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Friends of Milwaukee County Parks

Park People Spring 2018 Newsletter

It's Been An Exciting and Changing Time At Park People

As seasons change so has Park People. This past spring has been a busy one that has brought exciting changes for Park People.

- Dawn St.George left the organization in April for another opportunity. Barry Waddell and Kim Dunisch are supporting the organization now. Barry is working with Friends Groups and assisting with installs of trees and benches, and assisting with Weedouts. Kim is overseeing memberships, marketing and the Oak Leaf Discover Tour®.
- We have a new look, a very engaging new website. If you haven't looked at it lately you should. <http://parkpeoplemke.org/>
- We recently held our annual Friends Group meeting and awarded the Friends Group of the Year.
- Weed-Out® events have been happening all spring covering many of our parks to keep them looking nice.
- We have just released our Oak Leaf Discovery Tour® passport.
- We worked with students at Concordia University in creating a new PR plan for us.

2018 Friends Group of the Year

Friends of Lincoln Park

by: Nadine Weske



The Milwaukee River runs through Lincoln Park adding a unique beauty and environment that had been abused with overgrowth and trash. In 2014, this park was selected as a site for an Environmental Justice EPA Clean-Up. It was at that time that this friends group was established and its mission born: *Bringing neighbors and neighborhoods together to celebrate Lincoln Park*

Friends of Lincoln Park has been actively recruiting volunteers through events and fairs, outreach to schools, to youth and neighborhood groups. They know that volunteers are important to help make events successful including the annual Spring Fest and Celebration of Restoration, WeedOuts and river cleanups with Milwaukee Riverkeeper. This year the 'Don't Litter' campaign with the Northwest Side Community Development Corporation reached this park's neighborhood. Working with Sweetwater, the 'Pick up the Poop' campaign will be launched to help ensure that pet owners take responsibility for their animals. In addition, park walks with naturalists and water summits will continue to be held to educate and increase awareness of this green space to those interested in learning more.

The biggest achievement for this friends group occurred last winter with the potential closure of the Schultz Aquatic Center. Both friends and neighbors rallied together in support of keeping the pool open due to the importance of teaching the community to swim. These unified voices helped to secure funding and gave the neighborhood an opportunity to pursue additional activities and fundraising in this park's future.

Congratulations to all of our dedicated and hard-working friends supporting Lincoln Park!



Annual Friends Group Meeting

By: Lucas Olivieri

On May 23rd, we hosted our annual Friends Group meeting. We had a great turn out from Friends Group members, The Park People members and others who have vested interests in the parks. The meeting opened with an impressive presentation from Board Member and Chair of Weed- Out® Committee, Ken Solis, also known as Dr. Jump. Ken is a former world record holder in jump roping and performs athletic and artistic routines with his mesmerizing jump rope skills. During the meeting Ken spoke to another passion of his, Weed-Out®. On top of sharing his knowledge of invasive plant species in southeastern Wisconsin, Ken advocated and promoted the positive impact that our Weed-Out® programs have on Milwaukee County parks.

Sue Spoerk, Past President, lead the meeting speaking about The Park People's rich 40 year history and how the organization has evolved over time, building strong relationships with the community, Friends Groups and the parks department. Sue echoed the great influence that Friends Groups have on the Milwaukee County park system and the various benefits of being associated with The Park People. She stated the numerous advantages of being a fiscally sponsored friends group which included the organizations not-for-profit 501c3 status, insurance and legal protections for Friends Group events, and promotion of Friends Group events on The Park People website, through social media and newsletter just to name a few.

We were proud to present our Annual Friends Group Award to The Friends of Lincoln Park, who over the past few years have revitalized Lincoln Park through their hard work and community involvement. This type of selfless effort is a prime example of a Friends Group transforming their park into an asset of the community.

We were fortunate to be joined by a few special guests; two Milwaukee County board supervisors and staff members of the Milwaukee County parks department. They voiced their vision for the future of the parks system and the current status of the parks

funding and parks department staffing and efforts. They concluded by fielding questions and concerns from attending Friends Group members.

A big thank you to all those who attended the meeting and our members, the continued to support is vital to our organization and the Milwaukee County Parks.

Spring 2018 Weed-Out® Report

by: Ken Solis, MD, MA

2018 marks the 22nd year that volunteers have been removing invasive weeds from the parks. In the spring, the main focus has been on garlic mustard, and sometimes its close relative dame's rocket (*Hesperis matronalis*). Dame's rocket can be confused with wood phlox, but the former has 4 petals per flower, while the latter native plant has 5 petals. Although dame's rocket does not spread as rapidly as garlic mustard, it can still take over natural areas just as thoroughly given enough time, e.g. see many areas in Whitnall Park! Also, because it co-existed with garlic mustard in Eurasia before being brought to North America, it can coexist happily with it. Finally, dame's rocket is often sold in hardware stores and gardening centers when you buy "wildflowers in a can" (the companies selling it know that they won't have a dissatisfied, if misdirected, customer from lack of flowers taking root and blooming – good, native wildflowers are often more "iffy" in this regards, because unlike weeds, they are more particular.)

As of June 12, all the Weed-Out® coordinators have not reported in regards to their successes at this time. Harold Schmidt at Estabrook states that 10 volunteers gave 36.5 hours (over 1.5 days total!) pulling garlic mustard. Betsy Abert at Grant Park has ongoing successful Weed-Out® events and is even tackling some buckthorn in early June where she is taking advantage of some high school aged young "muscle" to take cut buckthorn to pile them on unofficial "social" trails that people make off the popular Seven Bridges Trail - thereby, killing two birds with one stone – smart! (Note: Betsy knows that buckthorn is better culled in late summer, but she understandably is willing to trade a little lesser buckthorn kill to keep people off of eroding hillsides.) Finally, Ney Collier reports that 30 people showed up at Doctors Park, most of them students from UW-Milwaukee. As a side note, she also reported that 81 fifth grade students from Donges Bay School showed up in Mequon's Garrison Glen Park and pulled a whopping 84 bags of garlic mustard for the garlic mustard "pull-a-thon!" Even though this event was not one of *our* Weed-Outs, it's great having young people learn and participate in invasive weed control wherever it occurs, and gives hope for the future.



