solzman, view his beautiful works, honor his legacy, and kick off 2017 in style. Follow-up receptions were held for Early Bird members and Park Advisory Council members. The Solzman Gallery is generously sponsored by Joan and Robert Feitler.

Many longtime friends joined FOTP in honoring David Solzman. Together, they viewed his gallery and celebrated the new year.

David Solzman (center) greeted attendees of the VIP reception as they gathered to enjoy his new gallery of Chicago park photos at the Friends of the Parks office.

Listening Tour: Rowan Park.

Listening Tour: South Chicago.

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Listening Tour: Rowan Park.

Listening Tour: South Chicago.
The Call for Comprehensive Planning for Jackson and South Shore Parks
By Juanita Irizarry, FOTP Executive Director

A number of Chicagoans have wondered aloud why Friends of the Parks is concerned about the professional golf course proposal that is now on the table for Jackson Park. They believe the Obama Presidential Center’s plan to locate in Jackson Park is good for Chicago and that any attendant development in the park must, therefore, be good. Other Chicagoans have expressed chagrin that Friends of the Parks has not filed a lawsuit to try to stop the Obama Library from locating in a park. Some don’t understand why we haven’t voiced a public position for or against a proposed pavilion in Jackson Park. Yet others consider it a no-brainer for us to applaud the idea of closing roads that currently run through Jackson Park.

Let me set the record straight on Friends of the Parks’ point of view about potential Obama Presidential Center-related development in Jackson Park and South Shore Park. We still maintain that the Obama Library should not be located in a park. But if it must be so, we continue to call for the replacement of park acreage and amenities usurped by the library. And with so many competing and uncoordinated priorities being pronounced via different entities, we have put out a clarion call for a comprehensive planning process to promote transparency, coordination, equity, and public participation.

One of the first meetings I attended in the fall of 2015 in my new role as the executive director of FOTP was a community charrette about potential revitalization of the “South Parks”—Jackson Park, Washington Park, and the Midway. The meeting was hosted by Project 120, a non-profit organization, in coordination with the Chicago Park District. Project 120 had expanded beyond its initial interest in improving the Osaka Garden in Jackson Park and set its sights on a broader revitalization scheme that included a new pavilion reminiscent of the Japanese pavilion erected during the 1893 World’s Fair. Objections arose, ranging from fears that the pavilion was part of a plan to make Jackson Park a regular concert venue to complaints that many birds would meet their demise when they flew into the proposed glass walls. In the summer of 2016, Project 120 facilitated the installation of Yoko Ono’s “Sky Landing” sculpture amid an atmosphere of suspicion. It was not clear how decisions were made, how permissions were granted, and whether more plans were in the works.

Local residents remain concerned about developments in Jackson Park. And they don’t all agree on the best path forward. Regardless of what side they’re on, most people are confused about the decision-making process and the proper avenues for community input. The Obama Foundation’s selection of Jackson Park as the site of the Obama Presidential Center, the mayor’s announcement of a proposed professional golf course connecting Jackson and South Shore parks, and the recent talk of road closures in Jackson Park have only exacerbated the problem.

We would love to see the Obama Presidential Center be an engine for and centerpiece of healthy economic development of nearby neighborhoods, but we also strongly object to the use of parkland for the library. The Obama Presidential Center is not just taking up passive green space. It will displace recreational fields that are used by the general public and many youth-serving programs. The Obama Foundation has been in touch with Friends of the Parks over the last year and we have privately shared with them our many concerns about the decision-making process and about specific proposals, going back as far as the controversies around Project 120. We have used this opportunity to ask them to step up and ensure that a comprehensive planning process will happen for Jackson Park.

Since the start of 2017, announcements and rumors have been flying regarding various uncoordinated proposals for Jackson Park “improvement.” When the mayor and the Chicago Park District announced in December 2016 that Tiger Woods would be designing a professional golf course for Chicago, we were taken aback. We have many concerns, along with local residents, including but not limited to this: the golf complex may not meet the needs of the community, may not be contained to the existing golf course footprint as promised, and will compete for funding with other heavily used resources, including recreational fields and the outdated Jackson Park fieldhouse.

