



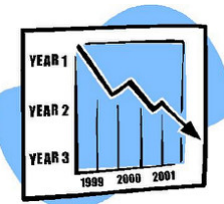
Park People News

Creating Citizen Connections to Our Parks

Park Funding Update

A large part of what the Park People does on a regular basis is directly related to advocacy for our wonderful park system. Our advocacy takes many forms. For example, we advocated for proper park policy by speaking out against the installation of parking meters on Lincoln Memorial Drive and the War Memorial's recent attempt to take park land to increase the size of their parking lot. We also advocated for issues related to social justice within our parks by pressing our elected officials for funding to reopen swimming pools that were closed years ago in depressed neighborhoods. Most importantly though, we have consistently advocated for increased funding to reverse the significant decline in park funding that has been eroding the upkeep of our parks for over twenty years.

We could go on and on about the estimated \$270 million in deferred maintenance within our park facilities or the decline of well over 500 front line workers. But realistically, those problems can only be addressed if there were dedicated and sustainable funding sources for our parks other than Milwaukee County's property tax levy. Rest assured we will continue to be the leading source of advocacy related to long term park funding issues.



A more immediate concern, however, is the 2012 County budget and what impact it will have on our parks. We already know that the County faces a shortfall of \$50 million for 2012. As we head into fall, the drama of the 2012 budget will continue to unfold and we will again be doing our part to advocate against any further loss of funding for our park system and communicating critical opportunities for public support. We will keep you informed of developments as they occur.

Jim Goulee, Executive Director

Storytime in the Park

Over the winter Park People Board members Chuck Rozewicz and Dan Cody were talking about ways to get younger families into their local parks and be more active with The Park People. They came up with a fun new program called "Storytime in the Park".



This past spring, The Park People partnered with Pink Banana Theatre Company to provide a series of four "storytimes" at Lake, Jacobus, Dineen and Humboldt Parks. The idea was to provide a series of safe, fun and affordable events that families could come to on Saturday mornings and enjoy our beautiful parks - and it proved to be a winner! During the four events last spring, we had about 125 kids show up for storytime and activities! Pink Banana provided the talent and we provided the location along with cocoa, coffee and snacks from Alterra

Coffee.

While the weather wasn't great this spring, we still had an excellent turnout and it was great to see families getting out and into parts of their local parks they may not have seen before. Pink Banana also put on a special "parents only" performance at Humboldt Park to cap off the spring series that was a lot of fun!

Response was so positive from the kids and their parents (many of whom are new members of The Park People) that we've already gone ahead and planned on having a fall Storytime series as well, starting September 24th.

Check out <http://ParkPeopleMKE.org/storytime> in the coming weeks to register. Children of Park People members are free!

Dan Cody, Board President

Run for the Parks

The second Annual Run for the Parks was a massive success. One hundred seventy-five runners and walkers gathered to support Milwaukee County Parks by participating in the 5K Run and 2K Walk. Parks Director Sue Black started the run from the Humboldt Park band shell and sent the runners off on a fun yet challenging cross-country style run through the park.

Participants enjoyed refreshments in the VIP area and listened to reggae from The Urbanites presented by Chill on the Hill. The event raised over \$4000 for Humboldt Park renovations. The sponsors of this year's Run were Tenuta's Restaurant, Nowak and Lewis Chiropractic, Southern Lakes Physical Therapy, Bay View Homes, Starting Line Athletics, and Barefoot Wine and Bubbly.



The Park People were very pleased to partner with Bay View Neighborhood Association and Milwaukee County Parks in presenting the run. A special thank you goes out to Director Black and the all of the Parks staff, as well as Patty Pritchard Thompson and Teri Crain of BVNA for their huge contributions toward making the event a success.

Due to the efforts of Executive Director Jim Goulee, Park People Board members Dan Cody, Robin Barry, Lauren Harpke, Nadine Weske and all of the volunteers who generously donated their time, the race went off without a hitch and was enjoyed by all. We look forward to the third Annual Run for the Parks in July of 2012.

Chuck Rozewicz, Board Member

Weed-Out Program

Reviewing the list of volunteers from our fall and spring Weed-Outs leaves me at a loss how to begin to thank everyone who contributed so much time and energy in this critical task. Approximately 850 people logged nearly three thousand hours! (We approximate as some people work without signing in!)

Over 70 volunteers attended more than one Weed-Out; twelve attended Weed-Outs at more than one park; and three at three parks! Is this addictive, or are they just real troopers?

Thank you Chris Young Eagle. Chris, our intern, did a great job recruiting and leading sessions. His internship has ended which leaves us with a big hole as we won't have an intern this coming year. That means we will be unable to provide office help at every Weed-Out. So I'm asking all of you who have worked in the past to consider stepping up as a coordinator for your favorite park. It's not difficult but does require a willingness to make sure someone oversees the work. We will continue to provide equipment as it is available but our presence on site can not be assured.

Special thanks go out to REI Corporation which once again provided us with financial assistance as well as manpower, food, and drinks at the fall and spring sessions. REI's ongoing support is very important and we urge you patronize them and tell them you appreciate their support.

Perhaps the highlight of last fall's season was having our work shown on Outdoor Wisconsin. It was a beautiful day and Greenfield Park was the perfect setting. It was a wonderful way to promote our program.