Use Your Membership Benefits

Did you know as a Park People member you can show your membership card and get discounts? Here are currently two places that we are working with to bring you even more benefits to being a member.

Lakeshore Paddle Sport Rentals - For over 18 years Lakeshore Paddle Sport Rentals has offered a relaxing way for Milwaukeeans to get away from the stirring city life to unwind. Members just need to show your Park People card and you will get a discount of \$5 per person/hour rental vs. \$8 per person/hr regular price. <http://www.lakeshorepaddlemke.com/>



Remodel Resale Fashion Boutique - Owner Tomara Orr is very passionate about saving the environment through keeping fashion circulating into homes and out of landfills. REstyling, REfurbishing and REmodeling is her version of up-cycling clothing. She carries quality styles for ladies, men, kids and plus sizes. Visit the store at: 7513 W. Oklahoma Ave. Milwaukee, WI 53219 and receive 20% off of your purchase just by showing your Park People membership card. <http://www.remodelresale.com/>



Get Out And Enjoy The Parks This Summer

Now that summer has finally arrived, get out and enjoy it in our parks! In addition to you being active in the parks by swimming, golfing, biking and hiking there is a lot more going on in Milwaukee County Parks this summer. Events range from farmers markets, beer gardens including permanent, pop-up and traveling, music events, fitness events, educational events, and movies in the parks. Utilize the Milwaukee County Parks calendar to see what is happening at: <http://county.milwaukee.gov/ParksCalendar>

Working With Students Not Only Provided A Learning Opportunity, But Also Provided Park People With A New PR Campaign

This past spring semester we worked with an advanced public relations class at Concordia University. This class fulfilled their mission to serve. The students in the class created and executed a PR plan for Park People which included a social media campaign and we'd like to roll it out to you and keep it going. So while you are out and about enjoying the parks this summer please take photos and share them on your social media outlets and utilize our social media hashtags created by the students.

#MyParkMyPeople

- Use this when you want to showcase a way to connect people in the parks, show people in the parks at events, praise people who started the park or the park is named after, etc.

#MyParkMyPassion

- Use this when you want to showcase your passion within the parks, when you are doing health and fitness activities, photography, environmentalism, education, wildlife, etc.

#MyParkMyPlay

- Use this when you want to show yourself at play, help raise awareness about play options in the parks- swimming pools, playgrounds, biking, golfing, etc.

#MyParkMyPeace

- Use this when you want to show an activity that brings you peace- reading, drinking coffee, taking photos, relaxing, etc.

#MyParkMyParty

- Use this when you want to show an activity that is party related- beer gardens, weddings, picnics, family reunions, get togethers, concerts, etc.

Feel free to use more than one hashtag. We look forward to seeing your activity on social media. One of the posts is below for you to see what the class completed.

We are also tying this into the Oak Leaf Discovery Tour this summer. As an insider tip, all the keywords are related to either People, Passion, Play, Peace or Party.



parkpeopleofmke



28 likes

parkpeopleofmke Sun setting and grass under our toes 🌅🌻🌿 Couldn't have asked for a better way to kick off May. What have you been doing to enjoy the weather in the parks?

#myparkmypeace #myparkmypassion #hammock #sunset #milwaukee #relax

Thank you to the class at Concordia University for coming up with this exciting kickoff campaign.



Left to right: Ryley Schetter, Anne Karsten, Nick Margrett, Devyn Favia, Jack Donnellan, Sam Alraes

Oak Leaf Discovery Tour®

Once again we are running our Oak Leaf Discovery Tour® as a way to get out there and enjoy our parks. This year we have focused on our PR campaign as a way to incorporate the keywords. Significant thought and time was put into connecting some of our best parks to keywords that are related to the campaign. To get your passport visit: <http://parkpeopleofmke.org/get-involved/programs/oak-leaf-discovery-tour/>

Thank You Cheri Briscoe

by:&

Every person makes an impact but some people create those special, memorable and long-lasting ones. Eight years ago, Cheri Briscoe, joined the board of the Park People with a resume filled with experience including serving as chair of the Milwaukee County Parks Advisory Commission. She had so much knowledge through her involvement with parks, nature and conservation including interest in recycling that she was able to teach us. Therefore, she dove right into her board role but was also willing to help other members in any way possible. Cheri is the kind of person who would step up to volunteer with a smile as long as she did not have a conflict on her calendar. She was instrumental in the creation of the Oak Leaf Discovery Trail's Passport Program sharing endless ideas and time to encourage people to visit parks and hopefully experience ones that they would not have stopped at before. Milwaukee was very fortunate to have her chose to become a resident moving from Waukesha County in 1996.

Thank you, Cheri, for your service to the Park People board, our friends and all of the park users who unknowingly benefited by your dedication to Milwaukee County Parks. We will miss you but know that you will continue supporting the parks.



Notice of Annual Members Meeting

We will be holding our Annual Members Meeting on Wednesday July 18 at 6pm at Zablocki Pavilion. Watch for invites.

Thank You for Supporting Park People

Your help in supporting the Park People's mission to support Milwaukee County Parks is so important. We appreciate all our donors. Thank you for your Annual Appeal donations and for renewing your memberships.

Another easy way to donate is through [Amazon Smile](#)

Thanks for being a member and making a difference! Enjoy your summer and make good use of our parks.

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