We invite you share your input regarding the Jackson Park developments with us. Friends of the Parks is hopeful that the recent swell of voices will converge to slow down the process and create space for transparency and inclusiveness to help Chicago come to the best possible conclusions for the sake of our precious parks.

For the unabridged text of this letter, visit fotp.org/issues/policy/obama-presidential-library-2.
Safeguarding Our Parks, Large and Small

In addition to our advocacy work on large park projects, such as the Obama Library (p. 1 and p. 8), we are at the table working on many other issues and participating in many other conversations about park projects throughout the city. Here are just a few of the projects we’re monitoring:

LAKE CALUMET
We have long advocated for more parkland in the Lake Calumet region, in part to help connect other park and trail development efforts in the region to our Last Four Miles vision of a completed path along Lake Michigan all the way down to the Indiana border. This has led us to a relationship with the Lake Calumet Vision Committee, which seeks the restoration and expansion of public parkland in this ecologically important area. As part of this coalition, we have been meeting with the Illinois International Port District, encouraging 10th Ward Alderman Susan Sadlowski Garza to promote the group’s vision, and co-hosting tours of Port District land that we hope to see converted to a public natural area. We are currently working in coalition to facilitate a land swap in return for the state forgiving IIPD debt on the land. Additionally, we are currently hosting a series of Listening Tour meetings in the region, funded through an Illinois Department of Natural Resources grant, to learn more about what the community wants from its parks and whether and how local residents see themselves as part of a coastal community. Finally, we kicked off our Southeast Corridor Series for this year’s Walter E. Netsch Lectures with a March discussion on the Lake Calumet vision.

BIG MARSH
With the opening of the Big Marsh Bike Park in November, we continue to monitor the balance of recreation, tourism, conservation, wildlife protection, and local needs at this location. Chicago Park District staff presented to our board policy committee in 2016 about the progress of restoration at Big Marsh and about the Bike Park. We have expressed concerns about the need for safe bicycle, pedestrian, and transit access to Big Marsh for nearby residents to balance the emphasis on access for eco-recreation participants from farther away. We are pleased that bicycle activists like Slow Roll and the Active Transportation Alliance have echoed our concerns, and it seems that some progress is being made. However, we remain concerned about a lack of transparency surrounding the Chicago Park District’s approval of the Ford Calumet Environmental Center, which is to be built at Big Marsh in collaboration with the Ford Family Foundation.

31ST STREET BEACH
The Park District’s 31st Street Beach has become a thriving summer destination where beachgoers and boaters vie for parking. After discussion with the Park District and South Side residents about the difficulty of finding parking in the area, Friends of the Parks supported the Park District’s proposal in 2016 to add environmentally-sensitive parking on vacant land on the west side of Lake Shore Drive. This additional parking should improve access to the Burnham Sanctuary and provide more options for boaters and beachgoers. However, upon the plan’s approval at the Park District board meeting, we were dismayed to learn the previously undisclosed parking rates, which we believe limit access for low-income families. Additionally, we took some heat from Streetsblog bicycle activists, who want to limit the use of cars. We agree with them on the importance of advocating for improved bicycle and public transportation access. However, the comments we’ve heard from various sectors of the community reinforce our position that expansion of parking greatly enhances access to the beach for many South Side families, some of whom reported driving all the way up to Montrose Beach because parking is so much easier to find there.

Save the Date!

April 21
The Lungs of the City: Rough Cut Screening & Reception
Register at this link: https://www.eventbrite.com/e/the-lungs-of-the-city-rough-cut-screening-reception-tickets-33288181848

April 22
28th Annual Earth Day Parks and Preserves Clean-Up
Register at fotp.org/events-page/earth-day

May 5-7
Jane’s Walk Tours
Details at fotp.org/janes-walk

June 9-10
Rethinking the Role of Chicago’s Parks:
Parks as Democracy?
Our Annual Luncheon will kick off this exciting conference, revisiting a conference with a similar theme that Friends of the Parks hosted 30 years ago! The Conference workshops will kick off right after the luncheon. Stay for an evening member reception, and come back Saturday for a full day of more interactive workshops and working sessions.