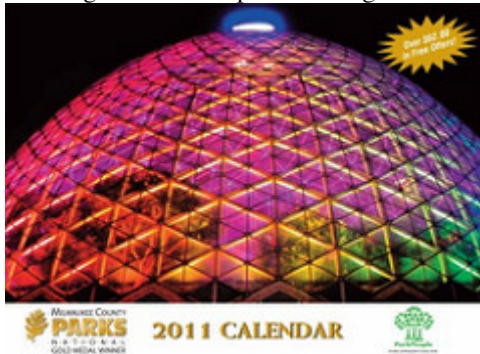
We know all of you have your favorite park, but volunteering in other parks can give you a chance to see areas that are "off-limits" to the general public, and expose you to more of our treasured assets. I hope you'll continue to chip in, or if you've not done so yet will consider doing so. It's a great way to meet your neighbors while helping preserve our natural heritage!

John Lunz, Board Member



Friend's Group Update – 2011 Fundraising Calendar and The Park People Website Calendar

The 2011 Friends Group calendar was a huge success. Friends Groups participated by submitting photos and information regarding their park. It was hard to choose which pictures to include since they were all so beautiful. The Milwaukee County Parks assisted by populating the calendar with historical dates and also events planned for 2011. A big thank you to Parks Director Sue Black who donated valuable coupons that helped to sell the calendars as well as drive revenue to our parks. There are still a few calendars left so if you have a son or daughter heading off to college, call the office and request a calendar so they can be reminded of our beautiful Milwaukee County parks! The calendar was fully funded by an anonymous donor allowing 100% of the proceeds to go towards operational costs of The Park People and the Friends Groups.



Speaking of calendars, as a reminder, The Park People hosts a calendar to promote all Friends Group activities on The Park People website. Simply email your events or call Jim Goulee at The Park People. Please include date, time, location, name of Friends Group and contact information. While the Milwaukee County Parks Dept. does a great job promoting park events on their website, they need to be selective with content. The Park People will post any Friends

Group event, big or small.

Sue Spoerk, Board Vice President

Park Advisory Commission to the Milwaukee County Board

In April, Cheri Briscoe, Secretary for TPP, was appointed Chairperson of the Milwaukee County Parks Advisory Commission, which had not met since 2008. Committee members are Rafael Acevedo, Jr., John Gurda, F. William Haberman, Henry Hamilton III, Nancy Davlantes, and Penelope Stewart. The first meeting under Cheri's leadership was June 9. Commission members heard a report from Jim Keegan, Milwaukee County Parks Chief of Planning and Development regarding ongoing and planned projects. Jim Goulee gave an update on parks funding challenges and activities of the Park People. No action was taken.

The Parks Advisory Commission was created "to provide policy and funding guidance to the Milwaukee County Board of Supervisors on preservation of the County's natural resources and places of natural beauty and the provision of recreational opportunities to County residents."

The Parks Advisory Commission passed a recommendation in June 2008 that the County Board put an advisory referendum on the November election to support a .5% (a nickel per \$10) sales tax to provide dedicated funding for our county parks. The referendum was expanded to a 1% referendum which would have provided dedicated funding for parks, public transit and emergency medical service. The referendum passed with nearly a 52% majority; however the legislature failed to act on Milwaukee County residents wishes.

The Park People in cooperation with Director Sue Black have brought in an average of over \$280,000 per year of grants and donations from the private sector for special projects for our County Parks since 2006. Many local park friends groups and corporations have come forward with funding for Bradford Beach, Mitchell Park Domes, Estabrook Park, Lake Park and more, however, the budget for parks maintenance and necessary capital repairs continues to decrease

along with full time and part time staff. If anyone has suggestions for funding options to create dedicated and more reliable funding for our parks, please contact Cheri Briscoe, [414-239-7883](tel:414-239-7883) or cherib41@gmail.com.

Cheri Briscoe, Board Secretary

Update on Long Range Lakefront Planning Committee

Last spring, the Milwaukee County Board created the "Long Range Lakefront Planning Committee" to study development plans for the lakefront and make recommendations on the future of the area. This committee was started in part as a result of the O'Donnell Park tragedy and when it was suggested the best use of O'Donnell Park may be to tear it down and sell it to developers.

The Park People expressed their concern about tearing down O'Donnell Park for several reasons including the fact that hundreds of thousands of dollars were invested for improvements to that park and it is a major revenue stream for the Parks Department. Over one million dollars of net revenue from O'Donnell helps subsidize other park operations annually.

The committee has been meeting for several months now with The Park People serving on one of its sub-committees. Partly because of The Park People's involvement in the process and their public pressure put on officials, the committee has moved away from plans to remove O'Donnell Park as part of their recommendations. Instead, the committee is looking at ways to better utilize the transit center, make improvements to the Lincoln Memorial Drive at Michigan Avenue intersection and the possibility of making the Hoan Bridge more pedestrian and bike friendly.

The committee continues to meet on a bi-weekly basis. I've been attending the meetings regularly to make sure we are fully aware of what is happening during this important process. The committee is expected to make it's recommendations to the full County Board later this summer and we'll continue to work to ensure that the voices of park advocates are heard!

Dan Cody, Board President