All elements of the Conference, including the Luncheon, will take place at Roosevelt University. Stay updated and register soon here: https://fotp.org/conference

Annual Luncheon Table Sponsorship and Conference Sponsorship opportunities available! Contact info@fotp.org for more info.

September 8
Parks Ball
This year, Friends of the Parks’ annual gala will honor Loyola University Chicago’s chancellor, Father Garanzini, for his leadership in promoting green space and caring for the environment.

Loyola University Chicago Lakeshore Campus, Mundelein Center, 5pm tour, 6pm cocktail reception, 7pm dinner. More info to come!
Host committee and sponsorship opportunities available! Contact info@fotp.org.
# DONORS

**Friends of the Parks Donors, October 1st — December 31st, 2016**

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**THANK YOU!**

To all who donated in 2016 and to all who have donated over the past 41 years, we offer our sincere thanks. We look forward to the next 40 years with your support!

Note: donations given in memory of Kay Clement are listed on page 11.

In Memoriam

We give thanks for the life and service of Kay Clement, longtime Friends of the Parks member, staffer, and board member—and mother-in-law of our current board president, Lauren Moltz. Kay was an advocate for city parks and an open lakefront even before Friends of the Parks was created.

“She was an activist for her community and the city, politically and environmentally,” said Erma Tranter, who led Friends of the Parks from 1981 to 2014. In the 1960s, Kay and others opposed a plan by then-mayor Richard J. Daley to reroute Lake Shore Drive through Jackson Park and across Wooded Island to connect to the Chicago Skyway. “Kay and others literally tied themselves to trees,” said Tranter. “They were out there for days and days.” Those early efforts eventually led to the lakefront protection ordinance passed by the Chicago City Council in 1973.

We are grateful for Kay’s unwavering devotion to the protection of Chicago’s parks and beaches, and we extend our sympathy to her family. We also give special thanks to these individuals who donated to Friends of the Parks in memory of Kay: Barbara Allie, George Bogert, Barbara Flynn Currie, Sergio and Maria Deganelle, Carol Gittler, Norman Malone, Pearl Rieger, Roberta Siegel, Judith Stein, and Almarie Wagner.

Help preserve Chicago’s parks. Help us reach 2017 members in 2017!

- $50 Individual
- $75 Family
- $100 Corporate/Steward
- $250 Conserver
- $500 Sustainer
- $1,000 Benefactor

Name: ________________________________
Address: ________________________________
City/State/Zip: ____________________________
Phone: _________________________________
Email: _________________________________

You can also join or renew online at www.fotp.org.
First “Oaktoberfest” at the Dunning Read Conservation Area a Success!

Friends of the Parks coordinated the first annual “Oaktoberfest” tree planting event on October 22 at the Dunning Read Conservation Area. We had a great crew, including neighbors and Boy Scouts, as well as representatives from our associate board, the American Indian Center, and the Friends of the Dunning Read Conservation Area. We were also joined by a local TreeKeeper, who will ensure the trees are well tended.

A family fun festival followed, thanks to the leadership of the Friends of the Dunning Read Conservation Area. Kids potted their own oak saplings to take home for replanting and enjoyed pony rides, a petting zoo, a bouncy house, and a band. Folks purchased honey produced by the onsite bees, which are tended by a local beekeeper, as well as other natural products. The local hawk watched over us all the while and a beautiful sunset brought our great autumn event to a close.

We are grateful to all of our “Oaktoberfest” partners, particularly the Friends of the Dunning Read Conservation Area, who took the lead on the family fun festival, and the Metropolitan Water Reclamation District, who donated oak saplings through their “Restore the Canopy, Plant a Tree” program.